



Community Gardens Organizational Structure Workgroup

Meeting Notes – January 11, 2010

Attendees: Weston Miller, Chair, Beth Cohen, Tammy VanderWoude, David Beller, Amy Ruiz, Kathy Dang, Alix Eastman, Mary Bedard, Lisa Turpel, Will Newman II, Steve Cohen

Facilitator: Stephanie Hallock, Oregon Solutions

The meeting began at eleven with a brief overview by Weston of the workgroup chair discussion with Commissioner Fish on January 7. As a result of the discussion with Commissioner Fish, Weston prepared a handout (attached) describing two recommended stages for addressing community gardens/growing food needs. The first stage focuses on enhancing the capacity of the current PPR/CG program and Friends of PCG as a 501(c)(3) and the second stage would focus on developing a regional community garden “hub.”

The group discussed the budget for PPR Community Gardens of \$625,000 that has been proposed by the Resources workgroup and how realistic it is to expect the city to come up with an additional \$164,000 in general fund on top of the current \$186,000 as proposed in that budget when the city is talking about 4% budget cuts. The group also discussed how to raise \$200,000 from fund raising outside the city that is also part of the \$625,000 proposed budget.

The budget discussion segued into a discussion of how the groups involved in the Oregon Solutions process might lobby on behalf of the budget and overall support for community gardens and growing food in the Portland metro area. This will be discussed at the full Oregon Solutions team meeting on January 22.

Revitalizing the current Friends Board and/or creating a new board was also discussed. Mary Bedard said she has a person with experience doing this who is willing to help pro bono. Using TACS was discussed, and Weston reported that Commissioner Fish intended to speak with the Parks Foundation Board chair about potential help with capacity building. Tammy VanderWoude mentioned that the Food Policy Council might be able to help with fund raising. General ideas suggested were: hiring a professional fund raiser, charging more fees for services, getting sponsors for individual gardens, having

membership in community gardens for those who don't have plots, community gardens tax on rate payers for water/sewer and/or on developers at time of permit for multi-family units (or they could put in a garden instead). Connection to Housing authority for new gardens was mentioned.

The group reiterated support for helping out the current program (stage one) but expressed frustration that in many discussions about growing food over the years, stage two never gets dealt with, i.e. the focus is always on community gardens and not on the other ways people can grow food. The group scheduled a meeting for February 1 to focus only on stage two, the idea for a regional community garden "hub" and what it would take to make that happen.

A couple of people had brought examples of programs in other cities (Detroit, Chicago) to this meeting, and it was agreed that everyone would bring examples to the February 1 meeting. Mention was made of the need to coordinate with the Multnomah Food Initiative as well, as they have been looking at models around the country.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 1, 3 to 5 pm. Location TBA, probably Metro

Homework assignments: Bring examples of programs in other cities (**all**). Check on Metro meeting room (**Beth Cohen**). Be sure Kat West is aware of broader discussion (**Stephanie**).