

FIC ORG MEETING ECOVILLAGE AT ITHACA May 13-15, 2005

Opening Bead Ritual

Remembering FIC meeting 5, 10, and 15 years ago.

Spring 1990 Lost Valley

Caroline, Geoph, Betty, Laird. Weaving in Harvey. Building ties with CSA. Sent Harvey who eventually got very involved with them.

LV used to be Shiloh, and FIC helped the current group take on that land. Dianne Brausse was a member.

First mtg Geoph missed.

Sunrise spring 1995.

First time meeting Bill Becker, not first time at Emissary cmty.

Came up with idea of NomCom (Nominating Cmtee)

First mtg Peggy & Earl attended

Defined mission of Cmag: loving hapless marauders (thank you Paul DeLapa)

Established staff salaries for the first time.

Velma & DianaC plotted to get Cohousing to take FIC seriously, and to get Laird to take Cohousing seriously. Zev Pais attended meeting.

Ben Lipman ran a wild evening program.

Elph initiated the idea of FIC having a web presence.

Jillian's first meeting.

DianaC and Paul DeLapa had tensions about the covers. Very interesting dynamics about who reports to whom in an org where people have many roles.

Sweet late night sharing meeting with a talking stone.

Apparently it was a rowdy group.

Last time had direct contact with Bruderhoff. Weren't happy with how they were sometimes presented in Cmag

Spring 2000 LV

DianaM, Loren became bd members

Tree and DianaC had direct dialog re: Cmag language usage

Jim Rough special guest facilitator. Spectacular not-success

2nd mtg Geoph missed

First one-day event coordinated by Tree. Had event in the middle of the org mtg.

Brad Jarvis' partner Nancy came to mtg pregnant. First time met her.

DianaM & Marty decided to move to Shannon

Terry's last bd mtg

Finance (Tony)

F: Harvey M: DianaM

Handout: Finance packet

Q1 number is really for first 1/3 of year (4 months)

Doing targeted fundraising/spending, so p2 of P&L has them separated out as non-operating budget.

2004

Art of Community netted almost \$2000 from Gainesville event. Very low expenses and good attendance.

Bookshelf lost money. Sales flattened or went down a little. Event sales lower so won't go to the events that are no longer fruitful. Expenses were on target, just lower income.

Cmag fairly large loss (17,000). A few years ago increased from 2000 to 4000 copies for retail sales due to getting mags in Barnes & Nobles and a Canada chain. Very low sell-through and returns didn't come in until this year. Loss is really from several years prior to 2004. Have corrected this and are back to shipping a little less than 2000 copies. Tony has been working with sellers to print numbers closer to actual sell-through. Still showing the loss for 2004 because can be 9 months before get returns.

Now only selling to a few B&N stores.

Development and Membership \$33-34,000. Doesn't show in one place because some was targeted donations.

Other income includes auctions, mailing labels. Did very well due to unexpected windfalls.

Interest income increased because of moving money to better accounts and working with FEC.

House party income went to Development unless specifically earmarked.

Bottom line: -3500.

2005

Bookshelf sales slow for this year, but don't do many events in the first part of year.

Cmag is low due to same issue above. Doing well except for that.

Consensus books slow and could use more attention.

Dir3 almost out. Coming off ic.org.

Dir4 selling on web, but not recording income until books are shipped. Not charging credit cards until shipped. Publish sometime in July. Has been on web for 3 weeks, and mentioned in eNews. No other marketing. 35 copies sold. Tony will do more marketing soon.

Video better than expected, but had put in low estimate. Might be that accounting is being done differently than projections. Slightly slower sales than last year, but steady seller.

Interest income and expenses are higher than projected. Interest rates are changing, but income and expense is usually balanced so no net change.

WWW income probably looks higher because probably has incorporated some donations targeted for endowment fund.

DIR3 LOAN IS FULLY PAID OFF!

Bookshelf

Mail order (Web) sales not as strong. Maybe because Alline is no longer managing, maybe something else.

Most events happen later in the year so event income being so low doesn't mean anything.

Katie uses spreadsheet for inventory, which Tony tries to reconcile with QuickBooks.

Challenging to get accurate match because the status and location of books changes. This could be an explanation for the \$600 inventory adjustment. This might change as books come back into inventory or are sold as sale items at events (with no expenses attached because they're zeroed out of inventory when they go on sale).

So numbers might be more or less accurate. But there probably is some loss, and breaking even is the best we can realistically hope for Cmag

Subscriptions are on target, also back issues / samples average, advertising.

Wholesale sales are showing loss due to returns from previous issues (noted above) when 4000 were shipped. Income only reflects more realistic number of books shipped of 1800.

Tony is watching closely.

Why is advertising high? Maybe income from last year's sales, maybe selling more. DianaC not in room to answer.

Royalties comes in once/year, so this is finished. Academics who use magazines in course material are main source. Probably make copies rather than buy magazines. Royalty is from copyright processing type agency.

Large distributors destroy rather than return.

TO is going to target universities. Ask them to try to get more professors to use Cmag?

Expenses all make sense, except Tony wants to look into fulfillment labor number. Cmag operates on a pretty reasonable budget. Can't really shave off much. Shipping directly from printer saves shipping \$.

