



Community Garden Subcommittee (CGS) June 17, 2010 6:30pm

1. CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chairperson Kimberly Goll called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Subcommittee Members present for the meeting were:

Co-Chairperson - Kimberly Goll

Member - Kris Gardner

Member - Karsten Baumann

Subcommittee members absent from the meeting were:

Co-Chairperson - Theresa Lostaglio

Member - Catherine Willis

Member - Myriam Rouzky

Member - Kechia Brustmeyer

Also present were the following staff members:

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services – Tony Chiotakis

Director of Public Works – Blake Mills

Public Works Administrative Services Manager – Laurel Belanger

Public Works Parks & Grounds Superintendent – Steve Dickinson

Planning Technician/Administrative Assistant – Shannan Ference

Also present were the following:

The Honorable Jackie Holcombe – Mayor, Town of Morrisville

Sherman Criner – Wake County Master Gardener

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION: *Co-Chairperson* Kimberly Goll called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Upon a motion by *Member* Kris Gardner and a second by *Member* Karsten Baumann, the motion passed unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **April 20, 2010 (amended)**
- **May 27, 2010**

ACTION: *Co-Chairperson* Kimberly Goll then called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the April 20th, 2010, meeting as amended and the May 27th, 2010, meeting as presented. Upon a motion by *Member* Kris Gardner and a second by *Member* Karsten Baumann, the motion passed unanimously to approve the April 20th, 2010, minutes as amended to reflect the change of the next meeting date from May 20th to May 27th, 2010, and to approve the May 27th, 2010, minutes as presented.

4. NEW BUSINESS

“Taking it to the Public”

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that at the last Subcommittee meeting the Committee discussed compiling a public survey and obtaining a guest speaker for a Forum to be held in July. She inquired as to whether there were any additional ideas that should be added to the Subcommittee’s efforts to present the idea of a community garden to the residents of Morrisville.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that it was still very early in the project planning to be getting too detailed in specific avenues to approach the public.

Member Gardner stated that he had no ideas to add but that he would like to know how *Co-Chairperson* Goll’s presentation to the Town Council went.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that she felt the presentation went very well.

Mayor Jackie Holcombe stated that the presentation was wonderful and was received with positive responses from the Town Council members.

Member Baumann inquired as to whether the Town Council had indicated whether they would be willing to financially support the Subcommittee’s endeavors.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that once the Subcommittee had established a tangible venture, a determination of where to obtain supporting funds would be addressed.

NC Community Foundation Grants

Co-Chairperson Goll inquired as to whether anyone attended the June 10th workshop in Cary.

No Subcommittee members confirmed that they had attended the NC Community Foundation Grant workshop.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that she felt workshops such as these would be a good source of information for the future Community Garden Committee, when established.

Non-Profit Workshop

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that she felt it was a bit soon to be discussing formulating plans for the development of a non-profit entity, but that she felt it was good information that should be passed along to the future Community Garden Committee.

Discussion ensued.

Co-Chairperson Goll inquired as to whether there was any additional new business to be discussed.

A short discussion ensued addressing the availability of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants for small communities wanting to showcase projects promoting greenhouse gas reductions and energy efficiency.

Member Baumann stated that a model for the community garden could be structured leaning more toward community outreach with an educational slant. Additionally, he stated that linking the process of composting to the community garden initiative would be another means of reducing the burden on waste treatment and appealing to the EPA. He further stated that a type of grant such as the EPA offers would require a matching donation from the community.

Member Baumann stated that it would be wise to engage “experts” in the environmental fields to come in and help assess the project and its needs. Further, he stated that a financial commitment would be needed from the Town to initiate the process; but if there was the potential payback in the form of grant monies, the initial investment may be more appealing.

Discussion ensued.

Member Gardner stated that in order to apply for grants, the Community Garden non-profit organization would need to be established sooner rather than later to obtain funding for a garden in the spring of 2011. He added that he realized this can’t be done until the Subcommittee obtains the backing of the public to establish a Community Garden Committee. Further, he felt that there is a very short timeline for establishing the Committee, for developing the non-profit entity, and for completing grant applications.

Mayor Jackie Holcombe inquired as to whether there was a drawback in going ahead and initiating the process of establishing a non-profit organization.

Member Gardner stated that the only drawbacks would be the investment of time and the funds it would require to set up the non-profit, all with the possibility that disclosing a plan for a community garden would reveal no public interest.

Co-Chairperson Goll inquired as to whether any of the members knew anyone who could set up a non-profit.

Member Gardner stated that he could try.

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis suggested moving forward with recommendations to the Morrisville Environmental and Recycling Advisory Committee (MERC), once public interest has been established, to schedule an organizational meeting of the engaged population and place the establishment of a non-profit organization as the primary

item on the meeting agenda. He further stated that once the non-profit is formed, the entity would have other options for funding besides grants. He added that private companies could be approached as sponsors or for donations in the form of supplies and/or cash in order to establish operating capital.

Discussion ensued.

Member Gardner stated that having given it some thought, promoting a public campaign to establish interest and seek the involvement of the community would need to come first before setting up the non-profit organization.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that the Community Garden Committee should view their first year of existence as the “start-up” year and move forward into the more complex aspects of obtaining grants in the second and following years. She added that she felt the current Subcommittee was working out the kinks in the process to avoid having the new group meet unnecessary pitfalls.

