

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

November 8, 2021

Mission Statement:

The Holden Community Garden Committee is a volunteer organization working to provide and support Holden residents, individually and collectively, to grow food, flowers, fruits, and herbs on town land including the redeveloped property on Highland Street. Our efforts will enable residents to enjoy the beauty of our town while developing a sense of community through cooperative action, learning about sustainable and environmentally conscious gardening as well as ethical harvesting.

The Holden Community Garden Committee also exists to foster the education of the children of Holden through the support of community gardens in local schools and community groups. These gardens will help to develop the appreciation of future generations for the importance of agriculture and responsible environmental practices, and provide education and positive experiences through gardening and physical activity.

In Attendance: Jessica Cosenza, Chair; Members: Katye Brier, Julie McCarthy, Aleel Grennan, Mike Trigiano, Gina Tutela; Garden participants: Candy Graham

Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm Via Zoom.

AGENDA

The minutes of the October 4, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the September 2021 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Fall Clean Up Event Review

The Holden Community Garden Fall Clean Up event was held on November 6th from 10am-1pm. We had committee members, garden participants, high school and middle school volunteers present to help clean the space. It was a great success. Julie mentioned that she will be putting more time in to complete the 2021 cleanup around the Girl Scout garden. Aleel and Gina may be available to help with this throughout this week. As it gets colder, the cardboard will be placed to smother weeds in preparation for the paths to be completed in 2022, and to keep the areas around the rocks as cleared as possible. Any leftover cardboard may be used on garden plots. Plots that will be used again next year may be planted still throughout the coming weeks. Bulbs and cover crops are allowed if participants are returning in 2022.

Budget Update

Jessica asked for the group to consider the FY 2023 budget and propose projects for discussion. The "Sign Project" which Katye has been trying to coordinate for the past year, was paused due to changes in the cost of the project and hesitancy from the sign companies to work with our budget and contract requirements. Katye would still like to see that project moved forward and completed. Previously, the

proposed project was intended to give the garden better public exposure and recognition of location. The other project that was proposed earlier this summer was the idea of building a fence around the garden. Gina had noted that other community gardens use fencing to keep trespassers and unwanted animals out of the garden spaces, and she brought the idea to a previous meeting for discussion and ideas. Jessica reported that Mark Thorngren had brought this up in the summer as well but had not participated further in the discussion. George Klicka had done some research into this and presented some initial discussion of materials that could be used when we last met. He did not join the meeting tonight to discuss this further. Katye questioned if a fence would provide a significant benefit to warrant the cost and effort to build and install. Jessica mentioned that there is a note in the application and guidelines for the garden use that any participant can propose a fence around an individual plot, but it must be approved by the committee before installation.

Jessica asked for a show of hands to indicate if the committee needed further consideration of the fence project at this meeting. No members showed interest in discussing this further.

Katye offered to reach out to local sign vendors to get updated quotes and follow up with Jessica and John Woodsmall by email.

Motion #2

To allow Katye to update the proposal for a sign as our budget proposal for FY2023.

Voted and Approved.

Davis Hill/School Updates

Jessica reported that she applied for the Holden Garden Club grant on behalf of the school for funding for seating, seeds and a speaker. This was approved by the principal Mr. Norton before submitting. We will wait to hear back later in November. Katye will be trying to work on the K beds with her husband Joe. In the meantime, she will email Mr. Norton to see if the custodial staff could remove the rotting timbers and put them in the dumpster for disposal. In that email, she will also ask that the sign and the bird bath be taken in for winter storage. Gina and Katye will continue to follow up on any scout interests in helping with projects moving forward.

Community Harvest Updates

No new updates, but Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry throughout the winter months.

Old/New Business

Katye announced that the followup to the Worcester Garden Club was completed, showing that we used the funding for appropriate purchases on projects as proposed, and thanking the group for their donation.

Moving forward through the winter, meetings could take place via Zoom or in person.

Motion #3

To vote on meeting in person vs. by Zoom. Vote taken by a show of hands: Zoom 5/In person 1.

Winter meetings will be requested and held via Zoom.

Aleel shared ideas for a winter project involving starting native plant seeds by winter sowing. She will share more details with the interested members moving forward.

Candy Graham suggested that the watering cans be moved into the shed when not in use, or that bins could be purchased for storing them neatly near the cisterns. The bin storage near the cisterns was favored in the discussion with concerns that some members have trouble with the shed lock. Cardboard at the site will be laid out in the perennial garden area for weed suppression throughout the winter, but whatever is left over can be used for the same purpose on individual plots, so long as efforts are made to secure these from getting blown away.

NEXT MEETING: December 13 at 6pm via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:46.