

Garden Committee meeting

6 Feb. 2008, at # 35

A report to the LHE Board about the committee's first planning meeting of the spring.

Present: Dave Clarke, Ed Hampson, Ann Lammers)

Rototilling of garden area needs to be done again in late May. Before tilling, we'll pick out stones and spread more lime. Dave will have a soil sample tested before we buy lime. Previously we spread 300 lb. of stonelime, for under \$18. We may need to spread three times that much now, depending on soil acidity. After tilling we'll pick out stones again and drive stakes to mark out plots. (Map to be drawn by Ed; see below.)

Raised beds: Some owners may choose to install frames and fill them. Raised beds help fertilizer stay in place; gardening them requires less bending. After frames are installed, the whole area can't be rototilled again, but gardeners will do their own tilling.

Irrigation: Needed especially at beginning of growing season. Would we be allowed to tap fire hydrant? Doubtful, but we can ask the town.

Put water barrel near the garden for common use? Could fill from the LHE irrigation system; might need to install new meter on existing line. Dave could haul water from there in his truck, or we could buy a hose to run from there to garden.

Do we have drawings of the water pipes that were installed for the units that were originally planned for our garden area? If so, could we tap into the water main for those units? Would mean installing a frost-free line, with a valve above ground, turn-off below ground, and drainage field.

Ann will talk with Concord condo to see how they manage irrigation there. Dave will inquire about same thing at the common garden in Peterborough.

Cost to unit owners: The garden committee feels we should invite owners to use the garden without charging fees. Several reasons for this.

- 1) We want as many owners as possible to participate, especially this first year.
- 2) It would be burdensome to collect these fees, and hard to make them fair. Plot size will vary from owner to owner. Owners' use of garden will vary from year to year.
- 3) Most costs to the Association will be incurred this year. (See below.)
- 4) Parallel with tennis courts: everyone pays to maintain the courts, whether they use them or not. Value of all our properties is increased by presence of common garden, same as with tennis courts.
- 5) Once individuals begin to use the garden, they will bear the cost of maintaining their own garden plots: rototilling, planting, fertilizing, fencing, etc.

Size and distribution of plots: Everyone at LHE who wants to garden, can. We've got plenty of prepared ground to start with (about 40 x 80 feet), and more ground can be prepared before next spring, if there's a demand for it.

Before our next committee meeting, March 9, Ed is drawing up a map to show locations of garden plots of different sizes (5x10, 10x10, 20x10). He will leave space for paths (wide enough for a wheelbarrow to pass).

With board approval, we want to send out an informational letter to owners, probably in April. We'll ask them to tell us if they're interested in gardening, and what size plot they need. Then we'd like to assign plots randomly within each size category.

Garden guidelines:

Gardeners will have free choice about:

- 1) installing raised beds;
- 2) fencing their plots;
- 3) crops grown (e.g., perennials, annuals, vegetables, flowers);
- 4) fertilizing & tilling their plots;
- 5) keeping the same plot from year to year, or changing plot size, or adding another plot.

The garden committee requests:

- 1) please keep high structures (bean poles, etc.) toward center of your garden plot, not to shade a neighbor's crops;
- 2) if you give up your garden, please inform the garden committee about perennials, so we can give this information to whoever takes over your plot;
- 3) please return any shared equipment (wheelbarrow, rototiller , etc.) to garden shed.

JW's role:

As he did once in the fall, JW will rototill the prepared area after frost ends (late May?). He has promised to dump grass clippings and edge trimmings in a pile near the garden. Dave suggests we ask him to make two piles – one for grass, the other for loam.

Costs to LHE Association:

Some costs (about \$300) were incurred before frost. Similar costs (or lower) will be incurred in May, when second rototilling is done, with additional stonelime.

The Garden Committee would like to give the board the following wish-list, for some basic amenities:

- 1) garden shed, large enough to park wheelbarrow & rototiller
- 2) small, used rototiller (Dave Clarke has one for sale)
- 3) wheelbarrow
- 4) water barrel, with cover
- 5) 200-foot hose, or containers for hauling water.

We will provide the Board with cost estimates for these items.

Respectfully submitted, for the Garden Committee,
Ann Lammers

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