



Sustainable Sonoma Council Meeting

May 14, 2020

Videoconference format

Contents of this document: 1. Attendance list. 3. Meeting agenda, notes in blue including prospectus draft. 3. Chat box record.

Attendance list

Council

Fred Allebach
Lorraine Ashton
Mark Bodenhammer
Maureen Cottingham
Ann Colichidas
Aiko-Sofie Ezaki
Lauren Feldman
Logan Harvey
Rebecca Hermosillo
John Kelly
Curran Reichert

Orlando Rodriguez
Maricarmen Reyes
Diana Sanson
Fe Sendaydiego
Cathy Wade Shepard
David Stollemer

Steering Committee

Kimberly Blattner
Richard Dale
Cynthia Scarborough

Staff

Caitlin Cornwall
Mike Courville
Kim Jones

Advisors

Katherine Fulton
David Morell

I. Welcome

1 word that describes **how you want Sonoma Valley to be different and better, coming out of this pandemic.**

Lorraine: Collaborative
Logan: Employed
Cathy: Realistic
Fred: Equitable
Diana: Economic Diversity
David S: Affordable housing
Aiko-Sofie: Equity
Maureen: Balanced

Ann: Forward
Rebecca: Safe
Mark: Jobs-having
Fe: Cognisant
Richard: Connected
Lauren: Renewed
Cynthia: Collaborative
Kimberly: Equitable

Orlando: Optimistic
Socorro: Intentional
John Kelly: Fair

Curran: Inclusive
David M (advisor): Truly sustainable

II. Community transformation for a more sustainable community.

We have heard this desire from the SuSo Council and community in general, to make our community BETTER than it was before the pandemic. We are looking for ways forward that are consistent with SuSo values of finding sustainable community through advancing equity, economy, and environment.

The **DRAFT** prospectus you reviewed (below) is very much under construction with business and equity leaders. The scope currently is to seek support from individuals who live in Sonoma Valley or have personal connections here, to build momentum for bigger investments in the future, in SV and SuSo.

Main objectives in the prospectus, for discussion:

- Support small local businesses.
- Safety net, basic support for SV's people and households, which overlaps with housing strategies

III. Discussion

Are you comfortable with moving forward in exploratory conversations about the draft content and ideas in the prospectus, with various community stakeholders and potential donors?

Much discussion about local currency which is 1 possible item in the prospectus that is not proposed for direct near-term action. Many communities have developed a locally administered currency that fosters local community investment. Can be exchanged for \$US. Caitlin: An unsolidified idea.

Mark: Likes concept of local currency but not supported by federal law, must be informal. Red flag, couldn't pay wages with it. More of a fun concept. Point Reyes Station has it?

Aiko-Sofie: See Ying, founded by Carla Ballerd (alternative to local currency). Self-reliant community concept.

Logan: Let's be realistic. Local currency is not realistic for supporting working people. Not realistic to do basic income with philanthropic money. Start with how much money SuSo thinks it can raise. Remember massive government budget shortfalls.

Fred: Supports local currency as it might enable us to pay essential workers a living wage. Might be a way to act on desire for an equitable future. Need to continue to transcend silos.

Lauren: It is clear that there are people in this community both with and without a lot of money. It's about getting back to business as usual, at least initially, a new normal. Some industries and individuals that are booming. Supports a way to harness and distribute locally.

Ann: We need creative ways to get money circulating again. What are the specific products? Likes "buying iconic buildings" and "land trust" ideas.

IV. Vote using practical consensus

<u>SuSo Practical Consensus</u>	
Thumbs up means "I am in agreement with the proposal." Yes Button	If all thumbs are either up or sideways, then the proposal passes.
Thumbs sideways means "It is not my first choice, but I can live with it." Chat "---" (dashes)	
Thumbs down means "We need more discussion. I do not agree with the proposal as it stands, and here is why." No Button	

Thumbs up: 5

Thumbs sideways: 7

Thumbs down: 0



DRAFT **Community** **transformation** **through crisis** **response**



SUSTAINABLE SONOMA
Economy. Environment. Everyone.

Acting now for a more
sustainable Sonoma Valley



A period of uncertainty, yet the time for action is upon us all.



The Covid-19 pandemic will leave a lasting impact on **our economy** and **our society**. Severe unemployment, heightened family stress, permanent loss of many local businesses, school closures, and widespread housing insecurity are just some of the short-term impacts of this crisis.



