

**NEW ENGLAND GRASSROOTS
ENVIRONMENT FUND**

BGI GRANT REPORT FORM

Recipients of a Boston Grants Initiative grant are asked to complete a final Grant Report **no later than one year** after the grant application deadline. We rely on your **candid** responses to help us assess the effectiveness of our grantmaking program. Completing this report as a group at a regular meeting would help gather a broad perspective from your organization.

Date: January 18, 2010

Contact Person: Roseann Bongiovanni, Associate Executive Director, Chelsea Collaborative

Contact Person: Margaret Carsley, Co-Coordinator, Chelsea Community Gardeners Assoc.

Name of Organization: Chelsea Community Gardeners Association

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Date of Award: 4/2/2010

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Purpose of Grant: To support the Chelsea Community Gardeners Association to further develop its structure, to formalize its Executive Committee, expand its capacity to serve the community, and to utilize the garden as a bridge to build community.

FINAL REPORT SECTION 1: UPDATING GRANTEE PROFILE

Grantee Profile is attached.

FINAL REPORT SECTION 2: GRANT OUTCOMES

Please answer the following questions about your group and the work it is doing.

A. CHANGE OR ADVANCEMENT OF GROUP'S FOCUS/GOALS

1. How is your project progressing? Briefly describe its evolution.

The Chelsea Community Gardeners Association is proud to report that the Chelsea Community Garden (the Garden) has had much success and made significant progress this past season. We count among our accomplishments:

- We formalized and expanded the Executive Committee. For 2010 we went from a 3 member steering committee to a 5 member steering committee which included a Garden Coordinator, a Bi-lingual Co-coordinator, a Membership Coordinator, a Treasurer, and a Groundskeeper. During our monthly meetings we decided upon the offices for the 2011 season and set our process for nominations and elections. In October of 2010, 6 members were elected to the Executive Committee for the 2011 season. Attached are Executive Committee Lists for both 2010 and 2011.
- Garden by-laws were established. Member Ted Coates stepped up to write the first draft which was circulated to all members by e-mail. The draft was discussed and amended at the 8/24/10 monthly meeting. The By-laws were translated to Spanish. A finalized draft was circulated among gardeners before September meeting. The By-Laws were ratified and adopted at 9/28/10 meeting. English and Spanish copies are attached.
- Soil samples from 17 beds were sent to Massachusetts Extension Service at UMass/Amherst and compost was purchased for new beds. All were found to be low in lead and other heavy metals.
- The gardeners voted to designate the garden as semi-organic. Only organic methods of pest and weed control may be used, but a gardener may use non-organic fertilizer on her/his own bed.

- The new and expanded beds were filled with soil and mulch and ready for new gardeners at the beginning of the season.
- Nine new families were added to the membership in 2010.
- Garden Workshops
 1. In March a tool workshop was held. 15 gardeners attended.
 2. In May a soil test workshop was held. Samples were gathered from 17 plots.
 3. In September a tool workshop was held for the ROCA YouthSTAR program. 23 volunteers attended.
- Additional mini-workshops led by groundskeeper Joe Rubin were held throughout the season at gardeners' requests. Topics covered included: planting and transplanting, plant supports and trellising, garden plant care, appropriate water usage, weeding and mulching, and soil mixes and container planting.
- 13 Boston Natural Areas Network Workshops (BNAN) were attended by 2-8 gardeners each time. Transportation via car-pooling was made available to all attendees.
- Two landscape companies committed to providing free wood chips for the Garden..
- The following took place in preparation for the new beds built in December:
 - An old diseased peach tree and sour cherry tree were removed.
 - The entire common area was graded and mulched.
 - Our forsythia, lilac, rose and holly bushes were dug up moved to the exterior of the fence. This provided space for the new beds and a raspberry hedge along the inside fence. It will also allow space for future garden additions which include: a covered shaded area to provide protection from the sun, an additional shed which ROCA youth are building, a grape arbor utilizing the 2 sheds as anchors, an area for compost bins, a new apple and pear tree, and community strawberry and herb beds. The outside perimeter of the garden was also mulched. With the help of ROCA YouthSTAR, the Hawthorn Street perimeter was cleaned, weeded and planted with day lilies over the course of five workdays.
- We continue a fruitful relationship with the YouthBuild/JustAStart Program. Although 2010 was very busy this season for their organization, they managed to provide a 9-member youth crew who worked from 11/29-12/3/10 to construct 5 new member beds and one large elderly/handicapped accessible bed. While we initially planned to have 4 member beds and 3 handicapped accessible beds, this plan was adjusted to insure that there is enough space for a wheelchair to maneuver in and around the tall bed area. Additionally, the large elderly/handicapped accessible bed was built to wheelchair height specifications.
- We have hung new garden signs on the Hawthorn Street perimeter fence in English and Spanish.
- We utilized a Yahoo email group to enhance communications between gardeners.

