

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
January 20, 2015
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: February 17, 2015, 3-5p.m. at **a different location to be announced**

Attendees:

Steering Committee - Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Leah Smith (AIM); Rebecca Smith (HHS)

Committee Members – Alexandra Danino (SF/Marin Food Bank); Deborah Schoenbaum (YLI); Elaini Negussie (Marin HHS); Kerry McGrath (Marin Organic); Lauren Klein (UCCE); Liza Crosse, (Aide to Supervisor Kinsey); Miguel Villareal (Novato USD); Sheila Kopf (SF/Marin Food Bank); Socorro Romo (West Marin Community Services); Steve Schwartz (Interfaith Sustainable Collaborative); Terrie Green (Marin City Community Services District)

Guests – Erendira Olivas (LIFT-Levantate); Lori Davis (LIFT-Levantate); Marv Zauderer (ExtraFood.org); Sarah Schoenbaum

Welcome – Janet Brown

Review MFPC processes for 2015 – Leah Smith

Agenda items vs. announcements:

- **Agenda items:** should be added to the agenda before the meeting. Examples include policy action or important policy-related need in the community. To submit an item to the agenda, let Bonnie know immediately following a meeting or at least 10 days before the next meeting.
- If you have a time-sensitive request in between meetings, we will handle it via email within ~48 hours allowing for Council member feedback. If you are asking for Council endorsement, ideally you have time to present to the Council beforehand – please anticipate more formal asks so that we can maintain Council transparency.
- **Announcement items:** events, information, workshops, funding opportunities, organization updates relating to the work the Council does. Co-sponsoring opportunities.

Parking lot: post questions or ideas for future agendas if they come up during meetings.

Votes: the Council has a goal of consensus, will negotiate if that doesn't happen. As of yet, the Council has always reached consensus.

Subcommittee work: optional small group work done outside of regularly held MFPC meetings.

Nominations/volunteers for new Steering Committee Member(s) – Janet Brown
David Lewis is stepping off as a Steering Committee member, while staying committed to the Council. We are looking to fill his seat and expand the range of backgrounds and

skill sets by adding another 1 to 3 members total. This 1-year commitment requires: regular attendance at full MFPC meetings, Steering Committee conference calls, and/or involvement in subcommittees. Duties include:

- Leadership and strategic planning
- meeting logistical support
- agenda planning
- materials prep
- room reservations
- set-up
- meeting facilitation
- meeting notes
- maintenance of Council website

Volunteers: Steve Schwartz, Alexandra Danino, and Deborah Schoenbaum.
Motion to vote entire slate of current steering committee members as well as Steve Schwartz, Alexandra Danino, and Deborah Schoenbaum as incoming members for one year. **Full Slate unanimously approved.**

People can also take more leadership with future subcommittee work.

Equitable access policy work – Janet Brown

**View pie chart – our work on Equitable Access fits into the Council's larger picture of priorities and is just one piece of the larger pie.

**View subcommittee goals –

1. general county level policy and then community-specific policy
2. ensure that it works in the short-term and yield immediate results, as well as be sustainable in the long-term
3. develop policies that fundamentally change how food moves and is distributed
4. ensure that it addresses all of Marin, especially our three communities of focus

Is this big enough? Are we missing anything?

- Add that audiences have opportunity to be a part of the policy-making. i.e. young people not being able to access this meeting. If it were from 4-6p.m. that would make a difference. This room is not available after 5p.m. in winter months. If this is a priority for the Council we would like suggestions for other locations. Or dedicating a few meetings that are at a different time and bring in as many youth as possible? Youth response: if we're going to be involved, we want to be fully involved, for authentic engagement.
- Community tours were a great learning and networking opportunity. Concern that Novato might feel left out because it is usually recognized as a community with high health needs. Should we circle back around and include Novato? The Food Bank recognizes it needs to grow in Novato. Might also want to check with the three communities for their perspective on our learnings.
- Should we be specific about 'local' and 'sustainably produced' food

Six main issue categories/buckets:

1. Healthy retail food access
2. Community food production

3. Supplemental food production
4. Safe transportation routes to food
5. Education and emergency programs
6. Monitoring and advancement

**View SF data sheets – invaluable input from the SF team, we plan to use as a model. Numbers assembled by districts so each supervisor could look at their constituents, and we will do the same. Once we assemble this for the County, it will be an easy step to translate to the city level.

