

**City of Falcon Heights ENVIRONMENTAL Commission
Meeting – Monday Jan 8, 2007**

Present:

From the Commission: Jim Kielsmeir (Chair), Susan Harding, Gretel Keene, Frank Meah,-----,

Also: Peter Lindstrom (City Council), Justin Miller (City Administrator)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jim Kielsmeir at 6:35 p.m. Attendees introduced themselves around the table. We had two guests. Sarah Ullmer from Garden Works came with helpful tips for setting up a community garden including set up of the garden, leadership roles and other issues about sharing a community garden. Ron Kroese attended because he was interested in helping with the community garden. He was invited to apply to be on the Commission.

Jim K noted that for the next few months our commission would meet at 6:30 to be followed at 7 PM by the steering committee for the community garden. The community garden idea was approved by town council in November 2006.

1. Minutes were read and approved without revision.

2. A short discussion was initiated concerning work to be accomplished about the garden and what has already been accomplished. This was continued and amplified during the Steering Committee meeting.

3. A short update on monitoring of waste and recyclable collection by the Haulers was discussed which included:

We have about 3 more years to run on the recycling contract.

Focus should be on apartment buildings, which recycle at a very low amount.

Homes are at 50% or better with some neighborhoods estimated at 80%.

Blue Bins are available at city hall for free. At least one commissioner has more than one bin.

4. Comments were made about dealing with the large amount of junk mail that people receive. It was suggested that the phone number to call to remove yourself from many solicitation lists be found and placed in the next newsletter.

5. Discussions were started about disposing of compost from the community garden and disposal of microwaves, TVs, and computer monitors. Some businesses accept items daily and others post when to turn in fluorescent bulbs and other items mentioned above that have mercury or other environmentally disastrous materials.

6. It was suggested that we ask the city forester to come in and give an update on the state of the city's trees and other vegetation. Trees are a valuable resource for our city and we want to preserve them. It was suggested that we find out about specific types of trees that are suggested for our city Blvd. and neighborhoods. Also, the city is researching

information about injecting existing Elm trees for the prevention of Dutch Elm Disease. The injections may be available shortly.

7. Another issue to be discussed at a future meeting is environmental education.

We ended with a brief discussion about the commission goals. Jim will bring copies of the goals to the next meeting. Peter will bring the mission statement. Both will be discussed to assist the commission in focusing on future goals.

Susan Harding

Community Garden Steering Committee

Welcome by Jim Kielsmeier

Introduction of attendees: Jim Kielsmeier, Sarah Ulmer,-----,-----, Peter Lindstrom, Justin Miller, Susan Harding, Ron Kroese, Gretel Keene, Frank Meah, _____, Nick-----

Peter Lindstrom gave an overview of the garden project with a summary of his feasibility study. The web site survey and the ice cream social questionnaire gave an indication of interest so a study was started to determine the feasibility of a community garden being set up at one of seven locations. The site analysis ended with two possibilities, which are city hall (front area) and Community Park. The council decided on Community Park. The mayor contacted officials at the University of Min., which gave permission for the garden. The city gave \$5000 for the start up of the project.

Guest Sarah U. talked about the essentials for a community garden including: space, water, tools, people, and sun. She was pleased with our current accomplishments.

Sarah suggested joining Minnesota green an org. that assists community gardens with information, advice, and even less expensive seeds.

Sarah mentioned that on March 17 Augsburg College will be having a Garden Fair all day with many resources.

Next we discussed the questions on the enclosed pink page entitled Starting a community garden? This included: finding co-chairs, to fence or not, disposal of compost, how many plots and their cost, when to put down manure and where to obtain it, paths, shed for community tools if any, benches and beauty site, when to till, regulating water, pets and children, and what is realistic for the first year?

We spent time on the handouts given us by Sarah including job descriptions about coordinator, maintenance, repair, events, plots water, pest control and supplies. Garden rules were discussed

*We moved on to how to let people know about a community garden. It was suggested that a sign be put up at the site.

A volunteer to chair needed for next time.

Duo environmental and community garden meetings for a few months. Steering committee will then stand on its own. Feb 12 is the next duo meeting.

Nick will chair next meeting.
Pete will help with rules and regulations.
Sarah will help. She can be reached via phone or email

Summary of what to do next?

- 1 Compost will be put on site now to kill weeds
2. Till in April. Someone will talk to city grounds crew.
3. Pete L. will check on getting manure.
4. Jim will find out about joining Minnesota Green
5. Look for more grants.
6. Water. How to obtain and get to garden and how to cut it off and measuring amt used.
7. Use roof for drip line to garden
8. Bring food to next meeting cake Susan bread Jim and Crackers and dip Gretchen
- 9 Marketing-----put on website and talk it up

Susan Harding