

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Minutes
Wednesday, December 19, 2012
Gandhi Mahal, located at 3009 27th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55406
3:00 – 4:30 pm

Attendance: Aaron Reser, Beth Dooley, Bob Lind, Eric Larsen, Gayle Prest, Julie Ristau, Kristine Igo, Kurt Schreck, Mustafa Sundiata, Patty Bowler, Rhys Williams, Russ Henry, Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer, Katie Lampi

Others in Attendance: Jane Shey (Homegrown Minneapolis Consultant), Vish Vasani (Prevention Specialist), John Parker (Humphrey School of Public Affairs student), Tracey Foytik (Intern with Jane), Charley Underwood, Kevin Kuppe, John Robbins (Gandhi Mahal), Riz Prokasim (Gandhi Mahal)

Absent: Alison Rotel, Cam Gordon, Deborah Ramos, Erica Prosser, Neil Oxendale, Rebecca Reed, Tracy Singleton

Introductions and Minutes: The meeting opened with introductions and Mustafa asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes. Prior to the approval, one correction was made. Russ moved to approve the November Food Council Meeting minutes and the motion was seconded by Gayle and minutes were approved.

Homegrown Coordinator Updates:

December 5, 2012 Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Open House:

The event was attended by approximately 180 individuals including about 100 individuals who did not RSVP. An after action report will be written. The following comments were made:

- It was agreed that the event went well;
- *there was a high level of enthusiasm and energy in the room;
- *the table discussion was lively because people are doing great things in their communities;
- *the icebreaker took too much time and as a result, facilitators were unable to get to the actual questions;
- *there should be more time allocated to small group discussions because it was valuable;
- *the program should be shorter because the acoustics do not allow for a long program in a large gym setting;
- *the microphone/speaker system will be upgraded for future events;
- *there was a lot of value in networking with individuals who attended and community partners who had tables;
- *the speakers were great, casual, and did a great job weaving in the tabling community partners;
- *there were a lot of new attendees and as a result, the Food Council needs to think about what they can do so that they leave with an understanding of HGM, the Food Council, and how they can get in touch to provide input;
- *there were a lot of young attendees; and no one wanted to leave at the conclusion of the event.

Online Voting Process: As part of establishing the procedures for the Food Council, a draft of online voting procedures was circulated. The procedure is as follows: a draft would be posted where all can access it and see it [ex: Google Docs], the draft is edited within a certain time frame, the comment period closes, a committee makes the final edits and submits it for a motion to vote, more changes will not be made at this point, voting options: Yes No Abstain, vote is closed and posted [see attachment for detailed description of process]. Suggestions: (1) Allow flexibility in timeframe for edits because different letters will require different time limits; maybe have min/max days; final edits will be made after comment period closes; (2) Instead of "48 hours," say "2 business days;" and (3) if a document/letter is controversial, it might be better to have a conference call versus one-way email communication. A good majority of Food Council members were familiar with or already use Google Docs; Google Docs is "nimble" because you do not have to wait for peoples' emails, but rather, you can make edits onto one document that everyone can see. Subgroups can also utilize Google Docs and have their own. A brief training on Google Docs during the next Food Council meeting was suggested and well received. Kris suggested placing this 'Online Voting' document on Google Docs and allowing people to practice using Google Docs.

Review of Results from Dot Survey Activity administered at Open House Event: Vish discussed the dot survey activity, which allowed attendees to provide feedback on 2012 Strategic Action Plan and where the Food Council should focus their efforts in 2013. Economic Development received the most "dots," followed by Composting and Organic Matter, Growing, Community Engagement, Communications, Food Safety, and the "Blank Board" with miscellaneous ideas. Next steps: "What now?" in terms of the future strategic direction for 2013, and discuss actionable steps. Vish passed around a draft of the qualitative comments from the small group discussions. She stated that she will collate the information into a user-friendly format.

Introduction and Presentation by Gandhi Mahal General Managers [John and Riz]:

A slide show on the background of Gandhi Mahal was presented. The business has an emphasis on sustainability and self-sufficiency including growing vegetables for the restaurant at various community gardens, recycling their cooking oil, and producing compost. These gardens produced up to 1,400 lbs. of vegetables last year alone. Future projects include adding solar panels to the roof, greenhouses and bee hives. farming, and urban farming. They conducted a feasibility study to identify high and low volume items in their restaurant that they might be able to produce. The next addition is an aquaponics and micro-greens system in the basement. In the future, they would like to have a perennial indoor farmers market that also serves as a local food reserve. Ultimately, they would like to become a completely self-sufficient farm. Bob stated that HGM and the Food Council works with Gandhi Mahal, and if we know of more local food entrepreneurs, to point them to Jane and Bob.

