

US GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL ~ RI CHAPTER

Minutes of Meeting

December 4, 2008

New England Institute of Technology
Warwick, Rhode Island

Members Present:

Connie McGreavy, Chair
Mark Winslow, Treasurer
Justin Bownds
Norman Cook
Joseph da Silva
Mark DiPetrillo
Jack Leyden

Laurie Drucker
Holly Grosvenor
Stephen Hughes
Caroline Karp
Steve Kitchen
Gaytha Langlois
Dan Paquette

Members Absent:

Tony Dematteo
Paul DePace
Kenneth Filarski
James Lehouiller
Stephen Turner

Other key leaders present included the chair of the Finance Committee, Patti Young; Paul Caton, co-chair of the Emerging Green Builders Committee; Bernard White, Chair of the Nominating Committee and Kathy Kanterman, USGBC Regional Council representative. More than a dozen members of committees, RIGBC members and interested parties were also in attendance.

- 1. Call to Order** Before a quorum was formed, Mrs. McGreavy reiterated the significant requirements of the Conflict of Interest policy with board members in attendance and reminded members of the rule regarding unexcused absences of two consecutive board meetings. The meeting was later called to order at 4:45. Mrs. McGreavy introduced Lisa Whited, USGBC Chapter Growth Consultant and briefly explained her supporting role for the chapter.
- 2. Meeting Minutes** Approval of the November meeting minutes were deferred until they can be provided for review in advance of the January meeting.
- 3. Disclosure of Conflicts** - Deferred, in order to prioritize voting items.
- 4. Chair's Report** - Deferred, in order to prioritize voting items.
- 5. Treasurer's Report** –deferred for a report from the Finance Committee requiring action.
- 6. Committee Reports – Standing Committees**

A. Finance Committee

Mr. Winslow reported that the Finance Committee prepared a 3-year budget as required for the IRS 501(c)(3) application. He pointed out a pledge made by National Grid for \$5000 for 2009. He reported that corporate donations were a big consideration in formulating the budget, and lowered from initial estimates based on the deteriorating economy. The budget is divided into two sections, Revenues and Expenses. Some revenues will come from early donations, i.e., "seed money" and "Founding Sponsors". Founding Sponsors are projected at roughly 6 @ \$5000 or 10 @ \$3000 for a total of \$30,000 in 2009, \$45,000 in 2010 and \$60,000 in 2011 assuming corporate sponsorship grows. Other sources of revenues include fees from up to six USGBC LEED workshops and at least two LEED exam prep workshops per year (the latter will be for chapter members only). Mr. Winslow reported that the USGBC workshop model is changing, as is the manner in which LEED faculty are paid, which may represent an additional cost going into the second half of 2009. Mr. Winslow also stated that the RIGBC has identified some

potential grants with the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Bank of America, the US EPA and US EDA to pursue.

With respect to expenses, Mr. Winslow explained costs for liability insurance, corporate filings, an annual report, and marketing. \$15,000 was added to the budget for a marketing booth on the advice of Mr. DiPetrillo. Potential staff assistance was calculated at 30% of revenue. Mr. DiPetrillo acknowledged that sponsorship goals were lowered from the initial budget, but was optimistic that the chapter could receive ample donations of at least \$5000. Mrs. Grosvenor asked for clarification on what the insurance covered. Mrs. Young explained that the lower figure covers general liability for the chapter and the higher number is an estimate for individual board members. Mr. Winslow clarified that general liability insurance is no longer offered through the USGBC.

Mrs. McGreavy made a motion to approve the budget with Mrs. Drucker seconding. On a voice vote, the motion carried. Mrs. McGreavy next moved to approve \$750 to file the IRS application. Mr. Kitchen seconded the motion. Mrs. McGreavy explained that the USGBC was delayed in terms of sending national membership rebates and local chapter dues to Rhode Island, but that there was sufficient outside revenue from the LEED study group to cover the cost of the IRS submission. On a voice vote, the motion carried. Next, Mrs. McGreavy made a motion to spend up to \$500 for review of the IRS application by an attorney; the motion was seconded by Mr. Hughes. Mr. Winslow offered to confer with Gilbane attorneys as a precursor. Mrs. McGreavy reported that she would also contact local firms and a Washington, DC company recommended by the USGBC. On a voice vote, the board voted to approve these actions.

