

Marin Food Policy Council  
Meeting Notes  
April 18, 2017  
[HHS campus](#)

**Next Marin Food Policy Council meeting: May 16, 2017, 3:00 – 4:55 p.m.**

**\*\*Location changed to 20 North San Pedro, Point Reyes Room, San Rafael\*\***

**Attendees:**

*Steering Committee* – Alexandra Danino (SF-Marine 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* – Bonny White (Marin County Library); Elaini Negussie (HHS, Nutrition Wellness pgm); Heather Bettini (CAM SparkPoint Marin); June Farmer (Marin City CX3); Laura Hettwer (HHS, Public Assistance); Madeline Hope (West Marin Waste Education); Miguel Villarreal (Novato USD); Shannon Lovelace-White (AIM); Sheila Kopf (SF-Marine Food Bank)

*Guests* – Amy Dietz (HHS Area Agency on Aging); Audrey Peck (Redwood High School Sustainable Ag program); Irene Garcia (SF-Marine Food Bank); Rachel Stover (HHS); Shirin Vakharia (MCF); Tawnya Napoli (registered nurse at UCSF)

**Welcome and Council Representative Announcements** – Alexandra Danino and Lori Davis

- Miguel: just finished teaching 2,000 kids in wellness labs at 4 different elementary schools in Novato.
- Reba: Fruit and Veggie Fest May 13<sup>th</sup> at HHS.
- Sheila: SF-Marine Food Bank working with College of Marin to open a food pantry on campus. Events this weekend: Tomales (Friday evening) and Marin City (Sunday) Produce Pop-Ups (mini pantry distribution to meet audiences who aren't accessing the pantry network already).
- Becky: May 24<sup>th</sup> is Hunger Action Day in Sacramento; organized by Hunger Action Coalition to lobby representatives and listen to speakers.
- Julia: Thursday June 8th is an all-day regional meeting for members of North Bay Food Policy Councils at the Lucchesi Community Center in Petaluma, organized by UCCE/Julia. Topics include: Food Policy Council best practices, challenges, accomplishments, solutions, and policy advocacy skill building. All MFPC members are highly encouraged to attend.

- Lori: Sanzuma and Marin Co Parks hosting Yoga in the Park on Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup> at McNears Beach 10am-2pm. Bahia Vista's Wellness Day Friday April 21<sup>st</sup> from 3-6pm.
- Alexandra: call center moved to a new facility to support a larger staff of eligibility workers. AB 402: marrying access to school lunch with CalFresh access is a work in progress.
- June: Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup> park prescription day with food, nutrition and wellness classes. April 29<sup>th</sup> Healthy Kids Day from 11am-2pm. Both events are at Rocky Graham Park in Marin City.

#### **Council Business –**

- Alexandra: photo/recording permission policy. If a guest or a member would like to photograph, record video or audio of a meeting, permission must be granted by the whole Council beforehand.
- Lauren: governance updates to be attached along with the notes from this meeting.
- Reba: adopting a healthy food & beverage policy to go on the agenda for next month's meeting, circulate a draft now.
- **Location for May 16 meeting has been changed to 20 North San Pedro, Point Reyes Room Building (near the credit union, across from the Civic Center in San Rafael).**

#### **Senior Food Equity and Access Panel Discussion -**

- Shirin Vakharia (Health Program Officer for MCF): Needs Assessment data shaped the HEAL initiative focus on older adults and

- Amy Dietz (HHS): Program Coordinator for HHS Area Agency on Aging

- Shirin's mother is low income, has transportation difficulties and multiple health conditions that have dietary restrictions, resistant to Public Assistance. Diabetes class with information that wasn't age adjusted at all. Referred to a dietician but has no way of getting to the meeting.
- The aging process affects your relationship to nutrition and physical activity.
- Marin Demographic Imperative: 1 in 3 residents over 60 by 2030.
- Elder Economic Security Index looks at what it takes for an adult over the age of 65 to make it (including healthcare, food, transportation, and housing). EESI is \$30,000 for Marin (compared to \$11,800 federal poverty level). 20-20% of older adults in Marin fall below EESI. When you can't make all ends meet, often healthy food choices go first.
- About 3,000 results for the Older Adult Nutrition Risk Needs Assessment: People at or below EESI at higher risk (eat fewer fruits and vegetables, eat alone, eat fewer than 2 meals a day, run out of money for food most months).

