

CCGA Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes  
November 11, 2023 - 6pm on Zoom

Attending: JW Glass, Barb Dennis, Angela Taylor, Gina Jamison, May Toy, Marsha Wyatt, Mamie Gray, and Lorraine Kells. Guest Elizabeth Berkeley

Meeting opens 6:03pm

Motion to adopt minutes of October of October 17, 20 wanted to plant the seeds for new gardens and welcomed by JW Glass. Seconded by Marsha Wyatt.

**Project/Event Updates** are now given at the top of the meeting as per draft agenda sent 10/15

The 2023 CCGA Fall Event Series (How Does Your Garden Grow) ended community garden events with the last of two: Vedgewater CG and Edgewater Environmental Coalition Oct 28, and Passion of Pullman Organic CG also Oct. 28. The cold weather dampened attendance at both events although organizers stated they felt communities needed more time and more ways to approach potential attendees and suggested HDYGG inter-community events. Sometimes bad weather is just bad weather. Final update is still to come after ad hoc group discusses.

There is a continued call for the next newsletter, possible Winter Newsletter—please send topics/articles. There is still the issue of two step verification hampering any collaboration on Mailchimp.

Any other topics/projects to discuss- Angela wanted to plant the seeds for new gardens to be welcomed in the Garfield Park network. Gardens mentioned were Peace Garden; Westside Bloom with a flower shop, locations tbd.

### **Committee Reports**

**Resources** - Oct 21 is the scheduled annual seed garlic distribution with snowdrops at the African Garden open to community gardeners only. Dec 2 at 135 N Kedzie is the annual holiday garden workshop featuring hands on Container decorations by Bridget Schroeder and Ann Driscoll of the Contained Garden. Juline McClinton will give a holiday wreath demonstration. This event is open to all and family and friends. It was also noted in the holiday flyer; those attending must register by Nov 30. Refreshments will be served

**Advocacy & Outreach** – May, Amy and Lorraine met on zoom with Andrew Margenot and his colleague Roland to discuss the proposed grant to study PFAS. CCGA is invited to participate to provide a baseline analysis of community garden contamination, similar to the lead study. They will investigate how they can sequester (not eliminate, but capture) PFAS using various methods such as biochar, a charcoal naturally occurring soil amendment. It has the capacity to lock up PFAS organically. Ten gardens and targeted vegetables will be part of the study. CCGA has been asked to support the study and provide a letter of support for this research. CCGA will reach out to community gardens. For example, Loomis Street community garden has run-off from a nearby artificial turf with possible PFAS. May has requested testing of her garden. There is known controversy regarding artificial turf run-off.

This study includes farmland across Illinois and community gardens. CCGA will reach out to people who attended the February 2023 workshop on EQ compost that MWRD was given out to community gardens. With this study and the soil amendment which will be provided to targeted community gardens, we hope to realize minimal uptake, so there will no longer be such a health risk. Advocacy and Outreach will continue to work toward future policy guidance in Chicago and continue at the statewide level. Maine established PFAS contamination and was able to drop the price for soil testing. We want similar action for the state. The city is reluctant and wants the EPA to establish standards before testing. May suggested including Debra Shore, head of regional EPA and quartered in Chicago. They are interested in stopping production of biosolids and addressing sludge. The issue has economic impact, but we need to push for testing as a policy.

**Education** – The recent “Thinking Like a Rat Workshops” were full of valuable information: rats carry leptospirosis, a serious bacterial infection. The outer workshop demonstrated a small machine, Burrow Rx, that delivers carbon monoxide to rat holes via a hose and only takes 3 minutes to identify holes and burrows, and put rats to fatal sleep. May noted that certain herbs like peppermint may repel rats if used as oil in sufficient strength or plants used strategically. These at least harass rats. Marsha added that gardeners must be sure to close all holes that are identified.

**Communications** – JW and Mamie will work together to post on our website. For the newsletter JW proposed something about the new city composting program and a follow-up to the CECA ceremony. JW proposed to work with Mike Nowak to get photos.

**Finance** – Angela will be sending committee chairs information about pulling funds out of NeighborSpace accounts before their annual charge to us. Please send check requests to pull money out by the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Motion to adjourn made by Angela; seconded by Gina

7:09pm - Adjourn