

Public Forum Outline

& Notes for Next 206 Group

For Fall Semester NR 206 Team / Plan for Public Forum, Zoom Meeting

Why?

This forum is important because during our semester of research and communication with residents and planners in the Town of Williston, we discovered a lack of communication or understanding between the two groups. It is important that farmers who want to make changes to their property know who to talk to and how to go about it. We also noted a lack of effective communication between farmers and neighbors. We believe that if entrepreneurial farmers have the chance to discuss their needs and hopes with their neighbors, that they will be able to work out a plan that works best for both parties.

Mission

To build bridges between Williston officials and residents for positive outcomes in the future of Williston. Also, to build a network of support between farmers and rural residents.

To Invite:

- Williston Town Planners
- Residents of rural willison
- Williston farmers looking to expand land uses (Isham Farms, Laura's Farm, Adam's Apple Orchard)
- Agritourism knowledgeable guest speakers
 - (suggestions- Lisa Chase, Caroline Partridge- (Senator who wrote the Farm Bill))

Agenda (Will be 1.5 to 2 hours total)

Introduction by NR 206 Group (5 min)

1. Explain the purpose of the gathering, introduce all parties. Serve as an intermediary. Feel free to flex our ideas to fit your needs.

Guest Speakers (45 min total?)

2. Representing the importance of expanding land usage:
(Caroline Partridge? Senator and Author of Farm Bill) or contact the UVM extension team doing work in agritourism

3. A town planner: Discussing how to navigate zoning bylaws and how they can help farmers meet desired goals
4. A neighbor who is level headed and doesn't want land use expanded?

Time allocated for community questions (15- 20 min)

Breakout groups (10-15 minutes)

- Allow time for discussion. Pose questions for people to discuss, emphasize people getting to know each other as well.
 - Suggested Questions:
 1. Name, where in Williston they live
 2. Share thoughts on guest speakers and this issue
 3. What is your vision for the future of your community?
 4. Would you consider expanding land uses or supporting local farms who do? Why or why not?
 5. Pose a question for the group to answer

Group Dialogue (20 min)

- 206 team will facilitate this dialogue by choosing people to speak and posing questions if people are not talking.
- Facilitate conversation between town planners and residents, give them time to ask them questions about how they can expand land use, note that this may be useful for others as well

Closing (10 min)

- Post link in zoom chat (to excel doc?) for people to share their contact information to further communicate.
- Note that farmers may want to work together and tackle changes together, so mention that they can share contacts and do so.
- Allow Williston town planners to provide a closing remark

Next Steps

- Decide if another town forum should occur, find a way to make it permanent
- Are there other ways people can communicate better?
- Build a network of Willison Farmers

Helpful Contacts:

Laura Handy, Williston Farmer:

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Sharon Newman, Spring semester 206 group- email: snewman@uvm.edu cell: 703 835 4410