

**MEETING MINUTES**

Under the provisions of G.L. c. 30A, MetroWest Moves conducted an Open Meeting on  
Wednesday, October 28, 2015

9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Hudson Town Hall  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room B  
78 Main Street  
Hudson, MA 01749

**I. Call to Order**

- a. **Meeting convened:** October 28, 2015 at 9:30 a.m.
- b. **Members present:** Cathleen Liberty, Sam Wong
- c. **Others in attendance:** Andrea Freeman (MPHA), Melissa Green (Safe Routes to School), Janie Hynson (MetroWest Moves Coordinator), Nicole Isabelle (Marlborough PHN), Barry Keppard (MAPC), Laurie Pardee (Northborough Nurse/Health Leader)

**II. Materials Distributed:**

- MetroWest Moves 2015-2016 Work Plan Factsheet
- Project updates sheet (10/25/2015)
- Healthy Dining Initiative restaurant recruitment flyer, healthy dining tips sheet, and restaurant inspection checklist
- Discussion questions adapted from Mass in Motion Health Equity Assessment and developed by Culture InSight and Levels of Community Engagement table
- Act FRESH Campaign materials

**III. Work Plan and Community Updates**

a. **Today's Work Plan Focus - Safe Routes to School (SRTS):**

- **Hudson:** The Coordinator and Melissa Green (SRTS) have been working with Jodi Fortuna (Hudson Superintendent) and Lee Waingortin (Director of Nursing) to increase SRTS activities in Hudson. Dr. Fortuna asked that we focus on Farley Elementary and Quinn Middle School this year, particularly due to traffic congestion concerns at these schools. We met with the principals at both schools. As a result of these meetings, Farley started Walking Wednesdays this fall and a traffic observation event was held at Quinn Middle School in October. Jason Webster (Quinn principal), school staff, parents, police, Lee Waingortin, Melissa Green, and the Coordinator attended. Safety concerns were identified during the traffic observation and will be submitted to the Superintendent and Hudson Traffic Committee. Another traffic observation event will be conducted during the winter months. Melissa Green and the



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# MetroWest Moves



Coordinator will be continuing to meet with the Farley Principal and staff and working on formalizing Walking School Bus routes this winter to be implemented in the Spring. Both Farley and Quinn have been very receptive and interested in increasing participation in SRTS.

- **Framingham:** A meeting is scheduled with the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School principal and Wellness Committee for 11/19 with the goal of implementing a Walking School Bus at the school.
- **Northborough:** The Zeh School is very active with SRTS and Melissa Green also met with the Proctor principal. More details are included in the project updates sheet. Laurie Pardee attended this meeting and the Coordinator and Melissa Green are scheduled to meet with Laurie Pardee and the Northborough Wellness Committee.
- **Marlborough:** The Coordinator and Melissa Green are working to engage with Martin Levins and support the Marlborough Wellness Committee work with SRTS. Marlborough BOH and municipal staff are interested in being involved with these activities. Cathleen Liberty suggested that we also connect with Mary Zakrzewski (Director of School Nurses in Marlborough) and Superintendent Richard Langlois.

## b. Complete Streets:

- Framingham had several Complete Streets items up for discussion in their October Town Meeting, which will be included in the next Active Living Newsletter.
- More details about the Complete Streets Funding Program will be announced at the MassDOT Moving Together Conference (11/4). The Healthy Transportation Advisory Committee was meeting 10/29 to give their feedback before the public presentation on 11/4.  
**Update:** The Coordinator sent out presentation slides and notes from the conference detailing the application process and timeline (see email from 11/10).
- Through one of its CDC grants, MDPH is beginning to roll out a program to find ways to measure behavior change related to Complete Streets investments.
- In August 2015, WalkBoston released a guide for low cost ideas for improving walkability/bikeability entitled "Pedestrian Infrastructure: Strategies for Improving Pedestrian Safety through Low-Cost Traffic Calming." The guide is available here:  
<http://bit.ly/WalkBostonAug2015Report>
- The Coordinator is developing a new Complete Streets/Active Living Newsletter.



