Growing your

Green Team

A Handbook for Sustainable
Maryland Communities

SUSTAINABLE MARYLAND
• CERTIFIED •

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Introduction

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Introduction

Congratulations on your appointment to a Sustainable Maryland Certified Green Team! We expect that, for some communities, your Green Team is just forming. We also expect that some communities already have a "Green Team," by whatever name, which has been serving your city or town for years. Regardless, this handbook was developed to help you build or maintain a strong Green Team. By virtue of your involvement on a Green Team, you are positioned to lead your community in sustainable development.

Sustainable development means "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"[1] In essence, sustainability means **"preserving our civilization and the things we hold dear in perpetuity while enhancing our quality of life."[2]**

Communities—groups of people who are interdependent and have the capacity to make collective decisions—develop sustainably in three ways.[3] They become:

1. more **environmentally sound** by reducing the impacts of growth on natural resources and the environment;

2. more **economically productive** by making local investments that will protect human and natural resources while yielding adequate financial returns; and

3. more **socially just** by providing equitable access to resources and decision-making processes in ways that benefit all parts of the community.

Communities come in many sizes and degrees of environmental, economic, and social complexity, and issues around sustainable community development reflect this diversity. Nation states and multinational communities grapple with broad issues such as global climate change, international recessions, and unequal distributions of food across nations and continents. Local communities, the context for your work as a Green Team member, face challenging issues as well. Examples could include declining quality of local natural resources, increasing rates of diabetes, and growing numbers of homeless people.

In general, local sustainability issues are interrelated with issues at the state, national, and global levels. Progress in local communities—for example, reducing green house gas emissions, providing greener transportation options, and facilitating local food production and distribution—all benefit the larger communities that contain them.

Local communities such as your municipality have a unique social advantage in their quest for sustainability: neighborhood-level interactions and face-to-face relation-ships connect community members with one another on a day-to-day basis to assess their situation, create a vision for sustainability, develop a road map for achieving it, and adjust their strategies as needed. Local efforts in sustainable development hap-

pen at the grassroots level, and they provide functional laboratories that provide neighbors with new ways of working through their differences to achieve common interests. By joining a Green Team, you have positioned yourself on the cutting edge of change.

Sustainable Maryland Certified

Sustainable Maryland Certified (SMC) provides a structure for Maryland's municipalities to protect their natural assets, revitalize their communities, and become known for those achievements. Led by the Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland, in partnership with the Maryland Municipal League, SMC is a program for municipalities that want to go green, control costs, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term while being certified for their accomplishments. The program provides a menu of actions allowing a municipality to select the activities that will most help them work toward sustainability. Each action, once completed, earns the municipality points toward certification. To achieve certification in the program, many actions are optional, but two are mandatory: communities must create a Green Team; and the team must produce an action plan.

Green Teams

In SMC, Green Teams are official groups created by a resolution, proclamation, or ordinance of the municipality. They are similar to other boards, committees, and commissions created by municipalities in that they are governed by the same state and local government rules for conducting open meetings, providing public information, and honoring ethical laws and ordinances. SMC guidelines suggest that Green Teams involve about 12–15 members and be comprised of an equal balance of citizens, local elected officials, and local appointed officials.

While Sustainable Maryland Green Teams resemble commonly found municipal groups such as conservancy boards, environmental committees, and planning commissions, and may, ultimately, share some members with these groups, they are not the same. Green Teams will:

- share with conservancy boards an interest in preserving environmentally sensitive land, improving water quality, and developing local recreational resources, but they will not administer properties;

- be concerned, like environmental committees, with the protection and improvement of the natural health and welfare of the environment, but they will not manage programs such as recycling services; and

- understand, like planning commissions, the significance of land use regulations, but they will not have authority to review and make recommendations about proposed comprehensive plans, zoning code amendments, and rezoning and conditional use applications.

By joining a Green Team, you have positioned yourself on the cutting edge of change.

In essence, Green Teams differ from conservancy boards, environmental committees, and planning commissions because they focus their attention on actions required for Sustainable Maryland certification. Potentially, in your community, your Green Team can become a "sustainability leadership hub"—helping groups discern their common interests and creating collaborative, win-win actions.

Green Teams also bear some resemblance to the Maryland Tributary Teams, but, again, they are different. Like the tributary teams, Green Teams are comprised of citizens and elected and appointed officials interested in water resources—promoting wise stewardship, guiding decision-making and policy development, supporting Best Management Practices, and increasing public awareness. Unlike the state-created tributary teams, however, Green Teams are created locally, their focus is on issues of sustainability that extend beyond water resources, their geographic concern is for the municipality that created them and, again, their focus will be on completing actions required for certification in the Sustainable Maryland Certified Program.

Another program that requires an entity similar to a Sustainable Maryland Green Team is the Sustainable Communities Program through Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Like Sustainable Maryland Green Teams, Sustainable Communities involve local workgroups that include local officials, as well as nonprofit and private sector partners. Their goal is to develop and guide the implementation of Sustainable Communities Plans. Unlike Sustainable Maryland Certified, however, Sustainable Communities Plans can be completed by either a municipal or a county government; and Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA). (Completing a Sustainable Communities Plan is an option on the Sustainable Maryland Certified menu; it can be found under Planning and Land Use.)

Some communities may already have a Green Team-like entity in place when they register for Sustainable Maryland Certified. It is possible for an existing entity to serve as the municipality's Green Team provided that the composition of the Team is designed to reflect the diversity of the municipality and the broad definition of sustainability that is used in the Sustainable Maryland Program. Thus, in order to qualify for the program, it may be necessary for existing entities to expand their membership as well as their mission.

Green Teams in Maryland also bear similarities with sustainable development efforts and groups in other states. The Sustainable Maryland Certified program builds on Sustainable Jersey (www.sustainablejersey.com). In addition, cities across the nation are creating sustainability principles, programs, and Green Teams that provide examples for what is being done at the local level. (See sidebar below for a sample of cities.)

Partnerships

Studies of and experiences with Green Teams and similar groups appointed at the local government level support the need to create strong partnerships between citizens and their public officials. In essence, the studies and experiences support the thesis that SMC Green Teams will be effective insofar as they are founded on partnerships between citizens, local organizations, and municipal officials in which all parties be come fully engaged and work collaboratively to advance sustainable community development.

Local government websites
that feature principles of and programs for
sustainable development include:

- Columbus, OH
  getgreencolumbus.com/.../Green%20Principles%20Final%20031706.pdf

- Lawrence, NJ
  http://www.sustainablelawrence.org/milestones.html

- Colorado Springs, CO
  http://www.springsgov.com/Page.aspx?NavID=1056

- Carlsbad, CA
  http://www.carlsbadca.gov/services/environmental/Pages/
  sustainability-guiding-principles.aspx

- Dubuque, IA
  http://www.greendubuque.org

Local government websites that reference green teams include:

- County of Hawaii, HI
  http://www.hawaiicountyrandd.net/hcrc/green-government

- Colorado Springs, CO
  http://www.springsgov.com/Files/Guiding%20Principles
  %20for%20a%20more%20Sustainable%20City.pdf

- Newport News, VA
  http://www.nngov.com/city-manager/strategic_8/sustainability-presenta-
  tion-2-11

End Notes

1 *Our Common Future, Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987*. Published as Annex to General Assembly document A/42/427, Development and International Co-operation: Environment August 2, 1987

2. See http://www.efc.umd.edu/SustainableMaryland.html.

3 Swisher, M. E., Rezola, S. and Sterns, J., 2003. *Sustainable community development.* Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, IFAS, University of Florida, Gainsville, Florida.

The Foundational Partnership for Creating Highly Effective Green Teams

Chapter 2

The Foundational Partnership for Creating Highly Effective Green Teams

Green Teams should do more than merely create the appearance of environmental progressiveness or control the outcome of citizen interest in sustainability. At a minimum, Green Teams should offer municipalities a means for gaining information, assistance, and support from citizens to "Go Green."

Green Teams offer the possibility, however, for much more than minimum-level contributions. Your team has the opportunity to engage citizens in municipal governance, build citizenship, and reinforce the local sense of community. It can be a catalyst for change, answering deep systemic questions about sustainability such as:

"How can we transform our community from top to bottom so that a vision of sustainability drives everyday decision-making and defines short and long term success?"

and

"How can we change the way we do business and governance so that our work doesn't maintain damaging systems, no matter how deeply embedded, but instead benefits and sustains future generations?"[1]

Why position your Green Team to be a catalyst for systemic change? First, it can provide a model for how a government and its citizens can collaborate to build positive relations. In 2010, the Maryland Municipal League and the Maryland Association of Counties sponsored a series of workshops for training local government officials on the topic of "dealing with angry citizens." The initial plan was to offer five regional workshops across the state with 20 participants in each workshop. Once the opportunity for training became known, however, the workshops quickly oversubscribed. Eventually, the sponsors offered seven workshops for 25 participants each, and, even then, the demand for the training was not satisfied. In the workshops, local officials discussed the growing challenges they faced in relating effectively to angry citizens at service windows and in public gatherings, and emphasized how relations between citizens and their local governments have become strained to a disturbing degree. Case studies of Green Teams in New Jersey illustrate, however, that by promoting a sense of shared responsibility around broad concerns for sustainability, your Green Team can provide a practical means to build trusting relationships between citizens and their local government and win-win solutions to common problems. (See Case Studies A and B at the end of this chapter.)

A second—and no less important—reason for your team to be a catalyst for change is this: the problems of sustainability cannot be solved by government alone. There are limits to what sustainable choices can be officially mandated, regulated, and financially supported. To a large degree, solutions will require—for government, community organizations, and citizens—a deeper understanding of the meaning of and need for sustainability, as well as a willingness among both parties to make permanent changes in individual and community behaviors. Your team can lead the way to help people understand what it means to be sustainable and why sustainability is a responsible use of financial and natural resources, and help promote significant and permanent changes in the sustainable behaviors of local individuals, households, businesses, nonprofits, social groups, and your municipal government. As a New Jersey Green Team leader noted, "You can make your team a 'leadership hub' whereby government and diverse groups of citizens work together for community-wide change."

Creating trusting relationships, deepening understanding, and making permanent changes in behaviors—all for the cause of sustainability—are worthy goals for Green Teams. The key to their accomplishment in your community is to base your Green Team on a strong, ongoing partnership between your municipal government and the citizens who serve on the team.

The Qualities of a Strong Partnership

Municipalities and citizens both have responsibilities in a strong partnership that is designed to found and grow a Green Team. In effect, government and citizens make promises to each other about how the Green Team will work. Governments' responsibilities/promises are to:

1. inform the team about its mission, methods, opportunities, and challenges as perceived by local elected and appointed officials;

2. appoint strong team members representing municipal staff, elected officials, citizen leaders and, community organizations/businesses.

3. consult with the team and invite it to be involved in investigating sustainability problems and solutions;

4. incorporate and include the team in designing and providing sustainability services;

5. collaborate with the team in developing and implementing policies; and

6. accept, for serious consideration, policy recommendations made by the team.

Citizens' responsibilities/promises for relating to the Green Team are to:

1. inquire about mission, methods, opportunities, and challenges for the team on which they serve;

2. express opinions about and propose solutions for sustainability problems;

3. discuss, deliberate, and volunteer in the design and provision of sustainability services;

4. take part, in meaningful ways and on a continuing basis, in the development and implementation of sustainability policies in their community; and

5. initiate and assume responsibility for making policy recommendations to the municipality through the team.

These partnering responsibilities are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Partnership Responsibilities for Green Teams

Partner	Responsibilities in the Green Team			
Municipality	Consult and Invite	Incorporate and Include	Collaborate	Accept
Citizens	Propose and Express Opinions	Discuss, Deliberate, and Volunteer	Take Part in Meaningful and Continuous Ways	Initiate and Assume Responsibility

Adapted from Svara and Denhardt (2010)[2]

Green Team Functions and Levels of Engagement

The Green Team should reflect the overall demographics of your community, including members with differing income levels, housing types, ethnicities, races, ages, and neighborhoods. There is no perfect recipe for forming a Green Team, but the strongest teams will be those that represent a cross-section of your community.

There are two kinds of functions that teams perform in relation to their municipalities. Sustainable Maryland Green Teams:

1. Participate in the delivery of sustainability services, or partner with organizations and entities who can deliver sustainability services, such as innovative demonstration projects for composting, energy conservation, or creating a buy-local food coop; and

2. Assist with sustainability policy-making and implementation, such as helping to create a green purchasing policy for the municipality, helping to inform a decision to enact a tree-care ordinance, or helping to implement a pet-waste law.

Helping to deliver services and assisting in public policy-making can be done at different levels of engagement, from low to high. In the provision of sustainability services, Green Team members can, at a minimum, pitch in to help offer a service to the community; at a higher level of engagement, team members can collaborate with the municipality in assessing the demand and delivery methods for, and the quality of, public services. In sustainability policy-making, at a minimum, Green Team members can inform, consult, and help implement municipal decisions; at a higher level of engagement, members can collaborate to assess needs and help to write and evaluate the consequences of those rules and ordinances. The two functions and levels of engagement are illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2. Green Team Functions and Levels of Engagement with their Municipality

Functions	Low Engagement	High Engagement
Delivering Public Services	Help Deliver	Collaborate to Assess Needs and Delivery Methods, Evaluate Quality
Forming and Evaluating Administrative Rules and Public Policies	Inform, Consult and Help Implement	Collaborate to Assess Needs, Write Rules and Laws, and Evaluate Consequences

Adapted from Svara and Denhardt (2010)

Community Cultures

Every municipality has a unique political culture in which government–citizen relations, such as relations between the municipal government and citizens serving on its Green Team, are formed. Recalling the reasons for making the Green Team a catalyst for change—to build trusting relationships and to accomplish what government cannot do alone—the goal for Sustainable Maryland Green Teams should be to move its actions from lower to higher levels of engagement. A strong government-citizen partnership for your Green Team is the foundation upon which to build those higher levels of engagement.

Chapters of this handbook will offer tools to create and maintain the partnership. Included are methods to:

■ identify, recruit and convene Green Team Members (Chapter 3);

■ design and manage a collaborative process (Chapters 4, 5, and 6);

■ organize and focus the work of the Green Team (Chapters 7 and 8); and

■ build capacity by expanding the team base and its expertise (Chapter 9).

The following two case studies come from municipalities participating in Sustainable Jersey, the model for Sustainable Maryland Certified. The cases offer insights about developing and strengthening the municipal-citizen partnership that is the foundation for a successful Green Team. Of particular interest to Green Teams in Maryland will be methods the teams used to:

1. form the foundational relationship.

2. obtain, on an ongoing basis, the advice of experts;

3. involve in Green Team actions, through the use of committees and task groups, people who are not members of the teams; and

4. create sustainable leadership hubs to identify common interests and initiate joint actions with other private and public groups in their communities.

End Notes

1 King, Cheryl Simrell. "Citizen Engagement and Sustainbility" in Svara, James H. and Janet Denhardt, Editors. *The Connected Community*, 2010 http://www.tlgconference.org/communityconnectionswhitepaper.pdf pp.52-56.

2 *The Connected Community: Local Governments as Partners in Citizen Engagement and Community Building.* James H. Svara and Janet Denhardt, Editors. Arizona State University.

Case Study A: The Green Team of Galloway Township, New Jersey

"Go Green Galloway," the Green Team for Galloway Township, New Jersey, has established a strong public-private partnership. The team contains only ten members, but has creatively organized itself in ways to involve many more people.

Located less than ten miles north and west of Atlantic City, New Jersey, Galloway Township covers approximately 100 square miles, a fifth of which is water, and is home to about 40,000 residents. Created in 1774, the township is led by a council-manager form of government. The local economy is more service oriented than is the national economy; nearly 30 percent of workers in the township are employed in service-type jobs, twice the national percentage. Galloway Township contains a public college—the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey—that enrolls about 8,000 full and part-time students, and a wildlife protection area—the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge— where more than 47,000 acres of southern New Jersey coastal habitats are protected for migratory birds.

