



Wake County Sustainability Task Force News

Inside this issue:

Waste	2
Water	2
Energy	3

STF discusses the issues

At the Feb 18 meeting the Task Force members discussed the vision statements / summary statements put together by the facilitation team. Staff and facilitators compiled >600 responses from the visioning questions asked in January, categorized them into similar groupings, and wrote statements describing the categories. These were posted on the project website and announced via email to participants the week before the Feb meeting. The vision statements or summary statements can be found in the [Feb 2010 newsletter](#). The compiled lists of responses for each topic are posted on the project website under the heading “Documents” and are called Jan ‘10 Vision Ideas.

The task force randomly split into 3 groups, and each was assigned a topic: water, waste or energy. Originally the groups were slated to rotate through all 3 topics, but the facilitators decided to extend the discussion and keep everyone in the same group throughout the meeting. As a result participants discussed one topic and only heard summaries of the other topic discussions. For example, the people who talked about Waste did not get a chance to discuss Water or Energy. In time, everyone will have the opportunity to weigh in on all topics discussed. Numerous people mentioned their need or desire to weigh in on the different topics and the facilitators agree with them.

Several people suggested that they needed more information about the topics before the discussions could progress. In response, we will set aside the discussion about vision for now so that we can all learn about the 3 categories. We will revisit the vision statements later.

For March, we will embark on **waste education**. A series of speakers and a series of question and answer periods will fill our March 18th meeting time. The purpose of the meeting will be to learn about the state and local trends in waste generation and management, and to learn about current and new practices to meet waste management challenges. We are seeking examples of waste management practices to share with the group– please email us if you have examples you would like to share.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, March 18
Wake County Commons
Building
Carya Drive, Raleigh
4:00– 6:00 p.m.

Meeting topic:

- Solid Waste:
why do we need to manage it?

Other opportunities for engaging in this project: www.ncsu.edu/weco/wake

- an announcement listserv - please contact us to subscribe
- an online blog and forum - please see the website
- visitors are welcome to attend meetings
- to receive a hardcopy of this newsletter, if email is not feasible, please contact us.

Exploring a Wake County Sustainability Vision

The vision / summary statements crafted by the facilitators were discussed in 3 different groups. You can find the original statements in the [Feb 2010 newsletter](#). Below you can find the comments and ideas from the discussions of all 3 groups.

Waste: Participants in this group suggested the following revisions to the statements. Not all participants agreed with all the statements.

Use the lowest possible cost for waste disposal

Fuel and energy sources produced by landfills will be used locally

Waste will be used as a local energy resource

Enhance product cycle through 'cradle to cradle' process

Look for innovation/research for improved recycling process and developing markets

Develop an economically viable recycling process

Education initiatives will increase public commitment to best waste management practices

Innovative disposal of waste will create a healthier environment

Allow the use of grey water by eliminating regulatory barriers while complying with public health (should this be moved to water category?)

Charge consumers proportionally for their contribution to the landfill (this is a "how to" strategy to meet goals for waste management)



Water: This group chose to compile the vision statements into 1 or 2 succinct sentences. Group members liked a statement that is close to the following:

Wake County government, citizens, and businesses takes leadership in developing sustainable watershed management that supports ecosystem health, recreational opportunities, healthy citizens, a thriving economy, and secure and affordable sources of water. (sentence as written is intended to describe how water relates to a good quality of life)

A participant suggested organizing the information into tiers. Perrin, facilitator, agreed and suggested that the facilitators start plugging the group's feedback into logic

models (a strategic planning tool) to help participants view how ideas relate to each other. This will help discern visions from specific objectives and specific strategies.

Some major topics of discussion included:

Economics– Is it possible to provide inexpensive water resources while also maintaining adequate supplies over time. Do cheap supplies encourage people to waste water, hence resulting in depleted supplies?

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Citizen education and engagement– is education a goal or a strategy? It is crucial for meeting water resource needs. (participants were okay leaving it as an objective or strategy)

Water re-use and potable water concerns: Match the quality of water to the use. Health concerns are important, particularly in residential areas. What tools can protect health while allowing re-use?