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis stated that he felt the Town’s newsletter could initially be utilized to energize the program. He further stated that it would be beneficial to the new Community Garden Committee to immediately establish a marketing and education sub-group that could launch its own newsletter to supply the public with updates and with a constant flow of information regarding the Committee’s efforts and accomplishments.

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis stated that the creation of a separate newsletter dedicated to the Community Garden Committee would keep peoples’ interests alive and attract new people to the program.

Discussion ensued addressing the Town’s interaction with the newly formed non-profit organization regarding funding and money.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Public Forum Planning

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that she had placed a call into *Wake County Master Gardener Speaker Bureau Coordinator* Brian Purvis and was waiting on a return call to confirm a speaker for the Forum in July.

Public Works Administrative Services Manager Laurel Belanger stated that she had spoken with *Public Information Officer* Stacie Galloway regarding specific dates for the Forum. She added that Stacie had suggested Tuesday, July 20th, Thursday, July 22nd, or Thursday, July 29th as possible dates.

Survey Questions – Review

Public Works Administrative Services Manager Laurel Belanger stated that she had contacted *Advocates for Health in Action/ NC Cooperative Extension Intern* Bethany Mack and had requested that she supply the Subcommittee with appropriate questions to be considered for the survey. She added that Bethany had given her a list of several questions for consideration.

Public Works Administrative Services Manager Laurel Belanger distributed to the members a list of questions to be considered for the survey supplied by *Advocates for Health in Action/ NC Cooperative Extension Intern* Bethany Mack, as well as a sample survey that *Planning Technician/Administrative Assistant* Shannan Ference had compiled utilizing questions that had been suggested by the Subcommittee.

Co-Chairperson Goll stated that an introduction and an explanation describing a community garden should precede the questions in the compiled survey in order to clarify what the questions being asked were referring to.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the selection of survey questions.

The consensus of the Subcommittee was to include the following questions in the survey;

1. Would you be interested in participating in a community garden?
2. Would you be willing to participate in a community garden program if there was a small fee involved?
3. Do you have any resources or assets that you would be willing to offer to assist the community garden? (equipment, knowledge, non-profit or legal experience, etc.)
4. Do you have any land to donate or lease to a Community garden? If yes, where?
5. Would you be willing to help manage and/or organize a community garden?
6. Please provide your name and email address if you would like more information/updates on the development of a community garden in Morrisville.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Public Works Administrative Services Manager Laurel Belanger stated that she had spoken with *Public Information Officer* Stacie Galloway about setting up a survey for distribution to citizens and she was advised that a citizen survey could not be prepared until August.

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis stated that he would speak with *Public Information Officer* Stacie Galloway regarding the set up of the survey on the Town's homepage website and get things instituted as soon as possible.

Mayor Jackie Holcombe suggested that hard copies of the survey be made available to the attendees at the Forum.

Co-Chairperson Goll requested that staff look into setting up a mailbox system with automated responses to inquiries about the community garden.

6. SET 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

Co-Chairperson Kimberly Goll opened a discussion to coordinate the Subcommittee's meeting schedule for the remainder of 2010, and the group unanimously agreed to meet on the following dates:

Monday, July 12, 2010

Monday, August 9, 2010

Monday, September 13, 2010

Monday, October 11, 2010

Monday, November 8, 2010

Monday, December 13, 2010

At

6:30 PM

Public Works Facility
414 Aviation Parkway
Morrisville, NC 27560

7. COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis inquired as to why a definite date for the Forum had not been established.

Co-Chairperson Kimberly Goll stated she had not previously been able to secure a speaker for the Forum. She added that she would try for the dates of either July 20th, July 22nd, or July 29th.

Senior Director of Community & Emergency Services Tony Chiotakis stated that setting a date for the latter part of July or early August would be more prudent in an effort to get information out to the public in a timely manner.

Discussion ensued regarding setting a date for the Forum.

The consensus of the group was to set two tentative dates for the Forum, either Wednesday, July 28th or Tuesday, August 3rd.

Mayor Jackie Holcombe stated that as long as the special meeting date was posted at the meeting site 48 hours prior to the meeting, the Subcommittee would not be in violation of the Open Public Meetings laws.

Wake County Master Gardener Sherman Criner introduced himself to the group and offered his services to speak at the Subcommittee's public forum. He further added he would speak on any information the Subcommittee wanted in relation to gardening. Additionally, he handed out

two booklets published by the *North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service* as reference materials for the Subcommittee: *Home Vegetable Gardening and Composting* and *A Guide to Managing Organic Yard Wastes*.

Wake County Master Gardener Sherman Criner stated that the *Wake County Cooperative Extension Service* was currently working with several local groups that were in the process of initializing community garden projects, and he would be glad to show the projects to the Subcommittee anytime they would like.

Co-Chairperson Goll inquired as to whether *Wake County Master Gardener Sherman Criner* would be available to speak at the public forum on July 28th, 2010.

Wake County Master Gardener Sherman Criner stated that he was retired and would check his schedule.

Co-Chairperson Goll thanked *Wake County Master Gardener Sherman Criner* for attending the meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Co-Chairperson Goll then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, and upon a motion by *Member Gardner* and a second by *Member Baumann*, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Chairperson Kimberly Goll

Secretary to the Committee

Date

Date