



PlanItGreen Year One Implementation Report

November 1, 2011 – October 31, 2012

Submitted by Gary Cuneen, Seven Generations Ahead, on December 3, 2012 to the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation

Summary

This PlanItGreen Year One Report reflects the work of Seven Generations Ahead and partner the Delta Institute on implementing roughly 10% of the overall strategies listed in the Environmental Sustainability Plan for Oak Park and River Forest. The report reflects the work that SGA/Delta has led and performed as part of its grant agreement with the Oak Park River Forest Community Foundation's *Communityworks* initiative, and incorporates work on strategies listed in the plan that partner institutions have taken the lead on implementing. The addendum on partner institutions reflects work that these partner institutions have performed independently in relation to the plan and as part of their own sustainability initiatives that connect with PlanItGreen goals and strategies. This report will accompany the project's first annual Community Sustainability Report Card for Oak Park and River Forest, which will assess key success indicator data for energy, water, waste, and transportation, and highlight project activities.

Education

Sustainable Teachers Network

PlanItGreen met with OP and RF teachers representing D97, D90, and private schools to develop a Sustainable Teachers Network and solicit candidates for members to be a part of the inaugural planning group. The group developed and implemented strategies for providing resources and training to teachers around sustainability curricula, program activities, and operational projects on-site that can be learning tools for students. The group decided that the role of the Sustainable Teachers Network would include: a) sharing sustainability curriculum and program resources to teachers and educators throughout Oak Park and River Forest; b) conducting trainings and sharing forums to disseminate curricula and program resources; and c) promoting funding acquisition for school-based sustainability demos that impact operations (solar panels, green roofs, wind turbines, food scrap composters, etc.). The Sustainable Teachers Network planning team created a "Green Ed" learning and sharing format that convened teachers three times in 2012 at the Marion Street Cheese Market to provide brief presentations on different curricula, programs, and school-based sustainability projects; share curricula and program resources; and provide networking opportunities. Topics included local food, biking and walking; and solar and wind energy programs, and included programs such as ClimateCycle, Greenline Wheels, and Fresh from Farm. The Network will continue to offer forums in 2013. Twenty-five unique teachers have participated in forums to date, and have connected with featured program staff to explore collaborations for their classrooms and to share program information with other teacher colleagues.

Green Community Connections

PlanItGreen convened meetings with the GCC leadership team to brainstorm development of a scope of work, budget, and funding proposal that would position GCC to be an on-line (website and newsletter) provider of resources for residents and congregations that wish to implement sustainability best practices at home. The resources would include “how to’s” on a variety of strategies, and would support PlanItGreen’s goals of educating and equipping residents to sustainably transform their own homes and community. GCC has been implementing its newsletter and has completed its website throughout the past 6 months and beyond. GCC created a funding proposal to support and build upon its current efforts, which was vetted through the PlanItGreen Core Team and later submitted to the OPRF Community Foundation and approved for funding. PlanItGreen financially sponsored the GCC One Earth Film Festival and supported the Film Festival through promotions, moderating film screenings, and attendance at the opening gala and film screenings. PlanItGreen similarly sponsored and promoted the GCC Green Bike Tour, which featured sustainable practices at homes, schools, and institutions related to water conservation, waste reduction, composting, energy efficiency and renewable energy installations, local food production/gardens, and green infrastructure projects (permeable paving, green roofs, rain gardens, bioswales).

GreenTown Oak Park

Through a collaboration of host community sponsors including Oak Park Pioneering Healthy Communities, Communities Putting Prevention to Work, the Village of Oak Park, and the Good Heart Work Smart Foundation, GreenTown Oak Park was implemented by Seven Generations Ahead and partner a5 in October 2011. A core strategy within PlanItGreen, GreenTown was implemented as in-kind support for the overall PlanItGreen project. Workshops and keynotes focused on specific strategies in the Environmental Sustainability Plan for Oak Park and River Forest, including residential curbside food scrap collection programs, complete streets, energy efficiency financing, farm to school case studies, water conservation policy and practice, bike and pedestrian planning, safe routes to schools, geothermal for institutions, electric vehicle towns, etc. A key component of GreenTown was the invitation of Mark Fenton, who led a pre-conference “walking tour” and Village Hall forum engaging elected officials and community leaders to explore ways to make Oak Park more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Three months following the tour and conference, the Village of Oak Park passed its Complete Streets Policy.

Best Practice Case Studies

PlanItGreen developed priorities for best practice case studies and focused research on institutional (hospitals and universities) and residential food scrap collection projects and community recycling center models. SGA create a 28-page summary report on community recycling center models and potential materials to be considered for collection. This report has been used to support a 15-resident planning team in River Forest, led by Julie Moller, to explore development of a local recycling center that would support PlanItGreen’s goals of 62.5% waste diversion by 2020.

PlanItGreen Adopter and Institutional Stakeholder Forum

PlanItGreen hosted an institutional stakeholders forum in November 30, 2011 at the Marion Street Cheese Market and a second on July 10, 2012, each of which attracted over 50 institutional leaders from mostly all of the taxing bodies and major institutions in OP and RF. Sustainability strategy implementation success vignettes were shared, the PlanItGreen implementation work plan was shared and discussed, a process for pledge commitments was discussed, ideas were generated for collaborations among and across institutions and communities, funding and program resources were distributed, and networking occurred. The forums have led to subsequent meetings and collaboration

discussions across institutions, including meetings of private schools, collaborations with operations and facilities managers of major institutions, geothermal project sharing, and more.

Energy

Accessing and Promoting Existing Energy Efficiency Financing Programs

PlanItGreen met with Green Choice Bank and VOP to explore promotion of Energy Impact Illinois – a “one-stop shop” upfront financing program for energy efficiency upgrades that allows homeowners to pay back loans as savings are realized - within OP and RF. PlanItGreen organized a promotions team and began convening meetings with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (lead designer of the program), the Center for Neighborhood Technology, Green Energy Improvement, and the Village of Oak Park to develop and implement a series of local outreach strategies toward the goal of getting Oak Park and River Forest residences to participate in the program (see attachment for details on strategies implemented and overall timeline). Strategies in the work plan include informational forums (Village Hall; Interfaith Green Network); an introductory social event to promote the organizing of Energy Impact IL house and congregation parties; fairs and events; a VOP TV-6 “infomercial” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QncD8LnEkDY&list=UU1EZovakS7e_kepUJgVdb3A&index=3&feature=plcp); worship bulletin inserts; inclusion of materials through VOP building permits process; outreach to real estate agents; the implementation of 17 local house and congregation parties (12 more scheduled for January), 4 community meetings, and more. 70 people have signed up for home energy efficiency audits, and 11 homes in OPRF have completed the retrofit.

PlanItGreen also met with the Illinois Facilities Fund (IFF) and CNT Energy to develop strategies for promoting IFF’s energy efficiency program and services to OP and RF non-profits and congregations. We are currently organizing forums through the Interfaith Green Network to reach congregations and in collaboration with the OPRFCF to reach non-profits.

PlanItGreen organized two forums in 2012 to promote a variety of energy efficiency upgrade programs (Energy Impact Illinois, NICOR, CNT Energy) and to establish baseline data and energy efficiency goal targets through congregations. The first targeted Green team leaders from congregations and was held at the Oak Park Conservatory; the second targeted pastoral leaders and building engineers and was a luncheon forum held at St. Giles Parish.

Waste

Pilot Residential Curbside Food Scrap Collection Program

PlanItGreen met with VOP Public Works to develop plans for supporting the VOP residential food scrap collection pilot program. Support has included: organizing three public education and input forums in South Oak Park with SEOPCO, Ascension, and Lincoln Elementary prior to the implementation of the pilot; providing sample marketing and educational materials from existing residential programs across the country; and providing ongoing advisory support as needed. SGA has supported linkages of its Zero Waste schools network to the project to help increase food scrap volume collected. To date the pilot is serving over 100 residences, and plans are being developed to expand the pilot to serve all of Oak Park in 2013 – a core strategy of PlanItGreen.

Institutional Food Scrap Diversion

PlanItGreen developed the Food Scrap Collection Collaboration, a group of Oak Park and River Forest institutions interested in working collaboratively to begin food scrap diversion. This group met collectively 5 times during this report period and new institutions have added on throughout the year. These institutions have conducted waste audits, evaluated their current hauler contracts, and

completed the food scrap composting questionnaire developed by SGA to aggregate this information. Participating institutions to date include: Concordia, Dominican, Holly Court Apartments, OPRFHS, Rush Oak Park Hospital, Triton, Village of Oak Park (select downtown areas as well as sharing knowledge and resources from the pilot residential food scrap collection pilot program), West Suburban Medical Center, and Whole Foods. PlanItGreen is working to add to the group of participants, and is reaching out to other large community institutions.

In October 2012, a presentation was made to the collaboration by WasteQuip, a company that supplies composting storage and hauling equipment to haulers. The presentation covered different equipment options for food scrap collection both for haulers and for the back-of-the-house operations in each institution. The presenter has vast experience with food scrap collection across the US and shared her knowledge and recommendations with the collaboration. Concordia, OPRFHS, Rush Oak Park and the Village of Oak Park (select downtown areas) decided to move forward quickly with implementing food scrap collection and evaluated the benefits to doing so collaboratively. The Illinois DCEO grant for food scraps was reviewed but this group determined that the grant did not meet their needs at this time due to dollar match requirements and the limitations on items for which the funds could be spent. In September and October, an RFP was developed and distributed to all area haulers and 5 responses were received. Upon review of the hauler responses, each institution decided to proceed independently with their current landfill hauler. OPRF and Rush Oak Park Hospital are both designing pilot food scrap programs through their haulers, Waste Management and Allied Republic Services. Concordia is working with Roy Strom to evaluate the best plan for beginning to haul food scraps in 2013.

As the collaboration moves into this next year, it is anticipated that a few institutions will begin food scrap hauling in 2013. The institutions involved have stated that the collaboration has been invaluable in moving their institutions forward with this process and they have requested continued regular meetings in 2013. The collaboration will continue to meet to share knowledge and resources, to explore funding opportunities for internal needs at each institution and to address challenges as they arise.

Accomplished to Date

Late 2011

- Convened 1st meeting with group of Oak Park and River Forest institutions interested in food scrap collection.
- Reviewed Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) 2011 grant application to fund food scrap diversion. It was determined there was not sufficient time to develop a collaboration and submit a joint application for this round of funding. Goal set to move forward with planning so that funding could be applied for the following year.
- PlanItGreen Food Scrap Collaboration developed (Concordia, Dominican, Rush Oak Park Hospital, Village of Oak Park, West Suburban Hospital, Whole Foods)

Early 2012

- More institutions joined the collaboration (Concordia University, Holly Court, Oak Park and River Forest High School)
- SGA developed the food scrap composting questionnaire- institutions to determine and record volume of food scraps, how each institution handled landfill and recycling collection, current hauler contracts and more.
- Institutions conducted food scrap audits and completed the questionnaire.
- SGA researched food scrap collection around the country and presented findings to the collaboration.

- Village of Oak Park began pilot residential food scrap collection program.

Mid-Late 2012

- Reviewed DCEO 2012 grant application.
- More institutions joined the collaboration (Triton)
- Presentation to collaboration by WasteQuip on methods and equipment for collecting and storing food scraps, how this is being done in other parts of the country, and recommendations on what to ask from haulers as they begin this service in this area.
- Concordia, Oak Park and River Forest High School, Rush Oak Park Hospital and the Village of Oak Park considered a joint application for funding through DCEO.
- Food Scrap RFP developed and sent to haulers for the PlanItGreen Food Scrap Collaboration. Responses received from 5 haulers.
- Further review of the grant details led to each institution deciding to move forward independently without DCEO grant funding.

