

## Amherst Transition Town Meeting Notes from 3/15/12

Present: Jon K., John W., Gabor, Patty, Bernard, Wendi (note-taker), Rick (facilitator), Molly, Emily, Betsy, Jessa

Also present was Tina Clark, who came a bit later & gave an hour long presentation related to our Great Unleashing planning, also answering some of our questions.

Wendi will facilitate on 3/29.

We gathered at 6:15 for book group and potluck, but never did the 'book group' part. So for book group on 3/29 we'll use those same chapters (which I think are pgs.72-104).

Prior to Tina's arrival time was spent talking about the four categories of public events outlined at our 3/1/12 meeting:

1) Movies 2) Walk-about 3) Skill-sharing 4) Book study group

~ What is the purpose of these events?

~ Who do we want to come to these events?

~ Discussion revealed not much interest at this time in hosting a public book study. Maybe at another time, perhaps Fall.

~ Where is the fun !?! Need to have way more fun in all this! Lets think art! There is an art group in the valley (called A3?)

Perhaps we can collaborate and do an art project with them - a public art piece in town?

~ Movies update from Patti: Scheduled Jones library for 3/27 for viewing "The Power of Community". Free. Is also looking for and needs additional spaces in town for other movies. Amherst Cinema not interested. Please send her your ideas, or the results of you following through with your leads.

~ John W. offered the suggestion of ATT sponsoring a 'Perpetual Food Drive', saying it would raise awareness of our group if we sponsored it and promoted it.

We had a brief check-in after Tina's arrival. The following notes are from her talk.

Bernard told Tina where we are at with the Great Unleashing (GU) preliminary plan.

Three suggestions for alternate names for this event: "Sowing the Seed Event"; "The Launch";  
"Celebrate Amherst: Past, Present & Future"

The core intention is always making friends with our neighbors, that is what this is all about, what our public event efforts and the GU are all about. Don't think so much about how to 'convince' others of anything - but how to make connections

and build a stronger community.

GU Planning, Vision for GU:

~ You want to celebrate the past and envision a positive future

~ Common goal should be to unleash collective community genius

~ Draw folks in for the planning & participating by asking them to help 'throw a party' - a party to honour Amherst's history

and the history of the elders who live here.

~ Have a self-appointed group of folks gather oral histories of the elders in town prior to GU

~ Invite all the organizations in Amherst that make up this town.

~ Invite young people - think 'all ages' while planning this event.

~ Think diversity in every direction while planning - across age, class, gender, race. Our community is diverse.

~ Always think while planning... 'keep the fun going'.

~ Ask people to do things (with the GU planning & ongoing work groups) they would want to do anyway. Ask them to give their gifts.

~ Pick 2 or 3 groups in Amherst who are truly collaborative in spirit and hook up with them. Create events together.

For example: plant trees with the boy scouts

~ Media: get the newspaper to write article/s about these public events; put them on our website.

Public Events Leading Up To Great Unleashing:

Always think diversity. Cast a wide net. Who comes to our sponsored skilling workshops, movies & walkabouts will show us how we are doing in reaching a wide variety of people. Reach out for these events to different people, different groups, hold them in varied places such as coffee shops, churches, temples, soup kitchens, childcare centers, libraries. (These public events will be our 'test runs' for who will show up to the GU).

Transition Town U.S. has grouped five categories of people with regards to broad planetary changes:

1. Aware and Active - Have been busy in their own life and do 'their part' on their own
2. Aware but not Active - Know we are in deep trouble and it is getting worse, but don't act on it because too busy. This includes most social service workers.
3. Neither Aware or Active - Responds in thier life to very practical day to day needs. Stressed to manage physical life.
4. Uninterested
5. Questions and disagrees with TT movement.

Keep in mind different ways to reach all these people. Appreciate their thinking, where they are at. Thank those for their efforts who have done what they can - for their awareness and personal action. Direct folks to Amherst TT and TT U.S. website. Think of practical hands-on events and activities to engage folks who are not interested in the TT 'jargon'. Keep it fun with pot lucks, practical, engaging and useful hands-on projects.

