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NEW

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LOGO

WISCONSIN LANDSCAPES

Citizens United for Responsible Land Use

A Quarterly Newsletter of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
& 1000 Friends of Wisconsin Land Use Institute

Volume 6, Issue 1
Winter 2002

The Milwaukee County Executive got forced from office in a pension scandal — and that might be the best thing for land use since the Smart Growth law passed more than two years ago.

Is that because former County Executive Tom Ament had a terrible land use record? No. While land use was not his main interest, he did support some fairly progressive policies. The reason for hope comes from the questions southeast Wisconsin citizens started to ask about the entire role of county and local government in the wake of the scandal and Ament's departure from office. Residents started to ask if they needed all of the local units of government that crowd the metropolitan area or if a regional approach might be more efficient and less costly. Those are good questions for every metro area in the state — from Superior to Kenosha — to start asking.

Those questions are coming hard on the heels of a notoriously difficult state budget repair bill and a notoriously ignored study of the relationship between the state and local governments called the Kettl Commission.

While Governor Scott McCallum's attempt to fill the state's \$1 billion budget gap with a cut of the shared revenue program met with the cool reception it probably deserved, the governor's call for local governments to look at consolidations and regional approaches was greeted more warmly. (For a summary of our positions on the budget, see page 6.) And his budget gave new life to the recommendations for tax sharing and local government reorganization that were the hallmark of the report released two years ago from a

Rebirth of Regionalism

commission chaired by the University of Wisconsin's Professor Don Kettl.

Water and Traffic Don't Stop at the Border

Planning advocates have long argued that Wisconsin's hodge-podge of fragmented and often competing local governments has stood in the way of rational land use and natural resource planning. While local governments often look only within their own borders, water still flows downhill. It doesn't stop at the municipal line. So, if one community allows land uses that contribute to runoff pollution, the runoff usually runs right into another community's backyard. The same goes for transportation. Build a Wal-Mart at the edge of town and the traffic impacts are felt by the neighbors.

Nonetheless, our fierce tradition of local governments (Wisconsin has more than all but ten states) has hobbled progress in controlling sprawl. In some ways, fragmented government has made the problem even worse by forcing communities to compete with one another for development and the tax base that comes with it. A more rational system exists in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region in which governments share part of the increase in tax base. The Twin Cities did not abandon their system of small, local governments or local control, but they did find a way to reduce the competition for development with positive effects on land use.

Some Incentives in Smart Growth

Wisconsin's Smart Growth law does have several incentives for regionalism. It starts with a general policy statement

in favor of coordination and cooperation among nearby units of government, but the law also requires communities to identify conflicts with their neighbors and opportunities for cooperation. It allows planning grants for regional planning commissions and it requires that local plans be shared with the commissions. But the most effective incentive for regionalism is the planning grants program itself, which provides a financial incentive for communities to plan with their neighbors or overlapping governments. Communities that plan together get more money from the state. Those that go it alone have to rely more on local taxpayers. As a result of that incentive, in the last round of grants, an average of ten communities came together to work on each planning effort that will receive support from the state.

Regional Planning Saves Natural & Financial Resources

In the long-run, a small investment in smart growth planning will save a tremendous amount of natural resources and taxpayer money. The state's planning aids program is only \$3 million per year out of a \$23 billion annual budget for local governments. Developing a comprehensive plan takes only a small fraction of their budgets and it only has to be done once every ten years. But the payoffs are enormous. Done right, planning can prevent the kind of wasteful, hopscotch development that drains community resources and obliterates local character. It's a small investment that yields big dividends.

All of these things — the ferment in
continued from cover page.

(Continued on page 2)

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The Last Word; The First Friend

When Don Last steps down as an active member of our board in April to join Gaylord Nelson as an Emeritus board member, it will be the end of an era for our young organization. As our first president, Don took 1000 Friends of Wisconsin from an idea to a tenuous reality to a solid organization with an impressive record.

