

Hello Arthur,

I am very interested in how we can deal with the anticipated reduction of oil production. I think we need to * 1. get informed, learn about the oil production situation, and then * 2. share ideas. Well, not easy, because at first, for now, concern about peak oil is probably thought to be nerdy, on the fringe, ivory tower. Nevertheless, a couple of good sites for info are:

<http://www.atlanticfreepress.com/content/view/2757/81/>

<http://www.theoil drum.com>

TRANSPORTATION

People in the area need transportation for getting to stores, school, doctors, dentists, restaurants, churches, library, town offices, post office, houses of friends, senior centers, handicapped daycare, physical rehabilitation, home games, away games, parks, swimming, etc. As more and more gas is wanted, but not enough produced, we can expect a problem with cars as gas costs go up and up, and, possibly, gets rationed. At the same time, the already more fuel efficient railroads, will become (more) completely electrified so that any fuel -- coal, hydro, wind, nuclear, can be the primary fuel.

(<http://www.hopeforthefuture.info/articles/erail.html>)

As a teenager, my mother, Thelma Yerkovich, was often driven by horse-drawn wagon to the North Germantown RR station. She would then take the train to the Catskill RR station on the east side of the river, and then a ferry to the city of Catskill on the west bank of the Hudson. After doing the family's shopping, she would come back the same way -- ferry, train, wagon. The situation nowadays is of course not the same, but the main point is that the railroad was a useful link in local transportation.

It would be great if Rhinecliff, Barrytown, Tivoli, Germantown, North Germantown, Catskill, Hudson, again became RR station stops. Alas, this will probably take many years, and finally happen long after it is really needed. But, in the meantime, a Germantown area wide minibus system could be developed with the RR stations as focal points.

* The Germantown Times maybe can help people arrange car ride sharing.

* For the Germantown Comprehensive Plan, it is important to get the whole community involved in planning local public transportation. Different people have different wants: destination, pick-up, cost, way financed, days of week, wheelchair access, full-shopping-bags space, child stroller accommodation, etc.

* Critical: capacity, frequency and routes. An area-wide local public transportation system will succeed only if there are enough minibuses, the schedule is frequent enough, and stops are close enough to where you want to go to and from.

* A couple of cars/vans could supplement the general schedule/route for severely handicapped & other special needs people.

* The minibus schedule should be flexible enough to cover special events such as fairs, Bard College and Germantown school events, etc.

* The current school buses can be a starting fleet for an area wide public transportation system. Expand the service to weekdays and weekends, to days and evenings, to winters and summers. Have the buses serve young and old, able and less able.

* For the RR connection, start talking/working with the RR. At first they might think the idea is crazy, but as the fuel situation becomes worse, they may become more receptive.

* The Germantown Times is a good forum for people to express ideas, big and little; to respond to, expand on other's ideas; to have a forum that's there without being dependent on a town meeting being set up, getting there, dealing with hostilities, time constraints, bad weather, etc. (How can computer-less people

participate?)

AGRICULTURE

As transportation costs go up, local farmers may become more competitive for the local market as well as for the New York City market.

* The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement is a way we can support our local farmers.

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml>

(We are getting a 2008 membership to Hearty Roots Community Farm, a CSA located in Tivoli, NY.)

<http://www.heartyroots.com>

SPACE HEATING AND COOLING

If liquid fuel becomes extremely expensive/rationed, electricity is an alternative, but may be also extremely expensive/rationed. The Bard College experience is a good example of the practicality of using a geothermal energy system.

<http://www.achrnews.com/CDA/Articles/East/f444a3ed8e95a010VgnVCM10000of932a8co>

<http://www.abouttown.us/dutchess/articles/fallo4/geothermal.shtml>

With best wishes for the future,

Donald, and Doris Dubac, too

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