

## MALL REDEVELOPMENT POSITION

### The League of Women Voters of the Stevens Point Area (LWVSPA) – March 2011

**As the City of Stevens Point pursues the redevelopment of the CenterPoint MarketPlace in downtown Stevens Point, Wisconsin, we support redevelopment that is economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable.**

Our support is in accordance with the League of Women Voters–Wisconsin’s current position on Natural Resources<sup>1</sup>; the Stevens Point League’s past position supporting “government expenditures on downtown development,” believing that “both the taxpayers and the city will benefit from a revitalized downtown”<sup>2</sup>; and the “Eco Municipalities Position,” a statement of the League of Women Voters of the Stevens Point Area<sup>3</sup>.

When the city of Stevens Point resolved to become an eco-municipality in 2008, it accepted the guiding objectives and conditions for sustainability described in *The Natural Step for Communities* by Sarah James and Torbjorn Lahti<sup>4</sup>.

The objectives and conditions for sustainability require that our community work to –

1. Reduce the use of fossil fuel, heavy metals, and scarce minerals.
2. Reduce the use of chemicals and synthetic substances that accumulate in nature.
3. Protect life-supporting natural resources, i.e., land, soil, water, air, and ecosystems.
4. Promote the basic needs of all our citizens – food, housing, clean water, and clean air – over luxuries.
5. Promote jobs, safety, equal treatment, and the essential rights and responsibilities of our democratic society.

With the Natural Step conditions as a guide, the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force made specific recommendations in its final report, *A Path to a Sustainable Stevens Point*<sup>5</sup>. We are indebted to the “Development and Land Use” chapter of this report in making the following recommendations for the sustainable redevelopment of the mall and surrounding area.

1. Reduce the use of fossil fuel by –
  - Reusing portions of the mall building rather than demolishing and building new.

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<sup>1</sup> League of Women Voters-Wisconsin. “Issues and Advocacy: Natural Resources.” <<http://www.lwvwi.org/IssuesAdvocacy/NaturalResources.aspx>>.

<sup>2</sup> League of Women Voters-Stevens Point. *History: Downtown Development*. 1976.

<sup>3</sup> League of Women Voters-Stevens Point Area. “Eco-Municipalities Position.” 21 April 2008.

<sup>4</sup> James, Sarah, and Torbjorn Lahti. *The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns Can Change to Sustainable Practices*. Gabriola Is., British Columbia: New Society, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Stevens Point, WI. Eco-Municipality Task Force. *A Path to a Sustainable Stevens Point*. 1 June 2008.

- Remodeling with energy efficient heating, cooling, and lighting systems.
  - Providing transportation alternatives to the single-occupant motor vehicle – such as public transit, car pooling, and accommodations for walking and bicycling – and promoting these to Mid-State Technical College students and to employees and residents in the downtown area.
  - Encouraging walking and biking to school and work by -
    - designing roads and traffic patterns to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians
    - promoting housing within a fifteen-minute walking radius of downtown.
2. Reduce the use of heavy metals, scarce minerals, and synthetic chemicals by selecting environmentally responsible construction materials whenever possible.
  3. Protect land use by –
    - Providing options for parking in the downtown area: a multi-level parking structure shared by major users, small-scale parking near building entrances, and additional on-street parking.
    - Infilling large surface parking lots with new construction and green space.
    - Narrowing streets, particularly CenterPoint Drive and Water/Second Street.
  4. Protect soil and groundwater, and the nearby Wisconsin River, by filtering storm water runoff from roofs and pavement using roof gardens, rain gardens, green corridors and plazas – and by installing permeable pavement wherever possible.
  5. Protect air quality and enhance the cooling of buildings and paved areas by planting shade trees and large shrubs wherever possible.
  6. Promote basic human needs by re-creating downtown as the residential, economic, cultural, entertainment, and recreational heart of Stevens Point:
    - Provide housing for a mix of ages and socio-economic backgrounds, including apartments above commercial buildings and in large underused or vacant buildings; new residences on vacant land; and rental houses converted back to owner-occupied single-family homes.
    - Recruit businesses that pay a living wage with benefits, including light industry.
    - Recruit businesses that provide basic goods and services, e.g., a small-to-mid-sized grocery store, winter market, and hardware store.
    - Strengthen the presence of institutions of higher learning and health care, e.g., Mid-State Technical College, UW-Stevens Point, and Ministry Health.
    - Provide safe and pleasant public and private places for exercise, entertainment, and relaxation.
  7. Promote the essential right of citizens in a democracy to assemble by providing publicly owned space for meetings and gatherings.

The redevelopment of the mall and surrounding area will give Stevens Point a large canvas upon which to demonstrate its commitment to the economic, ecological, and social health of our community.