

Garden meeting Saturday, April 6th 4/6/13

Attendance

Joey DeLec	Little Wing Lee (new)
Alexandra Hayes	Ted De Barbieri
Ruth Manning	Lynn Armentrout
Rosemary Palms	Silke Torras
Lindsey Haddix	Eva Wang
Will Law	Louise Brooks
Melissa Atwood	Chris Moore
Ana R.	Kristen McClaran
Elly Perkins	Frances Norwood
Traci Nottingham	Hans Steiner
Flory Wilson (new)	Jessica Stein Patrick
Rebecca Stern (new)	Martha Elliot
Jeff Secor	Rodellia Nottingham
Ella Morgenlander	Grace Nam
Lisa Watkins	Lee Schere
Amele Garin-Davet (new)	Prina Talia (new)
Jennifer Richman	

4/16/13 Garden Meeting Minutes 11AM - 12:15PM

Brief Introduction by Jeff and a round robin of hellos & introductions.

Board Announcements and Amendments to Bylaws:

With regard to service hours, 2 members may sign up per shift. Members are encouraged to sign up. A calendar will be posted in the box in front of garden.

Announcement from Treasury Dept.

The Garden currently has a balance of \$3,501.43
Annual Dues are now due. Members are requested to pay their annual dues by the May meeting.
For new members, please meet with Treasury after this meeting to coordinate paying dues and getting on the list serve.

Announcements from Joey, the box coordinator,

Joey has done tallying and has been evaluating the boxes actually being used throughout the year. Some members are not tending to their boxes on a consistent

basis. There is a long waiting list and Joey posed a request that people offer to share their boxes if away for the summer. Please be active in letting other people know if you will be away so that they can enjoy use of the gardening space.

It was brought up that at least one long-time garden (has been a member for over 3 years) has not received a box. She was asked to speak with Joey, the box coordinator. If any current member feels that they have been a member for a long period of time and should have a box by now, please speak to Joey as well.

PHCF is now on Twitter and Facebook!

Members were suggested to let others know about the Facebook and twitter pages as well as the PHCF website. All information about the garden is up on the website.

Announcements, Updates and Discussions:

New Tree needs to be planted

Discussion about the Stewartia Tree which needs to be planted. It is currently sitting in a bucket and has been there for a while. Thank you to Ruth for driving to and from the BBG on behalf of the tree.

Traci proposed that the new tree be planted today.

Garden members discussed what is to be done with the front beds of the garden. Question was raised: "Should the tree go in the front of the garden?" The front beds are rather bare now and need to be attended to.

It was agreed that garden members should look at all trees we want to plant and decide what tree to put where.

Compost Grant:

Jeff put together a compost grant, \$680 requested.

The grant would cover the cost of a new scale which would weigh in pounds food scraps going into compost and how much in volume would be accounted for once composting process has been completed. The grant organization replied that they would get back to us later this month. This project involves putting measurement into compost which is in accordance with NYC data collections.

Philip Silva Project:

Philip is working on a project similar to Mara's, looking at the ways community gardens work in the city. He is holding a workshop sometime next month to meet with various gardens, in the effort to evaluate what is happening. We can possibly tack on the compost project as we discuss our current plans with Philip.

It was proposed that members offer to volunteer to work with Philip on this project. At least 3 garden members volunteered to do so - Anna H., Louise, and Kirsten). Participation in the project with Philip was discussed among group members present in the meeting. Workshop will be held in Brooklyn or the Bronx. Location not yet

confirmed. As it stands currently, participation in the project is open ended right now. Most members do however support participation in the project.

Ratification of past Meeting Minutes was brought up. Does anyone need more time to ratify the minutes from previous meetings? Traci will be posting the minutes once agreed that ample time has been given.

Discussion about trees being removed in the garden:

The Dogwood Tree:

Discussion ensued about making more boxes and how to make more space for new members.

Lynn proposed to take down the Dogwood Tree. By doing so would create open space for 3-5 additional boxes.

Lynn proposed to move the kid's dig box to another area.

Lynn proposed to transfer the strawberries box to the box directly under the plum tree which gets very little sun and it is difficult to grow anything as a result.

Traci mentioned that the Plum tree was trimmed and that the box under it, which was previously not getting enough sun, should be less shaded now. Moving the kid's dig box or the strawberries would not be a good choice, as the box in question would now receive ample sun.

The Maple Tree:

Lynn made the comment that the Maple tree is not in good shape. The tree was checked out by a professional and he gave us a negative report about the tree. It is currently on the decline and may present a hazard if not cut down at some point in the future. It is however not in immediate danger of falling at the present moment.

Garden members are concerned that if we pull down both the Dogwood and the Maple tree, the change in landscape would be too drastic. Lynn suggested we plant another tree. The back area gets a lot of traffic, as it is near the compost bins and is a common work area. The shade is definitely appreciated. It was suggested that we trim the Dogwood instead.

Also, why are there so many sacks of leaves in the back, covering the roots of the tree? The bags are currently located where the rotting side of the tree is. This may be harming the tree. Lynn suggested that the compost team be more vigilant in keeping the back area organized and bags away from the base of the tree. Most garden members agreed.

Two choices at present time:

a) Check root ball: The same professional who evaluated the tree can do so further by digging into the root ball and having a more precise perspective and the cost of \$500.00

b) Cut down the tree: The tree can be cut down at the price of \$1200.00. About \$250.00 can possibly be deducted from the amount if garden members assist in taking down limbs.