A Public-Private Partnership

Go Green Galloway is Co-Chaired by the township's Director of Community Education and the President of the township's Business Association. The team includes people who represent business, educational, environmental, and residential interests. A township council liaison also serves on the team.

Two Ways to Augment Human Resources

Since its creation by the township council in 2008, Go Green Galloway has increased in size only slightly, from eight to ten members. Despite its relatively small size, the team has "grown" its human resources to increase the number of actions it can undertake, and the technical level at which it can perform. Team resources have been augmented by the addition of "Advisory Members" and "Committee Members."

Advisory Members provide technical expertise for the team. Although they may attend any team meeting, Advisory Members are required to attend only those meetings that involve agenda items related to their area of special knowledge. The seven people serving as Advisory Members, currently, include: (a) the township's environmental commission chair, planner, and public works director; (b) two faculty members of Richard Stockton College; and (c) representatives of AtlantiCare, a regional health care provider, and (d) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Committee Members help the team create actions related to specific public issues. Committees were created in 2010 when the team decided it had "far too many projects underway to handle," established eleven new committees, and advertised for help from the public. Citizens responded positively. Currently, there are sixteen committee members, some of whom are co-chairs of their committees. Some Committee Members participate in most team meetings, but like Advisory Members, Committee Members are expected to attend only those meetings that have agenda items related to their committee. Committees have been formed around the following issues:

- Bicycle Master Plan;
- Reusable Bag/Bottle;
- Green Building;
- Eat Local/Buy Local;
- Native Plant Landscaping/Water Conservation;
- Energy Efficiency;
- Green Business Recognition;
- Recycling/Waste Reduction;
- Recirculation;
- Environmental Resource Inventory; and
- Kids Go Green in Galloway/Recycling.

The committee structure provides a way for citizens with a passion for a particular sustainability issue to become involved in the work of Go Green Galloway. In two ways, the structure also serves as a team recruitment tool: (1) committee members broaden their interests beyond their initial cause and become attracted to other issues and to functions performed by the team; and (2) members have an opportunity to demonstrate, to team leaders, their effectiveness in action.

Primary Sources: Barbara Fiedler; Mary Crawford; Steve Fiedler and the website for Galloway Township, New Jersey: http://www.gallowaytwp-nj.gov/

Case Study B: The Green Team of Sustainable Cherry Hill, New Jersey

"Sustainable Cherry Hill," a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that formed in 2008, assisted Cherry Hill Township in creating a "10 Point Green Action Plan." In 2009, Sustainable Cherry Hill created, as a subgroup within its organization, a Sustainable Jersey Green Team. To ensure a strong partnership with the township and with partner organizations, Sustainable Cherry Hill seeks ways to create mutually beneficial relationships.

Cherry Hill Township—which is located in the Delaware River Valley, five miles east of Philadelphia, PA—contains 70,000 residents in its 24 square miles. The township has a council-manager form of government and provides police protection, administration for 49 parks, city planning and zoning, road repair and cleaning, snow removal, leaf collection, trash and recycling hauling, public library services, recreation programs, preservation of open space, and economic development.

Known as the commercial center of Southern New Jersey, Cherry Hill Township is home to Subaru; Lockheed Martin Advanced Technology Laboratories; Melitta Coffee; and Pinnacle Foods Corporation, makers of Vlasic and Duncan Hines products. The population of the township is relatively well educated, with more than fifty percent holding a Bachelor's degree or more.

Mission and Structure

Sustainable Cherry Hill (SCH) emphasizes education and relationship building in its mission statement, **"Bringing People Together to Build a Sustainable South Jersey"** (2009). As shown on the team's website, SCH strives to:

> …*continuously tap Cherry Hill and the surrounding region's greatest resource— its people— in order to shift to a sustainable way of life. We do this through hosting educational events, networking opportunities, supporting community based task forces and acting as a general clearing house of information on sustainability news and events. We provide a structure for people at all levels to work together to pursue their passions and use their unique skills and networks in the service of a more sustainable community.*
>
> *SCH is essentially a community group in that our approach to sustainability recognizes that everyone making small changes results in big differences collectively. As such, it is critical that we establish and nurture relationships with all area stakeholders, including government, schools, businesses, faith*

*groups, other community groups and individuals from all over South Jersey. But grassroots cannot do it alone. Large scale change requires leadership by governments and corporations. An educated and empowered populace can put pressure on these entities from the ground up. (*http://www.sustain-ablecherryhill.orgcherry-hill-township-green-team/*)*

Sustainable Cherry Hill is governed by a nine-member Executive Board, led by an Executive Director who also serves as Co-Chair of the township's Green Team, along with the Cherry Hill Township's Planner and Zoning Board Administrator. Technical advice is provided to SCH by a 13-member Advisory Board, which includes members experienced in areas such as business, engineering, ethics, law, and organizational development.

To recruit citizens with passions for various facets of community sustainability, SCH has invited the creation of task force groups under its care. Currently, nine such groups exist:

- Green Building;
- Regional/Urban Partnerships for Sustainability;
- Green Business;
- Educating for Sustainability;
- Way to Go: Alternate Transportation;
- Green Health;
- Sustainable Farms and Gardens;
- Faith and Sustainability; and
- Composting/Zero Waste.

Most of these groups have created their own mission statement, strategies, objectives, and ongoing efforts.

Building the Team-Township Partnership

To avoid any concerns among township officials that Sustainable Cherry Hill might become an unreliable partner, SCH defines itself as "apolitical" and supports township events. Thus while it may host a forum about a contentious issue, it invites participants with differing views and interests, taking no political stand. SCH also publicizes and participates in township events. Recent examples include assisting the township in its effort to promote the planting and care of wildflowers along a highway, and publicizing the creation of two new National Recreation Trails located in the township.

Similarly, so as to avoid uncertain roles or conflict with the township's appointed environmental group, the Cherry Hill Environmental Action Committee, SCH invited leaders of the committee to meet for the purpose of brainstorming common interests and activities. These meetings took place in 2008, when SCH was forming its mission. The result was a collaborative partnership to provide mutual support and take joint actions. Recently, for example, SCH publicized and participated in "Explore Cherry Hill Trails" an event created and hosted by the committee.

A Leadership Hub for Education and Collaboration

Instead of politics, SCH devotes its resources to education, with the goal of hosting at least one learning event every month. For example, in Summer 2011, the Farm and Garden Task Force hosted "Sustainable Floral Designs," a gathering that featured designs of native plants; and the Green Health Task Force hosted a "Summer Book Club," which featured two environmentally conscious books, *Fair Food*, by Oran Hesterman, and *Serve God, Serve the Planet* by Matthew Sleeth.

SCH considers itself to be a "leadership hub" for sustainability. To further this vision, the team has created an attractive and easy to navigate webpage, featuring SCH's history, accomplishments, events, donors, resources, and preferred vendors. Other menus direct users to SCH Task Forces, leadership, and contact information. An archive provides a record of every event and activity sponsored and supported by SCH, including most recently, a visit by U.S. Senator Robert Menendez to announce a bill to offer federal grants to support sustainable certified programs like Sustainable Jersey and Sustainable Maryland Certified. Additional archived resources include a blog by an academic environmental scientist and notable community events related to sustainability, such as the choice of a local middle school teacher to go on an Earthwatch Expedition. Significantly, the webpage links to an active SCH Facebook page and Twitter feed.

While it is nonpolitical in the sense that it does not advocate for any policy prescription, the long-term goal of SCH is to create grassroots pressure for change to advance sustainability in government units—be they local, state, or national—and in businesses, from small firms to large corporations.

Primary Sources: Lori Braunstein, Executive Director of SCH and the websites for Cherry Hill Township, New Jersey: http://www.cherryhill-nj.com/about/default.asp and Sustainable Cherry Hill: http://www.sustainablecherryhill.org.

Involving the Public in Forming Green Teams and in the Work of the Teams: Who and How?
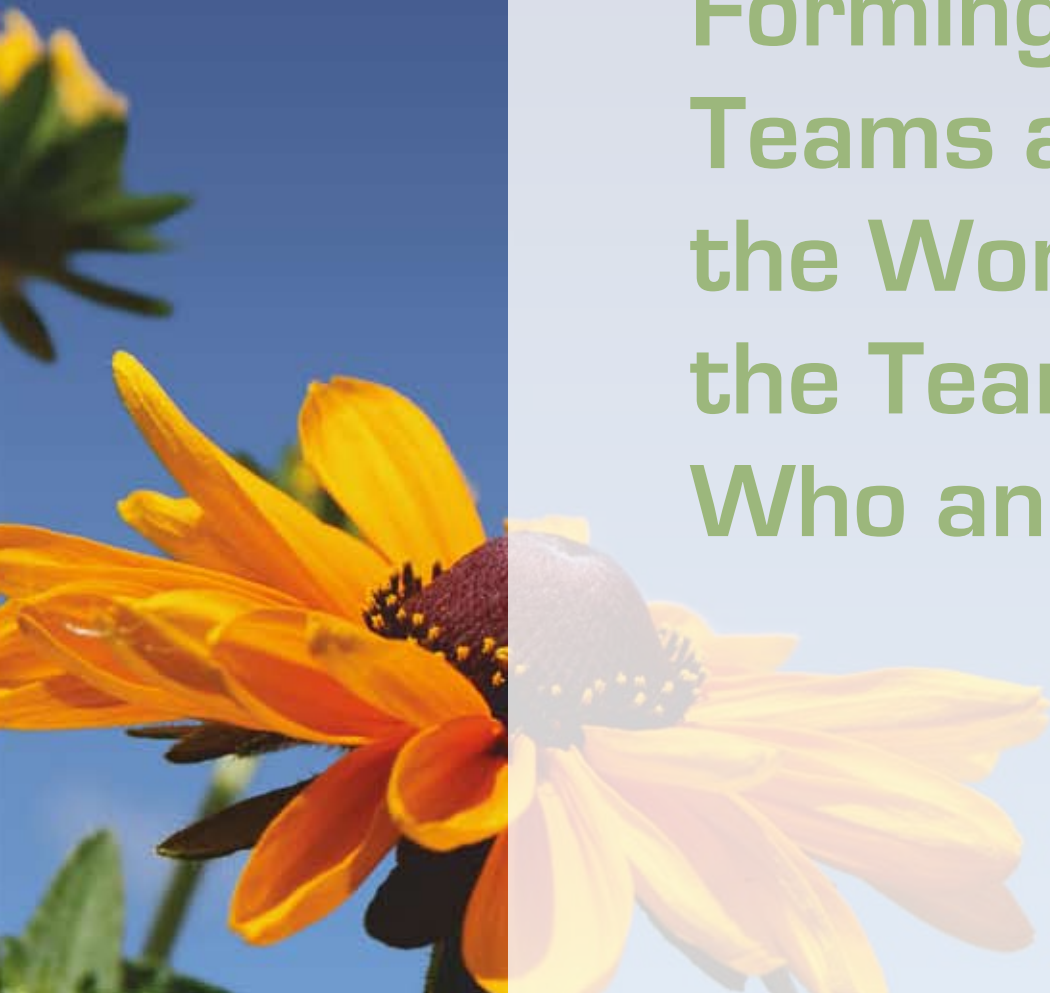
Involving the Public in Forming Green Teams and in the Work of the Teams: Who and How?

As municipalities form Green Teams and later, when the teams help to provide services and create policies that advance sustainability, efforts are needed to involve members of the public. There will be occasions, for example, when the teams will want to share information, compile input, provide feedback, and converse with the public. Preliminary questions about public involvement are:

1. Who should municipal officials recruit as Green Team members?

2. Once Green Teams are formed, who else should they reach out to involve?

3. What methods will be useful in such outreach efforts?

Who should be Involved?

Some private and public stakeholders for community sustainability are obvious and should be considered candidates for Green Team membership and for involvement in team actions. They include, on the private side, local businesses, environmental and religious groups, and schools and colleges, if they are present. On the public side, depending on the mix of services a municipality provides, departments that have sustainability concerns include those focused on neighborhood development, environmental matters, planning and zoning, public works, recreation and parks, and transportation. County and regional agencies that have similar concerns and jurisdictional responsibility in your community, particularly those interested in helping your municipality become Sustainable Maryland certified, are stakeholders too. When considering your region, you may realize that you are interdependent with neighboring municipalities (e.g., watershed issues) or potential partners with them (e.g., joint purchasing opportunities). Since Sustainable Maryland Certified defines sustainability broadly, other private and public stakeholder groups to consider involving are groups concerned with food, historic preservation, energy production and consumption, and health and wellness issues. (For more information about stakeholders, see Chapter 8, "The Green Team Action Plan.")

When reaching out to the public, it is important to provide opportunities for individuals who are not members of defined stakeholder groups to be involved as Green Team members and in team actions. Doing so will create pathways for individuals

who have personal causes—for example cleaning up unsightly trash, buying local products, or increasing the number of pedestrian walkways—to take their issues from the personal to the community level where individual concerns can be shared, tempered with additional information, and made part of a larger vision for the future. As was illustrated by the Galloway and Cherry Hill Green Team cases, your team can form entities related to the team, such as committees and task force groups, to involve citizens with passions for sustainability.

When recruiting Green Team members or forming committees or task force groups, it is important to not overlook individuals or groups who, because of their relative lack of formal education, income, property (i.e. renters), or visibility, often have little voice in public decision making. Including marginalized individuals and groups is a matter of equity and practicality; those whose interests are not often considered are likely to bear more costs and receive fewer benefits of public choices, and they may be able contribute useful information to public processes that would not be otherwise revealed.

Another group that may be overlooked, unless you seek it, is your community's youth. Schools and colleges can, in a limited way, speak about issues of concern to young people; and, more importantly, perhaps, educational institutions can help invite youth into Green Team efforts. Other organizations that can bring young people to Green Team functions include Boy and Girl Scouts, faith-based youth groups, and community Boys and Girls Clubs. By directly including young people in Green Team work, you will hear fresh voices, tap into new energy and enthusiasm, train the next generation in sustainability practices, and involve the people who will be the major beneficiaries, over time, of your Green Team's successes.

Four "Ws" and an "R"

When recruiting Green Team, committee, or task force members, you may find it useful to remember four "Ws"—Work, Wisdom, Weight, and Wealth—and one "R"—Representation.

Work. Individuals and groups who are willing, initially and over time, to take responsibility for forming a leadership hub and implementing your action plan are essential to your team's success.

Wisdom. Likewise, you will need people skilled in collaboration and in the technicalities of sustainability. Experiences in New Jersey's Galloway and Cherry Hill Townships suggest technical experts may be tapped to join an advisory group; that way, individual advisors meet with the team when their wisdom is required.

Weight. There are always those people who, because of their reputations, prominent positions in your community, or both, will help provide credibility to your Green Team. This will be important, especially, when you are first getting started and have yet to demonstrate a series of successes.

> ## Remember four "Ws"—Work, Wisdom, Weight, and Wealth—and one "R"—Representation.

Wealth. People with means are able to donate funds and often have networks of friends and associates from whom you can solicit resources. While wealth may be a factor for your team's success, an experienced Green Team leader from New Jersey commented that it is often "overrated" and certainly overshadowed by the need for human resources; i.e., workers.

Representation. Sustainable Maryland Certified emphasizes the importance of creating Green Teams that reflect the diversity of the community, from the very beginning and not as an afterthought. Including people of different ages, ethnicity, gender, religious background, sexual orientation, and economic situation should be a priority at all times. This is not only just, but it also yields practical results.

Additional Resources for Chapter 3

Resource A: Public Participation Methods

Excellent information about how to involve the public in the work of your Green Team can be found on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) website. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) also provides a website that will help inform your methods to reach out to others.

