

EBMUD/LAC Education & Outreach Subcommittee 8-8-2016

Attendees:

Aisha Bouziane	Jerri McNair
Katie Creighton	Georgia Madden
Bobbi Feyerabend	Alisa Rose Seidlitz
Saxon Holt	Michael Thilgen
Marie Kahn	Stew Winchester
Sundong Kwong	Kristin Bowman

Announcements:

- Nelsy Rodriguez will join the group again on September 12 to provide an update.
- Lisa Cuellar from California Urban Water Conservation Council has been invited to our next meeting. Their organization has been working at state level on some new online tools for water budgets and demonstration gardens.
- Next EBMUD LAC meeting guest speaker is Bart O'Brian

Old Business:

1. Demonstration Gardens project:

Inspected Locations: Reminder: SURVEYMONKEY is available for evaluations.

Heather Farms - Saxon

Dimond - Bobbi

Richmond - Stew

Glen Echo, Lakeside Park - Michael

The discussion centered around follow up on the previously reviewed demonstration gardens. Michael commented that it probably would be more cost effective to renovate existing gardens than pay for new installations. The committee seemed to agree that this direction was the best one.

Saxon added that EBMUD still offers Smart Garden Grants for existing gardens. That type of financial assistance could be a greater incentive to make improvements. He also said the offer of assistance has a favorable influence stakeholders in the various sites. On-going maintenance continues to be a concern but no ideas evolved on how to solve this issue.

Alisa said that generally there should be some incentive to get a commitment to longterm maintenance, and offered a reframing of the discussion of "maintenance" from "status-quo" to one of care, continued and improved value. Kristen offered that attention can be an incentive, and also create resources.

More ideas on how to encourage longer-term garden (and grant money) success:

- Partnerships and sponsorships to help with development and care. Nurseries, or MG's. (Bobbi)
- Recognition for those involved in the gardens, including maintenance gardeners. (Katie)
- A "development" package for each garden that includes grant money, site visits, information, publicity help, potential partnerships. Encouraging gardens to identify community groups with interest in the garden who may want to be involved in garden maintenance and benefit from recognition. (Saxon)
- Master Gardeners - If the Master Gardeners program could partner with EBMUD that relationship could help solve the some of the maintenance issues. Alisa and Saxon agreed to talk with their contacts in the local chapters to get more information. Michael said that the component of community involvement is very positive.

2. Garden Updates:

Glen Echo (Michael) Same general issues and lack of resources like signage. There is a general lack of focus on useful upgrades for this site.

San Pablo (Stew) Gives location a C. Needs signage, new plants, weed control. Has good bones with a native plant backdrop and is not visited often.

Richmond

Kristin told us that the city has agreed to do a major clean up as phase one of the renovation. Phase two would involve re-design and installation. The subcommittee will meet at the site on October 10 at the regular meeting time to discuss an overall re-design strategy for Phase Two that can be presented to the city. Saxon said that water catchment elements, like the rain garden to be installed here, could be a more central element of the "New California Landscape".

Heather Farms

Stewart said that the garden needs a major re-planting. He has the plans used for the original installation. He recommended that a walk through with Brian Lawsoon, the new gardener, would be a good next step for this project.

Additional Updates & Discussion:

- Should we have the next meeting (October 10) at the Richmond garden, and work in small groups to evaluate next steps and scope of work? The group will give their availability via email.
- Saturday, September 24, 10-1pm in Richmond is a Grey water/rain water workshop. There is a lot of interest in gray water and rain water retention, and Kristen will look into getting the workshop presenter for the LAC speaker series.
- Is there enough focus on another angle of of rain water "catchment" - the landscape and grading improvements like swales, curb-cuts, permeable surfaces and de-paving?

3. Nursery Roundtable

Attendance was somewhat low, but was a good gathering of like-minded nurseries and was not attended by any bigger box stores. The discussion covered how EBMUD can help the retail locations, how each promotes dry plantings, a kiosk to display and sell the EBMUD book and an MWELo update.