May 2017 Sustainability Lab @ T-Rex Discussion Group Notes

Group 1
Moderator: Aaron Young

Suggested Contacts and Audiences to reach out to

- Universities
- Veteran and homeless populations
- African Americans
- Other minorities
- Religious institutions
- People with disabilities
- North Side Farmers Market
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD)

Resources and websites mentioned

- East St. Louis Art and Culture Asset map on CEL website
- Serving with the Badge
- Johego
- SWCD has money available for agriculture projects

Communicating the Lab

- Need to develop a common and understandable language
- Make website and materials easy to understand, use app to determine grade reading level
- Compile list of businesses with sustainability statements/goals, reach out to them early
- Develop a message of cost savings to bring in more businesses
- Sierra Club maintains a list of companies with renewable energy goals
- Work with communications channel of the Green Business Challenge
- Incorporate a message and goal of increasing neighborhood safety
- Create a communication hub
  - Use press releases
  - Revisit on-line calendar, see Sierra Club and Forward Through Ferg. websites
- L&T Communications specializes in marketing campaigns to general public

General Comments

- Consider a road show and field trips, take the Lab to different communities
- Differentiate Lab and OneSTL from other initiatives (particularly ones related to merging City and County)
- Survey Lab attendees and OneSTL Network for more input
Group 2
Moderator: Karla Wilson

What will keep you coming back to these OneSTL events?

Date and time can be an issue- How do you stay engaged without being able to attend every single meeting?

- An interactive forum or platform for discussion online and a place to catch up on what has been discussed at each meeting. Space to comment and post ideas etc.

Having a physical permanent space. Forming committees, sub-committees, scheduling meetings to coordinate and stay engaged and work towards progress.

The idea is to form groups for discussion and to have 6 working groups, one for each goal topic, who would meet regularly. At the end of the group meetings the groups would come together to share their ideas and thought processes. There’s a need for a Steering Committee. There’s a lot of cross over with the goals so it’s important to communicate between groups and tie important issues together to work towards achieving goals.

Have different individuals lead the group discussions for each meeting- provides mentor opportunity.

Using the set goals timelines as guidance. Have people coming together on large broad issues through social networking and form connections. This is a great opportunity for people/organizations to come together who are working on sustainability in the region and might not even realize it.

How do we bring stakeholders to the table outside of the environmental movement?

Prioritize grant writing – create environmental jobs in the region so graduates can start careers here.

RFPs

Intentional invites- target groups. Have themed meetings based on who will be invited.

- Groups may include:
  - Municipal Leaders
  - Faith Based
  - Educators
  - HOAs
  - Teens

The room is filled with like-minded individuals who agree on these issues- we need un likeminded individuals who will challenge issues- we need diverse stakeholders to understand other perspectives.

The meetings need to be beneficial and useful. Example: Have city leaders describe related issues and have individuals work towards supporting the work and contribute to solving the issues.

Understanding other possible stakeholder’s interests so that we are not only using them to benefit our goals but also benefiting their goals as well. Knowing our audience.

Community based approach.
Promote market based solutions.

How do we get diverse stakeholders?

- East-West Gateway needs to find funding and make small grants available.
- Funding for speakers/consultants- may have to pay people.
- Have people who are already engaged be matchmakers. Idea + Funding + Target + Match Making
- Identify key players

How do we engage citizens?

- Provide initiatives and ways people can become involved.

How do these separate initiatives come together to form momentum?

Knowing and understanding what threads are coming out of each initiative and how that can become something tangible.

Making sure projects are communicated and structured for success.

Need a Project Plan*

Consistent communication and report backs- consistency*

Have one large room with all the groups that is visual with ideas and documented progress. Achieving short term goals and seeing success will keep individuals motivated and keep the momentum moving. Visual success stories. “Idea Space” with tactical updates and questions.

Group 3
Moderator: Phil Valko

How can the OneSTL Sustainability Lab be structured to add value?

- Challenges
  - Engaging real professionals
  - Teaching/learning (education)
    - The need to know so much
    - The lab offers opportunity to learn and grow
  - Need for excellent teachers
  - wheel-spinning
  - limitations- inequality of opportunities for the underserved communities to care or get involved

Set metric need to be established and presented to constituents

Solution:

- Establish metrics
- Creating space (lab)
- Teaching and learning in that space
Possible structure of the Sustainability Labs

1st Summit work  2nd Learning/teaching  3rd Networking

Concrete steps to take back to
Your company/business/organization

Use each Sustainability lab to discuss different sectors/topics. Establishing groups/activities per sector

Bottom-up implementation

Be careful not to negatively impact other organizations, support-The answer isn’t always creating something new rather supporting and building what already exists