

Marin Food Policy Council  
Meeting Notes  
November 21, 2017  
HHS Wellness Campus, 3240 Kerner Blvd, San Rafael

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 16, 2018, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the HHS campus, Room 110**

**Attendance:**

**\* = Voting members**

X	Alexandra Danino, SF-Marin Food Bank*		Lorenzo Cordova, BOS*
X	Audrey Peck, Redwood High Sus. Ag, Pgm*		Lori Davis, Sanzuma*
X	Becky Gershon, SF-Marin Food Bank*	X	Madelene McCann, Marin Child Care Council
X	Bonnie Nielsen, UCCE	X	Madeline Hope, West Marin Waste Education*
	Bonny White, West Marin Comm Services*		Marv Zauderer, ExtraFood.org
X	Casey Poldino, Zero Waste Marin*		Miguel Villarreal, Novato USD*
	David Lewis, UCCE		Mimi Choudhury, AIM*
	Elaini Negussie, HHS Nutrition Wellness		Rachel Stover, HHS Public Assistance
X	Felicia Chavez, Systems Thinking Marin		Reba Meigs, HHS Public Health*
	Gail Crain, CAM*	X	Sheila Kopf, SF-Marin Food Bank
	Gueidi Beltran, WIC*	X	Steve Schwartz, Interfaith Sus Food Collaborative*
	Heather Bettini, CAM		Susan Martinelli, WIC
	Janet Brown, AllStar Organics*		Teresa Fogolini, North Bay Children's Center*
	Jessica Bazan, YLI*		Terrie Green, Marin City Comm Services District*
X	Julia Van Soelen Kim, UCCE*		Veda Florez, Latino Marin*
	June Farmer, Marin City CX3*		
	Kathy Carver, ExtraFood.org*		Guests: Anwen Baumeister
	Kathy Koblick, HHS Public Health		Bob Brown, City of Novato
	Laura Hettwer, HHS Public Assistance*		Curtis Havel, CDA
X	Lauren Klein, UCCE		Margaret Wallace, Canal Comm Garden
			Vince Trotter, UCCE

*24 voting members + 10 alternates = 34 total*

**Welcome and Announcements – Alexandra Danino**

- **Julia:** UCCE 3-event series this winter for farmers looking to get into wholesale markets

**Urban Agriculture Policies in Marin** – Anwen Baumeister, Harvest Moon Homestead; Vince Trotter, UCCE Sustainable Ag Coordinator; Bob Brown, Community Development Director of Novato; Curtis Havel, Principal Planner, Marin Community Development Agency and Novato Planning Commission

**Panel discussion: policy landscape for farming in or near cities**

- **Vince Trotter:** Ag Ombudsmen work helping farmers navigate licenses, permits, and regulations that might affect their ag business on a local, state, or federal level. Helping

farms adapt and change and ensure longterm viability. Urban ag topic isn't necessarily his focus (more larger ag folks in unincorporated parts of the county). Uses guiding documents when trying to determine farmer's needs and desires: often begin with the Countywide Plan, then municipal codes and development codes for unincorporated areas for the specific rules and regulations. How does an urban farm's desires relate to the CWP and what do those rules allow for? Recently there have been some specific rules regarding urban food producers (folks producing ag commodities in lands not zoned for ag) and whether or not they are an "approved source" that can sell their products.

- **Curtis Havel:** County level (unincorporated Marin) planning: folks come to him with questions about what they can do on their property, and he checks zoning ordinances. Recently updated development code to allow for community gardens and community garden markets in unincorporated Marin. Before March 2016 this wording didn't exist in the development code; Marin County has tried to minimize red tape regarding ag activities.
- **Bob Brown:** working on challenges for urban ag for years. In a city like Novato, they don't deal with ag issues often at all. Only 86 acres in Novato are zoned for ag (varied use, including on-site retail). Lots of rural residential, still have varied ag use permitted, and not a lot of folks take advantage of those regulations. Community gardens currently not allowed in any residential or commercial districts – want to work on that. Currently updating the code, with lots of policies that focus on healthy eating and active living (including action items such as supporting local neighborhood grocery stores, improved regulations for community gardens, developing a map of vacant land for community garden use, encouraging farmers markets, and developing regulations for beekeeping). Novato just bought 9 acres of land on Hill Rd near Margaret Todd Center and there's a group looking to develop a community garden on it, in addition to other uses.
- **Anwen Baumeister:** 3.5 acres within San Rafael city limits. Farm has a lot of produce and flowers, but is not a community food producer and therefore not able to sell product. One of the reasons she isn't is because commercial farming isn't permitted within the city of San Rafael. Wants to see an ordinance change to permit farming within city limits. Would like to do CSAs, have a 'pay what you can' farm stand, and to be able to sell produce to her tea house. On-site sale of produce is also not permitted within San Rafael. Sacramento has a new ordinance permitting farm stands and commercial ag in residential zoning, beekeeping up to 3 hives, some poultry. Oakland also is a good example: all residential land is zoned for commercial agriculture (permitted use for specific elements of ag – limits animals, heavy machinery, etc). Only really farming .8 acre and producing a LOT of food. (Check w/ Rob B re Oakland zoning?)
- **Constraints and Opportunities:** San Rafael is beginning their citywide general plan update and would be interested in MFPC input. Novato intends to share their plans and regulations with other cities – the more similar the codes the easier for Marin residents. There are some specific CWP policy areas that support the growth of regulations that support urban ag and local food production. Right to Farm ordinance in unincorporated Marin says farms

