

Minutes

St. Paul/Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission meeting on September 13, 2010, 5:30 – 7:30, at 90 W. Plato Blvd., Saint Paul.

Members attending were Becky Meyer, Bernie Hesse, Colleen Schlieper, Diane, Dodge, Helene Murray, Katie Koecher, Leonard Russo, Lynne Rosetto Kasper, Metric Giles, Nadja Berneche and Seth Kuhl-Stennes.

Others attending were Julie Seiber (staff), Margaret Adamek (consultant), Mary Peick, Marijo Wunderlich, Lindsey Jackson, Donald Gault, Vanne Owens Hayes, and Annalisa Hultberg.

June Mathiowetz (staff) and Julie Ristau (one of the three chairs) presented an overview of the food policy work accomplished by Homegrown Minneapolis from December 2008 until the present. Homegrown Minneapolis is a city-wide initiative to develop recommendations and implement strategies to increase and improve the growing, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods.

The work was accomplished with four subcommittees focusing on the areas of Farmers Markets, Gardens, Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture, and Commercial Use. Task forces took on smaller aspects and the work was brought together as recommendations with larger community meetings to verify the work. City staff has convened a work group to carry out the highest priority recommendations.

As a result of this work, the people involved are exploring the establishment of an on-going local food advisory entity. More details are available at the web site:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp>

Maggi Adamek led the Commission members in discussions about the Statement of Roles and Responsibilities, Vision, and Principles of Working together which will be available separately in their finalized form. Commission members expressed an interest in collaboration with Minneapolis and Hennepin County on food issues as the work moves forward.

The draft Roles and Responsibilities document needs to include language about members being ambassadors to the community on food and nutrition issues as well as statements about communication, collaboration and a commitment to learning on the part of the members. There was an opinion that the word access in the phrase “the aim of increasing access to healthy food” needs to be expanded. The discussion of the draft Vision statement was centered around education, social/structural

justice, environmental statements and respecting and celebrating the cultural food and agricultural traditions within the community.

A discussion about the Commission's planning process included questions about how to be systematic in engaging the community and how to include the needs of both the City of Saint Paul and the suburban part of Ramsey County. People from the governmental units should be involved in the task forces but not in a way that binds the group into boxes. The members discussed ensuring a process for change, not just talking about issues. Questions were raised about what are the values behind "local food" and what exactly does it mean. Different people and organizations seem to define it differently.

Reflecting on the process of the meeting, members thought that the whole-group conversations were very helpful. They liked hearing about Homegrown Minneapolis, both its process and outcomes.

Submitted by Julie Seiber

Next meetings:

1. October 11, 2010, 4pm – 8pm
Workshop with Branden Born, University of Washington and Seattle-King County Food Policy Council
Neighborhood House, Anna Heilmaier Room, #212
179 Robie Street East
St. Paul 55107
2. November 1, 2010, 5:30 – 7:30
Ramsey County Public Library, Roseville
2180 North Hamline
Roseville 55113