As shown below, the IAP2 Website—http://www.iap2.org/—offers a set of seven core values for the practice of inviting the public to be involved. According to their values, public participation:

1. Is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process;

2. Includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision;

3. Promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers;

4. Seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision;

5. Seeks input from participants in designing how they participate;

6. Provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way; and

7. Communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

The IAP2 Website also identifies 27 techniques in a "toolbox" for public participation (see http://iap2.affiniscape.com/associations/4748/files/06Dec_Toolbox.pdf).

It includes definitions of all of the techniques, reasons for "thinking through" each of them prior to its use, and ideas about "what can go right" and "what can go wrong."

Turning to the ICMA website, you will find a "Knowledge Network" that provides a "Citizen Engagement" topic; see it at http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/topics/kn/Topic/41/Citizen_Engagement. Once you locate the topic, you will find articles, blog posts, questions, documents, groups, and wikis about engaging citizens effectively in local government.

Another useful topic in the ICMA Knowledge Network is "Sustainability;" see it at http://icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/topics/kn/Topic/253/Sustainability. There you will find examples of outreach efforts, such as creating relationships between cities and colleges and universities, as well as examples of sustainability practices, such as "green public purchasing practices." Managers who grapple with similar issues supply much of the information on the ICMA Knowledge Network pages, providing real-world questions, debates, and solutions.

Resource B: Team Skills and Interests Matrix

When recruiting members, and as an initial step in developing action plans, Green Teams may find it helpful to create a "Team Skills and Interests Matrix." The matrix includes the names of team members, particular skills and areas of knowledge they bring to the team, and their personal interests, including interests or experiences in:

- Team Development; e.g., fundraising, internal communications, meeting management, web design, and public relations;

- Community Services; e.g., community gardening, energy audits, physical fitness programs, and tree planting efforts; and

- Public Policies; e.g., green purchasing, land preservation, Stormwater Management, and water conservation policies.

Following the Green Team organizational models provided by Galloway and Cherry Hill Townships, New Jersey, the matrix can also be expanded to include the names, skills, and interests of committee or task force members.

An example of a Team Skills and Interest Matrix, which has space for both Green Team and committee or task force members, is shown on the page that follows.[1] It includes a list of nine kinds of skills and knowledge areas that people bring to their team or committee, and room to add several more. A two-step process is used to develop a team matrix: (1) individuals complete a matrix for themselves; and (2) after that initial step, individual answers are combined by a volunteer into a single matrix for use by the team or committee.

Team Members	Skills & Knowledge Areas	Team Development Interests	Community Service Interests	Public Policy Interests
Committee Members				

Skills and Areas of Knowledge:

1. Biology/site ecology
2. Business/nonprofit management
3. Community/grassroots organizing
4. Education
5. Financing/accounting
6. Group facilitation
7. Legal issues
8. Marketing
9. Strategic planning
10. Special populations, for example, children, youth, teens, seniors and families, and the disability community
11. Arts and culture
12. Historic preservation
13. Environmental education
14. Residential issues
15. Other

Resource C: Tips and Tricks for Finding Great Green Team Members

- Gauge the capacity and interest level of citizens by asking some or all of the following questions:
  - ❖ What skills have you learned on the job, in your family, or in the community?
  - ❖ When you think about your skills, what things do you think you do best?

- ❖ Are there any skills you would like to teach?
- ❖ Have you ever participated in community activities (i.e. fundraisers, yard sales, volunteer work)?
- ❖ What community activities or efforts most interest you?

- Seek partnerships with businesses and organizations by asking some or all of the following questions:[2]

- ❖ What space and/or facilities are available and what kinds of activities do they support?
- ❖ What kinds of materials and equipment are available?
- ❖ Does the leader/manager/official have special interests, expertise, or associations?
- ❖ What kind of economic or financial assets are available?

Based on your findings, determine if there is an essential skill or knowledge set that is present in your community but not yet represented on the Green Team. Identify individuals with those assets and invite them to participate as active members, project leaders, or in other ways that appeal to their unique mix of skill and interest.

End Note

1 Smiley, Marc: *Land Trust Boards: Preparing for Perpetuity,* Washington, DC: Land Trust Alliance, 2007.

2 Ibid.

Chapter 4

The Challenge of Collaborative Leadership

The Challenge of Collaborative Leadership

Before we talk about collaborative leadership, let's take a brief look at collaboration.

Collaboration goes beyond sharing knowledge and information. It is a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties who work toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority and accountability for achieving results. The purpose of collaboration is to create a shared vision and joint strategy to address concerns that go beyond the purview of any particular party.[1]

If a local recycling club works with a local watershed management group to put on a bake sale and the proceeds are shared equally, is that an example of collaboration? While the joint bake sale requires that people work together to help each group achieve its own goals, there is no shared vision or joint strategy to address a common goal. Therefore, this is an example of cooperation rather than collaboration.

Conversely, Green Teams have a shared vision to make their community greener, as suggested in Sustainable Maryland Certified; they have also agreed to an action plan highlighting key priorities for greening the community. This is a joint strategy for a common goal, and the municipality and the citizens share responsibility and accountability for achieving results toward this goal.

The Collaborative Leader

A collaborative leader has a core belief that if the appropriate people are brought together in constructive ways with credible information, they will create authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of their community.

When community problems are discussed in group settings, rather than prescribing answers to the Team or directing them toward certain solutions, a collaborative leader:

- understands that he/she does not have the "answers" for the group and that the answers must emerge from the interaction of the stakeholders;"
- realizes that he/she cannot impose answers or solutions on the group as to collective issues;
- places increased reliance on the collaborative process and on building trustworthy relationships;
- relies on the group to find subject matter expertise and to work with content and substance; and

- focuses on ensuring that the process is constructive and leads to achievable results.[2]

In these ways, collaborative leadership differs from tactical or positional leadership styles. Tactical and positional leaders prescribe goals and direct tasks to accomplish those goals. An example of a tactical leader is the head of a SWAT team who unilaterally states the goal, explains the plan, and organizes the team's activity. An example of a positional leader is the owner of a small business, such as a restaurant, who lays out goals, measurable tasks, and activities that the employees are expected to follow. Then he/she motivates and rewards them for their performance. In both cases, the leader defines the problem, states the goal and lays out how the team members/employees will achieve the goal. They are, respectively, tactical and positional leaders.

This kind of leadership differs from collaborative leadership in that tactical and positional leaders, due to serving as a public official or to holding a position in a private company, have formal authority and exercise it over their subordinates. A collaborative leader, on the other hand, has informal authority that he or she uses to search for solutions that emerge from constructive dialogues with his/her peers.

Collaborative leadership may be the most challenging form of leadership, because a collaborative leader cannot tell Team members what to do, or what the right answer is, or control the outcome. A collaborative leader must trust, nurture, and protect group processes to find solutions to common problems.

Why and when does Collaborative Leadership Matter?

The usefulness of each of the two leadership styles explained above depends on the kind of problem and the desired solution.

In the case of a SWAT team on a mission or a small business increasing quarterly earnings, the problem is clear and there is often some clarity about how to proceed. However, in the case of a complex problem like decreasing high school dropout rate or reducing a municipality's carbon footprint, there is little agreement on how to proceed, even if the problem is clearly defined.

Enter Collaborative Leadership: it is most powerful where the problem is complex and there is little agreement on how to proceed. Collaborative Leadership is most effective when:

- there is shared power and no single entity is in charge (Example; traffic congestion involving multiple stakeholders in a multi-jurisdictional area such as Minneapolis, St. Paul or Washington, D.C.);

- the problem is complex, interdependent and systemic (Example; gang violence in high schools);

- there is no clear answer or there are many solutions with little agreement about what the specific problem is (Example: national unemployment); and

> A collaborative leader must trust, nurture, and protect group processes to find solutions to common problems.

- the stakeholders and the participants have the time, the skills and the commitment to come together for a constructive process to search for strategies and solutions (Example: The Baltimore Commonwealth, a collaboration of community groups, business leaders and municipal government, to prepare young people to be economically productive and involved public citizens).[3]

How can you use Collaborative Leadership on your Green Team?

Suppose your Green Team has most of the following characteristics:

- it is made of 10–15 citizens with varying degrees of experience in neighborhood associations, community organizations, or citizen activist roles;

- it includes a mix of municipal, citizen and community leaders with some experience on other boards or organizations;

- members provide a wealth of diverse ideas and visions for projects and strategies about how to make your municipality more "green" in accord with Sustainable Maryland Certified;

- most Green Team Members have jobs and families outside of their choice to be involved with the Green Team;

- there is some uncertainty about what the Green Team will do together and who some of the other members of the Team are;

- there is a vague sense that the Green Team cannot do all the projects everyone wants to do in the first 12 months, given limited resources; and

- there is some concern about how the Green Team will stay focused and renew itself beyond the initial enthusiasm of the first 6 to 12 months.

If most of these characteristics are in place, then collaborative leadership may be beneficial to:

- help select two Priority Actions from a possible choice of six Priority Actions by use of credible, inclusive constructive processes;

- help delegate the ways and means of implementing actions to members, or sub-groups, or to organizations allied with the Green Team by broad based involvement once the Priority Actions are selected; and

- help sustain the Green Team's energy and focus by encouraging participation; sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability; and celebrating incremental progress.

Some helpful collaborative leadership guidelines for (1) identifying appropriate stakeholders for participation in Sustainable Maryland Certified actions and projects, (2) assessing the extent of stakeholder agreement on implementing specific actions, and (3) assessing your municipality's capacity for accepting change are located at the end of this Chapter.[4] This is titled "Additional Resources for Collaborative Leaders" and is also addressed in Chapters 5 and 6 of this Handbook.

Key Skills and Attitudes of Collaborative Leaders

Chrislip and Larson have studied more than fifty cases of collaborative action in communities and regions, and have identified key skills and attitudes continuously found in successful collaboration efforts:

Collaborative leaders:

1. Inspire commitment and action by:

   ■ convincing people that something can be done;

   ■ refraining from telling Green Team Members what to do or doing the work for them;

   ■ catalyzing, convening, energizing, and facilitating in order to create visions and solve problems;

   ■ creating new alliances, partnerships and forums;

   ■ bringing people to the table, helping them work together constructively, and keeping them at the table by reminding them of the common purpose and of the difficulties of achieving results with other approaches; and

   ■ initiating a process that brings people together when nothing else is working.

2. Lead as peer problem solvers by:

   ■ investing energy in building relationships and the process;

   ■ promoting commitment and involvement by participants;

   ■ creating a credible, open, effective process in which participants have confidence;

   ■ resisting shortcuts, protecting the process against vested interests;

   ■ serving the group and the broader purpose for which it exists,

   ■ ensuring that ownership of the process is shared and that power and status differences are de-emphasized; and

   ■ recognizing that our ability to get things done must come from mutual respect because we have no authority from holding a public office or a formal position in a private company.

3. Build broad-based involvement by:

- taking responsibility to build the relevant community of interests, no matter how diverse;

- making a conscious and disciplined effort to identify and bring together stakeholders who are necessary to define problems, create solutions and get results; and

- including more people based on the recognition that many collaborative processes fail because the right people were not included.

4. Sustain hope and participation by:

- helping groups do hard work when it would be easier to quit;

- keeping people at the table when (a) more traditional but destructive ways of doing business seem tempting, (b) when quick solutions are offered and, (c) when power and influence assert themselves;

- persuading participants that each person's input is valued/recognize contributions;

- helping to set incremental and achievable goals along the way;

- encouraging celebration of success and achievements;

- sustaining confidence by promoting and protecting a process in which participants believe; and

- safeguarding the process, facilitating interaction, and patiently dealing with high levels of frustration.[5]

The key at the center of these skills and attitudes is promoting and safeguarding respectful and inclusive processes where many voices can be heard, and being willing to give up one's own investment or attachment to a particular Sustainable Maryland Certified action or outcome, in favor of a greater collaborative process.

For example, suppose that the consensus of the Green Team, as a result of a respectful, collaborative decision-making process, clearly favors Green Purchasing and Watershed Stewardship as Action Items. Suppose that you are one of a few Team Members who would really prefer to focus on Municipal Energy Audits and Stormwater Management. Even though you, as a leader practicing collaborative leadership, are among the latter group, you do not seek to impose your will on the Team. Instead, depending upon the overall consensus of the Green Team, you and the other participants who favor energy audits and Stormwater Management, may choose alternate action by (a) forming a subgroup to research those concerns, (b) standing aside and joining with the others on the chosen Priority Actions, or (c) seeking consensus to pursue those Priority Actions at a later time.

When moving a community toward Sustainable Maryland Certification, the leadership of the Green Team should:

- pay attention to making the relationships work between the municipal officials responsible for the programs and policies which would be affected;

- attract community resources to complete some of the Priority Actions;

- draw in citizens and community groups to participate in the Priority Action strategies; and

- draw in local organizational support so that the municipality can use partnerships to increase its own capacity.

To contribute to making SMC a reality in the life of the community, collaborative leaders:

1. Inspire Commitment and Action

2. Lead as a Peer Problem Solver

3. Encourage Broad Based Involvement

4. Sustain Hope and Participation.

The Skills and Attitudes stated above are critical to building and sustaining your Green Team because they help you to:

- select two Priority Actions from a possible menu of six by use of inclusive and constructive processes (Notice that the six Priority Action Areas are discussed in detail in Chapter 10 of this Handbook);

- delegate the implementing actions to Team Members, sub-groups of the Team, or to organizations allied with your Team by broad based involvement once priorities are chosen; and

- sustain energy and focus of the Team by sustaining participation, protecting the process, and celebrating incremental progress.

Possible drawbacks and limitations of Collaborative Leadership

As with most guidance and advice about leadership, there are situations where the collaborative style is less effective or simply inappropriate. Collaborative leadership may be ineffective if it leads to:

- escalating conflicts within the group;

- confusion and ambiguity about specific roles and responsibilities;

- lack of direction and frustration;

- squandering valuable time, resources, or social capital if crucial or on the spot decisions are needed during a crisis; or

- "group-think" when strong personalities are permitted to dominate in a discussion. (See Chapter 5 on facilitating effective meetings)

How would this caution about when to use Collaborative Leadership apply to a Green Team working towards Sustainable Maryland Certification? Suppose that the Green Team wants to pursue actions within the "Community Based Food System" as a Priority Action. It therefore works with appropriate parties to organize and install a community garden, and the Green Team identifies and procures land for the garden (by lease or donation) and agrees to a planting plan for the garden. While a degree of collaboration is often advisable and many volunteers are needed for a successful community garden, a collaborative process would probably not be necessary to accomplish technical tasks such as borrowing and using shovels and gardening tools; assigning volunteers to time slots in working the garden; and buying or borrowing seedlings, seeds or starter plants.

In other words, where the problem (task) is reasonably clear (e.g., starting the garden) and the methods or solutions are fairly obvious (e.g., tools, planting, and labor), then collaborative leadership may not be effective or appropriate. Earlier in this Chapter, we discussed tactical leadership and gave an example of it. Given the technical tasks and clarity of the goal in organizing a community garden, we believe that tactical leadership would be appropriate for this aspect of the project.

Additional Resources for Chapter 4

Resource A: Stakeholder Identification

- What are the perspectives necessary to credibly and effectively define problems/issues and create solutions?

- Who are the people who can speak for these perspectives?

- What are the interests that must be represented in order to reach agreements that can be implemented?

- Who are the people who can speak for these interests?

- Who are the people, interest groups, or organizations who are necessary to implement solutions, can block action, and control resources?

- Who are the people who cause or are affected by the problems/issues, and who will be affected by the solutions?

- Who are the people who, if they could reach agreement about problems and solutions, could generate the political and institutional will to create significant change?

Resource B: Assess the Extent of Stakeholder Agreement

- Have stakeholders agreed there, is a problem that needs attention?

- Have stakeholders agreed to work together on the problem/issue?

