

COMMUNITY GARDEN COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes (7:00pm Aug 21, 2012)

Present: Anthony, Greg, Carol, Christina, Meg, Darija, Alisa, Judy, Jason

Absent: Lorraine, Michelle

- I. **Meeting called to order** by Anthony. A question was raised about quorum? By definition of membership absence and low numbers in membership, the decision was made that we have quorum.
- II. **Approval of last meeting's minutes:** approved
- III. **Visitor business** (introduce visitors): Welcome Christina, Meg and Darija
- IV. **Business**
 - a. **Hacienda Open House , 1254 Union Street Kitchener August 23 at 4 pm:**

Meg and Darija extends an invitation to the gardening community to the open house.

Action: Carol to send out on the listserv and to add Meg and Darija to the community garden listserv.
 - b. **Accessible Gardens Update:** Carol provided some background information and an update of the accessible garden project. John, the Landscape Intern, has met with the three garden groups and scaled designs are being finalized. Each garden has its own approval processes which can be complex. A bid letter has been finalized and will be sent to recommended construction landscape companies. As this is not a Regional contract, Diggables does not have the same requirements or capacity for review as the Region does for broad requests for proposals. Once proposals are submitted, they will be reviewed by Diggables. Work is to be done this fall.
 - c. **Community Garden Story Telling Project Update:** Judy provided an update on activities since her last report in June. Ellen and Judy began the process by conducting twelve pilot interviews to produce the interview questions and prompts. As far as privacy concerns, the project had a stringent review by the Public Health Ethics committee. No garden or gardener identifiers will go into the report. The goal for the project is to conduct 70 interviews. Help for the project was secured with the assistance of two students. The dietetic student was able to translate the interview guide into Mandarin and was able to interview seven people in Mandarin. The other student, Kevin, assisted Judy with 61 interviews. These interviews are now being grouped into themes; e.g., physical challenges, seniors, etc... The information will undergo analysis in September with the view of having a

preliminary report in October. The goal of the report will be to gain support and resources for gardens by decision-makers. Judy answered CGC questions and provided samples of the interview questions.

d. **Permaculture Workshop:** Alisa provided an overview of the workshop provided by Natalie. She provided a great tour and educational session on permaculture and medicinal plants in a community garden in Guelph. There was a lot of plant information shared. Alisa comments that there was not great attendance from KW area. Carol recommends that Natalie be a speaker at one of our educational sessions.

e. **WPIRG Forum on Gardening & Food:** Alisa invited CGC to attend the forum to be held on Friday in room RCH 308 10 am -12 pm. Alisa updated the group on a presentation she did Food Resiliency with Transition KW.
Action : Alisa to forward her presentation.

f. **Garden Updates:**

i. Christina shares that Lang's Farm is interested in starting a community garden in Cambridge closer to the new centre. She has scouted out a few sites and will be pulling a group together to get one going. There was a partnership with the Police garden but it is located too far away to make it easily accessible for the Lang participants.

Action: Christina will keep CGC posted on her progress.

ii. Carol shares:

1. The Weber Park garden is in full swing and the garden coordinator put a lot of work to get it off the ground. A garden opening will be held – Carol to forward the invitation once finalized.
2. Patchworks got the Sparks grant for the Young City Growers project – its aim is to engage multi-cultural youth in Urban Agriculture and ignite interest in green collar jobs
3. Conestoga – the garden was featured in The Record July 31, 2012.
4. Erb St Cemetery Garden – the garden has started – many gardeners are from the congregation this year with the view that more public will be attracted next year. Water issue remains – the city was unable to assist with water access.
5. The Maranatha Garden (The Giving Garden) wants to have a bee hive and wonders if the CGC is aware of any restrictions. Suggestions were given re: flight lines.

Action: Jason volunteered to connect with Mary.

Greg notices that many gardeners have difficulty identifying weeds which maybe a topic for a workshop. Alisa and Carol shared information that some weeds are food for other cultures. The workshop could also include information about wild edibles.

- g. ExtraShare.org (FB) or a Kajiji group for gardens to buy/sell items: Carol and Meg shared information about ExtraShare from the Urban Ag Conference. It could be a great resource for gardeners to share excess items like seeds and tools. CGC promotes the sharing of excess produce with foodbanks. Jason shared information about a facebook application called “Catbook” that protects individual privacy as an option but we would need a facebook developer to build the “gardenbook”.
Action: Anthony will look into ExtraShare and will forward recommendations about possible use.
Carol shared information about the Urban Ag. Conference.
- h. **“To Make a Farm” movie, Princess showings:** Anthony reminded the group of the movie being shown in partnership with CREW and The Princess Theatre this week (Aug 22-23 6:45pm)
Action: Carol to send out a reminder to the listserv.
- i. **World Accord; Sustainability in the Park Event Sunday, September 30, 9-2 pm cost \$25.00;** This event is a fund raiser for Guatemalan women and men. Information shared. CGC is unable to attend.
Action: Carol to send regrets.
- j. **Council membership, commitment, roles, and funding:** CGC discussed renewal of membership, roles and applying for funding for CGC educational sessions. Greg, Anthony, Jason indicated they are committed for another year. Meg and Darija expressed interest but were wondering what their role would be. Several ideas were shared. Other people from the network may also be interested – all of the meetings are open. The idea of funding for CGC will need more discussion and possibly a small workgroup to plan. Carol shared that we will have to find a new meeting spot for 2013.

V. Recurring business

- a. **Financial Report (Lorraine) - defer**
- b. **Calendar :Next meeting Sept 18th (3rd Tues)**

VI. Adjournment