

## **Gardening and Community Programs Report, October & November, 2023**

### **Kathryn Pankowski**

Most of the problems in the last report have been resolved, but there are still a lot of loose ends left to wrap up on this year's projects.

#### Menzies/Michigan Seed Box Garden

- We have done some planting, including bulbs for spring, in the new bed around the tree in front of Discovery Coffee. More to come in the spring.

#### The Wee Free Seed Box

- This year we kept adding seeds to the box for a month longer (to the end of Nov) than last year, as we had a number of seeds suitable for fall planting.
- In Dec & Jan, when the seed box usually 'hibernates', we are instead going to experiment with using it as a spot to give away plant-based holiday decorating material (pine cones, seed heads) and second-hand gardening books and magazines, for mid-winter browsing, to keep it in use all year.

#### Fisherman's Wharf Herb Garden

- Loose end: We have an overdue My Great Neighbourhood grant for this garden, which I want to get wrapped up before the new grant run opens in February, as it will block the JBNA accessing any further placemaking grants in their own name if the money isn't spent and the report in. The only item remaining to be completed is the entrance sign so that will be a work priority for Dec-Jan.
- Suggestion from the community: there was a request on JB Local in Nov. that there be more on-line info from the herb garden about what's there, what's available for picking, etc. This is something the volunteers have talked about from time to time, but I think we are now nearly at the point that we have the capacity to do this (as we shift from doing garden rehab over the last couple of years into a more routine maintenance cycle).

#### The Food Trees

- I have been asked by the City to be on the advisory group for turning the Food Tree Stewardship Pilot Program into a permanent program.

#### Montreal Street Berry Patch

- We **FINALLY** took over operation of this garden on Oct 1 (It was supposed to happen in April!)
- We have resolved the ridiculous problem with the irrigation warranty mentioned in the last report. (The solution is pretty ridiculous too, but at least we're in there.)

#### Get Growing, Victoria!

- We've been asked to remain as neighbourhood distribution partner for this City program in 2024

- Dates will be (tentatively): spring mulch on March 15; spring seedlings on May 25, fall seedlings on Aug 10, and fall mulch on September 27.

### Montreal St Allotment

- Another problem solved! The north fence has been successfully relocated to a few inches inside the property line, and we are no longer in danger of having a bunch of annoyed rugby players on our hands. (Whew!)

### Garden of All Sorts

- And yet another problem solved! The transfer of the Garden from LifeCycles to JBNA is now complete and their operating funds have been transferred to the JBNA account. (Thanks, Wayne)

### Huntingdon Manor Allotments

- Loose end: Geoff, the Hotel property manager, has decided that he does not have time to do any more work on the garden, even though the planned shed was never built. Julia and I have discussed this and decided that the gardeners and I will buy and install a more pre-fab shed, which we need to do fairly soon in order to be able to wrap up the garden build grant.
- Problem solved: The issue with the garden being closed to the public (which violates the terms of the build grant from the City) was immediately resolved by Julia as soon as she got back from her holiday. There is now a much more welcoming sign that says the garden gates are open from dawn to dusk, but please watch your step while visiting.
- All plots are full and there is a 10-person wait list (so far).

### Recycling

- ReFuse, the pick up service that we use, suddenly announced that they are no longer accepting batteries or light bulbs. The Recycling folks have agreed, however, that we will still collect them and someone will drive them to a depot when we get enough to warrant it (probably about every three months).
- Recycling is launching its first 'special collection', by collecting full strings of dead or damaged Christmas lights at the Dec and Jan depots only. We hope to plan a series of these 'special collection' days for the coming year.

### Clean Up

- Still waiting on our storage area. **Has there been any further word?**

### Miscellaneous

- I gave a tour to some folks from the Downtown Residents Association who are trying to figure out how to get more gardening opportunities for people downtown. We discussed using private land (Huntingdon), the food tree stewardship program, incorporating gardens into transportation infrastructure projects (berry patch), and pickable herb gardens for residents.

NOTE: My current contract includes a number of organizational tasks, to document the info about the volunteer programs that should be available to the Board and my successor. I've set up a Google Drive folder and you'll be getting a link soon. It currently contains volunteer lists, an inventory of JBNA property used for programs and where each item is stored, recycling stats for 2023, and an 'emergency' list of volunteers who can take over running each program short-term if necessary. More specific program-related info to come shortly.