



Oregon Solutions

Organizational Structure Meeting

11/5/09

- I. Introductions (in attendance – Weston Miller, Mary Bedard, Deb Lippoldt, Alix Eastman, Ron Paul, Steve Cohen, Jason Andrews, Kathy Dang, Will Newman, Amy Ruiz, Lisa Turpel, Tammi Vanderwoude, Soil & Water Rep Caroline)
- II. Our charge is to create a sustainable/successful model of CG structure by getting all of the ideas on the table, brainstorming, and making sure all interested parties are spoken for
- III. Model presentations by committee members:
 1. Mary Bedard – Friends
 - Flow chart using Mindmeister; “Community Gardens Support Organization” at center and not necessarily under any judicial arm/autonomous
 - Supported by existing FPCG, partners, autonomous by collaborating organizations, and sustaining strategies
 - Mary asked to explain the need for autonomy – because it seems there is a wider need and it would be restrictive to focus at city level
 - Friends wants to act as a support but doesn’t want to take over; understaffed and not making forward progress
 2. Tammi Vanderwoude – OFB
 - Combination of City of Portland Bureau (Parks/Office of Neighborhood Involvement) and Private Non-Profit (Friends or other)
 3. Deb Lippoldt – Growing Gardens
 - There are different approaches for different needs; trying to pin down what our goals are or what/where are we trying to solve
 - Do we just hire a TACS consultant to help Friends get on track or do we expand “food gardening opportunities”?
 - Weston - #1 goal is to address the wait list; get people gardening and then set a course for next 10 years to meet broader needs
 - “It’s hard to know how to help when we don’t know where we are trying to go”

- a. Made group commitment that we would focus on the short term goal of addressing the wait list, and eventually we would turn to the long term goal of creating some sort of foundation that was sustainable
 - b. Steve commented that we need to increase opportunities to grow more food in PDX, and that we as a group need to support the model of community gardens, but with this model we would never be able to create enough space to support the demand; the community-driven/neighborhood campaigns are the most successful
- 4. Amy Ruiz – Mayor’s Office
 - Create an “Office of Urban Agriculture” (or Office of Food & Agriculture)– not a city bureau but a single purpose office, similar to recently formed “Healthy Working Rivers”; could be spun off from city at a later date, but could work across bureaus with autonomy
 - Entrepreneurial, variety of program offerings, outreach, education, collaboration, convener, organizer, ad hoc basis, uniting power of Steve and Lisa
 - Oversee Friends and other branches
 - Committee member warned that we need to be realistic about costs and where money would be coming from
- 5. David Beller – MercyCorps
 - Complexity of project needs to be addressed
 - Government = city parks, other bureaus, Oregon Solutions entity; Non-Profit = Friends, community organization, New Garden Org. not working with city
 - Commissioner Fish’s view is of something that falls between these 2 categories
 - David feels that all of these interested parties can’t exist; something would need to go away?
- 6. Weston Miller – OSU Extension
 - Umbrella over “Consortium of Organizations”; a partnership of all involved
 - Stephanie warned of the risk of competition for money between organizations; need to combine governance with resources
- 7. Lisa Turpel – Parks
 - “Functional Framework” with “Growing Food” as center circle; Lisa sees need for another distinct entity
 - Envisions Community Gardens Coordinating Council and emphasizes the need for joint ownership of all involved organizations; we’ve all been talking about how we could contribute, but we need to step ahead (communication → cooperation → collaboration)
 - We all need to put our resources on the table and be accountable
- 8. Kathy Dang – Oregon Tilth

- Presented review of P-Patch in Seattle
- 6 staff; annual budget of approx. \$659,000
- Spoke with Laura Raymond (city staff); recently passed park levy that gave \$2 million to community gardens (just for acquisition)
- P-Patch Trust is the fiscal agent/fundraiser; outside of city boundaries/restrictions; handle advocacy so that the staff can work on other things; board of Trust very vital to the work they do (Kathy to look into what kind of people are on Board)
- Annual Report as of Aug. 09 on website
- Rich McDonald (CG Director for 10 years plus); utilities based on land ownership, but department involvement is case by case basis (has helped to fund water/resource based education in the past)
- Depart. Of Neighborhoods – pros = empowering communities, which would get lost in Parks
- David made the point that this program still has a huge waiting list as well...

IV. Discussion

- Ron mentioned support of guerilla food gardening
- Deb suggested integration of Multnomah Food Initiative and other similar movements in town
- Lisa pointed out that Parks is going for 2010 bond measure (\$100-200 million limit); have identified over \$700 million worth of capital needs, which they have narrowed down to \$400 million (a good chunk put aside for CG); our OS project is critical to chunk of bond going to CG (how would this affect staying under city?)
- Discussed process of transitioning from bureau to other funding sources; the city has vested interest in support (examples: Children’s Museum, Pittock Mansion, International Race Way – Lisa has assisted all of these transitions); there are OR statutes and clear guidelines about transition strategies
 - a. Why do these transitions happen? Is there a common thread? A critical mass need with energy like ours which creates political interest
 - b. Parks supports brainstorming for spin-offs, but will make sure it will be successful so the organization won’t fall back in their lap
 - c. Financial sustainability = big, sophisticated boards with heavy hitters
- To be discussed/determined on the 13th:
 - a. Introduce members of group, summarize what each group has accomplished/discussed, discuss our goals as a group
 - b. Stephanie to close with “Where do we go from here?”
 - c. Matrix – what other communities are doing for CGs
 - d. End product = “Declaration of Cooperation” – all members making commitment for future project