Planning Skills & Expertise Valued by Food Policy Councils (FPCs):

A Case Study Analysis of Four American FPCs working with Urban & Regional Planners

A thesis

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ABSTRACT

As communities have grown increasingly concerned about food deserts, child obesity rates, globally-produced food, and the loss of prime agricultural land – to name a few, food policy councils (FPCs) are increasingly being formed as a way to solve these and many other food system problems. FPCs have traditionally worked with a range of public and private sector partners, and in recent years, have been working more closely with urban and regional planners at the city, county, and state level. Food system work is a nascent field of planning, with many in the field not yet convinced that planners have a significant role to play. In-depth case studies of four FPCs – the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition, the Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition, the Santa Fe Food Policy Council, and the Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council – are offered as a way to highlight how planners serve FPCs. The case study findings show that planners utilize general skills for their work with FPCs and that general planner skills, rather than specific skills, are what FPCs seek out and value. Considerations for planners are offered with the aim of making it easier for planners to approach and engage with FPCs.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the conventional American food system falls under greater scrutiny, communities are increasingly forming Food Policy Councils (FPC) to address the myriad and interrelated food systems issues of a given area. On account of the piecemeal fashion with which this conventional food system has typically addressed food problems, stakeholders such as elected officials, private sector workers, community groups, and local residents cannot naturally – nor easily – work interdependently. By acting as a forum for these diverse food systems stakeholders to find mutually beneficial solutions, FPCs create an entirely new space within which the institutional barriers and 'silo'ed thinking that normally hampers such collaboration is removed (Harper et al. 2009).

With the rise in FPC numbers has also come a rise in the presence of individual[1] planners and planning departments[2] working with FPCs. Though the bulk of FPC membership has historically been drawn from the five food sectors (production, processing, manufacturing, consumption and waste recovery sectors), FPCs have increasingly sought individual planners as FPC members – so much so, that Mark Winne, Food Policy Council Project Director for the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), recently stated

[1] "individual" is here used to refer to persons who define themselves as either city or regional planners.

[2] "departments" is here used to refer to either city planning departments or regional planning commissions.

that "planners are really becoming the hero of the local food movement" and encouraged FPCs and planners to seek each other out (Winne 2010).

While much of the FPC literature has justified the need, and explained the role, for FPCs in the broader community food systems context[3], far less attention has been paid to who comprises FPCs and how FPCs parse member roles and activities. In her research on FPCs, Karen Webb (1997) highlighted a pressing concern to "document the way [FPCs] function, including the process they use for conducting their deliberations, making decisions, and carrying out the tasks they undertake" (72). Examining FPC membership structure, and the decisions that inform it, is one such opportunity that can fill gaps in the existing FPC literature and set a precedent for examining FPC processes that Webb calls for.

To complement Winne's enthusiastic – but anecdotal – statement, a methodological examination of the tasks that individual planners engage in as part of FPC activities will offer a more comprehensive picture of how FPCs incorporate historically untraditional council members into council activities. Additionally, answering the question 'How are individual planners serving FPCs?' lays the groundwork for future analysis of the degree to which planner participation on FPCs impacts overall council success.

[3] Community food systems focus on particular places, promote sustainable and environmentally-conscientious practices, encourage local farm and farm-related business development, draw together historically disparate food sectors and consumer groups, increase knowledge of the local food system, and value transparency in food chain processes. See Raja et al. (2008).

Making visible the Urban Food System

Framing this thesis research is an early article by Kameshwari Pothukuchi and Jerome L. Kaufman (1998), entitled "Placing the food system on the urban agenda: The role of municipal institutions in food systems planning." In it, the authors assert an idea that has become accepted today, but was radical at the time: food issues have been primarily thought of as "agricultural issues grounded in rural settings" which has forced food systems to "take a back seat to other urban systems like housing, transportation, employment, and the environment"(1). By raising awareness of the hidden nature of the urban food system, Pothukuchi and Kaufman set in motion a dialogue on food system issues that, for the first time, included the role city government agencies and institutions, particularly planning agencies. The effects of this were twofold: one, food was redefined as a systems issue, and two, urban planners were suddenly compelled to consider food one among many of the planners' area of focus.

Pothukuchi and Kaufman then go on to suggest "different institutional arrangements" (1) that can raise the prominence of food systems as an urban issue and begin to more comprehensively address common urban food systems problems (such as hunger prevention, public health, or access to food sources). Key among their recommendations is for planning agencies to "have a role … in providing a comprehensive focus on food system issues" (221) that could include partnership with the work of "food policy councils

or coalitions of interest in the anti-hunger, health, sustainable agriculture, and social justice and consumer movements" (221).

Subsequent technical and non-technical literature about food policy councils (Dahlberg 1994; Winne et al. 1997; Biehler et al 1999; Clancy 2007) and food systems planning – as Pothukuchi and Kaufman (2000) would coin the term – (Caton Campbell 2004; Raja et al. 2008) would be framed by this assertion that food is an urban system that warrants broad government involvement, and specific planner participation, in the coordination of solving food system problems.

Tackling Urban Food System Policies

From here, the discussion of urban food systems and the role of government agencies then expanded to include discussions of particular urban food system policies and what to do about them. The Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) would emerge in the mid 1990s as the lead organization behind the community food security movement and would go on to produce two reports that detailed – among other things – how various government agencies work with urban food systems and the particular policy opportunities that exist for urban food system advocates to work with said government agencies.

For example, the 1997 report "Community Food Security: A Guide to Concept, Design, and Implementation" (Winne et al.), encouraged developing a sense of knowing how and when to embrace the public sector and offered detailed examples of public sector involvement in urban food system issues.

Examples included development and management of local food policy councils and coalitions; funding of numerous food projects through locally controlled Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and other publicly controlled money; transportation planning, including ridership surveys and rerouting public transit to such places as supermarkets; formation of farmers markets and other direct marketing outlets by state departments of agriculture; land grant universities and their cooperative extension services providing food program development services, and food-related research, education, and nutrition programs (31). Additionally, the report, "Getting Food on the Table: An Action Guide to Local Food Policy" (Biehler et al. 1999) offered such specific information about public sector involvement in urban food systems issues as an entire chapter called "Food Policy Inventory" in which the authors explain that the inventory is "intended to help readers understand the scope of local policies affecting their food system, and to identify opportunities to shape local policies and programs to advance community food security" (3). The chapter then outlines functions, programs, and policies of such planning and planning-related agencies as the Redevelopment Authority/Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Works, Department of Parks and Recreation, Conservation Commission and Environmental Services, and Land-Use Planning Departments.

Understanding Planners' work in Urban Food System Policy

In addition to the above discussions, this thesis research is framed by a 2008 report (Raja et al.), entitled "A Planners Guide to Community and Regional Food Planning: Transforming Food Environments, Facilitating Healthy Eating" in which the authors surveyed American Planning Association (APA) members nationwide for their opinions about the role of planning in urban food systems work. The report comes nearly a decade after Pothukuchi and Kaufman first encouraged the participation of planners – explicitly – in urban food systems work, and striking among Raja et al.'s findings is that 51% of respondents "cited the lack of staff trained in [urban food systems] as a significant or primary explanation for their organization's limited or no involvement" in urban food systems work (31).

This response seemed incongruous with Pothukuchi and Kaufman's earlier call for the participation of planners in food systems work – nowhere had Pothukuchi and Kaufman suggested that planners needed explicit knowledge of food systems to work in urban food systems work. On the contrary, Pothukuchi and Kaufman, as well as the various reports produced by the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), have called for the participation of planners in food systems work on account of traditional, and broad, expertise like familiarity with the policy process, ability to see linkages across sectors, and knowledge of how the built environment affects urban systems.

Research Questions

In response to the questions that the work of Raja et al. (2008) raises about the disconnect between urban food system advocates' perception of planners contribution to urban food systems initiatives and planners' skepticism about not being equipped with enough skills or training to contribute to urban food systems initiatives, this thesis aims to explore how today's urban planners are working on urban food systems issues with an eye towards better understanding how planners themselves define their work. Analyzing how planners work on all the various urban food systems policies and projects would be a daunting task – one clearly outside the bounds of this, or other, research projects. Thus, my thesis research will focus on planners working with food policy councils (FPC) and asks the question 'How do today's planners characterize their services and activities on FPCs?' In particular, my thesis research aims to better understand:

- Are planner services and activities similar across FPCs?
- Do planners share the same perspective as other FPC members about the nature of planner participation on FPCs?
- What contextual considerations do planners and other FPC members include when discussing planner participation on today's FPCs?

Given the existing literature on FPCs and planners working in food systems I anticipate that the answer to my research question will be that planners characterize their services and activities on FPCs in very technical terms relating to the policy arena – that they describe their work as

operating within an FPC's regulatory sphere. The literature on FPCs suggests that planners perform a variety of policy-related tasks for FPCs including writing and revising land-use policies and dealing with zoning codes. Conversely, the literature on planners working in food systems is much more general and suggests that planner work on FPCs – or any other food system initiative – according to broad planning principles like an interest in the public good or planning perspective like a systems-thinking approach.

Given these assumptions, this thesis examines how planners are specifically working with FPCs and aims to categorize their involvement through four case studies. Each FPC is briefly introduced and then discussed according to how council members describe their council's use of planner skills, training, and perspective. This research addresses a number of aspects relating to the work of planners on food systems initiatives: 1) which planner skills and training are needed to work on a variety of food systems initiatives; 2) the value of planner skills and training in food systems work; 3) who is asking for planners to contribute their skills and training to food system initiatives. Examining how four different FPCs have worked with planners sheds light on these aspects.

The case studies presented here are of food policy councils that work directly with planners in such roles as outside consultants, episodic support, or full FPC members with regular council duties. Some councils work with a single planner, other councils work with many planners in many different capacities and roles. The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition

(CCCFPC) works with numerous planners from the City of Cleveland Planning Commission and the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, primarily through the coalition's Land-Use working group. The Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC) has worked with one planner who now serves on the GKCFPC steering committee. The Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC) is an FPC with two planners (one city and one county) who are both full council members. Lastly, the Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) – formerly the Seattle-King County (Acting) Food Policy Council – also has two planners, one academic and one private, who are full council members.

The next chapter of this thesis provides context for the discussion of planners working with FPCs by providing information about the alternative food movements that FPCs came out of and a comprehensive overview of FPC operating characteristics and structure.

Chapter 3 reviews food policy council literature as well as the literature on planners' role in food systems work. This chapter introduces themes pertinent to the discussion of planner participation on FPCs including FPC orientation (policy versus programmatic focus), FPC membership structure and common partners, the role of local government in food system issues, and the justification of food systems as an area of planning focus.

Chapter 4 details the methodology used for case study selection, including FPC selection process and interviewee selection process. This chapter also describes the data collection and data analysis process.

Chapter 5 offers findings from the data analysis, drawing upon evidence from interviews and other sources to demonstrate themes that emerged.

Chapter 6 presents policy recommendations for decision makers, as well as recommendations for planners interested in forming relationships with FPCs. This chapter also discusses research constraints and suggests opportunities for further research to better understand the full extent of planner involvement on FPCs.

The case studies presented in this thesis research provide comprehensive information about the reasons why planners' skills and training are valued in the food system initiatives that FPCs undertake. This information can help shape national, state, and local policies and can offer practicing planners guidance for how to approach food systems work.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT; ALTERNATIVE FOOD MOVEMENTS & FPCS

This chapter provides information about the alternative food movements that FPCs were born of and a comprehensive overview of FPC operating characteristics and structure. A brief introduction to the alternative food movement is helpful for understanding how food shifted from being simply an agricultural issue (under the jurisdiction of the USDA) to an equity and community health issue (under the jurisdiction of various government agencies at the local and regional level). An overview of FPCs is provided to demonstrate how FPC structure mimics both government agency and non-profit structure and how FPC membership decisions reflect this.

Alternative Food Movements

Throughout the late 19th century and all the way up to the middle of the 20th century, food was understood in primarily agricultural (specifically, agricultural production) terms: hiccups in America's food supply were perceived as more or less the result of natural processes. However, the growth of nationally organized food corporations in the 1950s, in combination with the ongoing industrialization of agricultural practices, paved the way for a "wave of mergers among food processors, input suppliers, and marketers" (Lyson 2007, 30) in the 1980's that would ultimately lead to the formation of multinational food corporations who consolidate food system processes. The effects of this consolidation and industrialization of agricultural practices that lead to a globalized food

system, had been steadily building, but weren't immediately evident to most Americans whose grocery store shelves still regularly stocked items throughout this period of time.

While many people did not witness the environmental, economic, and social costs of the global food system, others did. Groups who were disproportionately affected by this shift towards a global food system included small-scale farmers and low-income residents. Out of these groups grew various social movements – all lumped under the umbrella of 'alternative food movements' – looking to create alternatives to a system that was perceived as inefficient and unjust. Two outstanding alternative food movements worth mentioning include the Community Food Security Movement (1994) and the Civic Agriculture Movement (2000).

Alternative Food Movement: Community Food Security

The community food security movement – which initially focused on urban equity issues regarding food access but was later expanded to include concerns for the small family farms that contribute to rural economic activity (Maretzki 2007) – sought to reframe the agricultural problem as not simply a production problem with piecemeal solutions but rather as a systems-wide problem with political, social, and cultural dimensions. The beginning of the movement was marked by the formation of the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) whose intention was to "bring political visibility to the reality of community food systems" (Maretzki 2007, 333). CFSC's emphasis

on greater community input in food systems decision-making encouraged community independence and local economic activity around food issues.

Writing on behalf of CFSC, Winne et al. (1997), define community food security as 1) a concern with the food needs of low-income communities; 2) addressing a broad range of food problems; 3) synthesizing disparate fields including economics and public health; 4) uniting urban and rural areas along with consumers and producer groups; 5) promoting solutions that have multiple benefits; 6) utilizing a long-range, community-driven planning process; 7) examining systems (socio-economic, political) for structural impact on food; and 8) coordinating efforts across community institutions. These community food security characteristics embody a wide range of goals – some of which can be achieved through policy channels while others can be achieved through projects or programs.

Alternative Food Movement: Civic Agriculture

With the concept 'civic agriculture', Thomas Lyson (2000) pushed the community food security movement's concerns one step further by arguing that only with the advent of a more democratic food system – one in which every citizen has not just equal right and access to food, but is also equally invested in their community's food system and equally knowledgeable about all its processes – will any real shift away from the global food system occur. Lyson's civic agriculture resonated with a growing number of advocates, academics, and community groups, who were eager to see a response to what they saw as an anonymous, capitalistic food system whose profit-

minded allegiances had left both urban and rural communities across America devastated.

Marked by an attempt to put people and place back into America's agricultural fabric by fostering "community problem-solving around agriculture and food issues" (Lyson 2007, 35), Lyson suggested that civic agriculture grounds agricultural development in social rather than economic processes, and characterizes civic agriculture as 1) a local orientation toward farm production; 2) the integration of farming and food production into communities; 3) the competition of food goods based on quality; 4) agricultural practices that are labor and land intensive; 5) place-specific food practices; and 6) direct market links for producers (Lyson 2007, 35).

Food Policy Councils

FPCs are advisory bodies comprised of members drawn from the entirety of the food system (production, processing, distribution, waste recovery, and consumption) who collectively work towards mutually beneficial solutions to local and community food issues. FPCs are comprehensive in approach in that they address problems on a systems-wide scale; are collaborative in execution by partnering equally with both the public and private sector as well as community residents and professionals; and are long-term in their vision in that they promote inventive solutions that have immediate and future applicability. While many FPC-like organizations exist that focus on programmatic efforts, the hallmark of FPC work is advising local government on food policy. FPCs were primarily born

out of the community food security movement and the civic agriculture movement, but some FPCs also have their roots in hunger advocacy and public health movements.

First FPC

The first FPC was formed in Knoxville, Tennessee after Professor Bob Wilson's landscape architecture class researched, and made recommendations on, food-related planning issues to the city council (Zodrow 2005). Passing a resolution in 1981 that enacted one of Wilson's students' key recommendations – the formation of an advisory council dedicated solely to food issues – the city council established the Knoxville Food Policy Council and with it demonstrated that "food was a matter of governmental concern" (Clancy et al. 2007, 122).

Common Operating Characteristics

FPCs are "as unique as the communities they serve, and the myriad variations of the name 'Food Policy Council' is a testament to that individuality" (DiLisio 2011). Many FPCs have names that don't incorporate the word 'policy' – names such as 'Food Systems Coalition' or 'Community Food and Agriculture Coalition' – are such examples and though these names might suggest a departure from policy work, many FPCs have similarities that unite them beyond a focus on policy. Kate Clancy et al. (2007) and Mark Winne (2010) have noted the operating characteristics that all FPCs share, regardless of an expressed policy focus. These common characteristics are: a comprehensive approach; long-term strategies; tangible results; place-based;

community interest; government buy-in; formal membership; and little - to - no funding (DiLisio 2011).