Mrs. Young reported that about \$1000 had been collected from the LEED AP Exam Prep course taught by Mark Winslow, however, no money had been spent in 2009. She had shopped around and received one quote for general liability insurance from The Hartford for \$350. She has not heard from the other companies yet. Mrs. McGreavy suggested the board defer this item for another month until more quotes come in. She asked if any of the board members had expertise in this area who could review the quotes. Mr. Bownds offered to ask his colleagues for a referral.

B. Membership Committee

Mrs. McGreavy reminded the board members and leadership team of the importance of joining the chapter to set the example. Mr. Kitchin asked for clarification regarding the difference between USGBC membership and RIGBC membership. Mrs. Drucker explained that the USGBC membership is for companies and institutions/organizations but not individuals. The chapter membership (RIGBC) is for individuals. She would like to see a list of chapter benefits generated soon to support membership committee efforts. For full time employees of national USGBC member companies, the cost for a chapter membership is just \$50 and \$65 for everyone else except students, which is \$25. Membership can only be processed online from the USGBC site, but the RIGBC website has helpful guidance documents. Mrs. Drucker cautioned that anyone who needs an invoice for accounting purposes should elect to pay by check, and then an invoice will be generated. This process takes longer than when paying by credit card, which is immediate; however, no invoice is generated. All transactions are followed by an email confirmation. Mrs. McGreavy added that if a person is interested in both the national and local membership options, to sign up for the national membership first in order to get the lower \$50 fee for the chapter.

C. Program Committee

Ms. Karp, Chair of the Program Committee asked that the board discuss the Strategic Plan. Mr. Kitchin asked Mrs. McGreavy to summarize each section for the board's reference. Mrs. McGreavy explained that the Strategic Plan had been updated to double as the narrative section for the IRS application. Primarily, she updated the history section and integrated the national USGBC goals, as well as defined several, but not all, committees. She explained that the chapter is not required to add an action plan component this year, but in good faith, she added metrics to some of the more critical committees as a

way to measure progress. The Strategic Plan must be posted on the USGBC Extranet by the end of the month. In summary:

- Executive summary – no change
- History- text added to reflect the fact that the RIGBC is now a provisional chapter; it is a domestic nonprofit corporation in good standing with the state and has adopted official bylaws, maintains an events calendar, has a 19-member board and various committees.
- Introduction-text added to reflect the priorities of the USGBC 5-year plan. Additional language was inserted in light of Rhode Island's economy with an emphasis to organize quickly to educate and provide training in order to spur green building and create jobs.
- Vision & Mission- Little change with the exception of spelling out the acronym LEED and inserting language to promote green design at the larger neighborhood and community level.
- Committee structure added and partially defined.

Mrs. Langlois suggested that the plan be approved in concept with the exception of making spelling and grammatical revisions. Mrs. Karp wished to add language regarding social justice modeled after the USGBC's plan and goals. Mrs. McGreavy explained that she did not want to over-promise on attaining social goals in its specific mention of "social well being". Mr. Paquette asked if the Vision Statement did not already sufficiently address social justice. The statement is included here for reference:

Our vision is to have a positive impact on our state's environment, economy and social well being by actively promoting environmentally responsible and affordable building and development efforts that serve all Rhode Islanders.

Ms. Karp responded that she would like to expand on this concept as building green developments improves the quality of life for all people. Mrs. Langlois referred to several aid programs for people of low income including heating assistance and weatherization. Mr. Kravatz added that there bond money was available and other federal programs whereby capital could be secured up front for affordable projects. A motion was made by Steve Kitchin to accept the Strategic Plan now for purposes of submitting the 501c3 application, and within 30days (or at the next board meeting), vote on Mrs. Karp's suggested amendments. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion. Mrs. Karp will work with Mrs. Whited and her committee to provide the amendments at least one week in advance of the January board meeting, ideally by posting on Base Camp. Mrs. Whited will be given access to the online communications tool. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

7. 2009 Meeting Schedule

Due to a personal emergency, Mr. Kitchin asked that the board take up the action item at the end of the agenda concerning the 2009 meeting schedule. He then moved to set the schedule with meetings beginning at 7:30 am each 3rd Thursday of the month. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion. After some discussion, and a show of hands, the board overwhelmingly approved the motion likening it to a trial period to test the new meeting time, pending room [and coffee] availability. Mrs. Young offered the Durkee Brown office in Providence as an alternate location, if needed.

