

**4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the  
Cass-Clay Food Systems Advisory Commission  
September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Fargo Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Heidi Durand, Moorhead City Council, Chair  
Arland Rasmussen, Cass County Commission  
Mike Thorstad, West Fargo City Commission  
Jim Aasness, Dilworth City Council  
Mike Williams, Fargo City Commission  
Jessica Arneson, At-Large Member  
Andrea Baumgardner, At-Large Member  
Jon Evert, At-Large Member  
Janet Paul, At-Large Member  
Dana Rieth, At-Large Member

**Members Absent:**

Jenny Mongeau, Clay County Commission

**Others Present:**

Megan Myrdal, Project Coordinator  
Kim Lipetzky, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Gina Nolte, Clay County Public Health/PartnerSHIP4Health  
Rita Ussatis, North Dakota State University Extension  
Aby Gold, Cass-Clay Food Systems Initiative  
Whitney Oxendahl, Cass-Clay Food Systems Initiative  
Adam Altenburg, Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Council of Governments

Chair Durand called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM.

**1(a). Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda**

A motion to approve the order and contents of the overall agenda was made by Ms. Paul and seconded by Mr. Thorstad. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**1(b). Review and Action on Minutes from July 8, 2015**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Aasness and seconded by Mr. Evert. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

**2(a). Fargo-Moorhead Metro Area Community Garden Information**

Ms. Myrdal explained that at the prior Commission meeting in July 2015, there was a request to review available data, including surveys and studies, related to resident interest in community gardens. Ms. Myrdal explained that at the prior meeting, information was reviewed on the Steering Committee's urban agricultural prioritization surveys in which Commissioners and 117 community members had completed surveys to assess what their interest was in regard to various urban agriculture areas. Ms. Myrdal stated that community gardens had been ranked the highest topic to be addressed by both Commission members and the community.

Ms. Myrdal informed the Commission that three available studies had been located that included some measure of previous community garden interest in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area.

Ms. Myrdal stated that the one study was the Active in Moorhead (AIM) Partnership survey completed in 2009. Ms. Myrdal explained that the intent of the study was to determine which types of activities would motivate citizens to become more active. Ms. Myrdal stated that approximately one-fifth of respondents (21.6 percent) stated that community gardening would be a recreational activity that would encourage them to become more active.

Ms. Myrdal explained that a second study to address community gardens was Phase One of the Moorhead River Corridor Study which was completed in 2013. Ms. Myrdal stated that the study asked respondents what types of specific activities they would like to see along the river corridor. Ms. Myrdal explained that there were mixed comments related to vegetation and the focus should be on promoting native species versus community gardening-type activities along the river corridor.

Ms. Myrdal informed the Commission that a third study which addressed community gardening was the Go2030 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fargo. Ms. Myrdal explained that the plan contained information on healthy food and access to healthy food and one of the recommendations that came from that plan was to establish permanent farmers' markets and community garden locations throughout neighborhoods in Fargo.

Ms. Myrdal stated that in conversations with West Fargo, Dilworth, Cass County, and Clay County, there was no currently available data assessing residents' interest in community gardens. Ms. Myrdal explained that of the studies mentioned, none were designed to be a direct measure of gauging specific interest in community gardens.

Mr. Evert stated that he was surprised to learn that the jurisdictions had not previously faced the issue of community gardens before and that it looks to be a new issue to civic leaders. Mr. Evert stated that it would be beneficial to be assertive in engaging with community members and civic leaders to start conversations on evaluating the desire for community gardens and other urban agriculture issues.

## **2(b). Community Garden Blueprint**

Ms. Oxendahl stated that the prior Commission meeting in July 2015, the Steering Committee had walked the Commission through the draft blueprint on community gardens. Ms. Oxendahl explained that the Commission had requested that the Steering Committee go back and check in with additional jurisdictions to see what their expectations were with regard to involvement by city parks departments in community gardening. Ms. Oxendahl informed the Commission that an additional appendix had been added to the community garden blueprint which addresses garden management in regional jurisdictions. Ms. Oxendahl stated that she had contacted Bismarck, ND, Grand Forks, ND, Rochester, MN, and Sioux Falls, SD.