Next Steps

Concordia University – working with their hauler (Roy Strom) to develop a food scrap collection program
Oak Park and River Forest High School - developing a pilot food scrap collection program with their hauler (Waste Management)

Rush Oak Park Hospital – developing a pilot food scrap collection program with their hauler (Allied Republic Services)

Convene a meeting of collaboration in December to update all institutions on progress to date in 2012 and to plan for 2013.

Zero Waste Event Training

PlanItGreen held a training on *How to Hold a Zero Waste Event* for Oak Park and River Forest institutions. SGA developed a training manual and conducted this 2-part training in July and August of 2012. Over 55 people attended the training and there were representatives from most of the major institutions and event planning agencies including Dominican University, the Frank Lloyd Wright race director, Holley Court Terrace, ICA Share Fair, Green Community Connections Bike Tour, DTOP, Euclid Ave, Interfaith Green Network, the Oak Park Conservatory, OakPark.Com, Park District of Oak Park, Park District of River Forest, Rush Oak Park Hospital, SEOPCO, Triton College, United Methodist Church block party, Village of Oak Park, and more. The training included a seminar on planning for and holding a zero waste event followed by an onsite tour of the Oak Park Microbrew Review to see zero waste in action. Both the training and the manual were very well received and institutions have already begun to hold zero waste events. Dominican University had a 1-day forum for students and visitors that was zero waste. Interfaith Green Network held a zero waste dinner. D97 Hatch and Whittier Elementary Schools have had zero waste harvest dinners. The Village of Oak Park helped the Green Awards to be zero waste. Alcuin Montessori School held a zero waste family fun night. And the Park District of River Forest continued to offer their zero waste Green Block Parties. The PlanItGreen Zero Waste Event Training has been requested by the D97 PTO parents and will be given in early 2013. We will also offer further training to encourage planners of Day in Our Village and other big local events to have their events be zero waste in 2013.

Establish Building Materials Re-Use Center

A building materials reuse center would enable building materials from Oak Park and River Forest to be stored and resold and diverted from landfill. The Delta Institute explored various building sites and obtained cost estimates for improvements needed for a building it identified in Maywood as its first

choice location for the Center. Delta began discussions with the Village of Maywood about the project and the zoning needed to implement it. The Maywood site ultimately did not materialize, and due to funding and site issues the project is currently on hold.

Expand Implementation of Zero Waste Schools Program

PlanItGreen met with the District 97 Zero Waste Schools Cohort to plan 2012 implementation, share successful strategies, and prepare for waste diversion assessments. Schools continue to implement core strategies to increase recycling, eliminate specific waste sources, and capture food scraps for on-site composting. Compost is being integrated into several D90 and D97 gardens. Lincoln Elementary is exploring off-site collection and hauling through the Village of Oak Park Residential Food Scrap Collection Pilot, and additional schools are considering doing the same as well. PlanItGreen met with private schools and OPRF High School to explore their participation in the project, and organized a complete food scrap audit at OPRF HS.

Currently the only public schools that are not participating in the Zero Waste Schools Program are Brooks and Julian Middle Schools with District 97. SGA met with D97 Superintendent Al Roberts, the D97 Business Manager, and the two new middle school principals this fall to discuss their interest in zero waste implementation and to discuss action steps for moving forward. The group unanimously agreed to move forward, and charged SGA with the task of developing an implementation plan and timeline for 2013 in collaboration with key PTO parent leaders. SGA convened this meeting, developed the plan, and is currently conducting walk-through audits at each of the schools as part of an initial assessment of needs and strategies currently in place. SGA will reconvene with principals in 2013 to review and implement a 2013 work plan.

