

TO: Earlham College Community  
FROM: Doug Bennett  
RE: Charge for an *ad hoc* Environmental Plan Committee  
DATE: October 17, 2003

As called for in our Strategic Plan, I would like us to develop an environmental plan for Earlham. With this memo I want to establish the charge and composition for an *ad hoc* Environmental Plan Committee

Earlham is a community with a high degree of awareness of environmental issues, but we have not drawn from our concerns an environmental plan. Among the topics we should consider in developing such a plan are:

- building design, construction, maintenance and use;
- energy sources and use;
- water use and disposal;
- care of grounds and buildings; and
- reduction of consumption, re-use and recycling of materials.

No doubt there are other topics that deserve to be considered.

Here are some important parameters for this planning effort.

- (1) We need a plan that guides both our behavior as individuals and also the behavior of Earlham as an institution.
- (2) We need a flexible plan. We know that what is possible and what is sensible will continue to change as we understand more about the environment, as technology improves, and as costs change. Our plan therefore needs to recognize that what is responsible behavior (both by individuals and by Earlham as an institution) will continue to evolve.
- (3) We need a plan that is attentive to costs. I ask that the ad hoc committee develop two kinds of proposals:
  - (a) those we can take without incurring capital costs or higher operating costs, and
  - (b) those that will involve capital costs or higher operating costs.

Once we have the committee's recommendations, proposals of the second sort will need to be weighed, through our regular governance processes, against other priorities.

- (4) We will want to be carefully attentive to what works here in Richmond, Indiana. Approaches that work elsewhere may not be best practices here, and vice versa. And there may be possibilities for fruitful partnerships with others in the region. We may be able to do more together than we can separately.
- (5) Additionally, we will want our approach to have educational value for students and faculty and staff. We will be learning as we go.

*Charge.* I ask the committee to do the following:

- (1) Develop a draft environmental plan that provides guidance for both individuals and the institution;
- (2) Sponsor discussion of the draft plan among faculty, students, staff; and
- (3) Present a document for approval by the President and the Board of Trustees.

I hope this work can be completed by end of this academic year.

*Composition.* I would like the committee to be composed as follows:

Dick Smith (Vice President for Finance),  
Mic Jackson (convenor), Christine Larson, Brent Smith,  
Two students nominated by Student Government, and  
One member of the hourly staff nominated by Employee Council.