
1000 Friends of Iowa



Stone City, Iowa 1930

Grant Wood, 1891-1942

Citizens United for Responsible Land Use

2009 Annual Report

A Message from the Board President

As I wrap up my first year as 1000 Friends of Iowa President, I find much to reflect upon but confess a difficulty in finding order within my musings. The challenge is the vastness of land use issues before us and my feebleness at finding cohesion within our efforts to address them.

Your board, also, continually struggles with this. Where do we expend our meager resources and energies given the many challenges before us: sprawl and its subsequent land-eating transportation needs versus “sustainable” development and walkable communities; agricultural practices that wash away our precious topsoil and, along with it, the chemical excesses of “modern” commodity farming; the pressures of new “green” building versus preservation/retrofitting; concerns about food security and safety; continued loss of our native habitats and, more recently, record setting floods forcing greater examination of our behavioral impact on this “beautiful land” we call Iowa. It is an overwhelming catalog.

However daunting this appears to be, I find comfort in the number of organizations now focused on finding solutions; we have much company in our efforts. Groups are targeting confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), sustainable agricultural practices, energy efficient building standards, carbon reducing transportation systems, “planned” development and local food production. Strong preservation efforts are evident throughout the state and whole communities are developing “sustainability” programs. A statewide dialogue is underway addressing Iowa’s recent record setting floods; this latter effort the result of legislative action authorizing the Rebuild Iowa Office. And, most recently, legislation was enacted that places “smart growth” principles in the Iowa code; a major focus of 1000 Friends since our inception twelve years ago.

As I wrote in the summer 2009 edition of The Land Use Bulletin, changing land use attitudes takes perseverance and patience; it is no easy task. Getting smart growth principles placed in the Iowa code required persistent lobbying, endless meetings, and just plain not giving up. As is often the case, it took a disaster to finally provoke the political will. However, our years of work paid off and allowed us input as this legislation was drafted and advanced. Currently, we are at the table again, serving on the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force as it creates recommendations to support and encourage Smart Planning, the report due to the Governor and General Assembly this coming November.

As more Iowans “get” the import of the issues surrounding land use decisions, their activism is adding numbers to our cause. Developing partnerships and collaborations with this enlarging constituency greatly expands our impact and you will hear about some of these efforts at this meeting today. One of which is the critically important effort to establish a constitutionally protected trust fund to help clean up Iowa’s waters; be sure and turn over your November 2nd ballot and vote “yes” on this amendment.

Education and advocacy remain our primary tools to achieve healthy changes in land use practices but it can be, and often is, a slow process. Collaboration, plus our technology expansion, increase our reach and speed up our results. The challenges are many, and, indeed, can seem overwhelming. I find great hope and optimism in the growing awareness everywhere that to not act is unconscionable. Thank you for your continued support of our work, we could not do it without you!

In your service,
Mary Ellen Miller

2009 Program Report

1000 Friends of Iowa has three issues that have been selected to focus our work. These 3 areas are Farmland Preservation, Transportation, and Citizen Empowerment.

Farmland Preservation

Since accepting the position of Executive Director in August 2009, I have spent much of the first year reaching out to other individuals and organizations in our state that have similar or complimentary priorities. My experience prior to coming to 1000 Friends of Iowa has been centered on health, education, and supporting local food systems. Building on this, I collaborated with the Iowa Food Cooperative and coordinated a new group, the Healthy Urban Food and Farming Work Group (HUFF). This group includes a variety of organizations in metro Des Moines that interface with some facet of the local food system. The organizations include Iowa Heartland Resource Conservation and Development, the Food Bank of Iowa, Drake Agricultural Law Center, ISU Extension, Des Moines Area Religious Council, Primary Health Care, Grow Your Small Market Farm, Optima Life-Services, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Food for Iowans, and Lutheran Services in Iowa. In August, the HUFF group became a recognized Regional Food System Work Group under the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Projects we are currently developing include: 1. community gardens within enterprise areas of Des Moines with a focus on engaging residents in growing some of their own food as well as learning how to cook it and the nutritional benefits, 2.

Planning and implementing an incubator farm where refugee and immigrants learn to farm in Iowa on a small scale and ultimately make farming a part of their livelihood, and 3. Increasing the capacity of several small Iowa farms to grow more food for the Des Moines area food pantries. The focus for 1000 Friends of Iowa for all HUFF activities is supporting local food growers who grow food for local consumption. This keeps farmland in use for farming, promotes land stewardship, supports the local economy, and increases food security for Iowans.