The accomplishments of 1000 Friends – the WisConservation legislative agenda, the Smart Growth Law, the Stewardship Fund increases, and the rest – are owed to the solid foundation we established together early on.

But for all the contributions Don has made to 1000 Friends, the one I will remember above all others was what he did in March, 1997: he convinced me to ignore my better judgment. I was happy at The Nature Conservancy and I especially appreciated that organization’s ability to pay me each month. The thought of leaving TNC to become director of a fledgling organization with an uncertain future was unsettling to say the least. But, in a fit of uncharacteristic bad judgement, Don convinced me to take the plunge and the result, for me, has been the best five years of my life.

Don is moving on to other things, including helping another new organization, the Wisconsin Chapter of the League of Conservation Voters, get on its feet. But, on a personal level, I will always be grateful for his coaxing me into the best job in Wisconsin. And in our organizational history, Don Last will always be remembered as 1000 Friends’ first friend.

David Cieslewicz
Director, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc.

Welcome New 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Inc. Members!

We would like to thank those who have joined our fight to promote land use reform in Wisconsin. We also thank those members who have increased their investment in our organization’s work. ***Thank You and Welcome.***

Friends (\$100 to \$249)
Taylor, Robert F., 2278

Regular Membership (\$35 to \$99)
Bennett, Ruth & Ralph, 2284
Choncholas, Gary & Patti, 2253
Ellingson, Sue, 2252

Lindon, Terry, 2268
Ramsey, Monika, 2251
Thwaites, Marc & Marilyn, 2270
Wehnes, Rosemary, 2258
Weiner, Jim, 2271
Zellmer, Jonathan, 2269

Milwaukee County, the Kettl Commission report, the state budget squeeze, the Smart Growth law – are coming together to create the most serious consideration of regionalism in a generation. Now is a good time to put all the regional issues on the table: tax base sharing, consolidation of services, new incentives for smart growth.

We’re going to do just that at our Fifth Annual Meeting in Madison on Saturday, April 20th. You can find details inside. We hope you can join us.

— Dave Cieslewicz

1000 Friends — Coming of Age

Some of you might have noticed that instead of our logo showing up in the upper left-hand corner of the newsletter's front page, you see a message about a new logo. Is this important? Isn't giving the organization a facelift a waste of time and energy? Good questions. But I think I am justified in answering "yes" and "no" respectively. Here's why.

Five years ago when the organization started, we were fortunate enough to have Randy Smith, computer guru and artist extraordinaire at The Nature Conservancy, donate his time to creating our logo — which shows the classic Wisconsin farm scene. And although much of the work we do here is dedicated to protecting scenes just like this one, we have grown to be much more diverse in our work and the landscapes we strive to protect. We now realize that one of the best ways to protect our favorite Wisconsin scenes — such as the red barn amidst vast farmlands, the wetland teeming with birdlife, the serene lake surrounded by lush forest — is to ensure that our cities and villages are healthy and vibrant places where people want to live, work and play. Therefore a great deal of our work is actually focused on the places that we *build*, in order to protect the places we don't want built. So the next time you get our newsletter, you will see a new logo that more accurately reflects this. There will be other changes as well, but I'm not giving any more secrets away just yet.

The new logo also marks the end of a very successful five-year infancy period of this organization. Please find enclosed your invitation to our 5th Birthday Celebration and Annual Conference. (We have included an envelope to make it easy for you to send your registration back to us right away!) We have many accomplishments to celebrate — and since you have been a big part of them, we hope you will join us!

What's next for us? The topic of our Annual Conference, "Regional Government: The Solution to Sprawl?" gives a clue to the complexity of the issues we promise to tackle over the next five years. So, although our logo may change — our dedication to protecting Wisconsin's landscapes by providing solutions to sprawl will not.

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Welcome New 1000 Friends Institute Members!

