



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

**Now is the Time...**  
**...for a Community Conversation on Sustainability in Waukesha County**

October 23, 2018

Thank you to Carroll University for hosting this event.

**Partners and Sponsors:**

Waukesha County Green Team

Waukesha County Green Alliance

Carroll University

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## Executive Summary

The dialogue event, “Now is the Time...for a Community Conversation on Sustainability in Waukesha County,” was hosted at the Carroll University Stackner Ballroom on October 23, 2018. Community members of Waukesha County took part in eight listening circles. In the first, structured part of the event, each participant was given the opportunity to respond to three discussion questions:

1. *“Talk about an experience you’ve had (professionally or personally) that you think influences how you approach environmental issues.”*
2. *“When thinking about sustainability in Waukesha County, what’s your main environmental concern?”*
3. *“Finish this sentence: Now is the time for what? What specific action would you like to see happen in Waukesha County?”*

Following this structured discussion session, participants were invited to take part in the Connected Conversation, during which participants followed up with one another in an open discussion without any guiding questions. The event concluded with a Parting Pledge, where participants answered the following question:

*“What’s one action you’d be willing to personally commit to in the following month?”*

During the first round, participants offered a variety of experiences both personally and professionally. Many participants described a childhood experience that sparked their concern for the environment. These participants tended to have a rural upbringing. Other participants described influences from their family or their concerns for their children, while a few participants attributed their awareness to their professional experiences or education.

During the second round, participants offered a variety of concerns. The most common concern was about water conservation followed by land development. Participants also shared concerns about waste reduction, effects of consumerism, impacts on nature, and a variety of other concerns.

For the third question, participants offered various suggestions for actions that can be taken either at the societal or individual level. The majority of participants focused on politics and policymaking as solutions. Another major suggestion was increasing education and awareness. Participants also suggested ways for individual actions to contribute to a certain improvement and expanding recycling programs.

During the Connected Conversation, each listening circle continued its discussion about individual action and solutions for their environmental concerns. At the conclusion of the event, participants pledged to take action, such as voting, educating others, and reducing waste in their

personal day-to-day lives. Overall, participants expressed a sense of optimism at the prospect of working towards environmental sustainability in their own local communities and Waukesha County.

**Questions about this dialogue may be directed to:**

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## Analysis

**Question Round One:** *“Talk about an experience you’ve had (professionally or personally) that you think influences how you approach environmental issues.”*

Most participants attributed their awareness of environmental issues to their childhood upbringing and other personal experiences rather than professional experiences. Some of these participants specifically attributed their awareness of environmental issues to their upbringing in rural areas. Many participants also described influences from older generations in their family while others described their concerns for the younger generation. A few participants attributed their exposure to environmental issues to professional experiences or education. Participants also provided an array of other observations and concerns from their personal experiences.

### 1.1 Childhood experiences

More than half of the participants described experiences from their childhood that have influenced their understanding of environmental concerns. Some of these participants compared their current adult experiences with those from their childhood, expressing concern for the environmental degradation they’ve observed over their lifetime.

*“I grew up on a cottage on a lake. We were very happy with our small charming house. Others around us also had small houses. Now, with the newer developments, and the new style of homes, everything is so much bigger. People seem to think that bigger is better and having more is a status symbol, but I am concerned with what we are doing to the environment and how we might be depleting our energy to live BIG [sic].”*

Other participants described witnessing pollution or other instances of environmental degradation in their childhood that have had lasting impacts on their views of sustainability.

*“We raised our own food, we had to [in order] to eat. We were a couple blocks from the Mississippi River. Some years we would be in the Mississippi when it flooded. I developed a natural appreciation for nature and beauty. The downside was that the city upstream would pour its waste into the river, and we were downstream experiencing it. Also, nearby were two cement plants, so we were often coated in lime. This brought the realization to me about how connected we are to nature and the damage we can do to it.”*

Similarly, several other participants also described growing up in rural environments or on farms, which sparked their interest in environmental protection.

*“I grew up on a farm. Growing up, I learned care for the land though not at the depth that I understand now. But it was the starting point for me.”*

*“I grew-up in a rural area, so there was land, and we really had an appreciation for nature.”*

*"I grew up in a suburban/rural area. My mom's family were farmers and valued the open land. It bothered me to see what was happening to the land. Now I work in conservancy."*

Overall, participants who described experiences with nature or rural environments tended to attribute their awareness of environmental issues to those experiences. These same participants also tended to describe how their family influenced their understanding of sustainability and environmental protection.

## 1.2 Family influence from the older generation

Participants shared stories about how they learned about sustainability from an older generation, such as their parents or grandparents.

*"I grew up in a household where not much was about saving the environment but appreciating the environment. I remember canoeing down the river with my dad. I felt a real sense of the environment. My grandfathers never threw anything away. They reused and fixed and reused stuff almost to the point of absurdity."*

*"My father worked in our local landfill. It began to occur to me where it [trash] goes. When we toss it away it's not just out of sight, out of mind. It goes somewhere and impacts everything. My grandma lived to be 105. She was born in the 1890s. She used to tell me, "The sky used to be much bluer." When I think about her saying that, it makes me wonder how will things change in my life. What will I tell my kids and grandkids [about the way the environment used to be]?"*

These participants tended to attribute their current behaviors to their upbringing and family as well. One participant described a way of reusing what she already owns rather than buying new.

*"I grew up in a family from South Carolina with antiques that have been passed down. People here put things on the side of the road and buy all new stuff when they get a new house. I have my mother's china and use it now. I get pushback from friends who say, 'You're using good china.' I explain that we are worthy of using it. We are the special occasion we have been waiting for to use the good china. What is old is valuable."*

## 1.3 Concern for children

Among other concerns for family, some participants also described their concern for the future generation as important influences for their understanding of environmental protection and sustainability. Some described their concern for their own children.

*"Being a mom makes a difference for me. I want a better place for my son. He has some allergies, and I realize that many more children have health issues now from allergies to autism that seem to be related to our chemical environment. Seeing this impact on health, I seek to make good food choices for our family."*

*"Now I am raising kids and am completely depressed by consumerism and throw-away society; when I see my neighbors' trash bins, I think to myself, 'What are you all*

*buying?!' I started an earth ministry at my church and am tackling basic things like using water bottles instead of plastic cups. I'm encouraging recycling at my kids' schools. It's frustrating, disheartening ... we're not turning the corner on consumerism ... people are too busy."*

Like these parents, other participants who expressed concern for future generations described how they have taken action in their own professional lives to address issues about environmental degradation.

*"When I came to choose a career, I wanted to be a doctor but switched from pre-med to a teacher because I wanted to help children. Now I have Lyme's disease, which is a climate change indicator. My health is a major concern for me, and so I bring that to my concern for children. There is so much infection and disease in the world that children face today. I worked in AmeriCorps and health of children was my focus. It is our responsibility as adults to help the children with the issues they face."*

#### 1.4 Professional experience

Other participants who shared stories from their professional experiences described different concerns ranging from public health to sustainable development.

*"The transmission of disease is my concern. When I worked in Public Health in Waukesha, environmental health was a part of our work. Public Health tested water in ponds, rivers, pools, etc. for water quality; hotel hot tubs were a big issue at that time because of calls about rashes."*

*"I was classically trained as an energy auditor but now work with the built environment to find energy savings. I learned from my extensive travels doing this that this is an attitude problem, while my past experience was to focus on the technology. Now I know that because people want to be comfortable, approaching this as a people issue is my approach. While in Australia, I learned that people say 'It's just the right thing to do' when they make ecologically sustainable decisions. An example of shifting from technology to attitude is educating people to make the 'right thing' kind of decision and use the turnstile entry instead of a conventional door and save 60% of energy costs. People can change their attitude about door entry."*

This last quote reflects the overlap between professional experience and education, as shown in the following section.

#### 1.5 Education

Participants also attributed their exposure to environmental issues to education. Some described their experiences in college as a starting point.

*"My first undergrad internship job was entitled a Naturalist. My first few weeks I fell in love with it. I felt part of something larger and it gave me a sense of how important the outdoor experience is so positive, and I was driven to connect others with that experience."*

Others described their own proactive approach to educating themselves.

*"I grew up post-depression [era] during WWII. I work on keeping up on the science behind all of the [environmental] change."*

Education emerged as a repeated theme throughout the discussions in each group, as seen in later discussion sessions.

## 1.6 Other influences

Several participants shared experiences that shaped their views about the environment that were personal. Some described their religious background.

*"I too belong to the Universal Unitarian church. Before I retired, I was not so involved in environmental issues. After my retirement I got more involved. I volunteer and learn from others about stewardship."*

Rather than direct personal experiences, others described things that they have observed in their neighborhoods and communities. These stories reflect the myriad experiences and observations shared by participants, who all expressed concern for the environment and a desire for more action towards sustainability in Waukesha County.

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**Question Round Two:** *"When thinking about sustainability in Waukesha County, what's your main environmental concern?"*

Participants offered a variety of environmental concerns, with the most common concerns centered on water conservation and sustainable development. Other concerns included waste reduction, effects of consumerism, and the negative impacts on nature. Participants also shared a wider variety of other environmental concerns such as air pollution and resource management, while others emphasized the importance of educating the public about these concerns.

## 2.1 Water conservation

Many of the participants emphasized the importance of water conservation and clean water sources. Most of them expressed a negative outlook on management of water sources.

*"Water is a concern with so many lakes and rivers in this area. If fish can't live in it, we shouldn't drink it. My fear is over-development of water."*

*"I am also concerned with water. We can do nothing without water, so we have to ensure that we are not contaminating it."*

Several of these participants specifically mentioned their concern about the use of Lake Michigan's water.

*"I feel like in Waukesha we are blessed with the green surroundings and that we need to protect it. My biggest concern is the water, the idea that we can take water from*

*Lake Michigan. I feel we can conserve our own water and believe there are solutions to our water issues."*

Concerns about water were also raised in connection to sustainable development and growth by other participants, as highlighted in the next section.

## 2.2 Development and growth

The second most common concern shared by participants was land development and more specifically, sustainable ways to curb growth in Waukesha County. A couple of the participants connected this problem with concerns about water sources.

