

Marin Food Policy Council

Meeting Notes

May 17, 2016

[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: June 21, 2016, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. [HHS campus](#)

**Attendees:**

*Steering Committee* – Alexandra Danino (SF/Marin Food Bank); Becky Gershon (SF-Marine Food Bank); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); Julia Van Soelen Kim (UCCE Marin); Lauren Klein (UCCE Marin); Lori Davis (Sanzuma); Reba Meigs (HHS); Steve Schwartz (Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative)

*Committee Members* – Ana Paula Kitos Vasconcelos (Marin School of Environmental Leadership – MSEL); Casey Poldino (Zero Waste Marin); Cio Hernandez (HHS); Dani Cohen (MSEL); Elaini Negussie (HHS, Nutrition Wellness Program); Janet Brown (AllStar Organics); June Farmer (Marin City CX3); Madeline Hope (West Marin Waste Education Coordinator); Marv Zauderer (ExtraFood.org); Merone Eckert (MSEL); Sheila Kopf (SF/Marin Food Bank); Rebecca Hoehn (Indian Valley Organic Farm & Garden); Terrie Green (Marin City Community Services District); Veda Flores (Latino Marin)

*Guests* – Anjurle Duchaussee (HHS); Claire Gupta, Dave Campbell and Kate Munden-Dixon (UC Davis); Dan Carney (MMWD); Laura Hettwer (HHS); Wendi Kallins (District 4 BOS candidate)

**Welcome & Council Representative Announcements**

- Reba: Thursday 5/26 at HHS speaker series Robert Lustig: sugar and politics
- Veda: Last day to register to vote is May 23, handouts on voting guidelines available
- Wendi: transportation, housing, health, safety
- Rebecca: IVC has tomato and pepper plants for sale
- Alexandra: May is CalFresh Awareness Month, (standing resolution from MFPC in 2013). The effort is increasing to reach the ~10,000 people who still qualify. CalFresh eligibility workers were at the HHS Campus Fruit and Veggie Fest last Saturday to make it possible for applicants to receive CalFresh cards that same day.

**Marin City Update – Terrie Green**

- **Background:** Terrie spoke with the BOS this morning about Marin City project to build a greenhouse for school kids. Grave health inequities between Marin City and other communities. Media distorts the safety issues of Marin City. 70% adults are overweight and obese, 50% of children. Highest chronic disease in Marin, only family-based public housing facility. Affordable housing is a big issue of Marin City, necessitates \$40,000+/year income, which folks in public housing don't make. Gentrification is the political goal, laws on the books around shipyard times that people of color can't move throughout Marin County.
- **Target and grocery store efforts:** Target is not a real grocery store, they are a big box store and they carry way more canned food and processed food than a grocery store. Marin City community advocates will still work for a healthy and affordable full-service, conventional grocery store that carries fresh produce, meat, and dairy. Asked, "Why do we have to go to such extremes to get a basic need such as healthy food met?" The Target

situation is making Marin City want to work harder, the state senator has reached out saying that's not just. Nothing will change unless the issues stay present in people's minds. The issue is not just about a grocery store, it's about a right to a healthy life. Marin City needs a grocery store where all of your shopping can take place. Worry that even the jobs that supposedly will be created to staff Target won't last. When righteous people stand together, then the right thing happens. We need to get the public voice out there, keep the pressure on the issue of healthy food access.

- **Next Steps** \*\*Reba: hire a consultant, interested, senator, potential community support: letter writing campaigns to grocery stores from the community.

- **Discussion:** What is the ideal? A WinCo Foods grocery store would be #1 (workers have part ownership), or an international market that carries foods for everybody. Marin City wants a consultant to negotiate with WinCo. Two tracks: keep fighting for the grocery store, and Target. Is there something we can do as MFPC to make sure that Marin City gets the best deal regarding food access with Target? Could we keep a spotlight on Target to ensure they do hire from the community full-time not part-time, with benefits? Could we ensure that Target broaden their organic options, reduce their packaged foods?

### **Equitable Access Report – Becky Gershon**

Report is in the final stages, reviewed by a few key people including David Lewis and Dr. Grant Colfax with HHS Deadline set for 5/31/2016. Reba to follow up with Mr. Colfax and advise of deadline date. Report will be shared with more folks, presented with the Equity Action Team of the BOS, MCF, and First % Communication Forum, and others. Report can be presented in the community before it is published. Who else needs to hear about this? We welcome suggestions for presentation venues. After the report is finished, we will direct attention to implementation and checking that the work is getting done. Question about the conversation with MMWD about price reductions or incentives for community food production. Question about adding Novato to the report; the current idea is that this is a living/working document, and we don't have a lot of connections with Novato, so Novato will be phase 2 when we have a greater capacity to address the community.

- **Food Resource Guide:** List of food resources and anything related to food security for the county. Could MFPC look this over and add anything missing so the document will then come out of the Council as a revised resource? Council agrees to address this at a future meeting.

- **Additional updates:** West Marin Collaborative presentation. The Collaborative wants to learn more about farmworker housing, and is still invested in finding ways to increase WIC access (such as AIM's mobile market and at the Palace market in Pt. Reyes). The Mobile Market will potentially be located at the WIC office so that people can get their vouchers and shop in the same day.

