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Royal Roads University

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design-Neighbourhood Development (LEED-ND)

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Moderated by Professor Ann Dale and Katherine Constantine

Participants

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Dialogue

Ann Dale

Welcome to our last real time e-Dialogue before the start of summer vacations. In this conversation, one of my colleagues, Katherine Constantine, will be exploring further her research on LEED-ND, and how to have a flexible yet accountable system for designing sustainable communities.

Before we begin, could I please ask each of you to introduce yourself and perhaps add a line or two about your thoughts about this topic?

Alastair Moore

Hi everyone, my name is Alastair Moore. I am the co-founder of Vancouver-based GreenWorks Building Supply, Canada's first business to market green building materials exclusively. I promote advancements in sustainable community development by raising awareness about the benefits of healthy, low-carbon, and energy-wise buildings, and I have done this by working in several sectors including municipal and regional government, academia, and private business. Today I am working as an independent green building consultant in Vancouver.

I personally am a proponent of third-party rating systems for buildings and neighbourhoods, at least at this point in history as we make the transition to more sustainable communities. I think that if all stakeholders (designers, professionals, finance people, consumers, etc) took a good look at the LEED concepts/products it would help raise awareness about the challenges/opportunities we face.

Ann Dale

Welcome, Alastair, so glad you could join us today, we have had some serious rain over the last two days here in Ottawa, but hopefully, for Canada Day, we get some sun!

Roger Bayley

Good morning all,

We, Roger Bayley Inc., are currently working on a program related to Platinum LEED-ND certification with the Canadian Green Building Council (CaGBC). My office is working on a range of issues associated with energy use and building performance.

My web site link is www.rogeRoger Bayley.com, and my work (researched and documented by myself and my team) from the past 4 years is published in the Challenge Series which can be found here:

www.thechallengeseries.ca.

Ann Dale

Good to meet you Roger.

Andrea Pellan

Hi all, my name is Andrea Pelland, and I am with EcoAmmo Sustainable Consulting Inc. We are primary LEED facilitators and have worked with almost all the major LEED rating systems, including two LEED ND projects. I am excited to be part of this conversation; thank you for the invite!

Adam Stoker

My name is Adam Stoker, and I lead the “green communities” work of Enermodal Engineering, which is Canada's largest consulting firm exclusively dedicated to creating green buildings and communities. We have recently certified our 100th LEED project and have had great success using green building rating system to encourage and evolve sustainable design. I have personally certified two LEED-ND projects under the USGBC LEED-ND Pilot Program: Currie Barracks in Calgary and Strathearn Redevelopment in Edmonton. I'm excited to share my experiences and thoughts today.

Odete Pinho

Hi all, my name is Odete Pinho. I work with HB Lanarc-Golder. I was the project coordinator for the City of Vancouver's submission for the certification of Southeast False Creek under the pilot of LEED for Neighborhood Developments (LEED-ND). Southeast False Creek has secured the highest LEED-ND certification score to date (83 points), and we are quite proud of this achievement.

Our company web site and link to the work we have done in Southeast False Creek can be found here: http://www.hblanarc.ca/projects/project_details.asp?ProjectID=106

Ann Dale

In the interests of time, let's get started. Our first question is the following:

What top three characteristics would you use to describe a sustainable community and why?

Andrea Pellan

For me, a sustainable community is first and foremost walkable. My neighbourhood is not considered "green"; however, I can walk to work, walk to get groceries, and walk to enjoy a wide variety of food and entertainment.

Secondly, I would say that a sustainable community should have food production and resource generation.

Thirdly, a sustainable community should have healthy and thriving natural areas that are integrated into the community for all to enjoy.

I know that we are only supposed to list three things, but fourthly I would add that a sustainable community should have an economically diverse population.

