



Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network

Network News

Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter January 2010 Vol 3, Issue 1

In This Issue

Network Meetings
News Flash!
Member Profile
Status of Deliverables
Educational Resources

Network Meetings

PVSN Meeting:
Wed, Jan. 13, 2010
Location: Co-op Power
Offices, 324 Wells
Street, Greenfield

Meeting Agenda:
8:00-Breakfast and
informal networking
8:30-Formal Networking
9:00 EPA
Project Update,
Sustainability Indicators
and Green Building
Decision Support Tool
10:15 Making the
**Network Sustainable--
membership drive,
identity building and
branding**

Quick Links

www.pvsustain.org
www.transitionus.org
www.umass.edu/tej
www.transitiontowns.org

Greetings!

Dear fellow PVSN members (and soon to be members...):

I think we had a fantastic dinner and first annual retreat on December 2nd, 2009 at the Green Street Café in Northampton. It provided us with a real opportunity to strengthen "the network", get to know one another better and kick off our membership fund drive in a meaningful fashion. Thanks to all who were involved; Catherine Ratte, Patrick Dufour, the Green Street Café and of course to Woody Tasch who spoke so well about "Slow Money".

As Chair of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network (PVSN) I would like to personally encourage all of our members to come to all of our meetings and to remind all of you that the year ahead poses many significant challenges for us. We need to stand on our own without EPA grant support. We already have raised \$2,000 and have 31 paying members (23 individual and 8 organizational), but we need significantly more funding to achieve our ambitious work plan and many more members to achieve our ambitious funding goal.

To that end I think we need to "brand" ourselves in two ways;

- 1) We need to develop a logo and letterhead that identifies who we are and why we are here.
- 2) Beyond the products developed under the grant, we need to develop a product that people identify with us.

I think an online newsletter/magazine (Sustainable Pioneer Valley..or something like that) will go a long way towards giving us that identity. We have discussed many times that it would be good to become a valuable informational resource about sustainability in the Pioneer Valley. An online newsletter/magazine where we all contribute, could very much meet that need. We would all have a chance to "toot our own horn" so to speak.

As we have previously recognized, we also will need to significantly improve the look and feel of our website and make it "feel" compatible with our mission.....

Here's to a very exciting, sustainable, and happy new year.

Eric Weiss

Chair, PVSN

Member News UPDATE!!

Sustainability at UMass Amherst - Save the Dates

The UMass Amherst campus is addressing sustainability across many fronts on campus and TEI is organizing or participating in many related events, including those listed below. Details and links will be posted on the [TEI website \(http://www.umass.edu/tei/\)](http://www.umass.edu/tei/) as they develop. *Please contact TEI to get involved in any of these initiatives, to find out more, or to share other sustainability events planned around campus.*

Save these Dates in 2010

February 10, - May 9, 2010

Green the Valley: Sustainable Architecture in the Pioneer Valley
[Greening The Valley](#) (Organizer: University Gallery)

Feb. 25, March 11, March 25, April 15, April 29
Double Bill on Thursdays

3:30 - 5:00 pm

Designing the Built Environment at UMass Amherst
Environmental Seminar Series

Each seminar will focus on a new campus building and pair a designer/architect and a UMass Amherst researcher

Sponsors: Facilities and Campus Planning, TEI, Environmental Advisory Performance Committee, Vice Chancellor Research and Engagement, Western Mass AIA)

7:00 pm

Greening the Valley Exhibition and Speaker Series (Organizer: University Gallery)

For the first time in our region, a landmark exhibition on sustainable contemporary architecture and environmentally sensitive building practices will take place at *The University Gallery, Fine Arts Center*. The exhibition, its related lecture series and the *Green Lounge* are designed to deepen the public's understanding and use of 'green' design, and to demonstrate that the key elements of sustainability can be accessible to all.

March 9, April 8, April 27, May 5

TEI Environmental Lecture Series ([Series Web Page](#))

The TEI spring lecture series will address hurricanes and climate change; water resources sustainability, sustainable forests and our connections to trees, and regenerative design in the public realm/connecting art/environment.

