

Attachment D **Additional Community Garden Information**

Garden groups were asked to update the agreement with the Town. Changes surfaced that warranted an updated agreement. Since the last agreement, there has been changes in management, the need for garden groups to have insurance and with the Dr. MLK Jr. Park Garden - OWASA water bill being paid by the Town once construction is completed. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr gardeners signed and turned in their agreement. Next, staff was scheduled to work with the Baldwin gardeners. After it was decided to place this item on agenda, staff decided to wait until any outcome of the agenda item.

Each agreement reflects the need by the garden groups to maintain an insurance policy so that the Town does not incur the complete liability of the community garden activities, which are currently run by volunteers. This insurance request is aligned with other event sponsors and groups that use town property. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Park gardeners are not able to obtain insurance currently because of park construction. However, it was recently stated that Orange County Partnership for Young Children will to continue to cover them during the construction phase, but would like to see them eventually get their own policy. Staff asked that the Baldwin gardeners have insurance by April 30, 2019. Since that request, the gardeners expressed some concerns.

The fees and charges document approved by the Board states:

Insurance may be needed if the event includes major physical activity and moderate/severe exposure to participants; expected attendance of over 500; large amounts of cash (\$1000+) or quantities of merchandise will be brought onto Town Property; and food will be served, sold and/or given to the general public. The individual or group must provide general liability Insurance with a minimum limit of \$1 million general liability coverage endorsed to name The Town as an additional insured and provide a certificate for documentation.

The garden groups provided the following information –

Carrboro Community Garden Coalition (CCGC)

Currently there are 15-20 'regulars', some who have been gardening together for a decade, and others who started just last year. In addition, dozens of people visit or try it out each year. The garden is open to local residents without regard to income or status and the list serve has over 150 individuals on it. The gardeners share in the work and share in the harvest, which is planned to produce seasonally appropriate organically grown produce year round, a valuable supplement especially for those whom may have difficulty purchasing organic produce. We also share our knowledge about gardening and teach others about organic gardening, planting, harvesting, natural pest control, etc.

The CCGC has survived and prospered for over a decade with a loose organization with no formal leader. There is a Steering Committee, open to interested participants, that 'meets' regularly over the internet and either in the garden or an occasional formal meeting to plan such items as crop selection and rotation, planting schedules, budgets, purchases, and fund raising. Along with equipment and labor donations, we typically have a budget of \$500 – 700/year, for seeds, compost (before Compost Now), fencing, tools, and equipment. This is raised by free-will donations by members according to their willingness and ability to pay. The town has generously provided many loads of leaves and other yard mulch which has been invaluable in improving the soil and wintering beds.

We meet most Saturdays and, during the longer, warmer days, Tuesday or Wednesday evenings, depending on people's schedules. We have perhaps 8-12 people on a fine day and usually at least 2-5 people even on marginal winter Saturdays. A few people work at other times – Sunday or a weekday, as their schedules allow. A volunteer, often a member of the Steering Committee, will take on the leadership for a work session, organizing the people who show up to accomplish the tasks appropriate to them, their interests, the season and the weather. The leader will also put out a list serve reminder of the upcoming workday and a summary of accomplishments. As schedules require, the leader may change midway through a workday. Typically, the leader is not a master gardener and will solicit and receive recommendations from other gardeners more familiar (through experience or interests) in particular crops and problems.

A major draw for our members is the shared community of soil preparation, planting, tilling and harvesting, with each person sharing his or her knowledge, skills, interests, and efforts in a common goal. And, of course, the sharing of the weekly harvest of fresh, organic produce.

The activity of gardening provides community members the opportunity to get outside and get exercise throughout the year. The garden builds community and provides the opportunity for leadership. We of course also work closely with the Family Garden, coming together on joint projects and sharing knowledge, seedlings, and friendship.

We plant both the “usual” garden crops, as well as some “unusual” plants so that we can see and teach others how things grow. For example, we have grown peanuts, okra, Malabar spinach, a dozen kinds of tomatoes and lettuce; and flowers, cotton, loofah, and hops. These are plants of interest to both gardeners and those that walk-through.

We have in recent years worked to increase community awareness of the garden, including creating a website (that we pay to maintain), a continually updated Facebook page (40-80 views each week), and making brochures available on the garden fence for people to take if no one is there. We have also staffed a table at the Farmer's Market in past years with information about the garden.

