

PROVIDENTIAL GARDENER'S MISSION IS TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION:

IS LIVING SUSTAINABLY NECESSARY? URGENT?

Or is it Just Nice to Do?

RELATED QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

How to define "sustainability"?

Do we have control of everything we need to live sustainably?

Do we *know* what we need to control to live sustainably?

What do we have to do to live sustainably?

Can individuals live sustainably or do we need to do this in groups?

Does everyone have to live sustainably for a place to be sustainable?

Did humans ever live sustainably?

Can all humans ever live on Earth sustainably?

How can we demonstrate

- **that sustainability is necessary?**
- **what is involved in living sustainably?**

How do we know how sustainable our lives really are?

How do we convince everybody that living sustainably is necessary?

How do we get everyone to live sustainably?

TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS WE NEED TO:

- **Define sustainability**
- **Identify guiding principles, assumptions**
- **Describe the common good**
- **Distinguish necessities from nonessentials**
- **Acquire historical perspective - how did our systems for doing necessary work evolve to this point?**
- **Acquire specific, contextual information**
- **Describe accurately how we do necessary work**
- **Understand current systems for doing necessary work**
- **Develop a common vision for our future ongoing sustainability**
- **Know which specific actions to take so as not to make things worse**

in short:

WE NEED A REAL PLACE

IN WHICH TO EXAMINE

WHAT "SUSTAINABILITY" IS

WHY MODEL SUSTAINABILITY WITH A REAL PLACE?

- **Avoid generalities and abstractions**
- **Avoid ideologies and idealistic, utopian impossibilities**
- **Confront the built-in quirks, inconsistencies of a specific group of humans**
- **Explore actual, existing problems and issues realistically**
- **Provide a practical context for understanding sustainability**
- **Create a useful resource for residents of a place**
- **Stimulate conversation among citizens**

RHODE ISLAND IS A GREAT SUSTAINABILITY MODEL!

RHODE ISLAND

- **Is small, relatively at human scale**
 - **easy for Rhode Islanders to get together face to face**
 - **easy to know each other**
 - **most residents can get anywhere in the state in an hour, more or less**
- **Has a relatively simple government**
 - **no county government**
 - **only 39 municipalities**
- **Has a distinct identity**
- **Has about 400 years of written history, plus millenia of oral tradition**
- **Has some control of what happens within its borders**
- **Has many residents and organizations**
 - **interested in sustainability**
 - **strongly connected to nature, conservation, and local place**

PROBLEMS TRYING TO MODEL WITH RHODE ISLAND

- **Much relevant information is scattered across thousands of websites**
- **Other useful information is not online anywhere**
- **Thousands of organizations are involved**
 - **no comprehensive organization listings by sustainability categories**
 - **many complex and overlapping coalitions, collaborations, associations, and partnerships**
- **Systems for getting necessary sustainability work done are**
 - **extremely complex in themselves**
 - **interrelated, overlapping, tangled (try separating the food distribution system from the transportation and waste management systems, or farming from energy)**
 - **impacted by powers, forces, and trends beyond Rhode Island**
 - **hidden, invisible, apparently simple, "out of sight, out of mind" – e.g.,**
 - **water comes out of the tap (looks simple), but thousands of people make easy access to water possible**
 - **food is in the supermarket (just run in and buy milk), but it takes millions of people to supply one large supermarket**

**Too much information to bring together!
Tedious to assemble enough information to be useful.**

YET...

Any place larger than Rhode Island would be even more daunting to use as a model, and any smaller place would have even less chance of making itself sustainable.

PROVIDENTIAL GARDENER TAKES THE CHALLENGE OF COMPREHENSIVELY DESCRIBING WHO DOES WHAT TO MAKE RHODE ISLAND SUSTAINABLE.

Features include:

- **Online calendar of environmental events**
- **Organization directory listing every group contributing to Rhode Island's sustainability**
- **Categorized RI environmental and economic news**
- **Articles and links providing historical perspective**
- **Categorized index of all kinds of places - from governmental entities to natural habitats**
- **Emphasis on education, especially adult education and lifelong learning**
- **Emphasis on curiosity and exploring the natural world that surrounds us**

GIVEN ALL OF THIS....

**CAN A CASE BE MADE THAT
PROVIDENTIAL GARDENER IS NECESSARY?**

CAN PROVIDENTIAL GARDENER BE SUSTAINABLE?

YOU CAN HELP!

YOU COULD SOLVE SOME PROBLEMS FOR PROVIDENTIAL GARDENER

ENTREPRENEURIAL, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

- **What is the business model? How can Providential Gardener be sustainable financially?**
- **What staff is necessary?**
- **Help write a viable business plan**

MARKETING / COMMUNICATION STUDENTS

- **How to explain sustainability to**
 - **the public**
 - **potential sponsors**
 - **legislators and other leaders**
- **How to present Providential Gardener's mission to**
 - **potential sponsors**
 - **potential advertisers**
- **Develop publicity campaigns**
- **Develop Email newsletter campaigns**

GRAPHIC DESIGN STUDENTS

Can you illustrate these wordy pages that probably put people to sleep and make sustainability interesting and compelling?

WOULD YOU HELP?

Providential Gardener Presentation at Johnson & Wales Sustainability Fair, April 29, 2015

Contact: Susan Korté ~ 401-273-6678 ~ skorte@providentialgardener.com

Providential Gardener, PO Box 2556, Providence, RI 02906

www.ProvGardener.com ~ www.WhatGrowsOnRI.com