

11/30/2022

Group Meeting Norms

- When you join, please chat-in or say your name.
- State your name before speaking.
- Verbalize messages in chat.
- Speak for yourself only, using “I” statements: “I do not like...” instead of “we do not like...”
- Raise your hand to speak and use your camera when possible.
- Closed Captioning is available through Teams by clicking on More Actions and selecting “Turn on live captions”.
- Meeting notes will be sent in “text only” format at the end of each meeting.

Vision

An equitable, just, and well Baltimore where everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and to thrive.

Goals

1. Increase support of urban agriculture
2. Improve social and community ties
3. Improve quality of life, increased autonomy
4. Reduce food insecurity and malnutrition
5. Sustainable agribusinesses and agricultural innovation

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Ask: review goals/ etc.
3. Farmer Chippy: What is the opportunity?
4. What do we need?
 - a. Who do we have?
 - b. Who is missing?
5. What do we need?
 - a. What do we have?
 - b. What is missing?
6. Feasibility and Relevance
7. The role/ goals/ vision of the LHIC

Meeting Notes

Problem

Farmer burnout/lack of retention

Farmers in Baltimore do not have a voice.

Last 10 years, urban agriculture had no space.

The average farmer only stays in the profession for three years

Funding issues

City resources are less available than state resources.

Government grants and loans are tedious, inaccessible, and highly competitive

- Farmers struggle with obtaining EIN, UEI, and grants.gov login
- Grant writing takes time away from work

DOP/DHCD unfamiliar with specific communities

- RFP without funds doesn't help
- Expression of Interest and partnership is more meaningful

Location, centralization, and competition

Farmers Markets are centralized, usually in wealthy neighborhoods

- People currently need transportation, but still encounter barriers transporting groceries
- Farmers markets need to be in their communities to build engagement and address food deserts

Competition:

Farm Alliance - 10+ years of history in Baltimore City.

- \$165/year to become a member
- Black and brown and minority communities lack representation
- Farmers are still suffering in similar ways to pre-COVID situations
- Competing with existing farmers

When the DOP/DHCD put out an RFP for land, it encourages short-term farms that lack community investment.

Larger food banks tend to focus on processed food high in sodium and sugar rather than fresh produce.

Potential Directions

Improve accessibility of funds

Find financing, land ownership, and technical support for farmers

- Help farmers obtain EIN, UEI, grants.gov login, SNAP and WIC and FMNP certification
- Work within the system to streamline government grant and loan applications
- Build a network of private funders
- Work with the Dept of Agriculture to procure loans and grants that enhance urban agriculture
- Find resources to partner with the USDA to maintain funding

Help Baltimore City move from being a transitional city to one that retains professionals

Work to retain agriculture and urban planning professionals

- Incentivize current urban farms, maintain long-term commitments
- Ensure amenities are available/accessible to all
 - We need to ensure supports are provided to backyard gardeners
- Improve Baltimore as a whole: Clean water, clean air

Use the land we have-- We have the land and vacant communities.

- Grow indoors
- Develop an urban farm in every blighted lot in the urban community

Create a supply chain for farmers

- Encourage large businesses to work with local urban farms
- Grow berries and other in-demand produce here

Support Communities *Food is the central force that connects communities.*

Food grown must benefit the communities it is grown in

- Create/decentralize farmers markets in target communities (schools, senior centers, and community centers)
- Market and build engagement
- Help improve access for older adults (the bus driver from the senior center)
- Food delivery and pickup

Example: Agrihood Baltimore

- 3 farmers markets
- Thriving marketplace
- Building Urban Ag Resource Training Institute

Listen to communities

- Listen to young people, they shape the future of our community
- Include corner boys

Promote Agriculture Education

Bring food science/urban agriculture to elementary curriculum.

STEAM -> STEAAM Education

Provide extracurricular youth education

- Agriculture
- Cooking demonstrations

Nutrition education

Who is doing the work?

Plantation Park Heights

Youth education

- Agriculture
- Cooking demonstrations

Food boxes and soup on Thursday

Food delivery

Attend/host farmers markets

Commercial kitchen

Safe gathering space for the community

Other Cities with Successful Urban Ag Models

Chicago

Detroit

Anti-philanthropy

Who do we need?

Who do we have?

BASF - bringing chemistry education to urban agriculture programs

Food Bank

Nieth is the champion for much of this work

Who is missing?

Pro bono work for grant and compliance supports

What do we need?

What do we have?

What is missing?

Overlap with other groups

American Heart Association: nutrition education

Department of Planning and Civic Works: food box distribution

Food partners: food distribution/education

BCHD and Civic Works: \$25,000 mini-grants for Social Determinants of Health

Next Steps

- Farmer Chippy - Determine role in LHIC workgroup
- Contact Bill from the Department of Agriculture
- Meeting with USDA, Farmer Chippy, and Elise - opportunity for farmers to talk to them as funder
- Workgroup - visit farm on a Thursday