Community Gardens in Parks: Connecting Communities with Food and Fun

DATE AND TIME  
Monday, 22 February 2010 / 3:30PM-5PM

SPEAKER(S)  
Krista Bailey  
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Unity Gardens, Inc.  
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SESSION DESCRIPTION
Discover the many models of community gardens that exist in urban and suburban settings today. Learn how encouraging and allowing the development of community gardens on park land can create safer neighborhoods, preserve green space, and provide new options for family recreation. Find out how one community took several approaches to starting gardens on public lands and learn how to help get them started and sustained in a park system.

Session focused on methods for effective creation and promotion of community garden projects. Krista Bailey discussed the community garden project in Elkhart that has been in place since 1997 as well as other individual and communal (ex. unity gardens) community garden projects in the South Bend area which now total around twenty.
She described such projects in terms of providing the opportunity to “experience the outdoors, nature, grow food, and have some fun with friends and family.”

Gardens are an opportunity for getting people outside in nature and involved in community interactions while working and celebrating success simultaneously. Community gardens can be in rural, urban, or any landscapes in-between these two categories, including open spaces at airports. While growing healthy food and environmental education measures, the community can experience a rise in caring attitudes which decreases crime and increases green space and aesthetic qualities. The gardens can be a source for community service, economic stimulus, and youth programming since various groups can get involved with volunteer opportunities and making decisions for the garden. After an initial meeting with park and recreational staff who can serve as resources, gardens should be publicized and planned based on decisions made by community members since many aspects of gardening (ex. lighting and fencing) are not appropriate or necessary to all communities. Basically, the gardens are dependent upon land use, creativity, and the community wants and needs.

SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify action steps that will lead to the development of a successful community garden project.
- Differentiate between the different types of community garden projects, and their benefits and limitations.
Community Gardens in Parks

Krista Bailey
Program Director
Unity Gardens, Inc.

Community gardens provide gardening and educational opportunities that help connect people to each other and to the natural world.

What is a Community Garden?
- Land Gardened By A Group Of People
- Community or Individual Plots
- Multi-Generational
- "Urban Agriculture"

Why Start a Community Garden?
- Economic and educational opportunities
- Produce nutritious, local, fresh food
- Bring together various ages, races, and ethnicities
- For recreation and exercise
- Provides a way for residents to take ownership of the land
- For recreation and exercise
- Bring people outside
- Decreases crime
- Raises property values
Why Start a Community Garden?

- Preserve green space
- Create a social networking, meeting and play space
- Educational opportunity for all ages

Why Start a Community Garden?

- Economic support for neighborhood residents
- Community Service Project
- Youth entrepreneurial experience

Why Start a Community Garden?

FOOD!!

How to Get Started: Planting the Seed

- Initial Meeting

How to Get Started: Planting the Seed

Publicize the event

Garden Land

- Lots of sun
- Water source
- Soil quality
- Lighting
- Fence
- Manageable rubble, debris – if any
Garden Land

- Availability
  - Close to neighborhood residents
  - Extended community interest
  - Room for parking cars and bikes
  - Accessible by public transit

Planning for the Garden

- Include an educational component
- Gardener Registration and Sign Up
- Youth involvement
- Tap into existing garden network in area
- Engage park staff: who will do what (maintenance, chemicals or no, etc.)
- Liability Insurance

Planning for the Garden

Garden Designs

- Communal: Gardeners take responsibility for one crop.
- Shared work/harvest days.
- Shared harvest.

Garden Designs

- Individual plots an additional possibility (here, single raised beds are in background).

Garden Designs

- Neighborhood plot on area green space.
  - Shared work and harvest creates a source of neighborhood pride and fresh food!

Garden Designs

- Bonus Features: containers in parking lots, gathering space...
  - ...and a place for the children.
Garden Designs
Combination shared and solo space:
Large shared mono-crop with family beds alongside.

Unity Garden: Open garden concept.
Plant, weed, water, learn, harvest as you can, need, want.

Do it Together!
Family days, work days, harvest days (with food!!), volunteer days, Master Gardener education days…

Plan to Party!

Celebrate with the children

Share the Wealth
Enjoy!

For more information:

American Community Gardening Association
http://www.communitygarden.org

Unity Gardens, Inc.
www.UnityGardensInc.org
GrowUnityGardens@yahoo.com
The Unity Mission

To improve community health:

**Physically** by increasing accessibility of fruits and vegetables as well as providing education on nutrition and food preparation.