Establish a Local Community Recycling Center

Building upon a very successful River Forest “Recycling Extravaganza” organized by District 90’s Green4Good at the River Forest United Methodist Church, PlanItGreen has begun working with organizers to explore the development of a “permanent extravaganza” or recycling center and educational program that would collect items not currently accepted by RF haulers. The center would aim to help PlanItGreen reach its 2020 goal of 62.5% material diversion from landfill. SGA compiled a 28-page report (referenced previously) on recycling center models and materials, and met with 15 RF resident leaders to begin developing this initiative. Project teams have been developed and subsequent meetings are being planned to discuss materials to be collected, site options, and business planning.

Water Conservation

Develop Water Conservation Task Force and Build Upon and Implement Water Conservation Strategies

The Village of Oak Park in collaboration with CMAP and with support from PlanItGreen hosted a meeting on January 31 to engage community residents and institutions in water conservation planning and implementation. PlanItGreen enrolled participants in attending the planning workshop and offered strategies to the overall plan that the community created through the PlanItGreen engagement process. PlanItGreen reviewed and commented on the final plan in October 2012, and will incorporate priority implementation strategies into the overall PlanItGreen Implementation Work Plan for 2013.

Create a Water Conservation Best Practices Video to Air on VOP TV-6

SGA worked with three graduate students from the UIC Capstone Project, which is part of the UIC Graduate Program in Urban Planning and Policy, to develop a video script and plan that would promote best practices around water conservation in residences. The team worked with PlanItGreen for 4 months to develop the script and plan, which was passed along to the Village of Oak Park

Communications Department for production of the video. The video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-h9vQo2-1s&feature=BFa&list=UU1EZovakS7e_kepUJgVdb3A) was aired on VOP TV-6 and will be made available to school audiences as well.

Park District of Oak Park Ridgeland Commons

PlanItGreen met with the Park District executive team and lead architects and designers of the Ridgeland Commons renovation team to promote water conservation strategies and other sustainable project features. PlanItGreen is supporting the development of a sustainability education component of the renovation that will provide on-site and web-based signage and learning about key water/sustainable features of the Ridgeland Commons development. These educational components will make Ridgeland Commons an educator of future and current generations.

Green Economic Development

Develop Green Business Criteria and Certification Program

PlanItGreen is working with the Oak Park Development Corporation, the Business Association Council, and the Village of Oak Park to review options and develop plans for a Green Business Certification program in Oak Park. Meetings this year with OPDC, BAC, and VOP focused on the key qualities that would characterize the program, a review of existing national, statewide, and local programs and the pros and cons of each (and accompanying overview document), and strategies for adapting or adopting a specific program model. The major elements of a program that the team is considering include: a green business certification program; financial and technical resources for businesses to support green business practices; marketing and education initiatives to help engage business community stakeholders; and building partnerships with local and regional agencies working in this area. OPDC's summer "green business" intern conducted further research on program components/options, and current green features and levels of Oak Park businesses. This work laid the foundation for an OPDC proposal to the OPRF Community Foundation, which was recently funded to support a project that will include twenty business participants from the Oak Park-River Forest community and is planned to kick-off in mid-January, 2013. It is comprised of three core components: pre – and post-sustainability audits for each participant; a series of business focused educational seminars; and the collection and celebration of local best-practice examples of business suitability. The program will target businesses that are interested in making green improvements but have not made significant steps towards sustainability to date.

Community Development

Review Municipal Ordinances and Codes through Sustainability Screen

PlanItGreen discussed with VOP/VRF staff a project that would hire consultants to do a sustainability screen of VOP and VRF ordinances that either support or detract from sustainability, and make recommendations for policy revisions, additions, or deletions. PlanItGreen is scoping out a work plan and costs from urban planning firms. PlanItGreen encouraged the Village of Oak Park to apply through *Communityworks* for funding to cover consultant costs, which did not occur due to another priority funding request.

