
**Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)
Public Health & Safety Mental Health and Well-
being/Nutrition, Food Security, and Food Safety
BREAK OUT SESSION NOTES**

Meeting Date: 10/7/2020
Meeting Time: 5:20-6
Zoom

AGENDA & NOTES

Moderators: Lori Mathieu, Caroline Dumont & Cynthia Costa

Note Taker/Chat Moderator: Jasper Sha

- Nutrition and Food Safety
- Discussion of Mental Health

- Nutrition and Food Safety
 - Michael Puglisi: Food issues in CT overview.
 - Martha Page: Work underway at regional level that CT participates in that thinks specifically about state level food planning and regional food shed, what do these need to look like to promote equity and a food system for everyone to have access. Can also respond to issues like COVID and hurricane Maria.
 - Not starting at a blank position.
 - CT does not have a food plan, but in the process with Dept of Ag to develop one.
 - Working with other states to develop this.
 - Things do not stop but have started to attract funding at the regional level.
 - USDA planning grant for 6 state group to look at this issue from a regional perspective, informed by each state activities.
 - Beginning stages of the plan but have been worked on for a while. Traction is occurring. Learning from other states.
 - Slide 4 of presentation
 - Lori: Getting into explaining the connection to climate change is important.
 - Martha: The streams of food and climate change have been working in parallel but needs to merge into one subject.
 - Cynthia: Food safety isn't usually talked about in those areas. Regulators think differently. To bring Food Safety to the table is different, but food safety is important on any level.
 - Lori: Covid has caused an interruption. Not all things are available on the shelves at a grocery store. People were scared and hoarding.
 - Michael: Working also on quality aspect of food security and resources. Want to give access to **healthy** food. Can be uprooted by climate change.
 - Martha: Want to look at a regional level because of interruptions (food crisis, energy level costs, etc etc.). Food lines are easily disrupted, want to draw it tighter with a resilient, sustainable food system.
 - Lee Cruz: (Personal Experience) Talked about being at a food distribution (out of 4 in CT). 600 people in line. People are not all in the know about access or afraid to show up at public events or activities (undocumented people). Attempting to bring food to the homes of people who are afraid to go. **One thing found is lack of a directory within directories.** No one had a page of where to go to for food.
 - Michael-discussed how many people showed up to a food resource. Poll indicated people knew that was the only resource to go to (not great information distribution)
 - Martha: A lot of pantries are staffed by volunteers (elderly), but when COVID hit, they had to close.
 - Lee: There needs to be a directory available about details of different food resources to be updated.
 - Lori: Suggested to Lee to add his suggestions. Recognize that what we do may not be good enough and we need the input to make it better.

- Lee: Suggestion. Alicia Santilly- Community Alliance for Research, Food Security in New Haven in 2017. They have data and community people who are fellows working with grad students and are out in the neighborhood and learning, also strong community presence to deliver information out when needed. (inserted into Chat)

Discussion of Mental Health

- Slide 6. Caroline Dumont: Emphasize the conversation and thank everyone.
 - Works at CT Mental Health center, public hospital.
 - Clients are impacted by food insecurity and a topic that needs addressing in that population.
 - COVID has cut back on ability to find meals in the community.
 - Opens up for discussion.
- Sarah Lowe: Information seeking recommendation.
 - Working with Katie to see what CT is doing in disaster associated with mental health.
 - Want to know more about what people in Public Health are doing.
 - Jeri Weiss: Vermont has some experience from hurricane Irene. Shocked by mental health impact by that disaster. Good place for lessons learned for approaches.
 - Lori: These storms on top of COVID along food security, the anxiety and emotional exhaustion along with the difficulties that come along these issues. People are probably struggling and not seeking ways to address it. A lot worse if in a vulnerable population.
 - More examples from people of trauma amongst different populations and the important of mental health professionals and addressing those traumas. Those educations are difficult to communicate.
 - Sarah: Research on trauma going into an experience and the risks and how they recover.
 - Lee Cruz: Alice Forester, Mental Health Clinic. Research on trauma in children. Clifford Biers (Sp) clinic. Discussion on not just how to take care of the kids, but also yourself in the process.
 - Suzi Ruhl: Federal Interagency Working group on Env. Justice has a natural disaster subcommittee looking at full range of impacts on low income populations and flaws in the government acknowledging that. Report coming out soon. Knowledge from this break out group can go into that. Offer up connection to that group for Caroline and Sarah
 - Katie Ebinger: working on capacity to mental health team, more resource needed in CT mental health structure and how to supplement it based on other states. More recommendations and best practices.
 - Anthony Allen: Talk about how to address the systems that we have now so we can get ahead of climate change/disaster issues as they come about. Talk about localization, investing in controlled environment agriculture, connection between rural farm capacity, city space capacity for use. Also, instead of just looking at shoring up systems, but a huge argument for finding leaders in food sovereignty movement to build food security from the grass roots and within the community instead of delivering food into community. (Self production).
 - Urban areas have potential for green infrastructure. Can be more than just environmental benefits, but also a source of food. Ex: edible rain gardens in urban communities.
 - Lori: Urban revitalization is a great thing. Ex: Philadelphia made small infrastructure improvements. Look at areas of blight and build community

garden, hire the people in community to work in them. Can solve issues while invest in urban agricultural environment.

