

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

November 16, 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, Michael Mazloff, Wayne Dodge, Julie McCarthy, Gina Tutela.

Meeting called to order at 6:24.

AGENDA

The minutes of the October 12 meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the October 12, 2022 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Fall Clean Up Event Review

Successful clean up at the plots, perennial area, rock border, and compost area. Template for new row laid out and readied with no till layering on the ground. Weather, holidays and coordination efforts may prevent an additional session this fall. Jessica is storing the seeds collected. These will be available in the spring.

Soil Testing Updates

The test showed no signs of lead, and the soil quality is excellent, although the depth and density is poor. Will have to build up significantly on the new area. pH is perfect. No lime recommended. Nitrogen and potassium could use a boost- could add:

- 20 lb of blood or feather meal or 100lb of alfalfa meal per 100 sq ft. (Nitrogen)
- 100 lb alfalfa meal or 9 lb potassium sulfate/1000 sq ft. (Potassium)

Budget and Grant Proposals

- MCC/HCC Grant "Gardening For Everyone" submitted. Decision may come in December.
- Holden Garden Club Grant for DH withdrawn- cost estimate requirements could not be met in time, and recycled materials could be substituted. No teacher interest from the school.
- Town Budget Proposal submitted for water and irrigation system placement. Gina would like to add a request for full or partial funding of the expansion.

Motion #2

To allow Jessica to write and submit an ADDENDUM TO THE budget proposal to the town in the for funding the expansion of plots.

Voted and Approved.

Michael and Jessica have been discussing grants to further fund irrigation and expansion plans. Michael is looking into a Seed Grant from The GrassRoots Foundation, which we should be able to qualify for. He would like to send an email to the coordination of that program to confirm our eligibility. There may also be an opportunity with AARP.

Motion #3

To allow for Michael to explore and write a grant proposal openly, with the goal of partially or fully funding irrigation and expansion projects, including a final draft to be submitted for consideration by the Town Manager.

Voted and Approved.

Jessica requested that Michael check back into the Massachusetts Cultural Commission as there may be an opportunity with the Cultural Investment Portfolio program

Aleel proposed that she may reach out to the directors of the Civil Engineering and CAD programs at WRHS to ask for their input and involvement. This would be a terrific opportunity to add multigenerational community involvement in the upcoming projects, and it could greatly improve the design and installation of the irrigation system.

Motion #4

To allow for Aleel to reach out to the teachers/coordinators of the WRHS programs involved in civil engineering and design to invite them to participate in upcoming plans for irrigation design and installation.

Voted and Approved.

Community Harvest Updates

Gina will continue to be available for collections and donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry every 3rd week.

Old/New Business

1. Max Tutela has 100% approval to move forward with his Eagle Scout Project to rebuild the beds at Davis Hill. As the soil is starting to freeze, he will likely complete this in the spring.
2. Jessica asked Gina to speak to staff at the school to take down the sign and bring in the bird bath. Katye suggested that these may need to be replaced in the spring. She will follow up.
3. Next meeting Dec. 14 @ 6:15 pm in the Starbard building if available. Katye will get the key from the Starbard office.