

**Energy Fair Sub-committee meeting  
January 29, 2009**

**In Attendance: Dickie Heckler (host), Laura Routh, Brian Sifton, Daniel Poull**

We discussed the issues that have prompted our re-evaluation of the Energy Fair, overall. The issues raised were low attendance; stale/low energy/enthusiasm of part of volunteers and vendors; west Lawrence location not drawing west Lawrence residence; schedule conflicts with football games and other events.

It seems that the target market/audience for the energy fair has historically been consumers of home improvement projects and energy infrastructure and the question was asked: what are we trying to tell them? Is the natural market for this information saturated if we can't get new attendees? If the energy fair is kept the same, the concern is that there will be fewer vendors, fewer attendees and less interest and energy from SAB members. LDR noted that a fair with a broader theme, i.e. a sustainability fair, might have more draw and thus garner more attendance and buzz.

An idea was proposed that SAB work with the Lawrence homebuilder's association to get the HBA to establish an energy-themed area at the home show, and get all previous energy fair participants signed up for that event. The home show typically gets really good turnout.

In lieu of the normally held energy fair event, we would then work with the HBA and the Chamber to promote the energy component of the Home show and host a different sustainability fair event, possibility in conjunction with the Little Green Fair, in downtown Lawrence in the fall (2009 or 2010—no date certain established).

The group agreed that a central (close to downtown) location for sustainability fair was preferable to the high school, so that the event could draw from organic foot traffic in the neighborhood. There was discussion of having a fair be a streetfair, whereby part of Mass or New Hampshire streets would be blocked off (i.e. as was done for the Wilco concert). It was noted that some of the trees of Mass. Street seem to be electrified during the Christmas season, thus having power for vendors seems feasible.

There was discussion of stakeholders for a downtown event, Little Green Festival (Allison...); Downtown Lawrence Association and the Chamber and the Grow Green task force was identified as possible allies. The Kansas Health Foundation was noted as a possible source of grant funds for such a project.

We identified a list of potential tasks/steps to take to flush out the sustainability fair idea further:

1. Meet with Energy Fair champions: staff, Steve Lane , Steve Hughes, and get their feedback.

2. Meet with HBA and Chamber about idea of merging energy fair vendors and resources with Home show (Daniel would contact Bobby Flory)
3. Meet with DLA and chamber about co-sponsoring sustainability fair downtown.
4. Propose and form steering committee structure whereby responsibility for fair and advertising, etc. would be borne by entire group (imagine slices of a pie with all stakeholders owning a piece of the pie and thus an equal amount of responsibilities for fair)
5. A list of other allies for a downtown sustainability fair were noted: Sunflower outdoor; KU, Sarah's fabrics; the Farmers Market.
6. A budget and timeline and fair structure and scope would be established by the steering committee.

A concern was noted that we needed to check in with staff to get their perspectives on this idea and ensure full buy-in from SAB before proceeding with even preliminary information gathering activities.

**It was agreed that we would send minutes to SAB and staff after review by subcommittee and discuss recommendations at next SAB meeting.**