

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
November 19, 2013
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: December 17, 2013, 3-5p.m. @ HHS campus

Attendees:

Steering Committee - Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); David Lewis (UCCE Marin); Leah Smith (AIM); Rebecca Smith (HHS Nutrition Wellness Program)

Committee Members - Alexandra Danino (SF Marin Food Bank); Deborah Schoenbaum (YLI); Denise Trevino (YLI); Gueidi Beltran (WIC); Jeffery Westman (Marin Organic); Miguel Villarreal (NUSD); Richard Waxman (LIFT-Levantate); Roberta Michels (Seniors rep); Sheila Kopf (SF Marin Food Bank); Susan Martinelli (WIC)

Guests - Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Fahad Qurashi (YLI); Matt Rosen (YLI); Gail Crain (Community Action Marin)

Handouts:

-HEAL Implementation Team Mini-Grant
-Change Lab Solutions Training

Welcome (Janet Brown, Chair)

Opening remarks:

From the re-launch of MFPC last year in December, MFPC has almost reached its one-year anniversary. Looking back to our notes for that first meeting, we said that “if this Council fulfills its potential, we will all think that the time we spend here is valuable and worthwhile” and that “our aim was to have the results of your work here contribute to your other duties in ways that make that work easier, better supported, more effective, and sustainable.”

Part of this overall effort involves each of us gaining a better understanding of our whole Marin community as it is affected by access, or lack of it, to a nutritious daily diet. It also involves expanding our knowledge of agriculture and how the local food system works.

From our founding documents we defined *agriculture* as the production of food, fiber, flowers, forage, fodder and fuel, the growing of row crops, the raising and keeping of livestock, dairying, aquaculture, timber production, apiaries, nurseries, orcharding, floraculture, seed production, mycology, and medicinal plants.

We defined the *food system* as the entire set of decisions, connections, relationships, and processes that controls the production and distribution of food from field to table.

In our work to support diversification and localization of our food system based on local demand, we need also remain aware that diversification of the decision-making process is equally important. This is the key to true community food security that feeds all residents. Remember the words of Jeannette Armstrong, Okanagan wisdom-keeper, who defines community food security as “When the people are feeding themselves, in a pattern that can be repeated, from generation to generation.

We have used this year to learn together and to work together, to build a shared vision and shared language, in order to convey the benefits of a healthy and nutritious diet to all members of our Marin community. From our work on a CalFresh resolution aimed at serving all eligible Marin residents, to the

formulation of cutting edge Community Gardens Policy recommendations that put the tools for enjoying a fresher, healthier diet in everyone's hands, we have begun to operate out of that shared vision to solve problems of access and disparity.

We have learned from the words of Dr. Richard Levins, John Rock Professor of Population Sciences at the Harvard School of Public Health, in his piece titled, *Looking At The Whole: Toward a Social Ecology of Health*, that in dealing with public health issues we need to consider and reconcile two seemingly contradictory truths: that (1) We are each responsible for our own health, and (2) Health is socially determined.

This Council is focused on those social determinates, their effects on our community, and how policy can contribute to improved community food security and improved long term health outcomes for all residents.

Community Gardens Advocacy Packet (Janet Brown)

-Presentation of completed document

-Reflection on process and appreciations

-**ACTION:** Approved as part of the MFPC's Policy Agenda and Action Plan

Marketing to Support Health (Rebecca Smith, Deborah Schoenbaum, Denise Trevino, Fahad Qurashi and Matt Rosen)

-Background:

- Committee wanted to look at marketing environment in Marin to better understand effective marketing and access strategies for healthy local food in regards to the five "Ps" – products, price, placement, promotions, and policy.
- Resource: *Still Bubbling Over*, CA Center for Public Health Policy, longitudinal study shows that while consumption of soda and other sugary drinks among young children in CA is starting to decline, there is a spike in consumption among adolescents: <http://publichealthadvocacy.org/stillbubblingover.html>

-Youth Leadership Initiative:

