Analysis and Proposal

by

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Executive Summary

Co-creating an intentional community is a demanding and daunting task. Add to that the goals of sustainable living, relative self-sufficiency, and positive community involvement, and the task becomes that much more difficult. For starters, pinpointing exactly what sustainability in the context of community means is confusing, with copious amounts of disinformation and greenwashing available to the public. If a community can discern and agree upon sustainability principles and goals, the means of living into those principles and achieving set goals becomes problematic. There are so many to choose from. How does one know which means are the best for a particular community? Which ones actually work? Which ones do municipalities allow? If a community wants to use technologies that municipalities do not allow, is there a way around it? How does a community continually self-assess to make sure it is living as intended? How does a community integrate change? The questions go on and on.

Some of the most important questions at the outset of such an endeavor are, “What are we trying to bring forth into the world?” and “How will we contribute to the health and well-being of our members and the ecosystems which we inhabit?” At the core, these are the questions that must be carefully analyzed, intuited, decided, and lived.

Amidst the confusion, difficulty, and challenge, T2 Consulting Team hopes to provide some guidance to the developing Hart’s Mill ecovillage. Here, we apply sustainable community development principles, techniques, and technologies that have been tried and tested by hundreds of living laboratories called ecovillages. We use regenerative development as the underlying and uniting paradigm and methodology to guide our recommendations for Hart’s Mill to a level beyond sustainability, to a level that continually manifests higher levels of health and well-being for entire living systems.

We hope Hart’s Mill will find this analysis of its existing plans and proposal for future plans helpful. Below, we briefly summarize our proposals for the integral worldview, social, ecological, and economic dimensions necessary for sustainable community development and living. Beyond this report, if Hart’s Mill would like more support from us, we would be happy to provide it.

Our team worked as a group to develop our overall ideas, approach, and strategy. Individuals were primarily responsible for the development of certain dimensions or other aspects of the work. Those are listed here:

- Leah Gibbons: Purpose; Consulting Team Vision, Mission, Objectives; Worldview Dimension; Rituals; Nature Conservation
- Hamish Thompson: Permaculture Principles; Climate Change; Water Systems; Carbon Neutral Energy; Green Building
- Joe Cole: Vision and Mission; Social Dimension; Ecological Dimension recommendations
- Thumbs: Economic Dimension

Worldview Summary

A worldview is a characteristic set of beliefs, ideas, and principles that form the basis for how people interact with the world, including how they perceive it, how they behave within it, and what they bring forth into it. As such, worldviews are foundational to any endeavor in change.
For Hart’s Mill, we recommend developing and nurturing a holistic worldview that lives the reality of interbeing while recognizing different worldviews in others and interacting with them appropriately. Out of this worldview comes the overarching methodology of regenerative development, which is the basis of our recommendations in all dimensions. A compelling and guiding narrative about Hart’s Mill’s place in and unique value-adding contribution to its social-ecological system also emerges from a holistic worldview. We present a Story of Change but recommend Hart’s Mill craft its own unique Story of Change that reflects its intentions as an intentional community. Finally, we explain how creating a community such as Hart’s Mill is inherently spiritual and suggest that nurturing this aspect of community life will greatly enrich Hart’s Mill members and its endeavors.

Social Summary

Hart’s Mill is at a pivotal point in its development, still facing many key choices about the community and its mission. Our Consulting Team recommends expanding Hart’s Mill’s Vision and Mission to include a commitment to Regenerative values and practices. While Hart’s Mill has an established Governance structure using Sociocracy, many members would benefit from deepening collaborative skills and avenues of participation in community governance. HM members express a great deal of appreciation for HM leaders, while also revealing a spectrum of views on the effectiveness of leadership at HM. Members identified needs for feedback systems, younger leaders, more effective decision-making, and improved communication. Our Team also recommends regular meals and celebrations that integrate Regenerative Sustainability Values, and view celebrations as collective art-forms. Hart’s Mill is poised to become a Center for Regenerative Living on the East Coast of the United States. Our Team recommends that Hart’s Mill create an Educational center for Regenerative Sustainability, Cooperative Governance, and Social and Environmental Justice as a top priority, and fostering relationships with allies in Regenerative Sustainability and Education across local, regional, national, and international networks.
Economic Summary

Money and law have been used for evil things, just like agriculture, but HM has the opportunity to turn these powerful forces around and use them to heal their world. The legal status of HM collaborative ownership should recognize the long term development and evolution of the community from a small group of resourced elders, into a modest living classroom and eventually into a community owned leader in regenerative living. In pioneering hybrid legal structures of ownership and making their path to these decisions available for the public they will be working in alignment with their outreach mission and still serving their personal needs. Also, what HM sees as weaknesses and threats are really opportunities when they are reframed as opportunities to build alliances with communities that have what HM needs and want what HM has. And not finally, but initially because this is the launch of HM, the time is fertile for HM to invest fully in opening the doors of their education center and becoming a collaborative citizen of their social ecosystem.

Ecological Summary

In an era of climate change and environmental crisis, Hart’s Mill can become a leader in regenerative agriculture, green building, and renewable energy by revitalizing its mission and vision in relation to the ecosystems of which it is a part. Hart’s Mill rests near the headwaters of McGowan Creek, which feeds into the Eno River and the Neuse River Basin. By envisioning Hart’s Mill as essentially connected to the watershed, the land, the wildlife corridors, and the larger ecosystems around it, how might this guide the heart, the spirit, the choices, and the practices of the community? Through regenerative agriculture and permaculture design, the community can grow food in a way that increases the health and functioning of the surrounding ecosystems. Holistic Sustainable Building criteria and other regenerative technologies offer a template for deepening green building of homes and village. Regenerative design can guide water use, reuse, and wastewater treatment through rainwater catchment, living gray water systems, composting toilets, and constructed wetlands. Finally, Hart’s Mill can become an inspiring model in renewable energy through building for Net Plus renewable energy generation, maximizing energy efficiency, and collaborating with local and regional groups working for a renewable energy economy.
~Introduction~
~Hart’s Mill Background~

Hart’s Mill Ecovillage is a forming community located in a semi-rural area of Orange County, North Carolina. The group aspires to be a sustainable farming community with a village of around 30 dwellings, where people live in justice and harmony with the land and each other.

The property is located in the Piedmont Triangle Region of central NC, which includes the cities of Chapel Hill (20 miles away, population 57,000), Durham (23 miles, population 250,000), and Raleigh (45 miles, population 460,000). The closest towns to Hart’s Mill are Mebane (4 miles, population 11,000) and Hillsborough (8 miles, population 6,000). Hart’s Mill is within 1.5 miles of NC State Highway 70, and 2 miles to Interstate 40/I-85, while sitting 35 miles from RDU International Airport. Main Employers in the area include: major universities like NC State, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Duke; the State of North Carolina; several major Hospitals and medical facilities; technology companies like IBM and RedHat; BlueCross and BlueShield; and Public Schools. There is a locally-owned cooperative grocery store, Weaver Street Market, with stores in Hillsborough, Carrboro, and Chapel Hill. In addition, there is a vibrant local foods culture in the area, with successful farmers’ markets in Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Hillsborough, and Durham.

In January, 2017 the community purchased 112 acres of land with forest, field, and pond. The pond is located on the western end of the property, and feeds into a small creek that runs to
the east. On the eastern boundary of the property is McGowan Creek, which runs north to south and feeds into the Upper Eno River, and then into the Neuse River Basin. The property sits in USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 7b/8a, and sees average Annual Precipitation of 47 inches.

Hart’s Mill aspires to create a small ecovillage community with a working farm. The community has worked with architects and engineers to complete a Site Plan for the village that includes 32 homes, a Common House, and Farm Buildings, and that preserves most of the forest. The group is currently working on the designs of the homes, a plan for financing the development of the project, and a plan for farming. As of late September, 2017, the community has selected a basic design for the homes and adopted guidelines around sustainability. As the group continues to work on agricultural planning, they are seeking ways to attract more farmers to the community. Finally, the group is working diligently on questions of financing the development. Hart’s Mill’s goal is to secure a large development loan to build all of the homes, common house, and infrastructure at once.

Hart’s Mill has around 25 active members, with another 50 or so exploratory members. The group is mostly white, middle-aged and older, and middle class, and has ongoing conversations about how to increase diversity of age and ethnicity. Hart’s Mill uses a Sociocratic governance system, and while Sociocracy has proven to be quite efficient in making certain decisions, the group hears regular concerns about inclusiveness, transparency, and the difficulties of new members finding ways to participate and have their voices heard. In addition, as the project develops, there are ongoing questions around how deep the group’s commitment is to creating an ecovillage that is affordable and sustainable, in contrast to a more conventional cohousing development. Education is part of the group’s mission, and there are long-range plans to build an education center on the land. This past July 2017, two of the core founding members purchased a home on seven acres of land that is directly adjacent to the Hart’s Mill land. The couple lives in the house, called Hart’s Nest, and is making the residence available for shared housing and community meetings, gatherings, and workshops.
The community has created 36 Principles and Intentions that provide guidance for how the group hopes to fulfill its Vision, Mission, and Aims, stated below.

~Hart’s Mill Vision~

We envision a world in which people live in justice and harmony with each other and the land.

~Hart’s Mill Mission~

We are an agrarian intentional community: restorative in our agriculture, sustainable in our designs and practices, collaborative in our social and work life, and celebratory and creative in all that we do.

~Hart’s Mill Aims~

- To create and maintain a physical infrastructure such as homes, structures, a community house, roads, pathways, utilities, studios, and workspaces
- To produce food, fiber, and energy for our community
- To provide governance, financial and legal stewardship, membership services, land-use management, community-strengthening and educational offerings
- To encourage the establishment of land-based enterprises
- To share what we have learned, serve as a model, and foster collaborative exchanges through teaching, learning, and participating in social change.
~Purpose~

Hart’s Mill is at a critical time in its development. Recommendations and proposals that provide guidance and options could be beneficial.

The Gaia Education Design for Sustainability (GEDS) certification program presents a comprehensive overview of the necessary components for sustainable community design. This extensive compilation is based on the experiences of hundreds of ecovillages acting as living laboratories over many decades. T2 Consulting members apply GEDS principles to Hart’s Mill as a case study and in hopes of providing useful information for Hart’s Mill members. Following, we present analyze Hart’s Mill’s current plans and provide suggestions and guidance in the form of a design proposal. Our intention is not to supplant Hart’s Mill’s current plans; it is to help manifest the latent potential of Hart’s Mill as an intentional community, as part of the land, and as part of a larger story of co-creation.

~T2 Consulting Team Vision~

We are a mindful community of consultants who nurture the growth of intentional communities in deepening their practices of Sustainability, Collaboration, Regeneration, and Social Justice.

We utilize the GEDS model of four dimensions of sustainability: worldview, social, ecological, and economic. Attention to each of these four dimensions as well as the ways they synergistically interact are necessary for systemic sustainability.
The four dimensions of sustainability and some of their elements. Image from Global Ecovillage Network Europe, http://gelebte-nachhaltigkeit.de/en/members/topics/index.htm

~T2 Consulting Team Mission~

- **Worldview**: To deepen awareness of fundamental values and commitments, oriented towards reconnection with nature, holistic consciousness, and engaged spirituality in the service of personal, community, and planetary health and well-being.
- **Social**: To support HM in creating resilient social, cultural, and governance systems, based in social justice and the recognition of the interconnectedness of all life.
- **Ecological**: To support HM in the design and creation of self-reliant and regenerative living systems that support a thriving community life. In our work we honor the power and wisdom of the Earth and the elemental mysteries of life.
- **Economic**: To present options for HM to make their vision economically viable and accessible to the intended participants.

~T2 Consulting Team Objectives~

We offer options and guidance in alignment with GEDS principles and teachings pertaining to:

- expanding Hart’s Mill’s Vision and Mission to include a commitment to Regenerative Design and Development values and practices
- strengthening the community’s approach to decision-making, personal empowerment, conflict work, local and global networking, and cultivating holistic leadership
- implementing appropriate technology, green building, food systems, water technology, Permaculture, regenerative and whole systems design
- Economic strategies concerning the next steps for networking with local allies and implementing the farming education program.
~HART’S MILL DESIGN PROPOSALS~

Analysis of Current Hart’s Mill Plans and Proposals
~WORLDVIEW DIMENSION~
~Regenerative Development~

At the core of T2’s recommendations is regenerative development. Regenerative development is a design and development methodology based on an ecological worldview, theory, and knowledge. It utilizes a regenerative sustainability paradigm. This paradigm is based on holistic living systems thinking. Its goal is to create the conditions for a thriving and abundant future for all species through mutualistic co-evolutionary relationships between people and nature, thus strengthening the health, adaptive capacity, and evolutionary potential of living systems from local to global scales (duPlessis 2012). Regenerative development identifies the life-enhancing patterns, processes, and potential in a given system and develops the capacities of the system to manifest these in continually healthier ways. Specific regenerative design technologies and strategies are based on an understanding of the inner workings of living systems and provide ways for human-nature interactions to generate new and healthier patterns in a place. These include Permaculture, biomimicry, biophilic design, positive development, ecological design, and more (Mang and Reed 2012).

Other (mechanistic) ways of approaching development and sustainability are not unimportant, but they are insufficient to achieve sustainability in living systems (Mang and Reed 2012).
Relationships between different modes of design and development. From Reed (2007).

Regeneration: “to re-weave human and natural communities into a co-evolutionary whole, where humans exist in symbiotic relationship with the living lands they inhabit.” (Mang and Reed 2012, p.36).

The unfurling fern frond represent new life, growth, and regeneration. from www.taptalk.com

~Recommendations~

We recommend incorporating regenerative development values and principles more intentionally in the development of Hart’s Mill. Many of Hart’s Mill’s Principles and Intentions reflect a regenerative sustainability paradigm. These include “an abiding commitment to each
others’ and the lands’ well-being” (Principle 1); “embracing the larger web of life” (Principle 2); “integrate harmoniously with the land and each other” (Principle 11); infrastructure having a “positive impact” (Principle 12); “deepening connections with one another and with the land” (Principle 15); facilitating “sustainable relationships, growth, and trust” with neighbors (Principle 30); “enabling the creation and sustenance of other eco-villages” (Principle 33); and continual reassessment (Principle 36). When applied more consciously, the regenerative sustainability paradigm and regenerative development can guide Hart’s Mill in achieving its goals and playing a valuable role in helping its larger community of life transform to regenerative sustainability.

Towards a regenerative process, we recommend the following adaptations to Hart’s Mill’s current name, vision, mission, and aims.

~Recommendations~

~Name~

The name “Hart’s Mill” does not immediately invoke the mission/vision or goals of the project. The community is named after a white man, Thomas Hart, who lived in the area during the colonial period. Hart was a mill owner, land owner, and tax collector. As a historical figure he does not seem to embody any of the qualities and values of the ecovillage project. T2 recommends that the community choose a name that clearly conveys the nature of the project as a center for Regenerative and Sustainable Living. For example, “Headwaters Ecovillage” and “McGowan Creek Ecovillage” each connect to the project of watershed preservation and sustainability. “Reunion Ecovillage” speaks to the reconnection of people to each other and nature as a whole, thriving system.

~Vision~

Hart’s Mill ecovillage lives our interconnectedness with all of life, living as nature. Through this interconnectedness, and through fulfilling our unique value-adding role in our larger whole, we reweave all of life and create systemic perpetuating vitality and health in place and in the living systems of which we are a part.

~Mission~

HM is a regional center for regenerative agriculture and living, adding value to and catalyzing transformation to regenerative sustainability of our larger community and bioregion while providing our inhabitants with a cooperative, celebratory, and co-creative social and work life. Hart's Mill uses regenerative agriculture, building, economic, and living technologies to continually increasing the health and vitality of the entire living system.
~Aims~

- Implement regenerative development and agriculture to co-create and help manifest a flourishing, thriving living system—humans and more-than-humans—in our community and beyond.
- Provide space and support for individuals and components of our community to discover and express their unique value-adding roles contributing to Hart’s Mill and our surrounding communities manifesting their essence and purpose.
- Co-create, maintain, and improve a physical infrastructure such as homes, structures, a community house, roads, pathways, utilities, and studios/workspaces.
- Produce food, fiber, and energy for our community.
- Provide governance, financial and legal stewardship, membership services, living system support, community-strengthening and educational offerings.
- Encourage the establishment of living system-integrated enterprises.
- Be a transformational regenerative living educational center. Share how we have evolved and what we have learned; foster cooperative exchanges through teaching, learning, and participating in social and ecological change; and serve as a catalyst for transformational change towards sustainability in our surrounding communities and bioregion.
~Story of Change~

One of the principles of regenerative development is manifesting potential in oneself and projects across scales. We play a role in whole systems becoming healthier and expressing their essence. We must ask, “What is this place trying to manifest? What is it trying to become? How can it play a value-adding role in its larger place?” For Hart’s Mill, we can ask “What are we changing from and to? How will the changes we make cascade across scales? What is our unique role in increasing the health of our place and the places of which we are a part?”

