

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Minutes
Wednesday, February 12, 2014
Sabathani Community Center - 310 E. 38th Street, Minneapolis
5:30-7:30pm

Attendance: Patty Bowler, Omari Chatman, Cam Gordon, Andrew Dahl, Beth Dooley, Pakou Hang, Russ Henry, Zoe Holloman, Kristine Igo, Katie Lampi, Bob Lind, DeVon Nolen, Gayle Prest, Aaron Reser, Sammie Ardito Rivera, Alison Rotel, Hashep Seka, Mustafa Sundiata, Rhys Williams

Others in Attendance: Jane Shey (Homegrown Minneapolis Consultant), Vish Vasani (Prevention Specialist), Casey Dziejewczynski (CPED), Charley Underwood (Minneapolis Tree Commission/Gardening Matters), Megan O'Hara, Mallory Morken (Gardening Matters)

Absent: Beth Dooley, Zoe Hollomon

1. **Mayor-appointed co-chair called the meeting to order.** Bob Lind moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Aaron Reser. Alison Rotel moved to approve the January meeting minutes, seconded by Katie Lampi. Introductions – Food Council members went around the room and stated why they applied to serve on the Food Council for Term 2 (2014-2015).

2. **Nominations for Food Council-appointed co-chair and Executive Committee.** Each nominee took 2 minutes to explain their interest in the positions – Omari Chatman is running for Food Council-appointed co-chair; Patty Bowler, Alison Rotel, and Aaron Reser are running for the Executive Committee. Food Council members were allowed to ask follow-up questions to the nominees. Food Council voted via anonymous ballots and all individuals running were selected to serve 1-year terms as co-chair and Executive Committee members.

3. **Voting on date/time for monthly meetings.** Based on members' availability, the 2nd Wednesday of each month was selected as the regular meeting time. Following discussion about times (e.g. Jillia Pessenda-Bovino and Cam Gordon stated they would be a few minutes late), Beth Dooley moved to begin the meetings at 5:00pm (instead of 5:30pm), seconded by Bob Lind. All in favor stated 'Aye.'

4. **Landscape of the new City Council.** Cam Gordon discussed changes made to the City's elected officials, including the new Mayor, Betsy Hodges, and seven new Council Members. The Mayor's Office representative for the Food Council will also be decided hopefully by the March 2014 meeting. The Food Council will work most often with two standing City committees: Community Development & Regulatory Services (Chair: Lisa Goodman) (e.g. Staple Foods Ordinance and Mobile grocery work, for which the Food Council passed a resolution in support of last year) and Health, Environment & Community Engagement (HECE) (Chair: Cam Gordon). Cam Gordon suggested that the best way for constituents to engage their Council Member is through *getting to know you* conversations. In addition, Council Members have good relationships with their Aides who have access to same information Council Members have. Russ Henry, Beth Dooley, Mustafa Sundiata, and Vish Vasani presented Homegrown Minneapolis 2013 Annual Report to HECE committee on February 10th. The presentation was received very well by all Council Members on the Committee.

5. **Examples of 2013 Food Council Working Groups.**

- Land Access Urban Agriculture (LAUA) Working Group (Co-chairs: Alison Rotel [Food Council] and Jim Bovino [Community]): This working group met six times in 2013 and engaged 20-30 community members overall. The LAUA Working Group had three main goals: (1) To form a working group to provide a means of authentic community engagement in this work; (2) Increase the number of acres of land being cultivated for food production within the city; and (3) Remove policy barriers that prevent urban agriculture from thriving within the city. Specifically, land access referred to publicly owned land for market gardens and urban farms. This group will continue but the structure of it will change and Alison and Jim will no longer be leading as co-chairs.
- Staple Foods Ordinance (SFO) Working Group: This working group emerged from the City of Minneapolis Health Department and in comparison to the LAUA working group, this group focused on a more defined project. Three Food Council leads along with a liaison from the Health Department convened the Food Council and community volunteers to conduct background research and estimate the potential impact of changes to the City's SFO. SFO work will continue into 2014.

