

Meeting Notes: Meeting #1

11/30/2011

Sustainable DC Food Policy Working Group

Meeting Attendees

Roselle Safran
Melissa Eddison
Morgan Barnicoat
Andrea Northup
Tara McNerney
Tina Lee
Jordan Clough
Maddie Morales
Elana Goldstein
Elizabeth Corona
R.G. Johnson
Margaret Pinard
Katherine Eklund
Derina Man
Rachel Stone
Stephen Alexander
Dominic Ouellette
Abbie Steiner
Ibti Vincent
Pertula George
Jeremiah Lowery
Raksha Vasudevan
Allison Lasky
Kristin Gregor
Katie Aldworth
Kafia Anderson-Hall
Ruth Kroger
Sarah McLaughlin
Josh Singer
Neil Seldman
Wendy Stuart
Lola Bloom
Rebecca Lomos
Sandy Fraber
Sarah McKinley
Cecily Kohler
Sophie Bock
Lacy Brittingham
Louise Meyer
Margaret Hoo Ballade

Fern Johnson-Clarke, Facilitator

Laine Cidlowski, Facilitator

Thor Nelson, Notetaker

General Discussion:

- Prioritize food access with links to increased public education and public health initiatives.
- To enable larger scale urban food production we need to focus on ensuring it can be distributed.
- Provide local food access at affordable rates: Co-ops can provide food access and local jobs.

- Need the cooperation of District agencies such as DPR and DDOT to make land available for gardens and farms.
- We also need regulations, DCRA and DOH should be at the table to craft regulations for urban food production.
- Start with the land and then develop a web of distributors and stores to provide healthy food access to neighborhoods.
- Need to focus on organic food production to be truly sustainable.
- Need to build support systems and networks to enable farmers to successfully directly sell to local populations and distribute their food.
- Create better partnerships between growers and consumers through such things as farmers markets. Also encourage local entrepreneurship by creating value added items based on local food production.
- Need to define healthy food access: Organic, fresh, and local.
- Getting food to consumers will require the development of highly organized distributions systems, especially for institutions such as schools.
- Public schools often have poor access to healthy food. Healthy food education can be a resource to the community as well as children.
- Local food production can also be used to enhance local economies.
- Sustainable food is a whole complex system which needs to be thought of comprehensively not in little parts. We should begin by mapping food production, distribution, and resource connections that already exist ("the web") and go from there.
- Define a % of local food production for the city. How can we incentivize regional food production as a supplement to local production? Also need to focus on other foods than just vegetables; people need a balanced diet of other food such as meat, fish, and poultry.
- How do we expand access to fresh food beyond the growing season?
- Immediate Goal: Eradication of food deserts!
- Explore rooftop garden production: we have a number of flat roofs due to our height limit
- Explore ways to bridge the digital divide over food information and policy. Need to focus on hands on communication to engage the people not in the room
- We should also look at "foodsheds" and the networks we can build from them to eradicate food deserts
- How do we incentivize healthy diets and eating
- Must utilize vestigial green space such as highway medians for food production
- Provide healthier option for vending machines in schools and workplaces. Need to define healthy food standards for vending machines.

Breakout Groups:

Group #1:

Categories

1. Access: 100% of residents having access to affordable, healthy, environmentally-sustainable food.
2. Quality and Health: "DC Organic" regulated standards for production
3. Education and Awareness:
4. Production (Resources and Practices):
5. Workers/Justice
6. Coordination (Food /Network)

7. Distribution

Group #2:

Categories

1. Public Health
2. Education/Schools
3. Food Production
4. Land Access
5. Sourcing/institutional Buying

Group #3:

2030 Long Term Vision Statement:

Through an updated government supported private/public sector partnership, create a robust and prolific healthy food system that incorporates our land and education resources to serve all DC citizens.

Group #4:

Vision Statement Draft:

We see a DC food system that: incentivizes local, health, affordable, and environmentally sustainable food growth makes use of local resources of land and people to address food insecurity involves residents, youth, and food-disadvantaged populations in food production decisions educates residents and youth about food issues values and creates respected food system jobs.

- Other points revolved around need to define phrases such as 'food system, sustainable, insecure, affordable, etc.
- Other points that were less 'vision' and more 'goal' included a percentage of ward acreage devoted to agriculture and mapping of the cultivable space.

Group #5:

- Implementation Items:
 - Central Kitchen
 - Healthy Schools Act
- Access/Affordability
- Self sustaining food economy
- Fast track access to vacant land:
 - changing zoning laws
 - government support
- Easy access to land grants/zoning issues/permits to grow
- Economic incentives for private land owners
- Self sustaining food economy w/ support for private or non-profit groups to provide access to all the food related issues for things such as a central kitchen, zoning, permits, access.