

# Minutes of BUGs Garden Design Consultation Meeting

YMCA, Room 245, March 11, 2009, 7 to 9:30 pm

The following documents information, comments and input provided.

**Total Attendees = 35 (does not include meeting facilitators)**

## Facilitators

- Susan Wellisch - Community Garden Transition Coordinator, Bytowne Urban Gardens (BUGs)
- Moe Garahan - Just Food / Community Gardening Network (CGN)
- Doug Fountain - F.D. Fountain Landscape Architecture
- Caron Cheng - F.D. Fountain Landscape Architecture

## Attendee Make-Up

- BUGs (Bytowne Urban Gardens)
- City of Ottawa (Community Funding Division)
- Councillor Doucet's Office (representative)
- Glebe Community Association (GCA)
- Glebe Memorial Park Rink Rats
- Just Food
- Parents
- Ottawa Internationals Soccer Club (OISC)
- Residents (adjacent, Glendale, surrounding streets, neighbourhood)
- Rink representative (Glebe Park Rink Rats)
- Teachers

## 1. BUGs & Project History

- History of BUGs from past to present
  - Student initiative
  - 1998 City of Ottawa Environmental Award
  - Beaver Barracks site (leased site on yearly basis from May to October; 32 plots, no charge but volunteer time; partnership with YMCA and Food Bank 507; community outreach programs / activities including workshops and events)
  - City involvement with former Councillor Elizabeth Arnold
  - Recent Zoning Protection by-law (protects Beaver Barracks community garden space)
  - 2008 Funding from City of Ottawa, Green Partnership Program and Community Foundation to help with transition from Beaver Barracks to new location
  - Article in Glebe Report, February 13, 2009 "Community gardening in your community!" received positive feedback (i.e. approximately 18 people emailed asking for plot)
  - See ourselves a bit like an Outdoor Community Centre (serve community through open workshops or programs; encourage people to join; provide learning opportunities for schools, day cares or day camps; provides amenity that complements / beautifies community and can be enjoyed by anyone)

## 2. Just Food / Community Gardening Network (CGN) & Involvement with Project

- History of Community Garden Network (founded in 1997)

- 2003 Community Garden Action Plan (sanctioned by City of Ottawa this week)
- 2007 Just Food (umbrella organization that includes the CGN; offers workshops and events; serves as information and resource-sharing network that supports the sustainable development of community gardens within the city)
- Distinction between Community Garden and Community Allotment Garden (former run by own governing structure, autonomous; latter run by City, only one in Ottawa is Kilborn)
- 2006 Green Partnership Program whereby “funding is available to environmentally civic-minded community-based groups to envision and undertake cleaning and greening projects in their communities, which enhance or sustain public open space”
- 2008 Hallmark Proposal to start nine community gardens across City (to date: six - seven complete)
- Michelle Heights Community Garden is first community garden to go into public park (previously community gardens often located in Church space or vacant lot)
- CGN & Just Food work to find places where gardens will benefit community and complement existing uses / programs in park
- Precedents: Examples of Community Gardens
  - Michelle Heights (as mentioned above: first garden to go into public park)
  - Strathcona Heights - Dutchies Hole (integrates with field activities within green space)
  - Nanny Goat (downtown Ottawa, bounded by apartment buildings and school property; provides examples of strategies implemented to address vandalism)

### **3. Discussion of Key Issues, Questions &/or Concerns Identified (chaired by Just Food / BUGs)**

- Approval / Consultation Process leading to proposed site for community garden (outline of criteria / conditions required by City; collaborative intentions on behalf of BUGs / Just Food):
  - Post notice in Glebe Memorial Park for two weeks providing opportunity for people to ask questions / voice concerns
    - o 11 x 14 plasticized sheet posted on shed
    - o Notice checked and confirmed one time in following week to see it was still there.

N.B. Attendee asked whether any responses came from notice; answer was no

- Visit 4 houses directly abutting proposed location & contact / consult with local community groups, associations and key users of site
  - o In September 2008, City provided contact information leading to consultation meeting(s) held with City, Just Food, BUGs, Glebe Neighbourhood Association Group (GNAG) and representative of Ottawa Soccer Internationals Club (OSIC) to identify useable space(s) in park
  - o Rink space and soccer pitches alongside other factors (vegetation, shaded areas / areas lacking sun exposure) identified through meetings
  - o City proposed two sites in park: one south of the shed and one in northeast area of park (former not approved due to soccer activity mentioned in meetings)
  - o In January 2009, meeting held with City leading to proposed 40 x 55' (approx. 12.2 x 16.8m) site that was ultimately staked out in northeast area of park
  - o Follow-up email sent out by City confirming proposed location decided / agreed upon

N.B. Attendee(s) voiced concerns that schools, residents in surrounding streets and parents should have been notified and consulted with

N.B. Question asked as to whether any flyers were distributed; answer was no

N.B. Question asked as to what GNAG has to do with project; answer was that City directed them to contact GNAG since they are involved with programming / activities  
N.B. GCA noted that it was BUGs who contacted them, not City and this was over and above the City requirement.

