

## Kick-Off Meeting

Wednesday, December 10, 2008  
Currie Conference Center, 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room  
10:30am – 12:00pm

**Attendance:** *See attached attendance sheets.* Attendees included Mayor Rybak, 16 of the Steering Committee members, and 58 community partners.

### Meeting Summary:

#### 1. Welcome and opening remarks by Mayor Rybak:

- Mayor Rybak welcomed the partners and presented his vision for the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative. He stressed the need for this group to build relationships with one another and act together to inform the City of Minneapolis.

#### 2. Introduction of the tri-chairs:

- Mayor Rybak briefly introduced the tri-chairs: Megan O'Hara, Julie Ristau, and Stella Whitney-West.
- The tri-chairs each spoke briefly about their background and how they came to be involved in Homegrown Minneapolis.
  - a. *Megan O'Hara* comes to the group as a concerned consumer and a community advocate. She helped coordinate the creation of the Mill City Farmers Market.
  - b. *Julie Ristau* brings to the group a background in farming and agriculture, having grown up on a farm in southwest MN. She understands the complexities and breadth of local food systems and will help guide the group as they think about the local food system and all of the relevant components.
  - c. *Stella Whitney-West* comes to the group from the Northpoint Health & Wellness Center in North Minneapolis, where she is the CEO. Stella has an academic background in food but also understands the impact that socio-economic factors can have on the food system.

#### 3. Introduction of the Steering Committee:

- Megan explained that the Steering Committee, which will be the main guiding entity for the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, is composed of City staff and community volunteers. She asked members of the Steering Committee to stand and introduce themselves.
  - a. *Maggie Adamek* (University of MN); she will be co-leading the subcommittee on Commercial Use of Locally Grown Food.
  - b. *Amy Arcand* (Midtown Farmers Market); she will be co-leading the subcommittee on Farmers Markets.
  - c. *JoAnne Berkenkamp* (Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy); she will be leading the subcommittee on Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture.
  - d. *Karin Berkholtz* (Community Planning and Economic Development).
  - e. *Patty Bowler* (Minneapolis Department of Health & Family Support).
  - f. *John Dybvig* (Aide to Councilmember Scott Benson).
  - g. *Robin Garwood* (Aide to Councilmember Cam Gordon); he will be co-leading the subcommittee on Commercial Use of Locally Grown Food.
  - h. *Kristen Klingler* (Minneapolis Department of Health & Family Support); she will be responsible for coordinating the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative.
  - i. *Cara Letofsky* (Policy Aide to Mayor Rybak) – absent due to family emergency.
  - j. *June Mathiowetz* (City Coordinator's Office); she will be co-leading the subcommittee on Community, School, & Backyard Gardens.

- k. *Gretchen Musicant* (Commissioner of Health, Minneapolis Department of Health & Family Support).
- l. *Gayle Prest* (City Coordinator's Office).
- m. *Kirsten Saylor* (Gardening Matters); she will be co-leading the subcommittee on Community, School, & Backyard Gardens.
- n. *Lara Tiede* (Minneapolis Department of Health & Family Support); she will be co-leading the subcommittee on Farmers Markets.

**4. Introduction of Stakeholders:**

- The partners went around the room and introduced themselves, giving their name and organizational affiliation.

**5. Homegrown Minneapolis Initiative Overview:**

- Megan reviewed the purpose statement of Homegrown Minneapolis (included on one-page initiative overview handout) and explained that most of the work of this group would be done at the subcommittee level.
- Julie reviewed the reasons why Homegrown Minneapolis is important to the City of Minneapolis, including the potentially positive impact on our economy, environment, health, and food security. She explained that this initiative is focused on a small part of the local food system – namely the production, sales, and consumption of local, fresh foods. She then reviewed the organizational structure of the group, focusing on the key roles and responsibilities of each subcommittee (listed in the Roles & Responsibilities handout).
- Megan briefly stated that the timeline for this initiative was approximately 6 months – a draft report and budget recommendations should be finished by April 2009 and a final report should be published in June 2009.
- Stella finished the overview by going over the roles and responsibilities of the Stakeholders, namely to offer their expertise and help pull together the recommendations. The Stakeholders will review and endorse the final list of recommendations before they are presented to the Mayor and City Council. She stressed the importance of this initiative as a way for the Stakeholders to put their stamp on the Mayor's 2010 budget. She also reviewed a few of the key questions that the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative is trying to answer (listed in detail on the Roles & Responsibilities handout). Her final comment was that many relationships will be built through this work and the Stakeholders should maintain these connections in order to build on what is accomplished.

**6. Question & Answer Session:**

- Stakeholders were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Q: How many times will the Stakeholder Group meet?

A: The large group will meet approximately 3 to 4 times over the 6 month period.

Q: How were the four subcommittees formed?