Cmag targeted donations not reflected in this report.

Development

Oops—top number (restricted donations line) is a mistake.

Targeted donations for Dir endowment, Graphic Design fund, online Dir Software fund. Some other endowment fund promises not reflected here.

Hard to know the difference between membership and donations, so some membership increase is probably due to development efforts.

D&D income doesn't include targeted donations.

Loan Fund

One loan out to Walnut Street Co-op.

Made deal with FEC for PEACH loan on Dir2. Will loan FEC \$ excess from loan fund (offsetting their loan to us) but with the agreement that we can take it back if need for loan fund purposes.

Office

Have been able to reduce MO office labor expenses. Part of this is because Tony is filling in as office manager and doing a minimal job (5-10 hrs/month). Probably a real office manager could do double that to really do the job.

Postage # probably will be shifted to fulfillment for various areas. Also supplies.

Balance Sheet

(Snapshot in time of assets/liabilities)

Equity has been up and down, and is relatively low, but isn't negative. This means could pay all debts if went out of business.

Cash Flow

(Snapshot of bank account at that time).

Have filed for extension on taxes because 2004 numbers still have some holes (esp. Video) in the accounting. Therefore not asking bd to approve 2004 numbers.

Consensus Books

Why is expense so high in 2004? Main expense is office overhead, which is a formula no matter how many books are sold. Might have been higher % used in 2004. Also printed books so some expense there. If lower % for process books, it will still come out of the bottom line, just through another income area.

Presentation by Dan Roth from EVI

Handout: US Partnership for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

Grad student at Cornell studying sustainability and education.

Decade of education in sustainable development. Initiated by UN. Started in 2005.

US Partnership=voluntary partnership of orgs who want to use this UN initiative to leverage (etc from mission)

www.uspartnership.org

FIC is clearinghouse for much of the learning from cmties that could be great for the org.

Do monthly free conference calls if want to know more. Third Thursday from 1-3pm EST.

Dan specifically works with young people. UN sustainability conference in SF this summer, leadership training, "how to get involved"

Dan will put name and email on participants list so all attendees have it.

US hasn't officially recognized Decade, but some agencies are involved (EPA, others)

Regional Networking (Fred)

[See report for background.] Fred introduced "Come Sing a Song With Me." Make the initiative an invitation ... to invite local/regional folks to take on a role to promote FIC in their areas. The idea will emerge as it grows and matures. The cmtee is asking at this point for the approval of a process rather than a finite well-defined program.

Primary task of the committee: Identify and empower people in the regions to be able to coordinate gatherings and work with the other FIC cmtees organizing meetings and events. It's a movement-building activity. The local organizers may develop more active roles over time. There is a possibility of creating regional newsletters, developing appropriate local materials, disseminating FIC information.

Convener would coordinate cmtee efforts with the board and aligned with the vision/mission of the org, manage a listserv for the various regional reps (and other tasks listed on the handout). FIC Board's role would be to approve any events thus generated, to provide mailing lists and resource referrals, and to monitor the work of the committee.

Cmtee membership would be somewhat self-selecting, and would also have a component recruiting the local organizers... board would have approval role.

This has been a stumbling point in the past. Concern that a lot of the local groups don't have much sense of connection with the mission or work of the FIC.

This would be a standing committee with a mandate and also some autonomy to operate independently within its mandate. Ultimately it would be accountable to the org through the board. There would be a hierarchy in the flow of info, but no hierarchy in terms of authority and responsibility.

Any budget? Currently none proposed. Don't anticipate any great increase on the load on FIC office staff.

The cmtee would be specific members active in the org participating regularly at org mtgs; the local coordinators would work through/under the cmtee. The Coho network has had some challenges trying to work with similar issues in responsibility, authority, representation ... eventually a similar enthusiastic subgroup became a separate group.

How could FIC have a functional role in promoting/organize local education, consulting, etc. (ex: Diana C recently led a process for the Eugene Coho group). We could provide contacts and resources without necessarily having responsibility for organizing such events. Would this help support the creation of independent entities, or might they have more visible ties with the FIC? Over time formal identification with us might become less and less relevant. Related concern is that FIC is already stretched fairly thin, so supporting independent cmtees might be more attractive than adding management /oversight responsibilities over groups officially within the org. If these groups organized independent events, they could ask us to provide materials, resources, people. That would seem comfortably in line with our mission. We would need to have enough energy within the org to support these independent initiatives. The idea is to bring more energy into the FIC, not to spread things out. We are not necessarily creating local FIC networks, but might see it as supporting the creation and development of autonomous local organizations. This cmtee's job would be to provide support for those independent regional groups.

FIC has been good at publications and events ... could use those tools, provide starter kits for these regional groups. Would also be a good conduit to draw in future resources such as org members, fill board roles, etc.

Concern about coordination between this cmtee and other FIC cmtees such as Site, Events, Inreach, etc. So far the RegNet efforts have been more independent, not consciously organized with the interaction of the cmtees, the flow of info has been weak regarding identifying who in

the local region might be coming, how could we have better connected/invited them? How much does the RegNet cmtee want to be in contact, or not?

