

Preparation questionnaire for the first Intentional Community Meeting at Camp Innabah/PA on
12/31/2012

1. Name 3-4 Activities you see yourself doing? (personal activities, like gardening, art, photography, etc).

- My interests are in community planning,
- research and
- involvement in energy efficiency
- My hobbies are photography,
- making videos (documentaries) and
- teaching. I collected many sources for self-sustainability in terms of energy, housing, gardening and food which can be realized in teamwork.

2. What will be the sources of your income? Not the amounts, but sources like: social security, pensions, savings, continued work, existing business, starting a new business. If you can think of a rough percentage for each with the total being 100%

My sources of income will be my (future)

- retirement income (pension 50%) and eventually
- rental-like income (50%) when I sell our property and invest into UC community building; furthermore I would be able to make – if necessary –
- additional income with my skills and interests.

3. What would you like to do with others at a community? (Things like eating, cooking, community outreach, worship, spiritual activities like yoga, etc)

- eating,
- worship,
- singing,
- seminars and training,
- planning, constructing and building things,
- shuttle service (with car),
- things related to PC software, hardware and network (building, repair, training, etc.),
- hiking,
- biking

4. Would you want to have families with younger children involved?

Absolutely, especially younger children need the inspiration, guidance and protection of a community of Blessed families to once become global citizens themselves.

5. Do you want to own your property?

Yes, I want to be able to invest into the community – that could be by

- owning a building and helping others through renting it out, by
- owning a business and help others make their own money, by
- holding shares of the entire site, etc.

6. Are there any deal breakers for you?

Physical and legal contracts are no warranty for longevity and harmony. To me most important are the practiced social and spiritual skills – without proper established and followed through traditions of principled lifestyle, decision making process, problem solving ability, living for others, common vision, etc. nothing could be sustained in harmony for long.

7. Would you consider having a long term care facility part of a community you are involved in?

Absolutely! Since we all came from a “40 years wilderness course” there is certainly a need for care, also long term – and neither the church nor the own family might be able to take care of the needs all alone. As a community we definitely need to help together and each other to fulfill all needs. Priority is also healthcare on site.

8. What might make you willing to make a commitment?

Since statistically 90% fail by hastily buy land and later face the problems I would feel safe for a commitment by a more or less established blueprint of all areas involved and a certain number of like-minded families or couples committed:

a clear outlined vision and purpose of the UC community, an established decision making tool and process, clear information about the legal possibilities and restrictions, a clear defined way of ownership and/or associate, a clear tool and process for conflict solving, a principled and outlined value system, an idea of screening, etc.

9. Could you write your own mission statement for your community? Try at least, there are no wrong answers.

I desire to live a life with 3 generation Blessed families according to the OSDP with the permanent aspiration of lovingly dealing with each other and respect one another and respect nature as well.

The sustainability and compatibility of all decisions for the big picture with consideration to the future has highest priority.

We are all connected. Everyone is of equal value. Each contribution is a gift to the community, and is equivalent.

Everyone brings in what he/she can and wants to do, and takes – after consultation with the whole - what he/she needs.

THE LOCATION:

I envision living on a farmhouse with surrounding farmland property, consisting of meadows, fields and forests, ponds and rocks. A stream flows nearby through the grounds – I definitely need the sound of running water to be present. An own spring or a well are vital.

THE PUBLIC HOUSE:

In the main building is enough space for a large communal kitchen, dining area, living room and assembly room. Several toilets, showers, baths are useful.

A large "school room", which can also be used for major events, seminars and festivities is important. Space for workshops, stables, storage facilities for vegetables (cellar), feed (hay and straw).

The property must provide sufficient space for a large vegetable garden, potatoes and cultivating crops, pasture for animals. Old fruit and walnut stocks, and berry shrubs are ideal. The forest provides us with firewood if needed.

ORGANIZATION:

We could be organized as an association. The association is the owner of the entire property. The members of the association are shareholders, depending on the amount of supplied capital. When leaving the community and thus leaving the association, capital initially provided can be again taken back if the community is not compromised.

Every asset generated while in good standing, is part of the community, is jointly managed and remains in the community even when individual members leave.