Envision

SGA invited Greeley and Hansen LLC consultants from Virginia and Chicago to conduct a luncheon forum at the Oak Park Public Works Facility with Village of Oak Park and River Forest staff on the new Envision™ Rating System for green infrastructure projects. Envision™ is similar to LEED certification for buildings, but focuses exclusively on infrastructure projects. Denise Nelson, PE, LEED AP, ENV PV and two Greeley and Hansen colleagues presented to Village of Oak Park staff (Village Manager Cara

Pavlicek, Sustainability Coordinator KC Poulos, Public Works Director John Wielebnicki, Lead Planner Craig Failor), and Village President David Pope to share details of the Envision™ Rating System, key criteria, and potential certification of Oak Park's Marion Street streetscape developments. Denise Nelson also discussed training and certification opportunities for VOP staff. The meeting was followed up by a walk-through of the Marion Street developments to explore potential certification, and subsequent training by VOP Sustainability Coordinator KC Poulos.

Village of Oak Park Comprehensive Plan

SGA is working with Houseal Lavigne Associates to schedule and develop 2013 forums for PlanItGreen stakeholders to provide input on the Village of Oak Park Comprehensive Plan. Meetings are being scheduled between January and June 2013.

Open Space & Ecosystems

Analyze Brownfield Sites and Develop Plans for Remediation and Reuse

PlanItGreen met with a US EPA Brownfield expert and VOP to explore development of a US EPA Brownfields Assessment grant proposal. PlanItGreen subsequently met with VOP to develop project parameters and core components, and hired a grant writing consultant to support VOP's proposal submission for \$400,000 to the EPA Brownfields Grant Program to support assessments, community education and input on site reuse strategies and strategies for developing green business corridors. The proposal was not funded.

Eco-Friendly Weed and Pest Control Policy and Best Practice Training

PlanItGreen met with representatives of the Safer Pest Control Project to design a training for community institutions on eco-friendly weed and pest control policies and best practices for municipalities and community institutions. The two-hour training will take place in late 2012 or early 2013 pending funding.

Food

Forums on Creating Local Food Centers, Learning Gardens, and Co-ops

Community learning gardens and local food continue to generate great interest among Oak Park and River Forest residents, including 80 people who attended two PlanItGreen Community Food forums (March 22 and May 16) to discuss established and emerging projects related to gardens and local food. Bill Sieck, who is developing a nutrition-based learning garden model; Jenny Jocks-Stelzer and colleagues Cheryl Munoz and Maureen Spain, who are developing a northeast Oak Park "Sugar Beet" Cooperative and Food Center; and Seamus Ford and Amy Beltemacchi, founders of Root Riot, who are building upon Root Riot's Westside Community Garden and Economic Development project, were all represented at the forum and had the opportunity to share their projects and enroll new volunteers and participants. PlanItGreen has met subsequently with the Sugar Beet leadership to support co-op development, fiscal agency decisions, and long-term planning. PlanItGreen facilitated the connection between Bill Sieck's Learning Garden project and Dominican University and the West Cook YMCA. The YMCA garden was implemented and currently the Dominican project is not being considered for implementation.

Support Dominican Plan for Measuring and Increasing Local, Sustainable Food Access

PlanItGreen met with Dominican to discuss its interests in assessing current local food procurement with vendor Chartwells Thompson Hospitality. Data has been requested for incorporation into the Community Sustainability Report Card. Dominican is discussing with Chartwells the creation of a Local Food Farmers Market, increased promotion of local food/farmers in the cafeteria, and other menu promotions.

Transportation

Create a Walking Tour and Strategy Session with Mark Fenton and OP and RF Policy Makers to Promote Bike/Ped Friendly Developments and Policy

PlanItGreen conducted a walking tour/strategy session in Oct 2011 as part of GreenTown that engaged over 50 village board and community leaders to analyze current street scaping and discuss development project features and policies that would promote increased biking and walking in the community. The 90-minute walking tour assessed business districts, residential neighborhoods, and street scaping to and from schools. Immediately following the tour, a session at the Village of Oak Park Council Chambers with board members and planners focused on specific development projects within the Village and specific policy and implementation recommendations.