*"I am also really concerned about growth. How many can we hold and be responsible? Pesticides and herbicides are getting into the water along with lead. Bush thorn has taken over, decreasing diversity. What is happening if we cannot sustain ourselves, and we have to divert water from Lake Michigan?"*

*"I think the main concern is that growth in Waukesha is unchecked. It's why we asked to draw water from Lake Michigan. There are plenty of empty buildings in Milwaukee; we could just put businesses in those empty buildings instead of trying to work it into Waukesha. It could be sustainable if they were required to reuse buildings and work with Milwaukee County. Our concrete would be more permeable. It's the competition between Milwaukee County and Waukesha County. The politics."*

Another participant in the same listening circle elaborated on this concern, similarly suggesting politics is to blame.

*"There is not a sense of smart growth in Waukesha County. There is a cowboy mentality; if you have money, the developer can pave over the rich farmland. I have to be careful because I grew up in Waukesha County, and it's a small area. I remember the quality of the farmland. I don't want to put down my friends for making money, but they did when they sold their farmland to developers. But now it's gone. There was no political will to control this."*

Overall, while participants shared a pessimistic outlook on sustainable development, their suggestions in Round 3 reflected an optimistic view towards sustainable growth in the future.

## 2.3 Waste reduction

Another concern expressed by participants was waste reduction. Some participants highlighted the problem of trash and landfills.

*"I live near the landfill site. There is one hill than is capped off and the new hill is just as high. Plastic blows off in the wind to the surrounding environment. Will we need to ship the trash farther away? That will cost more and cause more problems."*

*"Like [one of the other participants] I grew up near landfills. I used to play in them, some used to be quarries, but then they got filled up. Toxins were coming up through the soil. If materials are not breaking down, then reconstitute it. Use it over and over and*

*make something else out of it. Seems a terrible waste. A lot of waste would be stopped if we found a new way to use the plastic."*

This suggestion to target plastic use was also expressed by another participant, who suggested that reducing the use of plastics can begin with eliminating plastic shopping bags.

*"The biggest problem is the use of plastic in grocery stores. We need to learn how to physically carry our groceries out and make everything recyclable."*

Similar concerns about trash were also shared by participants who criticized the effects of consumerist culture, as highlighted in the following section.

## **2.4 Effects of consumerism**

Participants who pointed out the problem of consumerism linked this concern with the problem of waste. These participants highlighted the problem of waste production in manufacturing.

*"I agree waste is a big problem. Consumerism is overblown, causing over use of resources. In manufacturing and marketing, so much waste is produced. These 'byproducts' Are not used but thrown away. We need to produce things locally without packaging."*

Other participants shared what actions they have taken to reduce their own impact on the environment, such as reducing their consumerist habits.

*"I personally consider how much I need, really need. How much house is needed? Now we have wants and excess rather than need. I want to get comfortable with less stuff. I can still have a good life."*

## **2.5 Impacts on nature**

A few of the participants focused on the importance of protecting nature in order to protect the environment from further degradation.

*"On a smaller scale I am concerned about native plants and invasive species. If invasive plants take over, there won't be any native plants left. And it is the native plants that support pollination, help with water quality, and reduce erosion."*

These concerns overlapped with other comments made by participants, as highlighted in the following section.

## **2.6 Other concerns about the environment**

In addition to the top five concerns mentioned thus far, participants shared a wide range of other concerns. A couple of participants mentioned air pollution.

*"I am also concerned about air quality. This is an unseen problem...Here we have the factories south of Chicago that cause air problems here in this area. This is bad for our children to breathe."*

Other participants mentioned the importance of raising public awareness about environmental concerns in Waukesha County.

*“There should be awareness to every level of citizen living in Waukesha County. A responsibility that everyone contributes: starting with the individuals, then the streets, then the cities, then the county.”*

Overall, all participants agreed that there is a need to address environmental concerns in their communities.

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**Question Round Three:** *“Finish this sentence: Now is the time for what? What specific action would you like to see happen in Waukesha County?”*

During the third round of structured discussion, participants offered a variety of suggestions for taking action towards sustainability in Waukesha County. The majority of participants focused on politics and policymaking as solutions. Other suggestions included ways to increase individual involvement. Participants also suggested ways for increasing education and awareness and reducing waste. These suggestions generally focused on actions that can be taken either at the societal or individual level.

### 3.1 Politics and policymaking

Many of the participants suggested getting involved in politics to influence policymaking. Some reminded each other the value of exercising their right to vote.

*“Vote for candidates who have sustainability as their agenda.”*

*“Now is the time for Waukesha County to elect an environmentally conscious governor.”*

*“Voting, getting connected with elected officials, and getting them involved in trying to solve or find solutions to some of these problems.”*

Others offered themselves as examples of active political involvement.

*“I am very involved in politics, I have been since I was a teenager. I am actually working to help elect an assembly person now. We need to be hands-on involved in education decision-makers in environmental sustainability issues.”*

*“Get people more involved in local politics and what happens in local government. Show up at meetings. When I have been to meetings, there are only 2 or 3 other people. People are too busy to be involved in government on a daily basis and to know how we are governed.”*

This suggestion to “get more people involved in local politics” was echoed by other participants who emphasized the power of individual action, which are highlighted in the following section.

### 3.2 Individual action

Several participants emphasized the need for more individual action, beginning with themselves.

*"I need to take my responsibility to limit my own contribution to pollution. I need to take action to influence others."*

*"I need to take responsibility for my part in improving the environment. The professor is talking about plastics and I'm holding a plastic cup. At home I have filters and no bottled water."*

*"It's time for me to practice what I preach, I need to take a specific action to do something regarding my concerns."*

This emphasis on being proactive and taking initiative was also seen in other suggestions to increase education and awareness.

### 3.3 Increasing education and awareness

A number of participants finished the sentence, "Now is the time for...", with the word "education." Some suggested education should begin at an early age.

*"[Now is the time for] educating people starting in kindergarten about land use, tightly built homes, and building materials."*

*"[Now is the time for] more education, starting with very young children so that it spreads up to the people in the middle generation that need educating."*

At the same time, some participants reiterated the importance of educating adults as well.

*"I would like to see more people in my community have more of a cultural acceptance of these things in my community, but that would take a whole lot of education for the adults."*

This suggestion of more community involvement appeared in other suggestions that focused on renewing existing communities and infrastructure, as highlighted in the next section.

### 3.4 Renew existing communities

Some participants focused on action at the community level, suggesting ways to implement sustainable practices within their own local communities.

*"It's time for a renewal of communities, smaller levels in the neighborhoods concentrating on what's in our backyards. It's time to clean up those small creeks (build a chain) electric care and community gardens. I think we should start small rather than global."*

*"Look at practices in other communities. There is no need to reinvent the wheel as we look at sustainability in our community."*

This last suggestion — to look to other communities for inspiration — was also suggested by participants who focused on waste reduction.

### 3.5 Reduce waste

Participants suggested many ways of reducing waste. One offered a very concrete idea for incentivizing people to produce less waste.

*“[Now is the time for] a waste management system that charges for the amount of waste and gives incentives to buy less and generate less waste. St. Louis Park, MN is an example where the landfill waste bin won’t be emptied if it isn’t closed, and there is curbside composting. There should be a direct connection between how much you throw out and what you pay.”*

### 3.6 Other suggestions

Like the previous round of discussion, participants provided a myriad of responses that were very different from each other. Some suggested very specific solutions to sustainability.

*“Now is the time for plastic-eating bacteria. I recently read an article about a scientific breakthrough with this. Maybe GMO so replacing one problem with another and not really practical. But I was thinking about what other solutions, such as making buildings LEED or restrictions on new development, but it feels like they are missing something. Scientific breakthroughs seem to break on a bigger scale.”*

Other participants provided more general solutions centered on building relationships to solve problems together.

*“Now is the time to reach out to people so we can understand each other and develop intentional partnerships. It might not be necessarily about the environment, but it could be about inclusion and mixing.”*

Overall, all of these suggestions reflect an agreed view repeatedly expressed by participants — more needs to be done for the environment in their communities and in Waukesha County.

## 4.1 Connected Conversation

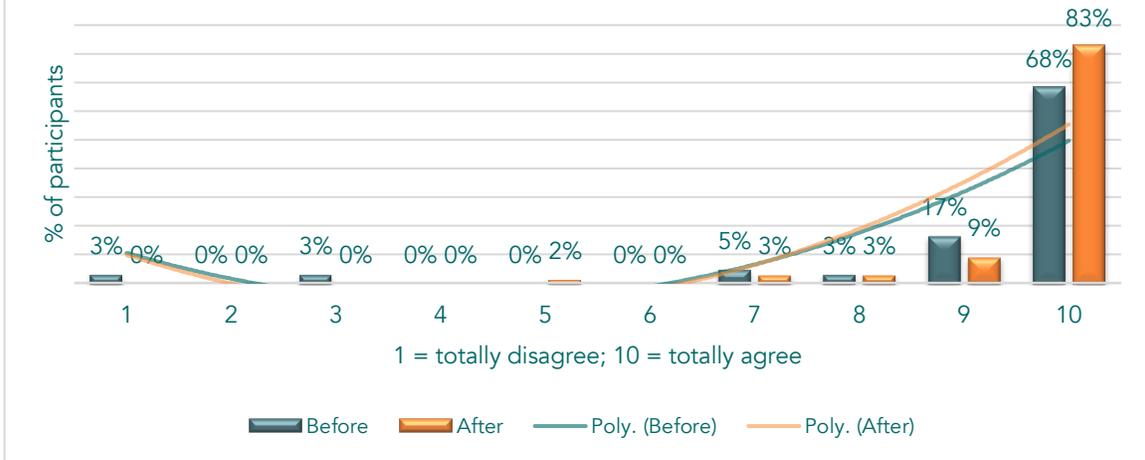
This unstructured part of the session allowed participants to follow up on each other’s responses from the previous rounds of discussion. Each group delved into very different topics. Some groups focused on broader individual actions they can take, offering additional suggestions and resources. Other groups focused on specific problems they can tackle. For example, one group spent this time discussing ways to minimize the use of plastic shopping bags. Many participants also wondered how they can spur other members of their community into action. While participants were unable to agree upon any solutions, they all agreed that meaningful action can begin at the individual and local level.

