

Minutes of Sustainable Communities Network 7/12/12

Present: Jessica Beckendorf, Linda Bartelt, Kim Biederman, Linda Stoll, Catherine Neiswender, Laurie Case, Kathy Thunes, Roger Kanitz, Dick Gosse, Geo Dearborn, Olivia Boerschinger, April Mielke, Dave Johnson, Jim Resick and Jerry Wittman.

Roger Kanitz reported on website. Gaps in community websites include only Outagamie County at this time. Recommended contact for Outagamie County is Craig Moser, subject to verification. Roger offered a Saturday morning training on how to upload community information to website. He also circulated hard copy map that will highlight SCN member communities on website.

Laurie Case, UW-Green Bay Sustainability and Strategic Planning Coordinator, spoke on a current project with City of Neenah. She reviewed Responsible Unit history and status. Research focus is analysis of recycling efficiency, using data sets, GIS, and interviews. End goal is to ID best practices being employed by top performing recycling programs. Neenah's interest is how to improve its current program, perhaps using new policy or approach.

L. Stoll suggested that UW-GB make speaker available to communities, when/reports complete. L. Bartelt suggested a workshop featuring best practices, comparative community models and experiences, differences across material types, and opportunities for collaboration across communities. A. Mielke stressed importance of a market-based approach and public education. C. Neiswender supported idea of a workshop. L. Case results will be ready for February Wisconsin Integrated Resource Management Council meeting, but results could be ready for an October/November regional event; she will inquire on this. This event could be a platform for cooperative action. The group requested this workshop, by consensus of those present.

Linda Bartelt reported on mission, functions, and activities of Northeast Wisconsin Educational Resource Alliance (NEWERA). Economic Sustainability model has become the "E Forward Community Model Alignment" (see attachment). This effort (Phase II) is hoped to create a collaboration around economy, education, energy and environment, on a foundation of best practices for sustainability and renewable energies. The E Forward Community Model will be described, along with benefits. And, 2-3 communities will be identified to work with ECWRPC and Bay Lakes RPC in piloting the Model.

A draft graphic model was distributed for review. A. Mielke reported City of Neenah is considering a project with NEWERA to draft a model sustainable community plan. In response to Wittman question, Bartelt responded that NEWERA, UW-Extension and New North all have coinciding research interests in common with Oneida Nation, around bio-energy and biomass production and marketing. Linda B. also reported that NEWERA is collaborating on creation of environmental engineering BS degree and associate degree with focus on soil, water and air. L. Case reported availability of online Master's degree in Sustainable Management, winter 2013.

R. Gosse asked if SCN is interested in cooperating on plastic bag ban. Bartelt suggested we look at bag conversion/reuse. R. Kanitz added we can look at same approach with algae in area waterways.

Community Sharing Round-robin:

G. Dearborn reported for T. Menasha on: sustainable business network, new zoning ordinance featuring flexibility in planning and sustainable building codes; success of farmers market and community garden (all plots rented out in 2012).

R. Gosse reported on progress for City of Appleton bike route development, including use of people commuting to work. He also reported that UW-FV solar panels at Communication Arts Center will be expanded. UW-FV also looking at designation as a “tree U,” working with City of Menasha.

A. Mielke reported for City of Neenah. 40 kw solar panel array at city garage now operating, will be featured at open house. Farm market expanding, more slots filled this year. DIY bike repair stations are under consideration along trails. Considering joining the DNR Green Tier program, as a Legacy charter Community; effort is opposed by Agenda 912 anti-sustainability initiative. L. Stoll reported this same group is opposing designation of Fox Heritage Corridor. April will forward some materials about legacy community.

L. Stoll reported for City of Menasha on solid waste program review with eye toward having less go to landfill. Once/mo. v. twice/mo. recycling pickup is being debated, but costs are a constraint. Multi-unit apartment waste (unsorted) is picked up for free, while recyclables of businesses are not picked up at all. A. Mielke will share results of Neenah’s solid waste review and program results, upon request. Menasha completed biking/walking study with eye toward identifying barriers to trail development, like route establishment, and walking in general; map being developed showing gaps. Another E-Waste collection program is planned for this fall; Neenah and Menasha talked at meeting of having a joint event. R. Gosse suggested educating citizens on how they don’t have to put garbage out every week during cold weather. A. Mielke reported “pair up” program – encouraging neighbors to consolidate waste – hasn’t worked very well. L. Stoll suggested we need cost data on these various practices for communication to muni’s in region; focus on how behaviors and best practices can save taxpayers money.