Humans have always used narrative to make sense of changes through time, connecting past, present, and future into a coherent and moving whole. Coupled with the questions posed above, this is a Story of Change.

The Story of Change presented here is one that Hart’s Mill may choose to live into, and members may create their own Story of Change after finding their regenerative role in their larger communities of life:

The story of separation has become the norm in industrialized western society and, increasingly, throughout the world. The story of separation tells us that nature can be dominated and controlled by humans, that humans are above nature and beyond the laws that govern it, that humans are separate from each other and that some are better and more deserving than others. This has led to the unsustainable and degenerative condition of most human societies and social-ecological living systems today. This story must be changed so that we once again recognize and live our interconnectedness to all of life, understanding that what happens to one part of the whole happens to the whole and to all its parts. If this story of separation and its resultant actions continue, environmental and social degeneration will continue until we have only a shell of life on this planet.

Hart's Mill promotes living our interconnectedness with all of life, living as nature, not just in harmony with nature. Hart's Mill lives this interconnectedness and, through fulfilling its unique value-adding role in its larger whole, contributes to reweaving all of life and creating vitality in the living systems of which it is a part. Hart's Mill contributes to the regeneration of healthy, regenerative capacities and vitality in itself and the larger systems of which it is a part. Each member of Hart's Mill similarly has a unique and value-adding role s/he plays in helping Hart's Mill manifest its essence and purpose. Hart's Mill contributes to life expressing itself and creating more life, in all of its vitality and splendor.

Hart's Mill was once a thriving and diverse ecosystem. Indigenous Occaneechi Saponi people who once lived here respected and nurtured its biodiversity and healthy relationships, recognizing themselves as part of nature and their health and well-being inextricably intertwined with that of the rest of nature. With European colonization came a worldview that saw nature as a utilitarian commodity for people's use, leading to clear cutting and agricultural use, ecosystem degradation and simplification. Hart's Mill recognizes the assaults that have occurred to this land and its people and reverses them, restoring and regenerating the biodiversity, co-evolving mutualistic relationships, and capacities of the land and all life inhabiting it to be healthy and vital. Hart's Mill uses regenerative agriculture, building, economic, and living technologies to actively live as nature, continually increasing the health of the entire living system. Hart’s Mill is at the headwaters of the McGowan Creek, leading to the Eno River, Falls Lake, Neuse River,
Pamlico Sound, then the Atlantic Ocean. This location gives Hart's Mill an important role to play in creating a healthy and thriving watershed through regenerative development.

Watersheds of which Hart’s Mill is a part—upper Eno and Neuse River, Orange County, NC, Planning and Inspections; Watershed GIS map by Miriam Coleman.

Hart's Mill recognizes that it is part of larger living systems and that it has a unique role to play in those systems manifesting their highest potential, health, and vitality. It is a catalyst for regeneration of the larger living systems of which it is a part. It helps its neighbors know there are ways to live healthfully and beneficially as nature, and it helps them transform to that lifestyle by forming collaborative guilds with them to enact transformational change. It works with other regional non-profits (e.g., Pickard's Mountain EcoInstitute, EcoHeal, Piedmont Center for Sustainability, Abundance NC) to help bring about regenerative transformation. As the US east coast center for regenerative living, it is transformational not just locally, but throughout much of the US, focusing primarily on its bioregion. It is elevating the conversation from sustainability to regeneration so that Earth can thrive again and be a place where life flourishes.

Hart's Mill seeks ways to be socially and ecologically inclusive of life that would typically not have a presence here. It asks: What are the rare species that might be able to exist here? How can Hart's Mill nurture them? Who are the rare people who might not be able to access a place such as Hart's Mill? (e.g., urban dwellers, low-income people, people whose worldviews preclude them from searching for such a place) How can Hart's Mill reach them? Who are the people who might shut out the messages Hart's Mill is spreading? How might Hart's Mill help them open up and receive this message of vitality?

This is a continual process that starts now and will never end but will always change, evolve, develop.
In manifesting Hart’s Mill’s vision, it is important to understand that people hold different worldviews (i.e., belief systems) that form the basis of the way they think and behave, and thus the realities they create. Knowing this will help Hart’s Mill members develop their own thinking, relate to others, including important interlocutors (i.e., stakeholders) that can help them achieve their aims and create systemic change. Below are worldviews and their descriptions that are present in Hart’s Mill members as well as individuals and groups with which Hart’s Mill interacts. These determinations were based on analyses of Hart’s Mill documents, conversations with Hart’s Mill members, and many years of experience working and interacting with the other interlocutors discussed.

Present in Hart’s Mill members

*Holistic:*

We experience the wholeness of existence through mind and spirit. The world is a single, dynamic organism with its own collective mind. Self is both distinct and a blended part of a large, compassionate whole. Everything connects to everything else in ecological alignments. Energy and information permeate the earth’s total environment. Holistic, intuitive thinking and cooperative actions are to be expected.

The holistic worldview is present in some members, but not all. It is reflected in some of Hart’s Mill’s current documents and planning, but not all. The holistic worldview supports regenerative sustainability, development, and design. The language in Hart’s Mill documents

~Worldviews~

Halloween Pennant Dragonfly, playing a value-adding role in its larger living system. Hart’s Mill, July 2016, photo by Joe Cole
and, as an outgrowth, actual plans (e.g., infrastructure, educational offerings) can be elevated to be more holistic.

**~Recommendation~**

The community can intentionally hold and nurture a holistic worldview, using social, ecological, and economic dimensions to do so.

**Integrative:**

We live fully and responsibly as what we are and learn to become. Life is a kaleidoscope of natural hierarchies, systems, and forms. The magnificence of existence is valued over material possessions. Flexibility, spontaneity, and functionality have the highest priority. Differences can be integrated into independent natural flows. Chaos and change are natural.

**Communitarian:**

We seek peace within the inner self and explore, with others, the caring dimensions of community. The human spirit must be freed from greed, dogma, and divisiveness. Feelings, sensibilities, and caring supersede cold rationality. We spread the earth’s resources and opportunities equally among all. We reach decisions through reconciliation and consensus processes. We refresh spirituality, bring harmony, and enrich human development.

Present in Orange County officials/employees, who are supportive of intentional community, but still have laws and order that need to be abided by:

**Strategic:**

Act in your own self-interest by playing the game to win. Change and advancement are inherent within the scheme of things. We progress by learning nature’s secrets and seeking out best solutions. We manipulate Earth’s resources to create and spread the abundant good life. Optimistic, risk-taking, and self-reliant people deserve success. Societies prosper through strategy, technology, and competitiveness.

**Authoritarian:**

Life has meaning, direction, and purpose with predetermined outcomes. One sacrifices self to the transcendent—Cause, Truth, or Righteous Pathway. The Order enforces a code of conduct based on eternal absolute principles. Righteous living produces stability now and guarantees future reward. Impulsivity is controlled through guilt; everybody has her/his proper place. Laws, regulation, and discipline build character and moral fiber.

**Potential investors**

**Egocentric:**

Be what you are and do what you want, regardless of consequences. The world is a jungle full of threats and predators. Break free from any domination or constraint to please oneself as one desires. Stand tall, expect attention, demand respect, and call the shots. Enjoy oneself to the fullest, right now, without guilt or remorse. Conquer, out-fox, and dominate other aggressive
characters. Potential investors also likely possess strategic and authoritarian worldviews, and possibly communitarian, integrative, and holistic.

~Spirituality~

Being regenerative and holding a holistic worldview (see above) is inherently spiritual, with spirituality defined as “the awareness and experience of belonging to the larger, interconnected community of life, of the purpose and meaning of life within this context, and the development of personal and community values and actions out of these.” Hart’s Mill’s proposed vision, mission, aims, and Story of Change (see above) exemplify this definition, as do our suggested approaches to all of its other elements and activities. These all express the interbeing of existence and Hart’s Mill’s purpose and meaning in the web of life, as well as each individual’s purpose and meaning within their larger communities. Proposed rituals, nature conservation, social practices, ecological practices, and economic practices are all a manifestation of spirituality and also serve to strengthen and evolve it. Spiritual activism arises from intentionally living one’s interconnectedness in a way that catalyzes regenerative sustainability in the living communities of which we are a part.
~Social Dimension~
~Governance~

Hart’s Mill has a tiered Membership Process with four levels of membership: Exploratory, Associate, Engaged, and Full. The community uses Sociocracy as its Governance structure, and employs consent decision-making and project organization across five Functional Circles: Membership, Governance, Finance/Legal, Planning/Design/Development, and Land Stewardship. Each Circle has an Operational Leader and an Elected Representative who serve on the General Circle, the primary decision-making and policy-making group for Hart’s Mill. HM has Meeting Ground Rules and a 5-Step Conflict tool.

Membership Protocol

Hart’s Mill has four levels of membership: Exploratory, Associate, Engaged, and Full. Associate and above are expected to participate in the work of Functional Circles, and will also contribute dues. At each level of membership, an applicant must submit surveys, materials, and engage in interviews with the Membership Circle. The Membership Circle will solicit feedback on the applicant from the entire community to help guide decisions on advancement.

Decision-Making

Hart’s Mill has adopted Sociocracy as its Governance structure. “The group organizes projects and tasks by circles sharing a specific purpose (aim), and decides using consent decision-making. Consent exists when there are no remaining objections to a proposal; objections must relate to a circle’s aim and provide valuable information used to improve a proposal. Policies have a time frames and measurement/evaluation criteria built into them.” (From Hart’s Mill New Member Handbook) Sociocracy is based on the principles of
Equivalence (all circle members function as peers with equivalent voice in decisions); Effectiveness (meeting processes are designed for movement towards accomplishing aims, with feedback loops for self-improvement); and Transparency (members have direct access to all policy decisions). Hart’s Mill chose Sociocracy as a system of shared power, where every voice matters, and decisions are aligned with the community’s vision and mission.

As of September 2017, there are five Functional Circles: Membership, Governance, Finance/Legal, Planning/Design/Development, and Land Stewardship, along with the General Circle. Each Circle has an Operational Leader and an Elected Representative who serve on the General Circle, the primary decision-making and policy-making group for Hart’s Mill. This double-linking structure promotes good communication and interpersonal connection. Meetings aim to be fast paced to promote efficiency and productivity. Circles meet once per month for 1.5-2 hours, and work on goals and tasks in between meetings. Currently there is no regular schedule for meetings of the whole group/plenary. Non-circle members may request to attend Circle meetings as observers, subject to approval by the Circle. Observers are not usually permitted to speak or contribute during circle meetings. To become a member of a circle, a member must make a request, and the Circle must consent to adding the person as a member. Occasionally Circles solicit input from members using surveys or face-to-face communication. Hart’s Mill community frequently gets feedback from new and exploratory members that it is challenging to participate and feel like their voices are being heard and included in decisions. In addition, some members regularly raise issues of transparency around decision-making. Minutes of meetings and decisions are posted on the group’s web platform, Only Office. Many members find materials on the platform difficult to access.
Hart’s Mill adopted a set of Meeting Ground Rules in December, 2016 to guide participants and facilitators to achieve more effective meetings.

- **Respect the group process**
  - Effective meetings are everyone’s responsibility
  - Come prepared, and come with an open heart and mind
  - Keep to task, topic, and agenda
  - Be concise
  - Decide together, based on HM Vision, Mission, and Principles
  - Decisions must be “good enough for now, safe enough to try”
  - Facilitator is here to serve the group and may interrupt or redirect to keep us on track

- **Respect yourself**
  - All Circle members have the right to speak and the responsibility to listen
  - Speak only for yourself (make “I statements”)
  - If confused about what's happening, ask
  - Do not withhold relevant information (feelings as well as perceptions and thoughts)--the group has a right to an informed decision

- **Respect others**
  - Respect differences of opinion: dissent and disagreement are welcome
  - Value the diversity of group members
  - No personal attacks, blaming, or aggression
  - When there’s conflict or emotional distress, we practice our conflict transformation skills and agreements

---**Conflict Resolution**---

Hart’s Mill has a 5-Step Model for Conflict, embedded in a detailed policy document that discusses a range of different types of conflict and potential responses. The 5-Step Model for Conflict is influenced by Non-Violent Communication and a Conflict Model developed by Laird Schaub. When two parties are in conflict and have not been able to resolve it through other means and resources, they can request assistance from a facilitator. The facilitator guides a meeting following a five-step process, in which each participant says and has reflected back by the other:

1. What happened?
2. What feelings do you have about it?
3. What’s at stake for you? What needs do you have that were not met in this situation?
4. What are you willing to do to help solve the problem or change the situation?
5. What would you like others to do?
~Recommendations~

Our Team Recommends that HM develop tools and practices to welcome broader participation from members; improve communication and transparency; increase cooperative skills of members; and improve membership recruitment to expand diversity and attract needed skill sets.

1. Develop additional tools and practices to welcome broader participation from members
   - Regular Plenary Meetings
   - Sharing Circles/Heart Sharing
   - Online Discussion Boards
   - Expand membership of General Circle: consider “at-large” representatives from the membership
   - Welcome and integrate new members—use new house for events and meetings

2. Address Issues of Communication and Transparency
   - Sharing Minutes of Meetings and Key Decisions regularly and directly with the membership
   - Clearing the Air Gatherings to process Conflict

3. Improve Cooperative Skill Level of Members
   - Integrate Meeting Ground Rules into all Circle meetings
   - Regular practice with 5-Step Conflict Tool during circle meetings
   - Regular trainings and workshops for practicing cooperative skills
   - Host outside facilitators and trainers to bring in new skills and ideas
   - Adopt new tools and methods, and practice them together
     - 9 Steps to Address Conflict Positively
     - Restorative Circles
     - NVC
   - Notify and encourage members to attend outside conferences, workshops, and trainings

4. Expand Membership while expanding diversity (age and ethnicity) and attracting needed skill sets—farming, permaculture, natural building, renewable energy
   - Local loans and creative fundraising to support farming and infrastructure projects, which will attract more farmers/young people/natural builders to the community, e.g. scholarship fund for summer interns and young farming families; leasing the land for pennies a month, and allow farmers and natural builders to “own” infrastructure upgrades which they can sell to another farmer/builder when they leave.
   - Private and government grants for endangered and threatened species; connect with local conservation organizations to monitor; connect with local universities to research
   - Community Engaged learning center: network with local colleges and universities and sustainability programs; partner with college courses looking for community service/community engaged learning projects
     - Sustainability Programs at local colleges and universities: Central Carolina Community College, Duke, UNC, NC State, UNCG, etc.
     - Partner with local sustainability organizations—Eartheal.org, Pickard’s Mountain
     - High Schools and homeschool students looking for Sustainability projects
When decision-making is at an impasse, we recommend that Hart’s Mill use the “9 Steps to Address Conflict Positively,” especially #3, 5, 6, and 7:
1. Create an appropriate atmosphere, based on trust and safety
2. Clarify perceptions and misunderstandings
3. Move from positions to interests and needs. Positions and interests are negotiable. Needs are not negotiable.
4. Learn to manage your emotions and the response you give to somebody else’s emotions.
5. Promote the connecting elements—the “we” instead of the “you against me.” Instill the idea of a “power towards” where we all participate, instead of a “power over,” that keeps out some people.
6. Project to the future, towards what we want to do together, acknowledging and learning from the past at the same time.
7. Encourage people to speak of their responsibility and not of their guilt. Facilitate reconciliation.
8. Identify and develop gradually workable solutions.
9. When possible, develop verbal or written agreements that everybody can accept.
~Leadership Roles~

Input from a survey of HM members indicates a great deal of appreciation for HM leaders, while also revealing a spectrum of views on the effectiveness of leadership at HM. Members identified needs for feedback systems, younger leaders, more effective decision-making, and improved communication. T2 recommends that HM holds regular plenary meetings and involves more members in decision-making; include leadership skills within governance and cooperative training; explore the role of the Power Triangle within group dynamics; and adopts Regenerative Development within the community vision and mission, educating all members and leaders around regeneration, “to re-weave human and natural communities into a co-evolutionary whole, where humans exist in symbiotic relationship with the living lands they inhabit.”

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

“I” skills: The way a leader behaves in different situations, enabling him or her to choose or create the mood, attitude, inner state, etc. more appropriate to each case. High self-esteem, self-confidence, emotional intelligence, and the ability to respond to a changing environment are some of the personal qualities a leader needs to develop and integrate.

