CALL FOR PROJECTS: SPRING 2013

Application Deadline: April 22, 2013

Application for CPC Project Assistance

Instructions: We encourage non-profit organizations and municipal agencies to contact the CPC with ideas for projects that can benefit the community while providing meaningful service-learning for RWU students. Please fill out the Application for Project Assistance, answering all applicable questions and including all supporting documents.

In order for any project to be considered for assistance, completed applications must be submitted to CPC Project Coordinator, Stephany Hessler, by 5 pm on April 22, 2013. Applications may be submitted by:

- Email: shessler@rwu.edu
- Fax: (401) 254-3565
- Mail: RWU Community Partnerships Center
  Roger Williams University
  One Old Ferry Road
  Bristol, RI 02809-2921

Any questions regarding the application process can be directed to Stephany at (401) 254-5211.

CPC project services are performed by students in support of their educational experience. Applicants shall understand that any deliverables generated through an accepted project are intended to provide conceptual information only to assist design and planning and as such are not intended, nor should they be used for, construction or other project implementation. Professional and/or other services may be needed to ultimately implement a sponsor’s desired goals.

SECTION 1: Organization Information

Name of Organization: Island Commons Sustainability Center (Formerly Sacred Ground) Portsmouth RI

Mailing Address: St. Mary’s Episcopal Church 324 East Main Rd. Portsmouth RI 02871

Name of Project Contact Person(s): David Monroe, Harry Gustafson

Contact Information:

Phone: David Monroe (401) 225-5494
       Harry Gustafson (401) 846-3332
Fax (401)846-0702

E-mail: david.r.monroe@hotmail.com
       harrygn@cox.net

Type of Organization: Private non-profit
Description of Organization and Mission:

**Description** - The Sustainability Center exists as a budding concept envisioned by a consortium of concerned, likeminded community leaders intent on foster ideals of conservation, environmental protection, woodland, wetland, water and wildlife management and sustainable production agriculture. The center will be based out of St. Mary’s former parish house and the abutting 70 +/- acres optioned for conservation by the Aquidneck Land Trust, St. Mary’s Church, the Trustees of the Sarah Gibbs Trust and their partners.

We envision restoring St. Mary’s former parish house within a Limited Liability Corporation run by partner, tenant organizations such as the Aquidneck Growers’ Market, Sustainable Aquidneck, and EcoRI, Inc. that may have office space in the center. Major programs envisioned include:

1. A dynamic agricultural program, primarily managed by Sustainable Aquidneck in close coordination with other partners (e.g., Lease Agreements with the Aquidneck Land Trust and the Trustees of the Sarah Gibbs Trust), on the 75 +/- acre conservation area. This agricultural program will include three main components. There will be incubator farm plots, generally about 2 acres in size, where local up-and-coming farmers, through a thoughtful and competitive application process, can rent affordable, agricultural land to start agricultural enterprises. Access to affordable land has been a major hurdle to farmers trying to get started. St. Mary’s Church will manage a community garden on one section of the agricultural acreage to grow fresh produce for those in need on Aquidneck Island. Additional agricultural acres of the conservation area will be managed to provide small individual and family garden plots for islanders who lack land and/or wish to garden alongside others in the community.

2. A hugely popular year-round local farmers’ and artisans’ market that will be run by Aquidneck Growers’ Market. During the winter months, and on rainy days, the market will move indoors to the gym in the former parish house. Not only will the market provide a year-round venue for local farmers and artisans to sell their products, but it will also provide the community with a wonderful way to interact while purchasing fresh foods and beautiful crafts.

3. A community eco-coffee shop, will serve delicious local foods and beverages while providing an attractive space where the community can come to exchange ideas and grow together. It will include space for public meetings, film screenings, workshops, and local music acts.

4. Within and near the 70 +/- acre conservation area, the Aquidneck Land Trust will manage a nature trail system which will enable the public to get outside and directly experience, commune and learn about nature. It is anticipated that the conservation area would be linked up and be a part of the Aquidneck Land Trust’s proposed Center Island Greenway Trail that would run on the land around St. Mary’s Pond, Sisson Pond, Lawton Valley Reservoir, Aquidneck Land Trust’s Oakland Forest and Meadow Preserve and elsewhere. There is also a crosswalk, from the eastern part of the 70 +/- acre conservation area across East Main Road, which enables the public to walk the short distance to the Aquidneck Land Trust’s Sakonnet Greenway Trail, Aquidneck Island’s largest public nature trail.

5. Island Commons will run a year-round sustainability education series out of meeting spaces in the former parish house, the new parish house and on the land itself. The classes offered to the public will cover the latest best practices in gardening and agriculture, local flora and fauna identification, water conservation, how to eat in a healthy and sustainable way and other subjects that help island residents understand how to live a sustainable life style.

**Mission:** To help the Aquidneck Island community achieve a more sustainable and connected existence to one another and the natural world that we are a part of primarily through incubator farms for up-and-coming farmers, a significant community garden to help feed those in need on the island, small individual and family gardens for islanders who lack land or wish to garden alongside others in the community, a robust year-round local farmers’ and artisans’ market, a community coffee shop where people can gather and share, a public nature trail system, and a sustainability education series.

How did you hear about the CPC?
We discovered CPC while initiating communications with Mr. Arnold Robinson of RWU.
SECTION 2: Project Description

Title of the Project: Island Commons Greenway Trail System

Project Location: 324 East Main Rd Portsmouth RI 02871

General Project Description (you may attach a longer narrative if necessary):

This project is conceived as Phase II continuation of the Spring Semester 2013 RWU CPC project that resulted in a high level programmatic examination of a projected trail system.

