

**Minutes**  
**St. Paul/Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission (FNC)**

December 6, 2010, 5:30-7:30

Ramsey County Library

2180 North Hamline, Roseville

Members attending: Becky Meyer, Bernie Hesse, Colleen Schlieper, Katie Koecher, Diane Dodge, Leonard Russo, Metric Giles, Nadja Berneche, Robert Schuneman, and Seth Kuhl-Stennes.

Others attending were Julie Seiber (staff), Margaret (Maggi) Adamek (consultant), Anne Hunt, Allison Dostal, Mark Granlund, Dan Tiltson, Vanne Owens-Hayes, and Jaya Ginter.

*Welcome, introduction, and recap from last meeting: Julie and Maggi*

Announcement from Seth: resigning from the FNC because he is moving and will not be a resident of Ramsey County anymore. Gave a short good-bye and expressed hopes to continue working as a partner with members from the Commission on these topics through alternative avenues.

Maggi reviewed slides (provided as handouts) and reminded of priorities, timeline, and the means to get there. The Commission reviewed the question *"What are types and levels of change?"* (top left slide on page 2 of handout). This slide provided examples of the scales of change ranging from grassroots efforts (i.e. building of chicken coops) to federal level change (i.e. the Farm Bill) and how food system change can work across the three levels - systems, policy, and environmental change. Maggi reminded the Commission that there are varying degrees of influence to achieve change.

One Commission member asked: What is our capacity as a Commission? Discussion included the need to have a common focus and a base level of understanding as a whole. There is a need to do more than just talk and to decide what capacity we have to make policy change. Other discussion points of members included:

- Must influence the change we want to see, make the recommendations
- Should work with things we feel strongly about and remember we have more teeth together than as just individuals
- We should craft our own answer, we can work within our inner circle (comfort zone) and be an advisory board or we can move outside of the 1<sup>st</sup> circle into areas we are passionate about
- Should remember that large groups sometimes collapse OR they can get going and make things happen
- Must remember that we have selected these priorities and there is no one to hand them off to, we must do the work we set for ourselves
- Must decide the process of rulemaking that will work with our Commission
- Should remember the Commission could take a practical approach, using the task forces to get things done

- Recognize the connections the Commission has with City and County staff and utilize these relationships to craft messages to present to the Council and Board
- This collaboration with City and County is key to getting work done and is similar to work done by Homegrown and Dr. Born in Seattle

Small groups to discussed the following questions:

*“What counts as policy change associated with community food environments?”*

*“What is the unique role of food policy councils with respect to changing community food environments?”*

*What are they empowered to do and change? What is their scope of influence?”*

*“In what ways can policy at the city and county level lead to these changes?”*

With reflection upon the above questions Maggi then asked the group to respond to the question

*“What’s coming clear about the role, reach, and impact of the FNC?”*

- We could have influence and power
- We must not assume our reach is limited
- Should establish clear goals of what we will achieve; get to the concrete and get things done
- Need to establish credibility
- Cannot forget the people who have no money to buy the healthy foods we hope everyone has access to
- There is a new state legislature-- how will they set policy and how could we respond
- There is potential opportunity to have a seat the policy table
- There may be limited things we can do because of the big things affecting the food system
- Should try and gain a “quick win” to build momentum which may be a local, small one at first
- Must remember to have confidence
- Must remember to reach out to the greater community without a lot of words, but with some action (i.e. IKEA provides picture directions with their furniture products you have to build yourself, there are no word directions which creates universal directions of how to get things done without written language which is not universal)

The importance of getting to work and starting action is possible with the task force development. The FNC is currently being funded by the SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Program) grant which ends June 30 and needs to have some outcomes. This deadline should inspire rapid work and launch of the task forces quickly.

*Task Force Development: “What will be important for task forces to consider as they shape the Commission’s priorities into proposed policy changes?”*

- Recognize the short and long term goals
- Development of SMART objectives is important

- Evidence-based research and data support is important to problem solve and provide rationale for work proposed
- The idea of winning- starting with SMART goals, low-hanging fruit
- Should be open across the “aisle” (consider diverse opinions)
- Increase the scope of influence
- Involve the City and the County at the start
- Provide clear ways to explain and engage
- Inclusive, expertise based
- Take “it” on the road
- Recognize how relevant the change is to the people we target, is the change needed by those we think need it
- Who are we talking with and who should we be talking with

*“In what ways can the task forces serve as a means to engage a broader range of community members in the Commission’s decision making process?”*

