

Master Planning Sustainable Campus Ecology

Jennifer Giannuzzi, February 1, 2006

Sustainable development is defined by the Brundtland Report as a process of developing that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"¹. This concept can refer to many areas of planning, but must include economy, environment, and social equity, and must make them all tie together³. An area in particular that sustainable development has a big impact on is that of college campuses. College campuses have a big impact on society in all three areas important in sustainable development, so they have a duty to act appropriately when it comes to their actions, especially in planning. An example of this would be at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, where the administration has created a campus master plan specifically intended to meet these needs.

The Florida legislature required all institutions in the state university system to prepare and adopt campus plans in 1993 (FSU). This was in large part due to the fact that it was acknowledged how much universities contribute to their surrounding communities. The point of the campus plans is to define the growth of the institutions, ensure governmental involvement, and provide a basis to act in the future (FSU). The university constructed its plan² by hiring planners who used data collection and analysis to develop and test a variety of planning and growth concepts which eventually resulted in the campus master plan (FSU). Throughout the development of the plan, many different people were involved and participated, including students, faculty, administrative groups, and the government (FSU).

Within the campus master plan, there are 18 different elements involved which cover all aspects of the university, but more specifically the concepts pertaining to conservation and campus habitat are discussed below. This area is found in section 13 of the Florida State University Master Plan, specifically Objective 1C, which is titled: Conserve, appropriately use, and protect native vegetative communities and wildlife habitat (FSU). There are a total of 7 policies under this objective which specifically outline the procedures regarding campus habitat.

- The first policy, 1C-1, is designed to protect existing mature trees on campus (FSU).
- The second policy, 1C-2, is set in place to appropriate the use of native plant species when restoring or enhancing plantings around the university (FSU).
- Policy 1C-3 states that it is the intention of the university to remove all non-native invasive plants, which include Noxious Weeds and Prohibited plants as identified by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Department of Environmental Protection (FSU).
- The fourth policy in the plan that concerns conservation of the campus habitat refers to protecting and conserving endangered, threatened and species of special concern. Specifically it states that the university must comply with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FSU).
- Policy 1C-5 is directed towards future planning phases or improvements on campus and says that a census of the wildlife and plants that would be affected must be performed (FSU). Also, protection plans must be made for any that are found.

- The next policy, Policy 1C-6, requests that procedure must be followed if university staff come across endangered species as reported in the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission's Wildlife Methodology Guidelines (FSU).
- The last policy pertaining to conservation of campus habitat in the FSU Master Plan requires that land development criteria must be provided to consultants and that the university's construction and development shall go through appropriate review processes (FSU).

Sustainable development plays a huge part in the operation of a successful campus. Not only is a sustainable campus important to the campus itself, but also to the surrounding community. Florida State University has made an attempt through its Campus Master Plan to begin to take action and responsibility in helping to conserve the campus habitat, and all other wildlife that the university affects through its operations.

Sources Used:

1. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_development
2. FSU Facilities Planning and Space Management-Campus Master Plan found at:
<http://www.vpfa.fsu.edu/sua/CampusMasterPlan.html>
3. Randolph, John. 2004. Environmental Land Use Planning and Management. Washington: Island Press

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Jennifer Giannuzzi

February 1, 2006, URP 4936, "Toward a Sustainable Campus Report: Campus Habitat"