Traci, Rodellia, Francis, and several other garden members disagreed with taking down too many trees.

Rodellia made a point that she wants shade from trees in the back of the garden. We should also keep the garden landscape similar to how it was years ago, when it was first designed. We will not be able to accommodate everyone in terms of boxes because the landscaping can not be drastically altered to make that happen. Lynn countered the statement, saying that more boxes encourage more open hours. More people would be able to garden, hence keeping more people engaged and committed.

Kayla agreed that the Maple is sick and needs to come down. She suggested that we keep the Dogwood. More mature trees mean more oxygen and less CO₂. A new tree would not have the same effect. The garden needs to keep as many trees as possible.

Rodellia agreed that we should try to keep the trees and trim them instead.

Lee - The Maple should come down soon. If there is a plan for re-organization of the garden, a visual should be sketched up and presented. This would allow for other options and effective use of space.

Lynn said that there is already less canopy from the Maple tree.

Joey suggested that Brian's bed could be moved to create more space for the back of the garden. He agrees with a visual plan before any big changes are made.

Traci agreed that a visual plan is needed in addition to measurements that were taken.

Jeff made the comment that many people are interested in taking down the Maple tree. The tree should be taken down soon. We do not have to vote on it now. Suggestion proposed when to take it down. Joey proposed that we work on the back of the garden first.

Lindsay suggested if we just take down the tree, we would avoid paying an additional \$500 to further examine the tree, which we already know is in decline.

By next Garden meeting, someone will draw up a sketch of the back of the garden with the changes suggested. Once we have the visual, we will have a better idea of the numbers and will be better informed to make a decision.

Rodellia suggested that we should be kind to the tree! It is a living thing. Let it age gracefully.

Vote to take down Maple Tree:

18 people voted to take down the tree

2 people opposed taking it down

5 abstentions

Ruth: Next meeting We should think of planting new trees. Suggested new trees include Black Cherry Tree. Being that it is right near the Maple, both would have to come down - especially if the compost team wants to remove the stump.

Traci suggested if we leave the Pin Cherry Tree, compost can work around it. It gives fruit and would be great to keep. We can trim it so that it is kept in bush (shrubby) form.

Garden member suggested a tree planting committee.

New Committee suggested

Rosemary made the point that committees are charged to carry out a certain task, which may involve much work, research, and time. We need to constitute committees so that the group as a whole has confidence in their work, conclusions and recommendations. Most input and debate on the issue should happen at the committee level, not at membership's regular meetings; otherwise we discourage folks from doing the committee work in the first place. This doesn't mean the group as a whole can't vote down the recommendation. It does mean that we need to charge the committee in good faith, and expect committee members to conscientiously discharge their responsibilities in good faith. Maybe we need another step in the process, an allotted time during the general meeting to hear ideas and offer input. After that general discussion, the committee can come back in a later meeting with a proposal on which we vote.

Box Responsibility

It was brought up that box holders ended up taking care of the community beds instead of new members who did not have boxes. Original plan was for members who did not have a box would be able to use the community boxes. This way, everyone gets the opportunity to plant.

New members discussed that they very much like the communal beds in the back and some new members have been tending to them regularly.

Front of Garden:

Question raised what should be done about front of garden. It currently needs a lot of attention and care. Not visually attractive and welcoming to the community.

Currently some garden members are tending to various parts of the front garden beds:

Virginia is tending to the area along the wall from the front fence to the meeting table and the 8x8 next to Frances's memorial box.

Francis's old box needs more attention and care and she needs help.

Jeff proposed moving the original 8x8 boundaries for the boxes along the front fence. We do not need to vote on it now. Can be simply left as an idea. Currently, as it stands we need more upkeep of the front boxes in general. He feels the boxes are currently uninviting to people.

Counter to Jeff's suggestions, what will contain the dirt if we take down the cement? The boxes need a border. Rodellia suggests we keep the boxes.

Kayla pointed out that no one takes ownership of any of the communal areas in the front of the garden. She proposed that we assign individuals who do not have vegetable boxes to take ownership of the front garden beds. This would also allow for new people to be engaged in the garden. Possibly they could have different open hours requirements.

Francis, the garden member who first started the garden years and years ago, is concerned about the Rose bush in her 8'x8' bed and she can't take care of her front box properly because it is too messy with concrete junk and trash next to it. She also does not like people making the front of the garden look like a dumping ground.

It was agreed by all that we keep the boxes in the front and assign people to care for the front communal areas. Also a reminder that communal areas are everyone's responsibility.

Another member mentioned that the Warren Street garden has a mulch pile that is welcoming to children and was suggested that we may like to have one as well.

Update about BANG from Kayla:

BANG Meeting is on 4/7/13 at the BBG. 1000 Washington at 12PM.

Bang asked for a loan of \$500.

Bang is currently organizing a fundraiser

It will be on Wednesday, April 10th at 6PM, location: Grand Prospect Hall. All you can eat/drink. \$20 of money goes to BANG.

The Shed

Jen R. mentioned that while helping rebuild the compost sifter and looking for tools in the back, she re-organized the shed a bit. It was a mess and needed tools were very hard to find. It is also a safety issue in there. She suggested that people keep it organized and safe.

NEXT MEETING: Saturday, May 18th 11:00 AM

Meeting minutes typed by Jennifer Richman, Garden Secretary