

Transition Amherst 12/8/11 Meeting notes

Present: Patty, Bernard, (facilitator), Jon, Gabor, Katie, Betsy, Rick, Emily

Meeting began with a check-in and short discussion around holiday plans and scheduling the next meeting. It was decided that the next meeting will be on Jan. 5th at Bernard and Patty's house. Gabor will facilitate.

“The Transition Amherst Community-Building Toolbox.” Rick shared a document he created using notes from Transition U.S. and Sociocracy. The document details the purpose of the Transition-Town movement and provides a guide to participating in successful meetings.

Winter Bicycling workshop: Gabor reminded the group that he is offering a bicycling workshop at his home Saturday December 10 at 3pm: 44 Beston street, Amherst (in Gabor's "Neighborhood Bicycle Resource Center"). The workshop addresses: How to dress defensively: avoid overheating and freezing both during and after the ride. How to ride defensively: Lighting/visibility, protection against slipping, water and salt. What to do to make sure you reach your destination: tools, gear, and route choices. He noted that ten people have already signed up.

Town-Government-Liaison—Katie and Betsy agreed to talk to the new sustainability coordinator Stephanie Ciccarello about working with her on the sustainability festival: “We’re here and we want to help.” Possibly give her the Transition Companion. Bernard suggested the same thing needs to be done with the town manager and Amherst’s Master Planning Implementation Committee. Betsy and Katie agreed to meet with Stephanie and go from there. They will report back at the next meeting.

Website Development— Gabor gave a quick outline of the website and what it could have on it. He suggested that the focus be on content since the looks can be easily changed. He said it would be good to have a system so that we can maintain the website as a group. Patty suggested that a person could be responsible for updating the calendar. Bernard suggested we “not take six months to do this.” The website development subcommittee agreed to meet Friday December 30th at Bernard and Patty’s house to “flush it out more.”

Great Unleashing—Patty gave an update on the Great Unleashing subcommittee’s meeting. Bernard, Mona, Patti, Rick, Katie (and next time Betsy) met to discuss the Great Unleashing and to plan a schedule for the day and begin outreach. They agreed that there should be a general spirit of celebration. Patti said she will send the meeting minutes to the group.

Regional Gathering—Betsy noted that there was a regional gathering being planned that may occur in January during Martin Luther King weekend at Wendell Town Hall. Judy Phillips of Northfield will be speaking about their group’s Great Unleashing. She will keep us updated.

Peace and Conflict Resolution—Rick proposed a workshop on peace and conflict resolution to be held some time next year. He shared his flyer: The Beautiful Art of Compromise and received a unanimous “thumbs up” from the group. He said he felt encouraged and will begin to move forward with planning the workshop.

Interns from Amherst College—Betsy, Bernard and anybody else who is interested will be meeting Monday December 12th at 11:30 a.m. at Amherst College’s Center for Community Engagement to discuss a collaboration between student interns and Transition Amherst. They will report back at the next meeting.

Proposal to invite John Gerber— Betsy suggested the possibility of inviting John Gerber to speak about sustainability and responses to the black out. She also mentioned that there is a British woman who will be coming to the area to talk about Transition Universities—Leslie Cox (sp?) and suggested Transition Amherst contact her. Bernard said he would like to do that.

Follow Ups

Mission Statement— A piece of paper noting everybody’s responses to the Mission Statement was circulated.

Transition Companion Book Club— Bernard suggested a book club for people who would like to read the new Transition Book. Katie offered to organize it and Gabor offered to host it. It will likely start in February.

Closing

Meeting ended with check-out. Bernard asked group members to think about/imagine “content” for Transition Amherst: What projects would group members like to work on.

Bernard said he would like to organize a bulk order of 500 plants in our community that will make a difference in five years.

Betsy said she would like to work on a plan to identify, map and glean fruit bearing trees in the community.

Gabor said he would like to get more into dumpster diving and develop an “informal economy” with everything that can or cannot be accessible for money.

Katie said she is interested in all of it, especially a plant/seed swap and would like to know how to find the money to get all of it going.

Emily said she would like to find a more sustainable way of networking and utilizing the creative resources, energy and imaginations of the 50 plus thousand students who live in this valley.

Patty said she is interested in the health and well-being of people in the community especially people who are ill—what can we do as a community to help those folks and how can we keep ourselves healthy?

Rick said he would like to be a part of the new economy. Develop a community garden and work on content with groups mentioned in the handbook.
