

Bob Scheulen, Owner, The Sensible House
www.sensiblehouse.org

1. What inspired or caused you to get involved in green building & how many years ago was that?

After being somewhat involved in various environmental causes, especially land preservation efforts, I thought I needed to look at the use side of the equation and see what could be done there. As with everything else, I wanted to learn to practice what I preach, so I did my first green remodel in 1994 and then when that house no longer fit our lifestyle, we used the opportunity to see how green we could be in 2003. We felt it was important to show to positive side of green living. It's a more personal statement than doing political work.

2. 2 or 3 examples of what do you do to keep you on your edge?

We do two things (1) research into what is going on in the field (2) stay in communication with the community.

3. What are the next steps for you to get to the next level?

We are now looking at communities and lifestyles: in particular finding ways to avoid car travel and learning how to connect with our community. Certainly there are more things to do at the house level—going to zero energy & zero waste for instance, but the big opportunities now are all in transportation and re-shaping communities to reduce the need for transportation.

4. What feelings come up for you when you think of these steps?

There is tremendous opportunity to make a positive impact on society. I believe that people are fed up with our "more is better" culture, and are looking for a change—they just don't know what to look toward and are afraid of losing what they have.

5. What are a couple of success stories of bringing along your network to their next level?

I think its more an issue of my network having brought me up to the next level, or maybe we came up together. These are not issues anyone can do alone—we learn from each other.

6. If you were to describe your network as a metaphor that comes to mind...what would it be? Please explain, if necessary...

Like a tangled ball of roots. We're trying to operate in a culture that often values the wrong things, and in a financial system that often rewards environmentally bad choices. To try to do what we do requires one to be a maverick, which means that by nature we're more independent, which means our network is very loose. Its not like we all go to some straw-bale building every Sunday and sing hallelujah.

7. Next steps in working with your network in helping & inspiring them to the next level

My personal interests now is expanding my network to include other issues, because they all seem inter-connected. I'm an information sharer by nature, so I'll continue to share

with anyone interested, although primarily my outreach is aimed more at the general public.