

# (Draft Article for February 2008 Around The Village)

## Proposal for The Village Community Garden

The Community Garden Task Force was formed by the Village Board of Directors in June 2007. The Task Force's mission is to create a community organic garden to provide an opportunity to grow food, learn about gardening, and foster community spirit.

**Purpose.** At the Village, there is very limited space for residents to have a vegetable garden, and often the areas next to the buildings do not receive adequate sunlight for a good harvest. There are many gardeners at the Village, with about half the residents planting flowers from the annual Flower Give-away. A community garden would allow residents to cooperatively share a large garden space in a sunny area within the Village. Based on a survey of residents, there is a high level of support for establishing a community garden—76% expressed strong or moderate interest and 96 residents said they would like to have a plot.

**Design.** The Task Force proposes to build The Village Community Garden at the open area on Whitewood Street south of Norwood Street (see garden drawing). The garden would have 50 plots averaging 100 ft<sup>2</sup> within ¼ acre. However, the size of the garden and plots would be adjusted to accommodate as many Village residents who wish to join. The main components of the garden would be:

- 4'-high perimeter fence
- 4'- and 10'-wide entrance gates
- water supply system with 4 double faucets
- tool shed with tools & hoses
- 4 elevated beds for mobility impaired
- 2 picnic tables in meeting area
- compost bin
- sign and bulletin board

**Management.** If the garden is approved and built, a Community Garden Committee would be formed from the garden's members. This committee would appoint a Community Garden Coordinator, the person for residents to contact for all issues related to the garden.

**Rules.** Detailed rules would be developed by the Community Garden Committee with input from garden members. All gardeners would be required to use accepted organic growing

methods. Members would sign a statement agreeing to follow all rules including maintaining their plots. Members who fail to follow garden rules may forfeit their deposits.

**Activities.** Gardeners would be required to work a few hours each month for the general upkeep and improvement of the garden for everyone's benefit. Garden members could also help with projects such as a mini-farmers' market, Village shrub nursery, plant sale, grant proposal writing, and other fundraisers. The Community Garden Committee would offer educational programs such as lectures on environmentally-friendly, sustainable, organic gardening and fun events such as potlucks.

**Financing.** The Task Force requests approval of \$16,600 for this capital project. This would amount to a one-time investment of an average of \$39 per co-owner. The annual cost for the garden is about \$700, which would be paid with member fees. The proposed annual fee is \$20 per 100 ft<sup>2</sup> with a \$30 refundable deposit.

**Fundraising.** The Task Force has a critical need for volunteers to lead and assist in fundraising activities to reduce the cost of building the garden. If you have experience and an interest fundraising, please contact the Village Office as soon as possible.

**Timetable.** If the garden is approved and the project is fully funded by the Board by April 2008, construction would begin in fall 2008 and the garden would open in spring 2009.

**Input.** The Community Garden Task Force seeks your input on the location, design, and cost of the garden. Please visit this web site for details: [www.geocities.com/villageco-opgarden@sbcglobal.net](http://www.geocities.com/villageco-opgarden@sbcglobal.net). You can send your input to [villageco-op@sbcglobal.net](mailto:villageco-op@sbcglobal.net) or drop it off at the Village Office. Meetings would also be held to obtain more comments from residents prior to a Board vote. An update will be published in a future newsletter.

✿ The Community Garden Task Force