

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Minutes
Wednesday, December 10, 2014
Birchwood Cafe – 3311 E 25th Street Minneapolis
Meeting 5:00-6:00pm

Attendance: Aaron Reser, Andrew Dahl, Beth Dooley, DeVon Nolen, Gayle Prest, Hashep Seka, Jillia Pessenda Bovino, Katie Lampi, Kristine Igo, Patty Bowler, Russ Henry, Rhys Williams

Others in Attendance: Tamara Downs Schwei (Homegrown Minneapolis Coordinator), Vish Vasani (Minneapolis Health Department), Casey Dzieweczynski (CPED), Karl Hakanson (U of MN Extension), Leah Prudent (Gardening Matters), Magdalena Kaluza (Gardening Matters), Del Hampton, Anne Holzinger, Marie Eff, Kurt Schreck

Absent: Alison Rotel, Bob Lind, Cam Gordon, Erick Garcia Luna, Jesus Perez, Omari Chatman, Pakou Hang, Sammie Ardito Rivera, Zoe Hollomon

1. Meeting called to order. Russ Henry, co-chair, called the meeting to order. November Meeting minutes were approved.

2. Food Council – 2015 Meeting Time Approval. All Food Council members agreed on 5:30pm as new time for Food Council meetings but subsequently determined that the decision would be postponed and a new meeting date would be sought to accommodate a Food Council member's scheduling conflict. Tamara Downs Schwei will send out a short survey to see if Food Council members can meet on the 1st Wed or the 3rd Wed of the month, or another day, (instead of the current 2nd Wednesday of the month.). The Food Council will revisit the meeting schedule approval at the January meeting.

3. Food Council's Open House Debrief. It was a successful event overall and the estimated crowd was 200-250. There was agreement that the size of the room and location were great. It was suggested that we survey the information table participants to get their thoughts on what worked and ideas for improvements. Consensus was to shorten program next year and consider adding a community representative to talk as well. Some mentioned that they missed the facilitated table conversations/formalized networking which were held in previous years. Hashep Seka thought it was a good event for Youth Farm – this was the first time they had catered such a large, city held event and it was a good learning experience. Tamara Downs Schwei passed out a summary of responses on the Open House' Dot Survey Activity that was developed by the Sustainability intern, Laurelyn Sandkamp. The most popular area of work was Land Access followed by Organics.

4. Working Group and Task Force Updates.

- a. **Community Outreach and Engagement.** Their work has been focused on the Open House. Members are encouraged to participate in the Friends of Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Facebook page.
- b. **Organics.** Nothing new to report.
- c. **Land Access.** Andrew Dahl reported that land access group members recently met with Council Members Jacob Frey and Alondra Cano to discuss the Food Council's previously adopted land use priorities and they are largely supportive. Their support is important since they sit on City Council's Community Development and Regulatory Services Committee. This

is the committee that related policy or ordinance changes would most likely need to be approved by. Hashep Seka is taking the lead on hoop house policy initiatives.

- d. **Food Hubs/Aggregation.** The group is nearing completion of its survey. Other organizations are very interested in the results. The preliminary results may be available at the January meeting. The group is discussing the possibility of a convening for the survey participants in February or March.
- e. **Animals.** Russ Henry is meeting with people who raise backyard chickens on Thursday. Council Member Andrew Johnson is interested in authoring changes to City chicken ordinance. Karl Hakanson commented that he had recently attended a seminar where the University of Minnesota Bee Squad staff questioned whether or not there were too many bee hives in the area. The group discussed the need for more bee friendly landscape/food sources in the City.
- f. **Staple Foods.** City staff will check with Council Member Cam Gordon as to when to present the Food Council's large thank you card to City Council Members for passing the Staple Food Ordinance. A related minor ordinance change is currently going through City Council with no opposition.

5. Seed Sharing Letter of Support. Russ Henry distributed a draft Letter of Support from the Food Council for changes in the Minnesota Seed Law. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture recently took enforcement action against the Duluth Seed Library which focuses on sharing, not selling seeds, as the seed law is currently interpreted to include sharing seeds in the definition of seed sales. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the Letter. This passed unanimously.

6. Honoring Vish Vasani's Food Council Work. Vish Vasani was been working with the Food Council for just over two years as part of her Centers for Disease Control and Prevention fellowship with the Minneapolis Health Department. Though the fellowship has ended, Vish will be staying at the City's Health Department; however, she will not actively continue to help coordinate work of the Food Council. Members talked about her great work and energy. Vish Vasani also spoke words of thanks and appreciation.

7. Updates.

- a. Kurt Schreck updated the group on a possible large scale ongoing arrangement with a local grower for microgreens/kale that would be used in a soup that would be nationally marketed at high end stores. This is a great example of local food economic development.
- b. Tamara Downs Schwei recently was a speaker on a national urban food call where she discussed the City's water policy for community gardens.
- c. A local NGO is interested in building a large greenhouse for growing a variety of pineapples, avocados, papayas, etc. and is looking for financing.
- d. The city has not renewed the one year extension on exclusive development rights to land for the proposed Praxis grocery store in North Minneapolis.

8. Meeting adjourned. Russ Henry adjourned the meeting at 6:30. The next meeting is January 14.