Alastair Moore

- Resilience: community is adaptive to change/shocks (such as social upheaval, economic trends, resource scarcity, etc.) through awareness and citizen engagement

- Connected: infrastructure is built at the right scale to enhance and not limit economic, social and environmental assets and social / economic assets reinforce one another
- Integrated/Holistic: activities consider the 'bigger' picture and are in sync with the bio-productive capacity of local and global ecosystems

Just one more thought: a sustainable community is a community that has a shared understanding and a clear vision (among all its members) for its own long-term development.

Adam Stoker

- Efficient: This refers to efficiency in all its forms meaning energy efficiency, water efficiency, land use efficiency, materials efficiency, waste efficiency, etc.
 - Ecological: The community considers the impact on health of species and affected ecological communities on-site and off-site.
 - Connected: Transportation is the portion of our ecological footprint affected more by community design than anything else.
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Odete Pinho

The top three characteristics of a sustainable community are well captured in LEED ND:

- Smart location: The best places to develop are those with existing services, so we can more efficiently use the services that are already there (ie., sewer, water, utilities, roads, transit, etc.). It is ideal to have a location that is transit oriented.

- Density and compactness: A sustainable community needs a great design with attention to walkability/bikeability. In addition, a diverse mix of uses to live, work, play, within and around the site is preferred. Aging in place with variety of uses and housing forms & affordability. Full range of housing types.
- Green construction: This refers to using less land/space and fewer resources. Use the existing assets in and around the site (such as storm water, energy, water, waste management) and tailoring them to what is appropriate to the site.

Roger Bayley

I believe this is ultimately focused on **balance**, and balance varies between communities, regions, and ethnicity. And, as such, it is difficult to apply a third party standard to community development. The Vancouver Olympic Village achieved the highest point rating for LEED-ND in Canada (83 points), yet the issues around social mix and financial viability were profound.

Ann Dale

Let me push you a little on this, Roger, can you give us more detail on what you mean by balance? For example, can a community be sustainable if it exports its waste products? What about closed and open systems, and district energy systems?

Roger Bayley

Well, it depends on who you are and what your motivations are for defining balance. But I think we have to look at the broader set of issues and be able to find compromise. Sometime circumstances drive compromise in a direction that may not be desired in the strictest sense of sustainable community development.

As for what are the key issues for a community:

- In Vancouver, it may be access to reasonable housing costs.
- In China, it might be improving your health.
- In some other regions, it may be water shortages.
- In Europe, it may be energy (i.e., electricity costs 25 cents/KW-hour versus 6.3 cents in Vancouver).

So, how can we apply a standard approach when the issue we are dealing with is global? And, what are the real priorities? Is it resource depletion, climate change, health, social wellbeing, etc.?

Adam Stoker

The great thing about LEED is it allows you to choose which sustainable goals (credits) are appropriate for your site. In fact, this is inherent in the design of the rating system; there are many credits that won't be applicable to all projects.

Roger Bayley

I attended a major presentation with the Vancouver Regional Construction Association this week, which was also attended by a number of senior execs from the major construction companies. The conversation around LEED and LEED approvals was quite negative. It focused on the issue of a third party having a role in whether a project is certified and the legal implications of this.

Odete Pinho

I can echo what Roger just mentioned about the negative interface from the industry with LEED-ND. The prescriptive nature of the program does create barriers for industry update. I currently have a client with very large

property holdings throughout North America. The client has an expressed mandate for upgrading rental buildings to LEED gold standard. The client and the client's shareholders are committed to the trademark associated with LEED. Currently, we are advising them on a redevelopment property at a skytrain station which is 38-acres and well located for a transpiration oriented development. After we walked through a pre-screen of the scoring for this project, the architecture and design team did not want to be hemmed in by this prescriptive program. It changes the design freedom significantly; in particular, the Neighbourhood Pattern and Design P1 (Walkable Streets) aspect appeared quite restricting. The minimum height to street width ratios has a significant impact on design. Based on this, I am not sure that this client will proceed with LEED-ND.

Roger Bayley

This is an issue. I think we are going to see movement away from LEED to ASHRAE 189.1, where the intent of LEED is codified and not subject to third party approval. I understand there are legal cases emerging related to whether buildings are actually performing to the criteria that the design team has adopted. The issue of Measurement and Verification (M and V) often falls by the wayside as being an expensive point, and essentially M and V are key to success.