The space is open to all, when we are working. We have had garden neighbors come by just to walk through and show the garden to their visiting friends and families. Other neighbors walk past the garden when walking their dogs to see the flowers and other plants.

When we have an abundance of food (in the summer months), we donate excess produce to local organizations, including the IFC Food Pantry and the Interfaith Council for Social Service, that provide food to the needy.

One measure of community support is Compost Now: <https://compostnow.org/garden-partners/#triangle> Currently, 1274 members share their compost with the CCGC and 951 members share with the Carrboro Family Garden, greatly enriching the sometimes nutrient- and tilth-poor soil in this area and recycling otherwise wasted or landfilled food scraps.

The garden provides a diverse habitat that is home to a number of pollinators. We have developed several pollinator beds, with native plant species that allow native pollinators to thrive in the immediate vicinity.

We are one of the few outdoor and year-round venues that have welcomed Volunteers for Youth, an organization that helps at-risk youth become responsible adults. Gardening with us is a safe and healthy way to work off extra energy (shoveling, moving leaf mulch, weeding, harvesting, etc.). CCGC is proud to be a VfY partner by providing one-on-one attention and mentoring to teenagers that elect to perform community service hours at our garden. The garden is a perfect place to see the value of their efforts: work done one week will lead to fresh greens, ripe tomatoes, and flowers to take home the next. In 2018, we had 6 teenagers garden for 22 hours in the Community Service Program, and three Teen Court kids come to the garden six times, for over 16 hours. We have had the families of teenagers who started gardening with us later join the Family Garden.

When possible, we participate in local education projects. In 2018, CCGC participated in two graduate school projects, where garden members were interviewed and observed for research purposes. We also hosted around 5 undergraduates for a class project.

Goals for 2019:

We would like to grow our membership, in part by being listed online as a part of

Carrboro's Recreational Programs.

We would like to continue to produce healthy food and expand our shared community, friendships and knowledge of gardening.

We plan to continue working with Volunteers for Youth.

Understanding that there are complications due to the construction, we will work with the Town and construction personnel to get through the construction period safely and productively..

Current concerns and issues

-Driveway is currently closed, with no parking. (Access by foot or bike only using path to the left of construction driveway.)

-There is no current way to deliver needed bulk garden amendments or places to off-load them until used: wood chips, leaf mulch, compost.

-Learn about the new water collection system and devise and implement a workable integration with Garden storage tanks and distribution. When no feasible watering strategy exists, use OWASA water.

-Continue to work with the Family Garden and the Town on finding solutions to garden shading of a significant number of plots due to tall and growing trees around the site.

-Continue to work with the Town on resolving issues around the common garden fence: how it will be maintained and improved at acceptable cost.

-New Town of Carrboro requirement to have liability insurance and lack of a current insurer willing to cover CCGC during construction.

Mitigation ideas:

Gardeners stay within planned garden area to avoid construction zone.

Coordinate deliveries with construction team (they do not see deliveries as a problem and team leader Clint Lightsey gave Michele his contact info for coordinating the timing based on their progress and weather).

Continue to plant, tend, harvest.

Impacts of Loss of one year of gardening:

- Loss of plants, such as kale, potatoes and lettuces are already in the ground.

- Loss of plants currently being started in gardeners homes
- If we lose an entire growing season, we will lose a lot of momentum and volunteers
- A lot of land will be covered in weeds, poison ivy, snakes, and rats.
- The garden will be unsightly after a year of no gardening.

Appendix: Testimonials:

- As a member of the Carrboro Community Garden Coalition for about seven years, I feel the garden embodies Carrboro at its best. It's a place where people gather as a community, young people learn skills, and the earth is treated with respect.

- I've been going to the community garden for about a year, and it has quickly become an important part of my week. I have very little gardening experience and was immediately welcomed by everyone. I've learned so much because everyone seems to have a different vein of knowledge and is generous in sharing and problem solving together. Most recently there have been some younger people doing community service at the garden, which is a great idea, as having youth adds to the diversity of people working together.

