



Bridgeport Food Policy Council – August 16, 2017  
Burroughs Community Center, 2470 Fairfield Avenue  
The Learning Center Room

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*Members in attendance:* Margot Gotterer, Christine Strafstrom, Jacob Robison (OPED), and Jessica Zielinski Meffert (BDHSS)

*Guests in attendance:* Erin Harkrader (LifeBridge), Raquel Rivera Pablo (A Pinch of Salt), Breanna Natale (BFMC), Landon Horan (FEED Center - CCGB), Maria Ramos (Urban Roots - GVI), Anna Greer (SHU), Gina Smith (Get Healthy CT), Lisa Neff (Amer. Heart Assoc.), Kerry Morgan (SHU), Taylor Edelmann (Optimus) and Chris Cane (Food Corps)

*Staff in attendance:* Jessica Zielinski Meffert (BFPC Coordinator)

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The meeting began at 6:05 pm.

Attendees introduced themselves.

### **Council Vote**

The council held a vote to approve the meeting minutes from July 2017. Jacob made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Christine seconded the motion. All members voted in approval of the July 2017 meeting minutes.

### **Old Business**

#### EPA Grant – Local Food, Local Places

Maggie explained that an invitation had just been sent out via email for the September 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> workshops, and the listserv would receive the invitation tomorrow. These workshops will deal with the topic of local food and local places, focusing on Bridgeport's farmers' markets, and will be led by consultants from the EPA. The September 7<sup>th</sup> workshop will be an evening session with the goal of setting the overall vision, and the September 8<sup>th</sup> workshop will be a day-long session with the goal of creating a specific action plan. It is recommended if you can only attend 1 session, attend the Thursday session to provide input that can be used to shape the discussion on Friday. Maggie updated the group that Raquel and Breanna are soliciting produce donations from local farmers for the event. Maggie also shared that Spanish translation will be provided at both sessions. If you would like to send photos of related work you are doing in Bridgeport for inclusion in a session slideshow, please send the pictures to Landon Horan. If you have ideas of what "food access work" type places in Bridgeport the consultants should be shown on a tour Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup>, please send these ideas to Maggie.

### Food Policy Council Vacancies

Maggie relayed that Angel (not present) does not have any updates but has asked to meet with Maggie tomorrow about this topic. Maggie cannot attend this Thursday meeting so Christine will attend. Jacob is asked if he knows what might be holding the process up at this point and how the council can move forward. Jacob said in his experience usually the background checks hold up appointments. As far as the council is aware, the pending members have all passed their background checks, and are waiting to be presented before the Miscellaneous Matters Committee. Jacob suggested that if the background checks are done, then the council can be in touch with the person who creates the agenda for the Miscellaneous Matters Committee to ask to be added to the agenda.

### Council Rules

Christine explained that the rules have been shared with council members for comment and since there were no substantive comments they will be shared with the listserv for public input.

### Present FPC Report to City Council

Maggie stated that she has not yet heard back from Jeanette of the Economic Development Committee about setting a date to present to this committee. Maggie noted that before the council presents, we should determine what the 'asks' are from City Council, i.e. feedback, input, or acknowledgment. Christine suggested to start by introducing and raising awareness before asking for action.

### **Sub-group Updates**

Maggie asked that sub-groups include an update on recruitment and diverse participation so that the Community Outreach sub-group can help fill any missing skill sets or backgrounds in each group. Maggie also shared that Juniper's new start date is September 12<sup>th</sup>, and encouraged sub-groups to let Maggie know about their upcoming events and meetings so that Juniper can be looped in. Maggie also asks that the sub-groups let her know what sort of support would be most helpful from the in-coming VISTAs.

### Urban Agriculture

Jacob explains that they have not had a meeting yet to advance the master plan, but September 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> looks like the tentative date for the next meeting. This sub-group is looking for more members (currently Ellie, Cristina, and Jacob), especially those with skills in city law, city code, farming, and related planning.

Chris Cane suggested contacting the group at MIT that is creating a city planning-based game that engages laymen on the topic in an interesting and interactive way. This could be a way to recruit more members. Jess suggested reaching out to local master's programs to see what programs might have students interested in joining the sub-group's work or taking on a portion as a part of their thesis. It is shared that Fairfield University has a master's program in public administration, which might be a good fit. Jacob shared that Drew from the Nature Conservancy has been introduced to the sub-group members as another resource.

### School Wellness

Raquel reported that they have not been able to have their meeting with Sharlene yet, and she will be following up to set a meeting. Anna shared that the school wellness policy will go before the Board of

Education one more time, but it is likely that what is written now will be that policy to be put into place. Cesar Batalla is implementing the policy, by including school gardening programs with GVI, cooking demonstrations with Raquel, and pop-up markets with LifeBridge.

Maria made the point that it is important that these programs include the parents as well as the students. Raquel agreed and says she plans to do after-school programs with parents, and will follow up with Maria to discuss further. Raquel also shared that all communications will be in English and Spanish, and that she will be participating in two backpack provision programs at which she will be sharing information about school wellness work.

Kerry offered that she has many costumes that the school could use during their programming, such as fruit and vegetable costumes, a toothbrush and plastic bottle/plastic cup costume. Anna will loop Kerry into the school wellness sub-group so that they can make plans to incorporate the costumes she has offered.

#### Food-Based Economic Development

Landon reported that they are waiting to hear back about a meeting with Kim Staley and Angel. Landon made the point that the Local Food, Local Places event would be a great time and place to recruit for the FPC sub-groups.

#### Community Outreach

Taylor shared that the last sub-group meeting took place on 8 August at Starbucks, and that routinely about three people attend the meeting. On Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>, the community outreach subgroup will piggy back off of Raquel's participation in the backpack provision program to get the word out about the FPC. Taylor reports that the sub-group has also written a mission statement and goals, which he read aloud to the council.

Raquel offered that she would like to begin bringing topics from the FPC sub-groups and share them at events she holds with parents as a way to further engage the community.

Bree reported that she spoke with Cristina about the youth FPC group being formed in collaboration with GVI, and Cristina was very interested in this initiative.

#### **New Business**

##### School Wellness & Public Art

Anna informed that she would like to assist Sharlene Wong in disseminating information about the school wellness policy, possibly through on or more public art installations. Chris Cane has public art installation experience, so he's agreed to assist with this effort. Raquel suggested a fundraiser that could be held at an art gallery. Maggie reminded the group that Bridgeport will be having its annual Art Trail in November, so that could be an excellent time for this project, and will connect Suzanne Kachmar with Chris and Anna. November is also nutrition awareness month.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.