## 5.1 Parting Pledge

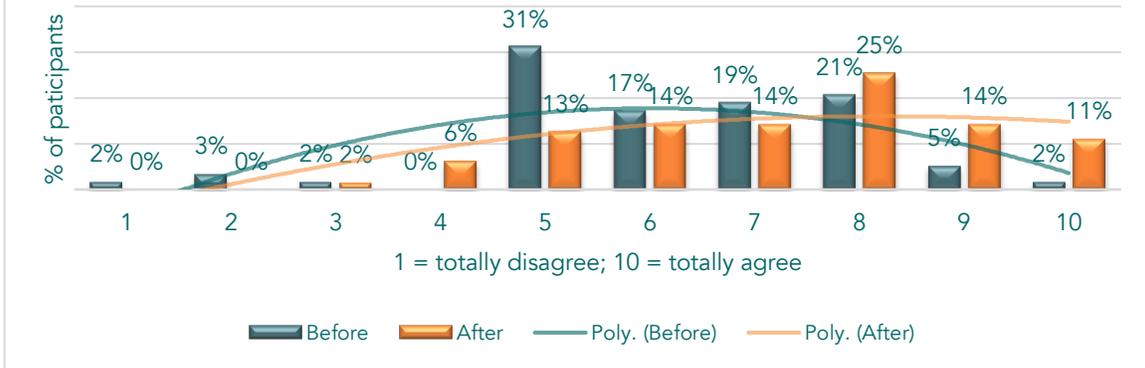
Participants generally reiterated the individual actions they will take from Round 3. The majority of participants pledged to vote, educate themselves and others, and take individual steps to reduce waste in their own daily lives. Overall, participant responses in the concluding portion of the event reflected an optimistic outlook on ways to bring sustainability to their own lives, their own communities, and Waukesha County.

## Feedback Forms

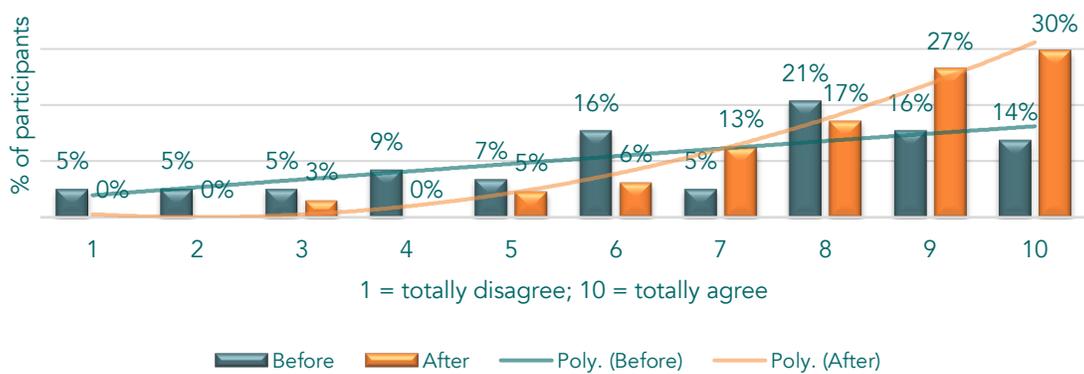
2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants:  
*My personal actions impact the environment.*



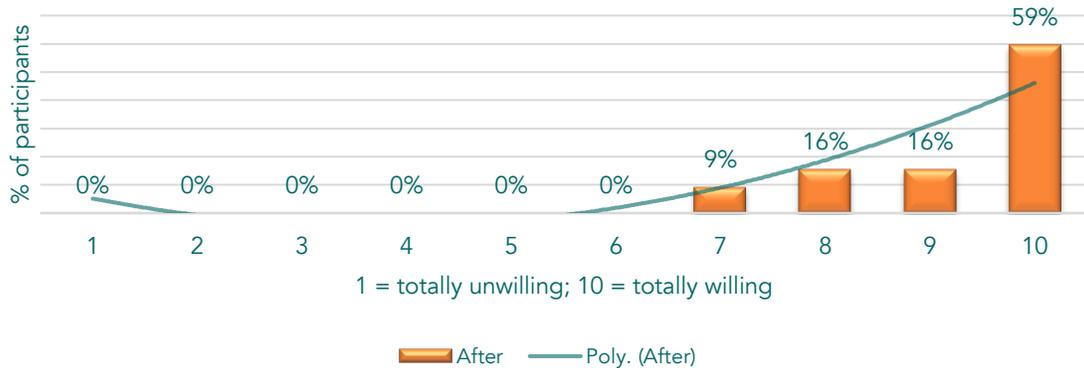
2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants: *I have a clear understanding of the major environment issues facing Waukesha County.*



**2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants: I have a clear understanding of Waukesha County Green Team's mission and vision.**



**2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants: How willing are you to recommend this experience to another?**



**Why or why not?**

- There is a need to rescue the environment and create a better place for all
- It is an eye opener! It made me get out of my environmental conservative view. It made me think as my view point is not everything and I made people think about the economy as part of the environment
- This is part of education of these issues
- Awareness leads to action
- Good experience when strangers get together to talk and listen
- We touched on very important issues
- Kind of intense, and we... each other but I did learn some things
- Another person educated is always a benefit

- Important to survival
- Helpful...ideas
- Educate
- Will there be change?
- This was a friendly experience that was great for raising awareness. Others with similar concerns and possible solutions
- The member of the group made... industry contribution to the discussion
- Everyone is affected
- To help create awareness and consensus
- Synergy = results for all
- Great forum to connect, will not change minds of Republicans
- Not many people are willing to 2-3 hours to critically think especially regarding the environment
- Circle approach keeps conversation on topic so not one voice dominates. But what are next steps?
- Because if we don't talk about these issues either nothing will get accomplished or very little will
- More of these events need to happen more often it's good to learn and share this information
- Necessary to improve knowledge
- It is great to hear from others and share ideas
- Inclusive and inspiring
- Always good to get together with others
- Safe environment to say/express opinions
- The more people who join in and develop awareness and dialogue, the more sustainable practices will become clear and accepted
- Good to hear, contemplate other views
- Very informative
- Just not sure what will become of this, great to have the presenter AND the discussion
- It is important and more need to know
- Push us out of comfort zone

***What was most satisfying or valuable about this experience?***

- The talk on sustainability by Prof. Petering and hearing other's opinion
- Bringing the community together and have everyone say something that brings solution to the matter in the county
- Hearing everyone's viewpoints and listening to individual views that are different from my own
- Hearing thoughts and ideas of others, connecting with like-minded organizations
- Sharing thoughts, asking questions
- Good like-minded people are motivation
- Love to hear story of others

- Open conversation
- Diversity of ideas
- Talking with like-minded people
- Getting perspective from people older than me
- Listening to other stories
- Great sharing
- Meeting others, group discussion, learning about providers
- Sharing and connecting
- New ideas - identifying with others
- People with same concerns
- Meeting other like-minded people
- Meeting with other concerned citizens
- The group discussion - knowing there are other committed environmentalists
- Group conversation
- Hearing other people's experiences and thoughts - good ideas for future actions
- Learning from others
- Listening to others and their opinions/ideas
- How many people want things to change
- Listening to others opinions
- Round table learning and sharing
- Meeting and connecting with other engaged people in a world that doesn't always care
- Discussion with the group
- Being with like-minded people
- Listening to others and having a notetaker hopefully will be taken to a county-decision-maker administration
- Hearing from actual people and not generalizations and media
- Listening to other's opinions on what's important for helping the environment
- Getting the word out how the commercial mechanical world can make positive changes
- The discussions in the groups to learn about differing issues not known before
- Dialogue with other concerned citizens
- Discussion
- It helped create a sense of community
- Being in a group with people from all different backgrounds
- Opinions of 8 other people
- Being able to listen to concerns of people I've never met
- It was good to connect with others in the community
- Conversations with others
- Good to have honest real conversation
- Validation of my thoughts; expansion of understanding
- Hearing the creative thoughts of others and also speaker was effective in establishing the bigger picture of the importance of developing a plan
- Hearing other's thoughts

- Discussion questions
- Group listening/sharing
- Hearing other's interests and concerns, the speaker - very direct and to the point
- The discussion portion
- Discussion of specific ideas
- Hearing others views on issues
- Listening to other persons ideas or views
- Understanding other people's opinions about sustainability
- Actually, meeting Sharon and learning what Zeidler Center is
- Non-confrontational environment

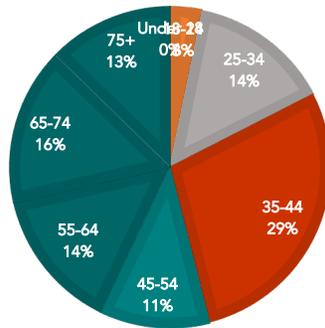
*In your personal opinion, what are you most concerned about environmentally in your community?*

- Lack of any commitment to a sustainable system on the part of the government, both national, state and local
- Mining exploitation with less environmental responsibility
- Having an environment, I would want my future children to live in. A sustainable future is the way. It will take time for this to happen, but general awareness needs to be created to create a movement.
- Invasive plants overcoming native plants with reduction in insects, plants, pollinators, birds and up the food chain
- Loss of farmland - some of the best agriculture soil in our country is right here in Waukesha County!
- Sprawl
- Water
- Overdevelopment and misuse of natural resources
- Water and water contamination
- Water and land use
- Unsustainable growth and the water aquifer dropping 7 ft/year
- Growth/plastic/waste
- Water
- Overpopulation, too much growth
- Waste and disconnection
- Cluelessness in their own actions
- Trash/waste
- Development
- Water
- Broadly speaking - energy use - CO2 production
- Water
- Increasing awareness/activism on environmental issues
- Use of fossil fuels
- Overdevelopment

- That CO2 emissions need to decrease, quality and future health care of water
- No economic incentive or punishment to do environmentally correct stuff
- Changing environment (droughts/floods), vegetation dies off and less diversity
- Lack of interest in environment - apathy in general; Not willing to change and adapt
- Apathy and awareness
- Consumption without concern
- Lack of awareness
- Water quality
- Land use changes and impacts to water quality, habitat, and lack of non-road infrastructure (trails, sidewalks) and beauty
- Environmental consciousness
- Development and transportation issues
- Water resources - availability and pollution of it
- Water quality and depletion
- Sprawl
- Plastic and water
- Water usage
- Water and cut down on the use of plastics
- Water
- Transportation, sprawl, pollution, water issues
- Loss of habitat for birds, animals, insects
- Excess
- That residents understand what sustainability in multiple areas is and make changes to address issues
- The mindset of people living here. The rules that shape their lives.
- Insertions on obvious problems
- Plastics, growth, water coming from Lake Michigan
- Water quality and quantity; Quantity - To not harm Lake Michigan; Quality - pollutants (of many kinds) getting into lakes and streams
- Affluenza, growth, water
- Educating adults about how to take simple actions that have big impacts
- The lack of education and understanding of issues
- Urban growth with emphasis on sustainability. What must that look like
- Gas emissions, water, water pollution
- Lack of education
- Urban sprawl, water from the Great Lakes, Diversity/equity/inclusion issues, nature dissonance

