

RASCL Members Meeting 10/29/24

Break-out Groups

Engagement with Underserved Communities

Facilitator: Martha Maxwell Doyle

Notetaker: Jordana Cutajar

Breakout Session 1

1. How do you know which communities are "underserved"?
 - a. Know your demographics - use EJ Screen, DeIDOT EJ Mapping, NOAA toolkit
 - b. Does RASCL look at community profile data? Intake form for communities to self-identify
2. How can RASCL help with engagement with underserved communities
 - a. First of all the designation "underserved" is problematic and not inclusive of those communities so messaging is huge
 - b. Meet where they are - not at government buildings, but by attending civic associations and other community meetings
 - c. Find local champions
 - d. Additional considerations lowering barriers to participation by providing things like childcare, food
 - e. LISTENING - underlying issues
 - f. Partnering and co-creation, anger over things happening to us, not bringing people in from the beginning
 - g. RASCL needs training on this! (engagement with "underserved" communities)
 - h. Need clear roles on what RASCL will or won't do so you don't lead on communities
 - i. Representation is really important and not currently reflected internally
 - i. internal recruitment retention processes evaluation
 - j. What is it about RASCL that doesn't encourage these communities to get involved and stay involved?
 - k. Orgs to get plugged into:
 - i. Route 9 Monitoring Committee to support unincorporated communities
 - ii. Sussex health and environmental network (SHEN)
 - iii. Sussex preservation

3. Example: NE Wilmington hasn't gotten a response, but Bayville Shores HOA did immediately
 - a. Lack of transparency in process internally (who follows up and what are the roles?) and externally (this is what you can expect from us and when you will hear back)
 - b. Unknown criteria for projects
 - c. Communities of means (HOA's) are by default way more resilient if we have free
 - d. Why outreach to communities if we are going to ignore them? Just checking box
4. Need more formalized process
 - a. Define what we can and can't do
 - b. Respond to community regardless if they meet criteria
5. Action items
 - a. Internal audit - current practices
 - b. Assessment - how are we outreaching and retaining members and communities
 - c. What communities are we currently serving? How diverse are they?
 - d. Feedback from communities, post assistance survey? Exit survey - did we meet your needs

Breakout Session 2

1. Looking at non-traditional sources of connection to reach "underserved communities"
 - a. Where are those community spaces - libraries, schools, churches, local town ambassadors
 - b. Social media outreach for busy people
 - c. Citizen science - engage communities to make observations
 2. Inroads to community serving groups
 3. Engagement and outreach with renters and legislators/local reps
 4. Reach out to local representatives to make sure they knew what RASCL was about and can refer people to
 - a. Going to know where underrepresented communities are
 5. Should we focus on serving underserved communities or the organizations that serve underrepresented communities
 - a. How can we help you, help them?
 6. Language barriers need to be addressed - Haitian Creole and Spanish
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Capacity Building

Facilitator: Lynne Pusey

Notetaker: Kristen Thornton

Breakout Session 1

1. What skills or information do RASCL members need to do their jobs better?
 - DNREC'S Living Shoreline Committee-general public could benefit from green or nature based solutions vs gray solutions
 - Explore more or alternate tools vs rinse and repeat of the same tools
 - Determine our pain points and our active hot topics or projects to address these issues
 - Use active projects to help showcase resources and solutions
 - Compendium of identifying and sharing solutions
 - RASCL certificate/training program-especially for new practitioners, students, towns and municipalities
 - Identify issues and what is currently being done, provide resources
 - NCC HOA conservation night/education program
 - CIB doing a pilot program for inland bays HOAs
 - Student ambassador program-engage college students (curriculum needed?) maybe require coffee hour and/or summit attendance
 - Students could help coordinate coffee hours
2. How can RASCL members better promote RASCL and support its capacity?
 - Including the RASCL tag in introductions or email signature-self-identifying
 - Call out in the CAP
 - Could RASCL be assigned something in the CAP or Hazard Mitigation Plan?
 - Kent and Sussex Comprehensive Plans-climate solutions act requires that they take climate change into account
 - RASCL PR events
 - Engage members with more hands-on events including community showcases/debriefs
 - Community rain barrell/garbage can painting and RASCL tag
 - Science community field trips
3. Can RASCL initiatives be integrated into the plans of member organizations and vice versa? How can we work together to increase capacity?
 - Members need to integrate RASCL into their own member organizations

