

The Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative Winneshiek County Planning Team met on March 18, 2009 at the Luther College Library at 4 pm.

SHARING: During introductions and sharing the following question was asked: *What have you appreciated the most from the County Planning Team experience and what is one thing you have learned from these meetings?*

- ❖ New discussions about important issues that impact all of us
- ❖ Public awareness and engaging children
- ❖ It's nice to have one group that ties everything together – food, fitness, infrastructure
- ❖ It's a great collaborative effort with a variety of different people with different backgrounds
- ❖ For someone new to the community – it's great to see the openness of the group
- ❖ It's amazing to see that people can plan for 2 years!
- ❖ It's an opportunity to meet new people
- ❖ It's exciting to look forward to projects that will happen

Brenda Ranum shared with the group results from the \$10,000 mini producer grants that were given out when the process first began. Many producers received only a couple hundred dollars, but these determined individuals began planting food and greenhouses resulting in about \$744,000 worth of infrastructure with that seed money. For example, 3 of 6 acres of land at Plant Peddler was converted to food production just six months after they got connected with FFI.

Ranum also encouraged the entire group to visit the website, blogging is now available.

REGIONAL TEAM: Instead of making a full report at the meeting, the regional team will now hand out a one-page summary of their meeting notes to the FFI group. Notes can be found on the website, www.iowafoodandfitness.org under the “county planning teams” tab.

Ranum briefly went over the Plan of Work and Timeline sheet, that entire form is also located at www.iowafoodandfitness.org under the “county planning teams” tab. She noted that we are definitely on the right track. We've been encouraged to continue all of our community involvement – that's something we're a leader at in comparison to the other Kellogg communities.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

The group discussed policy change. It was mentioned that we need to continue to ask questions to determine what the needs are on the local level. From there we need to identify what change we'd like to see happen. And also determine what the predicted outcomes will be. We reviewed a form called Strategies, Tactics & Policy Targets which is located at www.iowafoodandfitness.org under the “county planning teams” tab.

RFA's:

EVERYONE was encouraged to submit a “Request for Activity.” Even if it's something that may only impact a small amount of people, it might still be a process that could be replicated in other communities or businesses. That form is now posted on the web site.

Youth Group:

Hannah Ranum reported in on what the youth group has been up to. Previously, they took surveys at high school basketball games and found that people would be willing to pay a little extra for healthier options. They talked to the booster club and they are receptive but no major actions have been taken yet. H.Ranum added posters have been hung up in the hallways with health-related messages. For example, how much sugar is in one can of pop. During study hall breaks, the upper classmen also visit the elementary students and teach them about choosing healthy foods, food facts etc.

Ann Mansfield said the youth concept is definitely catching on. Almost all the districts in the region are doing something to promote these topics in the schools. On April 1 a youth conference will be held at the Decorah Lutheran Church. The Director of the Iowa Games will be the main speaker – 90 kids are already signed up for the event!

How often to meet:

It was the general consensus of the group that it would be best for FFI meetings to take place once a month. That would be the best way for people to stay plugged in to what's going on.

Mini Grants:

Ranum said that the dollar amount for the mini grants has not yet been determined. Kellogg has lost money due to economic times, about 24%. But FFI group wants to stay positive. Eric Nordschow said at another meeting, "In hard times, there are opportunities." Ranum will let everyone know as soon as the information becomes available, as to how much Northeast Iowa can hope to receive.

A couple ideas came up as to how the money could be spent:

- Playground equipment along the trails
- Walking clubs could be formed and promoted
- Brochures should be made promoting FREE family "active" activities
- Come up with a way to get people to put their energy (typically burned off on a treadmill) toward a good use that benefits the community. Work out and work at the same time.

CONCLUSION: Krista ended the meeting with a special reminder to check out FFI website often – there's tons of great information for everyone to read.