



Date: April 7, 2015

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Urban Agriculture Proposals - Barclay Heritage Square and Kensington Community Centre

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve, with all details to the satisfaction of the General Manager, the following urban agriculture proposals:

- A. A new collaborative garden at Barclay Heritage Square, and
FURTHER THAT staff enter a 5-year license agreement with Vancouver Friends for Life Society to operate the garden with all terms consistent with the Urban Agriculture Policy.
- B. A new collaborative garden on the roof of Kensington Community Centre.

POLICY

The *Urban Agriculture Guidelines* were passed by the Park Board in February 2015.

In July 2013, the Board approved the *Local Food Action Plan*, with a direction to develop new community gardens and other food assets in parks and community centres.

In May 2012, the Board endorsed the strategic priorities of "Engaging People" and being "a Leader in Greening". More specifically, the Board directed staff "to support community based food production by contributing to the development of neighbourhood and city-wide food infrastructure programs and assets".

Vancouver City Council approved *What Feeds Us: Vancouver Food Strategy* in January 2013.

Vancouver City Council approved the *Greenest City 2020 Action Plan* (GCAP) in July 2011. GCAP includes a target to increase local food assets by 50%, by 2020.

BACKGROUND

The Park Board issues a joint call for expressions of interest for new urban agriculture projects with Social Policy and Engineering each autumn. Staff work collaboratively to review proposals and move forward with those that are feasible, have strong community leadership in place, and are possible with available funds and staff resources. Staff work with proponents to further develop their concept, program, and design, and larger projects then undergo public consultation. If the project is supported through the staff review as well as the public consultation (as applicable), then projects are brought forward to the Board for their consideration.

DISCUSSION

Barclay Heritage Square

Friends for Life Society submitted a response to the Request for Expressions of Interest for new urban agriculture projects in September 2014. This collaborative garden is being designed to enhance the character of this park and buildings, and will enhance the wellbeing of Friends for Life clients. It will be integrated into programming offered by Friends for Life, and will provide skills building and community connection opportunities through shared food growing and preparation.

An informational sign is currently posted on-site to provide the public with information about the proposed project. If approved, the Park Board will provide site preparation including sod removal, provision of drainage and pathway materials as well as the first year of soil and ensure that a water connection is available from the building. Friends for Life has already fundraised for additional garden construction costs as well as staff support for programming. Figure 1 in Appendix A indicates the location of the proposed garden on a site plan.

Kensington Community Centre

Park Board Recreation staff led the development of this proposal, in collaboration with the community centre association and planning staff. This garden will be integrated into and enhance existing programming for seniors, children, and others. The small garden area will consist of three 4x8 foot garden boxes, built on an accessible section of the centre roof.

An informational sign is currently posted on-site to provide the public with information about the proposed project. Figure 2 in Appendix A indicates the location of the garden boxes on a site plan. If approved, Park Board costs will likely only include provision of soil for the establishment of the garden.

SUMMARY

The proposed urban agriculture projects are in alignment with the *Urban Agriculture Policy* and support implementation of the *Local Food Action Plan*. The projects encourage community engagement, development of the local food system, and connection to nature and the outdoors. Staff recommend approval of these two projects.

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Appendix A: Garden Locations and Details

Figure 1: Barclay Heritage Square garden location



Figure 2: Kensington Community Centre rooftop garden location

