

SBI Notes from Discussion on June 19, 2012 Sub-Committee Discussion

Education Sub-Committee – Discussion led by Jaime Ewalt

Questions:

Are you aware of effective tools for education and sustainability accounting?

What are the most meaningful delivery mechanism for information?

- Suggestions / Ideas: Utilize young people / students as resource.
Work with NJ Sustainable Schools Network, NJHEPs, Eco Schools, EIRC, NJEA (<http://www.njea.org/>)
- Tools are available from Colleges – Can get hands on help,
 - Students are already learning full cost accounting at business schools such as FDU
 - Existing business and academic network: the Innovation Network:
 - Use these connections in the form on interns from universities to businesses.
- Regarding Property Owners vs. Renters Issue
 - Need to approach together (tenant and landlord)-it is a mutual relationship with reinforcing responsibilities that should be recognized
 - Focus on Property owners, contact:
NAIOP NJ Chapter - <http://www.naiopnj.org/>
NJ Apartment Association - <http://www.njaa.com/>
 - SJ Letter – Renter to Owner
Renter from Mayor to Business Owners
 - Need to find a way to make the Clean Energy funds work for small businesses (so many limitations and most businesses fall just outside the cut-offs)
- Small Business info should be short, pre-digested, give them baby steps that they can take.
- Really important to have person to person communication (networking events and shared best practices/ storytelling)
- Prevailing wage is very big issues currently.
- Need marketing to sustain messaging
 - Use municipalities (SJ), for example on Direct Install program because people open mail from their municipality.
- Need to case study best practices
 - Jeanna's books focus on small business case studies.

- Create a higher purpose for SBI. Don't underestimate people—they want to be a part of something bigger than them. Need to outline or highlight the higher purpose and mission of sustainability.
- Need to let businesses know that long term costs will be less. Need to quantify ROI. Businesses need to see financial incentives and marketing opportunities.
- Need to cut through the clutter of information out there
 - Provide a one-stop for resources, tools, best practices, case studies

Incentives Sub-Committee – Discussion led by Jerri Weigand

Questions:

Which incentive is most valuable?

What are we missing within the existing categories that would incent businesses to participate?

- Regarding first Incentive idea - **Publicizing Financial Incentives:**
Post all agency financial incentives for small and medium sized businesses together on DEP, EDA and BPU websites. Comment: This is short term and doable.
 - Incorporate the time incentives (saved) (as well as the direct monetary payback)
 - Incentives should match upfront costs and difficulty of the task

Ultimate goal is to give extra points on applications for financial incentives to SBI-certified businesses. Comment: This is long term and depends on certification piece of the program.

- Re: technical assistance – Find other small businesses / technical centers – link to NJSBDC
- Mentoring – there are examples of where this is happening, e.g. pharmaceuticals and NJ Association for Woman Business Owners
 - Bring in champions to describe best practices and wins as well as lessons
- Somerset County Business Partnership is implementing similar strategies, e.g. mentoring, small business focus, awards and recognition
- Need more exposure to those businesses that ARE doing something. Give case studies of businesses who are working toward sustainability. Comcast has done some pro bono work on video clips for others. Idea- ask them to produce short

clips illustrating small businesses implementation of various sustainability concepts.

- Provide resources in the form of a continuum, so resources for those just getting started in sustainability, and those who want to advance beyond the basics.
- Needs to be businesses working WITH communities-reinforcing
- A survey of businesses was performed and asked businesses what incentives are important. Results showed mentoring, awards, recognition and marketing advantage were most important.
- Add networking opportunities as an advantage to SBI participation.

Certification Sub-Committee – Discussion led by Ky Asral

Is certification meaningful?

How are your sustainability efforts being measured?

- Does certification matter? It depends... If it increases market share or if it is tied to incentives – Yes! All activities are at different levels and have different meanings to different sectors
- Certification needs to be tied to the reward.
- Need to define a group of certifications that are viable.
- Do we need certification from the start?
- On website – need different points of entry.
 - For education – no certification needed
 - For product purchase – yes, need certification
- Measurement systems?
 - Look at Rutgers
 - Look at Hospitals
 - Be careful assuming correlation between nature of chemicals used and sick days-many chemicals (including innocuous ones) are misused.
- Look at ISO 2600

Cross Cutting

- Recommendation – to develop a video that tells the story – needs to appeal to the human element. Include a business that has actually implemented sustainability into its practices. Contact Comcast – have done them for Free.
- Should identify, map the synergy of what organizations (NGOs, private firms, municipalities, associations, etc) are doing (training, certifications, incentives) that promote sustainability. Would be useful if SBI would coordinate and help build the synergy.