



nerej

McGreavy steps down as USGBC-Rhode Island chapter executive director

May 12, 2011 - Rhode Island

"When you spend a little time with Connie McGreavy you realize that the phrase, 'Can't be done,' is not in her vocabulary," said Lisa Whited, Organizational Development Consultant for the U.S. Green Building Council. In 2008, McGreavy spearheaded the formation of the Rhode Island Green Building Council (RIGBC) with a band of 12 supporters and at record speed.

"It's been a labor of love," said McGreavy, who took on creating a "start up" organization during an historic economic downturn with an election year piled on. McGreavy evaluated several existing organizations before deciding that the national recognition of USGBC would be important in accelerating and transforming the building industry. The state's high unemployment rate and predominance of low performing, energy-inefficient buildings underscored the urgency to provide education in advanced green building technologies and practices to help put people back to work.

"There was a need; I was qualified. Actually, it was embarrassing that we were one of only a handful of states that didn't have a USGBC chapter. Nothing like pride as a motivator," quipped McGreavy.

"No one has demonstrated more commitment and energy to the subject of sustainable green building in Rhode Island than Connie," said Steven Kitchin, chair and vice president of the New England Institute of Technology which hosts the chapter. "She took on an incredibly arduous and challenging role, and against all odds, was truly the driving force behind the organization's many successes."

"I wanted to accelerate action on all fronts - organizational and programming-wise," McGreavy said. Consequently, the chapter has reached thousands of people with monthly educational offerings, helped companies retool for the emerging green economy, paired people with jobs, and is now building a knowledge network. The goal is for the RIGBC to become the trusted 'go-to' source for verifiable green building information in the Ocean State, particularly with its new Virtual Green Marketplace web portal.

"The experience has been extremely gratifying", said McGreavy. "I accomplished what I started out to do, which was mission drivenâ€”to accelerate and transform." Under her tenure, the RIGBC was instrumental in two bills becoming lawâ€”one which required that the state energy conservation code be upgraded to international standards (and also brought \$22 million in ARRA funds into the state) and the other, passage of the RI Green Buildings Act. A technical advisory committee formed under the Act is now examining components of the International Green Construction Code for adoption. "When standards become mainstreamed into the building codes, you know you've done your job," said McGreavy, "and now it's time for me to move on to other pursuits."

Advising private companies and state officials regarding how to make decisions strategically using sustainability as a metric, as well as helping implement a roadmap for a robust green economy that has impact locally, regionally and nationally will be McGreavy's next overarching goals who leaves

the chapter almost three years to the day from when it was officially recognized by the USGBC. She was the chapter's founder, first chair and executive director; she will continue to serve the board in an advisory capacity. McGreavy is currently the principal of Conserve by Design, LLC, a green consulting firm.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540