Member Updates:

Gayle Prest: The Municipal Building Commission approved bees on City Hall's rooftop – 3 hives. Approximately \$1500-2000 will need to be raised. City funds cannot be used for this. Forward on any information about people who may be willing to cut checks to Gayle. She will let food council know who to make the check out too – most likely a secondary non-profit organization. There is a team of experts available to assist in this process.

Patty Bowler: The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support is having its Health Living celebration on January 17th at the Longfellow Community Center. There is a possibility for HGM to table at this event; Russ volunteered to help because Jane will be out of town.

Winter Farmers Markets are being held at Mill City, Kingfield, Minneapolis, and Broadway. The HGM website has a link to all the Winter Farmers Markets.

Mustafa Sundiata: Extension responded to an RFP from Blue Cross Blue Shield with a program – Healthy Equity Leadership Academy. They are asking for a letter of support from the HGM Food Council [by December 28, 2013]. Jane stated she will send around the detailed information, with contact information. The food council presented the following feedback: still unaware of who else has submitted proposals for this grant and don't want to vote for any one organization; as a food council unit, does not feel comfortable doing this and it might be limiting for the food council; if food council members are part of individual organizations, they can support this program as an individual organization versus the HGM food council; and as more opportunities like this come up, it may be beneficial to have a protocol in place for dealing with support letters and grants. It was suggested to post this question on the Mark Winne Food Council list serve.

Jane Shey introduced Katie Lampi, a health inspector with Regulatory Services who has worked with farmers markets and their vendors. She will be replacing Tim Jenkins, who is now working at the State Department of Health.

Review Minneapolis Food Council 2012 Strategic Action Plan Spreadsheet [Jane and Vish]: This spreadsheet has the Objectives on the left and the Progress on the right [what happened and missed opportunities]. It might be helpful to continuously update this spread sheet [as appropriate] and review it at the monthly Food Council meetings. The back of the paper has the HGM Food Council purpose, as per the City Council Resolution. The Food Council presented the following feedback: (1) the Food Council had a late start because about 3-4 months were spent in a planning stage. As a result, many objectives have not been met. Some strategies may have been too ambitious and resources were not available to make it happen. Strategies may need to be reexamined, but not completely discarded; (2) the objectives are broad, so we shouldn't think that we haven't gotten anything accomplished. We should think of the current strategies and ideas as values/guiding lights. Right now, a lot is not actionable and so, it is difficult to measure; (3) maybe consider adding another column that reads – “Do this by...” – this column can be focused more on the process of how to carry out the strategies; (4) was unable to really answer what the HGM Food Council does because on a personal level, the work group is not meeting. Potentially focusing more on specific tasks will help accomplish things and create a sense of accountability; (5) tasks are not concrete enough and they are too broad. A workgroup is not required to accomplish every task. In increasing the specificity of the tasks, they will be more doable; (6) there are people on the Food Council who are so involved in the urban food system and the summer is a busy time for these individuals. It also becomes important to think about where each members' passions lie and what each individual wants to accomplish; (7) goals and objectives need to be SMART = specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-oriented. Currently, they are not all SMART.

Small scale evaluation of the Food Council [Vish]: Though the HGM Food Council has been active for the past year, approximately four of those 12 months were spend in a planning stage. However, as the year comes to an end, it still presents an opportunity to reflect back and

conduct a small scale, primarily retrospective evaluation to help determine a direction for the future [2013]. During last week's Executive Committee meeting, I asked food council members what their priority informational needs were, what they would like to learn as a result of an evaluation, and what they think are the most important questions to answer. During today's food council meeting, all members were able to provide feedback: (1) are we focusing on the right topics? Are we missing critical things such as food literacy and food justice? Is something missing from our design; (2) are there areas in the strategic action plan that people are already doing and doing well? Are we reinventing the wheel; (3) in terms of community engagement, how are we drawing in others who are interested in this work; (4) should we focus on concrete projects next year; (5) how should we focus our recruitment efforts for the next cycle of the food council; (6) how can we engage the broader community in what it is we as a food council do; (7) and getting external feedback is important; thus, the food council can help Vish identify folks to have 15-20 minute conversations with to elicit their feedback. A survey will be sent out to all food council members in the beginning of January, with a week to complete it. The survey will help inform questions to ask during small group discussions held in January. These discussions will be results oriented and focus on solutions to move forward in 2013. Vish will email food council members to ask them to suggest 2-3 people to speak with.

Last minutes things to think about prior to next meeting [Jane]: Elections for Executive Committee and co-chair positions. Those currently on board can run again. Meeting times will also be discussed along with a preliminary event calendar for the 2013 year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30pm.