Meeting Notes

- Food Policy Council Member Priorities
  - What questions should our economic assessment for the food system ask?
    - Focus on labor and local food.
    - A department of Agriculture or Food (or variation) could have a big impact on DC
    - Tax break that relates to labor and food security
      - Pay businesses to train people on the job = wage subsidy
  - Considering using working group as a focus group
    - Make sure leaving no federal funding untapped
    - How best to leverage philanthropic organizations or startups
  - Labor
    - Get more food service workers involved in working group meetings
    - Long term minority businesses are being gentrified out of city. Look at legislation that can prevent it.
    - Want to get new business owners into working groups and find out how to make navigating startup process easier.

- Priorities for This Coming Year
  - Health
    - How to frame investment in food industry and urban agriculture? Frame it in terms of health (e.g. Obesity epidemic). Educate people about healthy food.
  - Education
    - Education investing at an early age in kids and health/food. “The kitchen community” – Kimball Musk
    - Yearlong educational curriculum – school of food – how to store, maintain & run “misfit economy” book
  - Social Media
    - Social media an option for transparency around food policy and city government
  - Government Efficiency/Accountability
    - Look at how to streamline existing administrative activities in DC government.
    - Look at existing agricultural legislation and help find ways to help them get implemented.
    - Twitter Baltimore contracts – where Baltimore government spends their contracts.
    - ABRA – distribution/import paperwork – where are all the time suckers in this process, how can we examine these processes and streamline the time-sucks?
DC Food Policy Council Meeting Notes

- DC Farmers Market collaboration – the permit process is tough to repeat annually - DCRA, DDOT and DOH. How does the cost of permits affect business owners, farmers, and organizations that run farmers markets?
- Cottage Food Act, Urban Farming Act
- Understanding policies and funding that’s out there and available
- Don’t get too centralized government planning, it’s more important to invest in your talent/staff.
- Assessment of existing regulations and policies is required. Deeper detail is needed.
  - Who can help us gather data? Law students, etc.?
  - What do we want the assessment to get into?

Funding

- Incentives
- Federal money
- Foundation capital

Food Business Incentives

- What type of food businesses are we incentivizing in wards 7 and 8?
  - More effort put into what’s being developed in communities like those.
- Consider the current supermarket tax credit program. Includes healthy corner stores program.
  - Is there a new model that might work better or improve on it?
- Finding ways to make rents and leases more affordable might be more effective.
  - Intersection between real estate and our priorities.
  - Supermarket tax credit is almost impossible to get.
- Need to see how tax abatements or other legislation can be used to level playing field.
- How to make the District a place where employees who work here can live here.
- Need to adjust zoning regulations and see how they incentivize local businesses. Have ongoing dialogue with communities.
- Avoid over regulating and depending on government legislation to mandate change.
- Focus more on organic entrepreneurial approach in communities.
- How many businesses are coops?
  - Coops = employees own equity in a business.
  - Needs to be part of conversation, recognize history of them and the history of DC government support for them.
- “Global shapers” – Locally funded project – could be good resource to us (help w/survey).
- Give tools to business owners to have good community relationships/support a community.
- Take a holistic view of food business opportunity.
DC Food Policy Council Meeting Notes

- Make sure we include people who have tried/failed/accessibility for communities.

  - **Influencing Existing Food Businesses**
    - Need to set straightforward mandates. Put pressure on businesses via consumers to influence businesses to meet demand.
    - Food rules will intersect with zoning laws.
    - Would like to see an award approach to supporting businesses with good missions. Detroit has a Golden Beet Award for food businesses doing good things in the community.
      - Detroit soup model of community engagement
      - Encourage market-led solutions, look at the Every Table restaurant market in Los Angeles, this is 2 locations, with different prices for different income communities, with the more affluent offsetting lower prices in the lower income community

  - **Best Practices** - What are model food businesses in DC?
    - Fresh Farm Markets
    - Busboys and Poets
    - Think Food Group – Chef Andreas’s business has created a pipeline for labor and experience into multiple businesses.
    - Sweetgreen – bringing the healthy fast casual movement to DC and the country as a whole now
      - They’re one of the fastest growing fast casual. They are open to urban agriculture if enough supply can be provided.
    - Cava – great on labor. Good to their workers.
    - Depends on what factors we consider to be important.
    - Glens Garden Market. Business owners who are thinking of the broader community need to be celebrated and championed. More focus on mission driven aspect to businesses.
    - Good Food Market. Accessibility and affordability for the surrounding community needs to be considered.
      - Could survey what life is like in micro-communities.

- **How to Focus Efforts in Coming Year**
  - **Food System Economic Assessment – required by the legislation that set up the Food Policy Council**
    - Funds available on October 1 are operating funds. Generally allocated for economic assessment only.
      - Help clarify scope of this assessment. We should focus on how to make best use of this money.
      - Looking for volunteers to do deeper dive into existing regulations.
  - **Funding** –
    - Government money = fed and local
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- Private = investment
- financial incentives broadly

  How We Do It: Community Outreach and Engagement - Move meetings around to get more voices. Community engagement and feedback from restaurant owners and food service workers.
  - How to review current legislation (need fellows, interns and others).
    - Look at law schools and consider planning schools.
  - Have a way to survey groups that were not successful going through government programs = consultant can do that.

Policies – what legislation is on the books and how to better leverage it and government mechanics (how policies work). – possibly hold focus groups to get more detail