**The Director’s Desk**

Why cities? Isn’t this a land use organization?

Former 1000 Friends chief Dave Cieslewicz sums it up pretty well in his article. Cities are important for the protection of our most precious areas. Imagine if the roughly two and half million homes in Wisconsin were all on one acre lots. We’d lose one fourth of the land area of the state just to houses and yards.

Of course, there’s more to it than just that.

Wisconsin is changing. We are becoming more urban. We are driving less. We are using transit more. We are making great neighborhoods in formerly blighted areas. We are demanding more walkable neighborhoods that are closer to our place of work. We are building far fewer new homes in the exurban fringes. This is all very good news for our farmlands and our natural areas.

Still, the question we have to ask ourselves is “Are we making the right choices for our future?” Are the legislature and the governor responding to these changes and opportunities that will help Wisconsin meet the needs and wants of future generations of Wisconsinites?

How would you invest the future if you knew:

- People are driving less - The number of miles driven each year has been flat since 2004. The per capita mileage has been decreasing far a far greater rate.
- People are using transit more - The number of people using transit is up 10% in Madison, 12% in the Fox Valley, 1% in Milwaukee, despite huge cuts in service and increases in fares.
- People are moving to urban areas - America’s urban population increased by 12.1 percent from 2000 to 2010, faster than the nation’s overall growth rate of 9.7 percent. The growth rate in exurban areas has crashed from over 2% in 2006 to under a half percent in 2011 while the growth rate in cities and inner-ring suburbs has soared from a net loss of residents in 2006 to a 1% gain in 2011.)
- Generation Y (those born between 1980 and the early 2000’s) have a strong preference to live in urban areas. 88% want to be in an urban area.
- Generation Y is willing to pay more for neighborhoods that are walkable.

These trends argue against putting more money into highway expansion. They also argue against cutting transit aids. These trends argue in favor of making new investments in transit and more investments in redeveloping blighted areas and brownfields.

When our elected leaders figure this out, Wisconsin will be better positioned to meet the needs of the 21st century as well as to protect the most precious natural assets of the state.

*Steve Hiniker*
### Why Cities Matter

**Good urbanists equal good environmentalists**

*Dave Cieslewicz*

I love the Wisconsin countryside. I love deer hunting in the fall. I love sitting in a marsh shooting at ducks and they love my missing them. At this time of year I love sitting in the woods for hours and not seeing any turkeys. Any hunter who believes hunting is about killing things is missing the point entirely.

But I also believe that the best way to show my respect for our natural world is to go to the countryside as a visitor, leave little trace of my having been there, and return to my home in the city.

And since its founding that has been the key point of view that has distinguished 1000 Friends from every other good environmental organization. We believe that in order to save the wild things of Wisconsin we need to save, improve and respect the great urban places of our state as well.

In a recent wonderful book by New Yorker writer David Owen called “Green Metropolis” the author makes a compelling case that Manhattan is the greenest place in North America.

Per capita, New Yorkers contribute one-third the greenhouse gasses of the average American, they use about half the energy and a fraction of the water. And they do all that without even trying. The least environmentally sensitive, Rush Limbaugh-listening, hustling New Yorker is living a far greener lifestyle than a politically correct, recycling, hybrid-driving resident of a far flung large-lot subdivision.

The reason is that New York’s infrastructure is set up for walking and use of mass transit and, increasingly, for biking. Many New Yorkers don’t even need to own cars. And with so many people living in apartments, the shared walls emit much less heating energy to the outside. Without lawns, water use is dramatically less.

And every other city, to a somewhat lesser extent, has New York’s environmental advantages. So central Milwaukee is far more green than New Berlin and Madison is much better for our environment than Waunakee.

It was that revelation that compelled me to run for mayor of Madison back in 2002. I saw being mayor as a direct extension of my work as an environmentalist because I believed that if we could create really great cities that pulled people away from drive-everywhere lifestyles we would do more for the environment than any regulation could possibly accomplish.

I know that even today this is still hard news for a lot of well-meaning environmentally-minded Americans, even some who belong to our own organization. After all, there is
a long history in this country, going back to Thomas Jefferson and running through Frank Lloyd Wright and John Muir, of denigrating cities and holding up the natural world as the ideal.

But, simply put, we won’t make any great progress on our remaining environmental challenges until we got over our inherent anti-urbanism. ‘If you love nature, make your home in the city’ needs to be the ethic we develop.