Strains on **our natural environment** continue while we cope with the pandemic. Local stresses include recurring climate change disasters such as wildfires, floods, heat waves, and groundwater failures.



Choices we make now can transform **our communities** into more connected, equitable and caring places, positioning Sonoma Valley for long-term sustainability for our people, our economy, and our environment. We can build a model for others to emulate.



Local creativity, civic partnerships and strategic capital expenditures are needed to forge a long-term path toward stability in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Recovery or transformation?

Disaster recovery efforts typically focus on returning to business as usual, seeking to reclaim what has been lost. But getting back onto the same course of action that brought us where we are today is at odds with creating more sustainable communities. What if we can instead move in a new direction,

not going back but headed forward toward a future aligned with sustainable values: equity, caring, and stewardship?

True transformation requires thinking and acting differently about our future.



Build a local economy resilient to future shocks.

Early draft for discussion.

Forecast	Example Objectives	Short-Term Actions	Future Impact
<p>Widespread permanent closures of smaller, locally owned independent businesses.</p> <p>Race to the bottom makes wages insufficient to support local households.</p> <p>Acquisition of lost local businesses by out-of-area corporate investors, with loss of local influence over iconic properties that create social infrastructure.</p>	<p>Establish a fund to issue buffer payments to carefully selected businesses, so they can provide good jobs that support the community.</p>	<p>Provide a lifeline that allows desirable businesses to continue and be good employers, by providing low-interest or forgivable loans to businesses meeting these criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ locally owned, ○ employ local people ○ serve residents as well as visitors ○ create community character and build social infrastructure by virtue of their location, within 2 buildings of: Sonoma Plaza, central Springs, or "downtown" Glen Ellen and Kenwood. <p>"Adopt-A-Shop" campaign.</p>	<p>Use job training to shift employment beyond tourism and hospitality, towards a diversified local economy and business holdings.</p> <p>Support a large new innovation employer on the former Sonoma Developmental Center campus.</p>
	<p>Acquire key commercial properties or buildings at risk from business closures.</p>	<p>Buy iconic buildings and sites, operate them under B-Corp or similar governance for public good.</p>	<p>Establish a community trust to advance equity in business holdings and employment taking into account race, ethnicity and industry.</p>



Provide security and opportunity for all members of our community.
Early draft for discussion.

Forecast	Example Objectives	Short-Term Actions	Future Impact
<p>Local employers reduce payrolls, leading to permanent loss of local jobs.</p> <p>Insufficient safety net. Public assistance is lacking. Undocumented individuals, parents, and households receive none.</p> <p>Housing costs over-burden poor families. Evictions, foreclosures, mental and physical health problems, and family violence skyrocket.</p> <p>Loss through emigration of residents and employees continues.</p>	<p>Meet minimum household income needs to ensure a decent standard of living.</p> <p>Support economic diversity of households.</p> <p>Prevent further loss of community members who move away.</p>	<p>Transform local organizational capacity to provide substantial need-based direct financial assistance.</p> <p>Provide financial assistance, primarily rental supplement, to households whose incomes have crashed, including repaying deferred rent and related costs and supporting basic household expenses.</p> <p>Based on the publication Homes for a Sustainable Sonoma Valley, identify specific strategies and actions for SuSo to lead to meet short-term goals, such as:</p> <p>Public will-building campaign to promote housing affordability.</p>	<p>Establish a basic income support program for all individuals and families who need it, focused on residents earning less than 60% area median income (AMI).</p> <p>Network with other communities and sustainable development groups to create new mid- to long-term social safety net program.</p> <p>Develop a local currency.</p> <p>Establish or support a housing land trust to secure capital for affordable housing.</p>



Our established foundation for transformative action in Sonoma Valley.

In many places, recovery efforts will run up against inherent conflicts and partisan differences that will hamstring new actions, exacerbate existing inequalities, and heighten inter-sector tensions. Based on successful actions taken here in the past four years, Sonoma Valley, California, offers a potential model for a truly transformative community-wide response.

Well before today's Covid-19 challenge, 30 organizations came together as a coalition called *Sustainable Sonoma*, centered around a core set of values defining a sustainable community by its people's well-being, healthy environment, and strong economy. Leaders from social justice, business, health, environment, nonprofits, and government began taking action together on solutions to our community's biggest challenges .