**Please see the new meeting schedule posted on the website that alternates meeting times from the afternoon in January to the morning in February for starters, based on confirmation of meeting room availability. Meetings will be held in the Hall of Fame Room.*

8. Committee Reports – Ad hoc Committees

A. Sponsorship Committee

In addition to the predictable methods of collecting revenue (workshop fees, membership revenues, etc.), Mr. DiPetrillo and Mr. Cook reported that the committee brainstormed other avenues for raising money.

Mr. Bownds asked whether it would be possible to offer a tangible service to potential sponsors as well as members that could help them realize energy savings for instance, in their home or business. Mrs. McGreavy commented that The Green Roundtable offers a free, 1-hour consultation using paid professional staff. Mr. Cook posited that if a percentage of savings from reduced energy use could be demonstrated to a client, whether on LEED projects or not, that may be a way to bring money in, as long as the nonprofit does not violate any rules in terms of offering paid consulting services which is not allowed by chapters. (TGR is an affiliate of the USGBC, which predated the national organization; thus, TGR can offer more and different services than a chapter can.) Mrs. McGreavy suggested a program whereby sponsorship money could be used to offset the cost of some of the educational programs, for which USGBC members get substantial discounts.

Mr. Bownds suggested an event whereby the bank would sponsor a dinner for its clients (commercial developers and builders who are not using green practices.) so that they could learn about sustainable approaches to building, operating and managing new or existing buildings. This could be very effective if tangible benefits could be demonstrated. A question arose as to whether advertising is allowed on chapter websites. There was continued discussion about the possibility of generating fees through consulting, and the difficulties involved with insurance, liability, etc. Others mentioned the notion of organizing a green building challenge. Mr. Jacobson suggested kicking off a fundraising drive on Earth Day 2009. Mrs. McGreavy added that Mrs. Drucker was interested in a program for commercial property managers and was considering an educational event for Earth Day week as well.

B. Green Building Marketplace Committee

In Mr. DePaces's absence, Chair of the Green Marketplace Committee, Mr. Connor reported on the last committee meeting, where the committee discussed ideas for a Green Resource Center. The consensus was that the best model is Boston's Nexus Center. Discussion revolved around whether and how to fund a licensing agreement with the Nexus Center (their vehicle of choice), ostensibly for assistance in early organization and sharing of resources such as lessons learned regarding the design and operation of a GRC, educational program offerings Rhode Island might want to replicate, equipment and resources needed and how to plan/pay for it, selection and vetting of green products, database subscription discounts, etc. One notable aspect of the license agreement to create a Nexus brand (apart from the fact that Rhode Island already has a Nexus Center for its information technology sector and could not outright adopt that name) was the benefit of the ongoing product research by 5-8 employees, which is an extremely time-consuming, yet an especially valuable process. The committee hopes to continue to investigate this model by way of a motion, asking the board to be the primary party to any negotiations on behalf of the state. This is in response to overtures from the City of Providence and New England Institute of Technology's related interests in hosting/owning a facility, either of which could be potentially disconnected to the RIGBC. The committee felt that the Boston model, whereby the GRC was a program of The Green Roundtable (the Massachusetts affiliate of the USGBC), was critical to the facility's identity and credibility.

Mrs. Langlois envisioned the GRC as a clearinghouse where public and private services could perhaps be coordinated. She made a motion to approve this exploratory approach with Mrs. Grosvenor seconding the motion. Discussion ensued. Mr. Winslow indicated that if The Green Roundtable needed a "guinea pig", then the RIGBC would be happy to serve as the beta test, as there was also value returned to TGR in such a proposition. Mr. Bownds agreed. Mrs. McGreavy clarified that TGR was being sought by various major cities around the country, and the license idea was the most viable option from their standpoint. Ms. Karp made mention of several potential locations including the LADD Center in Exeter, RI where training programs in green rehabilitation of buildings could be held; Quonset, where the state plans to stage a major wind manufacturing facility as well as considering an exhibit at TF Green Airport. Mrs. Kanterman indicated her support of a GRC in Rhode Island working with TGR to take advantage of their expertise. Mr. Paquette voiced concern regarding the liability associated with product endorsements but felt that if TGR assumed that liability, that would be different. He was opposed to using students for research. Mr.

