



COMMUNITY GARDENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DRAFT

DATE: July 6, 2010
TIME: 6:30pm
PLACE: Ken Edwards Center, 1527 4th St., Santa Monica, CA 90401

1. **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order by Tim Bowler at 6:35pm. Attendees were:

Tim Bowler - Main Street Gardener – Chairperson
Don Singer – Park Drive Gardener – Committee Representative
Radana Mikes – Park North Gardener – Member At Large Representative
Francine Medeiros – Main Street Gardener – Committee Representative
Lisa Goodwin – Park Drive Gardener – Committee Representative
Cordula Ohman – Main Street Gardener – Committee Representative
Sharon Sirotnak – Euclid Gardener – Committee Representative
Antony Lewis – Main Street Gardener
Wendy Pietrzak – City Staff – Community Recreation
Renee Nielsen – City Staff – Community Recreation

2. **Approval of Minutes from March 2, 2010**

A motion was made by Francine Medeiros to approve the minutes from March 2, 2010. Sharon had noted that her name was misspelled. The motion was made to approve the minutes with the name correction and was seconded and carried unanimously.

3. **Announcement of Election of Site Representatives**

Wendy announced the newly elected site representatives along with their terms as follows:

Silvia Carrillo - Euclid (2 year term)
Tim Bowler - Main St (1 year term)
Jeff Jarrow - Main St (2 year term)
Cordula Ohman - Main St (2 year term)
Julie Milligan - Main St. (2 year term)
Lisa Goodwin – Park Drive (2 year term)

4. **Election of Officers – Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**

The members present then elected Tim Bowler to serve as Chairperson and Francine Medeiros to serve as Vice Chairperson.

5. **Report on the Department of Sustainability Task Force Meeting, Cris Gutierrez**

Chris Gutierrez was out of town and no report given.

6. **Discussion of Use of Shared Composting Bins at Park Drive**

Lisa Goodwin discussed her observations of the use of the compost bins over the past year or two and in her opinion it has been a disaster. She has compost in her own plot and felt that other gardeners could do the same if they wanted to compost. She suggested removing the compost bins at both Park Drive north and south which could create two additional garden plots that could then be leased out.

Wendy reported that the bins are not being used correctly and tend to get trash and other non-compostable material in the bins. She also observed that the material is not being cut into small enough pieces, turned periodically and water added. The bins become a haven for rodents and insects causing additional problems. City staff have offered two free compost workshops but not sure how many community gardeners attended. Neither Public Landscape or Solid Waste are responsible for emptying these compost bins making it very problematic when the bins overflow.

Sharon commented a similar situation exists at Euclid Park.

Tim asked staff to conduct a simple survey via email to both the Euclid and Park drive gardeners to find out if the compost bins should stay or be removed. Wendy will put together this survey and if no resolution is reached prior to the September meeting the item will get re-agendized at that time for action.

7. **Staff Updates**

a) Garden Inspections: Wendy reported that overall the gardens are looking good and no citations were issued for the month of June. She noted Nut grass and fennel on the increase. Members requested an email be sent to all the gardeners to clarify that City maintenance staff was not responsible for keeping the interior pathways clear and that this is the responsibility of each gardener.

Don questioned if a plant was over a certain height was it in violation of any rules and therefore the garden should receive a violation. Lisa explained the rule regarding height pertained to trees in pots – dwarf trees less than 5' in height are allowed in pots. If a plant is shading another's gardener's plot that would be considered a violation of the rules.

Cordula reported discovering the Main Street gates unlocked and open on several occasions and no licensed gardeners were on site. Wendy reported that several emails have been sent over the past two months reminding all gardeners to lock the gates when they leave.

Wendy will be out again at the end of July for inspections.

b) **Garden Workshops:** Cris Gutierrez and Susan McCorry are interested in having a mulching workshop in September or October. Tim will send an email to Cris regarding this.

c) **Update on Garden Sharing Registry:** Wendy reported that there are several more homeowners and gardener that have registered for the program but no new matches have been made. Currently there are three matches. Wendy will work with the Neighborhood Associations to schedule time in the fall for board members to volunteer to give a presentation to promote the registry program. In addition, staff will continue to do outreach via press and City TV.

d) **Revised Operational Guidelines:** Wendy reported that the updated Community Gardens Advisory Committee's Operational Guidelines were approved unanimously by the Recreation and Parks Commission.

8. **Ad-hoc Committee Reports**

a) **School Gardening Partnership:** Discussion to re-establish this committee to meet, discuss and make recommendations on possible collaboration with the SM schools including working with CREST to get the elementary school site gardeners up and running again and John Adams Middle School. Tim, Cordula and Lisa expressed interest in serving on the Committee with the possibility of including licensed gardeners Cris Gutierrez, Randy Zigler and Susan McCorry. Wendy will make contact with Cris, Randy and Susan to see if they would be interested and able to serve on the committee.

Wendy was approached by both of these organizations to see how the community gardeners and schools could work together in some type of partnership to make their on site gardens more successful and active year round. Specifically Dan Brown, Science Teacher at JAMS has (6) raised beds each about 100 sq. ft. that he would like to see active again. Discussion was held regarding the type of gardener that would be required, who would be liable, fingerprinting requirements, would the gardener share in the crop, and would it be feasible to target people on the waiting list. All of these and more questions will be worked out by the school and the Ad Hoc Committee members. Cris, Randy, Tim, Susan, Cordula and Lisa will form a committee on this.

9. **Public Input** – No public input

10. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.