

COMMUNITY GARDEN COUNCIL MEETING

Notes (7:00pm June 17, 2014)

Present: Jason, Carol, Eva, Shane
Absent: Anthony, Lorraine, Emily, Jeremy
On leave: Greg, Cristina

It was decided that as we did not have majority representation – we did not meet quorum

- I. Called to order by Jason.
- II. Approval of last meeting's notes – notes were circulated. Carol noted a few revisions – remove last names, reference to an abrasive person, spelling error.
Action: Carol to revise and send to council for approval
- III. Visitor business (introduce visitors)
 - No visitors
- IV. Business
 - Good Earth Garden: A meeting was called to discuss an offer to buy a portion of land the gardeners use from the church. About 40 gardeners attended and expressed beautifully what the ability to garden has meant to them. The pastor who also gardens there will take their comments to the congregation prior to the congregational vote to sell. The garden coordinator felt the meeting was positive. Eva and Shane attended the meeting and shared their impressions. The accessible garden component will likely not be affected. We discussed sending a letter to the church. The garden coordinator felt we should wait.
 - Communications - Social media: As many garden are now opening their own facebook page, we discussed reconnecting with facebook. Also, social media plays a large role with youth and as a part of our connection to youth we may wish to explore it further. Jason searched for our site but could not find it. Some council members are still reluctant to use facebook.
Action: explore other social media options
 - Municipal Elections (Heather) – update received from Krista
“Plan to launch the campaign the week of June 23rd when provincial elections are over. We have 2 community garden members volunteering with our outreach team plus volunteers from emergency food, local food, farming, students, natural health professionals, so a good representation of the local food system.

We will have outreach materials for people to distribute, so if the CGC is out at any events, we would provide you with some materials to hand out for us.

Once we launch the campaign we will send a message to all the HCP partner orgs and affiliated groups to notify their networks.”

Shane has just joined the advocacy group and is excited to be involved.

Action: Shane to keep us posted when the media site is launched.

- Community Garden Council plan for 2014-2015:

CGC identified youth gardening as a priority but we have not created a strategy to carry this through. Some ideas were:

- Define “youth” – wide spectrum – university/college; high school, elementary etc.,
- To date we have held a workshop on youth gardening – about 30 people attended
- PH has applied to MLTCHP Ministry of health for funds to hire someone to conduct an environmental scan of community gardens in schools
- Sustain Ontario has an edible education network see <http://sustainontario.com/initiatives/ontario-edible-education-network>
- Some schools already have garden programs e.g. Eastwood, Elmira, Eva’s Daycare, etc.,
- Some people have approached the public school board for a school garden but have been turned down – School board worries re: liability, union, aesthetics (and vandalism). Suggested approach at the individual school level – principals, interested staff
- Encourage each garden to add 2 plots for youth and reach out to the school or youth groups in their neighborhood
- Educate schools re: benefits – Eva’s Daycare could help. They have people coming from all over to see their project.
- Promotion with fliers, etc.,
- This will take money – it would be necessary to find a sponsor or become registered as charitable group. We need someone with legal or accounting experience to help us move in this direction. (Maybe we hire someone to do this)
- We need to think of our own sustainability – how do we make money, attract and keep active committed members. Ideas include charge of \$5 per garden to belong to the network, bike tour of gardens as a fund raiser

Action: Discuss further on e-mail; next meeting

- Waterloo Town Square Event (Emily, Eva)

Shane, Eva, Emily and Alisa attended on behalf of community gardens. There was a lot of interest in community gardens. Windy day and display did not stand – was hard to draw people in. Bean activity worked well for smaller children – tough competition with the KW Seed Library who offered a seed bomb activity.

People were interested in the map. Suggest updating the map and using for handouts.

V. Recurring business

- Financial Report (Lorraine) defer
- Garden Updates:

VI. Garden assignment. People were still trying to connect to a garden. This will be an ongoing activity

Action: continue connecting with a garden not your own.

Accessible gardens: gaining more interest. MS Society, KW Habilitation, Kitchener Downtown Community Centre are exploring further.

Sturdy Park. The strike down of a petition against a garden in Sturdy Park was discussed. Greg presented to the Cambridge Council on behalf of the community garden council. Council voted 9-0 to keep the garden provisionally for 1 year.

VII. Calendar

- Next meeting: August 19th. We will need to discuss our next network meeting.
Action: Check in with Emily co-hosting with the EMS site.

VIII. Adjournment