

40 MORE ON SCATTERED AGRARIAN HAMLETS

07 July 2019

BACKGROUND

Ashton Miller, Post Carbon Institute

Good Afternoon Mr. Miller:

This is a followup to my emails to you of 29 April and 19 May 2019. These emails responded to your email to “Dear Ed” of 18 April 2019.

From the 6 June email to a Post Carbon Institute (PCI) mailing list with “Dear Ed” personalization, it appears clear that PCI is continuing to pursue the strategy of generating a sustainable global food system that relies on a massive number of scattered “rural” HAMlets devoted to agricultural production. (“*The Future is Rural*” is cited as “background” for the 26 June fund raiser.) The 13 June “*Lets talk about food*” flier from Ms. Cesarini – also addressed to “Dear Ed” – drops the “background” reference.

I am concerned with the idea of a ‘rural’ AGrarian Hamlet or AGrarian NEighborhood approach as a major policy strategy. This is a distraction from the core mission of PCI – a sustainable MODERN civilization after humans stop burning carbon.

This CURRENT *PERSPECTIVE* offers two alternative for the application of AGrarian Hamlets or more complex Agrarian NEighborhoods.

SOURCES OF FOOD CHAIN IDEAS AND STRATEGIES

I noted a feature from BBC titled *Five ways we can feed the world in 2050*. There is a second Perspective titled *How to fix our broken food system* linked to the BBC post.

I do not agree with all the suggestions in the BBC summaries. Permaculture is not even mentioned as a strategy to address top soil loss. Evolving Perennial food crops that do not require annual tilling and planting could reverse the loss of topsoil and fertility.

Unfortunately, The BBC strategies also do not address Global Climate Change. Climate Change is a critical contextual issue that cannot be ignored in favor of focusing on technology, geoengineering, tinkering with industrial agriculture or tweaking AGrarian Settlement Patterns.

RECENT, ARTICULATE CLIMATE CHANGE PERSPECTIVES

Climate Change must be a front hook concern that provides context for threats to a secure and sustainable food supply system. *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming* (David Wallace-Wells, 2019) is appropriately reviewed in *It is absolutely time to panic about climate change* (Sean Illing, Vox 24 Feb 2019).

Well's text provides a sketch of the future if there is not a Profound Transformation away from current warming trajectories. The threat is further articulated in *Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach*. This report from Australia predicts human civilization could face EXTINCTION starting in 2050 if the current temperature trajectory is not reversed by that time.

Falter: Has the Human Game Begun to play its self out? (McKibben, 2019) is Bill McKibben at his best on the topic of Climate Change. *Losing Faith: A Recent History* (Rich, 2019) provides a summary of the creation of Climate Change Deniers and the defeat of strategies such as a carbon tax and aggressive alternative energy policies / action in the 1970s and 1980s.

PROFOUND TRANSFORMATIONS

Relying on existing agricultural strategies applied by organic farmers residing in agrarian Hamlets raising contented cows and tasty greens is a romantic vision of future agrarian strategies that will not create food system security at scale.

Humans must go beyond 'iguanas you can shoot right off your roof' to fundamentally new perspectives on agriculture.

Citizens must to embrace Profoundly new food strategies. For example see *Maggots: A Taste of Food's Future. The black soldier fly's (maggots) remarkable ability to transform nearly any kind of organic waste into protein could revolutionize global food supplies. The Washington Post*, (3 July 2019) profiles a project at Texas A&M University on this topic.

In one week, a soldier fly colony of modest size can turn a ton of waste into 100 pounds of protein, 400 pounds of compost and sequester – rather than emit – CO2. An acre colony of black soldier fly maggots can produce 136,553 pounds of protein in a year while the same acre in one year has the following protein productivity: broiler chickens 1,717 pounds of protein, soy 959 pounds of protein, pigs 365 pounds of protein, corn 152 pounds of protein and cattle 43 pounds of protein according to the Texas A&M pilot program.

Every strategy to reduce the volume of CO2 in the atmosphere must be considered in the context of a sustainable and secure food supply. IndigoAG has a project being tested that pays farmers to use advanced farming tactics that sequester CO2. Others are perusing advanced strategies to turn

trash into heat, protein and feed stock for 3-D printers. All the viable alternatives must be evaluated and sorted out very soon due to the reality of Global Climate Change.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

As documented in *THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE* (Risse, 2000) Human Settlement Patterns have controlling impact on Economic, Social and Physical Systems. Functional and Sustainable Human Settlement Patterns are the Sine Qua Non of Human civilizations survival.

Pursuing a settlement pattern of scattered agricultural hamlets is not a viable global strategy. Profound Transformation requires more than settlement pattern tinkering. Settlement Patterns strategies are very important but must start with an UnderStAnding of relative impacts of alternative settlement patterns.

