

Subject: Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter
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Network News

Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter May 2009 Vol 1, Issue 4

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Network Meetings

PVSN Meeting:
Wed., May 13, 2009

Location: Amherst
Town Hall
2nd Floor- Town
Room
4 Boltwood Ave

Meeting Agenda:
8-8:30-breakfast and informal networking
8:30-9-breakfast and more formal networking
9-10-EPA grant funded deliverables
10-11-Network business
11-adjourn

Greetings!

Welcome to the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter

Earth Day has come and gone, but as our new Energy Secretary, Steven Chu, said in the New York Times magazine special edition for Earth Day, "I would say that from here on in, every day has to be Earth Day." Reading the NYT magazine 4/19/09 was inspiring. Articles on Transition Towns and the exciting work of David Foster, Director of the Harvard Forest, reminds us of how we in the Pioneer Valley really are taking the lead on sustainable actions and behaviors. We collaborated with Tina Clarke of Transition Towns U.S. and the Sustainability Institute to host a Transition Towns training for 30 community leaders this past April. Many members of the Network presented sessions at the very successful Co op Power Sustainable Energy Summit held at UMASS. A coalition of clean energy and energy efficiency advocates, led by the Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Collaborative, the group that developed our exemplary Clean Energy Plan, are working on a multi-million dollar proposal for Recovery and Reinvestment act funds to implement our leading edge plan. Let us take pride in all we do and at the same time be inspired to do even more. This upcoming meeting of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network will showcase how far we have come in building this valuable network for sustainability professionals in our region. The Coordinating Committee, led by our fearless leader, Eric Weiss of the Hilltown Resource Management Collaborative, has made great progress toward sustainability of our sustainability network. We all agreed on our first list of indicators and Rick Taupier of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst will be presenting a baseline of these meaningful indicators. I hope you will all make some time in your

busy schedules to attend the meeting on May 13th at the Amherst Town Hall to hear about these exciting efforts and to be inspired by one another to do even more. I thank you all for the terrific work you do and I hope to see you on the 13th.
-Catherine Miller, Sustainability Planner at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Member Profile



"Knowing the Network" an interview with [Eric Weiss](#)

Eric Weiss leads network meeting

How long have you lived in the Pioneer Valley? Why here?

I moved here when I was going to UMASS where I got my Bachelors and Masters in Mechanical engineering and then never left. My Masters thesis focused on wind power in the New Bedford region and alternative energy projects

Tell us about your vision for your business/organization & how it relates to sustainability.

I have worked on recycling issues in the valley for over 20 years. I see recycling as just one piece of the overall sustainability equation.

Why are you interested in sustainability?

Because it only makes sense to live our lives in as sustainable a way as possible. We are not entitled to over consume resources. We can limit our impact just by being conscious of what we do.

Why did you get involved with the PVSN? What is your vision for the network?

I got involved with PVSN because I knew there were many groups working in many areas that may or may not be aware of each others activities. My vision for the PVSN as the first Chair/Facilitator is to get the network up and going as a resource for all involved. We can become a significant informational resource as we move ahead so long as we keep focused on that being our primary mission.

What is the future of sustainability in the Valley? State?

The Pioneer Valley is perfect place to promote sustainability. We should have recycling, windmills, solar collectors, land use planning, conservation, public transportation and any other "green" efforts which allow us to become more locally sustainable. We must do it here because we have a great local environment to start with that needs our protection for the long term.

Book recommendation: Influential reading for you.

I like Van Jones new book on Green Collar Jobs I also liked

"Silent Spring" when I read it years ago. Another personal favorite is "The Monkey Wrench Gang". Al Gore's Earth in the Balance and movie "An Inconvenient Truth" are also personal favorites.

Status of Deliverables

A Short Report on the Status of the EPA Funded Pioneer Valley Sustainability Project

We are about to enter the third and final year of EPA funding for the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Project. The grant required us (UMass and PVPC) to complete a set of 12 deliverables within the three year period. Eight of those deliverables have been completed, two are partially completed and two are yet to be started. Establishing a network of sustainability advocates has gone very well and the group meets every two months as a whole and in subcommittees from time to time. Graduate students from Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at UMass completed a literature survey on the use of indicators, conducted case studies of 17 sustainability indicator projects in the U.S. and organized focus groups to discuss how indicators might be useful for a range of sustainable initiatives such as local agriculture, affordable housing, and renewable energy.

The sustainability art contest was held and the winner created a wonderful art installation that is travelling to the Pioneer Valley towns. The pvsustain.org web site is in its second incarnation and content continues to grow. Final selection of an indicator set was done in April and we are now actively gathering the data to support those indicators. In the fall we will begin to show indicator information on the web site. Most of the ground work has been laid for the decision support tool intended to assist building owners with energy system decisions and several early versions of the tool have been tested and critiqued by a variety of users. In the coming year we will look to see that DSS tool available on line before we begin to discuss how it might be applied to land and water use decisions.

