

Business Plan Team for Center for Community Agriculture (CCA)

Agriculture Commission AD HOC

November 14, 2013- 10:00 to 12:30

Session FOUR

Attending: Linda Stuhlman; Marianne Halpin; Peter Dean

Session THREE minutes /notes were approved.

The AD HOC attendees discussed the calendar of events and plans for Marketing Research farm visits. The group performed website research and discussed their findings. Several incubator farms and businesses were reviewed. It was decided that each member would do a comprehensive search for any commercial kitchens operating in CT in any capacity to determine competition or possible visits in the near future.

Linda relayed that according to Scot Mackinnon the kitchen would be "open to all who wish to process food or rent kitchen facilities." Clients farming traditionally or organically would be able to use the kitchen service.

Scot Mackinnon will check dates and approval from Selectman for Joe Bonelli and Diane Hirsh to visit and give Risk Management and Food Safety presentation.

Other issues discussed:

- Regulations pertaining to all aspects of the kitchen such as Health Department, Department of Consumer Protection, Food Safety Modernization ACT, Organic farming and processing and USDA mandates. It was decided that the Business Plan would include a copy of all regulations.

-Preliminary needs for interior of kitchen.

-Other uses for kitchen and barn such as offices.

-Organic regulations... NOFA will be contacted and information compiled pertaining to Organic farming.

-Marketing commercial kitchen facilities to clients regionally.

-Issues regarding kitchen on Harris property vs. kitchen in another town location.

-Cost considerations for commercial kitchen construction.

-Cost analysis for kitchen rental..... The AD HOC will start to consider costs in kitchen research in effort to start planning for financial sustainability. How many clients will be needed to generate appropriate income to cover costs of operating the kitchen? How much will each client be charged? What will be the operating hours of the kitchen?

-Constructing the Business Plan notebook should start now. It was suggested that the AD HOC start to copy 'research data' for Marketing Research and that volunteers start to document time/input. It is important that readers note the enthusiasm by town members and the efforts placed toward achieving the goals of the project. Documentation of progress and Outline of Achievements speaks volumes to those assisting in funding and gives a clearer picture of incremental effort..

Mission Statement:

As primary clarification of goals is completed, it is time for the Mission Statement to be drafted. Each AD HOC member will write up a Mission Statement draft for review at Session FIVE.

The following questions taken from Joe Bonelli's Business Plan outline were the topic of the session FOUR. The AD HOC listed many answers to each question which will be explained and positioned in the Business Plan. The AD HOC found it takes time to formulate constructive answers to the appropriate questions.

Special Attributes of Business:

Why was this business started?

What is special about the business or products?

Why should the customer be excited?

Why should the reader of this plan be excited?

(Hint: You want the reader excited if you are trying to get something from them such as a loan)

Customers

Who are your customers?

Where are they located?

Are they single visit or repeat?

AD HOC members decided to work past the 1 ½ hours end time.

As the AD HOC works toward Operation and Marketing, all thought it would be good to place photos taken at the property and to write a simple paper brochure.

Research and fact-finding calls this week include Commercial kitchens in CT; Health Department; Dept. of Consumer Protection; White Gate Farm scheduled.

Agenda next session FIVE: Operations, Market Research

Submitted by: Linda Stuhlman