Connor added that TGR uses ten criteria to vet products, which is quite rigorous. Mrs. McGreavy added that BuildingGreen.com relies on manufacturer's guarantees, but is a highly respected source of green product information. She added that there are at least 3-4 worthwhile databases, but most require some kind of subscription for full access to the data.

Due to the lack of a valuation report from The Green Roundtable regarding its assets that could be realized in a licensing agreement, coupled with a desire by several board members to have more concrete information about the particulars and ramifications of entering into such an agreement, the board decided to table the action. Mrs. Langlois officially withdrew her motion, as did Mrs. Grovesnor. Mrs. McGreavy indicated that she was in touch with a staff person from The Green Roundtable responsible for packaging the information in time for the next board meeting and that Mr. Hanchar of the Finance Committee would be in touch with Barbra Batshalom who runs The Green Roundtable with the objective that the board could return to the issue in January. Members agreed that an opinion from legal counsel regarding such matters would be valuable. Mrs. Miles suggested that members visit TGR to become familiar with the facility in advance of the next meeting.

C. Affordable Green Buildings Committee

Reporting for board member, Justin Bownds, Committee Chair, Joshua Brandt reported that this committee's mission would be to acquire and rehabilitate either a foreclosed property or rental building in the state, ideally a 3-family unit, and turn it into an affordable green building. Mr. Brandt reported that he had met with representatives of housing groups and the RI Economic Development Corp and outlined a \$20,000 proposal for the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce grant program. This committee will seek other funding streams from the city as well as from federal funds typically administered through state agencies and local community development corporations, as well as the RI Renewable Energy Fund, should alternative energy be incorporated into what he hopes will be a LEED certified project. Mr. Brandt hopes to make integrated design a focal point of the project, which will be filmed for educational purposes. He expected that a number of product suppliers and service providers would step forward to contribute time and materials. Mr. Bownds urged the committee review insurance issues. Ms. Karp suggested that Habitat for Humanity is working with the USGBC successfully on demonstration projects and we need to understand what the barriers are, if any. She added that perhaps project management and other costs could be split and revenues shared if the RIGBC teamed up with the Rhode Island HFH group. Mrs. Miles added that there was an ongoing project in North Carolina that she was aware of.

Mrs. McGreavy added that she planned to partner with Brad Moran, her Co-Chair on the Providence Chamber of Commerce's Environment and Alternative Energy Hot Team to put together a grant for a sustainability conference. Mrs. McGreavy would be representing the RIGBC in this capacity. She wished to clarify that the grants were due in 5 days and asked if the board had any objections if various committees pursued this funding. There were none.

D. Exporting Green Internationally Committee

In the absence of James Lehoullier, who was on travel, Mrs. McGreavy reported that this committee intends to contact presidents and vice presidents of all Rhode Island universities and technical schools regarding collaboration on a global sustainability conference some time in 2009. This will be a letter writing campaign; the idea is to tie a board member who has a relationship with each university president or vice president and set up meetings to explore this possibility. This effort would complement the Chamber grant writing process. Mrs. McGreavy mentioned that Grow Smart Rhode Island is a willing partner, pending more details, and that this kind of exposure could help to get the RIGBC brand out into the public as the "go to experts regarding green development". Mrs. McGreavy moved to approve the recommended action of contacting universities for the purposes of meeting with them and potentially creating an inventory of conferences to assess whether the idea is viable. On a voice vote, the motion was passed.

E. Graphics & Communications Committee

In response to a question by Paul Caton, Mrs. Grosvenor explained the restrictions regarding USGBC logo use. Mrs. McGreavy added that chapters are allowed to develop their own logo; however for recognition purposes, it might be better to stick with the brand. She mentioned that there are different logos for members, chapters, projects, etc and all had strict guidelines. For an individual chapter member, for now, a safe way of marketing oneself would be to simply state the membership rather than rely on a logo.

F. Residential Advocate/ Green Homes Committee

Mr. Paquette reported that he is working with the RI Builders Assn. to have a planning meeting in early January to discuss a joint RIBA/USGBC conference to educate residential builders about the different green building standards, most notably LEED –Homes and the National Association of Homebuilders Green Design Standard. Mr. Paquette will pursue this and line up speakers. Mrs. McGreavy offered to look into room availability at New England Tech for a February event. The RIBA and USGBC would split any proceedings.