On my spring break this year I did a Jane Jacobs tour of North America, visiting her neighborhoods in New York and Toronto. Jacobs, the author of the seminal “Death and Life of Great American Cities”, was to urbanism what Aldo Leopold was to our understanding and appreciation for the natural world.

Just as Leopold spent hours sitting quietly on his farm just north of Madison carefully observing nature and developing an appreciation for the complex and fragile relationships that make an ecosystem work, Jane Jacobs looked out her window in Greenwich Village and observed the “street ballet” that made a city come alive.

Both nature and cities are fragile, complex and beautiful systems. They both demand our attention, our understanding, our respect and even our affection. We can’t be good environmentalists unless we also become good urbanists.
Chalk one up for the little guy.

Standing like a David in front of Goliath, the town of Koshkonong went toe to toe with the Wisconsin DOT and the highway lobby over a planned 4 lane highway that would circumvent Fort Atkinson. The town argued that the road was not needed and would destroy over 200 acres of farmland. Then the surprising thing happened. Goliath fell. The road project was set aside.

The Highway 12 bypass around Fort Atkinson was planned as a part of the state’s Corridors 2020 highway planning process. The road was proposed to be widened to meet the growing traffic counts on the road – even though those counts wouldn’t have justified the project until 2035. However, since 2004, traffic counts have been going down.

On highway 12, the numbers had actually dropped by 25% - calling the whole project into question.

In February, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin Executive Director Steve Hiniker was invited to speak to the town of Koshkonong board and others concerned about the project. By the end of the meeting, the town had decided to collect and then present more than 1000 petitions to the Governor asking for the project to be stopped. The town then enlisted the support of state Representative Evan Wynn and state Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald to help convince the governor to stop the project.

Two months later, in April, the town prevailed and Governor Walker halted work on the project. In the process, over 200 acres of farmland were preserved, several acres of high quality wetlands were left intact and the downtown of Fort Atkinson was assured that vital traffic wouldn’t be shuttled around the city.

While the work has been suspended, the project needs to be completely shelved before permanent victory is secured.
Green Tier Legacy Communities

Continue to Grow

Steve Hiniker

In January, five communities celebrated their first anniversary as Green Tier Legacy Communities – a program pioneered by 1000 Friends of Wisconsin and the Department of Natural Resources. The idea was simple: have participating communities pledge to implement sustainable policies at the local level, continually improve on their performance and share their progress with other communities.

In turn, they would get technical assistance from the Department of Natural Resources and other non-profits like the League of Municipalities, the Wisconsin Energy Conservation Corporation and COWS.

Those five communities (Appleton, Bayfield, Fitchburg, Middleton and the Village of Weston) have continued to grow their sustainability programs and develop close relationships with the DNR – as well as each other. Quarterly meetings bring them together to hear from experts in sustainable practices in fields as diverse as urban forestry, community justice, transportation planning, stormwater management and energy efficiency.

Weston hosted the March meeting where participants learned more about the programs of Cool Choices – an organization dedicated to encouraging behavioral changes that result in greenhouse gas reductions. They also had a presentation from the Center for Land Use Education (CLUE) housed at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. CLUE representative Lynn Markham presented the broad range of programs and technical assistance available to communities throughout Wisconsin.

Several additional communities have expressed interest in the program and we expect to name at least two new participating communities this summer.

To learn more about Green Tier Communities please visit www.greentiercommunities.com or call Steve Hiniker at 608-259-1000.
We invite you to help us celebrate the very best of Wisconsin! What are the best places in the state? Who are the people that helped to make or save those places?

Please give us your ideas on who and what deserves special recognition as being among the best in the state. We have assembled a special panel of experts to evaluate nominees for Smart People and Smart Places in Wisconsin. Join us in October to celebrate the nominees.

Help us honor the best! Nominate your favorites, tell us why and send a photo.

