

Discussion of forming a CittaSlow Commission for Town of Fairfax

In Spring of 2010, the Town of Fairfax, Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, and Sustainable Fairfax collaborated to apply for certification in Cittaslow International movement of slow towns and cities. Cittaslow was formed in Italy in 1999, and today there are 145 Cittaslows in 25 countries across the globe. www.cittaslow.org and www.cittaslowusa.org. A Cittaslow community is a place where local foods are grown in a way that protects the health of both the environment and the community, where open space and public gathering spots are common, and where residents work together on projects for the common good. A Cittaslow supports public transportation, alternative energy and the use of new technologies that help residents live more fully and sustainably. They're rich with cafés, theaters, music, and art centers, and encourage their visitors to explore the qualities and distinct traditions that give them a unique identity.

The criteria for accreditations and involvement include:

- Environmental protection and sustainability
- Local products
- Hospitality
- Infrastructure, road safety, bicycle paths
- Historic buildings
- New technology
- Cultural and historical values and diversity
- Unique town identity

After significant international evaluation, Fairfax was designated Cittaslow in June, 2010; making it just the second Cittaslow community in the United States. Cittaslow accreditation is recognition of the history of Fairfax, work that has been done to preserve our town and work that is yet to come to keep us striving to root in the past as we move into the future. For the past year Sustainable Fairfax has taken the lead on this movement, bringing forward a local currency with a snail image fostering support of local businesses, building a cob oven in the Sustainable Backyard for the making of slow food, and hosting a Cittaslow gathering for interested citizens. But with the recent change of leadership, I am suggesting it would be more appropriate to house it under the municipality in the form of a new town Commission. This Commission would include opportunities to collaborate with other town commissions and lend support to existing commissions who do some similar work.

Cittaslow Commission

5-9 people

1. Town Council Representation: (e.g. Council Representative or Staff)
2. Cittaslow USA Representative

3. Cittaslow Chair-organizational coordination of the commission and community support network under the guidance of the commission
4. Cittaslow Secretary/Treasurer-manages documentation and accounting for any fundraising events and expenses
5. Communications-handles all messaging and promotion of events and activities and shares information with Cittaslow network
6. Representatives should come from Ross Valley and serve to bring forth information and ideas regarding leading on a collaboration with other groups around the following issues in the Town of Fairfax: Environment, Historical preservation, Character celebration Local Agriculture and food production, Hospitality, and Local Business.

Possible activities:

1. Education and opportunities to show respect to the natural and human history of the area and the peoples connecting the past to the present.
2. Placemaking activities that draw attention to the unique character of community (this could include murals, mosaics, or other installations of artistic renderings that are reflective of our unique character)
3. Local community feasts drawing on seasonal and local food as well as offering by local restaurateurs
4. Activities and events that highlight local skilled craftspeople
5. Collaborations with other commissions and community organizations bringing awareness, education and advocacy related to Cittaslow criteria topics.