

## Sustainability Education Meeting – Bridgewater, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009

### **Participants**

- Bettina Grunwald – Realtor
- Jim Drescher – Windhorse Farm
- Leon De Vreede – Bridgewater sustainability
- Cate Trueman – Mindshift, Acadia Grad Student
- Bernie Maughan – Sustainable Bridgewater
- Bill Smith – Chiropractor
- Pam Birdsall – Chair of Mahone Bay ICS committee
- Gary Ramey – NDP Candidate, K Burg West
- Dana Doiron – South Shore Regional School Board
- Louise Hopper – Public health south shore health
- Susan Bone – Environment Canada
- Sherry Hudson – CCG
- Rosmarie Bradley – Healing Nature Heal
- Joanne Jefferson – Second Story Women's Centre
- Shawn Henderson – Henderson's Cleaning Maintenance
- David Hapley – Dave's Vacuum Clinic
- Amanda Lavees – MTRI
- Cindy Rubinfino – MTRI
- Leif Helmer – NS Environment
- Larry Bell - NSEN Board
- Andrea Cleland – Global Education Association
- Julia Bubrin – Katimavik project leader
- George McKiel – Elderfit-Lunenburg
- Chris Ives – Windhorse Farm intern
- David Nodding – TNG
- Carla Silver – TNG, River Song
- Marven Nodding – TNG
- Dylan Harding – Little Feet Yurts
- Brenden Vogel – Town of Kentville ICSP
- Richard Belsinger – Halifax Shambhala Centre, Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative
- George Mossman – NDP constituent, Lunenburg
- Daniel Church – Windhorse Farm intern

### Tamara

- we get funding through LSF
- formal (schools), informal (society) and non-formal (media) sector
- last year met in Halifax, Truro and Wolfville
- announcement about Feb 18<sup>th</sup> in Halifax and March 6<sup>th</sup> in Antigonish
- EGSPA
- three pillar of sustainable education: social, environmental, and economic
- Overview of our projects: Sierra Club (ecological footprint), ACSI (natural step), press coverage, Peaceful Schools International
- announcement: symposium -- health, recreation and sustainability; possibly pre-conference with outdoor conference

### Leon's Presentation (pdf of Leon's presentation)

- Education for Sustainability and the Sustainable Bridgewater Project
- Society has changed – new perception that another world is possible
- Important to look at all the needs of community when it comes to sustainability
- 1. Municipal planning for sustainability
  - why address sustainability? - affects all sectors – health, education, etc.

- a lot of \$ in the Federal Gas Tax Program – to access money, sustainable plan is required, Bridgewater has \$1.5 million, lots of potential
- every municipality in NS has to do sustainability planning – they need help
- realities – knowledge gap in government, lack of frameworks, short time-line, public engagement can be tough(\*\*), more funding needed, municipalities are stretched as it is
- if you don't plan early you will have trouble
- see slides
- 2. Sustainable Bridgewater
  - Natural step – adopted by Bridgewater, offices in 9 countries around the world
  - see slides
- 3. Meaning of life
  - sustainability 1.0 – resulted in nothing, no direction, now moving into version 2.0, need to move into 3.0
  - see slides

Why is sustainability important? – group comments

- For survival – clean air, clean water, etc.
- when recycling program started, people were upset, but people bought in quick – same could be true when it comes to sustainability education
- people need to understand how being more sustainable will help them, their families, their neighbours, etc.

How can SENSE, public and local governments mobilize society?

- wants vs. needs – exploring the differences
- what 3 areas would you work on? - 1) Energy - , 2) Citizen engagement processes, 3) Transit and transportation
- getting into schools and engaging youth
- business, voluntary sector and government has to lead and have to work together, great capacity exists within rural areas who know how to live sustainably
- lack of capacity in bringing people together, important for people who work with the public to get involved with these processes
- the rural folk are smarter than you think, don't make people feel belittled
- move from the abstract to the concrete
- women's centers want to show government bodies the expertise of women's groups when it comes to social change
- in Kentville – environmental advisory committee includes members of the public which makes a big difference (could be a great, progressive model), if the mayor takes a flight, it has to be carbon offsetted, banning bottled water, anti-idling
- please look at the 16 values in the Earth Charter in Action – NSEN plans to go into schools and have people sign on to the Earth Charter

#### Jim, Windhorse Farm

- will talk a bit about Windhorse farm and about how this is the most exciting time to be a human on earth, the third great evolution (agricultural, industrial, now turning toward life)
- few communities have engaged with 3.0, they are communities that have hit rock bottom
- ecological systems are collapsing – local , regional and global level
- still doesn't get people's attention
- economic systems are collapsing, that affects people in a more personal way, every month, millions are losing their jobs,
- kinds of changes will not happen until we reach rock-bottom
- can't fix the current economic system, it needs to be changed fundamentally
- how do we use this opportunity of economic collapse to change?
- Windhorse Farm – family farm, practice earth stewardship, forestry, wood products, clean energy, agriculture, education – offer opportunities for people and organizations to come, incredible natural place, harvested every year for the last 169 years still going strong, everyone is

invited (can hold meetings, come for fun, etc), is it sustainable? No, but each day it is closer, uses Natural Step

