

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

September 7, 2022

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, Aleel Grennan, Gina Tutela, Michael Mazloff, Wayne Dodge, Julie McCarthy. Guests: Max Tutela, Christina Dale, Troop 11706 leader and members.

Meeting called to order at 6:02.

AGENDA

The minutes of the August meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the August 2022 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Davis Hill/School Updates

Max Tutela presented his plans to:

- Deconstruct the 5 standing beds. Wood may be disposed of if rotted, donated, or reused at the main garden site to edge other beds. Soil will be reused, and may need additional soil. Jessica requested that the new soil be organic compost.
- 4- new 8ftx40in(+/-) galvanized steel beds will be installed and filled with the organic loam
- Pending approval from his scout advisors/counsel. Work to be completed and funded by his own resources/other scouts to help.
- Gina suggested consideration for updated chips on walkways.

Motion #2

To approve the plans for Max Tutela to move forward with project completion as proposed.

Voted and Approved.

Next Davis Hill meeting with Mr. Norton scheduled for September 26th at 9:15am.

Scout Project Update

Holden Girl Scout Troop 11706 has finished the woodland "Punny Path". Their project is pending

approval from their service unit manager meeting next week. The plans for use include a pumpkin walk this fall. Jessica will followup with the Town Managers' office to notify them of the date. Girl scout troops will be invited to meet there. Schools will be notified of the path for open space use. Connie sent an email to the Landmark. Michael will follow up with the Landmark as well. Katye will contact the group to do a "Gardener of the Month" feature for social media. Michael plans to follow up with the new Senior Center director and the Checkerberry community to invite visitors to stop by. Chips may still be spread during the fall clean up event when that takes place. Bird houses may be a next project to consider, other troops could participate. Julie will coordinate sign off for the troop.

Motion #3

**To approve sign off on the woodland path project completion for Holden Girl Scout Troop 11706.
Voted and Approved.**

Julie is planning to order 2 more yards of stone for the front perennial garden. She invites participant to help weed the site to prepare it, and spread the stone once it is delivered. She plans to do this project this weekend and will send a communication email to the group.

Geocache Project

Katye presented on behalf of her neighbor in 8th grade, Milo Cocola, who would like to put a geocache on the garden property. He has already gotten a signature from Peter Lukes, but he would like consent from the HCGC.

Statement from Milo: "geocaching is like a modern day treasure hunt. People hide containers with a paper that you can sign and other small trinkets for others to find. There are over 35 Million geocachers world wide, and 3 million hidden geocaches. Many are hidden in everyday objects in public, and many more are hidden throughout trail systems. A geocache in Massachusetts will usually get 20-120 finds over the course of a year. So a geocache is a great and safe way to bring people into places that you want to share with them around the community. The cache contents would vary as people take and leave things, but the original contents are a dollar, a pin, a pine cone, an eraser and a logbook and pencil. The cache would be a fake rock that is hollowed out about the size of your hand."

Since this project was already approved by the Town Manager, a vote was not required, but all participants are in favor of seeing this installed and will work towards sharing the news of this in the community.

Fall Event Planning

Aleel has reached out to a yoga instructor who would be willing to hold 2 yoga sessions this fall at the garden. Thursdays seem to work best. Aleel will check dates for Sept/Oct. Sept 22 and 29th proposed at 6 pm on the green at the back of the garden. The instructor is not asking to be paid for her time and service, and therefore the committee would offer this to the public, with acceptance of donations if any are offered. Jessica checked with Abi Benoit at the Town Manager's office and was told to have participants make a donation directly through the link on the Town Website, or a collection can go right to the TMs office for deposit into the garden account. Aleel will follow up with dates and make a plan for a flyer to go out through social media and community contacts.

Christina Dale attended the meeting to offer help with projects that support and communicate the importance of supporting pollinators, particularly butterflies. Milkweed seeds are being donated, and Jessica and Aleel are also saving annual seeds. We discussed a scavenger hunt in the garden for pollinator supporting plants- to be prepared over the winter and shared in the spring. Seed paper project- no one on the committee has experience with this and therefore that will be postponed until

further researched. Seed “bomb” project- Katye, Christina, and Aleel will plan this and discuss incorporating this into events as they occur, or making a separate event. This could be offered during the fall events. Aleel also has small envelopes to disperse seeds to visitors if the other projects do not come together. A flyer on harvesting and planting seeds would be a helpful component to add.

Grant/funding Updates

Followup from the last meeting:

- Grants are available and should be considered based on project proposals and members of the community who may benefit from the expansion.
- Michael has started a great list of grants to research further locally as well as throughout the state and New England.
- Goals include outreach to gardeners with limited physical abilities, seniors, low income groups- standing gardens, additional access, adding water access on the property.
- Focus should be based on outreach to those most in need for food security, physical and social interactions, environmental benefits of the project, ecological benefits and teaching in the community, expanding the community’s knowledge of agricultural practices locally, creating a partnership in the community.
- Michael and Gina will reach out to the senior center. Aleel will be researching raised bed models for seniors in the community.
- Jessica will have to follow up with the DPW to start discussion of budget deadlines, estimates of cost and labor needs, water access.
- Based on all of this, a mission statement should be discussed at the next meeting.

Community Harvest Updates

Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry every 3rd week. Katye mentioned the Mustard Seed and the St. Francis community may also accept donations. Ethical Community Harvesting is encouraged this year. Participating plot members will be asked to donate anything they may not need to use when ready for harvest.

Old/New Business

1. Theft at the garden has been reported- Jessica notified the Town Manager’s office as well as the DPW and the HPD through email. No response received.
2. Future meetings can still be held outdoors while the weather and light allows.
3. Michael will continue to look into funding. Next applications due would likely be the Holden Garden Club application and the Holden Cultural Committee grants. HCC grant may be looked into for supporting future events at the garden such as yoga, kid/family events, painting, photography and garden lessons.
4. Next meeting Sept. 28 @ 6pm.