

Acting Food Policy Council Meeting

February 15, 2008

Good Shepherd Center, Seattle, WA

Present: Sylvia Kantor, Mary Embleton, Branden Born, Tammy Morales, Steve Bauck, Erin MacDougall, Laura Niemi, Kelly Horton, Pablo Monsivais, Linda Nageotte

Absent: Jen Lamson, Fe Arreola, Laura Raymond

Guests: Chris Curtis, Siri-Erickson Brown, Jason Brown, Jennifer Kooreny, Andrew Bjorn, Mateo Teicher

Action items and outstanding questions are **bolded**

LFHK:

House Bill passed 95 to 1 out of House. Bill should be voted on the Senate floor—soon, likely next week at the latest. No money attached currently attached to the bill. Expectation is that given that this is not a budget year, the revenue picture is a little bleak. Package will possibly be lower than what we are asking for

Action: Legislative Hotline 1.800.562.6000 call it!

Message: Thanks for supporting HB 2798 and please fully fund the bill.

City and County Resolutions:

Leg. staff of city and county councils are developing proposals that are conceptually woven together. County may be first to float a proposal, and city will be going along with the plan. The plan is for the city to get issue on agenda, will follow county's lead on structure.

Patricia Lee of Conlin's office is drafting language, developing ideas on how to construct the FPC—Local? County? City? Location provides a sense of place and value. Representation: objective is to represent active sectors and appoint appropriate expertise to fill FPC.

New idea: Structure of organizations that oversee cities and counties do not currently overlap well. So, What about PSRC? This would mean there would be no need for a County ordinance. "The larger the better?"

Branden: Is there more leverage at the county and city level? Drafts being developed, mission, purpose is being digested. A city ordinance is being drafted. There will be community meetings and opportunities for input. County resolution is still in development. County wants their proposal to meld with what city is creating.

Chris: What is the PSRC's jurisdiction?

Answer: Transportation and economic development

City/county collaboration? How to coordinate between Conlin, Patterson, Council? AFPC members? How and when to unveil this concept? Staffing is being discussed. Costs may be split between city and county.

Important to work closely with Ag Commission as proposal moves forward.

Message: We are a partnership organization. "We will help you do what you do."

Events:

Wayne Roberts March 21, 5.00-7.00pm

Seattle City Hall, 600 Fourth Ave

Roberts and will hold trainings for city staff: including what city can do pertaining to food, nutrition, health. AFPC member, Fe Arreola should be there. 9 am -11am He may come to UW campus around 12-1:30 Friday February 22

Branden will send update on UW event

Erin: Send suggestions of planners and others, who could go to morning city meeting to Laura Raymond.

Eat the Sky: author Anna Lappe

Town Hall, March 13, 7 pm.

Laura N. wants to get talking points to Anna.

Pablo: It was very difficult to inject talking points in to Pollan presentation. But, there are talking points “Local Food Systems Snapshot.” These can be shared.

Pablo: Send points to Laura. Send info to Anna, Linda Mapes, Tammy other media

King Corn. March 22, 4 pm

Likely showing at NW Film Forum.

Erin on panel, will get more info to council soon.

No Small Farm Expo this year

Sylvia: Have been wondering about getting on *county Town Hall agenda*. Is this group interested in participating? Locations shift monthly. Could we designate a small group of people to volunteer? Meetings are usually during the day.

Chris: These are poorly attended by Council members

This could be aligned with the resolutions to coordinate with existing council involvement.

Sylvia: Volunteers? Timing is key issue

Tammy, Laura and Kelly are interested in exploring doing this.

Farmers Market:

“Build on what’s working”

Presentation: Chris Curtis; Neighborhood Farmers Markets

Farmers Market Stats:

Vender sales were \$5million last year, up 22% from previous year.

Trend for farmers markets is that it is flatter for sales, but increasing for shopper counts

Total sales: \$11million from farmers markets in the city of Seattle in 2007

Wants to improve donations to food banks, yet markets are currently the largest donor of fresh produce in city

Siri: If farmers don’t sell, we take back to farm as compost. “It is a relief to have someone take it.” This food is high quality. Food donated by Safeway is 24 hours from a compostable state.

Food Life line can help. They have the capacity and storage.

Use of WIC coupons is down this year. But, things are good, volunteers are abundant, acres producing food is also up this year. “It is a good picture for farmers.” If it wasn’t for markets, many farmers Chris works with would not farm.

Chris: We need people to process data on where these farmers are located. We have access to number crunchers.

