

Community Gardens

Community Gardens Interest Group (CGIG)

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, 3/21/12 6:00-7:30 PM @ SDSU Children's Center

Location Map: http://as.sdsu.edu/child/misc_pdf/CC_MAP.pdf

1. **Call to Order** (6:03 p.m.)
 - a. Approval of Minutes from 2/29/12 meeting.
 - b. Attendees: **Robin Judd, Kari Szakai, Henry Bertram, Luiza Savchuk, Glen Brandenburg, Marguerite Mauritz, Gabe Mitchell, Pat McGann, Ann Cottrell**
Guest: **Kathy Wolfe**, Hardy Elementary School Principal

2. **Current Business**
 - a. Update on communications
 1. Progress of "Homeowners" letter sent late last week **(Henry)**
 - a. One letter undeliverable. All others assumed delivered.
 - b. We need 1-2 volunteers to contact all homeowners by phone. **Henry and Robin** to make calls during week of April 2.

 2. Report on support solicited/received **(Henry)**
 - a. Two organizations have sent letters of support: Councilmember Marti Emerald & CVEA have sent letters of support.
 - b. Doug Case, Pres. of CACC, has been asked to write a letter.
 - c. SDSU 'Good Neighbor Program' to be contacted for their support. **(Luiza)**

 - b. Feasibility of "Hidden Valley" site
 1. Soil testing
 - a. We need to test for heavy metals, organics, and pesticide compounds.
 - b. **Marguerite** has a contact to have 5 samples done pro-bono.
 - c. Testing organics is very expensive. So, narrow down what we are testing for.
 - d. Research history of the sites; do planning dept. search in person **(Henry)**

 2. Install a water meter
 - a. Possibly get water from nearby SDSU irrigation lines.
 - b. **Gabe** can check out the site to see if the water line is live.
 - c. **Patrick** will contact Steve Lincoln SDSU Energy Director.
 - d. John Ferris, the Director of Physical Plant is a good resource as well.

 3. Codes, regulations and possible homeowner's resistance to consider
 - a. Find out if the land has City Planning Dept. "overlay" restrictions, i.e. environmentally sensitive land, canyon review status, protected area, etc. Does the land have protected status? Any "pristine, disturbed, undisturbed" areas? **(Henry)**
 - b. Obtain more detailed topographic maps. What parts of land can we reasonably expect to be able to use as gardens? When we have OK to use land, create maps with proposed CGIG land borders so we can calculate plot areas. **(Henry and Patrick)**
 - c. Find out the flora and fauna of the plot of land if needed per City Planning Dept. requirements. **(Henry)**
 - d. **Robin J.** has Children Center building plans she can share.
 - e. Existing pathways. Make sure current users can continue having access.

f. **Glen** suggested we come up with more good reasons for homeowners to say yes to let us use/lease their land.

g. Making a 'Benefits List' – consider these benefits: free food, free weed clearing, increased desirability of home if put up for sale, positive media coverage, involvement of area children, owners can be added to a small donors sign if desired, visually aesthetic, possibility of free use of one plot(don't offer until they say no).

4. Appearance and governance issues for proposed garden

a.. Users will sign an agreement to ensure they keep plot tidy.

b. Have consistency in agreement language.

c. Review and comment on weblink of other gardens rules to get some ideas.

d. Consider what kind of space are we trying to create? Keep amount of rules as low as possible. **(Kari)**

e. Would like to know what the exterior might look like? **(Kathy)**

Living Fence. **Nicholas** to bring in a sample of his prototype living fence.

f. Start of a list of what we could use: Mulch, Weed cloth, Coffee bean bags (free from Starbucks?) to use for a walking border.

g. Discussion regarding existing gardens in S.D. County. About half may be private gardens. **Glen** suggests we contact another private garden, and find out their difficulties with starting. **Luiza** will contact Judy Jacoby (SDGN) to find out who to contact re: other gardens.

3. New Business

a. Hardy Elementary School; update on their proposed garden. Guest: **Kathy Wolfe**, principal.

1. They are at the developing stages of their garden.

2. Avoiding potential bureaucracy by growing in containers.

3. They are starting small: a little welcome garden, then growing pumpkins, then a garden of fruits and veggies eventually. They have a 1 year and 5 year plan in development.

4. In July, they will start a community service out-reach program with her students. 300 students + parents can potentially help CGIG with harvesting and maintenance duties. Also could help collect clear plastic bottles for possible CGIG "living fence" project.

5. She sees multiple ways to engage with CGIG.

6. Contacts to reach out to: Bill Tole, city farmer's nursery.

7. No real resistance with their efforts from SD City School administration. Their food services management is very excited about possibly using locally sourced food.

8. **Kathy** invited to be regular member of CGIG.

b. Additional research.

1. Construction and maintenance: need (2) 20 amps, 120 volt AC circuits. **Glen** says there is one outdoor receptacle (hot 24/7) available under Children's Center parking lot solar panel array. Also more power could be available from an area in front of Children's Ctr. We intend to use only electric tools on site at all times. Possible minimal night time lighting will be needed. Start-up and maintenance costs for 1st year are not yet known. **(Henry)**.

2. Potential funding sources: Associated Students (SDSU), SDSU Children's Center, fundraising, Rotary club, Greenovation grant, Home Depot grant, Union Bank Foundation, S.D. City Council discretionary funds, Federal grants, SDSU Foundation, etc...Options for assistance with identifying/requesting (writing) grants and other funding. Scale of money needed: first year start up and maintenance cost likely less than \$50K. Community groups that could potentially donate: CACC and CVEA, El Cerrito group. Could contact the businesses in El Cajon Blvd. B.I.D. for donations of money or services. **Marguerite** suggests we come up with likely initial costs so we can know what to ask for.

3. New resources and networking: Fundraising events to expand the network as well as possibly obtaining funds. Community Garden Education group—visit website sdgcn.org. Garden outreach

(SDSU and Community). Good neighbor program & Chanelle McNutt about SDSU diversity Garden. **Luiza** will contact. **Robin J.** has connection for someone to clear the land.

- c. Start-up plans for the garden (resume discussion at next meeting)

See samples: <http://www.oakparkcommunitygarden.org/pages/rules.htm>

http://www.nplanonline.org/sites/philpnet.org/files/CommunityGardenToolkit_FINAL_R20110322.pdf

1. Overall Governance: stay with the committee structure, create an elected board, or other?
2. How to divide plots: different sizes? Continue fencing discussion
3. Who will be invited to use garden?
4. Establish use and access rules. Use/modify readily available agreement documents?

4. Closing

- a. Items to consider and work on prior to next meeting.

1. Need topo map to show contours and land available for usage.
2. Total amount of land we can use, in square footage?
3. Lay out proposed plot sizes. Pathways need to be at least 3 feet wide.
4. Pro-bono work available from a landscape architect? **Henry's** contact: Linda Chisari, **Marguerite's** contact: Revolutions Landscape. **Patrick's** Contact: SDSU architect. **Gabe's** contact: Student group. Other individual or group to be contacted for design ideas?
5. All to research more funding possibilities? Charities, organizations, local and national foundations?
6. Brainstorm a name for our garden. Send suggested names around by email to all regular attendees before next meeting.

- b. Next CGIG meeting date/time/location.

1. Next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 18th, 6 p.m. at the SDSU Children's Center.
2. Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

3/26/12: *L.Savchuk, H.Bertram*