

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 16, 2009
~~2009~~

Date: ~~November 29, 2009~~ ~~March 24,~~

Time: a little after 5:45pm

Place: NATA Room – Council Chambers

Prepared By: Dwayne James

- **Introductions**

5 minutes

Peggy Faul	513 Larkin	pfaul@fergusoncity.com
Mara Higdon	Gateway Greening 2211 Washington Ave	mara@gatewaygreening.org 314-588-9600 x22
Chris Jaurigui	131 S. Hartnett	cjaurigui@hotmail.com
Angelique Kidd	620 Ballman	notoaster@sbcglobal.net
Mike Lonero	29 Almeda	mikelonero@sbcglobal.net
Natasha Ramey	110 Church	nramey@fergusoncity.com
Larry Robinett	514 Tiffin Ave	ldrobinett@att.com
Nancy Whitener	501 N. Florissant	nwhitener@fergusoncity.com
Rosalind Williams	110 Church	rwilliams@fergusoncity.com
Dwayne James	402 Tiffin Ave	djames@fergusoncity.com

- **Revisit of our Goals / Mission**

10 minutes

Dwayne quickly went over the goals and mission discussed at the last meeting with Natasha commenting that it is very possible that the two locations will have different plans and initiatives.

- **Gateway Greening Inc. - Representative**

15 minutes

- Mara Higdon, Program Director

Gateway Greening has helped a few communities in the past. It is better for the grants to come through residents (Residents need to play). Application process starts the 2nd Friday in November. The first two years of community gardens are tough. A garden leader is necessary. The leader needs to be someone that is at the garden the majority of the time and can be the main contact. A core group of about 10 residents is normal. City can likely provide water-line, fencing, access to compost but residents should do the majority of the work. Grant process involves dedication of 30 hours of volunteering with gateway greening per year (ie. 3 people times 10 hours each). Produce needs to also be weighed as part of feedback in addition to a comprehensive report.

Feel free to stop by their Bell Office any Saturday (from 9am-1pm) or call Hana for listing of install days for new gardens in the area.

- **Update on Garden Sites**

10 minutes

- Robert Superior

The process has begun City to 'acquire' 802 Robert from the County. Angelique Kidd reported that her and her husband (Craig Kidd) investigated the lots (802 Robert and 419 Lamont) - see attached maps. Even though 802 has a sink hole along with

some trees that would likely need to come down, the swale and flooding at 419 are major concerns. Angelique mentioned that a major concern is water for the site. On a side note - in speaking with neighbors, neighborhood children use 802 as a playing field.

○ OFW

See attached report from Larry and Heather Robinett

○ General –

Mara Higdon commented that some communities have worked out agreements with Fire Districts to tap into hydrants as a water resource. Other communities found it advantageous to place rain buckets or elevated water tanks on the site. She suggested that we speak with the neighboring home owners to see if we could attach rain buckets to their homes (since we don't have permanent structures on our lots as of yet) and also suggested that we investigate the use of elevated water tanks with the City possibly refilling the tanks. She noted that having the City come by and water the lots is not the best solution since the residents need to have access to water on weekends and through the times that they are present.

● **Schedule / Cost Preliminary Discussion**

10 minutes

Dwayne to communicate via email with Craig/Angelique Kidd and Larry/Heather Robinett to begin drafting a schedule and an estimated cost.

● **Next Steps Discussion**

5 minutes

○ Continuing to enroll resources

Larry Robinett commented the neighborhood gardens initiative was mentioned at the last OFW Board meeting. They commented that they would be open to giving a donation once more information is available and also are looking at ways/means to sustain the garden initiative as well as other thoughts for the neighborhood.

○ Building list of volunteers/donors

Larry and Angelique both commented that they have been speaking with neighbors. Larry has started to develop a list of residents that are willing to commit time and energy.

○ Designing garden

▪ Water options

See discussion.

▪ Soil testing

Angelique mentioned that Craig has obtained samples from the lots on the Robert Superior neighborhood and is performing a pH test.

