

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Minutes
Wednesday, July 17, 2013
St. Olaf Community Campus
3:00 – 5:00 pm

Attendance: Aaron Reser, Alison Rotel, Bob Lind, Cam Gordon, Deborah Ramos, Eric Larsen, Gayle Prest, Kristine Igo, Mustafa Sundiata, Neil Oxendale, Patty Bowler, Rebecca Reed, Rhys Williams, Russ Henry, Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer, Katie Lampi, Erica Prosser

Others in Attendance: Jane Shey (Homegrown Minneapolis Consultant), Vish Vasani (Prevention Specialist), Zoe Hollomon (Appetite for Change), Mallory Morken (Gardening Matters), Lisa Farwell (Gardening Matters), Norman W. Harrington (Praxis), Glen Ford (Praxis), Beth Grosen (CPED), Charlie Underwood

Absent: Beth Dooley, Julie Ristau, Kurt Schreck, Tracy Singleton

1. Introductions of guests

2. Approval of June Food Council meeting minutes – Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer moved to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Bob Lind. Minutes were approved.

3. **Presentation by Glen Ford, Praxis development in North Minneapolis and and Beth Grosen, CPED :** Property is located at the corner of Plymouth and Penn in North Minneapolis and will be utilized to build a 30,000 sq. ft. grocery store breaking ground later this year. The goal of this project is to infuse new capital into the North Minneapolis neighborhood by using food as a provider of jobs (and address unemployment rates), improve and impact the lives of inner-city resident through food purchases, and ultimately contribute back to the neighborhood. Another overarching goal for Praxis is to build a national infrastructure through similar grocery stores in other cities – currently, there are requests for 41 different stores nationwide. The long-term vision is to build 200 stores, including those with aquaponics capabilities. Images of the two-story store were shown. This store will be located near a bus stop and amenities include a parking structure, a coffee shop, and culinary classes; the team is also exploring ways to cater to the high senior population in North Minneapolis.

Question and Answer Session

Q. Was the community involved during Praxis' development phase?

A. Glen Ford stated that he has a comprehensive understanding of the community and conversations are continuously taking place on how this project will contribute to the community of North Minneapolis.

Q. What is the timeline of this project?

A. The months of August and September will consist of environmental cleanup. The hope is to break ground before the end of the year, 2013. Six months after the groundbreaking, the store is anticipated to open.

Q. The size (30,000 sq. ft.) is quite large – what does the financing plan look like for a store this size, and are there any alternate plans?

A. Confident that there will be the right return of capital on this project, though Glen Ford is open to working through different scenarios.

Q. Is this a “flagship” store, or will all six being built be the same?

A. Minneapolis is the first one, a flagship store; as a result, people from the corporation will have a place to visit and see.

Q. Will the building of this store in North Minneapolis affect the building of other stores?

A. No; but, each grocery store is different and if you pay attention, you can correct the “model” every month and not wait an entire year. What is more critical right now is to get going, including getting the aquaponics started.

Q. The money required for this project is quite large; will this project yield a quick return for investors?

A. The hope is for a quick return to pay back investors as soon as possible. The population in North Minneapolis is dense, and Glen Ford stated that he understands there are critical pieces involved in this process and he knows how to make all of the pieces work.

Q. Could you speak more about the affordability/price of foods that will be offered in the store?

A. This store will be on the “high end” in terms of caliber of grocery stores. A University of MN study stated that the cost of food is the highest in North Minneapolis; as a result, you could place a Lunds in this neighborhood and it would not be very different from what people may already be spending.

Q. Will prices be comparable or more affordable?

A. More affordable. Customers will also have an opportunity to guide what is stocked in the stores. (A food council member agreed and stated it is very important to train employees to listen to the customers.)

Q. Have you taken a look at the Wegman’s model in New York?

A. Glen Ford worked there in upstate New York. That store sets very high standards and he is a fan of Wegman’s.

Alison Rotel requested a follow up visit from Glen Ford to present his vision on the supply chain.

4. Workgroup Updates

- Staple Foods Ordinance Workgroup (Cam Gordon): The Staple Foods Ordinance change was initiated by the Minneapolis Health Department and they are working with the City’s Licensing department; however, the timeline for this ordinance change has been delayed. Council Member Cam Gordon will be reviewing the most updated version of the Ordinance and determine what to move forward with, including industry meetings, and small group and large group meetings.

Question and Answer Session

Q. Has feedback been received from corner stores that are a part of the City’s health corner store program? They are always looking for support and they would benefit from assistance with community outreach (ex: Street Teams).

A. It will be imperative to find store managers that are supportive of this Staple Foods Ordinance change. We are also looking to broaden the input on the draft changes from just the 6 staff people working on it.