Ms. Oxendahl explained that in Bismarck, the Parks and Recreation Department provides land use, water and hoses, and spring and fall tilling, along with composting dumpsters for two community garden locations. Ms. Oxendahl stated that in Grand Forks, they have an office on-site at their community garden and that the Park District provides spring and fall tilling, water and hoses, and composting, as well as landscaping around the garden's perimeter. Ms. Oxendahl explained that in Rochester, the Parks and Recreation Department administers two community garden sites and that the department provides the land, tilling in the spring, and mowing in the fall – but do not provide water to any of the sites. Ms. Oxendahl informed the Commission that in Sioux Falls, community gardening is a cooperative effort between the Minnehaha County Master Gardeners Club, South Dakota State University Extension, and the Parks Department, with the Parks Department providing the land and the Gardeners Club and Extension providing the tilling, water, and maintenance. Ms.

Oxendahl stated that in conversations with each of the jurisdictions, specific budgets were not normally allocated and that each was seeing a need or open to expanding community gardening activities.

Chair Durand asked whether Bismarck or Grand Forks had given an indication of how much of their general maintenance budget had been set aside for community gardening activities. Ms. Oxendahl answered that the officials she spoke to were uncertain how much community garden activities were costing them but that officials in Grand Forks has indicated that plot fees were able to cover tilling, water, and maintenance. Chair Durand stated that she found it interesting that elected officials in those municipalities would not want to know that information.

Ms. Myrdal informed the Commission that members of the Steering Committee had recently met with officials from Clay County to discuss the community garden blueprint and how the blueprint might be used to inform ordinance changes to recognize community gardening activities within the county. Ms. Myrdal stated that a timeline has already been established to guide that process from 2015 into 2016.

A motion to approve the Community Garden Blueprint was made by Ms. Arneson and seconded by Mr. Aasness. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

### **3(a). Urban Bees Education**

Ms. Myrdal stated that urban beekeeping, also known as hobby beekeeping or backyard beekeeping, is the practice of keeping bee colonies in urban areas. Ms. Myrdal stated that there are a number of reasons communities are choosing to permit bees in urban areas for both economic and environmental reasons.

Ms. Myrdal explained that one of the obvious benefits of urban beekeeping is honey, with residents having a desire to produce their own honey as well as the ability to sell honey to local markets.

Ms. Myrdal stated that an issue that has been receiving greater attention is allowing for urban beekeeping for environmental reasons. Ms. Myrdal explained that bees are pollinators and are the most important insect that transfer pollen to flowers and in-between plants. Ms. Myrdal stated that many crops grown in the Midwest are pollinated by bees including apples, cucumbers, raspberries, squash, and watermelon to name a few.

Ms. Myrdal explained that many urban areas contain a greater biodiversity of plants compared to farmland areas which are characterized by large swaths of single crops, often referred to as monocropping. Ms. Myrdal stated that bees are often better able to thrive in urban areas because of greater biodiversity.

Ms. Myrdal informed the Commission that there is a global concern about the loss in honey bee populations. Ms. Myrdal stated that the number of managed honey bee colonies in the United States has decreased from six million in the 1940's to approximately 2.5 million today. Ms. Myrdal explained that a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a 2014 report which declared that today is a critical time to support honey bee populations since these populations have been in decline for decades. Ms. Myrdal stated that the reason for this sharp decline is not entirely known, although many suspect that colony collapse disorder (CCD) to be the reason, caused a combination of environmental stressors including bacteria, parasites, viruses, agriculture practices, pesticide use, and poor nutrition.

Ms. Myrdal explained that most of the crops that bees pollinate are our most nutritious foods, including fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Ms. Myrdal stated that supporting a healthy bee population is essential to maintaining a local and global food supply, with bee pollination responsible for more than

\$15 billion in increased crop value each year. Ms. Myrdal stated that one mouthful in three in our diets benefits directly or indirectly from honey bee pollination.

Ms. Myrdal explained that one of the greatest concerns with inviting bees into an urban environment is the fear of stinging. Ms. Myrdal shared a resource with the Commission from the Garden Task Force of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) that addresses some of the common concerns that citizens have including different kinds of bees, allergic versus non-allergic reactions, and safety tips on how to reduce risk – including adequate public education.

### **3(b). Urban Bees Blueprint**

Ms. Oxendahl informed the Commission of common issues addressed in local ordinances on urban bees including: number of hives permitted, permit and fee process, hive restrictions, location on the lot, equipment requirements, flyway barriers, sources of fresh water, setback distances, minimum lot size, rooftop considerations, nuisance clause, re-queening aggressive colonies, permitting, educational requirements, penalties, and whether honey or other products may be bought or sold. Ms. Oxendahl stated that none of the jurisdictions in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area address beekeeping, though that since the issue is not addressed in Fargo and Moorhead, bees would not be allowed in those jurisdictions.

