

DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

Schuylkill River Park Community Garden 2015 Annual Meeting Minutes

March 26, 2015, 7 pm

Trinity Center for Urban Life, 22nd & Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, PA

Attendance: 53 Gardeners & guests

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Responsible Party/Timeline
Welcome to New Gardeners Reception & Refreshments		Gardeners had the opportunity to sign up for a Chores Week and to volunteer for hosting a City Harvest plant, to serve as a Garden Mentor, or for a number of projects & committees.
Call To Order	Lois Evans, 2014-15 Chair, called meeting to order & welcomed new & returning Gardeners.	
Introduction of New Gardeners	Thirteen New & Returning Gardeners were introduced by Jim Wells.	To attend one of three orientation sessions in the garden.
March 2014 Annual Meeting Minutes	Motion to accept made by Joan Wells, seconded by Rob Reisley.	Approved by voice vote.
Garden Chair Report	<p>Lois described a very successful 2014 garden year, noting a positive sense of community, participation and camaraderie; fabulous weather, and increased recognition and use of the garden by many.</p> <p>Orientation to plot layout: Lois showed a map of the garden and explained how the plots are numbered south to north in rows lettered from east to west.</p> <p>Two Awards received in 2014 Garden Year: (1) Designation as a USDA “People’s Garden.” Lois and Scott Poethig explained that this designation by the US Department of Agriculture is awarded to gardens that: (1) serve the community (2) use organic practices and (3) distribute food to those who need it. (2) PHS 2014 PHS Gardening and Greening Contest. SRPCG won a <u>Blue Ribbon & Garden of Distinction Award</u> in the community garden category of PHS’s Gardening and Greening Contest. Lois described the award ceremonies and the recognition SRPCG received.</p> <p>2014 Accomplishments, 2015 Goals. 2014 accomplishments included: (1) infrastructure improvements (upgrading of the electrical system, adding sprinklers to the Parkside plantings beds, and stabilization & capping of the brick pylons along the entire garden fence), (2) establishment of a garden mentors program, (3) holding several garden workshops, (4) participation in and support</p>	<p>Signage will be displayed in the Garden come better weather.</p>

	<p>for CCRA's first Street Scene contest, (5) revision of Garden Guidelines & Rules to make them more clear, and website improvements.</p> <p>New Initiatives in exploration. These include: children's activities, an oral garden history project and an age-friendly garden project. The Garden will again participate in/support CCRA's Street Scenes competition.</p> <p>Communication with Gardeners. Primary vehicles for communication are: the bulletin board, the annual mailing with the lease agreement, mass emails via iContact and our website at www.srpcg.org. The calendar of important dates (e.g., workdays, Steering Committee meetings) is on the Home Page. At any time, gardeners with questions, concerns or suggestions can contact the chair at chair@srpcg.org or 215-546-6719. Gardeners can also get and share information and photographs via the garden's Facebook page and via Instagram.</p>	<p>Gardeners with interest in these areas are encouraged to volunteer.</p> <p>Gardeners are especially encouraged to check the website frequently, especially the Home Page and materials posted under 'Steering' (including pre-post & workday chores), to submit photos of the garden via Instagram [@srpcgphotos using #SRPCG] and also to request to join our Facebook page (Schuylkill River Park Community Garden).</p>
Treasurer's Report	<p>2015 Actual to Date, Projected Year End and 2016 Proposed Budget. Wayne Rosenberger, Treasurer, presented the 2015 actual and 2016 proposed budget. The garden's fiscal year is now the same as CCRA's: July 1 to June 30. He projects an operating surplus of \$5,264.64, even after the planned FY 2015 transfer of \$8,000 to the capital account. The proposed FY2016 budget includes another \$5000 transfer to the Capital account which allows the garden to address upcoming aging infrastructure needs.</p>	<p>Steering Committee will review and approve final proposed budget before submitting to CCRA.</p>
City Harvest Report	<p>Linda Zaimis, who has managed the Garden's participation in City Harvest for the past several years, oriented Gardeners to this collaboration among PHS, the Philadelphia prison system and SHARE. Over 80 community gardens participate in City Harvest which distributed 55,000 lbs. of fresh produce to 1200 families last year. SRPCG donates its produce to the food cupboard at the Lutheran Church on Chestnut Street and, when this is not available, to St. John's Hospice. Last year, we contributed 1053 lbs. Linda credited our ability to meet this 'half ton' goal to the many gardeners who "fostered" a plant or two.</p>	<p>Gardeners were urged to consider 'fostering' a City Harvest plant which Linda will harvest in their plots, to continue to donate excess produce in the designated box in the work area, and to notify Linda when produce may be harvested during 'Gardener away' times by putting a note in the City Harvest contribution box on the potting bench under the shelter.</p>
Parkside Planting Report	<p>Joan Wells noted that the Parkside Plantings are the garden's "gift to the neighborhood." She noted improvements made by the Park Service last year, including an irrigation system, a Belgian Block border and a low iron fence which provides more protection to plantings. One hundred new plants were also planted. Joan thanked all the people who contributed time, guidance and plants to the border & cistern area, including Alison Miller.</p>	<p>Joan has volunteered to chair the Parkside Plantings committee for this year and asks for volunteers who are knowledgeable about roses to help with the border.</p>
Community Chores Report and Sign-up Reminder	<p>Cecily Kihn credited Joan Wells for the successful system she developed through which gardeners sign up for a week of garden chores--keeping common spaces clean, removing trash, refilling the cistern, etc. This has worked well to maintain the garden as a pleasant environment, both for gardeners and the general public. It was suggested that, because of the heavy load of trash in the fall from plot</p>	<p>Gardeners to sign up; Linda to send timely reminders/contact information to the 2-3 Gardeners sharing the week.</p>

