



NLR Community Garden Committee Meeting

May 27, 2015, 3:30–4:30 p.m.

Committee members present:

Baring Cross Community Garden (Janie and Ken Lumley, Margaret Powell)

NLR Fit 2 Live (Bernadette Gunn Rhodes, Sharice Loftin)

NLR City Council (Beth White)

NLR Neighborhood Services (Dan Scott)

NLR Community Garden (Heather Rhodes-Newburn, Blaine Miller)

R.O.C.A.N. Community Garden (Jean Baltz)

Skyline Community Garden (Diane Barton)

St. Joseph Center of Arkansas (Ruth Landers)

Community members present:

East 2nd Street Community Garden (Vernell Ryan)

St. Patrick's Community Garden (Robby McAllister)

Shorter College Community Garden (Dr. Paula Fletcher, Harrison Johnson)

3:30-3:40 Welcome and introductions

We welcomed Mr. Vernell Ryan, attending for the first time from E 2nd St. Garden.

3:40-3:50 Updates from garden managers

St. Patrick's Community Garden

Growing well, fertilizer has been washing away in rain. Distributing Argenta's tulip bulbs to neighbors. Woman stopped, said garden was "Best thing that ever happened to the neighborhood." 12-year-old boy said the garden "sure is pretty."

Skyline Community Garden

Constructed 1 new bed, which will be available for rent.

East 2nd Street Community Garden

Vegetables are growing well. Too much rain for melons. Some issues with neighbors harvesting plants before they are ready.

Baring Cross Community Garden

All plots planted and growing. Summer kids program (under Marquita's leadership) starts June 1, runs 12:00-5:30pm every day. Problem with red ants and squash bugs. **For ants, gardeners recommended** cinnamon, EcoSmart granules, and orange peels or orange oil. **For pests** (though not necessarily squash bugs), gardeners recommended diatomaceous earth.

R.O.C.A.N. Community Garden

Clover is sprouting. Harvested 10 lbs of potatoes, several lbs of strawberries. Herbs growing. Have 4 volunteer tomato plants, 3 watermelon plants and 2 cantaloupe plants.

NLR Community Farm

Summer plan: Meeting every Thursday at 9:00am to make weekly plan. Groups of 2 will handle daily schedule. Food will go to homeless and needy families. Ms. Riggins has a summer family list. Last year, 125 families were on the list.

St. Joseph Community Garden

Wait list went down to zero, but then filled up again. Everyone is taking care of their own beds, and there are many new gardeners. Using playhouse built onto greenhouse as a resource room with books. Grew plant starts in greenhouse, put out extra as free samples for beginners. Need sticker for garden sign with updated contact information. **Action Item:** Get sticker dimensions from Ruth.

Shorter College Community Garden

All beds are producing well. Kids gardening program will start this September. Plans to start a stand with bagged veggies for students and neighbors to pick up. Neighbors are stopping by and asking questions about the garden. Heather Rhodes-Newburn mentioned that there is a **mobile kitchen at Seventh Street Elementary** that may be able to be used for educational programs at Shorter. The NLRFC Farm Team also has a **Nutrition Education team** that could help teach.

Question: How do you know when onions and radishes are ready to pull up? **Answer:** Peek at the tops at them and pull them up once they've reached the desired size.

3:50-4:00 Updates from Arkansas GardenCorps

Sharice told the group about the concept of "Food is Free," a table with a large "Food is Free" sign where community gardeners share produce with surrounding neighbors. This may be a way to reduce instances of people taking produce straight out of garden beds.

Sharice and Beau have **tomato, eggplant, watermelon, and cucumber starts** to share from the greenhouse.

4:00-4:28 Presentation on Janet Carson's "Grow Your Groceries" Workshop (Dr. Paula Fletcher)

Dr. Fletcher emphasized how much Ms. Carson's workshop inspired and educated her and the other participants. Topics covered were:

- Soil testing
- Growing zones and seasonal growing
- Fertilizers
- Cooking from the garden (**recipes attached!!!**)
- Resources available through the U of A Div of Ag Cooperative Extension Service

4:28-4:30 Public comment None.