

Prospect Heights Community Farm Winter Meeting

March 14, 2009, 11am, at BBG

Minutes compiled by Traci Nottingham and Jean Kahler

In Attendance:

Kayla Schwartz (presiding)
Traci Nottingham (took notes)
Jean Kahler (took notes)
Redelia Nottingham
Ben Shupp
Frances Norwood
Silke Torras
Meredith Kadet
Torberg Davern
Laurie Kilpatrick
Virginia Webster
Maria Stasavage
Patricia Slee
Lisa Watkins
Cynthia Hilmoe
James Kendred
Ruth Manning
Michele Tall
Maya Lau
Catherine Orrok
Philip Silva
Jon Pope
Elly Perkins
Trevor MacDermin
Rosemary Palms
Benedict Jackson
Yuki Kaneko
Johanna Bauman
Audrey Morrell
Peter Rust
Brian L. Thompson
David Lignetti
Anthony Mohen

Topics:

Bylaws and Policies

Bed List Report

Water Tank

Compost

Disciplinary Hearing — James

Secretaries

Disciplinary Hearing — Shed

Treasury Report

Website

Elections

Open Hours

Other Business

Issues for April Meeting

Bylaws and Policies

- Kayla reports that Green Thumb has raised the required number of weekly Open Hours during the season from 10 to 20. We do not need to maintain a membership in Green Thumb, but it is useful, as they provide us with tools, etc., through their giveaways.

- Phil reminds members that a Rules Committee formed last year to gather the rules that the garden had (loosely or not) used in the past and combine them into an up-to-date, easily understandable system. The system now consists of Bylaws, which function as the garden's

constitution, and Policies, which cover smaller issues and can be changed at any meeting by a simple majority vote.

- Open discussion on proposed Bylaws. Various changes are suggested and voted on, as follows:

(Please note: this language is approximate. Phil will post the formal language of the amended Bylaws to the listserve.)

1. Elections for all garden positions will be held annually at the Winter Meeting.

2. Members are eligible to run for elected office after one year active membership (where “active” means fulfilling all open hour and meeting attendance requirements). In the event that no one with said prerequisites wishes to run for a given office, this requirement shall be waived.

3. Amendments to Garden Bylaws will be voted on annually at the Winter Meeting. (Policies may be changed at any meeting.)

4. Meeting attendance requirements for bed-holding and non-bed-holding members shall be: 3 per season for bed-holding members; 1 per season for non-bed-holding members (as voted on in Spring 2007)

5. BQLT representative, Master Gardener, and Compost Coordinator are included in the list of garden officers. Master Gardener and Compost Coordinator shall include in their duties alerting membership to volunteer opportunities in the garden.

6. “Manage” in duties description of Master Gardener and Compost Coordinator will now read “advise”.

7. Co-positions shall be elected every year, with regular officer elections. There is no term limit.

8. Members may vote at the Winter Meeting to appoint non-voting advisory members of the board, including Coordinators Emeriti.

All amendments pass: 22 yea, 0 nay, 4 abstain

Bylaws pass: 23 yea, 0 nay, 3 abstain

Further Policies discussion:

- We need a "No non-member dogs" sign for front gate. People have been running their dogs in the garden in the winter.

- Alcohol is not allowed in the garden, because of our relationship with TPL.

It is moved that a clause be added to the garden Bylaws, stating that Policies may be amended at any meeting by a simple majority vote.

Motion passes: 23 yea, 0 nay, 3 abstain

Bed List Report

Ruth reports on bed waiting list. Current bed-holding members who wish to change beds will be assigned first, then empty beds will be assigned to those on the waiting list. Jean K. would like to switch beds to a sunny location. Phil Silva is next on the list to receive a bed. Members should talk to Ruth about their place on the list, etc.

People can also share beds or collaborate on the care of communal beds.

Water Tank

Jon Pope seeks help fixing the foundation of our water collection tanks, which is shifting perilously. Work will take place in April and requires plenty of hands, feet, etc. Job requirements, per Jon: "Strong like bull, smart like tractor."

The water tanks were drained at the end of the season, but the

overflow was not. It cracked over the winter, but Jon reports he will have to “crack the snot out of it” in order to repair the foundation anyway.

Compost

Thanks to our vigorous and intrepid Worm Brigade, we have lots of lovely compost, sifted and everything. Use it. Mulch all you want; they’ll make more.

On April 4th, the Staten Island Compost Something-Or-Other will have a field trip to the garden

Various proposals from the Compost Consortium will be compiled into a Comprehensive Compost Plan and presented for member discussion and approval at the April meeting. Among the issues under consideration:

- Building a formal relationship with the PH Community Supported Agriculture group, either by having the garden open for CSA members to drop compost off during their Thursday evening produce pick-up at PS 9 or by assigning a member to go to PS 9 to get the compost. (Johanna is spearheading this effort, which would not require more compost bins in the garden.)

- A “compost membership” option for community members who do not want to garden?

