

ESSSN Minutes – Term 4, 6 December 2012

Randwick Council Sustainability Hub

1. Welcome

The Chair, Fiona Campbell from Randwick Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. She asked each person present to briefly introduce themselves to the group.

2. Tour of The Hub

Fiona led attendees on a tour of The Hub and pointed out the water, energy and permaculture assets of the site. These included:

- a sustainable kitchen with water efficient display and dishwasher
- a range of rainwater tanks that feed rainwater into the toilets and irrigate the permaculture garden
- water wise irrigation features in the Permaculture Interpretive Garden
- native, low water requirement garden in the Permaculture garden
- Randwick Environment Park, which includes remnant Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub and wetland
- energy supply systems-2.4kW wind turbine, 2.1kW photovoltaic solar panel, solar hot water system
- passive design system-awnings, louvre window ventilation for cooling, retrofitting for the use of natural light including skylights,
- active design system-fans for heating and cooling, gas heating, energy efficient appliances.
- a range of raised vegie beds
- a rain garden that is hooked up to the rainwater tank stormwater overflow
- the compost and worm farm demonstration area
- native garden including frog pond and lizard lounge.

Fiona also announced that schools from all three council areas (Woollahra, Randwick and Waverley) will be eligible to visit The Hub for excursions in 2013. Details on what the excursions entail, costs and how to book will be sent to schools in early Term 1 2013.

3. Address from Mary Bell, Sustainability Education Specialist

Mary Bell gave a short address to the group and encouraged them to incorporate the five senses into their education where ever possible.

4. Knowledge Sharing

Fiona put some flip chart paper on tables around the garden and asked people to wander around and write down thoughts or suggestions under a few different headings as way to share knowledge and experience in the network. There was some great feedback written on these sheets and thanks to everyone who added something.

For a summary of the feedback given, see **Appendix 1**.

5. Presentation of the 2012 ESSSN Sustainability Awards 2012

Eastern Suburbs schools are doing a wonderful job educating and empowering students to creatively and strategically care for our local environment. From gardens, to water audits, to leadership programs – there is much to be celebrated!

In response to this, the Eastern Suburbs Sustainable Schools Network (ESSSN) was proud to award the inaugural ESSSN Sustainability Awards to recognise local schools for their dedication and commitment to sustainability projects.

The winners of the 2012 ESSN Sustainability Awards were:

Water - Vaucluse Primary School, Water Saving Project

Waste - Moriah College, Earthlings Project

Biodiversity - Glenmore Road Public School, Native Gardens Project

Student Leadership & Empowerment - Coogee Public School, Green Gang Project

The following projects were highly commended by the judges:

Water – Clovelly Public School, North Playground Decking Project

Waste - Holy Cross Primary School, Worm Farms and Edible Garden Project

Biodiversity - Coogee Public School, Outdoor Biodiversity Classroom Project

Student Leadership & Empowerment - Kambala School, Youth Leading the World Project

Macquarie Grammar School was also recognised as the Judges' Choice for Creativity and Design for their Plants for Desk project.

Well done to all our award recipients!

6. Meeting Close and Thanks

Melissa thanked everyone for attending and for another fantastic year. She drew the two lucky door prizes and announced the details for the Term 1 meeting (see below).

Council updates were not delivered at the meeting however can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Meeting closed at approximately 5:50pm.

Next Meeting:

Term 1 Meeting

Tuesday 23 February 2013

3:45pm – 5:15pm

Holy Cross Primary School

81 Edgecliff Road, Bondi Junction

Appendix 1: Knowledge Sharing Feedback

Ideas for finding funding...

- Write and sell a cook book
- Draw on the parent community in the school
- Engage local businesses
- Invite parents/community to sponsor a tree
- Sell worm wee
- Bake school garden veges and sell
- Classes or years earn points that can be exchanged for trees/plants/money for sustainable behavior
- Look for sponsorship of garden projects in the school

Ideas for school vegetable gardens...

- Native gardens plus theme gardens (e.g. different cultures)
- Seed saving
- Make a collage or take photos of their favourite things in the garden
- Use different seeds and species
- Pick and eat for 'crunch and sip'
- Step by step, slow introduction to the garden – guided and supported (teachers, students and parents!)
- Knowledge management and succession planning is important
- Use the produce in canteen food which encourages children to take ownership
- Clever Kid Health and Play program – free to schools in the eastern suburbs. A multi-sensory program in the garden that improves the children's health and increases learning abilities
- Build learning initiatives into working in the garden
- Book the 'Grow Plus' program with Observatory Hill EEC – helps integrate your school garden into the curriculum

A great project idea is...

- Sensory gardens
- Reduce takeaway waste going to landfill
- How much money you can save by using a water tank
- Marine and coastal unit of work for 3 council area local schools – embrace the coast!
- Edible gardens in schools that **don't** have the Stephanie Alexander project!
- Use the Clever Kid Health and Play program for kindy – year 3
- Look at what you already have and revive it!
- I love the permaculture interpretive garden – recreating this or elements of this is fabulous
- Landfill tours

Ideas for getting people involved...

