

Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Seminar: June 20th, 2016 7:45AM – 9:30AM

Organizers: Bonavista Area Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus Memorial University

Brennan Lowery, Interdisciplinary PhD student, Memorial University

Guest Speaker: Dr. John Dagevos, Telos Brabant Centre for Sustainable Development Netherlands

Attendees:

Johanna Ryan Guy

Shane Hayes

John Norman

Wilma Norman

Renee Paul

Leann Pardy

David Hiscock

Chantal Dickson

Corina Ryder

Ruth Weller Mulchow

Claudia Dickson

Strat Canning

Kim Boyce-Durdle

Notes:

- Comparison of NL and the Netherlands
 - NL is 9x bigger than the Netherlands in size
 - 1.4 people per square km in Newfoundland and Labrador vs. over 500 in the Netherlands
 - Similar GDP per capita
- North Brabant province, Netherlands (where Telos Brabant Centre for Sustainable Development was founded): a region redefining itself
 - Telos was founded as part of a large-scale process of finding a common vision for the region
 - That vision is ongoing
 - The visioning process began with the release of the “Brabant Manifest” in 2000: charted a path forward for the province until 2050
 - A long-term vision is easier for stakeholders to agree on than short-term, specific projects
- About Telos:
 - Telos was founded in 1999/2000

- It serves a watchdog role to the provincial government: its goal is to ensure that the province keeps on track to reaching the vision of the Brabant Manifest
 - It is publicly funded but independent, has no government influence
 - Its goal/vision is to promote balanced development that ensures multiple aspects of sustainability (mainly 3Ps: people, profit, and planet)
 - The region is home to a lot of large manufacturing: Phillips, Fuji, etc.
 - The region was in a major economic crisis in the 1990s due to the restructuring of the largest employers
 - Agriculture is a major sector in the region (especially pig farming)
 - Changing relations between different levels of government (a transition from government to governance in which multiple stakeholders make decisions together)
 - Telos was born out of a visioning process undertaken in the province: during the Millennium Change there was a period of visioning, the creation of new ideas, and dreaming
 - A large-scale visioning process led to the Brabant Manifest 2050 (a vision for the province for the next 50 years)
 - As a result of this manifest, Telos was created
 - Telos has the goal of conceptualizing, defining, and calculating the “millennium capital” of Noord Brabant – measuring sustainability in the province and helping to ensure its implementation
 - It serves a watchdog role vis a vis the provincial government, maintaining an independent role and safeguarding progress towards the Brabant Manifest
 - Telos’ major accomplishment has been the creation of a “common language to talk about sustainable development”
 - The provincial government in Noord Brabant has been heavily influenced by the work of Telos: remodeling of its internal structures and administrative operations
 - in addition the different sectors of the economy speak this language: farmers, business community, etc.; as well as civil society
 - Telos always stresses the integral role of stakeholder involvement in monitoring sustainability (especially in the beginning of a process)
 - Telos has developed a suite of innovative tools and products for measuring and monitoring sustainable development
 - Daily inspiration: the original Brabant Manifest signed by all major regional stakeholders, and the Linden tree that died and had a young tree growing inside it
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- The first task of Telos was to define the “Millennium Capital” of the region
 - It approaches sustainable development from the Brundtland definition (development that meets the needs of the present generation without preventing future generations from being able to meet their needs)

- Telos uses 3 forms of capital to define sustainability, with a focus on trade-offs and balance between them
 - Ecological capital
 - Socio-cultural capital
 - Economic capital
- Telos takes an integral approach to monitoring sustainable development
 - Importance of expert knowledge
 - Normative/political nature of sustainable development
 - Need for stakeholder engagement
 - Importance of a mobilizing perspective

Discussion

- Where do we see the Bonavista region in 25-50 years?
- A long-term vision is very smart but also at odds with how politicians and government think, which is short term and about getting elected
- I am annoyed by this Report Card: it's missing the arts as a priority, and these regional boundaries/name do not make sense
- Statistics do not tell the whole story
- A huge problem overall with report cards/measurement of sustainability: when data are poor, you cannot get an accurate picture
- We need more representation of the issues facing artists: the need to use non-traditional spaces to display art, barriers to entry for artists, etc.
- Measures cannot just be in dollars, they must also be qualitative
- In order to get an accurate measurement of the region's wellbeing, we need to have everyone at the table, and it has to be a big table
- How can co-ops be used as a mechanism for sustainable community development in the region? (example of care co-ops in the Netherlands, Fogo Island Co-op, etc.)
- How to combat the lack of support from the provincial government?
 - Local organizations feel like they are using all of their energy just to stay afloat
 - Initiatives get the rug pulled out from them all the time
 - Urban-centric, centralizing attitude in government ("rural life is for the birds")
 - 2016 budget: latest assault on rural Newfoundland
- What is the mechanism for launching a regional development strategy? How do we start doing it?
- We need proxy measures for more abstract priorities like sense of place, identity – when concrete indicators do not exist, we will have to get creative
- We need a broad strategy on regional development for the Bonavista region
- The Chamber is working on a baseline data study to inventory local businesses in the region: this will help in this endeavor, and recent ACOA funding to the Chamber will also help
- What are some models for regional development/creating a strategy?

- Example of a mediated workshop in Toronto using Harvard negotiation techniques: 4 weekend sessions, each of which produced a report, and culminated in a report with 92 recommendations for improving the city

Next Steps

- We must begin working to plan a regional development strategy
- Analysis of the region's economic value/how the region contributes to the provincial economy (as a way to fight for keeping services in the region)
- Report Card/sustainability assessment for the Bonavista Region
 - Participatory mapping session? (to decide on the boundaries of the region)
- Baseline study of local businesses (the Chamber is working on this)
- Regional forum/conference as a means to start brainstorming ideas for a regional development strategy?
- We need good facilitation of sessions that can engage everyone in the community, including quiet people and those who do not normally attend public meetings