Rick Taupier UMass Amherst

Local Activism

Since 1956, May has been recognized as National Bike Month and the third week of May celebrates "Bike to Work" week. In the Pioneer Valley, we are celebrating the 10th Annual Bike Commute Week from May 11th- 15th (with additional events on the weekends). Ten communities in the region will host 27 different events promoting bicycling including film festivals, bike decorating, a bike rodeo, free breakfasts, guided tours, bicycle safety clinics, lectures, and community rides. Although Bike to Work week celebrates commuting to and from work, any trip using a bike instead of the car supports an eco-friendly/human-friendly transportation system. Most non-work trips are viable by bicycling because 75% of non-work trips are less

than 5 miles.



The bicycle is the vehicle for our sustainable future. Biking is economical- households spend 20% of budget on automobile expenses; it's healthy- the sedentary lifestyle of most Americans has created an unhealthy society with 66% of population overweight and 32% obese. Lack of physical activity among children has led to 1

out of 4 children being overweight. It's environmentally friendly- no fuel emissions means less green house gas in the atmosphere, better air quality, and a smaller carbon footprint.

Our current transportation system puts our health and our environment in jeopardy by contributing to sedentary behaviors, hazardous pollution levels, and preventable injuries and deaths. Now more than ever, we need to create communities that promote active living, reduce pollution levels, increase accessibility, and ensure safety for all transportation users. Be apart of the solution- ride your bike to work, to school, the post office, the store, to visit friends, and get out and support bicycle events in your community.

Bike Commute Week events calendar www.pvbikeweek.com

Bicycle resources:

[MassBike \(Pioneer Valley Chapter\)](#)

[League of American Bicyclist](#)

[Complete Streets](#)

Tony Dover

Sustainable Development Planner

(& Regional Coordinator of PV Bike Commute Week)

Upcoming Events

May 2009

Winter Fare 2010 Meeting

Monday, May 11, 6:00pm

We're holding an open meeting for anyone who is interested in getting involved in the Greenfield market or in winter farmers' markets elsewhere in the Pioneer Valley. We're seeking input and opinions. We hope some folks will volunteer to help organize winter farmers' markets, but coming to this meeting does not imply commitment to future involvement. The meeting will be held at 6pm on May 11th at the CISA office, 1 Sugarloaf Street, South Deerfield. Help support year-round sales of local food! To learn more about Winter Fare in 2008 and 2009, please visit the Winter Fare website: www.winterfare.org. For more information, email claire@buylocalfood.org.

Pioneer Valley Bike Commute Week Events

May 11-17

See events calendar at www.pvbikeweek.com

Massachusetts Wind Working Group Meeting

Wednesday May 13th, from 3 to 5 pm

Wind Turbine Tour: Holy Name School, Worcester, MA

We will tour the new 600-kW turbine and hear remarks from Holy Name President Mary Riordan and project developer Sustainable Energy Development, who will also talk about the viability of community-scale wind energy.

To those who have RSVP'd already, thank you. If you haven't yet, please do so.

Where: Main Auditorium

Holy Name Central Catholic Junior/Senior High School 144 Granite Street, Worcester, MA

Directions: <http://www.holyname.net/directions.html> Parking: Park anywhere, and follow the signs to the auditorium

Green Drinks- Northampton

May 13th

Northampton Brewery 5:30-7:30

16th Annual New England Energy Conference and Expo

May 18th and 19th, Groton, CT

For registration and information, go to: www.neca-cpesconferences.org presented by the Connecticut Power & Energy Society and the Northeast Energy & Commerce Association

Ecological Intelligence

Monday, May 16, 7pm

Will Raap will speak on Ecological Intelligence, the new guiding principle for sustainable land use and economic development, during a public lecture at Conway Town Hall at 7 pm. Raap is the founder of the Intervale Center in Burlington, Vermont. Sponsored by the Conway School of Landscape Design.

Northeast Energy & Commerce Association's 16th Annual, New England Energy Conference & Exposition

May 18-19, 2009

Mystic Marriott Hotel - 625 North Road, Mystic, CT

New England Energy Markets: Today and Tomorrow

This annual two-day conference unites industry leaders and public officials with a stake in the Northeast energy markets to discuss and debate critical industry issues. Concerns over climate change and an increased desire to control carbon emissions have spurred debate over an appropriate fuel mix to meet increasing regional demand.