G. Green Schools Advocate/ Green Schools Committee

Mr. da Silva reported that the school design industry in Rhode Island is following the High Performance Schools guidelines which have been adopted by many states in the Northeast, and for which school districts receive subsidies. (This standard is different from LEED for Schools). Reportedly, there are difficulties once projects get into the construction phase; consequently, the High Performance Schools Group, with which the Green Schools Committee has merged, held a number of energy workshops this fall geared to facility directors and plans educational events for the construction industry this spring. Mrs. McGreavy mentioned that Mr. da Silva is sitting in on Advocacy Committees along with Mr. Paquette.

H. Advocacy & Government Relations Committee

Mr. Hughes reported that his committee met jointly with the Standards, Codes and Regulations Committee. The Advocacy Committee is researching what other states have done and what problems they have run into so that the same mistakes are not made in Rhode Island. Additionally, Cynthia Giles of the Conservation Law Foundation provided research on green building codes in the region. The group will be advising state legislators regarding public policy issues related to green building in 2009.

I. Education Committee.

Mrs. McGreavy reported that 85 people were signed up at the URI Energy Expo and that the database of interested parties is now nearing 800 people. She thanked everyone for their generous contribution of time and effort to make the event and the booth a success. Chris Kearns reported that the RIGBC workshop presentation was very popular. Mrs. McGreavy indicated that there are various upcoming conferences at which the board may wish to have a presence. One is the Jan 8th annual conference put on by RI Interfaith Power and Light organization from 5PM-9:30PM at LaSalle Academy. Mrs. McGreavy expected this event might be well attended and asked for a motion to approve \$50 to purchase a display table. Mrs. Langlois, Committee Chair, made the motion with Ms. Karp seconding it. The motion passed.

J. Workforce Development Committee

Mr. Kitchin was unable to report due to a personal emergency. The Committee had met earlier in the day to discuss the direction of the committee. Mrs. McGreavy indicated she would send Mr. Fuller a list of individuals who would be willing to teach short training courses that would complement LEED workshops, the latter of which would not likely be offered until the spring of 2009.

K. Emerging Green Builders Committee

In the absence of Chair, Tony Dematteo, Paul Caton reported that a meeting was tentatively planned for the following week. Mr. Caton added that builders could stage a challenge and corporate sponsors could

provide prizes. A demonstration project like that could be organized and judged by the RIGBC. Mrs. McGreavy suggested that Mr. Caton contact Tracie Hall, the Executive Director of the Upstate NY Chapter as they were quite experienced with Emerging Green Building projects. Mrs. Grosvenor suggested that design charrettes did not typically involve issues of liability and would be well suited to this committee.

L. Governance Committee – No report.

M. Renewable Energy Technology Committee - No report.

N. Sustainable Cities Committee – No report.

9. USGBC Regionalization Task Force Update

Mr. Winslow reported that the USGBC has finalized the bonus credits for the pilot program for LEED 2009.

10. LEED AP Study Group

Mr. Winslow reported that there are 10 people in the course and expects more next time because of better marketing and advance notification. The course was limited to RIGBC members.

11. USGBC Regional Council Update – This topic will be taken up at the next meeting.

12. Greenbuild Update – This topic will be taken up at the next meeting.

13. LEED Workshop Schedule – This topic will be taken up at the next meeting.

14. Issues that Merit Discussion or Decision – These topics may be taken up at the next meeting.

- Sustainable Skylines grant
- Request for Green Mentor/Green Shadow program by Brown U's student group
- Request by Providence Engineering Society for RIGBC to become an affiliate

15. Announcements

Mrs. McGreavy encouraged board members and leaders to attend the end-of-year holiday social on Dec. 18th @ 28 Wolcott St, Providence, RI 5PM-8PM - an event staged in John Jacobson's net-zero, green, mixed-use building in collaboration with "Providence Green Drinks". An awards ceremony to recognize the many volunteer contributions of the group is planned.

16. Adjournment The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45PM.

Respectfully submitted on December 4, 2008 by Alexis Miles (Membership Committee) and edited by Connie McGreavy, Chair, prior to distribution.