

Marin Food Policy Council
Meeting Notes
September 18, 2018
HHS Wellness Campus, 3240 Kerner Blvd, San Rafael

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 18, 2018, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the HHS campus, Room 110

Attendance:

*** = Voting members**

X	Alexandra Danino, 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 Com Services*		Marv Zauderer, ExtraFood.org
X	Casey Poldino, Zero Waste Marin*		Miguel Villarreal, Novato USD*
X	Elaini Negussie, HHS Nutrition Wellness	X	Paula Freeman, Covia
X	Felicia Chavez, Systems Thinking Marin	X	Reba Meigs, HHS Public Health*
	Gail Crain, CAM*		Sheila Kopf, SF-Marin Food Bank
	Gueidi Beltran, WIC*		Steve Schwartz, Interfaith Sus Food Collaborative*
	Heather Bettini, CAM		Susan Martinelli, WIC
	Janet Brown, AllStar Organics*		Terrie Green, Marin City Comm. Services District*
	Jessica Bazan, YLI*		
X	Julia Van Soelen Kim, UCCE*		<i>Speakers:</i>
	June Farmer, Marin City CX3*	X	Barry Miller, City of San Rafael
	Karimah Hay, Ag. Institute of Marin	X	Bob Brown, City of Novato
	Kathy Carver, ExtraFood.org*	X	Raffi Boloyan, City of San Rafael
X	Kathy Koblick, HHS Public Health		
	Laura Hettwer, HHS Public Assistance*		<i>Guests:</i>
X	Lauren Klein, Comm. & School Gardens	X	Bruce Richard, Environmental Forum of Marin
X	Liana Orlandi, Ag. Institute of Marin*	X	Jaqc Streur, Zero Waste Marin
	Lorenzo Cordova, BOS*	X	Liz Darby, County of Marin, Fair Housing
X	Lori Davis, Sanzuma*	X	Roxy Yekta, HHS Nutrition Wellness Program

Welcome and Announcements – Alexandra Danino and Lori Davis

- Julia: SAVE THE DATE: Hunger Forum on Monday 9/24 in San Rafael
- Julia: SAVE THE DATE: Regional Listening Session on local FPC issues with statewide relevance at Lucchesi Community Center in Petaluma on Thursday 10/25 in Petaluma
- Felicia: online systems thinking trainings coming up – **email Felicia if interested**
- Liana: new project definition for permanant market includes two categories: 1) creating better farmers market through infrastructure improvements, and 2) educational programming and social entrepreneurship opportunities. Fourth stop starting 9/27 in Marin City. Currently hiring mobile market assistant to work with Karimah on the Rollin’ Root – **email Liana if interested**
- Reba: circulating rough drafts of factsheets looking for input for use at the Hunger Forum
- Lori: if anyone needs kale, arugula, or salad green seedlings, Sanzuma will donate – **email Lori if interested**

Urban Agriculture Panel –

Raffi Boloyan, City of San Rafael; Barry Miller, City of San Rafael; Bob Brown, City of Novato
Hone in on policy opportunities appropriate for MFPC.

Overview of Urban Ag – Julia Van Soelen Kim

- 2016 Equitable Access Report created by MFPC, Community Food Production was one of three highlighted topics
- Since the report, community gardens have gotten the title of ‘allowable use’ in a number of municipalities, there are more school garden programs, and some new community gardens
- Learning policy and regulatory barriers to urban farming from urban and peri-urban farmers: problem not rooted in the County level General Plan; commercial on-site sales option is a priority; land use, zoning, and allowable use is a major component of barriers; there are a lot of blanks in individual municipalities’ code for various ag use regulations. A number of municipalities do not allow urban ag, whereas others are pretty supportive of urban ag.

Bob Brown, City of Novato

- Attending MFPC meetings have helped him to identify issues and ways to promote urban ag. Main way to help: eliminate burucratic barriers. Novato is currently re-writing their General Plan, update is focusing on sustainability and Healthy Eating, Active Living (among other topics). Also proposing to adopt a lot of implementing ordinances all at once.
- These regulations are already drafted as concepts, largely patterned after Oakland *Proposed Zoning Allowances for Urban Ag document circulated in the meeting
- Now want to promote: ability to establish community gardens with less or no costs and permitting problems (use permit, planning hearing); provisions allowing single individual market gardens whose products can be given to non-profits or sold to restaurants; and the ability to sell products on-site.
- There will be General Plan hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council in March and April of 2019, **would like MFPC support at the hearings**. Can also circulate documents to MFPC earlier for feedback.
- Cities tend to be competitive (esp with sustainability), so cities may be motivated to upgrade ordinances to ‘keep up’ with other cities.

Barry Miller, City of San Rafael General Plan 2040 Project Manager (www.sanrafael2040.org)

- Usually General Plans have a horizon years of 20 years, so working on the General Plan now looking out to 2040. General Plan update began a year ago, so still in the early stages of the process. Projected completion date is early 2020.
- General Plan is a policy document, not regulatory document; more philosophical issues (road map), which will get implemented later through municipal codes.
- Steering Committee of 24 San Rafael residents (each with alternates!) with **meetings open to the public: 10/3 from 7-9pm at B St Community Center, 10/17 from 7-9pm at Terra Linda Community Center, 10/27 from 10am-noon at Al Boro Community Center**
- Health Equity and Environmental Justice element (mandated by the state), which elevates food access issues like never before.

Raffi Boloyan, City of San Rafael Planning Manager

- There is limited mention of food in the current General Plan because it wasn't a hot topic back in 2004
- Have tried to improve regulations since then, including: improve access to beekeeping (now no permit needed), and memorializing community gardens to allow them almost everywhere in town as a permitted use.
- Urban Ag is a broad topic. Need policies built into the new General Plan as the guiding document. San Rafael has no ag zoning in the city, so will always be dealing with interactions with neighbors, businesses, etc. The more activities that are permitted, the more staff is needed to do that permitting. Conversely, the more issues they get complaints about, the more things they will need to enforce.
- **Talk to Steering Committee members, find advocates, write letters, attend meetings**

Urban Ag panel discussion

- County Health Dept has regs, state has regs, etc. – is there any room for creating clarity at the city level to lessen the reg burden? Development is complicated these days, with many exemptions. San Rafael tries to let people know of known regs when possible.
- What is the cost of a use permit? Not a fixed fee, starts around \$2600 in Novato, but you can get a refund if it's a small (not controversial) project with less time needed. Use permits start at \$1200 in San Rafael.
- Inclusion of breastfeeding as an element of food security in the GP 2040
- Arcata farm: Bayside Park and Farm managed by city Park and Rec
- Community Gardens overseen by Parks and Rec – who has the insurance? Not sure if it's under umbrella of city insurance policy.
- *How can MFPC be involved? Top recommendations? Any cautionary warnings on this topic?*
 - If you have Best Practices, write them down (short bullet list) to provide cities ideas
 - City grading system
 - It doesn't take much – just a few people to attend meetings
 - **Decide top 4-6 urban ag priorities, create a message and stick to that message** wherever we go, because topics can get convoluted, and then people get overwhelmed. Develop specific rules after policy is approved.
 - Simple message dropped in at all the right places and times – stick to the basics
 - Shorter term advocacy before 2020? Climate Change Action Plan Update is happening right now in San Rafael, going to the city council in the next 4-5 months, could happen earlier than 2020.

CA Food Policy Council Report – Julia Van Soelen Kim (for Steve Schwartz) and Liana Orlandi

- Farm Bill – still in progress in different versions, have not created a consensus draft to be voted on, but the deadline for current bill to expire is 9/30. Nutrition programs will continue to function normally, but there is concern on the agriculture front (including senior farmers market program and farm to school programs). Three options: 1) **encourage Congressman Huffman to support an extension of current Farm Bill (Steve can propose draft**

language for MFPC review, to circulate via email before next MFPC meeting), 2) go without a Farm Bill, wait and see what happens (new congress in new year, may have more favorable players), or 3) force the Farm Bill to be moved to the floor for a full vote now. Strategies: try not to let Republicans know what issues liberals care about, OR advocate to anyone and everyone. Farmers market for petition signatures?

- SSB – we thought that it won't be until 2021 til statewide legislation will look at SSB. Since then, quick movement by American Medical Association and American Heart Association to move a bill forward in March 2019. May be a grassroots effort to get signatures to support getting it onto the ballot, or may go the political route of just signing it on. To explore more at our next MFPC meeting.
- CA FPC Annual Legislative Report, seeking vote of support from MFPC in moving the doc forward – **will circulate via email.**
- CA Food and Farming Network listening session for FPCs in the North Bay to raise local issues we care about, seek opportunities for statewide legislation. Focus on Senior farmers market programs, urban ag, and farm to school. Invite to come, SAVE THE DATE: 10/25.
- H.R. 6687 – Support for sustainable ranching activities in the Point Reyes National Seashore Vote. Draft letter of support circulated by AIM to support ability of ranchers in Marin to continue their work in the PRNS. This has been an area of conflict in the recent past, historical ag use and wildland mix has been contentious. Allows Park Service to use tools to reduce conflict between tule elk and ranchers, including moving elk to native reservation lands (tribes would be allowed to hunt elk for food). Park is updating their General Management Plan, looking at whether ranching should be allowed, not allowed, or allowed with adaptations; proposing to include protecting ranching more explicitly in the GMP. AIM is writing a letter of support to their board to approve, as is MALT. BOS is in support of this as well, Park Service was key in directing how the elk would be managed. **MFPC wants to learn more, may circulate for a vote on MFPC support via email before the next MFPC meeting or agendaize for the October meeting. Liana to email the full council with more information.**
- ****Proposition: 1 pager format for Letters of Support in the future: background on issue, who else is backing the issue**

New Member Presentations – Julia Van Soelen Kim

- If you've recently applied for MFPC membership and haven't given a new member presentation yet, please let us know.
- It can be brief: introduce yourself and your organization, what issues you work on, relevant projects and programs, any funding associated with this work.

Break-out groups

- **Urban Ag - September**
- **Farm to School – October**
- **Seniors – November**

Closing – Alexandra Danino and Lori Davis

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

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