-I have been working at the Carrboro Community Garden for enough years that I forget, maybe ~5 or more. Having worked at other gardens for comparison, this one gives me the most enjoyable exposure to a diverse group whose common thread is love of the earth and healthy eating. We share ideas, tasks and produce communally, which creates a unique rich environment of cooperation. I learn a lot — about gardening and people and even about foods I am unaccustomed to eating. The community experience is important to me. V.L.

-When I moved from a shady neighborhood in Carrboro to my present, sunnier location in August of 2015, I had never before grown a vegetable. I heard about CCGC and decided to go one Saturday, in the hope of learning something I could use in my new home garden plot. I had a great time, and returned the next week, and the next, and practically every weekend since then! By going every weekend and learning from other more experienced people, I received a free informal apprenticeship in farming, as well as in technical aspects of our water-pumping system. When the primary workday leader retired, in late 2016, I eventually realized that I had enough knowledge to lead workdays (with the support of other more experienced gardeners), and since early 2017 I have been the most frequent Saturday workday leader.

We get a lot of visitors at the garden. When I orient them, I like to point out that the leaves we receive from the town decompose and are used as soil, that we receive finished compost from hundreds of people who selected CCGC as their compost recipient through CompostNow, and that we make our own compost from weeds and other scraps. I like to create an environment where we are all learning together; I am always learning and trying new things, and if I don't know what to do I will often try two ways and see which one works better! For me, CCGC has been a wonderful environment to make friends, grow as a person, promote sustainable agriculture, and enjoy the feeling of eating something that grew just a few blocks away. It has enriched my life and is a reason I continue to live in Carrboro. --Michele Easter

-I've been going to the community garden for about a year, and it has quickly become an important part of my week. I have very little gardening experience and was immediately welcomed by everyone. I've learned so much because everyone seems to have a different vein of knowledge and is generous in sharing and problem solving together. Most recently there have been some younger people doing community service at the garden, which is a great idea, as having youth adds to the diversity of people working together. (Anonymous)

-After walking around the MLK, Jr. Park Community Garden for many years, this year, I signed up to join the CCGC and have attended two work sessions, weeding 3 rows of beets, then 3 rows of spinach. I weeded for 5 hours, and loved every minute of it--the fresh air, the sun on my shoulders, the smell of the well-cared for earth. Now I can't believe the Town is considering halting its support of this wonderful resource. Heavy equipment is tearing up so much of the Park for a pump park. If the Town can support that kind of recreation, why not the community garden, which nourishes many, and in more ways than one. With climate change, it will become even more important for people to learn how to grow food and to take care of the earth. I ask that the Town continue its support of the Community Garden. Even for people who do not garden there themselves, it is an inspiration. I and others working at the garden this year all walked or biked there. We are the Park's neighbors, and we are stewards of the land. Please protect our garden and the soil it has taken years to build up. (Barb Stenross, age 72)

What the Carrboro Community Garden contributes to our community

I am a British citizen and US Permanent Resident. My wife and I are semi- retired and we moved to the Chapel Hill/Carrboro area about 5 years ago. I was looking for things to do that aligned with my interests, kept me physically active and gave me the opportunity to make new friends. My wife read about the CCG on the internet and I went along one Saturday morning to find out more. The first thing that struck me was how friendly and welcoming the gardeners were. This proved to be a reliable first impression as I've made a number of good friends at the garden, and it's been a wonderful way of becoming part of a thriving local community. It's great to be the CCG team and to be able to see, and enjoy the fruits of our collective endeavours. One of my volunteering activities, in the UK and US, is mentoring school students. I've enjoyed working alongside community service students at the garden, I've tried to share my love of gardening and help them learn about planting and nurturing the things we grow. The gardeners are of all ages, physical abilities and nationalities. We share stories about our home countries and I've learnt about gardening practices in South America, mainland Europe and the Caucasus. We frequently have visitors; members of the public who stop by to ask about the garden and how they can get involved. It's very rewarding to show these people the same courtesy, and passion for community gardening that I experienced when I first visited Martin Luther King Junior Park back in 2014. I tell them that it's a great meeting place, and advertisement for the town. (David North)

-The garden is a working small-plot produce farm within the Carrboro city limits that is open to anyone and everyone who wanders by on Saturday morning. That's both unique and special. Like many volunteer-run organizations both its internal organization and its outreach wax and wane with time, and that's normal, but, again, through purely volunteer effort Carrboro basically has a teaching farm. We should NOT lose that resource. (Claire McLendon)

