

Community Food Security Coalition
Proposed Community Economic Development (CED) Committee

Minutes

Committee Meeting

July 29, 2008

teleconference meeting

2:00 to 3:00 pm central time

Steering committee members present: Katherine Pigott, Ken Meter, Hannah Laurison, & Kai Siedenburg.

Brahm Ahmadi, Kamyar Enshayan, Rich Pirog, and Kelly Thompson notified the convenor that they were unable to attend.

Guests: Stephen Arellano, Herb Barbolet, JoAnne Berkenkamp, Patty Cantrell, Siena Chrisman, Tim Crosby, Heather Hossie, Joe James, Vicky Karhu, Bill Leland, Teresa Mauer, Clark deSchweinitz, Cindy Torres, Wendy Wasserman, Judy Wicks, & Nella Young.

Meeting convened at 2:04 pm Central time. Meter explained the purposes of the CFSC CED committee: (1) to bring an awareness of economic issues to CFSC, and create ways for an economic approach to strengthen ongoing work of the coalition, notably farm-to-school initiatives, food system assessments, community food programs, farm and food policy, urban agriculture, and international links. (2) to perform outreach and education on local foods as community economic development to food initiatives in Canada (in coordination with Food Secure Canada and other partners) and the U.S.; (3) To produce a “toolkit” of materials useful to economic development officials, civic leaders, community foods initiatives, funders, investors and other allies; (4) provide a vehicle for community economic development practitioners, and CFSC members interested in CED, to network with each other.

The committee is structured with (a) a steering committee, that establishes and works to implement specific strategic priorities, and (b) a more general membership that learns from this activity, and helps inform and influence the process. At this stage, the steering committee may meet on a monthly basis, while general meetings (by teleconference) may happen every three months or so, with face-to-face meetings at the annual CFSC conferences.

This committee is not currently funded, and relies upon volunteer energy from its members. CFSC has expressed tentative interest in this group applying to serve as a formal working committee of the organization. This could create funding opportunities.

Strategic priorities set last year include:

1. Publish two written documents that make the case for local foods as economic development. Distribute these at the CFSC annual meeting in October, 2008, and post on the CED web

site as useful materials for education and outreach. One document would be two pages in length, offering a very concise overview of the topic. The second would be a longer essay with footnotes. Pigott and Meter are taking charge of this effort.

2. Post on a provisional CED website key resource materials, including research papers, case studies of successful local foods initiatives, videos, websites, etc., that community foods initiatives, local governments, foundations, and others could use for reference, outreach and education. Meter has posted an early draft of this.
3. Apply to CFSC for formal recognition of this committee as a committee of the Community Food Security Coalition. Pigott and Meter will co-ordinate this effort, which is expected to be the topic for the members meeting in October.

Minutes of previous meetings are now posted on the committee website:

<http://www.crcworks.org/cedminutes.html> .

A very early DRAFT list of **resources** that help make the case for local foods as economic development has been posted. We welcome suggestions on what else to add to this:

<http://www.crcworks.org/cedresources.html> .

The temporary home page for this CFSC CED committee is:

<http://www.crcworks.org/cfsccd.html> .

It is expected that these internet pages will migrate to the Community Food Security Coalition website, after fully developed.

Introductions:

Most of those on the call had not spoken directly to each other in this context, so a good portion of the time was devoted to getting acquainted.

Stephen Arellano

Ruth Mott Foundation, Flint, Michigan.

Our foundation became involved in food system work through our health program area. Just beginning to explore economic development through food, primarily in the Flint region. We have the cutting-edge land bank in the U.S.

Herb Barbolet

Centre for Sustainable Community Development, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, British Columbia.

The center just changed its name from calling itself the center for community economic development. We have a wealth of food activity in the Vancouver area, but need to link this together. The Centre is active in Local Food First, a network of networks.

JoAnne Berkenkamp

Director of Local Foods Program, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

IATP is coming to recognize the importance of making the economic case for local foods in policy circles. We are out to educate ourselves and contribute what we can.

Patty Cantrell

Michigan Land Use Institute; Kellogg Food & Society Fellow, Traverse City, Michigan.

With MLUI, works on entrepreneurial agriculture and economic development. Would like to create something like a road map showing the processes involved in creating economic development through local foods. This would show what steps need to be taken, and what resources are most useful at each stage. Cantrell would create the backbone for this, and others could contribute their experience. It might be some form of wiki site, at which users could post materials.

