

Community Garden Council Meeting
Meeting Notes (7:00pm Aug 19, 2014)

Present: Anthony, Eva, Shane, Greg, Carol

Absent: Jeremy, Emily, Lorraine, Jason

- I. Call to order by Anthony
- II. Approval of last meeting's minutes: approved
- III. Visitor business (introduce visitors)
 - a. Catherine B. attended and provided an update on the House of Friendship garden project at 3 residential sites. She reported gardens are well received by residents. The green space is limited but they are using container and trellis gardening techniques including straw bales. She feels the gardens are a success.
- IV. Business
 - a. Cambridge garden update: approved for a year, article in the Cambridge Times. Greg reported that he reviewed the site. No gardeners were present but the site is well maintained and appealing. Carol reported that the City of Cambridge received a complaint of vandalism as result of kids loitering in the garden. The person was asleep when the vandalism occurred after midnight. Several tomatoes were thrown at the window and a pumpkin was smashed on the driveway. The police were called along with the ward councilor. Carol followed up with the complainant and shared the good news story about the garden. The person conceded that it was not the fault of the garden. Carol contacted the garden coordinator who had also followed up with the person. The garden committee will create a plan to minimize the risk of vandalism at the garden level. The Cambridge Times wrote an excellent article about the garden.
 - b. Preston Heights accessible garden: The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has introduced new regulations requiring former industrial sites be tested prior to be used for agricultural purposes. The site tested clear prior to the tower being removed but had to be retested due to the new regulation. The Region had the site retested twice for soil and water. The second set of results was clear. The MOE has 6 weeks from the time of submission of results to approve. They are still asking Kiwanis for information about the site. This will likely result in a further delay in the building of the accessible garden. Team Depot is rebooked for the spring.

- c. Community Garden questions for municipal candidates? Greg shared the municipal campaign has a 2 pronged approach advocating for community gardens and temporary food markets. The Food System Roundtable has a volunteer base to petition and lobby their ward council candidates. The issues they are focusing are:
- i. Identification and removal of barriers
 - ii. Enabling legislation
 - iii. Active assistance from the city
 - iv. Inventory of space to accommodate community gardens in open areas
 - v. Set targets – 10 more gardens by 2020
 - vi. Active partnerships – police, faith groups, fire

Greg states this work needs to also focus on the newly elected.

- d. Decommissioning of T4H website (Carol) Public Health has recommended this website close. Katherine states she has funds for a new community garden website if the group is in agreement. Everyone agreed to a new website – they would like community gardens coordinators consulted re: design. Carol to recommend to Public Health a design workshop.

Options for new site to consider are:

- Photo gallery that people can self post
- Central registry for coordinators
- Calendar of events – blog page
- Shared knowledge – an interactive “gardenpedia”

- e. Sign for Courtland Shelley: Dave S. called and asked about getting a community garden sign. Carol connected Dave with Heather M. who got signs made for Victoria Hills at a reasonable price.

This request raised a question about finding funds to help upgrade some of the older gardens. Greg stated that Hamilton’s experience is that the gardens are better sustained if they assist in the fundraising. A strategy could include both components.

- f. CGC sustainability: Membership and volunteer recruiting: New members are needed for the upcoming year. We need people who can commit to taking charge of specific tasks e.g., newsletter, social media.

We might also consider the topic of charitable status so that we can assist gardens in obtaining funds needed for start-ups, upgrades and programming.

- g. Social media: More gardens are using social media and it is the most effective means of communication especially in the younger generations. It is a tool we will need to consider for a youth strategy
 - h. Youth Initiative – need to develop a strategy yet. Last meeting good start. Eva shared that the Emmanuel Daycare will be hosting an open house September 20, 10- 4 pm. This is a great opportunity to see and promote the gardening work at the daycare.
 - i. Network event plans for the upcoming year; partner with Multi-cultural CG Network. Carol and Emily both attended the meeting (Emily is a member of that group) to explore if the 2 network meetings could combine. The MCCGN attracts gardeners who have English as a second language so the approach is different. For example, educational approaches – 30 minute formal presentations may not be as appropriate as 10 minute bite size pieces at a display. They have booked St John’s facility for September 28th. CGC was in favor of combining the 2 events. Carol will send an invitation for volunteers to help plan/set-up the event.
 - j. Gleaners Guild Logo Competition (Carol). Carol connected Doug with a few other people that were looking into similar urban agricultural projects. The Tri-city Gleaners Guild has formed and has met with some gleaning successes. They are asking people for submissions for a logo. Carol to send out further details.
 - k. Update for the municipal elections (Krista, Marc). Project is creating a buzz!
 - i. Website/facebook/twitter accounts up and running with 170 likes – 120 hashtags (sp?)
 - ii. 200 people signed the petition – target is 500 – sign if you have not already - Sign-in and post on your links
 - iii. Council candidates are participating/responding
 - iv. Social media calendar – each day has a new theme
- V. Recurring business - defered
- a. Financial Report (Lorraine)
- VI. Calendar
- a. Next meeting Sept 16th (3rd Tues)
- VII. Adjournment