- Have stakeholders agreed on how to work together on the problem/issue?

- Have stakeholders agreed on the definition of the problem/issue?

- Have stakeholders agreed on the solutions to the problem/issue?
- Have stakeholders agreed on an implementation plan and action steps?

Resource C: Assess the Extent of Community Capacity for Change

- What is the level of conflict, mistrust, and disunity that exists among the stakeholders?
- To what extent do the skills necessary for collaboration exist in the community?
- Are there leaders with the credibility and respect to convene stakeholders around the problems or issues? Who are they?
- Are there citizens with the leadership capacities to initiate and sustain a collaborative process? Who are they?
- Are there people or groups in the community with the expertise to design and facilitate a collaborative process?
- Are there people or groups who can provide the information necessary to make good decisions? Who are they? I f they do not exist within the community, what are other sources for this information?

Resource D: Town of Esquimalt Mission Statement (of Values)
[brackets indicate modifications appropriate to Green Teams]

This Mission Statement, from the Town of Esquimalt, British Columbia, is clearly written in support of the principles of Collaborative Leadership.

Openness

We are open and transparent with our information, process, and communication to our customers [partners and stakeholders], community, the public, and one another except where clearly prohibited.

Fiscal and performance accountability

We are accountable to our community, the Municipality, and our work teams for the work we do and taxpayer's money we spend. We do this through long term planning, setting measurable performance goals, performance reviews, and regular feedback about our work to our leaders, community, and customers [partners and stakeholders]. We value hard work and achievement of organizational goals.

Teamwork

We work as members of team understanding that individuals, divisions, and Departments [committees, teams and work groups] that work together achieve high quality results and provide exceptional service.

Respect

As public servants we treat all residents, customers [partners and stakeholders], co-workers, and viewpoints with the respect that we would have accorded to ourselves.

Integrity and trust

We say what we mean and mean what we say. We honor our work and keep our commitments. We are worthy of the public's and each other's trust.

Innovation and creativity

We strive for excellence as individuals, and team members, and in the services that we provide to our community. We create a work environment in which we look for new solutions and experiment with innovative ways to work—even if they don't always succeed the first time. We recognize the need to be dynamic in meeting the community's changing needs. Each employee [member] is given the opportunity to grow and develop.

Recognition

We recognize and are proud of achievements in the organization. We also recognize the need for balance in work and non-work as a value that will ultimately benefit our organization and the taxpayers of Esquimalt [citizens of your municipality].

End Notes

1 David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson, Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass, 1994.

2 Ibid, 129.

3 Ibid, 42–43.

4 See also Chrislip and Larson, 65–69, 88.

5 Kouzes, James M. and Barry Z. Posner. The Leadership Challenge. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

Chapter 5

Meeting Facilitation and Group Decision Making

Chapter 5

Meeting Facilitation and Group Decision Making

"Well run, effective meetings require solid preparation. Too many people underestimate the time needed to plan and organize good meetings. The hardest part, and certainly the most time consuming aspect of a meeting, is the planning."

—Kim Bobo, author, *Organizing for Social Change: a Manual for Activists in the 1990s*

The process of growing a Green Team entails a number of steps (See www.Sustainable Maryland.com for resources on starting a Green Team). This chapter highlights the meeting facilitation and group decision making needs of the Green Team.

Meetings

Meetings can make or break a Green Team and well-planned, focused, effectively facilitated meetings will strengthen your projects. Well-run meetings are crucial because so much time in organizing any project is spent in meetings where groups must make decisions together. Running an effective meeting is not something we pick up by osmosis or that we can do because of good social skills. We can learn the elements that lead to successful meetings by practicing our skills during every meeting we attend.

Elements of a Well-Planned Meeting

1. Set clear goals for the meeting.

It is important to have clear meeting goals in mind. Without them it is difficult to create an agenda and to know who should attend. Every meeting should have concrete, realistic and measurable goals that reflect what the Team wants to accomplish. Avoid goals such as: "to have a meeting"—a meeting is not a goal in itself; or, "to educate people"—it is tough to measure whether people need to be "educated" about the opportunity at hand. Because meetings are used to plan action, make decisions, build Team cohesion, the initial meeting goals may be:

- To decide on the initial Action Plan for the Team.
- To develop a plan and timeline for implementation.
- To organize into small groups with team leaders to pursue specific elements of the Plan.

Consider the following meeting purposes (from www.bonner.org):

Purpose	Example
Celebrating	Recognizing and honoring achievements, such as the completion of a Sustainable Maryland Certified action
Analyzing	Determining the causes of a situation and the relationship between different elements or variables
Decision making	Reaching a conclusion about what action to take
Informing	Providing or receiving information, or clarifying information, usually for use later
Mediating	Facilitating the result of negotiation or conflict between people
Planning & Problem Solving	Setting goals and establishing a schedule of activities. Or working as a team to resolve issues or take advantage of an opportunities
Team Building	Creating feelings of trust and collaboration, and establishing norms for how a group works together
Tracking then Evaluating	Monitoring progress toward goals (usually for work that is being done independently) then assessing relative success in achieving planned objectives

2. Be selective about choosing a meeting site.

The meeting location will affect who comes to the meeting. Criteria for choosing a site include:

- **Familiarity.** Is it a place where people feel comfortable?

- **Accessibility.** Is the meeting site easy to get to? Is it accessible for people who are disabled or elderly? Is it accessible to public transportation?

- **Represents Constituency.** Is the site perceived as representative of those who may participate? For example, if the goal is to build a multi-cultural and/or diverse Green Team and meetings are being held in a church exclusively used by a white congregation, the choice of site would not represent the full constituency. See Chapter 3 for more on creating an inclusive Green Team.

- **Adequate Facilities.** Different meetings require different facilities. Small meetings need a small, cozy room, while larger meetings need larger rooms with more elaborate facilities such as a microphone and sound system. Any group, including a small group, may require an overhead projector, slide projector, flip chart or blackboard. A set location is likely to reduce confusion and keep meeting attendance consistent. Alternately, if you live in a community with several distinct "districts", you might consider rotating the location of the meetings. Free meeting space should be sought at libraries, community centers, houses of worship, and/or schools.

3. Don't forget about childcare or other supports.

In order for some people to attend meetings, childcare may need to be arranged at the site. A meeting with many families attending may need a separate room for childcare. Childcare provision can be an important way to include diverse members of the community. Other supports include scheduling meetings at locations convenient to public transportation, ensuring that meeting facilities are accessible to those with disabilities, or providing translation services if necessary.

4. Choose a convenient time.

Set the meeting at a time that is most convenient for the majority of expected attendees. If feasible, decide on a regular monthly meeting time. (This is the least time-consuming option as all meetings for the next year can be set at once.) Alternately, if all members have internet access, use one of the free online tools like Doodle (www.doodle.com) listed in Chapter 6. This type of free polling system allows a facilitator to plan meetings around multiple schedules. (This is more time-consuming because one participant will need to get the ball rolling every month.)

5. Schedule meetings regularly.

Regularly scheduled meetings keep the group from having to negotiate a time and place for every meeting time—a big time and frustration saver. While regularly scheduled meetings are a sound general rule, a meeting should not be scheduled for the sake of meeting when the issues, decisions and reports scheduled for that meeting can be appropriately set to a later date. A meeting held without a timely purpose will tend to drain interest in attending future meetings.

6. Set up the room before hand.

Before the meeting, assess the room that will be used. Consider the following:

- **Seating arrangements.** For example where chairs are arranged in a circle or semi-circle seating plan without tables, the meeting tends to be more informal. Where tables and chairs are placed in a rectangle, the meeting tends to be more formal.

- **Places to hang flip chart paper.** Will tape damage the walls?

- **Outlets for audio-visual equipment.** Do you need extra extension cords?

- **Refreshments.** Do you need to bring a coffee maker? Do you need to provide snacks or food? If so, can people get to the food easily without disrupting the meeting? Who will pay for the food? Who will clean it up?

- **Comfort.** Does the heat or air conditioner need to be turned on ahead of time? Is the bathroom unlocked and does it have toilet paper?

- **Welcome and sign-in table.** A Green Team Member welcoming newcomers creates a warm atmosphere. This may be appropriate for a Green Team, which is newly forming or for a meeting with a larger group. The greeter can

also give attendees a nametag and ask them to sign in with their contact information which will be used for future contact. It is important to determine before the meeting where the best place is to set this up. If it is not possible to have a sign-up table, a sign-in sheet can be passed around during the meeting (although this can be distracting).

7. Actively recruit members.

Well-planned meetings with clear agendas and goals, where all voices are encouraged are more likely to keep people coming back. (For a complete discussion of recruiting and retaining Green Team Members, see Chapter 3 of this Handbook.)

Meeting Roles

A successful meeting leaves people with a feeling that progress was made, time was wisely used, and people had fun. Everyone needs to feel they that their voice was heard and that they played a valuable role in shaping the meeting outcome. A meeting design that enables this type of participation can transform a person into an actor—one who actively helps build the future, rather than just waiting for it to happen—and a group into a team.

Clearly defined roles filled by capable people are essential parts of any successful meeting. Five key roles are likely needed for an effective Green Team meeting. These are facilitator, scribe, timekeeper, note-taker and greeter. Three additional roles will need to be filled by members of the Green Team to keep the team functioning between meetings—the Sustainable Maryland Certified Primary Contact, the Outreach Coordinator, and the Secretary.

1. The Meeting Facilitator keeps the meeting on track.

The meeting facilitator is responsible for setting the tone of the meeting. It is her or his job to make sure that everyone feels safe, understands what is going on, is heard, and stays involved. The facilitator is responsible for developing the meeting agenda, distributing the agenda prior to the meeting, and keeping the meeting topically on track and on time. Modeling the behavior that the facilitator expects from the participants is essential—see the helpful tips and strategies in Chapter 3. The meeting facilitator could be the Green Team leader or co-leader or this role could alternate among Green Team members. (If you choose an alternating facilitator, you must set a schedule!)

One of the most challenging tasks for the facilitator is to bring about decisions in a fair and equitable way. The principles of collaborative leadership, discussed in the chapter above, may be helpful. To aid in this, a facilitator can quickly review the roles, guidelines, agenda and goals at the beginning of each meeting to avoid unnecessary confusion during discussions.

> A meeting design that enables this type of participation can transform a person into an actor—one who actively helps build the future.

2. Scribes capture the essence of what is being said.

The scribe is responsible for writing concepts, strategies and activities on a flip chart so that everyone can keep track of what has been said.

3. The Note-taker records the details.

The note-taker is responsible for taking detailed notes of what transpired at the meeting, including action items, team decisions, and timelines, and preparing minutes for distribution to all participants. For more about what the minutes should contain, see the Appendix concerning the Open Meetings Act.

The Green Team should agree upon a procedure for sharing action items after each meeting. For example, the note-taker could (1) send action items via email, (2) post action items on a group webpage, (3) or print and distribute a list of action items to each member.

Note: The difference between the role of the scribe and the note-taker is that the scribe is keeping track of the generic topics and present flow of the meeting, while the note-taker is transcribing the details of the meeting for later reference by the Green Team Members or to keep a record.

4. The Timekeeper paces the discussion.

The timekeeper is responsible for letting the group know when a discussion time is almost over by giving a five (or three) minute warning, and for letting them know when time is up.

5. Greeters get the names of all attendees.

The greeter welcomes new people and records names and contact information as they enter. A greeter is particularly appropriate in meetings where the public is invited.

6. The Sustainable Maryland Certified Primary Contact

This person is in charge of providing documentation to SMC program staff when Action Items are ready to be submitted for points.

7. Outreach Coordinators communicate with the public.

Once your Green Team gets ready to draft the Green Team Action Plan and implement actions, an Outreach Coordinator should be appointed.

8. The General Secretary facilitates communication.

A general secretary should be responsible for facilitating communications between members outside of meetings, updating the contact list, and performing other administrative-type activities. The general secretary should also be responsible for orienting new members.

Effective Meeting Facilitation, Common Blocks, and Strategies

Common Blocks to a Good Meeting:

As you have probably experienced with other groups, not everything about a Green Team meeting will go smoothly. The most common issue, after lack of preparation, is people who act in ways that disrupt or impede the meeting. Knowing how to handle those actions can help to keep a meeting running smoothly. Following are strategies for common issues that can get in the way of a good meeting:

1. When a point is being discussed too long:

- Summarize.
- Suggest tabling the question for a later time.

2. When two members get into a heated discussion:

- Summarize points made by each person and turn the discussion back to the group.
- Invite the two to stay after the meeting so the three of you can talk it over.

3. When coping with a "one-person" show:

- Interrupt with a statement giving the speaker credit for his or her contribution, but politely asking him or her to hold any other points until later.
- Interrupt with "you have brought up many points that will keep us busy for a long time. Would anyone like to take up one of these points?"

4. When a speaker drifts from the subject or raises a new subject:

- Interrupt, give credit for the idea but explain that it is a departure from the main point.
- Present to the group the question of whether it wants to stray from the agenda/schedule or follow it.
- Bring the discussion back to the topic by using the related idea as the transition.
- Use a "parking lot" or "bike-rack" system. When an issue is brought up during a meeting that is important to discuss, but not currently relevant to the issue at hand, the facilitator can ask that it be 'bike-racked'. The idea is then recorded on a flip chart with other bike rack items by the scribe and revisited

at the end of the meeting, to discuss if there is time, or to determine when it will be discussed in the future.

5. When a member has difficulty in expressing him/herself:

- Build up his/her confidence by stating appreciation for what has been said and then re-phrase the material with a preface such as "Is this what you mean, Mr. Jones?"

In conclusion, there is no such thing as a "perfect" meeting. However, having a clear agenda and meeting goal, being organized, offering assertive facilitation, clarifying meeting roles and being flexible to changing situations are important strategies for creating good meetings to which people will return.

Helpful Tips and Strategies for Facilitating a Meeting

- Consider seating arrangements
- Define your role as facilitator
- Do substantial introductions (appropriate to the size of the group)
- Explain the Guidelines for Discussion (See Additional Resources below)
- Discuss/Explain the decision-making process (consensus, majority, other?, (See Additional Resources below)
- Make eye contact
- Use first names
- Use humor
- Use various facilitative tools and strategies (see Appendix A.1 below)
- Trust the wisdom of each participant
- Change your position (sitting/standing)- move around the room
- Use visuals
- Record themes on a flip chart
- Avoid responding to each comment
- Give time for people to answer
- Don't lecture
- Give positive feedback
- Respect differences of opinion
- Invite and encourage people to speak and express themselves (before meeting begins and during the meeting)
- Seek commitments from Team Members concerning what actions they will take with whom, by what date.

- Distribute detailed informational material after discussions, if doing so before the discussion will likely distract from the discussion

- End session with overview and follow-up coordination

- Use evaluations to find out what participants liked, or would change about the meeting

- Thank people for their work

For further assistance on moving an issue forward toward resolution, see Additional Resources at the end of this Chapter."

In conclusion, respect for others and clear communication, as exemplified in these "Common Blocks" and "Tips and Strategies" will lead to more effective meetings, so that Team Members are more likely to stay involved.

Getting Started with Sustainable Maryland Certified: Planning an Organizational Meeting and Developing an Action Plan

Once you have registered your municipality with Sustainable Maryland Certified, one of the most important steps is to plan and hold a Kick-Off/organizational meeting(s) of your Green Team and to adopt a Green Team Action Plan. The process steps leading up to adopting an Action Plan and the guidelines for the content of an Action Plan are detailed in Chapter 8 of this Handbook.

Below is a suggested agenda for a first or organizational meeting. Some teams may have completed a needs survey and already have a statement of their mission, vision and objectives before this Kick-Off meeting. Other Teams may be beginning these tasks or in the middle of them. Naturally each Team will need to adjust this agenda to suit its' own needs, situation and timing.