April 8

Monitoring and Responding to Water Resources Challenges

[Annual Water Resources Research Conference](#) - *For faculty, students, government agencies, nonprofits, private sector, and other stakeholders throughout the New England region. Will again feature best student posters competition and awards.*

April 25-27

Residency forest canopy researcher Nalini Nadkarni

Sponsors: TEI, Asian Arts and Culture, Natural Resources Conservation, Political Science, Graduate School, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement

- **Environmental Activism Workshop for Students**
- **Community Art and Environment Projects**
- **K-12 Educational Partnerships**
- **Public Lecture**

May 2

Sustainable Landscapes Tour

(Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning and University Gallery)

June 15-17

EPA/UMass Amherst Green and Sustainable Remediation Conference

Addressing the environmental, energy, and economic aspects of green remediation. Call for posters open. ([More](#))

Campus Sustainability Links

UMass Amherst now has a [Green Portal](#)

[Environmental Advisory Performance Committee](#) is working on the campus Climate Action Plan

Member Profile

We need you to join now--if you are not one of the 31 first members of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network

Organizational memberships vary by size of your annual operating budget:

- >\$1,000,000 - membership is \$500
- \$1,000,000-\$250,000 - membership is \$250
- <\$250,000 - membership is \$100

Individual membership is sliding scale, but no less than \$25/yr unless you are a student in which case it is \$10

to join--please email or call Catherine Ratte at 413/781-6045
cratte@pvpc.org

Art of Sustainability



Art of Sustainability

We need communities to host the show. If you would like to host the Art of Sustainability winner, "A Table Set for Forever" please contact Catherine at cmiller@pvpc.org or call 413/781-6045. We will bring the art to you and set it up.

Artist: Jane Wegscheider
photo by Cheryl Dukes

Right Now the Art of Sustainability is in Shelburne Falls at the Art Garden, 14 Depot Street--open house 1/17/10 3-5 pm
details at www.theartgarden.wordpress.com

Transition Towns

Transition Towns
www.transitionus.org

Activity in the Pioneer Valley
Informational meetings in Northampton and Amherst and see below for an article about Northfield's Transition Towns activity

The official "Training for Transition" workshop will be offered in western Mass on Feb. 27-28.

To register, contact Catherine Ratte, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, cratte@pvpc.org, or see: www.transitionus.org -- "Training".

contact Tina Clark for more information about Transition Towns in general

Tina Clarke, Consultant, tina@350.org
Transition Towns Trainer www.transitionus.org

tinaclarke@transitionnetwork.org
Montague, Massachusetts, U.S.
Skype: [tina.clarke.us](https://www.skype.com/user/tina.clarke.us)
413-863-5253

Re-Localizing Northfield

We are so blessed here in Northfield to have nearly one hundred parcels of land devoted to agriculture! We also have an active Open Space Commission, Community Preservation Committee, and Energy Committee. In addition, the Greater Northfield Watershed Association works to protect natural resources and promote a healthy balance between the environment and the economy.

What if all of these groups, plus additional interested citizens, all got together to talk about the future of our community? How can we respond as a group to the current economic and environmental stressors that we are all experiencing both as individuals as well as a society?

We could join together to "re-localize" Northfield, to take advantage of the agricultural and other environmental assets that we are so blessed to have here in town. Taking action is up to us in our local communities to step up into a leadership position to re-localize all elements needed to sustain and thrive. We could move forward to build local resilience and reduce carbon emission.

There are many ways that a community can go about this process. One way is with the Transition Initiatives Model. The Transition Initiatives Model is based on extensive worldwide experience. It involves community members going through a comprehensive and creative process of:

- Awareness-raising around peak oil, climate change and the need to undertake a community-led process to rebuild resilience and reduce carbon usage
- Connecting with existing groups in the community
- Building bridges to local government
- Connecting with other transition initiatives
- Forming groups to look at all the key areas of life (food, energy, transport, health, heart & soul, economics & livelihoods, etc)
- Initiating projects aimed at building people's understanding of resilience and carbon issues and community engagement
- Eventually launching a community defined, community implemented "Energy Descent Action Plan" over a 15 to 20 year timescale

This results in a coordinated range of projects across all these areas of life that strives to rebuild the resilience we've lost as a result of cheap oil, at the same time reducing the community's carbon emissions drastically. The community will also recognize 2 crucial points:

- v We used immense amounts of creativity, ingenuity and adaptability on the way up the energy upslope, and that there's no reason for us not to do the same on the downslope.
- v If we collectively plan and act early enough, there's every likelihood that we can create a way of living that's significantly more connected, more vibrant and more in touch with our environment than the oil-addicted treadmill that we find ourselves on today.

