



*Champions for Sustainability
Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee*

Vol. 1 No. 4
September 2009

**BCC
Steering Committee
Update
Briefing
Meeting Date:
September 3, 2009**

Champions for Sustainability (C4S)
A Program of Sustainable Pittsburgh
425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1335
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone (412) 258-6642
Fax (412) 258-6645
www.sustainablepittsburgh.org

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BCC Steering Committee Meeting, September 3, 2009

C4S Steering Committee

Bruce W. Ahern, P.E.
Project Manager, Transit
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Phyllis Barber
(Steering Committee Co-Chair)
Sustainability Coordinator
Environmental
Management
Highmark

Dr. Eric Beckman
Co-Director
Science & Technology
Mascaro Sustainability
Initiative

Nathaniel Doyno
Executive Director
Steel City Biofuels

Byron Falchetti, President
Standard Property
Corporation/Highmark,
Inc.

Bill Flanagan
Executive Vice President,
Corporate Relations
Allegheny Conference on
Community Development

Lee Hipps
Board Member
Sustainable Pittsburgh

Scott Hudson
Senior Grants Analyst
Alcoa Foundation

David Kahley
President & CEO
Progress Fund

Mike Kane
Executive Director
Community Foundation
for the Alleghenies

Deborah Lange, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Steinbrenner Institute for
Environmental Education
and Research
Carnegie Mellon

Betsy Mallison Bialosky
Manager, Corporate
Public Relations
PPG

David Mazza
Regional Director
Pennsylvania Resources
Council, Inc

Dr. Irene E. McGee
Vice President
Health, Safety,
Environment and Quality
Bayer Material Science
LLC

Richard Pearson
CEO
BioSpace Development
Company
Board Chair
Sustainable Pittsburgh

Richard Piacentini
Executive Director
Phipps Conservatory and
Botanical Gardens

Dick Rosey
Vice President Marketing
& Sales
Solar Power Industries

Bonnie Siefers
Owner/Designer
Jonano

Robert Sroufe, Ph.D.
Murrin Chair of Global
Competitiveness
Palumbo – Donahue
School of Business
Duquesne University

Jerry Swart
(Steering Committee Co-Chair)
Managing Director
Environmental Services
Department
FedEx Ground

Scott Van de Mark
Director, Special Projects
Pennsylvania
Environmental Council
Western Regional Office

Jennifer Young
Managing Director,
Advanced Manufacturing
Network

Jeanee Zappa
Deputy Director
Green Building Alliance

Executive Summary

This document contains a summary of notes from the first Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee meeting from July 23, 2009 as well as a compilation of notable information that committee members may want to review until September 3, 2009.

C4S Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee

Champions for Sustainability convenes leaders from Pittsburgh area businesses to recommend actions related to Pittsburgh's climate. The group meets every 6 weeks. The goals of the BCC are to:

- To provide an opportunity for businesses in Pittsburgh to learn what others companies and organizations are doing related to climate initiatives
- To design and oversee BCC events which raise awareness of climate related activities
- To create a best practices guide and case studies for local businesses relating to climate initiatives
- To oversee the Pittsburgh Business Climate Leadership Awards Program

About C4S

Champions for Sustainability brings together companies large and small, from many different industries, entrepreneurs, community leaders, university researchers, educators, and other social ventures to put sustainability into practice. C4S aspires to be the most effective region-based collaboration of leaders accelerating the practice and policy of sustainability in business and civic circles. Champions for Sustainability provides value to firms and organizations that seek sustainable solutions to operational practices through convening, networking, and direct consulting.