-When I moved to North Carolina for graduate school in 2017, I was looking for ways to get connected to the community. I was also moving from Washington, DC, and was looking for a way to reconnect to the environment. The Carrboro Community Garden Coalition puts the "community" in "community gardening." The CGCC embraced me with open arms from my very visit in August 2017. It has remained a place to ground myself throughout a difficult two years of my master program. It's been a place to grow as well, learning about sustainable agricultural aspects. Most importantly, the community garden promotes inter-generational connections. We are truly stronger together." (Anonymous)

I started participating in the CCGC this past fall (2018) when I was 9 months into my recovery from a moderate brain injury that I sustained after a bike accident. The 9 months of recovery prior to my CCGC participation were extremely challenging for my mental health. I was unable to do most of the things that I previously enjoyed because I was impaired on many levels, so I became socially isolated and battled with overall feelings of worthlessness and helplessness. I eventually decided to try community gardening because I felt that the gardening tasks could be simple enough that I could complete them with a sense of efficacy, and I also hoped that social interaction with other gardeners would improve my mental health. I was attracted the CCGC's website's welcoming invitation for anyone to participate, so I gave them a try. I got what I was hoping for! The garden participants were all very warm and welcoming, and they helped me find tasks that I could be successful in. Participating in the CCGC felt like a pivotal point in my recovery. I began to see that I was still capable of being productive and social, and I found my interactions with other gardeners to be uplifting. I am grateful for the CCGC for their kindness and also for sharing their passion for building community! (Laura Carrol, M.S. Candidate, Occupational Therapy)

I have participated in the Carrboro community garden since the second year of its inception. It has been a special part of my life. I have particularly liked that, unlike community gardens with individual plots, all gardeners share the work in one large garden. People with all levels of garden experience - from none to expert, have been represented and there is the opportunity to learn and share skills. There is also the opportunity to learn about other people's lives as you pull weeds beside them. Most important to me is the genuine spirit of cooperativeness and sharing and equality. This, and the fun of digging in the dirt would be enough, but then there's also the produce to take home (at times a portion of this has been donated to the women's shelter.) Gardeners have always been welcoming to newcomers, and we would welcome new members from all parts of the community. (William Michael Larter)

Carrboro Family Garden

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CARRBORO Family GARDEN

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Our Mission

The mission of the Carrboro Community Family Garden is to provide space, resources and education for families with children to garden organically, promote healthy eating, encourage sustainable living and cultivate community.

Our History

The garden was founded in 2008 by the Orange County Partnership for Young Children (OCPYC) our local Smart Start agency that supports programs and projects that help children start school healthy and ready to learn and succeed.

The gardens were started with grant funding from the Health and Wellness Trust Fund of NC, and later a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided continued funding.

In the early days, with more funding, the garden staff included a project manager, garden manager, multiple interns and volunteers and we provided more classes on cooking, gardening and children's programs. In October 2011, the Board of Alderman voted to always maintain a community garden as part of the MLK Park. In 2012, with funds from a Nourishing NC grant, a water line was installed to help keep the gardens hydrated through the long hot summers.

OCPYC has maintained the OWASA account and paid the water bill for the garden. As grants ended, management lessened with OCPYC now only providing minimal oversight. Four years ago OCPYC offered a series of community garden management workshops and several members of the garden attended. A garden advisory board made up of volunteer garden members was formed to help plan and oversee the day to day management of the garden.

As the garden transitioned to a volunteer-run group the makeup of garden members shifted to include more neighborhood residents. We continue to serve some low-income families, but with limited time and resources, we are no longer able to do much outreach, coordinate volunteers, or provide classes or children's activities. We mainly recruit new gardeners by word of mouth at this time.

Our Impact

Part of our mission is to make space available to low-resource families with children to learn how to grow organic vegetables.

1. Currently, 40% of our gardeners list their income below 20k per year.
2. We are presently serving 57 children this year at the garden and provide individual garden space to 28 families from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds.
3. For fifteen of our families, English is not their native language.
4. 54% of our families have at least one member who is an ethnic or racial minority.
5. Since the garden began in 2008, well over 100 families and 150 children have participate in the program.