Complete Streets Policy Passed

In Jan 2012, the Village of Oak Park Board of trustees passed a "Complete Streets" policy requiring all new street developments to accommodate all modes of transit including biking and walking.

Increase Biking and Walking to School

PlanItGreen met with a PHC team committee to develop a strategy for engaging school principals in assessing the current barriers to and solutions for increasing the numbers of children that bike and walk to school. A meeting convening Village policy makers/staff and school administrators was held to design and implement solutions that make biking and walking to school completely safe for all children. Greenline Wheels and D97 implemented a survey to determine the number of students currently walking and biking to school. PlanItGreen met with the Active Transportation Alliance to discuss development of a project proposal that would conduct a site analysis of D97 elementary/middle schools to assess bike cages and amenities at the schools. The proposal was submitted to the OPRF Community Foundation and was not awarded funding.

Deliver Bike Safety Education to 3rd-5th graders

Greenline Wheels as part of its mission and role in Pioneering Healthy Communities is implementing bike safety training for grades 3 through 5 in Oak Park this spring, and is exploring a similar program for RF schools.

Create Plans for a Full Service Biking Facility in Downtown Oak Park

PlanItGreen met with Village President David Pope to explore ideas for innovative project ideas to include in VOP's TIGER grant proposal submission, and recommended the inclusion of a downtown bike facility among other strategies. VOP is exploring other options, venues, and funding for a new facility that would facilitate greater bicycle use to and from public transit and throughout the downtown business district areas.

Data Aggregation

CMPA LTA Proposal

SGA met with CMAP Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn and Deputy Director Bob Dean to discuss ways to involve CMAP in PlanItGreen data aggregation. SGA submitted a proposal to CMAP for technical assistance support, which was awarded. The award provides PlanItGreen with technical assistance support in relation to data aggregation and indicators for the Community Sustainability Report Card. A meeting was convened with CMAP lead consultant Drew Williams, Village of River Forest Manager Eric Palm, and VOP Sustainability Manager KC Poulos to review the scope of work and discuss key decision points related to the Community Sustainability Report Card.

Community Sustainability Report Card

PlanItGreen met with Village of Oak Park President David Pope and KC Poulos to discuss key decision points related to the Community Sustainability Report Card, including: a) indicators to include; b) evaluation method; c) data aggregation plan; and d) design and formatting. We subsequently met with the PlanItGreen Core Team to get input on these decision points and later with VRF Manager Eric Palm. A subsequent meeting with graphic design firm a5 was conducted to share report card formats, researched report card models, and core components. PlanItGreen has begun to aggregating data on one additional set of indicators that were not included in the baseline data – public transit ridership – which will be included in the Community Sustainability Report Card.

Gather Core Baseline Metrics and Pledges for Large Community Institutions

PlanItGreen proposed a strategy and process for data aggregation/goal pledges at the November Institution Forum and developed a pilot data/pledge form to be implemented through the Interfaith Green Network. To date, eight institutions have compiled individual data on energy and water consumption. Final data compilation will be completed in Q1, and will be used to inform Year Two implementation strategies.

Engagement of Members

Support Sector Groups, Institutions, and Associations with Strategy Implementation and Member Engagement