- Platform for RASCL members to communicate with each other/Community discussion boards
- Continue to socialize with the funders
- Improve the fundability of RASCL projects

Breakout Session 2

1. What skills or information do RASCL members need to do their jobs better?
 - How to combat misinformation (ie offshore wind)
 - Funding components and curriculum may be required
 - Possibly unpaid
 - UD Climate Hub partner/networking other universities to host a coffee hour
 - Career networking night with students
 - Happy hour after summit-student ambassadors
 - Posters from students
 - Role for science committee-students and mentors/ambassadors for students
 - APA has a model of pairing a planner with new/exploring students for mentorship
2. Is there existing training that can be leveraged to meet these needs?
 - DEIJ/decolonization training
 - Policy development
 - FEMA/HUD trainings-some are self-paced
 - RASCL members give presentations/trainings internal for professional development/member highlight possibly as part of every member's meeting
 - Highlighting the different parts of the state and the projects occurring in those areas because members are not all familiar with all parts of the state ex. Field trip to Northeast Wilmington
 - Looking at tangible projects and meeting with community members
3. How can RASCL members better promote RASCL and support its capacity?
 - Hesitation of assigning RASCL to actions: who is going to do it and how do we ensure continuity? Still struggling with manpower to achieve our mission
 - Worried about being assigned to a comp plan
 - Acknowledge RASCL as a state climate network
 - Offer RASCL as a resource for technical assistance during the comp plan writing process

4. Can RASCL initiatives be integrated into the plans of member organizations and vice versa? How can we work together to increase capacity?
 - Fund additional positions
 - DELMARVA Oasis received congressionally delegated funding for a position

Key takeaways:

- College students
 - Building our pipeline
 - Promoting RASCL overlaps with capacity building/sharing of expertise
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Defining Community Audience

Facilitator: John Harrod

Notetaker: Ashley Norton

Breakout Session 1

Participants: Mike Tholstrup, Michelle Koenig, Ed Lewandowski, Laura ? (DE State Parks), Jessica McIntosh

John - Start with OED definition + RASCL definitions

What communities do we serve? Should we expand it?

Some groups are new – should we include them?

E.g., HOAs, consultants, unincorporated areas, utilities

Mike T – try to be broad

RASCL needs to broaden language to cover other areas outside planning, science speaks if we broaden other options (e.g., use “social determinants of health” to broaden audience – understanding where RASCL’s work fits into these other frameworks)

Public health as example – speak to cross-connections & speak their language

Michelle K – communities and those who serve them (to include utilities)

Simplify definitions and mission statements – we want to help those who live and work here, period.

Consultants – maybe we consider them a “special” audience, with different outreach. Instead of members

Developers – do we include them too? Good question – another for-profit entity

Ed – DESG program has to drawn line at public entities

Maybe instead of determining who is community, we determine what different groups need/tier our services – e.g., packet of info for a “nice no”

By limiting to municipal, public entities – we may limit our ability to engage in EJ communities where community groups are the local leaders for those residents (i.e., underserved by governmental agencies/leaders)

Ed - Where have our successes been?

Networking, being a hub for info

Trying to be all to all people is a bad path

Unincorporated areas – hardest to work with because they is no governance structure/who do you work with? Need community champion + legal structure

E.g., Envision the Choptank – Jonestown – had a leader and legal structure

Lack of legal structure can inhibit feasibility/implementation of technical solutions, plans, etc. because not decisionmakers

HOAs & others - Why are ppl asking to become members? Asking for technical assistance? Looking for some kind of certification?

Mostly assistance with issues within community – e.g., we have flooding, what can we do?

Needs not being met by county, for example, not sure where else to turn

Consultants & utilities – how to handle them? Maybe more as partners than audience/end-users?

Developers

Have reached out to CRDS for technical assistance with resilient practices, landscape architecture

Coffee Hours – we invite all, anyone interested vs. PGG – specific entities

Coffee Hours – we use framework to target specific audiences but don't turn people away

Helps us focus our topics and marketing

Breakout Session 2

Participants: Sarena Deglin, Grace Roth, Josh Thomas, Jennifer Pongratz, Kelly Valencik, Emily Maung-Douglass

John – start with OED definition + RASCL mission – “communities”

Why define community audience? We can't do all the things all the time – parameters for saying yes and no.

