

Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors

Sunshine Community Gardens

8/8/23

Attendees: Carol Limaye, Iris Slevin, Marsha Riti, Kerry Drake, Kay McMurry, JP Maestre, Laura Eiernefield and Mary Zambrano

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, any statement is reflective of an individual board member and not the opinion of the Board as a whole.

Meeting called to order at 6:05

City of Austin Presentation on Traffic Survey of Sunshine Drive: Laura Eiernefield, Austin Transportation & Mary Zambrano:

Laura Eiernefield:

Laura thanked the board and stated she is a big fan of SCG. She is coming to us from the City of Austin, looking to make the streets safer and more accessible. She pointed out there is a new crosswalk (improved, safer) at 46th and Lamar.

The city plans to extend crossings along Sunshine Dr. where it meets with Lamar to where it meets with 49th. On Sunshine Dr. they plan to extend crossings northward to Grover. These improvements are through Project Connect and encompass more frequent bus service (also for students of TSBVI).

The city would like to make Sunshine Dr. safer and more navigable for the visually impaired, for pedestrian crossings, and for bus transportation. Laura reported adding more pedestrian crossings along Sunshine Dr., a bikeway to meet at 49th and Grover, and one from Grover to North Loop. There is a plan to have bike lanes on each side of Sunshine Drive that will extend around 49th St.

A board member asked about spillover garden parking, how these changes will impact our parking. Laura from COA stated there will be some tradeoffs for shorter crossings and bike lanes as they work to shorten crossing distances and make the protected bike lanes safer. She stated the west and south curbs of 49th St. would no longer have street parking. She mentioned looking at onsite parking and parking availability nearby offsite. She said they are considering connectivity, safety, and tradeoffs.

It was pointed out that parking along the west side of Sunshine Dr. is also used by the Dept. of Health. The City of Austin is consulting with all of the places nearby. The City

hopes parking service lots and garages (east side of Sunshine) will be available to gardeners. They will take into account parking throughout the TSBVI campus and the garage space to the north of 49th. They hope to find balance for all the stakeholders in the area.

A board member stated that the Cole Rehabilitation Center doesn't allow parking nor does TSBVI.

Laura was asked if this presentation was purely informational or if our feedback is a part of the decision making. Laura said they are listening to all the stakeholders in the area. She asked the board how available parking is on site. She said they do assess the situations at different times of day, different days.

Iris pointed out the SCG map for parking information, and noted it would be a challenge for parking as far away as the garage for gardeners with tools, plants, supplies, soil or things are being loaded, so parking on 49th could also be a problem. Sunshine Community Garden doesn't have explicit permission to park in the Dept. of Health garages, and we can't go into TSBVI campus. The board also mentioned our new accessibility garden expansion: those gardeners can't park far away.

Laura clarified the proposed changes: no parking on the east side of Grover, as it will be a 2 way bike lane, and will allow for all ages and abilities and better crossings for the visually impaired.

What will the bike lane look like? Bumps or curbs? It will be built curb and flexible posts and buttons (white concrete)-- like those on the residential streets. This is for the bus interaction: to separate buses and bikes. The bike ramp will be up and away from the bus, and the bike line behind the bus stop.

A board mentioned the pocket prairie that is being planned for the front of SCG. Laura replied with some options, such as parking pockets. Some garden events do require more parking (winter celebration, garden sale, etc.). A board member asked if there would be light crossings for pedestrians? There is street lighting. There would not be traffic lights for stopping traffic for crossing. There is a plan for a crossing island – an opportunity for planting low plantings that would be maintained by the city and an urban forestry group that contractors would edge and mow. There was a suggestion of tree planting at 46th for shade because it is so hot there.

Why bike lanes on both sides of Sunshine? For the blind and visually impaired, this is the preference to get them used to patterning. Though it is expensive, a desire for pocket parking was expressed. The COA is in exploratory conversations with TSBVI. The representatives appreciate the information provided, and said we would probably get a fact sheet about the plans in a couple of weeks.

The Austin Transportation Representatives signed off from the Zoom meeting at 6:55.