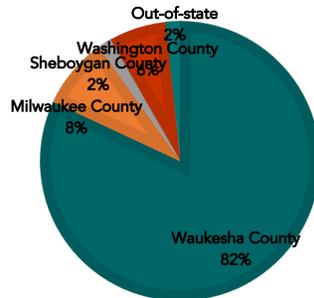
## 2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants: Age Range

■ Under 18 
 ■ 18-24 
 ■ 25-34 
 ■ 35-44 
 ■ 45-54 
 ■ 55-64 
 ■ 65-74 
 ■ 75+



## 2018: Waukesha County Green Alliance - All participants: Age Range

■ Waukesha County 
 ■ Milwaukee County 
 ■ Sheboygan County 
 ■ Washington County 
 ■ Out-of-state



**Question Round One:** *“Talk about an experience you’ve had (professionally or personally) that you think in-fluences how you approach environmental issues.”*

### 1.1. Childhood experiences

- This is a difficult question. I grew up on a farm. Growing up I learned care for the land, though not at the depth that I understand that now. But it was the starting point for me. At the time I wanted to get away. My father taught me many things about the land. He taught me the need to leave the land better each time, with conservation, crop rotation, and to minimize erosion.
- I was a very sensitive child wanting to care for all the animals and insects. I wanted to be of service from a little child on. When I came to choose a career I wanted to be a doctor but switched from pre-med to a teacher because I wanted to help children. Now I have Lyme’s disease which is a climate change indicator. My health is a major concern for me and so I bring that to my concern for children. There is so much infection and disease in the world that children face today. I worked in AmeriCorps and health of children was my focus. It is our responsibility as adults to help the children with the issues they face.
- I too grew up on a farm where I gained a sense of satisfaction on the land. My concern is with scale. When I was young I flew to California and saw the land beneath me. I saw the largeness of the land but also the largeness of the population in California. It was so different from my rural small community experience. I now think about how to act local but also to consider the rest of the world. I think much education is needed for the scale of change we need.
- When I was a girl we were also on a lake in a cottage. We grew up as feral kids, coming home when we were hungry to eat. Nature wasn’t just an idea. It was a HUGE part of life that gives me sadness when I see things trampled on
- In terms of formative feelings about the environment, sometimes I think, ‘That’s neat.’ There was a big forest reserve. We played in it all year long, and that gave me a real sense of what something like the built environment is like. I grew up in Kalamazoo, and it was a hub of paper products manufacturers. I used to ride my bike alongside one and they used to dump outside. Because of it, I didn’t want to fall in the ditch. I am glad they don’t do that anymore, but I wondered they they felt it was OK [to do it] back then.
- Both of my parents grew up farming near the quad cities of Iowa. We raised our own food, we had to [in order] to eat. We were a couple blocks from the Mississippi River. Some years we would be in the Mississippi when it flooded. I developed a natural appreciation for nature and beauty. The downside was that the city upstream would pour its waste into the river and we were downstream experiencing it. Also nearby were two cement plants, so we were often coated in lime. This brought the realization to me about how connected we are to nature and the damage we can do to it. I’m a gardener. I’m involved in environment and nature.
- I was a kid in the 60s. I remember the campaign with the Indian commercial on littering

and pollution. It really affected me as a kid. I remember riding with my grandma in the car and people would dump litter on the highway. It's kind of unbelievable. It was the time of hippies, protesting Vietnam, the ecology flag. I have one [of the ecology flags] and fly it and people are like "what is that". I lived in the Middle East. Living without running water [and other things], it made me appreciate the bounty we have here, such as when we go in the grocery store. Whenever environmental issues come up, I was like "yeah let's do it". I then learned about balance, that there are other things that go into it, including the economy and the viability of the community. Small steps. Every step is progress. Especially as we educate our children

- No single event or situation. I grew up in a household that not much was about saving the environment but appreciating the environment. I remember canoeing down the river with my dad. I felt a real sense of the environment.
- I've been noticing unconsciously changes. I'm 75 but don't feel 75. When I was little, we lived in the Dells. There was a bridge across the river that led to a camp for Indians there. I remember crossing the bridge to play with the kids in the village. Some years later, I bought a motorcycle and rode to Alaska. I set up a tent to camp and eat. I could go 100 miles a day down the highway and also follow deer trails. I had an appreciation of the outdoors. When I moved back [to Wisconsin], I noticed how much it had changed in a year, with the expressways and stores. More and more city, less country. Wisconsin used to be a country state, but not anymore. I don't have an answer, but I don't like the changes I see. I know we got to live somewhere
- I grew up 1 or 2 miles from a landfill. It was under grass and was a steep hill, almost pretty to my kid eyes. When I travelled to Ghana, it changed things for me. It was for an economic development class and I was really interested in global poverty solutions. The need for recycling was much more visible than in the US. I had a coughing fit and my teacher said that it's Sunday so that means they are burning plastic. I remember walking through a forest and walking across plastic. When I moved back, I noticed more hills and that the hills were higher. I started recycling plastics and reducing my use of them. Plastic is gross to me now. I don't use it. I don't like how it looks or feels.
- As a kid, I loved our plants and garden. A question I asked myself was 'Where does all the garbage go?' I heard about the government sending garbage barges out to sea. I also remember in the school the "Don't Be a Litter Bug" campaign
- Growing up in New Berlin I really didn't think about the environment. Then in scouting, I earned my Eagle Scout badge creating compost bins and then developed environmental projects for other badges. So then I went on to study those issues at Whitewater. I want to keep our environment beautiful for my children and grandchildren
- I grew-up in a rural area so there was land and we really had an appreciation for nature. We have the last Spruce on Spruce Street. My sister and I are trying to figure out what to do with the tree after father's death
- Growing-up my parents composted and grew vegetables. We were the only non-traditional family on the block. I was 19 before I had my first Twinkie. I would see my friends having a baloney sandwich and I would be dying for one. So now I gravitate to a healthy environment and lifestyle

- I grew-up in a suburban/rural area. My mom's family were farmers and valued the open land. It bothered me to see what was happening to the land. Now I work in conservancy. We reuse buildings, build furniture...In my opinion, I think some land should remain undeveloped
- I grew-up in Puerto Rico. We pulled everything out of the orchard. There was no separation of human, nature, animals and land. In the US at work I started to whistle because I felt carefree – until I noticed how structured we are. There should be fertile farmland and clean water. I see poverty and suffering and that shouldn't happen.
- I grew up on a farm in Waukesha County and I remember my father reminding us we do not own this farm, we're just here to take care of it and pass it on
- I grew up overseas and I remember the river was black and smelly. Four years ago I went back home and found they had started cleaning the river and the smell was not as bad. I remember thinking it's never too late to start and there must be a long-term plan to be ongoing with the care of the river.
- I grew up on a cottage on a lake. We were very happy with our small charming house. Others around us also had small houses. Now, with the newer developments, and the new style of homes everything is so much bigger. People seem to think that bigger is better and having more is a status symbol, but I am concerned with what we are doing to the environment and how we might be depleting our energy to live BIG

## 1.2 Family influence from the older generation

- My father taught me many things about the land. He taught me the need to leave the land better each time, with conservation, crop rotation, and to minimize erosion
- My father worked in our local landfill. It began to occur to me where it [trash] goes. When we toss it away it's not just out of sight, out of mind. It goes somewhere and impacts everything. My grandma lived to be 105. She was born in the 1890s. She used to tell me, "The sky used to be much bluer." When I think about her saying that it makes me wonder how will things change in my life. What will I tell my kids and grandkids [about the way the environment used to be].
- My family purchased a cottage on North Lake in 1958. Now, in 2018, people are building much bigger homes. I think about how it has impaired the lake from invasive species. There are algae blooms. We used to have clams and sand. We're working backwards to fix things and it'll cost more money to fix it all.
- The throw-away nature of our society is striking to me. I grew up in a family from South Carolina with antiques that have been passed down. People here put things on the side of the road and buy all new stuff when they get a new house. I have my mother's china and use it now. I get push back from friends who say, "You're using good china." I explain that we are worthy of using it. We are the special occasion we have been waiting for to use the good china. What is old is valuable
- No single event or situation. I grew up in a household that not much was about saving the environment but appreciating the environment. I remember canoeing down the river with my dad. I felt a real sense of the environment. My grandfathers never threw anything

away. They reused and fixed and reused stuff almost to the point of absurdity. However, only a few years ago, I finally threw away a wheelbarrow from one of my grandfathers; it must have been 75 years old. They were about not wasting or accumulating stuff. This was part of my life experience, what we have to do, not about saving the environment.

- My family grew up on farmland. We truly lived off of our land, and there was very little that the land did not afford us. Because we had to dispose of our own trash. I was always very conscious that trash didn't just go away on its' own. We had to DO something to it to make it go away, like burn it, or find other uses for it, or trade it to someone who had a better use for it, and we'd exchange our leftovers for something someone else was not going to use. I would like to see our community do better in this regard and have us to be knowledgeable that our trash doesn't end when it leaves our homes.