Goals/Missions

The emergence of FPCs grew out of separate, but interrelated ideological responses to the conventional American food system, particularly the community food security movement, civic agriculture movement, organic standards movement, and the sustainable agriculture movement (Clancy et al. 2007). Though rooted in ideological movements, the activities of FPCs are focused on solving real world problems with practical solutions that have tangible results. While many FPCs function as the voice for community food concerns, and position themselves as authorities on community food systems issues, FPCs themselves posses no legal authority to make food policies. Given these interests and constraints, FPC mission statements are comprised of one or all of the following goals:

- Participation in the policy process
- Development of programs that address food systems gaps
- Find solutions that work systems-wide
- Unify strategic food systems partners
- Research a community's food system
- Promote transparency of a community's food system processes
- Hold meetings comprised of diverse food systems stakeholders (Harper et al. 2009, DiLisio 2011)

How FPCs work

FPCs advise local government on food policy issues by approaching food problems comprehensively and through systems thinking that reconnects the historically disparate sectors of the American food system. FPCs work by "evaluating food problems on multiple levels." (DiLisio 2010) For example, a common food problem FPCs examine is how to increase the access residents have to grocery stores. FPCs will "unpack the interrelated causes of the problem" (DiLisio 2011), considering factors such as:

- Infrastructure: Are public transportation links to existing grocery stores adequate?
- Economic Development: Which banks will/will not loan to new grocery stores?
- Built Environment: Which zoning codes or regulations could be changed to locate grocery stores closer to residential areas?
- Alternatives or Supplemental Programs: Could a farmers' market or home delivery program fill service gaps?

Who FPCs serve

FPCs serve the needs of three particular groups in a given community: local government, representatives from the five food sectors (production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste recovery), and residents (Dahlberg 1994; Clancy et al. 2007; Schiff 2008). FPCs serve these three groups by gathering information about their needs and food concerns and

then sharing that information with and among the three groups towards the end of facilitating cooperation.

FPCs essentially cater to the needs of any food eater, but FPCs are expressly concerned with historically underserved groups – especially those that have been neglected by the conventional American food system. In some instances, these groups might come from certain neighborhoods, certain economic backgrounds, or from certain racial or ethnic groups. In other instances, FPCs focus on underserved groups operating in the alternative food movement, for example small-scale farmers, local food processors, or grocery cooperatives.

Where FPCs are located: jurisdiction

FPCs can be found at the city/town, or local level, at the county level where they serve a region, and at the state level. Some FPCs hold a dual jurisdictional authority where they serve both a city or town and a county or serve a county in addition to a state. FPCs determine jurisdictional level by weighing such considerations as:

- Spatial Aspects: how geographically dispersed a given community is
- Community Boundaries: which people are linked by which food traditions
- Infrastructure: which government level could support FPC activity (DiLisio 2011)

Of these considerations, many FPCs often first consider the dominant food geography and typology of the community they will likely serve. More

FPCs that cross state lines and serve multiple states can be found in America's Midwest where the production, processing, and distribution of corn – for example – takes place across vast swaths of an area. The Tri State Food Policy Council of Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri is one such example serving just those multi-state needs in which communities with similar food systems are linked. In contrast, states with multiple, well-established urban centers or other localities – like California – often have many local FPCs. The Oakland Food Policy Council, San Francisco Food Systems Council, and the Los Angeles Food Policy Task Force all strongly represent their individual communities. Additionally, communities struggling to bridge urban and rural divides or unite small and scattered towns often develop regional FPCs working at the county level that can provide overarching support and even access to resources.

Where FPCs are housed

Because FPCs rarely have enough resources to completely support themselves, FPCs often rely on outside support from "foster" organizations. Many FPCs are, in fact, formed as divisions or subcommittees within a given organization or institution which grants FPCs a certain amount of stability. Who an FPC is primarily affiliated with, and ultimately housed in, depends on such considerations as:

1. Political Will: Dedicated government officials or agencies sometimes choose to fully or partly house FPCs in government departments.

This is often the case if an FPC has been formed by executive order or legislative act.

2. Access to Resources: FPCs need time, money and space to function. Affiliating with a strong non-profit, other established CFSA bodies, or an institution like a state university extension office can offer much-need support.
3. Community: Though advising on policy to elected officials, many FPCs are housed in community and grassroots organizations to help them stay connected to the people they represent (DiLisio 2011).

More than half of state-level FPCs are housed in government agencies, while the bulk of local and county FPCs are independently housed (Harper et al. 2009, 24). Regardless of jurisdictional level, where FPCs are housed, or who FPCs are primarily affiliated with, all FPCs work with elected officials and government agencies in some capacity.

Membership Structure

The effectiveness of FPCs lies in bringing historically disparate sectors of the American food system (production, processing, distribution, waste recovery, and consumption) around the same table to not only share information but also to work together on mutually beneficial solutions to common food problems. FPC membership structure is weighted towards gathering representatives from these five food sectors, but many FPCs also expand their membership to include non-food experts and professionals that

reflect the needs of a given community. For example, many FPCs pull experts and professionals from various public sector agencies like public health departments, school systems and universities, or even city and county planning departments.

Many FPCs are formed on the heels of other community groups passing out of existence. In some instances a community group tasked with a food problem, or food-related problem, looks to continue the successful group dynamics that contributed to earlier achievements. This was the case for the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition; the coalition formed as a way to maintain the core members who worked together on the Steps to a Healthier Cleveland campaign of 2007. Conversely, some FPCs are formed as a way to salvage what remains of a community group's dissolution or failure.

Many FPCs are comprised of about 8-12 members who are chosen through various nomination processes. The particular membership path varies with FPC, but is mainly within four categories: self-selection, nomination, application, or appointment. Depending on the FPC, membership process may occur across or within these four categories. For example, some FPC members are appointed by a legislative body while other membership paths are a combination of member self-selection, application, and fellow FPC member acceptance process (Harper et al. 2009).

Many FPCs manage their comprehensive missions by breaking their councils down into smaller components. Whether called "subcommittees" or

"working groups", these smaller components encourage FPC members to clump around FPC themes. Breaking down FPC initiatives in this way helps ensure that FPC members feel invested in a particular topic and that the overall FPC mission isn't compromised in the actual process of being addressed, as well as ensures and that full FPC meetings are more efficient.

Who Partners with FPCs?

In FPC work, there is no person, organization, department, or agency that can't be a potential partner. Because food – and food systems – touch every facet of community life, seemingly untraditional partners to policy work have a valid place at the FPC table. At minimum, FPCs must at least nominally work with government agencies and with community organizations. Other groups that FPCs have traditionally, or increasingly partner with include:

- Faith-based organizations
- Advocacy groups (e.g. Environmental or Hunger groups)
- Foundations
- Charities, such as food banks and soup kitchens
- Academic Institutions, including Cooperative Extension offices
- Public Health organizations, including hospitals
- United States Department of Agriculture and state departments of agriculture (Harper et al. 2009)

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review was conducted to establish a definition of FPCs, chart changing perceptions of the role of planners in food systems work (both in the field of planning and the arena of food systems initiatives), as well as highlight how planning and food system issues are discussed in relation to each other. Additionally, this literature review identifies shifting paradigms in planning theory that have impacted the way today's planners think of, and talk about their profession. I therefore present three distinct bodies of literature: food policy council literature, food systems planning literature, and urban planning theory literature. Databases such as JSTOR, Agricola, Google Scholar, and Academic One were utilized for the purposes of this literature review. Key terms such as food policy council; food systems planning; food systems initiatives; food policy; civic agriculture; urban planning theory; and urban planning skills were used to conduct the literature review. Additionally, the key words coalition; planner; participation; and policy were used. Once specific organizations (public, private, and non-profit) and leaders (academics, advocates) in food systems work were identified, further research was conducted to find examples of planner participation in food systems work.

Technical literature about FPCs and food systems planning both emerged in the mid to late 1990s and was born of a need to examine the actions – or non-actions – of local government in the burgeoning alternative food systems movement. Despite this genesis, an overt discussion of the role

of local governments, elected officials, and municipal workers has rarely been at the fore of technical literature. A few early journal articles touch on this issue, or make explicit mention of this concern, but technical literature has for the most part only peripherally explored local government's ideal or actual role in food systems issues. Early reports by the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) provide the most in-depth, and articulate accounts of how local government is or can work with food systems initiatives. Given this trend, this literature review has been framed by the degree to which each piece of FPC and food systems planning literature mentions the role of government in addition to providing descriptive information about FPCs or food systems planning.

FPC literature rarely discusses food systems planning in any detail, and likewise, food system planning literature often touches on FPCs as one expression of government participation in food system issues but doesn't focus on them. Given this tendency in the literature to focus on FPCs or food systems planning, this literature review will discuss each separately and will make mention of points of convergence when particularly relevant.

Finally, this literature review includes a portion of urban planning theory literature that has significantly shaped the scope of this research. It primarily addresses communicative models of urban planning theory and also touches on aspects of public participation in the planning process.

Food Policy Council Literature

Kenneth Dahlberg's (1994) "Food Policy Councils: The Experience of Five Cities and One County" raised the prominence of FPCs with his observation that many localities engaged in community food systems activities were doing so through FPCs, thus warranting examination of how these FPCs operated. In researching case studies of the FPCs in Charleston, South Carolina; Kansas City, Missouri; Knoxville, Tennessee; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Onondaga County, New York, Dahlberg developed a list of factors that contribute to FPC problems and FPC potential. Dahlberg identified nine such factors that influence FPC success: regional values; city/county size and demographics; historical and political context; mandated role and powers of the council; organizational position and degree of integration into city government; composition of food policy councils; staff and budget support; consultants and advisers; and overall program leadership and management (5).

One factor to FPC success worth highlighting is Dahlberg's consideration of council composition. Dahlberg breaks down council composition into groups "based upon the elements of local food systems" (5) and further refines groups into the categories: consumers, distributors, environmentalists, farmers, gardeners, grocers, hunger advocates, health and nutrition advocates, neighborhood, processors, restaurants, schools, and waste stream (15). Dahlberg then charts which of the FPCs profiled have which groups represented on their council, which groups are present on the

council but don't have an official representative, and the degree to which the council has links to other private and public groups. Absent from Dahlberg's list of groups that are represented on FPCs or that FPCs have links to, is urban planners and planning departments, specifically, or more generally speaking, government agencies.

Dahlberg notes some interesting results that council composition has on FPC focus. For example, many councils that lacked formal representation of, or a relationship with, farmers and environmental groups points, were often too narrowly focused in their food system objectives. Dahlberg goes on to suggest that farmers and environmentalists represent groups with a "basic interest in a number of food-related issues"(4). Additionally, Dahlberg comments that FPCs are often compromised by public or city government interests that tend to be specific hunger and related health issues and further suggests that councils "which have been more successful are those that are not dominated by hunger issues and groups" (5). Dahlberg's observations provide helpful clues for the impact that council composition has on success, and demonstrates how the balance of organizations represented on FPCs is a crucial component for FPCs to seriously weigh in their work.

Overall, Dahlberg's nine success factors established loose definitions for what makes FPCs work, and his descriptive style set the tone for many subsequent reports and articles about FPCs. The presentation of his case study findings in easy-to-read tables that are supported with analysis made it easy for researchers or laymen to quickly grasp general FPC characteristics.

Dahlberg answered simple, but pressing questions, about what FPCs are and why they exist, and in doing so established FPCs as a rightful expression of the alternative food system movement.

Soon following, Dahlberg led the preparation of a resource guide with Kate Clancy, Robert L. Wilson, and Jan O'Donnell (1997) entitled *Strategies, Policy Approaches, and Resources for Local Food System Planning and Organizing*. This guide collected materials that the Local Food Systems Project (LFSP) – a three-year, W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant funded study – had initially compiled for target communities but decided to distribute to a wider audience. LFSP was launched to offer six communities (Los Angeles, CA; Berkshire County in western MA; a nine country planning region around Rochester, New York; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Austin, Texas; and Moyers, West Virginia) "technical assistance for developing food policy structures (policy councils, task forces, networks, etc.) to strengthen their local food system" (7).

While no analysis of LFSP is offered in the guide, the collection of materials in the guide offers insight into what academics and emerging FPC experts saw as pressing needs for emerging FPCs of the time. These needs include examples of FPC mission statements, local level policy issues, strategies for planning and organizing that help assess available community resources (including community partners), and how to link food system policy issues with other community issues like economic development and public health.

Compared to Dahlberg's "Food Policy Councils: The Experience of Five Cities and One County," which researched only FPCs that were official advisory bodies to city or county government, the six communities that worked with the LFSP "had their main locus of leadership and membership in the non-profit sector" (Dahlberg 1997, 2). The differences between these two FPC orientations – local government versus non-profit – would come to define a major split in the FPC community that later literature examine in further detail.

One of the first reports by the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), was authored by Mark Winne, Hugh Joseph, and Andy Fisher (1997) entitled *Community Food Security: Concept, Design, and Implementation.* In it, the authors provide helpful information for understanding the role of FPCs by carefully examining the relationship between FPC project orientation and FPC policy orientation within a broader framework – namely the Community Food Security (CFS) movement.

While earlier academic literature had taken for granted that FPCs were either primarily project oriented or policy oriented (and likewise more or less aligned with local government) Winne et al. examine the project and policy component within the CFS movement to demonstrate that FPCs are both an expression and a tool of the CFS movement. Recognizing that CFS can be realized through 'from-the-ground-up' projects and programs or through 'from-the-top-down' policy changes, Winne et al. thus advocate for a CFS

methodology that employs a three-pronged approach: Process/Partnership, Projects, and Policy (9).

The authors discuss FPCs in detail, but under the broader CFS category of "Collaborations and Coalitions". In addition to specific information about FPC objectives, structure, examples of mission statements, and examples of common FPC activities, this chapter also touches on general reasons for collaboration; types of collaboration; the characteristics of networks, coalitions, and councils; and how to start a general collaboration. By anchoring FPCs as one type of CFS collaboration, the authors are then at liberty to carefully unpack the project/program versus policy orientation debate, offering such comments as "food policy councils typically serve as advisors to government agencies, as an advocate for specific policies and programs, and as a forum for information exchange and educational resource for the public" (24), "food policy councils are generally charged with an oversight and catalyst role around food policies and programs"(24), and "[FPC] activities and objectives vary from place to place depending upon the circumstances and need of each locale as well as their members' interests and resources"(24).

By providing specific examples of common FPC activities – drawn from FPCs existing at the time – the authors demonstrate that much of what might have been misunderstood about FPC projects/programs is actually very familiar. Examples like 1) attracting new supermarkets to low-income communities, 2) establishing new community gardens, 3) gaining cable

coverage of nutrition education classes, or 4) food system education campaigns, all help to demonstrate that many FPCs which have never thought of themselves as having a project/program orientation nonetheless engage in many projects/programs and therefore can not claim to be totally policy oriented.

Carefully though, the authors are mindful to state that despite any interest and engagement in projects/programs, FPCs are "one mechanism to directly involve local government" (23) and that what marks an FPC from other CFS collaboration is that FPCs are "typically sanctioned by either city or county government" (23) having "generally been formed through city or county resolution"(25). In probably the nicest parsing of where and how FPCs exist along a project/program versus policy orientation spectrum, Winne et al. explain that because of the role FPCs serve as a "policy advocacy mechanism" for CFS objectives (13), advising government bodies and "advocating for specific funding, legislation, and/or programs"(13), that FPCs "should emerge from prior collaborative efforts" (13). This suggestion for how FPCs should ideally be formed pays a nod to the project/programmatic nature of other non-FPC CFS collaborations and suggests that CFS collaborations can carry a nugget of this project/program orientation into their later incarnation as an FPC where their focus will likely shift towards policy work.

Following the "Community Food Security: Concept, Design, and Implementation," the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC), in

conjunction with the California Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SAWG), released "Getting Food on the Table: An Action Guide to Local Food Policy. In this report, Biehler et al. (1999) expand upon the information that the " Community Food Security: Concept, Design, and Implementation" report offered about gaining public sector involvement in community food systems, and presents a guide for working with various government agencies and departments on community food system initiatives. In the report, the authors provide an inventory of the functions, programs, and policies of various city and county government agencies which are either explicitly or implicitly involved with food systems; nine case studies of food policy organizations (including, but not limited to, FPCs); guidance for how to organize food policy work (including advice on starting an FPC); a resource guide; and appendices with sample documents like food inventories, food legislation and ordinances, and overviews of federal funding opportunities.