There would probably be no major concerns if all the groups were as advanced and organized as NICA is. More fledgling groups might need more support than we can provide. NICA probably wouldn't have grown as it did if had been tried as a group under the FIC umbrella. Existing RegNet regional coordinators have come to FIC, have gotten excited about taking their organizing energy back to their regions. So far they've not asked much of the FIC. Regional networkers need to identify who is already doing stuff in their region, look for what kind of support is needed, what can we give.

Summary: seem to be some concerns about what "could happen," but not necessarily a concern to prevent us from trying something. It would be an FIC cmtee to provide regional networking, but it's not of the type we call "to serve the board," so it wouldn't need to go through Personnel for staffing.

AGREED: FIC wants to promote autonomous regional groups, and supports the creation of a standing cmtee to develop and implement this concept.

TASK: The cmtee needs to develop a clearer statement of its mandate and job description.

Regional Networking (Fred)

Job description for committee submitted. To address concerns that were raised in earlier session.

Coordination of literature for events? How do they get to the regions?

Central office would now be called upon, but will eventually become a local task.

Coming across as being very detailed and daunting but it is very good.

How does Fred see the committee FIC more assessable to the local communities of each region? An avenue of feedback to the Org as to how they are doing in each region. More folks will be drawn into the fold of FIC.

What would the region like from the FIC? Regions would like Local databases to be up and running. So as to tap into those in the area to build excitement for an event. Get locals engaged in what the FIC is planning. Groundwork would be laid down already through the regional knowledge of who's who and what can be tapped into.

Willing to work with other standing committees such as membership and events.

Finding local contacts is what the Regional Network would do, not necessarily do the organizing themselves.

Some reservations around coordination problems. Willing to see how it plays out as things unfold.

Sharing databases between regions and the FIC would be a key component.

AGREED: Regional Networking Committee becomes a standing committee of the Org?

Committee participants, Fred (convener) Aron, Geoph, Kip, Lotus, Ma'ikwa, Raines, Vince.
Committee is accepted.
It is an open committee.

Policy on FIC Spokespeople (Laird)

[Handout available for review.] At the '04 fall org mtg this issue came up, so Oversight chewed on it at their interim meeting, and has come back with these recommendations. Are there other names to add to these lists? Jenny has already declined being on the first list. What about adding Marty, Jenny, and Bill (who are current members of the Oversight Cmtee)?

AGREED: Add Tony to the list of official media spokespeople for the org (joining Harvey, Geoph, Laird, Diana).

TASK: Ask OS to reconsider adding Marty, Jenny, and Bill.

Re FIC spokespersons at public events: Why is this being proposed? What if none of these people are in my region? The policy seems rather constrained and overly formal. This proposal is based on some awkward and embarrassing experiences, when others have represented themselves as spokespersons for the org, but their personal presentation, or spin or personality created some problem for the org that need to be cleaned up. It's a question of quality management, to assure that what we put out is serving us well. Applied in the reverse, it gives a clear tool ... individuals can be sure to say "Here's what I think, but I'm not speaking for the organization." That generalization is somewhat dicey, as the media person might not care about that distinction, and might portray it inaccurately. So there's no guarantee about honoring who can speak for the FIC. There needs to be a line somewhere: either the individual needs to draw the line themselves (self-selecting), or the org needs to do it. What if we made it more procedural, rather than a rule? Leave more room for informality and flexibility? There is more than presentation of policy involved here ... there are a lot of personality factors and behavioral traits involved.

Almost but not quite Agreed: The Board approves the following as FIC spokespersons at public events, including House Parties: Board members, Oversight members, Diana C, and Geoph. Additionally, OS can approve others on a case-by-case basis. Individuals interested in getting such approval are encouraged to approach OS with their request.

There's a need for more specifics about House Parties, what does or does not occur at such events? It would be helpful to have a list of steps written down on how to approach or handle this process. It would be an invitation for how folks could approach the org if interested in pursuing initiatives in this realm.

Strategic Planning 1 (Laird)

5 questions:

What do we do best (using brainstorm from Fall 04 mtg)?

What is our mission?

What is our market (who is our constituency)?

What do we think are the unfolding opportunities and challenges in a changing world (using previous brainstorm as jumping off point)?

What do we want to do (the intersection of passion and mission)?

Laird asked author about measures of success in the nonprofit world. Said he's thinking about it (is actually writing a book on it now).

What do we do better than anyone else?

Brainstorm from Fall 04 with additions and ranked 1-5

1. Clarity and flexibility in knowing what we contribute – 2.6

2. Focalizes segments of cmties movement – 4.6

Network IC's – 4.2

3. Collaboration with other like-valued orgs – 3.8

Bringing a cmty element to an event – 4.2

Bridges IC's and wider culture -- 4

Represents IC's to the rest of the world -- 5

Meeting the hunger for integrated values -- 3

Articulates what IC's is about -- 5

Articulates the lessons of IC's experience to the wider world -- 4

Model for how to work with diversity – 3.1

Produce events about cmty – 3.9

4. Networking burning souls – 2.33

Inspires burning souls -- 4

Inspiring and sustainable as a social change nonprofit -- 3

Support and care for cmty activists – 1.95

Inclusive generalists -- 5

5. Knows where IC's are -- 5

Online directory -- 5

Supply up-to-date info about North American IC's -- 5

6. Model and practice Consensus process -- 4

Issue raised that some of these are our values but not what we're doing better than anyone else, or even very well, and others are really what we do well, which is the focus of this discussion.

