



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Draft COMMUNITY GARDENS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 28, 2012

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-110 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL - Introductions as needed.

Present: 8 -

Nan Fey; Madelyn D. Leopold; Annette M. Nekola; Joseph E. Muellenberg;
Luke Thao; Jill Schneider; Melissa Gavin and Nancy A. Dungan

Excused: 2 -

Matthew J. Phair and Yimmuj Yang

Non Voting: 1 -

Joe Mathers

Others present: Michelle Shively - CAC.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS - None

NEW BUSINESS - See Communications

SPECIAL ITEM OF BUSINESS

25461

Madison Cultural Plan Feedback

Attachments:

[Madison Cultural Plan 2011.pdf](#)

[Madison Cultural Plan Exec Sum2.pdf](#)

[CommunityGardensCulturalPlanRecstoCPSC122011.pdf](#)

The Madison Cultural Plan has not formally been referred to the Committee, but Karin Wolf indicated to Fey that Karin would be interested in the Committee's feedback. Muellenberg will forward his comments directly to Wolf. Madelyn Leopold suggested forwarding Vincent Smith's article to Wolf. Leopold liked the fact that community gardens and edible landscapes were included in the citations. Fey had three suggestions: on page 17 there should be a specific reference to community gardens with public gardens; on page 76 a reference to community gardens should be inserted with "green walls"; and on page 33 the reference to "winter garden" in Olin Park needs clarification. Jill Schneider questioned, on page 85, the meaning of "Community Development Office." Fey responded that the reference is probably to community development block grants. Fey will forward these comments to Wolf with our appreciation for being included in the process.

OLD BUSINESS

25114 Committee discussion regarding two recent community garden studies: Growing Our Own: The Socioeconomic Value of Community Food Production (by Vince Smith) and Exploring The Social and Spatial Characteristics of Community Garden Placement in Madison, Wisconsin (by Robbie Greene.)

Attachments: [Vince Smith Study - CAC Executive Summary.pdf](#)
[RobbieGreeneMastersPresentation 2012.pdf](#)

Committee discussion regarding two recent community garden studies: "Growing Our Own: The Socioeconomic Value of Community Food Production," by Vince Smith, and "Exploring the Social and Spatial Characteristics of Community Garden Placement in Madison, Wisconsin," by Robbie Greene.

Fey noted that these studies are on Legistar so they can be linked up on the Committee's website. Schneider noted that she knew Vince Smith. She thought it would be interesting to know how each interviewee had responded to the survey. Schneider suggested that John Bell should be contacted to see if the Committee can get a list of the interviewees. Joe Muellenberg and Schneider noted with interest the data showing that few gardeners wanted to make money from their gardening. Annette Nekola noted that some data are not apparently representative. Shively committed that the data may be skewed because home gardens were included. Muellenberg commented that, in the Greene article, it seemed as though some community gardens had disappeared. According to Shively, there are more than 50 gardens in Madison now. Fey mentioned that a graduate student who may present at the Committee's April meeting is in the process of identifying vacant lots owned by the city. Schneider commented that the New Garden Fund decision criteria included in the Greene materials are interesting.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

[18897](#) CDBG Update

No report.

[14868](#) Planning Update

The Plan Commission did approve the beekeeping ordinance. The last step in the process is City Council approval. Work continues on the Downtown Plan and zoning map.

[08283](#) New Garden Fund - Subcommittee Recommendations

Subcommittee Recommendations – Nekola reported that five applications were received, of which four were for gardens in city parks. This means, Muellenberg said, that four are up in the air while Parks staff considers these sites.

1. Leopold School – Muellenberg visited the site with Alice Anderson. Melissa Stevenson of Americorps is the volunteer heading up the school garden. Only eight plots have been set aside. Ten to twelve plots are recommended. Also, the site is shady so the plots must be rearranged. The site is across the road from Joining Forces for Families, so produce would be shared with that organization. The school principal and the alder are supportive. (The principal was at Midvale School when that school's garden was put in.) Leopold has 660 students. Roughly 60% of the students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. There have been meetings over five months. Recommended funding: \$300 (\$175 for water hookup and meter fee; \$125 for lumber for raised beds; and \$50 towards fence or storage shed). Nekola reported that \$6,000 was requested, but they told the applicants that the fund can't finance fencing. Also, there are other sources of funding. (According to Nekola, applicants are told that they can request up to \$2,000 but most grants are in the \$100s, so applicants should prioritize.)

