

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Get Fresh! MARP Report Provides a Snapshot of the Fort Greene & Clinton Hill Food Environment and Generates Actions for Change

FORT GREENE & CLINTON HILL, BROOKLYN — The Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project LDC (MARP) has released a comprehensive Community Food Assessment (CFA) titled ***Get Fresh! Food access, food justice and collective action in Fort Greene & Clinton Hill***, a report researched and created in collaboration with local residents and food advocates. The report serves as a “snapshot” of the local food environment in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill, and will inform community-led efforts to improve access to fresh food, create opportunities for nutritional awareness and education, and strengthen advocacy efforts. Several informational presentations will be made throughout the community in the months of December and January to share findings and information about the first three projects resulting from the CFA.



Beginning in January 2011, MARP spearheaded a Community Food Assessment for Fort Greene & Clinton Hill with help from members of the Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Community Food Council (CFC) Steering Committee and a number of community volunteers. MARP also worked closely with City Harvest, who has conducted CFAs in the past. The purpose of this CFA was to understand the local food system, to identify both the opportunities for and barriers to accessing fresh, healthy food, to bring to light the specific issues facing various stakeholder groups, and to inform and create community-driven projects to improve our local food environment. The CFA incorporates and builds upon previous research completed by other community organizations as well as comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data including mapping, 52 store assessments, 266 resident surveys, 7 focus groups and 23 interviews with advocates and experts working on food- and health-related issues.

Among several findings, the report concludes that access to quality, affordable fresh food is limited; SNAP/EBT acceptance by higher-quality retailers is low; and residents are ready and eager to learn more about ways of improving their own nutrition. Members of the Fort Greene-Clinton Hill CFC utilized the results to identify gaps in available services, and to generate 29 recommendations for new projects, policies and advocacy efforts to bridge those gaps, all of which are listed in the full CFA report. The CFC has identified three projects to tackle in the short-term: 1) increasing the number of food retailers that accept EBT; 2) creating grocery shopping tours to help consumers make healthier choices; and, 3) ‘closing the loop’ on holiday food donations. The latter project involves encouraging those who are collecting food donations (and toys and coats) to deliver them to local pantries and churches for local distribution. Several merchants have already volunteered to serve as donation drop-off sites including Five Spot (459 Myrtle), Maggie Brown (455 Myrtle), Green in BKLYN (432 Myrtle), Kiini Iburu (388 Myrtle), Brooklyn Stone Boutique (366 Myrtle), Cake Joy (364 Myrtle), Fort Greene SNAP (324 Myrtle) and St. Joseph’s College Tuohy Hall (245 Clinton). St. Joseph’s College will be donating farm-fresh produce to area pantries as well.

"We knew that these issues existed all along," explains Dominique Bryant, Myrtle Avenue Farmstand manager and member of the Fort Greene-Clinton Hill CFC, "but now this report provides actual proof of what's really happening here, and how difficult it is to find fresh, affordable food."

Informational presentations will be held at multiple locations throughout the community where people can learn more about the findings, and find out how to get involved in upcoming initiatives. The first presentation will take place at Child Development Support Services ([352-358 Classon Avenue](#)) on Thursday December 8, 2011. The remaining presentations will be scheduled during the months of December and January. To request a presentation at your organization or community meeting, to attend a presentation, to participate in any of the projects described above, or to find out more about the Fort Greene-Clinton Hill Community Food Council, contact Kassy Nystrom at kassy@myrtleavenue.org or 718-230-1689. Copies of [***Get Fresh! Food access, food justice and collective action in Fort Greene & Clinton Hill***](#) can be downloaded from MARP’s website.

MARP’s *Myrtle Eats Fresh* initiatives are supported by the New York Community Trust and Atlantic Philanthropies as part of the Community Experience Partnership, with additional support from Community the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA).

CONTACT: Meredith Phillips Almeida
meredith@myrtleavenue.org, 718.230.1689