Alastair Moore

Interesting point, Roger. It was mentioned earlier that a client was committed to the 'brand of LEED'. This is common but I think it confirms that the LEED label/certificate is often the goal instead of long-term building performance. The cost implications of M and V are too high for the market to sustain.

Roger Bayley

M and V are the most important component of any Sustainable program because, if you don't measure, you CAN NOT Manage.

M and V should be mandatory on all LEED programs, so that one can substantiate the decisions made, justify the performance, and defend against the legal challenges that are going to proliferate.

Andrea Pellan

I absolutely second your opinion about measuring and monitoring, Roger.

Roger Bayley

While I understand that LEED is an aspiration and not a code, the legal profession is starting to side with the residents of LEED certified buildings, where it can be demonstrated that the buildings have been marketed with certain aspirations without performing to them. Hence, the need for M and V.

Adam Stoker

What would M and V look like for a community-scale project? Whole community energy monitoring? Regular transportation assessments? What else?

Katherine Constantine

Is M and V possible at a community scale versus a building scale? The social culture of residents makes it difficult to assess with respect to varying lifestyle choices. For example, you can build a community with homes

equipped for solar hookup but a resident may choose to spend money on granite countertops.

Is there an understanding among buyers of what it is to live in a sustainable community?

Roger Bayley

M and V and resource supply are absolutely pertinent at the community scale, where energy can be managed between users and generators (i.e., office buildings generate thermal energy from air conditioning).

I think the public has little understanding of sustainable community development, however, the concepts are being embraced by municipalities, where they have to confront the demands of infrastructure development and resource supply.

Adam Stoker

I agree that LEED-ND has perhaps too many prerequisites. I'd rather see projects being weeded out by falling short on points. That said, considering how important walkability is:

Is having at least 15% of existing and new street frontage within and bordering the project has a minimum building-height-to-street-width ratio of 1:3 that difficult?

Katherine Constantine

LEED-ND's Neighbourhood Pattern and Design category has the largest point allocation. This category is very specific with regards to what LEED-ND considers to be walkable. I am interested in what you consider the walkability factor of a community to entail.

Alastair Moore

Walkability should certainly consider maximum distances (keeping residents' physical abilities in consideration); however, relying on the proximity metric alone misses some of the story. Safety issues and aesthetics of the walking experience need to be considered (lighting, shading, soft landscaping, greenery, noise, traffic issues, etc.).

Ann Dale

Alastair, a sustainable community then has to have the infrastructure for these kinds of choices? I am thinking here of traditional 50's and 60's suburb design, based solely on car transportation?

Alastair Moore

That's it, Ann. We explicitly designed with the car lifestyle in mind, and, we got exactly what we planned for. The bad news is that we got what we planned for, the good news is that we can now plan/design/build for what we want vis a vis sustainable communities. If we think about what makes us happy to walk/ride/bus/tram/etc, and plan/build to address these ideas, then we will be much more likely to achieve our goals. Of course, we need some strong price signals to reinforce behaviours!

Roger Bayley

Regarding the social components, again this is so dependant on regional issues. The experience in Vancouver has demonstrated that financial issues can easily overwhelm the aspiration to achieve social balance, and then there are those who are strongly opposed to building social housing in the midst of high-end residential communities. There are implications on the marketing and value of the market components when combined with social housing.

Ann Dale

We heard about efficiency (particularly energy efficiency), connectivity, resilience, and integrated planning. Also, walkability and access to healthy foods (I would assume as well to local and organic) are key aspects. What about diversity? A sustainable community offers a diversity of amenities, a diversity of food experiences, walkable places, green spaces and so forth.

How can you satisfy a rigorous standards rating system that still allows for flexibility in meeting local conditions and at the same time, optimizes its innovation? If not LEED-ND, then what?