What is our mission?

To assist IC's

Who is doing what and where?

Recruitment

Cmty –cmty connection

Cmty-media connection

Cmty-resource connection

Technical assistance

Is this part of our mission? We've talked about this a lot and have been doing this. Is this still what we want.

Helping people get more cmty in their lives

--Help exploring what "cmty" means

--Providing the social tools based on what we're learning in IC's

Others are doing this better than FIC, so should be secondary.

Some are more excited by this part than focusing on IC's so should also be in there.

Is already part of our mission. What we do best and should continue focusing on strongly is providing the social tools.

Could be a good avenue for finding burning souls because more are involved at this level than at IC's level.

Some cmties are more involved in this area than others. Good if FIC supported them by helping in this area.

We can be a resource for orgs that are doing this well, especially by providing the social tools... so should support them in their outreach rather than try to do it ourselves.

Do in context of knowing what our constituency is so that these efforts can be targeted toward them.

Network and clearinghouse for information for people who want more cmty in their lives and for the orgs that do this, but let other groups do the outreach work of helping people build more cmty in their lives.

What we do better than anyone else is help people understand what they mean by cmty. Our business is to help them answer that question for themselves and then support them in finding the right information and place to do that. Focus expertise on IC's, but don't sell us short by not reaching out to them. They may realize that they're looking for IC. Don't tell them what they want, help them figure it out. We do this best.

We won't overshoot our limits (at least not too much).

Art of Community events were striving to do this.

Can't not do this because this is a service to IC's. People who get more practical experience of cmty in their lives are more likely to be able to fit in an IC. People who don't want to go all the way can have cmty in their lives at the level they want rather than feel it's all or nothing and try to fit into an IC when they don't really want that intensity.

Have a good set of tools for people to use at any level of cmty.

Support forming or struggling cmties by being a clearinghouse of info from cmties that are strong in a certain area and can help the others.

Promoting inter-organizational connections for groups dedicated to cooperative social change

Resource leverage

--Collaborative projects while preserving individual identity.

Strategic Planning 2

Is the following part of our mission?

Promoting inter-org connections for groups dedicated to cooperative social change

--Resource leverage

--Collaborative projects while preserving individual identity

We already do this with CoHo/US, ENA.... Does this mean expanding the groups we do this with? Yes. This is new. When FIC collaborates with other orgs, it is somewhat incidental, somewhat intentional. This is meant to make the networking more intentional and deep with the groups that we have strong connections with. Pretty much the same groups we already do this with, at least at first. Orgs that promote cooperation are often not well coordinated with each other.

Some have experienced that there is some territorial competition when bringing together orgs. Also that with work it has been successful. Very supportive, but recognize it will be extremely challenging.

This might be one of the things we do better than others because of our experience promoting cooperation. Also FIC is better known so might be successful.

Fundraising opportunities for this (such as for an inter-org summit mtg that's been discussed)? People who like endowment will probably like this. Others who are progressive would probably like this.

Good to expand the impact of individual regional groups that don't have a larger reach.

Supportive of inter-org summit, and try this out as a tool, but hesitant to make this part of the mission until more is known. Is this a means to other mission points? Or is it a point in itself?

Concerned about making a statement that it's a major thrust that is equal to other mission points. Good to keep doing it, just maybe not put in the mission.

Seems like this fits inside the mission point of (#1 of mission) so it's good but don't need to change the mission.

Similar vein. Don't know that we do this better than anyone else, but are well poised to find out.

Good to try and see what develops.

Would like to do a regional summit and see how that goes. Always looking to develop new ways of reaching out. This expands that.

Why are we worrying now about whether or not this is in the mission statement? There is excitement about trying this out. If this develops into something productive it can become a more explicit part of the mission down the line.

Putting it in the mission makes a stronger statement.

Summary: Valuable to FIC, does it already, does it well, and supports rest of the mission.

Continue with this as support for our current mission and see if it develops.

FREEZER: OS continue thinking about the mission question

Who is our Market? What is our constituency?

Bd should always be thinking about this because the world is always changing

Brainstorm:

**Existing IC's

People are recently less comfortable (or projecting that this will happen)

*People interested in renewable energy

-Political disaffected

Cmty seekers

Forming cmty's

Progressive spiritual groups

-Student coops

-People (especially singles) with children

Homeless

**Groups interested in cooperation and cmty

*Cultural creatives

Intentional retirement cmty's

-People wanting to create more cmty where they live right now

*Ivory tower academics

Affinity groups looking for a home (i.e. artists, people looking for specific diets)

Sustainable agriculture / farmers / family farmers

*Political activists

Wackos and crazy people

-People who want to simplify their lifestyles

*Young people who grew up in IC's

-Traditional groups (Amish, Quakers) who are losing population

Disillusioned former communitarians or attempted communitarians

**Also for non-disillusioned ex-communitarians (but perhaps delusional?)

Home Schoolers

Small town folk that want to keep a small town feel

**Cohousing

-People already involved in cmty development

Developers

*CoHo Developers

Land-use professionals and planners

Journalists

*Permaculture designers

**People who wannabe in cmty but never will

*Hip urbanites

Mainstream but possibly receptive (encompasses others on this list)

What group should be serving more? (Pick one)

-People who want more cmty where they are

-Land use developers

-Mainstream

-Family farms

-Renewable energy

- People less comfy
- Journalists
- Intentional retirement cmties
- Hip urbanites

What do we think are the unfolding opportunities and challenges in a changing world?

