

Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee Meeting

November 18, 2021 – 9:00am to 11:00 am

Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation, Conf. RM (4th FLR), 2 North Main St., St. Albans, VT

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81189987089?pwd=YzQ1aXp4anJkRjZyVENIU3RlY3p6dz09>

Attendance: Christine Porcaro, Rachel Huff, Emily Alger, Lauren Weston, Lynn Douglas, Tim Smith, Peter Jenkins.

Goals:

- Isle La Motte School Update
- Diversified Ag Apprenticeship Update
- Work Plan/Next Steps/Feedback

Times	Agenda Item	Action
9:00 to 9:30	Org updates	- Emily will be reaching out to get a mailing address for Robert's partner so we can send notes.
<p>Notes: no quorum. Introductions: Lauren, new advisory committee member, NRCD for a year now. Honoring Robert – Emily will be reaching out to get a mailing address for Robert's partner so we can send notes. Emily shared a brief update on staffing. She has met with Tim, Catherine and also Christine. Christine and Peter are reviewing the work plan over the next couple of months and will be working with Emily, Tim, and Catherine to assess whether HRC will proceed with hiring a new staff member. Tim, joining late – he confirms that we have quorum with four. Org update FCIDC: working on strategic plan and updating mission, holding discussion panels, yesterday was Ag discussion – Christine attended. Focus shifting from industrial towards housing, workforce development, ag, Lauren – NRCD – took over for Jeanie Lynn – representing the NRPC board. Lives in Fletcher</p>		
9:30 to 10:00	Isle La Motte School Update	
<p>Notes: Exploring infrastructure needs/opportunities. See Christine's presentation. Commercial kitchen was top need expressed by survey participants. Isle la Motte Community Kitchen – brought to our attention by Patrick Helmen and Sylvia Jensen. Nine respondents interested so far. Businesses not in the islands would still be interest if it could be rented for a whole day. Questions: Emily recommends inviting Andy Julow of ACCD and Alisha Utter of Arbor Farmstead to participate in the planning Good opportunities for funding with Build back Better and Working Lands grants for 22/23.</p>		

Emily - GISD will decide by July 2022 if they want to keep the Isle la Motte school. Town of Isle la Motte has the right of first refusal if GISD does not keep it. This means by the end of the spring it will be helpful to have a plan for use. Can we have a foot in the door? Renters in the building could help make the case for GISD to keep the building.

Lynn – asks if we have contacted the VT Health Department. Waste water and permitting is really important. Emily says let’s get this on the agenda.

Tim – wonders if we could have access to the site and hold an open house with the 9 respondents and get a sense of how they view the space, what they need. They could start building ownership in the space.

Christine – sulfur smell in the building.

Tim – will contact Chevalier Well Drilling to get some information on this.

Rachel – asks what is our involvement in the long term.

Christine – Based on the makeup of HRC right now the vision would be more a producer cooperative, doubtful that HRC would have capacity to run and staff this space

Rachel- asked about what Hall’s is up to.

Christine – with school consolidation in other areas this could be a model for other school buildings around the state.

Lauren – sharing that there would be agency of ag? Funding. From Statehouse to Farmhouse event people said that East Sheldon is an ideal location.

Christine – shared Abbey Group involvement/opportunity

Emily – thinking about how to serve communities best without duplicating too many things

Lauren – did we hear from any producers who said they would not be interested

Christine – no. realized that distance is not a big issue but would be interested to know more feedback from producers that are not interested.

Tim – can draw from NY as well.

10:00 to 10:30	Diversified Ag Apprenticeship Update	
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Notes: funding by EDA for us to explore the diversified ag apprenticeship program. Koi did a lot of work on this. Initially this was going to be a certified apprenticeship with school credit, but this proved difficult. Schools and farmers are interested. Koi found the Pasa Agriculture Diversified Ag Apprenticeship (DVA) in PA. See Christine’s presentation. The Pasa DVA is 18+ and their representative shared that this proved much easier from a legal standpoint than high school age.

Tim – connecting to the FCIDC ag panel discussion. For students who haven’t grown up on a farm this is connected. BFA presentations

Christine – pre-apprenticeship program of Pasa Agriculture and an opportunity for us to do something similar

Wanted to share this information with the Agency of Ag – shared with Abbey Willard of AoAg. This could be a state wide program

Lauren – shared about the Regeneration Corps – connect with them

Rachel – Richford group involved ag training and meat processing training.

Tim – still in search of an individual to operate the facility

Rachel – is there a need for this – farmers can’t even find employees

Christine – base pay for farmers and apprentices would make this competitive

Lauren – wondering if this would be animal farms as well diversified veg

Christine – meat and veggie seems good. There is the Dairy Grazers apprenticeship program

Lauren – equity is important to keep in mind throughout.

Lynn – have you had conversations with the UVM farmer training program. Farm safety is critical.

Christine – safety would be included in curriculum

Lynn – more concerned about farm safety – not all farms are equal on this

<p>Peter – could this create a tension between apprentices and regular employees. Emily – leaving it up to farms to figure out Lynn – also thinking about the equity with migrant farm workers. Emily – important to think about this in the planning process Rachel – what is the value of the apprenticeship – are there credits? Christine – no credits. Farm management, business management. Emily – thinking about value in terms of farm access programs, benefit to farms seeking farm managers, farm start up Emily – maybe this becomes a statewide program Tim – is Christine putting time into this a good use of time? At what capacity? Christine – focus is on the next generation of farmers Rachel – how could an AmeriCorps help HRC Lauren – also the VYCC, that is an AmeriCorps Lauren – wants a demonstration farm to happen in FC – maybe this will happen in St. Albans Bay? Rachel – I live on 300 acres of unused land – demonstration farm! Christine – distribution to markets is an important part to keep in this conversation</p>		
10:30 to 11:00	Work Plan/Next Steps/Feedback	
<p>Notes: Christine reviewing the workplan – who was on Lead, Support, Advisory and reassessing. Peter shared willingness to take on the individuals campaign Lauren shared that FC NRCD has a new staff member and could support capacity Next meeting Jan 27th, 9-11am</p>		

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