

INFORMATION FOR PRESENTING AND PUBLICIZING *GROWING TOGETHER*

Thank you for your interest in our film *Growing Together: Consensus Building, Smart Growth and Community Change*. The purpose of this insert is to provide some suggestions for presenting the film and publicizing it as a resource.



Outreach/Presentation Strategy

A major component of our outreach efforts is partnering with organizations such as yours, both to present the film to audiences in your region, and to tout its usefulness to other local groups –particularly to those who may face difficult challenges regarding growth issues.

The film can be most useful when presented in conjunction with a structured discussion or exercise focused on how some of the consensus-building techniques highlighted in the film may be applied to real life situations in the community. The liner notes included in the DVD provide examples of questions that may be asked in such a discussion.

Although the film can be useful when viewed at any point in a community's growth planning process, it may have the most impact with groups that face a difficult planning or development issue – and are ripe to consider alternatives to traditional decision-making approaches. The film can help open a window of opportunity for engagement about these tough issues. While having a critical mass of participants is important, we also feel that audience diversity is also essential –for example, having three or four different stakeholders, including those who typically hold contrasting viewpoints, as opposed to a big audience that shares similar opinions.

The film runs 52 minutes, and features case studies in both urban, suburban, and rural settings. To allow time for discussion and to highlight those case studies you feel are most pertinent to your audience, the DVD menu format easily allows you to skip among the case studies.

Follow-up Activities

It is our hope that the showing and discussion of the film will result in some breakthroughs, either in helping a stalled local process move forward or in fostering a more collaborative approach among diverse interests. As part of your partnership with us, we would greatly appreciate it if you could keep us abreast of positive or negative results as some of these consensus-building techniques are undertaken in your regions. Send us an e-mail or give us a call if you have news to share.

Frequently Asked Questions

We have posted a list of frequently asked questions on our website (FAQ) regarding the content of the film. It can be found by going to the site's home page (<http://efc.muskie.usm.maine.edu>) and clicking on the *Growing Together* link located there. The questions and responses focus particularly on the extent to which the approach is applicable to smaller communities and projects, cost and time considerations, and information on hiring and using facilitators

Sample Press Release

To facilitate your outreach efforts, we have provided below a sample press release that might be included in your newsletter, website, mailings or other outreach efforts. Feel free to adapt the language to suit your needs.

[Our organization] is pleased to announce a viewing and community discussion around a new film from the New England Environmental Finance Center. The film is “*Growing Together: Consensus Building, Smart Growth and Community Change*”. It explores how consensus building can bring communities together as they grapple with difficult issues regarding growth and development.

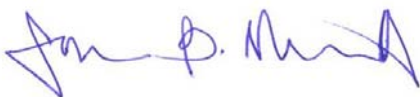
After a discussion of basic consensus building principles and techniques, the film features four case studies of New England communities dealing with choices about how to grow. Each, in varying degree, has incorporated consensus-building principles into their decision processes, and has focused on satisfying multiple community interests. Local municipal officials, concerned citizens, and developers of smart growth and community revitalization projects discuss how difficult issues may be approached more collaboratively to find successful paths for change.

The film, produced and directed by Melissa Paly, is a sequel to her 2002 film, *Livable Landscapes: By Chance or Choice?*, which chronicled New Englanders’ concern over loss of the character in their communities. The film will be shown by [our organization] on [date, time, and location]. Whether you are a realtor, conservationist, developer, affordable housing advocate, or any other concerned citizen, please come and join the discussion of how to make our community a better place to live.

Keep Us Posted

Whether it is letting know us know about a scheduled film screening, an article in your newsletter or a community in your area that is considering or already using consensus building techniques, please keep us posted. Give us your comments on what aspects of the film were most/least useful, and any lessons you may have learned as a result of showing the film. ***We are particularly interested in knowing about specific steps on specific projects*** that aim to incorporate principles described in the film.

Thank you for your help.



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The New England Environmental Finance Center is a university-based research, education, and public service program aimed at helping EPA’s constituencies find financially successful approaches to environmental improvements. The Center is housed within the Muskie School of the University of Southern Maine in Portland, and is part of a network of nine EPA-supported centers distributed throughout the country that focus on environmental financing issues.