Following the suggested agenda for the Kick-Off meeting, we have suggested a generic agenda for regular meetings. See Additional Resources below. Team Members should also recall that public meetings of the Green Team are subject to the Open Meetings Act, which is discussed in Appendix B at the end of this Handbook.

Sample Agenda for Kick-Off Organizational Meeting

Naturally, you can adapt the format to best suit your Team. You may want to start the first meeting of the Green Team a few minutes late in case anyone has difficulty finding the location. However, in the future, meetings should always start on time. The best way to get people to come on time is to start on time. Here is a sample agenda:

1. **Welcome** by the convener(s) or facilitator.

2. **Purpose of meeting and agenda review.** The facilitator lets attendees know that they are gathered to organize a Sustainable Maryland Certified Green Team and to begin to develop and adopt an Action Plan. As detailed in Chap-

ter 8 the planning process may include initiating a community needs assessment and developing a vision for the Green Team.

3. **Introductions.** Attendees give their names, possibly stating their group affiliations, if any, and what brought them here. Or you may wish to ask them to complete a stem sentence such as, "What I really like about Green Teams is…."

4. **Sustainable Maryland History.** Someone other than the facilitator should outline the process so far, explaining the Sustainable Maryland program and presenting a strong, clear vision for the Team. If the needs survey has already been completed, this person should share it's outcomes with the Team. If a needs survey has not been organized, then there should be an agenda item for starting the process. It is important for Members see that a process has been started, but that the vision will only develop with their participation.

5. **Vision.** Members of the Green Team brainstorm and discuss (a) their respective ideas and images of what their municipality would look like as a green city or town and (b) the Sustainable Maryland Certified actions which, if completed, would implement their vision. A person familiar with Sustainable Maryland should identify and explain the Six Priority Action areas, which are discussed in Chapter 8 of this Handbook.

6. **Slides, photographs or Power Point presentations,** which illustrate each of the Sustainable Maryland action categories may help to spark Members' creativity in establishing priorities for their Green Team. The facilitator may wish to lead a brainstorming session about ideas that Team Members may care to work together on. All ideas should be recorded on a flip chart and all flip charts should be saved future reference. Refer to the sections below for help with consensus- based decision making. It may be that development and adoption of a Green Team Action Plan takes more than one meeting, particularly if the group decides to use a consensus approach.

7. **Getting Started/Prioritizing Actions/forming Work Groups.** Draw up a list of tasks to be accomplished such as obtaining materials, publicity and outreach activities. Group the tasks into three or four categories and title each category. These categories may later become the basis for Green Team committees or work groups if there are enough people (possibly three to five participants) for each committee. The most important part of this step is that each Team Member understands and has a clear task to work on, regardless of whether all the Team Members are organized in one committee or several groups.

   Subject to the needs of your Green Team, some suggested work groups might be:

   Coordinating Work Group. Organizes and oversees general operations. A core coordinating work group assumes the responsibility for overall operations of the Team. The members can change over time, but to insure continuity, a strong dedicated coordinating work group is essential.

Note: Initially, the original Members and/or meeting facilitator will plan the agenda. Later, the Green Team may wish to establish a coordinating work group, who may be asked to plan the agenda. Whoever works on the agenda should (a) plan to send it out ahead of the actual meeting, so that members can comment on it and prepare for the meeting and (b) at the beginning of the meeting post it on a large flip chart, so that everyone can follow and understand the meeting contents.

<u>Outreach Work Group.</u> Develops materials for outreach and community engagement for actions selected by the Green Team.

<u>Project-Specific Work Groups.</u> There may be a need for a work group, a project manager or co- coordinators for each action that the Team decides to complete.

Work groups meet for 15 minutes to discuss the groups' purpose, designate a point person that will communicate with the coordinating work group, give each person a task and decide when the work group will meet again.

8. **Review Agreed upon Actions.** The whole Green Team should then review each work group's discussion. On the flip chart, record each work group's priorities and tasks.

9. **Set a Date and Location for the Next Meeting.** Identify a facilitator. Review specific tasks for each work group to complete by the next meeting. Between meetings, the coordinating work group and/or meeting facilitator works to develop the next agenda. The point person for the coordinating work group (who is now the lead coordinator) contacts the point persons for the other work groups to give support and create accountability.

In conclusion, the kick-off meeting for your Green Team can have a significant impact on the tone and course of future meetings. This meeting should have clear and modest goals since agenda items in such a meeting may take longer than originally expected. These are important aspects to attend to: developing a modest agenda; giving lots of attention to process safeguards as members get used to working with each other; and a facilitator who keeps members on track with each current agenda item.

Decision Making in Small Groups

Transparency in decision-making helps everyone know how to take part in the decision-making process and how power is distributed across the Team. There are basically two ways to make decisions as a group—majority rule or consensus. Your Green Team can be creative in modifying or combining them. For example, if the Team cannot reach consensus in a timely manner, then the Team can fall back to a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. (*Note:* The suggestion for 2/3 vote is discussed below) The important thing is that well before the time for a decision, everyone understands the process for making group decisions and agrees to abide by it.

Majority rule voting works well for large groups that are not well versed in the consensus process, which is explained below. However, majority rule means that one part of the community wins and everyone else loses. Silencing a sector of the population goes against a central goal of Green Teams that seek to include and empower every member of a community and enliven participation in civic life. If a Team needs to use majority rule voting, then, in order to avoid alienating many Green Team Members, we recommend that a proposal will only succeed if it receives a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

What is a Consensus Process for Decision Making?

An alternative method is consensus. A consensus process aims to bring the group to mutual agreement by addressing all concerns. It does not require unanimity. In many cases, consensus can take longer than other processes but it fosters creativity, cooperation, and commitment to final decisions. Consensus asks us to step out of our narrow personal agendas and to make decisions that are in the best interest of the whole Green Team. This is not to say that personal concerns are left out of the process. Impacts on, or agendas of, individuals affect the whole group and are weighed during the discussion portion of the process. Someone who has a personal concern with a proposal, but who has had their issues deliberated within the Green Team and thinks they can "live with" the decision can allow a decision to be made by "standing aside."

A "block" is a means where an individual member does not allow a decision to be made. A block is only used when a person has a strong moral disagreement or thinks that the decision will fundamentally damage the Green Team. It is not a step to be taken lightly. During a consensus process it is well to keep in mind the meeting guidelines stated above in Chapter 5. Refer to Chapter 6 for help with consensus-based decisions.

Conflict Resolution

People occasionally get into scuffles. Your Green Team can be prepared for difficult situations by discussing how it will handle them before they occur. Please see Additional Resources below.

In conclusion, since Green Teams are dedicated to inclusivity and collaboration, until Members become accustomed to working together in a decision-making process, perhaps there should be a primary rule of consensus with a back-up rule of 2/3 majority vote. Both consensus seeking processes and conflict resolution call for an attitude of respect, curiosity to understand each other's point of view, and patience.

Additional Resources for Chapter 5

Resource A: Sample Agenda for Regular Meetings

In regular meetings, where a Green Team has agreed in advance to make decisions based upon a majority vote, Team Members may wish to consult Robert's Rules of Order. Below is a simple standard agenda, which may be adapted for the particular use of each Green Team:

1. **Check-in.** Each person can share briefly about how they are feeling that day.

2. **Schedule and Announcements.** Short announcements that have to do with upcoming events. If an announcement turns into a discussion, it can be put on the agenda or on the "bike rack".

3. **Appreciations.** (Optional) Opportunity to give short acknowledgements to the hard work others are doing.

4. **Agenda Review.** Members can add new items to the agenda here. This is the place to prioritize and give time limits to agenda items, if needed.

5. **Agenda.** Start with "tabled Items" (Old Business) followed by New Business. If you cannot get through an item in the allotted time, the Team can decide to take time from another item or it can table the topic to the next meeting.

6. **Next steps.** At the end of the meeting, each Team Members states what they understand their next task or responsibility is. This works to clarify who is doing what by when.

7. **Evaluation.** Leave a few minutes to ask how the meeting went for everyone. Ask participants to share a word or phrase that describes what they have learned. Also ask if there is anything that could be improved.

Alternatively, consider the following two agenda formats as alternatives to the typical linear agenda:

Sample Agenda 1: Simple

What	How	Who	Time
Review the status of the Municipal Energy Audit action	Municipal Energy Audit lead will report on correspondence with City Council and status of bids	Natasha	15 min
Discuss upcoming Spring Transplant Sale and assign lead	Group will brainstorm options for sale, establish lead, sketch out a timeline	All	30 min
Report on progress connecting with local Green Schools	Green School lead will report on progress since the last meeting and next steps	Michael	10 min

Sample Agenda 2: A bit more "corporate." Bullets can be typed in the Discussion section as the discussion ensues; Action section can be easily summarized into action items for distribution after the meeting.

Item	Discussion	Action	Person Responsible	Deadline	Time Allotted
Municipal Energy Audit		Natasha			15 min

Resource B: Additional Strategies for Effective Facilitation

- **"Round the Horn."** Go around the room and give each person a brief time (appropriate to the group size and subject) to summarize their point of view/experience with the issue.

- **Icebreakers, energizers and gatherings** can help energize and refocus the group during a long or difficult meeting.

- **Standard guidelines** ("groundrules") for discussion that the facilitator can introduce or brainstorm with the group may include:

  - ❖ Listen with an open mind to others;
  - ❖ Don't interrupt;
  - ❖ Ask clarifying questions;
  - ❖ Welcome new ideas;
  - ❖ Start on time;
  - ❖ Disagree with ideas not people;
  - ❖ Do not allow personal attacks
  - ❖ Treat every contribution as valuable, and
  - ❖ Respect the facilitator's decisions.

- **Brainstorming.** Invite participants to call out their responses to a question or topic. There is no discussion on anyone's ideas—all ideas are accepted and recorded on a flip chart. After a period of brainstorming, the group discusses individual points in more detail.

- **Small group discussions.** Break the large group into smaller groups of 4-8 to give all participants an opportunity to get to know one another, share their ideas and opinions, and work on an activity.

- **Paired work.** Divide the group into pairs of two to allow for a more intimate and non-threatening discussion.

- **Work alone/Journaling.** Give participants an opportunity for silent time to think and/or write about a subject before the whole group discusses it. Consider the use of Post-it Notes or 3x5 index cards.

- **Report backs.** After breaking the group down into smaller groups, invite them to summarize what they discussed in the large group.

- **Role-plays.** Solicit volunteers to act out the topic at hand.

- **Fish bowl.** Used to flesh out a complex or difficult issue. Ask two (to four) people who have very different points of view to discuss it while others listen. After the key points have been made, then ask others to join in.

- **Popcorn.** Typical type of discussion in which anyone in the group can raise his or her hand and be called on to speak.

- **Stacking.** During discussions when several people have their hands raised, call on one person and list the names of the others in line to speak. This allows people who wish to speak to relax and listen to the speakers in line before them, knowing they will be called on in turn.

- **Time outs.** If discussion gets too heated, then a break can be called to let things cool down.

- **Evaluations.** Ask the group for ideas on what can be done to move the topic forward.

Resource C: Suggestions for Managing Discord Before and During a Conflict

1. **Speak directly to one another.** If a person is having an issue with another person, he/she should speak directly to the other person about that concern. (This sounds obvious, but we know how much easier it is to talk about someone than it is to talk with someone.) During conversation, participants are asked to speak using "I" statements (For example: "I feel hurt and unappreciated when not included in decisions that have to do with my project") and to try to state clearly their interests, needs and perceptions. Participants are also asked to listen actively by setting aside personal opinions and judgments and reflecting back what they understand another person is perceiving, feeling, and needing. Active listening also asks us not to prepare what we are going to say in response to the other person while they are speaking. Sometimes it helps to ask each person to summarize and restate what they heard the other say, before they may make their own reply.

2. **Ask for third party support.** If a person can't speak directly to someone alone due to fear or difficulty articulating when they are upset, then they can ask a neutral third person to mediate a meeting. Often the third person need not do anything but be a witness to the event. The act of witnessing can create an atmosphere of safety and honesty that can help people move through issues.

3. Use the meeting guidelines stated in Chapter II a above. Sometimes it is useful to frame the disagreement in terms of a specific statement, idea or action of the other person, rather than as an attack, criticism or blame of the other person.

4. Engage in whole group reflection. If the two parties achieve a resolution, whether by themselves or with a neutral third person, then the parties In conflict or perhaps the Green Team could reflect on what they can do in the future to minimize such problems.

Resource D: What are the Practical Steps in a Consensus Decision-Making Process?

1. **State the issue.** What are we talking about? The facilitator asks the person who raised the issue to frame it and provide context or explanation.

2. **Clarify the question.** What needs to be decided? The facilitator or the framer states what needs to be decided.

3. **Discussion.** What are all the viewpoints? The facilitator asks each person to speak to the Issue. "Does anyone else have additional thoughts or comments on this question?"

4. **Make a proposal.** "What are our next actions?" The facilitator asks for proposals describing an action (or set of actions) the group can take that will incorporate all (or most) viewpoints.

5. **Discussion.** "What are your concerns about this proposal?" The facilitator asks people to speak to proposals by asking clarifying questions or by expressing support or concerns.

6. **Modify the proposal by friendly amendments or withdraw the proposal and solicit new proposals.** "So it sounds like there are two or three amendments to this proposal. Let me see if I have this right." The facilitator then attempts to summarize and restate the amendments.

The facilitator tests for consensus by the following steps:

1. **Call for concerns.** The facilitator restates the proposal and asks if anyone still has concerns. If so, the person with concerns restates them. Then the facilitator asks if others wish to speak to those concerns. "Person X has expressed a concern that …. How do others see that topic?"

2. **Call for objections within consensus.** If concerns remain even after they have been thoroughly discussed, then the facilitator asks if those persons with remaining concerns are willing to stand aside. ("I think there are some problems, but lets it give it a try;" or "I don't agree, but I can live with it.")

3. **Call for blocks.** If persons with concerns cannot stand aside, then the facilitator asks if they are blocking. If a person says they are blocking because of a concern they have already expressed, the proposal is dropped, discussed fur-

ther, or sent to committee for additional review. "So it sounds like the current proposal is blocked. What do people want to do? We can continue to discuss it, we can drop it or we can send it to a committee; Are there other ideas on what can be done with this proposal?"

4. Consensus reached. If there are no blocks, ask everyone to show visual (thumbs up or thumbs sideways) or oral agreement.

5. The decision is implemented. Who does what when? Check if there is a need to write down the consensus and the actions implementing the decision.

Chapter 6

Green Team Communication

Green Team Communication

As emphasized in Chapter 5, effective communication strategies will be key to the success of your Green Team. As your Green Team solidifies, you will need to consider how to communicate most effectively internally (among members of the Green Team) and externally (between the Green Team and the rest of the members of your community).

Technology will inevitably be a major vehicle of your internal and external communication—for organization, collaboration, and outreach—and lots of recommendations will be made in this chapter for useful online tools. At the same time, your community is unique in terms of how information gets shared and a full-throttle high-tech strategy may not be necessary or warranted. For example, many communities reach a broad audience through a locally published newspaper or flyers on bulletin boards. Your Green Team should take this into account when creating an internal and an external communication strategy.

This chapter is divided into two parts. Part 1 will provide a few tips for communicating internally as a Green Team. (Also see Chapter 5 of this Handbook.) Part 2 will provide ideas for communicating with the community at large. (Future iterations of this Handbook will be updated to provide real-world examples of how Sustainable Maryland Certified Green Teams are utilizing effective internal and external communication strategies.)

Part 1: Communicating internally as a Green Team

- **Communication and Information Sharing:** Email or an email listserv are both ways that Green Teams can share information. However, when information needs to be analyzed or edited, or when there is a large volume of information to be shared, email may not be efficient. The Green Team should consider a tool such as www.mycommittee.com or the tools referenced on this site: www.peacedevelopmentfund.org/page/communication.

