
Stakeholder Group - Meeting Notes

Tuesday, May 12, 2009
Currie Conference Center
9:00am – 11:00am

Attendance: *See attendance sheets for complete list.* Attendees included 13 of the Steering Committee members and 36 community partners.

Meeting Summary:

1. Welcome and introductions:

Tri-chair, Julie Ristau, welcomed the partners and gave an overview of the agenda and purpose of the meeting (to present draft recommendations and gather feedback from stakeholders). Partners introduced themselves by giving their name, affiliation, and what subcommittee (if any) they are participating in.

2. Overview of Draft Recommendations document:

Tri-chair, Megan O'Hara, briefly described how the draft recommendations were developed (see explanation below) and walked partners through the details of the document.

- The Steering Committee reviewed all 72 subcommittee recommendations and 146 details/action steps, looked for common themes, combined duplicate recommendations, and organized them into one overarching recommendation plus five broad action statements based on the following categories: Policy, Systems/Tools/Education, Green Jobs, Land Use and Development, and Communications. Described under each action statement are specific sub-recommendations which offer more detail and guidance for implementation.

Partners were instructed to break up into small groups (one group for each of the 6 main recommendations, facilitated by a Steering Committee member) and spend the next hour discussing the following questions:

- What do you like about the draft recommendations?
- What ideas are missing from the draft recommendations?
- What issues should we consider as we move forward toward the implementation of these draft recommendations?
- What other questions, comments, or concerns do you have related to this initiative or the local food system in general?

At the end of the hour, partners were instructed to use the next 20 minutes to write down any remaining comments, suggestions, or questions related to the draft recommendations on various flip charts positioned around the room. For a complete list of comments, including those from the small groups, please see the appendices included at the end of these notes.

3. Next Steps and Opportunities to Stay Engaged:

Homegrown Minneapolis coordinator, Kristen Klingler, explained next steps for the initiative.

- All comments from a) the stakeholder group meeting, b) Homegrown Minneapolis website, c) two public meetings, and d) various City and community advisory groups will be compiled and discussed by the Steering Committee in order to further refine the recommendations and develop a final report which will be presented to the Mayor and the Health, Energy, and Environment Committee of City Council in June. All specific subcommittee recommendations will be included in the final report (as appendices) along with the broader

recommendations presented in the draft document. We will ask City Council to pass a resolution supporting the local foods movement and directing specific City departments to begin implementing recommendations from the report.

- Partners can continue to be engaged in the following ways:
 - Comment on the draft recommendations via the Homegrown Minneapolis website through May 31st.
 - Sign up for the Homegrown Minneapolis email directory to receive updates and announcements.
 - Continue to check the Homegrown Minneapolis website (<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp>) for updates, the final report, and other important information.
 - Call, write, or meet with your City Council representative to advocate for Homegrown Minneapolis and local foods efforts. Talking points will be generated and distributed for our partners' convenience.
 - Attend City Council public hearings (more details to follow on the website) to voice support for Homegrown Minneapolis and local foods efforts.

4. Meeting Conclusion:

Thank you to our partners who participated in this planning process over the past 6 months. We appreciate your time and efforts to improve the local food system here in Minneapolis!

Appendix A: Comments on Recommendation 1: Adopt a resolution of the City of Minneapolis that puts the City on record supporting the increased growth, sales, distribution, and consumption of healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown foods for all Minneapolis residents. This resolution should identify a work group that will oversee the implementation of Homegrown Minneapolis recommendations.

No comments offered

Appendix B: Comments on Recommendation 2 (Policy): Develop City policies that support increased growth, sales, distribution, and consumption of healthy, locally grown foods for all Minneapolis residents and create the necessary internal structure to support these efforts.

- Tracy Singleton from the Birchwood Café offered her business to be a case study to learn more about how to fix zoning and planning, and other regulatory issues facing local businesses wanting to utilize more local food
- Lori Olson from Reg Services expressed openness to staff addressing issues and coming up with policy changes, but need to know more about the specific ordinances that are a problem (blanket “review regulations for consistency with values of HGM” isn’t focused enough). Discussed having city staff (reg services, business licensing, zoning, etc) utilize HGM stakeholders in focus groups to help identify specific issues with rules that should be changed
- Several people discussed the need to coordinate farmer’s markets: help with common publicity, help with relations with farmers (to make easier for farmers to access), help limit/coordinate competition (build sustainable system of farmers markets)
- Need to co-create the solutions together with city staff and community
- Stress need to create demand for locally grown foods in some communities, so farmers markets, community gardens, etc, are created out of the communities themselves
- Communication to include clarifying rules around what you can do with the food you grow yourself (how can it be sold, used in markets, used in restaurants)
- Point that 75% of food businesses are mom&pop shops, so there is a great market for the locally grown stuff
- Need strong vision (discussion of how the idea of a resolution is the way to state this vision)
- Discussed pros and cons of a food policy council

Appendix C: Comments on Recommendation 3 (Systems, Tools, and Education): Assist Minneapolis residents in growing, selling, distributing, and consuming healthy, sustainably produced, and locally grown foods by identifying and reducing barriers to local food production, aggregation, and distribution and by creating new tools and educational opportunities that encourage these activities.