"Getting Food on the Table" is a remarkable work, not only because it is so exhaustive in its information about exactly how the public sector is – and could – be working with food systems initiatives, but it is also remarkable in that it takes a strong stance on the project/program versus policy orientation of FPCs. While "Community Food Security" doesn't endorse a project/programmatic orientation for FPCs, it does recognize that many FPCs can do great project/program work, and seems apprehensive about suggesting that the only true FPCs are those with a policy orientation. On the other hand, "Getting Food on the Table" is not shy about which orientation it

thinks FPCs should have – a policy orientation. An entire section called *Projects Versus Policies*, located in the chapter "FPC Operational Issues", advises FPCs to "resist the temptation to launch an ambitious project that will use most of their limited time and resources" (69) and that "the work of a FPC is primarily to achieve results by shaping policy, not to take on a specific activity that some other organization could do" (69). For this reason, Biehler et al. very plainly state, "it is generally not advisable for a FPC to get deeply involved in projects"(64).

What Biehler et al. do advocate for as the primary function of FPCs, is something closer to a "framework for power" (65) – which the authors define as FPCs harnessing their knowledge of "the system and the issues" and then using "that knowledge effectively" (65). The authors suggest that the way for FPCs to go about this is to recognize that, despite the often limited function of FPCs in the policy realm, FPCs nonetheless exert considerable power via such policy-related opportunities as 1) compiling information on local food systems; 2)speaking for many constituents with one voice; 3) having access to decision-makers; 3) potentially reviewing budgets, reports, or plans; 4) developing food-related policy; 5) highlighting and taking positions on food issues; and 6) acting as a catalyst for food systems projects (65, 66).

While Biehler et al. offer some of the most detailed and comprehensive explanations of what FPCs are, why they primarily exist, and steps for starting a FPC "Getting Food on the Table" is an outstanding example of FPC literature because it was the first FPC report to so thoroughly

explain the role of city and county planning departments in the web of community food system initiatives, of which the authors consider FPCs to be one expression of. For example, Biehler et al. explain " Many FPCs have won great policy gains, but few have taken their organizing to the next level: comprehensive food system planning. The planning process can be daunting and confusing for many groups, but it is an integral step for creating community food systems" (70). While prior reports and pieces of academic literature about FPCs had touched on the role of the public sector, or briefly mentioned the opportunity for public health departments, specifically, to work with FPCs, it wasn't until "Getting Food on the Table" was published that the link between FPC work and planner work was so expressly stated and encouraged.

At about the same time that the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) was releasing reports that explained why FPCs exist and within what context, a piece of academic literature emerged asking 'Why aren't FPCs conducting internal or external evaluations?' Karen L. Webb, et al. (1997) published one of the few scholarly articles that, to date, addresses the issue of evaluation – "Local food policy coalitions: Evaluation issues as seen by academics, project organizers, and funders." Acknowledging that Dahlberg's seminal and subsequent work provided invaluable "lessons learned" for new FPCs, Webb nonetheless argues that "the limited availability of systematic evaluations in the published literature makes it difficult for groups wishing to initiate, replicate or support food system activities, to learn from the

lessons of pioneering food policy coalitions and councils" (67). Arguing for the benefits of evaluation in the formative stages of FPC development – particularly for its ability to help with "identifying and reducing barriers to effective collaboration" (67) – Webb et al. conducted semi-structured interviews with key informants (academics, project organizers, and funders) to determine what barriers prevent FPCs from conducting internal evaluations or commissioning external evaluations.

Webb et al. found that discussions about evaluation with key informants brought up four distinct concerns, "(1) perspectives about what to evaluate, (2) perspectives about the purpose, size, and composition of food policy coalitions, (3) uncertainty about how to evaluate food policy coalitions and projects, and (4) the influence of external factors on the success of coalitions and on evaluation" (69). For the purposes of this particular review of FPC literature, it is worth highlighting the discussion about the composition of FPCs. While funders who were interviewed had no comment about FPC composition, academics and project organizers showed "a notable lack of consensus" (70) about how FPC composition impacts council success. Webb et al. notes "there seemed to be general agreement that a small number of highly motivated 'doers' can make things happen" but that "what these individuals 'do' should reflect the reasoned judgment of a broadly-based group of local stake-holders" (70). Furthermore, Webb et al. pays a nod to on the aforementioned government versus non-profit orientation that was forming in the late 90s, by adding "Underpinning these differences were

divergent views about the purpose of coalitions and whether their main purpose is policy debate and development, obtaining/providing political support for action, planning what to do, or overseeing project and policy implementation" (70).

The research of Webb et al. provides insight into the growing importance of the government versus non-profit orientation that was developing in the FPC landscape and of this development's impact on how – and for what reasons – FPCs should be evaluated. Webb et al.'s research points out an interesting issue: though FPCs were formed as a way to encourage government participation in local food systems initiatives, many FPCs and FPC academics did not consider the degree to which government entities have been incorporated into an FPC's local food systems initiatives to be an important evaluation factor or measurement of success.

About a decade after the early reports and articles about FPCs that thinkers like Dahlberg and various writers on behalf of the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) produced, came a new wave of FPC literature. Leading this second wave was one of the leaders of the first wave of FPC literature – Kate Clancy. In her chapter "Food Policy Councils", in the book Remaking the North American Food System (2007), Clancy charts the history and reasons why FPCs emerged, and specifically looks at how government-sanctioned FPCs are currently performing.

Clancy's grasp of FPC history and the broader contextual reasons for their emergence secures this chapter as a valuable piece of FPC literature, but

more than that, it is the findings gathered from interviews with key actors from eight different FPCs that marks Clancy's chapter as a key piece of FPC literature. In "Food Policy Councils", Clancy notes "because it has been almost ten years since Dahlberg (1994) conducted his study of FPCs, it is important to examine what has happened in the interim and also to consider councils formed at the state level" (127). Clancy is clear about her definition of FPCs – "officially sanctioned bodies of representatives from various segments of a state or local food system" (126) and goes about framing her research protocol from this framework.

Clancy evaluates her research information according to the "Eight Elements of Successful FPCs" she developed in 1988 which results in findings being lumped into the categories of *Longevity, Government Sanction and Funding, Food Policy Council Membership and Leadership, Documentation of Food System, Key Successes and Factors Leading to Success, Key Challenges,* and *Five Years from Now.* Information within each of these categories is very detailed, providing a finer grade picture of a similar scenario that Dahlberg presented 10 years earlier. More interestingly, Clancy offers analytical sections, such as *Advice for new Councils* and *Lessons Learned*, in which she synthesizes her research data with earlier FPC literature to and offer such commentary as "food policy councils have a unique role to play as quasi-governmental bodies in putting food topics on politicians' radar, elevating discussions about food, making connections, and getting useful projects implemented" (140). Ultimately "Food Policy Councils" is a neat introduction

to today's FPCs but it doesn't highlight how today's FPCs have changed since Clancy's, and other FPC thinkers, earlier writings.

In 2008 Rebecca Schiff, wrote "The Role of Food Policy Councils in Developing Sustainable Food Systems" and with it highlighted tensions between what FPCs originally aimed to achieve and the realities of what FPCs actually did. By including direct quotes and commentary from the 13 semi-structured interviews she conducted with FPCs in the US and Canada, Schiff inserted rich, contextual data that had been lacking from earlier FPC literature.

By heavily weighing the testimonials and first-person accounts of FPC members' experiences, Schiff offers an up-to-date account of what defines FPCs and what the role of FPCs is according to the people who actually work within them. Schiff grounds her study in the assertion that "[d]iscrepancies among definitions of 'food policy councils' demonstrate a broader uncertainty and divergence in understanding the overall concept of the food policy council" (207) and then goes on to identify these discrepancies and explain them. Schiff identifies three discrepancies that relate to FPC organization (FPC concept, policy versus program orientation, and FPCs as government or nongovernment organizations) and two discrepancies that relate to FPC role (FPCs as networkers and facilitators and FPCs as educators).

Of particular note in Schiff's research is the attention paid to the discrepancy between a FPC's policy versus program orientation. Schiff notes

"Several of those interviewed indicated a minimal involvement and even disinterest in researching, writing, or recommending new policies or changes to existing policies" (210) but goes on to note that while "[t]en of the FPCs interviewed, including those expressing some disinterest in policy work, had previously worked with or intended at some future point to engage in policy work" (212) there nonetheless exists a "focus … on building credibility and resources to eventually allow for greater focus in [policy work]" (212).

Schiff's article also raised another issue that is related to the policy versus program orientation discrepancy among FPCs, namely the discrepancy between FPCs as government or nongovernment organizations. Schiff tracks how this discrepancy developed by explaining that

> "The initial premise of the food policy council concept included a strong relationship with and basis in local government. Early FPCs such as those in Knoxville, Toronto, and Hartford, were created under orders, ordinances, and mandates to function primarily as a government organization. Over several years, as the number of FPCs increased, several of these organizations were developed as nongovernment, or nonprofit organizations (NGOs). … While prior research has indicated that FPCs function most 'successfully' as government mandated organization, organizations continue to establish themselves and operate for several years as NGO food policy councils" (213).

Schiff then goes on to note the emergence of "a 'hybrid' model" in which "some formal relationship with government through funding, resources, or otherwise" exists "while maintaining some NGO or nonprofit status" (214).

In concluding, Schiff reiterates her main findings, and of particular concern are her comments on policy versus program

orientation of FPCs and whether or not FPCs should be government or nongovernment organizations. Schiff notes "All of the FPCs interviewed described one of their primary roles as being that of a voice for recommending new ideas or changes to government activities surrounding food policy and planning. They also indicated a need to strike a balance between authority within government and the ability to maintain perspectives from 'outside the system'." (226). It is comments like these that anchor Schiff's "Role of Food Policy Councils in Developing Sustainable Food Systems" as an important contribution to FPC literature that emerged after the initial wave of FPC literature. Schiff teased out tensions between the perceptions and realities of FPCs as interviewees recounted them, not as Schiff perceived them. In doing so, Schiff offers analysis throughout the article that plays a supporting role and allows Schiff's interviewees' experience take center stage.

As the number of FPCs has steadily risen, broad generalizations about FPC characteristics are coming with more caveats, thwarting Dahlberg-style attempts at FPC categorization. Organizations producing FPC reports and articles today often find themselves compelled to still answer Dahlberg's simple "what are FPCs?" question but the answer is no longer as simple as it was for Dahlberg 16 years ago. Today's reports and articles about FPC characteristics – such as Food First's (2009) "Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned" report – are exhaustively thorough but rarely let interviewees

speak for themselves as Schiff's work did. "Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned" was informed by a comprehensive literature review, interviews with FPC experts, and 40 responses from a nation-wide survey sent to FPC coordinators, directors, and members. While it acts as a great manual for navigating what today's FPCs are – much in the same vein as Clancy's 2007 "Food Policy Councils" it nonetheless fails to offer insight into how today's FPCs are perceiving their own structure and work. Analysis in the report is very much the work of the authors, suggesting that more in-depth interviews with FPC coordinators, directors, and members is needed to prove or disprove the report's authors' assertions. Given that FPCs operate differently from each other, and given the value of work like Schiff's, today's reports on FPCs would be wise to include FPC coordinator, director, and member commentary in conjunction with analysis.

While the above literature has helped frame what FPCs are by describing their structure and missions in varying degrees of detail, missing from the literature is a discussion about how different FPC participants shape FPC activities and overall success. The first step towards filling that gap would be to better understand how different kinds of FPC members and participants understand and view their work for FPCs. Schiff's semi-structured interviews and use of direct quotes in the body of her article stand out as a method for best capturing how FPCs are working and how FPC participants view their work. While existing literature has helped define what FPCs are – primarily for audiences of elected officials or funding donors

– they are nonetheless hollow. While Dahlberg's pioneering case-study methodology is ideal for capturing FPC characteristics, Schiff's inclusion of interviewee commentary adds a rich element that demonstrates how FPC members understand their work and their council. What is needed now is more first-person commentary from today's FPC participants and members in which they reflect upon their contributions.

Food Systems Planning Literature

The article that first called for putting food systems on the planning agenda is Kameshwari Pothukuchi and Jerome L. Kaufman's (2000) "The Food System: A Stranger to the Planning Field." In this seminal work, the authors point out the notable absence of food systems among the field of planning's concerns – as expressed by the lack of commentary about food issues in planning journals, dominant literature on planning, and graduate planning curricula. Surprised that food issues have received "short shrift" (114) from a field that expresses a commitment to community well-being and focuses on "links among functional sectors, between the public and the private sectors, and among multiple perspectives on community life"(118), the authors thus surveyed city planning agencies in 22 U.S. communities to gain a more complete understanding of why food has been ignored by planners for so long.

Pothukuchi and Kaufman found that, generally speaking, "[surveyed] city planning agencies are at best only slightly involved in the food system arena. In most cases, when they do get involved, their role is reactive rather

than proactive and piecemeal rather than comprehensive" (115). More particularly, the authors suggest that survey findings point to a number of reasons why planners exhibit low levels of participation in food system issues. The authors clump these reasons under the following categories (116):

1. It's not our turf.
2. It's not an urban issue; it's a rural issue.
3. The food system is driven primarily by the private market.
4. Planning agencies aren't funded to do food system planning.
5. What's the problem? If it ain't broke, why fix it?
6. Who is addressing the community food system with whom we can work?
7. We don't know enough about the food system to make a greater contribution.

Recognizing that these reasons are substantial hurdles, the authors go on to suggest a number of opportunities for planners to start participating in food systems issues within the traditional planning avenues. Pothukuchi and Kaufman encourage planners to "strengthen the food system" (119) by:

- Compiling data on the community food system.
- Analyzing connections between food and other planning concerns.
- Assessing the impact of current planning on the local food system.
- Integrating food security into community goals.
- Educating future planners about food system issues.

Within each of these broad opportunities, the authors lay out specific examples for the types of activities planners can do to support food system developments – activities planners are already doing. Pothukuchi and Kaufman thus continually make the argument that there is nothing that planners aren't doing that can't be applied to food systems work, and as such, warrants the quick entry of planners into food systems work.

The "conceptual hole" of food systems in the field of planning that Pothukuchi and Kaufman identified with "The Food System" marked a turning point in planning literature. By "explaining why the food system has a low priority among planners, illuminating specific ways the food system affects the economy, employment base, environment, and health of communities" (121) and by "suggesting directions planners may take to strengthen community and regional food systems and food system planning" (121) the articles left no stones unturned in the discussion on the role of planning in food systems work.

Following the seminal work of Pothukuchi and Kaufman, Kate Clancy (2004) wrote a short article entitled "Potential Contributions of Planning to Community Food Systems" in which she analyzes the Pothukuchi and Kaufman's "The Food System" to offer a more fine grade rendering of their findings and to identify "areas within which planners might more realistically and fruitfully be engaged" in food systems work (435).

Whereas her colleagues had identified barriers and highlighted broad opportunities for planners to engage in food systems work, Clancy takes the

opportunity to entice planners to food systems work "through avenues that seem familiar – peers in other agencies, community groups other than those speaking only about food issues, or design and architecture colleagues" (438) and goes on to suggest a number of very particular planner-specific situations that are ideal for overcoming barriers to planner participation in food systems. Clancy claims four such situations exist:

1. Advocates looking to engage planners in food systems work must first "understand the difficult job planners have in 'juggling private property rights, community growth, quality of life issues, and environmental protection' "(437).
2. These advocates must also "have a good understanding of the geographic boundaries within which their planning agencies function" (437) so as to "tailor their requests to those problem areas that are appropriate" (437).
3. Planners can initially work on traditional areas of focus like smart growth problems and can then work on less traditional planning areas where coordination with "agency personnel from, for example, the health department or an emergency management agency" could be encouraged (437).
4. Civic efforts such as the "healthy cities" movement led by Healthy Cities Organization or the "sustainable communities" movement offer an entre into the world of planning. Additionally, proponents of New Urbanism design can be tapped for their understanding of "the need

to include food in their approach to neighborhood design, sprawl, and quite important, regional rather than local planning" (438).

In the same year that Clancy published "Potential Contributions of Planning to Community food Systems" Marcia Caton Campbell (2005) wrote "Building a Common Table: The Role for Planning in Community Food Systems" and with it offered planners a number of ways to "contribute to the development of a common food systems discourse and a food systems agenda"(349). Noting that the emergence of alternative food systems – starting as early as the 1920s, but gaining real momentum in the 1960s and onwards – has produced many exciting developments but also produced a diverse group of stakeholders with varied, and sometimes divergent interests, Campbell heeds the call of her contemporaries for a "common language to unify researchers, practioners, community members, and disparate social movements in community food security work" (342) by employing stake-holder analysis techniques from the "environmental dispute resolution field" (342). This stakeholder analysis not only identifies "issues around which to build a common framework for action" (346), but also provides planners with a starting point and increased leverage for bridging food system tensions.

