

Health Action:
Planning for a Healthy Sonoma County

Meeting # 10
MEETING SUMMARY

February 6, 2009
8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
1030 Apollo Way, Road, Santa Rosa

Attendance: *Co-Chairs:* Supervisor **Valerie Brown** and Health Services Director **Rita Scardaci**; *Health Action Members:* **Gina Belforte**, Rohnert Park City Council; **Jane Bender**, Santa Rosa City Council; **Tom Chambers**, Healdsburg City Council; **Oscar Chavez**, Community Action Partnership Sonoma County; **Judy Coffey**, Kaiser Permanente; **Mike Cohill**, Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa; **Walter Collins**, United Way Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake; **Terry Davis**, Community Volunteer; **Nancy Dobbs**, KRCB Television and Radio; **Jerry Dunn**, Human Services Department; **Naomi Fuchs**, Southwest Community Health Center; Dr. **Bo Greaves**, Sutter Medical Group of the Redwoods; **Sarah Glade Gurney**, Sebastopol City Council; **Judy House**, PsychStrategies; **Pat Kilkenny**, Kilkenny Advisors; Dr. **Mary Maddux-Gonzalez**, Public Health Officer; **Suzy Marzalek**, Community Volunteer; **Andrew McGuire**, Trauma Foundation and Health Care for All California; **David Rabbitt**, Petaluma City Council; **Carol Russell**, Cloverdale City Council; **Lisa Wittke Schaffner**, Sonoma County Alliance; **Mary Szecsey**, West County Health Centers; **Carl Wong**, Sonoma County Office of Education.

Welcome and Introductions

- Rita Scardaci reviewed the Health Action timeline and introduced new members representing the city councils. New council members include:
 - ✓ Tom Chambers, City of Healdsburg
 - ✓ Carol Russell, City of Cloverdale
 - ✓ Gina Belforte, City of Rohnert Park
 - ✓ Sarah Gurney, City of Sebastopol
 - ✓ Cheryl Scholar, Town of Windsor

- Scardaci provided an overview of the various groups that are working between meetings to keep us moving toward our objectives. The Steering Committee is providing guidance and oversight. The project design teams are preparing plans for implementation and the Financing Strategy Workgroup is developing financing recommendations. We'll hear their reports at the April 3rd meeting. Scardaci acknowledged the excitement and impatience to start doing things and taking action. Today's meeting and the next meeting set the stage for the launching and implementation of Health Action publicly. Scardaci reminded Health Action members that this is an important time for them to stay involved and at the table to guide these efforts.

- New co-chair Supervisor Valerie Brown expressed her enthusiasm for Health Action's work and stressed that we are working on these issues during very exciting times. Supervisor Brown said that there is a "sea change" in the nation and the county and that health and health care reform are very prominent on the agenda. She informed the group that as President of the National Association of Counties she has selected health care reform as her priority issue and that a lot of counties are looking at health and wellness. She said that this

puts Health Action in a good position to move its initiatives forward. Supervisor Brown introduced Supervisor Shirlee Zane as her alternate as co-chair to Health Action.

Initial Community Engagement Strategy

- Barbara Graves presented recommendations from the Community Engagement project design team on launching Health Action in the community this spring and asked for agreement from Health Action members on the direction of this approach so that we can move forward to implementation.
- The design team members included representatives from the following organizations: American Health Association, Area Agency on Aging, Community Activity and Nutrition Coalition, County Health Department, Healthy Eating, Active Living initiative, Kaiser Permanente, County Regional Parks, Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, St. Joseph Health System – Sonoma County, and Sonoma County Transportation Authority. Health Action communications and marketing consultants also participated in the design process.
- The Community Engagement design team was asked to focus on two of Health Action’s main goals: 1) strengthen and support a culture of active, healthy living and, 2) To increase physical activity for all residents. To accomplish these goals, the Action Plan calls for us to:
 - Create long term partnerships with local governments, business, health and other community organizations to advance the 20-20 Vision.
 - Develop a community-wide social marketing campaign to create a broad behavior change movement.
 - Implement a countywide walking initiative as the first step in community engagement .
 - Advocate for improvements in community infrastructure to support walking, biking and other physical activity.
- The Community Engagement design team recommends that Health Action’s first project should be a broad “call to action” that engages as many people as possible and recommends starting with a countywide walking initiative.
- Graves reviewed the rationale for starting with walking as Health Action’s first project. Key reasons include:
 - Walking is an activity that most people, regardless of age or income, can do without a lot of experience, expense or equipment.
 - We can begin with existing resources. Get going now by leveraging existing programs and efforts.
 - It will allow us to have some early activity and “wins” while we work on developing resources and programming for some of our longer-term, more complex projects.
 - It will build on the high level of community interest and support for walking. In our community outreach, we discovered a long list of enthusiastic potential partners.
- The design team heard from many organizations that currently sponsor walking programs or walking groups that they are eager to become a part of a larger movement and vision. Additionally, a focus on walking will create synergy with the ideas that are being developed by the other project design teams (e.g., Safe

Routes to School, employee wellness programs, and links to community resources through medical homes).

