

Food Policy Council Minutes
1/21/2015

Member in attendance: Fred Kaskowitz, Christine Stafstrom, Esperina Baptiste Stubblefield, Kristin DuBay-Horton, Maggie Reynolds, Steven Farley, Raquel-Rivera Pablo and Marie Desances, Teri Brown, Jonathan James, Michelle McCabe, Madison Wierzel, Audrey Burr, Ginne-Rae Clay.

The meeting started at 6:15 and everyone introduced themselves.

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

Healthy Corner Stores (HCS) Update

Marie spoke about the CDBG funded exterior renovations that will enhance the exterior appearance of the three Healthy Corner Stores. The \$25,000 grant will provide funding to update all the exterior awnings of the three stores. The new awnings will include the HCS logo in order to raise public awareness of the stores' participation in the program and to keep the community aware of where they can purchase healthier food. The doors will also be replaced and each new door will have the HCS logo on it. Some exterior painting and other repairs will also be completed.

Marie also spoke about OPED helping the Health Department in facilitating the process of remodeling the three HCS. CT DPH is aiding in the community education, Marcia Maillard and State Senator Marilyn Moore will help with educating store owners on how to store and properly maintain their fruits and vegetables.

Marie talked about the ongoing evaluation efforts of the HCS initiative. College students from the neighborhood are currently conducting customer surveys that were done prior to the initiative at two of the stores – and intend to do so again once the storefronts are updated. The evaluation will also include data on the amount of produce being purchased at each store. Coupons will be distributed to bring people into the stores once the exterior renovations are complete. Southern SPH is helping with the data analysis.

The group discussed whether or not the HCS initiative funds should be applied for through CDBG again this year. Kristin discussed other options that were being considered as part of a potential ordinance change that would make these efforts more sustainable (e.g. increasing permitting cost for stores that do not meet basic HCS guidelines and using those dollars to create a revolving fund for HCS renovation work, or use of tax incentives to reward owners that meet HCS guidelines). With some discussion the group was supportive of the idea for the coming year.

Gardening and Farming Committee

The Gardening and Farming Committee is planning on having a community garden kickoff event in April, hopefully during the celebration of Public Health Week 2015. It will be held at a community garden on Reservoir Avenue, hopefully will include the Mayor's Office, and will link to the existing nutrition education work going on in the City's daycare programs. The full FPC will be invited to take part in this effort.

The committee mentioned they are considering using Twitter to create social marketing for the community garden, and that social media efforts could be coordinated through shared FPC accounts that other committees could take advantage of as well.

The committee is still working to increase representation in their committee meetings from local gardening groups.

Farmers Market Collaborative

A few issues regarding the farmers markets were discussed, the largest point of discussion being that the incentive program is at risk due to lack of funds. The farmers market collaborative is applying for FINIP funds to cover SNAP doubling, but those federal funds cannot be used to double other federal incentives, such as WIC, and WIC sales are a much higher percentage than SNAP sales at the markets. The group is brainstorming fundraising ideas and other grant sources. Approximately \$40,000 is needed to double at the farmers markets. Additional funds are needed to cover the costs of the staff that run the markets.

Food Waste Subcommittee

United Congregational Church is getting donated produce from Mrs. Green's Market in Fairfield. They are the first group to try such an effort locally. The committee itself has yet to meet but work is happening.

Food System Summit

We may need to change date because it is during the Spring Break week. The current plan is to focus on children's access to healthy food through daycare, schools, or other venues. Madison is leading the effort to talk with the school Nutrition Center in order to identify challenges and barriers for the Nutrition Center around increasing wellness in the schools, and to identify opportunities for the FPC to support these efforts. A nurse, Miranda Vincent, was present at the meeting to express her interest in supporting efforts to improve school breakfast. Potential agenda items for the summit discussed include someone to talk about sugar/fast carbs and their effect on learning, as well as general info on the health of Bport kids. The tentative idea now is to move event to April 25th, 10am-2pm. This is also Healthy Kids Day at Bport Y and perhaps we could partner with them on this event. A subcommittee will come together to discuss this

after meeting with Nutrition Center: Madison, Kristin, Michelle, Raquel, and Maggie all volunteered to take part.

New business:

A council member asked about potentially expanding size of group– there is one new person in pipeline.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm. Fred made the motion, Esperina seconded and it was unanimous.