Not only does Campbell's article offer one of the most succinct and nuanced descriptions of the alternative food movement's history (including how the many sub-movements emerged and in relation to which issues) but

the article is also the first to suggest that rather than planners having numerous roles or opportunities in food systems work, planners have one primary role – that of "bridging food system tensions" (342). Campbell makes the case for this assertion by drawing upon a hypothetical example of a "declining central-city neighborhood [that] has become a 'food desert' from which the last conventional supermarket has departed for a neighborhood with more affluent households" (348), and then illustrating how planners can act as bridgers to take advantage of the "many complementarities among food system stakeholders" (348) in the hypothetical example to "augment the neighborhood's community food security and increase healthful food options" (348).

Additionally, Campbell offers more discrete examples of how planners can fulfill their role as food systems bridgers depending on whether or not the planner in question is a practicing or academic planner. For example, Campbell suggests that practicing planners can: 1) collect and analyze data on the local or regional food system; 2) participate in specific community food projects; 3) revise local land-use plans and regulations to promote the local food system; and 4) facilitate the development of local food policy councils as a means for creating food policy and for stimulating public participation in food democracy and participate with other municipal and nongovernmental agencies in developing local food policy (350). For academic planners, Campbell suggests that planners can: 1) expand upon early community food systems theory building and empirical research and

publish in scholarly planning journals; 2) include the food system as one of the functional sectors covered in survey courses – as a topic area in courses on central-city revitalization, community development, land-use policy, transportation, or regional planning – or develop a freestanding community food systems course; 3) offer service-learning opportunities in community food systems courses; 4) participate in specific local food system projects or community collaboratives, community-university partnerships, and other public service involving the local food system; and 5) help local community food systems collaboratives or grassroots nonprofits document their efforts (352).

Though Campbell takes time to outline the above discrete planner expressions of bridging, she is nonetheless clear about the main thrust of "Building a Common Table" – to demonstrate that until now, no stakeholder analysis of the alternative food movement has been conducted, and that in doing so, commonalities that can be exploited by planners should be seized to work towards "developing a common language" (352).

Not long after Campbell's time of writing, the American Planning Association (2007) released the *Policy Guide on Community and Regional Food Planning* and with it drastically altered the discourse on food systems planning. For nearly ten years, academics, planners, and community food systems advocates had been calling for planners to more meaningfully participate in food systems, but it wasn't until the release of *Policy Guide* that an established planning organization gave its sanctioned approval of planner

work in food systems. The *Policy Guide* lays out a number of observations about how the field of planning relates to food systems on both a macro, and a micro, level. First, the *Policy Guide* introduces the problem that earlier food systems planning writers and advocates had made clear – that the field of planning has oddly ignored a major community system for a long time, and then goes on to note "converging factors" that have recently led to an increased awareness among planners that food systems work should be a planner concern (1). From here, the *Policy Guide* then "seeks to strengthen connections between traditional planning and the emerging field of community and regional food planning" (2) by offering two broad goals: 1) help build stronger, sustainable, and more self-reliant community and regional food systems; and 2) suggest ways the industrial food system may interact with communities and regions to enhance benefits such as economic vitality, public health, ecological sustainability, social equity, and cultural diversity (2).

The *Policy Guide* then goes on to lay out "seven general policies, each divided into several specific policies" and "[f]or each specific policy, a number of roles planners can play are suggested" (2). The seven general policies that the *Policy Guide* establishes as planner-relevant roles in the food system are:

1. Support comprehensive food planning process at the community and regional levels;
2. Support strengthening the local and regional economy by promoting

local and regional food systems;

3. Support food systems that improve the health of the region's residents;
4. Support food systems that are ecologically sustainable;
5. Support food systems that are equitable and just;
6. Support food systems that preserve and sustain diverse traditional food cultures of Native American and other ethnic minority communities;
7. Support the development of state and federal legislation to facilitate community and regional food planning discussed in general policies #1 through #6 (2).

As further context, the *Policy Guide* reviews "salient facts and trends about how the food system impacts localities and regions and provides some examples of progress being made by planners"(4), including: 1) general effects of the food system on local and regional areas; 2) food system links with the economy; 3) food system links with health; 4) food system links with ecological systems; 5) food system and social equity; 6) native/ethnic food cultures; and 7) comprehensive food planning and policy (3 - 7). These "salient facts and trends" are in the same vein as categories that earlier food system planning advocates had outlined, but again, what is remarkable is their recognition by an established planning organization. Additionally, the *Policy Guide* highlights common planning themes that frame all the general

and specific policies, themes such as:

- The importance of community participation in all aspects of planning;
- The usefulness to all general policies of common planning activities in research, plan-making, plan-implementation, conflict resolution, and consensus building;
- Recognition that all planning occurs in a political context and that political support may be garnered more easily for some issues than others;
- The existence of tensions between and among general policies, which will require dialogue among stakeholders in particular communities and regions to resolve (7).

The *Policy Guide* marks a crucial point in food systems planning literature and in the broader field of planning's relationship to food systems work. Like earlier pieces of food systems planning literature, it is both descriptive and prescriptive – offering general and specific observations alongside broad and discrete recommendations for planner engagement. Unique to this guide though is the fact that this information and this stance on food systems issues and the role of planners in them was directed towards an audience of practicing planners, as opposed to the academic planners that earlier food systems planning literature was primarily reaching.

Following in this same vein, the APA put out a Planning Advisory

Service (PAS) Report by Samina Raja, Branden Born, and Jessica Kozlowski Russel (2008) entitled "A Planner's Guide to Community and Regional Food Planning: Transforming Food Environments, Facilitating Healthy Eating" in which the authors not only define community and regional food planning but also provide examples of programmatic, policy, and planning efforts to promote healthy eating. The authors go about this by, first, broadly mentioning the various kinds of programmatic, policy, and planning efforts, and then, profiling six particular communities that have engaged in healthy eating efforts via community and regional food planning.

While this information is rich and valuable, it is not a total departure from earlier food systems planning literature. Of note in this report though, is the interesting findings of a nationwide online survey of APA members that the authors conducted between September 2007 to January 2008 to find out planners opinion on "their role in facilitating healthy eating through community and regional food planning" (27).

Partially intended to follow up on the survey that Pothukuchi and Kaufman (2000) conducted in 1996-97 that informed "The Food System," the authors received 192 responses to their online survey, with the total pool of respondents representing "a broad cross section of APA membership" (28) that included comprehensive planners, community development planners, environmental planners, transportation planners, and even regional food planners. Respondents represented a range of sectors including government, private, and non-profit organizations. About half of the respondents were

American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certified and about "60 percent of the respondents had a graduate degree in planning" (28).

From such a varied pool of respondents, report findings are particularly telling of how far planners opinions about planner participation in food systems work has come since Pothukuchi and Kaufman's time. Planners were asked to rank 1) the "level of involvement … that the profession of planning should have in a number of food-related issues"; (28) 2) their organization's actual level of involvement in "particular food issues"(29); and 3) perceived factors that act as major barriers to their planning organization's involvement in food issues (31), among other factors.

On the topic of planners' views on their organization's involvement in food issues, the survey found that "[d]espite their preference to be involved, 71 percent of APA member who took the survey report that their planning organizations have no or minimal involvement in food and healthy eating issues" (29). Additionally, a particular finding that shaped this thesis research was that in regards to survey respondents' perceived factors that act as major barriers to their organization's participation in food systems issues, the survey found that

> "lack of education and knowledge appears to be a significant factor limiting planning organizations' involvement. A majority (51 percent) of APA members cited the lack of staff trained in this area as a significant or primary explanation for their organization's limited or no involvement. No other factor received majority support (as being a significant or primary explanation) from survey respondents" (31).

Bearing in mind that the answer "Lack of staff trained in this area" was one

answer among five others (Lack of resources, Lack of political support, Lack of awareness regarding food issues, Organization's work does not intersect with food issues, Lack of interest by planning organization, and Lack of community support for the issue) that respondents had to rank, it is nonetheless telling that out of all possible choices, "Lack of staff trained in this area" was either the best fit for, or closest approximation to, respondents' situation.

Ending the chapter on this note, Raja et al. (2008) go on to suggest that "in the coming years, planning practitioners, professional organizations, and academies will need to help prepare the profession by filling this gap by training planners in the area of healthy eating and community and regional food planning" (31) and it is easy to see that the authors aim for "A Planner's Guide to Community and Regional Food Planning" to be one tool in that broader education effort. Again, what marks this report as unique is the fact that it was generated by the American Planning Association with the presumption that academic as well as practicing planners would be the audience.

Urban Planning Literature

There is ample literature that explores what it means to be an urban planner and what skills and expertise characterize the profession. The research for this thesis has been informed by planning literature from the 1980s to the present, the earlier of which marked a departure from up-till-then given assumptions about planning's role in social and political

movements. The research for this thesis has been informed by a field of planning literature that is process-oriented, as opposed to outcome-oriented (or what Susan Fainstein (2003) calls "design-oriented" (181) movements such as New Urbanism) that focuses on outcomes, with particular attention to spatial and physical elements in community-related problems. One theme found in process-oriented literature that has informed this thesis research is the use of story telling as a medium for demonstrating planner skills and expertise and the belief that first-person planner stories are indicative of common experiences shared among planners across the field (Hoch 1994).

In particular, this thesis is indebted to such process-oriented planning theory as the Communicative Model (Fainstein 2003) and the "Just-city" (Fainstein 2003). The Communicative Model is an iteration of Judith E. Innes' (1995) term, *communicative action*, which itself is a reference to Jurgen Habermas' (1984) Theory of Communicative Action. Innes (184) articulates the characteristics of communicative action according to what theorists focus on:

- what planners do in order to highlight what planning is
- specific planners, not abstract or general planners
- "messy" parts of planning that are exceptions to given frameworks
- the action of planners in the world
- the potential for planners to wield power

The Communicative Model that Fainstein (2003) identified expands upon Innes' communicative action and suggests that "the planner's primary

function is to listen to people's stories and assist in forging a consensus among differing viewpoints" and that "the planner is an experiential learner, at most providing information to participants but primarily being sensitive to points of convergence" (175). This planner function is the cornerstone of the Communicative Model, whereby "[i]nstead of asking what is to be done about cities and regions, communicative planners typically ask what planners should be doing" (Fainstein 176). What emerges from this planner-centered, iterative planning theory is something more than a set of planner practices but something closer to planner ethics. Fainstein explains that the answer to the question of what planners should be doing is simply "that they should be good (i.e. tell the truth, not be pushy about their own judgments) (176).

Fainstein was not the first to propose that planning is more about values than it is about practices. Michael Brooks (2002), in searching for a "bedrock of public planning"(58), takes four of Richard Klosterman's (1985) arguments for planning[4] as a starting point and goes on to examine in-depth the nature of public interest as a planning component. Deborah Stone (2002) candidly suggests that public interest "might mean any of several things" (21) – including "individual interests held in common, individual goals for the community, goals on which there is consensus, things that are good for a community as a community (21) – and Brooks himself notes that while many

[4] Paraphrased as 1: Planning provides the data needed for effective public and private decision-making; 2: Planning promotes the common or collective interests of the community, particularly with respect to the provision of public goods; 3: Planning attempts to remedy the negative effects of market actions; and 4: Planning considers the distributional effects of public and private action, and attempts to resolve inequities in the distribution of basic goods and services (Brooks 2002, 51-53).

planners contest the definition of 'public interest', many nonetheless point to it as a concept that parameters their work. Brooks argues that where theory really gets stuck in the weeds is the fact that the planner's reality of working in the public interest is to serve communities comprised of diverse people with divergent needs. This automatically entails that planners will have to make judgments about which people within a community a plan will serve and that this puts planning "squarely in the realm of values" (60). Brooks ultimately proposes that the bedrock of planning isn't so much public interest as it is "… values – those of the planner, and those of the diverse individuals and communities whom the planner serves" (60).

Additionally, what Susan Fainstein (2003) calls the Just-city model, is a theory of planning that has shaped the research for this thesis. Fainstein explains that, "[w]hereas the communicative planning theorists primarily speak to planners employed by government, calling on them to mediate among diverse interests, Just-city theorists do not assume the neutrality or benevolence of government (Marcuse 1986). For them, the purpose of their vision is to mobilize a public rather than prescribe a methodology to those in office" (186). This is an important consideration for planners, and for planning theory, because planner relationships are rarely linear: with information moving simply from planner to elected official or from planner to public. Considering Just-city theory helps paint a more complete picture of the relationship planners have to various audiences.

Fainstein further explains that Just-city theorists envision urban development as involving "material well-being but [also] relying on a more pluralistic, cooperative, and decentralized form of welfare provision" (190). Implicit in statements like this is an awareness that planners operate in political arenas – regardless of whether or not they are directly working with elected officials – and that an awareness of how planners can wield their unique power is something planning theory needs to mindful of. While the communicative model might have first noted that planners operate in inherently political arenas, it is Just-city theory that attempts to unpack the web of relationships between planner and the public that lie beneath that reality.

One issue that is related to Just-city theory that has significantly shaped the research of this thesis is the role that public participation in planning decision-making processes plays in defining planning. Or said another way, to what extent is planning defined by the planner's role as an advocate for certain groups or organizations? Raymond Burby (2003) is candid about the fact that "[p]lans that do little else besides gather dust on government shelves have been an issue for some time (33) and suggests that the remedy is to have strong plans that "stem from planning processes that involve a broad array of stakeholders" (33). Paul Davidoff (1965) suggested that the planner's role as an advocate was central to the work of planning, and likened the role to that of a lawyer: responsible to a client for preparing a given plan, responsible for knowing about arguments against said plan, and

responsible for educating a client on various issues (legal or otherwise) related to a given plan (426). While this is helpful for understanding the planner's supportive role in enabling other's vision or plans, it is difficult to imagine a planner being able to advocate for multiple stakeholder's various interests. All of this is to suggest, that urban planning might not necessarily be defined by the tools that planners use (in this case, public participation and advocating on behalf of a client) – though in many cases, it may be tough to see how these two things are not sometimes one and the same.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Grounded Theory

For the purposes of this thesis research I chose a grounded theory approach. This approach best addressed the particular constraints of my research question for a number of reasons. First, though a substantial amount of literature about FPCs, as well as food systems planning, exists, no literature about planners on FPCs exists to date. As such, no explicit theories or models of planners working on FPCs exists that I could take as a starting point for conducting my own research. In grounded theory approach, a theory is not proven, but rather is allowed to present itself in the research findings. Research findings are thus, not simply data – numbers, figures, etc. – but are a "theoretical formulation of the reality under investigation" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 24). Given that my research question stemmed from an observation of a severe disconnect in the literature between planner perceptions and urban food systems advocates perception of planners contributions to urban food systems work, it seemed fitting to gather information that would not just be particular, but indicative of a whole world I was trying to better understand.

Second, grounded theory approach attempts to correct for the disconnect that I witnessed in the literature which sparked this research. Among other things, grounded theory recognizes and validates "the nature of experience … as continually evolving; the active role of persons in shaping the worlds they live in; an emphasis on change and process, and the

variability and complexity of life; and the interrelationships among conditions, meaning, and action" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 25). Given that there is a lack of research and solid theory about the relationship between FPCs and food systems planning nearly 13 years after the literature first emerged, I needed a methodology that would allow me to discover patterns or commonalities as they exist today.

Lastly, grounded theory approach was particularly attractive because it advocates for the principle of Theoretical Sensitivity, defined as the researcher's "awareness of the subtleties of the meaning of data" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 41) and "refers to the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn't" (42). I had conducted preliminary interviews with planners on FPCs as part of a research project for my summer internship. As such, I was already acquainted with some of the issues and wanted to bring that understanding to my research methodology. My exploration of FPCs and food systems planning literature aimed to increase the Theoretical Sensitivity I already possessed on account of my initial exposure to my research subjects.

Research Criteria & Data Collection

I took inspiration from Rebecca Schiff's (2008) semi-structured interview methodology that she employed for "The Role of Food Policy Councils in Developing Sustainable Food Systems." I began the process of identifying FPCs and/or planners to profile in June of 2010. I wanted to reach

many FPCs and food system advocates at once, so I utilized two online listserves, COMFOOD and the Food Policy Council (FPC) Program of the Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC). Through both these listserves I sent out an email requesting information about planners working with food policy councils. I explained the nature of my research and asked for the names of FPCs working directly with planners and for the names of these planners. Over the course of two weeks, I received many emails from various FPC members across North America. Some emails were from planners themselves working on FPCs, some emails were from planners who knew of colleagues or friends working for FPCs, while still other emails came from FPC members who knew of councils other than their own who were working with planners. From both these direct, and more second-hand pieces of information about where planners were working with FPCs, I began to chart locations to begin selecting a sample drawn from a wide geographic range.

The initial criteria I based my research population on included:

- Planner status; was the planner a FPC member?
- Length of planner engagement; how many years has planner worked with the council?
- Council location and jurisdiction; where is the council located and do they serve at the city, county or state level?
- Council orientation; does the council engage in policy work?