We would like to thank those who have joined our efforts to promote sound land use decision making in Wisconsin. We also thank those who have increased their investment in our work. **Thank You and Welcome.**

Friends Fellowship (\$250 to \$499)

Slavin, Deb & Al Nemeth, 521

Friends (\$100 to \$249)

Anderson, Hugh, 2273

Brogan, Bob & Geri, 2277

Douma, Wallace & Peggy, 2272

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Andersen, Jill, 2280

Bachman, Joseph, 2254

Burton, Larry & Roxanne, 2254

Butler, Brian & Carol, 2259

Ebert, Wesley, 2257

Hamady, Walter, 2281

Higgins, Melissa, 2276

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Reid, Patrick, 2279

Stucki, Dawn & David, 2260

Thwaites, Marc & Marilyn, 2270

Van Slyke, Laura J., 2261

Cities — Built by and for Kids: Terrace Town 2002

“When we look at our cities, we see ourselves. We hope our children will like what they see.”

On January 25th, 2002, the Frank Lloyd Wright Monona Terrace Convention Center was transformed into a sea of urban villages – presenting model cities as imagined by 400 Dane County second, third and fourth graders. The event, sponsored by the Center for Understanding the Built Environment (CUBE), was the culmination of weeks of studying how cities work. Terrace Town 2002 asked students, teachers and mentors to immerse themselves in urban design concepts, and then create three-dimensional models of their cities – using cardboard structures that they built as well.

The 1000 Friends staff participated in the day’s event by engaging students in discussions about their cities and 1000 Friends board member, Meagan Yost volunteered as a classroom mentor for the fourth graders of Madison’s Kennedy School. This article shares her experiences.



I got involved with this project to answer two questions. As a Land Use Institute board member, my first question was whether this project could be used across the state to get communities excited about planning. But I am also a member of my local plan commission trying to decide if this urban model could be adapted to a village-rural model and to get our local school kids involved in planning for our (their) own rural community. The answers are unequivocally, yes and yes.

I know nothing about teaching and my experience with kids is limited to the usual parent/grandparent stuff. This turned out to be one of those “fools walk in where angels fear to tread” things that I am always finding myself in the midst of. Happily, I had a ball with the kids and all of us learned a great deal.

The goal of this project was to create a kid-friendly community. We quickly realized that a community designed for kids (easy to get around in, offering independence and access to activities and services) **also** worked for everyone else; rich/poor, old/young, strong/



weak, sighted/blind; ambulatory/



wheelchair dependent, with/without a car, etc.

The students were assigned the perspective of different community members such as non-driver, mayor, wheelchair driver, plan commissioner, preservationist, environmentalist, low-income family, factory worker, emergency worker, business person and each student worked on their community design through the eyes of these various characters. Students had to explain their design decisions to the entire group and it was rewarding to watch leadership and cooperation emerge so quickly and efficiently within groups of kids from different classrooms.

I was astonished at the ability and enthusiasm of the kids to take on tough planning principles and concepts. I started out gingerly — not knowing what to expect of these 9 and 10-year-olds — but ended up covering topics like reserve/preserve land, gray water/brown water, ground/surface/storm water, rain gardens, income-integrated housing, density, alleys, landmarks and focal

points, scale, mixed-use, and design standards and aesthetics.

It was fascinating to see the generational changes that television and cul-de-sac subdivisions have delivered. My own 30-something sons have fond memories of alleys as the gathering places of their childhood where they would meet up with friends and gather great treasures on their way home from school. At Kennedy, the kids envisioned only two kinds of alleys: bowling alleys and dark places into which people were dragged, murdered and stuffed in dumpsters. No yearning for traditional neighborhood design among these kids; I had my work cut out for me.

But the experience involved far more joy than work as I witnessed the kids’ interest and their capacity to soak up issues that many adults often can’t or won’t. Their eyes large and their smiles broad, they were proud with what they had learned and the city they had built. I am confident that these kids learned skills that will help them be engaged, responsible leaders and community members...and a new generation of 1000 Friends.



