

Prospect Heights Community Farm May Meeting Minutes:
Date: Saturday, May 18th 11:10AM - 12:17PM

Meeting Attendance

Traci Nottingham	Francis Norwood	Redelia Nottingham
Valentine Douglas	Silke Torras	Alexandra Hayes
Anna Rose Hart	Catherine Orrok	Jeff Secor
Jennie Spector	Jennifer Richman	Maria Stasavage
Alexis Casano-Antonellis	Eva Wang	Joey DeLeo
Ruth Manning	Cara Buckley**	Katie Durgin-Bruce**
Larisa Shaterian**	Kimberly Chow**	Joanna Shepard**
Danae Colomer**	Adrian Castineira**	Saqib Rahim**
Lisa Watkins		

** New Members

May Meeting Minutes:
Jeff presiding

Ratifying minutes from April meeting: 0 no, 3 abs, 7 aye

Treasury Report from Alex:

Currently there is \$3,530.80 in our account + \$585.00 overdues - \$402.41 in plant-sale and gardening supplies, totaling \$3637.22 remaining for April.

Alex will check if Cliff got paid yet for his services. Joey has not been paid for his Lowes trip.

Box Coordinator Report from Joey:

All boxes have been allocated.

There are 13 members on the waiting list.

Lisa questioned if Marva is on the list and asked for explanation of box process.

Ruth says Joey would send her the info..

Service Hours report from Eva:

Service hours were 90% filled.

Compost Report from Val and Jennie:

Compost team needs sifter space because the bins are ready to empty.

Changes in compost areas - Compost team is moving the sifting pile and leaves closer to the gate in the back.

Compost team needs to have a work day to make these things happen.

Master Gardener report from Traci and Catherine:

Catherine spoke to Cliff regarding the chipper. It is Greenwood's chipper, unsure if he can get it.

Traci got 2 honeysuckle and two other shrubs and 2 blueberries from the BBG plant sale.

BANG Report:

BANG Loan discussion was deferred until Kayla present at meeting to give more information

Community Events:

Jeff- There will be a Bar Mitzvah on Thurs. June 13th at the garden including a band and 30-40 persons. No Alcohol is permitted at the event.

Traci asked where the band would go and will there be a tent in case of rain?

Lee offered to be there. Redelia asked if there could be any other members to over the event in addition to Lee. Lexie C. and Jeff offered to be there.

There is some concern about liability and plant damage.

Lisa - There will be teenagers and people in high heels, etc.

8 aye, 2 no, 4 abstain to hold event.

General Gardening Matters:

Jeff asked What do people want to do in the garden?

Garden Member Suggestions about what they would like to see happen at the garden:

Francis - The water barrels by her bed are empty and need to be filled. It is too heavy for her to carry the water from barrels that are far away from her bed. Francis is okay about the Maple tree being down however it is now just sitting there and cluttering the space. Also the clay pots are broken and unsightly. The current mulch is too fluffy and needs more wood chips. Francis also requests new benches.

Redelia - We should build new benches and clean up the Maple in front of the garden.

Maria - We need more hand clippers and plastic bag storage tube in shed.

Val would like Beehive and blueberries.

Jen Richman - 3 little baby pin cherry trees are currently being tended to and Jen would like to know if the garden members would like to plant one of the trees.

Lisa Watkins- Is this our anniversary year and if so are we doing anything for it? Lisa feels that we should announce our anniversary during all events throughout the year. We don't have to make a big party but there are little things that we can do such as make a sign. Lisa said that she would donate for that project.

Jeff announced that we have a copy of Francis's old newsletter from one of your first years in our archives.

Traci - The answer to Lisa's question is yes, it is our 15th gardening season. We started the fall 1997 and then the next year our first gardening season began around Memorial Day 1998, when we built our boxes (with Dan sawing lumber for us). All had a great time. Traci agreed that we should have an event to celebrate it. Traci asked Lisa if she suggested that we put a posting of our Anniversary Year on all flyers.

