

**Draft Minutes of  
Resilient Hartford  
Clifford Park Food Forest Design Workshop #3  
August 4, 2021**

A Resilient Hartford workshop was held on Wednesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the West Hartford Library, 5133 Route 14, West Hartford.

**Resilient Hartford Members Present:** Laura Simon and Chair Kye Cochran.

**Resilient Hartford Liaisons Present:** Jon Bouton, Conservation Commission.

**Others Present:** Jack Barnhart, Judy Simon Bouton, Laura Brooks, Earl Hatley and consultants Cat Buxton and Karen Ganey.

**Staff Present:** Matt Osborn, Town Planner.

**Welcome & Introductions:** RH Chair Kye Cochran called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made. Kye then introduced consultant Karen Ganey of Permaculture Solutions. Karen designs gardens that maximize biodiversity and ecosystem health. She has extensive experience working with grassroots organizations and volunteering on community projects.

**Goals and Design Qualities/Aims:** Karen Ganey went over the following goals and design qualities of the project and what Resilient Hartford aims for the project:

Goals & Design Qualities:

Build Soil Health

Attractive

Access to affordable/FREE food

Physical accessibility for all

Nutritional, environmental, social benefits

Reimagine public spaces

Food productions

Community involvement educations

Signage and education

Workshop spaces

Areas that kids of all ages (intergenerational spaces) will enjoy!

Lower maintenance for the Town of Hartford

Welcoming

Wonder

Pride

Belonging

Abundant

Relaxing

Peaceful

We Aim:

To create an accessible and inclusive space for the community to come together to grow food naturally and regeneratively.

To restore soil health.

To create a food forest with mostly native, fruit bearing shrubs, trees and perennials.

To nurture opportunities to learn good stewardship of our environment.

To create space where people share knowledge and skills.

To provide a space for reinvigorating the human soul!

To nurture wonder, pride, belonging, abundance, relaxation, peace, and FUN!

To create habitat for pollinators, wild fauna, migratory birds, and wildlife.

To strengthen the wildlife corridor along the White River.

To explore how input intensive parks can be transformed into low maintenance and regenerative social and environmental ecosystems.

To work cooperatively with Abenaki community members to learn about traditional ecological knowledge.

**Design Process and Species Selection:** Karen Ganey gave an overview of the July 21<sup>st</sup> workshop and the discussion with tree expert Jesse Marksohn. Jesse provided recommendations for several varieties of nut and fruit trees. Karen then presented a hand drawing that she prepared of a possible design. Cat Buxton also submitted a draft design on her laptop that she prepared utilizing drawing software. Discussion followed.

There was discussion about creating a space for workshops - in the back, somewhere around the tennis courts 20' x 30'. As for irrigation possibilities, water could be pumped from the river or collected from roof of the barn into rain barrels. Earl Hatley explained the Cherokee garden concept - center of garden is a circle spiraling out with beans and squash on the outside.

It was suggested to find out the Abenaki name for the White River

There was discussion of the challenges of dealing with Flood Regulations since Clifford Park is in the 100-year flood zone. Matt Osborn noted that there is a requirement in the Town Flood Regulations that for material being brought in, there must be an equal amount of material taken out. This is required to maintain flood storage capacity. Matt stated that the Town Zoning Administrator and State Regional Flood Manager have agreed to the fall planting provided we meet that requirement. Cat Buxton stated that if we are not able to bring in materials (soil, compost etc.), we can use compost teas as an alternative. For the long-term plan, the Town will be working with an engineer to navigate the Flood Regulations. There was discussion of opportunities to make the Park more resilient and improving the riparian buffer.

**Next Steps:** Matt Osborn noted that the next step is to present a design of the proposed September Tree Planting at the August 12<sup>th</sup> Parks and Recreation Commission. Karen indicated that she will attend the meeting. Matt also noted that the project design will be presented to the public at a community meeting in the coming weeks.

**Adjournment:** Kye Cochran thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.