

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

March 10, 2005

Chiles 228

ATTENDEES: Ben Farrell, Dorene Steggell, Anne Forrestel, Karyn Kaplan, Robyn Hathcock, Christine Thompson, Jim Blick, Paula Staight

Guests: Ron Bloom, Whitey Lueck

Light Pollution

Whitey Lueck, a local naturalist, presented information on light pollution in the night sky. Ron Bloom, from Facilities Services, talked about lighting on campus, and Christine Thompson discussed campus policies.

Whitey has taught for classes for 20 years in biology, history, landscape design, and horticulture. In the late 1990's, the city invited him to participate in writing language regarding lighting in the land use code. Prior to showing slides, he used a desk lamp to illustrate task lighting that directs an appropriate level of light where it's needed. This is the way lighting should be used in a helpful and energy conserving way. It's important to understand how the eye works in response to light. When the eye encounters disabling glare from inappropriate lighting the pupil reacts and the effect is that the areas around it looks very dark, and that creates unsafe conditions.

Whitey's slides provided the committee with many examples of beneficial verses disabling lighting. Some excellent examples of well directed, appropriate levels of light can be seen at the Eugene Clinic, the Register Guard building on Beltline, the juvenile justice center on Centennial Boulevard, and many areas at Oakway Center. More light does not make for a safer place, but better lighting does. He used Lillis as an example of excellent indoor lighting, but the outside lighting could be much improved. It is obvious that a designer who understands how the eye works designed the interior Lillis lighting. At 13th and University, one of the busiest areas on campus, disabling glare comes from both the standard poles and the bollards. There is an example of good lighting on campus on the east side of the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art.

Ron Bloom brought a map of the outdoor lighting and an example of a glass fixture to show the cut off inside. He said that the internal shield is 98% effective in shining light down with only 2% shining upward. There are 450 standard poles on campus. Facilities Services will replace 15 poles this year at a cost of \$2500 each. When the fixture itself is replaced it costs \$650. They use 100-watt up to 150-watt bulbs in the fixtures. The electrical costs for pole lights alone is about \$14,000 per year. The total costs for energy use is \$15,000 per day.

Christine pointed out that university planners worked with engineers and with the city to make sure that the cut off fixture meets code. She distributed the campus outdoor lighting plan and assured the committee that it was a comprehensive effort that involved many parties who are involved in campus lighting issues. This document provides guidance for the campus.

Whitey expressed concern that the fixture Ron displayed does not sufficiently address the light pollution problem. Anne would like to be sure that we do the best job possible in lighting the campus and asked whether this new cut off fixture is really the best option.

Karyn suggested that a lighting presentation be given to contractors, project managers, and user groups prior to new projects. Ben recommended that the best approach would be to talk to project managers during the early planning stages, i.e., the Living Learning Center and Health Center.

The next Environmental Issues Committee meeting will be held on April 13, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in the EMU Board Room