

## Amherst Growing Food in Community Meeting

Amherst Town Hall

June 7, 2012

*Who is in the room and what is your interest?*

*Betsy Krogh* - growing at home since the early 70's including an edible forest garden, root cellar, canning and drying, neighbors sharing eggs, expand the community gardens

*Molly Falsetti-Yu* - part of Transitions Amherst, teach at Smith, encourage students

*Kathleen Doherty* - UMass Permaculture, worked with Northampton to produce a brochure on how to create a permaculture garden, more accessible to non-homeowners

*Michelle Chandler* - specialty micro-farm, hens and rabbits, Master Gardener, all about growing food, canning

*John Root* - gardening for years, permaculture, working at Triple Brook, Earthwise Landscaping is a new business, chair of refuse and recycling committee, need to compost

*Julie Federman* - Health Director, 5-year community transformation grant called "healthy hampshire" looking at high rates of obesity, food and fitness at the policy level, how to promote community gardens or local store, making food part of the local landscape

*Valerie Cooley* - teaches policy, knows food policy, students coming to home, social entrepreneurship training, micro-agribusiness incubator

*Bill Cooley* - North Amherst, property which is overgrown, interest in bees and chickens with neighbors, makes beer and mead, permaculture ideas into zoning, working with Stockbridge students

*Bernard Brennan* - Amethyst Farm, Ag Commission, Transition Amherst, Master Gardener, horses, bees, goats, maybe a cow, CSA member, grow community, host a CSA and farmer training program, large herb garden, edible forest garden

*Mona Naimark* - Transition Amherst, compost toilets, yes I care, we are all needed

*Sue Morrello* - gardening in public spaces, apartments need public space, grow food everywhere programs

*Stephanie Ciccarello* - Town Sustainability Coordinator, new position, town is supportive of green issues and energy conservation, growing more food is important, students need to be encouraged to grow food, education is needed

*John Gerber* - I would like to be a cheerleader for all of these wonderful ideas

Wide Ranging Discussion: Conservation Department manages community gardens and it has been difficult to maintain, there are different models for manages community gardens, clearing house or inventory to identify land opportunities for sharing space and ideas, help people figure out how to share space with their neighbors, Gardening in Community and garden together rather than dividing up plots works because it was focused on social gathering and learning, community garden at the Survival Center, bread and other food from the Survival Center to raise animals, Cambodian gardeners need space, focus on different populations, shared kitchens for teaching workshops especially connecting with the faith community - this will keep costs down, network to connect people, yahoo group or phone number to call to connect people who want to plant with land, growers dating service, gardensharing, online gardening clearinghouse, connect to libraries, hyper-locavore, yardsharing, sharing backyards, perennial food gardens at schools lower maintenance costs, is there a place to store equipment, tool library, seed library, outreach to colleges, wish list on town web site, connection with ag school, does the business school provide opportunities for students to gain experience, lets focus on hunger, lets feed the hungry, Rachels Kitchen for gleaning, glean orchards, and more.

### Some Specific Ideas

- canning workshops
- edible landscape trees in town
- shade tree committee for gardening
- neighborhood experiments
- town farm
- town gardens
- gardening in community (work together)
- wish list on town web site
- community farm
- grow food and grow community
- Transitions Amherst event
- skill sharing open mike
- gleaning events
- Portland Fruit Tree Project (gleaning for the hungry)
- database connecting people
- work with Stockbridge students on town projects
- tool registry - by neighborhood
- nut trees at the Survival Center
- town and gown relations
- block party in fall with Alex and the BID
- engaging students
- educational event in the fall with Kathy Harrison
- permaculture brochure (like Northampton)

### Next Steps

1. Stephanie will facilitate the next meeting on July 11 at 10:00am
2. We will invite others to the next meeting
3. We will identify 3 top ideas and form working groups to take action

### Finally

Thanks to everyone for sharing your thoughts and passion around *growing food in community in Amherst*. Attending this meeting is not a commitment to continue to engage in this conversation. Everyone is busy. However, we do hope you will continue to share your time and energy to the best of your ability.

Thank you.

### Attending

Betsy Krough  
Molly Falsetti-Yu  
Kathleen Doherty  
John Root  
Julie Federman  
Valerie Cooley  
Bill Cooley  
Michelle Chandler  
Bernard Brennan  
Mona Namark  
Sue Morrello  
Stephanie Ciccarello  
John Gerber