Ms. Oxendahl explained the framework for evaluating urban bees including health, economic, and social domains. Ms. Oxendahl explained that health benefits of urban bees include increased access to a nutritious food source, while a concern was allergies to bee stings. Ms. Oxendahl stated that environmental benefits include more fruitful gardens due to increased bee pollination, increased biodiversity, and increased support for dwindling honeybee populations. Ms. Oxendahl explained that economic benefits include furnishing individuals and families with honey, wax, and other useful products, as well as the potential to sell products, while concerns include costs of permitting fees, cost prohibitiveness of equipment for low-income families, and jurisdictional cost of monitoring and addressing issues. Ms. Oxendahl stated that social benefits include increased awareness of the food cycle and connection to agriculture as well as providing a positive family activity, while concerns include the fear of getting stung and nuisances that include occasional stinging when bees feel threatened, swarming, and bees gravitating towards shallow bodies of water.

Ms. Oxendahl provided information from the blueprint on common urban beekeeping concerns including stinging, cost for low-income families, and bees gravitating toward bodies of water. Ms. Oxendahl stated that a handout from the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) accompanying the agenda packet addresses common misconceptions about bee stings and that yellow jackets are the most aggressive and prone to stinging, while honey bees are least likely to attack. Ms. Oxendahl followed-up by stating that a majority of individuals are allergic to yellow jackets, not honey bees. Ms. Oxendahl provided information on solutions for bee sting concerns including public education and requiring a six-foot flyway barrier at hive exits to reduce bee contact with humans. Ms. Oxendahl stated that including funding and management from non-profits to cover startup costs could help low-income families overcome initial cost barriers. Ms. Oxendahl explained that most ordinances require urban beekeepers to provide a water source for their colonies during the non-dormant period to minimize the nuisance to surrounding property owners.

Ms. Oxendahl informed the Commission that two regional jurisdictions currently allow urban bees: Duluth, MN and Grand Forks, ND – while urban bees are not permitted in Bismarck, ND. Ms. Oxendahl stated that urban beekeeping is also allowed in Lincoln, NE and in agricultural districts in Sioux Falls, SD – but not allowed in Mankato, MN or Rochester, MN. Ms. Oxendahl concluded with information on example ordinances from Boston, MA, Duluth, MN, Minneapolis, MN, Salt Lake City, UT, and Littleton, CO.

Mr. Rasmussen asked if honey bees attract other types of bees or stinging insects. Ms. Oxendahl stated that they shouldn't as long as the apiary grounds are cleaned as that may be more likely to attract other bees and stinging insects. Mr. Rasmussen asked what happens if an individual is not maintaining their apiary and who would be responsible for enforcing those types of inspections. Ms. Oxendahl stated that it would depend on the language of the ordinance, with the possibility of animal control or public health departments responsible for inspections. Mr. Rasmussen stated that this may be an issue as West Fargo, Fargo, and Clay County do not have animal control departments and that police may become tied up enforcing urban animal issues. Mr. Rasmussen stated that enforcement entities need to be identified prior to any jurisdiction adopting language allowing urban bees. Chair Durand agreed with this assertion that each jurisdiction would need to determine what option would work best for them.

Mr. Evert asked a clarifying question on whether re-queening can actually modify the behavior of bees of an aggressive colony. Ms. Oxendahl stated that re-queening with a more docile queen will affect and tame the behavior of the rest of the bees of a colony.

Ms. Arneson asked how many bees are in a typical colony. The Steering Committee was unsure of the typical number of bees per colony. Ms. Arneson asked if there was a trend in the number of hives allowed per yard. Ms. Oxendahl stated that the number of hives allowed varies per city but that the number usually doesn't surpass five hives per yard.

Mr. Evert asked whether most bee stings were the result of intrusion or of bees feeling threatened. Ms. Oxendahl answered that this is true. Mr. Evert posited that people's fear may be the reason for many bee stings if they are trying to slap them away instead of ignoring them. Chair Durand and Ms. Myrdal both stated that education will be a huge component of any urban bees ordinance or policy.