In its decision-making, *Sustainable Sonoma* gives equal weight to voices from equity, economy, and environment, seeking the "highest common denominator" among these interest groups for integrated, long-term solutions.



The way forward.

Sustainable Sonoma has forecast some of the predictable effects of Covid-19 on our regional economy, environment, and the pursuit of equity within our community. Despite the many challenges in front of us, we see a way forward: advancing a set of robust actions in the short-term with potential to accelerate even bolder, transformative change subsequently in the mid- to long-term.

Undertaking these actions over the next two years positions Sustainable Sonoma to build momentum for future change and advance long-term sustainability for communities within the Valley and beyond:



Creating an effective model for how small communities can pivot from the pandemic to move toward an era of care, conviviality and commons.



Working alongside other California communities to translate local solutions into state policy platforms.



Networking with similar communities across the nation, this Sonoma model can propel advocacy for sustainable economies, advance community equity, and protect our country's natural environment.

Accelerating transformative action for sustainability.

Sustainable Sonoma now seeks significant support from people who care about the future of Sonoma Valley, to rapidly initiate a transformative pandemic recovery. We believe Sustainable Sonoma's unique cooperative community-wide structure can demonstrate long-lasting benefit to our devastated local economy and our people.

www.sustainablesonoma.net

Sustainable Sonoma is a coalition of a diverse Sonoma Valley people from social justice, business, health, environment, nonprofits, and government, taking action on solutions to our community's biggest challenges.



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Sustainable Sonoma is a project of
Sonoma Ecology Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit EIN 94-3136500

What is the nature of any no votes? If substantive, staff will explore offline. Time is of essence.

We had no no votes.

IV. “Forward Not Back” name brainstorming

use “Transform”

use simple language like “Better than before”

Should be simple, convey idea of “forward”

Access through Opportunity

V. Input on communications hub

As staff recruit new Council members, we are on the lookout for more inclusive ways for input, decision making, we need a platform that creates transparency and connection for the Council/SuSo process.

What functions would you want from a Council communications hub? e.g. Private conversations, group chat, reports from staff on conversations they’ve had, updates from Council members.

Lauren: has had success with google docs @ function

Richard: something that pushes out key messages instead of requiring active searching by members

Fe: look into apps that help coordinate teams. Idea of Team Snap, which notifies you, not on email, worked for 50 person membership (track team).

Input on draft Forward Not Back, received **before** Council meeting

Lauren Feldman via google form

Re table 1: Creating a system that supports the infrastructure that can in turn support individuals. What if we have a fire and power outage while we're still sheltering in place?

Re table 2: It's like a shock-absorber. The create a springy, resilient economy that isn't too stuck in its ways to bounce back in effective, efficient ways.

When it comes to housing, I think a lot of people currently taking up valuable rental properties are interested in buying homes. If more of the local community was able to buy homes that are now being used as second homes or quickly snatched up by people

from outside our community with cash offers, it would free up some much needed rental space that could help balance the price being charged for said rental properties. When walking around Sonoma neighborhoods during this time of quarantine, I am always surprised by how many homes there are but how many appear vacant. If our mission is to keep green space and don't really want to see it disappearing for low-income housing developments (as much as they are needed), what can be done with what we already have existing in the market already?

Fred Allebach via email, excerpt only:

I think adjustments need to be made ...to ... sew the threads between “sectors”, i.e. the working class and Latino populations, the wealthy, and the business and environmental communities... For SuSo this means including some actual, fire breathing POC advocates: NBOP (Belen Grady), Food For All (MariCarmen and Maite can maybe be bridges between SuSo/ La Luz/ non-profits and Food For All leaders), SoCo United in Crisis and North Bay Jobs with Justice (Mara Ventura) in discussions about what positive transformation means from an equity standpoint. We probably don't want to simply and tacitly recap past inequities as we imagine a positive future.

no one making working class money can shop in Sonoma. Suggestion: get a public bank to fund, or a rich donor to buy a building where there's a food store space and space for workers to live. It strikes me that SuSo until now has been very measured and cautious. It may be time to step out and make your voice heard, SuSo needs to get strongly behind lobbying for public banking. Contact Chris Petlock on this.