### 1.3 Concern for children

- I was a very sensitive child wanting to care for all the animals and insects. I wanted to be of service from a little child on. When I came to choose a career I wanted to be a doctor but switched from pre-med to a teacher because I wanted to help children. Now I have Lyme's disease which is a climate change indicator. My health is a major concern for me and so I bring that to my concern for children. There is so much infection and disease in the world that children face today. I worked in AmeriCorps and health of children was my focus. It is our responsibility as adults to help the children with the issues they face.
- I grew up in a suburban environment. It wasn't until college that I saw a different world. When I met my now husband's family on their farm I saw a whole different way of living. Then I went to visit my sister in Seattle and I saw an urban way of living differently. I was envious of that. Now having children makes me realize I have a responsibility to them.
- Being a mom makes a difference for me. I want a better place for my son. He has some allergies and I realize that many more children have health issues now from Allergies to autism that seemed to be related to our chemical environment. Seeing this impact on health I seek to make good food choices for our family. Something has to change in the wider culture. I hope to make an impact. I started a wellness committee at work. I have started classroom composting at the school as well as recycling.
- Growing up in New Berlin I really didn't think about the environment. Then in scouting, I earned my Eagle Scout badge creating compost bins and then developed environmental projects for other badges. So then I went on to study those issues at Whitewater. I want to keep our environment beautiful for my children and grandchildren
- I was a music teacher in elementary school for 32 years. We did the Earth Day program with lots of songs and research by children. I remember the song about "turn the water off when brushing our teeth". I decided that was the most important thing I did as a music teacher. Now I do environmental work. I think if anyone can save us, it will be the children. I was visiting in California and observed after every meal they scrubbed the dishes clean under running water, then loaded them into the dishwasher to run a full cycle. When I tried to correct them they said, 'I will use as much water as I damn well please'. So now I

think about how I say something – not to make an argument, but to open their eyes. I look to the children for our future

- I don't have a background in sustainability issues but for me the influence has been that something "feels off" in recent years—food, chemicals, water ... watching documentaries; I have kids and this scares me. There are not enough people doing 'person things' like you mentioned. How to get to that 'right way' on a global scale is so huge; how to make the changes
- Now I am raising kids and am completely depressed by consumerism and throwaway society; when I see my neighbors' trash bins I think to myself 'What are you all buying!' I started an earth ministry at my church and am tackling basic things like using water bottles instead of plastic cups. I'm encouraging recycling at my kids' schools. It's frustrating, disheartening ... we're not turning the corner on consumerism ... people are too busy

#### 1.4 Professional experience

- The transmission of disease is my concern. When I worked in Public Health in Waukesha environmental health was a part of our work. Public Health tested water in ponds, rivers, pools, etc. for water quality; hotel hot tubs were a big issue at that time because of calls about rashes
- I was classically trained as an energy auditor but now work with the built environment to find energy savings. I learned from my extensive travels doing this that this is an attitude problem, while my past experience was to focus on the technology. Now I know that because people want to be comfortable that approaching this as a people issue is my approach. While in Australia I learned that people say 'it's just the right thing to do' when they make ecologically sustainable decisions. An example of shifting from technology to attitude is educating people to make the 'right thing' kind of decision and use the turnstile entry instead of a conventional door, and save 60% of energy costs. People can change their attitude about door entry.
- I have a mechanical technical background so I go into many buildings, just like where we are now, and see simple changes that can be made that are more sustainable. Lighting and the thermostat are obvious places to begin
- I am a Carroll graduate and learned about sustainability here; also, I work at Retzer. Previously I worked in plastics manufacturing and saw how the tiniest defect meant the part was rejected and had to be recycled. There was so much waste. I left the job because of this.
- My background included a dynamic chemistry teacher who got me interested in the issues. I studied to be a chemical engineer so I could be on the front end of making change; to be on the 'Green team.' Then I went to work for Dupont building power plants that got me way off track. Now I am raising kids and am completely depressed by consumerism and throwaway society; when I see my neighbors' trash bins I think to myself 'What are you all buying!' I started an earth ministry at my church and am tackling basic things like using water bottles instead of plastic cups. I'm encouraging recycling at my kids' schools. It's frustrating, disheartening ... we're not turning the corner

on consumerism ... people are too busy.

## 1.5 Education

- I grew up in a suburban environment. It wasn't until college that I saw a different world. When I met my now husband's family on their farm I saw a whole different way of living. Then I went to visit my sister in Seattle and I saw an urban way of living differently. I was envious of that. Now having children makes me realize I have a responsibility to them.
- When I was in college my background was in zoology. After joining the Peace Corps I realized how much impact there is on what we choose and the environmental impact. I saw room for daily choices and the things (small things) people do to make choices.
- I grew up post-depression [era] during WWII. I work on keeping up on the science behind all of the [environmental] change
- I am a Carroll graduate and learned about sustainability here; also, I work at Retzer. Previously I worked in plastics manufacturing and saw how the tiniest defect meant the part was rejected and had to be recycled. There was so much waste. I left the job because of this
- My background included a dynamic chemistry teacher who got me interested in the issues
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- I have a masters in environmental studies, I grew up with a strong love for nature
- My first undergrad internship job was entitled a Naturalist. My first few weeks I fell in love with it. I felt part of something larger and it gave me a sense of how important the outdoor experience is so positive and I was driven to connect others with that experience

## 1.6 Other influences

- My alignment is with my faith-Unitarian Universalism- a principle of which is the Interconnected Web. We are all a part of it, a system. Recently I started the practice of Buddhism: 'right thinking and right action' and 'do no harm'. I have become more involved in taking action as I became a parent, the Native American tradition of 'seven generations'. I am also jaundiced in thinking about the country I live in. It's all about the money. I was born in 1958 with a President who gave the country a mission such as 'go to the moon in 10 years'. Now we don't have a mission anymore. Other countries get it and are committed to renewable resources. I am angry about the current state of things here in the USA. Now I am listening to others in hope they might listen and come to me.

- I am international and see things that way, a tradition of ask your neighbor. I am working in research. Here what I am seeing may not be the same as what I am learning, the America I experience compared to the America I read about. I see the “backyard”, things I did not expect to find. Green and beautiful versus the actual communities in Milwaukee. I am a volunteer in cleaning/garbage/sanitation in Milwaukee. I believe that each person’s actions contribute to make the community better, yes? If I do something wrong, I can affect myself and my neighbors. See, if I see a banana peel on the street, I know it didn’t just put itself there, yes? Someone put it there. Now imagine if children are crossing the street and the fall on that banana peel? My point is that actions cause results...maybe not today but the next time.
  - I too belong to the Universal Unitarian church. Before I retired I was not so involved in environmental issues. After my retirement I got more involved. I volunteer and learn from others about stewardship. I did participate in the Adopt a Highway program. Now I want to get out and do something. I have the same observation about stuff thrown on the roadside, the banana peel as you said (laugh). I want the county to be green. It has to be more than just talking about it! We need to go out and do this. It’s all about stewardship.
  - I don’t have a background in sustainability issues but for me the influence has been that something “feels off” in recent years—food, chemicals, water ... watching documentaries; I have kids and this scares me. There are not enough people doing ‘person things’ like you mentioned. How to get to that ‘right way’ on a global scale is so huge; how to make the changes.
  - It was my first car. I remember loving to drive and drive and then quickly I learned I had to get gas from the gas station. I wondered “where does gas come from”?
  - Twenty years ago we moved to the suburbs and I noticed how the neighbors would put chemicals on their lawns. We proceeded to dig up our grass and put in a prairie. Another time I remember walking into the river which was polluted and we came out covered with oil. So much of the beautiful environment is being damaged either by misuse or overuse of unfriendly things or ingredients.
  - We live in a society that is built on fast and having everything right now and convenient. We use so many plastics and throw-aways, and people seem to think that when they put it in the trash that is the end of it, but it is not. I wish we could get back to more of the old ways of not throwing out so many disposables.
  - My concern is similar to yours. I would like to see us do more recycling education because I am also concerned with how much we throw away as well. I think that if people understood the impact of what we are doing to the environment by the use of so much temporary stuff we’d all do better as a society.
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**Question Round Two:** *“When thinking about sustainability in Waukesha County, what’s your main environmental concern?”*

## 2.1 Water conservation

- Water is a concern with so many lakes and rivers in this area. If fish can't live in it we shouldn't drink it. My fear is over-development of water. I fear we are headed like California and Arizona with over chlorinated water
- My concerns is also water because I think everything ultimately ends up in water, whether it's chemicals on people's lawns which have to go somewhere. Water is life. We won't have an opportunity to save our planet if we're not careful about our environment. I think it's weird that people use drinking water to wash their cars and sprinkle lawns
- In the next 50 years water is going to be it. As our country grows in the next 50 years water is going to reach its' flash point. How will that be sustainable? What precedent does it set for the great lakes?
- I think about the water issue. The debate was going on when I was a student at Carroll, about whether to use Lake Michigan's water. I remember a lot of puzzlement because there was terrible flooding in the Fox River and yet a water crisis. How can we have floods and still have a water crisis at the same time?
- The water issue is important to me too. Like I said, I grew up near the Mississippi River. I am used to large quantities of water flowing by. I like the lakes but they're not the same. I look at lakes as limited resources. Drawing down of the aquifer due to private development of private and municipal wells. The lack of viable quality water due to building over the recharge base and the centuries it takes to refill them. Invasive species taking over lakes, boats and jet skis on Lake Michigan, overuse of facilities. Without water, there wouldn't be quality of life
- I am passionate about the way that the government is doing away with environmental protection rules; that someone can build a large farm without environmental protections in place to prevent contaminates getting into the water downstream that is used for drinking water.
- My concern is about the water quality. I learned how lax the government rules for water were when I was looking for a house. So many places had water issues and no place would assure me that our well would be save for years. Some places are now needing to bring in bottled water. Now I see that 200-250 new houses are being built near me. Water is underpriced and not efficient. Better government rules would help
- Pesticides and herbicides are getting in to the water along with lead. Bush thorn has taken over, decreasing diversity. What is happening if we cannot sustain ourselves and we have to divert water from Lake Michigan?
- I feel like in Waukesha we are blessed with the green surroundings and that we need to protect it. My biggest concern is the water, the idea that we can take water from Lake Michigan. I feel we can conserve our own water and believe there are solutions to our water issues. I feel there's no political will to put emphasis on the environmental concerns at hand
- One of our ways to solve our water problems is that no one else is getting water from our great lakes
- I am concerned with water and ensuring that we have clean and good supplies for future generations. Milwaukee had the crypto issue years ago, and so much can be done to

contaminate our waters. We have to keep it viable for other generations, and that begins with us doing our part. That takes education

- I am also concerned with water. We can do nothing with water, so we have to ensure that we are not contaminating it
- Yes, water is big. What are we doing to sustain it? If we're not careful we won't have good water in the not-too-distant future
- Education is key in use of water and our consumption, and in educating folks about land and trash. Education is the great leveler. We have to move the needle in that way.