PlanItGreen met with VOP staff to discuss grant proposal support related to TIGER and EPA Brownfields Assessment grants. PlanItGreen convened a group meeting and met with individual operations and facilities managers from Whole Foods, Oak Park Rush, Fenwick, and OPRF High School to discuss involvement in food scrap collection/composting project. PlanItGreen has met regularly with the Interfaith Green Network Leadership Team to plan strategies and events for engaging congregations in PlanItGreen strategy implementation. Representatives from 16 Oak Park/River Forest congregations met on March 5th to discuss how they can become part of a pilot program to begin implementing the Energy, Water and Waste sections of the PlanItGreen Sustainability Plan. The program consists of each congregation recording its 2011 “benchmark” usage of electricity, natural gas, water, and waste collection, and then setting goals, or “pledges” for reductions in all areas. At a follow up PlanItGreen Luncheon on March 19 for clergy, building engineers, council members, and green team leaders, 30 representatives from 13 congregations discussed pledge goals and strategies ranging from geothermal projects, on-site composting, and rain water harvesting. There was a great deal of enthusiasm and much sharing of ideas on how to finally begin to take concrete steps to reduce the negative environmental impacts on our world, to save money, and to conserve resources. On Tues, April 10 at the Oak Park Conservatory, PlanItGreen organized a forum on a variety of actionable strategies and programs for increasing energy efficiency within their worship buildings as well as at members’ residences. Congregations participating in data aggregation and goal pledges have submitted their 2011 baseline data, and their goals for 2012.

Recruit New PlanItGreen Organizations and Participants

PlanItGreen conducted outreach and initiated meetings to recruit new participants, including:

- a) a meeting with **Fenwick** and **Alcuin Montessori** to discuss strategy implementation and ways to engage OP and RF private schools – a decision was made to conduct a zero waste schools forum for private schools that could lead into the development of a zero waste private schools cohort;
- b) a meeting with Zero Waste D97 PTO Cohort to identify **sustainable teachers** candidates;

- c) a meeting with Robin Dunn from the Oak Park Park District to discuss community garden and café plan for **Cheney Mansion** and other park district open spaces;
- d) a meeting with leaders from the **Irving Elementary** Schoolyard Project to discuss the details of the project and grant funding sources.
- e) enrollment of **Concordia University** and **Holly Court Apartments** to participate in the Institutional Food Scrap Collection Collaboration.
- f) a meeting with President Granados of **Triton College**, leading to the addition of Triton as an institutional representative on the PlanItGreen Core Team.

Engage Core Team in PlanItGreen Implementation

PlanItGreen secured new Core team members for 2012 and convened monthly Core Team meetings from November 2011 through October 2012 to engage the Core Team in guiding PlanItGreen process and in taking responsibility for the implementation of specific projects. See attached Core team roster.

Communication

Keep Community Informed About PlanItGreen Progress and Events

PlanItGreen implemented PlanItGreen e-newsletters from December 2011 through October 2012 featuring implementation projects, funding resources, and member institution achievements. PlanItGreen conducted two community-wide institution forums that showcased ten success stories/implementation projects each forum by PlanItGreen participant institutions, and has incorporated strategy implementation overviews at community organization meetings, community food forums, and at Core Team meetings. PlanItGreen has also conducted presentations on the project at national, regional, and local conferences, including the American Public Works Association Annual Sustainability Conference; Biocycle's Annual Conference; and two GreenTown Conferences.

A Sense of Wonder

Over 200 attendees witnessed a superb performance by actress Kaulani Lee of *A Sense of Wonder* at the beautiful Oak Park Arts Center, a play she wrote about the life and work of Rachel Carson. Carson's book *Silent Spring* - now celebrating its 50th Anniversary – is recognized as the catalyst for the U.S. environmental movement. Kaulani Lee's performance beautifully channeled the personal journey of Carson, who struggled to raise her nephew while being thrust into controversy and the national spotlight over her writing. Lee's moving and poignant portrayal of the quiet and persistent will of Rachel Carson captivated the audience, and shed light on Carson's passion and writing that challenged the use of toxic chemicals in agriculture and other sectors, and prodded producers and users of these chemicals to take responsibility for them. Carson's writing eventually moved the federal government to begin overseeing the production and use of these substances - the public health and environmental effects of which she documented through her writing and public appearances. Equally impressive was Kaulani Lee's post-performance Q&A session, which gave the audience insight into her own journey as an actress who has chosen to do her part for environmentalism through this play, while giving the audience updated information on the real life evolution of Carson's legacy. The performance raised \$2,500 for PlanItGreen, and educated and inspired the audience to continue Carson's legacy.