Memberships and Information:

- Champions for Sustainability www.C4SPgh.org
- Sustainable Pittsburgh www.sustainablepittsburgh.org

C4S Program Administration

Matthew M. Mehalik, Ph.D.
Program Manager
Sustainable Pittsburgh

Sustainability Coordinator Leadership

Phyllis Barber
(Steering Committee Co-Chair)
Sustainability Coordinator
Environmental Management
Highmark

Members of the 2009 Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee:

Mr. Steve Bland
Port Authority of
Allegheny County

Mr. John Burke
URA

Mr. Andrew Butcher
GTECH Strategies

Mr. William Cagney
International Union of
Operating Engineers
Local 95

Mr. David Deal
evolve environment::
architecture

Mr. David Diorio
La Prima Espresso

Ms. Janice Donatelli
ARTEMIS

Ms. Rachel Filippini
Group Against Smog
and Pollution (GASP)

Ms. Christina French
Table Magazine

Mr. JD Fogarty
Port of Pittsburgh
Commission

Ms. Ann Gerace
CCI Center

Ms. Lynne Glover
Visit Pittsburgh

Mr. Dave Grupp
Direct Energy
Business

Mr. Jon Mathews
Fairmont Hotel

Mr. Peter Johnson
Allegheny Design
Group

Mr. Tommy Johnson
Consol Energy, Inc

Mr. Robert Jones
Dominion Peoples

Ms. Meg Kelly
Frontier Energy

Ms. Bonny Kwolek
Pittsburgh Cultural
Trust

Ms. Janet Lauer
3 Rivers Clean Energy

Mr. Greg Lok
Constellation Energy

Dr. Scott Matthews
Carnegie Mellon
University

Ms. Irene McGee
Bayer Materials
Science LLC

Ms. Christine Mondor
evolve environment::
architecture

Ms. Joyce O'Connor
Cardinal Resources
LLC

**Ms. Carolyn
Pengidore**
Clear Choice Energy

Mr. Seth Rice
Babst, Calland,
Clements and Zomnir,
P.C.

Ms. Catherine Sheane
Astorino

**Mr. Nagaraj
Sivasubramaniam**
Palumbo*Donahue
Schools of Business,
Duquesne University

Mr. Chris Steffy
American Institute of
Chemical Engineers-
Pittsburgh Section

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1. Prior Meeting Summary (July 23, 2009)

1.1 Agenda

Champions for Sustainability
Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee Meeting
July 23, 2009
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Location:
Regional Enterprise Tower (Old Alcoa Building)
425 Sixth Avenue
23rd Floor
A.V. Davis Room

Continental Breakfast Provided

Facilitated by Matthew Mehalik and Jillian Ryan, Sustainable Pittsburgh

- 8:30 Arrival & Check-in: Breakfast
- 8:40 Welcome
- Introduce new faces
 - Recap last meeting (6.11.09)
- 8:50 Update on useful resources related to business and climate
- Report Update (7.23.09)
- 9:00 Events Committee meeting (7.08.09)
- Bonny Kwolek
 - July 30th Climate Issues Event
 - BCC's role with outreach
- 9:25 Energy Workshops Update
- Jan Lauer
 - Energy Related Stimulus Money
- 9:35 Focus Groups Committee Meeting (7.14.09)
- Joyce O'Connor
 - Design
 - Aug 27th Meeting
- 9:50 Discussion
- 9:55 Closing Remarks

1.2 Prior Meeting Summary

I. Call to Order:

- A. Matt Mehalik and Jillian Ryan called to order the fourth meeting for the Champions for Sustainability Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee

II. Roll Call

- A. Each attendee introduced themselves: name & organization

III. Opening Issues:**A. Recap of last meeting (6.11.09)**

- 1. BCC Report Update resources
- 2. CMU Presentation (Mike Blackhurst)
- 3. Goals Committee Recommendations for events and initiatives
 - a) Energy Workshops
 - b) Focus Groups
 - c) Clearinghouse
 - d) Major Events
 - e) Case Studies
- 4. Pittsburgh Climate Initiative
 - a) PCI Survey (Miriam Parson)

B. Today's Agenda/ Topics

- 1. July 30th Event
- 2. Energy Workshops Update
- 3. Focus Groups Committee Meeting
- 4. Energy related stimulus money

IV. Overview:**A. BCC Report (7.23.08)**

- 1. Energy Management & Energy Audits
 - a) The BCC Update Report Volume 3 contains a summary of notes and meeting minutes from the last Business Climate Coalition Steering Committee meeting on June 11, 2009, the events & focus group committee meetings on July 8 and 14, respectively, as well as a compilation of resources on energy management and audits and climate related articles.
- 2. Looking for suggestions and information to develop more comprehensive resources in these topics
 - a) Recommendations: Association of Energy Engineers for list of local energy service companies
- 3. Information from reports will be easier to access once the BCC website is built (currently in progress)

