

MINUTES

Mayor's Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force
Roundtable—Green Building
Bascom-Tykeson Room—Eugene Public Library
Eugene, Oregon

October 4, 2005
1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Rusty Rexius, Mayor's Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force Co-Chair; Jan Fillinger, Mark Miksis, Scott Stolarczyk, Alex Dakers, Brian McCarthy, Reid Hart, Steve Musser, Steve Korth, Roger Ebbage, participants; Doug McClaughry, Josh Bruce, Keli Osborn, Al Dee Sollinger, Kathleen Donohue, Frank Vignola, Robert Bolman, Kristin Karle, Lou Christian, Rod Olson, observers; Terry Miller, Portland Office of Sustainable Development; Lynn Feekin, Deb Noble, Charles Biggs, Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force; Bob Doppelt, Sara Mazze, Ray Neff, University of Oregon; Kathy Ging, Deborah Brewer, guests.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Rexius welcomed participants and observers to the roundtable. At his request, those present introduced themselves. Mr. Rexius reviewed the agenda.

2. Roundtable Purpose and Green Building Background Summary

Mr. Rexius recalled the Eugene City Council's charge to the Sustainable Business Initiative Task Force, which was to encourage existing businesses to move in the direction of sustainable business practices and to identify local niches in sustainable industry that could be further exploited. The task force was seeking input from members of the community who could cooperate and collaborate toward the development of an action plan and related action items regarding the topic at hand, green building.

Mr. Rexius noted that such roundtables often brought competitors together, which could be awkward. He suggested the participants consider the roundtable as an information sharing opportunity in pursuit of the creation of an information network that would benefit everybody.

Mr. Doppelt called participants' attention to the background paper sent out prior to the meeting.

Mr. Doppelt summarized the result of research done by graduate students in regard to green buildings and the local community:

Practitioners View of Needs (Examples)

- Education and training for industry, suppliers, customers, government regulators
- Coordinated efforts to expand supplies through local value chain
- Market analysis to determine needed products and technologies

Practitioners Vision

- Green building becoming a standard practice
- City code and zoning ordinances to support green building
- Many supplies and services provided by local firms
- Local companies producing products for sale locally, regionally, nationally
- These and other actions make Eugene “center of excellence” in green building

Possible Actions from Practitioners (Examples)

Industry

- Hold local education and training and conferences and workshops
- Partnership with suppliers
- Organize “one-stop shopping” information center on green building for consumers

City of Eugene

- Sponsor more tours of green buildings
- Publish articles on green building
- Organization collaboration for research and projects with University of Oregon, Lane Community College

Others

- Support EWEB efforts to partner with City of Eugene
- Partnerships between labor unions, trade associations, Lane Community College, University of Oregon, City, County for training programs
- Jerry’s Home Improvement offered to be green building information center

3. Portland’s Green Building Program

Terry Miller, Programs and Policy Coordinator for the City of Portland’s Office of Sustainable Development/G-Rated, discussed his agency’s efforts in encouraging green building in Portland.

G-Rated

1. Resources – technical assistance, print materials (strategies/resource guides, case studies), online materials (green directory with list of providers—nwgreendirectory.com)
2. Events
 - Rethink--venue for green building education
 - Three month program
 - Project managers describe projects
 - Baseline education
 - BIG (Build it Green)
 - Tour of 20 homes and residences
 - Self-guided, six hours with brochure
 - Personal connection

- Very successful
- Fair at end of tour
- Incentives
 - \$200,000/yearly _ \$500,000/yearly
 - RFP once yearly _ Green Investment Fund
 - Variety of projects
 - Biggest impact in predesign and concept (example: solar studies, energy modeling)

Now, refining the program to stay relevant

City of Portland

- Not required to build green
- Incentives from State

Project Green Build

- Coding—State, local
- Barriers
- With Bureau of Development
- Research phase

Tracking

- # of technical assistance
- Verification of projects funded with incentives

Mr. Miller solicited questions from roundtable participants.

Solar access regulations in Portland—None

Barriers to green buildings in Portland?