- Community compost give-back, perhaps at the Plant Sale?

The crowd offers a rousing woo-hoo! To our Marvelous Mavens of Mulch! (Hot Rotters? Decay Devotees? Your humble secretary still favors Worm Brigade.)

Disciplinary Hearing — James

This agenda item tabled for Disciplinary Committee meeting, following James's objection to having it discussed by full membership.

Secretaries

Dan had asked that the membership discuss the job the secretaries have been doing so far. The membership treats the secretaries to a rousing round of applause and an embarrassment of compliments. The secretaries blush decorously.

Disciplinary Hearing — Shed

Someone seems to have been living in the shed. It is a big mess, and Ruth has found a stranger in the locked garden.

Kayla says that the rules are clear on this issue and that the disciplinary committee should meet. This decision is approved by a clear majority.

This agenda item tabled for Disciplinary Committee meeting.

Treasury Report

Phil reports the following:

- Current Balance: \$2852.68
- \$600 is held for fixing the water tanks
- Phil is now listed as the treasurer with the IRS and has EIN (?) number, etc.
- We spent roughly what we took in last year.
- Our bank account is still in Stan's name. Kayla reports that Stan is unhappy with this arrangement.
- Our bank account costs us \$15/month

- Phil can't get the bank to put the account in only the garden's name and does not want to put it in his own name.

Johanna has gotten an account in the name of her CSA and will talk to Phil about what bank was willing to do it.

Phil moves that we close the bank account and put the money into travelers' checks, so we can stop paying the fee. Motion passes by clear majority.

Phil will look into how to have our treasury information kept in a place accessible to the membership, such as on the website.

Website

Dan has made some kind of new website for the garden. Maria says that this was not in response to our needing to stop using the yahoo group; everything there is still working. Dan seems to want a website that will do other things, but members present are unclear on exactly what.

This is not something that was ever discussed as a group, and would involve an ongoing hosting expense. (Yahoo site is free.)

Various members are concerned with the safety of having personal information on the website.

It is agreed that Dan should make a formal proposal to change the website at the next meeting, at which members can vote on it.

Elections

In accordance with the bylaws, elections were held in the following manner: Candidates were nominated by the membership. Nominations were seconded. Positions were voted on. Where those elected requested that the membership nominate and elect a co-officer to work with them,

co- officers were elected as well. Votes are listed here in this format: Yea/Nay/Abstain. (Note, vote totals may not match when people did not raise hands for abstentions.)

Administrator (formerly Coordinator)

Virginia Webster (*unopposed*)

21/0/3

Co-Administrator

Dan Kelly (*nominated in absentia; unopposed*)

17/3/4

Secretary

Traci Nottingham (*unopposed*)

20/0/2

Co-Secretary

Jean Kahler (*unopposed*)

20/0/2

Treasurer

Phil Silva (*unopposed*)

22/0/2

Co-Treasurer

Torborg Davern (*unopposed*)

18/0/3

Master Gardener

Virginia Webster (*unopposed*)

21/0/2

Co-Master Gardener

Traci Nottingham (*unopposed*)

21/0/2

Compost Coordinator

Jon Pope (*unopposed*)

21/0/2

Co-Compost Coordinator

Johanna Bauman (*unopposed*)

21/0/2

Communications Coordinator

Maria Stasavage (*unopposed*)

20/0/3

Co-Communications Coordinator

Meredith Kadet (*unopposed*)

20/0/2

Service Coordinator

Tabled until April meeting, since Akiko is not present and there's no one else fighting for it.

Box Coordinator

Ruth Manning (*unopposed*)

21/0/2

Advisory Board Members

Kayla Schwartz

Catherine Orrok

Frances Norwood

All elected by general assent

Open Hours

Open Hours for the 2009 season are set as:

Saturdays, 12-6 (divided into two shifts)

Sundays, 12-5 (divided into two shifts)

Tuesdays, 4-6

Wednesdays, 4-6

Thursdays, 4:30-7:30

Fridays, 5-7

Open Hours sign-up sheet for April circulated at meeting and will be posted in the garden

Other Business

Wi-Fi: Trevor MacDermin, whose wi-fi signal reaches the garden, will give the password to those who would like to use it. Thanks!

Virginia and Trevor will get seeds at the Green Thumb giveaway on 3/31

Jon Pope will sign up for lumber from Green Thumb on 4/4

Cynthia has a proposal for 3rd and 4th graders to have a workshop in the garden on 4/1. Email her for more info or if you know a child who would like to be involved.

Cynthia is also willing to act as a liason to PS 9 for teachers wishing to use the garden as a teaching resource.

Issues for April Meeting

Compost Plan

Website

Jon Pope suggests that we take over care of the new Vanderbilt street trees as a gesture of neighborliness, an opportunity for more members to garden, and an effort to keep the trees from an untimely croaking. This could be in cooperation with the St. Marks garden.

Next Meeting: April 18th, in the garden, at 1pm.

Raindate: April 9th.