Strategic Thinking Skills: The capacity to define and achieve specific objectives and goals, around a common vision everybody can support. Strategic thinking skills also refer to the capacity to find or develop the resources needed to support the group work and achieve its goals. Creativity and strategic thinking are crucial to the success of any endeavor.

Systemic thinking skills: The capacity to identify and understand the general context wherein the group develops their activities, from the most immediate environment to the greater social system. Also a capacity to understand and create the appropriate structures to help the group achieve their goals and realize their vision.

Relationship skills: The capacity to understand, to communicate with, and to motivate other people, acknowledging and honoring differences. The capacity to recognize different elements of group culture—norms, assumptions, power and rank issues—being aware of the influence they have on people’s behavior and attitudes, and intervening in a way that brings more awareness to the group.

Elder skills: Any leader and empowered person becomes an elder by first and foremost attending to the well-being of the whole. Being an elder involves leaving behind one-sidedness and cultivating compassion. An elder is fluid in her ability to bring out and move between many roles. She acknowledges and honors silent ones, welcomes criticism, and is able to take her own side as well. She knows when she becomes one-sided and invites others to fulfill the leadership role.

In August 2017, our design team surveyed Hart’s Mill members on the question of Leadership skills in the community. Referring to the five leadership skills above, we asked:

1. How well are these leadership skills represented at Hart’s Mill?
2. What might we do to cultivate and deepen these leadership skills throughout our group?
~Recommendations For Leadership from Community Survey~

- Encourage individuals to lead/shepherd on tangible projects
- Ongoing leadership performance evaluations and self-assessments
- Ongoing leadership training (e.g., understanding effective leadership approaches and styles, communication discipline [e.g., NVC], etc.)
- Constant reevaluation of how/whether our leaders are remaining faithful to our core values
- Training in systemic thinking skills. This is part of an appropriately-oriented Permaculture approach
- Many of us “of a certain age” feel quite self-confident in our “elder” skills and wisdom. However, we sometimes find it hard to be fully open to opinions and values of younger people. Honoring the wisdom of our elders while, at the same time, encouraging and valuing the non-elders among us is something we may want to create a discussion group around.
- Attract and include young leaders
- Cultivate Open-mindedness instead of like-mindedness
- Address and improve immaturity of “I” Skills across the group
- Improve relationship skills
- Welcome diverse communication styles
- Is leadership being resisted because members are afraid of someone dominating?

Remains of Box Turtle, Hart’s Mill, March 2014, photo by Mia Stawsky
~Recommendations~

Distribute leadership in a fluid and dynamic form.

HM uses Sociocracy as its governance system. Sociocracy provides for a hierarchical system of governance where there is a General Circle that has ultimate decision-making authority. Within the General Circle of ten people, leadership is well-distributed among the members, who are all either Operational Leaders or Elected Representatives of other Circles, including Financial, Land, Planning, and Membership, plus the Facilitator and Circle Administrator. Functional Circles, like Financial, are good places to cultivate leadership skills for members who participate, and a handful of new members have worked their way into leadership roles via functional circles over the past few years. However, not many members are involved in the Circles. The community currently faces challenges around involving more of the exploratory members in the governance process and the work of the Circles. In order to address these challenges, we recommend that Hart’s Mill develop leadership skills and practices, and also address power dynamics in the community.

Develop Leadership Skills and Practices

HM already holds regular Sociocracy trainings, and plans to include collaborative skills in these workshops. As a forming community, this plan shows strong commitment and awareness to developing member skills. However, there is currently not much consistent discussion of or focus on leadership development within the group. We recommend:

- Hold regular Plenary or whole-group meetings on meaningful and engaging issues. Perhaps this would attract more exploratory members and get them involved in participating and making decisions, and then help attract them to the work of the Circles, where leadership is more effectively cultivated.
  - Use Plenary time to practice collaborative skills (reflective listening, speaking clearly, emotional awareness, conflict tools)
  - Put decisions on the agenda for Plenary meetings, so a broader range of members get to experience and learn decision-making
  - Use Plenary time to explore and educate group around Regenerative values and practices
- Establish a Mentoring system for those new to leadership positions
- Include a component on Leadership, referencing the 5 Leadership Skills above, in Sociocracy trainings; or, create a separate training/workshop on Leadership Skills.
- Adopt Regenerative values within the HM vision and mission; educate all members and leaders around regeneration, “to re-weave human and natural communities into a co-evolutionary whole, where humans exist in symbiotic relationship with the living lands they inhabit.”
- Include Leadership training centered on Regenerative framework
- Regular Feedback Forums for Leaders
  - Use Role Improvement Feedback and Performance Review frameworks provided in Sociocracy
- Begin all circle meetings with review of Meeting Ground Rules
End all circle meetings with closing circle using Meeting Ground Rules to evaluate the meeting and member participation

Address Power Dynamics

Hart’s Mill would benefit from a close examination of power dynamics within the group. We recommend that the community reflect on the distinction between Repressive Power and Creative Power. The false assumptions of Repressive Power include: Scarcity, Separation, Competition, Self-Denial, and Protection. The beneficial assumptions of Creative Power include: Abundance, Opportunities for Growth, Solutions for All, Respect Needs of All, and Sharing Common Needs. In addition, we recommend that HM members develop awareness around the Power/Drama Triangle, where people take on roles of Persecutor, Victim, and Rescuer. In order to transform the dynamic of the Power Triangle, members can:

- Become aware of roles held in the Power Triangle
- Develop Humility, Compassion, Authenticity
- All roles become aware of rank and power they hold
- Embrace power and learn to use power with transparency
- All roles learn to use power in service of the well-being of the group
- Cultivate awareness of connections to larger wholes and systems: ecosystems, social systems, planet
- Leave behind attacks, threats, resentments
- Ask for and respect other points of view
- Give space to all voices in a conflict
- Discuss reasons and motivations for doing things

The Drama/Power Triangle

GAIA Education, Social Dimension Module 3
~Art & Celebrations at Hart’s Mill~

HM currently hosts a monthly potluck, meal, or game night. A Land Doming Ceremony is planned for Earth Day in April, 2018. Our Design Team recommends weekly local food meals and gratitude rituals; monthly potlucks with other communities and ecological and social justice organizations; quarterly celebrations of the equinoxes and solstices, along with plant and animal walks; and annual rituals to celebrate leaders and recognize rites of passage. We encourage HM develop a culture that views celebrations as collective art-forms, and that integrates Regenerative Vision and Values into community celebrations and rituals.

Connection to HM Mission

Hart’s Mill Mission: “We are an agrarian intentional community: restorative in our agriculture, sustainable in our designs and practices, collaborative in our social and work life, and celebratory and creative in all that we do.”

Framing Questions:
1. Can HM develop a culture that views celebrations as collective art-forms?
2. Can the community integrate Regenerative Vision and Values into Celebrations and rituals?
3. Can HM commit to Celebrating Leaders?
4. How can HM network and co-host events with Other Co-hosts: e.g, intentional communities?
5. Can HM combine celebrations with Fundraising efforts for specific projects?

~Possible Calendar of Events and Celebrations~

Weekly
A. Community Meals with home-grown and local food
B. Gratitude Rituals: e.g. Sunrise song

Monthly
A. Potlucks: Networking gatherings where HM invites other local Intentional Communities, Triangle Intentional Community Meetup Group, local neighbors, Social Justice organizations, and Eco or Green groups
B. Creative Skill Shares
C. Creative Community Projects: indoor/outdoor beautification
D. Celebrate Completion of community projects/milestones

Quarterly
Solstices and Equinox celebrations
1. Autumn Equinox Harvest Celebration: Recognizing ancestors; Honoring the ecosystems; Celebrating local farmers; Live Music and Dancing; Local Food; Co-host with local farming organizations.
2. Winter Solstice Social Justice Celebration: International Folk Dancing Party; Live Music and Dancing; Local Food; Co-host with Social Justice and Immigrant rights Organizations: Hate Free Schools Coalition, TSURJ, NAACP, Latino groups in Triangle.

3. Spring Equinox Dreaming/Seed Planting Celebration: Plant Literal Seeds via Ritual; Plant symbolic Seeds, and give voice to Dreams in our lives that we want to nourish this year; Live Music and Dancing; Local Food; Co-host w/ eco-groups: Pickard’s Mountain, Ecoheal, Muddaubers

4. Summer Solstice Clean Energy Celebration: Renewable Energy and Natural Building; Live Music and Dancing; Local Food; Co-host with a Renewable Energy Organization: NC WARN

Celebrating Other Species on the Land, Celestial Connections
- Plant Walks, Animal Festivals, Astronomy watches/star gazing

Annual
1. Rites of Passage: Recognize and celebrate stages of life; Who moved along/into each decade?
2. Honoring Leaders: Recognize and celebrate Circle leaders and members and other leaders as they come and go in positions of responsibility
Rituals and rites of passage are archetypes within the human soul and society. They are important reflective, organizing, and shaping events in community life, providing a sense of belonging and authenticity. They mark and celebrate important transitions in the human condition. They honor humans as holistic beings—a union of body, mind, soul, and spirit. They help us create and nurture deep relationships with each other and all of existence, healing ourselves and our relationship with nature.

Recommendation

We recommend that Hart’s Mill create meaningful rituals for their community to strengthen connections to each other, nature, their place, and their larger wholes. For example:

Hart’s Mill may practice simple and time-honored rituals of sharing meals, sharing work, sharing items, sharing responsibilities, dancing and making music together. Members may also conduct rites of passage around birth (for the child), maturity, marriage, childbirth (for the mother and father), menopause, and death. They may celebrate when an important event occurs in someone’s life and in their community’s development. They may mourn significant losses. They may honor nature’s cycles and wisdom. They may express their joy, awe, and appreciation of being part of the great web of life and existence.
Hart’s Mill’s rituals may include the following:

- **Morning Circle**—Daily morning ritual of welcoming the day, with gratitude for nature and each other, in a morning circle held outside.

- **Potlucks**—Through formal and informal potlucks held on a daily and weekly basis, we give thanks to the earth, sun, and people involved in growing our food and preparing our meals for the nourishment they give us and love they show us. We use potlucks as a time to appreciate the natural and human systems that support us, including our friends and family. We share not only food but also stories, experiences, music, and fun, developing stronger relationships with each other and with nature.

- **Game nights, dance nights, music nights, etc.**—Rituals held weekly as a way to connect more deeply with one another and celebrate community, life, and nature.

- **Seasonal feasts**—fall harvest; spring harvest; winter celebration; summer celebration. These feasts are a time to celebrate in much the same way as potlucks, but at feasts we also celebrate the abundance nature provides and the unique qualities of each season. Feasts are associated larger significant events including Autumn Equinox, Spiral of Light, Spring Equinox, May Day, and Summer Solstice.

- **Autumn Equinox**—A ritual in September that celebrates the transition to longer periods of darkness and cooler weather, a time to turn more inward towards our innate reflective and creative abilities; a time for incubation, growth, and transformation; a time to open to deep intuition and knowing.

- **Spiral of Light**—A ritual in December that celebrates the darkest time of the year (winter solstice) and the inner light and wisdom we hold and share during this time.

- **Spring Equinox**—A ritual in March honoring the inward journey of winter and celebrating protection, fertility, wisdom, strength, gratitude and joy to breath new life into what is yearning to burst forth in oneself and the Earth.

- **May Day**—A ritual held on May 1st that celebrates the return of vitality, fecundity, and vibrancy to nature.

- **Summer Solstice**—A ritual in June honoring the sun as the source of abundance and the light for guiding our days.
● **Rainbow Bridge**—A ritual honoring the end of one cycle (early childhood) and the beginning of another (middle childhood) as children transition from the more spiritual and “dreamy” world into the more earthly realm, around age 6-7.

● Similar rituals may be performed around the transitions to adolescence and adulthood as well as for major adulthood transitions, such as menopause.

● **Moon dances and feasts**—These rituals honor monthly natural rhythms.

● **Childbirth Rituals**—These are particular to each family but may involve a Blessingway ceremony, particular dances, music, herbs, candles, or blessings.

● **Birth Rituals**—A ritual to honor the newborn child and provide a sense of belonging, community, and identity.

● **Death Ritual**—A ritual to honor our friends and loved ones who transition to the next realm.

● **Revisiting Ritual**—An annual ritual in which revisiting our vision, mission, goals, and actions to achieve these things occurs.

Hart’s Mill may also create rituals around giving thanks and gratitude to animals we raise who give their lives for us (e.g., for food) and around universal and earthly rhythms associated with agriculture (e.g., biodynamic agriculture rhythms, planting and harvesting rituals).
~Bioregional Networking~

One of Hart’s Mill’s aims is “To share what we have learned, serve as a model, and foster collaborative exchanges through teaching, learning, and participating in social change.” Among the 36 Hart’s Mill Principles and Intentions, HM states that “Education is a key part of our mission”; “We hope to make ourselves an instrument for cultural change”; and “Enabling the creation and sustenance of other eco-villages is a key part of our mission.” Given Hart’s Mill’s values and commitments, the community is poised to become a Center for Regenerative Living on the East Coast of the United States. Hart’s Mill has long discussed building an Educational Center on the land. Our Design Team recommends that Hart’s Mill create an Educational center for Regenerative Sustainability, Cooperative Governance, and Social and Environmental Justice as a top priority. The community can create 501-c3 Cooperative Educational Non-profit Foundation that employs community members.

Hart’s Mill is located in a region with excellent educational institutions at all levels. By connecting with Public schools, charter schools, and Colleges/Universities Sustainability Programs, Hart’s Mill can become a highly sought resource for Community-engaged Learning on Regenerative Sustainability. The community has a wide range of expertise and connections that offer good foundations to grow relationships in education, in the intentional communities movement, and in the field of Regenerative Sustainability. Our Design Team recommends that HM prioritize building an Education Center and fostering relationships with allies in Regenerative Sustainability and Education across local, regional, national, and international networks, while paying attention to the “Fundamental Aspects of a Bioregional Organization.”

**Fundamental Aspects of a Bioregional Organization**

*(Kirkpatrick Sale, *Dwellers in the Land*, Chapters 5-8)*

Scale: People can understand issues and their connections to them at a scale where the forces of government and society are still recognizable and comprehensible, where relations with others are still intimate, and where the effects of individual actions are visible. This is the scale where abstractions and intangibles give way to the here and now, the seen and felt, and the real and known.

Economy: A bioregional economy would seek first to maintain rather than use up the natural world, to adapt to the environment rather than try to exploit or manipulate it, to conserve not only the resources but also the relationships and systems of the natural world. This economy would also seek to establish a stable means of production and exchange rather than one always in flux and dependent upon continual growth and constant consumption.

Polity: A bioregional polity would seek the diffusion of power, the decentralization of institutions, with nothing done at a higher level than necessary, and all authority flowing upward incrementally from the smallest political unit to the largest.

Society: Symbiosis is as apt a model as any for a successful human society, which we may envision as a place where families operate within neighborhoods, neighborhoods within communities, communities within cities, cities within regions, all on the basis of collaboration and exchange, cooperation and mutual benefit, and where the fittest is the one that helps the most—and of course is thereby the most helped. The most important instance of such an interaction on a bioregional scale would be the social symbiosis between the city and the countryside.
Along with the Hart’s Mill Vision, Mission, and Aims--including “To share what we have learned, serve as a model, and foster collaborative exchanges through teaching, learning, and participating in social change”--several HM Principles and Intentions provide a strong foundation for creating an Education Center on the land.

**Current Principles And Intentions that Support creating an Education Center at Hart’s Mill:**

28. **We expect to work both within the community and the larger society.** We expect that some members will primarily work within the physical community, while others will work outside the physical community, traveling to outside jobs. Recognizing the resource costs in the latter, but also affirming both the necessity and the value in engagement with larger communities and tasks, we will seek the most socially and ecologically sustainable ways to do both.

29. **We are committed to working for racial equity and for social and environmental justice.** We acknowledge racism in ourselves and in our society, and seek to overcome its harmful legacy in our relationships, our country, and on the land. Aspiring to create a racially inclusive community, we recognize that we can only achieve this goal by addressing our own racism and by working for racial justice. Aspiring to create a sustainable community, we recognize that true sustainability requires achieving harmony and justice – making ourselves a “beloved community” – both ecologically and socially.

30. **We will engage energetically with our neighbors.** Our community will deal fairly and generously with all others (individuals, workers, state and other governments, etc.), and seek ways to be supportive within our local area in particular, as well as to honor and learn from our neighbors. This may include offering community work groups in times of need, holding open potlucks and other meetings with local communities, and searching for other ways to engage with neighbors to facilitate sustainable relationships, growth, and trust all around.

