

Summary of Meeting with Lydeana Martin, Floyd County Community & Economic Development Director, August 1, 2013:

WHAT ARE WE RESEARCHING?

Beginning with the “Common Sense Meets Home Ground” article by the Land Policy Task Force in The Floyd Press, 2/21/2013, that noted:

Among the things that “matter most” to Floyd County residents is:
“Preservation of rural character, Appalachian heritage, community identity”

RESEARCH: To learn what that “rural character, Appalachian heritage, and community identity” ARE (or at least what one of these is – probably “rural character”) in an empirical way would be valuable.

[Quotes below are from Lydeana Martin.]

“What do residents PERCEIVE the farm (or rural) heritage/experience to be?”

What is so precious about life in Floyd County that you want your grandchildren to experience?
Knowledge base? Connection? Sense of place? The circle [of life and death within an environment] that is so much tighter for country people?”

We would see where the answers to our questions (our data) would take us.

A thought about a POSSIBLE finding:

“Is it possible that “creativity” would be a part of this? “Figuring out what worked. Ability to learn and create and have insights.

IS THERE a heart/emotional attachment to this land and way of life, or is the motivator more of a comfort with the status quo and not wanting to change?

Better understanding the County’s history and heritage (and defining what residents mean by that), will help Floyd County residents better write their stories going forward.

This research would help the residents of the county write their stories into the future. Understanding that and breathing that in [would allow us to] be more positive [with regard to the future].” It would allow for a positive putting forward of this story/values/plan. It would go beyond reaction – i.e. simply reacting to outside stressors as they arise.

RESEARCH: “What do residents perceive to be the “threats” to that heritage/experience?

In this regard, outside influences are quick to come to mind: fuel prices, commodity prices, etc. But it would be helpful to research what the barriers or threats that are HERE, that can be CONTROLLED.

What are the reasons farmers are not encouraging their children to farm?

From a land planning and economic perspective, it would be valuable to know these answers.”