



Well-Preserved

Updates from
Neighborhood Gardens Association
A Philadelphia Land Trust

Preserving community-managed open space since 1986

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OUR MISSION

The Neighborhood Gardens Association / A Philadelphia Land Trust (NGA) is a private non-profit corporation founded in 1986. The mission of the land trust is to ensure the continuity and long-term preservation of community-managed gardens and open space in low and moderate-income neighborhoods.

Editor: Margot Berg

Message from the Executive Director

Memorial Day has passed and the official beginning of summer is right around the corner. In my travels around the city, I have been stopping by the land trust gardens to see how they are doing this season, and have been impressed with the lush growth. The cool early spring weather with just enough rain has done wonders.

I hope you will join us at one of the parties this summer. Seedy Acres Garden is now completely preserved after years of struggling, and will throw a party to celebrate on June 26th. On July 9th, NGA and Philadelphia Green are co-sponsoring a Celebration of Community Gardens at The Spring Gardens, 18th and Wallace Streets. The gardeners are celebrating their 10th season by inviting gardeners from around the city to join them for an afternoon party in the garden.

As NGA approaches its 20th anniversary, the Board of Directors and staff are undertaking a strategic planning process to evaluate the efforts of the past and look for new ways to help Philadelphia community residents preserve their beloved gardens and green spaces in the future. NGA believes that every community should have access to green space just as William Penn envisioned in his Greene Countrie Towne plan. Stay tuned for the results next year.



NGA SPOTLIGHT: *The Spring Gardens*

This issue's Spotlight focuses on The Spring Gardens community garden north of Center City.

At 18th and Wallace Streets, in the Spring Garden neighborhood, *The Spring Gardens* community garden flourishes on an entire city block. Before the garden, the block was home to numerous vacant lots, and a few abandoned rowhouses and car-repair shops. The City cleared and leveled the lots in 1996, and neighborhood resident Stephan White and others began to transform the two-acre site into a vegetable and flower garden, meeting-place and urban oasis. After the first growing season, Philadelphia Green and the Spring Garden Civic Association donated funding to create the garden's raised beds. Today, this thriving community garden has over 180 plots gardened by neighborhood families, including African-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Asians, and eastern Europeans. Through a grant, The Spring Gardens installed the beautiful wrought iron fence depicting tall grasses which has become a symbol of the garden.



A resident of Spring Garden for 30 years, Stephan says that this once-divided community came together around the garden. "We discovered that we care about the same things," he reflects. The garden has played a role in the area's evolution and renewal -- from one plagued by abandonment and decay to a diverse and highly desirable place to live.

The garden hosts neighborhood events, workshops, plant sales and flea markets. New street trees, sidewalks and a raised perimeter bed with evergreen and perennial plantings have been added. The block is now a major asset -- replacing drug dealing and trash dumping with beauty and kinship.



The gardeners want this spectacular green space to be preserved as a permanent feature of the neighborhood. A *Celebration of Community Gardens* and a raffle to raise money for preservation will be held here on July 9th. Call NGA and say you'll come!

GARDEN UPDATES

Solar Power – A Bright Idea for the Gardens

Over the last four years, the NGA Garden Improvement Project has funded water connections, new fencing, and safe sidewalks at most of the larger land trust gardens. At the top of this year's list is installing electricity at the gardens to allow for the use of lights and power tools. Two gardens, Glenwood Green Acres and the North Street Garden, have traditional electrical systems for the security lights installed at their gardens in recent years. NGA has paid for the installation costs with community block grant funds and grants from local foundations and businesses. The gardeners pay for their monthly usage. Four more gardens have electricity high on their wish list and, with NGA, are pursuing the installation of solar-powered lighting. West Philadelphia's Aspen Farms and the Southwark / Queen

Village Garden will be the first two gardens to receive these systems. The design will allow them to use traditional electricity when needed and to transfer units of power collected by the solar panels to PECO during the sunny days of the year. The gardeners hope to generate more than they use and end up with energy credits. The solar systems are expensive to install but will allow the gardeners to avoid monthly electric bills and make them more sustainable into the future. We hope to have these systems installed this summer.

Seedy Acres Celebration

On June 26th, the Seedy Acres community gardeners at Leithgow and Poplar Streets will celebrate the final preservation of their garden. From 4 to 7PM, \$5 gets you their signature silent auction, food, music, and vodka snowcones.

Raffle to Benefit NGA's Acquisition Fund

NGA thanks all of those who sent in a donation for the Garden Acquisition Fund in response to the Spring newsletter, helping to preserve more community green spaces in Philadelphia. NGA will hold its second raffle to raise money for the Garden Acquisition Fund - this year at The Spring Gardens community garden party at 18th and Wallace Streets on July 9th. Lots of fabulous prizes will be raffled off, and you don't have to be present to win. If you'd like to buy raffle tickets, call Margot at 215-988-8797.



www.ngalandtrust.org

Clip and send with your donation!

Help Save Community Gardens

NGA is a nonprofit urban land trust preserving community-managed gardens and green spaces in Philadelphia's neighborhoods. We need your support!

\$50 \$100 \$250 Other

NGA's United Way
Code is 8206

Name: _____

(as you wish to be acknowledged in our publications)

Address: _____

Phone: _____ email _____

I prefer to remain anonymous. I am interested in making a planned gift. Please contact me.

Please make checks payable to the **Neighborhood Gardens Association** and mail to:
NGA, 100 North 20th Street, Suite 309, Philadelphia, PA 19103

If you would like to use a credit card, go to www.ngalandtrust.org and click on the link to **Network for Good**.



NEIGHBORHOOD GARDENS ASSOCIATION

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Email Margot if you would like to receive the newsletter and NGA announcements via email.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Saturday June 26: Garden party at Seedy Acres Community Garden to celebrate the final preservation of the garden. Leithgow and Poplar Streets in Northern Liberties 4 to 7 PM. Food, music, vodka snowcones; silent auction of artist-made bird houses. A \$5 donation is requested.

Saturday July 23: Plant Swap, 9 AM to noon. Bring plants to trade with other gardeners. Sponsored by Aubury Arboretum Community Garden, Francis Cope House off Chew Avenue near Washington Lane.

Saturday July 9: *A Celebration of Community Gardens* at The Spring Gardens, 18th and Wallace Streets, 4 to 7PM. Music, various ethnic foods made by gardeners, and a raffle of great prizes to benefit the garden and NGA's Garden Acquisition Fund. RSVP 215-988-8797.