

1000 Friends of Iowa 2010 Annual Meeting Intense, Informative, and Educational!

There was much to absorb at the 2010 Annual Meeting. Approximately 40 members and supporters of 1000 Friends of Iowa gathered at the Griffieon Farm in Ankeny on October 30. The theme, “Building a More Sustainable Iowa, Urban Agriculture, Clean Waters and Green Landscapes”, was well covered by a variety of speakers from many different disciplines.

During the Iowa grown lunch, prepared and provided by the Griffieon family, attendees had the opportunity to make connections, bid on items donated for the silent auction, and enjoy a little down time.



Recipients of the 2010 Best Development Awards were honored at an awards ceremony immediately following the Annual Meeting. See page 5 for the list of all recipients. We will feature this year’s recipients in our Winter issue of the *Land Use Bulletin*.

Speaker Highlights

Linda Gobberdiel, Executive Director, 1000 Friends of Iowa, presented information about the work of the Healthy Urban Food and Farming Work Group (HUFF). There are two projects the group is currently focusing on: 1. The Immigrant and Refugee

Incubator Farm Project and 2. The Empowerment Gardens Community Food Project. Both projects have common goals—to help high risk populations (low-income, refugees, immigrants) grow food for their own consumption and for profit to support and their livelihood in Iowa.

Wayne Petersen, Coordinator of Urban Conservation, Division of Soil Conservation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, discussed managing urban run-off and offered examples of success in parts of Iowa.

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1000 Friends of Iowa is a state-wide non-profit organization founded in 1998 based in Des Moines, Iowa.

1000 Friends of Iowa promotes responsible development that

- Conserves and protects our agricultural and natural resources
- Revitalizes our neighborhoods, towns and cities, and
- Improves the quality of life for future generations

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Letter From the President

by Mary Ellen Miller



As I reflect upon my first year as your board president, I am easily drawn to our success in finally getting Smart Planning Principles into the Iowa code. A driving goal of this organization since our inception twelve years ago, this achievement does not mean we can rest our case. The language in the legislation is “may” not “shall.” Using these Smart Planning Principles remains optional which means we still need to educate our local, county and state officials on the benefits and value of acting upon these principles.

The Smart Planning Task Force, an outgrowth of the 2008 flood recovery efforts by the Rebuild Iowa Office, has completed its recommendations and submitted the report to the Governor and Legislature. Our co-founder LaVon Griffieon, valiantly promoted our “sustainability” message as a committee member of this effort; arduous duty over the course of several months. The Task Force has asked for restoration of a state level office to house the state’s GIS information, promote and help coordinate “smart” land use planning.

Another success this past year was the federal emphasis on passenger rail transportation via funding for a new Amtrak route connecting Chicago to Iowa. Transportation options greatly impact our choices of where to live and work and are an integral consideration in sustainable development. To further spread this message, we co-sponsored our inaugural Sustainable Planning Workshop held this summer in Des Moines. Plans are underway for next year’s workshop scheduled at the Hotel Patee in Perry.

For all these successes, we saw a big change in our political landscape following the November elections which may affect support and funding for implementation of the Smart Planning Task Force recommendations. Thus, we will be focusing our efforts in 2011 on ways to better promote the value of “smart planning” and “sustainable development.” As always, we will need our members to help carry our message to elected officials and opinion leaders.

To this end, we are developing brief “position” papers and “talking points” to enable our members to better represent us. We also will be expanding our use of electronic communications to keep you current on issues and needed actions. Our website will be updated more frequently and you can now follow us on Facebook. This may also mean more frequent email updates, but we will use these judiciously and keep them brief.

This is the hard work of moving the “political will” in our direction. It is neither glamorous nor easy. But, we have proven that we have the tenacity required for success. Plus, we have the facts and data to support our goals. My hope is that each of you will take this message of “sustainability” and “smart planning” to our political decision makers in whatever way you are most comfortable with. Our aim is to provide you the tools necessary to do this successfully. We can do this!

In your service,

Mary Ellen Miller

Linda's Line

Dear Friends,

On October 30, approximately 40 supporters gathered at the Griffieon Family Farm for the 2010 Annual Meeting of 1000 Friends of Iowa, generously hosted once again by LaVon and Craig Griffieon. I enjoyed meeting several of our members and learning from the speakers who participated!



Recently, we sent out an evaluation form to those who attended. I encourage you to return your evaluation form as soon as possible. Thank you to those of you who have returned your evaluation forms, we appreciate your feedback on how we can improve on our meetings. If you did not receive an evaluation form, please contact our office and we'll send one to you.

