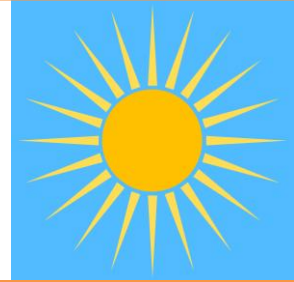




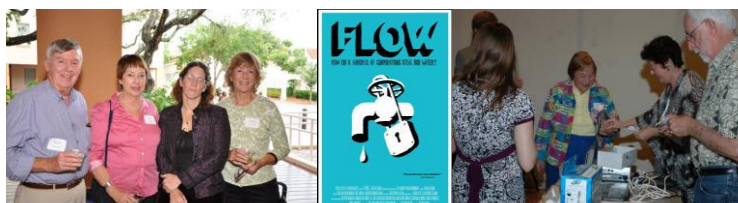
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**Summit for Environmental Action  
July 1, 2009 Update Report**

## SEA Celebrates!



Since the Summit for Environmental Action (SEA) on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the amount of energy dedicated to the four goals set at SEA has been nothing short of amazing. After more than a year of steady work, SCOPE and the SEE Water committee were glad to host SEA Celebrates!, a celebration of the work accomplished and an opportunity for people to learn more.

The highlight of SEA Celebrates! was a public showing of the film For the Love Of Water (FLOW). This award-winning documentary looks at the global water crisis & spotlights the people and institutions providing practical solutions. The event began with a reception to showcase the efforts of the four SEA committees. These committees gave short presentations on their progress. Finally, everyone grabbed some popcorn and watched FLOW.



**The Presentations:** Each of the four SEA Committees (Transportation & Redevelopment Action Committee (TRAC), Green Jobs, SEE Water, and Solar Hot Water Heaters) presented on their group's progress, mission, members and next steps. The following pages share that information.

*It is amazing to see what has grown from a day in February – and where it may take us.*

*Tim Rumage  
See Water Co-chair*

**The Raffle:** After the presentations, the SEE Water committee hosted a raffle of products that would reduce an individual's water consumption. Products included: 50 bathroom faucet aerators, a dual-flush toilet converter kit, a low-flow showerhead, an indoor water audit and an outdoor water audit. Thanks to Eco-Technologies, Raindrops Cisterns and Grant's Gardens for providing the prizes.

**The Film:** After the raffle, the committee showed FLOW - Irena Salina's award-winning documentary investigation into the world water crisis. The film builds a case against the growing privatization of the world's dwindling fresh water supply with a focus on politics, pollution, human rights, and the emergence of a world water cartel.

The Friday night event enabled attendees to make new connections to their fellow participants and with the subjects of transit, solar hot water heaters, green jobs & water reuse.



## Green Business



### Looking Back - Summit for Environmental Action Goal:

“Attract sustainable & green manufacturers and vendors to our local area.”

**Getting Here:** The committee spent the first two months educating themselves on the current green businesses in Sarasota County. They also learned about the distinction between businesses making green products or services and businesses conducting operations in a green way.

By September 2008, the committee realized that there are a plethora of local groups working on this issue. In response, the committee became more focused on green jobs and training. Also at this point, the committee began to dwindle in number because many members were involved in other efforts.



By January, the committee had contracted with Dwell Green to do high-quality energy audits on two houses in Newtown. The audits were completed in March, and by April Dwell Green compiled a rubric of the retrofit options for these particular houses.

At this time, the federal government signed a stimulus package, and the group members saw an opportunity to put a project “on the ground” to do green retrofits on Newtown houses. In response to this possibility, the group was largely reconstituted to include representatives of all of the players needed to put together a cross-sectoral project.

Currently, two energy/structural audits of residences have been conducted. The final written assessments are pending. Preliminary results are exceptionally promising. Assuming that each resident will experience a reduction in their utility expense of at least \$50 monthly, this project will increase disposable income in Newtown by \$60,000 per year. If the State of Florida were to adopt a cap and trade policy\*, this would further increase the wealth creation component of this project.

**Looking Forward:** The committee hopes to put together a project to retrofit 100 or more owner-occupied residences in Newtown so that the cost of home operation is substantially reduced. This would be accomplished by the development of a standard retrofit package based upon a sufficient number of home energy/structural audits (10 to 20) to enable the greatest return on investment.

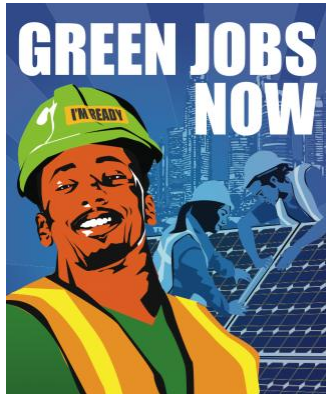
This program would create the equivalent of 20 full-time jobs, based on research that shows a full-time job is

*The program would create the equivalent of 20 full-time jobs and be an opportunity to generate training vehicles for citizens who live in Newtown to work in green careers.*

## Green Business



created with \$100,000 of retrofit investment. This project is an opportunity to generate training vehicles for citizens who live in Newtown to enhance their capacity to earn income related to the growing demand for “green” services. This requires an abiding commitment on the part of all project partners to include training as a part of each step. This includes the energy/structural audits, weatherization, HVAC, electrical, mechanical, structural, project management, etc.



In addition to the opportunity to increase the capacity of the Newtown workforce to access the emerging “green” jobs and business, this project can help increase the number and sophistication of local private businesses and increase the capacity of existing local, neighborhood-based organizations. Both of the above are intentional components of the project based upon the commitment to encourage and support transformation from the inside of the community, in this case Newtown.

**Learn More:** To keep up-to-date with the project or to share information about possible funding sources or program models, contact Kate at [kirwin@scopexcel.org](mailto:kirwin@scopexcel.org).

**Committee Members:** Lorna Alston, Fredd Atkins, Bob Bartolotta, Kathy Baylis\*, Lee Hayes Byron, Steve Crowell, Tim Dutton\*, Nick Gladding, Don Hadsell, Lars Hafner, Teri Hansen, Dru Jones, Kathy Keh, Mary Helen Kress, John Lambie, Scott Lempe, Leslie Loveless, Jeff Maultsby, Mitchell homeowner, Jack Meredith, Peg Nadel, Dana O’Mara, Palmer homeowner, Sarah Pappas, Steve Quieor\*, Bill Russell, Susan Scott, David Smith, Stewart Stearns, Lori White

*\*indicates convening member: Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County, Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, SCOPE.*

**\*Cap & trade policy:** *an administrative approach used to control pollution by providing economic incentives for reducing the emissions of pollutants. A central authority sets a limit (or cap) on the amount of a pollutant that can be emitted. Companies or other groups are issued emission permits and are required to possess an equivalent number of credits, representing the right to emit a specific amount. The total amount of credits cannot exceed the cap. Companies needing to increase their emission allowance must buy credits from those who pollute less, referred to as a trade. In effect, the buyer is paying a charge for polluting, while the seller is being rewarded for having reduced emissions by more than was needed. Thus, in theory, those who can easily reduce emissions most cheaply will do so, achieving the pollution reduction at the lowest possible cost to society. [from Wikipedia]*

## SeeWater: Alternative Water Sources & Uses



### Looking Back - Summit for Environmental Action Goals:

- “Develop alternative water supply plant policies that encourage the use of rainwater harvesting, stormwater and greywater for indoor and outdoor use.”
- “Create ‘low-impact’ requirements for new developments and incentives to retrofit existing landscapes with ‘low-impact’ features.”

*SEA attendees voted to move forward on two water goals, creating two committees: the Low Impact Development committee and the Alternative Water Sources committee. Due to similar topics and overlapping members, the groups merged into the SEE Water: Alternative Water Sources & Uses committee after the June 30<sup>th</sup> 2008 Implementation Committee Meeting.*

### Getting Here:

By the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Alternative Water Sources & Uses committee had zeroed in on the ideas of “right water for right use” and “connecting the drops.” The committee recognized the need to look at water use and re-use on scales from neighborhood to watershed. The committee learned about a variety of regulatory options and tried to untangle the maze of regulations.



The Low Impact Development\* (LID) committee was working on defining LID broadly, to include water use, solar panels and urban tree cover. However, as the committee merged into Alternative Water Sources & Uses committee, the focus remained mostly on water.

By September, the joint committee had focused on Pelican Cove Condominium Association as a case study. Throughout the winter, the committee toured a variety of homes and office buildings reusing water in cutting-edge ways. The goal is water neutrality\* in Sarasota County. They are developing a tool in order to assess how appropriately water on a site is being used, which they will pair with a tool to show the sources of water on a site.

***The committee has identified the “water equivalent of the energy efficient light bulb” – the .05 bathroom faucet aerator.***

The committee secured funding for water meters at Pelican Cove in January 2009. The meters allow the committee to collect data on the amount of well water Pelican Cove uses, quantifying the price of electricity to run the wells and challenging the perception that well water is free. After the committee gathers information over time, they will share methods Pelican Cove and other communities can take to reduce their water usage.

## SeeWater: Alternative Water Sources & Uses



As part of their goal to reach out to the public, this committee showed FLOW: For Love of Water at Ringling College of Art + Design on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2009. FLOW is a film about the privatization of the world's water supply. The film features "interviews with scientists and activists intelligently reveal[ing] the rapidly building crisis... while begging the question 'Can anyone really own water?'" Before the film showing, there were presentations on the four committees' work over the last year.