2. Leopold Park – Located on Cannonball Bike Path. Issue is the soccer field: the Parks Division is saying that space must be preserved for a future soccer field. Schneider expressed surprise that a future soccer field should take precedence over a current community garden. An issue with the near site is trees: the city planted them so the city cannot remove them. Shively is working with Rutledge to change the plan to provide enough space for thirty (30) 20 x 20 plots. This is the most promising of the four park sites. Fey noted that since neighborhood planning is going on in this area, it is a good time to support this garden. Recommended funding: \$350, conditional upon Parks approval (\$200 for water hookup; \$100 for hoses; and \$50 for soil test).

3. Brittingham Park – Nekola explained that Parks has approved a 3,600 sq. ft. site, which is enough space for nine (9) 20 x 20 plots. This is too small an area, however, given the demand. The Bayview community has expressed significant interest. When Nekola toured the space, she was met by a group of twelve to fifteen local residents. Because of the great demand, these individuals have agreed to draw straws for a plot. The proximity of the site to a volleyball court is an issue. Theft, and volleyballs falling in the garden, are concerns, and the residents want a fence, but the cost of a fence would be prohibitive. Parks has approved the volleyball location, but money is not available for the fence. Recommended funding: \$550, conditional upon Parks approval (\$175 for water hookup and meter fee; \$100 for tool shed; \$100 for tools [wheelbarrow, etc.]; \$75 for outreach materials; \$50 for bulletin board sign; and \$50 for soil test). Subsequent to the subcommittee's visit, Rutledge met with this group and walked over the site. There is a difference of opinion about the choice of site. Leopold asked what the Mayor's position is on these gardens, and would the Madison Parks Foundation be able to provide supplemental funding? The Committee agreed to defer this application because the subcommittee prefers the alternative site (near 101 and 109 South Brittingham) rather than the volleyball site chosen by Parks.

4. Elvehjem – Near Painted Post Drive. Apparently a perfect site. There is concern about underground utilities, but it would be easy enough to contact Diggers' Hotline. There is a question whether the neighborhood would be interested. Lynn Brown has been the driving force, but it is not clear that there is a core of volunteers. The neighborhood association would do outreach to its 1,600 households to determine interest. This is an unusual application because the neighborhood is all single-family dwellings, not multi-family dwellings, so neighborhood follow-through is important. Recommended funding: \$200, conditional upon Parks approval and letter from alder (no cost breakdown – generic amount to show NGF's support).

Fey moved approval of the NGF subcommittee's recommendations for projects at Leopold School and Leopold Park and Elvehjem Park. Shively seconded motion. Approved.

15100

Garden/CAC Reports

CAC is interviewing for two positions. Fiskars has donated tools for 26 gardens, and has set aside \$5,000 for a project to be recommended by CAC. Jeanne Hoffman is writing a \$75,000 grant proposal to the Sustainability Network of Funders for school and community gardens on behalf of CAC, MMSD, Sustain Dane, and other organizations; if successful, it would be matched by the Madison Community Foundation and be paid over three years. Registration for the gardening season is now underway.

08281

Parks Update

No report, but see discussion in New Garden Fund and Communications.

COMMUNICATIONS

Fey noted that an email dated May 26, 2011, was received from Samuel Stevenson supporting community gardens at James Madison Park, also that Kevin Schiesser had submitted his resignation because he's moving out of town.

Fey also noted an email from Kay Rutledge to the effect that there are no spaces for gardens in James Madison Park; the email closed by noting that there is an appeals process. Shively noted that three other groups that have requested gardens in parks are receiving the same negative response but, until their preferred sites have been formally rejected by Parks staff, no appeals can be filed. The Committee identified a number of questions that need to be answered: Who can file an appeal? What is the appeal process? Who is eligible to participate? What should be the Committee's role? Additionally, the Committee should seek clarification as to whether the email response relates solely to the lake site or rejects all gardens in James Madison Park. Other questions to address include: what does the Park and Open Space Plan say about community gardens? What percentage of a park can be set aside for "passive use"? How is "interrupting the flow of a park" defined? The agenda for the next meeting, and perhaps future meetings as well, will include "Siting Gardens in Parks" for an ongoing discussion of these and other issues that may be identified in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Schneider announced that Joe Mingle, a property owner at Union Corners, received approval for a food pantry garden on East Washington Avenue up to Winnebago, on the city's land bank. More information can be found on Mingle's website at deurbanization.com.

ADJOURNMENT

Schneider moved to adjourn - motion was seconded by Nekola and was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.