- Why Other Green Spaces / Parks such as Central Park not Chosen
  - initially reviewed however rejected due to flooding issues and preference to have new location at closer proximity to Beaver Barracks / Centretown

NB. Attendees noted that Glebe Memorial Park also encounters annual flooding, albeit temporarily, particularly in northeast corner of park

- Permanency of Community Garden in Glebe Memorial Park
  - Intention is that the community garden will be permanent and meant to be a sustainable / beautifying project that compliments the park, however, the garden is not a concrete structure so if it is not successful then the space can go back to what it was
  - Beaver Barracks property, once developed, will also provide a secured space for the continuance of a community garden through the Zoning by-law

NB. Clarification asked as to whether the GCA meeting in January 2009 may have left attendees with incorrect impression that the community garden in Glebe Memorial Park was to be a temporary measure until the Beaver Barracks development was completed and the community garden could be resumed; answer was a confirmation that incorrect impression may have been left even though that was not the intention

#### **4. Summary of Action Items from Discussion of Key Issues, Questions &/or Concerns Identified**

- **Feedback / concerns regarding Approval Process to be forwarded to Green Partnership Program.**
- **Acknowledge and support that another meeting / further communication needed with OISC to clarify soccer pitch space / identify useable park space**
- **Acknowledge that Approval Process is not supported, however, can move forward from here on in towards a more comprehensive consultation process with stakeholders / community**

#### **5. Constraints, Issues, Interests, Opportunities &/or Ideas Raised (chaired by Just Food / BUGs / Facilitators)**

- **Protect concept / realm of public park**
  - Create community garden that has appealing aesthetic and integrates / fits into park
  - Create an open / inclusive community garden space (does not appear as private space)
  - Create a garden that is sustainable but flexible (not “set in stone”)
  - Create a garden that can be seen as an amenity that can be enjoyed and used by community, and complements / beautifies community
- **Create a garden that is functional, aesthetically appealing and community oriented**
  - BUGs objectives:
    - Garden to house both food and flowers (vegetables for food; flowers as aesthetic but also opportunity to provide to those in need of cheer)
    - Garden space limited so must think vertically also in design approach

- Garden to serve community through open workshops or programs
  - Encourage people to join
  - Garden to serve community through educational programming and provide outdoor learning opportunities for schools, day cares or day camps
- **Impacts on adjacent homes (especially parking)**
- Can be heavy on Glendale (cars lined / jammed up during prime time)
  - Park users (soccer) need access to unload equipment
  - BUGs noted that garden members usually walk or bike; use car only on a special occasion
  - Suggested need buffer between garden and hedge vegetation and fencing along shared property line or else it may be too close [to vegetation]
- **Impacts on / from school group use**
- Track & field activities
  - Montessori School activities
- **Impacts on / from soccer use**
- Youth competitive soccer activity covers significant park space
  - Need accurate dimensions of current pitches (changed since 2005 city aerial)
    - GU7 soccer pitches: at least 30 x 40' running lengthwise, east-west between playground area and east side of park on either side of the shed / clubhouse (endlines towards play area / east end of park)
    - youth recreational / smaller soccer pitch for younger: at least 25 x 40' between GU7 pitches
  - Noted that only 3 parks total in Glebe area accommodate soccer
  - Soccer balls ok at sidelines (6 – 20' from kick) but not end zones (50 – 60' from kick)
  - Need buffer for pedestrian circulation and general (i.e. do not take child within 6' of soccer pitch; at least 20' back is decent)
  - Shared use of shed / clubhouse in summer
- **Impacts on / from rink (Glebe Park Rink Rats)**
- Snowbanks
  - Sharing of water tap
  - Noted that only 2 parks total in Glebe area have rink
- **Impacts on / from Ultimate Frisbee play**
- Seen every Sunday during summer
- **Issue of vandalism / inappropriate park use activity**
- Happens a lot late at night / early morning
  - Frequent setting of fires (clubhouse / shed, waste receptacle)
  - Regular spray painting (6 times a year)
  - Often broken glass (in general, in playground sand)
  - Monthly break-ins (clubhouse / shed)
  - Teenagers come at lunch to smoke
  - Noted that light beside driveway often goes out; main light on at dusk / dark /dawn (electrical panel in shed)

NB. Just Food noted acceptance that vandalism will happen, can help address through gardening design / gardening techniques

NB. BUGs noted that they hope, through the community garden, to encourage more eyes on the park; will look to precedents such as Nanny Goat Community Garden at Bronson & Laurier which is open and has been dealing with vandalism since its inception

