

Outreach and Communications Committee Meeting

Meeting Notes of June 2, 2008, 8:30 A.M. at the Black Dog

Present: Linda Sibley, Kerry Scott, Susan Wasserman, Mimi Davisson, Ned Orleans, Mark London, and Jo-Ann Taylor

1. Review of Summer '07 Outreach

- Last summer's outreach program was based on soliciting feedback on findings and tentative conclusions from the work groups then in operation.
- There were a number of display and booth opportunities:
 - Booths were manned at the Tisbury Street Fair, at Summer Solstice on Circuit Avenue, and at Cronig's several times. There wasn't much response at the fairs; people seemed to be more interested in the party. There was a lot of effort involved, and it would probably not be worth it to repeat these sittings. There was somewhat more engagement at the tables at Cronig's
 - Displays were set up at various relevant functions sponsored by other groups (e.g. annual meetings). The response to these was good. This effort could be expanded.
 - The booth at the Ag Fair was well-attended. Fair-goers were particularly impressed with the display of development past, present and projected. Exhibits that are visual, interactive, and/or fun work best.
 - The poster displays at the Steamship Authority and grocery stores were well-received, as well as the flyer inserted into the newspapers.
- There were six forums last summer, including a larger one on Development and Growth at the Ag Hall the week after the Fair. All were well-attended. There was a discussion of their effectiveness; they are aimed primarily at the people already interested in a topic. Concern was expressed that some forums, particularly Development and Growth, had ended precipitously, leaving some with a feeling of unfinished business.

2. Planning for Summer '08 Outreach

We should focus on introducing the work of the 3 new groups – Transportation, and Built Environment and Social Environment – and return to consideration of Development and Growth. There are three types of group, each of which should be reached in different ways.

1) Network of Planning Advisors and Other Interested People

- Three forums, on Built Environment, Transportation, and Development and Growth (Social Environment not being ready for this type of exposure).
 - Forums should be on Monday evenings at 7:30 pm.

- The big Development and Growth forum could be at the Ag Hall, the Wednesday after the Fair (as was done last year), or could be the Monday the week before the Fair at a different venue such as the Whaling Church. Possibly a notable figure could host to boost the appeal.
 - There were format strategies discussed without resolution, such as limiting the speakers to one dynamic individual, leaving more time for Q&A; scheduling the sessions for 2 hours rather than for 1.5 hours, allowing the discussion to continue on past the time limit. There was a suggestion that someone could write questions and major points on a display board in real time.
- Livelihood and Commerce will participate in the Living Local event in September.

2) Elected Officials

- We could hold a session of the All-Island Planning Boards in June.
- We should send informational materials by e-mail, with the possible addition of hard copy mailings, particularly for multi-page documents that e-mail recipients might be reluctant to open.
- We should prepare a summary or matrix of existing development regulations in place in all the towns.
- Each Steering Committee member could “adopt” a Selectman or two, and to speak to them one-on-one to keep them informed of our progress and solicit their input. This could be an on-going effort that could be initiated immediately.
- We could meet each Board of Selectmen once over the summer, and invite the Planning Boards and other town boards. This would involve a brief and TV-friendly update and solicitation of input. One or two Steering Committee members could go with a staff member.
- We could make a presentation to the All-Island Selectmen’s Association at its next meeting in September.

3) General Public

- Posters at the Steamship Authority and grocery stores. Focus on key issues.
- Flyer-insert in the newspapers.
- Booth at the Ag Fair (interactive or otherwise engaging, fun).
- Displays at association meetings.

Notes prepared by Jo-Ann Taylor and Mark London