"Resilient" has taken the lead (versus sustainable) in planning for livable communities and a livable world. Resilient really includes being sustainable (able to maintain) but goes further in also being able to anticipate, respond, and recover from adverse conditions. Fred Kirschenmann, in his article "Imagining resilience" in the Fall 2010 Leopold Letter, asks some of the crucial questions:

"How do we maintain enterprises such as agriculture in the face of the inevitable, significant physical changes taking place on our planet? How do we make our food and agriculture systems resilient as we face the end of cheap energy, climate destabilization, depleted fresh water resources, loss of biodiversity and declining soil health?..... How will we "keep it going" when these resources are no longer available?.....As significant uncertainties loom in our future, the need to build resilience into our social, economic and physical enterprises is becoming increasingly apparent. "

Much of the information presented by our annual meeting speakers, provided examples of how

communities and individuals are responding and taking action to build resilience through urban conservation and water management, ecosystem restoration, community gardening, and urban agriculture. These examples show what is possible and that taking small steps to move forward is key.

Finally, as a reminder, please send in your annual membership dues if you have not already done so. Also, any end-of-year extra contributions will be greatly appreciated and are tax deductible!

Linda Gobberdiel
Executive Director

1000 Friends extends our thanks to the following individuals and companies for contributing facilities, labor, time, talent, donations to the silent auction, and sponsorship of the 2010 Annual Meeting:

Griffieon Family Farm

John Morrissey

Mary Brubaker

Nan Stillians

Erv and Janet Klaas

Laurie Belin

Mary Ellen Miller

Fair World Gallery

Chip Mathis

Elkhart Fire Department

Arlie Brandmeyer

Linda Gobberdiel

Aaron Todd

Darrin Nordahl

Wayne Petersen

Tom Dunbar

Von Ketelsen

THANK YOU!

Passenger Rail Links at Risk?

What YOU Can Do

Iowans have asked for change. It's up to us to stay the course and make sure the change we envision is what we get. A massive educational effort is needed to connect the dots for citizens and policy-makers.

Transportation is a huge land use issue. It is also a huge political issue...and often hot potato. The Obama administration has done a grand job of merging the EPA, HUD and DOT to work together on sustainable cities which decreased federal funds coming to Iowa to build new roads. This is a good thing because taxpayers can no longer afford to maintain the 978,000 acres, or 114,225 miles of roads, we have in Iowa. There are more public roads in Iowa than interstate in all 50 states added together. There are approximately 39 miles of road for every 1,000 people in Iowa. It gives a new meaning to the term "road hog".

Instead of putting all our eggs in one basket, it seems a wiser approach might be to embrace a more diverse transportation system. Investment in mass transit so busses are clean, comfortable, and run after 6:00 p.m. and on Sundays would seem logical. There are 35 public transit systems in Iowa, including 19 in urbanized areas and 16 serving regional areas of the state. 1000 Friends worked to have the legislature create an IDOT study of transit services in Iowa. The results called for coordination of transportation plans with land use planning. The study also addressed the needs of an aging Iowa population which would require alternative transportation options in order to remain independent.

Iowa railroads serve 90 out of 99 counties, 407 out of 947 cities, 43 out of 60 river terminals, and 444 out of 871 grain elevators. However, passenger rail is scarce. Only 297 miles of passenger rail currently exist in Iowa. The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded \$230 million in federal funding on October 25 for a new Amtrak route connecting Chicago the quad-cities and Iowa City. The project - scheduled for completion in 2015 - will create 588 jobs

per year for the first four years of design and construction. Once initiated, the new service is expected to increase business activity at \$25 million per year. The new route will provide two daily round-trips and carry trains traveling at speeds up to 79 miles per hour (mph) with an expected trip time of less than 5 hours. The long-term vision for the line includes expanding the frequency of trains to offer more than two daily round-trip trains; extending the route; and making additional infrastructure investments to increase speeds from 79 mph to 90 mph, or even 110 mph.

Governor-elect Branstad has expressed concern about the cost of new passenger rail links. Branstad is to be commended for his fiscally responsible perspective. When he considers ALL the costs of competing transportation (via highway / air) including external costs that are not paid for by fuel taxes, he'll find the passenger rail will be a bonus for Iowa.

According to a 2010 U.S. study, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/13n8v8gq#page-23>, roads have higher external costs than other modes of travel. External costs include congestion delay, accidents, air, noise and water pollution, health, climate change and energy security. It seems that many of our external costs can be reduced or eliminated by high-speed rail. With conversion to high-speed rail over time, the total direct and external cost comparison clearly beats out highway and aircraft for intercity transport of people on a per capita basis.