- "While deepening our experience of nothing missing, we travel a path of earth stewardship, which leads toward a more and just and sustainable society" – how do we reconcile view that there is no problem with our current crisis?
- 3.0 is about enrichment not just solving problems
- earth stewardship is a path – 1) refraining from causing harm and 2) enriching the lives of other beings as much as possible,
- wealth – problem is we have synonymized wealth with money, need to look at it from different angles (e.g., biomass, sunlight, clean air, peace, compassion) – how do you create wealth? -- in communities through generosity, how do we increase it? – many positive feedback loops
- questions
- how can we reach people outside this community and teach them that wealth does not mean money?
- encouraging that each person here represents a group
- a large part of it is meeting people where they are at – education
- education should be put back into family setting
- 10 years ago sustainability, organic, etc. were hardly there, things have changed, need to realize that sometimes things take time, we are doing things
- our own values have been displaced by the beliefs that are thrown at us by the media, seems to me that we have to address the issue of media's control over society
- don't have to start with teenagers, can start younger,
- in developing countries – most successful social efforts are done by women
- generosity – when you give more, more comes, be generous to ourselves, communities, etc., it spreads, mobilize by doing
- start with yourself and your family
- just putting the ideas out there can work
- students from Calgary, many are wealthy, from oil business, come in one way and really seem to change
- involving people even if they aren't that interested in, sometimes they come in for the wrong reasons but are converted, need to be ok with disinterest (sometimes people don't think they like environment – stigma)

#### Andrea - Global Education Association

- Class Afloat
- exposing young people to the world makes them more engaged in it
- how do you relate a program like class afloat to kids in Lunenburg?
- how do you fight the temptation to shut your eyes to what is going on??
- global education association – creating models that can be recreated
- global education is everything – can be complicated...find the best method is to constantly make connections
- amazing what youth have to say when they have the space to say it
- questions
- funding? – through grants, Class Afloat, dosomething.org, always a challenge

#### David Nodding – The Nodding Group

- computerized cutting table reduces waste
- shop has thermal dynamics hot water system
- feng shui is important for a comfortable work environment
  
- Nodding group has chosen a green path
- couldn't just stay on the farm, wanted to get out and get engaged, help the industrial world
- a lot of research was necessary
- started with small actions
- role of spirituality in business – how can we do what we do in a good way
- put things into writing, then you have to do that, accountability, have a game plan

- started to work with sun energy (made from recycled pop cans) and use local products whenever possible
- creativity is important in greening a business
- solar sheet – heats air in homes
- wash a lot of boats, concerned about runoff from lot, started washing with a solution from BC which is safe (pink solution, sea kelp, baking soda) - \$50 supply lasts 2 years in the average household
- biofuel / biodiesel – big debate – went to rendering plant in the valley, uses fat (from French fries, etc.) he now creates massive quantities, started to run their vehicles on it, just have to clean the fuel filters in the summer, in the winter can only put 20% veggie grease because it gels, glycerin is removed so it won't gel as much
- Wilson's fuels is promoting biodiesels – their fuel is from fish brine, now using fish brine for furnace
- not sure what to do with glycerin by-product, spray glycerin on woodchips then put it in the furnace, so it all gets recycled
- use an energy-meter – becomes a game to try and reduce energy uptake (plug in amount you're paying for electricity and it can tell you how much you are using)
- source separation containers
- no raises until people started to recycle
- work with Dal Eco-efficiency centre – checked their shop, recently got the report
- Use water from rain and snow (roof) for water in bathrooms, to clean boats, etc.
- try to network and find local sources of materials first
- have a green team—educating managers and staff

#### Rosemarie, Helping Nature Heal

- Do organic gardening, landscape design and educational services
- doing things without chemicals, recycling, local manure to create sustainable gardens that do not need a lot of maintenance
- focus on native, heritage and adaptive species – less work
- education services – passing along knowledge, work with second story women's centre, growing tomatoes in small cans, feed themselves and their families
- project in Mahone bay where people are growing their own produce in front yard
- also doing great things in local schools – schoolyard gardens, outdoor classrooms
- Rosemarie puts out an interesting newsletter, can get info from website

#### Amanda – Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute

- bring people together to create a stronger force
- one of the most rural non-profit organizations in NS, low population, high biodiversity value
- lots of work on endangered species
- formal – work in schools, national tree planting day, helping youth environmental group, researchers team up with kids one-on-one, people from many disciplines involved
- theatrical production (shark) e comedy, kids taught them to build a butterfly garden
- training workshops on lichens – huge crowds – people like excuse to get outside
- monthly public talks and summer seminars
- woodlot demonstration – talk about sustainable forestry and results
- moose day last year, this year bear day
- produce many outreach products
- most effective way of outreach is through newspapers

#### Bettina, Claussen Walters Real Estate

- What some call a swamp others call a home
- examples of building lots
- developer likes people to pick based on house-style (e.g., if you want a basement, buy a house with a basement, don't build one)
- one lot has a huge organic field
- questions

- septic systems – there are septic systems where nature takes care, and we don't damage our environment
  - one guy said they tried it with an above-ground system and it didn't work, so they decided to go back to the old system and not try new things
- LEED program – more people need to know more about, certifications for being more environmentally-friendly
- scientist said NS will get so hot and water will rise and everyone will be wanting to come
- responsible roles of government is not only to make new legislation and policies but also remove old legislation and policies

Shawn Henderson – Henderson's Cleaning and Maintenance

- people are often looking for the most aggressive, fast-acting chemicals
  - helps companies switch to green products
  - using a product called eco-pure, preferred environmental cleaner, also like the nodding groups pink solution,
  - environmentally-friendly cleaner used to be expensive and not as effective
  - now there are products that work that Henderson's has turned to 100% environmentally friendly cleaning
- we are impacted by every product used

*Group question: Who is missing?*

- Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, Gerald Keddy, teachers

*Events and Resources to share:*

- Mind shift
- youth-led sustainability education program, [www.earthed.ns.ca/makeshift](http://www.earthed.ns.ca/makeshift)