**Socially** by providing education, increased social capital, and opportunities for the disadvantaged

**Economically** by developing a sustainable local food system, recapturing food waste, creating new jobs, and increasing per-capita productivity

The gardens provide food for those in need & bring diverse people together to grow, harvest, share, and eat healthy food. Each Unity Garden has two criteria: diverse people coming together to grow food and a sharing component.

A Unity Garden Can Be...

☼ Any Piece of Land Gardened by a Group of People.
☼ Open to community-wide participation or open only to garden members
☼ A Community Plot or Many Individual Plots
☼ Urban, Suburban, Or Rural
☼ Multi-Generational: Youth, Adults and Seniors Gardening Together
☼ A Series of Plots Dedicated To "Urban Agriculture" Where The Produce is Grown for a Market.

For information on how to donate, volunteer, or to join or start a garden, please contact:

Unity Gardens, Inc.
Sara Stewart RNMSN
Executive Director
Unity Gardens, Inc.
PO Box 10022
South Bend, IN 46680
574 315 4361
www.UnityGardensInc.org
growunitygardens@yahoo.com

Unity Gardens, Inc.

We Are Growing More than Vegetables Here!
Growing community; sprouting seeds of sharing
The Unity Gardens
We’re growing community; sprouting seeds of sharing.
The Unity Gardens Inc. is a collaborative network of community gardens originated to increase the availability, awareness & accessibility of healthy, locally grown food.

Garden Workshops in 2010
A variety of garden education events will be taking place at many of the gardens during the 2010 season. From starting seeds to harvesting and preparing goods from the garden, there will be many opportunities to learn. Check the website or contact any of the garden coordinators for more information.

Gardens, Locations and Contacts

The Unity Garden at LaSalle Square; Ardmore and Prast.
  Melissa Murawski - melmurawski17@sbcglobal.net  (574) 232-3529
  Linda Hopkins - southbendlindah@aol.com  (574) 226-6494

The Unity Garden at Monroe Park in South Bend, South & Carroll Street
  Karen Coman - krazycomans@sbcglobal.net  (574) 329-9410

Ric's Garden of Hope:  Broadway United Methodist Church
  Pastor Nancy Nichols - bcppastor@sbcglobal.net  (574) 289-0333

The Butternut Squash Unity Garden; 802 S. Kaley St. 46619
  Judith Rubleske - jrube@michiana.org  or  JRUBLESKE@memorialsb.org

The Unity Garden at The Salvation Army; Chapin & Western Ave. (303 Chapin St.)
  Liz Kurtz - liz.kurtz@usc.salvationarmy.org  (574) 233-9471 x103

The Unity Garden at Our Lady of the Road - Catholic Worker Laundry & Cafe; 744 S. Main
  Aimee Shelide - aimee.shelide@gmail.com  (615) 426-6047
  Margaret Pfiel - Mpfeil1@nd.edu  (574) 520-7745

The Garden of Saint Therese; Holy Trinity Church Olive Street
  Tina Velthuizen - teunisje@aol.com  (574) 233-8197

The Lakeville Unity Garden and Farmer's Market; Prairie Wind Farms
  Charlotte Wolfe - wolfecp@wildblue.net  (574) 291-9943

The Community Garden sponsored by the Junior League - Center for the Homeless
  Angela Willson - AWillson@cfh.net  (574) 282-8710

The Greenhouse Community Garden
  Krista Bailey - sbgardens@yahoo.com  (574) 233-1055

The Robertson's Apartments Unity Garden
  Patty Willaert - pwillaert@memorialsb.org  (574) 233-1055

The Oaks at SouthPaw Community Garden; 16323 Roosevelt Road near 331
  Carol Laidig - claidig@oaksatsouthpaw.com  (574) 633-4326

The Poland Street Unity Garden; 2408 W. Ford Street
  Judith Rubleske - jrube@michiana.org  or  JRUBLESKE@memorialsb.org  (574) 288-1386

The Portage Unity Garden; 3016 Portage Ave (Portage Manor)
  Dave Nickerson - dnickerson@ducombcenter.org  (574) 232-4817

The Department of Corrections Youth Center Unity Garden
  Beverly Williams - bewilliams@idoc.in.gov  (574) 232-8808 ext 350

The J.F. New Unity Garden; Donating directly to the Food Bank
  Jason Hughey - jhughey@jfnew.com  No phone number available

Memorial Unity Garden –
  Joseph Vasta, Director of Nutritional Services, jvasta@memorialsb.org  (574) 647-3015