

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
February 21, 2017
[HHS campus](#)

Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: March 21, 2017, 3:00 – 4:55 p.m. [HHS campus](#)

Attendees:

Steering Committee – Alexandra Danino (SF-Marín Food Bank); Becky Gershon (SF-Marín Food Bank); Bonnie Nielsen (UCCE Marin); David Lewis (UCCE Marin); Lauren Klein (UCCE Marin); Steve Schwartz (Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative)

Committee Members – Cio Hernandez (HHS); June Farmer (Marín City CX3); Michelle Fadelli (First 5 Marin); Shannon Lovelace-White (AIM); Sheila Kopf (SF/Marín Food Bank); Wendy Pacheco (YLI)

Guests – Rob Bennaton (Bay Area UCCE Urban Ag Advisor and Director for Contra Costa and Alameda University of California Cooperative Extension offices – also a member in the Oakland Food Policy Council)

Welcome and Council Representative Announcements – Alexandra Danino

- Lauren Klein: working on a project with MMWD looking at water efficiency and consumption in community and school gardens; 30 pilot program gardens
- Becky Gershon: SF-Marín Food Bank has developed messaging around “Food for All” addressing the uncertainty and fear among immigrant communities – personal info of families who use the food banks is safe and secure. All are welcome, and the food bank is a safe space. Some sites (those a part of the food bank enrollment system; of which there are 4 in Marin) do collect information and require ID to check in at a pantry; if that makes people uncomfortable, food banks can work with individuals.
- Shannon Lovelace-White: Market Match grant ends in March, but it has been worked out so the grant can continue and carry over until the new grant begins in July. This way there won’t be a lapse.
- June Farmer: Intergenerational Garden Work Day (big work party) on March 18 from 9am – 3 pm.
- Alexandra Danino: working hard to assuage fears in the community about CalFresh endangering immigrants.
- Steve Schwartz: Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative Annual Conference on March 21 in Berkeley; info on CSAs and Farm Stands

Council Business - Lauren Klein

- January survey regarding topics of interest: Steering Committee is building the year's agendas based on survey results.

Policy Follow-up – David Lewis

Development Code Amendments relevant to agricultural production

- Speakers present and we don't want to lose what they've shared or lose opportunities to act on any requests.
- Discuss next steps and agreements: drafting policy suggestions, letters of support, ideas for speakers, etc. from the following meeting dates:
- 1/19 and 3/15: ag farmworker housing and food access
 - Draft statement of support? Who would it be directed at?
 - Update from Leelee or other West Marin folks ***Alex to check in with Leelee**
 - Food bank is working with West Marin students to survey families on whether they are utilizing food banks and if sending food home on buses could help reach more ranchers – results are being shared tomorrow at West Marin Collaborative meeting ***Sheila (or Becky?) to share more as appropriate**
- 9/20: Breastfeeding support and follow-up
 - Include language and goal setting around breastfeeding as an equitable access issue ***Becky to follow up**
- 10/18: ranching in the park ***David to present a follow-up in the future and MFPC can move forward from there**
- 11/15: development code amendments up for BOS for approval on March 14
 - Mobile on-farm slaughter and small scale on-farm poultry slaughter are both on the table: MFPC consider writing a statement of support a week ahead of BOS hearing ***David to draft, Bonnie to circulate to the MFPC**. Also include MFPC support for making community gardens on private land separate from gardens aimed at revenue streams, in order to streamline the permitting process. **Letter should get to BOS by March 7.**

Trends in Urban Ag – Rob Bennaton, Bay Area UCCE Urban Ag Advisor

- **Overview of Green Thumb & NYC Housing Authority examples:** programs in New York; helpful to have a toe in the door as programs expand scope and evolve. What began as growing a few flowers evolved into thinking about the whole ecosystem, building soil, planting perennials, improving water quality, planting trees, etc; 105 flower gardens began as a garden competition in 1963, and by 1974 the vegetable category of the flower competition had really taken hold. First social program in public housing history, provided some assistance and support, partnerships began. Day care centers and senior

centers participated, in addition to individuals and families; the majority of participants were seniors and children. Over time expanded the program to become more environmentally conscious. Encouraged property management to allow residents to continue planting in the same beds year after year.