Sub-recommendation (a): Develop and expand systems that support local food including a city-wide Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)/Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) system at all area farmers' markets; and transportation options to farmers' markets, community gardens, and other local food outlets. Use farmers' markets, gardens, and other outlets as a launching pad for food distribution programs.

REWRITE of Sub Rec (a): Facilitate access and use of farmers' markets by facilitating the provision of technology necessary for use of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons at all farmers' markets; Address equity issues of access to farmers markets, by working with area farmers markets to making farmers' markets more available and accessible with each neighborhood;

Sub-recommendation (b): Develop increased capacity for food production and distribution, including access to tools and trainings. At the City level, coordinate educational opportunities (such as an annual food summit for residents interested in learning about urban agriculture) or work with community residents to address soil contamination issues and remediation options. At the neighborhood level, create networks of growers and gardeners who can share resources and knowledge or develop a central Urban Agriculture Resource Center to provide focused training and skill development opportunities.

REWRITE of Sub Rec (b): Develop increased capacity for food production and distribution, including access to tools and trainings. At the City level, coordinate educational opportunities and or develop a central resource function to provide focused training or skill development opportunities; support development of a clearinghouse to connect growers with buyers. (“such as an annual food summit for residents interested in learning about urban agriculture”... Suggestion is to remove this piece and put in Recommendation 6. It is distracting here and may stop other educational opportunities.) At the neighborhood level, identify barriers to backyard gardening; establish resource clusters which can support more neighborhood-based skill development and training to city residents; work with community residents to address soil contamination issues and remediation options; develop neighborhood and city-wide composting systems.

Sub-recommendation (c): Facilitate small-scale processing, distribution, and aggregation of local foods by identifying gaps (through an inventory of commercial kitchens and a study of the local foods value chain) and helping to fill identified infrastructure needs (i.e. help to secure local facilities for food storage or aggregation).

REWRITE of Sub Rec (c): Facilitate development of small-scale processing, distribution, and aggregation of local foods by identifying gaps (for example, through an inventory of commercial kitchens and a study of the local foods value chain) and helping to fill identified infrastructure needs (i.e. help to secure local facilities for food storage or aggregation).

Sub-recommendation (d): Partner with the community and other key stakeholders to address obstacles external to the City including the burden of insurance requirements on community gardens and small urban agriculture businesses; incorporating local foods in

institutions (such as hospitals and universities); and sustained coordination of community programs (such as youth garden initiatives).

REWRITE of Sub Rec (d): Enhance use of local foods in institutions (such as hospitals and universities) and create sustainable coordinator of community programs (such as youth garden initiatives) through partnerships with the community and other key stakeholders to address obstacles external to the city, including the burden of insurance and regulatory requirements on community gardens and small urban agricultural businesses.

[NEW] Sub-recommendation (e): Identify key messages and audiences, and provide to communications groups for dissemination

Special notes:

- Backyard gardeners seemed to be minimized in this recommendation, when they should be one of the primary recipients as we could see the quickest and largest increase in local food production from backyard growing. I hope this is addressed in the word in Sub REc B.
- Group recommended that recommendations be written in the positive – at least starting with positives and then making recommendations to address negative situations.

Other Comments:

- We had a debate whether or not to have clearly define goals in the resolution,
- Recommend an assessment of current local food production (baseline measure) and available resources to support local food production.
- Have a more clearly articulated overall vision for a local food production and the benefits to city and residents that it would convey – particularly benefits that resonate with today's issues, such as more successful students who would benefit from improved health from exercise and better nutrition, and from utilizing schoolyard garden as an outdoor, living classroom.

Appendix D: Comments on Recommendation 4 (Green Jobs): Include local foods jobs and small enterprise urban agriculture within the City’s Green Jobs initiative and include them in all City-sponsored employment and training services.

Sub-recommendation (a): Establish mechanisms that support urban food growers, farmers, and small urban agriculture businesses such as micro-lending programs, grants, or other funding from public or private sources. Expand business development services and training to include local foods entrepreneurs, farmers, and urban growers.