Mayoral Debate on Sustainability

Tuesday, May 19, 7:00-8:30

GCTV, 393 Main St., Greenfield

Bob Paquette, host of WFCR's Morning Edition, will moderate the final Mayoral debate on Greenfield Community Television, on Tuesday, May 19, from 7:00 to 8:30pm. The debate will be shown live on Tuesday on Channel 15. The topic will be sustainability. The questions for the debate have been gathered from Greenfield residents, business people and civic leaders by the Greening Greenfield Energy Committee. Refreshments will be served.

[Alternative Energy & Energy Efficiency 09](#)

May 19-20, 2009

Hynes Convention Center
900 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02115

http://www.alternativeenergysshows.com/About_the_Exhibition.html

[Green EXPO- Information Fair](#)

May 21st, 2009 11am- 2pm

Center Court Tower Square, Springfield

[Green Drinks- Springfield](#)

May 26th

5-7 pm @ Theodore's 201 Worthington Street, Springfield 5:30-7:30

[NESEA Workshop - Residential Retrofits for Energy Efficiency and Sustainability](#)

May 27th, 9am-5pm

Brattleboro, VT
Marlboro College Graduate Center

This full day workshop continues to be the most popular at NESEA for the last four years. One of the nation's most experienced, and possibly most animated presenters, walks the audience through a nuts and bolts approach to making

existing 1-4 family homes in cold climates more energy efficient. Join Larry Harmon in his no-nonsense approach to air barrier sealing, tighter envelopes, better insulation, and finding the waste in homes. Learn how to get the most bang for the buck and reap substantial increases in comfort, affordability, resource efficiency, health, safety, and durability. Workshops are AIA accredited for 7 continuing education units. A continental breakfast and lunch are included. Registration is taken on a first come basis and is limited.

To register: <http://www.nesea.org/conferenceworkshops/workshops>.

[Hilltown Spring Festival](#)

Saturday, May 30, 10:00am to 6:00pm

The 3rd annual festival features great local food from Hilltown eateries, live music and entertainment by professional and student performers, and children's entertainment. Also includes a Hilltown Business Expo, an Art and Craft Exposition and a Focus on Sustainability featuring environmental education and renewable energy displays. Be sure to visit the CISA table. Held at the Cummington Fairgrounds from 10am to

6pm. www.hilltowncdc.org

June 2009

TOGETHER ON THE LAND - Options for Sustainable, Affordable & Ecological Living in Community

Friday June 5th, 2009

7-8:30pm PANEL DISCUSSION at Second Congregational Church, 16 Court Square - Greenfield, MA

Saturday June 6th, 2009

9am-4pm MULTI-SITE GUIDED TOUR Franklin County, MA
Pre-Registration Required

More information and registration see VCLT.ORG or Call Megan at 413-624-5128 to register.

Can we build sustainable communities that are affordable and ecological? Yes! Throughout the Pioneer Valley (and Franklin County) there are numerous models for how to create communities that balance affordability, ecology and community connections. No one model has all the answers - but they all offer tremendous insights and for some, may be the answer you were looking for today. This tour & pre-tour discussion focuses on concrete examples of sustainable community living right here in Franklin County. Tour stops will include:

Cooperatively owned homes, Homes on community land trust land, A small cohousing development, A rural ecovillage, A working farm utilizing the state APR program, "In-town" green housing, New construction & existing neighborhoods, and an Intentional community.

The goal of this tour is to connect people with organizations and individuals working towards sustainable community living, offer real-world examples of community models, and explain basic information about how they work. We hope you can come! Co-sponsored by: Cooperative Development Institute, Coop Power, Katywil Ecovillage, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust & Valley Community Land Trust

Green Drinks- Northampton

June 10th

Northampton Brewery 5:30-7:30

Green Drinks- Springfield

June 23rd

5-7 pm @ Theodore's 201 Worthington Street, Springfield 5:30-7:30

Links and Resources

In doing research for the newsletter I often run across interesting websites/new technologies/resources that might be useful (or just entertaining) to further our work toward sustainability.

Google Earth has launched a new interactive map that provides an overview of the carbon footprint of different streets and buildings in the US. The new application allows users to view carbon emissions from factories, power plants, roads and residential areas in order to

compare different regions performance. One of the aims of this application is to help encourage businesses and individuals to take action to cut emissions.

<http://www.purdue.edu/eas/carbon/vulcan/GEarth/>

If you have any links you would like to share with the network email me at adover@pvpc.org



Are there topics you would like to see included in future issues? Do you have a success story you would like to share with the community? Are you hosting an event? Please let us know your thoughts by sending an e-mail to adover@pvpc.org with "Newsletter" in the Subject field.

Tony Dover
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Sustainable Development Planner
(413) 781-6045 Ext. 334

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