

Medford Community Garden Commission
April 27, 2021

Present: Fred Laskey, Brian Duran, Rebecca Stevenson, Lisa Risley, Elise Boerges, Amanda Bowen (recording)

Board of Health guidelines for the gardens: The Winthrop steering committee drafted and the Board of Health approved new guidelines for garden use this year. These were shared with Tufts, McNally and Riverbend.

New garden at La Prise Village: Funds are available from federal block grants to build community gardens at Housing Authority properties. Amanda will meet with MHA staff to discuss their interest in such a plan and to consider locations at La Prise.

Membership report: Brian reports that all the garden spots are now filled. We have fulfilled wait list names up to August 1, 2019. There are about 50 people on the wait list now. Almost everyone would prefer Winthrop! Riverbend has a much shorter wait list of 8 names.

Duplicate plots: One gardener had a plot at both Riverbend and Winthrop and was asked to give up one as our rules explicitly prevent multiple plots in the same household.

Map of gardens: Brian created a map which shows the explicit location of each of the gardens. We will integrate this into our web site so those applying for space know the location of the gardens.

Application: There was discussion of how the assistance categories on the current application are used. Brian does pass the information along to each membership coordinator and offers a reduced rate for membership. If disability is indicated then the easy access beds are prioritized for those gardeners. Some commissioners questioned the appropriateness of asking these questions but the application was vetted by Board of Health staff who have similar questions on their various forms. Riz noted that it helps potential gardeners know that we acknowledge these as needs.

We hope to create a web-based application acknowledging that there must continue to be a way to apply on paper. Amanda will discuss this with Syrah who currently handles all applications and Rebeca who has been updating our web site. It was suggested that we supply applications in a number of locations such as the Library, the Senior Center, the Board of Health, the Medford Family Network and at the gardens themselves.

Water: The City has agreed to try to get water on in all the gardens by May 1.

Seedlings: Riz is cultivating approximately 100 tomato seedlings to be distributed to patrons of the Mystic Market in June.

Updates: The Tufts Garden has once again asked the City to consider installing bollards in the parking lot to prevent damage to the fence. It was suggested that concrete planters might be a nice alternative, perhaps decorated by local artists.

Brian noted that he is working with the Winthrop Steering Committee on a range of improvements possible with Eversource reimbursement funds.

There was general discussion of how compost works in each garden and consideration of whether a rotating bin at McNally would be feasible.