

Economic Development Headlines October FVSN Forum

Since launching earlier this year, the **Fox Valley Sustainability Network (FVSN)** has hosted three forums each built around a specific sustainability theme, while incorporating project team planning time across 7 major sustainability topic areas. The forums consistently draw 75 municipal officials and topic experts from across the region.

In July, the **Grand Victoria Riverboat Fund in Kane County approved a \$34,000 to support the FVSN**, which supports forums, an annual mayors breakfast, a GreenTown 2017 event, project team work, research and dissemination of program and funding resources, and communications.

The forum on Oct. 7 at **Aquascape Inc.** in St. Charles focused on economic development, and included presentations from Kane County's resource management coordinator **Cecilia Govrik** and **Chris Toth**, a land urban planner for the county. They presented "success stories" that can serve as examples for the Fox Valley region. One story highlighted an initiative called Dayton Regional Green in Montgomery County, Ohio, which has developed partnerships with local utilities and introduced free and low-cost energy audits. Govrik and Toth said they think it's important for the Fox region to identify projects that can be accomplished at the municipal, regional or network level.

Mark VankerKhoff, director of the Kane County Development and Community Service Department discussed Kane County Economic Development initiatives being explored to increase exports, develop industry clusters, and secure a federal designation as a manufacturing metals community. **CMAP's Brian Daly** provided an overview of the Fox River Corridor Plan with Village of Algonquin planners **Ben Mason** and **Katie Parkhurst**, while **Carpentersville Village President Ed Ritter** talked about implementing the Fox River Corridor Plan in this town, tracing its heydays as a leader in development in the 1950s and '60s. "Then it went south [and] we became the Cleveland of Kane County," Ritter said. In the middle part of the last decade, "several of us got together and said we've got to change things."

Project teams meanwhile are actively working on regional community solar development, food scrap composting, sustainable business development along the Fox River, an expanded bike sharing network, a local sustainable food web-based resource, green infrastructure trainings, water quality protection collaborations, and more. The FVSN's next forum will be held on December 7 from 9-11am at Judson University in Elgin.