In addition, we enlarged and diversified the garden's membership and engaged more of the community-at-large by collaborating and coordinating with a number of community groups:

Garden's Membership: Building communication, goodwill, and trust among the members is truly one of the greatest accomplishments of this 2010 season.

Our new membership-led organizational structure led to a significant increase of active members who consistently participate in the regularly scheduled communal garden workdays, monthly garden membership meetings held at the Chelsea Collaborative on the 4th Tuesday of each month and Steering Committee meetings. The Steering Committee, with the assistance of interested members, met on the 2nd Tuesday of each month to help plan and coordinate all the new projects. Our members stepped up to volunteer with the numerous tasks necessary for the success of the 2010 Garden activities (tasks such as planning, outreach and publicity, organizing, and hosting the Garden Open House and the two Photo exhibit receptions at the Chelsea City Cafe Gallery.)

In years past we had a Harvest get-together in October, which had lapsed over the past several years. One of our new members organized a Harvest potluck-cookout at the end of August. We borrowed chairs, tables and a grill from Chelsea Neighborhood Developers. One of our members donated a grill. Stop and Shop donated a gift card. Our first annual Early Harvest Cookout was a smashing success attended by a large number of gardeners and their families, as well as several neighbors.

MGH Refugee Program: Carrie Nedzipovik, a new garden member, is the Chelsea Police Department's Newcomers Advocate and the liaison for the MGH Refugee Program. Through her connections, we gained 3 new active garden families who are Bhutanese refugees from Nepal.

Chelsea Neighborhood Developers (CND) Garden Project: We strengthened our relationship with the CND gardeners by keeping them informed of BNAN workshops and offering car-pooling transportation to Boston. We also initiated a joint cookout with the CND Garden. It was so successful; we plan to make it an annual event. CND representatives were also at our Fall Open House. Additionally, Joe Rubin our 2010 Groundskeeper will be making a presentation for CND as an agency on how to utilize city owned land as garden space and the community wide benefits of doing so. This includes turning lawn spaces as well as vacant lots into gardens.

Photo Exhibit and Chelsea Community Cable: Chelsea Community Cable was very interested in filming the garden throughout the season and running it as a series. However, due to budget and time constraints, they were unable to do so. Melissa Shook, a gardener, photographer, and documentary filmmaker, was moved by the rich cultural diversity of our membership and took photographs throughout the gardening season. Margaret Carsley, long time garden member and 2011 Garden Co-Coordinator helped Melissa to organize an exhibit of her work. The Chelsea City Café graciously donated its gallery space and the refreshments for the opening. Though it was a cold rainy night, the event was very well attended by Chelsea city councillors, supportive Chelsea residents, neighbors and friends, and local artists and photographers. We also promoted garden membership with 2011 garden applications available.

Melissa produced a video documentary about our joint CCG/CND Cookout which was shown weekly on Chelsea Community Cable (CCTV) throughout October, November and December. She also filmed the YouthBuild/JustAStart construction project in December which will be shown on CCTV in 2011. She shared her photos and the video with YouthBuild/JustAStart and they were thrilled to have the documentary for the youth and their organization.

Chelsea Cultural Council: A grant was submitted to the Chelsea Cultural Council to support the photo and video documentation of the garden in 2011. Ms. Shook plans to film the diverse gardeners talking about the meaning of gardening and their personal histories in their own languages. The documentaries will be broadcast on CCTV allowing Chelsea residents to learn their stories. The photographic exhibit will record garden participation from the barren first months, through harvest, and frost. The aim of both photographic and video documentation will be to demonstrate the discipline and pleasure of gardening, to encourage wider participation and to build community. We feel quite confident that we will be receiving this grant to do this project.