○ Other

I have attached Nancy Whitener's notes about neighborhood gardens in other communities.

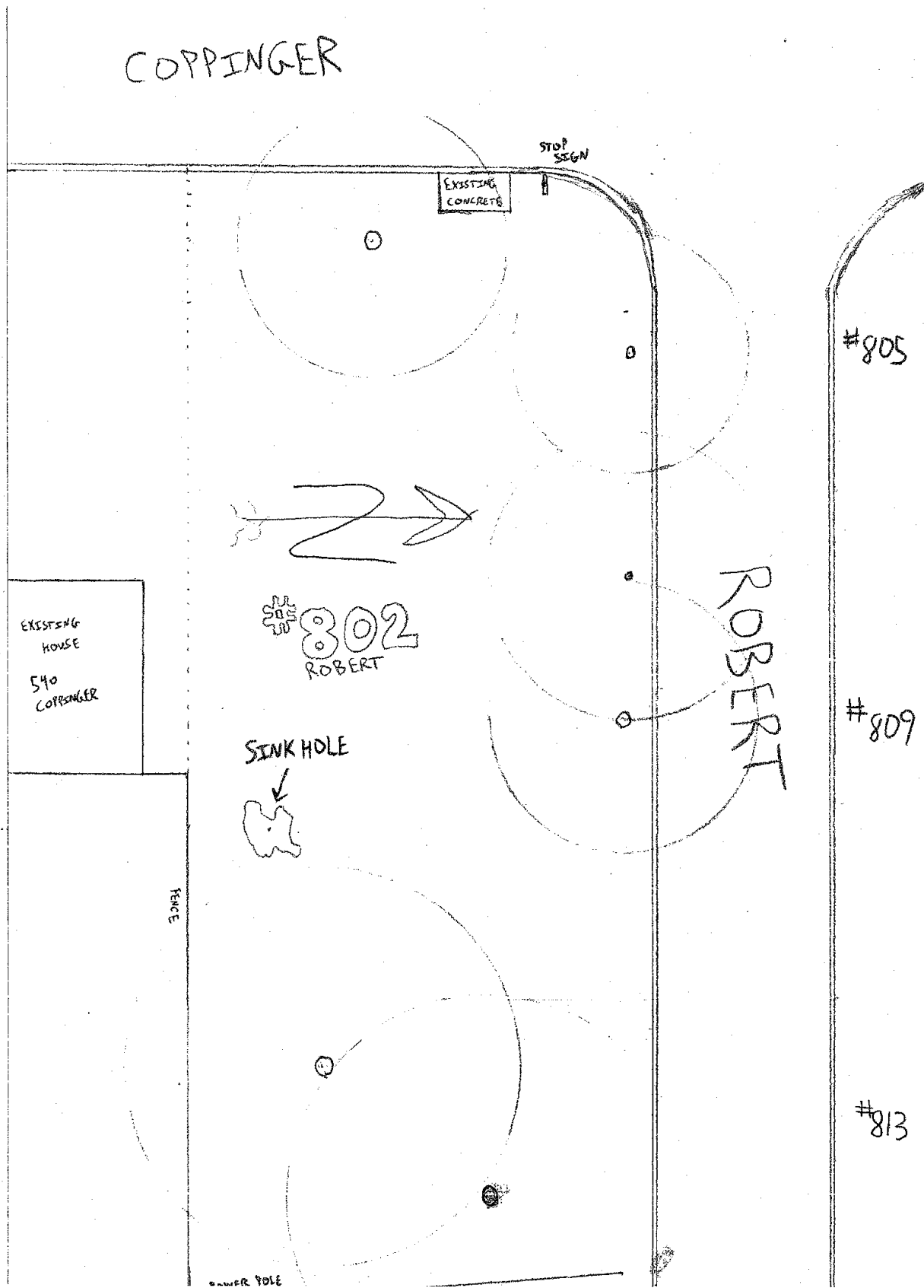
● **Next Meeting Dates**

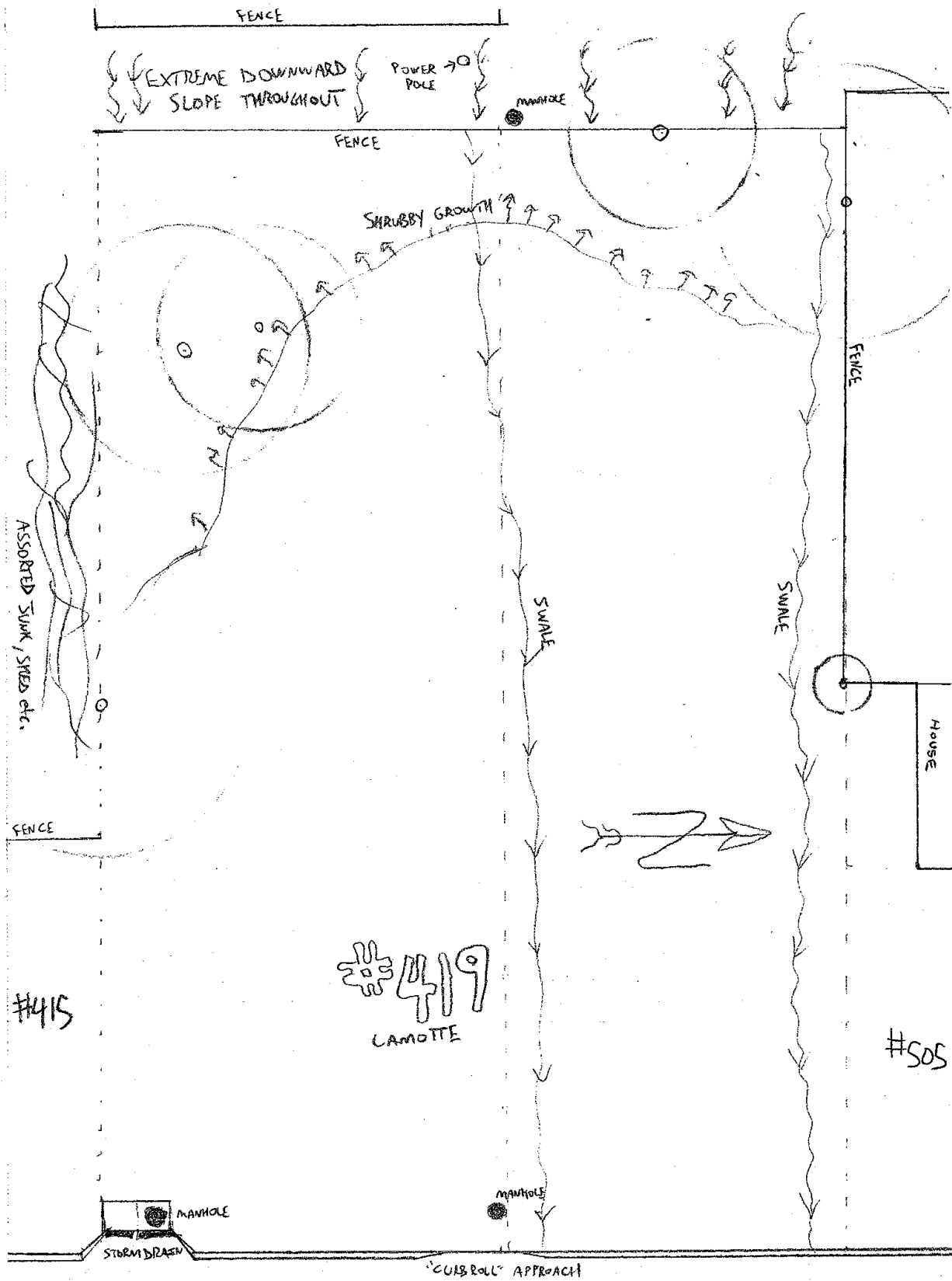
5 minutes

April 20th at 5:45 in the NATA Room

● **Adjourn**

6:45pm





Neighborhood Garden Follow-up OFW Site - Larry and Heather Robinett

485 Mueller - Best Choice

- Nice level corner lot near storm drain - fence along back and most of one side by neighboring house
- Street light across from lot on corner
- Not a good prospect for subscription membership due to possible flooding and potential vandalism
- Potential children's lots to involve neighborhood kids. Could work with area churches as well.
- Removal of 6 trees necessary, with the possibility of 3 more removed back by the creek.
- Propose Square Foot gardening for vegetables on most of lot which is a new approach to garden in less space (currently researching)
- Perimeter gardening of flowers and decorative grasses so the lot looks more pleasant to those driving by
- Possible signage
- Will promote the idea at next neighborhood meeting to drum up interest.

429 Mueller

- Small lot between two properties
- Lot of trees blocking sun not on property
- 433 Mueller - has the trees - property boarded up

333 Mueller

- Small lot between two properties
- Huge tree to be removed

321 Mueller

- Quiet end of street
- Level lot - needs trees removed
- *Could be next potential lot in OFW area*

Follow Up Questions to be answered:

- Soil Samples - Info from MU. Other places that do them locally?
- What fencing will the city allow?
- Will city allow a cover crop for first year with plants along perimeter?
