

**Burlington Food Council
Minutes
October 17, 2011**

Food Council Business

- After a year of facilitation, Meg is handing the baton to Will Robb. As head of the Urban Agriculture Task Force, Will is already driving the bulk of the work of the Food Council forward and having him in the facilitation role will allow that coordination to be more seamless. Will can be reached at william.h.robb@gmail.com or (802) 233-3609. Many thanks to Will for his hard work on the Urban Agriculture work and for taking the reins of the council.

Food Council Mayoral Candidates Debate

- Newly minted facilitator Will proposed the Food Council host a Mayoral Candidates debate focused on food and agriculture in Burlington. General agreement that this was a good move. Will will work to pull that together with assistance from other Council members as necessary.

ECos/Legacy Planning Project Updates

David Raphael of LandWorks is working to both create the ECos plan at the regional level and update the Burlington Legacy Plan. The ECos project is designed to promote sustainability in all forms and is funded with a \$1 million grant from HUD.

David led a discussion asking the Council What are some of the impediments and some of the opportunities around advancing sustainability when it comes to food and agriculture. The following are David's notes

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Small scale agriculture in City Center versus Intervale.

Increase in BTV production

- Farmland protection at edge of city / ACT 250 encourages sprawl and fragmentation
- Private lands

Intervale – flooding needs to be addressed – How?

- need land in city to start plants during flood season

State Energy Plan

- measure how many/much CO2 emission in city
- recapture developed areas

Jennifer Ely (in response to Irene)

- don't build dikes – augment flood storage capacity (new)
- develop wetlands (but archeological impacts)

Education

- ensure that more local foods in schools(plus family access to)

- curriculum development for teachers
- Time spend in classroom

Incorporate more local foods in cafeteria

School food production

Systemize ad hoc food activities / initiatives

Depends on external groups to do

Switch priorities for the schools to take on.

Demand exceeds supply in BTV

- run out of food in city

Access for new farmers

Range of diversity in farming options

Vegetable farming easiest

Land prices an impediment

Retry thinking conservation of lot size for conservation

Farm to plate / sustainable jobs, food

Competing goals in BTV

- more density versus urban agriculture and open space

Distribution is an issue

BTV has to rely on lands to the east for food production

More farmer markets / work with supermarkets

Sustainability – tell the story of sustainability

What's the goal?

Big lawns in BTV

- property tax abatements for agricultural production
- food based taxes?
- Public benefit

For development

Small scale current use

Where food is grown

Where it is purchased

How we address / develop

Sustainable food systems

Plan BTV ideas:

- green roof development
- urban forestry

Policy and Planning

- prioritize presentation of farmland
- what are the mechanisms if BTV increases density
- what happens in BTV

City purchases development rights outlying towns to serve city
Multi-municipal approach?

Food system infrastructure and transportation infrastructure
(food hubs and transportation)
Planning has to result in actual outcomes

Does public transportation serve community farms?
97% of food bought at big box stores?
More food cooperatives in central locations

Section on Food to/in city

- smaller stores with food around Burlington / “food dessert”
- convenient quick stops

“Healthy Retailer” Grants

Mapping for community gardens

Where people want gardens – are they available?

Regional recreation group

Could look at sites for community gardens for the schools but can't be for profit.

LWCF lands cannot be used for commercial agriculture

Open space is retained with density developments

10-acre zoning policies that support meaningful open space

Mechanisms for manufacturing food/fiber/wood development

Transfer of Development Rights as an option

Urban Agriculture Task Force Will and Allison took this meeting to focus on integrating Planning Efforts with the Urban Agriculture Task Force. The following are Allison Nihart's notes:

Will: The Downtown and Waterfront Development Plan mentions green infrastructure and green roofs – could definitely connect to growing food in these places

Density

Will – there could be a mechanism to connect density with anti-sprawl policies (e.g. transfer of development rights)

Harris – Purchase of Development Rights on properties around the area and mandate agricultural production for the city

David – There could be a multi-municipality regional organization to handle this

Integration of food/transport infrastructure

Will - E.g. bus stop and farmers market combined?

Jennifer – we should invite CCTA sometime, we could superimpose open space with transportation map

Meg – Both City Market and the Farmers Market are low on parking

David – there has been discussion of repurposing railway into Burlington from areas south of the city

Small stores around Burlington (e.g. quick stop corner stores) could provide outlets for local food, instead of developing completely new enterprises. There are Healthy Retailer Grants to support such initiatives.

Parks and Recreation - there is a group of Chittenden County parks and rec professionals. Considering that land purchased under the Land and Water Conservation Funding can't be used for commercial agriculture, perhaps such land could be used for school production. Alternatively, Dan suggested that those restrictions could be transferred to non-LWCF lands.

David – there is certainly an issue of fragmentation (of agricultural lands and communities) under ACT 250.