

Community Garden Council Meeting
Minutes (7:00 pm May 19, 2015)

Present: Anthony, Lorraine, Donna, Jeremy, Jill, Carol
Absent: Lauren, Shane, Eva, Jason, Greg

- I. Meeting called to order by Anthony
- II. Approval of last meeting's minutes – defer Carol to send out by e-mail
- III. Visitor business (introduce visitors)
 - a. Stephanie, Joel and Donna were introduced and welcomed
- IV. Business
 - a. Review new website: Stephanie provided an overview of the new website online. Everyone thought it was well done and congratulated Stephanie and the working group on their excellent work. Stephanie will send out thank-you notes to working group members on behalf of the Community Garden Council. Stephanie experienced some troubles with placing gardens on the map in the correct location. Anthony suggested using the Google map already done on old website or using the satellite function on the map to visualize the garden and place the marker in the correct spot.

Feedback to consider:

 - Add section on multiculturalism – add translated bookmarks, and cultural guide, once approved by Public Health. (this was a resource requested by garden coordinators)
 - Add Willow Greens to the accessible garden page
 - Link accessible gardens to the map
 - Would like to have a donate button or ability for advertising down the road – need structure in place to administer the funds first.

Action: Donna will provide a description of the accessible components available at Willow Green.
 - b. Website Survey: Joel, a practicum student with Public Health will be conducting an online survey of garden coordinators and gardeners for feedback into the website. It will be one survey but will separate out coordinator and gardener responses. Joel provided an overview of the survey sections:
 - i. Experience of the website user re: functionality and information
 - ii. Perceptions of roles/responsibilities
 - iii. Interest in community building/social events

Feedback:

- See above suggested additions to the website also noted it is premature to ask how much they are using the website as it has just been launched.

c. Compost delivery report (Anthony, Michelle). Anthony had 13 requests for compost. Delivered 8 loads to new gardens or those that did not get a load last year. Most of the garden turned down did get a load last year. Those turned down got their orders back yesterday. Anthony sent a thank-you card to Jim @ landfill. Adams Trucking was paid with a surplus of \$100.00 which Lorraine will deposit. Michelle rode the truck – started at 7:30 am ended 3:30 pm.

Action: Anthony to send thank-you card to Michelle.

d. CGC Waiver Form. The waiver was reviewed. Changes were suggested taking Greg and other committee members' views into consideration. Members felt a form did provide a suggested code of conduct – some gardens may have their own bylaws and it is not meant to replace those. (Whether gardeners choose to abide or not is their responsibility, but we are providing due diligence by suggesting these measures). The personal safety information has been researched and is provided by the landscape association.

Action: Jill will make revisions and send out to council. To be voted on next meeting.

e. Community Garden Council Incorporation. The issue is to continue the great work we are doing we need funding. We no longer have sponsorship support. To administer our own funds we need to be a registered charity. To be a registered charity we need to be incorporated.

Carol sent out incorporation materials provided by Gil and distributed a chart comparing registered trusts and incorporation. Lorraine advices council would need to stay within budget to proceed. The largest pro is that the council will be able to help those gardens who can not access funding on their own and the council would be able to accept donations and have more resources to support the gardens. Another pro is that some liability coverage is provided to council members.

If council agrees to go this route; next steps are to:

- Have all council members vote – several are away
- If yes, recruit someone with an accountant or legal background who may experience with the forms

- Conduct a name search and application at the federal level.
- Jill knows an accountant that may be interested in helping. Richard from Good Earth might be willing to help if asked. Gil did provide names of local lawyers his organization uses. This work would likely have to be pro bono.
- Once incorporated, there are some board membership requirements – which were reviewed.

Action: Council to vote next meeting

Look into cost.

- f. News: Preston Garden approval. Carol provided an update on the Preston Community Garden. The group persevered against neighbor antagonism. They developed partnerships with the local library for children’s programming, donated over three hundred pounds of food to the local food bank and offered yoga classes in the garden. The garden’s one year pilot was reassessed and City of Cambridge Council voted to keep the garden despite negative lobbying.

Jeremy provided an update on the Salvation Army garden. They partnered with Kim Fellows at Pollination Canada and will be able to install a fruit hedge to attract pollinators. The garden plans to offer workshops. Jeremy just offered a workshop on soil.

Action: Jeremy to post upcoming events on website.

- g. News: Garden Event (tour + talk). Small turnout for the event. Jill thought about 18 people participated. The tour of the garden was nice and provided a way for council members to connect with the gardeners at the garden. Gwen provided a presentation on “potager”. She was well spoken and offered many great ideas on edible landscaping. It was a great opportunity to speak to a master gardener and ask questions.

Some of us were disappointed with the turnout. We had too much food – will ask for RSVP for future events.

Idea for next workshop:

- Partner with Jeremy at Salvation Army – tour their garden
- Ask Gil to talk about cold frames – maybe Andy copy could demo how to build one?
- People like food demo’s – ask a chef to demo a fall vegetable like squash.
- Host on a Saturday morning late September – maybe a better turnout

h. Willow Green water access: Donna provided an update on Willow Green. They have expanded into two gardens but they have lost their water source. The city did reimburse the neighbor for garden usage but the neighbor withdrew that support. Now they have to go down a steep bank to access water from the creek. Willow Green is asking council support in approaching the city for a policy around water access for the gardens. Carol sent an e-mail to Dan Linka at utilities asking for the current practice. She heard that the city support is changing and has asked Dan for clarification. Greg is away currently but council will ask his support a policy lead once he returns.

Action: Carol will communicate response from Kitchener Utilities.

V. Recurring business

a. Financial Report (Lorraine)

Lorraine filled in a Regional vendor application form which will allow easier reimbursement for expenses at the Region.

Lorraine provided a cheque to reimburse Anthony for the compost. Anthony will get Jason's signature.

Lorraine provided a cheque to reimburse Jill's expenses – will need Jason/Greg's signature

Action: Carol to obtain signature and forward cheque to Jill.

VI. Calendar

a. Next meeting Jun 16th (3rd Tues)

VII. Meeting Adjourned 8:55 pm