

Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable



Executive Summary and Recommendations

Presented to Mayor Coleman, the Saint Paul City Council,
and Sustainable Saint Paul

April 19, 2006



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www.eurekarecycling.org/environmentalroundtable

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Resolution – 06-373 – Accepting the recommendations of the Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable.

Resolution – 06-385 – Recognizing Eureka Recycling for their leadership in organizing and facilitating the Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable and thanking the members of the Roundtable for their participation.



Introduction

The Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable is a model of collaborative environmental planning designed to provide an effective way of gaining valuable citizen participation in policy creation. The Roundtable, made up of volunteers from throughout Saint Paul, was formed in 2005. The work of the Environmental Roundtable culminated in the passage of a Saint Paul City Council resolution on April 19, 2006, commemorating the 36th anniversary of Earth Day. The resolution help to set Saint Paul's policy direction on six environmental issues: zero waste, food systems, cleaner energy, green building, open space and water stewardship.

In 2005, Eureka Recycling and Council Member Lee Helgen joined forces to harness community interest in the environment. Fifteen volunteer Saint Paul residents stepped forward to serve as members of the Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable, providing a framework for the tremendous energy and community groundswell of interest in environmental issues. Over 500 residents of Saint Paul came together between September 2005 and April 2006 to make the city healthier and more livable by protecting and improving its environment.

Through open community meetings and forums, the Roundtable members collected the best ideas and resources and produced a series of thoughtful, pragmatic recommendations to help the city focus their efforts in the six chosen topic areas. Based on guidance from Sustainable Saint Paul, the internal working group of city staff established to address environmental issues for the city, The Roundtable members prioritized the attached recommendations on the basis of environmental impact, cost-effectiveness, and public support. In addition, the Roundtable has suggested a general timeline for each recommendation.



What was the Environmental Roundtable process?

Eureka Recycling, a nonprofit that has worked with the city on recycling and resource conservation issues for over two decades, convened the Roundtable in response to community interest and questions on a variety of citywide environmental issues.

The method for the Roundtable was determined by an advisory committee comprised of eight citizens. They developed criteria for selecting the Roundtable topics and recommended community members who could champion each topic. The advisory committee will evaluate the process, once complete, so that it can be replicated in the future.

Fifteen volunteers stepped forward to serve as Roundtable members. They oversaw the process, championed the progress of policy recommendations, and engaged the community. Using the criteria developed by the advisory committee, the Roundtable members began by selecting six topics to address: zero waste, food systems, energy, green buildings, green space and water stewardship. These six topics impact every resident within Saint Paul although there are disparities in how environmental issues affect specific communities. Before the roundtable was convened, there was no other public forum available to address these important issues. In making their topic selections, members also ensured that there was enough information and expertise available to fully address the economic, social, and environmental impacts of each topic.



Who was involved in the Environmental Roundtable?

Community

Community participation is at the heart of the Roundtable process, because the best and most sustainable solutions arise when they are worked out collaboratively, involving input from as many people from as many different perspectives as possible.

With this in mind, the Roundtable members led a series of open meetings designed to involve community members from all walks of life, with any variety of concerns about

the environment. Since September 2005, the Roundtable has hosted twelve such meetings, involving over 500 hundred members of Saint Paul’s community. As expected, Saint Paul residents are inquisitive about what is already being done and passionate about what more could be done to improve quality of life in Saint Paul.

Meeting attendees discussed and learned about the specific opportunities and obstacles for implementing Roundtable recommendations in the city. They also voiced their ideas about the topics and offered creative, useful suggestions for improvement to the recommendations. As hoped, attendees came for reasons that varied widely. Some were concerned about supplying the homeless with healthy food, while others were interested in turning their front lawn into a rain garden.

After each meeting, the Roundtable members worked to keep people informed about revisions through email and mail notices. Background and additional information is updated on the Roundtable website for easy access to those who want to stay involved.

Community members, environmental organizations, neighborhood businesses, and the city have come together to envision and articulate these positive recommendations. Through the Roundtable, people who were already doing good work to make these improvements gained a venue to combine efforts and interact with those working on other, interconnected environmental policies.

The Roundtable Members

The Roundtable consists of fifteen Saint Paul residents and individuals from throughout the city, who were personally inspired to volunteer their time to do something more to protect and improve Saint Paul’s environment. Some Roundtable members have professional ties to organizations that address environmental issues including Eureka Recycling, Environmental Ground, Inc., EcoDEEP, Friends of the Mississippi River, Science Museum of Minnesota, Minnesotans for an Energy Efficient Economy, Our Scenic Minnesota, St Bernard’s School, Upper Midwest Hydrogen Initiative, Great Plains Institute for Sustainable Development, Capital Region Watershed District Citizen Advisory Committee, Energy Systems Consulting, and Farm in the City. These Roundtable members do not represent these organizations, but themselves as residents with specific expertise. The Saint Paul Environmental Roundtable members are:

Brian Bates

Whitney Clark

Kathryn Draeger

Kevin Flynn

Carlos Garcia-Velasco

Pat Hamilton

J. Drake Hamilton

Susan Hubbard

Jon Hunter

Seitu Jones

Colleen Monahan

Rolf Nordstrom

Shirley Reider

Nilgun Tuna

Anna Wasescha

The Roundtable Advisory Committee

The Roundtable advisory committee is comprised of passionate Saint Paul residents, including some environmental experts and neighborhood leaders, from Saint Paul District 6, Saint Paul's West Side, Environmental Ground Consulting, Eureka Recycling, Macalester College, Neighborhood Energy Consortium, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The Roundtable advisory committee is:

Brian Bates

Kathryn Draeger

Tom Eggum

Amy Fredregill

Susan Hubbard

Mary Morse

Sharon Pfeifer

Brett Smith

Eureka Recycling

Eureka Recycling, a nonprofit that has worked with the city of Saint Paul on recycling and resource conservation issues for over two decades, convened the Roundtable to focus attention on a variety of citywide environmental issues. While Eureka Recycling launched the Roundtable process, the project has been a joint effort between many groups of people from many different backgrounds who bring specific expertise, connections and information on specific topics.

Community Sponsors

To coordinate the Roundtable, Eureka Recycling sought support from foundations and companies willing to invest their time and money to improve the local environment and quality of life in Saint Paul. Major sponsors include:

Abitibi Consolidated

Aveda Corporation

City Council Member Lee Helgen

The City of Saint Paul Public Works

Department

DeRuyter Associates

Eureka Recycling

Impressive Print

Industrial Electric Company

IPS Incorporated

Peace Coffee

Saint Anthony Park Community

Foundtation

Western Bank

Additional financial and in-kind support was provided by:

A. Johnson & Sons Florists
Ancom
Artropolis
Bennett Material Handling
BioClean
Tim Brownell
By All Means
CB Richard Ellis—John Ryden
Chess
Coffee Mill
Culvers of Saint Paul
Tom Eggum
E-Z Recycling
Fleet Graphics Services, Inc
Fox River Paper
Amy Fredregill
Hampden Park Foods Co-op
HDR Engineering
Susan Hubbard
Jerabek's New Bohemian Coffee
House

Cheryl Kartes and Associates
Kowalski's Markets
Magney Construction
Midway Animal Hospital
Mike's Truck and Trailer
Minnesota Commercial Railway
Company
Mississippi Market Food Co-op
Neighborhood Energy Consortium
NRG/Specialized Environmental
Technologies, Inc.
Resource Recycling Systems, Inc.
Schechter Dokken Kanter
Dorothea Shay
Brett Smith
Trotter's Café
Tom Baumgartner Agency
United Employment
Ziegler Cat