
Community Garden Implementation Plan

01/30/23

Presented by: Cassandra Ladino

Town of Boonsboro Environmental Commission

The purpose of the BEC is to develop and promote a healthy environment through sound conservation and sustainable practices; encourage responsible waste management; and energy and resource conservation; and study other issues that affect the health and well-being of the citizens of Boonsboro.

BEC members supporting the Community Garden Management Subcommittee:

- **Kathy Vesely**
- **Janeen Solberg**
- **Kim Pruitt**
- **Cassandra Ladino**

Community Garden Project Background

- A priority item on the BEC strategic plan for many years, primary goal for 2022
 - Maryland Sustainable Certified certification credit
 - Developed working relationship with Hagerstown City Engineer and Community Garden Manager. Presentations from other local community gardens.
 - Polled town residence about participation interests (58% support a garden)
 - Engaged community partners to leverage resources
 - Developed clear and distinct community goals for a community garden
 - Formed Garden planning team in September 2022
- BEC Special Budget
 - Requested (July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023) - \$12.5k
- Completed Grants
 - ~~AARP Community Challenge~~
 - ~~Chesapeake Bay Trust~~
 - Nora Roberts Foundation - \$25k for Fence Installation
- 3 locations proposed, 1 location approved
 - Reviewed and approved by Park Board and Mayor and Council in March 2022

Garden Management Team

- Meets once a month... 3rd Tuesday of the Month
- Continue to evaluate and discuss funding opportunities
- Prioritize and evaluate planning and infrastructure needs
 - based on other community garden examples
- Designate an official Garden Manager
- Set an opening date for the garden and advertise membership
- Involve other community entities such as FFA, Boy Scouts, Lions Club, UMD Master Gardeners, etc.
- Final site design, construction coordination, and manual labor for initial preparation and long term maintenance.

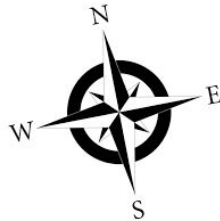
Ideal Community Garden Location Characteristics

- .5 to 2 acre designated plot to allow expansion over time
- Flat elevation
- Brush and debris free area, few trees around the perimeter is acceptable
- Nearby parking lot and accessible walking path
- Nearby restroom facilities
- Ensured safety in early morning and late evening hours during growing season
- Nearby water source



Proposed Shafer Park Site - Near Boy Scout Building

- Does not interfere with Sports fields
- High visibility location
- Paid for water source, water main at Boy Scout Building
- Already cleared and level area
- Good access with nearby parking lot and paved walking path
- Future park plans
 - Shafer Park Drive future plans, play area, parking lot



Proposed Shafer Park Site - Near Boy Scout Building (actual 0.42 acres)





Catering to Boonsboro Community Needs

- Necessary to maintain a thriving membership for long term sustainability.
 - 46 out of 79 (58%) respondents replied that there is value in a community garden.
- Median age is 40.1 years old, by 2030 population will be 50+
- Median income for householders 65+ years is \$25k.
- 6.5% of total population meets Census defined poverty threshold
- 31% of housing are rental units
- 40% of lots are under ¼ acre



Misconceptions

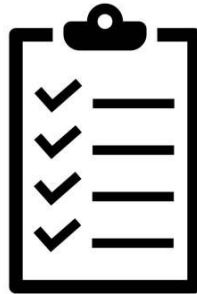
- Everyone has enough property, financial resources, and physical ability to install and maintain their own gardens.
 - Town census statistics suggest this is not true.
- Project conflicts with other Town proposed community projects
 - Garden will be funded primarily through grant funding, not Town money
- Elderly will not be able to participate
 - Garden design will include accessibility features such as raised beds, smaller plots, and irrigation.
 - Community member will work together to support each other
- Community garden will not provide benefits in area with existing Agriculture.
 - Physical and mental health benefits
 - Community connections
 - Healthy Family activity (sports alternative)
 - Promotes “local first” thinking and appreciation for local Agrobusiness

Proposed Roll Out

- **Winter 2023** - Required infrastructure installation and initial construction.
- **Winter - Spring 2023** - Communicate with town residents about construction
- **Spring 2023** - Soft opening/ invite only. “Hands On” site design evaluation and final planning.
- **Spring - Fall 2023** - Garden Planning team will finalized required paperwork and identify a garden manager.
- **Fall 2023** - Final site design and community group contributions
- **Winter 2023** - Solicit community for membership sign up
- **Winter 2024** - Final cleanup and preparation, if needed
- **Spring 2024** - Opening Day!

Community Garden Infrastructure Requirements

- Tall fencing including locked gate - **Primary Cost (\$21 to \$25k)**
 - 6ft high vinyl coated chain link fence (600 linear ft to enclosed the 0.42 acres), and two gates (each end)
- Water system including pipe and pump
- Gravel path extension from existing paved walking trail
- Mix of plots (size and style, i.e large inground vs small raised beds)
- Soil Testing/ Amended Soil
- Storage shed, maintenance tools, and equipment



2023 Implementation Plan

Total Budget: 25k grant + up to 12k BEC Special Projects budget = **\$37k**

Requirement	Execution	Proposed Completion Date
Fencing (\$23.5k)	Long Fence	Mid April 2023
Waterline Extension (\$2k)	Town Maintenance Staff	End of March 2023
Gravel Path w industrial grade weed barrier (\$2k)	Martin Marietta, additional labor TBD, would like to align with waterline extension	End of March 2023
Soil Testing (\$20.00)	University of Delaware, BEC members will collect samples	End of February
Shed Installation and concrete footers (\$5.5k - shed only)	Kelly Moore sheds in Williamsport but may pursue cheaper (\$3.5k) options, footers TBD	End of April 2023
Soil Amendment (\$1k)	TBD, depends on how many inground plots will be created in 2023	Mid April 2023

2023 Community Group Contributions

Requirement	Execution	Proposed Start Date
Greenhouse with concrete footers	Eagle Scouts, Will Duus (seeking approval from M&C to begin project)	Mid April 2023
Tractor Supply	Exact items TBD (tools, raised beds, rain barrel systems)	Mid April 2023
Boonsboro BSA	Community service hours, help with preparing inground plots for initial test sites	Mid April 2023
8 Perimeter trees (5+ gallon), native species and height appropriate	Tree Board, MUCFC Fall Grant	Application due in July 2023

Questions

Cassandra Ladino

BEC Chairperson