The next, secondary, board meeting will be on 16th Wednesday 6 p.m.

Minutes (July 13th: executive and regular meeting.)

Executive meeting minutes delayed to be voted in. July regular meeting minutes approved.

Financial Report: Carol

The garden is still in the black, and will be next month, too. Then we are on thin ice due to water bills. We have enough cash, but not in sync with the budget. We've had more refreshments, etc. We're okay for right now. We have several projects, funds. Compost buy is usually at the end of August. Are we onboard with that? Iris is unsure if that is moving forward. We have a new sales tax to add to the cost of the compost. We have two tax free sales days as a non-profit. Compost buys are outside of our free days and so we have to pay the sales tax. Last time we eliminated the discount. In the fall we do 2 rounds of compost; 3 in the spring. Grant funds; web design, etc., are also underway.

Plot Report: Kay

The WL stayed steady, increasing by 3, and currently at 105. 3 assigned, all in Zone 7. Reassignments: 2 half plots waiting reassignments. 6 vacated plots for health and moving. Desired plot sizes, similar to last month. Wait times have gone up for Quarter plots, same for half, and also up for full. It was suggested to look at available spaces for quarter plots (available and water available). An initiative to add 3 quarter plots (with space between them).

20x40 common spaces— the water is always 20 feet away. Can someone pull a hose between two plots? Iris and Kay and Marsha will do a walk though.

Children's garden update: Kerry

All but two plots are filled in the Children's Garden. Plans are being solicited for a pagoda shade area with built in benches, and for future educational, fun meet ups for the young gardeners and their families.

CG dues: should the \$60 go to the CG funds or general fund?

Security Issues

Questions:

Should we put another lock on the trailer door?

A person has been visiting the garden (Eli). He was mistaken as another gardener by other gardeners. But there have been surprises in the cold room. The cold room has had the thermostat turned down to 65. Some things in the trailer have been amiss. Eli did know the lock code. The fire door was unlocked. He knows the code and unlocked the

fire door, etc. A different code was used on a new padlock. Burn marks were on the counter in the cold room. There were also burn marks on the counter in the bathroom. We want to avoid a fire in the trailer. Also knives were out. Extension cords, outlet plugs, the power breaker for the power port was turned off. Hoses have been unrolled and left running overnight in multiple areas. Soaker hoses in Micah6 were on, as if they had been on for several hours. We need security policies, a response process flow. He did refuse to leave. He was seen the day after he was escorted off premises. We should consider cameras to notify if someone is entering the trailer. It was noted that Eli has 3 felonies and multiple misdemeanors.

Anyone can walk into the trailer and can walk in during the day and unlock the fire door. A partial repair of the stairs needs to happen out of compliance with fire safety. Different types of locks are being explored for being able to exit the fire door. Changing the code was the first part of the change. Should we have a digital lock for the future? We need to keep people from being in the trailer overnight. The last person leaving the garden must be sure to lock the trailer. Change the codes to the gates, as well? Another idea: a spring-shut closure of the metal gate of the door, a welded-on lock, a spring to auto lock the door. Not everyone has the code to the trailer door. Steve Camp, Sheilish, Jim Willmann, and the board. The people that operate for Micah 6 can know the code. Should we also change the Wifi code and install new wifi? Carol will contact the person who volunteered.

The board should think about other solutions for locking the trailer at night. How to keep the trailer locked, resetting all locks, a video camera for entrance and exit. There are many options for saving recordings. \$19 mo/ a year's worth of data, for cameras.

Board members offered thanks to Iris for helping with the safety of the garden.

If Eli is found in the garden he needs to leave. Police would need to be called to ask for a mental health professional to come. We have an obligation to have him leave because of the safety of the TSBVI students. The incident has been reported to TSBVI (Eli's name and image). We are taking steps to change the level of safety. Cameras could begin alarming us at 8 p.m., and then we could know to be able to call police. This conversation for suggestions on keeping the trailer and grounds safe will continue.

Motion to end the meeting was made and seconded. Meeting ended at 7:44 p.m.