

Town of Red Hook

Agriculture and Open Space Committee

Minutes of June 27, 2011

Attendance: (3) Kenneth Migliorelli, Michael Grady Robertson and Marina Michahelles

Absent: (6) Co-chairperson Peter Hubbell, Co-chairperson Norman Greig, Richard Biezynski, Mary Ann Johnson, Lindsey Shute and James Stagias

Guests: Town Board Councilman William O'Neill (liaison)

Note: The Draft Minutes from April 25th and May 23rd were not approved at this time due to a lack of a quorum. Members present carried on with discussions but were not able to vote on anything.

The meeting opened at 7:10 pm.

Discussions: *(Topic areas taken from the agenda)*

1. **OPAV** *(Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value)* **Conference at local level for Red Hook Farmers and landowners: Marina and Michael to head up exploring this.**

Marina contacted Alex Wiley from the Farm Land Trust. They are exploring a date for the fall or winter for the Conference. There was some discussion on the possible type of structuring of the event: panel, roundtable or larger presentation.

Ken thought it would draw 40-60 people. Contact should be made with the Cooperative Extension so that the counties of Dutchess, Ulster and Columbia can be invited. There might be a need to compensate the presenters for travel, etc.

Mike inquired if the AOSC has a budget for this?

Bill indicated there might be town budget money available for that.

2. **Discussion of future of the committee. How to make group positive and productive? What's our job beyond zoning?** It was agreed the group should remain proactive.

3. **Ag Fencing: Review Mary Ann's Proposed Changes.** This has been completed. Mary Ann's proposed changes were sent to the Town Board.

4. **Summer Meetings**: Ken felt they should meet in July if only briefly on the topic of the Conference so that contacts can be made.

New Business:

1. **Joint meeting with EDC** (Economic Development Committee): Discuss any joint project planning

Bill noted that the EDC is restructuring.

Linda noted that it is always good to have another support group associated with you when applying for a grant. If the EDC is not ready then the Chamber is a possibility.

2. **Farmers Market Promotion Program** (FMPP) Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, (CFDA) Number: 10.168, due July 1, 2011, up to \$100,000 with no matching funds.

Lindsey inquired where the grant information came from in the email. Linda Keeling stated it was from her for the group to consider. It can promote roadside stands and help create new ones. Lindsey felt that there needs to be inter-farm stand promotions.

2. Currency Bucks:

Ken noted that last month, Dick Hansen (guest), suggested a focus on “Shop Local”. The convenience factor encourages locals to buy their produce at Hannaford or Adams rather than at the local farm stands. Again, discussion focused on creating a local currency that could be used at local farm stands to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to qualifying single moms (or single dads) and the elderly.

Mike thought a gift card might work.

Lindsey noted that the cost would be reduced to the recipient.

Ken noted that the green market in NYC has healthy bucks through the Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) which is funded through state and federal programs. The bucks are only for non-processed foods so eggs and chickens do not qualify. He will do more research on the topic. Thoughts also included how to distribute. Perhaps a short survey could be done when the person gets the coupons.

Lindsey suggested getting local businesses be a sponsor of the buyer’s program. The others thought this was a good idea. She thought maybe they could get a grant that might supply matching funds.

All agreed that it wouldn't occur immediately as much research and planning is needed to implement a sustainable program.

Ken mentioned there are several additional programs aside from the FMNP, Green Market Healthy Bucks and the Farm Market Federation. These are a different size coupon.

Linda suggested working with the Chamber of Commerce especially when they have community events. During the past concerts, people were there only to hear the music and not shop at the stores. As far as distribution, assign one day in the Chamber booth to get the coupons.

Ken suggested setting up a table with general information from the farms without the array of produce but maybe a tomato juice drink as an enticer.

Questions focused on the farm / farm stand location map that Robert McKeon did several years ago. Lindsey noted that it needs updating as she was not included.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

The next regular meeting is **Monday, July 25, 2011** at 7:00 pm. at the town hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Keeling, secretary
Correction made and Approved 7/25/11