Adam Stoker

I think it is important to understand the LEED was never designed to be mandated or used as a code. It is an aspiration program designed to encourage and recognize the top sustainable projects. If a project team decides that LEED is not appropriate for their project, that's not to say it isn't sustainable. However, the credits and prerequisites in LEED-ND were not developed on a whim. They were assembled by a consensus of hundreds of professionals around the world. I would be skeptical of a project claiming sustainability and not aligning with any of the requirements of LEED-ND.

Andrea Pellán

Our company is a LEED for Homes Provider and that system is working very well as opposed to the other LEED systems and can perhaps address the need for flexibility and innovation. With LEED for Homes, the Provider acts almost as a mediator and guide for the project team and then defends the review on a case by case basis. The LEED review process has become a major deterrent for many people pursuing certification, and like others here have mentioned, we have had many clients say that they were unhappy with the prescriptive measures and wanted more flexibility.

Perhaps if the systems were more adaptive and made more allowances for regional variations there could be a much more collaborative outcome.

Katherine Constantine

Many of the prerequisites make it difficult to apply LEED-ND to a rural setting. Should LEED-ND allow for certification if the community isn't connected to other areas or public transportation methods?

Adam Stoker

While the USGBC is somewhat sitting on the fence with their approach (they haven't specifically prohibited greenfield or rural sites but they haven't made it easy for them either), I definitely think that a good green rating system provides something of an apples to apples comparison between projects. The LEED certification is not an indication of how much effort the team put forward but rather how sustainable the project is.

A rural project pulling out all the stops (district renewable energy systems, massive stormwater reuse systems, etc) might score the same as an inner city redevelopment doing nothing special. I think this calls attention to the underlying realities around the impact of different types of development.

Andrea Pellan

I think there is a larger question there, Katherine. Can a community be considered sustainable without connectivity or alternative transportation?

Alastair Moore

Good point, Andrea. Although LEED aspires to create sustainable buildings or indeed neighbourhoods, I think it is better at creating environmentally

friendly buildings than it is at creating buildings/neighbourhoods that could be described as 'sustainable' at an integrated/holistic level. A LEED neighbourhood in the middle of nowhere could be quite green but not likely truly sustainable.

Roger Bayley

I believe the issue is going to be focused on the third party issue of verification. If owner/designer/builder set out to do a LEED project and market it accordingly and the third party reviewer deems that the project hasn't achieved this status there are legal ramifications. In addition, builders and owners are skeptical about spending the resources to make this happen. It is interesting that Sustainable Development has been blamed for the financial debacle at the Vancouver Olympic Village, and, because of this, Olympic Village has put the development industry off from making the LEED commitments on subsequent projects. In reality, the actual overrun costs were associated with the commitment to the Olympic Program, likely in the order of a premium of \$150 to \$175 a sq. ft.

Alastair Moore

Sad, but true observation Roger. As I mentioned before, LEED is but one step toward more sustainable communities. Many, many developers will forever slam LEED for messing up the Olympic village and other developments. We have lots of smart designers/builders/policy makers that should be encouraged to build smart without the discomfort of squeezing into a LEED product. The trick will be to recover the cost of doing so without the marketing value benefit of a LEED label. Our development financing people, city approvals staff, and professionals can play a big role here in promoting the value/benefits of case-specific sustainability design. Given the profile raising benefits of LEED and other programs, I'm hopeful that we might be getting closer to the point where the market can see the value of thoughtful, efficient, healthy buildings/neighbourhoods without a LEED label. Am I being unrealistic?

Adam Stoker

Project's don't attain LEED certification until after the review is complete. The CaGBC and USGBC are very sticky (for good reason) about projects promoting themselves as LEED projects during design and construction. You can be a LEED candidate but anything further than that is asking for trouble. I would encourage projects to talk more about the specific features they are incorporating rather than the certification.

Andrea Pellan

I am quite certain that we will see a trend towards moving away from labeling, and many people feel that this should not even be designated as "green" and instead just best practice. The trick will be to create an educated market that can spot green washing.