Open House: In order to increase awareness about and interest in the Garden, we held a Garden Open House in October. We served pastries, coffee and hot cider on a beautiful fall day. The event was well publicized in both English and Spanish. We were happy to have many curious and interested community members stop by and learn about our garden, among them City Councilor Brian Hattelberg and reporter Cary Shuman from the Chelsea Record. The best result was that fifteen new families, who reflect the diversity of Chelsea, signed up for the garden in 2011. Even with the five new beds built by YouthBuild/JustAStart in December, we now have a waiting list.

Publicity and Media Coverage: We received terrific publicity for both the Photo Exhibition and the CCG Open House in the Chelsea Record, the Boston Globe, on Chelsea Community TV, and on the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) website. Copies of newspaper articles are attached. The gardeners distributed flyers extensively at city-wide organizations to announce both events. The flyers were bi-lingual in English and Spanish. Copies of the flyers are attached. We also utilized the Chelsea Collaborative's weekly cable spot "*Al Día con la Collaborativa*" to publicize the garden and our events.

Chelsea Senior Center: We would truly like the garden to be an intergenerational space which is open, welcoming and accessible to all. The tall beds originally intended for seniors and handicapped, have historically been under-utilized for this purpose. We had one senior citizen use a bed in 2010. Many seasons, the beds were left fallow. In

order to assess and address the challenges of ensuring more senior participation, we conducted discussions with the Chelsea Senior Center staff and Latino Elders as well as the Massachusetts General Hospital's (MGH) Healthy Chelsea Initiative. In collaboration with the Chelsea Senior Center, MGH's Healthy Chelsea Initiative, and Chelsea Community Cable, we submitted a proposal to the Chelsea Community Fund. This proposal intends to provide a safe means of transportation to and from the Chelsea Senior Center and Garden twice weekly, the construction of a paved walkway to safely access the tall elderly/handicapped beds and the creation of a gardening plan with which the group of Latino Senior participants will cultivate the tall beds cooperatively. We are pleased to report that we were awarded partial funding for this project from the Chelsea Community Fund.

ROCA YouthSTAR: Joe Rubin, our 2010 Groundskeeper, initiated a relationship with the ROCA YouthSTAR Program. ROCA serves high-risk young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are street, court, drug or gang involved, disengaged, in danger of dropping out, have dropped out, or are young parents. YouthSTAR participants satisfied their mandated community service hours through a series of Garden Work Days. YouthSTAR participants, many of them young mothers were enthusiastic and eager to learn about gardening as well as very good sports while doing the "grunt" work needed. They will have a garden bed of their own in the upcoming 2011 Garden season.

Chelsea Community Kitchen: This soup kitchen and food bank operates from ROCA's kitchen on Saturday mornings. We coordinated with the staff to make donations of organic vegetables weekly from our communal bed and from the surplus of 3 of the individual beds. We have plans to continue the relationship and to enlist more gardeners to volunteer and commit to contributing throughout the growing season.

BNAN and Whole Foods: The Whole Foods Kitchens' Regional Distribution Center is located in Chelsea. Joe Rubin, our 2010 groundskeeper, developed a connection with the Distribution Center in which they provided recycled 5-gallon and 2½-gallon buckets. Throughout the season, Joe regularly picked up the containers in Chelsea and delivered them to BNAN's center in Boston, for use in their "Container Gardening" program with Boston residents. This project specifically focuses on Somali, Bantu, Haitian, Korean, Vietnamese and other ethnic refugees who have only balconies or cement yards in which to garden. Joe picked up 150 containers at a time delivering almost 1,000 containers in total. He also held an impromptu workshop for 8 refugees on prepping their containers for drainage and planting.

CHARCOLL and the ArtWalk: We had hoped that the Garden would be a site for the 2010 CHARCOLL (Chelsea Artists Collaborative) annual ArtWalk. Unfortunately, due to liability and insurance issues, the project we had planned had to be cancelled. Happily, our Garden was chosen to be a venue on the 2011 ArtWalk. CHARCOLL will provide partial funding. Our participation will include an "INVITATIONAL" to artists to design and create scarecrows for exhibition in the Garden during the ArtWalk weekend. In addition, we will offer a staffed table with materials for people to make their own scarecrows to take home with them. We'll offer refreshments and information about the garden. Four of our garden members are members of CHARCOLL.

