

East 40 Advisory Committee
Nov. 4, 2022
via Zoom

Attending: Cindy Vojnovic, Alex Brands, Doug Smith, Robin Cunconan-Lahr, Sienna Heath, Alison Carpenter, James Weiler, Tom Shillea, Will Rufe, Adam DePaul, Anita Forrester, Ellie Wirthiem, Evi Kim, Kelly Allen, Carol Burns

1. Restructuring of East 40 Staff

Under a proposed restructuring plan, Kelly would become the full time Director, and a full time Farmer would be hired. Another position of full time Coordinator, responsible for project management and purchases/expenses, will be created. Kelly met with Christine Pense, Dr. Ruth, and Jim Dunleavy to discuss this plan and also how East 40 will generate revenue (e.g. grants for agriculture and humanities).

2. Kiln update

Andrew Stork, a part time ceramics faculty member, has taken the lead on completing this project. It is projected to be up and running around Nov. 21.

3. Lenape Nation

Kelly met with Adam DePaul (Chief of Education for the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania) to discuss programming opportunities with East 40 and NCC. They are working on an Indigenous Studies concentration within the Global Studies program. An annual conference was discussed, as well as a robust community ed schedule focusing on Lenape culture (past, present, future) and food. They are working with Elizabeth Lugagis to secure humanities funding from the college to support these initiatives.

4. Seed Keeping event

Discussions have begun with Katie Hunter from The Seed Farm on a Seed Keeping event for early in 2023. It would include speakers and panels to share information.

5. Yoga Loft event

This event was originally planned for October but has been rescheduled for spring.

6. Community ed classes

Cindy Vojnovic will offer two classes in May as part of the community ed schedule.

7. Food Studies Concentration

The work to bring this to fruition continues; the paperwork has gone through the Curriculum department; it will be part of the Global Studies program. There is no date yet as to when it will begin.

8. Composting Outhouse

With the assistance of the East 40 volunteers, the outhouse has been updated (and decorated). Two urine diverters have been installed; the next project is to install a ramp.

9. Fall 22 Update

This fall has been the busiest, in terms of traffic to East 40. More than eight classes used the space. Per Kelly, there has been “amazing energy” as we establish ourselves as the space for “place-based learning.”

10. Discussion

- Attending Pasa conference? Kelly, Ellie, Will, Sienna, Anita, Carol are interested; maybe Evi?
- Per Anita, NCC is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education; that info will be added to the East 40 website.
- Evi had questions about the new staffing, and also about having livestock on the property. There may be an option to get an educational variance from Bethlehem Township.
- There was further discussion about the kiln buildout. It is a “high fire” (2400 degrees), wood-fueled kiln that takes 24-48 hours to fire up. It will be used by credit students. The NCC project is unique in that we can harvest materials from the East 40 property (excavating and processing the clay). Only one other site in the US has the same resources.
- Additional discussion about the work of the volunteers and Good Growers. Kelly acknowledged Ellie’s good work with both groups. Many of the volunteers are international students, and they have bonded as a group. The Good Growers focused on foraging black walnuts, persimmons, paw paws, and hickory and hazelnuts from the East 40 property.
- It was noted that there are several Lenape gardens at regional colleges (Haverford, U Penn); this could be an option to plant a native garden, with plants for medicine and food. It could also include signage in the Lenape language. Will mentioned that his uncle has a library of Lenape seeds.

11. Brainstorming

- Yoga loft event – could include meditation
- In partnership with the office of Civic Engagement, we can host one (or more) of the coffee talk conversations and focus them on the themes of agriculture, food culture, the environment, relational foodways, etc.; perhaps using mugs made at the East 40?
- Anita suggested working together on an Environmental Symposium and/or Earth Day events – some of which could be at the East 40.

- Another idea was to offer a “Climate 5K” in the spring; part of the course could be through the woods on the East 40 property.
- The new disc golf course was mentioned – perhaps sponsoring the “East 40 Cup” as an event?
- Design and build study pods for more studying options, on the site.
- Could ‘the mule’ be outfitted with a welcome sign, perhaps including a history of the East 40?
- Build an imu (Hawaiian underground oven)
- Create a back-to-school mug building workshop for faculty and staff
- Host dinners at the East 40 that celebrate diverse food cultures
- Solstice and Equinox celebrations
- Develop Community Education programs
- Host a spring concert

12. Closing

The last Farmers Market of 2022 is planned for Wednesday, Nov. 9 from 10-2 in the Quad. It will feature produce, honey, pottery, a bake sale, and East 40 memorabilia. The plan is to schedule additional markets in the spring.

The next meeting is on Friday, Dec. 2 at 2 p.m. via Zoom.