



## Education Work Group Report January 27, 2014

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TO: Jon Laria, Chair, MD Sustainable Growth Commission

FROM: Calvin Ball, Chair, Education Workgroup

SUBJECT: Progress Report

DATE: January 27, 2014

The Education Workgroup is pleased to report we have successfully completed our inaugural Sustainable Growth Challenge! We awarded prizes to four winning teams, with a tie for second place. We have begun collaboration with MDP's communication staff to determine how we can develop a cohesive social media marketing campaign to promote smart growth. Now that the Challenge has concluded, we will focus on developing and progressing with our additional tasks. Below you will find details of our projects.

### **Sustainable Growth Challenge**

The first year of the Sustainable Growth Challenge culminated with the submission of twelve team submissions from four institutions. Student projects included community planning exercises, analyzing economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable growth and developing creative solutions for actual communities. Participants included undergraduate and graduate students pursuing degrees in planning, architecture, engineering or related subjects. Projects were submitted from University of Maryland, Towson University, Notre Dame of Maryland and Montgomery College.

Projects were screened by the Education Workgroup and 6 teams were invited to present to a panel of judges on December 13<sup>th</sup> in Annapolis. Panelists included Jon Laria and Calvin Ball, Sustainable Growth Commission members, Richard Josephson of MDP, Olivia Campbell of the Governor's Office, Christine Conn of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Justin Bowers, a graduate of St. Mary's College.

The presentations were energizing, creative and inspiring. Students and panelists engaged and had great conversations about the challenges and solutions posed for the sustainable growth projects.

Winning presentations covered:

- planning for sea-level rise (University of Maryland, College Park)
- adapting the community of Burtonsville to mixed-use development (Montgomery College)

- improving access to the Patapsco Valley Heritage Greenway (Towson University)

The Sustainable Growth Commission will recognize winners of the 2013 competition at an [awards ceremony](#) on February 5 in Annapolis. The challenge was supported by the grant from the MD Association of Realtors and the Howard County Association of Realtors. The grant covered the cost to sponsor a reception for the students and panel during the presentation day and will be used as awards and certificates for the winning institutions to be used to integrate sustainable education or enhancement projects at institutions.

## **Review of the Education Requirements for Members of Planning Boards and Commissions and Boards of Appeals**

MDP has initiated an update of the Planning Commissioner Training Course (PCTC) based on the recommendations supported by the Sustainable Growth Commission. The target date for completion of the live presentation materials will be June 2014. The online portion, which will be more multi-media based, will be similar to the continuing education module to provide the foundation to Planning Commissions to meet their charge to implement Maryland's Septics Law (the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012). This new module was presented live at the recent Maryland Planning Commissioners Association Conference in Aberdeen and is now available on MDP's website at <http://planning.maryland.gov/OurWork/septicsBill/training/home.shtml>

## **Collaboration with Realtors to Promote Smart Growth**

Nothing new to report at this time.

## **Social Media Marketing**

Our LinkedIn membership continues to grow (currently at 74 members) and we encourage posting within the group, discussion among members and within the posts. We will use this social medium to invite the public to and gain excitement about the winners of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Awards Forum and Sustainable Growth Challenge and other upcoming Commission events.

## ***Smart, Green & Growing:* A Proposed Marketing Campaign to Engage All Marylanders in Achieving Smart, Sustainable Growth**

MDP's communications director, Valerie Berton, accepted the Work Group's invitation to present to the Commission in November 2013 with a presentation titled "Smart, Green and Growing; Maryland's Smart Growth Brand." Her presentation described the state's overall priorities, tools, partnerships and specific agency initiatives, as well as details on MDP's strategy and messaging on sustainable growth. She also encouraged Commission members to post to the state's Smart Growth Maryland blog.

In January, the Education Work Group has worked with Berton to develop plans to spotlight the inaugural Smart Growth Challenge held in December. In addition to discussing a webpage, a Facebook post and tweet, and plans for the SmartGrowth MD blog and the SGC LinkedIn page, the Work Group has arranged for the winners to be recognized at the 2014 Maryland Sustainable Growth Forum and Awards Ceremony in February. As an annual collegiate competition, the Smart Growth Challenge presents a compelling, ongoing opportunity for the Commission to engage a broad audience of Millennials on these issues, and to inspire the young people participating in the Challenge to pursue careers promoting sustainable growth.

The Education Workgroup continues to encourage Commission members to follow and submit to the Smart Growth Maryland blog at <https://smartgrowthmd.wordpress.com/>.