Branden/Pablo: Coordinate students etc., with Chris

There are 90 farmers markets in the state. Seattle has nice system, but only 5% are able to generate rent from farmers alone. Markets are not currently self sustaining. The Neighborhood Farmer’s Market Association (NFMA)—only covering about 70% of overhead via market.

Fundraising, events, other makes up the rest

Branden: what is the biggest hurdle?

Chris: Costs of staffing. NFMA pays a living wage and benefits. Location is also a hurdle: Losing time, moving, or attempting to purchase over the next 3 years. How to sustain a market structure in Seattle for the next 100 years? Seeking no/low rent options, City and county in discussion on these tenant issues.

Sylvia: What about street use permits or use of park space?

Advocacy needed. Resolution language review needed.

EBT:

Erin: Farmers Markets EBT technology is a big issue. Pilot language w/i LFHK, but may be stripped from bill this year. "I would like to see language in Chris's summary document on how much money is being spent via EBT. Might be interesting time to do a user dot survey from farmers markets in region. Use markets as opportunity to gather data at this critical time."

Mary: EBT study had begun two years ago, but there was no money to continue. Ellen Grey (Washington Sustainable Food and Farm Network) has advocated for this as well. WSU small farms program is interested.

Branden: EBT technology moves quickly. Is there anything we can learn from the industrial grocery model? Wireless Networking? Skype?

Chris: Need there to be technology for each farmer to have own machine and shoppers can go from stall to stall. Transaction fees are an issue. Stigma of being seen as different is often an issue for Food Stamp cardholders. Machines have to serve all shoppers (meaning that they have multiple card reading capability – EBT/DEBIT/CREDIT). Marketing that markets serve food stamps should be improved. Currently, it is not obvious to the common shopper that markets take food stamps. Notice should be given on all NFMA materials.

Who from council would want to participate?

Sylvia: Is story (above) the same for suburban markets? Nationwide?

Bellevue is great, Burien is lower quality. Quality varies from site to site. There is a finite number of farmers who are marketing to the lower revenue sites.

Sylvia: Examples of sustainability?

Markets are sustainable when and where there is an infrastructure of support. Southern CA and NYC-program of Council on the Environment, NYC are good examples.

Steve: Primary hurdle for poor is cost.

Chris: Evidence is that over a season, farmers markets are a good deal. Need additional study and data to be released.

What will AFPC do?

Branden: What does one have to do to get a new market?

Farmers need to make \$500-600 market day for it to be worth their while. City support might allow money to be redistributed over the market system. Questions of buying power in low income neighborhoods were raised.

Some farmers in CA can work 35-40 markets per week

Chris: Who are AFPC's primary constituency?

All constituents and stakeholders interested in food.

Chris: What will drive the "second tier" of people to farmer's market? Health issues will bring those who are not already committed to the issue..

Erin: What are the land use issues that are important? What are the structural requirements for farmer's markets?

These are things that AFPC can help with

Issue Papers:

GHG-done! Ready to go out to elected officials and general public.

Set schedule, elected, public. Post paper to web, draft cover letters

Access to Food-

Rebecca, Sylvia, Pablo: Send comments first to Andrew by next Tuesday then to council for review and brainstorming about policy recommendations.

Farm to School-Tricia is on leave so this paper is on hold

Disaster Preparedness—Linda:City and county contacts, Coordinated Assistance Network

Pablo, Sylvia: Outline and Scope by next meeting. Contact Steve Hamai with City of Seattle

Erin: We need to institutionalize the process of disseminating these education pieces.

Kelly and Jen have good templates for cover letters to go with issue papers.

Paper review process: 1) Email edits of each paper to AFPC members 2) meet to brainstorm policy suggestions/compare drafts

Papers should be read and we should be prepared to discuss by next meeting.

Projects:

City and County directive: AFPC should do projects, build track record. *What are our activities going to be?*

Outreach papers: GHG is done. Food access is in review, Farm to School is started. Other projects?

Do we need a short –term project? Work with Chris? Farmer’s market studies,

Branden: Farmer’s markets may be better for longer term? (Branden)

Kelly: There should be a distinction between those projects and events

Erin: There is interest from the main planning team to start planning for ELT earlier this year.

We should also look at what will we do with LFHK next year, given that it is a budget year.

Environmentalists will not be taking the lead on LFHK next year.

Outreach:

City and county council efforts: Requires an AFPC committee to gather materials for council.

Establish a committee to develop materials and presentation, media, public.

Revive outreach committee: Sylvia, Rebecca, Laura

Siri: A potential compliment to ELT might be signing up more people for CSA programs

Erin: Need to educate farmer’s market supporters about value of advocacy.

Wrap Up