

FCC Eco-Roundtable Meeting

June 5, 2008

7-9pm

Venue: Wildwood Community Association

Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Presentation on solar panel installation in bylaws – Neil Younger, City of Calgary
- 3) Presentation on Project Porchlight - Jeanne Savoy, Discovery Ridge CA
- 4) Presentation on Edmonton Eco-Challenge – Leslie Evans, FCC
- 5) Group Discussion – A Calgary Eco-Challenge?

Attendees: To be provided by FCC

Solar Panels

Neil Younger, a planner with the City of Calgary, gave a brief presentation to outline the City's thoughts on the use of solar panels for micro-generation (single-household level) of electricity, as it pertains to City by-laws.

- The City is moving in small steps to introduce more sustainable standards for landscaping and other land-use
- The approach is to incorporate sustainability goals from initiatives such as Imagine Calgary and existing ASPs
- Current by-laws require development permits to be sought for any projects involving the installation of solar panels
- The development permitting process adds time and cost to a solar panel installation which consequently makes such projects less attractive economically. The initial cost is higher, and the pay-back period is longer.
- The City of Calgary is considering a less onerous approach for micro-generation going forward; not imposing more regulation than is required. For example, flush-mounted rooftop panels may not require a development permit, but perhaps an electrical permit for the wiring. Placing panels on one's front yard would be a different situation, perhaps justifying more regulation.
- Jeanne Savoy asked whether The City had consulted with private businesses who are currently involved with this type of technology.

The City of Calgary contracted a company called Sedmek, Inc. to provide background and other information to City planners regarding micro-generation with solar panels. Sedmek is a local company specializing in the installation of renewable energy systems for homes and businesses.

<http://www.sedmek.com/index.html>)

- Leslie Evans asked whether planners had looked at the current Licenses of Occupation associated with CA halls. Within these LOCs there is language which restricts CAs from installing solar panels on their halls.

Neil was not aware of the issue and will follow-up with the FCC to learn more.

- A question was asked about how provincial legislation may affect the ability of home owners to “sell back” the excess electricity generated through such technology to the local utility company.

While new provincial legislation would obligate the utility company to provide a credit for any excess energy put back into the grid, there are currently some obstacles to implementation which are delaying the rollout. MLA Kent Hehr was in attendance and agreed that he was aware of obstacles but was not clear on the particular details.

- The City of Calgary continues to seek input as it works on how to address micro-generation into the existing by-law framework. Interested parties may contact Neil Younger to follow-up: neil.younger@calgary.ca

Project Porchlight

Scott Payne from Project Porchlight was unable to attend. Jeanne Savoy from the Discovery Ridge CA has had some prior contact with Project Porchlight and spoke a few words about the initiative.

- <http://www.projectporchlight.com/>
- Project Porchlight is an initiative of a non-profit organization called One Change, based in Ottawa.
- According to the group’s website, their mission is: “ ... to make energy conservation accessible, relevant, and personal by engaging citizens, community groups, and municipalities to promote simple yet effective changes that have a global impact.”
- Project Porchlight involves the distribution of free compact fluorescent light bulbs to individual households to get people to take steps towards conserving energy.
- They rely on local volunteers to distribute the bulbs, and corporate/government sponsors to cover the bulb costs.
- They are currently focused on rural Alberta vs. large cities, possibly due to the relative ease of organizing the bulb distribution in smaller towns
- There was some discussion that this project could be deployed at a community level through the CAs.

- CA's could use this initiative in conjunction with a membership drive or other community projects to better engage their residents
- The FCC will approach One Change to talk about how that initiative can tap into the existing network of CAs in Calgary to facilitate the rollout of the project in Calgary
- Scott Payne is the Alberta campaign manager. scott@onechange.org

Edmonton Green Challenge

Leslie Evans attended a meeting in Edmonton of their community leagues (an equivalent of Calgary's CAs).

- Three Edmonton communities organized the Green Challenge which is a series of environmentally-themed tasks/projects for other CAs to undertake.
- Each CA must complete at least 5 of the 8 items in the Challenge to qualify for various prizes including the grand prize of \$5000 towards an energy efficiency upgrade for their facility.
- The three Edmonton communities that started this initiative were: Strathcona, Riverdale and Aspen Gardens. Three communities who had already done a lot of eco-friendly things in their communities such as:
 - Painting storm drains with fish to raise awareness of where run-off flows
 - Creating community gardens on un-used CA land
 - Installing compact fluorescent bulbs and programmable thermostats in their halls, and subscribing to green sources of electricity
- The specific criteria for the Eco-Challenge is listed below
- The FCC and the steering committee for the Eco-Roundtable have agreed that a similar initiative would be a good idea for Calgary
- The Edmonton criteria could be re-used as a starting point for a Calgary challenge. Calgary would also break the challenge into two streams: one focusing on improvements to CA facilities (like the Edmonton Challenge) and one focusing on outreach and education with residents. This would allow CA's without halls to participate in the challenge
- A sub-committee was formed to work with the FCC on designing a Calgary Green Challenge that could be rolled-out later this year or early 2009. The committee includes:
 - Jeanne Savoy, Discovery Ridge
 - Will Fong, West Springs/Cougar Ridge
 - Ned Shillington, East Village Revitalization
- There was group discussion on the specific challenges that could be incorporated into the Calgary challenge vs. the Edmonton one. These ideas were captured on flip chart pages and will be referred to by the sub-committee as they work over the summer to define the program.
- The draft design will be presented at the next Eco-Roundtable in September.

EDMONTON COMMUNITY LEAGUE

GREEN CHALLENGE 2008

PREAMBLE:

Members of the Strathcona, Riverdale and Aspen Gardens Community Leagues have teamed up to create a challenge to all other community leagues in Edmonton to become more environmentally sustainable.

Each of the three leagues has taken the initiative to green their buildings, reduce their carbon footprints and minimize the overall ecological impact of their operations.

These three leagues are challenging all the other leagues in Edmonton to do the same.

This year's challenge- called *Community League Green Challenge 2008* challenges all Edmonton Community Leagues to do the following.

CRITERIA:

1. Complete an energy audit of your hall
2. Change all old light bulbs and replace them with compact fluorescent bulbs.
3. Replace old appliances with new energy efficient appliances.
4. Place "TURN OUT THE LIGHTS" stickers on all light switches.
5. Sign your hall up with a Green Power provider i.e. Bullfrog Power
6. Re-landscape all skating rinks and put rinks on a separate water meter with EPCOR.
7. Install Programmable Thermostats.
8. Your own innovative "green" idea.
9. Registering with CORE- City of Edmonton Carbon Reduction Strategy

We would also like to provide two educational challenges that leagues could carry out through their newsletters and websites.

1. Pesticide education on the health and environmental risks and alternatives
2. Vehicle Idling- Busting the Myths

The Challenge will be issued publicly during the week of April 14th and presented in full at the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues 2008 AGM on April 19th. The theme of their AGM this year is GREEN. The EFCL has in addition created a GREEN task force to assist leagues in becoming more sustainable.

Community Leagues that meet 5 of the 8 challenges before May 2009 will receive prizes and a chance to win an efficiency upgrade worth \$5000. The first 50 leagues to register receive a grab bag of bargains, including a thermostat to get you started. To register email communications@efcl.org or call 437-2913