Session SAT A03 - Better Business: A SITES™ Pilot Project Discussion with Designers and their Clients

PDH Credits: 1.5
The Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) will be taking an important step forward this year with the release of an updated rating system. The designers and clients of four certified projects will discuss certification and demonstrate how high-performing landscapes improve business management practices across all sectors.

Objectives:
- Examine lessons learned from clients and designers of the first certified SITES™ pilot projects.
- Identify opportunities for achieving multiple site benefits using performance-based benchmarks.
- Demonstrate added value of applying an ecosystems services framework to improve best management practices.
- Optimize emerging use of the SITES rating system as a valuable tool to market your services.

A. Update on SITES
1. Summary of revised rating system and preparations for SITES Reference Guide and project certification.
2. Value of SITES pilot program and public comment period in improving rating system.

B. Introduction to SITES Pilot Projects, Clients, and the Landscape Architects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Client</th>
<th>Landscape Architect</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Certification under Pilot Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Novus International Headquarters</td>
<td>Novus International Inc.</td>
<td>SWT Design</td>
<td>Corporate Campus</td>
<td>3 stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunts Point Landing</td>
<td>New York Economic Development Corporation</td>
<td>Mathews Nielsen</td>
<td>Former Brownfield, Waterfront Park</td>
<td>2 stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Residence</td>
<td>Margot Taylor</td>
<td>Land Ethics</td>
<td>Single-family residence</td>
<td>3 stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Center for Sustainable Landscapes</td>
<td>Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Inc.</td>
<td>Andropogon Associates, Ltd.</td>
<td>Public Botanic Garden</td>
<td>Currently in certification review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Analysis of Key Issues
Within this discussion, designers and their clients will describe the project’s goals, context, and SITES certification status. Key discussion points will include:

1. Success factors
   a. Client motivation and alignment with mission of SITES and ecosystems services
   b. Adaptive thinking of seeing sustainability not only as a responsibility but as an opportunity
   c. Significance of integrated design approach
   d. Improving and sharing best management practices: measurement = better management
   e. Educational value (both to client/business and designer/practice/industry)
   f. Changing the marketplace; opportunities for market leadership

2. Challenges
   a. Technical challenges of implementing specific benchmarks
   b. Project constraints of budget, documentation and procurement process
   c. Changing the marketplace; need for broader industry-wide SITES training and expertise
D. Lessons Learned

a. Start with SITES at beginning of a project; build an interdisciplinary team to define economic, social and environmental objectives
b. Decide on priorities for both the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of using SITES metrics
c. Involve all relevant stakeholders from the outset
d. Communicate applicability of ecosystems services framework (SITES) as business management tool
e. Plan for adaptive management strategies to support maintenance, monitoring and ongoing research

SPEAKERS

José Almiñana, FASLA, LEED AP
Trained both as an architect and a landscape architect, José is a principal at Andropogon Associates, a landscape architecture firm known internationally for its ecological design, planning and sustainable development approach. Since 1983, he has been instrumental in many of the firm’s complex site development projects, striving to create sensitive, sustainable designs that respond directly to site conditions and incorporate innovative construction technologies. José is a visiting lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design, at Philadelphia University, and at the Executive Education Program of the Graduate School of Design of Harvard University. He is a LEEDTM Accredited Professional, and ASLA representative on the SITES Technical Core Committee.

Richard Piacentini
Richard V. Piacentini is executive director of Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Since 1994, he has led the nonprofit’s green transformation, constructing the first LEED® visitor center in a public garden; the first LEED greenhouses (Platinum EBOM); the world’s most energy-efficient conservatory; and the Center for Sustainable Landscapes, a net-zero energy and water facility designed to achieve the Living Building Challenge™, LEED Platinum and 4-stars Sustainable Sites Initiative™ (SITES™) certification. Piacentini serves on the board of the International Living Future Institute (ILFI), received ILFI and USGBC’s leadership awards, and is a past president of the American Public Gardens Association.

Hunter Beckham, ASLA
Hunter returned to Saint Louis after attaining a professional degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Arkansas to build a career in his hometown. He has over 15 years of experience with special interest in sustainable practices particularly with green roof and ecological improvements by design as well as multi modal community planning. These interests have developed into a leadership role with ASLA as co-chair of the Sustainable Design & Development PPN and past Trustee of the St. Louis Chapter with a passion for the importance of history. With a diverse portfolio that ranges from healthcare to parks and recreation to urban campus design he brings an open-minded, solution-oriented perspective to the site design process. Hunter is the project manager of two Pilot Projects recently certified in the SITES Pilot Program.

Margot Taylor, ASLA
Margot Taylor utilizes her 29 years of experience in landscape architecture, resource conservation, and environmental education to design/develop and manage an array of ecological restoration, land management, and environmental design and advocacy projects through her consulting practice. Her expertise includes riparian and forest habitat restoration; a holistic approach to land, vegetation and soil resource management; design of integrated and natural process-based stormwater management systems; design, construction, operations and management of sustainable landscapes; and procedural and documentation requirements that meets SITES guidelines. Margot's property is the first SITES certified residential project on the east coast and second in program and has earned a 3-Star SITES Certification.

Signe Nielsen, FASLA
Signe Nielsen is co-principal of Mathews Nielsen, a New York-based firm specializing in urban, environmental, and master planning initiatives that reimagine place and use. Dedicated to creating spaces that are restorative to people and to the earth, she and partner Kim Mathews have worked on more than 400 projects with a “Who’s Who” of architects, engineers, and other industry professionals. The firm’s high-profile experience include the recent renovations at Lincoln Center, the Tribeca section of Hudson River Park, landscape preservation at the Philip Johnson Glass House, and the renaissance of the Erie Canal Harbor in Buffalo. Garnering more than 75 awards to date, MNLA received the 2010 National Park Service “Designing the Parks” Awards Merit Award, Site Design, for the Hudson River Park's Tribeca Section.

Kate Van Tassel
Kate Van Tassel is an Assistant Vice President in the Development department of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. Her areas of focus are waterfront development, including developing greenway projects such as the South Bronx Greenway/Randall’s Island Connector, and community and neighborhood planning efforts, such as the Seward Park mixed-use development project, a major recent initiative to develop over 6 acres of City-owned property in Manhattan’s Lower East Side, Fordham Plaza, a transit-oriented plaza redesign in the Bronx, and the Staten Island North Shore Land Use/Transportation study, a 20 year vision for Staten Island’s North Shore. After graduating from the University of Virginia, she worked in the South Bronx for 5 years before receiving her Master of City Planning degree from the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT in 2007.