- Will city allow a compost area? Rear of property at 485 Mueller would be ideal for this.

Notes from Nancy Whitener's in speaking with other communities about their neighborhood gardens.

Gardening notes:

Maryland Heights Garden -

Folks can grow whatever they wish. 95 percent of folks grow vegetables. Got started by putting an announcement in Parks and Recreation brochure and local papers. First year had 22 people and group has actually gotten smaller. Do not have fence around garden so have to deal with deer, geese and 2 legged creatures.

Each person gets a plot 4 feet by 30 feet with a three foot path around each plot so a mower can fit through. Problem is some folks think they can garden the entire plot and have found that at times this size is too big. Many times the gardener lets it go to weeds. This is an issue with the council as well as the neighboring gardeners.

Do provide a water spicket but each gardener must provide hoses as well as other gardening implements.

Basically an organic garden. No chemicals used. Worst might be preen. Supposed to be organic but it really smells.

Parks Department tills the garden twice a year. Once in the spring and once at the end of the season.

City stall collects samples of the soil and has it analyzed by the botanical garden every year to make sure what the soil may need. Through this analysis they tell the gardener what they need to put in the soil such as calcium, bone meal, phosofass. Do not wait until spring to have soil analyzed. Do this in the fall so have plenty of time to perform the analysis and get back with participants.

In September, send letter so they can remove what they wish so parks folks can till soil. Deadline is October 15th.