We continue to view this proposal as one of a community laboratory for CPC wherein our center will benefit from engagement with RWU scholars. We hope this project will be one in a series of evolving community building opportunity for both of our organizations.

Potential Scope of Work/Tasks for RWU CPC:

We envision and request RWU Faculty, Staff and Students building on the work done by RWU CPC Spring Semester 2013 students provide an analysis of the proposed Island Commons Trail System. Especially we would welcome RWU’s development of the following:

1. Assessment of the environmental condition implications on construction and location of the trail system.
2. Assessment of adjacent land use condition implications on the construction and location of the trail system.
3. A proposed bill of materials required to build the trail system designed by the spring semester 2013 students.
4. Risk and liability assessment associated with incorporating the proposed exercise stations along the trail system.
5. Providing key recommendations for best management practices for a trail system.

We would welcome any or all of the following support services:

- business development
- environmental science and sustainability
- community development
- education
- communication
- marketing
- legal
- public relations
- visual arts and digital media design

as community partners developing innovative strategies for our mission implementation.

Proposed Project Schedule (when the tasks/project needs to be completed):

1. We envision each of the three deliverables could be completed by the end of the Fall 2013 semester.
2. Consulting support for our mission goals and objectives could be ongoing in a laboratory partnership relationship.

Other information to help us to better understand the project (we encourage feel free to include pictures, site documentation, maps etc.):

In addition to the attached drawings RWU’s Bridges will contain final Scope of Work findings from the Spring 2013 CPC effort when posted.
Aerial view of St. Mary's property optioned for conservation in perpetuity and surrounding area.
SECTION 3: Project Outcomes

Please describe how this project will benefit your organization:

In keeping with our vision it will allow us to foster and enable improved stewardship of the land. It will enable community residents an opportunity to enjoy an intimate relationship with the land. It will foster community socialization. And in its development it will enable us to collaborate with CPC experts in academia on the essential elements of our architectural needs and to the extent feasible with students and experts in other related domains and community development disciplines.

Please describe how this project might benefit the overall community, including who could benefit from this project (i.e. target groups, neighborhoods, the region/city/town as a whole, etc.).

As our mission states our goal is to help the Aquidneck Island community achieve a more sustainable and connected existence to one another and the natural world that we are a part of primarily through a public nature trail system, incubator farms for up-and-coming farmers, a significant community garden to help feed those in need on the island, small individual and family gardens for islanders who lack land or wish to garden alongside others in the community, a robust year-round local farmers’ and artisans’ market, a community coffee shop where people can gather and share, and a sustainability education series.

Additionally we see a partnership with CPC providing a unique, broad based laboratory close to the RWU campus that might benefit your community and interests as much as it will benefit ours.

SECTION 4: Financial Information

What is your organization’s annual operating budget?

We are a fledgling consortium of existing organizations with a shared vision of enabling and supporting a variety of conservation focused agricultural and agribusiness initiatives. As such we have not matured to the point where we have an annual budget. Our initial funding will be through grants and possibly low cost loans. Our capital outlay and operating budget funding requirements have yet to be determined.

Our opening initiative is a Winter Farmer’s Market to be operated on successive Saturdays in November 2012 through May 2013 in the former St. Mary’s Parish House gymnasium. St. Mary’s is underwriting the operating utility overhead for the market and offering the facility rent free.

What are your major sources of funding?

Initially it will be grants and loans eventually augmented by and transitioning to partner or client fees and rent.

How much funding from your annual operating budget is set aside for this project (if any)?

An initial grant of $30,000 has been received to support:

1. Parish Hall 2013 utility costs
2. Improved facility and parking signs
3. Architectural and engineering review of building potential
4. Underwriting of development work and proposal writing
SECTION 5: Private Sector Involvement

Have you or your organization discussed the project with practicing professionals (e.g. architect, engineer, planner, etc.)?

Yes in that many of the current partners in the consortium are professionals in land preservation, community development, community service, marketing, and education. They in turn collaborate with many second tier artisans, growers, food processors, fishermen, naturalists and educators.

We have not yet begun an open dialogue with architects, engineers, construction managers or community planners. We envision a partnership with CPC will lead us in a more focused way into those relationships.

We have begun conversations with and made funding application to charitable foundations and government sources.

If yes, please explain why you have chosen to seek assistance from the RWU CPC with your project request, instead of undertaking the project using fee-for-services from a paid professional:

We believe our Sustainability Center and the RWU CPC provide ideal laboratories for each other and that a relationship will be mutually beneficial. We understand that eventual construction planning will necessitate the fee-for-services of paid licensed professionals.

SECTION 6: Supporting Documents

Please include the following items when submitting your application:

- Budget for the current fiscal year – see section 4 above
- List of current Board members
  - Harry Gustafson, St. Mary’s Church
  - Karen White, Sarah Gibbs Trust
  - David Monroe, St. Mary’s Church
  - Bevan Lindsey, Aquidneck Farmer’s Market
  - Lisa Lewis, Aquidneck Farmer’s Market
  - Chuck Allott, Aquidneck Land Trust
  - Kyle Hence, Sustainable Aquidneck

- Copies of supporting resources identified in section 2 as needed to support your application
  - In addition to the attached drawings RWU Bridges contains CAD drawings of the former parish house. It will also contain final Scope of Work findings from the Spring 2013 CPC effort when posted.