	clean out, up to 3 gardeners sign up for weeks from late September to early November. Linda Zaimis will manage the Garden Chores assignments for 2015.	
Garden Education Project and Survey Reminder	Nicole Gortian, who co-chairs the Education Committee with Michele Langer/Alan Cohen, described the educational offerings of the past year, including workshops on planting window boxes, weed identification, square foot gardening and winter sowing.	Gardeners were asked to complete the survey distributed with the agenda to indicate preferred 2015 workshop topics and times for sessions.
Election of 2015 Steering Committee	Lois Evans presented the slate of nominees to serve on the Garden Steering Committee for 2015-16. No further nominations were made from the floor.	Fran Levi moved and Bob Weiss seconded the motion to accept the proposed slate. The motion was carried by voice vote.
Announcement of 2015 Committee Leadership; Call for Volunteers	Lois announced Garden Committee and Task Force leadership for this year and asked for assistance from volunteers.	Volunteer Gardeners are especially needed for website management backup; rose, iris and herb bed maintenance; development of children's activities; the Age Friendly initiative and identification of persons to interview for the Garden History project.
Thanks to outgoing Steering Committee & Volunteer Gardeners	The following Steering Committee members are rotating off this year: Margie Cole (public lottery, workday management), Chris Henningsen (facilities management, plot use), and Cecily Kihn (secretary, weekly chores). The special contributions of Joan Wells (Parkside Planting), Sally Frazza (web management, herb garden) & Shelby Fraser (Ladybug Release Party) were also acknowledged.	Gardeners acknowledged this service.
Reminder of Important 2015 Dates	Lois reminded gardeners of the required work days in the Garden-- Saturdays, April 11, July 11, and October 24 from 9 am to 1 pm—orientations, the Ladybug Release Party, and the Harvest Supper. All these dates are on the website.	
Announcements	Locks: The garden lock combination will be changed on Friday, March 27, and an announcement re: the code will be sent to all gardeners. Compost: Mushroom compost will be delivered on April 1 and is available for use by Gardeners as well as the Parkside Planting area. Water: The water will be turned on April 1 as well.	
Questions	A gardener asked about finding substitutes to water plots while away. A gardener asked about plans for mosquito abatement.	Postings on the bulletin board or querying gardeners via Facebook were recommended. The mosquito abatement program began last year will be continued.
Program	Elisa Ruse-Esposito, Certified Master Gardener, Penn State Extension, & Urban Agricultural Garden Coordinator, Department of City Parks & Recreation, made a brief presentation on 'Square Foot Gardening.'	

Minutes Recorded by Cecily Kihn, 2014 Steering Committee Recording Secretary.