31. **We hope to make ourselves an instrument for cultural change.** Our hope is that in building Hart’s Mill Ecovillage we will not only secure a far better life for ourselves than we’d be able to live separately, but also that we may contribute to a society-wide “Great Turning” – ecological, social, and spiritual. We commit ourselves to social justice as well, and to seeking out the avenues of engagement that will enable us to promote it, such as reducing local and international hunger, support for those fleeing violence, and the like.

32. **Education is a key part of our mission.** We expect to welcome short and medium term visitors and live-in students and interns, as well as to establish summer camps, afterschool programs and other ways of partnering with schools, college & training programs, workshops, and the like, in order to teach by example and experience. By inviting the presence and activity of young people in many forms, we also hope to attract the membership of families with children.

33. **Enabling the creation and sustenance of other eco-villages is a key part of our mission.** We hope to foster the development of similar communities on other parcels. One step in this direction is the establishment at Hart’s Mill Eco-Village of a Carolinas-oriented subsidiary of the School of Living umbrella organization for overseeing community land trusts.

~Recommendations~

Hart’s Mill has long discussed building an Educational Center on the land. As a top priority, Our Design Team recommends that Hart’s Mill create an Educational center for Regenerative
Sustainability, Cooperative Governance, and Social and Environmental Justice. The community can create 501c3 Cooperative Educational Non-profit Foundation that employs community members. HM is located in a region with excellent educational institutions at all levels. By connecting with Public schools, charter schools, and Colleges/Universities Sustainability Programs, Hart’s Mill can become a sought-out resource for Community-engaged Learning on Regenerative Sustainability.

Add HM to the following websites/Directories for Networking
- Global Ecovillage Network
- Permaculture Design Magazine
- Numundo Impact Center

Options for Education/Networking
1. Home school communities: plant walks, permaculture talks, cooperative living classes
2. Community-Engaged Learning site for Colleges
3. Sustainable Agriculture classes, site visits
4. Hart’s Nest classrooms for local teachers/trainers

_Gazebo, Hart’s Mill, November 2016, photo by Joe Cole_

Effective Networking and Funding

For effective networking to develop an education center, Hart’s Mill can draw on much experience and expertise within the community. Many HM members have experience working in higher education, and already have networks of relationships in colleges and universities. The membership also includes a handful of professional facilitators and consultants who do trainings and education in governance, conflict, facilitation, collaborative skills. Currently there is some farming on the land, and there is one cob natural building project happening now. These foundations can help grow relationships and connections in education, the intentional communities movement, and Regenerative Sustainability. While there are no funds available at this point for an educational center, fundraising possibilities include local donations, slow money network, loans, and crowd-funding. The goal of building an Education Center also provides opportunity to create a 501c3 legal entity to solicit donations. Hart’s Mill currently lacks a 501c3 non-profit entity, and such a legal framework could also benefit other projects in the community. Networking efforts can be guided with the five questions below.

Knowing the Network: 5 Questions (GAIA Education, Social Dimension Module 5)
1. Who are the project’s natural allies, supporters and, equally, potential adversaries?
2. What are their interests and goals?
3. With whom can we work directly? Who is within our reach?
4. Who are we hoping to influence through the project?
5. How can we include them in the process?
“Diversity is crucial for every ecosystem, and so it is for a sustainable community. There is a richness of exchange and encounters happening on the edges of any given project. Diverse points of view, even adversaries, are needed to sharpen the edge, revise messages and strategies, and expand our worldview.” (GAIA Education, Social Dimension Module 5, pg. 11)

Survey on Education Center

One of Hart’s Mill’s potential goals is to become an Education Center, with its own designated building. Five members responded to the following questions about the importance, focus, and scope of such a project. Summarized responses below. (Detailed responses in Appendix B.)

1. How important is an Educational Center as a project for Hart’s Mill?
   From important to very important; the education center can connect HM to the broader culture, and be an important resource.

2. What might be the focus of an Educational Center? (Some possibilities: sustainability, collaborative governance, permaculture, green building, sociocracy, renewable energy, conflict resolution, natural building, facilitation, ecosystem preservation, racial equity, regenerative agriculture, cooperative business and economics, social and environmental justice, nonviolent communication, biodiversity, ecovillage planning and development, and holistic leadership.) Select as many of these as you wish, and/or add other domains that you feel the Educational Center ought to pursue.
   All of the above are supported, plus music, nature arts, dancing, healing arts. Also can be used to rent out to other organizations to generate income for the community.

3. As you envision it (based on your answer to #2), who are the Educational Center’s natural allies, supporters and, potential adversaries in our local area, our region, and at the national and international levels?
   Supporters: schools, farmers, students, governments, environmental groups, business, conservationists, healers, spiritual practitioners, intentional community explorers, existing communities, neighbors, 4H. Adversaries: real estate developers, conservative neighbors, governments and businesses resisting change, those who fear alternative lifestyles.

4. What are the interests and goals of these allies, supporters, and adversaries?
   Supporter Goals - learn a better way to live, protect our planet, help us obtain funds to promote our vision, to be involved with the movement for smaller communities, access to resources for teaching and learning, healing, growing, addressing global warming.
   Adversary's Goals - to develop more of the land in the area so they can make more money, to keep their own privacy, selfishness, imposing traditional values, resisting change.

5. With whom can we work directly? Who is within our reach?
   Local schools and universities; local farmers; other communities; Pickard’s Mountain Eco-Institute; Carolina Farm Stewardship, County Extension, Black Church Food Security Network; Duke Divinity School

6. Who are we hoping to influence through the Educational Center?
   Our Community members and all who wish to learn about ecovillages and sustainable living

7. How can we include them in the process of planning and development?
Work with who shows up; outreach to those we have relationships with already; begin hosting events and workshops for the broader community; co-sponsor events with local organizations

8. *When should the community devote energy and resources to developing an Educational Center? (some options: immediately, near-term, mid-term, long-term, or distant future)*

Near-term to Long-term; start planning NOW; focus after the village is built; start using Hart’s Nest (P/H home) for education center and guest house.
~Ecological Dimension~
Humans have degraded ecosystems to the point that it is questionable how much longer they can support human civilizations in their current forms and human populations in their current numbers; how many ecosystems have reached tipping points, beyond which their characteristics and functioning are fundamentally and permanently altered; how soon more ecosystems will reach tipping points; and how one or more ecosystems approaching or reaching tipping points will affect others, with cascading effects across scales to our global ecosystem. Further, humans have directly and indirectly caused a mass extinction, which we are currently witnessing. Our actions must be restorative and regenerative of whole living systems, creating systemic capacities across scales to continually co-evolve to higher levels of health and vitality. Hart’s Mill may play a unique value-adding role to the healthy functioning of the systems of which it is a part in many ways.

~Recommendations~

Goal

For all decisions, Hart’s Mill may seek to increase the health and vitality of entire living system, humans and more-than-humans. Hart’s Mill may ask the questions: Does this action increase the health and functioning of the entire living system of which our community is a part? How or how not? How can it?

Hart’s Mill is located in an area zoned for future urban growth. It is currently surrounded by land zoned residential and residential-agricultural, with large parcel sizes, but change is imminent. By implementing regenerative development, Hart’s Mill can change the trajectory of the area from one of typical degenerative urban sprawl that decimates and homogenizes nature, treating her as a resource for human exploitation, to one that increases the regenerative capacity, health, and vitality of nature as a co-evolving social-ecological system. This moves beyond conservation to regeneration.
Enhancing biodiversity

Hart's Mill has an important role to play in creating a healthy and thriving watershed through regenerative development. Hart’s Mill is located at the headwaters of the McGowan Creek, leading to the Eno River, Falls Lake, Neuse River, Pamlico Sound, then Atlantic Ocean. Hart’s Mill can catalyze restoration and regeneration projects by creating guilds of partners with the Eno River Association and other watershed organizations (e.g., state parks, municipalities). The health of McGowan Creek and the upper Eno River, its riparian ecosystems, and the ecosystems that affect them are nodal intervention points (i.e., leverage points) for systemic transformational change towards greater health, flourishing, and regenerative capacity. Hart’s Mill can regenerate the health of the water systems to catalyze systemic health and regenerative sustainability. Biodiversity and abundance of native species as well as the system’s capacities for self-organization, co-evolution, and social-ecological mutualism may be nurtured and monitored, leading to adaptive responses in specific strategies to continue evolving. For example, Hart’s Mill may actively remove invasive species and strengthen native ecosystem health so that invasive species cannot live there.

Questions to guide regenerative efforts and monitoring include: How does the system respond after disturbance? Does it evolve to higher levels of complexity (through panarchy cycles)? Are the human and more-than-human components of the system benefiting and healthy? Do the humans in the system understand that their health and well-being are dependent upon the health and well-being of the more-than-human components of the system, and do they live accordingly? Do we view our relationship as one of co-evolving mutualism?

Regenerative agriculture

The land that Hart’s Mill stewards, as well as surrounding land, has a history of agriculture since European colonization. Agriculture is an important component of Hart’s Mill increasing its self-
sufficiency. Practicing agriculture in a way that increases the health and functioning of the ecosystem (including humans) is important in the context described above. Regenerative agriculture offers a way to do this.

Regenerative agriculture’s purpose is to increase the health of entire living systems through agriculture as a nodal intervention point. Principles include (from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regenerative_agriculture):

- Increasing soil health and fertility
- Working with wholes, not parts
- Progressively improving whole agro-ecosystems (soil, water, and biodiversity)
- Connecting the farm to its larger agroecosystem and bioregion
- Creating context-specific designs and making holistic decisions that express the essence of each farm
- Expressing the unique irreplaceable essence of each person, farm, and place
- Making holistic decisions aimed at specific systems change
- Ensuring and developing just and reciprocal relationships amongst all stakeholders
- Growing the five capitals (human, social, natural, built, financial)
- Designing for non-linear, multi-capital reciprocity
- Continually growing and evolving individuals, farms, and communities to express their innate potential
- Continually evolving agro-ecological processes and cultures
- Agriculture shifts the world

In Hart’s Mill, applying these principles would mean that the agricultural system is a healthy ecosystem that contributes to the healthy functioning of its larger ecosystems--Hart’s Mill, the Neuse River watershed, and the agroecosystems surrounding it in Mebane and Orange County. Discovering the farm’s essence will take some time and work, and perhaps a trained regenerative development facilitator.

Regenerative agriculture creating healthy soil. From revolutionchronicles.com.
Hart’s Mill can practice and teach regenerative agriculture, acting as a catalyst to this currently rural agricultural and future urban area for increasing health, flourishing, and regenerative capacities of living systems (social-ecological systems). It would be one of the few teaching centers for regenerative agriculture in the US and in high demand. Watershed health is a nodal intervention point (i.e., leverage point) for systemic change in this system. Local regenerative food systems regenerate the health of people and the planet across scales as one whole living system. By implementing regenerative agriculture, Hart’s Mill can act as a catalyst for transforming other farms in the region towards regenerative practices. Communities, existing and future, can be transformed to be ecovillages like Hart’s Mill that are regenerative in all aspects.

**Natural, regenerative building**

Hart’s Mill can practice and teach natural, regenerative building and living techniques and technologies that support nature conservation by increasing native biodiversity, providing habitat, and food, and filtering water. These include living roofs and walls, ecological landscaping, and wetland “waste” water treatment.
~Permaculture And Regenerative Design Principles~

~Recommendations~

We recommend that Hart’s Mill use Permaculture along with regenerative design as some of the technologies to implement regenerative development. The permaculture farm can take shape with volunteers and community members sharing meals in a simple structure. Care for the earth and people. Returning surplus back into the system. We have started with detailed designs and plan to break ground no later than 2018. Gently, cautiously, communicatively. Our shared meals provide a chance to deepen our cares and reduce our waste, with feedback loops designed to embolden and strengthen our vision and mission.

Regional wildlife corridors spiral and radiate over and underground. Fragmented landscapes reconnect through a spider’s web of resilient silken threads. Beavers industriously construct dams in the unnamed tributary below the main pond near McGowan Creek. Wetlands flourish in a food-shed for waterfowl, migratory warblers and raptors. Dabblers and divers have their spots, kingfishers enjoy overhanging stream branches, woodpeckers and sapsuckers feast, year after year off decaying giants spared from the woodman’s chain.
We carefully watch, from the beaver enhanced creek, the slopes. Are we losing biomass or soil? If so, where is it going? About 88 acres of the 112 are forested, the slopes generally gently sloping from an elevation of about 636 feet above sea level to 730 feet on the broad ridge in the northwest where we plan to develop the Village. Near the creek slopes may be as steep as 50 per cent. According to studies the soil largely poorly drained clay and silt loans which have been heavily impacted by agricultural use over the last few centuries. Our goal is to rectify this analysis.

The “wilderness” within the permaculture design features includes trails, as sketched, with paths to each of the two ponds, the one near the village created between 1955 and 1968 and the other, smaller pond, down by McGowan Creek. The woodlands and all other beings who depend upon them for their homes, from mushrooms and other fungi to woodpeckers and deer watch and listen.

Hart’s Mill Ecovillage and Farm, in its document “Land Development Parameters” quotes Jonah Lehrer, Imagine: How Creativity Works as saying “… the imagination is unleashed by constraints. You break out of the box by stepping into shackles.” The principles of permaculture are examples of these shackles, constraining us to think holistically rather than mechanistically.

The process of farming is necessary mechanistic. Certain plants combine well with others, some require shade and others full sun. The purpose of farming is where the ethical principles provides holistic guidance. Providing meals and good company for each shared meal is practical people care, but how do let people struggling outside the boundaries of North America help us? Earth care requires as much for our own food is drawn from all around the world. Finally, waste exists
where we are disconnected from the land or those around us. Connections with undocumented immigrants may productively turn this cycle into one of inclusion.

Resources:

Subsurface organisms impacted by fragmented landscapes
http://conservationcorridor.org/2017/07/above-ground-landscape-features-impact-connectivity-and-gene-flow-for-underground-species/ receive attention. This article has a North Carolina nexus, through the Executive Director of Conservation Corridors.

A Forest Stewardship Plan prepared in January 2013, cooperatively with the U.S Department of Agriculture Forest Service and funded through the Eno River Association, plans to use silviculture, whose focus is intended to be regenerative, in order to generate revenue. This plan includes facilitating the use of permaculture. This document, and the Hart’s Mill Environmental Assessment, contain information about species and plants living on the property.

Orange County Department of Environment, Agriculture, Parks & Recreation stated in December 2014 that “… the perennial stream that flows through the length of the tract and McGowan Creek … are significant water resources and wildlife corridors that should be protected from any future development activities.”

November 3-5th in Durham the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association is hosting a Sustainable Agriculture Conference. It's a great opportunity to hear the aspirations of local farmers. Here's the link: https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/sac/

![Oxeye Daisy, Hart’s Mill western field, May 2017, photo by Joe Cole](image)
"Today I will walk out. Today everything unnecessary will leave me. I will be as I was before. I will have a cool breeze over my body. I will have a light body. I will be happy forever. Nothing will hinder me. I walk with beauty before me. I walk with beauty behind me. I walk with beauty below me. I walk with beauty above me. I walk with beauty around me. My words will be beautiful."

The land known by us as Hart's Mill will be beautiful.

"In beauty all day long may I walk. 
Through the recurring seasons, may I walk. 
On the trail marked with pollen may I walk. 
With dew about my feet, may I walk."

The trails and hidden ways will multiply.

"With beauty before me may I walk. 
With beauty behind me may I walk. 
With beauty below me may I walk. 
With beauty above me may I walk. 
With beauty all around me may I walk."
The land known by us as Hart's Mill will be beautiful.

"In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, lively may I walk. In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, living again, may I walk. My words will be beautiful."

Our thoughts and prayers for Hart's Mill, living lively, will be beautiful.

The reference for these reflections, in quotations, are Walking in Beauty: the Closing Prayer from the Navajo Way Blessing Ceremony as interpreted in a Celtic Zen Workshop. This Ceremony traditionally lasts about ten days.

In short Hart's Mill Ecovillage and Farm may initially be based around a single facility, crafted with dance, music, crop storage, sleeping and swaying in mind. Energy policy, learning, teaching, social justice will rise from wells of our beaver hearts. This facility may be temporary in nature, but will be designed to create space which brings people together.

Existing buildings are integrated into our design. We have razed one unusable facility and one of our members has purchased a neighboring property which is now available to us for gatherings. This spirit of generosity is flowing ...