While many FPCs work with planners and planning departments on either a regular or episodic basis, few FPCs have membership seats

specifically for planners. As such, I had to expand my research population to include FPCs that worked with planners on their subcommittees. Many FPCs have subcommittees or working groups comprised of people who don't hold official FPC membership. One of the FPCs ultimately chosen for research fits such an example – the council does not have a member who is a planner but does have planners who are part of one of its working groups. Additionally, I compromised on the length of time planners worked with a given council. I had initially hoped to research councils that had planner members with at least two years council experience. Trying to apply this criterion narrowed my population significantly. Lastly, I wanted some variety in terms of geographic distribution and chose to research certain FPCs from different parts of the U.S.

Once I had determined which FPCs I wanted to profile, I then contacted either a council member or planner working with said council via email. In most cases, I had contact information sent to me within responses to my request sent out via the COMFOOD and FPC listserves. In most cases, my preliminary interviewees responded to my first request for an interview within a week. Individuals who did not respond to my initial email were contacted by phone. Each FPC I chose maintains an active website – these websites proved helpful for providing contact information for interviewees that were more difficult to pin down. By the end of August 2010, I had established contact and interviewed eight key informants – the director or chair of each FPC profiled and a planner who worked with the council. In

March of 2011 I then reached out to additional FPC members from each of the FPCs profiled in order to triangulate my data sample. I asked the directors or chairs of each FPC I had interviewed in 2010 for the names and contact information of additional FPC members who had worked closely with the planner(s) on their FPC. I was able to connect with an additional one to four FPC members for each FPC I profiled through this method. The total number of interviews conducted by April of 2011 was 17.

My data was collected via semi-structured interviews which I conducted over the phone at a length of about 45 minutes to one hour. In some cases, additional follow-up questions were asked via email. My interview questions were intentionally open-ended so as to permit interviewees to slightly steer the direction of the conversation. My interest in how planners and FPC members perceived planner participation on council activities meant that it was of utmost concern that I let interviewees express themselves freely.

Though this research was granted an IRB exempt status, I nonetheless took steps to ensure anonymity given the sensitive nature of the topic. In many cases I was asking interviewees to comment on situations, relationships, and experiences that were politically sensitive and was also asking interviewees to comment on their colleagues. As such, interviewees were informed that their names would not be disclosed to other interviewees and would not appear in the data analysis or presentation of findings. I maintain a file of each interviewee's name and contact information, as well as

a folder of the interviews conducted. This information is private and only I have access to it.

Interpretive Procedures

As I conducted interviews, patterns in the data emerged and I began coding answers based on recurring themes. Though many planners were conducting activities for their council, I quickly learned that most planners were doing activities that fell within a limited number of categories. I began formally analyzing data through open coding methods – grouping quotes according to key words. Categories that emerged include: 1) Community Insight; 2) Integrating/Bridging; 3) Political Process; 4) Neutral/Objective; 5) Educating. Because I had done nothing but group similar quotes, I felt confident that my concepts reflected the reality of my research population because they were the actual words of my interviewees.

I then proceeded to axial code the data by examining data in relation to these new categories of information I had established. I did this by further examining the quotes within these new groupings to see if any additional or new meaning could be gleaned. By grouping quotes into these categories, data was isolated from its context and compared against other like quotes to determine if the quote could stand-alone as an example of a broader body of meaning. Additionally, I also compared the categories themselves to other categories of information that might prove useful as a framework.

For example, I found it helpful to align planner functions with the stated objectives that FPCs operate under (Participation in the policy

process; Development of programs that address food systems gaps; Find solutions that work systems-wide; Unify strategic food systems partners; Research a community's food system; Promote transparency of a community's food system processes; Hold meetings comprised of diverse food systems stakeholders). In this way, I was able to compare the degree to which isolated quotes could be examples of how planners were animating FPC stated objectives – and in doing so – start to plot where planners tend to more frequently, and more significantly, serve FPCs. As a result, my initial categories became my data concepts and then my later comparisons to FPC objectives became more like properties or dimensions of initial categories. For example, the FPC objective of "Participation in the policy process" is a more fine-grade example of my initial category "Political Process" and "Research a community's food system" more accurately captures my initial category of "Educating"

A conscious decision was made early in the coding and analyzing process to not compare the categories I developed with other sets of planner skills as defined in planning literature and theory. From planning theory literature it was clear that planner participation on FPCs certainly fell within the communicative planning model rather than a rational planning model. Connie P. Ozawa and Ethan P. Seltzer (1999) cite Forester (1989), Healey (1997), Hoch (1994), Innes (1996), and Sager (1994) in order to explain that the communicative planning model is marked by "the creation of meaningful information occur[ing] through social interaction, which includes the planner

in the mix at the political fulcrum. The planner's role is that of a communicator with primary responsibility to facilitate the inescapably selective flow of information between and among various political actors involved in public planning-related activities (259). The planners I was researching were certainly "in the mix at the political fulcrum," and I appreciated that the kinds of planner actions I was witnessing related to the communicative model, but it was not my intention to *prove* that these actions are indicative of a certain planning orientation. Furthermore, my commitment to grounded theory approach encouraged me to let my data construct my theory and framework for me rather than try to pin my data on some existing framework. Ozawa and Seltzer's (1999) break down of planner skills and competencies as well as Ernest Alexander's (2001) later revision to these categories helped me to understand how the field of planning is debating the importance of the planner's skill set in a changing job environment, yet it seemed that a comparison of planner activities on FPCs to planner skills as defined by current communicative model advocates could hinder my ability to be as open-minded as I wanted.

Case Study Rationale

From preliminary interviews conducted in the summer of 2010, I had already informally categorized planner functions on FPCs. Charting these functions in a matrix was helpful for getting a sense of common planner functions but it lacked the depth and richness of information that my interview notes held. Given that the nature of FPCs is to bridge, weave, and

connect sectors it seemed more fitting of my subject to present information that was more comprehensive and interconnected than discrete categories of isolated actions could convey. As such, presenting research findings in the form of case studies became an ideal venue for not only showing how planners and FPC members were talking about planner participation but it could also allow for the inclusion of contextual data. While data findings pointed to commonalities across FPCs, it seemed important to provide an opportunity for differences to be accounted for.

Additionally, the merits of "research that is written in a story-like fashion" (Czarniawska 1998, 13) has been employed by other planners writing on the topic of planners (Hoch 1994) to great effect. Narrative case studies, and 'stories from the field' are sometimes regarded as successful methods for teaching students, more so than other scientific models on account of the fact that stories encourage "sensemaking … the activity of attributing meaning to previously meaningless cues" (Czarniawska 1998, 15). My review of FPC and food systems planning literature had already demonstrated that countless lists, tables, and charts, exist on these topics but that few rich, qualitative accounts exist. Presenting findings in a narrative format aims to address a gap in the literature and provide additional meaning within the FPC, and food systems planning, dialogue.

Additionally, the decision to employ narrative case studies as the medium by which my findings would be presented also enabled me to employ an 'accurate description' method of content analysis. Accurate

description method allows for the researcher to "intersperse their own interpretive comments in and around long descriptive passages and the quotations from interview fieldnotes" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 22). Recognizing that stated FPC objectives were acting as that which was framing my organization and understand of planner actions on FPCs, I wanted a method that would allow for my interpretations to have a valid place in the final product. Interpreting data according to FPC objectives was not something I wanted to turn my back on in the process of writing up my narrative case studies.

CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDIES & FINDINGS

Case Studies: Four FPCs

This chapter details the results of the case study process. From interviews with planners at the city and regional level as well as current and former FPC members (17 total interviews), I offer profiles of the FPCs to provide the reader with historical context, followed by analysis of information that was gathered in the interview process. Case study information has been presented according to the concepts that emerge during the data coding process. I have categorized these concepts according to how they relate to planner training, expertise, and skills as discussed by my interviewees. For example, the concepts Integrating/Bridging and Creative Solutions speak to a planning perspective or problem-solving approach, the concepts of Political Process and Community are indicative of a familiarity that planners gain from exposure, and the concepts Neutral/Objective and Educating are more representative of planner values. Within each concept I offer interviewee commentary about how planners in particular, and in general, animate those concepts and the particular FPC objectives that relate to them.

FPC Profiles

Table 1. FPC profile: The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)
Formed: 2009
Jurisdiction: city/county
Size: unlimited; currently 150 full and part-time members
Housed in: Case Western Reserve University's Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods and Ohio State University Extension
Funded by: Case Western Reserve University's Prevention Research Center; pays for Co-Conveners salary and coalition activities
Leadership: Two paid Co-Conveners
Membership: Volunteer; members not reimbursed for coalition services
Working Groups: Health & Nutrition, Food Waste Recovery, Food Assessment, Local Purchasing, and Land-Use; comprised of one coalition member and additional volunteers (non-coalition) from the community
Relationship with Planners: Numerous planners from the City of Cleveland Planning Commission and the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission advise on a regular basis; not paid for services by Case Western Reserve University's Prevention Research Center, but coalition work is incorporated into regular planning duties at the city and county planning commissions
Details of Planner Interviewees: Three planners from the City of Cleveland Planning Commission, and one planner from the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, ranging in years as a professional planner from three to fifteen
Details of FPC Interviewees: Two current FPC members, ranging in years of FPC membership from one to four

The CCCFPC can trace its inception back to 2007 when roughly 75 people from various area organizations came together to improve Cleveland's food system as part of the Steps to a Healthier Cleveland Campaign, a program of the Cleveland Department of Public Health under the Federal Steps to a Healthier US program. From interests as diverse as hunger advocacy, economic development, and community organizing, these individuals together crafted what would be the CCCFPC structure and mission. Later the Steps to a Healthier Cleveland Campaign directed grant money to Case Western Reserve University and the Cuyahoga County branch of Ohio State University Extension to continue coalition-forming efforts. Come 2009, as the Steps to a Healthier Cleveland Campaign was wrapping up, the George Gund Foundation and the Cleveland Foundation provided the coalition with more grant funding to expand coalition efforts and bring on staff and interns.

The CCCFPC is a great example of how planners working with FPCs draw inspiration from the community and the realities of a place to craft innovative food system policies. What are the realities of Cleveland? A 50% reduction in population, loss of industry and the jobs that went with it, increasing numbers of demolished houses, and notes, one interviewee from the Cleveland City Planning Commission "a lot of vacant land - more than ever before - and certainly more than we need in the foreseeable future." One interviewee pegs the number of vacant parcels in Cleveland's land bank at "17,000 to 20,000 plots" of which there is "3,000 acres with no development

potential" and notes that CCCFPC founders "were astute to recognize early on that dealing with all this vacant land would be a consistent aspect of the work we engaged in and that if we could take advantage of city support for neighborhood revitalization that went back decades, then we could turn this vacant land into something positive, some kind of opportunity."

While the CCCFPC's relationship with planners and planning departments might have been born out of the realities of Cleveland's abundance of vacant land, that is not where the relationship ends. Instead, the coalition – in conjunction with planners from the Cleveland City Planning Commission and the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission – addresses a number of planning-related issues related to food systems, for example revising land-use ordinances that restrict beekeeping or the ability to raise chickens in residential areas, developing urban agriculture overlay districts, or even promoting economic development projects like mobile food cart plans. Today, the CCCFPC often works with planners from the city and county commissions through the coalition's Land Use working group. The CCCFPC also works with individual planners on an episodic basis – either for the life of a project or on some component of a project, like GIS mapping.

Table 2. FPC profile: Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)
Formed: 2010
Jurisdiction: city/region
Size: 21 seats
Housed in: Kansas City Healthy Kids, an area 501(c) 3
Funded by: Kansas City Healthy Kids; pays for Director's salary and coalition activities
Leadership: One paid Director
Membership: Volunteer; members not reimbursed for coalition services
Working Groups: None
Relationship with Planners: One planner who advised the pre-GKCFPC coalition and who now serves on the GKCFPC steering committee; not paid for services by Kansas City Healthy Kids but early work advising pre-GKCFPC was part of regular planning duties at the City Planning and Development Department
Details of Planner Interviewees: One planner from the City of Kansas City Planning Department with nine years of professional planning experience
Details of FPC Interviewees: One current FPC member and two former FPC members, ranging in years of FPC membership from one to two

The GKCFPC was officially formed in 2010 but the coalition's earlier incarnation actually pegs the start of the GKCFPC efforts closer to 2009. At that time, some residents disapproved of a local couple's growing and selling produce from their backyard and the vocal opposition of these residents lead

to the discovery that the couple was in violation of current zoning codes. Rallying to this couple's defense, members from the Kansas City Healthy Kids and the Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture (KCCUA), as well as residents from the community and elected officials, sought to change the zoning codes so the couple could continue their operation. This ad hoc coalition enlisted the help of a planner who had been very familiar with how to change outdated zoning codes and land-use ordinances on account of the work she had just done to "green" the city's development codes since 2004. What followed were weekly meetings over the course of six months in which the planner met regularly with the ad hoc team that included the now Director of the GKCFPC. The Director explains that from the beginning, "[The planner] put in tremendous effort, leading the ordinance revision process to a large degree." By providing code history, clear explanations of code language, and comparative contexts in other cities at their regular meeting, the planner ensured that – for those whose first time it was engaging in the political process – everyone was well-equipped to fully participate.

After successfully changing the zoning codes to permit urban agriculture, the ad hoc group retained much of its core membership and went on to form the GKCFPC which is now housed in the Kansas City Healthy Kids and maintains a strong relationship with the planner that helped with the urban agriculture zoning code revision process. Partly due to the GKCFPC's earlier incarnation's experience with zoning code revisions, the GKCFPC is a coalition incredibly aware of the policy process and how planners can help

FPCs navigate the political context that often frames policy decisions. The planner that still works with the GKCFPC through the coalition's steering committee as well as the GKCFPC members are all very focused on other land-use ordinances and zoning codes that impact not just food systems but also community, social, and environmental health. So aware was the GKCFPC of these issues that when they officially formed in 2010 they structured their coalition to be aligned with the Metropolitan Area Regional Commission (MARC) – a bi-state, multi-county coordinating agency for state, county, and municipal planning.

Table 3. FPC profile: The Santa Fe Food Policy Council

The Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)
Formed: 2008
Jurisdiction: city/county
Size: 14 seats
Housed in: Independently housed
Funded by: City and County government as well as in-kind donations from area non-profits; pays for Director's salary as well as council activities
Leadership: One paid Coordinator
Membership: a mix of government-appointed representatives from both the city and county level (4) and volunteers not reimbursed for council services.
Relationship with Planners: Two planners (one city and one county) are full council members and include council activities as part of regular planning duties at the City Planning Department and County Planning Commission
Details of Planner Interviewees: Two planners from the Santa Fe City Planning Department and the County Planning Commission, ranging in years as a professional planner from four to eight
Details of FPC Interviewees: Two current FPC members, ranging in years of FPC membership from one to five

The SFFPC's formation was the result of two events: one was findings from a 2006 report by the Department of Agriculture which found that the state of New Mexico was at that time the number one state for food insecure persons in the nation, the other was Health & Human Services week, also in

2006. In response to these two events various community conversations ensued, resulting in a Declaration of Food Rights. From there, individuals who would go on to serve on the SFFPC, gathered further information from the community on forming a food policy council and how such a council would be structured.

In 2008 the SFFPC was established by a joint act of the Santa Fe city council and the county commissioners office. The SFFPC Coordinator notes that the SFFPC "could have easily been two separate councils working on their own related issues, but by working together the council looks at the big picture to see how the city impacts the rural, and the rural impacts the city." The SFFPC has been structured to reinforce that holistic perspective: four of the 13 member seats are reserved for government-appointed representatives whose duties include SFFPC participation. Of these four seats, two are reserved for city representatives and two are reserved for county representatives. This structure alone makes the SFFPC stand out, but furthermore, two planners were appointed to the council and serve as full members: a planner for the City of Santa Fe holds one of the two city level government-appointed seats and a planner for Santa Fe County holds one of the two county level government-appointed seats.

The SFFPC is a council very focused on bridging, uniting, and working with various community groups as well as government agencies. The SFFPC is currently working with both city and county officials to examine the food purchasing programs of area senior centers and detention centers. The

Coordinator explains that "for Santa Fe, procurement policies represent a real unified perspective because both the city and the county are jointly addressing the lack of local and healthy food in area institutions." The task of the SFFPC, notes the Coordinator, is to demonstrate that procurement is a food systems concern "where community and policy intersect" and to then translate this intersection into a common language for both the public and elected officials.

While the SFFPC has striven to bridge urban-rural and informational divides, one thing the SFFPC hasn't done is lose focus. The Coordinator cautions that the temptation to take on every cause that comes the council's way is great, but that the wisdom in choosing one task to focus on, is that there is a definitive beginning, end, and reference point in council work. She explains that "regardless of what we take on, we need to be able to come back with policy recommendations - that's what we were appointed to do." Likewise, one planner interviewee notes that now the council "helps the community to help themselves" by farming out causes and program ideas to the area's already strong non-profits and community food organizations. In this way the SFFPC effectively uses the council members', community partners', and elected officials' time wisely, as they stayed focused amongst all the moving pieces of council work.