- With this in mind, Graves explained that the design team is proposing iWALK Sonoma, a countywide community engagement campaign designed to: 1) brand Health Action in the community and set the stage for future projects and initiatives, 2) attract major long-term partners, 3) mobilize significant numbers of people to join existing walking groups or form new ones, 4) increase the availability of walking groups in Sonoma County communities, and 5) increase the walkability of communities all over the county.
- Graves showed some preliminary images developed by the project design team to promote iWALK. The design team developed the concept for iWALK after researching best practices across the county and based its design work on key findings from that research:
 - The social support provided by walking groups can be a powerful influence on individuals to begin and continue walking.
 - Across ethnicities and social strata, women and seniors are the “early adopters”.
 - Ongoing support is essential to sustaining walking groups and programs.
 - The most powerful factor in determining whether individuals continue walking, once they have started, is community “walkability”.
 - Walking groups often evolve into advocacy groups for improved physical activity infrastructure.
- Next, the team reached out to potential major partners and learned that there is enthusiastic interest among cities, senior centers, parks and open space and many other organizations to implement iWALK. Using this information, a team designed a campaign in two phases.
- **Phase 1 (March 1 – May 10)** is focused on identifying existing walking programs and groups in the community, working with major partners to publicize and promote them. We will begin by formalizing partnerships with interested cities. If this project is approved, Graves said that the project will begin with presentations to city councils on Health Action’s Priorities for Action to request their support in acting as “local hosts” for city-specific iWALK activities. At the same time, we will be working to formalize partnerships with Regional Parks, the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, major healthcare organizations and others. During the week of May 4th, we plan a succession of media events to launch each city’s iWALK program – for example iWALK Petaluma – with local partners such as the chamber, area employers, senior centers, schools, recreation providers, healthcare organizations – each highlighting their role in creating and supporting iWALK Petaluma. Phase I also includes the launch of the iWALK Sonoma website - designed to link people with existing walking groups in their communities, provide information and resources to help individuals, employers, and others create walking programs. The site will become a platform for walking group contests and challenges, and a clearinghouse for maps of local walks and hikes, and links to other physical activity opportunities.
- **Phase II will begin in May 2009** and will focus on increasing the number of organizational partners through continued outreach and increasing the number of walking groups by promoting the creation of new walking programs by employers, community organizations, recreation providers, neighborhood groups,

and individuals. Many of these new efforts will be targeted to high-risk communities and populations and to opportunities to create high levels of participation i.e. walking school bus, employer-sponsored groups etc. The iWALK website will be enhanced with additional resources and online networking features to allow users to connect with each other and contribute resources of all kinds, assess and promote enhanced community walkability, and link to other Health Action programs.

- Graves asked for agreement from Health Action members that staff and partners should proceed with the iWALK campaign and described some of the ways that Health Action members could help with initial community engagement effort, including: becoming Health Action spokesperson to present resolutions or partnership requests to cities and major alliances and organizations; participating in launch events (tentatively week of May 4th); and becoming media spokespersons during “launch week”.
- Health Action members expressed approval and excitement about the proposed iWALK campaign. Comments are summarized below:

Promotional partnerships

- Link to May 9th Human RaceAdd logo to Human Race t-shirt;
- Put a small iWalk sticker (like “I voted”) on everyone at race
- Community Health Centers can distribute iWALK information to patients
 - Guerneville (Russian River clinic) site for launch (?)
- Cities should sponsor iWALKcontests/challenges i.e. Senior Center vs. Boys & Girls Club
- Link up with Coast Walk

Comments on iWALK images

- More diversity in photos, more real people of varying sizes, ages, weights etc.
- All images should contain Health Action label (can be small)
- Need to show shoes, and show people walking safety
- Consider “weWALK”