- **Infrastructure / access for City services & maintenance**
  - Catch basin and flooding area at northeast end of park
  - Water tap and nearby manhole at northeast end of park
  - Noted that light beside driveway often goes out; main light on at dusk / dark /dawn (electrical panel in shed)
  - snow plow / removal (from Glendale & driveway leads to snowbank encroachment at northeast end of park (at north side of driveway end)
  - mowing
  
- **Topography / vegetation**
  - Availability of sunlight / sun exposure limited by trees including northeast end of park
  - Regularly flooded area at northeast end of park (catch basin area gets backed up)
  - Soil study reports conditions ok for garden but former railyard (perhaps contamination)
  - Suggestion for raised beds
  - Suggestion to investigate alternative location within park
  
- **Investigate alternate location for community garden (adjacent to Chamberlain at central entry)**
  - Good sun exposure
  - Gateway entry at this location least used
  - Berms provide natural enclosure
  - Consider salt spray from road
  - Consider flying objects (soccer balls, Frisbees) though from sidelines
  - Consider pathway [through community garden] linking with central entry
  
- **Consideration of Rodent Population**
  - Rabbits
  - Raccoons
  - Other
  
- **Consideration for Pedestrian Circulation**
  - Provide buffer zone around organized activities (soccer, ultimate Frisbee)
  - Consider run-out zone for edge of play
  
- **Consideration for bike parking**
  - Soccer kids drop off / pile up bikes (15 to 20) between north side of shed and driveway; kids leave unlocked
  - Bike rack in playground area mostly for chariots (baby strollers) and would not accommodate soccer kids
  - Suggestion to locate [additional] bike parking at Glendale entrance but not behind (east) of shed / clubhouse because not locked or seen; perhaps south of shed / clubhouse
  
- **Possibly Investigate Alternate Locations for Community Garden.**
  - Green space bounded by Clemow & Bank

- good sun exposure
- slope of 10-20% would require terraces
- Central Park (bounded by O'Connor, Glebe & Clemow)
  - initially reviewed however rejected due to flooding issues and distance from Beaver Barracks / Centretown
  - suggested that perhaps can be revisited since Glebe Memorial Park also encounters annual flooding, albeit temporarily, particularly in northeast corner
- Chamberlain Park (bounded by Chamberlain, Lyon & Renfrew)
  - northwest corner not used (people loop around east and south end)
  - noted that there are problems associated with drinking there

➤ **Ensure More Comprehensive Consultation Process Implemented**

- Outreach to schools
- Outreach to residents on surrounding streets
- Outreach to parents
- Include children in design process

**6. Summary of Action Items from Constraints, Issues, Interests, Opportunities &/or Ideas Raised**

- **Protect concept / realm of public park**
- **Create a garden that is functional, aesthetically appealing and community oriented**
- **Consideration of impacts on adjacent homes (especially parking)**
- **Consideration of impacts on / from school group use**
- **Consideration of impacts on / from soccer use**
- **Consideration of impacts on / from rink (Glebe Park Rink Rats)**
- **Consideration of impacts on / from Ultimate Frisbee play**
- **Consideration of issue of vandalism / inappropriate park use activity**
- **Consideration of infrastructure / access for City services & maintenance**
- **Consideration of topography / vegetation**
- **Investigate alternate location for community garden (adjacent to Chamberlain at central entry)**
- **Consideration of Rodent Population**
- **Consideration for Pedestrian Circulation**
- **Consideration for bike parking**
- **Possibly Investigate Alternate Locations for Community Park**
- **Ensure More Comprehensive Consultation Process Implemented**

**7. Upcoming Tasks / Dates:**

- Meeting minutes posted for review & comment
  - Posted on BUGs website ([www.bugsottawa.ca](http://www.bugsottawa.ca))
  - GCA will work to post meeting minutes also on website ([www.glebeca.ca](http://www.glebeca.ca))
  - Email to attendees who provided contact information
- Upcoming Meetings (dates confirmed; agenda to be confirmed)
  - March 25, 2009:
    - Consultation with stakeholders /community to investigate what is possible within Glebe Memorial Park space, and provide opportunity for review and comment
  - April 7, 2009:
    - Presentation of Master Plan based on March 11<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup> meetings

**Please make an effort to attend upcoming meets in order to have your voice heard and have opportunity to get involved in the conceptual development of the design**

**Please Take Note:**

- **If you have further comments, input & ideas to add to the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes, please email: [bugscordinator@gmail.com](mailto:bugscordinator@gmail.com) by Friday March 20, 2009**
  
- **Agendas for upcoming meetings to be confirmed and posted**
  - **Posted on BUGs website ([www.bugsottawa.ca](http://www.bugsottawa.ca))**
  - **GCA will work to post also on website ([www.glebeca.ca](http://www.glebeca.ca))**