

Living Well Community—Areas of Sustainability

Living Well Community is a 124 acre mixed-use intentional community/ecovillage on the Deep River on the edge of the town of Franklinville in Central North Carolina. It is rural/small town, but also close to many larger cities in the NC Piedmont including Greensboro (27 miles), Raleigh (63 miles), Charlotte (75 miles), etc. The property has abundant resources on site including about a mile of frontage on the Deep River on one side and 0.85 miles of frontage on Sandy Creek on the other side. It has varying topography including high bluffs overlooking Sandy Creek, deep soils in the center of the property, abundant rock outcroppings at various points on the property, mature forests on some parts of the property, good solar access, etc. In addition it has access to important modern infrastructure such as town water and sewer, fiber optic cable for high speed internet, closeness to essential services and shopping, and a regional rail trail/greenway connection providing another pedestrian and bike path to Franklinville and Ramseur and points beyond, and is 1.3 miles from a major 4 lane highway for easy access to nearby destinations.

Living Well Community has four core values: sustainability, health/wellness, honoring the sacred, and service to the greater good. While member's interests and abilities to address all areas of sustainability varies, and addressing the full range of issues takes time, resources, and attention, here are some of the areas the community is either doing already, working on, looking at, or considering how best to address. Also the community uses many different strategies to address these many issues including community-wide required commitments (e.g. Green Building requirements, rainwater harvesting), community wide encouragements (e.g. community garden, development of community spaces/resources, shared meals/cooking), more formalized activities between community members (e.g. tool share and buying club), informal activities between community members (e.g. ride sharing, barter activity), and individual commitments (e.g. green product use and buying local).

Goal: Develop ideas, options, partnership opportunities, strategic plans, and timelines for each of the following five areas of sustainability: Energy, Food and Fiber, Water, Waste, and Transportation. See the specific primary goal listed as part of the following description for the 5 areas. Students can either pick one area to focus on or multiple areas, or students can work in groups to address multiple areas. Highest priority areas are Energy and Food and Fiber. Transportation could be included as a subset of Energy.

Harvey Harman will be the main contact person. Other committees from Living Well Community, especially the 1) Business and Economic Development committee and 2) Garden and Grounds Committee will provide additional support and input. Harvey can be reached at 919-799-6819 or Harvey.harman@gmail.com. Since Living Well Community is made up of households with modest resources a primary goal will

be developing low cost solutions to these various issues, or uncovering innovative strategies for paying for development and implementation of these various strategies.

The results of the this project work will get added into the immediate and longer term strategic plans and strategies for the Living Well Community with the additional goal of sharing these ideas and strategies with other neighborhoods and communities.

Five key priority areas for more developed strategies include the following:

Local, Renewable Energy Production: Key area: Energy

Primary goal: Have 100% energy equivalent for Living Well Community be produced on site or within a five mile radius from renewable energy sources.

- Solar on Houses and Structures
- Free standing solar (maybe a solar farm)
- Firewood for Wood stoves and wood ovens
- Biofuel Production
- Capturing methane from the adjacent wastewater treatment plant?
- Hydro electric power?
- Wind
- Geothermal
- District Heating and Cooling
- microgrid development
- demand management

Food and Fiber production, harvesting, processing, storage, & preservation:

Key area: Food and Fiber

Primary goal: Move towards 50% production of food for the whole community within 5 years, with a way for those who are interested by able to be 90% food self-sufficient.

- Individual kitchen gardens
- Community Garden
- Harvesting and promotion of wild edibles
- Mushroom production
- Food buying coop
- Interest in root cellar, commercial kitchen, production facility, etc
- Many members already do food fermentation
- Edible landscaping
- Hemp for multiple food and fiber uses

Water and Water Quality (multiple uses for water): Key area: Water

Primary Goal: Develop a way to capture, store, and have available a 2 year supply of water for drinking, house use, and irrigation of food and fiber crops.

- Rainwater catchment and storage required from all buildings
- 53 acre Conservation Area buffering the Deep River and Sandy Creek
- Multiple ways to access water: town water, rainwater catchment, well (proposed), Deep River, Sandy Creek, tributary creek, etc.)
- Storm water LID elements throughout property
- Possible pond sites
- Greywater reuse?
- Natural swimming pool?
- Add additional water features to the site?

Handling Waste: Key area: Minimizing, reducing, and reusing Waste products

Primary Goal: Become a zero waste community within 5 years.

- Interested in being a zero waste community
- recycling
- minimize use of toxic materials and cleaners
- Interested in addition interaction with the waste water treatment plant: e.g. maybe add a reconstructed wetland as an additional layer of treatment prior to release into the Deep River
- Greywater recycling

Transportation: Key area: Transportation

Primary Goal: Reduce community need for cars to 1 car per 4 adult community members within 5 years.

- Car sharing
- local taxi
- Development of the Deep River Rail Trail for pedestrian and bike connection to downtown Franklinville and Ramseur
- Electric cars charged by renewable energy
- Alternative Transportation?
- Reducing need for trips by car