

## Question and Answers - Sustainability Master Plan Open Forum

June 21, 2010

**1. Q: Would it be possible to formalize the campus land use plan to include permanent use(s) for community gardens and student farms?**

A: This needs to be evaluated by a group such as Design Review Board (DRB) that is responsible for campus land use. Dr. Joe Novak added comments suggesting that some sights being used for these purpose are experimental and not always the best quality soil. Prior to making any permanent designations, thorough site evaluation would be critical.

**2. Q: What is the best way to deal with waste in residence halls? Many of them do not have can or bottle recycling.**

A: The University is working on ways to improve recycling opportunities for on-campus residents. Currently, more than 1/3 of residence halls have a recycling program in place. The Environmental Issues Committee (EIC) provides bi-monthly curbside recycling for residence halls during Fall and Spring semesters. There are various campus initiatives to encourage recycling and energy conservation through programs such as the Residence Hall Energy Challenges. In Fall 2010, campus will also be working with Johnson Controls Inc. on a student engagement project which will encourage energy reduction behaviors in dorms. Overall, the best way to advocate for more recycling is to become involved with Residence Hall Association (RHA) leaders and share requests with Residence Life staff.

**3. Q: What are specific things departments can do to help encourage campus sustainability?**

A: Sustainability is a cultural shift in the way we make decisions and operate. Modeling sustainability in daily practices and communicating these intentional decisions is an impactful means of spreading sustainability. Every campus department and organization has a role to play in sustainability. If you want ideas on how to incorporate sustainability in your organization, contact Kelly Wellman at [kwellman@tamu.edu](mailto:kwellman@tamu.edu) and she will work with you to develop ideas.

**4. Q: Can you please discuss the Aggie Green Fund and explain where that will be and what can we expect in the next few years.**

A: The Aggie Green Fund (AGF) is a \$3/semester environmental fee (Fall and Spring) and \$1.50/semester (Summer) that was passed by a 57% vote in the Spring 2010 election. The purpose of AGF is to make A&M a more sustainable campus by encouraging campus members to submit project ideas that benefit the institution. The Fund is expected to generate ~\$300,000/year that will be made available in the form of grants to students, faculty and staff. AGF will be managed by a Green Fund Advisory Board (GFAB) comprised of six students and three non-students. The six students will represent the campus at-large and will be selected by the leaders of the seven largest campus constituencies. The Office of Sustainability will serve as an advisor to the GFAB. We anticipate selecting the GFAB in Fall and intend to create the project evaluation and proposal process. Ideally, the first money from the AGF will be issued in late Fall or early Spring.

5. **Q: What is being done on the educational side to develop and plan course content related to sustainability?**

A: Several of the colleges already have sustainability woven into various course offerings. The Office of Sustainability welcomes the opportunity to partner with course instructors to find ways to further integrate sustainability into academics. We are also working to create a comprehensive list of sustainability related curriculums and make those readily accessible on the web.

6. **Q: Is the Office of Sustainability the main contact for each of the 12 strategic imperatives?**

A: The Office of Sustainability (979.845.1911 or <http://sustainability.tamu.edu>) serves as the initial contact for each of the Sustainability 12; however, there are many key staff and faculty members who help implement and track the various measures.