



Partnership Planning Questions

Putting Green, Inc., New Ulm, Minnesota

March, 2004

1. What is the initial vision of the partnership?

The initial vision of Putting Green, Inc. is to create a regional sustainability education center, a Minnesota Riverside park featuring mini golf that teaches about stewardship of our natural resources, a climbing wall, native plant gardens, amphitheater, river pier and interpretive trails. The park is designed to model sustainable principles, products and practices and to inspire visitors to make environmentally sustainable choices in their everyday lives.

2. What is the Partnerships' initial focus and structure?

Putting Green's focus is to make sure the process of developing the park is a learning experience for all participants. The entire park has been designed with the help of young people, adult mentors and professionals. For example, the business plan, mini golf holes, website and learning center "clubhouse" have all been developed with students' input and creativity, through educational workshop experiences led by professionals.

Putting Green's structure is a tax exempt 501c3 nonprofit organization governed by a 16 member board including 4 high school students. Staff includes a volunteer executive director and a part-time youth coordinator.

3. Who does the Partnership identify as potential "partners"? What are the proposed responsibilities of these "partners"?

Partners:

Science Museum of Minnesota – Collaboration in designing mini golf activities and exhibits dealing with soil and water science for our parks (SMM's Your Big Backyard and Putting Green's Environmental Adventure Park).

ISD#88 and Area Schools – teachers and administration support project-based learning in the classroom (ie New Ulm Middle School 8th graders are working with professionals to develop graphic panels for the park's exhibits.). Putting Green curriculum to supplements the activities at the park is also being developed with the help of ISD #88 and Minnesota State University, Mankato staff.

University of Minnesota – Student interns serve in various capacities. Grad students from the College of Architecture helped design the Learning Center "Clubhouse". U of M Extension "Master Gardeners" are helping to design the landscaping plan and will help organize planting efforts.

Minneapolis College of Art and Design – Students designed an interactive promotional CD which includes a game of 3 holes of our mini golf.

City of New Ulm – Donated a lease for the 9 acre riverside site.

Three Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Council – Adopted our project and offers technical and organizational support.

Izaak Walton League – Collaborating on a population exhibit and spearheading a collaboration of sportsmens groups to sponsor a wetlands exhibit.

New Ulm Public Utilities Commission – Supporting the energy modeling for our high performance Learning Center “Clubhouse”.

Local Contractors, Electricians and Plumbers – Participating in the design development of our Learning Center “Clubhouse”.

Supporting River Organizations:

Minnesota River Board
Rivers Council of Minnesota
Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River
Minnesota Scenic River Byway:

Professional Consultants are like partners to us:

Gary Hittle, Landscape Architect, Waconia, MN
Todd Olson, Product Designer, New Ulm, MN
Greg Ingraham and Associates, Minneapolis
LHB Architects, Minneapolis
The Weidt Group, Minneapolis
Justin Green, Fundraiser, Metanoia of St. Mary’s University, Winona, MN
Anne Hunter, Business Consultant, Marketing Source USA, Minneapolis, MN
Jim Roe, Exhibit Developer
Breiter Media Group, Mankato, MN

4. What are the Partnership’s targeted building sectors?

We are building a high performance Learning Center with classroom and lab, climbing wall, ticket and concessions area and “green” store. As the hub of the park’s educational activity, it will be a flexible learning space and a showcase of eco-efficiency. Resource efficient materials, energy efficiency strategies and renewable energy technologies will be designed as exhibits. Again, to make sure the design process is educational, area builders, and subcontractors will be involved in the design of the building and our building committee will report regularly to the City Council and staff.

5. What are the partnership’s initial goals for building performance, EE project and activities?

Because our mission is to teach sustainability, the building must be “extreme” in its eco efficiency, attracting experts in the building industry to come to see its unique sustainable features. Therefore, Putting Green intends to build a Clubhouse that produces more energy than it uses. The initial modeling describes a 40% reduction in emissions. (see attached)

In the concept phase, we demonstrated our commitment to keeping the building *small* (2000 sq. ft) and the flexibility of the space *big* (i.e. multiple use rooms and moveable walls). These elements are the cornerstone of sustainable construction and commitment to these principles will remain strong as we move into the detail design phase.

In terms of education, the building itself will be an exhibit. Systems and products will be transparent to the visitor and graphic panels and vendor lists will accompany the

building's features. An energy monitor will be installed which allows students to monitor energy use patterns and an energy curriculum will be developed to supplement the building's exhibits.

6. How will building improvements fit in with local priorities?

Area communities are looking for ways to thrive into the future. Sustainable development is essential to long term community vitality and health and this building, as a model of eco-efficiency, will stimulate new ideas in the area's building industry. Lessons learned can be applied to future projects.

7. How will the activities of the Partnership be supported?

Putting Green has a track record of good planning, including a complete and thoroughly researched business plan, and a sustained successful fundraising effort with over \$500,000 raised to date. Sustainability is the linchpin of the Putting Green, not only from an ecological standpoint but from an economic standpoint as well. Once funded for the cost of construction and startup, our goal is to sustain Putting Green, financially, from ongoing operations. Rather than relying on the ebb and flow of grant monies, the plan calls for a steady stream of income from a variety of profit centers including miniature golf, concessions, "green" gift store, climbing wall, bike, canoe and facility rental. The goal is to have Putting Green Park be a *sustainable* resource educationally and recreationally for the people of southern Minnesota and the state.

8. What is the Partnership's time frame?

Phase I includes a temporary shelter, nine holes of mini golf, site grading and initial plantings, parking lot and site lighting. Scheduled for completion in 2004.

Phase II includes the environmentally sustainable Clubhouse and park landscaping including rain garden (3.5 acres). Scheduled for completion in 2005.

Phase III includes 9 more mini golf learning stations, an interpretive river trail, pier and natural amphitheater (5.5 acres). Scheduled for completion in 2006.