



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & RURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
28 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0028



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

SETH H. BRADSTREET, III
COMMISSIONER

May 15, 2006

Grantmaking
Maine Community Foundation
245 Main St.
Ellsworth, Me 04605

Dear Maine Community Foundation,

On behalf of the Maine Department of Agriculture, I want to express my enthusiastic support for the Opera House Healthy Community Connections project being developed by Albert Small, Lauri Ackley, Annette Marin and others. I have become familiar with the project through a grant application they have made to the Department and from discussions I have had with Senator Bruce Bryant, their representative.

I am a firm believer in local agriculture, and doing whatever we can to help Maine people find local, quality Maine produce and value-added products. This proposal provides the mechanism for that linkage, utilizing an old opera house in an area of Maine where we need more focus on promoting agriculture.

What I am most impressed with is with the amount and variety of community support activities for which the Opera House will become a rallying point. This type of collaboration and interest from various diverse groups speaks well of the organizing ability of the group.

I have asked my staff to be available to help "The Connections" group as they develop the Café and farmers market. I expect our Department to be an active partner with the project as it moves forward, both in assisting with the educational events on preparing food, inspections of the facilities, and in supporting the farmers market through our various promotional programs. I also hope to visit the Opera House and farmers market in the coming summer months.

I hope you give this proposal the attention it deserves, and support they need, to get this project up and running.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seth H. Bradstreet III".

Seth H. Bradstreet, III
Commissioner