And all beings will celebrate, in their caverns and tunnels, by their dams, snoozing in their nests.
Outside of North America, and within undocumented communities, exist loving survival techniques which include migration, hard work, observation and connectedness in the face of adversity. Resilience requires nourishment of these deep roots.

~Recommendations~

Hart’s Mill is already pursuing many of the recommended principles and design strategies for ecovillage development, including simple and efficient design, renewable energy, local food production, water catchment, energy efficiency, and cooperative ownership and governance models. Our team recommends that Hart’s Mill follow the criteria of Holistic Sustainable Building (HSB), which include renewable energy use (solar and other renewables), efficient water use, composting, and natural wastewater handling, along with a focus on sustainable materials. Toxic materials should be replaced with safe products. HSB also recommends water catchment systems, high insulation and energy efficiency, and awareness of the values of peace and health.

We recommend implementing regenerative design. Regenerative design technologies aim to add value, life, and health to the system. These include biomimicry, Living Building and Communities, Permaculture, and positive development. Some examples of implementation include cycling and using water as much as possible before returning it to the earth through natural purification processes; living walls and roofs; and using local, renewable, natural materials from on-site when possible, such as earth, straw, and timber.

We also recommend that HM follow bioclimatic strategies for the design of buildings and for the layout of the village. North Carolina rests in the Northern Hemisphere in the Southeastern U.S., with hot, humid summers and sub-freezing temperatures in the winter. Bioclimatic building in this region would include orienting the home to face south with ample windows for maximum solar gain, while building a roof or overhang that allows solar energy and light inside the home during the winters and shades the windows in the summers. Thermal mass inside the house, like tile or concrete slab floors, can collect the heat from the sun in winter. Another important strategy includes planting deciduous trees and bushes around homes to increase shade and cooling in the summer without interfering with solar access in the winter.

In addition, our Design Team recommends that HM consider the embodied energy of building materials. Embodied energy is a measure of sustainability, energy and resource use, and contributions to global warming from the materials used in building. Low Embodied Energy materials would be best for building sustainably. Such materials include local wood, rammed earth, unfired clay bricks, local ceramics and tiles, and local insulation like recycled paper, hemp, straw, or wool. High Embodied Energy materials include steel, concrete, highly
manufactured items, and bulky items transported a great distance. For Building, the goal should be to use as many materials as possible with Low Embodied Energy. For example, wood and brick are sustainable options because they are abundant and affordable in central North Carolina and have low embodied carbon.

Finally, we recommend that Hart’s Mill identify and support a social justice project outside of North America and to actively consider becoming a sanctuary community. These steps may inspire and inform the green building guidelines and open up new funding opportunities and resources. Will we use our privileges to formally designate, with the Department of Homeland Security, all 112 acres as sanctuary? Will the land and air be our cathedral? Will our joyous celebrations include all beings, past and present, and involve dips in the creek?

Research Material:

The community has a large number of documents and research related to green building. One resource not mentioned is the local non-profit Ecoheal. Our recommendation is that the community focus on developing its permaculture farm through 2018 while allowing more thoughts to germinate about the village itself.

The document General Architectural Design Criteria 6-4-16 covers the type of materials and their source to be used in the Ecovillage.

Cob Hut Construction, July 2017, photo by Joe Cole
Come, all ye who are thirsty. We recharge the aquifer. Create resiliency downstream. From the headwaters of McGowan Creek to the estuary of the Eno we work to preserve the watershed. Wee hearts regenerate. Earthen knowledge of enslaved peoples in times past meet privileges with compassion. Rural landscapes spring to life after winter’s thaw.

From the original lyrics from the 1930’s to Old Man River, sung by Paul Robeson …

“Ah gits weary
An’ sick of tryin’;
Ah'm tired of livin'
An skeered of dyin',
But Ol' Man River,
He jes' keeps rolling along!”

Sometimes scared, other times overwhelmed; as the rewritten lyrics from the 1950’s state...

"But I keeps laffin'
Instead of cryin'
I must keep fightin';
Until I'm dyin',
And Ol' Man River,

Hart’s Mill Hydrology Site Plan by Bodhi Land and Design
He'll just keep rollin' along!"

Rainwater hitting roofs and roads infiltrate and recharge the aquifer. Reduced surface ponding, evaporation. Biota and biomass increases. An 8,000 square foot solar array diverts about 234,000 gallons per year, balancing the needs of our common room and kitchen. 112 acres!

Water. The flow of economy.
Clean water nourishing all that is internal
Reflecting intentions in a pooled mirror
Of rain drops rapidly spreading
In overlapping circles
Replenishing, regenerating.
Life.


Waste water treatment needs of 8,720 gallons per day, with the water sourced on-site through catchment and, for resiliency, our local utility. A subsurface drip irrigation system for our septic drain field is intended to minimize water waste. Designed efficiently the earth will receive additional nutrients to facilitate the permaculture designs. Our estimated wastewater of 8,720 gpd is based on residential housing with 67 bedrooms at 120 gpd, a common room with kitchen for 134 people at 5 gallons per person or 670 gpd, an education room at 200 gpd or 20 people at 10 gallons per person and workshop space of 4 buildings at 120 gallons per building or 480 gpd.
Wee monitoring of habitat and wildlife takes place over millenia. Time is relative. Wee hands, colleges, schools, passionate learners of all ages. A biomimicry baseline for tomorrow’s today.

Wee act, contemplate, think. Heterarchical thoughts identify empowering people, communities, “nodes” cooperating. The learning center deepens these nourishing relationships. Recent hurricanes bear witness to the notion that "The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.

Detailed computations by Hart’s Mill of the waste water treatment, needs can be found in “Hart's Mill preliminary wastewater system narrative_v2docx.”
Other quotes are from “The Marriage of Heaven and Hell; Proverbs of Hell” 1790-1793
William Blake

~Recommendations~

Our Design Team recommends that Hart’s Mill consider how Regenerative Design can guide water use, reuse, and wastewater treatment. Hart’s Mill sits near the headwaters of McGowan Creek, which feeds into the Eno River and the Neuse River Basin, and the community could become a model of Regenerative Sustainability through its care for water on its land and in the region. Constructed wetlands technology is a natural systems approach for treating sewage that has been widely researched in the US, including by the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Constructed Wetlands are a very suitable choice for a rural ecovillage because of their low cost of construction, low complexity of operations, and zero or low energy per annum for treatment. We also recommend that HM expand its plans for water catchment on the land, for both agricultural and home use. In addition, we recommend exploring natural graywater systems, composting toilets, and other sustainable water and wastewater technologies.
"Tyger Tyger, Burning Bright,  
In the forests of the night;  
What immortal hand or eye,  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry …"

What the light for Hart's Mill?

"In what distant deeps or skies.  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand, dare seize the fire? …"

Where the licking flame for Hart's Mill?

"And what shoulder, & what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? And what dread feet? …"

Whom the beating of Heart's Mill?

Rattlesnake Plantain, Hart’s Mill, July 2016, photo by Joe Cole

"What the hammer? what the chain,  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp?  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp! …"

What the grist for Hart's Mill?

"When the stars threw down their spears  
And water’d heaven with their tears:  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee? …"

When the flight of Hart's Mill?

"Tyger Tyger burning bright,  
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?"

Silence is energy. Gazing quietly into one another's eyes is power, all the power of the universe channeled into that moment.

The quoted poem is Tyger, Tyger by William Blake; written more than three hundred years ago. Today our energy leaves tiger bodies swollen in post colonial floods, as the gasping earth sucks in new breath, breathes out the flames of desire.

Hart's Mill has County approved plans for an 8,000 square foot solar array. While the official state plan by the NC Energy Policy Council is aiming to be 40% renewable by 2025, students and faculty North Carolina State University are pushing for 100% renewable, for themselves, much sooner. Non profits in this field are aiming for North Carolina to be 100% renewable by 2030.

Hart's Mill will be a regenerative beacon, sailing beyond zero carbon energy goals. Ground zero for Ecovillage design in North America.

Resuscitated
Regenerated
Sacred Hart’s Milling.

Pounding
Puttering
Pooping
Pro ...
Creating ...

A name
For the nameless
Perennial stream?
From pond to pond
Beaver’s Heart?

Gnaw, gnaw, gnawing
In the dark
Diverse
Dripping
Daylight.

Whistling in the wind.

Gazing upon the nameless in the very depths of our souls, entered iris by iris.

We are all pupils
Tigers and rats alike
Sturdy oaks
Apes.

~Recommendations~

Our Design Team recommends that Hart’s Mill follow the Regenerative Design Framework and become a leader and model in renewable energy through building for Net Plus renewable energy generation, maximizing energy efficiency, and collaborating with local and regional groups working for a renewable energy economy. Regenerative Design combines integration within and across scales, whole systems thinking, and local solutions. To facilitate the transition away from fossil fuels, we need a shift towards renewable energy organized locally through cooperative or public-run utilities. In North Carolina, the monopoly utility is Duke Energy, one of the largest utilities in the world, and a for-profit company wedded to fossil fuels like coal. Duke Energy benefits from a centralized system, which allows them to accumulate vast wealth and power.
Renewable energy systems would be effective as decentralized systems, serving the needs of their local communities, instead of the needs of corporations and CEOs. Decentralized and cooperative Renewable energy systems would keep jobs and income in the local community and region, which would strengthen the local communities and increase sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Within the community, we recommend that Hart’s Mill explore innovative forms of renewable energy including biofuels, geothermal, and solar, along with innovate systems like combined heat and power. When considering solar power systems, our team recommends that the community compare solar photovoltaic with concentrated solar power. Solar CSP systems, some of which use mirrors to concentrate and amplify solar power gain, have half the ecological footprint and twice the energy return on investment as Solar PV systems.

Hart’s Mill, in partnership with organizations like NC WARN and Piedmont Biofuels, can challenge the current centralized, fossil-fuel based energy system at all levels. They can do this by installing solar energy systems on homes, community-scale renewable energy, supporting businesses in cutting fossil-fuel dependency, and creating local and regional energy suppliers that are based in renewables, are cooperatively controlled, and are integrated into local ecosystems.

[Image: Solarize north carolina]

[http://solarize-nc.org/]
~Climate Change Impacts~

Welcome all; Dreamers, Travellers, Artistes, Snoozers, Wees and Elders. A smile, a bowl of soup, a glass of water, a tear, dance and swinging song. Fertile soil for migrating grasses. Haven for all.

Sun’s fiery energy, compressed in solidarity with earth, drives carbon through pipes and tunnels to sudden release. Earth’s tipping balance shakes life forms off the globe. Carbon and methane dawning in the Age of the ... ? Ways of peace and foresight. Agreeable loving inclusion.

From quietly crackling campfire in the cold desert to urban fireworks wee watch worldwide for enticing visions drawn in golden blue flames. The heat of our passions and warmth creates a trillion trillion caresses carefully crafted spirals and sparkles upward lifting wee thoughts and prayers of young and old. Earth’s memory chills in the aeons of time. Regenerating.

Wee
See
Contemplate
Celebrate
Regenerate
Vision
Multiplied.

The rippling McGowan Creek,
Feeds the Eno
Through to the estuary.

Words of knowledge
Unspoken
Spread peace and justice
Through edges and sedges
Where beavers gnaw
Wispy willows;
Voles and moles
Walk, May 2017, photo by Joe Cole
Raptors and vultures
Cranes and bears
Wheel in spiraling
Air.

Wild Yam, Hart’s Mill Nature
Temporal memories
Rustling leaves
Pockets of resilience
Connected through
Markets and nodes
Careful footprints
Learning
Leaning on
One another
Our fabric
Universal
Intact
Unity
One

Western Field, Hart’s Mill, March 2017, photo by Joe Cole

Climate Change Impacts, Risks, and Opportunities in North Carolina

In North Carolina, Climate Change will result in increased risk to forests from pests and drought, changes in agriculture, and more frequent and severe weather conditions, such as drought, which could threaten water sources. Higher air temperatures could result in increased heat-related illness or death. Respiratory disorders or allergies could worsen as a result of increased heat, humidity and declining air quality. Spread of vector-borne infectious diseases. Extreme weather events—tornadoes, hurricanes, heat waves—could result in increased deaths and injuries. Mean annual precipitation may slightly increase in North Carolina through the first half of the 21st century. There will be increased demand for air conditioning, and potential impacts on electricity generating capacity and energy distribution infrastructure. Improvements in both energy efficiency and renewable energy generation provide a large potential for a more resilient energy sector. Hart’s Mill has an opportunity to contribute to the health and flourishing of the larger social, economic, and natural ecosystems around the community through wise planning and innovative design in regenerative agriculture, forestry, building, and energy.

Survey Results on current and potential threats of Climate Change to the Hart's Mill community:

- Affecting growing seasons; disruption of growing seasons; erratic weather patterns
- Access to fresh water for irrigation; drought--no water, no life.
- Consciousness of others suffering around the world
- Greater need to educate others
- More visitors to HM and inquiries of how to live more simply and in community. Impact on immediate neighbors--will we be able to assist them?
- Unpredictable and stronger storms
- Social disruption in the larger society; deepening pessimism about the future in general and for our children
- Ocean acidification - Mass extinction of planetary life is a potential threat if oceans continue to decline and become unable to support the life that supports us.
- Melting of the polar ice caps; Sudden changes in our coastal regions with water levels rising will lead to major shifts in population centers and could affect our immediate surroundings or gov’t policies on ownership.
- Spread of disease - animals/insects are migrating to different regions and could lead to increase in susceptibility to disease we are not accustom to. Invasive species.
- Changing rainfall patterns

**Resilience**

Resilience is the capacity of a system to survive and maintain health and essential functions, while responding to challenges and disturbances. Resilience also refers to the capacity of a system to experience a disruption to its fundamental processes and transform to a higher level of functioning and health. Sustainable communities help build capacity for self-maintenance and adaption amidst the challenges of peak oil, energy descent, and climate change. (Holling 1973, Gunderson & Holling 2002, Walker *et al.* 2006), from Resilience Alliance.

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Great Blue Skimmer, Hart's Mill Pond, July 2016, photo by Joe Cole

~Recommendations~

Our Team recommends that Hart’s Mill adopt a Regenerative Design Framework. A whole systems framework of sustainability links to many scales, and tries to “optimize the health of the whole system for the long-term benefit of all participants in the systems.” (*Gaia Education, Ecological Dimension, Module 1*) Sustainable design requires connecting to local places,
communities, and ecosystems, instead of relying on highly centralized systems of production that favor the few at the expense of the many, the earth, and future generations. However, this process of decentralizing does not mean withdrawal and isolation—it requires global collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and practices that work. Another aspect of the whole systems approach is integration at each scale, from relationships, industries, local communities, to regions, nations, economies, and the world. The goal here is to integrate “our processes regeneratively into the healthy ecosystems functions of the regions we inhabit.” (Gaia Education, Ecological Dimension, Module 1) Through linking across many scales, and integration within scales, Hart’s Mill can participate in a collaborative, sustainable, and healing response to the challenges and opportunities of climate change.
~Economic Dimension~
Beyond bountiful terrestrial resources, Hart’s Mill (HM) also the opportunity to tap into fiscal abundance to fuel the pursuit of their mission. Money is the water that helps paradigm shifts grow into established norms. Instead of relying on resource extraction for short term wealth, HM may create positive feedback strategies which enhance the yield of their land while disseminating healthy food, empowering education, and social justice to their watershed. While greed may have lead to the exploitation of the land they are stewarding, mindful money may also be an allie to regenerating an ever more vibrant ecosystem.

Hart’s Mill is nestled within a region that is blooming with culture which will support HM to reach their mission. This is particularly relevant to HM because there is a palpable aspiration to share the lifestyle they are engineering with a broader community of like minded people. With a network of agricultural, educational, and social allies HM will be able to amplify movements within their region, while not being burdened with initiating the paradigm shift. Through integration into the gestalt of the region's social evolution towards egalitarian sustainability each action HM takes will have greater beneficial returns.

The goal of the Economic Dimension is to illuminate an actionable strategy for HM to have every aspect of their legal status, partnership network and business plan be in alignment with their mission and fiscally sustainable to endure indefinitely. HM is currently in a time of vibrant formation, with many options on the table as to what even their legal ownership status is. This is daunting, but invaluable to laying a foundation of collaboration for the community, so I open by reviewing this. Extending the collaboration to local allies will multiple the benefits of every action HM makes, so a review of these options will follow. Once the backdrop has been painted, a education center business plan for the next 2 years will close out this section.

Who Are We Now?

