



Greenwich Food Alliance

Leveraging Inspiration, Knowledge and Networks

9.16.2022

MINUTES - ~~DRAFT~~ APPROVED

GCG @ Armstrong Court

Attendance: Myra Klockenbrink Land + Water Sector, Nick Bridge Sam Bridge Nursery, Julie DesChamps Waste Free Greenwich, Trisha Tozzi Native Coastal Edible Permaculture, Sue Lord-Peters Director GCG-AC, Ali Ghiorse The Foodshed Network

Meeting called to order 9:10am @ GCG @ AC

Introductions + Initiative Update:

Julie updated on Zero Waste Schools initiative, working on funding from the BET to run an organics diversion pilot at New Lebanon School and sorting stations. Just finished a week of training at New Leb. **Trisha** GCG-AC Steering Committee hosted Dan Brubaker on seed saving, good turn out. **Myra** shared photos of the melons and squash that grew in the Cos Cob Library edible landscape garden. Lack of water made the melons and squash grow really well. Emphasized the importance of talking about our work in the context of climate change. People are hungry to learn ways they can contribute to mitigating climate change, everyday habits. People ask, what can we do? We need to have the tools and means to respond. **Nick** attended an event convened by the CT Farm Bureau - attended by the CT Commissioner of Agriculture Bryan Hubert. Prides Corner, native plant group has seen a huge increase in demand for native plants, they sell plants to other garden centers such as Sam Bridge, and there has been a hug pull for natives especially from housing developers, their entire plant list is almost all native material, exclusively, people are beginning to recognize that native plants are the way to go. **Sue** introduction, co-director of Armstrong Court garden, projects addressing the invasive species alongside the garden, all House Authority property,

along a restoration plan for the waterway in the pipeline. **Ali** Met with Chris Carlin, Special Education teacher at New Lebanon School, and coordinator of their school garden. Climate Action Plan - passed, food systems section will need your input and support Foodshed Picture Project: Hazel Jarvis - illustration artist. Any suggested thought partners, Sustainable CT.

(Shellfish Commission, Conservation Commission - members of Alliance) Would like to engage the community on what they see. TFN - update + added all logos to the GFA page. USDA People's Garden - sign up your garden. White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health - Ending Hunger and Diet Related Diseases - link to register, anyone like to host a watching session | Wed Sept 28th. Fall Forum begins on September 21st @ 7:00: Seasonality: A Celebration of Taste, Place and Connection.

Trisha, not interested in registering her gardens in USDA Peoples Garden, feels the intention might not be genuine. Led to a discussion around food sovereignty, and the film The Seeds of Vandana Shiva documentary. Corporate control over seeds, and our food supply. Grants coming in from the USDA often have strings attached that are not in keeping with the values and principles of a sovereign sustainable just food system. Ex. Miller's Organic Farm in Pennsylvania raw milk production, stipulations on how food is processed - they are a small operation and tangled in a bureaucracy with the government about what they can and do - regulate etc ... the government oversteps on the farms production.

Provided by Trisha: information about the Amish Farmer, Miller's Bio Farm, and his case against the USDA.

Company website:

<https://millersbiofarm.com>

Latest articles about Miller's legal case:

<https://www.thelancasterpatriot.com/millers-organic-farm-fighting-for-sustainability/>

<https://thefreethoughtproject.com/government-corruption/despite-0-complaints-amish-farmer-fined-250k-facing-jail-shut-down-for-humely-raising-animals>

Recent interview with Amos Miller:

<https://thehighwire.com/videos/the-amish-farmer-facing-jail-time/>

Nick shared an ex. About is friend, farmer running cattle on pasture and received a grant from the USDA for fencing and the contingency - cows need to be a free standing barn - previously the cows were free

to roam on pasture, walk down the street for pasture - that was stymied because of government stipulations.

Open discussion about funding the regional food system - if USDA grants have too many arduous strings that impeded on our ability to grow our food, how do we fund the food system. **Ali** mentioned her friend Woody Tasch working on Beetcoin - a new Slow Money initiative. **Trisha** talked about the Hilltop Farm: subsidized by the state of New York and it functions very well. Makes the cost of their food affordable, and accessible to the community.

Ali + Trisha talked about the Vandna Shiva - and how her success was interdependent on the women farmers in the villages who shared their wisdom and knowledge - farming practices and seeds. Vanda was their voice - translated/represented their fight to keep Monsanto at bay.

General discussion on how do we educate the general public on these issues? How do we convey the gravity of the industrial food system? **Ali** talked about Foodshed Picture Project, partnering with GHS - creating a three part art project: past, present and future and **Hazel Jarvis** idea of making the project travelable - taking it to schools and convening discussion around the food system and why it is important.

Prepared by Ali Ghiorse

"Food is our most intimate and powerful connection to each other, our cultures and to the earth. To transform our food system is to heal our bodies, transform our economy & protect our environment."

HEAL Food Alliance