

## Newark Street Community Garden Association Fall Meeting

October 14, 2017

Maureen Spagnolo, president, called the meeting to order shortly after 10:00, a quorum being present. She began the meeting with reports from the committee chairs.

Membership: Steve Gordon reported that this season we had assigned 41 plots to new gardeners (typical turnover). About half the people contacted from the waitlist declined to take a plot, so the waitlist is currently 98. Steve said that the waitlist would probably be reopened next summer. He thanked Lynn Rothberg, who does the actual assigning (e.g., matching people from the wait list with the open plot which best matches their needs) and Mary Gautier, who keeps the master lists.

Treasurer: Treasurer Hillah Culman could not be present so Bill Bonner presented the treasurer's report (attach copy). In brief, total receipts were comparable to past years, they exceeded disbursements by \$1501, and we ended up with a balance of \$8737, which gives us a cushion for unexpected plumbing, repairs, etc.

Rules: Felicity Amos reported that the Rules committee was continuing to do its work to encourage gardeners to keep up their plots for the good of the garden as a whole. She mentioned a policy which allowed someone who couldn't garden because of a temporary hardship to relinquish his/her plot for the season and to go instead to the top of the waitlist; it seems to be working well.

Communications: Bill Bonner reported that he would keep sending reminders to the membership to maintain plots and whatever else was relevant.

Garden services: Jon Mormino couldn't be there (he has sports responsibilities at Sidwell on Saturday mornings), but Maureen briefly described what he does, e.g., keeps track of tools, organizes chip path repairs, works on the website, etc.

Social: Cathy Winer reported that the highlight of the season was the potluck supper proposed by Felicity -- great turnout, food, and weather. In addition, the social committee also organizes the snacks for the meetings and the garden work days.

Special projects: Juan Piaquadio, who is a master gardener, offers advice and help throughout the garden as needed.

### Elections

Maureen next announced that we had three board positions to fill (the positions currently held by Steve, Jon, and Juan). We have 6 board members, who serve two year terms, with three elected in even years and three in odd years. Steve and Jon were each nominated to serve again, the nominations were each

seconded, and each was re-elected by acclamation. Juan did not want to run again, so Bill Bonner was nominated to replace him, the nomination was seconded, and he, too, was elected by acclamation. (In the fall of 2018, the positions held by Jane, Felicity, and Anatol will be up for election.)

Committee chair positions: These are appointed, not elected. Anatol had chaired the Agricultural Committee, which is responsible for maintaining the veggie compost bins, but since he moved from the neighborhood this was no longer feasible for him. He said that Paul Basola who had been helping him, had agreed to take over this committee. The Special Projects chair is open as Juan is stepping down.

Bill suggested that we consider setting up a plumbing committee to coordinate responses to plumbing issues and to serve as liaison with the plumber we use. At the same time, we want a strict limit on who turns on and off the water to avoid acting at cross purposes. The renewal forms will solicit volunteers for such a committee.

Garage construction and wall plots: Angela Bradbury, ANC 3G, reported on the city's plans to build a parking garage on the police station grounds (this is to free up a current parking lot for subsequent construction of the homeless shelter). They will need to tear down most of the wall for construction (the back side of the garage will be where the current wall is) and this will impact 11 wall plots. Of the 11 plots, 4 were used by gardeners as their sole plot. One of the 4 decided to share a regular plot with an existing gardener; the other 3 were assigned vacant regular plots. Gardeners who have both a regular plot and a wall plot will not get a regular plot assigned to replace their lost wall plots.

The city said that none of the regular plots or the tennis courts will be affected. Construction is scheduled to start in November 2017 and last about 8 months. As part of it, the city will cap the water lines which extend to the wall plots and restore them afterwards.

The city offered to build temporary plots for the displaced wall plots and then to reconstruct the wall plots, but the board decided that reconstructing the wall plots in the same location didn't make sense (because the structure would be higher than the current wall, there would be car exhaust fumes, and the garage plan show gravel drainage against the wall). The board is exploring with the city instead putting in permanent new plots, precise locations to be worked out. One of the new plots will be a "community plot" to comply with DPR requirements. The board will also consider what other accommodations we can request from the city as compensation for the lost wall plots and disruption; possibilities mentioned were a new shed, electric outlets for a greenhouse, and deer fence behind the compost area. Additional suggestions are welcome

Other business: Russell Kramer took the floor to express several concerns about plot assignments. He asserted that under DPR rules a single household could only have a single plot and that plots were being assigned contrary to that, even to family members who did not live in DC. The board responded that he was incorrect about the rule, that they had in writing from the DPR that the rule was one plot per person, not one per household, and that all applicants had to be city residents.

Kramer also asserted that people who leave the garden routinely give their plots to friends instead of letting them go to the person at the top of the waitlist. Steve countered that in the 10 years that he has been involved in membership, he has never seen that happen.

Kramer also complained that the plots were of different sizes and that this was unfair to people on the wait list. The board explained that, at a point in the distant past when there was no wait list, some gardeners got to take over adjoining plots to ensure they were maintained. In the '90's this practice changed; the existing larger plots were grandfathered in, but as they turned over, the double plots were divided back into two plots. There are only 8 grandfathered plots left. What may look like a double lot can actually be two plots where the respective gardeners have chosen to take down the interior fence dividing them. The board also said that current gardeners can request a swap between their current plot and one becoming vacant, e.g., if they want a plot next to a spouse (this is allowed only if the plot they are leaving is in at least as good condition as the one they are asking to move to) – this can give the impression of an oversized plot, but it is still two plots.

Kramer then left the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, Maureen reminded everyone of the need to close and clean up their garden by November 30, which includes getting rid of trash and laying tomato cages, etc., flat. The meeting was then adjourned and the members moved to the garden for the final workday of the season.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Winer, scribe