Ms. Arneson iterated that she liked the idea of an educational requirement and asked if an entity would be available to help with that. Ms. Gold stated that there are experts that study various pollinators at area universities and that several extension specialists that may be able to assist with education but that a formal system of education or a master beekeeper program does not currently exist in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area. Ms. Gold stated that this may be something to consider when determining the educational component included in an ordinance. Ms. Gold stated that online educational beekeeping programs or programs from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area could prove beneficial. Ms. Gold also explained that beekeepers in the area may also be willing to share their knowledge but would probably not be able to provide a formal education program. Chair Durand posited whether it would be possible to have beekeeping program specialists from Minneapolis-St. Paul provide training programs in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area once or twice a year. Ms. Gold stated that an organization called the Back Yard Beekeepers Association also provides ordinance education and could potentially be a good resource.

Chari Durand expressed that she had a concern with a table in the blueprint that referenced the educational handout accompanying the agenda packet but that the handout was not actually included in the blueprint. Ms. Myrdal stated that the handout addressing common misconceptions about bee stings could be added as an appendix to the blueprint.

Mr. Thorstad asked if buy-in from neighboring property owners was an issue addressed in the urban bees blueprint and, if not, how it could potentially be addressed. Ms. Oxendahl stated that she had not seen any ordinance address buy-in from neighbors for urban bees but that it has been an issue addressed in other urban animal policies. Mr. Rasmussen stated that this could be a potential issue between jurisdictional boundaries, especially between Fargo and West Fargo where the boundaries abut, if one jurisdiction were to allow urban bees and one jurisdiction were not to allow urban bees.

Chair Durand asked whether the blueprint included any information on the lot width or lot depth to determine the number of hives a jurisdiction would allow on a property. Ms. Oxendahl stated that there are lot requirements in each of the ordinances that she reviewed and that the number of hives is usually determined by lot area. Chair Durand posited that there may be circumstances in which small lot size may prohibit a hive on a property. Ms. Gold stated that some of the densest cities in the world have the highest level of urban beekeeping, with cities able to utilize rooftop beekeeping. Chair Durand stated that she had concerns that there may be backlash from individuals that may push to make urban bees a prohibitive activity and that utilizing lot size might allow Moorhead to ease into a pilot urban bees program.

Mr. Evert asked a clarifying question on whether hives for honeybees attract more wasps, hornets, or other types of pollinators. Ms. Oxendahl stated that they shouldn't as long as the apiary grounds are kept clean.

Ms. Arneson asked whether there was any correlating data that showed that urban beekeeping led to an increased number of stings in an area. The Steering Committee was unsure whether there was any data available that showed any type of correlation between urban beekeeping and increased stinging incidents. Chair Durand stated this would be excellent information to have available when discussing urban bees with jurisdictions. Ms. Myrdal explained that most stinging incidents do not come from honey-producing bees but from other pollinators.

Mr. Williams stated that many of the questions that had been raised throughout the discussion were pertinent and that much of the information in the urban bees blueprint, including the example ordinances, would be a great resource for jurisdictions in moving forward with the issue.

Chair Durand asked the Commission whether there were any other concerns with the document and whether any additional information was needed. Ms. Rieth asked a clarifying question about the blueprint referencing a state beekeeping code for North Dakota and whether a similar state code existed for Minnesota and whether it had any provisions which needed to be addressed in the blueprint. Ms. Myrdal stated that she was unsure what Minnesota had in terms of state codes for urban beekeeping and whether it had any application to the blueprint and the jurisdictions referenced. Chair Durand asked the Commission if they would like to see the state codes for both North Dakota and Minnesota added to the blueprint as an appendix. Ms. Myrdal stated the Steering Committee would add state statutes for North Dakota and Minnesota as appendices to the blueprint.

A motion to approve the Urban Bees Blueprint with the changes suggested by the Commission was made by Mr. Evert and seconded by Ms. Arneson. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

#### **4. 2015-2016 Sustainability Plan**

Ms. Myrdal informed the Commission that in July 2015, members of the Steering Committee attended a training session through the Center for Public Health Systems Science at Washington University. Ms. Myrdal explained that the program works with coalitions and initiatives across the United States to help form more sustainable policies and enhanced capacity for sustainability through time. Ms. Myrdal stated that attending the training was part of the requirements expressed by the North Dakota Department of Health in its grant to the Steering Committee for the development of the Commission.

Ms. Myrdal explained that as part of the program, members of the Steering Committee had completed a sustainability assessment report to determine which domains were important for sustainability for the Cass Clay Food Systems Initiative (CCFSI) and the Commission. Ms. Myrdal stated that based on this report, the Steering Committee had identified four domains/objectives to be addressed as part of the CCFSI: funding, communications, program evaluation, and other projects/initiatives. Ms. Myrdal

explained that this became the basis of the 2015-2016 Sustainability Plan for the CCFSI and the Commission and that this plan may help in the development of more formal work plans in the future.