Legal

Hart’s Mill has no qualms discussing all potential ownership models, from private mortgages to community land trusts, and in this horizontal exploration they have pioneered a relatively novel model of ownership they have termed Plan B. This model is designed to be a solution to the current shortage of full time members to invest in large infrastructure development loans, to allow current members with assets to start building their homes, and yet protect the community from becoming a fragmented housing development. An precariously accurate simplification of this model is that a HM Member Coop gives residents and commercial entities access to lease land from a the HM land trust, with the requirement that all activities and infrastructure are built in alignment with HM principles and the HM Member Coop has first rights to purchasing member built infrastructure.

When deciding on their final legal structure HM needs to keep in mind that being a regenerative solution means their status must have the flexibility to evolve and accessibility to be inclusive, while avoiding the potential for charismatic individuals to become dictators nor those in need to be exploited. The potential for the HM Member Coop to buy infrastructure that members build is an outstanding way to empower individuals to start making their dreams happen, and for the HM Member Coop to reap the benefits once it has fiscally matured.
However, diligent attention should be paid to the type of structures that members build, not only for low impact design, but the potential for heterogeneous home value to lead to ownership inequality among members. For example if I build a 1 million dollar passive solar home, and you build a $10K passive solar hovel, there is now a “rich” and “poor” neighborhood developing within the community.

Along the same vein, simply subleasing land to aspiring farmers has unsettling similarities so sharecropping, which was a manipulative way to shift human slavery to wage slavery. Hart’s Mill is made up of outstanding members who have no intention of being exploitative, so this is simply an observation not a conviction. Hart’s Mill has offered that commercial interests, such farmers would own the infrastructure on the land they work, yet the profits of sustainable farming are slim for many years, so without land capital a small scale farmer still has very little fiscal capital to support them in bad years. Going a step further by building the farming infrastructure, and giving the farm hands that work the land partial ownership of a larger unified HM farming business, is a way to regenerate the fiscal stability which empowers marginalized peoples to invest in themselves.
Opportunities and Threats

Hart’s Mill is rich in many intellectual, situational and natural resources. Yet there are still threats to manifesting the mission of HM so I created this SWOT analysis to illuminate the intersections of opportunity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members</strong>: vision, talent, commitment, skill in facilitation, diversity of interests and backgrounds, some with knowledge and experience of farming, some with interest and experience in architecture, good will, good humor</td>
<td>1. <strong>Members</strong>: Mostly elderly members that aren’t skilled in community building skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Resources</strong>-Own Fertile, biodiverse land</td>
<td>2. <strong>Money</strong>:Lack of clarity on financial plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Resources</strong>-Large adjacent property with home recently purchased</td>
<td>3. <strong>Money</strong>:Lack of investment to move project forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Marketing</strong>-appealing website</td>
<td>4. <strong>Time</strong>: Intimidating longevity of commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Logistics</strong>-draft Building plan complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Opportunities**
1. **Education**: Learning potential for members, community and society
2. **Market**: Local SLO food movement is profitable
3. **Market**: Proximity to highway, colleges, and affluent towns.
4. **Sustainability**: Solar panels will reduce energy costs.community on many levels
5. **Market**:good relations with neighbors

1. Develop Good connections with local community to foster grants, community college classes, and free workday events
2. Utilize local knowledge to host workshops
3. Use workshops students to build classroom
4. Vital SLO food movement can help support vision of member businesses
5. Utilize smooth website and videos to reach younger crowd

**Threats**
1. **National**: economic climate that supports individualism and corporations
2. **National**: Shift to online communities
3. **Environmental**: Climate change makes farming difficult
4. **County**: Regulations making innovative building difficult
5. **County**: Difficult to keep property prices affordable

1. Utilize smooth website and videos to reach younger crowd
2. Use fertile land and diverse biota as academic laboratory for impact of climate change
3. You are a group of diversely talented individuals, celebrate each other's gifts so group doesn’t feel like one homogenous cult.
4. Utilize articulate members to work with local government to make renovating restrictive regulations a goal of the community
5. Your plan for co-op model and

1. Local food markets and farming potential to bring more farmers into the membership
2. Tap into alternative currencies reduce demand for limited USD resources
3. Host workshop for local real estate agents and member of Hart’s Mill to get the word out about the benefits of Co-Op ownership model
4. Create educational learning opportunities for younger people so time span of project doesn’t fall on elders’ shoulders.
shared housing will be a useful tool against inflated property prices. solutions to the climate change challenges.

What stands out for me in this analysis is that the perceived weakness that HM is a community of elders having trouble engaging with the marginalized communities they aspire to empower, is actually an opportunity for them to turn the mirror on themselves and see that elders are a marginalized demographic whom they may be liberating by unshackling themselves. With such a strong focus on educating others on how to create a vibrant, sustainable community they are already well versed in the medium of education. So in documenting their own journey down this path, and disseminating their take-aways they will already be in alignment with their mission.

Another opportunity that stands out is that they are aspiring to create a living classroom, and are already well endowed with wizened teachers to lead workshops. Yes they are lacking youth, but they are also lacking infrastructure and an audience to practice their proposed workshops on. A powerful way to encourage member buy in is to trust people with building this collaborative ecovillage. If HM invites youth to give feedback in exchange for affordable admission to the workshops, while also giving youth hammers to help them build the infrastructure, the next generation will feel emotionally connected with the space. By bringing youth into the design of educational experiences and construction of the community, they will be building loyalty which will outlive the founding members.

Another important visual is to shift the relationship HM has with various allies from being single purpose transaction to dynamic partnerships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Old Paradigm Status</th>
<th>Evolved Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HM Coop Member</td>
<td>Partial Owner</td>
<td>Chosen Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Customer</td>
<td>Money Source</td>
<td>Education Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate Agent</td>
<td>Business Allie</td>
<td>Movement Outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social NGOs</td>
<td>Agreeable Neighbors</td>
<td>Mission Manifestors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is table is meant to serve as a quick conceptual reference for the shifted perspective, but the brevity should not be confused with fleeting importance. In the social ecosystem each interaction has dynamic reciprocity which HM must nurture to grow roots with the local community. In the modern world of virtual learning, and global travel HM will struggle early on to compete with the bounty of competing service providers. However, if organizations, customers, and consultants are looked at beyond fiscal partnerships, but as ideological members of the community HM will receive support in ways money cannot buy.
Who Are Our Allies?

Degrowth—Hart’s Mill can become a mindful experiment in degrowth by reducing personal possessions, reducing external resource consumption, and utilizing shared public resources. Wealth is not necessarily correlated with private possession and wasteful usage of natural resources. Individuals can still have the experiences of mainstream economic wealth, without the waste and impact that is a direct byproduct of conventional economic wealth.

Dancing Rabbit has successfully reduced their environmental impact on energy, water, and carbon emissions to a fraction (between 4% and 10%) of the average American household, while experiencing life satisfaction that is greater than the average American. The most quantifiable ways they have implemented these shifts are through car sharing, rainwater use, onsite renewable power production, and passive natural buildings.

Hart’s Mill could feasibly integrate similar systems into their community.

Transition Town Activism—The closest registered Transition Town Community to Hart’s Mill is Transition Carrboro/Chapel Hill. Based on this group's web presence they do not appear to be actively meeting or engaging in local politics. However, Transition Towns like Heathrow are remarkably proactive in their collaboration to achieve social and environmental justice locally. One of the explicit goals of Heathrow, as stated on their website, is to:

We hope to bring to light the environmental damage and misery future airport expansion at Heathrow will bring to local residents and businesses.

To achieve this goal they have occupied the derelict plot that was proposed for airport expansion. They have gone beyond simply squatting on the land to redeveloping it into a productive nursery run by a diverse array of volunteers whom are specifically selected from minority populations. While this explicit stance can be contentious, they feel it is necessary to making environmental and social justice movements in rugged environments, like an abandoned lot, accessible to everyone whom will be impacted.

Hart’s Mill aspires to engage with a racially diverse community on social justice issues. If they were to initiate and engage in a local transition movement, with their members coming as representatives as Hart’s Mill, they may be able to both learn what non-white upper middle class communities are dealing with, and foster synergistic collaborations with more diverse volunteer pool.
Social Enterprise - At this year’s Twin Oaks Community Conference Ed Whitefield from Fund for Democratic Economics will be presenting on cooperatively owned social enterprise projects including Renaissance Community Co-op, Greensboro, NC, and Southern Reparations Loans Fund.

Hart’s Mill could engage with both of these organizations. As aspiring growers and educators they could partner with the Community Co-Op to provide a particular crop at an affordable rate from a very local source. This could be a valuable marketing avenue to reach out to customers of the urban food co-op, whom are from an economically disadvantaged and racially more black community than Hart’s Mill. Offering gardening experiences at their farm would be an incredible experience for those whom have never had the experience to leave the concrete jungle they are raised in.

The Southern Reparations Loans Fund particularly caters to marginalized communities that otherwise cannot receive funding. While Hart’s Mill definitely does not fit this criteria, they could act as a host for various farmers, groups or educators who are funded by this fund and cater to the population that Hart’s Mill otherwise does not have connections with.
What Do We Do Next?
Hart’s Mill Business Plan 2017-2019

Goals:
(1) Expand Seeing Stars Farming business
(2) Host Educational Workshop
(3) Increase Public Awareness of Community
(4) Integrate Volunteers into Labor Force
(5) Run Crowdfunding and Donation Campaign to Support Educational Scholarship

Introduction:

Hart’s Mill is on the verge of breaking onto the ecovillage scene as an invaluable medicine to heal an array of social and environmental epidemics. In a world which is fraught with interlocked problems of social inequality and environmental degradation, Hart’s Mill multifaceted living laboratory of here and now solutions mixed with paradigm shifting social experiments can benefit a community far wider than immediate members and further than their property boundaries.

Farming, Volunteers, and Education:

In the eyes of a Millenial farming is not the destitute, back-breaking, impoverished work that their grandparents may have wanted to avoid at all costs. Progressive farming techniques like permaculture design, restoration farming, and regenerative agriculture have become hands on solutions for young people to live in alignment with their ideals. The international educational market has catered to this by blossoming new degrees with buzzwords like sustainability and environmental. The result of this confluence of enthusiasm and education is a surplus of qualified young people who are rich in theory, but hungry for hands on experience.

Working with this community directly addresses many of the challenges which Hart’s Mill is puzzling over; namely youth engagement, labor force, community involvement, and environmental education. Simply posting a volunteer position will be of marginal benefit, however integrating volunteers into a mutually beneficial immersion program and/or community work day may become a impactful program to align Hart’s Mill with their mission statement.

An opportunity to utilize, and not abuse, volunteers is to create a young farmer educational immersion program. Hart’s Mill is uniquely positioned to offer a young farmers the experience of designing a for profit, multi-stakeholder, environmentally beneficial farm with limited financial resources. This is EXACTLY the situation a young farmer will find themselves in if they aspire to create their own agrarian business. Hart’s Mill is also wealthy in the wisdom of elders from a variety of disciplines, each of whom may teach a lesson to the immersion program relating their expertise to the farming lifestyle.
Hart’s Mill will directly benefit from this program because it will increase their visibility among the younger community, alleviate the restriction of a limited labor force on multiple farming projects, test prototype environmental education workshops, and increase Hart’s Mill qualification for certain grants/partnerships. A young community of students will learn about Hart’s Mill when seeing posters for this opportunity at food cooperatives, college posting boards, and through various club newsletters. An important part of the qualifications for the young farmer will be physical labor and charisma so that they can plug into taxing work like soil building and draining work like Farmers Market sales. In creating the low intensity educational program for the immersion participants, Hart’s Mill will be prototyping the workshops they aspire to offer the wider community. In addition, offering this experience will validate Hart’s Mill claim as an educational facility and increase the public’s interest in supporting them and allied organizations in partnering with them.

Another opportunity to find synergy in collaboration with volunteers is by partnering with local clubs to host community blitz workdays. While there are many ways an event like this may unfold one option may be to start the morning with an educational session about an aspect of farming participants will be working on that day, followed by a hands on work day rich with snacks and drinks, and culminating in a feast.

Of course Hart’s Mill will benefit from the work done, and community members will appreciate the experience, but more importantly it is another opportunity for Hart’s Mill to increase public awareness and foster partnerships with allied organizations. Once more workshops are established it is also venue to push for profit workshops Hart’s Mill will host.

Estimating Sales

Particularly an immersive volunteer working 40 hrs a week will have a modest impact on crop yield. Increasing the immersion program to multiple volunteers or an experience that is offered multiple times a year will definitely increase the farming bottom line. Important to strategically optimizing the volunteer is to design the farm development in a direction which a volunteer can plug into. Head down labor projects like preparing large swaths of land for open
pollinated seed or ornamental crops, are more appealing than long time investment projects like inoculating mushroom logs.

Catering to privileged volunteers is a side-effect of programs who do not give workers fiscal benefits for their work, thereby filtering applicants to only those with outside fiscal support. Since reaching a diverse community is emerging as ever more paramount to Hart’s Mill vision, the immersion program should supply participants with room/board and a stipend. Calculating a fair stipend occurs at the intersection of what Hart’s Mill has to offer and the needs of a young farmer. An assessment of cost of living and projected increases in crop yields will be factored into a final stipend estimate.

Volunteers could also build infrastructure, so their value may not be calculated in increased yield as much as saved wages. An extraordinary project that would initiate a slew of other opportunities is for the volunteer to help build an outdoor kitchen and classroom. Since this facility will not be a commercial kitchen, nor be called home for anyone, it can subvert many of the building codes that stymie creative architecture. Instead it may be a sustainable piece of artwork which utilizes natural building techniques and serves as a focal point to the nascent Hart’s Mill education program. This will be a hub, zone 1 in permaculture terms, for the rest of the farm projects to radiate out from. Low skill labor+many person hours needed+lasting results+novel learning experience=volunteer project!

Types of Clients

Investing in this program will cater to many types of clients, in the short term and building more long term opportunities. In the short term Farmers Market sales will increases, and in the long term this is a pathway to for profit workshops and immersion programs (yes, people will pay you to work).

The Farmers Market is already an established profit stream thanks to Seeing Stars Farm. An immersive volunteer will supplement this market by expanding the variety of items for sale, increasing the markets Seeing Stars has a presence at, and/or increases the harvest of already selling items. The community blitz days can also serve as a unique selling point to gain customer loyalty by inviting them to come visit where their food is grown, and be rewarded with a delicious meal that is at least partially harvested from the farm.

Within a year of prototype workshops Hart’s Mill will be in a strong place to start offering for profit workshops. Every aspect of Hart’s Mill conception, gestation, and birth are educational opportunities to various demographics. Once an outdoor educational venue is established not only can Hart’s Mill utilize members to teach courses, but others may rent the venue to host their own workshops.

It is feasible that an immersion experience at Hart’s Mill would eventually qualify for course credit at one of the local educational facilities. If Hart’s Mill were to become part of a course, students would be paying to gain the resume building experience of agriculture within an ecovillage. Students between 18 and 22y.o. are the target demographic for this education, so drawing in a similar age group for the initial stipend immersion program would be productive for prototyping a for profit immersion experience.
Competitors

**Center for Environmental Farming Systems**

**Sustainable Agriculture Internship**

7 week internship is designed to broaden students perspectives on sustainable agriculture by giving them experience in hands on farm-work, lectures and discussion, community engagement, and field trips to local farms and markets. The cost or stipend is not made clear on the website, nor housing facilities nor total hours of work a week.

**Sustainable Agriculture Apprenticeship**

6-9 month work study program with applicants to study specific aspects of their field of interest.

**Food Supply Chain Apprenticeship**

8 week summer course to work with local food hubs and businesses.

**Agroecology On Farm Fundraiser Dinner**

$125 a plate dinner with live music, hosted at the farms outdoor dining pavilion.

**Film Screening**

Free screening of Wendell Berry documentary

This well established, nationally awarded, center for agricultural education is geared towards training aspiring large scale farmers or educating commercial farmers. They are reaching out to a different demographic that Hart’s Mill, and in the regions the demographics overlap, i.e. college age students, they are only serving a couple handful of eager students.

Hart’s Mill is differentiated from CEF because it is an ecovillage which integrates agrarian lifestyle into a matrix of cooperative decision making and wild land stewardship. In addition Hart’s Mill is not seeking to host $125 a plate galas, but instead connect with more marginalized communities who may find empowerment and healing in connecting with their food system and local ecology.

**Wednesday Night Classes at High Point Public Library**

These are free gardening related classes. They are held in a library
Breeze Family Farm...and Brochure
Offering a comparable course to what Hart’s Mill might in topics ranging market opportunities to integrated livestock. However they have no website and their posting have no dates and only phone numbers to call. Doesn’t appear to be viable competition.

Local Agro Event Posting
Many of the local agriculture events on this board are geared towards professional farmers and cover commercial agriculture topics.

