

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative
Winneshiek County Planning Team
November 19, 2008
Decorah City Hall
Meeting Minutes

PRESENT: Brenda Balk, Donella Darrington, Rick Edwards, Lindsay Erdman, Tom Beard, Joann Hagen, Jeanett Hansen, Bill Ibanez, Elizabeth Kane, Georgie Klevar, Jenn Kuehner, Janet Lambert, Karen Kerndt, Angie Kerndt, Lyle Luzum, Sue Luzum, Julie Metcalf-Cull, Alma Meyer, Lyle Otte, Janelle Pavlovec, Liz Rog, Krista Vanden Brink.

SHARING: During introductions and sharing the following question was asked: *Since the last meeting, share a person or an organization you shared information about the NE Iowa FFI with.*

- ❖ Storks Nest
- ❖ Winneshiek County Community Foundation
- ❖ New Seed Savers Director
- ❖ Numerous departments at NICC
- ❖ Historic Preservation Committee
- ❖ Friends & family
- ❖ South Winn School district staff
- ❖ Inter-agency meetings
- ❖ Vennehjem
- ❖ Clergy at First Lutheran Church

REGIONAL TEAM: Team member, Rick Edwards said the group is advancing and they are now working on their core values. Individual teams have made the following progress:

Youth Team – working hard to form youth teams at each of the 18 school districts.

Communications Team – trying to figure out the best method of ‘how’ to communicate what this group is doing to the public.

Built Environment Team – currently they’re taking inventory of all indoor/outdoor activities available throughout Winneshiek County.

Community Health – working on a needs assessment.

Inclusive Team – two people resigned as interpreters. These funds will be reallocated for outreach in Postville.

NIFF Coalition – focus is now on supply side and finding ways to produce more food locally.

School Engagement Team – more people are coming to the table to share ideas – people from food service, administrators, PE teachers etc.

Human & Finance Team – upcoming event in December will bring together the 5 county community foundations to share ideas.

As a group the regional team has determined three major strategies supported with tactics and activities for each. They include:

- 1) Ensure that school district policies & practices support healthy living of children, families and community members
- 2) Ensure that local, health-promoting food is available and affordable in all communities, neighborhoods and institutions
- 3) Ensure that communities have a built environment that supports abundant opportunities for physical activity and play

Group Discussion: Referring to the list above, what “activities” come to mind to make these things happen?

- Community garden for schools
- Forming purchasing relationships between producers and schools
- Subsidize cost of school lunches so they can include fresh, local foods
- Fundraiser to sell local foods (not candy bars)
- PE classes teach students to utilize local trail systems
- Use school’s food preparation staff during summer months to preserve fresh foods which can then be served during the ‘off season’
- Additional PE time at school: healthy bodies = healthy minds
- Teach students how to prepare fresh, healthy meals in home economics class
- Demonstration vegetable farm
- Keep the media informed of all that F&F is doing
- Make physical activities available all times during the year
- Additional open-gyms or new fitness center for people of all ages & budgets
- Provide non-competitive activities so everyone can be involved
- Swimming pool available all year long

Discussion in all 5 counties will continue to answer this question. By the next meeting Rick Edwards informed us that one combined list will be available. In the mean time Krista advised us to e-mail any additional ideas to our regional team leaders.

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. The website is: <http://www.iowafoodandfitness.org/>. She also noted an upcoming program called “Live Healthy Iowa.” More information will be available soon. There will not be a meeting held in December.

Notes by Lindsay Erdman:

Str.#1: T-1: Field Trips that relate school activity to Local Growers to help connect with the local opportunities available. Examples: Seed Savers, Plant Peddler.

Community Gardens and the possibilities of Hydroponic (sp) for more year round activities. Successive class projects that build each year on what previous classes have learned/done in this (Farm- to School) regard. In other words build a knowledge model and create an expectation in the youth by making it a progressive thing as each year new students repeat the experience, but benefit from how past students have experienced the class.

T-2 or 3: Question was asked if Kellogg funds could be used to offset the Vending Machine income in some way to discourage unhealthy vending machine choices and help overcome the income generated by vending machines that is an income source for the schools.

T-4: Provide a classroom activity that includes the outdoors. Example was a trail tour as it might be related to a class topic, perhaps even as a PE credit as has been mentioned before in the Winn Co Cons idea.

Initiate winter PE activities - example snowshoing.

Str #2: T-1: The group sort of related this back again to the school opportunity for new communication of the message as an option and really didn't get much more into the topic.

T-2 & T-3: School processing to expand the use of local foods beyond the growing season. This started as an individual school by school activity, but I think it evolved into more of "is there an area-wide opportunity for processing and storage for winter use by schools?"

A question was raised "Is the Clayton Mines Area a potential option for a dry storage site?" Think Community Root Cellar idea.

Str #3: T-1: Regional Team focus was on new Developers including sidewalks. Based on the size and rate of growth/change in most area communities it seemed that there needed to be a more direct way to initiate sidewalk/biking improvements or the rate and degree of change will not be significant enough to make a difference. (not saying the developments shouldn't play a part too). For this reason some model of acceptable financing needs to be developed. This may be a combination of local funds, property owner participation, and grant or outside funds. To be sustainable tho the more local the better to not allow the solution to die if outside funding dries up. First step in this may be the mapping to identify the extent of the need.

Promote shoveling as a winter activity to offset the argument of shoveling versus sidewalks. (Or, as was just in the Cedar Rapids news - initiate a volunteer or reduced cost shoveling program to eliminate this as an argument against sidewalk construction - perhaps similar to fall raking and cleanup projects.

Safe walking will include lighting improvements in some cases. We, Decorah, seem to have more interest in lighting that would lead me to believe that walking is on increase.

Improve/expand/create/link Park and Rec type programs especially in areas where those programs don't exist.

Sponsor more winter activities. Emphasize the trails to take full advantage infrastructure already in place. Promote snowshoeing, skating, skiing, etc.