Alastair Moore

I agree Andrea. In a way, I'd like to see a community that can spot 'green-value' rather than 'green-washing'. That is, people able to spot the true benefits (personal financial, health and spiritual) from really good building/neighbourhood design. Do any of you remember a compulsory course in high-school discussing the value of good building/community design in terms of our pocket book, our health or our broader community's resiliency?

Adam Stoker

I see the big value of LEED being the third-party verification. It's incredibly easy to design a green building, but much more rare to actually end up with one at the end of the day. The industry is already overrun with green washing, LEED is one element that actually takes the time to verify the sustainability of a project.

Katherine Constantine

On a slightly different track, I understand (correct me if I am wrong) that under the USGBC a condominium complex can be certified under LEED-ND? Thoughts?

Adam Stoker

While the USGBC hasn't set max or min sizes for a ND project, a condo complex would be much better suited to a Campus LEED-NC certification.

Roger Bayley

The real issue for sustainability rests in the design of the community infrastructure and the decisions that impact transportation, resource generation and disposal, and related energy issues (along with the commitments to social mix and financial viability). Communities have to decide if they are prepared to fund social affordable housing because there is NO way such housing can be developed without community (government) subsidies.

I guess we all need to examine why social balance is actually part of Sustainable Community Development. Is this essential to the fundamental issues?

Settlement has traditionally always followed lines of economic strata. Recently, in China, I was asked why I would advocate for a socially mixed community when China has just spent the past 20 years trying to move away from such a commune culture. Interesting...

Adam Stoker

While I have no problem with social balance, I tend to agree that this is a good question. For social issues to have a place in this type of rating system we should have some way of connecting the dots back to the measurable value/impact. Do socially diverse communities produce less carbon? Do they improve biological diversity? Or, do we just accept that the benefits are real but not easily quantified (happiness, etc).

Alastair Moore

I think it's the latter Adam. Of course this will require real political leadership to drive this agenda but they will have to do so without clear and near-term

financial

rationale.

Andrea Pellan

Very good points, Adam. You are definitely calling attention to how we define economic success and the value placed on happiness. Interesting stuff!

Roger Bayley

Unfortunately, only a very small sector of the social structure is interested/aware of these issues. Most people are watching sports, wondering where their money is, and pondering other issues.

Ann Dale

The definition of sustainable development that many of us believe in is as follows:

Sustainable development can be regarded as a process of reconciliation of the ecological, social and economic imperatives, and equitable access to these three imperatives is fundamental to its implementation (Dale, 2001; Robinson and Tinker, 1997). <References listed on last page>

There is literature that shows the importance of social diversity to economic prosperity, especially in a highly connected and globalized world. As well, social innovation is inherently collaborative, so perhaps socially diverse communities are more innovative. I do agree, however, that we have done a very poor job of measuring and valuing diversity, and its critical importance to social, economic life, although lots of stuff on its importance to ecological systems.

Roger Bayley

I wonder why with a simple stroke of the legislative pen we couldn't require that real estate can't be sold unless it has an energy label. We demand this every time we buy a can of beans!!

If this was required, then the consumer could make an intelligent choice and would likely not buy the beans with all the salt!

Adam Stoker

Some real estate agents are getting the jump on the market by advertising walkability through tools like:

www.walkscore.com

Ann Dale

I was recently in Paris at an international social science meeting on global environmental change. I was surprised to see real estate ads (both rental and for sale properties) that listed both the energy efficiency and GHG emissions of the buildings?

Roger Bayley

Exactly! My wife just sold a condo she inherited in England, and we had to spend 350 pounds to get a certificate for the door saying how efficient the unit was.

Alastair Moore

As Europe has more (or longer) experience with resource scarcity, crowding, social integration issues, they have seen the need (earlier than N. America) to adopt smart practice. Adversity has some privileges. When we buy a car, we consider its gas mileage and get an owner's manual 100 pages long; however, when we buy a house/apartment, we're given the keys!

