

# Red Wing Local Foods Council Steering Committee

The purpose of this paper is to bring together discussions held by the Steering Committee from the time of the first meeting in March 2009 to the current meeting August 2009. The plan now is to move to a more formal level of organization with an expanded membership base to undertake specific actions of reform.

## Introduction

The Steering Committee was organized as Phase 2 of the Farmhouse Gathering @ the Anderson Center co-sponsored by the Riverbend Market Cooperative, the U of M SE Region Experiment in Rural Cooperation, and the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies. Phase one was a series of five meetings, modeled after the Natural Step Sustainability Groups done the year before, with speakers followed by small group discussions focusing on the benefits of a local/sustainable agricultural system.<sup>1</sup>

The first meeting for Phase 2 was held on March 12, 2009 @ the Farmhouse at the Anderson with Ken Meter, Director of the Crossroads Resource Center as facilitator<sup>2</sup>.

Erin Meier, Director of the U of M SE ERC was also present to provide information on what has now become Southeast Minnesota Foodshed Planning Initiative<sup>3</sup> that was organized by Maggi Adamek, one of the phase 1 speakers, after the Farmhouse Gathering.

This initiated the process of trying to understand how reform might proceed. Several members expressed views on how difficult this may be since the current system is dominated by corporations of global proportions. There was discussion of the Natural Step ABCD process of community change as a model that has proven effective in many communities. The early meetings also produced a draft vision statement:

*to provide everyone with a wide variety of tasty, nutritious, healthful food grown in a sustainable food system that is economically viable and in balance with other cultural goals and values, such as, an appreciation for the importance of the natural world to individual well-being, good land stewardship, humane treatment of animals, viable rural communities, biological and cultural diversity, public health, democratic values and principles, and social justice.*

Since this time there has been considerable amount of research and consultation done on the role, membership, and process being used by others with a similar

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the scientific and economic information presented at these meetings to document the public health, economic, ecological, and social benefits of local/sustainable agriculture is available at the Riverbend Market website: [www.riverbendmarket.com](http://www.riverbendmarket.com) Under the blog tag there are entries on the Natural Step program and organic agriculture resources. Along with the Farmhouse Gathering PowerPoints there are additional PowerPoints done by Erin Meier, Jim Riddle, and an Ad Hoc Riverbend Committee.

<sup>2</sup> ([www.crcworks.org/msi.html](http://www.crcworks.org/msi.html))

<sup>3</sup> See [www.regionalpartnerships.umn.edu/index.pl?id=2204](http://www.regionalpartnerships.umn.edu/index.pl?id=2204) for additional information.

vision. In this Maggi Adamek<sup>4</sup> of the U of M and Kelly Cain<sup>5</sup> of the U of W-RF have been very helpful and continue to be supportive to the Committees work.

## **Models and Resources Discussed**

### **American Planning Association**

<http://www.planning.org/>

Food System Planning White Paper and several others...

### **National Association of Counties**

[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

Counties and Local Food System pdf

Overview with references to many county initiatives

### **Drake University Law Center**

<http://www.law.drake.edu/centers/agLaw/>

### **Snohomish County Washington:**

[http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County\\_Services/Focus\\_on\\_Farming/agsustainability.htm](http://www1.co.snohomish.wa.us/County_Services/Focus_on_Farming/agsustainability.htm)

### **Dane County Wisconsin:**

[www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil](http://www.countyofdane.com/foodcouncil)

### **Osceola, Wisconsin**

<http://www.vil.osceola.wi.us/oefip>

### **Iowa Food Policy-**

<http://www.food-matters.org/index.htm>

### **Lane County Food Policy Council**

<http://www.fpclanecounty.org/>

### **City of Vancouver**

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/foodpolicy/>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.misa.umn.edu/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.uwrf.edu/sustain/>

## **Cornell University**

<http://www.cornell.edu/>

### **Erin Meier also provided a resource list:**

American Planning Association. (2005). Food Systems Planning White Paper.

<http://myapa.planning.org/divisions/pdf/foodwhitepaper.pdf>

American Planning Association. (2007). Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning. <http://myapa.planning.org/policyguides/food.htm>

Kloppenborg, J. Jr., Hendrickson, J., & Stevenson, G. W. (1996). Coming in to the foodshed. Agriculture and Human Values, 13:30 (Summer). 33-42.

