

SUFC Steering Committee Call Wednesday, August 1, 2012

Participating: Don Winsett, Cara Boucher (for NASF & Steve Sinclair), Carrie Gallagher, Dan Lambe, Julia Anastasio, Jim Skiera, Alice Ewen, Jen Hinrichs and Shannon Lawrence

- Shannon provided a short update on Vibrant Cities planning progress. The VC team (Shannon, Jen, Don and Larry) and the Vibrant Cities Ad Hoc Advisory Committee are meeting Wednesday, Aug. 8th at 3 pm EST if anyone would like to join the call . Tel: 866-740-1260, Access Code: 6850829#

The next step is to flesh out strategic goals and objectives. The team is on target with the proposed timeline and is making solid progress. Below are brief update points:

- The formal transition/baton hand-off letter was distributed to Vibrant Cities stakeholders and a SUFC Vibrant Cities webpage is under construction (holding place). With seed funding from the U.S. Forest Service, SUFC hired a part-time Vibrant Cities Project Director, a fundraising/planning consultant and a communications firm (Realize Ink) and is undergoing an intensive planning process to outline and define Phase II of the Vibrant Cities Initiative.
 - With the support of a Vibrant Cities Ad Hoc Advisory Committee, SUFC staff are identifying key goals for the next two years, including: 1) launching a targeted communication and outreach campaign to inspire implementation of Vibrant Cities recommendations by diverse organizations across the country; 2) recruiting a wide base of funders to support urban forestry organizations and the implementation of Vibrant Cities recommendations; and 3) sharing information about best practices in urban forestry (via a web-based knowledge network or something similar) and evaluating sector-wide progress towards achieving the Vibrant Cities recommendations.
 - The Vibrant Cities initiative "strategic plan" will be unveiled at the Partners Conference in Community Forestry in November. However, there will be multiple opportunities to touch new (and current) audiences prior to that event.
- The Steering Committee approved a membership *exchange* with the Clean Water American Alliance (CWAA). Cmte members comments include, "CWAA brings a very wide and broad perspective of water issues and represents wide ranging water community." "The water community is really branching out into the green infrastructure sector; good fit."
- ACTION:** *Jen will follow up with Ben Grumbles and Lorraine Loken of CWAA. Will plan low-key SUFC networking event to meet CWAA leadership and other new SUFC partners/supporters such as NLC etc.*
- SUFC is exploring growth options for the network. In response to the background paper circulated by Jennifer, the Steering Committee expressed strong interest in owning this process and leading this exploration (SUFC 3.0).

ACTION: Steering Committee will convene in Washington, DC within the next 4-6 weeks. Jennifer will reach out to Institute for Conservation Leadership to discuss a facilitator/consultant to help guide conversations.

The following points and opinions were expressed:

- There is concern that SUFC could lose its unique identity if it moves under the wing of another organization outside ISA – or a sponsoring organization becomes more than a fiscal sponsor
- Important to raise these issues now BEFORE we are in a true crisis mode
- Charting our growth/growth pattern will require SUFC to re-examine its strategic goals and priorities; what is our fundamental organizational direction?
- There is a need to offer solutions to our immediate needs for SUFC (re: capacity) and longer-term needs and growth
- A series of planning meetings by the Steering Committee and outcomes could culminate in a presentation/working meeting at the Partners Conf. – or the afternoon of Nov. 13th during the ACTrees meeting