

Medford Community Garden Commission

May 24, 2022

Present: Fred Laskey, Syrah McGivern, Kerry Masteller, Amanda Bowen, Matthew Paige-Lieberman, Rebecca Stevenson, Madeleine Levin, Lisa Risley, Elizabeth Williams, Brian Duran

Tufts theft: Kerry informed us that a hose and nozzle was stolen this weekend from the Tufts garden. There is no evidence of who took it and so replacement is necessary. She also raised the issue of the hole on the fence which would be an easy way to access the garden. Amanda has written Tim McGivern at DPW to request his attention to the fence. We can request CPA funding if it turns out that a taller fence is needed.

Andrews School: The new garden beds are being used by Kathi O'Donoghue and her students currently. The plan is still to offer two of the beds to prospective gardeners on our wait list with the agreement that they keep the other beds watered for the summer. We are still working out the details with Kathi. The project will kick off June 23 at the end of school but we will verify that gardeners can get started before then.

Garden beds assignments: We had a discussion about how our bed turnover rules were established in response to a query from a prospective gardener. Although she was unable to attend this meeting, her query questioned assigning beds to those who own homes, who have growing space at home and also questioned why gardeners are allowed to keep their plots from year to year if others are waiting.

After considerable review of how we came to the rules, as spelled out in the current bylaws, in the first place, the consensus was that the system is working quite well. We set up the system knowing that we wanted some continuity but that there must be turnover so the new gardeners got a plot eventually. We compared our rules with those in other cities at the time and felt our system struck the right balance.

It is still the case that more gardens must be built to accommodate the need and we are always on the lookout for prospective sites. The Andrews project was one such opportunity and our soon to be three gardens at Medford Housing Authority sites has been an important contribution to ensuring that these Medford residents have access to growing space.

La Prise Village: Amanda asked for assistance in thinking through a new scheme for the La Prise garden. Using cheaper beds, possibly forgoing sod removal, and perhaps having work days to do some of the assembly may help this project get off the ground. Given that Hedgewitch did a good job with the Andrews project we should get a quote from them.

Assignments: Amanda asked for some support for checking in on MHA gardens and engaging the resident gardeners. Elise offered to help. Matthew noted that MHA had not been supportive of his proposed garden on Canal St. He would like to find an available plot at one of the other MHA facilities.