B. Events Committee Meeting (7.08.09) -Bonny Kwolek

- 1. First Event—July 30th (6-8:30 PM)
 - a) [The Summer's Hot Business Topic: A Discussion of Energy Policy and The American Clean Energy and Securities Act](#) →Click to register & see details
 - b) Location: The New Hazlett Theater
 - c) Free
- 2. Other Event ideas:
 - a) Hero Story
 - (1) Completed for other reason besides grant money, such as cost savings

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- (2) Peer pressure
 - b) Good and not so good case examples
 - c) Accounting companies need to be brought in, can interpret for small businesses and explain opportunities
- C. Case Studies
- 1. Just Ducky
 - 2. Chris Steffy/ Aurora Sharrard have contacts
 - 3. Necessary for event ideas
 - 4. Commercial building owners who have made changes
 - 5. Opera House
 - 6. Phipps
 - 7. Companies who pursue energy reduction for rate of return reasons
- D. Focus Groups Committee Meeting (7.14.09) – Joyce O’Connor
- 1. Design and timeline/ dates
 - a) Aug 27th BCC member & Sustainability Coordinators group will comprise first group
 - b) Need facilitators
 - (1) Open discussion
 - (a) Disconnect...
 - (i) Goals/ point of focus groups: a combination of education opportunity, business outreach, and measurement strategy to select action items that are feasible, cost effective and respectable GHG emission reducers.
 - (ii) Strategy: to connect with more business and educate about energy issues while developing and publicizing specific cost effective and GHG reduction actions
 - (a) Social capital building
 - (b) Education
 - (c) Provides ownership value
 - (b) How to present issue?
 - (i) Cost savings issue
 - (ii) GHG reductions issue
 - (c) Plan for pain tolerance with participants...
 - (i) Level of understanding of issues may effect how and their wiliness people react to survey
 - (a) Individual survey first... then group survey
 - (b) Clear explanation in beginning on why and what is needed from questions
 - (d) Focus group meeting structure
 - (i) Currently: a few dates located at outside room for variety
 - (a) Consider video conferencing capabilities
 - (b) Electronic version?
 - (2) Clearinghouse
 - (a) Where does the Clearinghouse fit in?
 - (i) Not yet developed, request to structure more

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- (ii) Need for subcommittee meeting before next BCC group
 - (iii) Opportunity for businesses to turn to for resources/
guidance once “Chambers go Green” goes live
 - (b) The definition of clearinghouse...
 - (i) A hub for educational resources
 - (ii) A hub for service providing resources
 - (c) Aggregating opportunity
 - E. Energy Workshops – Jan Lauer
 - 1. Similar to DEP energy workshops and Philly’s Smart Energy Efficiency Program
 - 2. Goal: awareness and value in becoming more energy efficient
 - 3. Tied with Chambers go green
 - 4. Looking for vendors (program expected to last 2 hrs long)
- V. Discussion
 - A. Stimulus Money
 - 1. PA just received stimulus money for energy related, shovel-ready projects—
businesses should check it out
 - a) DEP will hold a webinar on Monday 1:30 -3:00 to answer any questions
regarding the grant that is due Aug. 14
 - B. For profit businesses
 - 1. Harder to obtain money for for-profit businesses
 - a) Tax credit
 - b) Tax reduction
 - c) Energy credits
 - d) Performance
- VI. Conclusion
 - A. Planning stage:
 - 1. Projects are in finishing stages of design
 - 2. More action initiatives requested
- VII. For Next Meeting (Sept. 3, 2009):
 - A. Sign up for [EPA portfolio manager](#)
 - B. Clearinghouse and Focus group structures designed
 - 1. BCC members involvement on Aug 27th
 - C. Thoughts on July 30th Event
 - D. PCI Inventory Survey
 - 1. Please fill out
- VIII. Adjournment:
 - A. Matt Mehalik adjourned the meeting a little before 10 am
 - B. Networking continued

****Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Bill Cagney: “It’s Easy Being Green” Golden Triangle, Green Roof Breakfast
 - 1. Friday August 21, 2009
 - 2. 7:30- 10:00 AM
 - 3. Highmark

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4. Fifth Ave Place
5. 120 Fifth Ave
6. RSVP by August 7
 - a) Contact: Janie French at 412.578.8376

Minutes submitted by: Jillian Ryan

Minutes approved by: Matthew Mehalik

1.3 Climate Event (7.30.09)

On July 30, 2009, Champions for Sustainability (C4S) and the Business Climate Coalition (BCC) of the Pittsburgh Climate Initiative hosted *The Summer's Hot Business Topic: A Discussion of Energy Policy and The American Clean Energy and Security Act* at the New Hazlett Theater on Pittsburgh's North Side. The event was designed to help bring insight into the complexities of energy and climate issues facing corporate decision makers and policy makers. Approximately 70 people attended, representing a mix of energy consultants, consumer-oriented businesses, manufacturers, engineering firms, and energy supplier firms as well as range of local nonprofit and government organizations.

Catherine Sheane, Sustainable Design Manager for Astorino, a local engineering construction firm, welcomed attendees to the event. She expressed that a region that pulls its resources to help its companies and communities adapt to find new, sustainable opportunities sets itself up to be resilient amidst changing circumstances. The Pittsburgh region is in a leadership position to demonstrate how a sustainability strategy can be a pathway to resiliency for its businesses and communities.

A screening of a filmed debate on energy issues comprised the first half of the event and featured four high-profile panelists:

- Karen Harbert, President and CEO, Institute for 21st Century Energy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- John Podesta, President, Center for American Progress; former White House Chief of Staff
- Christine Todd Whitman, Co-chair of CASEnergy Coalition; former EPA Administrator; former Governor of New Jersey
- James Woolsey, Venture Partner, VantagePoint Venture Partners; former Director of Central Intelligence
- The video, filmed at the end of May 2009 and just prior to the House vote of the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES), is part of the Miller Center of Public Affairs National Discussion and Debate Series. The group debated the question "Should the U.S. end its dependency on carbon fuels?". Podesta and Woolsey argued for the elimination of fossil fuels in American energy policy and emphasized major investments in renewables and green technology. Harbert and Whitman shared the belief that because of the high percentage of American dependency on fossil fuels, the country can not afford to, nor should it, disregard fossil fuels.

Despite these opposing viewpoints, there was consensus on the need to become more energy efficient, lower carbon emissions and reduce the country's dependence on foreign oil supplies. Topics debated included the role of nuclear, energy infrastructure and job creation.

At the film's culmination, event organizers introduced local panelists who shared their thoughts on energy issues:

- Lee Ann Briggs, Regional Environmental Specialist, Duquesne University Small Business Development Center
- William O'Rourke, Vice President for Sustainability and Environment, Health and Safety, Alcoa
- Sharon Pillar, Global Warming Outreach Coordinator, Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
- Keith Schaefer, Founder, CEO, and President, BPL Global
- Steve Winberg, VP, Research and Development, Consol Energy

Moderated by Rob Jones, Sr. Manager, Public Affairs at Dominion Peoples and President & CEO at IngoodCompany LLC, the panel agreed that energy efficiency is first and foremost the most accessible and easy way to reduce costs and energy usage. Panelists also acknowledged the complexity of the ACES bill and acknowledged the US Senate may start from scratch. Covering a lot of ground, the panelists discussed some important considerations, such as:

- Pennsylvania has received \$230 million in venture capital investment in the clean technology sector since 2007
- 3,000 businesses produced 39,000 clean energy jobs in PA since 2007
- There are 3,000 wind energy jobs in PA
- PA has 1000 years of carbon fuels and sequestration capabilities in PA
- The current house version of ACES provides an overall \$1.2 billion in investment in clean energy industries, with the potential to grow 72,000 jobs in Pennsylvania and 13,000 jobs in the Pittsburgh area.
- Southwestern Pennsylvania's environment of collaboration among the venture capital community, universities, and government sectors has created an opportunity for innovation to flourish in clean energy activities.
- The concept of "polluter pays" is inaccurate because in a sense, everyone will have to pay (through higher rates, cost of goods, taxes, etc.)
- While many pundits say Germany is "getting it right" in terms of energy independence, their cost per kWh is 36 cents, compared to 11.6 cents per kWh in the U.S. United Kingdom pays 24 cents and France pays 22 cents per kWh. However, this cost must be weighed against the harder-to-quantify costs of continuing to depend upon hostile regimes for sources of energy and that contribute to climate change (in other words, the "cost of doing nothing is very high").
- To affect energy demand, education is key. More forums like this one would be helpful.
- If the US reduces its emissions, will India and China follow? Will it matter? What will we do if they do not? Is all this effort worth it if we're only reducing global emissions by approx. 3%?
- Despite the US not having built a nuclear power plant since the late 1970's and whether it is the country's way of not promoting nuclear enrichment, other countries continue to bring nuclear plants on line.
- For every \$1million spent on in the clean energy sector, 17 green jobs are created; for every \$1million spent on fossil fuel exploration and development, only 5 jobs are created.

The audience asked the panelists to respond to several questions concerning the need for firms to adopt the "precautionary principle" about the potential irreversible harms if no change in the energy usage profile occurs, and the feasibility of using carbon-intense fuels as a last resort.

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The panel concluded with consensus that there will indeed be continuing debate on the energy and climate bill in the US Senate later this Fall, and that all of these efforts are building up to high-stakes discussions among the international community slated for Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009.

The event concluded with an announcement that the BCC will host a follow-up event later on this Fall. The focus will be more on what businesses can do to achieve energy demand reduction and cost savings.

The audience completed questionnaires relating to their views of how energy and climate goals should be pursued. The results of these questionnaires, as well as a more extensive summary of the event's panel dialog will be posted on the C4S website shortly.

1.4 Focus Groups and Clearinghouse Committee Summary (8.12.09)

At the focus group committee meeting on August 12, 2009 the BCC members assisted in the re-design and organization of the focus group sessions.

There will be four focus group sessions with a fifth combined event to highlight the outcomes and discuss our opportunities in a congratulatory atmosphere. The preferred dates are October 5, 19, 26, November 2 and 16ish. We will be checking out the possible locations for availability, price and convenience.

The details on what the main comparison we are hoping to obtain from the group series are still being determined (A few options are listed below: III. A. 3). The C4S business network will be the main source of outreach, which will occur the week of Sept. 7.

The paper draft of the materials is being modified, with the additional creation of material for computer generated results at each session. The focus group will assist via email in choosing which action items they believe are the most important to discuss. Most of the volunteers needed to run the session have been determined with leeway on who is doing what and opportunities for others to still help out.

Another subcommittee meeting will be held prior to the trial run (Sept 15) to finalize the focus group sessions and material.

- I. Call to Order:
 - A. Matt Mehalik and Jillian Ryan called to order the Champions for Sustainability Business Climate Coalition Focus Group Committee meeting

- II. Opening Issues:
 - A. Focus Committee Brainstorm/ discussion
 - 1. Goal of the focus group sessions
 - 2. Logistics of focus group session
 - a) Design
 - b) Discuss dates & sequence
 - c) Main comparison to establish group dynamics
 - d) Who to invite
 - e) Volunteers