- Focus groups of older adults around the county: physical limitations are a barrier to cooking and preparing and accessing healthy and fresh food. Transportation and mobility and the associated costs are a significant barrier to healthy eating.
- Services and Resources: seniors have a very low participation rate in CalFresh; state-wide there is an elder simplified application program with longer redetermination periods is coming. **\*\*MFPC could support this effort in Marin**
- Home and Community Services are vital. How do we create communities designed for elders? What other sources of revenue could be tapped into?
- HEAL Strategic Initiative for older adults 60+ with incomes less than EESI:
  - Promoting the senior farmers market program by bringing seniors to farmers markets and educating folks on advocacy
  - Marin City Park Prescription and exploring Medicare program on nutrition edu
  - Novato Independent Elders program work on accepting CalFresh for home delivered groceries, also getting their senior farmers market to accept EBT
  - Marin City Community Services District formalizing partnership with the Marin YMCA
- Area Agency on Aging is part of Aging and Adult Services (Social Services) and funded w federal money through the Older Americans Act: focus on 60+ with the greatest social and economic need \*no citizenship requirement.\* Questions: 457-INFO.
  - Home delivered meals: 80,000 meals to 550 clients; 3, 5, or 7 days/week as well as emergency meals. Volunteers establish relationships with the seniors they deliver to – for some this is the only social interaction they have. Need to be homebound, isolated, and considered frail to qualify.
  - Congregate meals: 16,000 meals to 1,000 clients at 7 sites all catered by Good Earth Natural Foods. Depending on the site, range from 15-50 people/meal. No fee, encouraged donation of \$3/meal. Looking for a location to host Friday lunches, will train a volunteer site coordinator.
  - How will AAA deal with the increasing elder population? AAA doesn't actively promote themselves, they do not have a waiting list, so there may be pockets they aren't serving. The USA is woefully unprepared for a large demographic shift.

- Irene Garcia (SF/Marin Food Bank): brown bag pantries and SFP

- Food Bank programs aimed at older adults.
- 49,000 people are living below 200% FPL – 6.4 million lbs of food being distributed in Marin (14,5000 meals/day)
- 47 weekly pantries in Marin

- NGNs: standard, open to the public, large and serve a mixed population (seniors, single adults, families), some have zipcode restrictions. Healthy Children Pantries: located at a host school primarily for the families of that school. Senior Pantries “Brown Bag Pantries” (weekly and serve seniors and adults with disabilities; try to avoid sugar, ingredients that may counteract medication) and “SFP” (once a month box that provides monthly non-perishable commodities; underutilized).
- Current projects: home delivered groceries planned for 2018/2019; currently in SF and hoping to bring to Marin. West Marin Pantry connected with the senior lunch program.
- Nutrition Education Team working to help with familiarization with foods. Working on developing a no cook menu in addition to the full cook and limited cook menus so they can offer the most appropriate products to the community.
- **What could MFPC do? When anything pertaining to food comes up, AAA will reach out to MFPC; Elder Simplified Application; policy solution for the SSI/SSP population exempt from CalFresh. This is happening statewide October 1, each county will be tasked with implementing it. Perhaps Marin can get ahead of the timeline and come up with some Best Practices before October 1.**

- Lauren Klein (UCCE): community gardens for seniors

- Bennett House senior housing in Fairfax: 30 people participating in community garden; part-time staff garden manager.
- Redwoods Senior Community Center in Mill Valley: food harvested in Thursday and distributed to residents whether or not they participate in the garden; staff garden manager.
- Marin City Intergenerational Garden at the Senior Center: opportunity for generations to work together; forum for seniors to pass along knowledge from their youth of gardening to young people today; work party to build a greenhouse, summer program at the children’s container garden.
- Neighborhood community gardens often have seniors participate in intergenerational community gardens in addition to other adults; distribute some of their produce to seniors in the community.

#### **Equitable Access Report Update - Becky Gershon**

- 3 buckets of focus originally identified: Food Access (physical), Food Assistance (resources to purchase food), and Food Production (capacity to grow food locally).
- **FOOD ACCESS:** people in all areas of Marin don’t have equitable access to healthy food. 3 Priority Areas: 1) pursue strategies and policies to ensure establishment of grocery stores in high priority areas such as Marin City, Target has opened in Marin City and

advocates are working on ensuring that it carries fruits and vegetables, etc. 2) increase availability of fruits and vegetables and decrease availability of SSB, tobacco, & alcohol in retail environments, starting a contract with YLI to work on Healthy Retail assessment work; and 3) increase WIC and CalFresh usage, Mi Rancho in the Canal now accepts EBT.

- **FOOD ASSISTANCE:** increase enrollment in CalFresh (only about half of eligible Marin residents are enrolled in CalFresh). 3 Priority Areas: 1) facilitate connectivity and dual-enrollment between free & reduced price lunch and CalFresh, San Rafael Schools asking families for interest in CalFresh, CalFresh Taskforce formed, County is interested in MediCal dual-enrollment for the future; 2) implement on-demand phone interview system for CalFresh applicants, people who have missed their recertification interview are being called and offered interviews; 3) improve the client experience in applying for CalFresh.
- **FOOD PRODUCTION:** 3 Priority Areas: 1) promote small-scale neighborhood food production, garden coordinators are getting together to compare best practices and tour sites; 2) support policy changes that ease the way for school and community gardens, community gardens are now allowed on private lands as a permitted use, more school gardens are using what they grow in school cafeterias, 3) identify funding for support and promotion for school and community gardens.

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

- CA FPC continuing to work on the list of bills that legislators have been supporting for FPCS to track

**Closing –** Lauren Klein, Alexandra Danino & Lori Davis

**Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.**

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