

**MADISON COMMUNITY GARDEN  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**September 18, 2019**

**MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

**Present:** Steve McAuliffe, Mike Barrasso, Ursula Leonhardt, Steve Stocker, Paul Schmitt, Geoff Anderson, Sondra Clark, Maureen Byrne, Margaret Malishchak, Charles VanBuskirk, Maureen Hoeflin, Kirk Moehle

**Absent:** Geoff Thomas, Brian Monaghan, Lynn Macagnano,

**Open Meeting Statement**

Steve M. read the Statement of the Open Public Meetings Act, as follows:

"In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this meeting of the Madison Community Garden Advisory Committee was provided by transmitting a copy of the meeting notice to the Madison Eagle, Daily Record and Star Ledger, and posting copies of this notice on the bulletin board at the main entrance to the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building, on January 17, 2019. Copies of said notice were made available to members of the general public."

**Roll Call**

The roll call was taken.

**Approval of Minutes/Agenda Review**

Steve M. suggested an adjustment to the statement about Apivar to read "Brian reported that Steve will be checking the hives to see if the Apivar strips were effective", and Margaret said she would make this adjustment. There was a motion, a second, and a unanimous vote to accept the Minutes of the August 21, 2019 meeting as amended. Margaret will provide these Minutes to the Borough Clerk. There were no suggestions for changes to the Agenda.

**Public Comments**

No comments at this time.

**Reports**

**Comptroller** – No report at this time.

**Subcommittee Reports**

Communications – Geoff noted that there has been normal traffic on the email account and inquiries are being answered. A few non-gardeners asked if they could bring in compostable materials from home and were told they could not. Maureen B. noted that the Boro is in the process of upgrading our Recycling Center and there are ongoing discussions about having a Boro-wide composting center.

Maintenance/Rules – Steve M. noted that Brian aerated and seeded the garden paths. Margaret mentioned that Brian asked her to water around her plot to improve germination of the grass. Steve said he would send a note to all gardeners that they should water around their plots if possible.

Master Gardener – Steve S. said there have been some false potato bugs in the hoop houses and he has seen an increase in crickets and grasshoppers in the Garden. Overall, however, there have been fewer bugs this year. He noted that the hoop houses have contributed about 400 pounds of produce to the Soup Kitchen so far this year.

Membership – Margaret said we have no available plots. There is one person on the non-Madison waiting list and two on the Madison waiting list. There should be some turnover before the end of the year. Ursula noted that she will be giving up her plot.

Apiary – Steve removed the Apivar strips at the end of August and tested all the hives for mites. Six of the 14 hives failed, meaning that mite counts were greater than 2%, and two hives has mite counts greater than 8%. This is the second year that Apivar has failed us, producing mixed results. Those that failed were retreated with Formic Pro and will be retested later this month. Steve has spoken to the Apivar representative, who cannot explain why this occurred. Chatham tested their hives last weekend and had similar results. Part of the problem may be that our bees have swarmed and picked up mites in the wild and brought them back to the hives. Steve said the only way to keep on top of this situation is with more frequent testing.

### Ongoing Business

Path conversion to Grass - covered above.

Compost/Garden Waste Disposal – Charles took some finished compost out of the oldest bin and it looks pretty good, although there is not too much yet. He proposes that perhaps we should have a team of gardeners assigned to work each bin. He says he can get leaf compost and horse manure to add to the bins if we want. There was some discussion about the use of horse or other types of manure, and it was eventually decided we need to look into this further. Paul suggested maybe we should have the soil that comes out of the compost bins tested by Rutgers Extension service. He also noted we need some topsoil to amend the compost, and it was suggested he can get some from Leo Hinds. There was a motion, a second, and a unanimous vote to authorize \$150 to purchase 3 yards of topsoil from Leo Hinds. Kirk noted he is going to install “open” and “closed” signs on the recently-constructed bins this weekend. Steve M. asked how should the finished compost be distributed and there was some discussion. Paul noted we probably will not have a lot of compost ready until the Spring. Steve M. said he is going to laminate the Compost Rules and post them by each set of bins.

Front Gate/Garden Entrance Upgrade – This project will be delayed until 2020.

MRC Meadow Restoration – Steve M. noted that the Boro Council approved about \$49,000 for this project at their December meeting. Other organizations have pledged a total of about \$14,000. Steve has received some bids for clearing the land, and has contracted with James Irish. His equipment can handle trees up to 4-5" in diameter. For larger trees he will use a chainsaw. All the tree debris will be left to decompose in the field. Steve also said that the Friends of Madison Shade Trees would like to plant some trees from their tree nursery on the site.

### New Business

Harvest Festival – This is scheduled for September 29 from 1-4 PM. Margaret will check on what paper goods we have, and will also get some beverages. Charles will bring a table. Steve will send out a reminder to gardeners.

2020 Applications – Steve has previously distributed revised applications for the Bee Club and garden plots. He thinks the Bee Club application is fine as is, with year adjusted to 2020. There was some discussion about proposed changes to the garden plot application. A section has been added about the grass paths, and the section about work requirements has been changed to read that two hours of volunteer time may be required. There was a motion, a second and a unanimous vote to accept the 2020 applications as amended. Geoff A. will arrange to have them posted on RoseNet.

Maureen B. noted that a resolution to ban single-use plastic bags from Madison will be introduced to the Boro Council at next Monday's meeting. She asked that Committee members attend the meeting if possible, to demonstrate support for this initiative.

There being no further business, there was a motion, a second and a unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM.