

HOLDEN COMMUNITY GARDEN COMMITTEE

May 10, 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, Mike Trigiano, Gina Tutela

Absent: Tracy Acito

Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm.

AGENDA

The minutes of April 12, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

Motion #1

To approve the 4-12-21 HCG Minutes

Voted and Approved.

Sign Project/DPW Update

Jessica reported that she spoke to John who advised that he will send the committee names of companies to contact for the sign. Katye will remain the point person for this project. She will be reaching out to get a work order in place before July so that the 2021 budget will be applied to the project. She has already been in contact with Serrato and Sunshine. Awaiting a quote. Jess and Katye to follow-up. We will be forwarding this to John ASAP.

Grant Updates

Jessica reported that John informed her that the 2022 \$1000 budget has been approved. The Holden Cultural Committee has also awarded the HCGC with \$1000. Therefore, we can start planning our seating goals for the site, with ADA compliance in mind. John offered that Chris would be a good contact person for this project.

Jessica also presented to the group the metal plant tags, laminating machine and UV resistant laminating sheets for Katye to use to make signs/postings at the site. We discussed having the perennials labeled with the common and Latin names. We may be printing these by hand or on the computer. We may need to use further funds for an appropriate marker to complete the project. Jessica will ask for an update on the remainder of the funds from the Worcester Garden Club for this project to be completed. Katye still considering UV resistant printing as well as the UV resistant laminating sheets. Jessica suggested starting with laminating the plot numbers and getting those

posted, a compost sign with instructions. The group also brain stormed other ideas including a laminated sheet of all perennials at the site, their native qualities for wildlife, the birds and animals onsite could be listed for interest, posting about protecting the pollinators. Jessica would like signs posted to remind visitors to not allow dogs near the plants.

Earth Day Recap/Applications

This event was a great success and has really helped us prepare for the season. Many new members came to meet the group, and we had a good amount of help from volunteers. Seeds remain available. We will close applications after the Memorial Day Weekend, and donate remaining seeds to the WREC. If plot #7 remains available, Aleel will take a second plot. School beds can be applied for as well, but applications will need to be completed and waivers signed.

Public Outreach

We continue to post on social media with updates at the site. Katye is working on another Gardener of the Month. She has a local neighbor who agreed to be featured this month. She suggested that we send her recipies, perhaps starting with recipies that feature herbs and vegetables available in early spring. We discussed chives, and Mike might have a recipe to offer.

Girl Scout Update

Julie reported that the Girl Scouts finished their plant sale (with great success) and they will be working on building the beds, installing the plants, and putting in the pathway stones. They will try to get most of this done in the coming weeks. There are 2 troops interested in taking this over once her troops are finished with their project. We suggest that the troops most interested come to a meeting to discuss the requirements and future plans for maintaining the site. Jessica will check with the Town Manager's office to ask about any permission required to allow troops to hold meetings and/or awards ceremonies in the garden. The nature trail was discussed again. There may be a troop interested, but not committed. Families and children are encouraged to explore the area while it is still being put together, and we will try to label plants as soon as possible to educate about the edible and pollinator friendly properties of the plants installed.

Davis Hill Update

The soil testing is back and shows high pH at both areas (K and Main beds), which will be amended with elemental sulfur and Langbeinite. Jess will order once the square footage is calculated. Katye will contact some teachers to see if they have interest in measuring. The K beds need some organic additions as well, which may be over time or will addition of leaf mulch, peat, or cover crop. Gina knows of a few people interested in applying to use the beds for the season (they will be asked to use the standard application and waiver form). There have not been any teachers expressing interested in using this space for garden projects this year, but it remains open for all to use. We discussed the Holden Garden Club Grant Funding available. The applications will remain open until October 15, so we have time to further consider proposals or hold the application for any interested teachers. Teachers have been notified per Mr. Norton.

Community Harvest Update

Gina continues to collect and transport donations to the Wachusett Food Pantry. Perishable items would need to be delivered on the 3rd Fri/Sat of the month.

Old/New Business

1. Jessica shared that there have been complaints of the shed lock not working correctly. Committee members have been able to operate the lock without problems. Continue to monitor.
2. The Fruit Garden Patch was announced by Jessica. She obtained the plants from the Worcester County Conservation Division plant sale, and she and her husband planted a peach tree, strawberries, blueberry bushes, and raspberry bushes.
3. Perennial Plantings will continue to be installed around the perimeter of the gardens. Julie and Jessica continue to work on this, and they will provide a list to Katie for labels.
4. Rain water collection continues. Jessica will contact DPW to reach out to the HFD if there is a need for a tank fill, pending any prolonged dry spell.
5. One plot remains open, as well as the 2 raised beds. Applications to close on Memorial Day.