



**Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan Open House  
Meeting Notes  
21 February 2018  
City Hall  
4 pm – 6 pm**

**Topic:** Local Food and Agriculture

**Facilitator:** Nan Stager

**Easel/Note Pad:** Sarah Garcia

**Computer notes:** MaCie' Moore

**Number of participants:** 10

### Summary of Interests Discussed

- Indiana University's involvement with Local Food and Agriculture. The university has created more food-related courses, has an increased student interest in food-related issues, more students volunteering, and has made a commitment to donating food, as well as a commitment to food and agriculture related programs like Hinkle Garden, and IU Food Institute
- More local restaurants have begun to compost and purchase locally grown foods
- Increasing number of nonprofit organizations aimed at addressing Bloomington's food insecurity and more have become involved in advocacy activities
- Concerns surrounding Bloomington's food accessibility, members of the group collectively agreed food truck services would be beneficial for food insecure communities
- The City of Bloomington has a heavy dependency on out-of-state food - nearly 90% of Bloomington's food is outsourced; need to create incentive to keep people in Monroe County farming or practicing urban agricultural activities
- Need for more fluidity in Bloomington's zoning codes to allow split purpose properties, and more variety of agricultural activities in urban areas
- More outreach and education initiatives to inform the community of resources and the state of Bloomington's food climate
- Conduct a study of the local food system
- Need for the city of Bloomington to not address food insecurity as a singular issue, rather find solutions to the root causes of food insecurity such as income, public housing, etc.

### Detailed Notes

#### ***What's is going well in Bloomington?***

- The Food Policy Council's Food Policy Statement
  - Endorsed by the County Commission 2 years ago
  - Addresses broad food-related goals for Bloomington residents and the City
- Farmer's markets
- Non-profit food pantries, soup kitchens, and community kitchens
  - Hoosiers Hill Food Bank

- Mother Hubbard's Cupboard
- Pantry 279
- Area 10 Agency on Aging
- Collaboration of Marion County with local non-profit organizations
- More people in the city of Bloomington are gardening
  - More interest in growing fresh foods
  - Increased interest in urban agriculture and owning urban chickens
  - Success at Willie Streeter garden, and various community garden in the city
- Local expertise
  - More people in the community seem to have knowledge of local food and agriculture problems in their community
  - Professionals
- Increase of grocery options that are offering fresh, organic options
- Local restaurants helping the local food community through:
  - Composting
  - Buying locally
  - Donating prepared foods to food banks
- Increased community interest in food advocacy and food distribution
  - local nonprofit addressing food advocacy concerns- Monthly Food and Farms Coalition meetings
- Programs addressing issues of accessibility with Meals on Wheels programs
- Local restaurants composting
- Indiana Universities involvement with local food and agriculture
  - More food-related course being offered at the University
    - more students becoming interested in food-related problems
    - Increase of young volunteers at food-related organizations
  - Indiana University's RPS donation of food to local organizations
  - Hinkle Garden
  - IU Food Institute
- Walnut Grove
  - Offers free food once a month
- Bloomington Permaculture Guild

### ***What is not going well in Bloomington?***

- 90% of the food in Bloomington is outsourced
  - dependency on non-local food
- Agricultural and yard waste
- Increasing amount of food insecurity in the community
- City composting
  - Green Camino is a small pick-up service - needs expansion
- Lack of knowledge surrounding affordability and resources available for urban agriculture
  - Permits, financial resources, workshops
  - Residents don't know where to start
- Lack of farming resources/options for citizens who don't own property (renters)
- City-run community gardens not at capacity
  - awareness problem
- Access - transportation issues
- Location of community gardens
- Regulation of plastic bags – grocery stores
- Leaf and food composting

### ***What changes would you like to see in Bloomington in the next 5 years?***

- Support beekeeping initiatives
- Fluidity of zoning
  - Address issues concerning commercial and business potential on residential land-permitting process
  - Wider range of activities in agricultural zoning, larger lots - permits to allow people to have urban farms
  - Allow food stands in residential areas
  - Allow other animals besides chickens in urban areas
  - Allow electric fences to protect gardens
- Commitment to raising wages, affordable housing, and the other linkages to food insecurity
- Food Hub - a place that acts like a wholesaler for small farmers
- Food truck that takes food to food desert - mobile food services
- Education marketing outreach
  - Target food insecure populations and provide resources
  - Informing community of food-related issues in the community: food insecurity, food deserts, accessibility issues, etc.
- City requirements and/or incentives for new infrastructure to incorporate green spaces
  - Green roofs
  - Rooftop gardens
  - Trees that would attract wildlife
- City should provide incentives for conservation of farm land within Monroe County that have been deemed agricultural land
  - Sycamore Land Trust
- Urban livestock

***What can Bloomington do to move forward to address concerns and to achieve its vision for the future in the next 5 years?***

- Creation of ordinances to support urban gardening and urban livestock
- Require green roofs and green infrastructure for new renovations in Bloomington
- Zoning changes
- Define and name agricultural spaces
  - Community investment
  - Ownership
- Designated agricultural spaces - spot zones
- More mobile food trucks to address accessibility and food insecurity issues
- Be honest and address root causes of what causes food insecurity (income, affordable housing, etc.)
  - Creation of task forces
  - Systematic approach
- New ordinances include what citizens want to see
  - Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)
- A Study of the local Bloomington food system
  - Data
  - Commission a study and/or hire full-time employee devoted to the local food system
- City sponsored leaf and food composting
  - Available to citizens
  - When leaves collected by city, redistribute for composting
- Education targeted at young/college-aged students
  - Cooking classes
  - Healthy food options

- Food and agriculture
- Better utilization of co-op services – increased cooperation
- More collaboration with the city and local organizations
- More engagement and connection with homeless population and community gardens
  - Sense of ownership
  - Homeless communities in exchange for meals
  - Create connection with homeless shelters and community garden and food access
- Compost pickup