III. Overview:**A. BCC Focus Groups Sessions****1. Design**

- a) Structure (Modifying original design)
 - (1) Business Community atmosphere
 - (2) 3 hrs long- luncheon/ with pre-reception time
 - (3) Lengthen discussion times
 - (4) When participants fill out things
 - (a) In advance: Background info to place in group session
 - (b) Everyone gets same intro—facilitates conversation
 - (5) Computer generated results to discuss at each session
 - (a) Web IQ
 - (b) Computers needed—either brought or accessible
 - (6) Bike Rack process—list ideas & hold to end
 - (7) Possible web/ online only additional focus group session
 - (8) Definitions list
 - (9) Questions answered in regards to their firm
 - (10) Consensus --- it is acceptable to not reach consensus with group discussion
 - (11) Clearinghouse will be output—will go on C4S/ BCC website
 - (12) Goggle group to discuss topic further
 - (a) Discussion board
- b) Background/ Pre-screening information
 - (1) Fill out information before hand
 - (2) Include:
 - What their company has implemented
 - (Renters/ Leasers) Tenants vs. building owners
 - Change experience to familiarity
 - Why their company has not or is not willing to implement some of the actions
 - (3) Inform Participants
 - (a) How the information will be used
 - (b) Alias from background needs to match rating sheets
 - (c) No statements will be attached to them
- c) Action sheet material
 - (1) Rating scale includes I don't know option
 - (2) Check box next actions indicating company has already implemented actions
 - (3) Comment for each action should say "Comment on Specifics"
 - (4) Cost Savings in the rating scale needs to say "Cost saving opportunities"
- d) Venue options to check out
 - (1) Duquesne University
 - (2) RET
 - (3) CMU

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- (4) Urban Mountain Gathering Place
2. Dates of focus group sessions
 - a) September 15—Trial run
 - b) Oct. 5, 19, 26 & Nov. 2, 2009
 - c) Nov. 16: all participants, display comprised results
 - Or before Nov 10 to be highlighted at Duq. Conference
3. What will be the main comparison
 - Big vs. Small
 - Energy Consultant vs. Provider
 - Lot of experience vs. Little
 - Non-energy biz vs. Energy biz
 - Experienced with energy cost vs. Less/ Not experienced
 - Expert in sustainability issues vs. Novice
 - Early in career vs. late
 - Pro-environmental active vs. Not active
 - Support climate bill vs. Don't support
 - Implementation of energy saving initiatives (substantial) vs. unsubstantial
4. Who to invite → Contact week of September 7, 2009
 - a) Regional (10) county businesses
 - b) BCC
 - c) Sustainability Coordinators
 - d) C4S members
 - e) Outreach through BCC
 - f) Building Owners- Trek
 - g) Operators (operators union)
5. Volunteers (Changes for each session)
 - a) Host
 1. Matt Mehalik
 2. Jillian Ryan
 - b) Facilitator
 1. Naga Sivasubramaniam
 2. Cat Sheane
 3. Evolve: Christine/ Dave
 - c) Recorder
 1. Joyce O'Connor
 2. Cat Sheane
 3. evolve: environment
 - a. Christine/ Dave
 - d) Time Keeper
 1. Jillian Ryan

IV. Conclusion

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- A. Next steps
 - 1. Fix changes to rating sheets
 - a) Cross check by focus group
 - 2. Decide what action items to address
 - a) Will be sent out to focus group committee members via email
 - 3. Set location → tour places
 - 4. Confirm use of computers for quick analysis
 - a) Have material/ data setup for computers for day of focus group sessions
 - 5. Develop invitation email to be sent out through BCC members
 - 6. Pick 10ish business members to run trial run on September 8/25 & work out quirks
- B. Next Focus group meeting
 - 1. Will be scheduled around the end of august? to finalize material and structure before trial run

V. Adjournment:

- A. Matt Mehalik and Jillian Ryan adjourned the meeting at 10:30 am

**Handouts:

- Agenda
- One set of Mock material for a focus group session
- Description of design set from last meeting
- List of action items
- Mike Blackhurst's list of other cities' action items

Minutes submitted by: Jillian Ryan

Minutes approved by: Matthew Mehalik

1.5 Events Committee Summary (8.19.09)

At the events committee meeting on August 19, 2009 the BCC members assisted in the draft design of the fall event, which details will be explained at the next whole BCC group meeting on September 3, 2009. The event will highlight what businesses are already doing and what they can be doing in respect to saving cost through energy efficiency.

I. Call to Order:

- A. Matt Mehalik and Jillian Ryan called to order the Champions for Sustainability Business Climate Coalition Events Committee meeting

II. Opening Issues

- A. Recap of summer event: July 30th screening of the Miller Center's discussion on "America's Energy Future"

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1. Thoughts
2. Write up an electronic version will be distributed to the events committee once final draft is complete

III. Overview:

A. Designing fall BCC event

1. Theme

- a) How others have become more sustainable “hero theme”

- (1) Highlight through

- (a) Speakers
- (b) Best Practices
- (c) Solutions
- (d) Resources

- (2) Topics/ strategies

- (a) Reduce energy use through both operations and buildings retrofits
 - (i) Astorino-building/ Children’s Hospital-operations
 - (b) Labeling trashcans “landfill”
 - (c) Mention on why climate policy is important for implementing cost saving energy efficiency for businesses

- (3) Speakers (suggestions)

- (a) (EvolveEA about Opera house)
- (b) WPXI (LEED)
- (c) Business that are just beginning...

