



## **Executive Session**

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

3pm - 5pm

### I. Welcome and Introductions

Present: Amy Black, Zoe Braunstein, Amy Laura Cahn, Hannah Chatterjee, Katrice Cheaton, Kelly Courts, Alice Dolbin, Jill Fink, Jeff Hornstein, Charles Isaacs, Jasper Jones, Linda Knapp, Nancy Kohn, Cat Lowther, Tamela Luce, Calvin Okunoye, Phyllis Rubin, Elisa Ruse-Esposito, Madeline Smith-Gibbs, Karen Stark, Dwayne Wharton, Sarah Wu, Alex Zaremba

### II. City Council Hearings on Urban Agriculture

After several years of policy and on-the-ground work by FPAC and advocates, City Council passed a resolution in April 2016 to hold hearings on urban agriculture. FPAC's Urban Agriculture Subcommittee met twice to plan for the hearings, thinking through what City Council should know about Philadelphia's long and diverse history of urban agriculture, brainstorming a list of people and groups that should be represented at the hearings, and generating policy asks for Council.

Suggestions from executive session attendees included:

- Comparing Philadelphia's urban agriculture policies to other cities
- Highlighting the importance of food hubs and food processing businesses
- Supporting training and workforce development
- Making a statement on GMOs
- Supporting composting and food waste facilities on city-owned property and reducing regulatory barriers to neighborhood composting
- Supporting cheap, sustainable energy inputs for growing
- Dedicating money from Activities and Capital Funds to gardens and farms; calling on all councilmembers to support urban agriculture projects in their districts
- Addressing long-term land tenure
- Changing procurement policies and encouraging hospitals and other anchor institutions to buy more food locally
- Investing in infrastructure like high tunnels to allow for year-round growing
- Meeting with individual councilmembers or their staff to follow up on the hearings

### III. FPAC Policy Recommendations

FPAC's mission is to facilitate the development of food policy recommendations. In the past, FPAC has shared its recommendations in its Annual Report, with a list of recommendations following each subcommittee section. During the most recent mayoral campaign, FPAC members created [Philadelphia Food Policy Road Map](#), which shares information about Philadelphia's food system, identifies challenges and opportunities, and provides four key recommendations.

Now that FPAC has more policy work under its belt, FPAC staff asked for feedback about how to share recommendations. Specifically, staff asked how FPAC can better target recommendations to relevant audiences, include contextual information as helpful, and follow a timeline and strategy that makes sense for the specific recommendation. For example, a recommendation could be directed at the department responsible for implementing it, could be supplemented with information about the history of the issue and the factors FPAC took into consideration, and could be accompanied by an action plan.

Ideas from the discussion included:

- Hosting education sessions to refresh FPAC members on how policy is made and to introduce members to the budget process
- Relying on subcommittees to inform leadership and staff about opportunities to engage with policymakers
- Preparing recommendations before budget season
- Identifying connections between subcommittees on certain policy issues and coordinating work
- Meeting with Mayor Kenney to present policy recommendations
- Keeping track of completed, in progress, and future recommendations on the website
- Getting media attention for our annual report
- Using PhillyCam and WPEB Community Radio to hold a town hall
- Tailoring format of recommendations to different audiences: for example, an annual report for the general public and an executive summary for policy audiences
- Showing that suggestions are coming from specific constituencies; parsing out which policies affect which people, and making sure those people are at the table

#### IV. Shared Metrics Update

The Shared Metrics project was introduced at FPAC's June general meeting. This project came out of a conversation among food-related nonprofits organizations and funders about developing a way to measure the health of our food system and understand how organizations' work plugs into larger objectives.

Shared Metrics project leaders presented an update of the projects goals and solicited feedback. Suggestions included looking to other federation organizations in the area for inspiration on how to aggregate data in the service of working towards shared goals, and making the project's primary goal about effecting change in the food system.

#### V. Open Session

##### **Restrictive Covenants**

FPAC member Dwayne Wharton brought up the issue of restrictive covenants, clauses in a deed or lease that limit what a new owner can do with the property. Some community groups in Philadelphia are concerned that restrictive covenants are being used by grocery stores that are closing or moving to prevent their competition from using their building, exacerbating low food

access in the city.

Washington, DC, passed an ordinance outlawing restrictive covenants for supermarkets, and some in Philadelphia's City Council are interested in doing the same. Further research is necessary to determine whether such an ordinance would hold up in court, and an alternative would be to restrict business licenses for properties that have restrictive covenants.

The conversation established FPAC interest in exploring this issue and in housing the work in FPAC's Food & Health Subcommittee. Questions going forward include:

- How many properties in Philadelphia currently have restrictive covenants, and where are they? How many recently-shuttered grocery stores might put restrictive covenants in their deeds when they sell?
- Does Philadelphia have the authority to ban restrictive covenants?
- Are either banning restrictive covenants or denying business licenses to properties with restrictive covenants effective ways to prevent abandoned grocery store properties and encourage new supermarket development? What other strategies might achieve the same goals?
- What are the historical parallels with restricting housing? Do we have potential allies in fair housing advocates?

### **Zero Waste Field Trip**

Five members of FPAC's Zero Waste Subcommittee travelled to Washington, DC, in August to learn more about that city's composting infrastructure. The group visited two Community Compost Cooperative Network sites that are managed by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance and DC Parks and Recreation and finished the day with a visit to ECO City Farms in Maryland.

The trip gave attendees valuable insights into both compost bin design and best practices for neighborhood-scale urban composting. These insights will be useful as the Zero Waste Subcommittee moves forward with its compost design competition.

### **Other Announcements**

Food Day is October 16.

On October 19, the Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance and The Food Trust are partnering to host a screening of Food for Change, a documentary film on food, equity, and cooperative development. After discussion, FPAC agreed to join as a co-sponsor for the event.

Submitted by Madeline Smith-Gibbs