Siena Chrisman

World Hunger Year Food System Learning Center, New York, New York.

WHY works mostly in local work in New York City. CED is an important piece of the local foods work. Chrisman is also a member of the CFSC International Links committee, which explores how local economies in the U.S. are connected to food issues abroad.

Tim Crosby

Puget Sound Food Network Coordinator, Northwest Agribusiness Center; Farm and Food Systems Director, Growing Washington.

Works in Puget Sound region on state and regional policy. Successful in enacting a local food “Healthy Kids” initiative, passed by the legislature 137 to 1. Looking to form linkages in the food system, especially state reciprocity agreements that allow products inspected in one state to be sold in another. We’ve done some solid research, and are looking for models that show local foods can work.

Heather Hossie

Just Food, Ottawa, Ontario.

We work on urban and rural agriculture, connecting urban and rural areas, and food access, including opening a food coop in a neighborhood with difficult food access.

Joe James

Columbia, South Carolina.

Worked in economic development since 1970, beginning in Philadelphia, and now in South Carolina. Work with for-profit/nonprofit partnerships on bioenergy, local foods, community development activities. Large African-American population. We have a USDA Community Foods Program grant to strengthen our farmers markets, address health conditions such as obesity. Now adding biodiesel by growing our own seed crops in collaboration with Clemson University.

Vicky Karhu

Executive Director of Muscogee Creek Food Sovereignty Initiative, Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

Works with Muscogee growers. Collaborates with Tribal Council yet an independent nonprofit. For many of our people, family needs come first before they can think of addressing community needs. Still, the tribe wants to make money, and wants new enterprises. What would be most useful would be short, one-page summaries showing success stories.

Bill Leland

Development Director, Center for Agroecology and Food Systems, University of California — Santa Cruz.

CED is important to the Center, and I’ve had some personal experience with the issue.

Teresa Mauer

National Center for Appropriate Technology, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Formerly worked with the Kellogg Foundation on the Grow Montana initiative, now working in a new state. Would like to link the local foods work in Arkansas with the CED committee. Also, there is a new secretary of agriculture in this state, which may provide some opportunities for bringing these issues to the state level.

Ken Meter

President, Crossroads Resource Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Convenor of this committee and co-chair of CFSC CED steering committee.

Involved in local economics work including local food systems since 1971. Began to write about the potential for local foods in the mid-1970s, and very excited to see this movement emerge in recent years. Performs food system assessments, with a focus on the economics of farm and food systems, and has to date completed studies in 39 regions in 19 states, as well as academic articles covering evaluation of farm and food systems. Beginning to get requests from local economic development officials; sees this committee playing a strong role in addressing that demand.

Kathleen Pigott

Manager, Healthy Communities and Policy, Region of Waterloo Public Health, Waterloo, Ontario. Co-chair of CFSC CED steering committee.

Active for 8 years in food system planning. We've formed five neighborhood farmers markets, working to localize food system for the benefit of public health. We launched a Buy Local Buy Fresh campaign, and have tried to inject food planning into the region's growth management strategy.

Clark deSchweinitz

Farm to Table, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Member of governor's task force on local foods.

I work with Pam Roy and Le Adams at Farm to Table, where we work on local food systems and creating supportive infrastructure. I've worked on community development and legal issues, and with farmers markets across the state.

Cindy Torres

Longwood Farmers Market, Boulder, Colorado; Kellogg Food & Society Fellow.

Here to learn about CED to apply these insights to local foods initiatives I am engaged with in the Denver/Boulder area.

Wendy Wasserman

Publisher, Edible Iowa River Valley, Iowa City, Iowa.

I'm interested in food as a point of entrepreneurship for developing independent businesses.

Judy Wicks

Owner, White Dog Café, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; founder of White Dog Community Enterprises, a nonprofit; co-founder of Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE).

Comes to this discussion as an entrepreneur, having founded the White Dog Café many years ago, and then launching White Dog Community Enterprises to build the local food system. Looking for model food-related businesses that can inspire others to create similar firms. I'm also leader of a new task force BALLE has just created covering economic justice.

Nella Young

Public Health Law & Policy, Oakland, California.

Intern at PHLP, working with Hannah Laurison on a food retailing project.