- Local is a good thing to add for recommendations.
 - Michael: Good to bring into conversation for connecting the work.
 - Anthony: Capacity for this work within the communities. Just address who is controlling resources in the community. Look at setting up new funding channels but also how do you provide awareness of opportunity and match with funds that are not burdensome.
 - Tendency to come up with solution and do it in every community but should do things a bit different. Let communities solve their problems.
 - Caroline: This also helps with mental health, gets community to get out and have a sense of agency. Connects disenfranchised communities.
 - Angel Serrano: Mental health. Look at the system and how it works because of times in disaster, those prone to breakdowns are those who have mental conditions.
 - Need to be services in place to serve those people. Examples were given.
 - Health care system requires you to be responsible, but those who are having mental problems are the least capable of being responsible.
 - Caroline agrees that there needs to be a shoring up of collaborations. Without good mental health care access, cant react well to state of crisis.
 - Plans need to be in place during disasters to help those who are having issues.
 - Suzi Ruhl: In addition to mental health issues connecting to food, but diabetes is also something to look at (healthy food access, mental health).
 - Can we think from a patient approach that affects all this to food security, climate change, etc. Lots of work to be done and bringing people together.
 - Lori: During crisis, food pricing and access got out of control.
 - Caroline discusses about how to get access or addressing some of these issues.
 - Angel Serrano: Needs life coaches to help them through the issues.
 - Lori: add access to care for the recommendation. Making sure people are okay.
 - Caroline: EEJ had good feedback and get put into mental health access. Focus of community out reach and case managers, there is focus on communities on marginalized groups that need extra attention.
 - Bud McAllister: part of GC3 and opioid task force. Unite Us group. Connecting farmers and communities for food delivery to homes.
 - Lori: Suggesting other groups can be helpful and other resources into the chat. Email links to provide comments.
- End of Breakout Session.

Chat Record

17:54:46 From Lee Cruz : Connect with Alycia Santilli, Community Alliance for Research and Engagement at Southern CT State University for info about collecting and distributing info about access to food at a city and neighborhood level.

17:54:52 From Martha Page : Need to sign off to attend another meeting...thanks for a good session!

17:55:32 From Michael Puglisi : Thanks, Martha!

18:03:33 From Susan Hibbard : I joined this breakout session because it's the area I know the least about, and you've opened my eyes to a lot of issues that Stonington hasn't even thought about. Thanks to all!

18:04:08 From Anthony Allen : I would like to pick up on what Sarah and Lee were talking about, and talk more about what we can be investing in both mental health and food security/access to get ahead of these problems instead of mostly discussing our response to

the damage they cause.

18:09:52 From Michael Puglisi : I apologize, I have to head out, but I agree with boosting local options and connecting those organizations through key stakeholders in the communities

18:10:04 From Michael Puglisi : thank you, Lee and Anthony, for your comments

18:10:14 From Cynthia Costa : Thank you for your presentation, Mike!

18:16:02 From Lee Cruz : check out www.chathamssquare.ning.com to see how one community is self organizing for physical and mental health. Note the multilanguage access.

18:16:20 From Anthony Allen : Examples of organizations working on food sovereignty, security, and nutrition in New Haven: LoveFed New Haven, Gather New Haven, Haven's Harvest, Semilla Collective

18:20:41 From Anthony Allen : Have to run, thanks everyone!

18:22:32 From Lee Cruz : "Gather New Haven" has a great, tested model for working with low income families where there are adults and children with diabetes.

18:24:39 From Jasper Sha to Lori Mathieu(Privately) : Theres a chance I may lose power at the tail end of this. Storm is building up hard.

18:28:52 From Bud McAllister : Unite Us

18:29:23 From Bud McAllister : Findhorn The New Story Hub

18:29:49 From Bud McAllister : thegreengazetteblog.com

18:30:11 From Doris Johnson : Thank you great dialogue

18:30:23 From Bud McAllister : Partners in Healthy Communities

18:30:41 From Bud McAllister : Practice Green Health

18:30:57 From Jeri Weiss : thank you Lori and all - an interesting discussion

NOTE: Identify if slides or presentations are available on GC3 web page: www.ct.gov/deep/gc3