I have seen no indication that Jason Bradford has experience in the field of REgional Settlement Pattern Strategy. Relevant REgional realities and perspectives must be brought to the attention of the two “inspirational food system activists” that are part of the 26 June program. They apparently also do not have a background in REgional Settlement Pattern Strategies and the parameters of alternate settlement pattern impact outlined in my two prior messages to you.

AGRARIAN HAMLETS AND AGRARIAN NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

As suggested in our earlier emails, a scenario where the application of “rural” Agrarian Hamlets on a large scale could be a core strategy might be as follows:

Assume that at least 95 percent of the Homo sapiens on every Continent were wiped out due to one or more of the existential threats outlined in Chapter One of *THE LITTLE BOOK* (Risse, 2020), the current draft is linked from the *PUBLICATIONS PAGE* at www.emrisse.com)

This scale of decimation would throw the human race back to the Neolithic Era. In this context, hunter gather bands and clans would evolve Neolithic Trading Villages described by Jane Jacobs in *The Economy of Cities*. (1969). This perspective is summarized in *THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE* (Risse, 2000). Also see *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (Yuval Noah Harari, 2015).

In “the normal course” the Neolithic Trading Villages would lead to the evolution of Neolithic Agricultural Hamlets and then to URban Agglomerations and CityStates. This would ONLY happen IF the course of “Civilization II” followed the path of PreHistory in the evolution of Civilization I AND if humans were able to solve the problem(s) that caused the 21st Century Collapse – i.e. over population, Mass OverConsumption, atmospheric pollution, loss of potable water, pandemics, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, etc.

If anything like the contemporary civilization is to survive, a sustainable food supply chain must be more robust and realistic than one focused on scattered agrarian hamlets such as the remnant settlement patterns found in Bavaria and Alsace.

A REGIONAL APPLICATION OF AGRARIAN HAMLETS

There is a related strategy that, while not a potential game changer on the Continental or Global scales, could have REgional impact in the United States. This is due to the low density scatteration of URban land uses in the COuntryside around the Cores of New URban REgions.

This is an overlooked source of land for AGrarian activity close to the markets for food and fiber consumption in the New URban REgion. SYNERGY has supported this strategy for decades. We call it SubDivision Recycling.

In the R = 35 Mile to R = 60 Mile Radius Band around the Core of large New URban REgions there are hundreds of subdivisions built in the 50s, 60s, 70s and early 80s. A majority of these subdivisions were carved out of productive farms and often have on-site water supply and primitive septic sewer treatment systems that can be improved to curtail ground water pollution.

UNits in these SubDivisions were the hardest hit by foreclosures in the Great Recession. Due to process by which MSA's are delineated and the way municipal, county and "regional" data is gathered, the status of the SubREgions where these SubDivisions are found is Tera-Incognito.

Many of the UNits in these SubDivisions are now owned by older HouseHolders who cannot afford to keep the UNits maintained. While some of these senior UNit owners might desire to relocate, they are stuck with a wasting asset. This is because no one wants to "buy grandmothers house" in these remote and scattered locations with out the possibility of evolving a context of Walkable URbanism.

Other remote SubDivision UNit owners might look forward to becoming residents of "Cottage DOoryards" within an Agrarian HAMlet or Agrarian NEighborhood in the CountrySide.

The value of the land in and around these remote SubDivisions has gone down as much as fifty percent since The Great Recession – even when the land has been improved to become horse-country 'estates. This is due to the lack of a realistic exception that there will ever be potential demand for URban Dwellings on the vacant and underutilized land surrounding these scattered SubDivisions. The unrealistic action of amateur speculators – including long-term family farmers – historically propped up the future value for URban land uses. The non-owner speculators have now turned their attention to appreciating URban contexts.

Obviously each SubDivision Recycling project will require patient, evenhanded negotiation that will probably involve land trusts or other INstitutions to insure all parties are fairly treated.

With SubDivision Recycling, if the existing dwellings are located on one acre (or smaller) lots, several lots could be agglomerated with the useable structures rebuilt for farmer housing or Cottage DOoryards and the rest of the reusable structures could be turned into large cold frames, planting tunnels and green houses to raise off-season fruits and vegetables.

If the lots are larger – there are many 10 acre “horse farm” SubDivisions in this context– each lot could become an intensive, specialty crop “farm.” This scale of agriculture would demand careful husbanding of the soil resource which would be possible with ‘new age’ farmers growing specialty food and fiber crops. The market for the food and fiber produced in these Agrarian HAMlets or Agrarian NEighborhoods would be close at hand for CSA or farmer’s markets strategies.

