

Food Policy Council Minutes

4/17/2014

Member in attendance: Fred Kaskowitz, Christine Stafstrom, Esperina Baptista Stubblefield, Kristin DuBay Horton, Faith Lorde, Christina B Smith, Marie Desances.

Kristin spoke about how the “Bridgeport Food Action Plan” covers the “CDC Strategies for Obesity Prevention” which includes increasing availability of healthier and affordable food and beverages in public places, improving geographic availability of supermarkets and areas with food deserts, and improving availability of mechanisms for purchasing food from farms. Kristin also discussed the logic model which covers area of focus including farmers markets within the city, healthy corner stores, urban agriculture, recapture of food waste, and education.

| Farm to School was addressed; group members suggested inviting Maura O’Malley -to come to the May Food Policy Council meeting in an effort to learn about the potential for a farm to school program that would improve the quality of food for students in Bridgeport.

Kristin reviewed the past meeting minutes. She moved to approve them, and Christine seconded it. The group approved unanimously.

Kristin spoke about the article “Fighting food deserts takes more than fresh produce” written by David Weinberg. The article summarized the idea that unhealthy products such as tobacco, sweetened beverages are targeting the most vulnerable communities, with the blackest and brownest individuals, with low socio-demographics, and the least resources.

Healthy Corner Stores

| -Audrey stated that children are more likely to shop at corner stores, as opposed to adults, which is why we need to be more cautious when conducting surveys outside of the local stores to ensure we are surveying adults and not minors.

Esperina feels that adults are more likely to shop at corner stores more often than children because they are running into the stores to get products to prepare dinner for their family.

| Kristin stated that we cannot survey minors without their parents’ consent; she mentioned that all the surveys that were collected outside of the three corner stores were completed by adults over the age of 18.

Fred spoke about having churches be a target of introducing healthy eating habits. Group members mentioned that we need to be cautious with the idea since most local churches have programs that are already implementing healthy eating. Council members concluded perhaps it is best we contact the churches when they are having special events and be a part of their venue: (such as at health fairs) and seek to be a part of those rather than coming in with new programming.

Marie- Spoke about the healthy corner store initiative, and the challenges. She mentioned that three stores were chosen however one store decided not to be a part of the program because he refuses to stop selling loose cigarettes. The loose cigarettes are one of the membership standards including not selling drug paraphernalia and to also adhere to all state and local laws regulations. A brochure was developed that covers the members incentives, what the program entails, membership standards and an application for storeowners to fill out.

Kristin- spoke about revamping neighborhoods by implementing the “Healthy Corner Store” throughout the city and to also offer coupons and marketing for the stores who decides to join the program.

Christina- spoke about the gardening sub-group and their plans for the year. Members of the gardening group are planning on holding City Wide Community Garden Day on Sunday, May 18th, 2014; they also changed their sub-group name to “Urban Agriculture” to be more all encompassing of backyards gardens, community gardens, school gardens, urban farming initiatives and more. Members of the sub-group are planning on providing a resource list, recipes, how-to information on gardening and maps of community gardens for individuals with invested interest.

The long term goals of the Urban Agriculture sub-group are to create a Master Gardener type program that takes place after work hours and/ or on weekends; establish a Seed Library program similar to the one at Fairfield Public Library; and to hold regular Garden Clinic sessions.

A few decisions that are still up for discussions among the members of the Urban Agriculture sub-group is to have a city wide community garden day, the location to have the event, recruiting other groups to participate in the sub-group, and address the options of providing seeds and seedlings for the event.

Kristin distributed paper-work to the Food Policy Council members. The form will be used to update their biography which includes their name, occupation, background, education, and hobbies. This information will be used on the website for public knowledge.

The meeting ended at 7:32. The next scheduled meeting will be on May 21th 2014.