Ms. Myrdal explained that the objective for funding included identifying and securing funding for a staff person by September 2016. Ms. Myrdal stated that the objective for communications included developing and implementing a communication plan on benefits and accomplishments of program efforts of the CCFSI and the Commission. Ms. Myrdal explained that the program evaluation domain included research and updating key indicators from the 2013 Metropolitan Food Systems Plan on an annual basis. Ms. Myrdal stated that other projects and initiatives included the continuation of the development of blueprints.

Ms. Myrdal provided additional information on the 2015-2016 Sustainability Plan including issue identification process, programming elements, structure of the Commission, proposed budget, and information on Commission and Steering Committee members.

Ms. Baumgardner stated that she is happy to see that funding was recognized as an important domain in the plan. Mr. Williams iterated that sustainable funding is very important and that it was good to see the Steering Committee recognize that grants are just one of many potential funding sources and not necessarily the primary source for funding in the future.

A motion to approve the 2015-2016 Sustainability Plan was made by Mr. Rasmussen and seconded by Ms. Baumgardner. The motion was voted on and unanimously approved.

#### **5. Community Orchards Grant Opportunity**

Ms. Lipetzky informed the Commission that, from time to time, funding becomes available for issues such as food access, urban agriculture, farming, and other related topics. Ms. Lipetzky stated that the Steering Committee would share these grant opportunities with the Commission and that one such available opportunity that recently became available was a North Dakota Department of Agriculture community orchards grant. Ms. Lipetzky explained that this grant would be available for communities, schools, and other organizations and that grant amounts ranged from \$500 to \$10,000. Ms. Lipetzky stated that money could be used for trees, fruit-bearing shrubs, planting supplies, soil, irrigation, fencing supplies, and related items. Ms. Lipetzky stated that grant applications were due October 23 and that Commission members were urged to contact the Steering Committee if they knew of anyone who may have interest in applying.

Mr. Williams asked if the community orchards grant opportunity had been shared with City of Fargo planning and engineering officials for potential flood buy-out/flood wall locations along the Red River. Ms. Lipetzky stated that she was in communication with Nicole Crutchfield with the City of Fargo Planning Department.

#### **6. Online Community Input**

Ms. Lipetzky explained that community members who may not be able to attend Commission meetings are able to submit public comments through the City of Fargo Let's Eat Local website. Ms. Lipetzky stated that one public comment had been received between July and August 2015 and that the commenter from Fargo would like to see cottage food laws modified to allow direct sales from home kitchens. Ms. Lipetzky explained that she had spoken with an environmental health official from Fargo Cass Public Health and found that it is a contentious issue throughout the United States. Ms. Lipetzky stated that some states, including Florida and California, have passed laws to allow foods prepared in homes to be sold directly to consumers with certain restrictions. Ms. Lipetzky explained that a future blueprint under consideration looks at the urban agriculture issue of sales and that it is possible that cottage food laws could be researched at that time.

Mr. Evert stated that homemade jams and other items are currently seen at farmers markets and asked whether cottage food laws apply to such items or not. Ms. Lipetzky stated that certain homemade items are allowed as long as they are properly labeled that they were not prepared in a commercial kitchen. Ms. Myrdal stated that there is very specific list of what items are allowed to be prepared in a home kitchen versus what items must be prepared in a commercial kitchen. Mr. Evert asked what home-prepared items the community input request may be referring to. Ms. Lipetzky stated that she could see rules applying to an individual who may want to sell bread directly from their home instead of going through a farmers market. Ms. Lipetzky explained she had researched the cottage food laws in Florida and one of the stipulations of selling directly out of home was a cap of \$15,000 per year without a license.

Mr. Rasmussen stated that an issue several years back was whether churches were able to prepare hotdish items for various functions and asked if cottage food laws were to be changed, would there be any types of inspections and, if so, would public health departments be asking for increased staff. Ms. Lipetzky stated that in speaking with their environmental health official with Fargo Cass Public Health, they would be taking a closer look at the issue when and if it becomes a bigger issue for the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area. Ms. Nolte stated that this issue could be addressed in the urban agriculture blueprint on sales.

Mr. Thorstad stated that there has been a proliferation of food trucks in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area and whether they are subject to inspections. Ms. Lipetzky explained that food trucks are licensed and inspected periodically. Ms. Lipetzky stated that an issue that may need to be looked at is locations where food trucks are able to sell food and potentially how close they may set up to schools.