All solutions create new problems and it is going to be up to the citizens of Iowa (YOU) to contact your legislators and educate them that despite what the road lobby says, Iowa needs passenger rail and alternative transportation options. Closer scrutiny will show an informed legislature the folly of investing in new roads the state can't afford to maintain.

Learn more about Iowa Passenger rail at the Office of Rail Transportation's website:

<http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail/index.htm>

Those Parent Questions

by LaVon Griffieon

*"If what most men admire they would despise,
'Twould look as if mankind were growing wise"*
Benjamin Franklin

I remember, as a kid, getting so involved in what I was doing I'd forget to think about the consequences.

My dad had a fifty gallon barrel of Archer oil with an Indian shooting an arrow painted on it. The barrel had this neat pump on the top. When my dad moved the handle on the pump it would make this musical "glug, glug, glug" sound. Each glug was about an octave higher than the last glug. I loved that sound... my dad caught me about two gallons of "glugs" later, just pumping oil on the ground, so I could hear it.

Then came the parent questions:

What in the world have you done?

Well, it was pretty obvious...I had pumped the handle.

What were you thinkin'?

Well, I was thinkin' that was a pretty pleasin' sound.

Now what are you going to do?

Well, I really didn't have any further plans...

I received an education about the expense of petroleum products. I learned that I had killed the soil and polluted any water that would flow through it for years. And worst of all, I was sent to the house to think about what I had done, the mess I was responsible for and the problems my actions had caused.

Iowa voters may need to be answering those same parent questions about their performance on November 2.

What in the world have you done?

As I see it, Iowans voted to remove most of our legislators who have been warriors for land use over the years.

What were you thinkin'?

Voters were thinking about emotional non-issues,

instead of the outcomes of their actions. They "voted the bums out", but time will tell if they voted replacement bums back in.

Now what are you going to do?

Voters who care about land use need to get to know their legislators, go to their coffees and meetings and share our vision for a better Iowa with them. Tell them today because we have only a month before the legislative session begins.

Be responsible for educating your legislator about the smart planning report the Governor's task force recently completed. You can find the report at http://www.rio.iowa.gov/resources/reports/2010-11_Smart_Planning_Task_Force_Report.pdf. Hold their feet to the fire. Watch their votes and hold them accountable. We are now responsible for creating new land use warriors.

Land use issues are not partisan.

All Iowans *should* want clean water, healthy, resilient communities, protected farmland and better transportation options. **Please call or email our office today at 515-288-5364 or kfoi@1000friendsofiowa.org to subscribe to our e-mail action alerts if you don't already receive them, then follow through with policy-makers when they arrive in your e-mail box.**

Find your legislator: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/FindLeg/>

2010 Best Development Award Recipients!

Join us in congratulating this year's recipients! They are:

- **New Residential:**
 - The Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity, Des Moines
- **Renovated Commercial/Civic:**
 - The Ladora Bank Bistro in Ladora
 - The Hotel Julien in Dubuque
- **Renovated Residential:**
 - UniverCity Neighborhood Partnership's Affordable Homeownership Program, Iowa City
- **Mixed Use:**
 - The Hotel Blackhawk, Davenport
- **Leadership:**
 - City of Dubuque, Dubuque
 - Lakes Community Land Trust, Spirit Lake

We will feature each of the 2010 Best Development Award Recipients in our Winter Land Use Bulletin.

Annual Meeting Highlights, continued from page 1

Among the many solutions Petersen discussed were rain gardens, rainscaping, and use of native turf. Petersen said efforts by many Iowans to create rain gardens often result in frustration due to differing practices, and often ineffective methods, of rain scapers. Rainscaping Iowa has established standards, common practices and consistency for rain gardens is helping to alleviate the misinformation. Learn more at www.rainscapingiowa.org.



Wayne Petersen presenting at the 2010 Annual Meeting

Petersen said it's possible to "design and bring nature into everyone's backyard rather than imposing on and destroying nature." and that "we need to stop building to fight nature, stop treating water like a nuisance and instead like the precious natural resource it is."

Tom Dunbar, Executive Director, Center for Resilient Cities, demonstrated what can be accomplished through education, neighborhood involvement and citizen empowerment. Dunbar stated we "could create a new urban texture if we had the willpower." Learn more at www.resilientcities.org.



Tom Dunbar presenting at the 2010 Annual Meeting

Darrin Nordahl, Urban Designer, City of Davenport and author of "Public Produce: The New Urban Agriculture", discussed how to create public spaces that offer healthy activity and fresh food within the communities where both are often hard to come by. He pointed to examples where edible landscapes and

community gardens are hugely successful.