Smart Growth Update: 1000 Friends Reviews Planning Grant Applications

Due in large part to our involvement creating the Smart Growth law, 1000 Friends wants to help communities create effective comprehensive plans. We feel that highlighting the efforts of those communities that are leading the way is an important step in promoting the law's implementation.

Last fall, 1000 Friends began evaluating Fiscal Year 2001 planning grant applications, looking primarily at four elements: public participation, natural resources, housing and transportation. This article highlights findings from our public participation and natural resources reports. We reviewed 103 applications (71 of which received funding).

Public Participation

The decisions we make about our communities' growth and development have as much impact on our landscapes as they do on us as individuals. For this reason, comprehensive planning decisions should incorporate input from all residents. This also explains why public participation was chosen to be one of four key areas the Land Use Institute focused on as we evaluated planning grant applications submitted to the state by Wisconsin communities.

Whereas some applicants simply outlined generic approaches that barely met the minimum requirements of the law, others described specific steps for each stage of the planning process.

Our report addresses the law's requirements for public participation, strengths and weaknesses of the grant applications and highlights two of the strongest applications. Finally, it presents a recommended public participation approach.

Some innovative ideas proposed in the applications and highlighted in our report, include:

- ❖ **Providing day-care facilities** at public meetings to encourage families, especially single-parents, to attend;
- ❖ **Informing students about community involvement and involving them** in the planning process - including appointing one student to the Steering Committee.
- ❖ **Holding some local planning**

meetings "on the farm" to highlight the concerns and needs of local farmers.

Natural Resources

When many of us think about our state, we envision rolling hills, towering pine forests, clear, cold trout streams, peaceful lakes and broad expanses of wetlands.

Unfortunately, these resources are being threatened as our population grows and we expand our habitat. Each development decision a community makes – from expanding a road, to siting a housing development, school or park – will inevitably impact the natural environment. As communities in Wisconsin prepare their comprehensive plans, it is important to determine natural resource protection goals early in the process and to plan growth and development carefully to successfully achieve those goals.

Our report illustrates that approaches to natural resource planning ranged from very vague and likely ineffective to carefully thought-out and detailed.

The best applications outlined specific steps the community would take to protect natural resources.

Examples of outstanding approaches included:

- ❖ **Addressing and discussing the components of the Agricultural, Cultural, and Natural Resource element early on in the planning process** so that critical areas are identified and kept "off the table" when discussion turns to housing and economic development.
- ❖ **Photo documenting significant natural areas and open spaces.** The photos will help the community track resources over time to ensure that development and other pressures are not degrading these significant features.
- ❖ **Creating a special natural resources focus group** to work with local natural resource professionals to help gather data and set goals and objectives.

* * *

For a copy of our Natural Resources and Public Participation Planning reports, please call our office (608-259-1000), email us (friends@1kfriends.org) or download copies of the reports from our website at http://www.1kfriends.org/landuse/pubpart_index.shtml and http://www.1kfriends.org/landuse/NaturalResources_index.shtml.

Fiscal Year 2002 Comprehensive Planning Grant Awards

The Wisconsin Land Council (WLC) voted at its January meeting to fund 23 of this year's 89 comprehensive planning grant applicants. Of the \$4.6 million requested, \$3 million was awarded. Only five grant recipients were single jurisdictions, the rest were multi-jurisdictional applicants (often encompassing several neighboring towns, villages and cities, and one tribe). Due to this fact, 66% (170 of 256) of the communities requesting planning grant funding this year actually received funding. The results of the WLC's decision can be viewed online at <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/olis/>.