Fit into every public event leading up to GU:

1. Intro of each person, put on newsprint: Name, town from
2. Have the event (skill-sharing, movie, etc.)
3. Pair up for 1 or 2 minutes after the event with a sharing related to the event
4. Tell folks about the GU Celebration Event-Give Date
5. Have sign-up sheet (newsprint?) for help setting up the GU; "We need you help ...". If not newsprint, have people put name, e-mail & phone number, & interest for helping on an index card. Collect the cards.

AT GU:

Always think- making connections and having fun while doing it.

Gotta present event like a party! Everyone wants to come to a party! Need many ways to make this fun for the diversity of ages and people there.

Celebrating Amherst's past while honouring the elders and their stories gets people on board and present at this community building event. Do something with youth (music?!). Honour and acknowledge the organizations represented there. Open your GU event with these.

This is your segway into the working groups, because now folks are excited about 'our town' and want to contribute

Create the space for people to focus on what they love to do. This supports our vision for the collaborative, resilient community we are creating. Out of this will come new projects, new working groups created at GU, such as: making goat cheese, canning together, community sewing groups, community gardens, children learning to cook kale, etc., etc.

Find a way at GU to not only collect a 'list' of these community building and skill sharing working groups, but to launch them. Get names, e-mail addresses, phone numbers on index cards or post-its. Gather or post the cards and find ways to connect people right there at GU with like-minded interests. Again,

always presenting as "what do you love to do, what are your gifts?". No one wants to be burdened with another obligation in their life. This needs to be fun and add something to their joy.

---

Minutes Submitted by Wendi

---

And the planned agenda for the meeting coming up on 3/29:

Just a reminder that Rick is in Palestine now-left on the 23rd. Lets hold him in safety and the belief his impact will be meaningful for him and others.

Please send agenda changes by Wednesday the 28th.

Submitted by Wendi - Facilitator for March 29 meeting

(We will start at 6:15 and plan to discuss the companion book due chapters (pg74 to 104 I believe) until 7:30 or so. Gabor)

Most items were taken from the agenda for March 15th meeting - moved to the 29th because of Tina's presentation:

1. Volunteers for tonight: note-taker and time keeper
2. Volunteer facilitator for next meeting April 12
3. Final approval of agenda for tonight - assign amount of time to each item.
4. Check-in
5. Announcements
6. Reports from:
  - a) John-treasurer

- b) Gabor - website
- c) Gabrielle, Ophelia, Jessa - Intern/campus report
- d) ? - Valley Time Trade

#### 7. Awareness Raising Public Events

- a) Continue filling in the 'blanks' for months April-Aug on the grid Rick made up. Need facilitators.  
\*\*\*Do we know where that template 'poster' is that Rick had at last meeting?\*\*\*
- b) Patti- how was movie event at Jones Library 27th? Future movie updates? Needs or requests?
- c) Bernard - Need time to discuss walkabout outings?
- d) Gabor - Need time to discuss and/or list skill-sharing possibilities?
- e) John W. - Want time to continue discussion on your Perpetual Food Pledge idea?
- f) Patti - Blue Sky Initiative - Want to discuss?
- g) Molly? Emily? - Continue talk of art event/collaboration with another group in Amherst? Downtown fun art project?

#### 8. Great Unleashing

- a) Discussion : pick another name for this event? Suggestions came up at 3/15 meeting. Should decide now, as our public events start in April and we need to have a 'name' if we're not using Great Unleashing. Suggestions from 3/15:

'Sowing the Seed Event' 'The Launch' 'Celebrate Amherst:Past, Present & Future'

\*\*Need help with the agenda about GU - do we want to discuss as a group Tina's presentation? Get updates from the GU committee and sub-committees? Continue actual planning?

#### 9. New Business for this meeting and/or Agenda items for April 12th

#### 10. Check-out

