

DRDC Members Present: Judy Craig, Dave Pearson, Courtney Brown, Judith Stephens, Joshua Doore

Others Present: Jason Bird, Dana Wilbur, Marilyn Scribner, Sue Watson, Frank Spizuoco, Scott Herring, Sam Brown, Tim Breen, Jim Greehey, Linda Clewly, Fred Sherburne

CDBG Advisory Committee: Jean Jacobs, Ella Munday, Stan Larrabee, Steve Gudroe

Meeting opened: 7:10 p.m.

Secretary's Minutes were accepted as written.

The Human Resources Committee has been appointed to act as our CDBG Advisory Committee. DRDC will develop RFP for architects, the RFP's will then be brought to the committee for their opinions on what needs to be added or changed. We are in hopes to have an architect firm hired by November. In the spring we will put out another RFP for contractors.

We received a letter on Friday from the Historic Preservation Office. The report states that no historic buildings will be affected. We also will publish a form in the Eastern Gazette. This will allow for a 10-day public forum. Any responses that come in will need to be addressed. From there we will receive to clearance dates – one for the environmental review and one to begin phase 2.

Our timeline is for completion of the Fossa building by August 2010. We would like to see the foundation work done this year but we may have to wait until spring. If the bid comes in over the money that we have allotted for a certain part, then we would have to wait until spring.

Jean asked who is responsible for getting our advisory committee information. Judy or Dave will give them the info. She asked if there is someone they need to submit their information to. Jason said they will have a checklist to go through.

Judy went to a conference last Tuesday as a guest speaker. The program was called "Reading the Farm" where service providers met with farmers at the Brewster Inn. Dave and Judy went to a 2nd speaking engagement at the Sangerville Grange Pama. There were lots of questions and excitement about our project. A public supper was suggested that would be hosted by the grange. Farmer's could bring samples of their goods. There is a meeting next Tuesday for Maine Highland Farmers at the co-operative in Dover. Judy will be guest speaking here as well.

We need to work on a vision and mission statement. A Mission statement is a fundamental purpose, philosophy and values. It describes the needs the organization is to fill and why it exists. A Vision statement is the bigger picture. Inspiration and framework for all strategic planning. The statements were discussed at length and suggestions made. We came up with our statements and agreed to think on them some more.

Vision Statement: Building out local economy and community through (or with) local people, farms and markets.

Mission Statement: Locally grown, Locally processed, Locally marketed

Dave is working on a logo.

Mark's contract was up October 1st. He is now selling his milk to Maine's Own Organic (MooMilk). Oakhurst picks up the milk. It is then delivered to Smiling Hill and distributed. Fred explains the creamery process will have the ability to keep separate organic and conventional milk. It will use the same equipment except for storage. Fred said that they need to look at a small creamery and figure out what kind of equipment they will need, as well as square footage. He is hoping there will be a local cheese maker to use local milk. Hopefully this creamery will create a huge number of opportunities to create or expand businesses. Jim asked if there would be dairy products available in August 2010 when the store is planned to open. Fred can guarantee milk – he has a license to sell raw milk and can provide whole milk, low fat milk and cream.

Tim feels we need a provider's survey. Maine Highland Farmers have done a study in Penobscot, Piscataquis and Somerset counties. They did random sample listings asking questions such as; How far are you willing to travel, what products are you interested in, etc. This survey is available online and would be a good starting point for us. Jason sent to survey to Judy and she will pass it along to the group through email.

Jason asked if there are tasks that need to be assigned before we adjourn.

Jim shared with us the results of a survey conducted by Frank. Frank provided survey questionnaires from talking to farmers. They are expressing doubt that there will be enough volume to support a year round store without dairy products. They also suggested allowing the growers to work with the architects because they know what is needed for their products. For example, they would need a loading dock in the back of the building.

Timing is critical. If we are planning on opening the store in August, we must assign crops to farms. Jim pointed out that we don't want a flood of farmer's all wanting to sell their corn. Farmer's also expressed concerns that the Dexter community will not support a year round farmer's market. They feel the Farmer's Market at P&L would be more successful if the community supported farmers. Some people feel that the hours of P&L's farmer's market is most inconvenient. We will most likely see better results at a store with set hours.

Tim suggested have a food producer's survey to have farmer's fill out. Then create a mailing list to start communications. Jason feels some questions need to be tweaked before sending out the survey. Tim feels we should have it to use temporarily to find out what kind of farm they have and what they are interested in. Judy would like to have a survey ready for MHF meeting.

It is pointed out that it is hard for farmers to make commitments a year ahead of time. If they know that they will need an abundance of certain product then they need to know well ahead of time. Jim states that they would need to know by Dec./Jan. Sue points out that many farmers are looking into extended growing seasons. Dave states that we need to remember that the schools are interested. Schools are not likely to negotiate with individual farmers but if they can go to a growers group then they will.

Jason shared his idea for a shared greenhouse for year round growers.

Fred announced there is a conference on slow food and building the economy in Farmington next Tuesday. There will also be farm tours.

Meeting adjourned: 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Brown, Secretary