1. Would the jobs related to urban agriculture be financially viable? Are these living wage jobs
 - a. Given the above concern, what types of investments, city programs, policies or incentives could the City put in place to encourage urban agriculture jobs that are financially viable?
 - b. the food grown as a result of these jobs has to be affordable
2. What kinds of partnerships are needed with rural areas to support urban agriculture related jobs?
3. What kinds of products can be included in the definition of urban agriculture? Do the resulting jobs extend to other products beyond food like fiber, woody ornaments, decorations, compost production?
4. The recommendation doesn’t address career scaffolding of youth in urban agriculture. How does the recommendation support long range career development?
5. A clearinghouse is needed to link urban agriculture job opportunities with youth.
6. the Minneapolis Employment and Training program run by CPED needs to be part of this discussion.
7. Can the City create loan programs for local food entrepreneurs such as aggregate suppliers?
8. How can the City partner with the University to support small scale urban agriculture?
9. Are there any opportunities for urban agriculture job creation with the Economic Recovery Act?

Appendix E: Comments on Recommendation 5 (Land Use and Development):

Prioritize local food production and distribution when determining the highest and best use of City-owned and private land and when planning new development or re-development projects that could potentially affect existing local food resources.

Sub-Recommendation A Comments:

- Land Inventories:
 - Glad to see an inventory of private and public land in the recs
 - Recommendation should include language ensuring land inventory results will be shared with the community
 - Inventory should include classification of land based on: quality of land (soil contamination), potential length/terms of use (long or short term), who land belongs to (schools, city, private)
- Add the need for related infrastructure such as on-site composting, food storage, food processing (may overlap with 3c) to ensure a comprehensive approach to supporting development
- Add policy framework to include farmers markets (land ownership/lease for farmers market sites to avoid situation like Midtown is now in); language throughout list of recommendations should include farmers markets (is this already addressed in the other recs?)

Sub-Recommendation B Comments:

- Language needs to be clear on whether City resources such as (water, parking electricity) will cost anything and if so, a specific fee or range of fees should be specified based on non-profit and for-profit sales. Does the current language imply that urban ag users would get these City services for free? (if so, that's a problem).
- Should include stipulations related to selling food grown at community gardens

Sub Recommendation C Comments:

- Developer incentives (tax or others) related to urban agriculture should be clarified.
- Farmers markets have different needs and should be embodied in plan separate from urban agriculture...eg. in recommendation c, should say "...lease or donate their land to urban food growers and farmers markets"
- What about the role of land trusts? No reference to land trusts or conservation easements as vehicles to support these goals

Appendix F: Comments on Recommendation 6 (Communications): Develop a Homegrown Minneapolis communications campaign to increase consumer knowledge of, interest in, and demand for local food, with an emphasis on outreach to underserved communities.

- Want recommendation to read Develop and implement...because it and sub-recommendations are more focused on creating a brand, etc. Need to “call out” implement a campaign.
- Lots of discussion and concern about “who” and “how” the message, brand and communications campaign will be created. Want to make sure that stakeholders are included in the process.
- Lots of discussion about the need for creating some kind of “clearinghouse” for all of the projects and organizations out there working on this (whether it’s a restaurant, youth gardening project, or organization like MN Project). Could be a web portal, directory, etc.
- Would like to see the Homegrown Minneapolis communications strategies and brand to demonstrate Minneapolis’ identity and sense of itself. Something like: Detroit is the car capital; Minneapolis is a local foods mecca.
- Important that HG brand is used to leverage existing assets already out there to serve a larger message that’s not out there yet (i.e., HG is the larger message—Minneapolis cares because local is good for our health, economy, environment, etc.). Things like Heartland Food remains a brand of restaurants that serve local foods, MN Grown remains designation for foods that are locally grown, etc. Would like HG to perhaps serve as a portal to other efforts. Lots of discussion about how HG communication efforts should provide the “whole” that individual efforts are part of. In other words, marketing the “whole” will elevate the individual pieces.
- Think the city should develop some benchmarks such as “X% of food consumed in Minneapolis is locally grown” or \$X spent on food in Minneapolis is spent on locally grown foods.” Progress towards these goals over time will give the “movement” something to grab the media’s attention over time. Suggestion that perhaps we could partner with the MN Dept. of Agriculture to track Minneapolis statistics.
- Want Homegrown to capitalize on local and national events and opportunities to promote local foods (*Kristen, I’m not sure what this means...?*)
- Minneapolis already spending money to promote tourism—why not integrate HG into these communications (as part of larger strategy related to Minneapolis identity as a HG city). Suggested that we explore how Madison does it. Gave the example of Chicago local foods store that’s at least partially run by the city.
- Suggested that we don’t make the connection to Green Jobs as a sub-message in overall message because it’s so important
- Need to educate public why it’s important to buy local—it’s not just an “earthy-crunch” thing. Need to help people to understand the difference between local and organic.
- Brand and comprehensive communications plan should identify target the different needs and interests of different constituencies (example: low income residents, the philanthropic communities, the lending community, etc.).