Q. Will healthy corner store work be written into Minneapolis Health Department’s SHIP 3 grant?

A. Yes.

- Northside Food Access Workgroup (Rhys Williams): This workgroup met with Glen Ford and engaged in a discussion about the size of the Praxis grocery stores and the 7.5 million involved in the financing for the project. The long-term vision is to eventually source 55% locally. The overall vision for Praxis in North Minneapolis is perfect and this workgroup wants to see it happen successfully.

Comments by Food Council Members and/or Question and Answer Session

Comment: The Wirth Coop has approximately 130 people signed up and are working to gain traction. It is a smaller model. The Wedge is also considering a new store in North Minneapolis.

Q. Publicly financed or through subsidies?

A. The City's released a proposal to develop that land. The financing portion is not a City component; the City will only help with the cleanup.

- Land Access and Urban Agriculture (Alison Rotel): The Land Access and Urban Agriculture Workgroup will be meeting next Wednesday, July 24, 2013 from 6:30-8:00pm at the East Phillips Cultural and Community Center. The agenda consists of recapping the history of the workgroup, review the goals and objectives of the group, and focus on action planning.
- Food Council Recruitment (Kris Igo): This group has met twice since the June Food Council meeting. This group will be meeting again on June 23, 2013 at Pow Wow Grounds Coffee. The official announcement for Food Council member applications will be made towards the end of August. The group has been working via email to develop general information flyers and blurbs to post on social media websites for example. Three informational meetings are also being organized and advertised. The idea of Food Council member testimonials was explored – "What does it mean to be a Food Council member?" During National Night Out, current Food Council members are encouraged to go to the different sites and offer information on applying to be on the Food Council. Kris will work to create a Google Group so that others can feed into this workgroup and promote this opportunity within their networks. The current meeting time for Food Council meetings is also being addressed, along with other barriers. Currently, an evening meeting time is being explored as the meeting time may affect who may apply. Another possibility proposed by Food Council and Workgroup members was to empower the new Food Council group to select their own date and time. Lastly, the group will discuss ways in which to best incorporate youth and elderly voices into the Food Council.
- MN Food Charter events (Mustafa Sundiata and Vish Vasani): The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council hosted a Train the Trainer MN Food Charter event on June 26, 2013 at the Longfellow Recreation Center. This event had approximately 30 attendees, including seven young people. An informational MN Food Charter event was also hosted with the City of Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board on July 11, 2013.

5. **Future meeting dates and times**: Explored the idea of moving the November meeting up one week and having a celebratory meeting prior to Thanksgiving, similar to visiting Kris' class at the University of Minnesota last year and cooking a meal with them. For the September meeting, proposed meeting on September 17th because Gayle Prest and Jane Shey will be attending a National Conference. Gayle Prest made a motion to move the November meeting up by one week, Russ Henry seconded the motion. Alison Rotel made a motion to move the September meeting to the 17th, Cam seconded the motion. For those who are unable to attend the

September 17th meeting, it will not count against their attendance. All Food Council members voted in favor of these changes.

6. Other issues:

- USDA guidelines comment period on dietary guidelines: The comment period opened June 2013. Food Council members provided feedback regarding the use of Roundup on vegetables and the inclusion of culturally appropriate foods. Jane Shey will send all information out to Food Council members; exploring how the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council can weigh in.
- Draft City Legislative language for 2014: Reviewed four draft legislative agenda items (attachment 2). Language will be voted on during the August meeting. Other ideas such as building codes, language around hoop houses, and rooftop farms were briefly discussed.
- Food Day, October 24th – is there a Food Council role? If there is interest, the Food Council will explore ways in which to partner with existing Food Day activities. October 12th, there will be a March against Monsanto (Deborah Ramos will forward information to Jane Shey).
- Possible ordinance change to allow a community oven, Franklin, Bedford neighborhood: Oval piece of open land near Prospect Park is currently maintained by a local garden club and the desire for a community brick oven here is emerging from a grassroots level. Updates on a possible ordinance change will come later. Rebecca Reed stated that the Bryant neighborhood may be interested in a similar concept as well.
- Food Council Annual Open House, 1st week in December and process for community nominations for Homegrown Heroes (attachment 3): A nomination form has been drafted to solicit nominations for the Homegrown Heroes awards. This form will likely be sent out after Labor Day. The Walker Museum is being explored as a potential location for the Annual Open House. Jane Shey and Vish Vasani are working to address potential barriers such as parking and transportation, and working on outreach to ensure all Minneapolis residents have an opportunity to attend.

7. Member Updates:

- Cam Gordon – Potential petition asking City to prohibit the use of pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, including within parks. Green Purchasing policies use friendly pest management. Currently, the City relies on Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's policies.

8. Guest Updates:

- Charlie Underwood – Brought up the issue of Roundup use on specific pieces of land. Also discussed topical application of pesticides on Ash trees in Minneapolis.
- Zoe Holloman – Every year there is a National Youth Food and Justice Coalition meeting. Individuals interested in attending should contact Zoe Holloman.

Mustafa motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer and Russ Henry seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm.