



Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network

Network News

Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network Newsletter August - September 2008 Vol 1, Issue 1

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Greetings!

Welcome! to the first issue of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network (PVSN) e-Newsletter. The purpose of our publication is to inform members of the network and others about sustainability activities in the Pioneer Valley region.

Since this is our first issue, we are eager to hear your comments and suggestions. 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.

Network Meetings

- **PVSN September Meeting:** 8:00am- 11:00 am
Wednesday, September 10, 2008 ([Agenda](#)).
 - Location: [Gasoline Alley](#), Springfield.
 - [August Meeting Minutes](#)

SmartGrowth Article

Complete Streets Deliver Complete Communities by Dom Nozzi, AICP

Economists use a term-The Barrier Effect- that has become crucial for smart growth transportation and community planners to understand in the context of community and transportation design.

The Barrier Effect, when applied to transportation planning, refers to the "barriers" that over-designing for vehicle travel creates for other forms of travel. To put it simply, designing an "incomplete" street (a street that is designed exclusively or predominately for cars) makes travel by walking, bicycling, and transit more difficult.

[Read more...](#)

Member Profile

"Knowing the Network"
an interview with
Kirsten Bonanza of Gasoline Alley

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

I moved to the Pioneer Valley after meeting Joe Sibilia at the StartingBloc Institute for Social Innovation at Yale School of Management this March. At the end of his presentation he gave an open invitation to the group to stop by if they were ever in the area. Two weeks later I found myself stopping in Springfield while on my way home (then Dutchess County, NY) from Goddard College in Vermont where I am working on a Master's Degree in Socially Responsible Business and Sustainable Communities. As Joe spoke with me and we walked first around the property and then around the neighborhood I could see there was not only something really special going on at Gasoline Alley but also a lot of potential for the sustainable revitalization of the city beginning with the Sustainable Living and Learning Center project in which I am now engaged. So I said 'I am in' and Joe suggested that I think about it for a little while because it was a big decision. But I knew in my gut that at Gasoline Alley in Springfield was where I was being called by God to work. I immediately began a difficult commute between New York and Massachusetts so that I could devote time to the project. Fortunately that unsustainable commute ended in June when I moved to the Pioneer Valley for good.

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

The Gasoline Alley Foundation 'gives value to that which has been abandoned.' We seek to teach financial literacy education to mainly inner-city underprivileged people. We also incubate and provide support to socially responsible businesses with the consideration that not only can business be a tool for social change, but also that job creation is the most effective means of both economic and community development. In short, Gasoline Alley Foundation feels that socially responsible business practices are the strongest economic model for sustainability. Consequently, we focus our efforts in socially responsible entrepreneurship education.

Why are you interested in sustainability? Why do you do what you do?

Doing things in an unsustainable manner just doesn't make sense. If we all did what makes sense then there would be no need for the network, among other things. I believe that when people live in close communities they naturally make the more sustainable choice but since we as a culture have gotten away from that having a network of people actively involved in making things more sustainable is important.

I do what I do because it is right. Not because of all the money I will make. Not for fame or glory. Our Earth is in crisis and I feel that I have to do my part in making things better. Part of what I do well is connect people (network weave.)

I may not be able to prevent the tailspin that will come if we continue as a world on our current path and which may already be inevitable. I will do my best to support others in their efforts to make sustainable changes and I strive to be prepared for the future.

Why did you get involved with the PVSN?

I got involved with PVSN because I see it as being directly tied to the work of the Gasoline Alley Foundation and the work for which I have a passion. (PVSN's focus is on the whole Pioneer Valley, whereas Gasoline Alley is more in the Springfield area.) I would like to see a comprehensive network built to enable collaboration and expansion of organizations/businesses efforts.

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

I think I answered this also in Q#3... When I am speaking to groups of students I always ask them if they can sprint for miles or all day long. They always acknowledge that they can't. But on the flip side most of us can walk a long distance or for many days at a time if necessary. Walking is sustainable compared to sprinting. Simple.

Book recommendation: Influential readings for you.

While I have read most of the books that others would consider 'influential' I would like to go a different route and

recommend an article and a documentary (see below).