Transportation

1000 Friends of Iowa has been indirectly involved in the area of transportation over the past year. We have been working with other groups to support sustainable planning, smart planning, the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, and the work of RE-AMP, a group of six Midwestern states working on strategic action in response to climate change. We hosted a first-time conference on Sustainable Planning on June 29th in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Rebuild Iowa Office, 6th Avenue Corridor, Inc., and Center on Sustainable Communities. Keynote speaker, Dan Burden, presented “Building Healthy, Sustainable Communities through Walkability” and conducted a walking audit of the 6th Avenue corridor. Planning for a variety of transportation options includes complete streets with bike lanes, effective bus routes, and walking options were addressed. The 2010 Legislative Session was historic for 1000 Friends of Iowa in seeing the passing of land use planning legislation! On March 27th the Senate

version of a Smart Planning Bill was incorporated into the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund appropriations bill and passed both chambers. The legislation outlined 13 components that a municipality may include when developing or amending its comprehensive plan or other local land development regulations. An Iowa Smart Planning Task Force comprised of 29 voting members and four non-voting are working to develop statewide goals for comprehensive planning that will incorporate smart planning principles. Smart planning principles include transportation-related goals including creating walkable neighborhoods, and providing a variety of transportation choices. LaVon Griffieon, 1000 Friends of Iowa has attended the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force meetings and was integral in following the legislation throughout the legislative session. 1000 Friends of Iowa is a member of the Stakeholders Working Group of the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. At the quarterly meetings, transportation-related issues are reviewed and input provided. Included in these issues is the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Work with RE-AMP during 2009 included attendance at the RE-AMP annual conference in Chicago. 1000 Friends of Iowa has also been involved in potential funding opportunities for deploying electric vehicles.

Citizen Empowerment

1000 Friends of Iowa continues to communicate opportunities to take action to our individual members through our updates using the online program, Constant Contact. Crystal

Leto, our Administrative Coordinator, works diligently to send out Action Alerts throughout the year and Legislative Updates during the Legislative session. In addition, we currently have a Drake intern who is working with us to update our Civic Engagement section of our website and create a Citizen Action Tool Kit for our members. Our goal is to continue to educate citizens on advocating for responsible land use at the local level. For those who prefer hard-copy communication, our Land Use Bulletin is still published and mailed out quarterly.

Financial Report

As of December 31, 2009

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Metabank 40,270.62

Total Checking/Savings 40,270.62

TOTAL ASSETS **40,270.62**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

2400 – Payroll Liabilities 4,816.29

Total Current Liabilities 4,816.29

Total Liabilities 4,816.29

Equity

3000 – Opening Bal Equity 36,015.68

3150 – Temp. Rest. Net Assets -300.00

3200 – Unrestricted Net Assets -6,500.06

Net Income 6,510.63

Total Equity 36,326.25

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **41,142.54**

“Building a More Sustainable Iowa”
Urban Agriculture, Clean Waters and Green Landscapes

- 9:00 a.m.** Registration, Coffee, Exhibits, Silent Auction
- 9:45 a.m.** Welcome/Announcements by 1000 Friends of Iowa President Mary Ellen Miller
- 10:00 a.m.** **“Healthy Urban Food and Farming Work Group, Polk County, IA”**
Linda Gobberdiel, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Iowa
- 10: 30 a.m.** **“Managing Urban Run Off”**
Wayne Petersen, Coordinator of Urban Conservation, Division of Soil Conservation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Des Moines, IA
- 11:45 a.m.** **Silent Auction Bidding**
- 12:00 p.m.** **Local Food Luncheon**
1000 Friends of Iowa Annual Business Meeting
- 1:15 p.m.** **“Resilient Cities”**
Tom Dunbar, Executive Director, Center for Resilient Cities, Madison, WS, and Founding Board Member, 1000 Friends of Iowa
- 2:15 p.m.** **Break**
- 2:30 p.m.** **“Public Produce: The New Urban Agriculture”**
Darrin Nordahl, Urban Designer, City of Davenport, IA
- 3:30 p.m.** **“Smart Planning Task Force Report”**
Aaron Todd, Community Planning Specialist, Rebuild Iowa Office, Des Moines, IA
- 4:15 p.m.** **“Iowa’s Water and Land Legacy”**
Mark Langgin, Campaign Manager, Des Moines, IA
- 4:30 p.m.** **IWLL phone bank, script will be provided**
Spend a few minutes encouraging friends and family to support this amendment
- 5:00 p.m.** Reception celebrating Iowa’s **Smart Growth Principles Legislation, presentation of the 2010 Best Development Awards & entertainment provided by Von Ketelsen!**