

LOCAC Tree and Landscape Committee

Minutes from previous two meetings (March 12th & April 17th, 2018)

Tree & Landscape March 12th Minutes:

In attendance: Mike Jenks (representing Blue C community garden), Cindy Roessler (new public member of our committee. Welcome!), Linde Owen (public member), Lou Tornatzky (LOCSD), Lynette Tornatzky (LOCAC Secretary), and David Hunter, LOCAC board member and Tree & Landscape chair.

Topic: Youth group planting project organized by the Tree & Landscape committee in conjunction with the Blue C community garden on 11th Street in Los Osos.

The committee agreed that the Blue C Community Garden on 11th Street in Los Osos would be an ideal location to launch a new pilot planting project focused on youth in Los Osos. David Hunter and Linde Owen are connected with the non-profit organization, Ecologistics, that manages the community garden. David has volunteered at the garden 4 years running. Such a project would be good exposure for the community garden if well organized and executed. Also the garden provides a safe place to have a kid's program. It's off street and completely enclosed with parking. Everything the kids need for their project and their activities will be located on-site.

Questions discussed at the meeting:

- Which youth groups in the community? 4-H Club, under-privileged kids, Brownies, Church youth groups
- Should the project focus on edibles or native/California-friendly or succulents?

Cindy mentioned pollinator and bird-friendly planting would fit into the curriculum and it's something local residents could dial into. We talked about staging a demonstration garden at the Blue C whereby we develop a concept garden as our 1st step. Replicating the concept in a public space in Los Osos would be a follow up program. Lou Tornatzky suggested the project be collaborative in nature whereby the kids would implement a buddy system and help each other water and care for the plants.

Tree & Landscape April 17th Minutes:

In attendance: Bev and Dave Bowlus, Cindy Roessler, Linde Owen, Sandra Brazil, Lisa Decker, Steve Best, and David Hunter.

David reached out to several youth groups in the community, including the Los Osos 4-H club. Jim Stanfil, Los Osos 4-H Club leader, was receptive to the planting project idea as long as it captures the kid's interest. Jim agreed to attend the next ***Tree & Landscape meeting Monday, May 14th at 6:30*** pm at the Community Center conference room to discuss details and answer questions. Jim said Los Osos 4H Club currently has 35 kids working on roughly 13 projects.

New projects begin in September. Kids are encouraged to sign up for only one or two projects at a time. Initially Jim sees roughly 6-8 kids signing up for the project, mostly ages 8-12.

David recommended we run the initial project from September until mid-November or early December. In other words, this will be an autumn planting and we should harvest and finish before the winter school break and rainy season. According to the 4-H website, projects typically run 6-8 months and kids meet monthly. David suggested compressing the program into 3 months and have the kids meet every two weeks. Garden projects need ongoing attention, watering, weeding, and periodic harvesting, etc. The group talked about parent-involvement. Will parents be able to drive kids to the garden between activity meetings to water? Kids and parents may need to take turns watering on a weekly basis.

Linde suggested three possible planting options:

- Option (1) Planting herbs and veggies in raised-beds whereby the kids will take home the food they grow as well as a “food give-away” program for the local homeless organization which is completely in-line with the 4-H mission of volunteering and giving to their communities.
- Option (2) Planting starter plants, native and/or California-friendly plants, at the community garden in the form of a demonstration garden and teach the kids about the local microclimate and plant varieties that work well in Los Osos. A future project would entail replicating the project in public spaces in Los Osos, “community beautification” of notable eye-sores around town.
- Option (3) would be planting a butterfly and pollinator-attracting garden

Cindy pointed out that teaching kids about beneficial insects in the garden, e.g. ladybugs, and planting a butterfly or pollinator-attracting garden are two different things. Companion planting for beneficial insects or to discourage bad insects might be one topic or activity to do with the 4-H kids. Linde said we should bring different people to work on the various activities with the kids thereby making the project more interesting. The kids could learn about several topics during the course of the project.

Lisa Decker said she would talk to Jessica at the Los Osos Valley Nursery to see if she would be interested in participating. David followed up with Jessica who unfortunately said she doesn't think she will have the time later this year. David also contacted the SLO Botanic Garden and has a few Master Gardener contacts. Greta Robbins who is a very active and knowledgeable member of the Blue C garden said she will participate.

The May 14th meeting will address questions raised about project logistics. David is reaching out to all the resource people and will provide those details. Jim will answer questions about Los Osos 4H Club. We hope everyone will attend!