Our Leadership and Structure

Currently, Carrboro Family Garden is run by a board of four volunteers. We are always exploring new ways to make the garden better and our main goal has been to focus on making the garden a long-term, sustainable project.

We accept a small annual \$20 - \$60 donation when families sign up each year that covers the cost of gardening supplies. The only stipulation for joining is that the person must have at least one school-aged child. We waive any financial contributions from families who cannot afford to give a donation to create an inclusive environment. Families with lower incomes are given first priority. We raise about \$700 per year in gardener donations.

Currently our fiscal agent is Orange County Partnership for Young Children. They are paying our water bill and providing our liability insurance and nonprofit status which allows us to work with the Cardinal Track Club and be eligible to volunteer for their three races every year. The grant we receive from them pays for more expensive garden needs such as wood for garden bed borders, fence repairs, extra loads of compost for new plots, tools, etc. Currently all of the money from any grants is held by OCPYC and goes directly back into the garden for project materials and there are no paid staff members. Our annual financial grant from the Cardinal Track Club is \$4000.

Our Community Partnerships

We have formed community relationships with organizations like the Cardinal Track Club, the Chapel Hill Service League and various independent contractors who provide labor at reduced costs in order to help sustain our mission and our work for families in the community. We receive donations from Compost Now, Sow True Seed, Botanical Interests and kind strangers who leave supplies when we post a need on Next Door. Public Works delivers truckloads of leaves for mulch, and The Arborist drops off wood chips for paths when needed.

Here is what some of our families have to say about what the Carrboro Family Garden means to them

“My family has been a member of the Carrboro Family Garden for 9 years. We started with the project when my son was in pre-K. I had gardened a lot with my own family as a child and I really wanted to pass on this tradition to my children. Going out to garden together, planting seeds, watering the seedlings, watching the plants grow... This is a process I have always loved.

The Garden was also a warm and caring community of diverse family. There are many Hispanic families, like us, Burmese and North Americans. The diversity of the community has enriched our experience because it has offered us the opportunity to learn about new culture through food! Over the years, in the garden and various events, we have learned about vegetables we didn't know existed and shared recipes.

Notwithstanding all of this, for my family, the most important thing the garden has offered is the opportunity to teach young children about food and where it comes from. Specifically, it has helped me to teach my children about the importance of eating a healthy diet, full of vegetables, taking care of our Mother Earth and not filling it with toxic chemicals, and the beauty of spending time outside with a community of people who share the same ideals. Perhaps the most significant and palpable consequence of being part of the community garden has been the change in my children's attitude towards food. They have grown from children who would not eat anything green to young people who love to go to the garden, harvest their own vegetables and enjoy eating meals prepared with the food they have grown. “

- Hélène de Fays and Abel Muñoz

“Since we joined the Carrboro Family Garden in 2013, we have met some amazing people and close friends. More importantly, our daughter has learned so much. She can identify most vegetables and herbs by sight, and she knows how to plant seeds and when to harvest the food. The garden has really given us an appreciation for our farmers and those who grow food for everyone. It is not an easy job! We feel so fortunate to have these wonderful gardens all within walking distance. It is truly one of the things that makes Carrboro such a great place to live.”

- Aaron and Brandy Pickrell

The garden community itself is fantastic - led by energetic, positive people trying their best to bring everyone together through the act of growing and producing our own food. It is truly a gem in this town. For years before we had children, my wife and I would walk past the garden and daydream of the time when we had kids and could expose them to the garden - we are so blessed to have been able to do so for the past two years and really hope we can continue!

Thanks!

- John, Alicia, Jack & Wes Verrier

"We recently moved to the area. This is our first season at the garden, and while we haven't even planted a single seed, we have found the community garden the most welcoming and community

oriented group of people we have interacted with so far. Having the garden as a common space to spend time outdoors with our toddler, as well as teaching her about community values, is something invaluable."

- Isaiah Taylor & Malavika Ramakrishna

"I joined the garden just a year ago and was thrilled to have a little patch of land to share my love of gardening with my daughter. I also appreciate the chance to work side by side with neighbors from all across Carrboro, many of whom are from countries around the world. Diverse common spaces are becoming a rarity, I hope the Carrboro Family Garden is allowed to continue to grow."

- Jenny Cook

The Baldwin Park Gardeners

Gardeners did not share information for this report.