

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

KARA HAHN
MAJORITY LEADER
LEGISLATOR, FIFTH DISTRICT
MAJORITY LEADER
COMMITTEE CHAIR
ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING
& AGRICULTURE



VICE-CHAIR
PARKS & RECREATION
MEMBER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION & INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS,
PERSONNEL & HOUSING
PUBLIC SAFETY

COUNTY LEGISLATURE

**TO: Members of the Food Policy Council:
All interested parties**

FROM: Honorable Kara Hahn

DATE: August 9, 2016

RE: Food Policy Council 2016 Public Hearing Agenda

I. Introductions

- Augie Ruckdeschel (Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning)*
- Zach Baum (Office of Legislator Kara Hahn)
- Joel Panagakos (J Kings)*
- Zahrine Bajwa (Cornell Cooperative Extension)*
- Nikki Kateman (UFCW Local 338)*
- Diane Shulman (Jerry Schulman Produce)*
- Patricia Gremillion-Burdge (Western Suffolk BOCES)
- Emily Mancini (Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning)
- Janet Sklar (Former School District Administrator)*
- Jennifer Young (Sustainable Long Island)
- Erika Hill (Sustainable Long Island)
- Gemma Saylor (Long Island Nutrition)
- Cara Montesano (Stony Brook Medicine)
- Michele Gervat (American Heart Association)
- Stephen Kramarcik (Suffolk County Department of Social Services)*
- Michael Haynes (Long Island Cares)*

*Indicated Member

II. Public Hearing: Comments from the Public

- **Patty Gremillion-Burdge:** We are looking to see how we can partner with the Food Policy Council and other councilmembers to meet our objective of access to healthy affordable food, healthy food in retailers, & fitness. Working in a number of locations including the Shinnecock Reservation, Central Islip, Brentwood, Wyandanch, & Roosevelt.
- **Gemma Saylor:** I live on the North Shore. I've noticed an increasing number of days with swimming warnings due to storm runoff. How much more can be done in terms of what we're using to grow our food & crops? I have concerns about pesticides ending up in waterways.
- **Zahrine Bajwa:** Cornell has a Stormwater Management Program. Anytime you'd like some more information you can check out our website (<http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/stormwater/home.aspx>). Federally funded grants and county funded grants are being utilized to address this issue.
- **Janet Sklar:** I heard about a start-up company using solar energy to destroy pathogens in runoff in a recent New York Times article.
- **Augie Ruckdeschel:** Part of Stormwater Management Program is evaluating animal waste. It's mitigating any type of negative influence into our ground and surface water. We don't have a lot of livestock agriculture. Most of it is pet or wildlife based.
- **Janet Sklar:** Waste products from most herbivores could be used as fertilizer.
- **Augie Ruckdeschel:** There is actually a summit this afternoon on food waste hosted by the NYSDEC at Stony Brook University.

In order to reduce pesticide runoff and nitrogen leaching, Suffolk County funds the Agricultural Stewardship Program does a lot of field trials with local farmers. For example, they field test controlled release fertilizers. Sweet Corn & potatoes are among the crops used for these trials. The goal is to maximize the absorption of nitrogen by plants rather than it running off into our ground and surface waters. The program also does a lot of mating disruption work to prevent the proliferation of insect pests and reduce the need for fertilizer. Currently, the County is partnering with the Soil & Water Conservation District, NYSDEC, Peconic Estuary Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and other stakeholders to apply for a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant from the USDA-NRCS. We are seeking grant funding for Nutrition Management Plans & Integrative Pesticide Management Plans on farms. This is part of the County Executive's "Reclaim our Water" initiative.

III. Subcommittee Updates:

- **Community Gardens**
 - o No update at this time.
- **Food Education**
 - o Working with the Brentwood School District. Hosting a Smarter Lunchroom Training for their staff. This is a USDA approved training. One of the policies that it tries to implement is not having unhealthier options on display (ex. chocolate milk) and instead the student has to request it. The training will be on November 8th and if anybody knows a school nutrition administrator that is interested they may reach out to Zahrine (zb12@cornell.edu)
- **Food Equity**
 - o There is a new healthy corner store in Southampton. The committee has tried very hard to find a store in Brentwood/Central Islip but so far there hasn't been a receptive storeowner. Perhaps Huntington Station could be a good site. They reached out to Legislator Martinez and will continue to work with her to identify a location in Central Islip/Brentwood.
 - o Joel states that one problem he has encountered is reluctance by stores to do a big display. He thinks we need to go in with a sales plan for them so it looks attractive and alluring for the customers. Janet said that companies will often give retailers displays to use such a tiered rack with baskets.
 - o Zahrine said that she's developing a red/yellow/green light system for snacks to give people an indication of what is healthy.
 - o Janet said that translating signage to other languages is an important component.
- **Why Buy Local?**
 - o Grown on Long Island Day was held Friday, August 5th. It was well attended. Steady flow of people all day. There was a seafood throw down. Two celebrity chefs who are sisters and competed on reality TV shows. County Executive was there with his two daughters. The event highlighted local fisherman and farmers.
 - o Island to Table was held in downtown Patchogue and featured local produce. It included six courses. A lot of farms were involved including Lenny Bruno Farms, Satur Farms, Koppert Cress, Feisty Acres, Davis Peach Farm, Catapano Dairy Farm, and 8 Hands Farm. Nearly all ingredients were sourced locally. Fish was provided by fishermen from the port of Shinnecock.
 - We still don't have a meat processor locally. County currently has an RFP for an entity to utilize the facility at the Suffolk County Farm for meat processing. Deadline is in September.
 - Diane Schulman said she knows a farmer in Riverhead who is raising and slaughtering pigs, goats, and other livestock. He might be interested in the meat processing facility.

- Freedom Fest Taste of Long Island will take place on October 30th following the Suffolk County Marathon. Will highlight local farmers, restaurants. Will be held in downtown Patchogue. A lot of vendor opportunities for local businesses to participate.
 - <http://www.suffolkmarathon.com/Events/TasteOfLongIsland.aspx>

IV. Announcements

- **Janet Sklar:** This week is National Farmers Market Week:
<https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/programs/national-farmers-market-week/>
- **Augie Ruckdeschel:** Cornell has a great calendar of farmer’s markets across Suffolk County.
<http://ccesuffolk.org/nutrition-and-health/farmers-markets-in-suffolk-county>
- **Michael Haynes:** September is Hunger Action Month. People are encouraged to connect with local food banks. Long Island Cares will have an activity calendar on their website (<http://www.licares.org/>).
 - More information about Hunger Action Month:
<http://www.feedingamerica.org/take-action/campaigns/hunger-action-month.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

V. Next Meeting

- a. October 11th - NEW LOCATION: Mattituck High School

VI. Adjournment