Lisa said yes, a posting would be nice and Jeff agreed. Lisa suggested that we can honor the founding members.

Saqib - no suggestions

Silke - discussed the watering cans and how she feels there is a shortage of functional ones without a hole in them.

Jeff replied that the issue was already addressed but perhaps it may need to be addressed again.

Joey replied that he recently bought about 8 watering cans, having measured the diameter of the barrels before hand so they should fit into the can. The new cans can be found having in the shed.

Alex- Agreed about the seating and the bee idea.

Dani - no suggestions, lovely garden!

Cara - no suggestions

Katie - no suggestions

Adrian - no suggestions

Lexie - (new as the fall) beautiful garden - wants to see labels on plants and flowers. Asked if the berries are communal. Traci said that they were. We currently have communal strawberries, blackberries, service berries, blueberries coming soon, and raspberries.

Question about children's box.. Can she begin a project there? Is it communal?

Jeff said that she can begin a project there, just send out an email to the list serve and mark the are with sticks, rocks, etc.

Eva - no suggestions. She likes the bee idea and knows that Will would like to see more shrubs and trees in the back of the garden.

Joey - Discussed the back of the garden -

We should continue to plan the re-design of the back of the garden

We could put a call of action to garden members to try and get these plans to come to fruition.

Ruth - no suggestions

Larisa - Suggests that people work up box points - How do we motivate people?

Joey - New members who are box owners have 9 hours that they need to dedicate to the garden. It is not alot, they can work on a project that the garden needs help with, opening up the gate and helping to clean up the garden.

Eva - We don't have to just to 9 hours, we can do more.

Luis - Agrees with the seating and additional berries

Larisa - likes the ideas of a plant guide. Traci discussed that we already have a weed identification guide.

Kim - would like a plant guide

Johanna - Would like to know more about what she can do around the garden and how to go about ideas for the garden. Jeff suggests that she can send questions/comments to the list serve and bring it up in meetings directly with people.

Anna - Suggests we increase community events and have more involvement in taking care of communal areas/flowers. Traci asked on thoughts to make that happen - Joey commented that he sees a lot of emails going around saying "someone should do this or that or buy this." Perhaps people can take initiative and do it themselves instead of asking others to do so.

Anna also has a bunch of ideas - Last weekend or the one prior, she and Jeff went to the five borough farm kick-off. It was about quantifying things in the garden. The project she worked on was how do we keep tabs on this and how do we get more people involved? Carrots do not have to be just be box points, a carrot can be things that are fun in the garden such as a concert, anniversary party, etc. She suggested that we come up with a schedule of events. She knows about 30 musicians who live in this neighborhood. She suggests a bi-monthly concert. That would help people want to be involved. We can advertise that and we can do that. If people saw identifiable plants, that would be of interest to people or a scavenger hunt for kids, that would get more involvement. It does not have to be big deal things. Even just a plant guide would be helpful. Anna suggests taking initiative of this project - she would take initiative to take snap shots of each plant. She can ask Catherine or Traci to help ID them. It should not just be about "do I get a box", it should be about taking care of these things. We should have a list ID-ing weeds. Jeff reminded that There is a weed ID on our website. Also

suggests a list of things to do at the garden for people to know what to do during open hours. #1 - fill the water barrels in the back (it is easy for some and difficult for others). To get more organized is to address the back hose issue.

Jeff discussed that the issue was already addressed. Now the only thing we need is a hose cover.

Ruth - Makes a motion to nominate Anna as events coordinator.
Lisa seconded that...

Catherine - would like a place for the brush pile. It would tie into the back design and help to address the issue about how the back of the garden looks.

Jeff - would like fruit trees and a greenhouse

Traci - would like a nursery to keep plants growing over the winter. She likes Anna's idea about the scavenger hunt, that is something that she was thinking of as well. She also reminded people that we have the materials to make a stage for events from a deck that was dismantled which we were given. The space that is planned for it is from the corner of the building to the green chair. She would like to see the project come to fruition this year. We can have dance recitals, kids events, we can stage our annual pumpkin smash/potato bake there as well. It was already voted on and the next step is to make it happen. We can use the stage for yoga classes as well. When we started the garden we had the idea of doing yoga in the garden.

