

Summit for Environmental Action

**Progress Report -
Implementation
Committees**

From 11/10/2008 Meeting



Released 11/19/2008

Summit for Environmental Action: Implementation Meeting
November 10th 2008, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
SCOPE Office Conference Room

Context

The third meeting of the Summit for Environmental Action Implementation Committees was held on November 10, 2008. For two hours, almost 50 people discussed improving our local environment, met new community members and learned from each other. This report is a chronicle of that meeting and a tool for Implementation Committee members and the wider community to learn and get connected to the issues and the committee members.

Structure of the Meeting

This meeting was organized differently than the previous Implementation Meetings. At the beginning of the meeting, a representative from each group gave a short presentation that answered the following questions about the group's progress:

1. What has been your group's greatest challenge?
2. What has been your group's greatest success?
3. Where do you see your group being by the time of the SEA – One Year Later event?

After each group had publicly answered these questions, the audience broke up into four small groups – one for each of the four SEA topics. The small groups focused on ways they could help the group achieve their answer to the third question. They tried to link people, resources, and concrete ideas to the Implementation Groups to help them achieve their goal.

The last part of the meeting involved a discussion about the SEA - One Year Later event. Nick Gladding led this section of the meeting and asked the group if a follow-up event was necessary, and if so, what form it would take.

PLEASE NOTE - After reviewing the feedback from the November 10th meeting, SEA Planners have committed to a SEA Follow-up event. This event will be in May 2009. Please visit www.scopexcel.org/data/sea_event.html for more information as the date gets closer.

Attracting Green Business

Presenter: Kathy Keh

SUMMARY

Challenges: The topic is so large that it took awhile for the group to narrow it down to manageable chunks. The group has broken into subgroups to try to examine the whole issue more efficiently. These subgroups are:

- *Finance* – How can we interest local banks in funding local home retrofits so that it is a standard practice?
- *Policy* – What public policy can be implemented to incite demand for green jobs?
- *Training/Education* – What local green jobs training programs can we implement?
- *Retrofit* – how exactly is a green retrofit done?

Successes: The right people are in the room to work on this issue. On a more concrete note, the group has two houses in Newtown that are going to be retrofitted in order to get an idea of what that entails.

Goal: The group would like to be able to know some specifics and have measurable goals.

SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION

Retrofit Ideas:

- Foreclosed property fund - \$7.1 million dollar retrofit these for 'green jobs'
- Polytechnic student training
- Menu for retrofit – focus on low-hanging fruit.
- Make retrofit less complicated. Develop a package to make it easier.

Education Committee Ideas:

- Piggyback on MCC, SCTI, Extension, IFAS
- Think about really low income left out of jobs, train them to do green jobs.
- Create the demand, people want to retrofit & be sustainable.
- Educate school kids to influence their parents.
- Heighten, build up existing demand.
- Working with training for products that need special techniques.

Policy Committee Ideas:

- Private sector needs to lead.
- County goal to reduce energy by 10% this year.
- County policy in the works to (require) encourage production and use of renewable energy.
- A lot can be done on retrofit, including hurricane readiness, energy star, leaks
- PGT does hurricane windows – retooling to do energy efficient windows.
- Take one category and work it through – solar, water, energy, landscape.

Financing Committee Ideas:

- EECG (federal) grants for retrofits.
- Incentives in public policy
- Tax credits (federal)
- State constitutional amendment: assessments don't increase for solar, etc.
- Look at financing models from other regions.
- Micro-credit, small private loans to within county.
- Use SHIP (affordable housing money) to fund energy efficiency.
- Clinton climate initiative model – select 40 houses and do a pilot for retrofit and financing.

Group Members:

Diane Andrews, Brian Bishop, Lee Hayes Byron, Bill Doorman, Wendy Cooper, Kevin Connelly, Tim Dutton, Don Fitts, Nick Gladding, Tim Graham, Kathy Keh, Art Nadel, Peg Nadel

Solar Hot Water Heaters

Presenter: Larry Altman

SUMMARY

Challenges: The committee's goal of 50% of homes and businesses installing a solar hot water heater in the next 5 years was ambitious. Also, the length of time the project took was challenging. It took six months to get the Sarasota County solar hot water heater task force up and running.

Successes: The committee's success came with having a finite path. First, the committee worked toward producing and distributing a report. This led to four committee members (Nick Gladding, Larry Altman, Raymond Kaiser and Bonnie Nickel) being nominated to serve on the Sarasota County Solar Hot Water Task Force. This Task Force will have four meetings between now and January, with the final product being a recommendation on how to create a solar hot water heater utility in Sarasota County.

Goal: To see action from Sarasota County on creating a solar hot water heater utility.

SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION

- The best way to help right now may be to show public support for the idea of a solar hot water utility and for the creation of a task force. Their meetings will be open to the public – attend and show your enthusiasm. Write and talk to your County Commissioners in support of this project.
- There may be an opportunity for the green business committee to work with the solar hot water committee.

