

PHCF October 2016 General Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, Oct. 16th 1:10PM - 2:15PM

Attendance:

Brian T., Johanna B., Selina R., Rosemary P., William L., Aaron D., Joey D., Catherine O., Jessica S., Marva W-S., Michelle F., Dan F., Traci N., Lisa W., Anna H., Lee S., Stav B., Kayla S., Frances N., Jennifer R.

New members:

Amy V.J., Alex B.

Meeting lead by Johanna with a brief introductions and orientation for new members

Retraction of proposal from last meeting and new proposal

Brian officially retracted the proposal presented at last meeting regarding smoking in the garden and moves for a new wording of the proposal, "Prospect Heights Community Farm is a non-smoking community garden."

Joey seconds this proposal and several comments by garden members follow, both for and against this proposal.

Comments include: It is proposed that the garden be considered a clean air space. PHCF is an opportunity for the community to connect with nature in its most pure form - visitors should have the right to breathe clean air. Smoking/nonsmoking has always been an issue but never had any official rules. Why now, after all these years? Smoking is less common in public spaces now - the culture has changed. It is technically illegal to smoke in a Greenspace and the garden is now officially a Greenspace. Persons should have the right to smoke as if they are in their back yard because it is a community space. PHCF is a public space stewarded for our community and should be treated as such - all people's needs should be considered. A member voices she is very sensitive to cigarette smoke (needing to run from it if someone is smoking in the street and needs to leave the garden if someone is smoking). In the past she had difficulty communicating her sensitivity to members, unclear of what the rules were and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings. If members vote to move ahead with the proposal, it is a ban on smoking, not smokers. The garden is a community space and does its best to accommodate all members.

Proposal: Smokers are welcome to smoke in front of the garden by the gate if they choose to. Smokers are not allowed to smoke inside the gate, but can on the sidewalk on the opposite side of the gate.

It is established that there is a quorum of members present to vote (19 members present at the time and there are less than about 80 active members in total). All members were encouraged to attend the meeting if they felt strongly on the issue. Members were required to be present in order to vote.

7 yes, 5 no, 7 abstention - proposal is accepted.

Ratification of last month's minutes:

10 yes, 0 no, 8 abstentions - minutes are approved.

Service Hours report by Aaron:

An updated list of service hours was circulated among present members and is currently posted online. A few work days are still being updated so the list is not completely up to date. If members believe that their service hours have not been properly recorded, please get in touch with Aaron. The spreadsheet online has a pro-rated, detailed list for members who joined in the middle of the season. This spreadsheet is located in the "members" section of the website. Members are encouraged to sign up for the remaining open hours and have 2 more weeks to complete them. Overall, garden members have done a good job in maintaining open hours as needed to remain in good standing as a community garden.

Service hours can be done year-round. Joining the compost team is a great way to fulfill service hours during winter months. Compost hours will be moved to 12-2PM in mid November in order to accommodate for the colder weather.

Reminder of service hour ratio needed to remain in good standing:

General members: 10 hours total: 6 open hrs, 4 svc hrs.

Box holder members: 20 hours total: 12 open hours, 8 svc hrs.

There is one more meeting left in November for those who have not fulfilled meeting attendance requirements.

Compost Report by Lee:

All are welcome to sign up for compost shifts which go on year-round. No further complaints by neighbors about the smell from compost. Decrease in smell likely a result of members better chopping up compost before it goes into the bins, increased education and encouragement for members to put additional browns when adding compost, (please note- increased moisture causes additional need for browns.) No condoms have been found in the compost - a former complaint. Today during workday, members will be repairing the lids on the compost bins. Help would be appreciated.

Recent testing of Lead found elevated levels of Phosphorous and potassium and decreased nitrogen in compost and boxes. Proposed ways to increase nitrogen are adding used coffee grinds and/or blood meal to the soil. Human hair also increases nitrogen but does not break down well - not recommended. It was determined that the wood-chips are not a source of Lead. The garden path

showed elevated levels of Lead but this was not found in the beds. Joey is still waiting for results of latest re-testing and analysis. He is hoping to compile the info once received. Joey will reach out to Maureen to expedite results.