Thoughts on HOAs, unincorporated communities, consultants, utilities?

Utilities – RASCL has unique perspective that could be valuable

Maybe not a no but prioritize – give timeline for response

Don't turn any one away, but we need to prioritize in terms of audiences, effort.

Consultants – can we ask for compensation/donation to support RASCL in return?

Historical societies – how do we consider them?

Non-profits

Can we target a number all at once to consolidate efforts

Can also be a partner to help inform RASCL

Can serve as connector to public – has governance structure

Unincorporated areas

Some have orgs – civic associations, etc.

Can we prioritize based on the type of issues – immediacy, need?

Targeted passive outreach – “no” packet, self-service resources – esp.

Say “here's resources – reach out if you still have questions”

CDCs...?

Emergency Response community – can be partners/members

For-profits like (some) utilities + consultants:

We should be open to share our info, knowledge-sharing

If they are working on behalf of a town – easy yes

Maybe draw a line at membership/committee participation

Opportunity for tiered membership or audiences?

Affiliates list? Maybe list of private practitioners on a website similar to the Living Shoreline Committee

Promoting RASCL

Facilitator: Jana Savini

Notetaker: Mollie Yacano

1. There is a lot of turnover in municipal governments and most organizations. How do we ensure new staff learn about RASCL and hear about our events?

- Annual reach outs to local governments now that we have the contact information
 - o Same time every year
- One pager that is put up in government offices
 - o QR code with link to the RASCL site
- Towns are required to send Office of State Planning an annual report, which should have updated contact list for at least some of the key positions
 - o Out of 58 jurisdictions, get around 40-45 of the reports a year
 - Due by July 1st, by August 1st the State Planning office has that information
 - o All of the towns typically have at least a clerk
- Tabling at Delaware Chapter of APA conference (Dec 4th this year)
 - o Also other local government conferences, workshops, etc.
 - o Have spoken before at the Delaware Local League of Governments dinner just to say what RASCL is, etc.
 - o Be on the resource list at the IPA clerks training
 - o Sussex county Association of Towns Dinner
 - o Institute for local leaders
 - May not still be something that is happening, look into this
- Identify yourself as a RASCL member when you are introducing yourself at events (not just who you work for independent of RASCL)
- How can RASCL get face time with every municipality in the state (58 total)
 - o Come in during public meetings when they are doing their comprehensive planning
 - State planning office can make sure RASCL is included.
 - The state planning website has a list of when these plans need to be updated (They are every 10 years so it varies year to year how many are due in a given year)
 - Climate change needs to be in these comprehensive plans
 - o What other offices engage with these communities?
- Strategize contact with all municipalities.
- What gaps exist in what RASCL is currently doing?
 - o Informed promotion plan that is audience specific

- Is there infrastructure to provide the services that communities need?
- Trained speaker list to give RASCL presentation.
 - Actual slides already exist for these purposes.
- Downloadable branding materials.

2. How do we better communicate RASCL successes and accomplishments?

- It is in the work plans that all of the committee's are contributing to newsletter content.
 - Don't tend to get a lot of from folks on this.
- Inviting guest authors for the newsletter?
- Issue is both folks not reading the newsletter and folks not contributing to the newsletter.
 - How do we fix both?
 - Raffle incentive to get people to read the newsletter could be an avenue.
 - Is 12 newsletters a year too frequent? Hard to hit the sweet spot between keeping the information on events/job postings current and it being sent too often.
- Maybe press releases, possibly.
 - More visibility through the media
- Annual report of what RASCL has accomplished each year?
 - Short infographic of the highlights
- Session at the summit on what RASCL did this past year

3. Should we promote the accomplishments of our member organizations?

- Yes
 - Things that aren't RASCL led but are RASCL adjacent
 - Helps reach a different audience than would be reached on its own
- Ticker/carousel on the website sharing member accomplishments
 - Value to both the members and the public
- Also framing the coffee hours as member accomplishments (as appropriate)

4. In cases where RASCL partnered with an organization, how do we attribute RASCL's contribution vs. member organizations?

- Case by case basis because it is very project specific.
 - Learning from previous projects (WIIN, etc.)