Ideas for walks/hikes and revenue generation

- Sell booklet on Top 10 best hikes (describe 1.5 miles rate difficulty)
- Target dog park groups – love to parade their dogs
- Target garden clubs
- History walks
- Local tourism angle – use iWALKs to promote visitors
- Link to dog walkers – sell dog tags that say iWALK

General

- Once iWALK is mature, transition to “iMOVE” to promote other physical activities
- Accommodate disabilities, promote safety for all ages
- Need to reach non-urban unincorporated areas
- Link iWALK to Climate Protection Campaign (reducing carbon footprint, carbon credits for walking?),
- How will we know if iWALK is successful? (Have groups report in # participated, # of miles)
- Develop program to donate shoes for low-income walkers
- Use the iWALK website to report walkability challenges, problem areas

Health Action Structure and Process

- Judy House presented an overview of Steering Committee recommendations. The Steering Committee has been convened to provide direction and oversight to Health Action. Current Steering Committee members are (in alphabetical order): Jane Bender, Oscar Chavez, Bo Greaves, Judy House, Pat Kilkenny, Rita Scardaci, and Carl Wong. Steering Committee meetings will be held monthly and were held in December and January.
- In order to create a structure and process that is effective and sustainable, the Steering Committee proposed the following 4 updates to the Health Action charter:
 1. Health Action planning and implementation activities will be guided by a Steering Committee comprised of 5-7 members who have played leadership roles in leading committees and represent the diverse membership of Health Action membership.
 2. Health Action will continue to have two co-chairs. One will be appointed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors from among their members. One will be recommended by the Health Action Steering Committee from the Health Action membership and approved by Health Action. This second co-chair will not be employed by the County of Sonoma.
 3. Membership on Health Action will include broad representation of community leaders with diverse and balanced perspectives on health issues. Steering Committee will recruit and update membership as needed to fulfill desired representation. Health Action members may submit potential member nominations to the Steering Committee for consideration.
 4. Health Action will convene quarterly as a full body, but will actively involve Health Action members throughout the year in ad hoc work groups and to communicate with and engage other stakeholders in Health Action implementation activities.
- After discussion, Health Action members approved proposed changes #1, #3 and #4 above, but requested further clarification on roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee. The group did not agree to proposed change #2 and felt this issue needs more discussion before any changes to the co-chair configuration are made. This proposed change was tabled for further discussion.
- In addition to the 4 changes recommended by the Steering Committee, some Health Action members suggested that it may be necessary to allow designated alternates for elected officials. The existing Health Action charter does not allow for alternates because the success of Health Action depends on the ongoing commitment and consistent attendance of the key community leaders that have been invited to become members. The group agreed that designated alternates would be allowed only for elected officials and that staff should work with the Steering Committee to come up with a protocol to handle this.
- Given the change to quarterly meetings, Judy House announced that the remaining meetings in 2009 will be as follows: April 3, July 10, September 4, and

December 4. A revised meeting schedule will be sent out to all members and will be posted on the website.

- The Steering Committee also discussed the need for Health Action to develop a fiscal agent to receive and disperse funds on behalf of Health Action. Pat Kilkenny said that this idea will continue to be discussed in the Financing Strategy Workgroup. Several ideas have been discussed including creating an ongoing relationship with an existing organization, such as the United Way, to serve in this capacity. We will need a community-based 501c3 to accept donations on behalf of Health Action. The Financing Strategy Workgroup will bring additional ideas back to Health Action at the April meeting.

Update on Project Design Team progress

- Ellen Bauer provided a brief overview of the 5 project design teams and their work since convening in November 2008. They have been reviewing the work of the task forces, community meetings, best practices and the criteria developed by Health Action. They are currently working to develop specific project options to bring back to Health Action at the April 3rd meeting.
- Bauer also announced that the Health Department has been working with the Healthy Communities Institute in Berkeley to launch an innovative community website (www.healthysonoma.org) to provide easy access to non-biased local health and quality-of-life information and resources. The website will be a resource for Health Action and other community partners to help track progress toward our 2020 goals and objectives and will launch this spring. The Community Engagement design team will help to identify and test ways that Health Action can benefit from this resource to create visibility for and engagement in the countywide walking effort and other upcoming Health Action initiatives.

Public Comment

Closing Comments

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 3, 2009, 8:00 –10:00 a.m. at North Coast Builders Exchange at **1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa.**

For more information please contact Ellen Bauer at 565-6684 or ebauer@sonoma-county.org or visit the Health Action website at: www.sonomahealthaction.org