



# City of Madison

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

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Tuesday, March 23, 2010

5:00 PM

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Room 108 (City-County Building)

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### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

**Present:** 10 -

Nan Fey; Betty Chewning; John B. Bell; Annette M. Nekola; Andre Scaife;  
Alice K. Anderson; Joe Mathers; Nicole M. Craig; Kevin Schiesser and  
Nancy A. Dungan

**Excused:** 1 -

Monya A. Choudhury

**Others present:** Jason Clay (CAC), Bill Barker, Antonio Colas and Marsha Rummel.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from January 26, 2010 and February 3, 2010 were unanimously approved.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

### NEW BUSINESS

Suggested items for new business to address during April's meeting:

1. Kevin Schiesser would like to schedule a short presentation for the Downtown Community Gardens group to receive feedback from the committee on how the committee could be involved in planning for a community garden on the rooftop of the downtown library.
2. Nan Fey recommended that Nancy Dungan work with other members of the committee to lead a discussion examining the role of the committee and the CDBG office in community gardens in Madison and surrounding areas, as well as the role of the New Garden Fund.
3. Nicole Craig requested that the committee look into having a staff member of the Mayor's office take minutes during committee meetings to allow her to more fully participate in the meeting.

[17568](#)

Accepting the Final Report of the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force as a supplement to the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan to guide future Park development options; and to extend the work of the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force to support additional Phase 1 planning and implementation efforts through 2010; and authorizing

the Mayor and Clerk to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Center for Resilient Cities, Inc., and Central Park Skate, LLC, to provide for the terms of City operation of lands presently owned by those organizations and creation of a non-profit organization to support the future Central Park.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION: CENTRAL PARK DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE**

**Bill Barker, head of the Central Park Design and Implementation Task Force, and Alder Marsha Rummel, Task Force member, attended the committee meeting to seek the committee's approval of the Final Report of the Task Force.**

**Bill gave a brief summary of the design process: The Task Force worked more than 2 years on this plan. The park has gone through many other design phases, and the original plan for Central Park included a much larger park with more than 100 community garden plots. The current park footprint has been reduced, and early on in this design phase, community garden plots were removed from the plan, but were reinstated when neighborhood residents requested their inclusion. The current plan that the Task Force is asking the committee to vote to approve includes raised bed accessible gardens. The land where the gardens will be located isn't currently owned by the City, but is currently owned by Madison Gas and Electric and is a storage yard. During preliminary discussions, MG&E has expressed interest in allowing the City to purchase or use that land for the park. The park will have four main uses: skate park, performance space for up to three festivals a year, playground, and community gardens. The park will also be used for a farmer's market. Barker reported also that a private-public partnership, such as the one existing at Olbrich Gardens, will be created as a fundraising entity. Some funds from Tammy Baldwin's earmarks are being used to create the park as well.**

**The Plan Commission has approved the Final Report, and next the Parks Commission and several other commissions will review the report. Bill doesn't see any large barriers to moving the approval process through the City.**

**Bill mentioned that public meetings will be held once the approval process is complete, and recommended that residents and others who would like to comment on community gardens in Central Park either attend one of these meetings, or contact Alder Rummel.**

**Alder Rummel also commented upon the history of the park. She has been involved in the park planning process since the 1980s. In a past plan, a huge stumbling block was the need to move the existing railroad line that bisects the park. Under Mayor Bauman, the park became smaller, but more realistic. The current plan now works around the need to move the rail by creating the park around the rail line, which will remain in place. MG&E has offered their services to pay for design consultants for the Central Park plan, and "3", a design collaboration, created the current plan as an alternative to the McCarthy plan, a previous park plan.**

**Marsha mentioned that the Task Force is currently petitioning the Office of the Railroad Commission to approve a railroad crossing at Few Street. Wisconsin and Southern Railroad is also petitioning the Office of the Railroad Commission to close several streets around the park, which would conflict with the Task Force's park plan.**

Marsha also mentioned that edible landscaping and public art are parts of the plan. The Task Force is recommending that artist Lorna Jordan be hired as the public artist. Marsha also mentioned that Bill Bauer of Parks Division has created a map of potential areas for public art, to create an art walk extending from Dr. Evermore's bird sculptures to Garver incubator. There is a potential for edible fruit and nut trees along the art walk, and additional community gardens along bike path corridors.

Betty Chewning gave her congratulations to the Task Force for their work, and asked for clarification on whether the park is a regional or neighborhood park.

Bill and Marsha noted that the official decision has yet to be made, but commented that the park will likely be typically neighborhood, with occasionally a regional park feel during festivals at the park.

John Bell commented that as a nearby resident, he appreciates the work of the Task Force and noted a large interest in the area for community gardens. Alice Anderson noted that having community gardens in parks is a nice synergy, which increasing participation and decreases crime and vandalism. She also noted the potential for new gardens to be supported by the New Garden Fund.

Betty Chewning moved to make a motion to recommend the acceptance of the Final Report, which was seconded by Andre Scaife. The motion passed by voice vote.

