



Bridgeport Food Policy Council – January 18th, 2017 –999 Broad Street Conference Room C,
Bridgeport, CT

Members in attendance: Margot Gotterer (Co-Chair), Christine Strafstrom (Co-Chair), Jacob Robison (OPED), and Albertina Baptista (BDHSS)

Guests in attendance: Patricia Mallios (American Heart Association), Ronnesha Addison (BDHSS), Helen Malcolm (BDHSS), Eleanor Angerame (GVI), Raquel Rivera Pablo (A Pinch of Salt), Landon Horan (CCGB), Michelle McCabe (CCGB), Erin Harkrader (Life Bridge), Anna Greer (Sacred Heart University), Cristina Sandolo (GVI), Clinton Gee (King Pantry), Meg Hourigan (Hartford Food System) and Chelsea Gazillo (CCGB)

The meeting began at 6:10pm. Members and guests introduced themselves.

Food Policy
Council Positions

Albertina informed the council that the deadline to apply for the Food Policy Coordinator position was December 28th. When Human Resources forwards the applications to the Health Department, a committee to review applicants will be formed. Maggie asked if someone from the Food Policy Council could sit on this committee and participate in the hiring process. Albertina agreed to follow up with more information.

Jeanette Herron will serve as a liaison between the Food Policy Council and City Council. Jeanette will nominate someone from her neighborhood to sit on the Food Policy Council. Maggie encouraged those in attendance to identify other residents to fill the vacant Council seats.

Update from
Hartford Food
Policy
Commission

Meg Hourigan from Hartford Food Policy Commission shared Hartford's 2017 food policy recommendations. The recommendations include: increasing fruit and vegetable consumption using federal and state assistance benefits. This recommendation will include marketing techniques that will reach out to SNAP participants. Hartford Food System is working with the Department of Social Services to create a video that informs SNAP participants of the Farmers Market SNAP match benefits. The second recommendation is to establish a Mayor's Task Force on summer meals. The third recommendation is to develop and support gardens at every school in Hartford. The fourth recommendation is support existing mid-sized grocery stores to sell healthy, affordable foods. These mid-size grocery stores include stores such as C-Town. Some of the challenges of this recommendation include finding business owners who are excited to work with Hartford Food System. The fifth recommendation is to support efforts to divert food from the city's waste stream.

Hartford Food Policy Commission has created working groups that support each of the proposed recommendations. Each of these sub-groups is working with their respective government department to identify next steps.

Anna asked Meg if these policy recommendations could be considered programming recommendations. Meg said that policy and programming can be blurry. The financial climate of Hartford requires the food policy commission to focus on involving small, local businesses. The recommendations that Hartford Food Policy Commission is advocating for are concrete examples of change that can be made within Hartford and can pave the way for future policy actions.

BFPC
Mission
Statement

Maggie asked if the Bridgeport Food Policy Council's mission statement needed to be re-drafted. Michelle McCabe and Anna Greer pointed out that redrafting a mission statement is a daunting task. The advisory board agreed this task should be done at a Food Policy Council monthly meeting. The advisory committee agreed this process should be completed within the next year to include it in the 2018 recommendations.

BFPC Final
Report

Anna asked the council when a draft of the 2017 food policy recommendation report would be complete. The council agreed this will be completed by the next meeting. Each sub-group will be responsible for drafting the individual sections that correlate with the recommendation they are working on moving forward. Chelsea will provide research for each of the sub-groups. Maggie and Christine will be responsible for the introduction and overall tone/messaging. Anna offered to draft a public-facing version of the recommendations that is accessible to those who do not understand food policy language. The Council agreed to vote to formally adopt the recommendations at the February meeting, discuss methods of distribution at the March meeting, and strategies to achieve the recommendations at the April meeting. Maggie and Chelsea will contact Jeanette Herron to find out how the Food Policy Council's recommendations will be presented to City Council.

In order to obtain community input on the 2017 recommendations before presenting to City Council, the Food Policy Council will share the recommendations on Facebook, at NRZ meetings and at an upcoming Bridgeport Generation Now meeting.

Urban
Agriculture
Sub-Group

Cristina provided an update to the Council on the urban agriculture sub-group's successful meeting with Lynn Haig, OPED's Director of Planning, on January 9th. The sub-group presented the case for urban agriculture, using models from other cities, and requested feedback on the recommendations for Bridgeport. The advocates recognized the need to frame urban agriculture in Bridgeport as an economic opportunity for the city and its residents. OPED will provide additional feedback on the recommendation and request any additional information needed from the sub-group.

Albertina asked if the group has looked at a poultry ordinance that the Health Department tried to pass through City Council in 2014. Chelsea said the Food Policy Council addressed the poultry ordinance in their meeting with OPED. Tina suggested contacting the City Council ordinance committee to obtain notes as to why the original poultry ordinance did not pass within the city, recalling concerns about animal safety, cock fighting, and noise from roosters.

Food Based
Economic
Development
Sub-Group

Michelle McCabe gave an update on the Food-Based Economic Development sub-group. On Friday January 13th the group met to discuss the current permitting process for food entrepreneurs and farmers in Bridgeport. The group agreed that there is a need for the City to work with the Food Policy Council to create a clear and efficient permitting process, starting with farmers markets. Chelsea and Maggie are researching what other CT cities similar to Bridgeport charge for farmers market permitting. Ronnesha and Helen will do research to clarify current requirements are for farmers markets and vendors in Bridgeport.

Chelsea updated the group about the School Wellness Committee. The sub-group has not met since the last school wellness committee meeting with the Bridgeport Nutrition Center. Michelle McCabe and

School
Wellness
Sub-Group

Chelsea have been working to edit and refine the School Wellness Policy Recommendation. The group currently is looking for a new chair. Raquel offered to be the group's co-chair. Ronnesha asked the group why they were requesting a new health and nutrition education coordinator. The school district currently does not have a health and nutrition education coordinator, although the head of physical education provides some health and nutrition education to middle and high school students in Bridgeport. Ronnesha pointed out with a limited budget, City Council may not move forward with this recommendation. Chelsea agreed to discuss this with Jeanette Herron, as she works closely with the School Board. Chelsea and Maggie are meeting with Sharlene Wong from the Bridgeport Nutrition Center on February 2nd and will propose that someone from the Nutrition Center should attend the Food Policy Council meetings. Christine said that Joe Larcheveque is now the new Chair of Bridgeport Board of Education and may be willing to meet with the School Wellness Committee.

Announcements

The Council of Churches will present a proposed text amendment about church-based commercial kitchens to the Planning & Zoning Commission on January 30th. All were encouraged to attend and spread the word about the meeting.

Patricia updated the Council on the American Heart Association's efforts to pass a sugar tax bill in CT. She offered to share more resources about the bill with the Council.

The meeting ended at 7:30pm.