<http://www.drs.wisc.edu/kloppenborg/publications/1996%20Coming%20In%20To%20The%20Foodshed.pdf>

Why Local Linkages Matter: Findings from the Local Food Economy Study -

<http://sustainableseattle.org/Programs/LFE%20Files/LFE%20REPORT%20FINAL.pdf>

Sustainable Communities: Building Local Foodshed Capacity in Frontenac and Lennox-Addington Counties through improved Farm to Fork Links -

<http://www.frontenaccfdc.com/downloads/Sustainablecommunities.pdf>

Food in the Public Interest: How New York City's Food Policy Holds the Key to Hunger, Health, Jobs and the Environment - <http://www.mbpo.org/uploads/FoodInThePublicInterest.pdf>

San Francisco Foodshed Report =

<http://www.farmland.org/programs/states/ca/Feature%20Stories/San-Francisco-Foodshed-Report.asp>

Local Foods: Estimating Capacity - <http://www.joe.org/joe/2008october/a7p.shtml>

Mapping Potential foodsheds in New York State: A spatial model for evaluating the capacity to localize food production -

[http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FRAF%2FRAF24\\_01%2FS1742170508002457a.pdf&code=0d2857fdca4edd905695a37a3d8fa71f](http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FRAF%2FRAF24_01%2FS1742170508002457a.pdf&code=0d2857fdca4edd905695a37a3d8fa71f)

<[http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FRAF%2FRAF24\\_01%2FS1742170508002457a.pdf&code=0d2857fdca4edd905695a37a3d8fa71f](http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FRAF%2FRAF24_01%2FS1742170508002457a.pdf&code=0d2857fdca4edd905695a37a3d8fa71f)>

The Food System: A stranger to the planning field; CityFarmer

<http://www.cityfarmer.org/foodplan.html>

Community Capitals <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/commcap/7-capitalshandout.pdf>

Community Food Systems Bibliography, 2000,

<http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/CDPP/cfsbib.htm#Applied%20Research>

## **Structure, Role, and Membership**

The Dane County, Wisconsin and the Lane County, Washington Councils have vision statements similar to ours. Some excerpts from their websites may provide useful material for us:

### **Dane County:**

The food council was created to address food system issues in the county, including:

- development of educational programs

- data-gathering

- research projects

- policies for increasing the municipal purchase of local foods

- improving and supporting direct marketing opportunities for local growers

- assisting with the development of local food projects such as the Central Agriculture Food Facility and the public market project

### **What are food councils?**

Food policy councils are established throughout the U.S. and Canada. They can be local (city and/or county) regional, or statewide. They have provided government officials and those interested in food a forum to identify policies that harness the potential of the food system to foster economic development, provide children and those in need with greater access to fresh and nutritious foods, and support stewardship of finite land and water resources.

### **Why a food council in Dane County?**

There was no body in Dane County that could claim to represent food concerns in the unique way that a food council would. The work on institutional buying, local branding, and dealing with food waste effectively was not yet being done by any one group. The council was needed to provide a group that could examine the many ways our food system impacts the county, from the production of food through the food chain to the eventual disposal of food waste.

### **Lane County:**

*To foster community food security and local food system development in Lane County."*

A Food Policy Council is a joint citizen and government advisory body that reviews and recommends policies to strengthen the local food economy and improve access to healthy and nutritious food.

Council members represent the diversity of stakeholders involved in the food

system, including farmers, processors, retailers, anti-hunger organizations, nutritionists, governments and citizens.

### **Goal Areas of the Lane County Food Policy Council**

- Conduct food system assessment and education
- Support a strong local food economy
- Address barriers that reduce access to food
- Ensure quality natural resources for future generations

### **Structure Elements of the Lane County Food Policy Council**

- Diverse stakeholder representation
- 15-25 members
- Community engagement
- Governmental involvement
- Initially supported by local community organizations

### **Activities of the Lane County Food Policy Council**

- Assessment of the local food system and benchmarking over time
- Advising policy makers and the community on supporting a strong food system
- Educating and engaging the community
- Creating partnerships to support projects that strengthen the food system
- Strengthening connections between food system organizations, businesses and individuals

### **Draft Action Plan**