### **UC Study on Food Policy Councils – Claire Gupta, Dave Campbell and Kate Munden-Dixon, UC Davis**

- **Focus group discussion:** How can Cooperative Extension get UC research circulated and applied and used to inform public policy? Current study working with FPCs: case study of 10 FPCs across the state looking at ways they draw on research to inform their policy work – how can relationships between UC and civic bodies like FPCs be strengthened?

- **What drives your policy agenda? What knowledge and information do you draw on to figure out what kinds of policy work the Council will get involved in?** The Network for Healthy California. HHS is restricted as county employees and they needed to do some of the work through a council such as this. Community leadership has

led and dictated what needed to be done. The research that came out of this is on the HHS website under CX3. Often it's just noticing common issues across communities, and MFPC is a good place to make connections between these. Policy ideas have also come out of community surveys, door-to-door, youth and adults. MFPC community tours throughout Marin City, West Marin, and the Canal of San Rafael.

### **Council Business – Lauren Klein**

- **Governance:** Lauren is working on the governance document for MFPC, has an outline of a few topics now and aims to have a significant first draft by the June meeting:

1. Structure
2. Decision-making process, decision roles and discussion process
3. Mission statement, purpose review, goals and methods
4. Running policy platform

**\*\*Your input is welcome, please contact Lauren at [lauren@igc.org](mailto:lauren@igc.org)**

- **Snacks:** Alex is bringing snacks for the June meeting.

- **Time keeper:** role will rotate.

### **CA FPC Updates – Steve Schwartz**

- **CA FPC:** looks at all the bills annually and narrows the list down to the 15 most important and tracks votes to create a legislative report, this is happening now.

- June meeting bring the CCOF bill to the council for discussion as to whether MFPC should endorse it.

### **Other Updates**

- **SF Marin Food Bank policy priorities:** SF-Marin FB has identified top 3 priorities specific to the work of food banks in CA. expand food donation tax credit food items, create an "Imagine no Hunger" license plate to fund food banks and State Emergency Food Assistance Program.

- **Invite to bring your policy needs forward:** bring to the MFPC or email to Bonnie at [banielsen@ucanr.edu](mailto:banielsen@ucanr.edu).

- **Supervisory forums:** MFPC sent the following 4 questions to the BOS forum at the Dance Palace for the discussion of 8 candidates for the District 4 seat:

1. **BACKGROUND:** In Marin County, 1 in 5 people face the risk of hunger every day. While the non-profit sector provides a multitude of food assistance programs to people in need, we know that the most effective public program that exists to meet this need is CalFresh (formerly "food stamps"). But unfortunately, current estimates tell us that only about half of eligible people – or about 10,000 people – are enrolled in the program, while another 10,000 people still remain unenrolled. In addition to the benefit that CalFresh would bring to low-income families and individuals, full participation is estimated to generate an additional \$30 million in economic activity for Marin County. QUESTION: What do you think you can do, in collaboration with the Marin County Department of Health and Human Services, the Marin Food Policy Council, and anti-hunger advocates, to support efforts to increase enrollment in this and other vital anti-hunger programs?

2. **BACKGROUND:** Currently in West Marin there are very limited grocery stores, small food markets, or farmers' markets. For example, residents of Point Reyes often travel over half an hour by car to get to the closest Safeway— assuming they have a car and money for gas. Alternatively, residents are limited to shopping at relatively small, expensive, and tourist-oriented markets closer to where they live.  
QUESTION: What do you think you can do, in collaboration with residents of West Marin, the Marin Food Policy Council, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the business community to ensure that all West Marin residents have access to healthy and affordable food close to home?
3. **BACKGROUND:** Within the Marin Food Policy Council, we frequently discuss the issue of food access and how the food system is connected to the overall economy. While our Food Policy Council encourages the growing of food in community gardens, schools and backyards, we recognize that not everyone has the space, skill, or time to do that. Instead, the obstacle for many people to obtain food is having enough income, and the means for getting to a grocery store that sells affordable healthy food.  
QUESTION: Can you discuss what connections you see between food issues, improving job opportunities, and economic development for underserved communities? And, specifically, in what tangible ways you would tackle these issues together in the 4th District and Marin County?
4. **BACKGROUND:** Currently Marin County produces \$100 million a year in agricultural products, employing over 500 agricultural workers in West Marin alone. While farm workers are the foundation of our flourishing local food system and our agricultural economy, the quality and standard of farm worker housing remains to be a serious concern. A 2011 survey administered by California Human Development found that virtually all farm workers surveyed were living in a home with at least one serious defect and most housing was considered inadequate, according to County standards. QUESTION: What are your ideas about how our County can work towards increasing the availability, quality, and security of housing for farm workers in Marin County, and West Marin in particular? For example, would you be willing to form a County task force or committee to address this issues or waive fees on permits for improvements or new construction of farm worker housing?

The forum was not able to get to the MFPC questions. Dominic Grossi spoke to the challenges from the standpoint of a rancher, said he would reach out to the Canal as well. MFPC members are encouraged to attend debates and raise questions about food access issues. At each of the venues, important conversations are coming up.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.**

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, June 21, 2016, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the HHS campus