Mr. Williams stated that a lot of local food at the church he attends, especially apples, goes to waste. Mr. Williams explained that they have been discussing how to give apples and other food away, potentially to local food banks, or using apples to prepare applesauce that could be donated. Mr. Williams asked whether this would be an activity that would be allowable in a church kitchen. Ms. Arneson explained that the Great Plains Food Bank recommends that churches and other community groups donate any raw produce directly to people to take to their homes. Ms. Arneson stated that another possibility would be for churches or community groups to invite would-be recipients to events where items such as applesauce or spaghetti sauce could be given away. Ms. Arneson explained that food pantries cannot accept food prepared in a non-commercial kitchen. Ms. Baumgardner stated that some church kitchens are commercially licensed. Ms. Myrdal added that some food policy councils in the United States have done assessments of their communities of all the commercial kitchens that are available to make citizens aware of where they may access those types of facilities to prepare food that could be donated. Mr. Williams asked whether such an assessment has been done for the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan. Ms. Lipetzky stated that the Steering Committee could help develop a list of commercial kitchens in the area.

## **7. Public Comment Opportunity**

Chair Durand informed the Commission that time would be allotted for public comments.

Chuck Fleming, Local Foods Coordinator for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) State Rural Development Office of North Dakota, informed the Commission that the state is currently working on a master plan for local foods in North Dakota. Mr. Fleming explained that he is tasked with making recommendations on various food systems elements which will need to be addressed in the plan. Mr. Fleming stated that he was interested to see what types of issues the Commission is addressing in the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Area. Mr. Fleming expressed that he would like input



from the Commission not only on general information on food policy councils/commissions but also areas which should be addressed in a state master plan for local foods. Mr. Fleming stated that any advice would be beneficial in the development of a state food council/commission or the development of more local or regional food councils/commissions. Mr. Fleming briefly shared with the Commission different elements he had identified as part of the master local foods plan including: producer development, products, marketing plan, financing, a save our farmstead (SOF) program, processing facilities, a technical assistance program for producers, food safety, soil health, beginning producer resource manual, insurance, and local food councils/commissions.

Mara Solberg of Solberg Farms and Prairie Roots Food Co-op informed the Commission that a group called the American Beekeeping Federation has information and additional ideas as it pertains to urban bees. Ms. Solberg explained that most bees will sting only if they are disturbed for a reason and that they should not be seen as a major concern. Ms. Solberg posited whether the Commission would be interested in a program to plant raspberry bushes in and around the community, the reason being that they are hearty, low-maintenance, and would help promote local eating. Ms. Solberg explained that the new Red River Market in downtown Fargo has been hugely beneficial for the community.

### **8. Commission and Steering Committee Roundtable**

Chair Durand asked for the Commission and the Steering Committee to share any additional updates.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Fleming how he felt his previous work with the North Dakota Department of Agriculture tied in with his current work with the USDA. Mr. Fleming explained that in 2010, he had outlined a vision for local foods to the state Agriculture Commissioner. Mr. Fleming stated that one of the recommendations in the state master plan for local foods that tied into his previous work would be for the governor to sign memoranda of understanding with various agencies for potential state funding of food systems initiatives in the future.

Ms. Nolte responded to a previous concern of Mr. Rasmussen about abutting jurisdictions possibly adopting different positions on urban agriculture. Ms. Nolte explained that it was the Steering Committee's hope that the blueprints being developed for urban agriculture would provide a baseline for each of the jurisdictions so that potential issues would be minimized.

Ms. Gold stated that she wanted to thank Ms. Myrdal in developing a Facebook page for the CCFSI with links to various resources, including the Minnesota Food Charter. Ms. Gold explained that this type of charter could be something for North Dakota to consider in the future and could be one of the recommendations of the state master plan for local foods.

Ms. Oxendahl invited Commission members who had not already done so to come to the Red River Market, held Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in front of US Bank Plaza through the end of October. Ms. Myrdal invited Commission members to check out a new group, Ugly Food of the North, which seeks to further the conversation about food waste on a local, regional, and national level.

### **9. Commission Action Steps**

Ms. Myrdal explained that two events were coming up in North Dakota and Minnesota related to food systems: the Creating a Hunger Free Community Summit would be held in Bismarck, ND on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>; and the Food Access Summit would be held in Duluth, MN November 8<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Myrdal stated that both events would be good opportunities to network with other people working on similar food systems issues. Ms. Myrdal stated that the next Commission meeting would be November 4<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Durand adjourned the meeting at 11:54 AM.