Parks staff goes out every spring and marks the plots. An announcement is distributed in December telling gardeners about registration. Charge of \$10 for each gardener - limit 1 plot per household unless they find plots are still remaining. Then they will assign 2 plots per person.

Bridgeton's Garden -

Have 15 plots 30 feet by 36 feet with just a walking path. No room inbetween. The city provides a water source on all 4 corners. Also trash cans and benches. Park operations disc ground in spring and the fall. Parks staff steaks out the gardens in the spring. Plots are reserved on first come seniority basis. New comers are welcome as space opens up. Keep names on wait list and the date indicated they are interested. Most of Bridgeton's garden is a vegetable garden. Volunteers will plant flowers around sign. Generally all vegetables.

No charge but must be 60 years of age or older and Bridgeton resident. Keep whatever they grow themselves although they do share tomatoes with staff.

A letter is sent out with a chart and who is in garden and telephone number. If they see someone out of hand they will generally take care of it themselves. Bridgeton operations disc ground around March 15.

No chemicals are allowed.

A meeting is planned every February to cover the rules. Sometimes people tend to neglect in the really hot months and garden seems to get overgrown. Only in past years have they had a problem with stealing vegetables but being next to police station really helps this.

Sometimes can get overgrown, but otherwise looks very pretty. Gardeners need to bring their own hoses. Currently have lots of gardeners with tons on the wait list.

No real problems. Very nice activity. City has had a garden since 1984.