- **Benefits include:** crime reduction, promotes public health, air quality improvements, supports safe spaces, express cultural heritage, builds community, mitigation of urban health issues, water quality improvements and rainwater harvesting.
- **Challenges and opportunities.** Important: formalizing agreements, decide goals, figure out water access, staffing capacity, management support, partnerships!!! Outreach and education... Oakland FPC is working on a mythbuster handout educating about the challenges and opportunities of growing food.
- **Provide incentives and support for folks to increase participation.**
- **Urban Ag: both small-scale for profit and non-profit food justice issue.** Big picture: urbanization leads to reduced air and water quality and overall environmental health. Urban Ag can help mitigate this.
- **AB 551 Urban Ag Incentive Zones:** application so that food can be grown on certain properties (private lands) at a reduced property tax rate. Marin is not listed because (although Marin has a population of just over 250,000) no city in the county has sufficient population to qualify. Also, it would have to have approval from the county, and then also from a qualifying city/urban area, as defined by US census.
- **City of Alameda's Farm and Garden Plan.** Foot in the door, gives local groups the opportunity to advocate for where they would like to have garden spots (private and public).
- **AB 2571 Neighborhood Food Act:** supports apartment dwellers in growing food as long as it's not at an inconvenience to their neighbors.
- Grants available to address food insecurity – Association of Bay Area Governments.

Discussion

- Gleaning? ExtraFood.org is a local non-profit that rescues prepared and non-prepared food and diverts it away from the waste stream to those in need. Has the public health department gotten behind this?
- AB 551 will sunset this year*, San Francisco FPC is going to try to get it back on the table again and is looking for ideas and suggestions. Does AB 551 apply to Marin County (does Marin hit the minimum population requirement?). **Make sure the new bill includes Marin, and make sure that cities like San Rafael opt in.**

- UCCE Specialists have statewide scope; Erin DiCaprio in Davis is focusing on food waste and food recovery. MFPC could come up with guidance documents and info to collaborate with the state level. Erin visiting East Bay in April...
- Josephine's: company comes to homes and makes food for people on-site. Sustainable Economies Law Center is working on legalities around this avenue.

Sugary Sweetened Beverage Update - Steve Schwartz

- SSB tax to go on the ballot in 2018, not 2017.
- Questions of fiscal sponsorship and county grants, where would the contract for the funding go? **Perhaps go through MFPC to manage the grant, will be distributed.**
- AIM is supportive of participating. Lots of coalescing of expertise and efforts happening. MFPC creating a plan in moving forward with timeline and next steps and partnerships.
- Discussed as the "Healthy California Fund" at the state level, not the "SSB tax." Potential for ongoing revenue source. Once the tax is assessed, hopefully MFPC would have some input in where the tax revenue would be spent.
- **As of now, MFPC SSB subcommittee is comprised of Reba, Steve, and Lori – but is open to anyone on the MFPC to join!**

Equitable Access Update – Becky Gershon

- CalFresh Taskforce spawned from the Equitable Access Report, and a lot of the CalFresh work is now taking place within this taskforce.
- Target Grand Opening in Marin City is March 12. Target committee invited black farmers to participate, see if they can collaborate and have black farmers grow certain food items for Target. Still hoping for a full scale grocery store in Marin City, in addition to Target.
- **Can MFPC draft to a letter to Target asking them to keep their commitment to providing fresh produce and healthy food options, as well as to request that Target keep Marin City residents as staff. *June to draft**

CA Food Policy Council Report/Other Policy follow-up – Steve Schwartz

- "Healthy CA Fund" Roots of Change and CA FPC is trying to get 1,000 letters and calls in support of this ***Steve and Bonnie to forward to the full Council**
- Sacramento winter meeting of CA FPCs, will let the Council know dates.

Closing – Lauren Klein & Alexandra Danino

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

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