## 2.2 Development and growth

- I am concerned about development and resource use in Waukesha County. So many houses are being built, so much energy is being used! This used to be an open land environment. Now there is growth everywhere. There are lights all night so we don't see the stars. There is an excessive use of resources
- How to help Waukesha County? May work for ten years has been with family care services with a county partner organization. The diversity in Waukesha County is a problem. A more diverse population wants to live here because of the jobs. But the services like food, doctors, schools are not adequate. This is causing more development and more building. I have been commuting here for over 15 years and have seen the growth. Rural areas don't have the resources. Public transportation is needed. But we also need to make smaller communities feasible with services provided
- Land use. We're building big homes and only 2-3 people live in them. Why do people wanna drive 20-30 miles to work every day?
- I do think there are smart growth plans. Communities at one time were required to have them. It has to come to [us] having laws with walkable, bike-able communities and people living closer to where they work. Maybe millennials are moving in that direction
- I go back to energy consumption that is at the heart of this. Lowering carbon based energy is a necessity. It all requires energy. We need to look at how to husband that. Anything else we do will draw upon that source so that what we do must be sustainable. How come for new housing there isn't a required code of compliance for insulation and everything else? We'll save in the long run by having environmental homes
- I think the main concern is that growth in Waukesha is unchecked. It's why we asked to draw water from Lake Michigan. There are plenty of empty buildings in Milwaukee; we could just put businesses in those empty buildings instead of trying to work it into Waukesha. It could be sustainable if they were required to reuse buildings and work with Milwaukee County. Our concrete would be more permeable. It's the competition between Milwaukee County and Waukesha County. The politics
- Well the horse is out of the barn now. There is not a sense of smart growth in Waukesha County. There is a cowboy mentality; if you have money, the developer can pave over the rich farmland. I have to be careful because I grew up in Waukesha County and it's a small area. I remember the quality of the farmland. I don't want to put down my friends for making money, but they did when they sold their farmland to developers. But now it's gone. There was no political will to control this. We sold the farm. Literally. There was no

plan for public sanitation systems. Is there something we can do about it. I don't know, but it'd be nice to think that there is

- My major environmental concern for Waukesha County that I can affect is for the built environment. People spend most of their time inside; buildings should be built to be healthier. But the building codes here are the absolute worst that you can build and still get it built. They allow "building down"—ways that are fast and cheap. Our business promotes building with integrity by integrating costs and savings; an example is putting in LED lighting and showing how they pay for themselves through savings
- My big thing here is land development; putting up buildings in green space and then seeing those buildings stand empty after only 5-10 years due to cheap building construction. Then those buildings get torn down, dumped in landfills, and something new and cheap goes up. All the while, the green space is gone. There is no reason we can't build them to last 50 or 60 years; we have the technology to do that
- I have lived in Waukesha all of my life and I have watched the population grow. Crap that should not have been developed has been. We need to be smart about land development and utilization. How do we make sure we are doing the right thing and how we share with others?
- I am also really concerned about growth. How many can we hold and be responsible? Pesticides and herbicides are getting in to the water along with lead. Bush thorn has taken over, decreasing diversity. What is happening if we cannot sustain ourselves and we have to divert water from Lake Michigan?
- My main concern is precise planning for sustainability. Creating a visionary design thinking outside of the original thoughts of green
- I would like to see us do a better job of land use by ensuring that we have green spaces, trees, forested areas, and clean lakes. Soil also has to be viable for farmers or we'll all be sick.

### 2.3 Waste reduction

- I live in Menomonee Falls. I live near the landfill site. There is one hill that is capped off and the new hill is just as high. Plastic blows off in the wind to the surrounding environment. Will we need to ship the trash farther away? That will cost more and cause more problems
- Like [one of the other participants] I grew up near landfills. I used to play in them, some used to be quarries, but then they got filled up. Toxins were coming up through the soil. If materials are not breaking down, then reconstitute it. Use it over and over and make something else out of it. Seems a terrible waste. A lot of waste would be stopped if we found a new way to use the plastic
- I also think we need to focus on trash. As an example, a couple years ago we changed from a system that charged for the number of trash containers we actually used to a single global fee. Now there is no incentive to reduce trash. I see change through the pocket-book. If we paid for each bag of trash we throw out, we would buy less, recycle more and compost more

- The biggest problem is the use of plastic in grocery stores. We need to learn how to physically carry our groceries out, and make everything recyclable
- Education is key in use of water and our consumption, and in educating folks about land and trash. Education is the great leveler. We have to move the needle in that way.

## 2.4 Effects of consumerism

- I personally consider how much I need, really need. How much house is needed? Now we have wants and excess rather than need. I want to get comfortable with less stuff. I can still have a good life
- I want to see a system wide change. I see so much separation. I need a car to go anywhere. I think we need to redesign our communities into small villages. I want a community with connection, with neighbors I know. I would like many things in one place: energy, forms, jobs, child care, etc. This would reduce our stress. I am concerned about consumerism, especially apparent now with Halloween. The celebration has gotten way out of hand. I am concerned about accountability for water use also.
- I agree waste is a big problem. Consumerism is overblown causing over use of resources. In manufacturing and marketing so much waste is produced. These “by products” Are not used but thrown away. We need to produce things locally without packaging. Now we have to transport this waste. There are chemicals involved in this also that cause issues later that were not considered in the beginning. I think we need to redesign and relocate. We need to stop shipping items so far. This is complex. Then there is the habit of vacationing far away. I believe that Chicago heads out of that city each weekend and then back again. I see this as a great energy waste
- Goods are not priced by their true disposal and resource costs, which is driving consumerism. Waukesha County is so wealthy and people can just keep buying things. True pricing would affect people on the margins first.
- Quit buying such big houses that are taking up unnecessary space when you only have two people living in it

## 2.5 Impacts on nature

- On a smaller scale I am concerned about native plants and invasive species. If invasive plants take over there won't be any native plants left. And it is the native plants that support pollination, help with water quality, and reduce erosion. I want people to recognize invasive plants. That requires education. Many people don't know the difference between native and invasive plants. I recently saw a fancy floral arrangement with invasive plants! Local government is where we can start that process
- One of my main concerns is keeping the corridor intact, migrating birds, butterflies between the farms the ditches or side of the road keeping the thriving healthy soil healthy
- My immediate concern is on my way walking here today I saw several swamps of land that appeared to be unchecked displacing the original lay of the land.

## 2.6 Other concerns about the environment

- Trying to get people excited about sustainability. We spray our laws. Children play in the grass. The chemicals get washed into drains when it rains. Looking at things we can do to be more sustainable [is my main environmental concern]
  - Sustainability is a system. It requires planning and coordination. In my mind, only government have the power to do that, not private businesses. My concern is that Waukesha County government is not set up to approach sustainability as a system. Until that happens we are not going to get anywhere
  - My concern is there is no plan. I feel it's all about sprawl for economic gain. We need to be reducing plastic bags and trash. We need awareness of individual responsibility and stewardship...like the banana peel example. Another problem is regulation: the energy company has an agreement about how much solar generated energy it will accept. Waukesha County has no concern or political power other than economic gain
  - I think transportation in Waukesha County is a big concern. I wish for more room for bicyclists and bus routes that extend beyond just this county. It is hard to get around
  - I live in Milwaukee County. Are community, public health and crime a part of the definition of environmental concern? In the past 15 years it looks like recycling has improved. My employer has 27 acres and 24 of them have baseball fields. We are trying to figure out how to cut less grass. Cutting requires manpower, money for gas...We are looking at planting gardens and flowers. Plants would be those that don't need cutting
  - In addition to my background growing-up, I am new to the area. Who is responsible for the sustainability plan and communicating it? How does one get the message? Who discussed greenspace and how it can better be used? My biggest concern is pesticides and herbicides
  - My concern is learning the history of this place, I've been here a year. This place just goes on and on whereas I am used to living in small places and here there are more homes, more roads that go on forever. I feel it sort of creates a disconnect for other species who need the open land to wonder and spread
  - I live closer to Lake Michigan where the neighbors are diverse than I thought they would be but there's good air quality, public transportation and bike trails.
- 

**Question Round Three:** *"Finish this sentence: Now is the time for what? What specific action would you like to see happen in Waukesha County?"*

### 3.1 Politics and policymaking

- We ought to have a building code that assesses WE Energy consumption, and the land that is associated with it
- Vote for candidates who have sustainability as their agenda. Individuals also have to do all that we can do to help improve things, such as cars, and thermostat setting
- Now is the time for Waukesha County to elect an environmentally conscious governor
- Get people more involved in local politics and what happens in local government. Show up at meetings. When I have been to meetings, there are only 2 or 3 other people. People

are too busy to be involved in government on a daily basis and to know how we are governed

- Now is the time for Waukesha County to not think it's so unique. We need to recognize that we are part of the economic and environmental network in Southeast Wisconsin and the state in general. If we think we are special or need protection in some way, then we will never use our resources wisely. I am very involved in politics, I have been since I was a teenager. I am actually working to help elect an assembly person now. We need to be hands-on involved in education decision-makers in environmental sustainability issues. As part of the Green Team, I have found Waukesha County government to be receptive and even ahead of what we are asking. We can't take adversarial position. We need to take a collaborative position while recognizing the limitations of elected officials
- to vote out any politician that does not believe in science that tells us that burning fossil fuels contributes to global warming
- the people of Waukesha County to vote out those who impede a systems approach to sustainability (as opposed to just economic drive and low taxes) and to vote in those that do
- to require, demand, expect local government to work on getting rid of invasive species and replace with native plants. Campaign to clean up our natural native environment
- Waukesha County as a whole to create incentives...for citizens to be allowed to do so and get a tax credit to do it. An example is solar panels and electric cars. There may be an increase in taxes to do this and I recognize it may cause a divide
- to strongly encourage all merchants to stop using plastic bags. And if not, then to charge enough for the bags to make people think twice before walking out of the store with 10 plastic bags
- a waste management system that charges for the amount of waste and give incentives to buy less and generate less waste. St. Louis Park MN is an example where the landfill waste bin won't be emptied if it isn't closed and there is curbside composting. There should be a direct connection between how much you throw out and what you pay
- We could ban the use of pesticides and herbicides. We need to press the Board to figure out whether we really need to destroy more land for a highway so we can speed through. Schools could have a plan for a sustainable nutritional system that they teach
- Now is the time for the government to place the environmental concerns as a priority not just leaving it up to city and county but also state
- I think it's time for a task force to sustaining local grass roots and developing plan to network to other towns and throughout the state
- Voting, getting connected with elected officials, and getting them involved in trying to solve or find solutions to some of these problems
- Public officials need to look more into these projects and understand the water usage and how it works
- Take the bull by the horns and getting the attention of elected officials. No more use of plastic bags. Be more of a person of drama, in other words, when in the store the clerk asks me paper or plastic I'll just carry or struggle to get it out

