

**Approved Minutes of the
Resilient Hartford Special Meeting on the Clifford Park Food Forest
June 2, 2021**

Resilient Hartford Members Present: Marsha Autilio, Marcia Gauvin, Frederica Graham, Dylan Kreis, and Chair Kye Cochran.

Others Present: Ashton Todd and consultant Cat Buxton.

Staff Present: Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

Resilient Hartford (RH) Chair Kye Cochran called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Matt Osborn read the “Act 92 remote public meeting script”.

1. **Review of the May 26th Soil Workshop:** There was a brief discussion of the 5/26 workshop and the consensus was that workshop went very well.
2. **Steering Committee and Teams Update:** Cat Buxton noted that some materials will be stored outside such as compost, manure, wood chips and leaves. Other items such as cardboard will be stored in the barn. Dylan Kreis reported that the boundaries for the Food Forest have been staked out. Cat Buxton reported that approximately 10,000 square feet of materials will need to be brought in to create soil for the plantings noting that we will be building soil on top of the turf.

Dylan Kreis noted that the Parks and Recreation Commission needs to approve the design for the Food Forest and it is important to keep them informed. It was agreed to see if we can get on the June 10th Parks and Recreation Commission agenda. Cat and Matt will follow-up with Parks and Recreation Department Director Scott Hausler.

Cat Buxton noted that the first step of the design phase is defining the paths and islands of plantings and it is important to avoid impacting park maintenance operations. Dylan Kreis wants to make sure that leaves from the Food Forest don't find their way into the tennis court fenced area. Cat responded that the Food Forest will be self-contained.

Kye Cochran suggested that a Resilient Hartford member take the lead role in directing the four teams. Frederica Graham suggested meeting at Clifford Park. Cat Buxton suggested waiting until after the 6/9 workshop. RH agreed.

Frederica Graham suggested preparing a flyer for the Food Forest Project to be posted at the West Hartford Library. Matt Osborn suggested posting it at the other libraries and seek additional locations as well since we are trying to generate interest in the project and recruit volunteers. RH agreed. Dylan Kreis noted that West Hartford has their own List Serve and the West Hartford Library has a Facebook page. Ashton Todd agreed to help promote the project on social media and requested written information on the project.

Cat Buxton reported that a Sharon Academy graduate who will be studying regenerative agriculture at Middlebury College is interested in volunteering for the project.

Dylan Kreis reported that he spoke to Katie Walsh at the Health Care and Rehab Services (HCRS) expressed interest in volunteer opportunities.

Cat Buxton noted that the tree planting will take place in the fall and the first year we will focus on keystone species. Cover crops to get green growing matter can start later in June. Cat noted that water is needed to establish the trees. Matt Osborn stated that the Department of Public Works (DPW) has two water tanks on trailers that we may be able to borrow to deliver water to the site. Matt added that a permanent water source will need to be addressed, but for the first year we will rely on a short-term solution such as the DPW water tanks and seek a permanent water source later since it will require funding and permitting.

Dylan Kreis reported that he has identified locations for donated materials such as compost, manure and wood chips and leaves. He added that all materials will need to be inspected prior to delivery.

Marsha Autilio asked about the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation as a possibly funder for the project. Cat Buxton responded that she thinks the Foundation is a great fit for the Food Forest since the Foundation supports community and education projects. Cat noted that the project will require grants, donations and in-kind volunteer time for the project to succeed. She also noted that a key component to the project is long-term Steering Committee that will help maintain the food forest well into the future. Marcia Gauvin asked Cat if the sky was the limit, how much would be an amount to shoot for? Cat responded \$10,000 at the most. She stated that the largest expense is purchasing trees and shrubs. Cat noted that the specific species will become clearer after the design process.

Timeline: Cat noted the project schedule:

- Host Educational Workshops via Zoom
 2. Design & Species: Wednesday, June 9th at 6:30 p.m. by Karen Ganey
 3. Finalizing the Design: Late June, Date to be Determined
- June: Continue to form Steering Committee and project teams.
- June: Soil testing and preparations: Adding layers of organic materials, planting cover crops, delineate pathways and complete the draft community design process.
- July – Continue building soil and refining design. Submit final design to Parks and Recreation Department and Parks and Recreation Commission for approval.
- September - Planting of Phase 1 of design.

Project Teams: Marcia Gauvin volunteered to serve on the fundraising committee. Dylan Kreis volunteered to serve on the design committee. The following is an updated list:

- I. **Design Team:** Kye Cochran & Dylan Kreis
- II. **Action Team:** Katie Williams & Laura Simon
- III. **Fundraising:** Marsha Autilio, Marcia Gauvin, Laura Simon & Nancy Russell
- IV. **Ground Team/Resources/Contact Team:** Matt Osborn

Kye Cochran reported that she talked to Clifford Park neighbor Paul Sadowski and he is excited about the project and offered his time to volunteer when work is needed.

3. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.