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# MetroWest Moves



c. **Healthy Dining Initiative:**

- **Healthy Dining restaurant recruitment flyer:** The Steering Committee reviewed the new Healthy Dining restaurant recruitment flyer and recommended the following revisions: add quote(s) from customer(s), move social media links up higher on the flyer, and remove cost information from the flyer. The fee payment process will need to be arranged. The flyer will also be adapted as an invitation to restaurants to attend an informational session to learn more about the Initiative. Cathleen is involved with the Marlborough Restaurant Association, which may be interested.

IV. **Act FRESH Campaign** – Andrea Freeman, MPHA

- a. **Background:** Andrea Freeman provided an update on statewide policy work that MetroWest Moves has been a part of through involvement with the Act FRESH Campaign. Act FRESH is a statewide coalition spearheaded by MPHA over the past 6 years which includes 27 organizations across the state. MetroWest Moves joined the Act FRESH Campaign three years ago. Originally, Michelle Ciccolo represented MetroWest Moves and now Janie Hynson participates in Act FRESH meetings on behalf of MetroWest Moves.
- b. **Act FRESH policy priorities:** The Act FRESH policy priorities are focused on improving access to healthy foods and encouraging physical activity, including:
  - **Secure financing for the Massachusetts Food Trust Program to increase access to healthy foods**– This was passed into law in July 2014. This effort developed after a 2010-2011 Food Trust assessment of Massachusetts which found that the state comes up short in terms of food retail outlets across the state (ranked 47 out of 50 states in terms of grocery stores per capita) and identified food deserts in Massachusetts. The goal is to increase access to healthy foods through a “food trust” which is a financial incentive program to create a pool of seed funding starting from state public dollars that can be leveraged with federal and private funding. This is both a public health and economic development project. A MA Grocery Access Taskforce has been created to work on this program. Currently, Act FRESH is working on getting this program funded. This program is focused on food retail and distribution but the language is written to be very flexible so some types of restaurants may potentially be included. DPH’s Healthy Eating Community of Practice group is examining other state food trusts for guidance. Although the Program does not have funds to manage yet, the program is within The Office of Business and Economic Development. The money would be awarded to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) approved by



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# MetroWest Moves



the U.S. Treasury; Massachusetts already has several CDFIs in existence.

- **Implement the Complete Streets Funding Program:** Act FRESH has a Complete Streets Working Group working on this initiative and MAPC has been greatly involved.
- **Support adequate funding for Public Transit, Walking, and Biking:** Act FRESH is partnering with the Transportation for MA (T 4 MASS) Coalition and is working to get the Fair Share amendment on the ballot which would raise money for transportation and education (about 1.5 billion per year). This would require a constitutional amendment to raise income taxes on people in Massachusetts who earn more than 1 million/year (applies to less than 1% of people in Massachusetts). A lot of focus group work was conducted beforehand to assess buy-in. November 18<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to sign on. At the earliest, this would be on the ballot in 2018. MassDOT is also seeking input for their next capital budget, has been holding listening sessions, and is accepting comments online through November 5<sup>th</sup>.
- **Protect state funding for Mass in Motion initiative:** Act FRESH was successful in getting \$250,000 added to the state budget for Mass in Motion. We will have to do this again for this coming budget year (Spring 2016).
- **Pass legislation to encourage shared use of school recreational facilities to promote physical activity during non-school hours:** Statewide effort to clarify liability if school districts are worried about opening up their recreational facilities as there is some unclear language in the current law.
- **Pass legislation for comprehensive zoning reform that advances healthy community design:** Massachusetts zoning regulations are very old and zoning reform made progress during the last legislative session.
- **Protect access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** Over the past year, there was a major technological glitch which caused a large drop in Massachusetts SNAP enrollment. This became apparent because food banks starting seeing a sharp increase in participants. Act FRESH is working with the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Governor's office to fix the technical glitches to increase SNAP enrollment.
- **Establish a Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) to help SNAP recipients access fruits and vegetables:** Massachusetts got a 5 year USDA grant to help SNAP recipients purchase more fruits and vegetables at certain locations. Act FRESH worked with the Department of Transitional Assistance to draft a bill to keep this incentive program going. This bill will likely not pass this year, but the hope is that it will



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# MetroWest Moves



pass before the USDA grant ends in five years. The bill would apply for purchasing fruits and vegetables at any location whereas the USDA grant only applies to purchases at farmers' markets, fruit and vegetable stands, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs).

- Act FRESH is also working to support the Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund.