Ann Dale

Here is another pitch for diversity:

Are the most attractive landscapes not the most diverse? Similarly, are the most attractive communities not those with diverse building types? But then, what is community, without people. For example, I was recently in Kingsburg, Nova Scotia, which is a beautiful former fishing village. Kingsburg has a diverse housing stock (mostly renovated) but only inhabited 2-3 weeks of the year by wealthy internationalists. So, what of

diversity? Actors, playwrights, and so forth? This is a long introduction to our last question...perhaps the most difficult.

Okay, let's assume we keep LEED-ND. If so, how can it be strengthened to address the social imperatives of sustainable community development?

Alastair Moore

Perhaps the 'innovation' points could be expanded or amended to include some sort of local customization/interpretation of the LEED system. Case in point, we did a comprehensive green renovation of our house that was inspired by LEED but made relevant and personally valuable by shaping and moulding the project to meet our personal/local sustainability goals.

Would our home achieve LEED standards? Maybe, but is it a something I'd pay money for? You bet! Can we do this with LEED-ND? Maybe. We must be able to customize to respond to local sustainability imperatives.

Adam Stoker

I think we need some way of determining what the right amount of focus is on the social aspects of a sustainable community. Is it 10% of what is important? 30%? 50%? This is an incredibly difficult question as it causes us to weigh the relative importance of the three legs of the stool: environment, economics, and social. Katherine mentioned that the social component was weakly represented in the Pilot program but what is your proof that this wasn't the right amount of weighting?

The only way I see the social component becoming stronger in LEED-ND is if we develop additional social goals that are measurable (i.e. we can build a LEED credit around them). This would have to go hand-in-hand with proving the value of those items.

Ann Dale

Building on Alastair's comments that we need to customize to respond to local sustainability imperatives and Katherine and Roger's comments, how can LEED respond to these imperatives?

Roger Bayley

In my recent work with the development industry, it all comes down to money, money, money. Our sole focus is now on building the connection between Building Performance and Value to the owner and the user, and there is a HUGE gap between these two groups.

The issue becomes how to justify in real terms (not just chatter) the connectivity between investment and operational costs, which all reflect on resource consumption and the issues of resource depletion and carbon emissions.

Adam Stoker

Unfortunately, much of the value related to sustainable buildings and sustainable communities are externalized. Benefits like reduced infrastructure maintenance costs, decreased health care costs, reduced heat island effect, and so forth are accrued by those other than the developer. I think this starts to make the case for incentives.

Alastair Moore

It makes the case for incentives and political leadership - which will be hard to realize without a multi-pronged strategy (i.e. education, social marketing, tax-shifting, user-pay policies, etc.).

Roger Bayley

I'm not sure if we have answered your three questions, but, unfortunately, I have to leave for a luncheon.

There is lots of fodder here - I have been asked to do an on line learning credit for GaGBC regarding the Olympic Village designation of LEED-ND Platinum. I think this should be available on August 15th. I will include slides and a voice over, and I hope to focus on the issues of community

integration, energy, water and financial along with commentary on the social issues.

I wanted to write a couple more chapters for the Challenge Series but unfortunately the Federal funding for this was cancelled following the take over of the Village by the City of Vancouver. Someday, I hope the full story will be told!

If anyone is interested in pursuing these issues further, my e mail is roger@rogeRoger Bayley.com

Ann Dale

I thank you on behalf of myself and Katherine, Roger. As well, my research team is currently working on a municipal policy agenda for the implementation of sustainable community agenda which we will gladly share when finalized in September.

Ann Dale

New panelists

I have had a request from a doctoral student in geography from Carleton University to join us, Gary Martin. Previous to his doctoral studies, Gary has been heavily involved in the construction industry. Welcome, Gary.

Gary Martin

Thanks Ann,

A couple of quick comments:

Regarding energy labeling (Roger's comment), energy requirements will become more stringent in Canada starting next year as per National Resource Council and Natural Resources Canada. I suppose this is the equivalent of labeling, in a way.