### Looking Forward:

The committee is currently working in three areas:

- Policy Recommendations: Over the summer, the committee plans to develop policy recommendations relating to alternative water use.
- Individual Actions: The committee has identified the 'water equivalent of the energy efficient light bulb' – the bathroom faucet aerator. This product is the first in a series of five water-saving products the committee will highlight. Committee members plan to give presentations to various groups regarding individual actions to conserve water.
- Data Collection: The committee continues to collect data from well meters at Pelican Cove. This data will be invaluable to get a complete picture of outdoor water use in Sarasota County.

**Learn More:** If you would like the SEE Water committee to present on Individual Actions at a group that you belong to, contact Kate (365-8751). Visit [www.connectthedrops.blogspot.com](http://www.connectthedrops.blogspot.com) to learn about upcoming events hosted by the SEE Water committee.

**Committee Members:** Jack Burden\*, Grant Beatt, Suzanne Dameron\*, Nick Gladding, Chuck Henry, Roger Landry, Chuck Butterfield, Charlie Fellmeth, Leann Fellmeth, Tim Ramage\*, Jack Merriam, Theresa Connor, Rob Wright, Nina Powers, Michele Mician, Joyce Raby, Skip Vermilya

\* indicates co-chair



**\*Low Impact Development (LID):** a term used in the United States to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to managing stormwater runoff. LID emphasizes conservation and use of on-site natural features to protect water quality. This approach implements engineered small-scale water controls to replicate the pre-development water regime of watersheds through infiltrating, filtering, storing, evaporating, and detaining runoff close to its source. [from Wikipedia]

**\*Water Neutrality:** a water neutral home does not import any net water, instead reusing graywater and storing rainwater to compensate for the home's direct water use (showers, irrigation, toilets, etc).

## Solar Hot Water Heaters



### Looking Back - Summit for Environmental Action Goal:

“Sunshine as an opportunity and Solution: Our proposition is that all new residential and commercial buildings as well as 50% of existing buildings in Sarasota County will have a solar hot water heater in 5 years. This will be implemented by a coalition of utility companies, governments, and financial institutions.”

**Getting Here:** This committee got off to a fast start, meeting weekly to research the issue. By the first implementation meeting on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2008, they had prepared a report. The report recommended a “Utility Model,” where a third party would own, install, maintain and acquire financing for the systems and the local water utility would market and administer customer billing for a fee. Report conclusions included: 1) to achieve a 50% installation rate of solar hot water systems within 5 years is an ambitious goal (over 20,000 systems installed per year) 2) the initial cost is the biggest barrier to large scale implementation 3) whatever the model that is used, a strong marketing effort is essential for success 4) a different business model is required and 5) it was beyond the purview of the working group to propose legal changes to mandate solar hot water systems in all new residential and commercial buildings.



### **Recommendations:**

- 1. Establish a public solar domestic hot water utility.**
- 2. Facilitate the adoption of owner-installed systems.**
- 3. Develop a public education & marketing program.**

When the group released their report, it attracted the attention of Sarasota County Government and interest in creating a Solar Hot Water Heater Task Force. This Task Force was charged with studying and then recommending a way to increase solar hot water heater use in Sarasota County, and met between November and March. Four committee members were nominated to the Task Force – Larry Altman, Nick Gladding, Raymond Kaiser and Bonnie Nickel.

The Task Force presented their recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Their recommendations are as follows: 1. Establish a public solar domestic hot water utility\*. 2. Facilitate the adoption of owner-installed systems. 3. Develop a joint

## Solar Hot Water Heaters



The County Commission did not support the above suggestions as recommended. They declined to establish a public solar hot water utility outright (1), instead directing staff to produce a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for suggestions/ideas for possible solar hot water programs via the public and private solar industry. This RFQ would not utilize Sarasota County as a financing source and would not establish a utility. They proceeded with recommendations 2 and 3 without alteration. They BCC also disbanded the Solar Hot Water Task Force so that its members would not be limited by Sunshine Laws.



**Looking Forward:** Sarasota County Government is moving forward with the RFQ process and should have it completed by early 2010. The Task Force has been formally disbanded, but members continue to advocate for more widespread use of Solar Hot Water systems in Sarasota County.

**Learn More:** Visit [sarasotacounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=18&clip\\_id=1016](http://sarasotacounty.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=18&clip_id=1016) to watch a video of the 4/14/09 Board of County Commission Meetings. Visit [scopexcel.org/data/sea\\_implementation\\_committees.html](http://scopexcel.org/data/sea_implementation_committees.html) to read the 6/30/08 report from the SEA Committee.