Stakeholder Group - Meeting Notes

Thursday, February 19, 2009

Sabathani Community Center, Conference Room D1/D2

2:00pm – 3:30pm

Attendance: *See attendance sheets for complete list.* Attendees included 16 of the Steering Committee members and 43 community partners.

Meeting Summary:

1. Welcome and opening remarks:

The tri-chairs (Julie Ristau, Stella Whitney-West, and Megan O'Hara) welcomed the partners, recapped the purpose of the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, and discussed the agenda items for the meeting. Partners introduced themselves by giving their name, affiliation, and what subcommittee (if any) they are participating in.

2. Subcommittee Updates:

Subcommittee co-chairs were given the opportunity to present a brief update of the work their group has been doing since the Kick-Off meeting. Comments focused on three main questions, "What is working in your topic area?", "What are the challenges/barriers within your topic area?", and "What is your group's vision/major themes that are emerging?"

See section at the end of this document entitled Subcommittee Update Form 2-19-09 for details.

- Community, School, and Backyard Gardens
- Farmers Markets
- Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture
- Commercial Use of Locally Grown Foods

3. Overarching Framework for Homegrown Minneapolis:

- Tri-chair, Julie Ristau, led the group through an explanation of the major overarching themes or "buckets" that are emerging from all of the subcommittees to date. This framework is meant as a starting point for synthesizing the work and recommendations of each subcommittee?
 - a. Infrastructure: What type of facilities and systems are necessary to build the type of system we're proposing? What is the infrastructure that needs to be in place to implement these recommendations and create a stronger local food system?
 - b. Regulations: What are the rules and regulations relevant to these recommendations? Examples include issues around zoning, land use, business development, licensing, etc.
 - c. Policy: Looking at legislative needs from the local, regional, state, and even national level. How can Homegrown Minneapolis influence short- and long-range policy initiatives related to local food?
 - d. Messaging/Communications: What kind of comprehensive messaging and communications should be done in order to promote and brand the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative and the local food effort, in general?
 - e. Funding: What types of capital are needed to build the type of system we're proposing? What resources are needed to implement these recommendations?

- f. Parking lot: Some issues may be outside the scope of the subcommittees or may require further research and analysis. The Parking Lot will capture these ideas and make sure they are not lost in the final report.

4. Recommendation Process and Timeline:

Tri-chair, Stella Whitney-West, gave a brief overview of the recommendation process and the anticipated timeline of events. Please note - these dates are only tentative.

- Subcommittees submit final recommendations to Steering Committee (late March)
- Steering Committee organizes, categorizes, and compiles a draft report (mid-April)
- Stakeholders review draft report, offer feedback, and then endorse the draft report (late April)
- Public comment period (May)
- Presentations to various City Advisory Committees for review and comments (late April - June)
- Additional Stakeholder review and final report (June)

5. Question & Answer Session:

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to ask questions about the overall initiative, the recommendation process, or any general concerns.

Q: Are members of City Council aware of the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative and if not, how can we (as Stakeholders) increase their awareness?

A: At the start of Homegrown Minneapolis, all council members were informed about the initiative via an email with the one-page initiative overview attachment. The Steering Committee is in the process of setting up one-on-one meetings with council members to share more detailed information related to the initiative and discuss their ideas and concerns.

Q: Where do projects like rooftop gardens fit in to the initiative?

A: Specific projects and models such as rooftop gardening have been mentioned in many of the subcommittee meetings. These ideas can be incorporated into the final recommendations or be compiled in the “Parking Lot” described in Section 3 above for further discussion and analysis.

Comment: It will be important for the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative to be able to understand and convey our “return on investment” for the recommendations and projects we propose to the City. With the current budget problems, the City will need to see that the outcomes of these recommendations are beneficial to the community. Since we are dealing with non-traditional returns (such as quality of life, community connectedness, etc) this may be difficult to illustrate and should be thoughtfully discussed.

Q: What is the role of Homegrown Minneapolis in nutrition education, outside of the “buy local” message?