Regarding LEED-ND, as some of you have alluded to this already, is it an attempt to measure something that is too complex to measure (i.e., a

neighborhood)?

Adam Stoker

Definitely not, while I don't think any of the LEED programs would claim to measure the entirety of what makes a project sustainable, some measurement is much better than none. LEED has been at the root of a tremendous shift in green building design and LEED-ND is poised to spur the same for neighborhoods. LEED provides a common language to get everyone on the same page. This has been a true barrier for green neighborhood development.

Alastair Moore

I wonder if LEED-ND could require a neighbourhood charter or a common vision, with long-term goals/objectives. These could be adopted and included on title in order to help maintain some of the 'values' of the community over time. I'm thinking out of the box here, but maybe the vision could be showcased throughout the community to help tell the local 'story' and direct/maintain/support the less quantifiable elements of the community.

Katherine Constantine

The Pilot version of LEED-ND was very weak with respect to social aspects of community design. The 2009 LEED-ND version we saw some improvement. However out of entire system approximately 15 points are allocated to social aspects of a community. Are projects aiming to acquire points for the social and affordable housing component of LEED-ND based on your experiences?

Andrea Pellan

The last LEED ND project I was on wanted to provide affordable housing, but just could not make a business case for it. I'm sure that this is true of many projects that are being built now where the housing costs are going

towards recouping the development costs.

Gary Martin

I think LEED has succeeded in part because we North Americans are enamored with rating everything, but again how do you prescribe "a good neighborhood"? The buildings are easy and most of us can agree on criteria for green building, but neighborhoods vary so dramatically because of the people in them.

Adam Stoker

I disagree with these comments. Ten years ago when LEED was first released people were saying the exact same thing about buildings. "Every building is so different", "How do we agree on what to measure?", "Building performance depends so much on the occupants". Through a consensus based approach LEED-NC was developed.

The same approach (only with input from many more people and an extensive 200+ project pilot program) was used to develop LEED-ND. It represents the best, most comprehensive tool we have for measuring what a sustainable community is. Without this, what will fight green-washing and promote advancement in the field?

Gary Martin

BREEAM in the UK has tried to prescribe the social capital part of it, and this is what I think is missing from LEED-ND

<http://www.breeam.org/page.jsp?id=372>

I quote a general criterion: "Community - promoting community networks and interaction, involvement in decision making, supporting public services, social economy and community structure, and community management of the development"

Ann Dale

This connects then to the need to provide 'space' for connection, for transportation infrastructure choice, most notably, the option to walk to obtain some essential services? and so forth? As Putman asks, do you want more policemen or more people knowing their neighbours, but then, people need places then to connect, to meet, simply to engage in conversation with diverse groups of people?

Alastair Moore

I think you could try to quantify the amount of 'bumping' space, or the probability of bumping into a neighbour (or stranger) as one navigates through the neighbourhood. Interesting exercise for a sociologist, a planner/architect, and a statistician working together.

Adam Stoker

What does BREEAM Communities measure specifically with respect to the social aspect of a communities? It is an interesting comparison, it appears that BREEAM provides even less emphasis than LEED-ND on the social side of things (only one out of eight key headings).

Gary Martin

I'd love to continue this Adam

gary_martin@sympatico.ca

Alastair Moore

I apologize everyone, but I must go to collect my daughter from school. It's her last day today, and there is much to do to wrap things up at school. It's been a great pleasure to e-talk with all of you.

Alastair

Ann Dale

Bumping space. Thank you for your participation, Alastair.

Gary Martin

Fine discussion. Thanks for letting me participate!

Andrea Pellan

Thank you very much for the invite to participate, all the best to you Katherine.

Andrea

Katherine Constantine

On behalf of Ann and myself, thank you everyone for your participation in this excellent discussion today. Your participation is greatly appreciated and this discussion has touched on several key issues that will be interesting for my research. LEED-ND is a valuable tool for sustainable community development and I look forward to analyzing this information further.

References Cited

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