



Sub-Committee on Environment (SCE)

**Minutes of the meeting of
Monday, March 15, 2010, 2:30 p.m.
Office of Sustainability, Room 216, Ferrier Building, 840 Docteur Penfield Avenue**

Present:

Dumoulin, Jennifer (via conference call), *representing Macdonald Campus Students' Society*
Knight, Maggie, *Environmental Commissioner, representing SSMU*
Mitchell, Matthew, *PGSS representative*
Nicell, Jim, *Associate Vice-Principal (University Services), Interim Chair*
Lague, Normand, *representing IT Services*

Guests:

Fortune, Dennis, *Sustainability Director, Sustainability Office – Campus and Space Planning*
Juster, Radu, *Architect/Planner, Campus and Space Planning*
Glencross, Jonathan, *student, Sustainable McGill Project*
McLaren, Nicole, *Assistant to the Environmental Officer, Sustainability Office – Campus and Space Planning*
Ng, Kathleen, *Environmental Officer, Sustainability Office – Campus and Space Planning*

Regrets:

Beech, Robin, *Macdonald Campus academic staff member*
Bennett, Elena, *McGill School of Environment academic staff member (on leave)*
Bouchard, Christian, *Manager, Waste Management Program for University Safety (EHS)*
Lechowicz, Martin, *Member-at-Large, SCPD*
Pageau, Bill, *Contracts Administrator, Food and Dining Services*
Pinto, Gabriela, *Associate Director – Building Service, Grounds and Special Events, University Services*
Roulet, Nigel, *McGill downtown campus academic staff member (on sabbatical)*

The chair called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

1. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved without changes.

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, February 15, 2010

The notes from the meeting were approved without changes.

BUSINESS ARISING

3. Town Hall debrief (roundtable)

K. Ng reported that a few sustainability-related issues arose.

- Sustainable food. A management student wanted to know whether McGill was taking into account sustainability considerations in its food services; the answer was yes. [J. Glencross commented that he was on the RFP committee for new food services providers, and that composting definitely a part of it.]



- Impending shutdown of Centennial Center cafeteria. The Dean of the FAEC indicated that they were continuing to work on solutions that would better service the community while taking into consideration the requests of the students for sustainable food. [Nicell commented that they were examining if could services could be improved there, perhaps using Brittain Hall. Glencross indicated that he was involved with the bidding process for a food services provider for Mac as well.]
- Overcrowding on Macdonald Campus shuttle during peak periods. The Dean of the FAEC indicated that they were continuing to work on solutions.

The Town Hall session recording and follow-up to questions asked would be posted on the Town Hall website at <http://www.mcgill.ca/townhall/>.

4. Workshops on curriculum change for students and academic champions (M. Knight)

[No progress to report]

5. Review of SCE Terms of Reference and Composition

The group reviewed votes made regarding relative priorities in the SCE's existing terms of reference. Overall observations:

- There was consensus that the SCE should be maintained as a coordinating body and a forum for consultation/exchange.
- The Office of Sustainability should be responsible for the communication strategy.
- The University's senior administrative bodies should take ownership of the Sustainability Policy and Plan.
 - It was suggested that there could potentially be a Joint Board-Senate Committee on Sustainability, similar to that on Disability and Equity (the latter which is currently developing a University policy on equity).
- The "Sub" should be removed from the name of the Committee.
- Re. suggestion that the SCE should be structured similar to the University Health and Safety Committee: Nicell advised that the latter group was more easily established because of a legislative requirement that a multi-stakeholder council exist to deal with cross-cutting health and safety/security issues. Additionally, the longstanding history of Departmental Safety Committees was an important component of this: every principal investigator knows that they are responsible for the safety in their laboratories (liability issues). Nicell advised that the University could eventually have a similar high-level sustainability council, but at present the group should focus on education (culture change).

A revised terms of reference will be crafted based on the input of the group and brought back for consideration.