Earthaven Ecovillage
This is an ecovillage of 55 full time and associate members with central and satellite locations. They have both work-trade immersion experiences, with food and board for 24 hrs of work a week, workshops, and weekly recurring social events.

This community 3 hrs away from Hart’s Mill so they are not going to be drawing away much of the local Mebane community. However, their model of guests either being hosted by specific community members or the community at large is a nice model for ensuring that guests are managed by the individuals who will be most benefiting from their labor.

Eco-Institute
This community hosts a variety of recurring community activities, visiting teacher workshops, and educational intensives. They also serve as the host site for allie organization like Natural Mystery School. They utilize their wild surroundings by hosting nature ceremonies and mushroom foraging. They are a non-profit organization with a stunning gazebo venue on their private lake. They also host a non-profit organization with the mission to heal the human-earth relationship.
How to Differentiate

Hart’s Mill is competing in a market which currently only serves a very narrow demographic, college educated white people. This community has the affluence to afford novel education and the luxury to enjoy the novelty of labor. However, Hart’s Mill is driven to reach beyond this well served community and connected with disadvantaged citizens. This appears to be an almost untapped, yet large demographic in their region.

Hart’s Mill most effective strategy would be the mirror the effective low investment workshops of their neighboring communities, yet reach out to underserved communities. Every one of their competitors has a website that is sleek and rich with photos of jovial white people enjoying nature. This creates a barrier to entry for potential minority customers. A clear web presence and mission statement that open an outstretched hand to marginalized communities is vital to differentiating Hart’s Mill from their competing allies.

Market Testing

Hart’s Mill should start by offering donation based workshops. Utilizing the generosity of the privileged class will be an invaluable tool for crossing cultural boundaries. There is enough wisdom already in the Hart’s Mill team for them to host trial workshops. The workshops can be marketed as donation, however $10 refundable fee will be charged to hold the person's space. This can be marketed from the standpoint that workshops often fill up, and they don’t want spaces to be taken by people who aren’t going to show up. They will have the option of getting their money back in cash at the end of the workshop. Customers will also be told that leaving larger donations will directly go towards funding scholarships to empower fiscally disadvantaged students from attending the course. If a clear goal is set that for every $XX number of dollars in donations which is raised another person will receive a scholarship for the workshop this could be a strong rallying incentive for donations.

For this to be effective a lineup of at least 5 workshops needs to be placed on the calendar early in 2018. The first push of marketing will be a steep uphill challenge because Hart’s Mill doesn’t yet have extensive marketing outlets in the diverse community they want to reach. Eventually they will be able to host fully booked workshops with a month’s notice, but for now they will need many months to cultivate enthusiasm.

The success of this marketing campaign will also be buffered by recurring community volunteer days. Investing in these community volunteer days is a strong investment in their community marketing campaign. Even paying for marginalized community members to join the events would be an on point publicity strategy for building connections with the demographic they are seeking to serve. Start the community volunteer days at the very beginning of the work season, with social events, such as movie screenings, sprinkled between. Start the first donation workshop once school gets out, and push to host all the workshops in fairly prompt succession, so their event calendar looks robust.

2018 can be the market testing year. Multiple trial programs can be running simultaneously and the synergy or strains of them will be assessed at the end of the year. Setting realistic marketing goals for the 2018 is vital to assessing the success of their strategy. For
example aiming to be mentioned in 10 affiliate newsletters, 2 newspaper articles, and have members speak at 5 public events is a quantified marketing goal to strive for. There can be another tier of goals around participation and donation/profits, yet these are not the main push for 2018.

Challenges to Becoming Financially Independent

The farming education should expect to run at a loss for the first couple years, so they can invest in substantial profits after the first few years. Currently there is a trickle of income coming in from produce sales at Seeing Stars Farms. If this profit were set as the available resources for farming education the hardware, seeds, and operating costs for farming would likely devour most of it. However, once the community can realistically commit to how many workshops and immersion program participants they will be able to host when running at 80% capacity in 5 years they can calculating how much to invest in this first year. The largest expense is location and employees, so Hart’s mill is at a huge advantage in owning the land and having member employees supplemented by volunteers. This advantage should shift most of Hart’s Mill investment into marketing for their first few years, followed close on it’s tail by farming infrastructure.

Once Hart’s Mill has established themselves as a viable educational facility with a vibrant community of supporters, they are ready to run a crowdfunding donation program to push for more scholarship money. This will be the ultimate marketing test, because it will require members to reach out to friends, family and the greater community. The goal of the campaign will be to fund marginalized community members to participate in the immersion program or workshops. Coordinating with potential recipients of the funding campaign before hand, so they can be compassion invoking spokespeople, is vital to humanizing the drive.

Banded Pennant Dragonfly, Hart’s Mill, July 2017, photo by Joe Cole
How Many Jobs created

Two jobs are integral to making this ambitious program work; volunteer manager and marketing specialist. These positions need to be filled well before volunteers or workshops begin happening on the property. Posting the volunteer position on various message board sites and networking with allied organizations are the foundation of the volunteer manager and marketing point person respectively. Both of these should be paid positions, with stipend likely supplemented by resources such as room and board.

The volunteer manager needs to post the position at least 3 months before the start date, and create a relatively detailed schedule of the immersion program beforehand. While the volunteer manager can start with a loose outline of total hours per week spent working in various administrative, hands on, and outreach there will be important logistical aspects to prepare for the immersion volunteer before they arrive. From simple things such as bedding, food and shared housing policies. To more complicated agreements, such as getting approval by the community on which infrastructure projects the volunteer can pour their enthusiasm into. Of course the legalise of a volunteer program and plan B’s if it falls apart midway are also professional responsibilities of the volunteer manager.

A marketing specialist is necessary to keep the public face of Hart’s Mill reliable, consistent, and accessible. Hart’s Mill is currently composed of many vocal members, each of which seems to be busy with the multitude of task forces. It is detrimental to a community if they seem so busy with internal governance that they do not have time for more members. I have experienced communities with poor communication habits push away participants by inadvertently making them feel unwelcome. Ecovillages are already a unique subset of culture that many people don’t associate with, even though they want to. A prompt, affable point person to represent Hart’s Mill is a vital gateway to the community.

Legal Entity

There can be 4 synergistic organizations collaborating to achieve different aspects of this project. Seeing Stars Farms already has an established presence at the Farmers Market. They also currently have land they are harvesting, but they can expand to also harvest from Hart’s Mill by leasing from the Hart’s Mill Land Cooperative. Hart’s Mill can also start a non-profit organization with a mission statement to educate a diverse array of community members with special focus on marginalized communities. Finally the immersion program participants, who are funded by the non-profit, can live at Hart’s Nest, which is not a legal entity as much as a community resource. The nuances of these inter collaborations need to be sussed out, but integrating multiple organization has the benefit of minimizing taxes, incentivizing donations, and tax benefits.
How Do I Summarize This for the Board?

Money and law have been used for evil things, just like agriculture, but HM has the opportunity to turn these powerful forces around and use them to heal their world. The legal status of HM collaborative ownership should recognize the long term development and evolution of the community from a small group of resourced elders, into a modest living classroom and eventually into a community owned leader in regenerative living. Also, what HM sees as weaknesses and threats are really opportunities when they are reframed as opportunities to build alliances with communities that have what HM needs and want what HM has. And not finally, but initially because this is the launch of HM, the time is fertile for HM to invest fully opening the doors of their education center and becoming a collaborative citizen of their social ecosystem.
~Remaining Questions~

This report is full of many suggestions specific to Hart’s Mill based on what has worked for hundreds of other intentional communities aiming to live sustainably, justly, and regeneratively. Some of these suggestions likely have resonated with Hart’s Mill members while others have not. No doubt, it has left readers with many questions raised by the material presented here and that we could not answer here. Questions might include:

- What is Hart’s Mill’s regenerative role in its larger wholes?
- How does discovering this role translate into principles, values, missions, and actions?
- How will we continually assess our actions against our principles?
- How will we incorporate change into our community?
- How will we attract new members that support our principles, vision, mission, and actions? Will we incorporate their ideas into our foundational structures? If so, how?
- Are our guiding principles non-negotiable, or are we open to the possibility that our guiding principles might need to change at some point? Under what conditions would they change?
- How will we actually put these suggestions into practice? What is our strategy, short-, mid-, and long-term?
- Where can we turn for help when needed? Who can we trust as credible sources and as friends?

Answering these questions will take careful consideration, time, and perhaps some outside assistance. Many others have done this, and you can, too!! If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to T2. We will help where we can.
Hart’s Mill rests at the headwaters of regeneration and can be a positive catalyst for transformational change across scales. This community touches the lives of more people than its membership roster will ever account. This community creates habitat for more species than will ever live full time within its property line. This community is creating business and legal structures that will yield profits for more good causes than their bank account is tied to. Hart’s Mill is a reservoir of resources from which many streams of opportunity may flow.

This report is a resource for Hart’s Mill to see how its members can intentionally live regeneratively, amplify the impact of their efforts, and leverage the resources within their own community and in their broader community. While there are extensive resources for environmentally progressive learning in the local community, groups coming together to celebrate spirituality, and brave organizations fighting for social equity there is not a bottleneck.
No, instead, HM is entering this field at a time when the demand and impact of these organizations will be multiplied through collaboration and when all of these characteristics need to be integrated into regeneratively sustainable communities. Hart’s Mill is in a watershed of allies, so finding their niche within the paradigm shifting social ecosystem is not about struggling for their survival as the fittest, but nurturing partnerships so they can be one of many that fits best.

The community also needs to exalt introspection as invaluable infrastructure on top of which their community will grow. One of Hart’s Mill’s most precious resources is passion for action. Hart’s Mill core members possess folders full or reports, exemplify consistent participation, and have the dedication to actually build their dreams. However, a community is a living organism, with many capable appendages. So like any individual finding her purpose, if one gets too caught up in the built world and loses sight of the guiding light of her deeper mission and poetic vision, she will be depriving herself from inspiring outcomes that are beyond any individual’s imagination. We wish Hart’s Mill members the patience to cherish their purpose with as much vigor as they pursue their projects.
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Walking in Beauty: the Closing Prayer from the Navajo Way Blessing Ceremony
APPENDIX A
SURVEY HART’S MILL MEMBERS ON LEADERSHIP, August 2017
1. How well are these leadership skills (“I” Skills, Strategic Thinking, Systemic Thinking, Relationship Skills, and Elder Skills) represented in our group?
2. What might we do to cultivate and deepen these leadership skills throughout our group?

Five Respondents, “A-E”

1. How well are these leadership skills represented in our group?

A. There are so many individuals integral to Harts Mill who display these leadership skills. I see 1, 3 and 5 as very related - and two and three also related.
I feel that we have many who display the people skills - with great self-awareness, respect, and kindness in communication. There is a willingness to serve generously with personal gifts and to also receive from others' gifts and strengths. I've been impressed with the reconciliation work I saw at one meeting, where hurts were acknowledged and honest sharing facilitated and relationships mended or the attempt was made. There are many elders in this group, people who think about the well-being of the group and those who are coming after us.
I also feel we have that second set of skills with several who are strong strategic thinkers and many who see the contexts and are able to put the questions in the broader contexts of systems, political, social, economic, ecological...

B. I've noticed some difference in leadership between what I experienced when Arcadia was forming and the past couple years with Harts Mill. In a nutshell, to me, the leadership with Arcadia arguably did a better job of leading than what I've been experiencing with Harts Mill. Below is a little reflection on what may be behind that.
1) Arcadia's intention (build a cohousing neighborhood) was narrower/more focused and therefore easier for people to relate to and buy in to and also easier for leaders to lead from. It was just a neighborhood, not a neighborhood and farm
2) Giles’ skills and experience as an architect and developer and vision with what he wanted to see happen and knowing how to manifest the vision where very important. He became a leader that people were willing to follow. A similar person or people haven't been present with Harts Mill, at least post county approval.
3) There were several other leaders at Arcadia that were instrumental, e.g., Ginger's leadership with the social aspect of cohousing/community; Lois Ann's dynamic presence, enthusiasm, and "can do" positive attitude; Ray's leadership with many of the practical aspects of development. Together with Giles, they formed a very tight and effective team that worked well together, perhaps better than what I've experienced at Harts Mill.
4) The forming group had a strong foundation in self-awareness. several Quaker members with experience with consensus; the several members with skills with facilitation/group/interpersonal processes; about half a dozen psychotherapists all told; experienced meditation practitioners. I don't think it's fair to say that Arcadians had better group process/self awareness skills than Harts Mill.
Mill members have, I don't know/have experience with many Harts Mill folks to really assess that, although I do have a sense that Arcadians were able to be more focused and clearer about their intention.

5) 25 years ago it seems that society in general was less distracted and turbulent, lived online less, had more time, etc. Leaders now need to deal much more with technology/living in the digital age and hyper everything, which can be a big barrier to good communications/group cohesion.

6) There may be something to Harts Mill's membership structure and process that is in some way related. The Arcadia group as it was forming as a whole was not as ephemeral, and so there was less turnover and more clarity about who was "in". You were either exploring or you were a member, not shades of grey. Also, Arcadia went from about a dozen people to over 50 people very, very quickly. That group was established pretty much by the time ground was broken. So leaders knew who they were leading, and that was a stable group for an extended time.

I have some disappointment both with myself and with others about my ability to more fully move into eldership. And, I see this as a huge/larger cultural challenge: our culture does not do a very good job of supporting and honoring the wisdom and experience and traits of elders.

C. As a forming community we have several known hurdles in front of us (and some that surely are not yet known). We likely also will face an occasional crisis (hopefully not too many and none terribly debilitating). Fortunately, our leadership situation seems rock solid to me. Specifically:

● We have adopted an effective decision-making process (part of the Sociocracy governance system)
● Members of the community, broadly speaking, and our leadership, in particular, appear to appreciate this process and are working to support and improve the way it best serve our needs.
● We have a broadly skilled pool of talented members, and we have been fortunate to recruit great individuals from this pool into key leadership roles.
● We recognize the need to rotating leadership roles periodically
● We recognize the need for periodic performance evaluations
● There are some in our community who are worried about power differentials and excessive power accruing to specific leaders. I take exception to this view. To the extent that power differentials exist (I do not deny for a minute that they do not), I believed they have served us well as certain key roles get assigned to well-matched individuals in ways that best move us forward. Our existing power differentials are not obnoxious impediments to fair, effective, transparent processes. I find them valuable… indeed, imperative. Further, we have methods (not always followed) for calling individuals out when they impede effective communication or forward progress.
● In each of the 5 “leadership skills” categories mentioned, I find nothing to carp about. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have effective leaders in each critical area of our community life.

D. Overall, most of the qualities are represented in the group. The trick is to get them all in one person at one time for a particular event. Having the qualities aggregated at a meeting does work, but not as well.
The flip side is that if some or all of the leadership qualities reside in only one leader then you have a cult and not an organization.
The rigidity of using Sociocracy rounds only instead of mixing in some popcorn (in some meetings) is stifling spontaneity and discourse.
The very high resistance to adding electronic communications to the tool box of HM has been an inhibiting factor in the group making faster progress and keeping its members informed and involved.
But then who gets perfection in any organization?
It is interesting that the first 4 qualities discussed above are gender neutral and the last, elder, is gender specific. Is that because our culture has a longer life span for females in the populace and that this is a truism or is something else involved?
For an intentional community to get started, there has to be a nucleus of pioneers. By definition, pioneers are decision makers and leaders who know where they want to go and will make the effort to get there. Then come the settlers who like the overall goal and want to buy in. The false assumption is that the settler believes that they should have equal say with the pioneer.
Sometimes the pioneers drop out because the initial nucleus is insufficient to get to the goal and the addition of settlers bends the goals. This is a normal process as being witnessed in HM.
Many intentional communities spend 10 years getting going and morph significantly during that time. The morphing process continues until a situation gels that allows the community to actually come into being with whomever happens to be a part of the group at the time.

E. For whatever emotional or governance reasons our group does not have strong leaders that effectively guide and lead us. There is such concern about including everyone in the decisions and being sure every fringe ideal is met that decisions are deadlocked and we can’t move forward. It is impossible to say both yes and no on major issues and still move forward. We are so adamant about everyone in the group being considered a leader that it is impossible for one to emerge and move things forward.
Our biggest need is for an “I” leader to allowed to step forward. There is so much analysis and worry and so much focus on inclusion the there is no group to be led. We have the leadership skills and knowledge within the group. As a group we need to learn to accept and encourage them by not hogtying the entire group with the demand that all diverse attitudes each have the ultimate say - an impossible situation.