The article by Essig I found in a local (Dutchess Co. was local at the time) food magazine and which I thought was right on. The documentary I found to be very interesting for those involved with community because the ideas surrounding sustainable communities and Utopia are often linked.

Kozeny, G. (Producer). (2004). Visions of utopia: Experiments in sustainable community. [Motion Picture] The Community Catalyst Project.

Essig, T. (2007, October-November). Eat local and laugh: The psychology of sustainable eating. *The Valley Table*, 31-32, 33, 34, 35.

Network Feature

STRATEGIC QUESTIONING is the skill of asking the questions that will make a difference. It is a powerful tool for personal and social change. It is a tool for giving service to any issue ... as it helps people discover their own strategies and ideas for change.

At the September 10th meeting of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network, Paul Lipke of Sustainable Step New England will present an introduction to strategic questioning in a hands-on format. For more information on strategic questioning go to: <http://www.jobsletter.org.nz/vivian/stratq97.htm>

The key features of STRATEGIC QUESTIONING are:

- It creates knowledge by synthesising new information from that which is already known.
- It awakens the suppressed possibilities of change embedded in each person, in each institution and in each society.
- It is empowering - ownership of the new information stays with the person answering the question.
- It releases the blocks to change and new ideas.
- It facilitates people's own responses to change.
- It generates energy to make changes happen.
- It creates answers that may not be immediately known but may emerge over time.

From

An Approach to Creating Personal and Social Change

by Fran Peavey

edited by Vivian Hutchinson

Status of Deliverables

Status of Deliverables:

Please go to: <http://www.pvsustain.com/pages/overview.html> for a summary of the goals of the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network project as funded by the Environmental Protection Agency.

In addition to facilitating the creation of the network-the project staff, in collaboration with the network, are developing: 1) sustainability metrics and associated maps representing the current values of the metrics; 2) an integrated assessment model of the impacts of electricity generation alternatives on a number of attributes as defined by the metrics; and 3) a web-based interactive decision tool.

Indicators

So far we have a preliminary list of indicators that has been developed through a combination of bottom up and top down approach. Professor Erin Baker in the Industrial Engineering department at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst facilitated a participatory planning process with network members using a values hierarchy approach to identify what we care about as a foundation for how to measure sustainability in the Pioneer Valley.

At the same time Professor Rick Taupier and his graduate students in the Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning department researched sustainability indicators in both academic literature and in real world examples around the United States and Canada. Eventually the two approaches merged into the list of proposed indicators at: <http://www.pvsustain.com/pages/metrics.html>

In the coming weeks, the public will be invited to weigh in on the indicators and staff will start the process of determining how to collect baseline data.

Decision-support tools

A prototype of a decision support tool on green building is available at: <http://www.pvsustain.com/pages/research.html> With the assistance of the network, Professor Erin Baker and her graduate student Ben Ewing will be developing this prototype into a decision support tool for use by municipal officials.

Physical Metaphor of Sustainability

In the Spring of 2008, Catherine Miller of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission facilitated the "Art of Sustainability" contest to create a physical metaphor of sustainability for the Pioneer Valley. Twenty-one local artists submitted proposals and a panel of local artists, activists and media personalities selected a winner. Jane Wegscheider of Shelburne Falls is creating "A Table Set Forever"-details at: <http://www.pvsustain.com/pages/art-contest-submissions.html>

The public is invited to get involved in the production of "A Table Set For Forever". You can email artofsustainability@gmail.com answers to the following questions, and your input will be part of the finished work of art.

What does the word sustainability mean to you?

Do you feel motivated to live a more sustainable lifestyle? (and if so, what or who has motivated you?)

What are some of the things you do to live a more sustainable life?

What are some of the challenges of living a more sustainable life?

What ideas and solutions for sustainability have you considered? (These could be dreams or inventions you have in your mind but haven't tried yet, or things you'd like to do but don't know how to yet.)

Do you have any questions that would challenge people to think about sustainability in a new way? (For example: "How much is enough?")

Thanks to our supporters: WGBY television and the Academy of Music-Northampton and the Center for the Arts Northampton, WRSI radio and Masslive, and special thanks to our Judges: Josh Simpson, Hilary Price, Monte Belmonte, Kristin Beam, Rus Peotter, David Starr, Daniel Ross and John Majercak.

