

Community Coalition News

Nov. 1, 2011
Volume 2, Issue 2

The monthly Community Coalition is convened by
Ottawaquechee Community Partnership (OCP)



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Coming Up

- ◆ **Upcoming Coalition Meetings**
Nov 8 and Dec 13
Local Healthy Food Council - 5-7 p.m. in the Woodstock Elementary School cafeteria.

At this two stage meeting, we'll be mapping what's happening in our local food system. Then we'll look at steps we can take to strengthen food security with access for all to local healthy food.

Focus on Healthy Environments

Healthy Environments - where the healthy choice is the easy choice! Research shows that when communities intentionally develop systems, practices and policies that focus on healthy environments, residents of those communities are more likely to lead healthy lives and less likely to develop chronic disease.

What does that look like in our towns? The physical infrastructure, local policies, and the environment all support safe places to walk and bike, children having easy safe routes to walk and bike to school, people of all ages have welcoming access to parks and recreational area and second hand smoke is banned from building entrances.

With that in mind, the Oct 11th Community Coalition meeting brought people across generations together to discuss how we to assess, support and promote healthy environments.

At the Oct. 11th meeting we:

- Reviewed a presentation on a

Youth Assessment of the Built Environment. This was a result of the youth participatory photo mapping project in which youth looked critically at "Where we walk, bike, play and hang out in our communities."

- Discussed the concept of developing a Smoke-Free Woodstock, and learned more about the initiative to establish smoke-free zones in our communities
- Reviewed the Safe Routes to School initiative, including Woodstock Elementary School's Walking School Bus, and the Vermont Safe Routes to School travel plan.

Learn more about each of these projects in this edition of the *Community Coalition News*. If you're curious and want to be involved or learn more about any of these initiatives, contact Jackie Fischer at jfischer@ocpvt.org or call 457-2679.

Who was Represented at this Coalition Meeting?

Participants at the October Coalition meeting included OCP Board member Lisa Kaija, ED of OCP, Jackie Fischer and Outreach Coordinator, Jim Grossman. Sustainable Woodstock was represented by Sharon Earn accompanied by Brian Earn. Youth groups represented include Vermont Kids Against Tobacco members Hayley Atwood and Abby Nickerson. Change the World

Kids was represented by Miranda Holson. Community members included Jen and Hugh Belton, Karen Vitols and Caroline Grossman. Community Coalition meetings are open to all who are interested in the topic of the month. The Nov 8th and Dec 13th will focus on strengthening our Local Healthy Food system. ALL who are interested in healthy local food are encouraged to attend!

Youth Team Assess Built Environment

In August of 2011, just weeks before the Irene flood, a team of up to 12 young people in grades 6-8 photographed (photo-mapped) places where they play, bike, walk and feel welcome.

Training for the team was provided by city designer Sharon Earn. She prepared the teens to assess and think critically about where they feel welcome, and why. "What are the qualities," Earn asked, "of the places where you feel welcome?"

Members of the team met with writer in residence at the Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park, Wendy Call. Ms.

Call encouraged the teens on using their voices and opinions as a powerful instrument for community change.

To summarize this stage of the project, the team created a presentation of the photos with imbedded notes about their impressions of the locations.

Some surprising (and some not too surprising) findings:

- Access to brooks and the river are important to young people
- Bridges are great places to hang out
- The Norman Williams Public Library is especially inviting

for young people - and a great place to get warm on a cold day.

- Some stores in town are particularly welcoming
- Teens would like to see Teagle Landing become a smoke-free zone.
- There is little affordable food for teenagers in town.

Other findings:

Teens are longing for a place to 'hang-out', listen to music, have a snack, do homework.

Middle schoolers have less mobility than high schoolers and want to be close to places in town to congregate.

Middle schoolers don't really don't mind having adults around to keep a sense of safety and order.

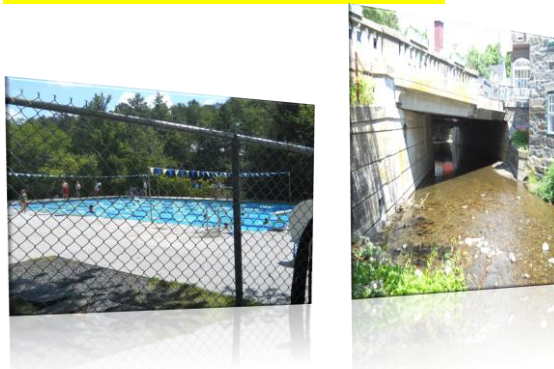
Winter indoor space is a need.