Budget Crisis Creates Smart Growth Opportunities

Wisconsin, like virtually every other state this year, is facing a budget deficit. The gap in our state is \$1.1 billion. No one wants the current budget crisis, but sometimes it takes big problems to spur needed changes. Our current, sprawling development patterns are costing us – in both environmental and fiscal terms. If the Legislature embraces five ideas from us — which have virtually no cost in the context of the entire budget — they can lead to more efficient land use and lower costs for taxpayers while they build the regional approach that reformers have been proposing for decades.

1. Save shared revenues, but reform the program. Eliminating this 90-year-old program of state assistance to local governments would be a terrible mistake. Because cities are more dependent on the program, cutting shared revenues would mean service cuts and tax increases in cities that would outpace those in surrounding towns. This would almost certainly lead to more rural development. So, shared revenues should not be cut, but the program could be more effective if local governments were given an incentive to grow more wisely. Because compact growth is less costly to serve, a “Smart Growth Dividend” should be built into the shared revenue formula. The dividend would reward communities that approve more compact, mixed-use developments. The result would be lower service costs – and less pressure for state aid increases – in the long-run.

2. Restore planning grant cuts. The Governor would cut the Smart Growth planning grants program by \$350,000. This program covers at least half the cost of local planning efforts. Planning for growth saves money in the long-run, but another benefit of the program is that it is promoting the kind of regional thinking that the Kettl Commission and the Governor say they want. In the last grant cycle, almost three out of four grants went to multi-jurisdictional efforts. So, Smart Growth *is working* to get communities to think beyond their

own borders and to work with their neighbors. A signal that there is local interest in planning is that demand for the program is far outstripping the need. In the most recent grant cycle \$3 million was awarded to 23 applicants, but another 66 applicants were turned away.

3. Build schools that kids can walk to. Since the state took over two-thirds of the cost of education, school building projects have mushroomed. But too often these schools are built in places that are accessible only by car or bus. This increases school district transportation costs and it can even contribute to the increased obesity among children due, in part, to a lack of exercise. The Governor would cap the amount of state support for school capital improvements, but the Legislature should allow a greater share of state support when a school is built or rebuilt at a site where most kids can walk to school.

4. Find out what highways really cost. One reason for sprawl is our over-emphasis on auto travel. Wisconsin spends 33% more on roads per capita than the average state, yet the Legislature just authorized another \$300 million in new road-building projects. One part of the problem is that the Legislature only asks for the cost of the actual construction project, ignoring related costs like maintenance, resurfacing, policing, painting and signage. Being fiscally responsible means knowing the real costs of programs. As part of the budget rewrite the Legislature should require the Department of Transportation to produce total lifecycle cost estimates for new road projects. With that information in hand, they might choose a more balanced transportation system.

5. Save the Dane County Regional Planning Commission (RPC). The RPC will go out of business in October after almost three decades of service. A task force charged with coming up with a new commission structure has bogged down and, with the Legislature adjourning in March, there is no way a new commission can be in place before the current one

expires in eight months. The Legislature should extend the RPC’s life for another two years to give the task force, chaired by the widely respected Mark Bugher, time to come up with a permanent solution. If this doesn’t happen, crucial water quality planning will fall to an already overloaded state DNR.

And on defense...

The five ideas above represent our positive land use policy philosophy. Our lobbying team is working hard to get them enacted. But they may need to work just as hard to stop some bad ideas from taking hold. There may be a move to cut the state **Stewardship Fund**, which protects about 20,000 acres each year of some of Wisconsin’s most treasured places. This would be a senseless cut because Stewardship is a long-term bonding program. Cutting it would yield virtually no savings for the short-term budget problem. There may also be a move to delay full implementation of **Smart Growth** from 2010 to 2014. We are actually ahead of schedule in getting communities started on their smart growth plans. Delay is unnecessary and, again, it would have no positive fiscal impact.

And outside of the state budget...

Our **tax incremental financing** reform bill (SB-311), which would have stopped the use of this taxpayer subsidy for development of open space, died in committee. That’s the bad news. The good news is that we fought off an industry-supported bill that might have snuffed out any hope for TIF reform in the near future. We

What you can do...

