

Bethel & Liberty Farmland Protection Plan Committee Meeting, 12/16/08
Liberty Town Hall, 7 - 8 pm.

Present:

Ray Kelly
Maureen Barber
Paul Hahn
Melinda Ketcham
Jennifer Mall
Heinrich Strauch
Willie Hughson
Nelson Hector
Dean Farrand

1. Update:

Public Meetings: The Callicoon and Delaware public meeting and farmers focus group were held this past Saturday. The turnout for the public meeting was low (about four people in addition to committee members), but the farmers focus group was attended by roughly 30 people.

Surveys: We have now received 102 farmer surveys County-wide (about 24% of the total we sent out), and 29 business surveys (about 28 % of the total number sent out). We cannot break the surveys down by town, since many respondents did not answer the question about where they own or rent land. Nan will go over preliminary results for Bethel and Liberty at the January meetings.

2. Outreach for the January Meetings:

Options:

-Send out a postcard to all the farmers on the survey mailing list (roughly 180 from Bethel & Liberty).

-Half-page inserts in the Catskill Shopper, targeting Bethel and Liberty zip codes. For 7275 flyers, the cost would be \$525.55

-1/4 page ad in the Catskill Shopper at a cost of \$330, or 1/2 page ad at \$545.

-We have already distributed a letter-sized poster to everyone via e-mail, to post around town.

Discussion of whether the cost of the Catskill Shopper inserts includes printing, or just the fee for putting them into the Shopper. Planning will verify that this is the cost of distribution only, and the inserts will have to be printed professionally or by the Planning Department. We can find out printing prices.

Discussion of the effectiveness of the Catskill Shopper inserts. These are intended to target the general public. The insert might not bring many members of the public in. People will certainly see the flyer in the Shopper, but it might not translate into action. It might not matter how much print advertising we do, because many members of the general public will not give up a Saturday for the meeting.

These costs would come out of the cash match that the Towns must provide.

Discussion of Budget:

Applicant cash match: \$3334

Communication: \$334

Contractual services: \$2500

Supplies and materials: \$500
Applicant in-kind donations: \$13,400
Salaries and Wages: \$13,400

Posters in the store windows would be an easier way to get attention, at a lower cost.

The half-page insert that we made for the Catskill Shopper would be great to put in places where you have a table, and people can take one away with them.

Discussion and agreement that we should send the postcard to the survey recipients.

Agreement that the Catskill Shopper flyer is not necessary.

Jennifer: I spoke with Dan Sturm today, and his committee members had to cancel due to weather. He feels comfortable with putting some of Bethel's cash match toward postcards, flyers, or whatever we decide tonight. So I will tell him we decided on postcards for the farmers.

Jennifer: verify with Jill that Planning can copy the postcards and take it out of our in-kind donation, and find out about postage (who pays, who reimburses).

Paul: make 15 to 20 copies of the full-page poster for Heinrich to take and post around town.

Planning staff: make sure that the postcards go out on Dec. 31.

Jennifer: look at the mailing list for the Second Home Owner Study, to see if it might be feasible to send postcards or some kind of invitation to the recipients whose second homes are in Bethel or Liberty.

Press Release:

The date on the press release is December 22. Discussion of timeframe, and suggestion that the press release not go out until after the New Year. Suggestion that there is a time lag between submission and when it appears in the newspapers or is aired on the radio, so we should make sure there is ample time.

Q: What about the SC Partnership?

A: They don't have a mailing list broken down by community.

But Bethel First probably has a fairly extensive mailing list. That would be Sue Reynolds or Leon. Bethel might want to distribute the posters to the businesses in Kauneonga Lake.

Planning staff: distribute the press release via the County's distribution list, and verify that the press release will go to the local cable station.

Jennifer: Edit the press release, to mention the snow date (January 24).

Supervisors: Put the press release or some version of it on the Town websites. Update the websites if we do need to postpone.

Planning staff: ask Dr. Pammer to contact the radio stations and newspapers, and send them the press releases.

Heinrich: distribute a reminder/ invitation to the January 10 meetings, to everyone on his mailing list (roughly 250 community members) shortly after the New Year.

Phone calls:

The Liberty and Bethel committee members who volunteered to call farmers on the survey list have not had much luck finding phone numbers or getting in touch with the farmers. We did notice that, after the Callicoon and Delaware committees called their farmers, Planning got several phone calls requesting surveys, or expressing interest in the meetings. One person at the meeting, for example, was impressed that her Town Supervisor called her about the meeting, and appreciated that effort. On the other hand, the effort of calling might outweigh the benefit you get in terms of meeting attendance.

Maureen: call Lynn K. and David B. to see which farmers they got in touch with. She'll call the farmers whose phone numbers she has, to remind them about the meeting, and encourage them to remind their acquaintances.

Survey reminders:

We will not include survey reminders on any of the upcoming publicity, because the deadline is long past and soon the consultant will need to begin a comprehensive analysis of the survey data. We will not be able to use surveys that arrive in January.

3. Refreshments:

Heinrich: Catskill Harvest gave me an estimate based on 40 people for breakfast, and 40 for lunch. Breakfast would be muffins, bagels, rolls, and coffee. Lunch would be sandwiches, cheese and fruit. The total cost for both meals would be \$537.

Maureen: I don't think you need to feed a full breakfast at 10 am. A light snack would probably suffice. We might be able to reduce our planned attendance, to around 20 people.

Paul: Callicoon and Delaware had cookies, muffins cut in half, bagels, etc. There was a lot left over.

Maureen: As for the lunch, we will hopefully have an estimate of the number of attendees closer to the date. I'll call everyone on our committee and ask them to call other farmers to find out who plans to attend.

Heinrich: I'll scale back the breakfast estimate. If we reduce the numbers for lunch, that will bring it down more. The cost of breakfast and lunch comes out of your cash match, or you can probably take it out of contractual services.

Committee: Let Catskill Harvest Market know if we expect dramatically more or fewer attendees.

Supervisors: Decide whether to cancel, and let Catskill Harvest Market know by Thursday if we need to cancel-- only if a major storm is in the forecast.

Heinrich: Make sure that CHM supplies plates, cups, milk, sugar, silverware, etc.

January 10- Logistics and Format:

Paul: The public meeting will be broken down into small discussion groups, and we will discuss the importance of agriculture and issues facing farms when we regroup. The farmers meeting will be a big roundtable. Nan will bring up issues to guide the discussion (zoning, labor, etc.). At the Callicoon/Delaware meeting, lots of great issues came up and people began discussing possibilities for protecting and improving agriculture.

Melinda: One thing that came out of the Saturday meeting was the importance of making farmers' voices heard by legislators. One legislator was at the public meeting last Saturday. We thought it would be good if someone from the Town could call their legislators and invite them to the meetings. Bethel has David Sager; Liberty has Frank Armstrong, Jodi Goodman, and Elwin Wood. It would be especially good for the legislators to come to the farmers meeting, since so many issues and concerns came out of that one last week.

Melinda: This is a brochure that the Delaware Highlands Conservancy helped to create for the farmland protection plan in Pennsylvania. So these are some ideas to get people thinking, and many of these things were discussed last Saturday.

Heinrich: The Visitors Association has a brochure, "Made in Sullivan," which they made with CCE, which just came out. Also, Pure Catskills.

Supervisors: Call (or designate someone from your committee to call) your Town legislators and invite them to the January 10 meetings.

Committee: Arrive at 9 am on January 10 to help set up.

Next committee meeting:

Tuesday, February 17 at 7 pm is good for Liberty; check with Bethel.