### 3.2 Individual action

- action. I need to take my responsibility to limit my own contribution to pollution. I need to take action to influence others
- spreading awareness. Specifically, I am using my graphic design skills and pictures I take and sharing these to websites to reach others, especially young people. We need to get nature pictures to young people to inspire them
- I need to take responsibility for my part in improving the environment. The professor is talking about plastics and I'm holding a plastic cup. At home I have filters and no bottled water. What we could have done is to tell people to bring their metal water bottle to this event
- It's time for me to practice what I preach, I need to take a specific action to do something regarding my concerns.
- Take the bull by the horns and getting the attention of elected officials. No more use of plastic bags. Be more of a person of drama, in other words, when in the store the clerk asks me paper or plastic I'll just carry or struggle to get it out
- Empowerment and involvement, getting more involved and helping get the message out about our environment
- I built an electric car. I go to the farmer's market and people were amazed by my car because it's painted like a towel. My car 8-10 hours a day and the conversation comes up about my car and that opens the door involving having good people to vote for. Having a positive future, problem solving, facing the challenges

### 3.3 Increasing education and awareness

- We need education. People don't know what they are doing. The next generation will have to face this. So many are clueless. There are smart people at my workplace but they think I am crazy when I tell them about our garden. We are the only family with a garden on our street. There needs to be a willingness to change.
- It just takes one influential motivator to switch people in the direction of radical change. The eye-opening of someone almost acting like a parent and taking us in a different disciplinary direction.
- I would like to see more people in my community have more of a cultural acceptance of these things in my community, but that would take a whole lot of education for the adults. Now people seem to feel that positive participation is having the most weed-free lawns
- educating people starting in kindergarten about land use, tightly built homes, and building materials. We need to look at this systematically; Europe has models we could follow.
- more education, starting with very young children so that it spreads up to the people in the middle generation that need educating. Specifically, we should upgrade the building codes; Wisconsin is very slow; we wait for everyone else to go first. I love the idea of having to pay for all of the costs including the ultimate cost of disposal. Choosing to be a community like this begins with education
- spreading awareness. Specifically, I am using my graphic design skills and pictures I take and sharing these to websites to reach others, especially young people. We need to get

nature pictures to young people to inspire them

- I feel it's time for the public to realize the problem and get all the people involved in a strategy to address the problem. I feel it's important for the people to wake up and realize what's happening to the environment
- Learning and making others aware, getting children more involved, find a way to stop the use of straws because straws have become an issue
- Empowerment and involvement, getting more involved and helping get the message out about our environment

### 3.4 Renew existing communities

- I think of the energy required, the numbers of people added, the services needed like garbage collection. We need to have no more people. We need to fix up what we have.
- I want a redesign of our community structure. I think a mini district would use less resources and set a model, an example of a better way; a way that does with less. I want to see it!!!
- I read that 50% of Americans are lonely and feel disconnected. We could solve this by a better design for our community. Also we need to look at education, our schools. We need to see the schools and teach the schools as an ecosystem. The children need to be aware of the cycles of nature: grow food, prepare food, eat, compost- the full cycle. The children need to live this not just learn about it. Then they take the ideas home. Then, too, as adults they will have this lived experience of care for the environment. The other issue is population. We need an awareness of the population growth. We need education also to stop, take a look, and move forward with a change in life style. We need to influence our culture. When we experience pressure for comfort we need to push back. Are we being honest to our children? ...about what they face? The curriculum needs to tell the truth. Some parents may push back but that means we need to educate the parents also. We could get a school/community agreement plan and get commitment form families to change.
- We could have a goal of being a better part of the community. We could bug our neighbors into getting involved and develop school gardens. We need to get to know our neighbors, rely on them, trust them – that makes it easier to approach them to get them involved.
- Big things! Look at practices in other communities. There is no need to reinvent the wheel as we look at sustainability in our community
- It's time for a renewal of communities, smaller levels in the neighborhoods concentrating on what's in our back yards. It's time to clean up those small creeks (build a chain) electric care and community gardens. I think we should start small rather than global.

### 3.5 Reduce waste

- Recycling of garbage. If we flip things and have trash pick up bi-weekly and recycling weekly instead people will start to think differently about their waste and begin to live more environmentally consciously.

- Composting. I would love if it was a part of our [trash] pick up
- To be non-political, I want to bring back a culture that respects reuse and reduces waste. I went to an event at the Sussex Library. An older woman was talking about aprons and how her family used to make them out of potato sacks. She said that waste back then was appalling. Now you need a new backpack every year or it's not cool. We need to make waste unpatriotic; you are taking resources from the country. When you drive your Hummer to the Country Club then you are taking resources. We need a marketing campaign. During World War II people were giving their metal objects and it felt good. A marketing campaign would be good for everyone, but Waukesha County could start it. Make people feel good about what they're doing. Not adversarial, but "look at what we can do"
- to strongly encourage all merchants to stop using plastic bags. And if not, then to charge enough for the bags to make people think twice before walking out of the store with 10 plastic bags
- a waste management system that charges for the amount of waste and give incentives to buy less and generate less waste. St. Louis Park MN is an example where the landfill waste bin won't be emptied if it isn't closed and there is curbside composting. There should be a direct connection between how much you throw out and what you pay
- We should cut down on whole dumpster loads of building remodeling materials going to the dump
- The use of plastic bags. Plastic is a problem. Learning how to recycle. Recycling bins are ridiculous. It's impossible to rid yourself of plastic.

### 3.6 Other suggestions

- There used to be a field across the road from where I live. My house was built in the 1950's. One day I came home and the whole row of trees was gone – in nine hours, gone!
- More renewable energy in Waukesha County. I very seldom see people putting up solar panels. I have never seen windmills in Waukesha County. Put one in this municipality someplace as a token. And more environment-conscious cars. We drive one that gets 60 mpg.
- Now is the time for plastic-eating bacteria. I recently read an article about a scientific breakthrough with this. Maybe GMO so replacing one problem with another and not really practical. But I was thinking about what other solutions, such as making buildings LEED or restrictions on new development, but it feels like they are missing something. Scientific breakthroughs seem to break on a bigger scale
- I agree with everyone
- I have attended two conferences in the last two weeks and the themes were Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. When we go to these conferences and talk about green spaces it's mostly people like me. Now is the time to reach out to people so we can understand each other and develop intentional partnerships. It might not be necessarily about the environment but it could be about inclusion and mixing
- Getting more involved in human trafficking issues

## Connected Conversation

- I want something we can do quickly. Education is a long-term plan. I choose composting. the city needs to begin collecting compost. Restaurants need to use compostable carryout containers. Grocery stores need to reduce packaging. We need more recycling education so we know what to recycle. And we need good public transportation. I know this idea will not be well received. People say it is poor people who need transit not us.
- I have this to share. There is a recycling App for Waukesha County that tells what to recycle. I got it on Goggle Play store. They also publicize recycling events. How do we reach the wider population. We have TV! But such things are not on TV! We could have education on the environment each day instead of advertisements for consumer goods. We have Amber alerts. We need environment alerts. Is money an obstacle? What is money to our survival?
- I think we need to get away from technology as a solution. Our minds and the minds of our children have been affected by the use of technology. My daughter went to a six weeks arts camp in Michigan. They allowed no technology. She said the first two weeks she counted the days till she could get back to her technology. Then about week four she found herself so at peace sitting by the lake. It was like a withdrawal syndrome at the beginning.
- Yes, sell that idea like a product on TV!
- The Twitter community is not a real community. We need a real sense of togetherness. We need time in Nature and time to relax from stress, relief from the desire for instant gratification by technology.
- Yes, food has become our comfort in stress.
- We are too busy
- Permaculture is a way for me ti rethink my choices. One of the design principles is "Produce no waste".
- We need to find how to go forward as humans.
- The opposition between business and environment doesn't have to be, but it's so ingrained in people. There are some companies that are committed to doing complete recycling of their plants. It's almost as if this thing is political.
- A lot of times it comes down to who is going to pay for this [the change].
- I think business is reactive, not proactive. If we're not making money we're not being productive. I worked at a lab during school. We see a problem and then we try to solve it, we are not anticipating it, and trying to head it off. We need to hold business more accountable. I have to be held accountable in my practice as a nurse.
- It also comes down to what our plumbing is made out of.
- There is old lead plumbing in old houses. I saw this from helping Habitat for Humanity rehab old houses.
- We have to look at funding and where it goes. The National Institute of Environmental Health looks at solving problems instead of treating them.
- We have to take responsibility as a community to save ourselves.

- The Fox-Conn does not satisfy any of the concerns echoed here. They are being allowed to build without any environmental safeguards.
- I know people who own a small plating company. It used lots and lots of water. But all the water released back into the system was much cleaner than what came in. The company is always boasting about water being cleaner. I hear politicians say it's too difficult, so their solution is Lake Michigan then send the waste to Fox River. This bothers me a lot. We can clean our own water. We can get it close to being pure. It [the plating company] is not a big company, but a small mom-and-pop shop that is proud of doing it. If they can do it, then we can do it. If everyone did that, then the money would come down. People say you can't get the radium out, but you can; if you had to do it, then people would find a cheaper way to do it.
- The presentation from Petering was depressing. Who could listen to that and not say we have to change now. I don't get it. Change has to be incremental so that the system doesn't stop; plastic bottles not banned tomorrow, but maybe 10 years. Who is not listening to it? Why aren't they listening? Power and money? Power and money now? 50 years from now, it [power and money] will be irrelevant. We may not have anywhere habitable.
- Petering talked about the Common Good. It's a moral issue. A faith issue; God's steward. Follow Pop Francis. Every religion teaches respect for nature, even if not phrased that way. Waukesha Green Team started a subcommittee on faith communities that shares environmental actions that congregations can take. You don't have to necessarily believe in religion or God, but because we are all on this planet and sharing it, it should be a common value. I still have garden tools from my grandparents, a wheelbarrow too [in reference to other speaker from earlier]. We reuse. We used to tear clothes into strips to give to our neighbor who had a loom and made clothes. Because of my religious upbringing, I learned to reuse and to live simply.
- Most of my neighbors don't listen. Most of them are my generation too. It seems like they feel the news will tell them what's important. If the news is telling you, then it's important. If not, then it's not important. When the aquifers were in the news for going down 7 feet in a year, everyone worried. But then people would turn on the faucet and still have water so they stopped worrying. You know the thing about boiling the frog. Yeah, they believe someone will tell them when to worry about it. Newspapers are purchased by those with other interests.
- I heard from some local politicians who didn't get their way to tear down some buildings [nearby in Waukesha County near mud baths]. The area used to be famous for its healing waters. There were companies that offered to buy the land and develop it for homeless veterans. The politicians did not take it; they are waiting for the buildings to deteriorate so they can do it their way.
- Do you remember Jurassic Park? When they were talking about the DNA and bringing the dinosaurs back, someone said "you never earned this, you're just using what those who before you developed." You never had to work for this. The feeling that I get from people is that they deserve the status they have now. It could be gone tomorrow, stock market crash. There is not that sense of the future or of history.

