



WASHTENAW

COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

HEALTHY. FAIR. AFFORDABLE. SUSTAINABLE.

2019 was an exciting and busy year for the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (WFPC). We received a third year of grant funding from the Michigan Local Food Council Network that will help us to do a Community Food Security Assessment during the winter/spring of 2020 in collaboration with Washtenaw County Health Department and Food Gatherers.

The Washtenaw County Food Policy Council took action on several of the **capacity building initiatives** put into place in 2018 including:

Relationship building with local and state elected officials

UM School of Public Health faculty provided advocacy training to Council Members to prepare for a May 1 Lansing Day visit with Washtenaw County representatives. Council Members met with representatives and staff to advocate for 10 Cents a Meal funding to discuss impacts of 10 Cents on Washtenaw County schools and area farms. An October 15 Lansing Day provided another opportunity to meet elected representatives to share Food Policy Council priorities and further relationship building.

The Food Policy Council also began to engage with City of Ann Arbor staff to support inclusion of food systems language in the upcoming 2020 Master Planning process.

The WFPC envisions that by the end of 2022:

- The WFPC has the **organizational structure to respond rapidly to funding opportunities** and requests for collaboration
- The WFPC is a vibrant group that **regularly advises County Commissioners, the County Board of Health, City Council Members, and other local leaders** on issues affecting our local food system.
- The WFPC is engaged by **state legislators to provide insights on bills** that could impact Washtenaw County.
- County departments are **modeling best practices, such as procuring local food for catered meetings and offering healthy vending** in county buildings.
- Members of the community **know where to go to get help or to get connected to help if they are in need of food or assistance** applying for SNAP benefits.
- **Many new farms are starting each year** and can connect to older farms for mentoring, and **long-standing farms are evolving scale and scope as appropriate.**
- **Local produce is easily accessible** through a variety of retail outlets.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 15** Appointed Members
- 4** Policy Action Teams
- 1,162** Website Visitors
- 17** Average # of Attendees at Council Meetings
- 645** Facebook Page Likes
- 422** Listserv Subscribers

POLICY ACTION TEAMS

Farmers & Institutional Purchasing - Consists of farmers & non-farmers who seek to create a voice for growers through examining policy

Food Access & Nutrition - Works to make healthy food more accessible in Washtenaw County & beyond

Food Waste & Packaging - Develops campaigns around food waste prevention & recovery systems from businesses, institutions, residents & agencies

Planning & Zoning - Examines land use issues around the food system as they relate to zoning & planning ordinances & regulations

2019 Food Policy Council Members

Markell Miller

Chairperson, Emergency Food System, *Director of Community Food Programs, Food Gatherers*

Shannon Brines

Vice-Chairperson, Rural Agriculture, *Brines Farm, University of Michigan School for Environment & Sustainability*

Sharon Sheldon

Secretary, Community Representative, *retired from Washtenaw County Health Department*

Melissa Robinson

Policy Liaison, Food Manufacturer & Distributor, *UM Master of Public Health, Nutritional Sciences*

Noelle Bowman

Waste Management, Sanitarian, *Washtenaw County Health Department*

Alexandrea Somers

Community Representative, *University of Michigan student*

Khadija Wallace

Food Service, *President, Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti U.S. Black Chamber of Commerce; Joyfui Treats Catering*

Kendrin Sonnevile

Nutrition, *Assistant Professor, University of Michigan School of Public Health Department of Nutritional Sciences*

Anikka Van Eyl

Planning, *University of Michigan Master of Urban & Regional Planning, Master of Social Work Candidates*

Elisabeth Vanderpool

Health Care, *Director of Community Health, Saint Joseph Mercy Health System*

Cynthia VanRenterghem

Urban Agriculture, *Executive Director, Growing Hope*

Sue Shink

Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners

Wendy Banka

Food Retail, *Mighty Fine Poultry Processing LLC*

Ann Hubbard

Faith-Based Organization

Angela Smith

Education

2019 Highlight

SNAP RULE CHANGES

The Food Access & Nutrition Policy Action Team submitted comments to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the proposed rulemaking on SNAP requirements and services for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) and the proposed rulemaking on a revision of categorical eligibility in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Our comments emphasized the importance of SNAP in addressing hunger and food insecurity in Washtenaw County and outlined how the proposed rules would harm our community and its residents.

2019 Highlight

PRESERVING LAND FOR SMALL FARMERS

The Farmers & Institutional Purchasing Policy Action Team drafted a letter to the Ann Arbor Greenbelt Advisory Commission during their public comment period with suggestions for how to better include Washtenaw County local food farmers into their program.

Our comments helped the commission connect the public's desire for the development of local food systems to the land needs of small farmers. The commission is now considering ways to adjust the scoring criteria to include small, non-contiguous acreages as these are often the most appropriate for Washtenaw County's local farmers.