2. Outreach

- a) Mailer/postcard/ flyer with type written letter
- b) Pass out through BCC (~100 each)
- c) Design of outreach material
 - (1) Soy based ink/ recycled paper
- d) Printing of material

3. When:

- a) ~ October 27, 28, **29**
- b) Early evening
 - (1) 4:30-7:30pm
 - (2) 3-6pm

4. Where

- a) Opera House
 - (1) Has chairs & stages
 - (2) Green catering (Right by Nature)

IV. Conclusion

A. Next Steps

1. Figure out who the speakers should be

V. Adjournment:

- A. Matt Mehalik and Jillian Ryan adjourned the meeting around 10am

****Handouts:**

- Agenda
- Screening event write report (one hard copy)

Minutes submitted by: Jillian Ryan

Minutes approved by: Matthew Mehalik

2. Resources

2.1 BCC Climate related articles as of 9.03.09

- **A Quest for Batteries to Alter the Energy Equation (7.27.09)**, ALLENTOWN, Pa. — In a gleaming white factory here, Bob Peters was gently feeding sheets of chemical-coated foil one afternoon recently into a whirring machine that cut them into precise rectangles. It was an early step in building a new kind of battery, one smaller than a cereal box but with almost as much energy as the kind in a conventional automobile. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Climate Change Seen as Threat to U.S. Security (8.08.09)**, The changing global climate will pose profound strategic challenges to the United States in coming decades, raising the prospect of military intervention to deal with the effects of violent storms, drought, mass migration and pandemics, military and intelligence analysts say. Such climate-induced crises could topple governments, feed terrorist movements or destabilize entire regions, say the analysts, experts at the Pentagon and intelligence agencies who for the first time are taking a serious look at the national security implications of climate change. Recent war games and intelligence studies conclude that over the next 20 to 30 years, vulnerable regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia, will face the prospect of food shortages, water crises and catastrophic flooding driven by climate change that could demand an American humanitarian relief or military response. [Click her for more information.](#)
- **Energy Risk - Only One in Ten Americans Are Very Knowledgeable About Sources of Electricity (7.31.09)**, While Congress debates the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, much education is needed to enhance public knowledge, understanding and interest in various sources of electrical power, their associated benefits and risks and the value of becoming more energy efficient. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Environmentalists Slow to Adjust in Climate Debate (8.31.09)**, The oil lobby was sponsoring rallies with free lunches, free concerts and speeches warning that a climate-change bill could ravage the U.S. economy. Professional "campaigners" hired by the coal industry were giving away T-shirts praising coal-fired power. But when environmentalists showed up in this college town -- closer than ever to congressional passage of a climate-change bill, in the middle of the green movement's biggest political test in a generation -- they provided . . . a sedate panel discussion. And they gave away stickers. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Falling Behind On Green Tech (8.3.09)**, America confronts three interrelated crises: an economic crisis, a climate crisis and an energy security crisis. We believe there's a fourth: a

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competitiveness crisis. This crisis is particularly evident in America's worldwide standing in the next great global industry, green technology. [Click here for more information.](#)