A: (Gretchen Musicant responded) The Steering Committee considered what was going on in the community and started to group things together in order to form subcommittees. It was difficult to fit all of the relevant areas into a few main categories so the grouping that was decided on may still seem “messy” but intuitively, it was a good place to start.

Q: How is the group defining the terms “Local” and “Homegrown”?

A: (Megan O'Hara responded) The local food system realistically includes what is happening in Minneapolis as well as the surrounding region – it is a regional food system.

(JoAnne Berkenkamp responded) The idea of “local” is a little like the idea of “community” – it's in the eye of the beholder. There are many definitions of local that suit different people in different places and circumstances. Each of the subcommittees may want to explore what “local” means for their work and for this initiative overall.

(Todd Churchill responded) His definition is that “local” means knowing where your food comes from; having a personal connection with those who grew it; establishing relationships with the farmers.

(Lara Tiede responded) The goal of Homegrown Minneapolis is to get things grown within the City limits, so “local” in this sense is very focused on the City itself, although the food system does encompass more.

(Bonnie Dehn responded) Her family, as farmers, are fighting to stay on their land and should be considered part of the food system because they are a part of the urban sprawl that makes up Minneapolis. Minneapolis may be the focal point, but it is supported by farmers in the entire region.

(Julie Ristau responded) There is a very clear connection between the rural and urban components of the food system – the Steering Committee is very aware of that fact. Homegrown Minneapolis is a big project; we have to remember that this is just a kick-off and that this project will grow.

Q: How will group communications be handled?

A: (Kristen Klingler responded) In the beginning, I will be the main point of contact for anyone who has questions about the initiative in general. I will point people in the right direction and help connect them with the appropriate subcommittees and resources. Once the groups are established, the subcommittee co-leaders will be responsible for sending out updates and information specific to that group. Updates relevant to the entire Stakeholder Group will be sent out by me (Kristen).

Q: Will we be given group contact information and meeting minutes?

A: (Kristen Klingler responded) Yes, meeting minutes will be distributed to all of the Stakeholders via email. We will also maintain a database of contact information for everyone involved in the initiative, but this will not be distributed widely in order to respect everyone’s privacy. Partners are free to share their information amongst themselves, however.

#### **7. Subcommittee Breakout Sessions:**

- Partners were instructed that they could break up into subcommittees based on their interests. Partners did not have to choose a subcommittee if they didn’t want to – it is possible to just be a member of the Stakeholder Group. It is also possible for members of the community to participate in a specific subcommittee without being a part of the larger Stakeholder Group.

#### **8. Subcommittee on Farmers Markets Summary:**

- Participants included: Co-Chair Lara Tiede, Co-Chair Amy Arcand, Debbie Nelson, Heather Schoonover, Allie Mentzer, Brian Jorgenson, Martin Adams, David Nicholson, Brian Fredericksen, Pat Nelson, Larry Cermak, Scott Barriball, Sandy Hill, Lillian Hang, Marjorie Hegstrom.
- Participants of the farmers market subcommittee introduced themselves, briefly described their farmers market connection and outlined some of the issues related to farmers markets:
  1. More effort should be put toward driving traffic to main markets because they are losing foot traffic
  2. Concern that farmers are going away; especially 2<sup>nd</sup> generation immigrant farmers
  3. Tension between the desire to have more neighborhood-based markets (especially in low income areas) and the negative impact that more markets have on the main markets and on farmers’ ability to make money—easier and cheaper for them to sell to many people at one market than fewer people at many markets
  4. Main markets wants financial support from the city

- In addition, participants offered names of people who should be included on the subcommittee: Rachel Slocum from St. Cloud and a masters student from the University of Minnesota. Lara and Amy distributed a list of meeting dates. **The first one will be January 7, 2009 from 9:00-10:30 at the Corcoran Neighborhood Association.**

