

Onondaga Citizens League

“Greening CNY” Steering Committee Meeting Notes

August 18, 2009

Present: Jason Allers, Joe Ash, Carol Boll, Diane Brandli, Emanuel Carter, Megan Costa, Lori Dietz, Khris Dodson, Sam Gordon, Kuki Haines, David Holder, Steve Kearney, Rick Martin, Sarah McIlvain, Brian Moore, Greg Munno, Evan Newell, Chethan Sarabu, Ed Szczesniak, Sandra Barrett.

COMMITTEE PROGRESS TO-DATE:

Definition of Green: environmental impact subset of Sustainability Traits, focusing on “reduce, recycle, reuse” principles

Questions to be addressed by the study:

1. What are we doing Green? Is it enough? (An assessment; comparison to benchmarks)
2. How can we be more Green in CNY? (look at other places, model practices)
3. How do we make sure that the decisions we make have a beneficial effect on the environment?

Timetable: Study Report to be completed by May 1, 2010.

Audiences: individuals/families; business and organizations; municipalities. For the purposes of the study, the local community is defined as Onondaga County, although we may touch on other places in the metropolitan area.

Potential Study Session Topic Areas - Subgroups will focus on: Ecosystems; Sustainability; Land Use Planning*; Transportation; Energy Supply; Green Bldgs & Housing; Waste Management; Water & Sewer Infrastructure*; Green Jobs, etc.; Case Studies of holistic approaches to sustainability.

*(include former Natural Resources and Green Infrastructure topic areas). Public Perceptions Subgroup works with all topic areas.

UPDATES - New Members: Kuki Haines, interested citizen; Rick Martin, SU Sustainability Analyst; Evan Newell, Environmental Finance Center; Chethan Sarabu, L. Arch. grad, med student.

DISCUSSION

The audience for the public study session series was discussed, with general agreement that the target be as inclusive as possible. Locations and times could be varied. Some sessions might be co-hosted with other audiences; OCL study might piggy-back on other public seminars (e.g. Tech Garden, TMR) related to the topic areas.

The **Ecosystem** and **Vitoria-Gasteiz** case study sessions were discussed; they will be scheduled for September. SUNY ESF was suggested as the venue, after office hours to facilitate parking arrangements. The Sustainability session will be the third session, date and location TBD.

It was agreed that **Land Use Planning** should follow as the fourth session and incorporate farmland preservation, previously listed separately. Following discussion of the subcommittee’s proposal, it was suggested that Megan be joined by Steve Kearney for the Land Development Trends in Onondaga County as a stand-alone discussion, perhaps also including a town and/or village planner.

Best Practices in Land Use Planning presentation by Sam might be a separate session. BJ's presentation on **Green Infrastructure - the County's Save the Rain! Program** - would be added to broader discussion of water and sewer infrastructure (with Karen?) at a later time.

Agreed that **Transportation** follows logically Land Use. Chethan suggested speakers from Sustainable Ithaca, Pod Cars, RIT in addition to those in the report be considered. Suggestion that additional discussion be given to disincentives to auto commuter trips (TDM incentives) be added to Transportation Description. (Chethan will lead this subgroup)

Question was raised again about the need for **Case Studies** separate from the Topic Area discussions. It was agreed again that within topic areas, specific examples of model initiatives should be shared, but that Case Studies would delve deeper into holistic community approaches to sustainability.

The **Public Perceptions** group will collect hard data about how people think about green/sustainable development, how far they are willing to go to become sustainable, as well as scattershot opinions. Two Maxwell professors are possibly willing to help with survey. The limitations and timelines of student work were discussed. The PP subgroup will survey the study committee about what we should measure and report back for further discussion at next meeting. Megan said that the SOCPA and SMTC are currently discussing RFP for a similar survey – Greg will consult with Megan about possible collaboration. Phone directory will probably be used to select telephone survey sample – most scientific. Possibilities for separate surveys of university students (less likely to be in phone book), business community (MDA and Chamber members, e.g.) were discussed. The PP subgroup will also help with distribution of info ... among other things, Greg is creating a Facebook page for OCL that will help us to extend our network of “Fans”, make them aware of sessions and link to the blog.

NEWLY RECOMMENDED RESOURCES (Other Resources listed on http://onondagacitizensleague.org/ocl_studies/2009/study_resources.htm):

Victoria Transport Policy Institute Online TDM Encyclopedia - <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/index.php>

Sustainable Tompkins - <http://www.sustainabletompkins.org/>

Earth Day Network - <http://www.earthday.net/> (Earth Day is April 22)

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, Sept.1, 4 – 5:15 PM, 307 University College

Agenda: Update on Public Perceptions project; Review additional Topic Area proposals; Discuss carbon footprint measures, benchmarks.