- Organise environmental excursions
- Talking about what happens at our meetings
- Just do it and when it's up and running step back and let them think it was all their idea
- Run competitions for children to design signs, badges, posters etc. re: sustainability
- Start with senior students
- Introduce the idea of 'grow your own'
- Support from all teachers, parents and students
- Flood newsletter with photos
- Encourage leadership kids to come from schools
- Working bees – emphasize the social side (picnics after working bees)
- Visit a local EEC or book an incursion program about water, energy or school gardens
- Get involved in the school P&C to build membership
- A cohesive program for linking residents in street blocks. Make it easy for them to meet and enhance biodiversity in blocks (corridors of habitat). Plus community building
- Opportunities for volunteers to do coastal regeneration etc. Link suburbs to coast and not just for play.

Council support I would like...

- Education opportunities to help build my knowledge and confidence
- Fact sheets/lesson plans
- Gardener and environmentalist come to schools
- Getting business to connect with school gardens e.g. green waste
- Advice on chickens in schools
- Work with MDC Bondi to do a specific local unit on marine and coastal environment and issues – all very terrestrial for 3 coastal councils
- Water usage education
- Landfill education
- A visit to the school!
- Professional gardening/landscape advice. Many parent volunteers are novice gardeners
- Donations of plants e.g. indigenous natives are very useful
- Fabulous that the three councils are collaborating more and more! We could develop a wildlife database (same format as existing ones e.g. birds in backyards) and residents contribute photos – schools, individuals could contribute. Stunning photos and growing knowledge could result. Gaps identified and more habitat created!

Appendix 2 – Council Updates

Woollahra Council Update

Summer Activities 2013

- There are lots of great, free activities happening this summer in Woollahra and around Sydney! Check out www.summerama.com.au for all the details!

Community Environmental Grants Program 2013/14

- Applications open in March next year (closing June 30 2013). Start thinking about what environmental project you could seek funding for.

Talks and Schools Support

- Council's Sustainable Business Officer, Rob Brewster is available to help your school measure energy and water consumption. Contact him on 0409 333 145.
- Contact Melissa Sellen on 9391 7095 for any other environmental education schools support including classroom talks, help organising guest speakers, and special events.

Waverley Council Update

Small Grants Program, Round 2 (2012-2013 Financial Year) closes Friday 22 February 2013, 5pm.

- New guidelines, application form & reporting process.
- Please call 9369 8045 for any advice on grant applications, especially in the planning / design phase of your projects. http://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/community/grants_and_donations/small_grants

SUMMERAMA – January 2013

Great line up for this year's program with 3x Rockpool Discovery Tours, 3x Marine Eco Sculpture classes, 2x Coastal Bush Tucker & Indigenous History walks, and 2x visually stunning presentations: 1) Dr Rip, Science of the Surf and 2) Beaches @ Risk.

Please promote these activities to your school community as they are FREE to provide opportunities for our community to engage with and learn about their coastal environment.

GARDENING

CONGRATULATIONS to several of our schools that entered the **2012 Green Kids Award**. Clovelly Public & Bondi Public School received an honourable mention and the star of the ceremony Tenzin Dodds-Bowering won the award (Bondi Beach Public School student).

The **Sustainable Gardeners Network** for the eastern suburbs has now been established, with the first brainstorming meeting held a couple of weeks ago. I think this is going to be another great knowledge & skills sharing network and anyone who is involved in the gardens at school should definitely consider getting involved. Please contact the Environmental Education Officer if you would like to be added to the list.

Schools SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY – Environmental Profile!!

- Unfortunately only 8 out of our 17 Waverley schools completed the survey. It is really helpful for us to know where you are at and what you might need help with. If your school didn't complete the survey can they please still do it before Term 1 next year, it would be really helpful!
- 2013's Sustainable Schools Program will be a slightly different offering from Council, a little bit more structured but an interim until the new resource is developed – for launch in 2014.

Going for the record!!

Bondi Beach Public School is looking to break the Guinness Book of Records for the 'largest piece of recycled paper'. The dimensions will hopefully be approximately 14 m x 7 m. If anyone has any advice, help, would like to get involved then please contact Jo Walsh on bboshc@primaryoshcare.com.au.

Holiday season – LOW waste please

The holidays are a time for giving, and unfortunately it is also a time for creating lots of waste. Here are a few easy tips for having a low waste holiday without being a Grinch:

- Don't give stuff; give an experience such as cooking classes, zoo/aquarium passes or donations to a charity or environment group in the person's name.
- Don't buy gifts, make them! Get crafty with the kids and make Christmas tree ornaments or bake cookies. Martha Stewart is a wealth of great information www.marthastewart.com/359534/recycling-materials
- Wrap with reusable materials such as newspaper, last year's wrapping paper or even fabric like Japanese Furoshiki. You can even carry your groceries this way, amazing! <http://www.wikihow.com/Do-Furoshiki-%28Wrap-and-Carry-Things-With-Square-Cloth%29>
- Also check out this website for environmentally themed gifts: www.thebestgift.com.au

Monthly update instead of every Term meeting?!

If you would like to be added to our monthly environmental eNews that includes stories like the above but much much more then please email environment@waverley.nsw.gov.au

I am heading off overseas to get back into marine conservation and community education. I just wanted to say that it has been an absolute pleasure working with you all over the last 12 months and I wish you all the best of luck in continuing on in your sustainability journey. If you ever think of visiting Central America look me up ☺

Cheers,

Jodie x