

Millwood Community Garden Proposal February 26, 2010

Why a Community Garden in the West Valley of Spokane?

According to the American Community Garden Association “Multiple studies in recent years have clearly demonstrated the benefits of community gardens: they increase urban green space, provide fresh produce, give children a constructive activity, enhance property values, build connections between diverse neighbors, and even reduce crime.”

Goal:

- Establish a community garden on the land owned by Inland Empire Paper north of the Spokane River and east of Argonne Rd.

Proposed Objectives of the Millwood Community Garden:

- Provide fresh produce to Inland Northwest Second Harvest Food Bank
- Help families educate their children about fresh healthy foods
- Help community members learn organic gardening practices
- Turn currently vacant lot into a beautiful, productive piece of land
- Provide a place and project for strengthening relationships in the community
- Promote the Second Harvest Plant a Row for the Hungry Program
- Promote good neighbor land use activities of Inland Empire Paper

Proposed Organizational Structure

- Inland Empire Paper Company provides use of the land through a permitting process very similar to the permits issued for use of its forest lands
 - Only those who have filled out and been issued a permit are allowed access to the land.
 - Signage will be provided indicating permitting rules with contact information for participating in the community garden.
- Other area organizations sign on as sponsoring organizations to support the effort. For example:
 - the West Valley School District could help provide plant starts through their greenhouse program,
 - Millwood Presbyterian could provide liability insurance and a web site for filling out the permit's online and some office support for administration,
 - Second Harvest could provide seeds for garden plots with an agreement that gardeners will donate to the plant a row program
- A planning team will be formed to fine tune the garden rules, sponsoring organizations and garden layout.
 - A likely arrangement is that the land would be organized with three different uses in mind;
 - One use would include a series of individual plots for area neighbors who would like to grow a garden patch along with a community. Participants would be responsible to care for their patch, encouraged to participate in plant a row, and have more

general responsibilities shared by everyone who is permitted to use the land.

- Another use would be community garden rows or a “giving garden” with all of the harvest going to second harvest. There may be some that want to focus their gardening efforts on the giving garden while others want to focus their efforts on their individual plot.
- The other land use would be to beautify the land utilizing flowers and native species to grow along the border of the land.

In order to facilitate the launch of the community garden for the Spring 2010 Growing Season here is a list of items that need to happen:

1. By March 5;

- Form planning team and have an initial meeting
- Initiate a soil sample study
- Initiate repairs of backflow valve and water meter
- Arrange for the ground to be tilled

2. By March 12

- Establish rules for 2010 growing season
- Establish a date for a community gathering/town hall meeting to discuss the garden and give people a chance to sign up to participate.
- Set up web page for downloading permit and signing up to participate.
- Send a direct mail postcard to everyone within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the garden site inviting them to the community gathering.
- Issue Press Release inviting people to the community gathering.

3. By March 26

- Have initial gathering
- Plot our garden plan and assess supplies and resources needed to set up
- Solicit help from area businesses who might be able to help with supplies
- Secure insurance certificate

4. By April 16

- Complete first work day
- Have three garden areas established and ready for work
- Have soil samples done
- Have irrigation system in place

Considerations:

- The traditional last freeze date for Spokane is May 15, so that should be targeted as a date to get the garden planted.

Here is an example of Garden Rules from another community garden:

- Gardening hours will be dawn to dusk on Monday through Saturday and 1PM to dusk on Sundays.
- Plots must have at least three planted rows by May 15 (weather permitting) of the year or be forfeited to someone on the waiting list.
- Plot holders must attend a meeting at the beginning of the year (April 2, 2009 at the YMCA at 7:00 PM) and at the end of the growing season (around Oct. 31, 2009).
- Only plants listed under rules and regulations will be approved for planting.
- Plot holders promise to devote at least 1-2 hours per week to their own plots and to the overall community garden throughout the growing season.
- All paths and plots must be kept free of trash, weeds, etc., by the plot holders. Compost piles will be marked and available for plot holders.
- No stealing of anything is permitted. Should it become known that you have taken anything: vegetables, tools, hose, plants or anything else, you will lose your plot immediately.
- Crops must be harvested once they are mature. If you do not feel you can use all of harvest, items will be given away or sold for the food pantry at the local farmer's market on each Saturday during the growing season. Please let your garden coordinator know if you have more than you can use.
- If you want someone to work your plot or pick your vegetables when you are sick or away, give that person a signed note.
- All plots will be inspected three times during the growing season. Plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do not meet the rules and regulations will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of the plot.
- Participants are encouraged to give a small portion of their harvest or of their time to the food pantry.
- Any rules to be added to these by-laws must be approved by a majority of the participating gardeners.
- All participants must sign the RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LEGAL LIABILITY form.
- Any conflicts among gardeners will be referred by the coordinators of the garden.

