Seven intrepid energy conservation “experts” met at a secret off-site location to plot strategies for Centre College to become climate neutral.

Setting the tone for the event, we shared our dreams about how the College might proceed. Responding to the question, “What should we do if there were no limitations of time or money?”

- Hire a consultant. We recognize that Centre does not have anyone on staff that has the time to do the detailed planning that is necessary. A consultant would also provide needed technical expertise.
- Install alternative energy. This can be photovoltaic, solar thermal, and wind generation. These facilities will be visible witness of our commitment, will inspire us to additional actions, and will begin emission mitigation.
- What are the offsets. We understand that offsets will be an unavoidable part of our ultimate goal of climate neutrality and we need to better understand what these are and how best to implement this.
- Dining hall operations. Convey our message through changes in dining hall operations. Local food and meatless (or beef-free) days. Composting.
- Establish a sustainability office. Someone who knows all the engineering and finance, who has authority to guarantee accountability, and who is an inspiring leader.
- Aggressively attack electricity use and air travel. These are our big sources of GHG emissions and we must not delay in addressing them.
- Energy audit of each building. Before we can recommend conservation projects we have to know which buildings are the least efficient and what updates are possible. Engineering expertise.
- Communication. We must do a much better job of informal education. We must communicate the opportunities for voluntary conservation as well as the values and benefits of sustainability.

The main objective of this meeting was to develop an outline for the college’s Climate Action Plan. We reviewed suggestions from ACUPCC, from AASHE, examples of plans submitted by both universities and colleges, and a very tentative draft that was distributed before the meeting.

As our discussion progressed, we finally realized that part of the reason we are so challenged by developing a climate action plan is this document will serve several purposes. Primarily, the CAP will be an operational plan that sets out tasks and timelines. This will be both an internal document that hopes to organize and prioritize our efforts and the document will also be used to communicate to stakeholders beyond our campus. One valid purpose of the CAP will be to report recent accomplishments and current activities. In the CAP we must set out challenging goals (in the words on one member, “We should not self-edit.”), but we must also be cognizant
of other good campus goals and the inevitable challenges of limited resources. Finally, we see the success of the CAP depending upon these plans being fully interlaced with the college’s Strategic Plan. We must balance being inclusive and at the same time produce a document that is sufficiently succinct that it will be read. And we must get it done in time for internal review and final publication by Sept 15.

What follows represents a consensus second draft.
I. Executive Summary

II. Introduction
   A. The argument from climate and energy perspective
   B. The argument from sustainability perspective
   C. Centre’s position
      1. Derives from institutional mission
      2. Lace the CAP throughout the Strategic Plan.
   D. ACUPCC, what it is and how we got into it.
   E. Recent GHG reduction actions. There’s a lot here, we must be succinct.

III. Targets
   A. How the targets were set
      1. One can use a science-based approach, but the science is still developing
      2. We have chosen to use a visionary approach
   B. What are the targets
      1. 2020 – 25% reduction from 07/08 levels
      2. 2030 – 50% reduction from 07/08 levels
      3. 2040 – carbon neutrality
      4. How do we explain how we came up with these numbers?
         1. Neutrality is achieved in one generation
         2. Interim goals are established in hopes of advancing technologies
      5. If interim goals are not met, equivalent offsets must be purchased
   C. Emissions baseline and trends
      1. Impact of enrollment changes
      2. Electricity, 54%; air travel, 20%; natural gas, 17%
      3. Projections of Business as Usual (BaU) scenario (Jamison calculation)

IV. Emissions Reduction Strategies
   A. Behavioral
      1. By policy
         a. Interlace energy and resource conservation throughout Strategic Plan
         b. Develop policies where possible
         c. Budget managers or offices should set goals and report their actions
      3. Voluntary behavior changes
         a. Continuing public education campaign
            A. New student orientation
            B. New employee orientation
            C. Develop a strong and comprehensive web presence
            D. Prizes, competitions, fairs, dinners to promote conservation
            E. Include as part of Resident Assistant responsibilities.
         b. Total reduction through behavioral changes is less than 5-10%
   B. Structural
1. Consider energy/resource conservation in all decisions for new construction and replacement of existing buildings
   a. Maximize space utilization to minimize or avoid new construction
   b. All new construction to highest standards of efficiency

2. Upgrade of mechanical systems
   a. Target the buildings with largest footprint
   b. Target the buildings with lowest efficiencies
   c. Ground source heat pump is appropriate technology
   d. Performance contracting to accelerate progress

C. Develop internal expertise to continuously identify energy conservation opportunities. An energy conservation staff position.

V. Offsets and Alternative Energy
   A. Solar thermal
   B. Photovoltaic
   C. Mother Ann Lee
   D. The Centre Grove as an internal offset
   E. Commercial external carbon offsets
   F. Promote & facilitate commuters purchasing offsets (this is the Nyerges calculation).

VI. Financing the Plan
   A. Current Capitol Projects System
   B. Establish a special category of capital projects system
   C. Performance contracting
   D. An internal offset for air travel
   E. Stakeholder financing
      1. Students
      2. Staff & faculty
      3. Alumni
   F. External foundation support

VII. Education, Outreach, and Research
   A. Educational program
      1. Survey our faculty to discover how many courses already have a sustainability component
      2. Describe the ENS minor
      3. Consider development of ENS major
      4. Integrate into general education program
         a. Option 1. two-term ENS sequence that satisfies science gen ed.(this leaves out the economic dimension)
b. Option 2. Incorporate sustainability into all gen ed courses (this sounds real hard to do)
5. Hire faculty with primary training in environmental field.

B. Research
1. Find out and report what we are doing now.
2. Do we want to set a goal of doing more environmental research?

C. Community Involvement
1. Our volunteer and service efforts
2. Collaborations with local government and community organizations
   a. Mayor’s Climate Commitment
   b. Clean Cities Initiative.

VIII. Other Resource Conservation Efforts
A. Solid Waste Reduction
   a. E-Waste
   b. Hazardous waste
B. Recycling
   a. Pursue RecycleMania
C. Campus landscaping
   a. Pesticides, fertilization, irrigation
   b. Composting
D. Refrigerant gases
E. Purchased materials
   a. Recycled content paper
   b. Publications
F. Food Service
   a. Local Foods
   b. Composting
   c. Meatless days (or beef-free)

IX. Tracking Progress and Next Steps
A. Responsibility for implementation
   a. Establish a sustainability office
   b. Establish a Sustainability Committee comprised of senior staff and office managers to oversee implementation of various offices and programs (e.g., study abroad, athletics travel, etc.)
B. Communication to stakeholders
   a. Continuing communication program
   b. Strong web presence and alumni publications
   c. Incorporate into admissions publications
C. Mechanism for modifying strategies and timeline.
   a. We acknowledge that timeline is uncertain.
   b. Periodic re-writing the Climate Action Plan as new understandings and new technologies are available
      i. Rewrite in two years.
ii. Rewrite every 5 years thereafter.

Appendix 1: 2007/2008 GHG Inventory
Appendix 2: 2008/2009 GHG Inventory