

June 21, 2012

Gr\$Sn Your Business Breakfast Meeting

The meeting was held from 8:30 to 11:00am at Mohonk Mountain House.

Speakers:

Susan Zimet, Town Supervisor (planned to speak about Zero Waste Initiative; unable to attend)

Craig Shankles, PDQ Printing and Graphics

Tom Smiley, Mohonk Mountain House

Ajax Greene, OnBelay

Michelle Bergkamp, UCRRA

Kimiko Link, EPA Region II

Craig Shankles: Found that by researching products, he could find environmental alternatives to less sustainable products or practices. Negotiated with his hauler to accept more types of plastic, and found a resource to take a printing by-product that was hazardous. He said Albany had about a dozen major paper suppliers which makes the prices he pays for recyclable/sustainable paper much more affordable and this way he can pass that along to his customer. Craig also works with "Save Our Tropical Forest" where donations are used to educate people living in areas where logging takes place can learn to do it in a more sustainable way.

Craig suggests:

- Business Shared Purchasing
- Purchasing sustainable products
- Creating an information data bank
- Continue to ask for services from your vendors – "No isn't the final answer"

Tom Smiley: Said that the Mohonk business practice is to maintain, sustain, and keep a peaceful property. He said they use strategic logging practices that evolved with time. He suggested that you ask yourself what your resources are. The new spa is heated and cooled with geothermal. Windows and lighting were updated, and insulation installed. During construction tons of stone was excavated and reused for the spa and gatehouse. He recommends use as many products available on site as possible. He also suggested that spending a little more money on a more efficient piece of equipment would have a better payoff in the end.

Guests can choose whether to have their linens and towels laundered daily or less often to save energy. Educational walks are available, and composting/recycling is available and adds up to over 550 tons per year. He said simple operational changes like compacting the trash can reduce pickups by the waste hauler and reduce costs.

Tom suggests:

- Run business efficiently

- Manage waste on site
- Make business operations easy enough to run by themselves – with some oversight
- Educate your customers/clients
- Use, repurpose, donate all materials; disposal should be a last resort

Ajax Greene: The Planet Earth is a closed loop system. Focus on the opportunity of economic challenges and remember supplies chains change: be proactive. There is an economic benefit to doing the right thing. Customers vote with dollars so you need to look at what's in you, on you and around you – that's what brings the business to you.

Ajax recommended to think about what's important to you. Learn how to grow, adapt, change. Make a list of what's important and what social/environmental changes there are to see how it will impact your business. (A Business Plan) But NO GREEN WASHING; consumers will figure that out. Your business should be run with transparency and trust. No one expects perfection but people respect honesty and trying. He also suggested that an outside audit is done to open up more avenues of opportunity. There are NYS certifications for green business available.

Ajax is working on a mid-hudson chapter of BALLE (Business Alliance for Local Living Economy)

Michelle Berkamp: Discussed the Business Action Recycling Plan, and said that the UCRRA does business waste audits. She suggested making mindful purchases using better practices. She played a video outlining MSW (garbage) transfer stations and the processing of moving garbage from the tipping floor into trailers which are then hauled to landfills four hours away. She discussed recycling, single stream recycling (everything recyclable goes into one container), and reminded everyone that Recycling Is The Law.

Michelle informed attendees that the UCRRA would be accepting food waste in their DEC permitted facility by July 1st at \$50 a ton. They have been permitted to accept up to 1,000 yards of food waste and 10,000 yards of yard waste. Three major haulers have contacted her about bringing in food waste from four counties.

Kimiko Link: Discussed the EPA Zero Waste Initiative and goals for green businesses. She said that tool shares, bike shares, and car shares could all help reduce waste and be a public benefit.