Contact your state senator and representative and ask them to support 1000 Friends’ 5-point anti-sprawl agenda in the state budget repair bill.

You can reach them via the toll free Legislative Hotline at 1-800-362-9472.

Question: What do haircuts, global warming and 1000 Friends have in common?

Answer: If you get your haircut (or receive any service) at any Aveda salon during April 2002, you will be contributing to 1000 Friends' effort to stop global warming. But let's back up and start from the beginning.

Every April, for the past four years, the Minneapolis-based hair and skin care company, Aveda, has been making contributions to nonprofits that help them achieve their mission of protecting the variety of life on Earth. For the next three years, they are donating a portion of their funds to organizations fighting global warming — and they have chosen 1000 Friends as their “earth partner” for our region. So, how does our work relate to global warming?

You may know the statistics: The United States, with only 5% of the world's population emits 20% of global carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels — one of the primary contributors to global warming. *And* more than 33% of our emissions come from the transportation sector. *And* studies have shown that the driving force (pun intended) behind our ever-growing transportation sector is ... sprawl. Which makes intuitive sense. We build our homes far away from where we work, go to school, shop and play. Which means we need to get in our cars to get from one place to another. The more trips we make and the farther we go, the higher our emissions.

1000 Friends' work to implement the state's Smart Growth law is intended in large part to reduce the amount of driving we do by promoting communities that do not strictly separate land uses — but mix and mingle them (envision a neighborhood within a short walk from a grocery store, a school and a good restaurant — and perhaps at a high enough density to support a bus line or even a rail line someday). The more we focus on building these diverse communities, where people don't *have* to get in their cars and fight traffic

everyday, the more open space we will leave open for the other species we share this planet with.

So, back to the haircut part of the riddle.

Aveda chose 1000 Friends as one of its fourteen nonprofit earth month partners because of our work to reduce dependence on cars by fighting sprawl and creating healthier communities. During the month of April, Aveda salons, stores and spas in Wisconsin and Illinois will be raising money to support this work.

There are three ways that you can contribute to our work and help Aveda fight global warming. Beginning on April 1st and running throughout the month:

1. Make an “Appointment for the Earth.”

Whether it is a massage or a haircut — salons in Wisconsin and Illinois will donate a portion of the price of these services to our work.

2. Purchase one of Aveda's new line of products: the Indigenous™ Purifying Collection.

This line of products incorporates traditional native ingredients including cedar, sage and sweet grass that have been wild-harvested by Native Americans.

3. Make a direct donation.

Aveda salons/stores/spas will also be accepting donations of any size for 1000 Friends directly. A special container will be available for these donations.

Equally as important as raising money, Aveda will distribute Global Action

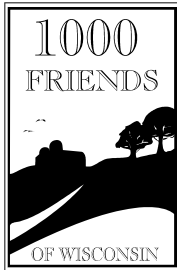
Pledges to its customers. Through simple individual actions pledged by clients and employees, Aveda hopes to educate consumers and reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the atmosphere over the next year. Aveda's Environmental Sustainability director, Mary Tkach, explains: *“Earth Month gives our clients the chance to do something wonderful for the earth while they do something for themselves. It is part of a healthy, beautiful lifestyle that's unique to Aveda. We're excited to bring these opportunities to our clients and community and to know our efforts will support groups in our region, too.”*

Over the years, Aveda and its network of salons, stores and spas have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of the environment. In 2001, Aveda Earth Month garnered more than \$420,000 and every penny was donated to grassroots nonprofit organizations dedicated to protecting and restoring biologically threatened areas in the U.S. and around the world. The effort also collected over 160,000 signatures to support the World Commission on Dams.

For more information on Aveda or to find a salon near you, please visit www.aveda.com



IMPORTANT:
INVITATION TO THE 1000 FRIENDS
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