

Proposal for Redefining the Sustainable Peterborough Partnership Model

The recent Strategic Planning Session brought to light the potential need to redefine/streamline the Sustainable Peterborough Partnership Model.

Presently, the partnership model is structured around 3 levels of membership: 'Champion', 'Leader' and 'Member'. Upon signing the Partnership Agreement form, it is at the discretion of the signatory to select which level they would like to commit to.

Issues identified with the current model:

- 3 levels of partnership are confusing, there is no measurement standard to justify the levels; many prospective and current partners consistently express confusion and intimidation over the 3 levels, and how they would fit into the model, the commitment expectation, accountability concerns.
- partners heavily involved in sustainability initiatives feel that their work and commitment are being devalued by the 'Champions' that do not have the same impact or commitment to sustainability.
- the 3 levels do not necessarily represent the true picture of commitment to sustainability in the community (often, self-proclaimed 'Champions' are much less involved in sustainability initiatives than a 'Member' organization)
- the 3 levels make the recruitment letter and partnership agreement dauntingly long, wordy and confusing
- Sustainable Peterborough Partner/Member organizations are being referred to interchangeably as "partner" and "member". The two terms have widely different connotations associated with them. The confusion over these two terms is raised at almost every recruitment meeting. The term 'member' implies that there is a fee associated with joining Sustainable Peterborough.

Proposal for a new model going forward:

- eliminate the 3 levels of membership
- agree upon a term (partner vs. member) and solely use that term going forward. We propose that Partner be used going forward because:
 - the term 'member' implies a membership fee, and a sense of "lesser than"
 - the term 'partner' implies equality and empowerment

The only slight issue identified with selecting the term 'partner' is that the partnership decals were designed and manufactured to state 'Proud member of Sustainable Peterborough'. As we only have about 150 decals left, we propose that we continue to distribute them before ordering new ones redesigned to say 'Proud partner of Sustainable Peterborough'.