Seattle P-Patch Program

P-PATCH COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

The Department of Neighborhoods P-Patch Program, in conjunction with the not-for-profit P-Patch Trust, provides 68 gardens for residents throughout Seattle. We will be adding another 4+ gardens in 2009. The community based program areas of the P-Patch Program are [community gardening](#), [market gardening](#), [youth gardening](#), and [community food security](#) in the City of Seattle. These programs serve all citizens of Seattle with an emphasis on low-income and immigrant populations and youth. Our community gardens offer 1900 plot holders serve more than 3800 urban gardeners on 23 acres of land.

P-Patch community gardeners show their concern for the value of fresh organic vegetables by supplying fresh produce to Seattle food banks and feeding programs, P-Patch gardeners donated 12.3 tons in 2008. Supporting a strong environmental ethic, the P-Patch Program allows organic gardening only and since all our gardens are maintained by community members, we have an 8 hour annual volunteer requirement to the common spaces within our individual plot gardens. Due to high demand, there are maximum square foot requirements at most sites.

HOW DO P-PATCHES WORK?

Gardeners are collectively responsible for all the basic work to keep the P-Patch looking nice. Gardeners like you volunteer to team up and coordinate the tasks and activities that keep your garden running smoothly. This leadership group organizes work parties, watches over the site and coordinates with Program staff and P-Patch Trust. Please identify which activities interest you from the Preference List following the application. Please be aware it's your responsibility to get involved, don't wait for someone to call.

WHAT CAN I GROW?

Any vegetables, small fruits, flowers or herbs you choose. Organic gardening only. Produce may be shared with friends or donated to food banks but may not be sold.

WHAT SIZE ARE THE PLOTS, HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? PROGRAM PLOT FEES

\$23 application fee

\$11 for each 100sf garden

Please refer to the examples below:

10 x 10 (100 square feet) - \$34 annual fee

10 x 20 (200 square feet) - \$45 annual fee

10 x 40 (400 square feet) - \$67 annual fee

Plot fee assistance is available if you qualify; please call.

WHAT ELSE DO I RECEIVE?

- Annual spring meeting at your P-Patch
- Festive events: Harvest Banquet.
- Organic fertilizer, water, use of hoses, tools at most sites.
- Organic gardening educational opportunities (to be announced).
- Quarterly newsletter, the P-Patch Post, published by the P-Patch Trust.
- P-Patch Listserve: a moderated tool for gardeners and staff to share ideas, horticulture information, and events. New gardeners will be automatically added to the listserv and

can expect zero to five e-mails a day. You may opt out by checking the “Do not add” box on the application page.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

- You must contribute a minimum 8 hours of time to the common areas of the garden
- You must give four of those hours at your P-Patch site.
- You must care for your plot (keep it weeded, watered and harvested!) and paths on a year-round basis
- You must provide soil improvements, seeds, tools (some tools available for loan) and labor.
- Keep in mind, as a gardener, you reflect the P-Patch program to the surrounding neighbors – please be nice.

HOW LONG IS THE GARDEN SEASON?

If you have a year-round garden (most plots are year-round), you should begin gardening as soon as the soil is workable or upon plot assignment. Then you must maintain your plot all year (plant, weed, water, harvest, and winterize!).

Fall and Winter Gardening options: Please remove all non-organic material (tomato cages, trellises, etc.) and choose one or a combination of these options to help with weed suppression and protect your soil from the winter rains. Tending the soil in the cool season pays you back in the warm!

Option #1: Grow winter crops such as garlic, onions, kale, etc.

Option #2: Plant cover crops: Cover crops are also called green manure because in the spring you dig them into your soil and they feed nitrogen and provide organic material as they decompose.

Option #3: Mulch /Sheet Compost to protect and build bare soil.

If you have a short season plot at Picardo, you may begin gardening in early April and must finish by the third weekend in October. Short season plots are rototilled in the spring and the fall.

HOW ARE PLOTS ASSIGNED?

Last year's participants have priority to renew their plots. New participants are assigned by waiting list rank. You may place your name on a waiting list for a more preferred site while still at your current site. Confirmation letters are mailed throughout the Spring.

WHAT IS FOOD BANK GARDENING?

Most P-Patches have a food bank or “giving garden” program to provide fresh produce for those in need. In all P-Patches, individual gardeners can grow food in their own plots to donate to local food banks. Please think about planting an extra row to donate. Many P-Patches also have plots designated as “food bank plots” that are communally or individually gardened specifically to grow food for donation. [Lettuce Link](#) coordinates with food bank gardening leaders at each garden and will connect you to your nearest food bank. To get involved in food bank gardening, please call Michele Bates Benetua at 206-694-6754, or email michelleb@solid-ground.org or talk to the food bank coordinator at your garden.