

## Capacity Building Group

### **Minutes for January 15, 2018 Meeting**

7-9:15pm at VIA offices, MarbleWorks

Present--Spence Putnam, Fred Dunnington, John Barstow, Andrea Murray, Fred Kenney, Claire Tebbs, Steve Maier, Jeremy Gildrien, Heather Neuwirth.

### **Minutes**

Fred Dunnington volunteered to take notes tonight, suggesting that others ought to take turns in this chore for future meetings.

### **Review Agenda, Check-in & thoughts since last meeting**

Claire Tebbs said she was eager to get to discussion of the Mission. Several members said they still felt open and not wed to preconceived ideas about what this effort will become.

### **Reports from liaisons with other groups**

Energy- Jeremy Gildrien said there was not much to report because, since our last meeting, there had been only one Energy subcommittee meeting. Steve said the Energy group was focusing on refining their several demonstration project ideas down to a more manageable number.

Agriculture - Liaison Lynn Coale was absent tonight. Jeremy reported that the Ag group is still discussing its basic direction. He added that they weren't directly discussing climate Economy or deep carbon reduction, rather, as one example, whether to develop a project that would reduce pesticide use.

Transportation - Claire said that Molly Costanza-Robinson is too busy to be the liaison between the Capacity and Transportation groups. Claire offered to serve as the Transportation liaison. Steve said the Transportation Committee was combining / refining a list of over a dozen initiatives, including a public transit promotion, a bike/bus/arts effort, and ride sharing education.

College contacts. Heather Neuwirth, who is in an interdisciplinary office connected to the College Office of Sustainability, said she would report back to the several College community contacts she has who were interested in following our Climate Economy groups and how they might plug in. Steve Maier said he will write a sort of op-ed 'here's where we are' piece for College and community information. He had met with Dave Donahue, asking for a College person who could join our Capacity Group.

### **Leaders report on Steering Team meeting.**

Spence said he, Steve Maier and Andrea Murray had met with Jon Copans and the Chairs of the other groups including Chris Huston (Energy), Asher Nelson (Ag), and Laura Asermily & Dorothy Mammen (Transportation). The Steering Team discussed development of the mission, vision and strategies. It was noted that although we have 3 task forces defined now, we ought to anticipate that this number could grow in the future.

## Review GMCEI Role Description

Fred Kenny had emailed us some documents to review, supplemented by Spence Putnam's email attachments sent to us 1/14/18.

Spence referred us to the "GMCEI Role Descriptions," drafted in late December. This summarized: the GMCEI Steering Team that Steve Maier Chairs including the task force chairs; the role of VCRD, which will end in August, 2018; the Capacity Task Force, which will create an organization and staff with funding sources to continue the initiative; and the three Task Forces on Regenerative Agriculture, Transportation and Building Efficiency & Renewables.

Fred Kenny took us through the guidelines document with diagrams describing how to distinguish among Mission, Vision, Values, Purpose (Goals), Objectives (Strategies) and Tactics.

## Vision / Mission

Jon Copans, Steve Maier, and Fred Kenny have all prepared draft MISSION and VISION paragraphs. Steve's draft was more explicit towards deep carbon reduction and economic adaptation to climate change. The Kenny draft included more on energy efficiency, transportation transformation, renewables and generally more 'economic flavor.' Fred Dunnington suggested that in "working lands development" a better word than "development" ought to be found as we don't wish to see these lands literally developed. The Group offered a few thoughts for improvement and agreed on a need to emphasize DEEP CARBON REDUCTION. Steve Maier and Fred Kenny will work to bring these two drafts together for our next meeting. Jeremy Gildrien advocated a GoogleDoc sharing, with ability for members to comment, but not all edit. This will be tried. Jeremy offered to help anyone unfamiliar with GoogleDocs.

## Brainstorming needs / sources of funding

Andrea led a lively brainstorming discussion. Spence said we need **staff**. John Barstow wondered if we could **attach our efforts to existing organizations** rather than create yet another 501(c)3....the counter point offered was that no other present organization has as its core mission **DEEP CARBON REDUCTION**. Andrea offered a variant on the Businesses for Social Responsibility model, where we would **advocate and assist with triple bottom line concepts** and be a **clearinghouse**, perhaps a **certification entity** for sustainable businesses. Heather said staff would need to have a deep **knowledge of B-corporations** and **good experience, education and PR skills** - - we could serve as a **resource center**...

Claire Tebbs said there was a need to **clear up how our mission differs from ACoRN's**. She liked the **focus on businesses**. Jeremy noted there was a difference in helping businesses become more aware of and value deep carbon reduction, versus helping them actually achieve deep carbon reduction. Heather mentioned Paul Hawken's **top 100 strategies to reduce carbon**. Steve felt businesses would be interested in **practical efforts**. Fred K. said a good relationship would be **helping businesses** in ways that they can both benefit from and **then underwrite some costs** of our efforts. Andrea described the principles of **triple bottom line** (people/planet/profit) and that we should support anyone and everyone doing the work of deep energy reduction. Heather felt there would be real appeal to the College in such programs that would **attract college students** not only academically but to stay and

settle and develop such businesses here. Andrea noted the **cooperative model of organization**. We have good local examples in Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op and ACoRN Energy Co-op...

All expressed a desire to continue our group brainstorming as a primary topic at our next meeting. It was suggested that we also **brainstorm a clearer/simpler name than GMCEI**, Greater Middlebury Climate Economy Initiative. Fred offered 'Sustainable Middlebury'. Spence offered: 'De-Carbonize Middlebury' .

#### **Next Steps / next meeting**

Monday night, February 12th at 7 pm was chosen as the next meeting date for the Capacity Group. Same location, VIA Offices, which the group expressed appreciation to Andrea for.

John Barstow and Claire Tebbs asked that a list of all groups and their members' names and contact information be sent around to all. Steve will include this in a web site that he is working on, which should be up in about 2 weeks.

Respectfully submitted  
Fred Dunnington