**Committee Members:** Larry Altman, Nick Gladding, Raymond Kaiser, Bonnie Nickel, Rich Swier, Geraldine Swarmstedt

**County Task Force:** Larry Altman, Nick Gladding, Raymond Kaiser, Bonnie Nickel, David Sessions

**\*Public Solar Domestic Hot Water Utility (SDHWU):** a publicly owned and operated utility that provides a solar hot water service to property owners for a monthly fee while maintaining public ownership and maintenance responsibilities of the systems. This approach reduces the costs of hot water for the consumer, eliminates the upfront costs of installing a system, reduces the risk of unexpected operating or replacement costs to the homeowner and can contribute to cost-effectively transitioning to renewable energy. The formation of a SDHWU does not preclude homeowners, businesses, or institutions from enjoying the full economic benefits of owning their own system. A SDHWU maximizes adoption rates, increases local jobs and provides benefit to the property owner. [from the Solar Hot Water Task Force board report]

## Transportation & Redevelopment Action Committee



### Looking Back - Summit for Environmental Action Goal:

Redesign transit system in conjunction with targeted mixed-use redevelopment zones. “Great Transit Connecting Great Communities.”

**Getting Here:** The TRAC committee took the above slogan and turned it into a community initiative. For the first two months, the group educated themselves on the principles of transit oriented design and learned about case studies around the nation by sharing links and reports and learning from experts.



By the June 30th 2008 Implementation Meeting, the group had decided to focus on a case study of Bee Ridge Road. Bee Ridge Road was chosen because SCAT has a grant application for a Bus Rapid Transit line whose southern end will be on Bee Ridge, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) has identified it as a major east-west corridor in Sarasota County; there are large sections of it that are not visually appealing, and many sections are perceived as dangerous to walk or bike along. The committee identified the first step in performing this case

study as drawing neighborhood associations and businesspeople together to discuss how the corridor could be improved.

By the September meeting, the group had solidified their goal as “to stimulate community interest, discussion and enthusiasm for transforming the Bee Ridge Boulevard by applying Transit Oriented Design (TOD)\* concepts and design.” The committee is focused on examining multi-modal TOD (or “Complete Streets”\*) while accounting for the demands of multiple stakeholders, and on changing existing policy regarding transportation concurrency to include multi-modal approaches to development.

***To read the report the committee will present to the Board of County Commissioners, visit [www.beeridgetod.blogspot.com](http://www.beeridgetod.blogspot.com)***

By November the group was building partnerships with New College of Florida and the Triangle Group\*. The committee also hosted focus groups leading to a forum in May. As the recession deepened, the group tried to see the silver lining in the downturn – between falling real estate and fuel prices, there came a space to “breathe” and given an opportunity to create a future that is built by design, not default.

By January 2009, the committee was working on building ‘buzz’ for their effort and reaching out to new groups, such as TBARTA, to form working relationships. The committee worked to inspire stakeholders

## Transportation & Redevelopment Action Committee



in the Bee Ridge Corridor and beyond to envision a Bee Ridge Road that would better serve the adjoining neighborhoods and the whole community as a transportation corridor and as a place where people might live, work, shop and play. The community input would help create a “roadmap” for elected officials, the business community and citizens to move the Bee Ridge corridor into the future.

As of May 2009, the group has conducted multiple focus group sessions with existing and specially formed groups. They hosted a community forum on May 1 and are building a coalition of citizens who care about transit oriented design.



**Looking Forward:** On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, the committee will present their summary report to the Board of County Commissioners. The report will be a compilation of input from participants in the May 1 transit forum and previous focus groups – over 250 people total. The report summarizes the thoughts of the participants into comprehensive themes and visions about the future of Bee Ridge Road.

**Learn More:** Visit [www.beeridgetod.blogspot.com](http://www.beeridgetod.blogspot.com).

**Committee Members:** David Brain, Millie Headdy, Kate Irwin, Jennifer Shafer, Linda Spivey, Del Macaulay, Julie Morris, Terry Osborn

**New College Students:** Taylor Kennedy, Ryann Wolf, Harrison , David Banks,

**\*Transit Oriented Development (TOD):** *A mixed-use residential or commercial area designed to maximize access to public transport that often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership. A TOD neighborhood typically has a center with a train station, metro station, tram stop, or bus stop, surrounded by relatively high-density development with progressively lower-density development spreading outwards from the center. TODs generally are located within a radius of one-quarter to one-half mile (400 to 800 m) from a transit stop, as this is considered to be an appropriate scale for pedestrians.*

**\*Complete Streets:** *Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. Instituting a complete streets policy ensures that transportation agencies routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users. Places with complete streets policies are making sure that their streets and roads work for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists, as well as for older people, children, and people with disabilities.*

**\*Triangle Group:** *A group composed of businesspeople, government employees and citizens (which make up its ‘three sides’) operating in Sarasota County to bring about consensus and cooperation on issues of local importance.*