Lague commented that there was potential for confusion between the Environmental Policy and Sustainability Policy: Nicell explained that the former policy (and similar others, such as the Paper Use Policy and Purchasing policy) were more specific, whereas the Sustainability Policy would be over-arching. The Environmental Policy would therefore not be subsumed upon approval of the Sustainability Policy.



Action: Ng and Nicell to further wordsmith Terms of Reference and circulate revised draft to all for review. SCE members should submit their suggestions for an improved name for the Committee.

6. Sustainability Projects Fund (J. Nicell)

Barbara Ouimet is coordinating communications: a preliminary notice was distributed on the *what's new@mcgill* online newsletter. Nicell mentioned that he was deliberately not providing advice on the probability of acceptance of specific projects to maximize the number of applications; the risk lies in offering advice that may be inconsistent with what the Sustainability Projects Fund Committee would accept, and thus potential applicants should simply be referred to the application guidelines.

STANDING REPORTS

7. Macdonald Campus Environment Committee (MEC)

On behalf of R. Beech, D. Fortune and J. Dumoulin gave a brief report on MEC activities.

- Re. Faculty resolution on renewable energy sources: D. Fortune reported that the Faculty meeting (presided by the Dean) was well attended, and the motion had gone back for another review. While there was overall support of the idea that renewable energy be used as a primary source (goal of 90%) on campus, discussion focused on the impact on academic research. Nicell commented that the introspection would be beneficial for buy-in if the motion is eventually passed, as the decision would be made with the weight of fully understanding of the implications of such a motion, instead of everyone simply agreeing in principle while leaving their individual actions unchanged.
- Dumoulin indicated that there was nothing otherwise to report, as the last MEC meeting had been cancelled. Nevertheless, she would be working with R. Beech to reschedule.

8. SSMU Environment Committee

M. Knight provided an update about undergraduate student activities, including:

- A referendum in March regarding the Green Fund (which funds Environmental Commissioner, the Farmer's Market and other student initiatives) was passed with a high rate of approval.
- Défi Climat: Organic Campus posted a notice on their website and would be giving treats to the winning faculty during the upcoming exam period.
- Final draft of sustainability criteria for cafeteria vendors, in collaboration with the McGill Food Systems Project student group
- Faculty roundtables
- Reporting on their 5-year plan on sustainability
- Administrative issues: Sending call-out for 12 volunteer opportunities, 5-year-plan portfolio positions, hiring next year's Environment Commissioner, and Green Buildings/Events Coordinator.

Knight would be running for SSMU Council and will not be Environment Commissioner next year. She commented that she was pleased to see candidates in the upcoming student elections all mentioning sustainability in their platforms (demonstrating their good intentions and openness to learning).



9. PGSS Environment Committee (PGSSEC)

M. Mitchell reported that they were getting the word out re. the upcoming Sustainability Fund referendum: a website and Facebook group were now available.

Nicell reiterated that he would like to present the Sustainability Policy to this group.

NEW BUSINESS

10. Rethink planning workgroup (K. Ng)

There were no volunteers for planning the upcoming Rethink conference (generally, there would be at least one administrative staff member, one faculty member, and one student involved with programming). Ng mentioned that those interested in volunteering should be able to work on the conference over the summer, given that the group had agreed that it should be moved to September.

Announcements

11. **Upcoming events.** Ng announced that

- The [CER-UNU](#) (Montreal) Forum would be held on June 2, 2010 for all the Montreal partners, with the goal to fostering relationships and encouraging inter-institutional projects and actions towards the CER's mission.
- McGill would be hosting the Northeast Campus Sustainability Consortium (NECSC) October 24-26: details would be posted [online](#). The preliminary theme would be on globalization and culture change.

12. *Défi Climat.* Ng reminded all to participate in Défi Climat. N. Lague lamented that he was unable to submit his responses because he either selected "I already do this" or "n/a" for all of the actions available. Ng admitted that she had the same experience; this was because organizers sought the engagements of those who were not already taking action to reduce their carbon footprint. Nevertheless, the campaign has evolved since its inception in 2008 and Ng expressed her hope that further improvements would be made in the future.

Pending

There were no pending items.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.