6. Presentation of Open House Dot Survey Results. To begin thinking about a 2014 work plan, Vish Vasani briefly re-described the Dot Survey. Community members and Food Council members helped identify specific priority areas for the upcoming year. During the 2013 Annual Open House, attendees received three dots and were instructed to select the top three strategies they would like to see the Food Council pursue in 2014. All strategies, however, received a considerable amount of votes and interest.

7. Discussion of 2014 Work Plan, Part One. Kris Igo facilitated the discussion around beginning to think about a 2014 work plan. Food Council members split up into groups of 2-3 to discuss specific work they are interested in and in what capacity they envision themselves being involved/engaged. During the large group discussion, Food Council members shared their ideas, which included: affordable processing facilities to support small farmers; support two urban agriculture legislative bills; aggregate information on zoning, etc. in one place to better support growers who have market gardens; and season extension for growers. Next steps include the Executive Committee synthesizing all of the information re: interests for 2014 and continuing the discussion as a group during the March meeting.

8. Updates

- Sammie Ardito Rivera: CEED has created and will be disseminating a survey re: food access. The survey will be open for 6 months. The goal is to reach as many low income community members and communities of color. This process is very similar to the MN Food Charter. Sammie stated she will look into it.
- Pakou Hang: The Hmong American Farmers Association is putting together two trainings: (1) Hoop Houses and (2) Greenhouse Best Practices at Dakota County Technical College. For more information, visit: www.hmongfarmers.com.
- Gayle Prest: On March 16 at 8:00am, the City Tree Program is making fruit, cherry, service berry and apple trees available. The Recycling Association of MN is also making compost bins and rain barrels available for a reduced, lower cost. They can be picked up by Snelling and 42nd.
- Mustafa Sundiata: The next Metro Food Access Network meeting is Wednesday, February 19 from 9:00-11:30am at Silverwood Park,

Great Hall (2500 County Road E., Saint Anthony, MN 55421. During this meeting, results from the MN Food Charter public input process will be shared.

- DeVon Nolen: The West Broadway Farmers Market is currently looking for vendors.
- Alison Rotel: The Carrot Initiative is collecting signatures for the Seward friendship store location. They currently have over 1400 signatures but are seeking more to demonstrate support. Comments are also helpful in addition to signatures (i.e. Why is this important?)
- Katie Lampi: The Minnesota Farmers Market Association (MFMA) worked with the City of Minneapolis to submit a bill that worked for both agencies in regards to farmer’s market legislation. The bill allows for the local regulatory authority to increase the numbers of days a market vendor is able to sell at one location. The MDA and MDH submitted a bill jointly that also addresses the 21 day operational limit on market vendors. Minneapolis has not seen this bill because it is under the “cone of silence,” and has been told that the MFMA’s bill is very similar to the State department’s bill. As far as the pressurized hand sink issue that came up in 2013 there have been no changes made to the existing MN Rule. Minneapolis, however, has decided that a gravity hand washing set up can meet the requirements of pressure based solely on physics so Minneapolis will be returning to the hand sink requirements prior to 2013.
- Mallory Morken (Gardening Matters): The Local Food Resource Hubs Network is now hosting monthly Community Food Forums (to replace the monthly Stewardship Council meetings). The first one is Tuesday, February 18th from 6:30-8:00pm at St. Peters AME Church.
- Vish Vasani: The Minneapolis Health Department is actively recruiting Minneapolis-based businesses and organizations to help grow nutritious foods for local food shelves through Giving Gardens. A workshop will be held on 2/27. Vish will send one-pager to Food Council members so they can distribute it throughout their networks.

9. Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm. DeVon Nolen motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Cam Gordon. All in favor stated ‘Aye.’ Russ Henry adjourned the meeting at 7:35pm.