

Town of Red Hook

**Agriculture and Open Space Committee**

**Minutes of April 23, 2012**

**Attendance:** Chairperson Pete Hubbell, Norman Greig, Michael Grady Robertson, John Hardeman, Marina Michahelles, Ken Migliorelli, and Secretary Linda Keeling

**Absent:** Richard Biezynski, Mary Ann Johnson and James Stagias

**Guests:** Town Board Councilman William O'Neill (liaison), Christopher Klose of EDC and Bicentennial Committee and Kim Gomez of the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce

**Meeting Opened:** As there was a quorum, Chairperson Pete Hubbell opened the meeting at 7:08 pm.

**Minutes:** Chairman Pete Hubbell read the minutes from 2/27/12.

John Hardeman clarified that he suggested a group should be formed with members from this group but as a separate and independent group on page 2.

Pete Hubbell noted Kim Gomez's position as Executive Director.

***MOTION:*** *Pete Hubbell motioned to accept the 2/27/12 with the additions, Ken Migliorelli seconded, all others agreed.*

**Old Business:**

**1. Red Hook Farmer's Almanac:** Linda Keeling distributed a copy of the first issue of the Almanac for all. Farmer's buying ad space were included and located on the center fold map. She noted that the public has been very receptive to the brochure finding it entertaining and informative. Many people are saving the issue for their future reference needs. The brochures are going like hot cakes with a distribution of 5,000 including distribution through the Dutchess County Tourism office. The second issue will come out mid June. This media form is just another means of branding Red Hook farm produce availability and farmer name recognition.

**2. Branding Red Hook:** Christopher Klose has been working with the Chamber and various business owners to investigate the possibilities of reusing the former IGA building. He noted the creation of a "Welcome to Red Hook" video to encourage a business friendly spirit with potential links to internet web pages, PANDA, Red Hook Chamber, Red Hook CAN, EBHS, Town and Villages web sites. It should be ready for June or July with no proprietary restrictions of ownership. Chairman Pete Hubbell asked if there was any way to track the hits. Chris Klose indicated no but it can be posted on You Tube and used for viral marketing by farms, local restaurants, etc. The video will be under 4 minutes. Norman asked what it cost as it is about \$1,000 per minute for general productions. Priority will be to look at spots open in the Village, ie: former IGA as a potential walkable center for the farm community, a core supermarket featuring Red Hook agricultural products to create a Red Hook brand.

The goal is to educate the public. Chairman Pete Hubbell recognized that Rich Biezynski, Ken Migliorelli and John Hardeman have developed their own farm markets. Norman noted that there is a vibrant NYC vendor markets along several streets which provides a vibrant choice for the customer. He felt that we have enough variety to be a great agri-tourism basis like Rhinebeck is to antiques. Chris Klose noted the concept is to develop input as a business plan needs to be developed for Red Hook in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Pete mentioned that a Pine Plains lady did a local survey at Hannaford. He suggested maybe Glenwood would do a survey as to who shop, how often, etc.

Chairman Pete Hubbell noted that Marina Michahelles and Mary Ann Johnson have information of the two groups from Washington, DC and Virginia as to their distribution as there is a need to work on branding.

Marina left at 8:14 but left a written note for Pete Hubbell: (Added to the minutes at his request) *“I used the map that Robert McKeon made up of Red Hook Farmers and either called or emailed everyone on the list. I have heard back positively from Mead Orchards, Montgomery Place Orchards, Rossi Farms. I assume that those of us on the Ag and Open Spaces committee are in (Migliorelli, Hardeman, Shoving Leopard Farm, Stagias, Saw Kill Farm, but I did not hear back from Norman). There are a number of farms on Robert’s map that either don’t sell to the public (Aragate Farm), don’t have a farm stand or market (Hearty Roots), or just don’t exist anymore (Awesome Farm, Alison’s vineyard). For others, the contact info was wrong and the internet was no help (Oriole Orchards and the Steiner Farm. There must be some Red Hook farms that are not on this map, too. Do you know of any? I hope this helps.”*

Ken Migliorelli noted that it is just not produce but dry goods, deli, fish department and baker. Chris Klose mentioned the lessee, Sharon Farm Market, Connecticut, which runs an urban farm market originally on Long Island, now at the old Grand Union, Millerton. They would like to be in Red Hook. They have a long-term lease and opened in 2010 featuring local produce with in-filling as needed from outside markets. Ken Migliorelli noted that they were buying product from all over from a major distributor, the prices were 20% less and competitive with the former IGA.

Chairman Pete Hubbell would like to see a local control of our own produce with our name on it. Bar coding was an option mentioned but the start-up costs for the computerized system is \$60,000 but would last many years. The computerization could keep track of rent for the monthly space and portioned revenue back to the farmer for the sale of their produce.

Marina Michahelles noted that the Hawthorne Market uses local sourcing while others are flown from California. The place of origin has become a big issue recently since the former tainted national news of tomatoes problem in the food supply.

Ken Migliorelli felt Red Hook Agriculture should be featured. Pete Hubbell and Norman Greig signed up to attend the Economic Development Committee (EDC) meetings which are held Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Village hall. Mike Grady Robertson signed up for the ZBA.

**New Business:**

**1. Consolidation of Town Committees:** Norman noted that the Farmland Protection Committee (FPC) and the Community Preservation Fund Committee (CPF) will be consolidated into one committee. The group felt they should be informed and be able to comment on land proposals.

Bill O'Neill explained that the committee reviews applications to subdivide land. The Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program sells development rights. The Community Preservation Fund committee pays for the development rights. The priority established by law mandated they have 7 members. The purpose for the change is to streamline the process by eliminating one group. There are 12-15 properties that can still apply. (Kalina, Greig Farms are in the works as high priorities) Applicants can go to the AOSC first and identify funding partners as with the recent cases for Stagias and James Greig. The Town only supplies ¼ of the funding.

There was extensive lively discussion about potentially combining the three groups (CPF + FPC) + AOSC. The AOSC can provide the information and technical assistance to an applicant. Mike Grady Robertson noted the Zoning Review Committee needs the input from the AOSC. Norman Greig noted that the fence issue advice from the AOSC was not adopted by other boards thereby affecting the communication efficiency of the Committees. John Hardeman noted that the AOSC is important to advise the Planning Board as was the case of the group's advice to the Sheehan family.

**2. Red Hook Farmer's Market:** Ken Migliorelli heard there is a Red Hook Farmer's Market application for the Village Parking lot. He wrote a letter to the Village Board and read it. He would like to see dialogue with the community on the issue through a public hearing as it may impact the local farm stands. Kim Gomez felt that the RHCC was not notified of the project and also would like to be involved in the process so it is successful. Mike Grady Robertson was not aware of the farmer's market and would like it to provide quality products and be well managed to ensure longevity and promote agri-tourism.

**3. Earth / Arbor Day:** Linda Keeling noted that Arbor Day is scheduled for Sat. April 28<sup>th</sup> from 10-2 pm. aside from informative tables, planting and free seedlings, there will be a small farmer's market with Northwind Farms, Migliorelli Farm and Greig Farm hay rides participating. There will be speakers, live music and a luncheon for the volunteer participants.

The Committee thanked Chris Klose and Kim Gomez for attending our meeting.

**MOTION:** *John Hardeman motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ken Migliorelli seconded, all agreed.*

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

**Next meeting:** Monday, May 28, 2012, 7:00 pm, town hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda J. Keeling, Secretary Approved 6/25/12