In past decades, SYNERGY has advocated SubDivision Recycling of closer in subdivisions to provide more intensive URban development – primarily, Missing Middle Housing – and Green INfrastructure. There is no reason the same strategy could not be used to start Hamlet or CLuster scale Agrarian NEighborhoods. This would not be a ‘global’ solution but could make a difference at the REgional scale.

I hope these observations and references will be of help to your and PCI.

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Post Script: A personal email thanking SYNERGY for input has now been received.

ON VOCABULARY & CAPITALIZATION.

This NOTE updates both **APPENDIX ONE – LEXICON** and **APPENDIX TWO – CORE CONFUSING WORDS** of *THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE* (2000)

In the evolution of a robust and functional Vocabulary to accurately articulate the complexity of Human Settlement Patterns, SYNERGY / E M Risse avoids the use of several Core Confusing Words and attempts to evolve words, phrases and letter sequences that are intuitively clear in the context used. The Core Confusing words that are avoided include **UNCAPITALIZED** use of the words “city”, “exurban”, “family”, “local”, “rural”, “sprawl”, “suburban” and “urban”.

Capitals are employed for the key elements of the settlement pattern Vocabulary because words that have specific meanings with respect to Human Settlement Patterns must be treated like Proper Nouns to avoid confusion. Within the guidelines of conventional grammar, ENterprises, AGencies and INstitutions are free to employ All Caps, Initial Caps and Interior Caps to

differentiate and advertise their products and services. Parents create new Proper Nouns when they become parents.

Why should those trying to UnderStand and articulate the complexity of Human Settlement Patterns be required to rely on confusing words and phrases and arcane rules of grammar?

Due to the fact that Capitalization survives most inter-system translations, Capitalized terms are employed when a specific definition of a word or phrase is intended. ALL CAPS are used for emphasis. This is because *italics*, underlining, **bold**, **color** and **highlighting** are often removed in software translations – e.g. different software used by email providers.

Many words, phrases and letter sequences used in SYNERGY / E M Risse communications, Perspectives and books that APPEAR to exhibit ‘irregular capitalization’ are defined in the GLOSSARY linked from the *RESOURCES* page at www.emrisse.com. The evolution continues and some use of Capitalized words have not yet been added to SYNERGY’s on line GLOSSARY. Many of the words used by SYNERGY are defined in *THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE*, APPENDIX ONE – LEXICON, however, these definitions were current when the book was last revised.

In addition to consulting the GLOSSARY, one can Google ‘e m risse’ followed by the word, phrase or letter sequences in question – for example ‘e m risse J / H / S / R / A’ – and find a definition and / or find the word, phrase or letter sequence used in context.

Links are not provided for referenced resources which are out of the control of SYNERGY. References to resources not authored by E M Risse can be located via an Internet search.

An expanded Capitalization strategy has been employed since the publication of CP # 33 (June 2014). In the past, a second capital has been used **WITHIN** compound words with specific meanings (e.g. OpenSpace, SubRegional, etc.) to focus attention on the need to understand the exact meaning of these terms.

As noted in APPENDIX TWO of *THE SHAPE OF THE FUTURE*, there are some confusing words for which there is no good substitute in English. In the past the words Unit, Cluster, Neighborhood, Village, Community and Region (including New URban REgions) have been capitalized. In Current Perspective # 33 and subsequent publications, a double capital is used to start the title of each organic component of human settlement pattern – e.g. UNit, CLuster,

NEighborhood, Village, COmmunity, REgion. Also additional words will be given Interior Capitals (e.g. HouseHold and SubREgion) as the need arises.

If you do **NOT** find the avoidance of Core Confusing Words and expanded Capitalization to indicate the application of a precisely defined Vocabulary useful to articulate a comprehensive Conceptual Framework for Human Settlement Patterns, you are welcome to create your own Vocabulary system to achieve UnderStanding in the context of Awareness => Interest => UnderStanding => Informed Action with respect to Human Settlement Patterns.

However: Do not be deluded and think that you will achieve UnderStAnding much less Informed Action using an inadequate Vocabulary which triggers Unfounded and Conflicting Neural Linguistic Frameworks. These words reflect Disorienting Naive Reality founded on Primitive Genetic Proclivities. See Current Perspective # 24 ***Live By / Die By*** linked from the *CURRENT PERSPECTIVES* page at www.emrisse.com .

NB: Evolving a functional Vocabulary is an ongoing process and feed back is welcomed. Please DO NOT provide blanket negative feedback UNLESS you also provide an alternative strategy to evolve a functional Vocabulary. The continued use of Core Confusing Words and limited Capitalization of words – especially for the organic components of human settlement – is NOT an acceptable response. Also see ***Millennials Destroyed the Rules of Written English and Created Something Better: The Spelling and Grammar Rules Do Not Apply on The Millennial Internet***, Rachel Thompson, *Mashable* (2 APR 2018).