Additional comments/suggestions made about the statements during the discussion:

- #2 – need more emphasis on “predictable”.
- Water conservation doesn’t jump out from statements
- Seems skewed to residential

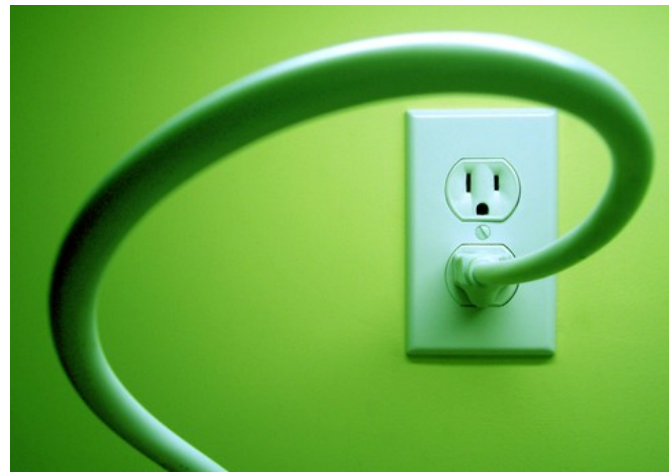
- #6 – conserve potable supply by increasing non-potable availability
- Minimize usage, more *efficient*
- Efficiency also = less energy moving water
- Cheap runs counter – to conservation
- Rainwater harvesting
- Reducing pollution and runoff, managing point & non-point pollution sources
- Security, (abundant) of supply
- Address water sources and outputs
- Responsible and engaged citizens & businesses

Suggested topics for learning: the water cycle; drinking, farming, & business water supplies– what are sources & demands; sources of water quality degradation & management strategies; environmental economics, water-reuse practices & tools to protect public health.

Energy: Comments made by the energy group are included here. They do not represent a consensus or agreement by the participants. These comments will be used along with the original ideas to formulate new summary statements. The original 7 statements are listed below with comments following each. This section begins with general discussion comments. Many questions were posed and much information/education is needed on the topic of energy.

Participant comments – paraphrased:

- We need a definition of sustainable, and if we don’t have one, we shouldn’t use the word in the vision statements. Maybe we can use these summary/ vision statements to define sustainability.
- I can’t “embrace technology for renewable resources” if it is going to cost more—maybe we need a better word than embrace
- Sustainability could include independence, such as independence from foreign sources. Our national security concerns are relative to our energy needs



and therefore our energy independence. What do we use foreign energy for today?

- Per capita use may go down, but overall energy use may go up due to more people and need. (Editor’s note: this is captured here and therefore removed from the rest of the comments to save space.)

(Continued on page 4)



Watershed Education for Communities and Officials

NCSU Campus Box 8109
Raleigh, NC 27695-8109

Patrick Beggs
919-515-4525
patrick_beggs@ncsu.edu

Christy Perrin
919-515-4542
christy_perrin@ncsu.edu

www.ncsu.edu/weco



Wake County Environmental Services

Matt Roylance
919-856-7133
matt.roylance@wakegov.com

www.wakegov.com

(Continued from page 3)

- Some local governments have established renewable energy tools.
- RTP is well-positioned well to take advantage of a smart energy grid.
- CO2 discussions are controversial – before we make changes based on this, we need more discussion.

Vision/summary statements followed by comments:

1. *Citizens will be able to choose from multiple energy sources.*
2. *A higher percentage of energy will be come from renewable energy sources.*

We want more choices in energy than we have today, but not necessarily a greater percentage of energy from renewable resources. We should be talking ‘clean’ energy, not just renewable. We should use less fossil fuel or have the technology to clean emissions. We will not get to a point of using zero fossil fuels. We need to use specific targets, not just say “more than today”. A 2030 challenge = a zero carbon footprint. Combine 1 and 2.

How much renewable energy are we using now? What constitutes renewable energy sources? Are we talking about truly clean fuel or just cleaner than we currently have fuel? What is the renewable energy approach in other locations?

3. *Transportation will consume less energy.* Transportation will be more accessible.
4. *The community will have a greater understanding of energy consumption and options.*
5. *Pricing, Markets, and Policy will work toward energy sustainability.*

This is too broad and should be separated. Deal with policy by itself. What will be the impacts of energy mandates? What about the price of all these energy ideas? Price must considered when planning for renewable energy and conservation.

6. *Energy Conservation, including efficiency, will lower per capita consumption.*
7. *Society will change its thinking concerning energy.*

This is too vague. Get rid of this whole category. (Editor’s note: Until the public comments/content ideas are captured in another category, we’ll keep this as a placeholder.)