

Onondaga Citizens League  
"Greening CNY" Steering Committee Meeting Notes

**October 22, 2009**

Present: Jonnell Allen, Jason Allers, Peter Arsenault, Joe Ash, Diane Brandli, Frank Cetera, Dave Coburn, Megan Costa, Lori Dietz, Chris Fowler, Sam Gordon, Karen Kitney, Rick Martin, Greg Michel, Greg Munno, Evan Newell, Mary Jane Szczesniak, Amanda Westerdahl, Sandra Barrett.

**UPCOMING STUDY SESSIONS:**

Managing Solid Waste **Tuesday, Oct. 27, 12-1:30 PM**, Chamber of Commerce  
Renewable Energy 101. (ESF event) **Wednesday, Nov. 4, 4:30 – 6:30 PM**, Whitman School  
Local Food Systems (TMR event) **Thursday, Nov. 12, 8:15 – 9:15 AM**, Drumlins  
County Save the Rain (TMR event), **Thursday, Nov. 19, 8:15 – 9:15 AM**, Drumlins

**10/22/09 UPDATES:**

**New study committee member:** Frank Cetera, of OCC Small Business Development Center and Alchemical Nursery

Articles of interest: <http://www.ceosforcities.org/news/entry/2591/new-study-shows-more-walkable-homes-are-worth-more>  
<http://www.inhabitat.com/2009/10/21/join-our-chat-with-boston-bike-czar-nicole-freedman-this-thurs-at-2pm-est/>

There is a **greenstudy** page on [Wikispaces.com](http://www.wikispaces.com)

**DISCUSSION**

Sam Gordon, Chris Fowler and Megan Costa reported on the **Revitalizing NY Summit** in Schenectady on Oct. 7. The conference was co-sponsored by [Empire State Future](http://www.empirestatefuture.com) and the [NYS Dept. of State](http://www.nys.gov). Syracuse was used as a positive case study for downtown revitalization by the keynote speakers. Geoff Anderson of [Smart Growth America](http://www.smartgrowthamerica.com) was one of the keynotes. Syracuse also seems to be in the forefront of green jobs, using an aggressive innovative approach to attracting green jobs. The conference was a positive indication that the state is trying to show leadership in smart growth; the large number of people there and the networking was encouraging. There was some talk about reconsidering the way State funds Water Authorities - more research is needed on this and whether it will affect OCWA.

It was agreed that we should pay more attention to what NYS is doing to promote smart growth, and also to look to what the county can/might/should do to use the sales tax negotiations, other incentives to control sprawl.

[Study Session chart](#) was reviewed. Addition of November 12 TMR session on local food systems was noted. Jonnell and Chris will develop panel. UB professor, CSA manager, others, were suggested.

Sam suggested the committee reopen discussion on adding education to the study because of its relation to sprawl. It was agreed that the committee could not adequately cover the topic; it was suggested that OCL consider school district consolidation as a future topic.

**Mandy Westerdahl and Evan Newell of the Environmental Finance Center** explained the **NYS Green Project Exchange** website mock-up. EFC will have funding from EPA to design, develop and maintain an online catalogue of local green initiatives across NYS and Mandy has begun to collect information on

green projects from municipalities. It was agreed that this is a great asset and will be widely marketed and it will be a valuable resource to OCL and others. Diane suggested that K-12 schools be added because there is much going on in the Green Schools movement and no current way to share. Peter suggested that it would be useful to quantify and tabulate the results in addition to collecting best practices. Sam mentioned Seattle-based [Sightline Institute](#) daily news roll on sustainability developments and suggested something similar would be helpful for the site.

**Greg Michel of Cornell Cooperative Extension** and the Sustainability Academy explained he began the <http://sustainablecny.com> website because when he moved to the area there was no place to find information on current happenings. It was agreed that the website would be a great complement to the EFC project as a place to capture and share other community sustainability information and initiatives but a sponsor/funding source must be found. The issue will be revisited. It was noted that CoE has registered for Syracuse on the Greenmaps.org platform but it has not been developed.

**Greg Munno** explained the **Wiki** greenstudy page he started on [Wikispaces.com](#) so that committee members could collaboratively develop the public opinion survey questions. It is a simple process to register and to use. Sandra added a page on Earth Day to collect suggestions and information on events.

Frank reported that the SBDC is developing a set of standards and a certification process for small green business. It would be cost free v. the ISO process.

#### **NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: TBD**

**Possible Agenda:** Update on Public Perceptions project; Measurements & benchmarks; Status Report

#### **REVIEW**

#### **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 (notes from past sessions are on website)** - 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.

OCL is now on [Facebook](#) and the [OCL Green Blog](#) has been activated.

There is a greenstudy page on [Wikispaces.com](#)

**Reminder: April 22, 2010 – 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day**