can be messy etc. and neighbors are signing up for that. Could there be a Right to Farm ordinance for urban residents? Could use permit requirements help? Commercial gardening is allowed in most unincorporated residential areas if products are sold off-site. Framework of sustainability and resiliency are popular these days, cities are all trying to take a look at these issues. Promoting local distributed food production is a great way to improve this. School gardens aren't regulated unless they try to sell the produce. School districts and cities have some overlap, but not much – kind of like oil and water. Perhaps have a panel with school district officials about what they are working on in the future? Also there is the question of livestock – how is 'agriculture' defined?

- **Policy opportunities:** draft a revision to municipal code to allow urban farming in San Rafael? (Per what Bob Brown is currently writing?) Could work from Sacramento Urban Ag Coalition's work. Should MFPC look beyond San Rafael to all municipalities? Urban ag sounds great in concept but is difficult in execution: the full complexity is beyond just greenlighting it (Questions such as infrastructure for urban ag to take off? Centralized distribution? Facilitate or aggregate sales? Etc...) A great topic to dig into, and then how to we build a system that supports urban producers and really does create resiliency (resiliency to climate change...)?
- **Is there a role for MFPC?** People go to elected officials prepared (we've read through these plans and policies, and this is what we would like to have changed). Vet it first, but show up. Look at the issue of scale to calm some fears. Small cities don't have the staff to do much ordinance production; larger cities can share ordinances with smaller jurisdictions, MFPC can lobby them as well. Bob Brown will be working on this in the next couple of months and is happy to work with MFPC on drafts, and would ask for MFPC support (letter of support or bodies at meetings) when it goes to the Planning Commission and Novato City Council. Can take this to San Rafael as a model for them to adopt. Example of slaughterhouse issue: group against cruelty to animals posed a large opposition – is there work MFPC can do to prevent potential similar opposition to urban ag? The process of updating a general plan requires a good amount of public meetings and discussion – find folks who do ag production in an urban environment and bring them with their neighbors to weigh in on how it has affected their community. Show local examples as well as research of where urban ag is working well. MFPC could also form a sub-committee to work with San Rafael.
- **VOTE: Urban Ag at the municipality level one of MFPC's themes for 2018? \*\*YES.**

#### **CA FPC Update – Steve Schwartz**

- CA FPC puts out an annual legislative policy report to keep people in the legislature accountable, focus on 20 bills out of about 150. This year's report has been drafted and will be public on Monday and would like each FPC's endorsement by December 19 – the

Steering Committee will review and Steve will circulate the draft for feedback form members once it is available. ACTION ITEM FOR STEVE!

- MFPC voted to endorse a bill on water issues in the Central Valley and Levine wound up endorsing it and the bill got passed by the governor (Levine was a swing vote).
- AB1321 Nutrition Incentives (like Market Match) is now funded from federal funds and CA approved \$5 million to support these programs as well.
- SSB update: latest concern is that there might not be enough appetite for two tax measures on the ballot next year (SSB and Strong Start). Still the possibility of some SSB work in Marin's future.
- SB 1383: bill with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions through dairy and meat production facilities (by introducing more sustainable practices on farms) including language setting a goal for the state to reduce edible food from going to landfill by 20%. SF-Marin Food Bank is following this bill because it could impact orgs that are tasked with figuring out what to do with said food waste. The bill has passed, and now folks submitting comments and drafting regulations. Key issue FB is concerned about is distinction between what is considered recoverable edible food; what food FB should be collecting and redistributing.
- 'Sell By Date' bill update: food industry lobby is massive and unlikely to change their ways; the regulations are mainly suggestions.
- Health Inspectors are supposed to suggest to places they regulate ways to deal with food waste.

### **Council Business**

- HEAL taskforce update: check email for Reba's invitation to join three HEAL taskforces (CalFresh, Built Environment, and FoodNow) that align with MFPC three buckets of Equitable Access work. If interested, talk to Alexandra, Lori/Elaini, and Reba respectively.
- Call for new Steering Committee members: bring nominations (of yourself or others) to the January meeting, to vote on members in the February meeting.
- MFPC plans for 2018: next full Council meeting is January 16. Before then we will send out a survey to help us plan for 2018 – please look for that via email.
- MCF update/funding update: MFPC put forth a proposal for funding to MCF to focus on HEAL for older adults. Asked for \$150,000 collaborative in Marin County involving multiple players who are part of MFPC. Will find out between now and March.

**Closing – Alexandra Danino**

**Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.**

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**Meeting dates for 2018:** February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15, June 19, July 17, August 21, September 18, October 16