- I read that there are more vacant buildings than homeless people. London and New York City have empty luxury buildings. They are lopsided in the way they are using resources.
- The political actions we take or don't take. We need folks elected that at least lean in the direction of sustainability, keeping the economy viable without being destructive. It is interesting to compare Minnesota and Wisconsin. The economy and politics are different. The Twin Cities are an economic engine. Milwaukee is trying but has been stalled by the state like other urban centers in the state. We need to find leadership that will move us forward economically. If we don't begin to address these environmental issues, then they won't be attended to.
- There was a referendum about plastic bags in Wauwatosa a few years ago that passed. But then the State overrode them and banned such laws.
- I work for Roundy's/Kroger. Kroger has a plan to remove plastic bags by 2020...so it is a good step. Plastic bags are about convenience.
- One plastic bag problem is there is no system to take care of them.
- Best alternative to plastic bags is "Bring Your Own" – like in Europe.
- Plastic bags can be reused but people don't bring them back.
- I use them now as home wastebasket liners.
- Some bags are biodegradable.
- Recycling has to have a market. It's an economic factor.
- Plastic bags have no market value.
- Maybe the solution is a bag deposit, like the can and bottle deposit in Michigan.
- Coming back to the example of the banana peel...teaching people to have a responsibility to others because of our own actions. There is no time. To counter the 'What I do doesn't make a difference'. We need more forums and more education.
- The Republic of Congo is favored with a lot of valuable resources and that attracts trouble in the form of loss of human life and the invading of resources. As an example, there may be a school building but if resources are discovered beneath it, some people will want to demolish the school to extract the resources. In my community, the resources in particular are cobalt and copper. Refining them throws the pollutants back into the water in rivers and destroys the fish. That destabilizes the local community and culture.
- My question about education is "how do you get people to care?" The people in this room care already; how to reach others who aren't here.
- In the commercial world, money will make them care. I show them how building a building with sustainable integrity lowers their budget and saves them money. I begin with a small win first, like using LED lighting.
- Does the money argument make a difference with individuals?
- It might. Some might change if they experience a small win, like paying less for a smaller size waste recycling bin, if there were a choice of sizes and prices. We've seen Green become more acceptable in the last 5-10 years; removing VOCs from carpets is an example.
- And more people using the energy star ratings when purchasing new appliances.
- Education can help both sides (commercial and individuals). There should be some sort of economic report on home buildings, like there is on the commercial side.

- Use a monetary system of incentives and penalties, plus education to push people more to tip the scales to favor Green. Then they will be able to get new rules and legislation in place. Even in this politically polarized time, try to bring along people on both sides.
- Peer pressure can help.
- Ours kids are being educated, but how do we keep good relations with their friends' families on these environmental issues. For example, the birthday parties with too many gifts and wrapping paper and greeting cards. How to agree to reduce this without being 'Debbie downer'?
- After 2 people died in bicycling accidents I took a survey to ask commuters about what to give up to get safer biking.
- When I heard the word "community" I thought about making a pledge like Lady Bird. She made people feel guilty about throwing anything out of the window, even a cigarette butt. We need to think of something that makes recycling fun and sexy.
- I was going to do an essay on hunger in America. My father said to bring it in closer – Do the essay on hunger in Watertown where I grew-up; make it more personal.
- I agree – I think I have to have a greater connection. I get lost in the bigger picture. Like your father said, when you talk about hunger being right here it is more real.
- What prompted you to start making small changes?
- I had all those plastic bags everywhere and I didn't know what to do with them. The reusable bags are bigger and stronger. They are also convenient by the register and they only cost \$.50
- I read a book called Ecophobia about global warming. We built shelters when we thought we would get boomed. With the environment we need to think sustainability instead of scare.
- Even though I never wanted to go out of the country I ended up living overseas. I'm glad I did because I saw so much that we take for granted. In Germany, the lights went off in the evening and you weren't turning them back on. Gas was \$8/gal even in the 80's.
- In Italy, a 30 year old woman was living at home with her mother. In the US you would be looked at funny. She asked "why not if you have a room that is 12x20? How much space do you need?" She was right. It changed my way of thinking. It opened my mind. A lot of it is cultural.
- It's like House Hunters International. People from the US are going overseas with US expectations. It is a dose of reality.
- I think everyone should travel out of the country – Not just travel but move there for at least 2 years. I think it would give perspective and bring countries closer.
- What were you drawn to the most about the presentation?
- Wants vs needs
- 1950 vs now regarding the use of resources. A lot has changed in that span.
- Wants vs needs and how wants become perceived needs. In 1950 we looked at needs differently.
- The cost of importing in a disposable society is very costly.
- What about emerging countries who want to be just like the US, thinking we are development and have wealth? We are on the hill and they are looking up at us.

- I am not sure it can fix itself, if it's too late or will it actually fix itself, I wonder.
- I think it would be good to know which water shed I share and with how many.
- I think it would be good to know what you drop in eco system and where does it go, names would be good for identification of final location.
- I think it's time to get together and talk about things not necessarily related to the environmental issues but could eventually lead to that conversation or action.
- I find it interesting that some trust people more than scientist with the actual facts of the matter regarding environmental issues.
- I like talking about the subject and I find my neighbors to be very different. I think we have a great environment here in Waukesha County.
- I think there are too many have strong opinions about whether or not we need to do anything at all regarding the environment.
- Find out how to protect our water, filling in wetlands
- Development has been impacted with developmental issues. It takes a collective effort.
- Get the masses together so things can change. Creating our own electric for cars, tear down the political barriers

## 5.1 Parting Pledge

- I will share the Waukesha County Recycling App with my wellness group.
- I will have the green team at the school start composting. We can do a Facebook group about waste. I want to show the film "Racing to Zero".
- I will reduce my impact and not be afraid to tell more to my co-workers. Already I am known as the one who fixes things from cars to small things for myself. I can help others.
- I have some native grass seeds to plant. I will live a simpler life. I can organize work for myself and my staff so we can work from home one day a week to reduce travel. Tis is working smarter and it adds quiet to my life.
- Finding some other way to conserve energy. And vote.
- Be better about contacting legislators. And vote.
- Definitely vote. I'll try to conserve more energy. And use another sweater.
- Voting is good. I will also learn more about my local politics.
- I'll vote. I'll read the Waukesha sustainability plan. It may provide the basis for a lot of citizen action. I think of it as a teaching tool.
- I'll make a sign for my yard that explains why I'm letting my yard grow with dandelions and clover. It's an ecosystem.
- I'm going to reach out to the Waukesha City Green Team.
- I will start using Milwaukee public transportation more
- Since voting has already been said, I thought about what I would do on November 7th regardless of what happens. I thought about turning off my lights and other things that seem small because of the scale and the people bent on destruction. I thought about upping my monthly donation to a conservation; however, I also thought that if things did not go well with the election then I may need to donate to other organizations especially with the recent anti-transgender news.

- I will help a candidate running for State Assembly who is environmentally progressive from Waukesha County. We need to take action: vote, canvas, contribute. Waukesha County has the third largest number of Democrats after Milwaukee and Dane Counties. Show up to meetings. I served on a village board. It changes when you become an elected official. People want you to do things that are not legal or that you do not want. It can be an isolating experience.
- Once you get someone in who you think you like, watch 'em. I helped a friend get elected and once in, he completely flipped around.
- I care about plastic and waste; however, my communication with my neighbors may not be helpful. I focus on just the facts and then go "why don't you know". We were going on a trip and my friend said she would bring water then brought a case of water bottles. My other friend said "I don't believe in water bottles". I want to be more like this friend in how I communicate. I will work on changing my language, to communicate emotionally and by values.
- AN EXCHANGE
- Be the change. Got to keep doing the little stuff. But it won't go far. We need systems change
- But what about working from grassroots, bottom-up. It will eventually reach people at the top.
- Even if all of us in Waukesha County stopped using water bottles, we have a problem still
- But what's the path to change? We have to get people to care
- I would like to try for a month to eliminate my use of plastic. It would mean a change and make me more aware of how much plastic there is in my life.
- I am going to look for 2 or 3 or 4 forums where I can speak to groups to educate them about solar panels.
- Since I heard about this event through Facebook, I am going to encourage everyone to post to social media to invite people to sustainability in their communities.
- I am going to get myself reconnected to the Waukesha County Green Team.
- I am committed to finding something else to replace how I currently reuse plastic bags as trash liners and cat litter box liners....and I need to convince my husband!
- I am going to talk to my boss to see if I can change the conversation we have in the store with customers asking "paper or plastic" and create a campaign "My plastic free life".
- Take reusable bags when I go shopping and ask my family to do so also.
- I already have a laundry list of actions. The ones I am working on now are plastic bag reduction, investing in socially responsible companies, putting in an electric line so I can switch to an electric stove from natural gas.
- Be part of an awareness event this Friday and Saturday at my church and spreading my photos.
- Composting the coffee grounds from my Keurig machine.
- Finding a bottle free source of shampoo and conditioner and deodorant.
- Developing a network of churches that have an environmental ministry or action agenda.
- Keep chugging along to sell sustainability.

- Waukesha County government should provide an incentive for 'bring-your-own-packaging' type stores to open in the county. These are stores where you buy what you want/need and package up what you buy with your own recyclable materials.
- I promise not to use plastics.
- I've started using reusable bags and I plan to do it more.
- I will get more involved locally on a smaller scale.
- I pledge to get to know my neighbors better.
- I am going to research the restricted instructions about the waste.
- I want to find out if there is a sustainability plan in place.
- I plan to reach out to other stakeholders and help with the organizing of the Fox River Summit.
- I personally want to work on finding out more about the ingredients in our food because I plan on being more mindful. Professionally I will work on a new style of program to launch in the spring to get more people engaged and connecting with each other.
- I think I'll start small by just picking up the trash I see laying and blowing around and also write a letter to the mayor/officials asking "what are they doing to counter act the construction that is taking away from the beauty in certain areas. I am going to do what I ask others to do.
- Use cloth bags
- Reuse bags and clips
- Turn off lights in living room
- Use less plastic
- Eat more veggies