- c. **Next steps:** A summary sheet was provided with more details about each of these priorities. Andrea Freeman will continue to contact the MetroWest Moves Coordinator when there is a need for Steering Committee members to contact elected officials about these policy issues. It is important to reach out to elected officials continually to update them on Act FRESH and MetroWest Moves' work in these areas.

## V. Steering Committee Member Recruitment/Engagement:

- a. The Steering Committee discussed "champions" in the community who may be interested in joining the Steering Committee. The Coordinator has been reaching out to community members/organizations such as the Framingham State University dietitian and students as well as HUD-TV (public television) about the Healthy Dining Initiative. Cathleen Liberty suggested the Marlborough Restaurant Association, Tim Cummings (Tim has previously participated in MetroWest Moves), Chambers of Commerce, and Bob Kane (involved with festivals in Marlborough).
- b. In the Spring, we can reconsider what strategies we will focus on for next fiscal year. Then we can look for other sector members which fit into those categories/strategies.
- c. For Complete Streets, Andrea Freeman suggested engaging bike/ped advocacy organizations, bike shops, etc. Barry Keppard (MAPC) can help with communicating with/engaging planning department staff and involving them in other related projects. MAPC completed a strategic plan about a year ago and high on their list is climate change/sustainability. Sustainability Committees may also be interested in MetroWest Moves' work.
- d. Laurie Pardee said that all schools in Massachusetts are mandated to have a Wellness Committee and there are lots of partners/sectors involved in the Wellness Committee. The Coordinator will continue to attend Wellness Committee meetings in each community as well as engaging with other groups such as PTOs.

## VI. Community Engagement/Follow-up to Culture InSight:

- a. At the last Mass in Motion Coordinator's Training, DPH noted that they will be asking us for more information about how we are engaging our target populations. For MetroWest Moves, the target populations we have identified are low income populations, environmental justice communities, and Hispanic/Portuguese populations. The Coordinator shared discussion



- questions adapted from a Mass in Motion Health Equity Assessment and developed by Culture InSight and asked for Steering Committee members' recommendations for ways to better engage our identified target populations.
- b. Equity is also one of MAPC's strategic priorities so they are supportive and they also now have a Community Engagement Division.
  - c. Steering Committee members recommended continuing to collaborate with the Latino Health Insurance Program on healthy dining and other initiatives.
  - d. In South Side Framingham, MetroWest Moves will work to engage with Woodrow Wilson Elementary through Safe Routes to School and potentially other outreach to parents.
  - e. Jewish Family Service of MetroWest was also recommended to engage immigrant and refugee populations and United Way of Tri-County and other food pantries to reach low income populations/food pantry participants.
  - f. The Steering Committee discussed possible development of a mobile market/food pantry for the region which could be implemented with the housing authority, apartment buildings, senior living, etc. Barry Keppard said that the Berkshires, Malden, and Somerville have mobile food pantries. The Hudson BOH requested a grant from the Health Foundation of Central MA for a mobile market but this was denied. Mobile markets are challenging to fund and sustain but can be a great mechanism for community engagement.

## VII. Administrative

- a. **Approval of meeting minutes:** The Steering Committee did not vote on whether the previous meeting minutes can be approved. Approval will be postponed until the next meeting.
- b. **Next meeting date/time:** The next quarterly meeting will be held in January 2016 and a scheduling poll will be distributed to select the date. In between quarterly meetings, the Coordinator will continue to meet with communities individually.
- c. **Review of Tasks/Action Items:**
  - Coordinator, Melissa Green, Cathleen Liberty, and Nicole Isabelle will work together to connect with Martin Levins, Mary Zakrzewski (Director of School Nurses in Marlborough), and Superintendent Richard Langlois about SRTS in Marlborough.
  - Submit updates to Coordinator for Active Living/Complete Streets newsletter (updates still need for Marlborough).
  - Notify Coordinator of any assistance needed to prepare for the Complete Streets Funding Program application process.
  - Steering Committee members should communicate with elected officials about MetroWest Moves work and the Act FRESH policy



priorities utilizing the MetroWest Moves 2015-2016 Work Plan Factsheet and Act FRESH Campaign materials.

- Notify Coordinator of any community “champions” who may be interested in participating in the Steering Committee.

VIII. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.