Additional Topics -

About the concert - Members in the meeting agree that it would be a good idea. It would be a great tie in for the anniversary event. Redelia said that we cannot ask people to come to a concert without seating unless asked people to bring their own chair. Traci suggested that we build benches from the chopped maple in the front of the garden. Jeff made the comment that he chopped them up too small.

Jeff made notion that we will vote that we will have a musical concert. If there are any specifics, let them be brought up now, otherwise the committee will work it out.

Members who volunteered to be a part of the Concert committee were Jennifer Richman, Louise B, Brian Thompson, Lexie.

The event does not require a stage at the moment. Lisa made the suggestion that the concert be a kick-off for anniversary events. Jennifer voiced that timing of the concert is important. Brian brought up to Jennifer that mosquitos are already becoming an issue so sooner is better. If we had the concert around Memorial Day Weekend, it would be great. Jennifer said that it is too short of notice but will explore it as a possibility.

Louise - it would be nice if during open hours, a musician playing acoustic music is a great way to draw people to the garden. - all unplugged.

Jeff brought up what Rosemary said at the last meeting, how we should enlist a committee and have them handle certain projects. We will do just that with this events/concert committee. Let them come up with a plan, as long as it is competent, we should do it. He also enlisted Brian Thompson as a member of the concert committee.

It was asked if we should set a date now and a Memorial Day concert was suggested by Anna. Jennifer voiced that artist availability must be taken into account. Redelia also noted that people need to prepare.

Val discussed Brooklyn/Queens day and that perhaps we can organize a concert for that day or that weekend. Brooklyn/Queens day is June 6th, it is a Thursday.

Traci - Concerned about Rosemary's comment the month prior about how the committee would have the dominion over something and telling everyone else what to do, whatever the topic is, her comment was let us trust the committee, but the committee is not always correct. Jeff announced that it would always come to a vote in the end. Traci noted that it is also the exact opposite of how we have worked this garden from the get-go. Everybody has a voice. No one is dictated to - we should have a consensus. Jeff voiced that the committee should feel comfortable to set forth plants that can be voted on during the next monthly meeting instead of being hashed out and waiting for the next monthly meeting to devise a plan. Redelia brought up the notion that other people who have ideas should be able to present them to the committee. There has been a situation of pushy personalities in the garden and not setting a good tone. Jennifer asked if there is any possibility of amplification for the concert. Traci noted that we can potentially ask our neighbors however we are still dealing with the ant issue. Jeff suggested using the wall as amplification and performing acoustically.

Ant problem update:

Jeff noted that we will be using a mixture of boric acid and sugar water along the wall to help resolve our neighbors' ant problem. Boric Acid is mildly organic. It was on the exterminators list for organic treatments. Eva, if you have any issues with the hops, please let us know. First company rejected treatment because we would not allow them underground access. They did not feel that the job would be effective without underground treatment. Therefore, the neighbors are still suffering with ants. We need to do something more intense - putting Boric Acid/sugar water will go in the green pods along the house wall.

Redelia - Regarding the ants, we do not eat anything from that area. Why can't we treat underground? There are several areas in the garden that are not organic. That is why we have raised boxes and have bought organic soil.

Jeff - There is a fig tree in the area now.

Catherine - brought up the question did the neighbors treat their backyard? The ants would come from their garden as well.

Ruth suggested that we plant basil in the area. She heard that it can be very effective in resolving ant problems.

Jennifer Richman had good experience with Raid traps but Jeff reminded that it is not an organic option so not possible.

Next Meeting:

Jeff - For the next meeting: please plan back of the garden designs for presentation at the next meeting, plant sale tomorrow in rain is not too big of an issue. Next Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 11th in the evening.

Liz Spencer will be doing a Dye Workshop after the meeting today

Minutes recorded by Traci and Jennifer - Minutes typed by Jennifer Richman, Garden Co-secretary