Group Members:

Leo Bellil, Tom Harriman, Joseph Hochadel, Nick Gladding, Raymond Kaiser, Donna Krabill, Bonnie Nickel, Nina Powers, Betsy Roberts, Rich Swier, Gerry Swormstedt, Bruce Zeitlin

Alternative Water Use

&

Low Impact Development

Presenter: Tim Rumage

SUMMARY

Challenges: The scale of the project was large to begin with, and made larger when the two committees merged. Alternative water sources and low impact development are similar but not identical topics, so the merger added another layer of information to an already large topic. However, they are both based on the historical assumption that water is cheap and/or free, which may be the biggest challenge that the group faces. Because of this assumption, people are reluctant to change the ways and quantities of water they use.

Successes: The mutual self-delusion that the committee can pull this off! There have also been recent successes in forming four subcommittees:

- *Water Budget/Water Audit* – These are two documents meant to work on a scale from household to watershed. A Water Budget is an assessment of the total water available to an area, and a Water Audit is an assessment of the water an area is using and how they could use water more efficiently. This subcommittee is developing questions for both of the above tools.
- *Pelican Cove* – This subcommittee is exploring opportunities to retrofit Pelican Cove, a condo community in Osprey. Currently they are working on getting the funding for meters for Pelican Cove's wells. With well meters they will be able to learn how much water the community is actually using in order to recommend future water saving measures.
- *Indoor Water Use* – This subcommittee is looking for the water equivalent to the Compact Fluorescent Light bulb – a simple tool that greatly reduces water use, is easy for residents to implement and will get people thinking about other ways to reduce water use.
- *Outdoor Water Use* – This subcommittee is looking at a variety of ways to reduce outdoor water use. These ways include high cost/high time things (cisterns, bioswales) as well as easier things (rainbarrels, rain gardens).

Goals: Lay out the water budget/water audit process, have data for Pelican Cove total water use, have found the indoor water use CFL, increase linkages and conversations with the city and county.

Group Members:

Grant Beatt, Jack Burden, Chuck Butterfield, Theresa Conner, Suzanne Dameron, Charlie Fellmeth, Leann Fellmeth, Nick Gladding, Chuck Henry, Claire Kanter, Dick Kanter, Roger Landry, Ellen Maloff, Jack Merriam, Gary Raulerson, Tim Rumage, Steve Suau, Rob Wright

Transit Oriented Development

Presenter: Jennifer Shafer

SUMMARY

Challenges: Framing the problem and finding an effective angle. The group took a very long time to structure transit oriented development into a manageable issue.

Successes: The choice to focus on Bee Ridge as a case study was an early success. Recent successes have come by inviting other groups into the conversation and partnering with some of them. Recent partners include the Triangle group and New College students.

Goal: The committee is aiming to reach out to various community groups in the Bee Ridge area between now and February 2009 to build momentum and excitement about a larger forum in spring 2009. The purpose of this forum would be to demonstrate the local will to redevelop Bee Ridge road in a way that makes transit possible. After the forum, the group would present their findings to the county commissioners and then be finished with the project.

SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION

- A one-on-one with each county and city commissioner may be helpful to ensure that they are 'in the loop' about what the group is working on.
- Sarasota County is bringing in Stephanos Polyzoides, a nationally renowned New Urbanist, as a local consultant. There may be an opportunity for the TOD group to meet with him.
- The group should work toward bringing in neighborhood and community associations with the city of Sarasota.
- The group could work toward developing an outreach plan and a timeline.
- Myflorida.com will have neighborhood association contacts if they are registered as a 501c3.
- The group should call a meeting with the folks who are putting together the PowerPoint for outreach in order to make sure that its message is one that the group agrees on.
- Suggested outcomes from the forum include: a summary for the public, identification of local leaders and a list of identified obstacles to making TOD a reality.
- The group could do an outreach survey to determine current transit use and where there are existing deficits in the current transit system.

Group Members:

Millie Headdy, Julie Morris, Terry Osborn, Susan Scott, Jennifer Shafer, Linda Spivey, Frank Folsom Smith, Del, Raymond Kaiser

Thoughts on a SEA – One Year Later Event

The attendees suggested that an event would be worthwhile because it would:

- Celebrate the successes of the working groups.
- Educate the public on the benefits of the 4 initiatives and on the fact that there is community involvement in improving our environment.
- Have the possibility to draw out funding for some group's work.
- Show that the SEA Event had an outcome and a follow-up. The public needs to know that this event didn't just wither away, but has legs.

The attendees cautioned that any event would be careful to:

- Be useful to the working groups and didn't add unhelpful stressful work.
- Be useful to the planners and organizers so that it didn't use many of SCOPE and partner's resources to little affect.
- Avoid preaching to the choir and be sure to have widespread community buy-in

Suggestions on the format of the event included:

- Small presentation starting in January to drum up excitement for a bigger event in March.
- Highlighting one idea to present a coherent presentation on a single idea, acknowledging that the implementation groups are proceeding at different paces.
- Share some of the Implementation Committees process in getting to where they are for the Year After event.
- Bring in experts who could advise the implementation committees and also be a draw for the public.