- Every group of Council members here at the table has some data that we want here. As we don't have a dedicated staff person to mine for data, we will rely on you all to help provide what you know. We will plug in all the numbers we can get and extrapolate the ones we can't. SF did this to discover new things they didn't know as well as confirm things they already knew to be true. We want to do the same thing to confirm what we learned on the community tours – hard data to support the qualitative data and stories and voice of the communities.
- We also realize a lot of this data isn't yet available – part of the process will be figuring out what isn't known yet and how we can. We don't need to be as exhaustive as SF, but we need more data than we have now to back up our case. Marin HHS has lots of data resources but might not be in the most accessible format. Do we need to split up by district if the end result (BOS resolutions and actions) won't? Also, a lot of the data we have is at the city level. Should be mindful of the end goal when designing how we use and present the data. BOS doesn't receive a lot of data. Non-profits collect data to back-up grant applications. Opportunity to bring in a masters student to help analyze data?
- We clearly know there is concentrated poverty and lack of food access in the communities we identified. Do we need more data to understand where they are at? Instead of getting the data, should we be working on mitigating their issues – do we need to go to the trouble of collecting the data if we already know where the problem is?
- We need to clarify our asks and then can identify what specific data we need. What we are headed toward is a resolution, we came up with a number of steps and a process after which we think we have a very good shot at our BOS passing a resolution. We want this to be so well-done that they can't say no, and they're actually saying it themselves. Perhaps on World Food Day on October 24. We need a plan that is well-informed with research to really have teeth. Data is the evidence to ensure that what we create has lasting-impact. Doing our due diligence is part of the process of creating buy-in as well as accountability. The data is there, the issue is more how to package it to make our case. Rebecca is happy to work on a data subgroup to collect this. Compiling the data helps create specific asks in response to obviously identified gaps.
- A substantial part of the SF funding went to support home-delivered food and meals. Tried to show a cost-benefit analysis, i.e. a year on home-delivered food costs the same as one night at SF General. Another major piece that got funded was CalFresh. All of this falls under the Department of Health and Human Services of Marin. Our audience, recipients, and asks should inform the format of the document, category by category, as well as the data used. Policy goals

- should dictate data. The only Marin County jurisdiction might be supplemental food program category.
- It's important to think in the statement of intention of how to get where the rubber hits the road. Partially through funding. The BOS has some but a limited potential to direct funding avenues (i.e. through non-profit arena). Cities are in a different situation; cities can be more helpful in areas where they are permitting projects than in funding. As it relates to funding: data is important to back it up. The Marin BOS does allocate funding for existing food policies and programs.
 - Look at this more broadly than County – there are opportunities at the state and federal levels. Make sure the communities are involved at each level. We need to think about community transformation and sustainability in the broader sense – people need to have the money to be able to choose what they buy and where. We need allies on all levels to work with us and see the changes we want.
 - Director of Marin HHS is retiring – potential for new collaboration.
 - There was a Community Food Access Report done several years ago by a PhD student, perhaps we could use as a resource for our data collection. There are a lot of similarities with this and Marin Community Foundation and their new funding priorities and Strategic Plan – what might a systems-level partnership with MCF look like? Can also check data collected by MCF. MCF is looking at how to align initiatives within MCF and how they interconnect; there is a general focus on aligning funding in Marin on a more intentional approach to healthy eating and active living.
 - Timeline and step-by-step:
 1. Form questions, form timeline, draft asks, find champions
 2. collect data, work with agencies and departments, blend qualitative and quantitative data, district-level data, analysis/report
 3. form asks; vet asks through agencies, get buy-in, work with champion on timeline and budget asks
 4. BOS hearing(s), generate media attention, RESOLUTION (10/24?), BOS budget ask for the 2016 budget, if applicable (?)

Council representative updates (All)

- Rebecca: food programs update on Feb 25 from 1-3p.m. Agency providers of food and nutrition services should come! Help spread the word. Geared towards providers, people in the community to help people navigate food and nutrition services. Hope is to follow-up with a food resources guide to be updated periodically so organizations can showcase their services.
- Rebecca: Media Smart Youth training on January 26 on marketing strategies. BANPAC quarterly convening from 3-5 p.m. on January 28 on successful food and beverage policies in San Francisco.
- Julia: new advisor positions for UCCE approved for future funding: 4-H Youth Development Advisor and Dairy Advisor (2 of the 4 requests), to be posted in 2015 and 2016. Did not get approval for the Nutrition Advisor or Small Farms Advisor, but we are hopeful for the future. Thank you to the MFPC for submitting letters of support.

Closing remarks (Janet Brown)

"It's 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 5:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 17, 2015, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at **a different location to be announced**