- **Consider accessibility:** Online usage (including interaction with social media), comfort level, and prowess vary depending on age, income, class, disability, experience, and access. Make sure that the way your Green Team decides to communicate does not leave anyone out. If it does, your Green Team will likely lose some membership and the community will lose the opportunity to consider sustainability from the perspective of those who are less tech-savvy.

- For more information on the tips and tricks summarized above, see:

  - ❖ www.citizenworks.org (Tools for Organizing: Neighborhood/Community/Town Organizing)

- ❖ www.bonner.org (Planning Effective Meetings)
- ❖ http://news.community102.com/?sort=&search=different%20age%20groups (How Different Age Groups Are Interacting Online)

Decision making

- ◼ The Green Team should discuss, agree on, and post guidelines for reaching decisions.

- ◼ When a decision is necessary in a meeting, the facilitator should determine what kind of decision is needed. Approaches include:

  - ❖ **Delegate with given expectations.** "Joseph, Greg, and Marta are going to figure out how to deploy volunteers for the big service day event and then inform us. We will follow their plan."

  - ❖ **Consensus.** "We have gotten approval to do the mural in only four colors. We need to all agree on what the four colors will be." (See Chapter 5 for much more on the consensus process.)

  - ❖ **Gather input from team/group and decide.** "We need to do a presentation to the campus advisory board at the end of the month. I would like to know what all of you think that we should cover. I'll design the outline based on your input."

  - ❖ **Gather input from individuals and decide.** "I've gathered everyone's survey about your individual preferences for the contents of this month's training day and come up with a final list from which we can vote."

  - ❖ **Decide and announce.** "This is our only opportunity to meet with the Mayor, so we are going to do it."

- ◼ Straw polling, voting, and consensus are all potential ways to come to a group decision.

  - ❖ **Straw polling.** Straw polling entails asking for a show of hands to see how the group feels about a particular issue. It is a quick check that can save a great deal of time.

  - ❖ **Voting.** Voting is best suited for large groups. To avoid alienating large minorities, you might decide a motion will only succeed with a two-thirds majority. Some community groups limit the privilege of voting to people who have come to three or more consecutive meetings to prevent stacked meetings and to encourage familiarity with the issue at hand.

  - ❖ **Consensus.** Consensus is best suited for smaller groups. A consensus process aims at bringing the group to mutual agreement by addressing all concerns. It does not require unanimity. Consensus can take longer than other processes, but fosters creativity, cooperation and commitment to final decisions. For a sample outline of a consensus process, please see http://www.citizenworks.org/tools/town/tools-town-meeting_deciding.php.

- For more information on the tips and tricks summarized above, please see:
  - ❖ www.citizenworks.org (Tools for Organizing: Neighborhood/Community/Town Organizing)
  - ❖ www.bonner.org (Planning Effective Meetings)

Handy Tools for Internal Communication

- Tools for managing meetings, including free ways to create a group webpage where you can post meeting notes, manage an email listserv, and share files:
  - ❖ www.mycommittee.com/
  - ❖ www.peacedevelopmentfund.org/page/communication
- Tools for scheduling meetings:
  - ❖ www.doodle.com
  - ❖ www.meetingwizard.com
- Tools for free conference calls in lieu of a face-to-face meeting:
  - ❖ www.freeconferencecall.com

Part 2: Communicating with the Community at Large

Why Public Involvement?

Sustainable Maryland Certified encourages municipalities to consider the community as a whole. Besides being the entity that leads the charge for achieving Sustainable Maryland Certification, Green Teams are also responsible for communicating their activities to the community at large. As indicated above, an Outreach Coordinator should be appointed as part of the Green Team and tasked with communicating program information to the public. Benefits for involving the community include:

- **Transparency.** To meet the standards of open and participatory governance, it is important to clearly share with the public the goals and rationale behind the decision to participate in Sustainable Maryland Certified (SMC). Some important points to communicate with the public could include:
  - ❖ SMC is voluntary and there is no cost to participate.
  - ❖ SMC was developed with the full support of the Maryland Municipal League (MML), the non-profit, nonpartisan association that works to strengthen and support municipal governments in Maryland.
  - ❖ Participating in SMC could bring future funding opportunities to the community.

- SMC is flexible and allows each MD municipality to choose activities specific to their needs.

- Free technical assistance, geared toward MD communities who are wrestling with finding cost effective and strategic ways to protect their natural assets and revitalize their communities, is available through the program.

■ **Partnerships.** Forming effective partnerships with the business community, homeowners associations, watershed groups, and other citizen-based groups may lead to additional program resources in the form of volunteers, in-kind donations, and even sponsorship. In addition, partnerships will be essential to complete many of the SMC actions.

■ **Increased commitment.** Knowing that the public is interested in knowing how their community is progressing toward Sustainable Maryland Certification may be a motivating factor for the Green Team.

■ **Creating bridges to other populations.** As your Green Team leads your community through the certification process, it will be necessary to reach out to more than just those who are typically "environmentally-minded".

■ **Better success with any actions that have an outreach component.** Many SMC actions involve reaching out to the community, particularly in the "Create Green Team Action Plan" action, the "Conduct Community Barriers and Benefits Assessment" action, and many of the "Community Based Food System," "Health & Wellness," and "Local Economies" actions. Having a system in place for regularly connecting with the public, will make these actions easier to accomplish.

Handy Tools for Communicating with the Public about SMC

As part of your work as a Green Team, you will need to consider how the Green Team will connect with the larger community—possibly creating and maintaining a web presence that serves to promote your SMC activities to the community at large. Some ideas for accomplishing this include:

■ Create a Communications Workgroup or Subcommittee, led by the Outreach Coordinator, which is responsible for creating and maintaining an outreach presence.

■ Draft language for inclusion in community newsletters or newspapers, on a community access television channel, on bulletin boards or at the information desk in municipal buildings, in homeowner association newsletters, and on the town website. Create a timeline for providing updates to all of these news sources.

■ Consider completing the "Build SMC Resource Center" action.

■ Use Social Media

■ Website and Blog Options from Peace Development Fund: http://www.peacedevelopmentfund.org/page/webdesign

- Examples websites from other Green Teams:
  - ❖ www.sustainablecherryhill.org
- For more information on the tips and tricks summarized above, please see:
  - ❖ www.citizenworks.org (Tools for Organizing: Neighborhood/Community/Town Organizing)
  - ❖ http://www.wholecommunities.org/pdf/Building%20a%20New%20Movement_Conservation%20and%20Community%20Engagement.pdf (Center for Whole Communities: Building a New Movement—Land Conservation and Community, Preliminary Report, Sept 2008)

Chapter 7

Vision and Mission Statements

Chapter 7

Vision and Mission Statements

For a Green Team, a **vision statement** describes the characteristics of the sustainable community that the team wants to create. A **mission statement** says what the purpose of a team is—i.e., what the team will do to arrive at its vision for sustainability. The reasons for writing vision and mission statements are:

1. People are more likely to change their behavior when they articulate what they want for the future and how they want to achieve it, rather than dwelling on what their problems are and who or what caused them;

2. While the future cannot be predicted, to a degree, it can be shaped by people working together on common goals.[1]

Both vision and mission statements are linked to action. An appealing vision provides an irresistible call to purposeful action.[2] And a comprehensive mission statement frames the kinds of actions a team will perform.

Both kinds of statements also are reflective of the municipality-citizen partnership that serves as a foundation for effective Green Teams (see Chapter 2 of this Handbook.) The mission statement must fit within the purpose the municipality gave when it created its Green Team.[3] And the vision statement must fit within the broader vision the community has for its future.

The characteristics of a good Green Team mission statement are that it:

- Links the team to the municipality;
- Provides the overall reason for the team's being;
- Notes the roles that the team will play; and
- Identifies important measures of success.

A good vision statement:

- Includes a common set of values;
- Clarifies direction and purpose for the team and the community;
- Inspires enthusiasm and commitment;
- Bridges the present and future;
- Is clear and easy to understand;
- Is ambitious—not limited by current circumstances—in what it perceives as possible;

- Builds consensus across the community; and

- Serves as a key component for an action plan.[4]

Examples of Green Team Mission Statements

Mission statements for Green Teams—with various names—in municipalities in New Jersey and Connecticut follow:[5]

- "The Burlington Township Green Team, which was established in July 2009 by the Governing Body, is a group of appointed volunteers that will review and evaluate sustainable initiatives and make recommendations to the Mayor & Council regarding the feasibility of implementing these initiatives with the goal of creating a "greener," more sustainable community that meets the present needs of its citizens without compromising the ability to provide for its future generations." *(Mission Statement for the Green Team of Burlington Township, New Jersey)*

- "Sustainable Cherry Hill strives to continuously tap Cherry Hill and the surrounding region's greatest resource- its people- in order to shift to a sustainable way of life. We do this through hosting educational events, networking opportunities, supporting community based task forces and acting as a general clearing house of information on sustainability news and events. We provide a structure for people at all levels to work together to pursue their passions and use their unique skills and networks in the service of a more sustainable community." *(Mission Statement of Sustainable Cherry Hill, Cherry Hill, New Jersey)*

- Our mission is, "To protect our environmental health, build a strong local economy, and foster a socially responsible citizenry by collaborating with residents, schools, businesses, nonprofits and municipal government to implement the Sustainable Princeton Community Plan." *(Mission Statement for Sustainable Princeton, Princeton, New Jersey)*

- "Woodstock's Going Green is a program of the town of Woodstock, dedicated to supporting encouraging and assisting Woodstock residents and businesses and the town itself to reduce our impact on the environment through conservation and increased use of green energy options. No members benefit or receive monetary compensation for our efforts. Our contribution is voluntary and our only rewards are what we can successfully contribute toward a cleaner environment for future generations." *(Mission Statement of Going Green, Woodstock, Connecticut)*

Overarching ideas in the mission statements are that the teams will:

- Work on behalf of the community;

- Advise public policy makers;

- Build coalitions, based on common interests, with other groups; and

- Perform services that include providing information and doing education and outreach projects.

Based on the characteristics of good mission statements, how might you adapt parts of these mission statements for writing a mission statement for your team?

Examples of Community Sustainability Vision Statements

Vision statements about sustainability from municipalities in British Columbia, California, Oregon and Washington follow. (Although all of the statements are called "visions," parts of some are actually statements of how groups will work, that is, they are "missions.") Based on the characteristics of good vision statements, what can you draw from the statements for your team vision?

- "Kirkland is known for its green spaces, parks and waterfront. The City is committed—through many 'green' initiatives—to preserve, protect and sustain our natural resources. Through a variety of efforts, the City is also addressing sustainable development, green buildings and climate change.

  Kirkland recognizes the interdependency of our natural resource systems:

  ❖ Water: Our streams, lakes, wetlands, storm water runoff, groundwater and shorelines;

  ❖ Land: The soils, vegetation, rocks, geology, and topography; and

  ❖ Air: Climate change, air quality, microclimates and macroclimate."

  (Combined Mission and Vision Statements for Kirkland Green, Kirkland, Washington)

- "We envision that in 2020 Corvallis will be...

  ❖ A compact, medium-sized city (population range: 57,500 to 63,500) nestled in a beautiful natural setting;

  ❖ The historic, civic, cultural and commercial heart of Benton County;

  ❖ An economically strong and well-integrated city, fostering local businesses, regional cooperation and clean industry;

  ❖ A university town, a regional medical center, a riverfront city;

  ❖ An environmentally-aware community with distinctive open space and natural features, protected habitats, parks and outdoor recreation;

  ❖ Rich in the arts and recreational opportunities, celebrating the talents and culture of the people who live here;

  ❖ A community that values and supports quality education throughout the age continuum;

  ❖ Known for its comprehensive health and human services and for its services for the elderly and disabled;

❖ A hub in a regional transportation system that connects Linn and Benton Counties and provides a link to the north-south high-speed rail system;

❖ A highly livable city which employs local benchmarks to measure its progress in areas such as housing, economic vitality, educational quality, environmental quality, and overall quality of life;

❖ Blessed with an involved citizenry that actively participates in public policy and decision making;

❖ Committed in its support for children and families;

❖ A community that honors diversity and is free of prejudice, bigotry and hate;

❖ Home... a good place for all kinds of people to live and to lead healthy, happy, productive lives."

(Vision Statement of the City Council, Corvallis, Oregon)

■ Ten Point Vision for the Year 2020

❖ Adopt a General Plan with measurable policies for sustainable development;

❖ Decrease landfill bound waste from 2.8 to 2.6 pounds per person per day;

❖ Recycle and beneficially reuse 25 percent of City wastewater;

❖ Evaluate all fleet replacements to ensure the smallest carbon footprint while still meeting operational needs;

❖ Preserve the urban forest by replanting at least one tree for each tree removed by the City due to disease and adopt a tree preservation and maintenance ordinance;

❖ Create a master pedestrian and bicycle plan and seek grant funding to expand the existing system Beneficially reuse 100 percent of Wastewater Treatment Plant produced biosolids;

❖ Develop a sustainability awareness campaign in partnership with the community;

❖ Construct all new City facilities at a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold standard;

❖ Seek to reduce local government greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent in accordance with the goal of Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006."

(Vision Statement of Dale City, California)

■ "The City of Portland and every local developer and contractor will apply ecological building practices that conserve energy and natural resources, protect human health, preserve local and regional environmental quality, and increase the structure's long-term value.

(Vision Statement of the Green Building Steering Committee, Portland, Oregon)

The final set of statements, from the Township of Esquimalt, in Canada, includes a vision, a mission statement, and principles of sustainability.

- ■ Vision:
  - ❖ Esquimalt is a diverse community, a desirable place to live, and an integral member of a larger region.
  - ❖ We encourage meaningful community participation and consultation to provide open and responsible decision-making. We enhance responsible economic opportunities and embrace sports, recreation, the arts, and the west coast lifestyle.
  - ❖ As we achieve the vision, we enhance our quality of life, enjoy health and safety, build upon our cultural heritage, revitalize our community, protect our natural environment, and foster our diversity.
- ■ Mission:
  - ❖ Focusing on community priorities, the Township of Esquimalt provides quality municipal services through open and innovative leadership.
- ■ Sustainability Principles
  - ❖ The Council of the Township of Esquimalt supports the principles of human sustainability, which includes the integration of economic, environmental, and social sustainability.
  - ❖ Council understands that we must not just strive for maintaining quality of life but look towards improving it, so that future generations can prosper. To do this, Council will build the concept of sustainability into its operations and decision-making processes by considering the longer-term implications of its decisions on the environment and the community.

(Vision, Mission, and Sustainability Principles Statements of the Township of Esquimalt, British Columbia, Canada)

Processes for Developing Mission and Vision Statements

Because it is a simpler process, you should write your mission statement prior to writing your vision statement. Keeping in mind the qualities of a good mission statement, the steps of the process would be to:

- ■ Build on the document that officially created the Team;
- ■ State, if is not already in the document, the overall reason for the Team's being;
- ■ Provide additional details, if and as needed, about the roles the Team will play;
- ■ Identify important measures of success.

Next, writing your vision statement becomes a critical step in developing a team action plan. The vision statement should be based on results of a community needs as-

sessment that identifies what the community values as characteristics of its preferred future. (See Chapter 8 of this Handbook.)