Focus Q: increasing dependence of electronic information sharing (vs. print, etc.). What impact does this have on our org?

Cmties that try to form through electronic media have difficulties because it's a tough communication forum. More face-to-face. More regional activity?
 Harder to make impact electronically because there is so much out there. Need to take advantage of emerging electronic technologies
 Teleconferencing becoming too prevalent. Better than email, but don't let it replace face-to-face.
 Avoid big media control. Create our own service?
 Media diversity to support diversity in our constituency
 Larger market as folks with "urban" skills can telecommute from rural cmties
 Vibes watch to know when issue needs to be taken off of electronic communication and requires face-to-face.
 Email good for rumor control and information distribution even within a cmty
 Political and/or corporate control of Internet in future
 FIC develop email protocol that others can adopt to smooth their email communications. Sell it?
 Has affected CDir, may affect other products as well, esp. Cmag. Electronic Cmag?
 Creates new opportunities to reach people
 Helps people meet each other
 Opportunity to create clearinghouse
 Increase in upset w/in cmty if people don't like how someone else represented cmty on web?
 Facilitate conflict management
 Video teleconferencing might reduce face-to-face mtgs.
 Giving up some control because others are also able to put out electronic information.
 Avoid leaving behind those who don't use electronic media

Focus Q: If there is a substantial jump in energy (travel) costs over the next 10 years, how does this affect FIC?

Opportunity to network small farms and helps foster cmty and cooperation on small farms
 Harder for people to get to events on national level. FIC become network of regional groups
 Might mean more cmties needed
 Increase in recently less-comfortable constituency
 Prepare for large wave of cmty seekers.
 Promote cmty clusters and urban sustainable cmties
 Might not be a dramatic change, so changes would be incremental
 Don't know what chronic conditions are developing from chemicals and increasingly dirty water & air. Probably more Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Lots more people looking for eco-cmties

Prepare for increasing political pressure

Further polarization. More cmties with violent ideologies or practices in the face of growing scarcity and polarization. Challenge our value of non-violence.

Focus Q: might be more degradation of civil liberties, or could be less. What would this change?

FREEZER: Need to flesh out constituency issue. Doesn't feel done.

How do we feel about process so far? This time was more focused, so that's good, but would rather start in a more pragmatic and concrete place such as making 10-year plans for our current projects. Much support from bd for this sentiment. Some good stuff has come out of the sessions for the past few mtgs, but time to really focus it now.

Even some strong frustration expressed.

Would have preferred to spend more time on constituency question because it impacts the products and services we provide.

Some suggestion that a retreat to focus on this question would be more effective.

Maybe the conversation is happening at too many levels at once. It was suggested to focus more on what our constituencies might need.

Cmag Review (Diana Christian)

Cmag Editorial Direction and Focus:

Bridge between IC's and the nearby wider culture.

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A resource to direct new folks to community. Cmag has tools for helping seekers and those in community to be successful.

Cmag had had some financial challenges in the last few years.

Not enough \$ because of a lack of ads. Don't have the readership for higher ad prices. Diana says she is burned out with selling ads and needs new blood. Diana takes responsibility for the lack of ad sales in the recent past. Someone who loves to do that kind of work and is in a stable life situation. More than just good hearts and good intentions. Diana is willing to send out job description to communities to see if there is someone willing to take on the job.

Successful ads that return issue after issue are ads for cohousing, workshops, etc. Ads that have ended up being a waste of time to chase after have been the businesses with products to sell such hot tubs or solar panels.

How to bring up revenues? Increase circulation. Promote the mag. in other magazines. We haven't had the staff to do this kind of marketing. We have no promotional direction.

Diana knows of a person (Ron) willing to help with this kind of promotional idea and has some money to help with this endeavor. Diana would like to follow through on this idea. (\$15,000.00 is a possibility but as of yet nothing is finalized.) Will hear back in June if we have the go ahead from the foundation that Ron works with.

Once an org is picked up by a foundation it is easier to seek dollars from them in the future. Even if the grant doesn't come through Ron is willing to make a personal donation to promote Cmag.

Grant \$ will go towards the promotion of the magazine so as to get new subscribers.

Another donator (Molly Morgan) is willing to give a donation with specific aims for the money. (See written Cmag report for details).

What happens after 2 years when the money dries up? Hopefully the magazine will establish a new base that is sustainable.

At this time there is no longer a print magazine for Cohousing, only on Internet now. They still have newsletter ads where we can work from to get advertisers.