Darrin Nordahl presenting at the 2010 Annual Meeting

Nordahl illustrated various projects throughout the United States where edible landscapes have become popular and successful alternatives to decorative and ornamental landscapes. He noted citizens are more attracted to volunteering their time and talent to the upkeep and maintenance of an edible landscape versus a decorative landscape because the entire community benefits.

Nordahl said we "need to find a way to provide low cost or no cost fruits and vegetables. People can't afford to eat healthy—and that's tragic.."

Aaron Todd, Community Planning Specialist, Rebuild Iowa Office, educated attendees about the history of the Rebuild Iowa Office, and what purpose the Smart Planning Task Force Report, recently submitted in final form to the Governor, served.

Read the Smart Planning Task Force Final Report at:
http://www.rio.iowa.gov/resources/reports/2010-11_Smart_Planning_Task_Force_Report.pdf

The Smart Planning Task Force Report will serve as a guide for state policies and procedures as Iowa moves toward integrating and implanting Smart Planning Principles into current practices.

A result of Senate File 2389, the creation of the Smart Planning Task Force to recommend policies and strategies will assist in creating more resilient and sustainable communities.

Truly a land use victory in Iowa.

1000 Friends extends our deep thanks to each and every individual who participated, supported or in some way contributed to this year's Annual Meeting!

Metropolitan Planning Organization Receives Grant for Sustainable Development Planning

The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is one of forty-five recipients from across the nation of grant funding through the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. The \$2 million grant will be utilized to develop a regional plan for sustainable development (RPSD) for the MPO's metropolitan planning area, which encompasses 542 square miles.

The MPO led a consortium of local stakeholders to apply for the grant including representatives from the MPO; Dallas, Polk, and Warren counties; Carlisle, Des Moines, Johnston, Urbandale, and West Des Moines; the Greater Des Moines Partnership; the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines; and, the Center on Sustainable Communities.

The grant will be used to create an RPSD that will provide a comprehensive framework for future development of the region, creating new and integrating existing regionally-planned components.

Grant funding will facilitate the creation of regional housing, environmental, and land use plans. It also will provide the opportunity to produce a long-range regional transit plan and a strategic plan for economic and workforce development, both of which are vital components of the area's RPSD. Additionally, the RPSD will suggest updates to existing plans in order to align all regional planning efforts.

For more information, visit: <http://www.dmampo.org/>

1000 Friends Thanks Departing Board Members For Service

Many thanks to board members **John Morrissey, Craig Malin and Ray Meylor!**

John has served on the board as secretary since 2007 and devoted countless volunteer hours as well as financial support to 1000 Friends of Iowa. Craig had been a member of the board for several years and contributed his expertise in the area of city planning. Ray served on the board for a year and during that time injected the board with a new enthusiasm and energy.

1000 Friends thanks each departing board member, and will greatly miss the resources, talent, and energy each contributed to the organization.

Your Gift Will Grow!

If 1000 Friends of Iowa had 1000 \$100 donors annually, an operating budget of \$100,000 per year would give us a solid position to continue to promote responsible land use across Iowa.

Matching Gifts

For every new member who joins at the \$100 level, the Iowa Foundation for Education, Environment and the Arts will give \$50.

So, a donation of \$100 will result in \$150!

For every member who donates \$2,000, the Cole-Belin Education Foundation will donate \$1,000 and the Iowa Foundation for Education, Environment and the Arts will donate an additional \$1,000.

So, a gift of \$2,000 will result in \$4,000!

Please help us realize the total extent of these generous gifts so our good work can continue in Iowa!



Give the Gift of Responsible Land Use!

If your gift-list includes someone who "has everything" but who cares about preservation of our land, our natural resources, or our historic places, give the gift of membership to 1000 Friends of Iowa!

Simply complete the form on the back page of this issue with information about your friend and send it to us along with your tax-deductible check and your name. Or if you prefer, visit our website at <http://1000friendsofiowa.org/> and complete the online form.

We will send you an acknowledgement letter and notify your friend of your tax deductible gift.

Clip and mail with your tax deductible contribution to: 1000 Friends of Iowa/3850 Merle Hay Road, Suite 605/Des Moines, IA 50310

Membership/Gift Membership

Please Check a Membership Category:

Student/Senior	\$20	—
Individual	\$35	—
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Founding Friend	\$100-\$499	—
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Sustaining Friend	\$1,000+	—

If you are giving the gift of a one year membership to 1000 Friends of Iowa, please use this space to write a message to the recipient. We will include your message in the welcome letter.

Enclosed is my tax deductible check for:

\$_____.00

Name: _____
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Telephone: _____
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GIFT MEMBERSHIPS:

Gift Recipient Name: _____
Address: _____
City,/State/Zip: _____