

Garden Questions and Answers

Ver. 5-23-20

Background and Organizational Questions

Q1: When was the idea of a community garden first conceived?

A1: In 2016, the FVT administration began to explore the concept of constructing a garden adjacent to FVT in Earnhardt Park, in partnership with Tempe Parks.

Q2: When was the formal agreement between FVT and Tempe Parks ratified?

A2: On December 9th, 2020 the formal agreement became effective.

Q3: What are the key requirements of the formal agreement

A3: That the operation of the garden be open to include participation of gardeners from both FVT and those living in the adjacent Evergreen neighborhood and possibly beyond.

Q4: What is the formal name of the garden?

A4: Friendship Evergreen Community Garden at Earnhardt Park.

Q5: Who developed the conceptual plan for the garden layout?

A5: Beau Dromiak, a contracted landscape architect who works for Ryan Construction, developed the plans which were continuously revised and updated over a two-year period or so.

Q6: How has construction of the garden been managed?

A6: In 2018, a garden Steering Committee was formed by the FVT administration. The committee's membership initially involved FVT residents, FVT staff, FVT administration, and Ryan construction staff. Most recently, a representative from the Evergreen community has been added to the committee. The primary role of the committee has been to finalize the construction plans and coordinate the involvement of all the various participants.

Q7: How has the garden been constructed to date and at what stage of completion are we?

A7: Ryan construction has been contracted by FVT to manage the construction details. Ryan's plans call for the garden construction to be substantially complete by June 13th.

Q8: How many people have signed up from both communities:

A8: To date, 20 people from the adjacent community and 36 from FVT have expressed interest in having a garden plot.

Q9: How has the construction of the garden been financed?

A9: To date, the majority of the funding has come from the FVT budget. Donations have been made by Ryan Construction (the lights), and the FVT Resident Foundation (the Redwood lumber). It is anticipated that the Donations Section of the new Web Site will provide a vehicle for future donations.

Construction and Operational Questions

Q1: What types of plots and how many of each have been constructed to date?

A1: There are 20 Family (ground level) plots and 35 raised plots that are now completed. The intent being that those gardeners that are unable to utilize a ground level plot will be assigned a raised plot.

Q2: What are the sizes of the plots?

A2: There are two sizes: 4'W x 10'L and 4'W x 8'L. The ground level plots are all 4'x10'x 18" high and raised plots are 4' x 10' and 4' x 8', both 30" high.

Q3: What will prevent the plots from rotting away over time.

A3: All the plots are constructed of Redwood lumber which is highly resistant to rot damage.

Q4: How do we prevent weeds from growing up from the native soil within our plots?

A4: Before the garden soil is added, a weed filter cloth will be laid in each plot.

Q5: What type of soil will be added to the plots?

A5: There will be two types of soil used. The first 1/3 will be mulch, followed by 2/3 premium humus. Upon the addition of a small amount of Nitrate, the humus soil will be ready for vegetable planting.

Q6: Will there be an irrigation system?

A6: Yes. There will be two irrigation options installed in all plots. The first will be a manual control valve on the front of each plot that can be used by the garden to control the amount of water flowing to the irrigation lines strung across the growing area. The second will be a master controller that will control the frequency of water flow to all plots and thereby provide the assurance that all plots will be irrigated.

Q7: Will I be able to work in the garden at night when it is cooler?

A7: Yes. There are light standards that have been installed throughout the garden that can be timed to be on during evening hours.

Gardener Participation Questions

Q1: Will there be fees charged for use of the plots?

A1: Yes. The amount of the fee has not been finalized; however \$50/season has been suggested.

Q2: Will there be plots accessible to gardeners who are walker or wheelchair users?

A2: Yes. There are raised plots that have been designed for ready conversion to accessible plots.

Q3: Will I have a place to store my personal garden tools?

A3: Yes. One of the lockable sheds will have shelves, with possibly baskets, intended for storage of personal hand tools

Q4: Can I grow flowers as well as vegetables?

A4: Yes. Residents can grow flowers and vegetables (but marijuana should probably be kept to a minimum or grown to look like flowers!).

Q5: Will there be assistance to get the plots ready for planting?

A5: Yes. A part time Environmental Services Department staff member will be supporting both the plots initial development and ongoing garden maintenance

Q6: Will there be sun shading provided for the plots, especially during the hotter months given our mainly southern exposure?

A6: All reviewed existing gardens are struggling with the best way to economically provide needed shade. The Steering Committee will be exploring innovative ways to provide adequate shade, that can hopefully be individualized for each plot.

Q7: I am not very experienced at gardening in AZ. Will there be educational opportunities provided to help me come up to speed?

A7: Yes. The Steering Committee is currently exploring several ways that informational materials and presentations by local experienced gardens can be made available to our gardeners. The new garden Web site or our FVT App is a good place to start.

Q8: As a person who would like to support the garden development, how can I make a donation?

A8: There is an area within our new communities Web site that facilitates donations towards a verity of items that will be needed in the garden.

Q9: When will I be able to actually start using the garden?

A9: Given that the summer season is upon us and additional construction still needs to take place, next September, early October, is the most likely answer.

Future Developments

Q1: What future construction/developments are in the plans?

A1: There are several key developments that are scheduled to occur over the next month or so

- 1) Both types of plot soil will be delivered.
- 2) The soils will be distributed to all 50 plots.
- 3) A composting station will be constructed for producing our own high-quality soil, using wastage materials collected from FVT grassing cuttings, tree shredding, kitchen waste, and other sources.
- 4) A second shed will be purchased to be used primarily for the storage of tools and equipment related to the composting operation.
- 5) The security gates for the newly constructed 7' perimeter fence will be completed, with access codes to be made available to gardeners at the appropriate time.
- 6) A crushed granite finishing material will be spread and compacted on the main walkways throughout the garden area.
- 7) And finally, a new garden entrance drive/walkway will be constructed.