

WeCAN General Membership Meeting  
Minutes  
March 11, 2014  
Prepared by Leah Rounds

## Agenda

- 6:00: Healthy Potluck Dinner
- 6:20: Call to order and Announcements
- 6:30: Police Officer Report
- 6:45: Presentation by Dana Miller from Grow Local Colorado on Urban Food Production and Sales
- 7:00: Update on West Colfax Community Garden
- 7:10: Information on a potential community garden at Cheltenham Elem.
- 7:20: Adjourn

## Minutes

Call to order at 6:20pm by Co-President Chad Reischl

Denver Police Department report

- “Puffers” have still been a problem. People leave the cars running to warm up and they are stolen.
- Theft from auto vehicles – reminder to keep doors locked, valuables out of sight, etc.
- Home burglaries - there is a “Community Resource Guide” pamphlet available on how to best protect your home and property.
- Fight at the Viking recently
- A recent stabbing further up north, this is still an ongoing investigation
- Q&A
  - Car lot has been parking cars and blocking the alley between Tennyson and Utica and 14<sup>th</sup> and Colfax. There was no trash pick-up because of it this week. Called in complaints before, what is being done? Will look into it again and let the local precinct officers know. A Sgt. Wailer has dealt with them before and will look into it again.
  - What can be done about illegal dumping? It is not a high on the importance list, so when a call comes in it might not be responded to because of other issues going on. The city will come and pick up the trash if called in. Document the vehicle description, license plate number, and description of the person if you see illegal dumping happen to give to the officer. What about hazmat materials that are dumped? Officers will call dispatch, notify the city, and respond to it sooner

## Announcements

- WeCAN is in need of 1½ Newsletter couriers. This is the primary means of communication with the neighborhood. Contact Bill Baker if interested
- WeCAN's Board Meeting: Will be on Mar 19 at 6pm downstairs, all are invited to attend
- WeCAN's next General Meeting: will be on Tuesday, April 8th, at 6:00 pm. Representatives from EFG will be at the meeting to let you know what to expect on site for the next several months.
- Totally Tennyson is back in its 4<sup>th</sup> year as an 80s themed street crawl on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – We will be selling tickets at our next meeting to support Colfax Elementary.
- The Mile High 5k Fundraiser for Colfax Elem. on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 at Sloan's Lake if you're interested in participating, contact Leah Rounds 303-587-6729
- West Colfax Clean-up Day and Picnic Lunch on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014
- Annual WeCAN Garage Sale on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Funds raised will go to support Confluence Ministry's computer lab for the GED and ELL classes. Hope to raise \$2k at this garage sale. In need of donations for the sale now. Contact Barb or Bill Baker if you have donations.

## Presentation on Urban Food Production and Sales

Dana Miller from Grow Local Colorado, the Office of the Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council

- Working on changing codes to allow for individuals to sell produce out of their gardens and homes (will hopefully pass in June 2014). Currently you can sell to farmer's markets and restaurants.
- Cottage Food Act allows for creating a small business out of your home to sell produce, canned goods, jellies, jams, etc.
- Councilwoman Robin Kniech is heading up this effort on the council level
- Benefits to this policy include: expanding access to healthy foods, increasing community involvement, and supports the Mayor's citywide Sustainability Goals.
- There will be a \$20 zoning permit fee for home businesses, no sales tax collected on food. Will be allowed to have a small business sign in your window. Can sell from 7am to dusk.

