

Minutes of: Food System Council

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| Date: March 25, 2010 | Location: 11104 NE 149 th St. Brush Prairie, WA 98606 | Recorded by: Elspeth Durek |
| Time: 4:00-6:00pm | Mtg. chaired by: Alison Dennis | Reviewed by: Team |

Attendees: Bill Cestnik, Paul C, Bill Coleman, Theresa C, Alison D, Dion H, Greta L, Amy M-P, Kristine P, Anna P, Debe N-N, Bruce P, Gayle R, Amy Sidran, Doug S, Elspeth D
Guests: Thomas Gibson, Sunrise O’Mahoney, Ariel Rivers, MCFPC: Tammy Vander Woude, Anita Yap, Amy Gilroy
Absent: Sandy B, Ingrid D, Tracy K, Anne L, Tricia M, Kendra P, Yvonne W

| Topic | Discussion | Decision | Follow-up |
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| Welcome and Introductions | Alison called the meeting to order. | | |
| Minute Approval | Minutes approved. | | |
| Brief Updates | Farm to School Amy S. has been in contact with committee members to keep this initiative going and build on the interest out there. Vancouver School District is interested in participating in future developments. The issue of using USDA commodities was brought up. It was pointed out that F to S projects would supplement &/or shift USDA commodity food choices, not totally replace them. Amy also reported about an article in Tuesday’s Oregonian about a school connecting with a farming community. | Continue exploring ways for FSC to facilitate further discussion with school districts on implementing F to S initiatives | |
| | Community Forum – water Doug reported there will be a seminar on water rights Sat May 15 in the am. There will be a presentation, followed by questions, and they are working on putting together a panel of farmers about their experiences. | | |
| | City Council meeting – gardens – Greta, Bill & Anne An inventory of vacant lots will be used to push for growing food on them. | Follow this and keep advocating for using vacant lots for growing food | |
| | Fruit Valley grant and Sub-area plan – Anna, Greta and Elspeth Grant: The survey tool for this project is almost complete and 5 outreach workers have been hired to go out in the FV neighborhood and survey a wide cross section of the population. Questions range from where residents shop, to how they get there, healthier choices they’d like to see in FV, their food growing and usage strengths, talents and needs. | Provide updates as this project develops | |



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| | <p>Sub-area plan: A draft will be presented at the meeting tonight. The plan encourages farm stands and gardens.</p> | | |
| | <p>Other: Sunrise O’Mahoney announced plans to apply for a USDA grant to start a market garden to help non-native residents grow food</p> | <p>Sunrise will be asking the FSC for a letter of support</p> | <p>Facilitate letter of support upon request</p> |
| <p>Speaker: David Knaus, Fresh Earth Gardens – Farmer Education and Farmer Incubation</p> | <p>David holds a BS in Business Administration and has 8 yrs experience with farming. Fresh Earth Gardens started in 2008 & is a 3 acre farm in La Center, growing high quality, organic vegetables and fruit for restaurants, farmers markets and families via his CSA. His focus is health and nutrition by providing the freshest, highest quality, organic, GM free, heirloom and international products.</p> <p>He offers a range of consulting services and class series. Modern Organic Farming on Small Acreage is a 10 week course, started in 2009 with about 50 students. Feedback from this successful class has David planning more combining of classroom time with an actual working demonstration sites, like 78th St. David feels that this and tours would build awareness and would open up small scale farming to more diverse groups. David has also developed another class series geared for home owners and smaller plots: How to Grow for your Family.</p> <p>Organic farming is the fastest growing segment of this industry. He believes the main obstacle is production efficiencies; organic farming has grown up as a cottage industry using “garage engineered” equipment. There is a need for product development, e.g. movable shade and hoop houses. Water also remains a challenge in Clark County; it depends on individual farm situation. The business can be profitable; it is a matter of education and the proper tools.</p> <p>David’s ideas on:</p> <p><i>How to increase community awareness about local food growers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting elder famers involved • Local media • Community events (e.g. harvest festival), 78th St. farm project, education, fundraiser – for schools, local farmers, etc. • Or, is there already over-exposure? There is a need for more farms producing local food now; there is more demand than there is produce right now. <p><i>How can more connections be made between growers and eaters?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More growers Education Affordable land • Organization between concerned parties, • More restaurants using local food, • More cooking classes, | <p>Support David’s efforts to improve growing and farming opportunities in the community</p> | <p>Follow David’s conversations with Doug and Sunrise on future partnerships with 78th St. project.</p> |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition education in the class (the power of kids and testimonials) <p><i>Opportunities to get involved</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals and fundraisers Grants and funding, • More booths at farmers markets Recipes for CSA customers • In short: developing a more logistical, educational, financial angle. <p><i>How small farmers can engage in Farm to School activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to consider: seasonality (use greenhouses), price, will the kids eat it, Preparation considerations, inertia, and current suppliers. • There are production problems (with the farmer), communication problems (with both), and demand problems (with schools). <p>For more information on David Knaus and Fresh Earth Gardens, go to: www.freshearthgardens.com</p> | | |
| <p>Multnomah County Food Policy Council</p> | <p>The Portland Multnomah Food Policy Council is a citizen advisory group to the city and county. They were formed in 2002 and are going through a re-focus phase. The panel of three who attended this FSC meeting, Tammy Vander Woude, Anita Yap, Amy Gilroy, were interested in how we were structured and how we operated. They questioned the effectiveness of our sub-committees, how to stay engaged and be effective in influencing policy. We stated we had core groups interested in particular areas, e.g. land use policy, and we had 3 vision and key focus areas of concentration.</p> | | |
| <p>78th Street Master Plan</p> | <p>The last work session was held a few weeks ago. A decision was made to leave this on the agenda for the April 6 meeting, when testimony will be heard. Another letter was submitted – not in favor of the road, and listing conditions for a water tower if placed.</p> | <p>Encourage members and others to attend the 78th St. meeting on April 6 at the PSC, and voice opinion</p> | <p>Email to FSC membership re. meeting on 4/6/2010.</p> |
| <p>County Farm Expo</p> | <p>Bruce relayed Mark McCauley’s message that the FSC has a charge and to keep that focus. The county will be hosting an Ag/Farm Expo event that will be booth based, with representatives from the farming and growing community, speakers – the goal is to educate the public about where to get local food, involve local agriculture organizations and promote local farmers.</p> | <p>Empower Bruce to relay our interest and stay involved in this event.</p> | |
| | <p>Next meeting - April 22nd, 2010, 4-6 pm.</p> | <p>Finalize Vision/Key Goals</p> | |

