

Agenda For April Block Association & Garden Meeting
April 20, 2011

BLOCK ASSOCIATION

NEWS/UPDATES

- Took attendance and greeting from JA and introduction of new members Ken Carrington, Carrie Walker and Andrew Hume
- Block Association finances and other news from the Treasury
 - Albano spoke about the Heritage Rose project and encouraged more members to contribute as we are paid up on the roses but still need \$\$ for mulching etc.
 - The message board has been ordered and paid for and we should be getting it very shortly.
 - Some new members were recruited.
 - Also spoke of the need to move forward with the fixing/replacement of the fence and gate to the garden, estimates ranging from 4-8K. Asked for the members help in getting more info and/or help in getting grants or contacting people in the business who might be able to help.
- News from the Community
 - Special Guest: Dr. Dedrick Blue, Pastor of Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church
 - Pastor Blue spoke gave a brief history of the landmark church and the need to work together to build strength in our community. He spoke of the potential strains of growth and personally pledged to work with the BA and to attend meetings as we navigate through the transition of our block and neighborhood.
 - Lamont Alston of the 123rd St Youth Program spoke about the our 1st annual Easter Egg Hunt and the success of that venture and hopes to continue such events in the garden. He thanked JA, the BA, Denise Rivera for her face-painting and all those who helped bring everything together.
- Recent and upcoming events
 - Health Fair sponsored by Ephesus 7th-Day Adventist Church in Sept.
 - Youth Day sponsored by 123 YP scheduled for August 27.
 - MMPCIA sponsored fundraiser and wine tasting to be held on April 26

PRIORITIES

- Secretary Elections
 - Kendra Sykes was elected our new secretary. She gave a short but informative bio and expressed her desire to give back to the community in which she grew up. Congratulations and applause followed.
- Call for volunteers for projects, special and otherwise.
 - JA welcomed suggestions from everyone for future doings, and spoke about partnering with local churches such as Ephesus and Mt Olivet, and organizations like NYC Cares that help those in our community who are in need.
 - Eve Byam mentioned that Ephesus has a clothing bank and other programs such as Pathfinders youth group.
 - Jim S spoke about a neighboring church through whom we got volunteers from Kentucky to help prepare the garden for spring.
 - Sebastian mentioned that we should not approach the local food banks until we have our garden truly up and growing.
 - Jim agreed that it might be a good idea to get some kind of chart showing who is growing what so we do not have a preponderance of particular veggies in the summer and can therefore give a greater variety of produce to those who need.
- Jim also gave information on the new Urban Garden Center that opened on 116th and Park near La Marqueta.

PLANNING CURRENTLY UNDERWAY

- 123rd Street Block Association t-shirts
 - Eve Byam suggested that the youth from the block and YP should enter into a contest to design our new BA t-shirts. A prize would be given to the winner.
 - AA spoke of the logistics of printing & selling T's as a fund-raiser and drew on his experience in the field to make us aware that we might need outside support to make it a worthy venture.
- Garden History Project
 - JA presented a copy of the original plan of the garden and reiterated the need to interview the founders, Dolores Leon and Lee Waring so our garden history is recorded and can be posted in our new message board for all to read.
 - Diane M volunteered to help and will contact YP teens who also might be interested in gathering the information.
 - Scott A volunteered to make a plan of the garden as it is now and will update it as changes are made so all can see it on the website.

- Jim will have the boxes labeled by name and hopefully a growing chart for same.
- Block Clean Up – let's keep it going.
 - Eve B suggested getting a sign-up sheet so people can volunteer their time in an organized fashion, since all who wish to help may not be available at the regular times which may be set.
 - AA mentioned that when we see neighbors littering or not cleaning up after their dogs, we should not be afraid to say something to them about it.

GARDEN

NEWS/UPDATES

- Harlem Heritage Rose District - April 30th planting day
 - Jim S spoke about our Heritage Rose Planting Day and the possibility that Borough President Scott Stringer will stop by our garden after the official ceremony in Mt Morris Park which starts at 11 am on April 30. Our planting will take place the same day at 1 pm and Jim asked for and received volunteers to help with same.
 - JA and Eve B spoke of contacting local media for coverage for this event, and JA printed up a chart of all the gardens with Heritage roses in our neighborhood for distribution to members.
 - Jim said we have received half of our roses already and expects the other half this week.
- Diane M mentioned the NYCCGC (New York City Community Garden Coalition) and GreenThumb annual GrowTogether that was a big success on the 9th. Flyers from that event were made available and she encouraged one and all to attend the workshops and meetings, especially of the NYCCGC whose big meeting is on the 21st of April. She also encouraged membership to the NYCCGC, as they are the most powerful organization defending community gardens and they need our support.
- Jim and Diane spoke about the possibility of asking for Syderia's and Shirley Reid's help in procuring 2 new rain barrels for the garden from NYC DEP giveaway on Saturday, May 7.
- Review of GreenThumb Garden Rules
 - JA printed up 5 copies of the 94-page GreenThumb Rule Book and encouraged all to access the book on their and our website so we can have an informed and productive meeting about issues such as BBQ's and parties in the garden.
- There will be a garden tour hosted by Jim S in the garden and these issues can be discussed.

PRIORITIES

- Open Hours & Signage
 - JA reiterated the need to get our signs and especially our open hours set and posted so our garden stays out of violation.
- She opened the floor to any and everyone who wished to speak, and also mentioned that we would like to have more outreach and involvement with youth groups such as Pathfinders and local elementary schools.
- Established that the 3rd Wednesday of each month will be the schedule for our BA meetings at Ephesus.