We plan to honor the best in the following categories:

1. **Smart Growth Leadership**: The most effective leader in promoting Smart Growth development
2. **Land Conservation**: The best example of protection of public land by a conservancy, community, organization or company
3. **Land Use Design Visionary**: An individual who has developed a vision for good land use design principles that has inspired others to excel in land use design
4. **Adaptive Re-use of Urban Land**: Property that has been transformed to a higher and better use
5. **Transit Leader**: A person that has championed transit for the betterment of all Wisconsinites
6. **Working Lands Innovation**: A person who has led efforts to promote sustainable land use principles on working lands in Wisconsin
7. **Great Neighborhoods**: Simply the best neighborhood in the state
8. **Civic Journalism**: A person that has best used the principles of journalism to promote best land use practices
9. **Public Space**: The best example of public space that attracts people and serves as a social hub in a neighborhood or an entire community

You may submit your nominations on our website at www.1kfriends.org
**Around the State**

Weston: Green Tier Legacy Communities meeting - Presentations by Lynn Markham from the UW Center for Land Use Education “Sustainability Initiatives at CLUE: Energy, Agriculture and Slow Money” and by Kathy Kuntz of Cool Choices “Cool Choices: Making Sustainability Fun, Social and Easy”

Koshkonong: Executive Director Steve Hiniker spoke to Koshkonong residents opposed to construction of Highway 12 bypass around Fort Atkinson. The project would have destroyed over 200 acres of farmland.

Madison: Meeting of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation Finance and Policy Committee, Executive Director Steve Hiniker testified that too much money is being spent on highway expansion projects and not enough money on fixing what we already have.

Oshkosh: Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association held its annual spring conference in Oshkosh on March 1. The theme of the conference was Planning for the Next Generation. 1000 Friends’ Deb Nemeth coordinated the event and Steve Hiniker presented in a session on legislative matters relevant to the planning community.

Milwaukee: City of Milwaukee Sustainability Director Matt Howard met with Wisconsin DNR Green Tier coordinator Laurel Sukup and 1000 Friends Executive Director Steve Hiniker to explore sustainability metrics and best practices.

**Save the Date!**

The American Planning Association Wisconsin Chapter is hosting the Upper Midwest Planning Conference Planning for the Next Generation September 26-27 Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center Madison

www.wisconsinplanners.org/
We Appreciate
Volunteers & Interns

Backyard Hero Award
Recognizing outstanding volunteers for their work in our community

Robin Wagner
1000 Friends of Wisconsin
Robin Wagner is enrolled part-time at UW, studying environmental conservation. Yet she has been a volunteer at 1000 Friends of Wisconsin for some time, now serving as the nonprofit’s website administrator. She has a wide variety of skills, is a great problem-solver, and is such a pleasant addition to the office—all of which make her the perfect volunteer.

For more information about 1000 Friends of Wisconsin or to volunteer, visit www.1kfriends.org or call 608.259.1000.

Sonja Reichertz has been our legislative intern this past semester. She plans to stay on this summer to revise the Benchmarks Report. Benchmarks was originally produced in 2000 prior to the Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Law. The new version will track changes in planning and behavior over the past 10 years.

Matt Covert has taken on our Madison Green Downtown Project and plans to expand it over the summer. Matt will be working with downtown businesses, merchants, residents, and workers to promote and highlight best practices in transportation, waste management, energy use, procurement, and more!

The Madison Green Downtown Project hopes to elevate the area to the greenest in the state.
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Sonja Reichertz

The last floor period of the 2011-2012 legislative session ended on March 16, but certainly not without a sigh of relief. Marking one of the worst sessions for environmental policy in recent history, the list of attacks on environmental protection and smart land use planning grew quickly. While attempts to undermine Wisconsin’s history of successful environmental and land-use policies persisted, not all of them prevailed.

Smart Planning and Zoning

Legislators and lobbyists threatened to repeal the state’s successful and bipartisan decade-old planning law requirement. The opponents nearly reached their goal as the bill passed the assembly, but no action was taken by the senate. The bill would have repealed portions of the comprehensive planning law and grant program. Today, the Smart Growth Law empowers local residents to direct development in their communities and the law remains safe for at least one more year.

However, the attacks on smart planning did not stop with the Smart Growth Law. Two regressive bills were passed. 2011 WI Act 144 limits the authority of a city, village, or town to enact a development moratorium on rezoning and land division approvals. As a result, the power of local governments and residents to direct the growth and character of their communities has been further undermined. Additionally, 2011 WI Act 170 limits the ability of local governments to enforce certain shoreland standards and ordinances which regulate non-conforming structures and lots. Unfortunately, the legislature failed to pass a good bill that would have allowed localities to address soil and groundwater contamination and encourage economic development. This bill would have increased funding for brownfield redevelopment grants and was not passed by the legislature.