If you are interested in becoming involved in a community-wide effort to re-localize Northfield and join with your neighbors to build a more sustainable community, you can do any or all of the following:

1. Look up the Transition Initiatives Primer at www.transitiontowns.org

2. Come to a movie "In Transition" and listen to Tina Clark, a trained Transition Town Coordinator speak at Dickinson Memorial Library on Thursday, February 11th at 7 o'clock. This event is sponsored by NAP (Northfield Area Progressives).
3. Join the community-wide initiative to re-localize Northfield by contacting Judy Phillips at: judy-dharma@crocker.com

Green Drinks Springfield--Celebrating

Green Drinks Springfield Celebrates One Year Anniversary

Meetup Successfully Focused on Green Business Networking and Camaraderie in 2009

Springfield, MA January 5, 2010 - Green Drinks, an international meetup phenomenon with a local group in Springfield, celebrates its one year anniversary on January 26, 2010 at the WGBY Studios from 5 to 7pm. Green Drinks Springfield commemorates a year's worth of successful meetups bringing together the leaders and stakeholders of the growing green business and community education movement in the Greater Springfield area. The monthly meetups have involved around 20 to 40 participants and have fostered connections resulting in everything from business deals to promotion of new green initiatives like Green Springfield.

Green Drinks is a casual social event, similar to Chamber of Commerce "After 5" events, but targeting business leaders, government representatives, and environmental enthusiasts for the purpose of networking, fostering connections, and developing collective knowledge resources in this burgeoning green movement. According to the website for Green Drinks International "These events are very simple and unstructured, but many people have found employment, made friends, developed new ideas, done deals and had moments of serendipity."

"Green Drinks meetings create a monthly opportunity to take the pulse of this new and rapidly growing segment of our regional economic base," said Allan Blair, President, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts. "The informal atmosphere brings people and ideas together that might not otherwise connect; an important first step to innovation. My congratulations to the organizers for the completion of the first successful year."

"Green Drinks in Springfield has been a great success! People from all walks of life are excited about the Green economy and they want to be part of it," said regular attendee John Kontekakis, Broker, Realtor, Green with Coldwell Banker. "You never know who you're going to meet there, but the one thing everyone who attends has in common is that they're wonderful, forward thinking people. It's always fun, enlightening, and low key. No pressure or agenda. Just get together, mingle, and see what everyone is up to. I've made some great connections over the past year, and look forward to the next decade."

About Green Drinks Springfield

Green Drinks Springfield is an unstructured, non-dues-paying, agenda-less networking meetup for anyone interested in sustainability, renewable energy, all things "green," the environment, and the new Green Movement. Whether a seasoned professional in a green business or just curious to find out what the buzz is about you are welcome every fourth Tuesday of the month at Theodore's on Worthington St in Springfield starting at 5PM.

Media Contacts:

Dawn Creighton, 413-530-0545, dcreighton@aimnet.org

Pam Cargill, 413-210-1245, [epheremelda@gmail](mailto:epheremelda@gmail.com)

Future Meeting Dates

The Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network meets every two months on the second Wednesday from 8-11 am. Breakfast is always available from 8-9 am. We rotate between the three counties of the Pioneer Valley.

March 10--Hampden County

May 12--Hampshire County

July 14--Franklin County

September 8--Hampden County

November 10--Hampshire County

Environmental Landscaping Association

ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is co-hosting the 2010 ELA Conference & Eco-Marketplace, "Expanding the Ecological Landscape" with Keynote Speaker Toby Hemenway, February 25, 2010 at MassMutual Center in Springfield.

Learn how to maximize biological potential, minimize environmental impacts, and obtain spectacular results at this one-day conference. Seventeen sessions offer multiple tracks focused on water use, landscape design, pest control, and application of practical skills. Experienced educators and practitioners provide sessions covering many aspects of ecological, sustainable, and organic landscaping (CEUs available). The concurrent Eco-Marketplace provides opportunities to explore new options in landscaping products and services.

Dinner features a keynote address by Toby Hemenway, author of *Gaia's Garden, a Guide to Home-scale Permaculture*. Adjunct professor at Portland State University and Scholar in Residence at Pacific University, Hemenway will share his design approach based on ecological principles that create sustainable landscapes, homes, and workplaces.

Full brochure and online registration available late December at www.ecolandscaping.org or call 617-436-5838 (attendees); 617-308-7063 (exhibitors).

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 cratte@pvpc.org with "Newsletter" in the Subject field.

Catherine Ratte
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Sustainability Planner
(413) 781-6045 Ext. 311