1500 subscribers right now. Probably less than 1000 copies sold on the newsstands.

The lack of a colorful magazine cover may have been the main reason it didn't go over in Barnes and Nobles.

Food Co-ops and natural food stores carry the Cmag and we're successful in those venues.

Business manager? Tony has been doing wholesale manager lately. New office manager person will be encouraged to monitor the wholesale business.

People have huge desire to create community in the wider culture. If the Cmag reached out to the wider culture and those seeking community that may not want Intentional Community per se.

Pictures have not been very high in quality lately and the digital photos have not been helpful. Need to be very high resolution. Better paper will allow photos to be crisp and clear as they were intended.

Is there any way to gage success after the two years and the money is gone? It will be an economic measure.

The grant is written so that it shows how we will succeed and not continue to need to ask for money in the future.

Concerns: Diana has a lot to juggle in her personal life. What is her energetic level to carry through on this two year endeavor to get the Cmag back in the black and on it's own fiscally sound feet?

She shares that she is very healthy now, and at a better emotional place. It's a part time job and she can do whatever she wishes in her off time. She feels like she has enough time to do the job she has been tasked to do. Writing her next book will make FIC directory and Cmag more visible. It will be geared towards the community seeker.

She still desires to be the editor. She loves the magazine.

Concern. There will not be an ad sales person soon. What happens between now and then?

Intention is to sell more cohousing ads. She knows from experience now where to seek those ads that will be successful and will be repeat buyers.

Changing the subtitle of Cmag? Not sure what it should be changed to but it's not a "journal" The front page and this subtitle can be looked at the same time.

Next issue will have a full color picture on the front. A very reasonable price to do so is available that wasn't available before.

Bookshelf (Laird)

Concern about the Bookshelf. We have been a book selling business using the web and at different events. Saw it as two activities to make some money. In '99 we had a manager come on board whom over saw the business.

Profits from the books don't cover the cost of doing the business. Last year we made only \$32.00. This year it not looking real good for a profit.

A candidate to be the new manager has asked about taking on the Bookshelf. Org can't do it the same way as we have done it in the past.

There's a positive synergy to having the books at an event. Only a small amount of subscription to the Cmag and membership is picked up while selling books. Memberships and subscriptions can be pushed more during the book sale set up.

Rarely are books bought in mass except a few titles that sell consistently well. Our profit margin is not as good as the big booksellers such as Amazon.

Whenever the books are shipped to an event we lose money. Need to have the seller do the selling for free and have the paperwork be very good so that time isn't wasted at the office in MO trying to figure it out.

If we pared down the titles would the profits come up? Difficult to account for this. How much staff time is used up is the big cost for the Bookshelf. It probable that with fewer titles to manage that handling costs would be less.

The service is valuable but maybe not through book selling per se, maybe having reading lists available is the better use of org time to get the info out there to our constituency.

Is book selling really part of the mission of the Org?

Could the regional groups do the education part of getting those titles out to people at an event but the book would then be ordered? It's suggested that we no longer have a huge stack of books to transport around from event to event. Each regional group would have just one copy as in a regional library?

Could it be a management problem over the years and is it possible that a new staff might make a change in the profits?

Having books can be an entry for folks to come to an event. When Bd meets in cohousing communities the books open the door to the folks to come in and check the books and the group out.

Org can't really afford to carry so many titles. Bookshelf should have maybe 20-25 titles and limit it to those. Keep the core titles relevant to the Org mission.

Suggestion: Continue with a smaller core title inventory that meet the Org's mission, and have the new manager take it on with guidance from the Bd.

Have a set of books that we sell on a commission. This could be a future idea to incorporate into the Bookshelf.

Bd needs to have more detailed proposal from new manager so that things are very clear as to the new steps to be taken. Feedback mechanism set up between manager and someone from the Bd.

Concerns that this manager has no track record in book selling business. Manager must demonstrate that she can do this job before the Bd is willing to totally let go of watching over it. As long as the book sales are in the red the Bd must be involved.

She appears to have the background to be successful at managing the Bookshelf.

Committee Reports

Site (Laird, Diana)

Oversight filling in lacking staff on this committee
Fall date, place set: Nov 4-7 LA EcoVillage

Tentative connections/locations:

Madison, WI Spring 06

Pacific NW Fall 06

VA Spring 07

Austin Fall 07

Vince: Offering Ozarks as fall 06/07 backups

Diana M coordinating, getting involved; transition from Laird.
Reminder: Committee serves the board.

Ic.org (Tony)

- Planning move to new web hosting provider
- Planning consolidation of fractured different platform
- Awaiting potential funding via directory endowment
- Challenges w/timely delivery, esp. w/Tony working on Directory
- Planning a written report
- Hosting partner offered through GaiaHost, Charles's collective -> web weavers. Sign-ups through there (if any) support ic.org website

Q: Traffic reports?

A: Fragmentation makes hard to aggregate. In communities directory, a community is added every other day. Tens of thousands of visitors per month.

Q: Need more help/energy?

A: Not interested in coordinating vast array of volunteers. Would benefit from larger core group. Web design, database work, and system administration.

