



City of Madison

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

Tuesday, December 3, 2013

5:00 PM

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Fey at 5:10 p.m.

Present: 7 -

Steve King; Madelyn D. Leopold; Aislynn H.C. Miller; Annette M. Nekola;
Nan Fey; Jill Schneider and Melissa Gavin

Absent: 2 -

Justin O. Markofski and Danna J. Olsen

Others present: Nancy Dungan and Linette Rhodes (CDBG), Joe Mathers and Greta Hansen (CAC), Mary Michaud and Lesly Scott (Public Health).

Introductions were made due to the number of guests present at the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minor changes to the minutes were recommended by Schneider and Fey and were documented on a copy of the minutes to be submitted to Lisa Olmsted for changes. Leopold recommended a change to item 08281 to add language that the Mayor had asked the Alder to look into getting a fence for the Brittingham Park Community Garden. This change was noted on the copy to be provided to Olmsted. A motion was made by Leopold and seconded by Nekola to approve the October 22, 2013, minutes with changes. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

[32247](#)

Status of Community Gardens Program - Update from Community Action Coalition

Greta Hansen, Executive Director of Community Action Coalition, reviewed the background of the Community Gardens program at CAC and updated the Committee on recent discussions regarding the program and its future within CAC. The Community Gardens Program budget is \$220,000 funded with \$50,000-\$56,000 from CDBG and \$100,000-\$125,000 from CSBG, and the remaining funded through other sources. The CSBG money is restricted to serving those participants who are at 125% of the poverty level or below. Because there is a growing population of participants at community gardens served by CAC that are not at 125% of the poverty level or below, the CAC Board is concerned the CSBG funding will not continue. Because pantry gardens are a source of food for their CAC Foods Division, Hansen sees support for pantry gardens staying at CAC. The Board has asked Hansen to begin discussions with those who have a strong interest in community gardens with the goal of determining where a community gardens program belongs. The Board will likely approve funding of the program at CAC through 2014, but would like to use 2014 as the time to determine where support of community gardens belongs outside of CAC with 2015 used as the transition year. Hansen also suggests moving the New Garden Fund responsibilities out of CAC.

Hansen has discussed with CAC staff about replacing the February 2014 gardens leadership conference with a meeting of stakeholders to get their input on the future of the community gardens program. She has begun discussions with the Mayor, Mark Woulf and Madison Community Foundation. Others entities she may contact would be the public, county extension offices and the county board. Woulf related that CAC, Public Health and the Mayor's office have begun discussions. The Public Health Department will take the lead.

The next steps involve Mary Michaud from Public Health and her staff creating a "concept paper" that will frame the data regarding community gardens and quantify the social benefits of community gardens. The paper will also outline options for what a community gardens program should be. A draft of the paper will be available at the end of the year or early next year. CAC staff will review, and then it will be presented to the Mayor's office. Woulf recommended that the Community Gardens Committee consider what our role should be at our next meeting. We discussed how our Committee could provide stories about the value of community gardens that those who are going to be fundraising could use to support the "value proposition." It was also suggested that members of our Committee could facilitate small breakout groups at the meeting of stakeholders CAC is proposing for February 2014. Fey and Woulf will discuss how and when to engage the Food Policy Council in the overall effort. This Committee will invite representatives from Public Health to the January meetings to present the concept paper and provide an update. We will keep this item on the agenda throughout 2014.

OLD BUSINESS

31912 New Garden Fund Issues

Attachments: [Gardens Working Group ReportFINAL.pdf](#)
[New Garden Fund Issues Discussion Document for 12-3-13 Meeting.pdf](#)

The issues as identified on the New Garden Fund Issues agenda item attachment can be broken down into fiscal issues and non-fiscal issues. Fey recommended that the working group that addressed the investment of the New Garden Fund in 2012 be reconvened to address the outstanding fiscal issues, namely items 4, 9 and perhaps 11 on the list. Fey recommended a second working group consisting of current and past members of the New Garden Fund Panel convene and address the remaining issues. Nekola will lead this second group. Both groups will attempt to meet in January and report their recommendations to the Committee at the January meeting. Mathers reported that only one New Garden Fund application was received, and it is not in a park and they are not asking for funding. This will give us an opportunity to address these issues now in preparation for applications received next year.