Moving Toward Sustainability

There are a thousand and one things you could do - or buy - to live a more sustainable life. However, not all of us have the time or inclination to make large lifestyle changes, even though we have that little voice in our heads that tells us we need to do our part for our planet. Every month in this section we will introduce a small step one can take to move toward sustainability. The first step is measuring our impact on the planet in our current lifestyle.

How much CO₂ your lifestyle creates is called your "carbon footprint." Home energy use, cars, and airplanes are how most of us produce carbon. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the main greenhouse gas behind global warming. To reduce our impact we must first calculate our carbon producing activities. Below are websites that have calculators to give you an estimate of the size of your footprint.

EPA has developed tools to help individuals and households reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take action. http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/ind_calculator.html

An Ecological Footprint quiz by Redefining Progress- a public policy think tank dedicated to smart economics. <http://www.myfootprint.org/en/>

Legislative Updates

National and International News

Many U.S. Cities Will Measure and Report Carbon Emissions

Some of the largest U.S. cities will report their greenhouse gas emissions for the first time in a program that will demonstrate to

companies, investors and the general public how cities are dealing with the risks and opportunities climate change presents. The first 21 cities in the program are Albany, New York; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Anchorage, Alaska; Arlington, Virginia; Burlington, Vermont; Denver, Colorado; Dubuque, Iowa; Edina, Minnesota; Fairfield, Iowa; Haverford, Pennsylvania; Las Vegas, Nevada; New Orleans, Louisiana; New York, New York; North Little Rock, Arkansas; Pacific Grove, California; Park City, Utah; Portland, Oregon; Rohnert Park, California; Saint Paul, Minnesota; Washougal, Washington; and West Palm Beach, Florida. At least nine other cities are expected to join the project. August 11, 2008, Environment News Service

U.S. Senators Propose New Energy Reform Act of 2008

A bipartisan coalition of U.S. senators, dubbed the "Gang of 10," has announced an energy proposal to reduce gas prices, lessen our nation's dependence on foreign oil, and strengthen America's economy. The comprehensive New Energy Reform Act of 2008-better known as "New ERA"-lays the groundwork to transition the nation's motor vehicle fleets to fuels other than gasoline and diesel. To ease gas prices in the interim, the proposal includes significant conservation provisions, consumer tax credits, and measures to increase domestic production.

Offshore Drilling Now on the Table for Democratic House

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi reversed her opposition to a vote on offshore drilling on "Larry King Live", saying she would consider a vote if it were part of a larger energy package. U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi urges the release of oil from strategic reserves as a way to bring down gas prices. According to Environmental Defense Fund, lifting the ban on offshore drilling may start to impact the price of gas in as early as . . . 2030! [Read the full story here.](#)

Markey and Platts File Fuel Economy Legislation

Massachusetts Representative Edward J. Markey and Rep. Todd Russell Platts (R-PA) have introduced the Accuracy in Fuel Economy Standards Act. If enacted, this would require the Department of Transportation to use realistic and rational gas price assumptions to calculate fuel economy standards, as required by the energy bill passed by Congress last year. According to the representatives, realistic gas price assumptions "will ensure that fuel economy standards will reduce gas prices and our dangerous dependence on foreign oil as much as possible." Last December, Congress passed the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, which contained the first mandated increase in fuel economy standards since 1975. [Read](#)

Massachusetts News

Several Major New Environmental Bills Become Law

This was an amazing end of session for the Massachusetts Legislature, with a raft of environmental bills passed in just a few days. Associated Press writer Steve LeBlanc wrote, "Tally up the crush of bills passed during the Legislature's 19-month formal session and it's hard to find a politician or interest group with bigger bragging rights than environmentalists." The environmental bills passed this session include:

- The Global Warming Solutions Act (Chapter 298 of the Acts of 2008), which requires the state to develop programs and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at least 10% below 1990 level by 2020 and 80% by 2050. The bill requires the administration to hold a hearing to determine the 2020 target, which may be as much as 25% below 1990 levels. [Read more about the GWSA here.](#) [Read text of the Act here.](#)
- The so-called Environmental Bond Bill (An Act Providing for the Preservation and Improvement of Land, Parks, and Clean Energy in the Commonwealth, Chapter 312 of the Acts of 2008), totaling \$1.78 billion, which provides the state with \$366 million to protect open space from the pressure of development over the next five years. [Read more about the Bill here.](#) Read the [text of the act here.](#)
- The Clean Energy Biofuels Act (Chapter 206 of the Acts of 2008), which makes Massachusetts the first state to exempt cellulosic biofuels from state gas taxes. This should help create economic incentives for companies while requiring that the fuels meet strict greenhouse gas reduction standards. Read [text of bill.](#) Read [more about this Act.](#)
- The Green Jobs Act (Chapter 307 of the Acts of 2008) funds clean energy educational opportunities and a "pathways from poverty" program for new clean energy professions, allows for the creation of a Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Institute at a state college, and an Entrepreneurial Fellowship program to assist business developers entering the clean energy field. Read the text of the Act [here.](#)
- The Green Communities Act, (Chapter 169 of the Acts of 2008), which "remakes the electricity marketplace in Massachusetts to favor efficiency over additional power generation, saving energy and money for consumers, and to support the development and use of renewable energy by residents, businesses, and municipalities." Here's the [text of the Act.](#)

- The Oceans Act (Chapter 114 of the Acts of 2008, which requires the development of a first-in-the-nation comprehensive management plan for Massachusetts's state waters, allows for the development of wind, wave, and tidal power as part of a plan that balances new and traditional uses with preservation of natural resources. Read [text of Act](#). [Read more about this bill](#).

State will Decouple Utility Rates from Sales Volume

In one of the first outcomes of the recently enacted Green Communities Act, the state Department of Public Utilities decoupled utility rates from sales volume, so that a utility doesn't feel compelled to sell more electricity in order to make more profit. Until this point, utilities have collected more revenue by selling more electricity or gas, and lose revenue when their customers use less. That approach creates an institutional barrier to reducing electricity and natural gas costs for residents and businesses. [Read more here](#).

Upcoming Events

August

[2nd Annual Pioneer Valley Latin Jazz Festival](#)

August 23, 2008

Rain or Shine at La Finca/Nuestras Raices Farm, Holyoke, MA.

(on Main Street, Close to Rt. 5) Site opens at 11 AM. Music begins at 12 noon.

Music, as a universal language can bring together cultures and generations in celebration and appreciation. Centro de Artes (CENA), a community collaborative project, and producers Eduardo Suarez and Yvonne Mendez present the 2nd Annual Pioneer Valley Latin Jazz Festival. <http://www.pvlatinjazz.com>

[8th Annual Red Fire Farm Tomato Festival](#)

Saturday, August 23

7 Carver Street, Granby MA (Rain date Sunday, Aug 24)

<http://www.redfirefarm.com/news/index.html>

[Wind Farm Tours](#)

Saturday, August 23

Wednesday, September 10

Searsburg, VT

Tours at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

Don't miss your chance to experience these 11 awe-inspiring clean energy machines in action. The Searsburg wind facility provides enough emission-free electricity to supply 1,600 average Vermont households. Learn firsthand about the Searsburg experience and issues that may affect our region's energy future. To register and get directions, contact Cynthia at 413-445-4556 ext. 25.

[Deerfield Farm and Music Festival](#)

Sunday, August 24

Mill Village Road at the site of Pioneer Gardens. The event is organized by Franklin Land Trust, in conjunction with the annual D2R2 Dirt Bike Randonnee. The festival runs from 2 to 10 p.m. The fun-filled, family festival is a celebration of local agriculture, and includes a farmers market, vendor booths with food, ice cream and other products, sheep-herding, a barbecue dinner, children's activities, music, and other activities. The event runs from 2 to 10 p.m. The gate fee is \$10 for adults; free for children 16 and under. For more information, contact Liz Kidder at LKidder@franklinlandtrust.org or go to <http://www.franklinlandtrust.org>.

