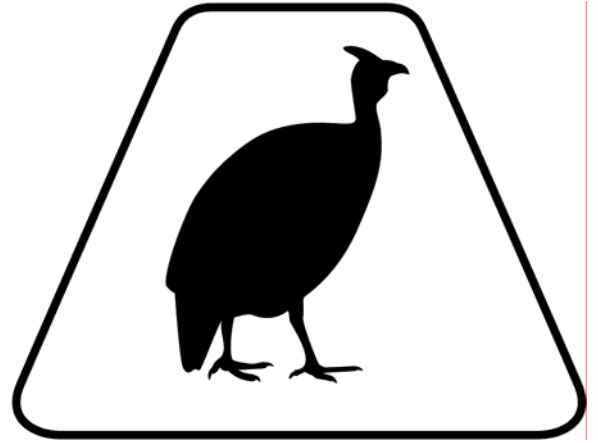


ESTABLISHING AN URBAN CONSERVANCIES



INTRODUCTION.

The establishment of urban conservancies is based on the same principal, as all other conservancies and that is that the community must be involved. They must take ownership of the environment in their area. The days that we sit and look at the deterioration of the environment are something of the past. The time to act is now.

This is the conservancy type with the less pre-establishment problems. When the conservancy is established one will only meet with them when invited. This is another exciting action to initiate. If the conservancy is established it will give the co-operative community the opportunity to really get involved in the management of the direct environment in their area. This gives the community empowerment of the environment.

The urban conservancy concept can be implemented in any urban environment, preferably not in a too big area. A suburb or a block is fine. If the need is there to establish a conservancy in a big area do not hesitate carry on. It is just not that easy. The bigger the area the harder it is to keep the concept sustainable. Smaller areas are more manageable.

PREPARATION OF THE INFORMATION SESSION FOR URBAN CONSERVANCIES.

The possibility is very strong that this session will be given a couple of times, because all the interested people cannot be at all the meetings. Again it is no use sending a person to inform the community about conservancies if they do not believe in the concept. The person must understand the concept and do it because he wants to. The person who gives the information session must be convincing and credible.

As soon as a community is interested in the conservancy concept the following steps must be kept in mind:

- Get contact persons contact numbers.
- Arrange that all the interested people be at a meeting where information will be brought over to the different parties.
- Try and get a representative audience

PRESENTATION OF THE INFORMATION SESSION.

You can adapt your talk the way you want as long as it is informative and applicable.

If you can take slides of the urban area which you are working in it will help a lot to show the meeting the problems of the area. Environmental problems

that occur daily can be shown. This will shock the meeting and will help to establish the conservancy. Slides such as:

1. Illegal dumping
2. vandalism
3. Unmanaged sidewalks
4. Air pollution
5. Waste
6. Stray dogs and cats
7. Plant invaders
8. Irresponsible development
9. Mismanagement of catchment areas, wetlands and river banks
10. Mismanagement of open spaces
11. Apathy and ignorance

The conservancy members can get involved in addressing the problems by being pro active and report the irresponsible actions to the relevant authorities. Projects such as the following can be implemented in the community

- Arbor sessions
- Sidewalk competitions
- Clean-ups
- Environmental evenings (invite interesting people to give talks)
- Environmental education actions in the community
- Educational trails

Inform the meeting of successes and failures so that they know what they are letting themselves in for.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO THE COMMUNITY?

- Urban wildlife is promoted
- Litter free zones are established
- Clean and healthy environment
- Vandalism disappears
- Knowledge of the environment is promoted
- Value of the property is raised.

HOW DO WE ESTABLISH AN URBAN CONSERVANCY?

Elect a steering committee to do the following.

- Determine the area.
- Scout the area
- Get the relevant people together
- Elect a committee which is representative
- Set the goals of the conservancy.
- Draft a constitution.

This type of conservancy gives the general public the opportunity to get involved in the management of their environment and will be great allies to the local authority.