

1095 Skagit Steering Committee

Feb. 28, 2013

2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Attendees: Karen Parnell, Debra Lancaster, Felicia Minto-Rodman, Michael Frazier, Carolyn Conner, Rita Ordonez, Serah Delaini, Holly Thompson, Mardi Solomon, Ethan Schaffer

Purpose: Check-in and Planning for 2013 Activities/Grants

- Intros around the table
- Discussion of Community Food Assessment plans for 2013, Holly's role as she transitions away from WSU.
- Discussion of proposed project with Graham – 60 3-minute apps about healthy food preparation, 12 26-minute documentaries.
- Mardi led a discussion of Farm-to-School programs, including Whatcom County current efforts and aspirations. Transportation of local produce, even one day a month, to the schools at a price they can afford is still a challenge. Improvements are needed in ordering, supply, transportation, invoicing - \$ flow. Berries and potatoes are plentiful local crops. It may be possible to increase efficiencies by working across county lines to create or enhance current systems.
  - The Fresh Food in Schools statewide program is headed by Ellen Gray. She and Georgia + Steve Crider wrote a grant proposal last year about some local activities but did not get funded. Backup material is still available in case we want to do something this year.
  - Viva Farms is working on a local distribution center.
  - NABC has a Food Hub project that has made a lot of progress.
  - Some schools in Skagit have successfully used local foods, such as Sedro-Woolley School District and La Conner. United General Hospital has been working at this and may have insights for us.
  - Big question is how to fit within the school bidding process. Discussion around bypassing this process, making it easier for schools to buy local produce within the process, how to facilitate pricing, perhaps for a member organization, or through a geographical preference in procurement.
  - May be able to use the food bank transportation system – most facilities have trucks that are not fully utilized. Also storage.
  - The Food Share Alliance, funded by the Bite of Skagit event, has some \$ available for local produce.
  - May be most effective to focus on one obstacle; something common across Skagit and Whatcom. Pricing? Value? Making it easier for schools to purchase? Preparation?

- Action Team Check-In
  - Need new names. Vegetables were a fun suggestion. Can we do it? Should we? J
  - Action Team A: Increasing existing program usage. (Carolyn, Michael)
    - This is a key focus area for 1095 Skagit again for this year. Summer feeding has a big effect on addressing hunger when institutional support is often inaccessible, so we will continue promoting these programs. The *Feed Your Brain* grant is the kind of activity that really brings youth in. \$5K – we are hoping to work with the Sedro-Woolley library or another facility to encourage this grant to come to Skagit County. Action Team A will have plenty of statistics to share at the quarterly meeting.
    - Volunteer opportunities include describing the WIC opportunities at food banks, encouraging food stamp and EBT use at farmer’s markets. Several existing programs we can promote.
  - Action Team B: Healthy Food Choices within Institutions (Felicia)
    - Meeting to be held before next steering committee meeting. Several people interested in this topic. Collaborating with Whatcom and other farm-to-school programs fit here, as do garden projects.
  - Action Team C: Access to Healthy Food at Home and Play (Serah, Holly)
    - Assessments are the first step to gauging the level of access around our county. WSU is working on a Community Food Assessment. 1095 Skagit will reach out again as that effort progresses. In the meantime, we will organize the available resources and see if we can determine any low-hanging fruit in the existing system regarding access to produce and healthy food choices.
  - Action Team D: Knowledge/Skills for Food Preparation (Graham)
    - Programs include Food \$ense and Skagit Valley College fresh soup meal. Felicia will get with Graham to discuss.
  - Getting ready for quarterly meeting. All teams will have ~10 minutes to describe history, progress, current goals, aspirations, calls for volunteers, program and activity descriptions, etc.
- Meeting again soon!
- Quarterly Meeting at 2 p.m. March 28!