The Bad Bills:

AB 303 Comprehensive Planning: did not pass
SB 504 Development Moratoria: passed, 2011 WI Act 144
SB 472 Zoning Nonconformities: passed, 2011 WI Act 170

The Good Bills:

SB 310 (AB) 430 Brownfield Redevelopment Grants: did not pass

Transit Funding

The legislature proposed numerous bills encouraging implementation of transit systems as a smart transportation alternative. Four bills would have reauthorized the creation of Regional Transit Authorities that were eliminated in Governor Walker’s 2011 Biennial Budget. Another bill would have increased funding for state aids to the four classes of mass transit systems. Yet another bill would have increased grant funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. None of these efforts passed the senate or assembly.

The Good Bills:

SB 418, SB 456, AB 574, AB 559 Regional Transit Authorities & Fox Cities: did not pass
SB 436 Urban Mass Transit Funding: did not pass
SB 278 Grants for Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities: did not pass

Waterways & Wetlands

In further attacks to our natural resources, necessary protections for wetlands and waterways were derailed. Wisconsin’s longstanding protection of wetland resources was insulted with the passage of 2011 WI Act 118 which modifies the standards and review process for wetland permits. The law allows developers to destroy wetlands by fast-track permitting and promoting mitigation as a first option. Furthermore, the DNR can
issue general rather than individual permits for projects impacting wetlands and creates a presumptive approval process. This process can automatically approve destructive projects if action is not taken within 30 days. The bill’s passage means a loss of high quality wetlands that provide valuable wildlife habitat and cost-effective protection for our homes and urban areas from flooding.

Similarly, another bill passed to change the process for regulations in waterway permits. 2011 WI Act 167 negatively streamlines the DNR permitting process for structures and other activities in or near navigable waters. Simplified general permits are now allowed and regulation related to piers, filling and grading, and stormwater permits are all modified with the bill’s passage. Also, SB 557 passed as 2011 WI Act 151 which makes it easier to pollute waterways by requiring the DNR to establish a statewide water quality trading program. The law allows for trading of water pollution credits to discharge pollutants into waterways if the individual agrees to reduce pollution under a second permit.

The Bad Bills:

SB 368 Wetland Permits: passed, 2011 WI Act 118

SB 326 Waterway Permits: passed, 2011 WI Act 167

SB 557 Trading of Water Quality Credits: passed, 2011 WI Act 151

Mining

The highly contentious metallic mining bill sought to roll-back environmental protections by changing the permitting requirements and processes for mining. The irresponsible fast-tracked legislation did not pass with the help of one republican senator. The bi-partisan compromise bill proposed as an alternative was not considered.

The Bad Bills:

AB 426 (SB 488) Metallic Mining: did not pass

The Good Bills:

SB 405/SB 406 Frac Sand Mining: did not pass

Recycling

The legislature rejected the Governor’s proposal to scrap funding for recycling programs. Recycling will continue to be the law in Wisconsin and communities will continue to get state aids for their programs.

Water Quality

The Governor proposed to rescind EPA-approved limits for phosphorus in wastewater, and prevent Wisconsin from setting phosphorus limits that are more protective than neighboring states. The legislature rejected this provision and delayed the implementation of the limits so that separate legislation can be developed after an economic analysis of the proposed changes is prepared by the DNR.

Enforcement of erosion control standards will be transferred from the DNR to the newly created Department of Safety and Professional Services, which has no experience in water quality enforcement. Non-point water pollution controls (NR 151) will be re-written to incorporate changes that will weaken municipal run-off controls.
Welcome New Friends

Jae Ames (3432), Deb Archer (3440), Town of Koshkonong (3435), Joshua Collier (3446), Michael Davis (3439), Robert Hagge (3428), Larry Hands (3430), Michael L. Johnson (3447), John Keefe & Sandy Hayes (3435), Andrew Kotila & Heather Foreman (3445), James Matson (3436), John McKenzie (3433), Sean Moran (3448), Diane Morgenthaler (3441), Friends of Lake Koshkonong (3438), John Raub (3431), Pat Riley (3429), Jennifer & John Rothstein (3437), Peter Schoephoester (3449), Tom Schorr (3444), Laura Senz (3442), David & Julie Worzala (3434), Jan Zimmerman (3443)

Thank You!

John Clancy and Godfrey & Kahn - For hosting our board meetings

Chris Gentile - Logo Design

Robin Wagner - Website administration

Matt Eberly & crew for re-wiring computer system

Jennifer Knight-Johnson - Photography