A: Homegrown Minneapolis presents an excellent opportunity to identify and describe the need for nutrition education as it relates to the local food system movement. Education (of farmers, consumers, residents, government, etc) has certainly emerged as an important issue that needs to be addressed across all topic areas. Subcommittees are encouraged to submit recommendations related to specific educational needs that they have identified. The role of Homegrown Minneapolis in nutrition education will be a topic of further discussion at upcoming Steering Committee meetings.

Comment: One issue that has come up repeatedly throughout the subcommittees is the issue of “food access”. The Steering Committee should consider making this a separate workgroup if possible.

6. Subcommittee Breakout Stations:

Partners were instructed to use the remaining time to visit each of the four subcommittee stations and ask specific questions that were not answered in the larger group discussion. Partners had the opportunity to network, write unanswered questions and comments on index cards and flip charts, and voice their opinions.

Subcommittee Updates: 2-19-09

Community, School, and Backyard Gardens

This subcommittee is working to develop recommendations related to increasing the number of community, school and backyard gardens throughout Minneapolis, linking City resources and programs to community gardeners, and simplifying the process by which gardens are developed and managed.

Some of the questions this group has been asking:

- How can gardening be valued highly enough so that City land can be set aside or appropriated?
- What are the opportunities or challenges related to the permanent use of City land for community gardens?
- How can the City partner with other organizations to provide education to residents and encourage them to grow more of what they eat?

What this group would like to see from City government:

- Recognition of community/school/backyard gardens as a permanent community asset
- Resources for educating and encouraging residents to grow their own food

Perceived challenges that the City could help address:

- Lack of land designated for community/school gardens
- No comprehensive City-level vision for community gardens
- Insurance/liability issues related to community gardens

Existing resources:

- High demand for community garden plots from residents
- Willingness of City departments to discuss challenges and opportunities
- Language supportive of community gardens in Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan

Farmers Markets

This subcommittee is working to develop recommendations related to providing coordinated services to the existing markets, using farmers markets as a foundation for providing food to underserved populations, and facilitating linkages between existing farmers markets, farmers, and consumers.

Some of the questions this group has been asking:

- How can the City help promote the existing network of farmers markets?
- How can the City help farmers markets serve low income communities?
- How can the City help make farmers markets viable for both the community and the farmers?

What this group would like to see from City government:

- Increased promotion of existing farmers markets
- Resources to increase the visibility and capacity of farmers markets (signage, wireless access, etc)
- Possibly some assistance with the service coordination across farmers markets

Perceived challenges that the City could help address:

- Changes in zoning and land use policies
- No reasonable communication/sharing network for markets to learn from each other.
- Is the current transportation system maximizing access to healthy foods by all populations?

Existing resources:

- Great community building opportunity between community residents and farmers
- Increases access to healthy, fresh foods
- Farmers markets linking to food shelves to donate surplus produce

Small Enterprise Urban Agriculture

This subcommittee is working to develop recommendations related to creating training and employment opportunities for youth, low-income families and others through food production and using City resources to encourage small food-related business ventures.

Some of the questions this group has been asking:

- What are the challenges of developing food-related businesses?
- What vehicles would exist for long-term leases, or permanent ownership by a nascent business or another landholder on the business's behalf?
- How could the City support new value-added food processing businesses

What this group would like to see from City government:

- Policy change regarding land access
- Business incubation and training for farmers
- Aggregation, distribution, and processing capacity at the neighborhood level

Perceived challenges that the City could help address:

- Temporary and long-term use of vacant city-owned property for food production enterprises
- Lack of processing/distribution facilities available to small-scale farmers
- Racial, gender, and income equity at the heart of the initiative

Existing resources:

- Vacant land, parks, rooftops
- Mayor and other decision makers who are paying attention
- Drive for green jobs, climate, energy concerns, transportation

Commercial Use of Locally Grown Foods

This subcommittee is working to develop recommendations related to increasing the use of local, fresh foods in a variety of commercial institutions.

Some of the questions this group has been asking:

- How could the City incentivize restaurants to serve local food? How does it now?
- How can the City build preferences for local foods into its purchasing policy?
- How can the City advocate to other levels of Government in favor of local food consumption in commercial uses?

What this group would like to see from City government:

- Local food seen as economic development
- Ordinance and regulation changes
- New sustainability indicator and target(s)

Perceived challenges that the City could help address:

- Discordant regulations
- Zoning
- City processes hard to navigate for small businesses

Existing resources:

- Willingness of the City and County to take a leadership role.
- City/University relationship (specifically the University District Partnership Alliance).
- "Green Job" policy goals, which could be broadened to include sustainable local agriculture.