Table 4. FPC profile: Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC); formerly the Seattle-King County (Acting) Food Policy Council
Formed: 2010
Jurisdiction: city/county
Size: 30 seats
Housed in: The Puget Sound Regional Council
Funded by: The Puget Sound Regional Council; pays for council activities
Leadership: One volunteer Director
Membership: volunteer; members not reimbursed for council services
Relationship with Planners: Two planners (one academic and one private) are full council members and the Puget Sound Regional Council is the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); not paid for services by PSRC and any council work is conducted in addition to regular planning activities at day jobs
Details of Planner Interviewees: One planner from the Seattle City Department of Planning and Development, one planner from a private planning firm, and one planner from an academic institution ranging in years as a professional planner from three to nine
Details of FPC Interviewees: Two FPC members, ranging in years of FPC membership from two to four

In 2004 initial meetings about food policy in Seattle came about as a result of the "Growing a local food economy" forum. From these initial meetings, a group of about eight people formed to act as a steering committee for the development of a local food policy council. In 2006, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council was formed as a result of these efforts. From the start, the founders of the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council were certain of one thing: they didn't want to be one more 501(c) 3 in Seattle's already thriving non-profit community. Instead the group decided that working alongside government could complement existing local food advocates in Seattle, working to impact the policies that alternatively help or hinder these non-profits.

With the Portland/Multnomah County Food Policy Council of Oregon and Seattle's own city/county Public Health Department acting as models, the acting council began scouting organizations or agencies that could both house and fund them. After six long years of reaching out and educating government officials, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council has reached its goal and has regrouped as the Regional Food Policy Council within the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.

For every elected official who is eager to form an FPC, another is equally skeptical, and as the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council discovered, step one on the path to government buy-in is educating officials on the merits of FPCs. By drawing upon resources and connections within the

University of Washington and Washington State University, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council began churning out semi-formal publications – articles, press releases, reports, and white papers – about the importance of FPCs and the area's need for one.

More than informing and changing the perception of individuals, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council's outreach is addressing broader challenges – challenges like the institutional perspective on food systems that various government agencies or departments hold. By equipping government workers with an additional perspective on how food systems work within their department, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council has helped city workers in such departments as transportation, public works, or economic development see that food is another framework by which they can address their departmental concerns. In their new role as the Regional Food Policy Council of the PSRC, the Seattle-King County Acting Food Policy Council members will be taking their well-honed outreach skills and coupling them with policy recommendations that speak to a broad range of stakeholders and partners.

Findings: Data Analysis

Nearly all of the FPCs profiled participated in every concept I identified during the coding process (Integrating/Bridging, Creative Solutions, Political Process, Community, Neutral/Objective, Educating), but as the above profiles indicate, each FPC tended to focus on one or two particular concepts. This focus on certain concepts seemed to be the result of

a broader FPC focus as interviewees often mentioned particular concepts in relation to other FPC activities. As a result, interviewees from the Seattle King County often spoke of the Educating concept while Santa Fe Food Policy Council interviewees focused on the Integrating/Bridging concept, and interviewees from the Greater Kansas City food policy coalition most frequently mentioned the Political Process concept. However, interviewees for the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County FPC were an anomaly, with each interviewee touching on nearly all of the concepts equally. Overall, interviewees commented on the Educating and Integrating/Bridging concepts most frequently and at the greatest length. The concepts of Political Process and Community were the second most discussed concept. The concepts interviewees spoke of least frequently and in the least depth about were the Creative Solutions and Neutral/Objective concepts.

Planner Perspective: Integrating/Bridging

Corresponding FPC Objective: Strategize solutions that have a food system-wide applicability

Interviewees commented on the systems-thinking perspective that planners use when working with FPCs. Few interviewees used the term 'systems-thinking' but many spoke of this idea in other terms, specifically as an integrating or bridging perspective that planners have. For coding purposes I used comments relating to integrating and bridging to be indicative of a wider systems-thinking planner perspective. For this reason, I saw that the FPC objective of "*Strategize solutions that have a food system-*

wide applicability" acted as a more refined category of the broader Integrating/Bridging concept.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Speaking generally, interviewees recounted how planners "help set a context for larger issues and not just the issues in front of us" and how they "give [the CCCFPC] a chance to step back and look at problems with a systems perspective – sometimes we get too focused on the immediate needs, but planners say 'let's step back, take a minute, and ask how does this fit in our city'." Another interviewee who is a planner noted that planners help FPCs demonstrate how food components are connected, explaining that "planning is seeing the big picture – that the healthier our residents are, the better employees they are, the better their kids are. Everything is connected – if we can walk to what we need to purchase, if we can garden on our own lot, if we can engage with a local farmer, those things have many benefits that planners see."

Interviewees spoke specifically of the Integrating/Bridging concept in terms of how city agencies can use their particular concerns in relation to a larger food system framework. For example, one interviewee noted that working through FPCs, planners can reach out to other food system partners like public health agencies. This interviewee who works with the county planning commission explained that "one big mission of the FPC is public health – in its inception planning was about public health so it seems like a

natural fit for planners to work on this food issue as just another extension of that public health component."

The CCCFPC has a very strong relationship with the Cleveland city and county planning commissions and is very aware of how to work among and with government agencies. One interviewee who is a planner for the city of Cleveland, spoke to this understanding when she explained that "when planners engage in food systems work they should draw upon their specialty – transportation planning, neighborhood planning, waterfront planning – and convey to department heads how those specialties are part of an overall food equation." Another interviewee noted that planners are able to "listen to diverse opinions in the room and connect those to a framework that the city understands" and that "interpreting input from people with really different backgrounds and being able to connect that with how planning works in the city is of real value to FPCs."

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

Maybe on account of the GKCFPC's relatively new status, interviewees spoke of the Integrating/Bridging concept in terms of opportunities. One interviewee explained that when planners work with FPCs the connection between the health of residents and the built environment becomes evident and that one of the primary roles of planners is to "encourage food policy people to see that they have lots of opportunities to use land in inventive ways; look to city officials to determine opportunities for locations to grow locally, start community gardens, or plant fruit trees." In addition to these

opportunities, this interviewee suggested that fixing "built environment features like sidewalks (or lack of) and transportation routes" is an opportunity to promote better health in residents because these built environment features "lend themselves to a food system that isn't local but also [a food system] that fosters poor health as residents can't walk to get their food, can't bike easily, and are too car dependent."

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Unlike other FPCs profiled, interviewees for the SFFPC only spoke generally about the Integrating/Bridging concept and not in specific terms. However, the comments interviewees offered were nonetheless insightful. One interviewee nicely summed up how planners participate in the Integrating/Bridging concept when working for FPCs, explaining that "planners ask 'How can we shift systems'." This interviewee went on to note "[Planners] are generalists, in that we know all about the various issues in planning, but we aren't experts. We have a comprehensive view of how a community functions and long-term thinking that allow us to look at connections from the past and see how they function now." Another interviewee suggested that planners help spark "that 'wow' moment," explaining that "planning is an inherently 'mapping way' of thinking about things – it requires an imaginative visualization about place. When people can actually see how planning for farmers' markets, public transit, or planning to preserve farm land serves people's food needs then suddenly people say 'I see where food fits'."

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Interviewees from the Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council had a lot to say about how planners engage in the Integrating/Bridging concept when working for FPCs. This may be partly the result of the council's then-recent move to the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization – the Puget Sound Regional Council. Interviewees were very aware of the council's reach in the area and noted how the council's move to the PSRC will enable it to serve four counties.

Speaking generally about integrating and bridging perspectives, interviewees commented that an important planner skill is their "holistic and synoptic view" that lets them "take a systems approach to food." Noting that planners see how the built environment, public policy, and city departments all work in concert, interviewees commented that planners are adept at seeing that food problems aren't singular – they aren't just about grocery stores or about farm-to-fork programs. Rather, as one interviewee suggested, the planners' system thinking approach enables them to "paint an overall picture" but in terms of "components that can be attacked – for example, if we have an unhealthy community what can we do about sidewalks, about the number of grocery stores about transportation." Identifying attackable components, but always in relation to a larger food system perspective, was something that the Regional Food Policy Council members and planners that work with them, were particularly cognizant of. One interviewee summed up

this concern nicely: “at one time all these zoning codes were about separating the things we are now trying to bring together. ” Additionally, one interviewee from the RFPC noted that this integrating/bridging quality among planners encourages a “break[ing] down of silos” that can ultimately foster “cross communication.”

One example interviewees drew upon when discussing integrating/bridging issues was how the council addresses urban-rural issues. One interviewee explained that the council “got its foot in the door” of the PSRC by “[making] the connection that our counties had ag issues – that we all eat, and it all fits together. We wrote to the PSRC and made suggestions for how food could be addressed through the PSRC structure. We offered food policy suggestions for the PSRC’s 2020 Comprehensive Plan.” One interviewee further explained how the council has specifically addressed urban-rural divide issues: by helping farmers understand the policy process and by helping process-oriented people understand farmers. She explained that there can be “tension and animosity” between urban and rural communities who often don’t understand how each other’s community works. A simple solution to this problem is to establish farmers’ markets. This interviewee noted that farmers’ markets bring rural producers into urban areas where they can meet and interact face-to-face. These exchanges go a long way towards repairing urban-rural divides.

Planner Perspective: Creative Solutions

Corresponding FPC Objective: Develop programs that address gaps in a community's food system

Interviewees commented about how planners use their land-use and built environment perspective to address food system issues. Many of these comments were offered in relation to a kind of inventiveness or creativity that planners adopted when using zoning codes or land-use ordinances to inform which food system projects to pursue. As such, I coded the category Creative Solutions to capture all expressions of planners using a built-environment perspective. The use of the term 'creative' came about from how interviewees discussed this concept and references the fact that this built-environment perspective is new and "creative" from an FPC perspective. Based on these observations, I thought that the FPC objective "*Develop programs that address gaps in a community's food system"* captured what interviewees were saying about this concept and how planners animate it.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Interviewees from the CCCFPC commented on the Creative Solutions concepts in ways relating to how zoning codes and other land-use ordinances enable or hinder food systems projects. I categorized these comments as within the Creative Solutions concept because interviewees indicated that this perspective is something unique to planners – only planners would look at zoning codes and land-use ordinances for their potential to impact food

system programs. Illustrating this point, one interviewee who works in the Cleveland city planning commission commented that "people who want a land bank parcel bump up against codes and restrictions, but my familiarity with code allows me to explain to them what is feasible and not feasible. People start projects from the heart and are emotionally tied to things. I try to get people to see that plans, are a guide and that the code is the law." While other planners might not see this perspective as creative, it was considered an inventive approach by coalition members.

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

Interviewees from the GKCFPC also spoke about the Creative Solutions concept in terms of zoning codes and land-use ordinances. One interviewee praised the planner that worked with the coalition in their earlier incarnation, noting that the planner "was key in explaining how to make [changes to land-use ordinances] happen and to find creative ways to meet goals because some things weren't achievable." Being able to work within the confines of certain codes, or see opportunities for codes to be changed, was viewed by coalition members as a kind of creative approach to problem solving.

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Interviewees with the SFFPC talked about how planners participate in the Creative Solutions concept by highlighting how planners recognize "where the gaps are in a community. " One interviewee remarked that a particular planner who is a council member is "really good at offering

solutions – she will point out some ways to get started thinking about community gaps." While other planners that work with the SFFPC are equally valued, this interviewee made note of how finding solutions to gaps in a community often requires a bit of creative effort and that this effort is particularly valued by FPCs trying to target their food systems initiatives to immediate community needs.

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

The interviewees from the RFPC noted how planners participate in the Creative Solutions concept by working on traditional planner activities in ways that relate to food systems. They also noted that planners can "think creatively" about working with like-minded disciplines like nutrition or public health. For example, one interviewee commented that "planners lend a creative perspective" to food systems work on account of the fact that planners will often reach across the table to seemingly untraditional partners. Another interviewee noted that the planners that work with the council are thinking creatively about urban-rural connections. This interviewee explained that planners on the council are aware of the local community college's new urban agriculture certificate program and are thinking about how to use transfer of development rights to open up land for new growers who come out of this program.

Planner Familiarity: Political Process

Corresponding FPC Objective: Engage in policy work relating to a community's food system

Many interviewees noted that the insider knowledge planners possessed about the policy process, how certain government departments work with each other, and where to find advocates was a real asset. For coding purposes I labeled all comments relating to this appreciation for planners' insider knowledge about the politics of a place Political Process. The FPC objective of "*Engage in policy work relating to a community's food system"* then appeared to be an expression of this broader Political Process category.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Surprisingly, the interviewees with the CCCFPC didn't have much to say about how planners participate in the Political Process Concept. This might be due to the fact that the CCCFPC works with so many planners and has such strong ties to both the city and county planning commissions that many interviewee comments were more targeted and more fine-grade expressions of the Political Process concept that actually fit more appropriately in other concept categories. Additionally, it seems that interviewees with the CCCFPC take the work that both the coalition does and what planners do as intrinsically policy-oriented and as such don't comment on it. One interviewee hinted at this when explaining "[the coalition] wants to support projects by looking at the codes that prohibit them. We don't want to

be the ones to start a Farmers' Market." This comment demonstrates that the CCCFPC long ago determined that its focus would be on food systems policy rather than food systems projects. Interviewees did remark on how they see the Political Process concept working in terms of planners helping the coalition with zoning codes, land-use ordinances, and other policies that hinder food system initiatives. For example, one planner that works with the CCCFPC recounted, "I dealt with a woman who wanted to start a pick-your-own operation but the zoning in her area wouldn't allow her to do it. Our job – my job and the coalition's job – is to make it easier for her to do that kind of thing by amending regulations."

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

The bulk of the GKCFPC's interviewees' comments were about how planners work with FPCs related to the Political Process concept. This was because the planner who worked with the pre-GKCFPC, and who continues to advise the GKCFPC today, helped with a food systems initiative that involved changing policy – in this case some zoning codes. Whereas the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition interviewees commented on how planners deal with zoning code to enable food system projects, interviewees with the GKCFPC both praised the planner's code knowledge and her political knowledge of how code changes would be perceived by various elected officials and community groups. Interviewees first commented on the planner's thoroughness in explaining the policy process, saying, "for many of the people around the table, it was their first experience dealing with the

political process. [The planner] actually gave everyone the history of the codes, explained them, and provided comparative contexts so that we knew what peer cities were doing." One interviewee commented how great it was to have a planner helping with the actual zoning code changes because "we were surprised that we didn't have to write the code changes ourselves. We were all really competent people but that was outside our expertise."

One interviewee expanded upon the planner's assistance with the zoning code changes when she recounted that "when the ordinance draft went to the city councilor for approval [the planner] continued to be actively engaged with us and communicated with us about potential amendments, substitute ordinances, concerns from the opposition." The planner encouraged the coalition to be mindful of the language they chose in drafting the urban agriculture zoning revisions because as one interviewee recounted "we needed working terms for what a 'row crop' was so that residents wouldn't have to get rid of the edible flowers."

Interviewees then went on to explain how the planner that worked with them helped them to navigate the political climate surrounding the zoning revisions. One interviewee noted that the planner "brought experience about how city council members, as well as city residents, would likely respond. We did not know this at all – only because [the planner] had attended multiple meetings with city council members did she know this stuff." Another interviewee elaborated, saying "[The planner] understood the politics of the situation so well – the politics of downtown, of how city council

works and doesn't work together, the concerns of the neighborhood association."

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Like interviewees with the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition, the issue of whether to focus on addressing food systems policies or food systems projects wasn't a question. For the interviewees with the SFFPC, the focus of the council has always been policy oriented. As one interviewee put it "policy is about value – policy is how you realize a community's values. Realizing community values was something the council saw as integral to their purpose and to the purpose of planners. This interviewee added, "if a planner wasn't in touch with that component of policy work, then a planner would be reduced to a technical functionary." Compared to interviewees from the CCCFPC, interviewees with the SFFPC were more vocal about emphasizing this policy orientation. In particular, they discussed the Political Process concept in terms of how planners can introduce FPCs and the general public to the policy process in an approachable way. They also mentioned that planners were incredibly good at dealing with management and bureaucracy – something intrinsic to the policy process.

One interviewee said, "FPCs turn to planners for information on how policy and government works." This interviewee added, "Planners are like the gateway to the political process – they are open to demonstrating how the political process works. The most accessible points to government are

through planning and public health. We in the private sector who need help with learning the process of what is policy and how it applies to food are at an advantage if you have a planner around to help deconstruct that process." An example of how planners with the SFFPC are engaging in the Political Process concept is through using their knowledge of comprehensive and strategic plans to address food systems policies. One interviewee explained that the process of putting food systems initiatives into the comprehensive plan is policy work and the planner who works with the SFFPC helped encourage the council to "do everything we [could] for the comprehensive plan to make sure food is right through there."