The committee requested that the Task Force announce public meetings to the committee; recommended additional community gardens to be included in the Central Park plan, potentially at the Brearly Street end of the park; recommended the inclusion of community gardens along the bike path corridors; and requested the Task Force to work with the New Garden Fund for potential new community gardens in Central Park.

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Parks Update

No report.

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Planning Update

No report.

[08283](#)

New Garden Fund

Alice Anderson reported that the New Garden Fund conducted site visits and met in February to make funding decisions. The New Garden Fund panel had approximately \$2,300, and seven proposals. The New Garden Fund panel would like to make the following recommendations for funding to the committee:

- Fund the new McCormick community garden for \$500, primarily to help them install a water line.
- Fund the new Darbo community garden for \$500, primarily to help them build a shed with reused materials.
- Fund the new/expanding Lindbergh Elementary School community and school garden for \$350, primarily to be used to build a fence around the garden.
- Fund the expanding Reindahl community garden for \$200 to assist with the installation of a new water line for the expansion.
- Fund the expanding Troy Community Garden Enabling Garden project for \$200 to assist with the creation of an accessible walkway.
- Fund the new Allied Neighborhood Container Garden Project for \$150 as a donation for neighborhood stabilization, to help them with purchasing materials and supplies.

The New Garden Fund panel decided against funding the remaining proposal for Brittingham Park community garden, as panel members felt the project was too early in the process and needed to involve neighbors and the Parks Division, and to figure out how to provide water to the garden. With these recommendations, the panel would disburse \$1900 of the approximately \$2300 available. They recommend that the committee approve these recommendations.

Andre Scaife asked about the potential closing of Lindbergh Elementary School. Several committee members responded that it appears that the school will not be closing.

Nicole Craig mentioned that the McCormick garden lease has gone through Common Council and is awaiting final signatures.

Kevin Schiesser asked how the funding amounts were decided upon by the New Garden Fund panel and why the surplus was not allocated.

Alice explained that the New Garden Fund was not adequate to fund all requests and that grant requests were for amounts up to \$2000, and that no projects received full funding. She said that the site visits helped panel members prioritize the funding amounts. The panel arrived at their decisions through a thorough process, and she would be happy to talk to Kevin more about the New Garden Fund panel process sometime.

Nan Fey added that the money can be set aside for use in future years, so the money will remain in the fund and will not disappear if not allocated. There will be additional interest in community gardens in upcoming years. Betty Chewing commented that it appears that the New Garden Fund panel needs additional money.

Nancy Dungan commented that the care and time that the panel puts into considering grants for a small amount of money to disburse seems disproportionate, but thinks that it's very appropriate for the committee to have the opportunity to approve the panel's recommendations and ask questions of the panel.

15100

Garden/CAC Reports

Nicole Craig gave the CAC report:

The CAC Gardens staff have been very busy working on spring planning and registrations for community gardens. Burr Oaks will be expanding this year and installing a water line, there is a potential small expansion at Waunona community garden, Reindahl has already expanded and will be installing a new water line, and there are several new community gardens in the City of Madison: Darbo, McCormick, Lindbergh, Allied container garden project, Russett Road front yard gardens, as well as new community gardens outside of Madison.

There are also new food pantry gardens beginning this year, and CAC AmeriCorps VISTA Patty Zehl has been working with these new pantry gardens, as well as existing pantry gardens and community gardens to encourage the participation in the Plant a Row for the Hungry program. She is also working with MACSAC to survey food pantry clients of their produce preferences for input to farmers, food pantry gardens, and gardeners donating produce to food pantries. She is also creating recipe cards for distribution to food pantry clients.

CAC received 22 applicants for the Share Your Harvest grant. CAC administers \$20,000 from the Madison Community Foundation through the grant. Decisions have been made regarding the funding, and recipient will be notified soon.

With an increase in the number of community gardens and gardeners (and a decrease in normal donations,) CAC's seed supply is short this year. CAC provides seeds for low-income community gardeners in gardens receiving assistance from CAC or the City of Madison. Nicole will be pursuing additional sources for seed donations. Alice Anderson commented that Eagle Heights will be donating their excess seed from their seed exchange to CAC. She commented that some of the seeds are treated, and CAC staff needs to notify gardeners receiving treated seeds of appropriate handling methods, and to keep treated seeds away from children.

Nicole also reported that the Gardens program will be holding a retreat in the following week to plan the goals and outcomes for the program, and specifically look at the types of events and services the program should be offering community gardens. Alice mentioned that gardeners at Eagle Heights would be happy to help other community garden leaders learn how to hold a seed sort/exchange workshop for their own gardens.

Nan Fey mentioned that the CDA has expressed interest in building community gardens on CDA land, and could potentially look at the Allied Drive area.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nan Fey mentioned that Antonio Colas' name has been forwarded on as a recommended new committee member, and that a vote to recognize new committee members will happen sometime soon during a Common Council meeting.

Nan Fey will continue as co-chair with Andre Scaife, as John Bell resigned as co-chair.

Alice Anderson again mentioned that the committee still needs two additional members, including a Hmong representative, as she will be stepping off the committee soon. The New Garden Fund panel also needs additional members.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT

John Bell motioned to adjourn the meeting and Alice Anderson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.