Ellie Insley, advisor, via email, excerpt only:

“each time I read the part about “iconic businesses” and “desirable businesses” the idea sounds exclusive. Maybe have a hierarchy of criteria not requiring all.

the document feels incomplete without the Environmental third leg of the stool, especially if jobs could be generated and the triple bottom line achieved, such as:

1. Retrofit 80% of existing homes to reduce emissions, improve indoor air quality, address inequities in housing, and reduce health costs.
2. Increase soil health and soil carbon in agriculture and wildlands by implementing proven practices such as biochar, composting, and reduced tillage.
3. Build microgrids in select locations powered by renewables, to increase self-sufficiency, improve air quality, reduce health costs, and reduce emissions (and create jobs - EI).
4. Increase health and resilience of wild and rural residential areas (80% of SV) to achieve multiple objectives of water retention, wildlife habitat, youth and low-skill employment, property value, and fire risk reduction. Activities include erosion repair, forest thinning where appropriate, dispersed water capture, de-ditching, prescribed fire, invasive weed management, and reconfiguration of wildlife-blocking fences.

Cynthia Scarborough, Steering Committee

Spot-on objectives needing LOTS more conversation - not clear what the appropriate role is for SuSo vis-a-vis other organizations active in this arena

Input on draft Forward Not Back, received **after** Council meeting

You all have done a lot of work coalescing ideas/concepts and I am glad to see the draft. Some thoughts;

Names- in reviewing the words that came up two themes stood out for me- balance (equity, diversity) and forward. Lots of the words used as a single aspiration are very often perceived as "PC", which we might want to be sensitive to in the name so it does not get categorized before it even starts. One possibility: Valley Forward.

Question- when reading the report, I kept wondering what additional data is there on housing. So what's the status of the long awaited report?

If we really want to do something that others cannot, what about focusing on SDC redevelopment and driving that the way it needs to go to benefit everyone? I know I keep asking that, but it really is THE project that could reshape the valley for decades to come. Yet SuSo does not seem to directly engage on it. Yes Richard is very involved, and others in SuSo, but it needs much more focus from the broader community. So many folks (esp. those in Sonoma town) think its a "Glen Ellen thing." It's not and the sooner the broader valley engages with it the better. It could help achieve several key elements in this draft document.

Since you are expanding the council, I am hoping you might bring in more small biz voices in some way (since that is a hard hit group now - beyond the chamber?) and then someone from the Glen Ellen Forum.

Cheers,
Diana

Contents of Council Chat

From SVVGA - Maureen to Everyone: (03:15 PM)

Welcome Lauren! Great to see your face on here.

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:20 PM)

I made some comments by e-mail, can they be shared with the group?

From KimberlyBlattner1 to Everyone: (03:23 PM)

Kim, was someone from La Luz invited?

Kimberly: yes-Juan and Angie.

From Socorro Shiels to Everyone: (03:25 PM)

Sorry I have to leave to another meeting. Thank you for everything you do for our Valley. Quite a group here...

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:28 PM)

a barter bank... build up barter credit...

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

- - -

From davidstollmeyer to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

From KimberlyBlattner1 to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

From David Morell to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

Thumb is up...I don't see my blue hand

From Ann C to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

From Cathy Wade Shepard to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

From diana sanson to Everyone: (03:40 PM)

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:41 PM)

thumbs up is in "reactions" icon

From laurenfeldman to Everyone: (03:41 PM)

Thumbs Up (I don't have a button..!)

From Mayor Harvey to Everyone: (03:41 PM)

From Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce to Everyone: (03:41 PM)

thumbs up and thank you

From Fe Sendaydiego to Everyone: (03:42 PM)

.....

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:42 PM)

my concern, SuSo does not go forward to change the world for the good while, like the Titanic, steerage passengers are locked below decks

From laurenfeldman to Everyone: (03:46 PM)

Someone said "Access through Opportunity" earlier.. I wrote that down... Thought it was good, but not sure it applies to this moment

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:47 PM)

RIUA Ridiculous, impractical, utopian aspirations!

From Mayor Harvey to Everyone: (03:47 PM)

i like it fred!

From Fred Allebach to Everyone: (03:52 PM)

every group has a core leader whose sensibilities ultimately guide the group, I trust Caitlin's impulse to advocate for full cost accounting, TBL sustainability; this is a voice that needs to be heard as we deal with our past issues plus Covid issues too