

# FARMERS on WALNUT

@ FREDRICKSEN LIBRARY

## PROPOSAL





## History & Timeline

- On September 17, 2011, Fredricksen Library hosted the first annual Bee Local @ Fredricksen Library: A Honey & Local Foods Festival. Featuring an onsite farmers' market, programs, children's activities and informational booths, Bee Local was a smashing success with 25 farmers' market vendors and informational booths and over 1,000 members of the public attending. The Library received enormous positive response from the community.

## Exploratory Meetings: September – December 2011

- Based on the success of the festival, a number of farmers approached the Library about the concept of a seasonal, producer-only farmers' market held in Camp Hill, potentially on the Library's grounds. An exploratory committee was formed. Linda Farr represented the Board for Fredricksen. Camp Hill Borough Councilman Aubrey Sledzinski and Manager Gary Kline also attended various meetings. Early discussions determined that the Market would be its own association, with a board, bylaws, and insurance, but potentially operate collaboratively with the Library.

## Camp Hill Borough Interaction

- After the exploratory committee's December meeting, the Borough's solicitor alerted Councilman Sledzinski that an ongoing market was not an allowable use at the Library due to zoning issues, but that the market could find another location within the Borough. Several alternatives were discussed. Bonnie Goble reported on this development in her Director's Report at the January board meeting.
- The Borough building parking lot was selected as the new location. The market chose the name "Farmers on Walnut" with the intention to honor ties between the market and the Library. A proposal was made to the Camp Hill Borough Council on January 11, 2012 by "Farmers on Walnut" for approval to begin operating a market in 2012. Positive comments, emails, and phone calls were received by the council, including a public supportive endorsement from former Mayor Lou Thieblemont.

## Current Status

- The Camp Hill solicitor determined that use of the Borough parking lot would also require a zoning change. Supportive of the proposal for a market, but weighing safety concerns from the fire company, the Borough Council has asked that the Library reconsider being the host site, provided that the necessary changes to the zoning ordinance are passed by the Borough Council and have a 30 day public hearing.

## **Potential Benefits to Fredricksen**

- Fredricksen would be a leader in a new kind of collaborative, community-based program among libraries. Fredricksen would be among just a few libraries in the nation that host or operate an onsite farmers' market. These libraries report positive outcomes from these endeavors (see attachment).
- Fredricksen would look to leverage market traffic through complementary programming, increasing circulation and marketing opportunities.
- Fredricksen would offer an important service to the Camp Hill Borough Council by agreeing to serve as the location for Farmers on Walnut, and a value-added service to all of our municipalities.

## **About Farmers on Walnut**

- Farmers on Walnut is currently operating with 16 founding members. These include some of the most prominent names in farmers' markets in not just Central Pennsylvania, but in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore markets.
- Farmers on Walnut has draft vendor guidelines and is currently writing bylaws and preparing incorporation papers.
- The board of Farmers on Walnut will be made up to include representatives from Fredricksen Library and from the Camp Hill Borough.
- Farmers on Walnut is seeking permission from the Borough, Camp Hill Church of God, and Trinity Lutheran Church for use of their parking lots.

## **Next Steps**

- Approval of the motion before the Board to approve the use of the side lot by Farmers on Walnut at Fredricksen for a seasonal, producer-only farmers' market, conditional on an approved ordinance by the Camp Hill Borough Council.
- Once approved by Fredricksen and the Camp Hill Borough Council, the Library will work with Farmers on Walnut to finalize layout of the market, market day parking, location of trash cans and other amenities needed. Plans will be reviewed by the Facilities Committee.