- Easier to do code minimum building
- Need valuing from lenders for increased productivity and other externalities

Funding

- Climate Trust and other programs
- Solid waste tipping fees
- Four staff members

Suggestion: Database of mistakes

Started as Portland Energy Office (see Web site for details)

Recommends staying relevant to needs of market—continuous outreach—advisory group

Definition of green building—tailor to audience

Portland is largely responsive

- Clearinghouse, not technical training
- Don't focus on public spaces, but Department of Planning, Bureau of Environmental Services do

Mr. Doppelt posed a series of questions to roundtable participants. Answers were recorded on easel pads and are reflected below.

What is possible in Eugene?

- Need inspiration and education; must make financial sense (without education), allow time for learning curve
- Consistency
- Avoid regulation, provide incentives
- Voluntary, positive
- Promotion—carrot approach to customers
- Coordinated education for consumers—EWEB with others
- Draw upon current expertise and interest
- Determine resources
- Bring big speakers to town
- First step green bureau
- Store like Energy Outlet (that stays open!)
- Educate architects, landscape architecture firms, etc.
- Everyone is a customer, not just residential
- Adopting others' standards can be more effective, can borrow from other data bases
- Incentives need to be across the board
- Remove impediments to building green (City level)
- LCC Energy Program could create database/information clearing house
- City green building advisory committee is looking at code impediments
- City could require some best practices (example, plumbing for solar thermal, wiring for PV at time of construction)
- City office to coordinate efforts
- Bring City person to next meeting
- Requiring plumbing, wiring may face resistance if it costs more
- So monitor and provide case studies, provide incentives, then put them in the code
- Code conflicts with land use (example, repositioning for solar gain costs more, takes more time)
- Staff ombudsman
- City project manager, but no funding
- Eco-charettes to identify low-hanging fruit
- Partnerships to pool resources for support person
- Private sector does a lot, but we need City level facilitator
- Green building link on City Web site (requires maintenance)
- Green zoning—concentric circles gong from city core to urban growth boundary with more requirements at UGB)
- City Council sets goal of supporting green building
- Need one person in City with knowledge of green building for adjustment review process
- City should adopt green building standards with incentives to meet them (example, all City buildings must be LEED)

- Policy for City facilities and City funded programs coming before the council in Spring 2006
- Incentives could be fast-tracked (like current program)
- Reduce costs by accounting for externalized costs—disincentives (example, vinyl siding)
- But, pessimistic approach may decrease supporters
- Work with lenders for increased loans for green building
- Hard for City to stay caught up in coding

Partnerships

Consumer Education

- Market research shows consumers will pay more for added value
- Homebuilders Association
- AIA
- Jerry's workshop for green buildings
- Portland—Green Home Forum: is informal, occurs every two-three weeks, includes an expert panel, Q&A—fee for Rethink, some free
- Public/Private partnerships—Rexius, Jerry's

Social Sustainability

- Bring low-income people into the fold
- Benefits and pay for workers in the industry—living wages, safe workspaces
- Need: incentives, education, promotion/publicity for business providing living wages and benefits
- Hard to find qualified people to work for less in small company
- Organization (City/County) can work only with responsible contractors
- Building Oregon Responsible
- More one-day training within building trades on green buildings and good practices at technician level
- City could take the lead

Trainings

- EWEB, City, University of Oregon, Lane Community College
- Need to train the trainers or partner with educators
- Partnerships between design, construction, etc.

City can encourage green buildings in larger projects, work with State

Communication between installers and designers

Next Steps

- Involve City to eliminate barriers
- Funding for ombudsman, Web site
- City can be overseeing hand (City is already working on three green building projects with the goal of learning more about coding, etc.)
- Green Building Advisory Committee – low hanging fruit, promoting green building, ramifications

- Education on externalities and long-term cost-benefit
- Presentation from City of Eugene Bring together the SBI Task Force and Green Building Advisory Committee (six months)
- Meeting next Monday—online
- Maintenance
- ABC of Being Green

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

(Recorded by Kimberly Young)