

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Engagement Work Group, Madison Food Policy Council
George Reistad, Food Policy Director, City of Madison

FROM: Martin Bailkey, Chair, MFPC/DCFC Urban Agriculture Work Group

DATE: October 29, 2018

RE: Progress Report and Workplan, Urban Agriculture Work Group

This memorandum is the response of the Urban Agriculture Work Group to the September 5th request by the MFPC Community Engagement Work Group that each MFPC work group submit written answers to questions in six specified areas that together constitute a progress report and current work plan. The Urban Agriculture Work Group's response below was drafted by Chair Martin Bailkey, reviewed by its members, and put into final form and submitted by Bailkey.

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1) Background: What is the general issue you're focused on, or the mission of the group? Why are you working on this? Please include any key materials or documents, e.g. council resolution, handouts, reports, etc.

The Madison Food Policy Council approved the creation of the Urban Agriculture Work Group in November 2017, largely to assume the responsibilities of the city's former Community Gardens Committee. In December, the Dane County Food Council (DCFC), upon hearing of the Work Group, requested that this new body be made into a joint city/county initiative with members from both food policy councils. The request was approved, and the joint body began work in early 2018, broadly focusing on two distinct but related needs:

1. Addressing the specific needs of urban farmers and gardeners in Madison and Dane County.
2. Providing support for and collaboration with the Gardens Network, the collaboration between the city of Madison, Dane County Extension and Community GroundWorks that manages community gardens across Madison and Dane County.

Within these broad needs, the Urban Agriculture Work Group aims to review, assess and, when needed, modify or create policies related to urban agriculture practice. Such policies can address issues of *infrastructure* (such as water availability and access, and hoophouse regulation), *land* (including both access to and tenure over land parcels, and regulatory issues such as zoning), *business* (the direct selling of produce and related issues), and *waste* (the storage and use of organic, food and animal waste products). It is not the intention of the Work Group to provide technical assistance or similar types of support to urban and peri-urban farmers and community

gardeners. It instead aims to be a conduit between urban farmers and community gardeners and local government appropriate to the impact of government on urban and peri-urban food production.

2) Accomplishments

The Urban Agriculture Work Group, as a relatively new body, is undertaking a series of issue explorations throughout 2018, and thus has no singular accomplishments to date. However, due to the significant membership overlap between it and the now-sunsetted MFPC Comprehensive Plan Work Group, the Urban Agriculture Work Group can take indirect credit for the stronger supporting language for market urban farming and community gardens in the new comprehensive plan approved by the Madison Common Council in Summer 2018.

3) Current Projects/Key Issues: What are you actively working on? Do you have a work plan?

During 2018, the Urban Agriculture Work Group has invited to its regular monthly meetings experts in the four issue areas identified internally early in the year:

- February – Land (both access to and tenure over land parcels in city and county). Guests: Greg Rosenberg, former Executive Director, Madison Area Community Land Trust; and Jim Welsh, Groundswell Conservancy.
- March – Waste (the storage and use of organic, food and animal waste products). Guest: Bryan Johnson, City of Madison Recycling Coordinator
- May – Infrastructure I (city regulation of hoopouses). Guests – George Henk, City of Madison Building Inspections; Ed Ruckriegal, Madison Fire Department; and Matt Tucker, Zoning.
- June – Infrastructure II (water availability and access). Guest – Katie Gletty-Syoen, Community GroundWorks/Gardens Network.
- October – Urban Agriculture as a Business (the direct selling of produce and related issues). Guests: Mark Voss, Voss Organics, and Robert Pierce, South Madison Farmers Market.

In June, the Work Group committed to investigating the inconsistent water access and costs charged to Madison community gardens. The group is also investigating a land taxation issue involving a community garden site in Mazomanie. Both the water cost/access and land taxation issues were brought to the Work Group by Gardens Network staff.

In September, after a staff presentation to the full MFPC of the city's Milwaukee Area Special Area Plan, the Work Group committed (with strong MFPC backing) to add supporting recommendations for market farms and community gardens into the final Area Plan consistent with the similar recommendations in the city comprehensive plan.

4) Next Steps: What are your next goals? What is the timeframe for those goals? What does the group expect to need help with in the next 6-12 months?

The Urban Agriculture Work Group currently has several goals for its work into 2019:

- Broker some resolution on the community gardens water cost issue among Madison Water Utility, the Gardens Network, and other players. Joe Mathers, former community garden manager for the Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin, will assist in this.
- Regarding the regulation of market farming in the city of Madison: 1) clarify the still-unclear regulating of temporary hoopouses within the city of Madison, with assistance from Matt Tucker and the Building Inspection Department; and 2) promote the Urban Agriculture Special District option in the zoning ordinance, an option that has been underutilized to date.
- Monitor whether the Work Group's membership – currently made up of appointed members of the MFPC and DCFC – represents an adequate degree of stakeholder representation as seen through the lenses of racial equity and food justice.
- Monitor the city's adherence to the urban agriculture recommendations in the 2018 comprehensive plan, as seen in the Work Group's current efforts around the Milwaukee Street Area Plan.

5) Participants: Please note any Madison Food Policy Council members, city staff, alders, etc. you may be working with, and describe key relationships with community partners.

The current membership of the Urban Agriculture Work Group is split between members of the two local food policy councils:

- Martin Bailkey (Chair), Center for Resilient Cities (MFPC)
- Carl Chenoweth, Dane County Supervisor, District 35 (DCFC)
- Lindsey Day Farnsworth, Center for Integrated Agriculture Systems, UW-Madison (MFPC)
- Nan Fey, former Chair, Community Gardens Committee (MFPC)
- Garrett Peterson, Community GroundWorks (MFPC)
- Karen von Huene, Community GroundWorks (DCFC)
- Bill Warner, Snug Haven Farm (DCFC)

The Work Group is staffed by George Reistad, City of Madison Food Policy Director, and directly connected to the three Common Council members currently serving on the MFPC – Alders Rebecca Kemble (District 18), Arvina Martin (District 11) and Ledell Zellers (District 2). The Work Group is also working with City Zoning Administrator Matt Tucker to clarify and advance the intentions behind the creation of the Urban Agriculture Special District in the city's 2009 zoning ordinance.

The involvement of Community GroundWorks staff and DCFC members ensures that the Work Group provides ongoing support to the Gardens Network. In addition, Marcia Caton Campbell of the Center for Resilient Cities, manager of the Badger Rock Center and its urban farm programing, participates regularly in meetings.

6) Website Presence: What would you like the city's website to say about your work? What materials would you like to be linked there?

The response to Question 1 above can serve as a basic overview of the Work Group for the public. Linked materials can include the Gardens Network homepage (<https://danegardens.net>).

Due to the Work Group's interest in the ongoing implementation of the city's new comprehensive plan, it would be helpful to have a direct link to those sections of the plan document specific to urban agriculture and community gardens, in particular page 97. An alternative would be a link to the entire plan document, with reference to those sections. The final sunset memo of the Comprehensive Plan Work Group (dated September 28, 2018) can also be linked.

Final Imagine Madison Plan Document:

https://imaginemadisonwi.com/sites/imaginemadisonwi.com/files/document/pdf/Combined_Comprensive%20Plan_181004.pdf