J. Wittman reported for Outagamie County that it will generate and place data on SCW website this fall. Also, County Administration building renovation will meet LEED Silver criteria, but county won’t pay to have this verified by USGBC. D. Johnson reported “push-back” on designation of bike lanes on county roads, leading to slow progress.

K. Thunes passed groundwater workshop brochure, and invited network members to this July 27 event in New London.

Next SCW meeting set for October 4, 3:00 p.m., place TBA.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Resick

Analyzing the Effectiveness of Recycling for Wisconsin Responsible Units

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

- Background:
 - When Wisconsin Act 335 was enacted (mandatory recycling), expectation was there would be 72 Responsible Units (RUs) – one for each county. But given the strong history of local government, there actually ended up being well over 1,200 RUs in the 1990s. Today there are just over 1,000.
 - WDNR began offering Recycling Efficiency Incentive Grants to RUs that demonstrated consolidation (a merger of at least 2 RUs into a single RU), or entered into at least one cooperative agreement with at least one other RU in specific efficiency categories
 - The greatest success in terms of a cooperative agreement for recycling & solid waste management is the agreement between Brown, Outagamie and Winnebago counties.
- Research project funded by UW System Solid Waste Research Program
- Using 2007-2010 Annual Recycling Program Accomplishments & Actual Costs Report forms submitted to WDNR which are submitted by recycling RUs as the data set
- Data categories in the report include
 - Collection methods
 - Processing methods
 - Materials collected
 - Weights collected
 - Actual recycling costs
 - Outreach & waste reduction efforts
 - Size of RU
 - Population density
- Used this data set and other tools such as GIS to conduct analysis of recycling efficiency
 - A multiple regression analysis was used to determine which variables are most significant for the efficient operation of recycling programs and identify which RUs have the most efficient recycling operations
- Take aways from research:
 - Insight into factors influencing performance, which can then be used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Wisconsin's recycling programs.
 - Identify and characterize the best practices of the top performing RUs
 - Identify any limitations that might be adversely impacting the results of the bottom performing RUs
- Availability of research reports
 - July/August?

NEW ERA/New North Sustainability Program

Phase I: Assessment

- Describe sustainability programs that connect business and community resources at NEW ERA colleges.
- Describe leading sustainable businesses in the region and their distinctive programs.
- Describe public/private partnerships to accelerate sustainability at the regional level. (i.e. Brown County, Municipal Waste Counties Program, Fox Cities TMA Carbon Reduction Commitments)
- Describe community awareness and action toward sustainability. (i.e. LIFE studies)
- Describe national models to develop sustainable, healthy communities (i.e. EPA's program "Sustainable Healthy Communities Research Project" in Durham, North Carolina; Dubuque, Iowa Sustainability Master Plan and Metrics, etc.)

Potential Outcomes:

1. Online resource network with best practices, programs and expertise for businesses and communities in New North.
2. Search for the experts' database
3. Sustainability Index for communities

Phase II: E Forward Community Model Alignment

E Forward Community: Economy, Education, Energy and Environment program, represents a collaboration of private/public partners implementing a Strategic Sustainability Plan built on the foundation of sustainable best practices and renewable energies.

Describe the E Forward Community Model and its benefits

Identify three communities within East Central and Bay-Lake Planning Commission area committed to piloting the E Forward Community Model



Network Website Update Report... July 12, 2012

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Status of website refinement is as follows:

- 1) The contact list for sustainability groups has been reviewed and corrected. We are still missing a website for Outagamie County!
- 2) We have selected Ria, Robin, Roger, and April as community administrators for website. We are still missing an editor for Greenville and Outagamie! Once we have names for all, we can then plan a training session! I plan to send sign-on's to the new administrators on Friday.
- 3) We have also added Shane, Connie, Kathy and Jessica as website administrators.
- 4) The map from EC has been placed on the first page. We would like to refine it to a smaller version if that works so it does not fill the space. Issues? Outagamie County is quite big! ☺

We are also looking to allow each of the administrators to be able to add up-dates to the community calendar. Each person will need to have a Google account and will receive an invite to the Google site once I try to add them to the list. If you are ok with this, I will do this prior to sending the sign-on information to each of you. The intent here is for each of the admins to add the board meeting dates and agendas as well as other community related activities as they are planned (like the Joint Oct 13th electronic recycling day in the City and Town of Menasha).

Note: the training sessions for the site can be hold on a Saturday (or a weekday PM if we ask Shane to take a day of vacation!) What works best for folks? I would suggest a Saturday AM in the near future.