

Onondaga Citizens League

“Greening CNY” Steering Committee Meeting Notes

September 1, 2009

Present: BJ Adigun, Jason Allers, Joe Ash, Diane Brandli, Emanuel Carter, Lori Dietz, Hanah Ehrenreich, Chris Fowler, Sam Gordon, Steve Kearney, Dan Kelley, Sarah McIlvain, Paul Mercurio, 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; Green Infrastructure; Green Jobs, etc.; Case Studies of holistic approaches to sustainability; Natural Resources (TBD). Public Perceptions Subgroup works with all topic areas.

9/1/09 UPDATES:

- OCL is now on [Facebook](#) and the [OCL Green Blog](#) has been activated.
- Ecosystems and Vitoria-Gastiez, Spain **Study Sessions** have been set for Tuesdays, **September 15 & 29** respectively, from 5 – 6:30 PM in [409 Marshall Hall](#) on the SUNY ESF campus. Notes will be taken and distributed for those who can not attend.

DISCUSSION

Steve distributed notes from the **Green Jobs subcommittee** meeting. Although the topic is large, so much work has already been done in the community, it is manageable. The subcommittee will meet again and refine focus of the planned study session.

Joe reviewed the **Energy Supply proposal** and explained the division of overlapping areas decided upon between the Buildings and Energy subgroups. A question was raised about including consideration of public ownership of the power system as part of the Energy Supply topic, based on the "community involvement" dimension of sustainability. Since the scope of the study is limited to the ecosystem dimensions

of sustainability, it was decided that public power will only be considered to the degree it has a bearing on the potential adoption of renewable forms of energy supply. The Energy Supply Study Session will be moved up to late October or early November.

BJ provided background on the County's Dept. of Water Environment Protection work toward **Green infrastructure**. The County is concerned with reducing storm water overflow to address the ACJ – amended consent judgment – that requires amelioration of sewer overflow into Onondaga Lake and tributaries. The County Executive wants to do it without additional grey infrastructure. County is still trying to determine policies, dependent to some extent on forthcoming DEC guidelines. Peer cities: looking at primarily Philadelphia and Chicago. Evan suggested also Lansing, Michigan. The County's emphasis is on County /public land actions and also to incentivize large commercial developers, not so much on private residences. However, rain barrels, OCCRA-like public education programs are planned (Every Drop Counts!). It was agreed that this issue is enough for a full 90 minute study session.

The question of **Natural Resources** topic came up. The Natural Resources subgroup (Sarah and Sandra) had determined that air, water and land preservation were probably going to be addressed within other topic areas. It was agreed that land as an economic commodity/the economics of suburban development needs to be part of the discussion. Paul suggested including NYS American Farmland Trust speaker in the discussion. The **Natural Resources, Water& Sewer** and **Waste Management** topics will be revisited.

Sandra suggested that the Study Committee begin thinking about **April 22, 2010 – 40th anniversary of Earth Day**. Possible event(s), collaborations with other organizations related to study? Diane said that Greening USA annual meeting is that morning.

NEWLY SUGGESTED RESOURCES/WEBSITES

<http://www.sustainablepittsburgh.org/>

http://www.sustainablepittsburgh.org/Sus_Comm_diagram.pdf

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, Sept. 22nd, 4 – 5:30 PM, 307 University College

Agenda: Update on Public Perceptions project; Review Mission Statement; Discuss measurements & benchmarks, update schedule,