

Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Minutes
Wednesday, April 8, 2015, 5:30-7:30 pm
EMERGE Career and Technology Center – 1834 Emerson Ave N Minneapolis

Attendance: Aaron Reser, Andrew Dahl, Hashep Seka, Patty Bowler, Russ Henry, Beth Dooley, Gayle Prest, Rhys Williams, Cam Gordon, Bob Lind, Jillia Pessenda, DeVon Nolen, Katie Lampi, Alison Babb, Omari Chatman, Kris Igo, Ginger Cannon

Others in Attendance: Tamara Downs Schwei (Homegrown Minneapolis Coordinator), Karl Hakanson, Robin Garwood (Aide to Council Member Gordon), Karlie Cole, Magdalena Kaluza, Casey Dziejewczynski, Donald Warneke, Jane Anderson, Scott Schumacher, Hannah Ramer, Amanda Weber, Ari Baum-Hommes

Absent: Jesus Perez, Pakou Hang, Erick Garcia Luna, Zoe Hollomon, Sammie Ardito Rivera

Pre-meeting presentation: Jane Tafel, EMERGE Director of Communications and Development, made a presentation about the history of the building and its redevelopment and EMERGE's new and existing programs.

1. Meeting called to order: Russ Henry, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. Introduction of guests were made. The April agenda and March meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of Homegrown Minneapolis Role in Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB)

Urban Agriculture Activity Plan Update Implementation Team: At last month's meeting, Ginger Cannon of MPRB gave an update on the status of the MPRB's Urban Agriculture Activity Plan and requested the Homegrown Food Council appoint a representative to join their Implementation Team. The group talked about the influence and energy of the Food Council in assisting the MPRB staff with the development and approval of the Activity Plan. Since the last meeting, a call went out to request who was interested from the Food Council to serve on the Implementation Team and two members expressed interest. Currently MPRB is accepting applications from residents to the Team until April 20th. There will be three residents selected to participate. Two representatives of community organizations will be identified through a separate process. In addition it is possible to volunteer to work on subcommittees. Ginger anticipates that the first meeting of the Implementation Team will occur in June. A motion was made and seconded to request that the MPRB Implementation Team include two positions designated for Food Council members. Motion passed unanimously. Ginger indicated that she would consider this request with her MPRB colleagues and report back to the Food Council on the decision.

3. Food Council Letters of Support Policy: The group discussed a draft written policy re: requests for grant proposal letters of support from the Food Council. The group discussed challenges such as limited capacity, timing and multiple requests for similar grants. Separate policies on partnerships and event sponsorships will be discussed at a later date. Motion was made by Beth Dooley and seconded by Aaron

Reser to adopt the following policy for letters of support for grant proposals: “It is the policy of the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council to direct requests for letters of support for grant proposals to specific Food Council members and/or specific City departments, depending on fit with and interest from those specific Food Council members and City departments.” Motion passed unanimously. The policy will be posted on the Food Council webpage and made available to those who inquire.

4. Press Release regarding support for Amending Minnesota Seed Law: Due to timing deadlines, the Food Council Executive Committee approved adding the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council to the list of organizations in support of Seed Law amendments for an April 1 press release titled “New Bill Promotes Food Security and Resilience by Protecting Seed Sharing.” This is an amendment to MN Seed Law that exempts non-commercial, interpersonal seed sharing activities in the state and has been discussed at previous Food Council Meetings. Other organizations listed on the press release include Institute for a Sustainable Future, Saint Paul Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Council, Saint Paul’s West Side Seed Library, Gardening Matters and Duluth Public Library. Andrew Dahl made a motion, seconded by Omari Chatman, in support of the Executive Committee’s action of approving the adding of the Minneapolis Food Council and Homegrown logo. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Legislative Updates:

MN Cottage Food Law (Minnesota Statute 28A.15 Subd 9 and 10): Katie Lampi updated the group. The City Council’s legislative agenda currently includes support for changes in order to promote local and healthy foods while protecting public health. Both the House and Senate Ag Omnibus bills are expected to include language that is supportive.

MN Seed Law exemptions: This is expected to pass. There are no state budget requests.

Urban Ag Funding: Karen Clark’s bill (HF153) had a hearing in Ag Finance Committee. The bill language calls for a pilot project for a number of cities including Minneapolis. The funding amount is still evolving. The Senate companion bill (SF534) has not had a hearing. The City’s Intergovernmental Relations staff has been assisting in monitoring this bill.

SHIP (State Health Improvement Program) Funding: Patty Bowler updated the group. In the past, SHIP funding has supported the EBT usage and Market Bucks programs at farmers markets, the MPS Farm to School work, Healthy Food Policies with the Minneapolis Parks and many other projects. It is also on the city’s legislative agenda. The exact level of future funding is unknown.

6. Presentation on Cuba Trip: Robin Garwood made a powerpoint presentation accompanied by Beth Dooley. A Minnesota delegation travelled to Cuba earlier this year to look at Cuba’s food system. The tour was organized by Food First. Robin talked about the various elements of Cuba’s food system that could be applicable as the Food Council looks at land access, food security, soil enrichment, and other related food policies and programs.

7. Working group sessions: The Community Outreach & Engagement and the Hubs group met.

8. Working group & task force updates:

Land Access: There is a different City staff person, Susan Schempf, in the Community Planning and Economic Development Department (CPED) who is now overseeing the garden leases for community gardens on city owned land. The Land Access group is awaiting an update from a City Council direction to CPED earlier this year to look at the City's land in context of the Land Access group's policy goals and report back by July 31, 2015.

Community Outreach: The group is going to focus on new member recruitment and planning for the annual open house. Kris Igo updated the group on the Facebook page and plans to return soon with a suggested policy related to making any interested Food Council members page administrators so they can more easily post on the page.

Organics: Council Member Lisa Bender organized a stakeholder meeting last week to begin to look at changes to allow commercial composting in the City. Karamu Gardens is hosting a composting workshop this Saturday.

Animals: Russ Henry and Tamara Downs Schwei attended a meeting organized by Council Member Blong Yang convening Hmong residents interested in growing food, and also obtained feedback about their interest in having chickens and perceived barriers. Russ and Tamara have also had discussion with staff from the City's Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and are looking at opportunities to reach out to Latino residents interested in chickens as well as other cultural communities.

Hubs/Aggregation: The hubs convening occurred on March 28 with about 20 representatives from the food hubs that participated in the recent survey, and went well. The role of the working group going forward is not clear since there doesn't appear to be a direct policy issue identified as a result of the convening. The survey findings will be posted on the Homegrown website.

9. Updates.

- The MPRB has cooking classes. Ginger Canon passed out a related poster.
- It's Public Health Week and the City Hall rotunda will hold an event tomorrow at noon.
- The Metro Food Access Network (MFAN) next meeting is May 20 and the Minneapolis and Saint Paul/Ramsey Food Councils are invited to attend and speak.
- Tamara Downs Schwei and Laurelyn Sandkamp are working with City staff on an app to crowdsource info and map Minneapolis urban farms, market gardens and market stand info. They are also working on updating the farmers market map for 2015.
- On April 13 there will be a food co-op forum in the morning.
- The Food Council is a finalist in the Food Stewardship category of the annual Environmental Initiative's Awards Ceremony on May 21. Food Council members are welcome to attend and can register at <http://www.environmental-initiative.org/projects/environmental-initiative-awards>

10. Meeting adjourned. The meeting adjourned. The next meeting is Wednesday, May 13 at UROC.