



Bridgeport Food Policy Council – December 6, 2017
Ralphola Taylor Community Center, 790 Central Avenue
Conference Room

Members in attendance: Margot Gotterer, Anna Greer, Jacob Robison (OPED), Angel DePara (CAO), and Jessica Zielinski Meffert (BDHSS)

Guests in attendance: Cristina Sandolo (GVI), Taylor Edelmann (Optimus), Marcella Lawson (New Level Academy), Landon Horan (FEED Center - CCGB), Clinton Gee, Sr. (Kings Pantry), Maria Ramos (Comm. Garden Captain), Faith Nicholas (Black Rock Resident), Alanna Gilbert (Farm-to-Pantry VISTA), Christina Smith (Groundwork BPT), Michelle Black Smith (Black Butterfly Project)

Staff in attendance: Jessica Zielinski Meffert (BFPC Coordinator)

The meeting began at 6:08 pm. Attendees introduced themselves.

Council Vote

The council held a vote to approve the meeting minutes from November 2017. Anna motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Jacob seconded the motion. All members voted in approval of the November 2017 meeting minutes.

Old Business

Food Policy Council Vacancies

Maggie reported that since the 2 new council members have been appointed, the City webpage has been updated with their information, and Maggie has followed up with Clinton and Mary to explain why their applications are on hold until a non-Democrat is appointed to the Council. Maggie requested that suggestions for getting the word out to potential applicants are shared with Juniper.

Christina Smith announced that she is the appointed liaison between the FPC and City Council.

Christina asked for a clarification on which neighborhoods the Council is interested in recruiting new members from. Maggie clarified that residents from all neighborhoods are welcome to apply, but the Council is most interested in neighborhoods not currently represented (i.e. neighborhoods other than Black Rock and the North End).

FPC City Webpage

Jess provided an update about the FPC City webpage, and asked council members and sub-group members to review their sections of the webpage for accuracy. Sub-group members were asked to work with Juniper on creating their sub-group mission statements.

Jess reviewed who is listed as a council member on the webpage, and it was discussed that the listed ex-officio members may need to be updated. Angel indicated he will continue working on this.

Anna asked if we should list the advisory board members on the webpage as well. Council members present agreed it would be a good idea to list the advisory board members on the webpage for benefits such as networking with the organizations the board members are involved with.

Clinton departed at 6:20.

Council Rules

Angel reported that the City Attorney's Office is still processing the council rules. Maggie asked if it is advisable to send them an updated draft of the rules. Angel said if an updated draft is to be sent, this should be done as soon as possible so the council rules review doesn't have to be restarted.

Annual Meeting: The FPC annual meeting previously had been proposed for October because that is when the annual report is due each year, however, Maggie proposed using January as an annual meeting in the interim, and starting with October as of 2018. The following activities are proposed for the annual meeting:

- Election of officers
- Review of position appointments for the council and sub-groups
- Review of meeting schedule for FPC and sub-groups
- Review of timeframes for meeting agendas and minutes to be posted
- Review and pass mission statements for sub-groups
- Statement of personal goals from council members for the year

Sub-group Updates

Urban Agriculture

Cristina reported that the sub-group will begin looking for a consultant to develop an Urban Agriculture Master Plan for the City of Bridgeport. To ensure that the plan is community-driven, the consultant will hold listening sessions and community meetings. The aim is to have RFP proposals posted in December, and RFP responses back by the end of January in order to have this master plan on track to be included in the City's Master Plan. Jacob reported that the process of updating the City's Master Plan will not start in April, as was previously the plan, so that gives the Council more flexibility on this timeline.

School Wellness

Anna reported there will be a meeting on 10 January with Sharlene to obtain parent feedback on the School Wellness Policy. Cristina noted that the School Wellness Policy is most likely out now for an extended public comment period. Angel noted that due to the substantial change in membership on the Board of Education, now is a good time to meet with the new board members to understand their position on the Wellness Policy. Angel also advised that if the Wellness Policy was linked with a board member that did not retain their seat, it could be the case that the legislation would go out with that board member, leaving the new board to re-initiate the policy.

Food-Based Economic Development

Landon reported that their sub-group had a productive meeting last week, and they are now working to put into writing many of the details about which licenses businesses need to obtain and how the licenses are obtained. Landon will share these details once they are all captured. Christina asked when the next sub-group meeting would be held, and Landon said she'd initiate a doodle poll and include Christina in the poll.

Community Outreach

Maggie provided the update on behalf of Tina that the Health Department does not have funding for a 2018 Food Matters event. Christina shared that UB will be funding a food-related event through their Naturopath school, and it is suggested that we combine events as a way to mutually benefit from each other's resources. Cristina noted that The Nature Conservancy may also have some funding for such an event.

For volunteer recruitment, Taylor shared that Jess had suggested VolunteerMatch.org as a place to connect with locals interested in the FPC's mission, however to create an account with VolunteerMatch.org it is believed an EIN is required from a non-profit. Cristina suggested that GVI could sponsor an account to be shared between GVI and the FPC.

Christina asked if a "Food Day" event she attended before was a FPC event, and if so, what the funding source was. Maggie said the event was hosted by the Health Department for a few years in a row, although not in 2017.

It is requested that Jess ask the Health Department what events they will be sponsoring in 2018 and if it will be possible to collaborate on any of these events.

For the FPC logo, Maggie stated that she will be reaching out to the design program at UB to see if some of students would like to create the FPC's logo, given that they have assisted with FPC design work in the past. It is asked whether the FPC logo will need to be approved by any City offices, and Angel replied that most likely, yes, it will need approval. On the City webpages, most councils use the City seal as opposed to a logo. Anna commented that if we will be working with students to design the logo, we should specify up-front that we'd like a logo submitted for feedback with the opportunity for revisions after the feedback so that the students can allot the appropriate timeline for reiterations.

New Business

Urban Agriculture Training

Maria shared her gratitude to GVI for sponsoring scholarships to the GVI Urban Agriculture Training program with UConn. Maria reports that the training is going well and is offering rigorous and robust lessons that will greatly benefit the community gardens and other urban agriculture in Bridgeport. Graduation from this program is set for November 2018.

Black Butterfly Project

Michelle shared about the Black Butterfly project, which is a program to support the education and well-being of Black girls in 10th-12th grades through a book club and other initiatives. Michelle read the project's mission statement and explained that there is interest in collaborating with the FPC on two topics the book club will be covering: 1). Careers and initiatives in food-based businesses and entrepreneurship, and 2). Incorporation of healthy, delicious, and fun foods into meals. Michelle reports that the book club meetings will be on the 3rd Tuesday of each month beginning 16 January at Housatonic Community College.

Maria asked if there is programming for girls of all ethnicities, and Michelle explains that the Black Butterfly Project works to address social and family dynamics as well as personal situations that are found to be specific to Black girl's community and cultural experiences, however the Black Butterfly Project is very happy to collaborate with affinity groups for other races, genders, etc.

Anna stated that she will put Michelle in touch with Raquel, because it is believed that Raquel will be enthusiastic about helping in particular with cooking demonstrations to promote healthy eating as also being fun and delicious.

Feedback from Fall Program at Groundwork Bridgeport

Christina reported that with the conclusion of fall programming at Groundwork Bridgeport, feedback was solicited from students about what should be included in up-coming programming, and there was a large response in favor of cooking classes. This could be an area of future collaboration between the FPC and Groundwork Bridgeport. Christina and others will continue a conversation about collaboration possibilities.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.