2. What might we do to cultivate and deepen these leadership skills throughout our group?

A. I think the methods we have adopted are very helpful for the first set - the sociocracy, the non-violent communication, etc.
I am not sure about the second set. I believe we have a few who are strong at this and are leading us. This is very important. How do we show appreciation for the dedication that this work takes. I am grateful for those who think clearly about the multiple systems and think strategically and help us to plan and move forward on these multiple fronts.
Perhaps at some point, acknowledging the ‘gifts differing’ will help us grow. Sharing some of the big-picture strategic work going on and needed might be helpful at some point to lift up the layers of leadership work needed and growing.
B. To date, a main way I've chosen to express leadership is to pick a very tangible project that I am inspired by (the cob building) and fully commit myself to it. That is probably the approach I will continue with; I don't at this point know what may be next. More generally, I'm ready to provide leadership with those specific areas I feel confident with leading because of my skills and experience. The main one is probably low impact development that maintains hydrologic balance with the land. There may be others, especially related to development. However, I need more clarity with what, if anything, Harts Mill is asking me to lead. In all honesty, I also have limited capacity to lead because of other commitments in my life.

C.  
· Ongoing leadership training (e.g., understanding effective leadership approaches and styles, communication discipline [e.g., NVC], etc.)
· Ongoing leadership performance evaluations and self-assessments
· Training in systemic thinking skills. This is part of an appropriately-oriented Permaculture approach (which we confess to embrace). But actually thinking systemically -- understanding non-linearities and acknowledging feedbacks, for example -- is not instinctively the way most of us approach decisions.
· Constant reevaluation of how/whether our leaders are remaining faithful to our core values
· Many of us “of a certain age” feel quite self-confident in our “elder” skills and wisdom. However, we sometimes find it hard to be fully open to opinions and values of younger people. Honoring the wisdom of our elders while, at the same time, encouraging and valuing the non-elders among us is something we may want to create a discussion group around.

D. The fact that most of HM and its leaders would qualify as being in the elder age group, suggests that even though there is room for growth and change to incorporate more of the leadership qualities in one person, our own learned programs would suggest that it would be difficult to obtain. Nonetheless, efforts on the part of all members to obtain or improve their leadership qualities would be well worthwhile for the group as well as individual growth. So far, in my short time with the group, there has not appeared an open minded younger person with all of the qualities you have listed above or the time to obtain those qualities to provide leadership in this very intensive and important time in the groups history.

General observation:
Many intentional communities have goals of creating groups that are "like minded". I believe those groups that strive to be open minded will be more successful and have greater joy in living. Right now, HM is about to schism because many are searching for like minded and not open minded. Getting down to the brass tacks of building and making factual and contractual commitments is very different from discussing flavors of ideology at group meetings as has been done in the past.
Open minded people can agree to disagree and let each live their own lives. When people search for like minded (for the most part, this precludes open mindedness or at least acceptance of individual sovereignty) and get in a group where not every one is like minded (which is the norm), conflicts abound.
Each person who is searching for like minded wants the other to be like them and do things they are comfortable with for whatever ideological force is pushing their buttons. When others decide to live their lives their own way, the person who is wanting like mindedness has heartburn, stress
or whatever dis-ease manifests in not getting their way and witnessing someone else living a life they want.

Don’t confuse like mindedness with having the same over all goals. Like mindedness wants everyone taking the same path to a goal where open mindedness accepts different paths to a goal.

E. I do think we have many of those skills in our community but unfortunately not all and not the ones most needed at this time. The elder skills are well represented as well as are the strategic skills. I think we have very strong systemic skills as well.

While we do have them, I suspect that the immaturity of our “I” skills and relationship skills are what is contributing to our current quagmire.

Our moods and attitudes amongst the ‘leadership group’ is very diverse and very adamant. I understand the “I” leadership as a charismatic one that can bring the strongest attitude and mood to the front and lead with it. That person (or the environment to attract or create one) we do not have and actively resist. When one attempts to emerge they are pushed back down by all the diverse attitudes being concerned that they are not the dominant one. There is very little cooperation and a willingness to compromise between the attitudes in the community so no one mindset (that is a well thought combo of the individual mindsets) can emerge and lead.

We seem incapable of sharing the same end goals but allowing or accepting different paths to that common goal.

Our relationship skills are in their infancy. There is such concern and focus on groups that are not currently involved in our group and on the fringe that understanding and facilitating the relationships within the greater group is very rigid - i.e. behave a certain way or you are being a problem. We are focusing so heavily on inclusion that we are excluding. Under a variety of labels and mindsets this prevalent attitude demands that everyone only relate in a narrow way. We seem unable to reach even the simplest decision because it might conflict with someone’s sensibilities in someway that the greater goal is not reached. So we flounder.
APPENDIX B: HART’S MILL RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION CENTER

One of Hart’s Mill’s potential goals is to become an Educational Center, with its own designated building. (For reference, see the Hart’s Mill Vision/Mission/Aims and some of the relevant Principles and Intentions copied at the bottom of the page.) Answer the following questions about the importance, focus, and scope of such a project.

Five Respondents, “A-E”

1. **How important is an Educational Center as a project for Hart’s Mill?**

A. It's important, but in the longer term.

B. To me, this is a very important part of our overall plan. However, I have no idea how to approach thinking about staging the timing of the construction and implementation of educational strategies. My instincts would be to place it after the housing, common house, and farm infrastructure. Thus, very important but low priority.

C. Very important...it’s encompasses many parts of our Principles and Intentions.

D. Very important. Education is an excellent way to participate in broader culture change. One of our goals is to be a model and a resource for others, and hosting teachers and visitors to participate in learning on-site is a great way to do it.

E. I have always heard about the educational aspect of HM and think that is a valuable dimension of the community. This could be community work for members who like developing curricula and creative learning opportunities and outreach. The witness value of the community and farm will be important to inspire others for what alternatives are possible. There are many ways to develop this educational aspect, but certainly programming and a space for it are important.

2. **What might be the focus of an Educational Center?** (Possibilities: sustainability, collaborative governance, permaculture, green building, sociocracy, renewable energy, conflict resolution, natural building, facilitation, ecosystem preservation, racial equity, regenerative agriculture, cooperative business and economics, social and environmental justice, nonviolent communication, biodiversity, ecovillage planning and development, and holistic leadership.) Select as many of these as you wish, and/or add other domains that you feel the Educational Center ought to pursue.

A. Any of these is consistent with Hart's Mill's stated vision/p&i. Others could include wildcrafting; more "traditional" topics in agriculture/food (e.g., beekeeping, putting up the harvest, small fruit, etc); arts and crafts; perhaps even yoga classes and other holistic classes. I think of such a center as a flexible and evolving resource for the members to use based on their own interests and inspiration to offer their knowledge/time/skills. One potential concrete offering is to support others in creating their own intentional communities-sharing lessons learned and best practices.
B. Specific topics are not so important at this time. All of the above would be a good answer, but there are other considerations. For one, the idea of an educational center received some attention at a time three years ago when there was a community of home schooling families who expressed interest in Hart’s Mill. So we thought… why not a school during the day and other classes and events (like yoga, musical events, talent shows, etc.) on evenings or weekends? Another thing needs to be said… We have always envisioned this as a venue where non-Hart’s Mill activities would take place on a fee-generating basis. So part of the rationale was to have an income-generating facility as well as facility for our own use. Sounds crass, I suppose. But at its heart, the idea is very permaculture-ry: stacking functions.

C. All of those mentioned are great areas of teaching and learning, plus anything else that promotes community and environmental awareness and is considered knowledge that can be shared.

D. I would say "all of the above." Maybe add music and dancing!

E. I think these you name are very appropriate to include as potential dimensions of an Education Center: sustainability, collaborative governance, permaculture, green building, sociocracy, renewable energy, conflict resolution, natural building, facilitation, ecosystem preservation, racial equity, regenerative agriculture, cooperative business and economics, social and environmental justice, nonviolent communication, biodiversity, ecovillage planning and development, and holistic leadership; others possibly: nature arts.

3. As you envision it (based on your answer to #2), who are the Educational Center’s natural allies, supporters and, potential adversaries in our local area, our region, and at the national and international levels?

A. Allies: local farmers, 4H, neighbors, folks doing similar work (could be a long list, Pickard’s Mountain, other intentional communities…) Supporters could be folks who take classes, folks who come to teach classes, those who provide financial or in kind support. I think of our culture of distraction, globalization as a key adversary.

B. Other local or forming intentional communities. It’s far too early (and perhaps far too arrogant) to fantasize about national conferences (ala Twin Oaks, Dancing Rabbit, The Farm, etc.).

C. Supporters - public and private schools, colleges and universities, agricultural groups, environmental groups, county and state governments, scouts, forestry service, ag extensions, farmers, other ecovillages, world health organizations, soil and water conservationists, business leaders, media, EPA, clean energy groups
   Adversaries - real estate developers, Realtors, some local citizens, certain government agencies, right-wing individuals

D. Natural allies are community members and our networks of association and knowledge. Supporters are others engaging in such activities where we have synergy and can mutually promote/refer. Adversaries? Only if we become a bother to our neighbors do I see adversaries.
E. Natural allies: I met a Peruvian woman who teaches at UNC in sociology. I believe she is a geographer/demographer. She teaches environmental justice. She seemed to desire very much to have a place to bring students for experiential learning. I do not have her name handy, but professors like her (and Anthony!) are natural allies, supporters and colleagues. I believe others interested in integration of holistic health, spirituality, environmental justice and sustainability would also be natural allies and supporters, possibly customers of the farm. Other allies nationally and internationally: others interested in eco-village life, in sustainable farming, etc.

Adversaries? Those who are afraid of community, of alternative lifestyles...?

4. What are the interests and goals of these allies, supporters, and adversaries?

A. Too many for me to take the time to try to articulate

B. NR

C. Supporter Goals - learn a better way to live, protect our planet, help us obtain funds to promote our vision, to be involved with the movement for smaller communities. Adversary's Goals - to develop more of the land in the area so they can make more money, to keep their own privacy, selfishness.

D. NR

E. see above (3)

5. With whom can we work directly? Who is within our reach?

A. This can be defined by those who wish to make offerings through the center

B. NR

C. We can work directly with schools/universities...actually any of the ones mentioned in supporters under #3.

D. There are many networks in this area -- Carolina Farm Stewardship, County Extension, CCCC and other colleges/universities, and places like Timberlake Earth Sanctuary and Pickards Mountain Eco-Institute which share many of our values. RambleRill farm engages in these activities and we could do some cooperative planning. And all community members belong to organizations and networks where there would be synergy -- just need to ask!

E. I believe there is a Methodist group very near by in Efland - Something Mountain. I will meet the couple on September 7. They offer retreats to clergy and others in spiritual work. I believe Norm Wirzba at Duke Divinity School and others involved in big tent food and faith issues/ ecology and theology, etc. There are folks at other Divinity schools nearby also who may be allies (e.g. Wake Forest).
There is a Black Church Food Security Network growing nationally, but still small. Heber Brown, a pastor in Baltimore is involved. Rev Dele (Hope knows) would be an ally also and is involved in the 'Green the Church' movement also the Black Church Food Security Network.)

6. *Who are we hoping to influence through the Educational Center?*

A. This can be defined by those who wish to make offerings through the center

B. NR

C. Anyone with an open mind.

D. 1. Our own community members--uplevelling our skill and training to develop capacities needed for HM to thrive. 2. People who are considering living at HM 3. People who are interested in what we offer and wish to cultivate skills for their own use. 4. Other intentional communities who can refer people as well as learn from us what's working

E. All ages and many diverse groups!

7. *How can we include them in the process of planning and development?*

A. This can be defined by those for whom the center is front and center right now.

B. NR

C. We will have to reach out to them through invitations, inquiries, tours or media or word of mouth from other ecovillages.

D. When we start to plan offerings, we will naturally network with people to participate and assist us. For example, we will be engaging with LaTarndra Strong to offer a Racial Equity Institute workshop at Hart's Nest. It's important that we reach out to the communities whom we wish to support, engage, and influence in the process of crafting our offerings or determining what is most needed.

E. NR

8. *When should the community devote energy and resources to developing an Educational Center? (some options: immediately, near-term, mid-term, long-term, or distant future)*

A. After the village and farm are substantially underway.

B. Long-term. In the shorter term, we can improvise by using homes of members and, certainly, the Hart’s Nest facility. For me personally, anything that diverts us from the core task of getting our housing and common house built and getting the farm expanded is undesirable.
C. I would say near-term. We are somewhat over-extended with the development of the village right now and can hardly handle much more. It should be and remain a topic for FC meetings and all ideas be collected so we can be ready when time allows.

D. When Paul and I bought Hart's Nest, our long-range goal was to have the community buy it for use as an education center/guest house. We plan to start NOW, inviting groups into the living room, the huge garage, spacious property, whatever space is most conducive. If we want a teacher, or even guests, to come from out of town, we have some limited lodging capacity. In the long run, with 5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, and at least 2 large indoor teaching spaces, we could do a lot here!

E. Good question. Not sure.
APPENDIX C
NETWORKING CONNECTIONS FOR HART’S MILL EDUCATIONAL CENTER

LOCAL
- NC Climate Justice Summit
- NC WARN
- Ecoheal
- Pickard’s Mountain Eco-Institute
- Mud Dauber Natural Building School
- Piedmont Center for Sustainability in Greensboro—looking for a place for demonstration projects on sustainable living, including an edible forest garden.
  info@piedmontsustainability.org  336-303-1126. Piedmont Center for Sustainability 619 Candlewood Drive Greensboro, NC  27403  http://www.piedmontsustainability.org/

- Colleges/Universities Sustainability Programs—become a resource for Community-engaged Learning on Regenerative Sustainability
  - Carnegie Foundation defines Community Engagement as “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”
  - UNC-Greensboro  https://sustainability.uncg.edu/
  - Elon University http://www.elon.edu/e-web/bft/sustainability/
  - NC State University https://sustainability.ncsu.edu/
  - UNC Chapel Hill http://sustainability.unc.edu/
  - Duke University https://sustainability.duke.edu/
  - Durham Tech Community College
    https://www.durhamtech.edu/academics/coursedescriptions/sstcd.htm
  - Central Carolina Community College http://www.cccc.edu/sustainability/
    - http://www.cccc.edu/agriculture/
    - http://www.cccc.edu/green/greenbuilding/
    - http://www.cccc.edu/green/
  - Guilford College
    - Sustainable Food Systems Major https://www.guilford.edu/sfs
    - https://www.guilford.edu/academics/departments/environmental-and-sustainability-studies
    - https://www.guilford.edu/who-we-are/social-responsibility/sustainability

NORTH CAROLINA
- Association for Regenerative Culture  ARC is an educational non-profit co-created by Peter Bane (publisher of the Permaculture Activist magazine), Lee Barnes, & others. Our aim is to initiate the creation of regional Permaculture centers throughout the East to support and coordinate the development of Permaculture education and its broader...
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association is on a mission to bring local, organic food to your table from a farmer who shares your values. Our vision is a vibrant, sustainable food system that is good for consumers, good for farmers and farmworkers, and good for the land. 13 Hillsboro, St. Suites 5 & 8, Post Office Box 448 Pittsboro, NC 27312 Telephone: 919 542-2402 https://www.carolinafarmstewards.org/

Earth Matters Resources for Sustainable Living. Our Practical Urban Permaculture workshop is a hands-on, intensive learning course applicable to home and school gardens, and is accessible to any skill level. Charlie Headington, Ph.D. Permaculture Teacher / Consultant headington@intrex.net http://earthmatters.info/programs-activities-2/workshops/

Greensboro Permaculture Guild We offer site evaluations, concept designs, and finished designs as well as consultations on specific situations such as poor soils, water management, ponds and drip irrigation systems, working in small spaces, selecting disease-resistant fruit trees, organic gardening and orchards, converting your front yard, child-appropriate plants and containers, trellises and green walls, and much more. Charlie Headington, 515 North Mendenhall Street, Greensboro NC 27401 Ph: 910 273 7292 https://greensboropermacultureguild.wordpress.com/talent/design-studio/

Growing Small Farms A sustainable agriculture website for farmer, gardeners, educators, and consumers hosted by NC Cooperative Extension Svc. Debbie Roos, Ag Extension Agent, Chatham Co. Center 919-542-8202


REGIONAL
- Twin Oaks Annual Communities Conference
- The Farm Annual Eco Conference
- Earthhaven

NATIONAL
- School of Living
- Ecovillage Consultants (find email list)
- FIC
- Regenerative Education
- Colorado State: Institute for the Built Environment, Josie Plaut
- Regenesis offers training, looking to expand https://regenesisgroup.com/

INTERNATIONAL
- FIC
- Global Ecovillage Network
- GAIA Education