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Like the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition and the Santa Fe Food Policy Council, the interviewees with the RFPC saw policy work as a fundamental step in protecting food system projects. One interviewee explained this choice saying, "any movement needs policy work and needs 'box movers' – many folks don't want to do policy work but rather want to 'move boxes'. We knew we didn't want to 'move boxes.'" Though programmatic work and food systems projects are more immediately gratifying and require folks to primarily 'move boxes,' the interviewees with the RFPC saw policy work as a slower, more long-term, but more important work given the area's glut of other non-profits working on food systems projects. Interviewees echoed what CCCFPC and SFFPC interviewees said

about the importance of planners engaging in the Political Process concept through policy work. In particular, one interviewee who is a planner that works with the RFPC neatly summed up the issue, saying "I don't get my hands dirty but I make the policies that support people who do." This planner went on to say that "[the planner's] ability to interpret land-use code is so crucial. If FPCs have lofty goals and ambitions there are sometimes things that are precluded from happening because the codes don't even allow for it." This interviewee went on to echo other RFPC interviewees' sentiments "If you don't have the policy to support the programs that you are enacting then they won't have long-term viability, there will be no guarantee of long-term survival. Policy work is time consuming but ultimately it brings institutional support for change and that has real long term investment." Planners that work with the RFPC discussed the Political Process concept in the broad ways discussed above but they also discussed it in specific ways. One interviewee who is a planner said that understanding the regulatory landscape helped her advise the FPC on issues relating to "policy and zoning development regulations that affect food systems issues." Another interviewee who is a planner recounted that "we found out that we didn't have definitions for a lot of things – a systematic overhaul of our land use code was needed." This planner found that her ability to offer information about specific policy language was of real value to the RFPC.

Planner Familiarity: Community

Corresponding FPC Objectives: Unify strategic food system partners, Cultivate partnerships among a community's five food sectors, and Convene meetings that draw diverse stakeholders of a community's food system

Many interviewees also commented on planner skills and expertise that comes from familiarity with the communities they live and work in. Interviewees noted that planners' understanding of how certain groups within a community do (or do not) work together, ability to juggle various stakeholders, and knowing what the particular planning needs of a community are was valued information. For coding purposes I labeled all comments relating to this appreciation for planners community knowledge as Community. The FPC objectives of "*Unify strategic food system partners, Cultivate partnerships among a community's five food sectors,* and *Convene meetings that draw diverse stakeholders of a community's food system"* all seemed indicative of this broader Community category.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Interviewees with the CCCFPC spoke briefly about the Community concept. Interviewees discussed the concept in two ways: in terms of how planners help ensure that the built environment reflects what the community needs and in terms of how planners can help with community outreach. For example, one planner noted, "a lot of developers come to me wanting to build strip malls and things like that in my planning area of the city." This planner then commented that "my concern is always whether or not the development

will benefit the community, especially one that is disinvested and predominantly poor." This same planner sees a number of requests for urban agriculture projects on vacant parcels in her planning area of the city and her concern for the community's need ensures that competing projects are not disproportionately favored. Additionally, it was noted that planners help FPCs with visioning processes and in this particular case, help the FPC and the city with outreach for explaining how residents want to use vacant city land.

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

When the pre-GKCFPC coalition was working on urban agriculture zoning ordinance changes, the coalition, and the planner who worked with them, had to balance diverse stakeholders including "gardeners, farmers, law students, engineers, and community activists." Interviewees with the GKCFPC discussed the community concept in terms of how planners represent many different communities or stakeholders and the need to be mindful of balancing many voices. For example, one interviewee recounted "[the planner] was aware of how different constituents would view the issue – she knew the folks who would be opposed to the issue because she had been exposed to them." More specifically, "[the planner] could communicate the politics associated with the changing of zoning codes from the perspective of city council, the home owner's association, and residents. It was invaluable because most people on the coalition didn't understand what kind of reaction we would get to our proposed zoning changes." One interviewee commented

that the planner who worked with the pre-GKCFPC coalition was not just skilled at representing various perspectives, but more fundamentally was "really comfortable in a community setting – [the planner] knew how to work well with citizens." This interviewee further commented on how remarkable this was because "I hadn't thought of community organizing as an urban planning skill – I've thought of you planners as technocrats." An additional way that the GKCFPC interviewees saw planners participating in the Educating concept was through the way planners often check their ideas against what is happening in the broader planning community. One interviewee recounted that the planner who worked with the pre-GKCFPC coalition "tapped into her own network of planners to see if the changes we were proposing reflected thinking in the field. [The planner] was interested in peer review and feedback from her network.

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Interviewees with the SFFPC had a lot to say about the Community concept, perhaps because one of the planners who is also a SFFPC member described her title as community planner. The SFFPC interviewees were particularly aware of how the FPC serves the community and relied on the two planners who serve as FPC members to act as liaisons between the other FPC members and residents. One interviewee commented, " If a typical citizen went to a planning board, they would be overwhelmed. If you have a planner on your side to help navigate the system then you are more likely to see change happen at the community level." One interviewee spoke to this

observation, describing the two planners that work with the SFFPC as "direct conduits" to the community, explaining "[the planners] are both very embedded in their communities so they are great link between the council and the community." Additionally, this interviewee saw that the two planners were a liaison to the elected officials who represent communities the FPC serves. This interviewee explained "because of [the planners] involvement in the council, we've always been able to go through them to access info we need. They know the ins and outs and are privy to info that us on the outside don't get." For example, [one planner] is working on an updated sustainability land development plan for the county. That process involves the full planning department and various counties. The council wanted input on that process so [the planner] really opened up the path for us to do that." Following up on this comment, the planner admitted that she views her role as " a rep" who brings information to the council on behalf of the planning department.

Other observations about how the planners with the SFFPC participate in the community concept included the ability to bring together diverse people under a common cause. One interviewee described her work on the council as "trying to connect people already working on food issues," explaining that "sometimes people get a really narrow view of their work and don't always know that other related programs exist with opportunities for collaboration or mutually beneficial projects." Other interviewees saw that the planners with the SFFPC participated in the Community concept through

the facilitation skills they possess – particularly the ability to handle meetings in which diverse stakeholders are in attendance and are brainstorming, prioritizing, and voting. One interviewee noted "I have background and training in how to facilitate meetings" which has helped with making meetings more strategic. This interviewee explained "For a while the council was trying to figure out what we were, so we invited lots of people to our meetings to give presentations about what they were doing - almost like a 'cause of the week.' We realized, though, that we weren't being as strategic as we wanted with these open meetings. My meeting facilitation skills have helped get us focused and we still have people come and present about what they are doing but we've set priorities." Another interviewee agreed adding, "[that planner] is really great at keeping the flow of our meetings and engaging the full board. [The planner] is really good at drawing out the opinions of those around her."

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Like the Santa Fe Food Policy Council, interviewees with the RFPC talked about how the planners that work with them participate in the Community concept by being able to manage diverse stakeholders. Particularly they talked about this concept in terms of planners being able to negotiate and to be diplomatic. For example, one interviewee outright said " it is key that planners have negotiating skills so that they can work stakeholders who are also interested in food issues, like people working in

nutrition." Another interviewee added that "juggling stakeholders is a planning strength – planners bring this because good policy reflects a plurality of voices." Both these interviewees saw these planning aspects of the Community concept as helping the council to more easily engage with a wide range of people and organizations, something that FPCs are very concerned with. One interviewee explained that for FPCs there is a need for "a really good facilitator" and that "there has to be leadership expressly devoted to facilitation" because there is never just one point of view to navigate.

Additionally, the interviewees of the RFPC thought that the planners who work with them were also exceptionally good at outreach to the broader community. One interviewee was aware of the need for FPCs to have "broad representation in the community, including everyone in the food supply chain like producers and processors" and that one way to achieve this is to rely on the planner's ability to conduct outreach. Another interviewee expanded upon this, saying "planners really have the outreach ability and the ability to develop priorities without imposing them. We don't go into a community and eliminate fast food and put in farmers markets – we respect that people know their neighborhoods best."

Planner Values: Neutral/Objective

Corresponding FPC Objective: Hold meetings comprised of diverse food systems stakeholders

Interviewees commented on planner functions on FPCs that reveal a kind of planner value or planner concern. Interviewees remarked that planners often portray a professional demeanor that is both neutral and objective – something FPCs value when they are dealing with either elected officials or the general public. The planners perceived demeanor was often relied on to counterbalance the overt advocacy work of FPCs. For coding purposes I labeled all comments relating to this planner value as Neutral/Objective. The FPC objective of "*Hold meetings comprised of diverse food systems stakeholders"* aligned with this Neutral/Objective category on account of the fact that the planners' professional demeanor was noted as helpful when dealing with diverse stakeholders.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Interviewees from the CCCFPC discussed the Neutral/Objective concept, but not at great length. One reason for why this might have been the case is that the coalition has an incredibly close relationship with both the city and county planning commissions and as such, there might be a sense that these planning commissions have taken on a kind of advocacy for food systems initiatives that normally isn't present in city agencies. As a result, the city and county planning commissions, as well as the planners that work with them, have a kind of imbedded quality that isn't conducive to the

Neutral/Objective concept. However, this doesn't mean that interviewees from the CCCFPC weren't aware of a planner's participation in the Neutral/Objective concept, only that they didn't belabor the point. What interviewees did say was potent. One interviewee commented that "having the director of city planning and director of public health's support at public meetings was invaluable" because it not only showed that the coalition had clout but it also utilized the presumed neutral stance that a city official holds. This interviewee went on to comment on the power of the planner's presumed neutral stance, explaining that "planners represent the needs of the city, but also have an even hand. They represent concerns to folks and at the same time provide insight into how the city is thinking of using the land in question."

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

Interviewees with the GCCFPC spoke extensively about how the planner that works with them participated in the Neutral/Objective concept. In it's earlier incarnation, the GKCFPC was a coalition of public health and urban agriculture advocates who had taken on a cause to revise certain zoning codes that were prohibiting a local couple from selling produce they had grown in their own yard. This topic was incredibly charged and various elected officials did not feel sympathetic to the cause. For this reason, the planner value of taking a neutral or objective stance on issues was incredibly valuable to this pre-GKCFPC coalition. Speaking to this situation, one interviewee explained that "[the planner] had a level of neutrality that the

other area non-profits don't have – can't have – because they are invested and passionate. Having [the planner] give the power point presentation to the city council (which gave an overview of cities across the country involved in urban agriculture) was really useful because of her perceived neutrality by both the government and the groups she was working with. Nonprofits and community/grassroots organizations can provide a ton of testimony but having [the planner] present those testimonials alongside evidence of what's happening in other cities had a lot of impact."

Speaking more generally on the concept of Neutral/Objective, one interviewee explained how the planner that worked with the pre-GKCFPC coalition navigated a charged political environment by "knowing when to be objective" even if the planner felt personally invested. This interviewee went on to remark "It was crucial for [the planner] to be objective – she could only approach the problem from the perspective of how the land looks, how the problem is, what the coalition could expect. She couldn't say 'here is language to help sell your case.' She had to remain objective, not just for [the coalition's] sake but for broader community." Another interviewee expanded upon this observation, explaining that the planner was "a good listener and helped re-frame things in non-judgmental ways and that she was good at valuing what people were offering however it came out of their months. Her capacity to hear, interpret, re-interpret, and be open to the whole process was so helpful."

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Interviewees for the SFFPC discussed the Neutral/Objective concept as it relates to how planners deal with the potentially conflicting needs of communities. The SFFPC is a council very aware of their urban and rural communities and the ways in which these communities see eye-to-eye on various issues. For this reason, it's not surprising that the planners' value of being neutral and objective would play out for the SFFPC in terms of how planners navigate the constituents the council serves. One interviewee emphasized "FPCs and planners have to remain politically neutral!", adding "[we] look at the entirety of communities and don't get involved with politics unless it's to address policy – policy is the only place where politics comes in. Planner objectivity was thus seen as a way to ensure that the council would not "play politics," or favor one community over another.

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Interviewees for the RFPC talked about the Neutral/Objective concept in terms of how planners should be open to new information and new perspectives – that planners should not bring their own ideas to the table that might prevent them from hearing others' perspectives or ideas. One interviewee praised the planner that works with the council saying, " [the planner] was really engaged in everything – even engaged in learning about the farm bill." This interviewee went on to explain that " [the council] is a great opportunity for planners to expand their thinking because there is a

trading of information between members. Being open is a good perspective for planners, especially for learning new aspects of the food systems." This openness was viewed as a kind of pre-requisite so that planners could have an open mind to all the new information they would likely receive by working with the council. Interviewees noted that when working on the council, there is increased access to other experts that allow planners – and other professionals – to learn new ways to apply their skills. To take advantage of this sharing, a willingness to be objective serves all council members and partners well.

Planner Values: Educating

Corresponding FPC Objectives: Research the specifics of a community's food system & Communicate information about a community's food system

Interviewees also commented on the planner value of educating. Just as planners value a neutral stance when dealing with planning projects, so too do planners value educating stakeholders about planning projects and principles. Interviewees remarked that planners often educate elected officials, the general public, FPC members, and other planners about food system issues that the FPC is working on. Additionally, these planners often inform others as to how particular food system issues operate within a larger framework. For coding purposes I labeled all comments relating to this planner value as Educating. The FPC objectives of *Research the specifics of a community's food system* and *Communicate information about a community's food system* both aligned with this Educating category.

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)

Interviewees with the CCCFPC remarked on how planners engage in the Educating concept by informing FPCs of how land is typically used in a given area or what the land-use restrictions are – such as zoning codes and how the codes can be understood. In this way planners help inform the FPC who in turn can inform elected officials, the general public, or other stakeholders. One interviewee explained that "[the coalition] first looked at where there was a lot of land and then approached the planner who was working in that area and asked 'How do you deal with land use issues in this area?'" This interviewee went to note that at an initial meeting with a planner who worked in a targeted area, the planner "reviewed code, page by page, figuring out where urban agriculture projects could be impacted and then walked us through what it all meant and where to enter the problem."

One interviewee with the CCCFPC talked about the Educating concept very succinctly. This interviewee is a planner himself and has been a strong advocate for food systems work as planning focus in the city of Cleveland. Perhaps for this reason, his message was particularly clear, "Planners don't have power on their own: their power is to inform and persuade. If planners are successful, people who do have power and money will buy into what they are suggesting." Speaking more specifically, this interviewee went on to note that the planners' participation in the Educating concept is to not just inform the public or elected officials, to also inform their department heads who may not yet be aware or convinced of why food systems work merits planner

attention. This interviewee said, "It is the planner's responsibility to inform, educate, and persuade their employer about the value of local food production. If there is resistance from an employer to a planner getting involved with food systems work then that planner can bring their employer up to speed and talk about the importance of the FPC." Suggesting that planners can be ambassadors of food systems work to hesitant supervisors or department heads was a real insight into how planners engage in the Educating concept in many ways.

Specifically interviewees talked about how planners engage in the Educating concept in terms of helping elected officials and residents better understand how vacant land could and was being used. As a city experiencing population loss and economic decline, Cleveland has a substantial amount of vacant land and the CCCFPC, as well as city and county planners, are very aware that this vacant land is a pressing issue. Interviewees remarked on the way that planners used GIS mapping programs and land-use inventories to catalogue and show were vacant land was and which land was viable for farming – an important first step on the path towards dealing with related food issues of that land. One interviewee recounted the process saying, "We looked at all the land in the county. First we looked at vacant land, then narrowed the parcels and acres down by size and soil type, then further narrowed down by land that had never been an industrial use, then land that wasn't forested. So now we know where all these places are and it is a great starting point for future projects. Having a good grasp of land and land

criteria – and then being able to show that in a map – is a huge asset." By conducting an inventory and mapping the land, the coalition could better inform elected officials and the general public about potential land-use issues for vacant parcels. One interviewee explained that the vacant parcel inventory then helps the coalition "to act as an intermediary to help folks get their urban agriculture business off the ground."

Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)

Interviewees with the GKCFPC spoke about the Educating concept very specifically – as mentioned, the pre-GKCFPC coalition worked with a planner on zoning code revisions and this experience informed much of interviewees' understanding of how planners work with FPCs. One interviewee recounted how the planner who worked with the pre-GKCFPC strove to make zoning codes understandable for "lay people." This interviewee said the planner helped make the technical language of code more approachable by " put[ing] notes on things to point out, for example the differences between residential and commercial codes." This interviewee went on to comment that the planner was " adept at communicating what the codes were saying and the implications that came with them – she was a good teacher" and that "the coalition was responsible for asking questions about the code which could get [the planner] talking further and explaining things." When I interviewed the planner in question, she added that in addition to being able to explain code and code language to people, "an ability to explain how development works is really important" because

"ultimately it's the market that is going to determine what happens." The planner explained, "You can't just put in a grocery store, or demand that one goes in, if it isn't profitable. You need an understanding of how development works to balance the demands of people and with what's possible." This planner saw part of her participation in the Educating concept as informing the FPC as to where that line between expectation and reality lies.

Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)

Interviewees with the SFFPC talked about the Educating concept particularly as it relates to how planners communicate food systems or planning concepts to the general public. Interviewees with the SFFPC were very aware of the power of visually engaging formats like GIS maps when trying to explain what the council was working on. For example, one interviewee who is a planner explained, "If you say policy, people's eyes glaze over! We need to make the FPC issues relevant and engaging! We don't want to be just another council full of buzzwords with no back up. It's all about framing, education, and outreach." This interviewee added that "planners are really resourceful; if we need information about something we know where to go, whether it's to contacts in the community or to contacts in government" and saw this ability to easily get information as one way to ensure that messages to the public are relevant and engaging.

Other interviewees verified this planner's observations, and noted further that "planners take information and make it digestible." It was explained that "talking about data to people is hard and when you are trying

to educate people who don't engage with this kind of info on a day-to-day basis you have to deliver info in a way that others will understand." Yet other interviewees explained that the planner's ability to convey information in visually engaging ways, or in ways that are more palatable, directly helped the council with grant applications because including maps was viewed as a powerful visual aid.

Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

The interviewees of the RFPC spoke at length about the Educating concept – something that may be partly the result of having one academic planner who is also a member. Additionally, the council was formed by individuals with ties to both the University of Washington and Washing State University. As mentioned earlier, the RFPC had spent a considerable amount of time and effort getting government buy-in and searching for a city agency to house the council in. In deciding that they didn't want the council to be a non-profit, the council then had to explain and defend what an FPC is. One interviewee recounted, "we had to impress upon city council that our stuff is important and we had to be able to back it up. The onus was on us to develop data and a narrative as to why our concerns mattered." This process automatically entailed a heavy amount of outreach and educating, something one interviewee called the process of "dispelling FPC myths." One planner simply explained "you are never in a room where 100% of the people agree.

You need to be able to communicate, explain, and educate so that people understand what you are advocating for."

Interviewees indicated that planners participated in the Educating concept in two particular ways, in terms translation and in terms of providing recommendations. First, interviewees noted how information about food systems often needs to be woven together into a cohesive narrative, especially for decision makers like elected officials or planning department heads. Just as planners were valued for their Integrating/Bridging perspective, on the RFPC planners were valued for their ability to tell a story with various food system components and issues. Planners were particularly valued for their ability to offer targeted recommendations that enable decision makers to know what to do with information. One interviewee commented, "It is not enough to just share info - that's running 25 miles of a marathon! As planners we all want to change the world, we are all working for the public interest, but the question is always how do you get it done." This interviewee explained further "It is important for me to apply the information I gather from research."

Additionally, planners were valued for the way in which they translate food systems issues and help other departments see how these issues work according to their department's terms – an important educating aspect because as one interviewee pointed out "if you understand, and can speak to, the institutional perspective in which a problem exists, then you can ultimately change those institutions." This interviewee when on to explain

"[the council] found that every city office has an impact on food, they just don't think about food in that way. For example the Office of Economic Development (OED) doesn't really see food as a big deal but that's because of the way the OED looks at food. If you cut the pie a little differently from the way the OED does then you start to see billions of dollars of impact and you start to see that food is probably the second largest sector in the city." This translating aspect of the Educating concept meant that for the interviewees with the RFPC, the real work of planners is to "light the light bulbs" that let workers think inventively about how they can engage their departments in food systems work.

Conclusion

The following tables summarize the main activities of planners working with each of the FPCs profiled and present information according to data concept categories (see table 5. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Perspective category, table 6. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Familiarity category, and table 7. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Values category). Answers to my research question, "How do today's planners characterize their services and activities on FPCs?" can be found in the chart's data concepts and in the specific characterizations of planner involvement on FPCs that is aligned under the data concept columns. For example, every planner discussed their work according to the concepts of Planner Perspective, Planner Familiarity, and Planner Values. Planner Perspective speaks to a mindset that is unique to the profession, Planner Familiarity

represents knowledge that planners gain from on-the-job exposure to planning tasks, and Planner Values is indicative of priorities that planners have in regards to the work they do, regardless of whether it is food system work. Since all planners discussed their work according to these concepts it appears that planner work on FPCs is representative of how planners would act, and talk about their work, in other more traditional planning fields. Planners did talk about their work according to their specific communities and specific situations, but they did not talk about their work for FPCs as being bound by these considerations. The fact that all planners interviewed talked about their work according to these concepts suggests that planner services and activities are more or less similar across FPCs and that any FPC – regardless of size or location – would likely see the same benefit that the FPCs profiled in this research received from working with planners.

Specific information represented in the data concepts columns aims to shed light on how planners and FPC members talk about planner work on FPCs. It is interesting to note that the data concepts discussed most similarly across interviewees were the Planner Perspective concepts (Integrating/Bridging and Creative Solutions). This might be the result of Planner Perspective concepts being indicative of a framework that all planners view the built, natural, and social environment through, and as such, would be more or less similar across planner performance. Interviewees were more varied in their language when describing Planner Values (Neutral/Objective and Educating) – something that is not surprising

given that the beliefs a planner holds about their job responsibilities can be applied in more personal ways, and thus, in more varied ways. Finally, interviewees were the most divergent in how they described planner work in the Planner Familiarity concepts (Political Process and Community). This suggests that the specific context that planners are working in affects how their work is described by both themselves and other FPC members. In this regard, it appears that context does impact how planners and other FPC members perceive planner work – at least to the degree that it affects the way in which planners and FPC members talk about planner work on FPCs.

Table 5. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Perspective category

FPC Name	Data Concept: *Integrating/Bridging*	Data Concept: *Creative Solutions*
The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)	Understands how various government agencies participate in "food equation"	Draws upon zoning codes and land use ordinances to better support food system programs
Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)	Changes built environment to promote local food and impact resident health	Works within confines of land use ordinances and other regulations to find opportunities for change
The Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)	Shifts food system through comprehensive view of community functions and long-term thinking	Identifies paths to solving gaps in a community's food system policies and programs
Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)	Connects urban and rural communities through broad food issues and a "synoptic" perspective	Uses traditional planner tools in new ways to address food system problems

Table 6. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Familiarity category

FPC Name	Data Concept: *Political Process*	Data Concept: *Community*
The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)	Finds and amends regulations to ease development of food system projects and programs	Balances land-use needs of community against requests to develop vacant land
Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)	Suggests appropriate policy language and offers guidance on how new policies will be perceived	Understands, and speaks on behalf of, many stakeholders within a community
The Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)	Introduces FPC to government arena by explaining policy process in layman's terms	Liaisons between community residents and FPC to ensure FPC activities are inclusive
Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)	Creates and recommends policies that ensure institutional support for long-term food system projects and programs	Negotiates with, and facilitates meetings of, diverse stakeholders

Table 7. Planner activity on FPCs; Planner Values category

FPC Name	Data Concept: *Neutral/ Objective*	Data Concept: *Educating*
The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (CCCFPC)	Relies on government employee status to speak objectively for FPC at public meetings	Informs planning department head of food system importance and FPC legitimacy
Greater Kansas City Food Policy Coalition (GKCFPC)	Remains objective to allow non-profits and other partners to be passionate	Explains land-use codes, common land-use patterns, and specific land-use issues to FPC members
The Santa Fe Food Policy Council (SFFPC)	Focuses on big picture to resist "playing favorites" with communities or food system projects	Presents information about food system to the public in engaging way, such as GIS maps
Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)	Demonstrates willingness to learn from other FPC members and FPC partners about food system issues	Weaves cohesive narrative of food system to inform and persuade decision makers and elected officials

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS, RESEARCH CONSTRAINTS & FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this case study research have helped to clarify how and why planners are working with FPCs and the degree to which planner functions on FPCs fall within the spectrum of traditional planning activities. A number of regulatory and non-regulatory approaches to strengthening partnerships between urban planners and FPCs are outlined below. These recommendations have been informed by the case study interviews with key informants and from a review of the literature. I offer recommendations for planners looking to approach and work with FPCs and offer recommendations for policy makers looking to strengthen FPCs and their partnerships with various government agencies.

Recommendations for Planners

- *Planners can offer a range of assistance to FPCs.*

The skills and expertise that planners bring to FPC initiatives and projects are incredibly valuable in whatever quantity or form they take. Many of the interviewees commented that planners helping with something as short-term as a GIS map were valued just as much as planners who are FPC members working on long-term, complicated food system projects. Likewise, interviewees praised volunteer planners just as much as those planners who were paid by their respective departments to incorporate FPC work into their daily load. Planners need not presume that the only way to

help an FPC is to be a full member with the ability to work on FPC-related work at their respective planning department or agency. Rather, the FPCs profiled in this research demonstrate that any and all help from planners – whether it be one time on a small project or frequently over the life of numerous projects – is appreciated.

- *Planners can be confident that they already posses the training to help FPCs*

Planners anxious about participating in food systems work can rest assured that FPCs are not looking to planners to have expertise about food. Rather FPCs are looking to planners to help them understand how the built environment, the political and policy arena, and planning systems are impacting food in a given area. Planners can engage in this work by drawing upon the skills and training they already have. Familiarity with zoning code language, how to draft comprehensive plans, how to conduct land inventories, and how to think visually as well as spatially, are just some of the planning tasks that FPCs value.

- *Planners can use FPCs as an opportunity to learn about food systems*

Planners might be apprehensive about joining FPCs because they aren't confident in their knowledge about food systems, but FPCs are actually an ideal entry point into food systems work. Planners working on FPCs are asked to use their planner training and expertise to solve food problems, and in doing so, planners can see how the particulars of the food system play out in a planning arena. Many of the planners interviewed for this research

commented that prior to their work with the FPC, they had seen and understood parts of the food system, but not until their work with the FPC did they see how all those parts fit together. FPCs value the sharing of information, expertise, and perspectives which makes for an ideal forum in which to learn about subjects as diverse as crop and soil nutrients, farmer well-being, nutrition in schools, hospitals, and other institutions like detention centers, and even food processing and distribution methods. FPCs are a wealth of food systems knowledge, and planners welcomed into FPC work will find this information easy to engage with.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

- *Policy makers can house government-sanctioned FPCs in Planning Departments*

  Just as some city planning departments now house an Office of Sustainability, city or county planning departments could likewise house an Office of Food Systems in which an FPC could operate. As mentioned, the Regional Food Policy Council of the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) profiled in this research is housed in the PSRC – the area's Metropolitan Planning Organization. This came at the request of Councilman Richard Conlin who now chairs the council. Likewise, other policy makers forming new FPCs can consider city or county planning departments as places to house FPCs.

- *Policy makers can establish FPC membership seats for planners*

As mentioned, many FPCs determine specific slots or seats for their council to ensure comprehensive representation of an area's particular food system. The FPCs profiled in this research that were formed by an elected official or governing body also had their particular membership slots or seats determined by that elected official or governing body. In the case of the Santa Fe Food Policy Council, it was determined that two seats would be specifically for planners – one city and one county planner. Likewise, elected officials or other governing bodies forming new FPCs would be wise to establish at least one seat for a planner.

Research Constraints

The above findings demonstrate that the case study process and the interviews with key informants did generate information that answered my research questions. However, some limitations to the research should be noted and explained. First, interviews were conducted in two phases – initial interviews with planners and FPC directors were conducted in the summer of 2010 and later interviews with FPC members or other persons who were familiar with a planner's involvement with the FPC were conducted in the spring of 2011. Given the time between these two interview stages, it is possible that discrepancies exist between interviewees from the spring of 2011 and those from the summer of 2010. Given my time constraints, I encouraged spring of 2011 interviewees to reflect upon a planner's work from the summer of 2010 but it cannot be guaranteed that interviewees from

the spring of 2011 didn't reflect upon more current work that planners themselves might not have mentioned in their summer of 2010 interviews.

Of the many FPCs that exist, 3 of the 4 profiled were city-county FPCs. My intention was to profile an FPC from each jurisdictional level – one from city, one from county, one that worked across regions, and one state FPC. Given my research requirement that an FPC would only be considered if it had worked with a planner for over a year's period of time, this significantly reduced my pool of available FPCs to profile. Additionally, FPCs working with planners for over a year's period of time tended to cluster around the west coast and the rust belt – an additional factor that complicated my ability to choose a research sample from different geographic regions. For example, I would have liked to profile an FPC from the Northeast but deemed no candidates suitable.

Parsing interviewee answers proved to be tricky on two levels. First, interviewees rarely discussed a planner's role on the FPC in terms as neatly as I categorized them. Often interviewee comments could have been categorized within two, or even three, of the different concept categories I had determined. Categories are thus somewhat arbitrary and should be viewed as complementary rather than exclusive. Additionally, getting interviewees to comment on what planners did on the FPC, as opposed to what the FPC does, was not always easy. Interviewees often blended these two things – either starting with what a planner did and then veering off to talk about how the FPC does something related or vice versa. As such it was

sometimes hard to tell where the line between planner role and greater FPC efforts was.

Future Research

Research for this thesis was sparked upon learning that American Planning Association (APA) members nationwide believed that the reason their public planning departments or private agencies weren't engaged in food systems work was due to a perceived lack of trained staff in food systems (Raja et al., 2008). What I wondered then was "If perceived lack of training is such a barrier to public planning departments and private planning agencies working in food systems, then what training and skills, do planners need?" This question lead me to research what planners on FPCs are actually doing in order to find practices and discrete tasks that might be indicative of certain training and skills. However, what surprised me in my research, was learning that those in the food systems community (advocates that range from public health officials, to community food security activists, to community development leaders) valued planners' work in food systems for the traditional and general planning skills that all planners are equipped with – regardless of specialty or expertise. Planners across the professional spectrum were all primarily valued for attributes such as a systems-thinking approach, an understanding of the built environment, and a familiarity with the policy process and political arena of a given community. From my research, it seemed that participants outside of planning seemed to understand why planners were valuable in food systems work. My

interviews with FPC members, and the planners that work with them, taught me that not a single food systems advocate was turning to planners for help with food per se but rather planner expertise that transcends topic. Given that this is the case, that which sparked my interest in this research is all the more confounding – planners perceived their existing training as planners to be insufficient for food systems work, yet food systems advocates seek out planners for that which planners already do and know.

From case study research I am not able to generalize to the FPC population as a whole, however this research does provide evidence that planners are equipped with skills that FPCs value. I would suggest future research that follows up on Raja et al.'s 2007 survey that sparked this thesis research. Given the findings of this research, and the structure of Raja et al.'s 2007 survey, a number of considerations arise that warrant re-examination. If Raja et al.'s survey is conducted again, in the exact same structure as the 2007 version, it is possible that with the passage of four years, respondents will answer differently and produce different survey results that more align with the findings of this thesis research. Additionally, future research could be conducted that re-structures Raja et al.'s 2007 survey to account for such concerns as,

- Sample population; Raja et al.'s 2008 survey methods included disseminating the survey through the American Planning Association's bi-weekly *Interact* newsletter. To encounter the survey, respondents had to first open the email that *Interact* is sent through, notice the web link that

directed interested individuals towards the survey, and then actually filled out the survey.

- Survey structure; forcing respondents to rank a list of answers (Lack of resources, Lack of staff trained in this area, Lack of political support, Lack of awareness regarding food issues, Organization's work does not intersect with food issues, Lack of interest by planning organization, Lack of community support for the issue) as possible explanations for what accounts for the most significant barrier to a planning organization's involvement in food and healthy eating issues, could have led to inaccuracies.
- Survey bias; it is possible that the way certain questions were framed, or the way certain provided answers were worded, led to inaccuracies. This is true for nearly all surveys but given that the field of food system planning was just beginning to emerge in 2007 it is possible that those who created the survey had particularly strong feelings, ideas, or presumptions about what the general population of planners might think about food system work.

Implications

The topics of food systems and food systems work are important to the field of planning. Sketching out the exact ways that planners are currently participating in FPC activities can help the field of planning better understand how to approach and interact with both food systems and various food systems workers. This thesis has attempted to help practicing

planners see how the skills they are already equipped with have a valued place in food systems work, and that as such, the field of planning is already aligned with the food systems work of today. Though much has been said about why planners should participate in food systems work, little to date has articulated just how planners are working with FPCs and what exactly they do with their planning skills for FPCs. The existence of academic literature that explores the broad principles of planner involvement in food systems suggests that planner work for food systems has at least been theoretically explored and discussed. This research aims to add to that conversation by offering real life examples of the various ways practicing planners are working on FPC initiatives in the hopes that the exact nature of their work has been illuminated.

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