- Strive to ensure that youth are front and center in efforts to improve food access and are instrumental stakeholders in creating policies that work in favor of healthy youth.
- Locally, YLI has worked with alcoholic sugar sweetened beverage work.
- **Presentation:** *Las Tienditas Saludables (Healthy Corner Stores): Food Justice Movement* (Fahad Qurashi, YLI San Mateo)
 - 5 corner store makeovers in neighborhoods with limited food access
Youth leadership at the core of work using Youth Participatory Action Research (Y-PAR) approach including resident public opinion surveys, store observations, merchant pre/post interviews. Work with continuation high schools for opportunity to nurture non-traditional leaders.
 - YLI has identified key steps for store makeovers that have led to a successful process:
 - Phase 1: Community Organizing
 - Phase 2: Physical makeover and store re-launch
 - Results: Decrease alcohol and tobacco messaging, increase access to healthy food, built new relationships, engaged youth.
 - Most stores are Mom & Pop stores, not corporately owned.

- Value of building relationship among store owners and maintaining relationships with owners going forward.
- Shops source fresh produce and new products either from existing relationships with distributors or were provided with new relationships.
- **Presentation:** *Students for Healthy Living Campaign* (Mark Rosen, YLI SF in Bay View/Hunters Point)
 - Goal: strengthen demand for healthy food in neighborhood and partner with those organizations already doing supply side work.
 - Created Students for Healthy Living Campaign with “Nutrition is our tradition” messaging.
 - Focused on retail corridors for high schoolers based on data that showed high school students are spending \$7 a day on retail food.
- **Presentation:** *Food Justice in Marin* (Deborah Schoenbaum & Denise Trevino)
 - Goal to create youth leadership movement across the county and build racial and geographic diversity to reach out to more non-traditional leaders.
 - Method: Teach those in more privileged communities the concept of social justice and being “allies.”
 - Partners: Friday Night Live chapters, Marin County Youth Commission, Healthy Novato Collaborative, Safe School Environment, Environmental youth Justice Project, 2014 Youth Justice Symposium
 - Example: Marin Oaks High School Dirt Club: discuss white allyships around food justice. Garden as safe space for sharing.
 - Next steps: Photo-voice project with children of farmworkers to focus on environmental justice and food justice which will be used collect data on issues.

-Policy implications: Recommendation to work with retailer groups such as American Grocers Association in area to better implement retail ordinances and retail incentive programs and in order to think about work more broadly.

-NEXT STEPS: Consider working with small businesses and corporations’ organizational policies to support healthy retail efforts; explore local policy implications and opportunities. This may include policy opportunities including – Retail Incentive Ordinance; Sugared Beverage Tax; and Approaches for working with chain stores and corporations in comparison to small business “mom and pop” stores;

Year 2 for the Marin Food Policy Council, themes for learning and participation (David Lewis)

-Year 1 has come to an end. Thanks and appreciations for everyone’s time and hard work.

-Successes from Year 1: final policy agenda and action plan (available in December).

-NEXT STEPS: Will discuss and set direction at next month about the issues and areas the Council wants to work on in the new year. Also will discuss Council membership and ask for input on potential new members.

ACTION ITEM: Rebecca will re-send brief HEAL dissemination survey and made request for everyone to submit responses - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HEALDissemination>.

HEAL mini-grant (Rebecca Smith)

-Handout: HEAL Implementation Team Mini-Grant.

-Handout: Change Lab Solutions Training

-HEAL provides opportunity for \$12,000 mini-grants to 3 teams: (1) Marin Food Policy Council, (2) Active Living Team, (3) Children and Youth Wellness Collaborative)

-Ideas:

- Implementation of community gardens.
- Strengthen outreach to older adults and build in activities that support older adults in addition to focus on children.
- Review status of Application Assisters and need for support.
- Organize youth led policy effort or convening.
- Think about a youth (and senior) advisory council or convening to inform the larger policy council's work.
- CalFesh support and need to both debunk myths and improve systemic models for increasing access to CalFresh.

Council representative updates (All)

Closing remarks (Janet Brown)

"It is not easy to cross boundaries to adopt a whole-systems approach to health. It means leaving the areas we know well and venturing into fields where we have to depend on the expertise of others. It means learning unfamiliar concepts and mastering new tools to engage complexity. It means asking people to take health into account in making decisions that usually depend on other considerations. It may provoke controversy. It may make people we approach uneasy and even angry. It requires patience, imagination, courage, integrity, and a sense of humor."

- Dr. Richard Levins, John Rock Professor of Population Science, Harvard School of Medicine

Meeting adjured at 5 pm

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