



Mayor's Sustainable Energy Council Presentation – November 26, 2007

Sector

- New Home construction and renovation representing 250 member companies comprised of builders, renovators, developers, suppliers, manufacturers, sub-trades, engineers, lawyers and other professionals associated with residential construction.

Mission Statement – The London Home Builders' Association is committed to provide a forum for it's members to share information and experience; promote ethical building and business practices; be the voice of the residential construction industry in London and to work towards the betterment of our community.

Top priorities for sustainable energy projects

- **Existing residential housing stock** – As new homes represent approx 2% of Canada's housing stock, and new homes are achieving substantial levels in energy efficiency through R2000 and Energy Star programs, to truly make a difference on the environmental impact from the residential sector, we suggest there should be an increased emphasis on retrofitting the aging existing housing stock.

The London EnerGuide partnership established by the City, in which the LHBA and other partners continue to participate, has provided a much needed resource centre for Londoners with explanations of the provincial and federal financial rebate programs and contacts for energy assessments.

The Spring and Fall Energy Guide publications produced by the City, and supported by the LHBA, continue to provide useful and informative articles that

encourage Londoners to change their behaviours related to energy conservation and reinforces the possibilities that can be achieved through renovations to existing homes.

Current federal and provincial financial rebate programs for homeowners are a start but do not go far enough. It is a large issue and needs concerted efforts from all levels of government and related industries to make significant gains.

- **Land development practices – functional planning** – The livability of our community starts with good planning in new developments and in infill areas throughout the city.

Cooperation between all stakeholders to bring a clear focus to smart land use practices, appropriate regulations for densities and consistent implementation is essential to success for London's future and its goal to becoming a Creative City.

Immediate priorities for Sustainable Energy Projects in London and Southwestern Ontario

- **Energy conservation** – Changing the way people think and look at how they use energy will affect all sectors, from personal habits at home to major decisions affecting business, industrial, commercial and institutional sectors. It is the root of all energy consumption. Behavioural change is possible by organizing and focusing efforts throughout the community.

In addition to participating in the City's London EnerGuide Partnership and the Energy Guide publication, within our industry we are continually promoting both to our members and to the public the benefits of making wise choices in their homes, either through a new home or through renovation.

We hear from many of our new home builders that we are making some headway with public awareness, but that there is still much work to be done.

- **Energy efficiency** – Focusing on initiatives that use energy more efficiently compliments changing people's behaviour in that it is also universal and can impact all sectors of our community.

Within the residential construction industry we have partnered with the City on the London Energy Efficiency Project which saw a number of our member builders and renovators involved in ongoing seminars to define the areas of a

home most requiring technology advances. Manufacturers were identified and new products sourced.

The important outcome has been a toolkit of information on the top 10 building products that will act as a source for all our member builders and renovators.

Most building and renovation companies are small businesses that do not have the time or staff to source new products, analyze potential benefits, find out critical information about installation, warranty and marketability.

We see this toolkit as a valuable resource, or a quick step that will support our members as they strive for enhanced energy efficiency levels in their homes.

The second phase of this LEEP project will be focusing on trials of the new products within builders model homes and there are also preliminary talks currently on establishing a pilot project for a community energy system.

LHBA's current sustainable energy projects

- **Promotion of R2000 and / or Energy Star building programs** to the industry and the public through:
 - ongoing seminars to educate builders, renovators and sales staff on new building practices practices (such as Advanced Framing etc) and products (power pipe, zoned air handlers, solar and geothermal heating) and other service efficiencies.
 - public education to support wise decisions on energy consumption within their homes through:
 - weekly informative articles and ads in the London Free Press (President's column and Homefront)
 - information on the LHBA website
 - a new large Eco Living feature at the LHBA Lifestyle Home in January which will provide visibility for energy efficient / environmentally friendly products and services to an attendance of over 16,000 London and area residents. The City will also be participating with a large display in this area.

- **Participation with the City of London and other partners in the Placemaking Demonstration project, the London EnerGuide Partnership, and Phase 2 and 3 of the London Energy Efficiency Project (LEEP).**
- **A Waste Management toolkit for LHBA members.** Most members are already recycling excess building materials from sites through the services of Try Recycling, but the toolkit will provide detailed procedure on how to audit excess materials and develop a plan for reduction of site waste.
- **A green renovation of the LHBA office** including contracting with Bullfrog for clean power.

Barriers to Success

- **Thinking within the box** - We often encounter a requirement for an increased level of certification and proof for proven yet innovative technologies. Risk management is prudent to protect the City from liability, but we encourage the City to support and foster those areas where staff are showing a spirit of innovation.
- **Threats to Affordability of Homes** - The Association continually lobbies against new regulations, levies and fees that do not recognize the resulting negative impact on the end price of a new home to fellow Londoners.

Ideas for MESC support

- **Support lobby efforts to the provincial and federal governments** for:
 - enhanced incentives for homeowners to renovate existing homes.
 - a new incentive program that would encourage purchasers of new homes to choose wisely and buy an R2000 or Energy Star home.