The admission of new members and families must be decided unanimously (maybe after some trial period). Only children are included automatically.

DECISION MAKING:

A council of elders is formed, which meets regularly. All decisions are taken unanimously. If no unanimity can be achieved to a problem, no decision will be made. To come to a final decision we use – for instance - the circle way method, which gives everyone the chance to speak and be listened to without interruption.

The benefit of the community and the larger whole has top priority in all decision making.

Meetings of all members (including youth and children) are held – if desired - on a regular basis. All wishes and concerns are taken seriously and are being discussed. The life experience and the knowledge of the older generation is an important part in decision making.

It is essential for the functioning of the community that each member takes up the responsibility in perceiving and expressing his/her needs.

Differences of opinion are cleared – for instance - with the help of the co-counseling method, in talks on the basis of the Divine Principle, as well as in speech bar rounds (circle way).

WORK:

Any community work is voluntary and is a gift to the community. There is no assessment of labor, meaning any kind of work is equivalent. It will be also recommended that one or more members mainly take care of the functioning and well-being of the community.

These are then contact persons for everybody to bring conflicts to the surface, to illuminate in a larger context and from the point of view of the Divine Principle, and to work out differences.

Weekly schedules are created for the most important incurring activities (who-when cooking community meals, when-who needs a / the cars, who looks after the children, who feeds the animals etc.). We work for the community – if possible - about three to six hours per day and take longer time to muse, for sharing, play and fun, attention to the children, deep conversations and outreach.

CHILD CARE AND TRAINING:

Children may develop freely and learn freely. To them a most versatile prepared environment is offered, in which they have the opportunity to explore the world themselves, to conduct research, to experiment, to try out and to find solutions. In this process, all "academic" skills are integrated.

There are always one or more adults as contact persons, companionship and support available to children. Also the workshops and the range of animals are of course open to children. All members of the community take responsibility for all the children of the community.

FEEDING:

Preferably freshly cooked, natural, organic, regional, seasonal and attested. Vegetables, cereals, fruits, berries, herbs, nuts from our own production. Animal products (milk, eggs, etc.) if possible only from the own (or known) animals. The foods produced at the farm are processed into high-quality products or stored. Joint lunch (for everybody remaining on the property during the day), sometimes dinner and breakfast.

ANIMALS:

Animals should receive a dignified home as well as loving and respectful care and housing with maximum freedom. Everything we get from animals is viewed as a gift and a tribute.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

It is a declared objective of the community, to supply energy as far as possible from own renewable sources and to ensure that production is environmentally sound and sustainable.

10. Is there a specific area you have in mind?

I only have kind of an idea what the area should look like:

- big (up to 600 acres or more) mixed landscape with woodland (timber, hiking, hunting, recreation), wetland (fishing, recreation), grassland (farming, animals), rocks (view, sports, solitude – holy ground)
- several clean water sources (wells, springs, lakes, streams, ponds), but not a typical wetland, since restrictions might apply and we might not be able to use the water then for our own purposes
- zoning should be more generous and allow expanding construction of several kinds of housing, business, public buildings, community facilities, infra-structure, research stations and greenhouses within the area to eventually create a village and also facilitate an alternative economic base for the whole region while providing a living example of sustainable living, natural building, alternative energy and waste management
- taxes need to be looked at closely and professionally, since that will have an effect on everything
- the vicinity of a big city I would not consider as a first priority. In my long-term view people will start going back to nature (trend of migration from cities) and the price and value of land will increase once city growth stagnates and unemployment reaches an unbearable high; it's better to build something sustainable and solid where more people can connect to in the future and also get a vision there how to build their own communities. If continuous versatile high quality education (seminars and proper outreach) is provided, people will overcome any distance to connect

11. Are there locales that would be out for you?

Nothing specific, since I don't live in America and am not familiar with the details.

In my research I found a place in upstate NY, which was owned by the Amish before and therefore not spoiled by chemicals or pesticides. It was about 500 acres, had several buildings, wells and springs, a stream and several ponds, rocks and forest land, pastures and farmland and a connecting road, but unfortunately already sold recently for about 500k. Still – in all cases the zoning regulations (concerning eventually expanding to a village) and the tax-situation are to be watched.