Box holder report by Joey

Joey took survey of who needed to have their boxes repaired. (Traci reminds that master gardeners took a count in the beginning of the year). The garden will be receiving wood on Monday. Ana, Catherine, and Stav volunteered to be at the garden to receive it. On November 1st we will have a shipment of Top soil for the beds. (Soil is needed because it tends to sink and corrode) Volunteers are needed to be present to receive it. In the past there was a large quantity of soil given to us (10 yards). We received soil with Pete in it, not top soil. There was not good absorption of water as a result. We have the option to get bagged or bulk this year. Bagged is recommended - we asked for 10 bags. Traci will reach out to reiterate that bagged top soil is needed.

10 yards of woodchips were delivered for free by Dragonetti Brothers - a private arborist company. They deliver woodchips to those who request every Saturday. All that is needed is to reserve it. The woodchips were spread around the garden.

Master Gardener Report by Traci and Catherine

The Stewardia tree in the front of the garden though appears to have died but is still alive. There are new buds forming. Catherine would like to re-vamp the area in the front of the garden and will send out email to members encouraging assistance. Will be performed as part of work-day as well.

Treasury Report by Brian

We have \$3,050.53 in our BANG account and \$100 in petty cash

Communications Report by Will

There was a new Blog post (about BANG flower delivery to Assembly members). Photos from past PHCF BBQ will be added to our website. If anyone has Blog post recommendations please contact Will.

Announcements/New Business:

New Table Request

It is requested that the garden purchase a new table. It is breaking and will soon be out of use. Member recommends checking out Brooklyn Free-Cycle. A wood table is ideal - it lasts a long time.

Prospect Heights Tree Force: bulbs donated - We have daffodil bulbs available that were given to us for tree pits. Traci will make an announcement on list serve.

BANG special event - Brian and Ted met with Assembly members and assisted in delivering flowers in appreciation for their support. Photos are posted on the PHCF blog. There will likely be one more BANG meeting - will be announced.

Arbor Workshop

Kayla went to a workshop by Greenthumb and learned how to make an arbor (definition: a decorative arch of wood with a ladder-like form that vegetation can climb on). She signed us up for a free delivery of box lumbar wood (if we want it). It was suggested the the best spot for it would be between the herb circle and the flower-cutting bed. It needs to be wide enough for wheelbarrows and deliveries. Greenthumb has a suggested design. Kayla will bring it to the next meeting to be voted on.

Pumpkin Smash date Nov. 5 from 12-4PM. A flyer will be made and posted. This is an annual event that usually happens the Saturday after Halloween. It helps us to compost pumpkins from the community. All are welcome. There will be baked potatoes and fixings, meat roasting with vegetarian options, and fun. Funds (\$100) from petty cash will go toward purchase of potatoes, veggie burgers, and meat. Members are encouraged to bring pot luck as well.

Joanna will as Martha to reach out to PS9, encouraging them to bring their pumpkins earlier in the day. There was concern about their bringing too many pumpkins for composting last year and they arrived just before the end of the event. Traci reminds that is we receive whole pumpkins, we do not need to smash them. We can decorate the garden with them instead.

Scarecrows recommended by Traci. It has been over 10 years since we had one. She will announce the idea on the list-serve.

Leaf Drop - We plan to participate again and Lee will organize this.

Ghouls and Gourds event happening at the BBG on 10/29 12pm.

Mulchfest 2016 - We will participate again this year however no dragging tree effort needed. We do not need to compete with the Dept. of Sanitation. Joanna will coordinate the event.

Ruth has loofa growing in her bed. It is hanging from the plum tree - recommends checking it out. (They are green and there are several of them hanging).

Respectfully submitted, Jennifer R. Garden secretary