Discussion: what CED resources would be most useful?

As participants introduced themselves, several issues emerged as priority suggestions for the work of the committee:

1. Expand coverage on the CFSC CED resources page. Perhaps move it to more of a “wiki” format, where participants may post their own materials.
2. Cantrell offered to create a “road map” template for a web site that will help community initiatives understand how to set up processes to promote local foods as community economic development.
3. Case studies or videos of successful business initiatives and local food business networks.
4. Fact sheets, case studies, other short publications or videos that document the linkages among issues such as health, exercise, economic development, local wealth retention, welfare costs, etc.
5. Engage in specific planning recommendations for professional planners through the American Planning Association food planning initiative.
6. Outreach and education, and possible professional collaboration, through national economic development organizations.
7. Outreach and education through international organizations, such as the International Economic Development Council.
8. Outreach and education through state Secretaries of Agriculture.
9. Collaboration with food policy councils to build an economic case for local foods.
10. Outreach and education through National Council of State Legislatures website.
11. Outreach and education through Housing and Urban Development, which has existing loan programs offering incentives for home-based businesses.
12. Outreach and education through USDA Rural Development and other channels.
13. Outreach and education through farm organizations.
14. Outreach and education through community development corporations.
15. Outreach and education through SARE and its partners.

Meeting participants forwarded the following materials to the convenor immediately after the teleconference:

Secretaries of Agriculture link [Maurer]. “One way that state departments of agriculture staff share info is this web site. Their next meeting will be in North Dakota in September.”

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

Jersey Fresh [Crosby]. The State of New Jersey made a compelling case for local food as economic development with a study documenting economic benefits of the state’s marketing campaign featuring 18 of the state’s farms. An \$800,000 investment in creating awareness of “Jersey Fresh” foods in 2004 netted \$25.2 million of farm revenue, and \$43.6 million of overall benefits to the state.

<http://foodsystemfactoids.blogspot.com/2008/02/economics-of-buying-local-part-1.html> .

Seattle Food Action Initiative [Crosby]. The Seattle City Council passed a policy framework on April 22, the Local Food Action Initiative, that discusses economic development as a goal. http://www.seattle.gov/council/conlin/#food_initiative .

CBC documentary on food localization [Pigott]. Canadian Broadcast Corporation's National News featured a documentary on food localization efforts in Region of Waterloo that ran Friday, July 25. This was broadcast as part of the CBC's exploration of the wider societal and economic impacts of the rising price of oil. Public Health's "Food Miles" research is featured. http://www.cbc.ca/national/blog/special_feature/running_on_empty/.

Emerging Opportunities

Cantrell discussed the potential for a “wiki” site that would serve as a place for people to post news and resources. She intends to work with this committee to create a “road map” site covering local food as economic development (see above).

Siedenburg discussed the “Healthy Corner Stores Network,” an initiative to intervene with corner stores in inner-city neighborhoods to increase access to fresh foods. This is not necessarily a local economic development strategy but does include efforts to expand the range of WIC benefits. Public health officials have been engaged. Not a great deal of data has been compiled yet, but 80 profiles have been developed.

Laurison described the Public Health & Law Project’s effort to measure the potential economic impacts of a “fresh and easy” initiative by the third-largest food retailer in the world to develop a store format that would offer more fresh foods choices to inner-city consumers. Laurison also outlined an effort within the American Planning Association to publish specific planning recommendations to help implement the local food planning guide.

CFSC annual meeting: CFSC has offered **meeting space to our committee** for a working meeting at the Cherry Hill, NJ, conference. This is likely to be on Tuesday afternoon, October 7, at 4:00 pm. The proposed agenda for this meeting is to create a mission statement and other needed materials for formal application to CFSC for recognition as a committee of the organization. This meeting will also serve as a chance for new people to connect to the committee.

Meter, Pigott and Winona LaDuke will offer a **breakout session** on local foods as economic development at the conference. The schedule for this is not yet clear.

Growing Food and Justice Initiative will feature LaDuke and Meter on local foods as economic development at its annual meeting in Milwaukee, September 19-21.

Next committee meeting: Meter will send out suggested times for the next teleconference in early to mid-September. Agenda for this meeting will be to review drafts of the publications that Meter and Pigott are now writing. CFSC has offered to print these for the conference packet if they are submitted in time.