- Partnering with Denver Live Well to offer classes, help people get started, and get promotional help.
- Wheatridge and Lakewood (among other US cities) have already implemented such policies

Sherona, resident of Ruby Hill shared her experiences

- She and her husband practice sustainable living practices, and would like to set up a urban homesteading school to teach neighbors about these practices
- Planning on setting up their carport as a little store (produce, eggs, honey)
- Attended a Building Urban Farmers course through a CSU extension program
- Has a business plan in place and hoping to start in June

Councilwoman Susan Shepherd of District 1 in NW Denver

- Fully supportive of this effort and offers a great opportunity for partial income. There are many other council members also in support and this will likely pass. It is in line with the state regarding the Cottage Food Act.
- Denver Sustainable Food Policy Council played a large role in getting backyard chickens and goats
- Concerns have been over food safety/inspections

Dana Miller

- In regards to food safety, this will be a one grower, one seller policy; so all food can be traced back to one household. Food can be grown in a home or community garden, but must be sold from one individual out of their home.
- Q&A
  - Will there be inspections? No, currently the Cottage Food Act doesn't require inspections
  - Can you sell produce to a grocery store? Don't see an issue with that since you can already sell to farmer's markets and restaurants.
  - How do you get a zoning permit on a shared property (duplex)? There are separate street addresses, so permit will be issued to each address

- When will it be taken to council? After committees, public reviews, etc. Hopefully by May or June
- Where is information on what you can sell? Can you sell pickles? The Cottage Food Act website has a complete list
- Is growing and selling from a community garden allowed? Denver Urban Gardens prefers that any money made be reinvested into that DUG garden. Other community garden programs don't do this, so you can sell and profit from produce your plot. Produce must be sold from a primary residence, so renters must ask landlords for permission.
- Can you leave produce and a money jar out for passer-bys? Not sure, will have to look into that
- Produce for Pantries is another program with 15 collaborative groups. It connects homes, community, and school gardens to local food pantries. Can call to get info on the closest food pantry to donate produce. Think about growing a little extra to donate.

#### New Food Bank at Cheltenham Elementary (Barbara Baker)

- Open Arms Community Church out of Cheltenham has started a food bank after Sunday services. Now partnering with the school to have a food bank in the school
- Non-perishables can be taken directly to the school. Perishables can be taken by Barb for after Sunday services

#### Councilwoman Susan Shepherd of District 1 in NW Denver

- Retail marijuana is going smoothly, a lot of tax money has been coming in
- Banking piece still needs to be figured out, these businesses are dealing with large amounts of cash, but this is something that needs to be dealt with on the Federal level.

#### Matt from DUG - Update on West Colfax Community Garden

- There are 8-9 plots still available, talk with Matt if you would like a plot
- WeCAN has donated \$200 that will be going towards edging the bed. Currently in phase 2, establishing paths and going from there
- Composting bins are active, trying to get them more established and teach people how to properly use them
- Q&A
  - Growing extra pumpkins for the library fundraiser, can we use extra plots to do this? Yes, Matt will let you know which plots to use
  - Is there any supervision at the garden? You have to sign a waiver before getting a plot. Plots are \$40 for the season (this mainly covers water and maintenance). Twice a month there is a community workday. They've had small events at the garden in the past (cocktails, etc.)
  - Will there be composting lessons? DUG Master Gardner can come do a class for the neighborhood. Could collaborate with the 3 neighborhood community gardens to take a class together
- Even if you don't have a plot you can help with fundraising, classes, social events, updating facebook, etc.
- Classes and activities can go towards sustainability projects and points
- Home Depot on W. Colfax in Lakewood is donating
- Will be collecting donations for DUG at April's meeting. Can also make a donation to our garden on the DUG website

Pamela Flowers - Information on the community garden at Cheltenham Elem.

- Had been a Butterfly Hope garden since 1996, and thrived until the program shut down in 2012. DUG has now taken it on.
- Now working on beautifying and revitalizing the garden. Hoping to reach out to the whole neighborhood for plots. Currently only 3-4 gardeners, there are 17 plots available.
- Projects to be worked on this year – bricks along the sidewalk, grow something over the gateway, teach classes, have the disabled residence that live nearby involved (provide wheelchair access)

- There will be a gardener onsite to help every Wednesday evening
- Teachers' plots will be used over the summer to supply Produce for Pantries
- Q&A
  - Where is the garden located? Behind the school on 16<sup>th</sup> and Irving
  - How do you sign up? Fliers available, call DUG at 303-292-9900 or DUG.org

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds  
Secretary  
West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)