

Medford Garden Commission Meeting

January 28th, 2025 at 7:00 pm

Amanda Bowen, Elise Boerjes, Liz White, Rebecca Stevenson, Kerry Masteller, Lisa Risley

Seed Swap

- March 8th - Unitarian Church Hall on High Street, 2 pm - 5 pm
 - Amanda and Elise are planning on being there, all others are welcome to come help out
 - Elise will get seeds
 - Amanda will make a flyer and advertise
 - Containers for seeds needed; Riz may have some

Pergola at Winthrop Street

- Medford City Fund from the Casino - \$2500 donation (to be paid out by Friends who will be reimbursed by Fund)
- CPA has awarded money as well

Tufts Community Garden

- Update to replace beds - Kerry will give an update in February after meeting with members of the Tufts Steering Committee
- Friends has money to put towards replacements, ~\$5K

Commission Member Status

- Need to recruit new members to increase energy
- Amanda will reach out to current members to determine their commitment

Applicant List

- Updated lists - all applicants have been contacted and invited to Google Groups

Meeting with the Mayor regarding new beds

- Liz & Elise met in January to discuss new gardens
 - Will meet with Mayor BLK on February 10th to discuss specific sites (Barry (priority), WMCC, Arlington St, Morrison, Harris), and request support from her; other ideas not needing a full garden build
 - Temporary space behind City Hall
 - Community members with garden space; could we offer it to people who don't have their own space
 - Micro-pantries at current gardens for non-perishable items and excess veggies during growing season (would need to be rat proof)
 - How to deal with rats in community gardens - beds should be elevated, prefab metal bins, hardware cloth laid under beds, other ideas?
 - Potential for increased food insecurity will increase demand for community gardens

- Need to look through Dropbox folders for city-owned properties that might be appropriate for community gardens
- Annual Garden Meetings coming up in April - encourage existing gardeners to express their support for new gardens
- Some metrics that indicate need for new gardens: sign ups since April 1, 2022:
 - April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023 - 57 people signed up
 - April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024 - 65 people signed up
 - April 1, 2024 - today - 49 people signed up

Wait list issues

- What will happen when more people have been on the list for three years than available plots due to normal turnover:
 - Each individual garden decides who to remove from the garden if people on the waitlist have been on it for three years but Commission should offer guidance
 - Encourage coordinators to reach out to gardeners and find out who is returning by February 23rd; Amanda will reach out to Georgiana and Norman
 - Will be based on demand for each garden
 - People who have not fulfilled their volunteer hours in recent years or haven't really used their plots should be first to go
 - Once we have number of plots needed we will compare to waitlist and have a more in-depth discussion
 - Long time Steering Committee members will get credit for their effort
 - As of 1/28 there is one open plot in Winthrop, it will be offered to a McNally gardener who took a plot at McNally even though his top choice was Winthrop. Priority will be based on application date
 - Current plots in Medford Community Gardens:
 - 8 beds at McNally, 22 beds at Tufts, 34 beds at Winthrop St
 - McNally was doubled 2 years ago, Tufts was built in 2017, Winthrop in 2015/2016

Web Presence

- Maintained by Rebecca

Miscellaneous

- up for grabs: Leftover solar flowers & gift bags from long ago fundraisers, warming blankets used for seed starting; also MCG patches
- Gift card from Wegmans available for use