Sheltered outdoor space, evoking a sense of shelter would make many young people happy (igloos on the green was one suggestion.)

While some really want youth oriented stores, others are content with a "space of our own."

The Team is planning to photograph the same places post-Irene.

Plan is to show anyone interested in seeing the presentation: Village Trustees? Town Planning Commission? Community Access TV? If interested in viewing the presentation, email jgrossman@ocpvt.org



Safe Routes to School - Vermont style

“An early morning walk is the best possible way for students to start the school day,” says Karen White, Woodstock Elementary School principal. “Walking with parents, teachers and classmates to school makes it even more fun!”

Faculty, students and parents walked with WES’s weekly Walking School Bus on Wednesdays in the Spring and Fall of 2010. The Irene flood derailed plans for the Walking School Bus for the opening of this school year, but it only spurred on the Safe Routes to School Team to action for future plans.

The Safe Routes Team, led by Principal White consists of school personnel, parents, Police Chief Blish, Village Trustee Bob Pear, Sustainable Woodstock’s Sally Miller (wearing double hat as the co-chair of the Town Planning Commission) and OCP’s ED, Jackie Fischer.

The Safe Routes to School team is developing a ‘Travel Plan.’ The team is being advised on this plan by Vermont Safe Routes to School director Abby Mattera and technical advisor and urban engineer John Dempsey.

The team looks carefully at all the ways children arrive to school, including safe arrivals and departures to school on foot, on bicycle or by car or bus. They recently walked the routes of the two Walking School Buses to assess for safety. Parents will be surveyed about the challenges to allowing children to walk to school. Students, too, will be surveyed to find out how many walk and ride bikes to school.

One of the cornerstones of Safe Routes to School is the acknowledgement that safer walking and biking routes can best be accomplished through a combination of infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects and programs. These are known collectively as the “5 Es”: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Engineering, and Evaluation.

When the Travel Plan is completed, the Safe Routes Team will unveil the plan and launch the Walking School Buses again. Principal White has a vision for the spring, “Our goal is to have a couple of days where everyone walks to school together - celebrating the joys of an early morning stroll!”



Nov 8th and Dec 13th
Community
Coalition Meeting:

- What? Local Healthy Food Council
- Where? Woodstock Elementary School cafeteria
- When? 5-7 p.m.

November 8 and December 13 Community Coalition Meetings Focus on Strengthening Our Local Food System

The Local Healthy Food Council has a lot to celebrate, and has big goals. The group formed in March of 2011, when food producers, farm to school advocates, teachers and gardeners all came together to consider how to increase access to local healthy food.

One of the first projects was to learn more about how other counties are developing local food systems. The Council talked with Hans Estrin from Windham County Farm and Food Network. He advised the group to jump in and start an ordering and delivery system for schools,

stores and restaurants. So that’s what they did! At the Nov and Dec meetings, hear the first report out about the system - and examine what we need to do next to strengthen our local healthy food system. All who are interested are invited. No food experience necessary, just your interest!

Smoke-Free Environments in Woodstock: Smoke Free Woodstock?



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The Community Coalition is convened by OCP every 2nd Tuesday of the month.

OCP is a 501c3 non-profit organization serving the towns of Barnard, Bridgewater, Killington, Pomfret, Reading and Woodstock.

We're on the Web!
<http://www.ocpvt.org>

Jim Grossman, OCP Outreach Coordinator, and adult leader of the Vermont Kids Against Tobacco, discussed the expansion of a project focused on creating smoke-free environments throughout the sending towns. WUHS/MS students are working to identify new

community locations to designate as "smoke-free" spaces.

Is there interest in a Smoke-Free Woodstock, following the model set by Boulder, CO and Calabasas, CA? If interested, contact Jim at jgrossman@ocpvt.org

Prescription Drug Take Back Day, October 29th

Clear out your medicine cabinet and prevent abuse of prescription drugs by turning in your unused medications for safe disposal on Oct 29th. Windsor County Sheriff D. Michael Chamberlin, in cooperation with the Woodstock Town Police, DEA and OCP and other local coalitions, is setting up sites for collecting unused or outdate prescription drugs on Oct

29th at the Town of Woodstock Police office from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Why is Rx Take Day important? In the 2009 Youth Risk Behaviour Survey, 22% of Windsor Co. Senior High students reported taking a drug that was not prescribed to them. "Take Back Day is one way everyone can help with this problem," said Sheriff Chamberlin.

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