

Brownsville Coop Planning Group Meeting: Minutes of Jan 14, 2006

Present: Ann Stein, Steve Brenner, Gian Mercurio, Kevin Schrier, Max Peschel, Rick Layman. (Whitney sick, Willow out of town)

- I. Go over Agenda Items (see list from email)
 - A. What are we? **Decision: we are a “Planning Group.”**
 - B. How do we operate? **Decision: A quorum of this group is those present; decisions made by consensus (or consensus –1, or –2 if necessary) when possible,** we need to be able to move forward.

Suggestion—we need to have a big party after survey, after sawdust, pre-Open House

Suggestion—Find another place to meet, more formal
 - C. Info from Andrew McLeod at Northwest Cooperative Development Center (RCDG) in Olympia, WA.
 1. Grants (RCDG) possible as a NCDC project; need matching \$\$
 2. Steps to take now in our organizational process
 - a) Make formal decision on building;
 - b) Have a clear & conclusive decision making process (see 2 above)
 - c) Make group statement on what we can do, would like to do, what is outside scope of project.
 - d) Fundraising is priority; need to get account & incorporate soon
 - e) Don't pursue 501C3—doesn't apply to retail business
 - f) He costs \$318 for ½ day; figure out Qs first
 - g) Faxed us a form for NCDC to channel tax exempt donations
 - D. Have you done your homework? Reading “How to Start a Food Co-op”—Ann, Steve, Gian—it's a really good document; Kevin, Rick—will get on it.
 - E. Unresolved agenda items—develop a phone tree? Whitney poster? Both of these were mentioned but no decision made.
 - F. Agenda items for this meeting from 11/26 meeting:
 1. Fund raising & Financing
 - a) Membership fees—Decision: flexible payment plan, equal payment for everyone (a co-op value/principle)
 - b) Member loans—question, no decision
 - c) “Get Togethers”—July garage sale in parking lot, farmer's markets in parking lot (free to Co-op members)
 - d) **Decision: need to open bank account** (how?)

2. Steve's CAD drawing—not exact but workable; ~2300 sq ft; will use in meeting w/ Willow & Randy on 1/28/06.
 3. Finalize Vision Statement—tabled because of other concerns
- II. Discussion
- A. Much concern over moving too fast, pressure to open. All agreed we need to proceed in stages. **Decision: Need to have a town meeting for interested parties, salon?**
 - B. Need to have people w/ business experience involved (Steve knows someone who owns several groceries)
 - C. Gian talked to Michelle, mgr of 1st Alt Coop, she is excited, will come & talk to us, bring other mgrs—salon in Feb?
 - D. Andrew McLeod to come to Feb meeting? Decision: wait on this until after “Building Meeting”
 - E. Ann will call Extension to see if they have someone to help us
 - F. **Decision: Planning Group needs to open account with two signatures**
 - G. **Decision: PG to give \$50 toward membership fee (amt undecided) for working \$**
 - H. **Decision: put off deciding on real name—Brownsville Food Coop for now**
 - I. **Decision: to have relationship of building & Coop clarified; need to know Willow's & Randy's vision & expectations & work w/ them. Meeting Sat, Feb 28 at 10 am at Randy's.**
 - J. **Fundamental decision: we are a Consumers Coop; we will deal with Producers Coop (growers)**
 - K. Brainstorming about what Coop will be: decision tabled because of heated discussion about Community Kitchen, liability, etc. (see notes for more info); **agreed that we need to open in stages**—one room first? Buyers' club?
 - L. Rick's report on sawdust, asbestos inspection—OK to work in there; basement may be prohibitively expensive; zero lot line means we can expand, cheaper.

Discussed Vision Statement but put off working on it because we ran out of time.

Decision: Agreed—1) Full service as much as possible with non-competition

- 2) **Start with areas of strength**
- 3) **Work in stages**
- 4) **Start w/ Food Club?**
- 5) **Open one room by July**
- 6) **Have a Farmer's Market in summer**
- 7) **Kitchen when feasible & desireable**

Start: 10:10 am End: 12:00 noon

Next meeting: Sat, Jan 28, 10:00 am