

Garden Report, February and March, 2021

Kathryn Pankowski, Garden Advocate

Projects

The Michigan/Menzies Seed Box Garden

- Continues to be maintained on a “one gardener per week” rotation; we are resuming our once-a-month outdoor distanced planning meeting in April, COVID permitting.

The Seed Box

- We now have more seed-packing volunteers and a good system of distanced packing set up, so, by the end of March, the seed box volunteers will have packed and put out over 500 packets of our ‘own-label’ seeds so far in 2021, most of which are food seeds. The box also regularly receives donations of seed packets and other garden materials - there was a handsome bag of crocosmia corms last week - from the community.
- The Seed Box and Seed Box Garden featured in a City of Victoria ‘Lunch and Learn’ in March, as an example of gardening that benefits the whole community.

The Food Trees

- Chris Adams kindly inspected and shaped the food trees in March. All look healthy, although one of the tennis court trees is not growing as robustly as might be expected. We will pay special attention to building up the soil near that tree this year, in case that happens to be the problem.

Allotments at Huntingdon Manor

- There has been a turnover of two plots at Huntingdon Manor, due to people moving away. The vacancies have been filled from the original wait list.

Fisherman’s Wharf Herb Garden

- City Council has approved granting the JBNA a three-year license of occupation for operation of the Herb Garden at Fisherman’s Wharf. Parks will continue to maintain the paths, hedge, and irrigation system, and the City arborists will maintain the Cornus kousa trees. The JBNA volunteers will look after the food-producing shrubs, berries, and herbs, as well as the general garden maintenance.
- We have started holding weekly work parties and have begun with basic tidying and working on reestablishing the line between paths and beds. Our planting focus for this year will be the area around the entrance and along the main path.
- I have met with Parks to learn about the existing irrigation system and to sort out the details of adding a water tap for gardeners’ use.

Plant Swap & Sale

- The James Bay Plant Swap & Sale will be held on Sat, April 17, 10-12 at the JB Community School, outside at the south end. Due to COVID, things will be a bit different this year: the usual COVID precautions, anyone wanting to add their own table must

notify me by April 7 and agree to abide by COVID rules, and payment will be by trading a plant or cash donation in a jar.

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City Mulch Delivery

- The City is delivering gardening materials (mulch, compost, and wood chips) to the NW corner of Macdonald Park. The piles will be there by 10 am, Sat, April 17, the start of the plant swap, and, if last fall is any guide, will be there for about a week until all is taken away.

City Plant Start Delivery

- The City food plant start distribution will be Saturday, May 22 at the James Bay Community School. Distribution for seniors, immunocompromised and people who pre-register will be from 10-12, while the general public is welcome from 12-3.

Berry Patch and Lewis St

- Still on hold due to other projects, but hope to get back to the berry patch soon.

Ongoing Activities

- I wrote two columns for the Beacon
- I have participated in two online Urban Food Table meetings.