PESTOPALOOZA

Sunday, August 24

An afternoon devoted to BASIL, Queen of Herbs. 1pm to 4pm Stockbridge Farm, South Deerfield, MA
Delight your senses with a walk through our lavender, herb and vegetable gardens. Enjoy the flavors and tastes of more than twenty varieties of basil. For more information, visit www.stockbridgeherbs.com

Sustainability & Climate Change Webinar

Sunday, August 26

11:00am - Noon Pacific Time

Targets from climate change experts can change rapidly. How can communities make sense of this, take appropriate local action and still manage everything else that they need to accomplish? www.visiblestrategies.com/form20e.html

September

Green Drinks Come join other environmentalists for an informal gathering of networking and fun! Contact John at 413-586-7350 ext. 28 for events in Northampton, and Jamie at 413-445-4556 ext. 14 for Berkshire events.

Tuesday, September 2

5:15 to 7:30 p.m.

Barrington Brew Works

Wednesday, September 10

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Northampton Brewery

NESEA Springfield Area Sustainability Energy Association

Tuesday September 2, 2008 7:00pm at Springfield Technical Community College, Building 17, Room 515, 1 Armory Sq, Springfield.

Renewable Energy in New England

September 8, 2008

The conference is a two-day comprehensive update on current law, policy and economics for renewable energy in the region. You will hear from federal and state policy makers, attorneys, developers, transmission companies and financial players on the current status and likely impacts of federal and state initiatives, the next wave of renewable technologies to be deployed in the region and opportunities for increased investment in the sector.

Hilton Boston Back Bay Hotel
40 Dalton Street
Boston, MA

www.lawseminars.com/webpdfs/08RENUMA.pdf

[Wind Farm Tours](#) (see above for details)

Wednesday, September 10

Searsburg, VT

Tours at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

[Alternative Energy Sources & Technologies: International Conference & Exhibition](#)

September 15-17, 2008

U.S. Department of Energy - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Wind and Hydropower Technologies Program - Wind Powering America

Location: Boston, MA For information on attending, exhibiting, sponsoring or speaking, please

email info@cardelleexpo.com

[Cleantech Forum XVIII](#)

September 15-17 2008, convening in Washington, D.C. the world's premier investment intelligence platform, providing insight, investment opportunities and unparalleled networking for the world's leading investors, growth companies, policy makers, scientists and enterprises.

[Resources for Homeowners Workshop](#)

September 18, 2008

There are a huge number of \$\$ resources for homeowners that can help you save on your energy bills. Greening Greenfield has assembled all these resources in one place for you. No more searching and wondering. Come and find out how you can find money to lower your energy bills or install solar systems! Join us on September 18, 2008 at 6pm in the Greenfield Community College Downtown Center, 270 Main Street, Greenfield MA to learn how you can save money on your home!

[North Quabbin Garlic & Arts Festival](#)

September 20th & 21st 2008

at Forsters Farm 60 Chestnut Hill Road

Orange, Massachusetts 10:00 AM ~ 5:00 PM

Admission: \$5 Adults Kids under 12 FREE! Weekend Pass : \$8

www.garlicandarts.org

[Fall Harvest Feast in the Fields: Red Fire Farms](#)

Saturday, September 20

Come celebrate in Granby the plenty of fall with a splendid feast in the Red Fire Farm fields.

<http://www.redfirefarm.com/news/index.html>

[Boston GreenFest](#)

September 26-27

Boston City Hall Plaza. Organized by Foundation for a Green Future.

See <http://www.bostongreenfest.org/>

[Nuestras Raices Harvest Festival](#)

September 27th, 2008

La Finca/Nuestras Raices Farm, Holyoke, MA 12:00pm to 6:00pm

[Green Jobs Now: A Day to Build the New Economy](#)

Saturday, September 27

Join other 1Sky volunteers, Green for All, the We Campaign, and tens of thousands of Americans. People of all backgrounds are organizing events across the country to show Washington that we're ready to build an inclusive green economy--strong enough to lift people out of poverty *and* solve the climate crisis. Whether it's an intimate house party or a giant rally, your event can keep the pressure on our leaders to build a new, clean economy that begins to heal the planet and ensures prosperity for all. Sign up to start an event or attend one near you at:

<http://events.greenjobsnow.com/signup/1sky>

Sincerely,

Tony Dover

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

Sustainable Development Planner

(413) 781-6045 Ext. 334

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