- **Glaciers a canary in the coal mine of global warming (8.8.09)**, U.S. scientists monitoring shrinking glaciers in Washington and Alaska reported this week that a major meltdown is under way. A 50-year government study found that the world's glaciers are melting at a rapid and alarming rate. The ongoing study is the latest in a series of reports that found glaciers worldwide are melting faster than anyone had predicted they would just a few years ago. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Healthy choice: Passing climate-change legislation is a necessity (8.31.09)**, The health-care debate has been so combustible that the political fire is in danger of sucking the oxygen out of other important congressional business. That can't be allowed to occur, because the other concern about health -- that of the planet -- will only be hurt by delays. On June 26, the House of Representatives by a narrow margin -- 219-212 -- passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act, HR 2454, which would wean the nation away from fossil fuels with incentives to encourage alternative energy sources such as wind and solar. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **How smart is a smart grid? (7.21.09)**, The term “smart grid” is bandied about regularly in energy news, but what is it, what does it entail? The smart grid concept at its most basic is a variety of technologies employed on the existing power grid (including buildings connected to the grid like our homes), to make it more efficient, more reliable, and reduce the operating costs of utilities while potentially reducing electricity costs to customers including homeowners and businesses. In short, smart grid aims to make the power grid work better without hanging (or burying) new transmission lines and building ever more power plants: Smart grid makes do with what’s available, using a little bit of technical innovation. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Psychological Factors Help Explain Slow Reaction To Global Warming (8.10.09)**, While most Americans think climate change is an important issue, they don't see it as an immediate threat, so getting people to "go green" requires policymakers, scientists and marketers to look at psychological barriers to change and what leads people to action, according to a task force of the American Psychological Association. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **Oil industry split on climate law protests (8.14.09)**, A rift has broken out within the US oil industry over a controversial plan to deploy thousands of workers in so-called “energy citizen” rallies protesting against imminent climate legislation. For full article please go to their site and sign in: [Link here.](#)
- **Special interests battle for climate-change ground (8.20.09)**, The climate battle will be waged in the ornate setting of the U.S. Senate this fall, but for now the fight is taking place in humbler locales like local libraries, college campuses and county fairs as supporters and critics struggle for hearts and minds beyond the Beltway. On the heels of campaigns against the climate change bill launched by oil companies and other opposing interests, unions and environmental groups kicked off a 22-state swing with a rally in Cleveland on Thursday to sell the bill’s environmental and economic benefits. [Click here for more information.](#)
 - **Critics seek to raise worries about climate bill (8.15.09)**, Critics of the Dems' carbon-capping climate legislation are stoking fear that it would kill jobs and raise energy prices

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if it goes ahead this fall. Critics of the Dems' carbon-capping climate legislation are stoking fear that it would kill jobs and raise energy prices if it goes ahead this fall. Instead of town halls and angry confrontations with lawmakers, farm and fossil fuel groups are using tractor pulls and county fairs and national advertising campaigns to spread their message that a climate bill will hurt the economy. Energy Citizens, an alliance that includes the American Petroleum Institute, National Association of Manufacturers, and the American Farm Bureau Federation, is planning 21 rallies in 20 states to build grassroots opposition to the climate bill sponsored by Reps. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) and Edward Markey (D-Mass.). That bill passed the House and is serving as a template for action in the Senate. [Click here for more information.](#)

- **The Climate and National Security (8.18.09)**, One would think that by now most people would have figured out that climate change represents a grave threat to the planet. One would also have expected from Congress a plausible strategy for reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that lie at the root of the problem. That has not happened. The House has passed a climate bill that is not as strong as needed, but is a start. There are doubts about whether the Senate will pass any bill, given the reflexive opposition of most Republicans and unfounded fears among many Democrats that rising energy costs will cripple local industries. [Click here for more information.](#)

- **'The Clunkers of the Power-Plant World' (8.16.09)**, Old Coal-Fired Facilities Could Escape New Rules, CHICAGO -- The twin smokestacks of the 85-year-old Crawford Generating Station are a familiar backdrop in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago. It's a largely Mexican immigrant community where children play in the street, families congregate on stoops and pushcart vendors sell corncoobs within blocks of the plant and its large coal pile. Six miles away in another crowded neighborhood sits a second plant, the Fisk Generating Station, built in 1903. They are among the nation's fleet of aging coal-fired power plants, a handful of them in the heart of urban areas, including Detroit, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Alexandria, where the Potomac River Generating Station has long stirred controversy. [Click here for more information.](#)

3. Meeting Schedule for 2009:

- √ March 19
- √ April 30
- √ June 11
- √ July 23
- √ Sept. 3
- Oct. 15
- Nov. 19