#### **9. Subcommittee on Community, School, & Backyard Gardens Summary:**

- Participants included: Co-Chair June Mathiowetz, Co-Chair Kirsten Saylor, Gayle Prest, Susan Reed, Barb Grossman, Geoff Maruyama, Martin Adams, Steph Hankerson, Scott Pampuch, Georgianna Yantos, Brian Noy, Jen Blecha, Aimee McAdams, Jeremy McAdams, Jennifer Ringold, Tamara Downs Schwei, Ila Duntemann, Michael Ansel.
- Introductions were made and the group discussed the date, time and location of future meetings. The group generally agreed that day meetings were better than night meetings and that meeting at the Green Institute would work as a meeting site. Subcommittee meetings will tentatively occur every three weeks on Tuesday mornings at **8:30 am and our next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at the Green Institute.** This will provide us with an opportunity to meet up to six times before the end of March.
- If there is anyone missing from the subcommittee that people would find helpful to have in attendance, please send their contact information to the chairs so they can be invited or invite them yourself.
- There was interest in understanding what already exists as far as city policies are concerned when it comes to community, school and backyard gardens. June Mathiowetz will work to compile any needed policy language for future meetings.
- There was interest in seeing a map of existing community gardens. Kirsten Saylor noted Gardening Matters has a map of existing gardens from 2006. If the group needs something more than this, the subcommittee can discuss exactly what is needed at a future meeting and find ways to obtain that information.
- There was also interest in the map of the corner grocery stores in the city that was mentioned in the earlier large group introductions. This map will not be available until the end of December but June will see if she can obtain a copy of that map from City staff when it's ready.
- One suggestion was that since the final outcome of our work is recommendations, let's start writing! If you already have thoughts and ideas regarding a recommendation you would like to see, please draft a statement in 50 words or less and send them to June Mathiowetz at [june.mathiowetz@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:june.mathiowetz@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) so they can be compiled for easier group discussion going forward. The co-chairs will also work to find ways to help the group brainstorm possibilities and draw out expertise and ideas of the group for additional recommendations.
- The approximately twenty minute meeting adjourned at 12 noon.

#### **10. Subcommittee on Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture Summary:**

- Participants included: Chair JoAnne Berkenkamp, Grover Jones, Robb Luckow, Peter Bachman, Beth Dooley, Kara Ferguson, Jen Blecha, Peat Willcut, Tamara Downs-Schwei, Helen Simrill, Anne Fischer, Robin Russell, Gunnar Liden, Paula Westmoreland, MaryLynn Pulscher, Ila Duntemann, Jenny Breen.
- Participants introduced themselves and talked about their interest in this topic. JoAnne reflected that this subcommittee may have less history to draw on since Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture is very much in the developmental phase in Mpls. It will be exciting to create a vision for this new work. In addition the members were asked to voice their hopes for the work of the subcommittee. Feedback included the following:
  1. There is a strong desire to involve youth in this work and to cultivate new farmers.

2. Community based solutions are important. It is important to understand what kind of support is needed and for the city to understand how it can be most helpful.
  3. Given the multiple issues involved, a holistic, “systems-oriented” perspective is called for.
  4. We need to think clearly about the differing challenges of enterprise development and youth employment. We need to identify models that are viable and sustainable and that have solid business plans.
  5. It would be great to turn vacant land into a positive for the community through urban agriculture, especially on the Northside.
- JoAnne relayed that at the next meeting the group would explore some existing urban agriculture examples and plan next steps for our work together. **The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 3 pm at the Common Roots Café.**

#### **11. Subcommittee on Commercial Use of Locally Grown Food Summary:**

- Participants included: Co-Chair Robin Garwood, Julie Ristau (for Co-Chair Maggie Adamek), Bonnie Dehn, Dayna Burtness, Danny Schwartzman, George Boody, Jenny Breen, Will Winter, Steve Young-Burns, Janelle Waldock, Rosemary Dederichs, Paula Gilbertson, Tim Jenkins, Todd Churchill, Annalisa Hultberg.
- The group discussed possible times for a first meeting, and **tentatively scheduled Wednesday, January 7, 9am at the Common Roots Café.** Co-Chair Garwood will confirm that Co-Chair Adamek can attend before finalizing.
- The group then discussed what perspectives seemed to be missing from the group, and came up with the following list. Individual members committed to reach out to people from the identified gaps, and their names appear in parentheses.
  1. Health and Wellness (Julie Ristau)
  2. Coop Grocery Stores / Coop Partners (Paula Gilbertson)
  3. Supervalu / MN Grocers Association (Rosemary Dederichs)
  4. B. James from Lunds (Todd Churchill)
  5. Chefs (talk to other members of stakeholder group)
  6. Department of Agriculture (Tim Jenkins, Jenny Breen)
  7. Minnesota Grown (Bonnie Dehn and Todd Churchill)
  8. Marketing/Communications experts (Robin Garwood, Paula Gilbertson)
  9. Bix Distributors (George Boody)
  10. Food Defense (Tim Jenkins)
- We then spent time discussing strategies for accomplishing the goal of the subcommittee. There was consensus that one of the early activities of the group should be to discuss obstacles/barriers to selling local within the current food distribution infrastructure. This discussion started, to some degree; members brought up contractual obligations in hospitals and schools as a barrier to local food use. The group agreed that a successful local food system will likely need to both work within the existing infrastructure (stores, distributors, etc.) and build competing parallel structures. Some members expressed a belief that market demand must be built first, and it will ‘pull’ local products through the distribution and retail systems. Members mentioned the need to track progress on local food use in commercial settings, through a ‘scorecard’ of some kind. Co-Chair Garwood ended the meeting by reminding members that the scope of the subcommittee is to develop recommendations for future actions by the City of Minneapolis, not necessarily to do the work ourselves, and that we must keep the group focused on that goal.