As you consider writing your vision statement and anticipate creating and implementing your action plan, there are several common pitfalls to avoid. Common pitfalls (and strategies to avoid them) follow:[6]

- Because so much is asked of volunteers, sustaining leadership fails (Amass a sufficiently large number of volunteer leaders and spread the work among them, or obtain the services of a paid leader—someone hired from the public);

- Coordinating the logistics required for doing a needs assessment, writing a vision statement, and developing the a plan become overwhelming (Think the whole process through carefully before starting, or obtain the services of a paid professional);

- If the process does not involve people who represent the whole community, it comes across, to the uninvolved as having preordained outcomes (Identify all the groups that have a stake in sustainability and include them);

- Likewise, if process is too narrowly based, the uninvolved lack knowledge and trust of it (Be inclusive by using the "four W's and an R" that are discussed in Chapter 3);

- Competing visions exist (Take alternative visions into consideration and make an effort to identify common interests);

- The process is perceived as a threat by community leaders (Include the leaders in the process, listen carefully to their concerns, and work to identify common interests);

- Results do not fit comfortably within the bureaucracy of the status quo (Involve the bureaucrats, listen to their concerns, and identify common interests);

- Energy for the implementation phase is lacking (Celebrate successes and bring in "new blood");

- Insufficient resources exist for developing and/or implementing the action plan (Ensure resources will be available before starting the process).

End Notes

1 Longo, Gianni. The Vision Thing: Tools to Get it in Focus. New York, New York: American Communities Partnership (from a presentation at the Railvolution Conference, Portland, Oregon, September, 1998).

2 Colaianni, L.A. "That Vision Thing" Bulletin of the Medical Library Association 1992 January 80(1):1-8.

3 It is possible that a "community sustainability group" may incorporate a Green Team. A good example is Sustainable Cherry Hill (SCH), New Jersey. SCH began in 2008, prior to the creation of a Sustainable Jersey Green Team by Cherry Hill Township in 2009. The township created its Green Team within SCH, and it is co-chaired by the Executive Director of SCH and a township official. The mission of the Green Team part of SCH corresponds to the official proclamation issued in 2009 by Cherry Hill Township.

4 Leadership and Motivation Training.Com. http://www.leadership-and-motivation-training.com/developing-a-team-vision-statement.html

5 The communities cited from New Jersey are all involved in Sustainable Jersey.

6 Cf. Longo, Gianni.

Chapter 8

The Green Team Action Plan

The Green Team Action Plan

The purpose of the Green Team Action Plan is to guide the Green Team's sustainability efforts in a systematic and comprehensive way. The Action Planning process will provide you with the tools for prioritizing specific action items, correlate the Green Team vision with concrete plans for change, and provide a framework for engaging the larger community. Because of its central importance to community sustainability efforts, completion of the Action Plan is mandatory for Sustainable Maryland Certification.

A Green Team Action Plan is a strategy for completing SMC actions and, eventually, achieving SMC certification. While the Action Plan may evolve over time, developing a strategy for moving forward is important to keeping the Green Team on task. A customizable 10-question community survey is included with the action. The community survey is designed to be a simple way to quickly assess the needs, interests, and sustainable behaviors of your community, in the spirit of the Asset Based Community Development model. The community survey will help highlight what issues are important to your community and help you to construct an Action Plan that is both feasible and successful.

Using an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Model

The traditional approach to community development is the "problem-solution" model: there is a crisis due to some deficiency or unmet need that must be addressed point-for-point in order for the community to heal. Most obstacles to municipal sustainability, however, stem from a variety of contributing factors. This makes the point-for-point correlation between problem and solution especially difficult to address and can overwhelm or frustrate even the most enthusiastic Green Team.

In contrast, Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) focuses on the inherent and often untapped resources in the community. By focusing on the discovery and implementation of energy and expertise already available, ABCD allows communities to develop organically and strengthen existing networks in order to achieve broader goals. This, of course, is the thinking behind growing a Green Team in your community with a solid government-citizen foundational partnership and a diversity of talents, experience, and areas of expertise among Green Team members. The advantages of this approach include:

■ Reinforcement of the capability of the community to achieve its goals;

■ A sense of personal and civic pride;

■ Cultivation of resident ownership, identity, and leadership;

- Creation of a space for the networking of inherent skills, knowledge, and gifts; and

- Sustainable social development.

Incorporating Asset Based Community Development in your Green Team Action Planning process

As we have discussed throughout this handbook, municipal sustainability depends upon a healthy relationship between the players in a community and the environment, society, and economy in which they live. Citizens, organizations and businesses, and government all have different assets to contribute and different ways of interacting with the three central elements of sustainability. A representation of these relationships follows below:

Components of Municipal Sustainability

Elements	Stakeholders	Assets
Environment Society Economy	Citizens Organizations/Businesses Government	Skills Experience Passions Capacities Networks/Connections Physical Assets Economic Assets

Now that you have drawn on your community assets to create a solid Green Team, it is important to reflect upon the needs and interests of the community at large. Thus, in order for the Green Team to be effective at achieving Sustainable Maryland Certification, you must select Action Items that are not only targeted for the specific needs of your community but also draw on the strengths of your community members and institutions.

Creating a Green Team Action Plan

The Action Item "Complete a Green Team Action Plan," includes a short sample community survey to help you determine your community's needs, interests, and behaviors relevant to sustainability efforts.[1] Additional or alternate survey questions may be developed by your community. Once you have completed the survey, you can correlate the areas of greatest need or interest with specific Action Areas.

To achieve certification, municipalities will need to complete actions worth a total of 150 points, including two mandatory actions and two of six priority actions. In summary,

Mandatory Actions (Complete All):

- Create a Green Team (Community Action)

- Complete a Green Team Action Plan (Community Action)

Priority Actions (Complete Two):

- Community Gardens (Community Based Food System)
- Municipal Energy Audits (Energy)
- Municipal Carbon Footprint (Greenhouse Gas)
- Green Purchasing Policy (Local Economies)
- Create a Watershed Plan (Natural Resources)
- Stormwater Management Program (Natural Resources)

To help determine which Action Items should selected:

1. Start by including the Mandatory Action Items on your list.

2. Consult the community survey: which Action Areas are the top priorities for your community?

3. Determine which of the Priority Action Items correspond to the top Priority Action Areas for your community.

4. Detailed instructions for the completion of each Action Item are available on-line at http://sustainablemaryland.com/actionlist.php. Once you have an idea of which Action Areas are of greatest need or interest in your community, read through the associated Action Items. What resources or skills are necessary in order to complete each Action Item?

5. Given the results of the community assessment, which Action Items match the needs and interests of your community? How can you correspond the community's needs with Green Team assets?

The selection of Action Items should be a collaborative process between all Green Team members. Implementation of the Action Plan will require the time, dedication, and skill of the Green Team; thus a cooperative effort is necessary for success.

Leadership and Accountability

During the Action Item vetting process, the skills and interests of team and community members should be matched against the demands of the Action Item. Follow-through is more likely if the people assigned to a task are interested in it, so volunteers from within the Green Team should be solicited.

Once a team member or members are assigned oversight duties, committees, working groups, and other networks of support can be created for them by correlating the expertise of each Green Team member with the Action Item. Deadlines or benchmarks should then be established using the Action Item instructions as a guide. Taking into consideration the priority of the Action Item, time commitments of the Green Team, and the abilities/assets of the community, a calendar can be developed to track the various phases of completion.

Action Plan information, including the Action Items selected, with oversight of Green Team Members, and the justification for selection of Action Items, will all be recorded in the Action Plan (see "Green Team Action Plan Template").

Measuring Progress

As Peter Drucker once quipped, "What is measured is what gets done." For that reason, the selection of indicators to track the progress of the program and individual Action Items is very important.

Things to consider:

- Quantitative measurements indicate amounts and answer questions like *How much? How frequently? How many?* Qualitative measurements are more descriptive and answer questions like *How? When? What kind? What quality?*

Good indicators and measurements:

- Are simple and directionally clear;
- Indicate a clear link between action and result;
- Produce a valid measurement (the results are believable);
- Produce a reliable measurement (the results are consistent with past results); and
- Require data that is feasible and measurable.

Programmatic success can be evaluated as the overall ability of the Green Team to:

- Move closer toward achieving the vision;
- Accomplish the tenets of the mission;
- Incorporate sustainability and sustainable practices into the larger culture of the community; and
- Complete the Action Items necessary for Certification.

Action Item success can be measured via:

- Benchmarking: comparison with similar municipalities
- Targeting: establishing specific objectives for each step in the Action Item instructions
- Establishing an initial baseline and comparing it with final results
- Evaluating levels of community involvement
- Taking quantitative measures of environmental improvement (i.e., lower toxic ppm count in the water supply)

Additional Resources for Chapter 8

Resource A: Sample Questions for a Community Survey

Use these 10 questions (or similar questions that are tailored to your community) as a starting point to begin to understand your community's needs, interests, and behaviors relevant to sustainability efforts

Community Based Food System

1. Is there a place to buy locally grown food in our community? (Yes/No/Don't Know)

2. What kinds of activities might you be interested in participating in if they were available in our community? (Yes/No/Maybe) (Record responses—if possible, ask respondents to choose the one they think is most important)

   ❏ Attending a local food fair

   ❏ Attending nutrition and healthy eating classes

   ❏ Attending a class on preserving locally grown food (canning, pickling, etc.)

   ❏ Attending a class on cooking locally grown food

   ❏ Attending a Farmer's Market

   ❏ Joining a Community Supported Agriculture group (where you buy a share of fresh, locally grown produce and it is delivered weekly to your neighborhood)

   ❏ Growing food in a community garden

   ❏ Attending a native plant sale

Natural Resources

1. Are you concerned about any of these issues in your neighborhood? (Yes/No/Don't Know) (Record responses—if possible, ask respondents to choose the one they think is most important)

   ❏ Pet waste not picked up

   ❏ Flooding when it rains

   ❏ Problems with septic systems

   ❏ Litter on the ground

   ❏ Litter in waterways (lakes, creeks, rivers, streams)

   ❏ Not enough trees

   ❏ Overuse of pesticides or fertilizers on lawns

Health and Wellness

1. Are any of these issues a problem in our community? (Yes/No/Don't Know) (Record responses—if possible, ask respondents to choose the one they think is most important)

   ❏ Childhood obesity

   ❏ Adult obesity

   ❏ Lack of activities/information that promote exercise

   ❏ Lack of activities/information that promote healthy eating

2. If you are employed, does your place of employment have a workplace wellness program? (Yes/No/Don't Know/Not Employed)

Local Economies

1. What kind of activities do you think would support local businesses in our community? (Yes/No/Don't Know) (Record responses—if possible, ask respondents to choose the one they think is most important)

   ❏ Hold local business roundtables

   ❏ Encourage our municipal government to purchase products and services from local businesses

   ❏ Recognize local businesses for "going green"

   ❏ A local business directory

   ❏ A "Buy Local" campaign

Climate and Energy

1. Do you know what greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are? (Yes/No/Heard of them but not sure what they are)

2. Do you know what a carbon footprint is? (Yes/No/Heard of it but not sure what it means/Don't Know)

3. Should our community focus on decreasing the energy used by the municipal government? (Lighting, landscaping, heating and cooling, etc.) (Yes/No/Don't Know)

4. Would you like to know more about how to make your house, condo, or apartment more energy efficient? (Yes/No/Don't Know)

[Insert Green Team Name] Three Year Action Plan

Starting Date:_____ Ending Date: _____

Green Team Vision Statement:

Green Team Three Year Goals:
Example: Submit 10 Actions for certification; achieve Bronze status; complete 2 Actions per year, etc.

Summary of Action Plan:

    Year 1:

        Action 1:

        Action 2:

        Action 3:

        Action 4:

        Action 5:

continued

Summary of Action Plan, *continued***:**

Year 1:

       Action 1:

       Action 2:

       Action 3:

       Action 4:

       Action 5:

Year 1:

       Action 1:

       Action 2:

       Action 3:

       Action 4:

       Action 5:

Year __ (1, 2, or 3) Action Plan, Action __ (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.)

Name of SMC Action	Example: Let's Move!
Mandatory or Priority Action?	❏ Mandatory Action ❏ Priority Action ❏ Neither Mandatory nor Priority Action
Action Category	❏ Community Action ❏ Community Based Food System ❏ Energy Efficiency ❏ Greenhouse Gas ❏ Health & Wellness ❏ Local Economies ❏ Natural Resources ❏ Sustainability Planning
Is this a new action or is this an action your community has already completed (in the past year)?	❏ New Action for our community ❏ Action that our community completed in the past year— We intend to apply for certification points retroactively. *(Note: This is only possible for Year 1 actions.)*
Green Team Member who will oversee this action	Example: Green Team Member Al Jones, ajones@yahoo.com
Who will lead this action?	❏ Municipal Department OR ❏ Community Organization
Who are potential partners for this action?	Example: County Health Department, Bryan Jones, bjones@county.gov; Boys & Girls Club, David Jones, djones@boys&girlsclub.com

continued

Estimated project cost (if any)	Example: Staff time only: Jennifer Jones
Available funds (if any)	Example: Approval has been granted for Jennifer Jones to devote staff time to pursuing this action
Projected start date-Projected end date	Example: Sept 1, 2011-Feb 28, 2012
What information was obtained from your short community assessment that indicates that this action may meet the needs or interests of your community?	

Please complete this page for each action your community plans to complete in Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3.

End Notes

1 Further instructions for completing the survey can be found in "Complete a Green Team Action Plan."

Chapter 9

Keeping your Green Team Growing

Keeping your Green Team Growing

Documenting best practices to keep a Green Team going is a work in progress, and it will always be so. As we learn how to "grow" Maryland Green Teams, look over the shoulders of Green Teams in New Jersey to see what is working there, and learn, generally, about how to sustain community organizations, this chapter of the handbook can be refined and augmented.

From what we have learned from case studies of Green Teams in Galloway and Cherry Hill Townships in New Jersey, and from what we now know in general about sustaining community organizations, here are some ideas for you to consider for how to keep your team going:

- Mind the relationship between the Green Team and its sponsoring municipality, both in how the relationship is formed and how it evolves. (This seems fundamental and was confirmed by leaders in Galloway and Cherry Hill Townships, New Jersey.)

- To gain particular kinds of expertise for your team, without overburdening busy experts, create an advisory group, and when a topic in the agenda of a team meeting is relevant to someone on that group, invite her or him to the meeting. (Both Go Green Galloway and Sustainable Cherry Hill use this strategy.)

- Include citizens with passions by creating "committees" or "task groups, even if what a group wants to do is not included in the Sustainable Maryland Certified program." (Galloway and Cherry Hill Green Teams do this. Over time, the people may become integrated into the program, and/or the program may evolve to include their passion.)

- Reread this handbook from time to time. The authors believe it contains many ideas for not only starting your Green Team but sustaining it also.

Maryland Ethics Laws, as applied to Green Teams

Since 1979 the State of Maryland has enacted extensive laws on ethics, whose purpose is to

- Assure the public of the impartiality and independent judgment of officials and employees, including those serving on State boards and commissions;

- Avoid even the appearance of improper influence; and

- Require officials and employees to disclose financial affairs and to meet minimum standards of ethical conduct.

You may view these at Maryland Code Annotated, State Government Article Sec. 15-1-1 through 15-1001.

Approximately 84 Maryland municipalities are subject to the state law requirement to adopt local ordinances concerning ethics. These are called "non-exempt municipalities." Approximately 73 small cities and towns in the state with small budgets and staffs and few services were exempted from this requirement ("exempt municipalities"). See http://ethics.gov.state.md.us/localgov.htm and Table A.1 below for a list of localities that have adopted their own ethics law.

During the 2010 Session, the General Assembly enacted a new law which requires non-exempt municipalities, those which are required to adopt local ethics ordinances, to enact more stringent local ethics ordinances which are equivalent to, or exceed, those laws which apply to State officials. At the heart of the new requirement is stricter conflict of interest and financial disclosure provisions. The State Ethics Commission has provided municipalities with model ordinances that meet this requirement of ethics laws and that are at least equivalent to State law. You may view the new state ethics law at www.mlis.state.md.us if you search for Chapter 277 of the Acts of 2010 [go to: new information, then status].

Your Green Team should consult the city (or town) attorney for your municipality to see a) if it is a non exempt municipality, which must pass a more stringent law, or if it is an exempt municipality, which does not and b) if your town is an exempt municipality, to see if your town has adopted an ethics law even though it did not have to under State law. Md. Ann. Code, State Government Article Sec. 15-803 citing Sec. 15-209.

If you are a member of a Green Team,

- who is also an employee of the municipality which authorized the Green Team, or

- who is also an elected official of the municipality which authorized the Green Team, or

- who is a citizen of the municipality which authorized the Green Team,

Then you are, most likely, subject to any ethics law of your municipality, generally the same as if you were serving on a board or commission within the jurisdiction. This is a general rule, which may vary somewhat from municipality to municipality. Your Green Team may wish to check with the attorney for your municipality to confirm that your Green Team is subject to the ethics laws of your municipality and to see if your Green Team would be treated similarly, for ethics law purposes, to a typical board or commission of your town. See http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/19a/19a.04.02.02.htm.

Following is a brief summary of the Conflicts of Interest and Financial Disclosure provisions that are commonly contained in State and municipal ethics laws. This generic discussion is drawn from http://ethics.gov.state.md.us/bluepamphlet.htm and is not intended as legal advice or as a substitute for making an inquiry into what the actual ethics provisions are, if any, within your city or town.

A. Conflicts of Interest. A conflict of interest is generally defined as a real or seeming incompatibility between a person's private interests and one's public duties or responsibilities. Black's law Dictionary (9th ed. 1990). As the equivalent of a board or commission of a municipality, your Green Team and its individual members will develop duties and responsibilities based upon your Priority Action Plan and the authorizing resolution adopted by your municipality.

A conflict of interest may take many forms, but it typically arises related to financial interests, business entities, creditor or contractual relationships, procurement processes, and use of real or personal property of the municipality or gift solicitation. Here are some key questions to ask yourself as a Green Team Member:

1. Am I doing or seeking to do business of any kind with another member of the Green Team, who is also an employee or elected official of the affected municipality?

2. Am I engaged in an activity or business that is regulated or controlled by another member of the Green Team, who is also an employee or elected official of the affected municipality?

3. Do I have a financial interest or anticipated economic benefit that may be substantially affected in a specific way by another member of the Green Team, who is also an employee or elected official of the affected municipality?

If you think the answer to any of these questions might be yes, then ask yourself whether the potential conflict might impair or influence (a) your independence of judgment as a Green Team member and/or (b) your commitment to apply your ability and energy to the work of the Green Team. If so, then you might wish to talk to other members of the Green Team, or the attorney for the municipality about whether to resign or redirect your energies within the Green Team Action Plan.

B. Financial Disclosure. Based on a typical requirement that members of boards and commissions, including Green Teams, are required to file a financial disclosure form, some of the purposes are:

- to allow municipal officials, employees, other agency personnel and the public to have access to documents which disclose possible conflicts of interest, and

- to provide access to documents that demonstrate to the public that financial interests are not hidden and that generally, officials, employees and members of boards and commission are not engaging in conflicts of interest

Note: This Appendix offers a generic summary for Green Teams about legal and ethical matters, so you may wish to consult the attorney for your municipality for specific legal advice on ethical matters discussed in this Appendix.

Table A.1.
Status Report—July 1, 2011
Municipal Corporations with Local Ethics Provisions

As of July 1, 2011, the following municipal corporations in the State have enacted local ethics provisions that the State Ethics Commission has determined meet the requirements of the Public Ethics Law and the Commission's regulations that were in effect on July 1, 2010. The Commission has granted partial exemptions to a few of these jurisdictions in accordance with State Government Article, §§15-804—15-806, Annotated Code of Maryland, and the Commission's regulations. (See ** to identify these jurisdictions.) For most of these jurisdictions the partial exemption means that the local law does not include lobbying registration and disclosure requirements. The Commission has completely exempted municipalities not listed here from the Ethics Law requirements for local ethics laws, though some of these jurisdictions do have ethics provisions meeting the State Law requirements with varying degrees of completeness. All nonexempted jurisdictions have identified a unit within local government to provide advice and receive complaints, as well as to collect and make public financial disclosure statements, for local officials and employees required to file disclosure, as well as candidates for local elected office.

Aberdeen, Annapolis, Baltimore City, Barnesville**, Bel Air, Berlin, Berwin Heights**, Bladensburg, Bowie, Brunswick, Cambridge, Capitol Heights, Centreville, Charlestown, Chestertown, Cheverly, Chevy Chase Village, Church Hill**, College Park, Colmar Manor, Crisfield, Cumberland, Delmar, Denton, District Heights, Easton, Elkton**, Emmittsburg, Fairmont Heights, Federalsburg**, Frederick, Frostburg**, Fruitland**, Gaithersburg, Glenarden, Goldsboro**, Greenbelt, Greensboro**, Hagerstown, Hampstead, Hancock**, Havre de Grace, Hebron, Hurlock**, Hyattsville, Indian Head, La Plata, Landover Hills, Laurel, Leonardtown, Manchester, Martin's Additions**, Midland, Mount Airy, Mount Rainier**, New Carrollton, New Windsor**, North East**, Oakland**, Ocean City, Perryville, Pittsville**, Pocomoke City, Poolesville, Preston**, Princess Anne, Ridgely**, Riverdale Park, Rockville, St. Michaels, Salisbury, Seat Pleasant, Smithsburg **, Snow Hill, Sykesville, Takoma Park, Taneytown, Thurmont, Trappe, University Park**, Walkersville, Westernport**, Westminster, Williamsport**

Appendix B

Open Meetings: Policy, Scope, and Procedure

Policy

The policy on Open Meetings in Maryland is that except in very limited circumstances, the deliberations and decisions involved in making public policy should be conducted in an open and public manner, so that citizens are allowed to observe such decision-making and the public officials who do it.

Two general reasons in support of the State's policy in favor of Open Meetings are given in the preamble to the Maryland statute on this subject: (1) Open Meetings "ensure the accountability of government to the citizens of the State" and (2) the conduct of public deliberations and decisions in open meetings "increases the faith of the public in government and enhances the effectiveness of the public in fulfilling its role in a democratic society." Md. Ann. Code, State Government Article Sec. 10-501 (a) and (b) ("Open Meetings Act" or "OMA").

Scope: Are the meetings of Green Teams within the scope of the Open Meetings Act?

When a Green Team is created by a resolution of the affected municipality and where a mayor (or other chief executive) of a municipality appoints several members to a Green Team, then the Green Team is a "public body" under the State Open Meetings Act. As a public body, the Green Team is subject to the Open Meetings Act. See www.oag.state.md.us/opengov/Open Meeings/Chap2.pdf, pages 3–5.

The Open Meetings Act applies only if a Green Team is holding a meeting. Some kinds of meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act and others are not. What type of meeting held by a Green Team is subject to the OMA? Three key elements make a Green Team meeting subject to OMA. They are:

- When a quorum is convened (a quorum is a majority of the membership of the Green Team);

- When the Green time is considering or transacting public business; or

- When the meeting concerns information gathering related to specific items of pending business, deliberations, or a final decision by the Green Team. For example this could include approving or amending a budget or a contract for the Green Team, or making a recommendation on a sustainability matter to the mayor and town council.

Looking at these key elements together, it means that (a) if two members of the Green Team talk on the telephone or exchange an email, (b) if the Green Team meets with a neighborhood group to answer questions or invite citizen participation in a Priority Action, or (c) if the Green Team convenes for a training session on

team-building, then the OMA would not apply. A Green Team meeting need not be held in person; it could be conducted by conference call, Skype, or email. The key is there must be "immediate interaction" between the members of the Green Team (see www.oag.state.md.us/opengov/Open Meeings/Chap2.pdf, pages 6–8).

When a meeting of the Green Team contains the three elements, bulleted above, then it is within the scope of the OMA.

There is one important exception to the general rule that Green Team meetings are subject to the OMA. It is called the "administrative function." The key idea here is that if a Green Team is implementing a previously-established law or program, instead of developing a new policy or program, then that is an administrative function which is not subject to OMA. One example of an administrative function that is not subject to OMA would be the early phases of preparing a budget for the Green Team.

Procedure: When your Green Team Meeting is subject to the OMA, what are the key elements you need to comply with?

There are three key elements to meeting the procedural requirements under the OMA. They are:

1. Reasonable advance notice of the date time and place of the meeting. The most likely method of notice would be through a local newspaper, on the Green Team section of the municipal website, posted at town hall, or by "any other reasonable method;"

2. The meeting venue is reasonably accessible to the individuals who are likely to attend; and

3. Written minutes are prepared "as soon as practicable," and contain each agenda items considered, any actions taken, and each recorded vote.

For more detail on these three elements, see www.oag.state.md.us/opengov/Open Meeings/Chap3.pdf, pages 1–2 and 7–8.

Closed Sessions of the Green Team are permitted under the OMA where a specific exception in the OMA is clearly identified and the agenda item planned for Closed Session clearly fits within that exception.

Generally, it is preferable to conduct Green Team business in an Open Meeting, given that one of the Green Team values is transparency and one of the Green Team goals is recruitment and inclusiveness. Many of the specific exceptions for a Closed Session would probably not apply to the routine business of your Green Team, but it is well to be aware that they exist. For a simplified list of these exceptions, see Table B.1 at the end of this Chapter.

In the event that your Green Team believes it needs to hold a Closed Session, it is prudent to consult with the City Attorney for your municipality to (a) make sure the

planned agenda item fits within one of the specific exceptions for a Closed Session and (b) to comply with the detailed procedures required for it. Broadly speaking, there are certain procedural concepts you need to be aware of in conducting a Closed Session. Generally these are as follows:

1. Notice of the public meeting must include notice that all or part of the meeting will be in Closed Session;

2. Before the Closed Session in the public meeting, there must be a written statement of the reason for closing the meeting followed by a majority vote of the Green Team; and

3. Many requirements for minutes for a Closed Session are similar to those for an open meeting, but there are certain additional requirements related to the Closed Session, the minutes for which are typically not open to public inspection. The degree of detail in such minutes need not negate the reason for holding the Closed Session, in the event such minutes are later made public.

See Md. Ann. Code, State Government Article 10-508 (d) and 509(c) and the Compliance Checklist included below as Table A, which was prepared by the Maryland Office of the Attorney General. See also www.oag.state.md.us/opengov/Open Meeings/Chap3.pdf, pages 1, 5, 6, and 10.

End Notes:

1. This Appendix is a summary of legal matters intended as general information for Green Team members. For specific legal advice on the Open Meetings Act, Green Team Members should consult the city attorney for the affected municipality.

2. The author wishes to acknowledge and credit the PowerPoint presentation, dated June 29, 2010, delivered by William R. Varga, an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Maryland, on behalf of the Academy for Excellence in Local Governance, which is also available at the link cited above.

Table A.1.
Compliance Checklist

For *all meetings* covered by the Act, did you:

- ❏ Provide proper advance notice?
- ❏ Arrange for minutes to be taken?

For *closed* meetings covered by the Act, did you also:

- ❏ Identify one or more of the following grounds for closing the meeting?
    - ❏ a specific personnel matter;
    - ❏ protection of personal privacy on a matter unrelated to public business;
    - ❏ acquisition of real property;
    - ❏ a proposed business relocation or expansion;
    - ❏ the investment of public funds;
    - ❏ the marketing of public securities;
    - ❏ obtaining legal advice;
    - ❏ consulting about litigation;
    - ❏ collective bargaining;
    - ❏ public security;
    - ❏ scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examinations;
    - ❏ criminal investigations;
    - ❏ other legal requirement; or
    - ❏ preliminary discussion of procurement issues.
- ❏ Record a majority vote in favor of closing the meeting?
- ❏ Prepare, at the time of the vote, a written statement of the reasons and legal basis for closing the meeting and the topics to be discussed?
- ❏ Keep the closed-session discussion within the scope of the exception that you cited?
- ❏ Include in the minutes of the next open meeting a statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed meeting; a record of the vote to close the meeting and the authority to do so; and a listing of the topics discussed, the persons present, and the actions taken?
- ❏ For a meeting *recessed into closed session to conduct an administrative function,* did you include in the minutes of the next open meeting a statement of the date, time, place, and persons present and a phrase or sentence identifying the subject matter discussed at the closed session?
- ❏ *After a meeting,* did you file and maintain records in accordance with the record retention requirements of the Act?

Public Information Act: How does it Apply to Green Teams?

Like the Open Meetings Act, the broad purpose of the Public Information Act (Md. Ann. Code State Government Article Subtitle 10 Sec.611-630, the "PIA") is to foster the accountability of State and local agencies and officials to the public by granting to the public a broad right of access to records that are possessed by government agencies. The central principle is that the right to information about government activities lies at the heart of democratic government.

The basic mandate of the PIA is to enable citizens to have access to government records, subject to certain exceptions, without unnecessary cost or delay. You may review the PIA at http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/Appendix_C.pdf. The PIA grants access to a wide range of public records, because it eliminates the common law rule that a citizen requesting a document from the government must have a "legal interest" to which the requested document is relevant. It also covers a broader range of government entities and documents than its federal counterpart, the more famous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). This is because the PIA covers "all public records," where the FOIA simply covers "agency records" (see http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/Chapter1.pdf). Because the PIA's general rule is disclosure and the definition of "public record" is very broad, a government official who wishes to deny access to a document has the burden to show that not disclosing a document fits within a narrow exception to the statute's general rule of disclosure.

Each Green Team is covered by the PIA because the Green Team is considered a "unit or instrumentality" of municipal government. This means that the minutes of a Green Team's public meeting and contracts entered into by a Green Team may be accessible to the public through the PIA, unless they fit into one of the narrow exceptions. It also means that through the PIA (if not otherwise), many documents and records of the municipality which authorized the Green Team may be accessible to the Green Team.

What is a Public Record?

If the public has a right of access to public records and the term "public record" is broadly defined, what does it mean? A "public record" is any record that is made by, or received by, a unit of government (again including Green Teams) in connection with the transaction of public business (see State Government Article 10-611(g)). One interesting exception to the scope of public records is the following example: if a Green Team hired a private contractor to purchase and install stormwater management equipment, and the Green Team does not obtain a record of the project from the contractor, then that record is not considered a public record, even though the Green Team has a contractual right to that record (see http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/Chapter1.pdf. at pages 4–6.)

What about the form of a public record? It includes not only written materials, but also photographs, films, recordings, tapes, computerized records, printed and electronically stored versions of email messages, correspondence, maps, and drawings. So if the Green Team makes a program decision by the collective exchange of emails, that email exchange would probably be considered a public record.

Types of Exclusions from Disclosure: When can the Government Deny a Green Team request for a Public Record?

Of course, not all government records are available for disclosure. The PIA attempts to balance the public's right of access to government records with other policies that respect the privacy or confidentiality of certain information. The PIA contains five provisions for "denial" of public right to access (see State Government Article Subtitle 10, Sections 615–619).

Some public records are confidential under federal or state statutes, under court rules, and under various "privileges" such as attorney-client and executive privilege. The PIA protects certain records from disclosure such as records pertaining to adoption, personnel, and Motor Vehicle Administration driving records. Naturally an individual's medical information and confidential commercial information such as trade secrets are generally protected.

Other records may be withheld if the agency decides that disclosure of those records would be "contrary to" or "cause substantial injury" to the "public interest." What are some examples of these "discretionary denials?" This would be investigatory records; information related to academic, licensing, and employment examinations; and documents concerning deliberation on a policy issue before it is decided. In most cases these "discretionary denials" related to the "public interest" would probably not arise in connection with the activities of Green Teams (see http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/What is PIA.pdf, pages 2–3).

Notes:

1. The author wishes to acknowledge the research and writing of Maryland Assistant Attorney General Robert MacDonald on the referenced website of the Office of the Attorney General of Maryland.

2. This Appendix is intended as a general summary of the PIA, which concerns legal matters. The reader is cautioned the Memo may not be relied upon as legal advice. A Green Team Member who has a specific question about the PIA should consult the attorney for the authorizing municipality.