31106 Sheboygan Gardens

No report.

30629 Parks Department Pre-approved List of Improvements at Community Gardens

Attachments: [Draft Garden Lease Language for Discussion 10-22-13 Item #30629.pdf](#)

Mathers reported that he and Leopold will meet with Kay Rutledge at the Parks Department in early January to discuss the draft lease changes approved by our Committee at the October meeting.

28453 Garden Leadership for Long-Term Sustainability

Attachments: [Garden Leadership Doc 10 23 2012.docx](#)
[CAC draft Garden Compact 2013.doc](#)

Gavin reported that the Garden Leadership Work Group met in early November. They discussed the possibility of getting funding from Forward Community Investments (FCI) for the scholarship(s) to send garden leader(s) to the American Community Gardens Association conference next August. However, they needed a fiscal sponsor. Through discussions with Janet Parker, the Farley Center agreed to serve as their fiscal agent for the grant request, but because the application was due the next day, there wasn't enough time to get the application completed and submitted. The Work Group is meeting again next week and will report back to the Committee in January.

REGULAR BUSINESS REPORTS

[28455](#)

Food Policy Council Update

Fey reported \$50,000 was approved in the budget for 'local healthy food efforts' grants. The Food Policy Council is developing grant guidelines, which will hopefully be ready by early January 2014.

[08281](#)

Parks Update

Attachments: [Brittingham Garden Update Sept 2013.pdf](#)

Mathers reported that a pre-approved list of items for community gardens is being worked on with Parks. There will be more to report at our next meeting in January.

[18897](#)

CDBG Update

Dungan reported that CDBG is in the process of drafting priorities for their funding in 2015 and 2016. They are seeking input from various stakeholders concerned with specific focus areas such as community gardens. They have received over 1000 responses to an electronic survey, and are asking for our input at this meeting. Gavin offered that there needs to be an emphasis on supporting existing gardens and exploring ways to foster leadership at the gardens, noting that garden leaders could develop into community leaders. Mathers suggested funding structures within community gardens as "placemakers." Michaud added that infrastructure in gardens helps create community social networks and civic engagement. Other discussion included perhaps identifying disadvantaged areas of the city and suggest that gardens be placed near these locations rather than waiting for the community to step forward. Other communities have created nature-based play stations, a non-traditional type of community garden. School gardens should also be supported.

CDBG staff will have a working draft of their Funding Framework for 2015 – 2016 ready in January 2014, and Dungan suggested the Committee members review this draft and provide feedback at the CDBG Committee meeting in early February. The draft of the CDBG Consolidated Plan (2016 – 2021) will be available in September 2014 and will be provided to the Committee for feedback.

[14868](#)

Planning Update

No report.

[08283](#)

New Garden Fund

Mathers reported that a group submitted a New Garden Fund application involving the Southwest Bike Path, but they are not requesting funding, only technical assistance. The Committee decided the New Garden Fund Panel will not review the application since they are not asking for funding, and Mathers should contact the group to offer technical assistance from CAC. Fey requested Mathers share a PDF of the group's application with her as she is involved in developing a process for entities requesting use of City-owned lands for gardens, etc., through the Food Policy Council.

Mathers reported that CAC was contacted by a police officer from the Vera Court neighborhood regarding a garden in that neighborhood. Mathers will follow up with Schneider and Troy Community Gardens to see if they could support this effort in some way.

[15100](#)

Garden/CAC Reports

The deadline to submit applications for Chris Brockel's old position is Friday, December 6. They hope to have someone hired and in place by the end of 2013.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fey requested that members complete their Statements of Interest as soon as possible rather than waiting for the deadline of 1/7/14. Members should have received a letter that provided the link to complete the statements online.

The decision regarding which date to meet in April was deferred to the January meeting or a subsequent meeting when more members are present.

ADJOURNMENT

Nekola moved adjournment, Miller seconded; meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.