Q: Advertising?

A: Marketplace, mostly people with products. Not using as major funding model. Makes \$1k/year from various online sources. Not a lot of banner ads. Has not proved to be a viable model for sites our size.

Q: What see in a year from now?

A: New server, all systems automated: calendars, advertising, ReachBook. Improvements to online directory to support community resources, automated posting. Unified design for family that retains distinctiveness of elements like cmag. A lot of the work is back-end redesign to make easier to maintain and more cohesive. Not a lot of new features, but features there better maintained.

Directory (Tony)

Page proofs on hand. Copy-editing and indexing in the next few weeks. Available in July. The first edition produced directly with website data-collection system. Just \$27 (vs. \$34), cheapest produced in 10 yrs.

Goal: new edition 12-24 mo.

Organizational needs: photos on community, kids, and urban themes. Need in next few days.

Recommendation: Directory coordinator (willing to serve), advisory committee. Ongoing vs. every-five-years pick-up-the-ball-and-do-it-again process.

The lines are blurry between online directory, web publication, and the book. Could be separate people.

Name/date on directory? "2005". On the spine, not the front.

Enthusiasm: [much applause]

Personnel (Jenny)

InReach, Site – Laird is doing a whole lot of the work.

Things are changing. Diana M stepped forward to convene site committee.

Miaya and Diana: Inreach co-coordinators. Both need to be presented to the board.

Newsletter Editor – still in the market for one

Personnel Cmtee members: Geoff, Jenny, Peggy

Office manager: Kim from Dancing Rabbit putting her name in the ring. Tony has been picking up slack in the Missouri office.

Oversight (Laird)

Q: Graphic redesign progress report?

A: Logo first. Done a few rounds. Directory work has taken Amy's attention.

Design Committee - Peggy, Tony, Laird

Development Committee

Q: FIC Member count?

A: On the order of 100 cmtly members. Much lower for organizations. See development report.

Most recent activity: mailing to everybody in directory for support. \$3500 (at least 4x cost of mailing), pledges for more. Many proposed annual. Did not yet ask them to buy a copy.

Still soliciting for major-league donors to support the website.

#1 piece of work: managing the directory and development drive.

Q Tony: Spending operating budget money to create endowment? Eventually endowment to self-fund its own fundraising.

A: Makes sense.

Q: Are things going well with Allison?

A: Yes. Helped me with transition to look people in the face and ask for money. A buddy.

Q: Development database to be integrated with communities, sales databases?

A: Yes

Trying to raise \$400,000 to maintain directory info (paying \$10-12/hr) to not just receive info but also periodically contact communities, ask "what's going on? Are you still there."

Trying to raise the endowment large enough to cover web development. Already our #1 resources.

\$25K is in-hand or pledged.

Operators are standing by. Does anyone know people that they have contacted or would be / solicited. [papers passed out] Alison or Laird will have a conversation with you about an appropriate way to make a contact.

Last fall we reported successful initial FIC house party. Supported by Songaia in Bothell, WA Sept 2004. Raised \$1k in 2-hr session. Julian Downey, Elph Morgan, and Amy Nesbitt from Great Oak Cohousing will do one in Ann Arbor in June when Laird's in town. If anyone's interested in hosting or recommending a host, let us know. Invite people in the area where you live, have a spokesperson from FIC, expectation of being asked to donate. We're looking for more of these opportunities.

Interested: Kip, Raines, Nathan, Barbara&Loren (both from Eugene, OR), Diana M, Vince, others. Alison will contact you.

Cohousing (Raines)

Many changes in the org. online newsletter rather than magazine.

Has been working on merging CoHo/US db with FIC.

Raines has experienced concerns from CoHo members about being associated too strongly with IC's in the public image.

Using the phrase Intentional Neighborhood

Want to have more polished image rather than the range represented by IC's overall.

Support working with FIC, just not in such a public way.

Requests that we each look for opportunities to build bridges to help CoHo people to be less fearful about FIC image.

Any sense that our image has changed through holding org mtgs and doing process work at more CoHo cmties? Suggest other key cmties to work with? Can the ones we've worked with support us to other CoHo cmties? Issue isn't the people in CoHo so much as their marketers and developers wanting to create a different image than is conjured by IC's as a whole.

Forming CoHo cmties often have to be somewhat vague with county etc licensing folks.

Concern that if too closely identified with IC's they won't become more accepted.

Laird's work with process work (Mid Atlantic, CO).

How can we bridge in other ways? Regional networking between different styles of groups.

An example of a missed opportunity happened in CO

Autonomy, independence, control over data.

Would CoHo/US board be interested in a dialog about the + and - of identifying more closely with IC's? Could be. Some of the ones who felt strongly have moved off the board. Other collaborations are working, so there might be increasing openness to recognizing the need for this.

Is CoHo/US serving the CoHo movement adequately? Gaps to be filled by FIC? There are opportunities, but not sure exactly where. Senses an undercurrent fear of competition. Be conscious of this when filling gaps. Formal contact would probably be best approach.

Simple way would be reaching out when Newsletter deadline is coming up so events can be advertised.

