

SUSTAINABLE DECATUR

sensible responsible marketable

Land- Working Group Meeting Notes

May 19, 2010

Attending:

Jim Alpi-Decatur Housing Authority
Stephanie Ashe-City of Decatur
Eric Bremer – Historic Preservation
Ben Carlisle-Teska Associates
Greg Crowe-City of Decatur
Consuela Cruz, Green Light Gardens
Phil Hazenfield –Chastain and Associates
Sue Hemp, Decatur is Growing Gardeners
Kathy Merner, Macon Co. Conservation District
Hank Norris-HASC
Christine Pinkard-Chamber of Commerce
Suzy Stickle, City of Decatur
Tim Stock-Macon Co. Farm Bureau
Paula Cross-Historic Decatur Foundation

Vision Statement:

- Decatur Area doesn't include people. People implement vision, not geographic area
 - Change their to "our"
 - "Residents of this county"
 - "Community"
 - Change "generations to come" to "future generations"

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<http://www.teskaassociates.com/sustainabledecaturn/>

Goals:

1. Decatur development practices will focus on appropriate urban infill and revitalization.
 - Define appropriate
2. New development and rehabilitation in and around Decatur will incentivize all appropriate Sustainable Neighborhood Design and Practices.
3. Decatur will utilize the most sustainable agriculture practices, and will be a national leader in urban/neighborhood and community supported agriculture.

Goal 1 Strategies:

- Incentivize property maintenance assistance and utilization of code enforcement
 - Assist with property assembly
 - Receivership program
 - Seek federal and grant funds
 - Property maintenance education / outreach
 - Neighborhood organizations
 - Habitat for humanity
 - Business community
 - Target communities
 - Neighborhood organizations
- Create market for homes in urban core
 - Fiscal
 - Permitting/Process
 - Develop reverse mortgage program
 - Develop receivership program
- Encourage business community to create public/private partnership for “homestead” type program

Goal 2 Strategies:

- Promote, require, and incentivize techniques that preserve land, promote common open space, and natural stormwater management
 - Conservation Design
 - Low Impact Design
 - Bioswales,
 - Rain Gardens
 - Rain Barrels
 - bioretention
 - dry swales
 - Utilize sewer rate fees to pay for these techniques
 - Native and appropriate landscaping
 - LEED Buildings
 - Green roofs
 - Narrower streets
- Utilize programs and develop new programs that incentive protection of existing structures, with an emphasis on historic properties.

- Expand historic district
- Fiscal
- Lobby State Illinois Tax Credit
- Education
- Expand demolition protection.

Goal 3 Strategies:

- Education and outreach to support sustainable agricultural practices, including alternative crops.
 - Encourage and incentivize alternative crops.
 - Work with farm bureau regarding education and outreach for sustainable agriculture practices.
 -
- Convert vacant and underutilized urban core properties into community gardens and agriculture uses.
 - Allow residents to plant and harvest vacant lots.
 - Set aside areas of city land (and/or rooftop space) that could be used for urban agriculture demonstration projects.
 - Establish a local organization to manage public community gardens (park district).
 - Encourage commercial food processing facilities, restaurants, and schools to purchase localized food, herbs or other agricultural products.
 - Provide subsidized space and training for low income residents in public community gardens.
 - Encourage local producers/processors to train and hire low-income residents.
 - Investigate possibility of remediation.
 - Education and promotion of good health.
 - Restart and strongly advertise farms market in Central Park.

Comments from Public Meeting

- Sustainable Agriculture: Food is important
 - Decatur has a three day supply of food
 - Promote through farm bureau
- Remove barriers to urban farming
 - Review weed ordinance
 - Nuisance ordinance
- Focus on Farmers Market
 - Goal is to have year round indoor farmers market
 - Advertising
- Start a sharing “Trade” trade
 - Ex: plumbers trade skills with drywaller
- Review Land Trust option
 - Maryland

- Local food market
 - Public schools purchasing local food production
 - Public gardens
 - City acts as connector
- Create community gardens as safe-haven