- Take the work on the road- rec. centers, district councils, etc
- Affirm practices groups/organizations are already doing in order to build on them
- Use existing networks
- Advocate for local restaurants, organizations, community groups who are doing good work and instituting sustainable practices
- Invite comments from public through news, website, etc
- Potentially invite those 15 people who applied for the FNC, but were not selected
- Build the base for what can be done
- Recognize Commission can off-load tasks outside of their meeting

Maggi called for 3 members of the Commission to help develop the framework for the task forces with a deadline of the January meeting: **Robert, Bernie, Colleen, and Nadja** volunteered. Julie said that she would meet with them. Work for the task forces was reviewed to ensure subcommittee for task force framework response to these points of importance. Added to this list were identification of the city and county staff to engage, how to network with other people who are interested, and develop process to do outreach to recruit additional people.

Julie informed the Commission that the FNC website is up and running on St. Paul/Ramsey County website. Anne Hunt will link this website from their City webpage. One Commission member requested better ways to get in touch with each other as Commission members- such as providing phone numbers or a password protected Google site. One Commission member questioned the accessibility and user-friendliness of the FNC website. Commission members expressed other ways to get the FNC in the spotlight: at Food Shelves, Public Media, Blogs for the Star Tribune (Lenny), editorials written in the newspaper.

Maggie and Julie will work to develop a communications plan with RC communications staff member. The Commission members will be asked to react to the communications plan to ensure it represents their views and goals.

Review of the skills inventory sent out to Commission members was done. Two handouts with the survey responses and a summary of skills of Commission members were provided. Maggie urged Commission members who have not completed the survey to do at this time to have a complete list of the skills, capabilities, and leadership characteristics of the entire Commission.

Maggi asked the Commission *“what will be important to consider that we haven’t yet discussed?”*

- Plans for the budget/how to keep things sustained
- Website- feedback/thoughts from the public
- Potential for blog- helps generate discussion and engage people
- Advice to get the work going
- Could develop a facebook page to get public opinion
- Must not forget about the opinion of those who do not have computer/internet access
- Do not forget to recognize the inequalities within society which can be used to inform communication strategies

*“What did we say we needed?”* How can these needed things influence the response of these questions:

1. *“How can this inform our thinking about Commission and task force leadership?”*
2. *“What decisions do we need to make about Commission leadership? Task force leadership?”*
3. *“How else can we make use of what we learned from the inventory to inform our structure? Process? Work ahead?”*

Responses from the Commission:

- Need to decide who is on each task force in order to decide the leaders (or to nominate those who should be the leaders)
- Need to decide how the task force members will be chosen
- Recognize some task forces may be unbalanced, but could trade members or invite others
- Suggestion to hold a retreat with in-depth, dismantling racism training
- Need to decide how we will get the feedback from the community and develop a broad communications strategy
- Need to decide if the task forces will be implementing the recommendations as a task force or if the Commission members will do so and if the task forces will go on forever or end and the FNC members become the decision makers again
- Potential to invite the others who applied for FNC

Volunteers were requested for an ad hoc nominating committee develop a proposal for leadership of the Commission, nominate individuals for the leadership positions and recommend a leadership structure for the task forces. **Commission members on this committee are Diane Dodge, Metric Giles, and Anne Hunt.** (Helene Murray who could not be at the meeting also volunteered after she e-mailed to be assigned to help with the work of the Commission.) Julie and Maggi will meet with this committee.

The last task for the December meeting was for each Commission member to indicate which task forces they are interested in and suggest other names next to their area of interest for the five task forces:

### **Task Force Interests:**

#### **FOOD ACCESS:**

- Nadja
- Lenny
- Colleen
- Diane
- Becky
- Jill Underdahl- Celeste's Dream

#### **FOOD LITERACY:**

- Lenny
- Katie
- Diane
- Jennifer Tacheny- Celeste's Dream  
Community Garden

#### **FOOD INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- Lenny
- Katie
- Bob

- Tori Bergin
- Kate Mudge- 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest Heartland

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

- Becky
- Bob
- Nigeter Tedesse
- Collie Graddick (Dept. of Ag. and AfroEco)

#### **URBAN AGRICULTURE:**

- Nadja
- Becky
- Colleen
- Diane
- Kirsten Saylor (Garden Matters)
- Susane Moua (urban farmer)
- Stephen Tacheny (farmer, CDH teacher)

*Meeting minutes prepared by Jaya Ginter.*

#### **Next meeting:**

Monday, January 3, 2011, 5:30-7:30  
Ramsey County Plato Building  
Conference Center  
90 Plato Blvd, West, first floor  
St. Paul, MN 55107