Is it serving CoHo movement to separate from FIC? Would like IC cmtly leaders to get more involved, for instance on CoHo bd.

Combined email list for topics pertinent to both? Interesting.

Enthusiasm about Cmag CoHo issue, although some concern expressed that people might think the mag is always about CoHo.

CoHo cmties might be candidates for House Parties. Burning souls exist.

NVC in LA (Geoph)

Allen Seid will present workshop

Geoph is very interested in doing this. 1 1/2 days. Shouldn't be open to public outside of who is attending the mtg. FIC to cover transportation, housing, food. He'll waive \$1500 fee. Perhaps another workshop (public) will be organized after this event so that he can still get \$.

Cost to FIC? Allen & Trish & toddler. Partly depends on what LAEV charges per day. Would like to be there for 4 days. \$150 (each) for transport? Around \$600.

Could do in just one day.

Where would travel \$ come from? They will advance the \$.

Where will it come from? Had thought public would be charged to make up those costs, but they are saying they don't want public there.

Maybe mtg attendees would pay \$ to attend the workshop.

Time would be in addition to mtg time.

Reluctance for FIC to spend the money on this workshop. Lukewarm on topic.

Some excitement was expressed from others.

Look into someone driving them.

Not very excited about the idea, but doesn't think the \$ should be the reason not to if others think it's worthwhile because it's small amt overall.

Willingness to let Geoph's enthusiasm carry this forward? Not much energy expressed.

Mtg is scheduled for 4 days now because thought one day would be NVC but could be 3 days if this weren't happening. People might not want to take the extra time. Wouldn't want this to affect mtg attendance.

Do people know what NVC is? Most do. Some have been to NVC workshops and are lukewarm. Others excited.

Doesn't really want to spend the extra time and \$ on this, but doesn't want to dampen anyone's initiative.

Someone familiar with NVC said that it appears we would benefit greatly, based on what has seen at this mtg.

Communication skills are great, but some might not be comfy with the self-disclosure.

Allen is one of their best trainers, so that's a reason to do it.

NVC isn't about exposure or self-disclosure. More about ways to soften energy so communication can happen better. Also called compassionate communication.

Harvey (Facilitator) asks if anyone on bd doesn't want it to happen. All willing to do it.

Willing to commit FIC funds? Geoph offered to find ways of funding this so that it doesn't have to come from FIC budget.

Willing to spend extra day for this? AGREED.

BLOGGING (Raines)

Creating materials in new media such as CD presentation of a workshop or keynote presentation. Can be sold as a CD or can be put on the Internet.

Information that is shared freely. A large creative community can be tapped into through the Internet.

A blog site is a Web sites that are more than just an intro site. Can be a very flexible medium that can be changed quickly and others can add to it.

Blog sites can show up very quickly during a search because they are visited so often and search engines track sites getting lots of use.

Should the FIC be involved in Blogging?

Most Blog sites are used by individuals and not by an entity such as the FIC as an organization. Could be a way to get info about IC's out to the larger culture.

How would the Org get involved? Could have their own blog, or could have pointers on the web site to other interesting blogs that encourage intentional community.

While it is an interesting forum some don't see it as a tool that this Org should put a lot of energy into it at this time.

New community entries could be set aside so that seekers can see the newest entries rather than surfing through the whole listing. Right now the web site shows the entries from the last thirty days, so it is already doing it.

Suggestion: Meet up Groups is an ongoing site that lists meetings and events on an ongoing way. FIC could link up with them and see what the two could work out that is beneficial to both groups.

Turn over to Web Weavers and if there are Bd level concerns it can be brought back for discussion.

Personnel Committee (Jenny)

Inreach Cmtee:

Board approves Diana M. and Miaya as co-conveners for Inreach

Site Cmtee:

Board approves Diana M take on the role as site committee convener.

Important that OS can also move forward on site work, especially the sites that are already in the pipe line. Create a transition from the OS to the committee until Diana can fully step into the role. Laird will keep in touch with Diana as time passes.

Newsletter:

Board approves Diana M as editor, but she's not willing to be the writer of the articles.

Nom Com Cmtee (Marty)

Board approves four candidates for Board position.

They are Marty Klaif, Raines Cohen, Caroline Estes, George Caneda (one year)

Evaluation:

Things done well:

Food

Sauna

Auction

Music

Good light and air movement in meeting space

Great service

Great view

Friendly Hosts

Old and new faces

Slide presentation

Upstate NY setting

Wireless Internet access

Balanced Pace

Committee time used well

Whole Board and all of Oversight in attendance

Great Markers (and grips)

Things that could be Better

Hot Tub

No 4th for Bridge

Inconsistent clean up sign up

Excess brainstorming vs. decisions

No "back rubs"

Plenary time could have been used better

Better "get to know you " exercises

More dancing, more social time

More review could have been done in advance

Neighborhood drumming

More interaction with host community

Consider doing auction on first night, rather than Saturday

Needed a toaster

Childcare – sometimes there, sometimes not

Could have done more with Cmag editor presence

Always room for improvement

Closing Bead Ritual (Jenny)

Michelle Nolen chose the bead to be added to represent our spring FIC Org Mtg at EcoVillage at Ithaca.