Collaboration with the City of Chelsea: Joe Rubin our 2010 Groundskeeper continued to maintain a good relationship with the Chelsea Public Works Department. The DPW picks up the trash and provides us with wood chips when they have them. When there was serious issue with a faulty sewer drain in the adjacent alley, Margaret Carsley and Joe Rubin worked together to inform the Public Works, Public Health, and Water departments at the City Hall as well as the two closest city councillors. Thanks to their intervention on behalf of the neighborhood, the problem was addressed and fixed promptly.

2. What factors have helped move your project forward?

NEGEF's support was crucial in helping us to develop both our physical and organizational structures. The dedication and commitment of our member gardeners was truly inspirational as well. This year we saw increased involvement and ownership from some of our newest members. Additionally, we worked hard to increase communication and a sense of community between gardeners. Having a bilingual English/Spanish Co-Coordinator and a bilingual English/Bhutanese member who provided consistent translation was invaluable. We also increased communications by using a Yahoo email group. The email group function allowed members to post and answer

questions, send reminders about upcoming events and recreational activities such as monthly meetings, workdays, workshops, cookouts, and the photo exhibit and to post general garden news.

3. What obstacles still stand between your group and achieving “success?”

Although we have improved communication and goodwill among the gardeners a great deal this season, this is a crucial issue for 2011. The challenge is to continue to keep the interest in communal activities and responsibilities high and to sustain people’s enthusiasm for our many newly created membership activities.

Before the new membership-led structure, most gardeners were interested in simply tending their own beds and looked upon any communal garden activities as a chore. With the successes of the Open House, Photography receptions and Cookouts as community building exercises, this has begun to change. In our monthly membership meetings, we worked to create organizational frame-works to encourage democratic decision making processes. We planned brainstorming exercises to encourage total membership participation. We met with Staci Rubin from Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE) who helped with advice on this subject. We want to continue this work and expand on it.

This year, we have invited 2 new groups of people to participate – a group of Latino Seniors from the Chelsea Senior Center and the Roca YouthSTAR participants. We will also have 9 new families. We need to be mindful to keep open communications between these “pre-formed” groups and our members old and new. We need to be aware and to communicate to all the membership, of any special needs or considerations of our Seniors, our new youth participants, and families. We need to determine what specific gardening instruction the new members will need, especially the youth group and attempt to provide this. We need to facilitate ways of sharing all special talents and skills of our members among the membership. At our Steering Committee and Membership meetings, we must continue to plan and experiment with activities and communication methods that best achieve these goals. We need to review what worked and what didn’t work last year. We began this evaluation process at the October membership meeting.

Communication is key. For 2011, we have elected have 3 bi-lingual Co-coordinators; a bi-lingual Groundskeeper; a bi-lingual Treasurer and a Membership coordinator who is making great strides in learning Spanish. We will initiate a Phone-tree. We will decrease the amount of formal Monthly Membership Meetings from 8 to 4 and will conduct bi-weekly informal “update” meetings at the Garden on Saturday mornings. We will utilize the newly installed Garden’s bulletin boards to post notices in Spanish, Bhutanese and English. In addition to the Yahoo group, we will utilize an e-mail system again. We discovered that all members could not access the Yahoo group. We will also have some new members who do not have access to e-mail and we’ll need to make a special effort to keep them in the know.

B. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

1. Have members of your group become more active in other community activities or organizations since you began your project? If so, in what ways?

In terms of leadership development, we feel it is most important to highlight the ways in which our garden members have taken on more leadership and responsibility within the garden. We have expanded our Executive Committee. We all worked to create by-laws. Members stepped up taking part in outreach efforts, appearing on Chelsea Community Cable, planning and contributing to Garden cookouts and open-houses, organizing activities for the many children involved in the Garden, conducting workshops both formal and impromptu, assisting with fundraising efforts and grant writing and generally contributing to community building within the Garden and by connecting the Garden to other community agencies, projects, and programs.

2. Did the experience with this group make you and/or other group members more politically active at any level? If so, at what level: local, state, regional?

We believe we sowed the seeds for future local political activation this past gardening season. As we make more community connections and create a greater awareness about the garden, we are acutely aware of the need for more community gardens in Chelsea and the lack of space for most community members to garden. We have several members who are interested in creating a sub-committee to work on this with the Collaborative's Green Space, the city's Development Department and Alternatives for Community and Environment.

C. COMMUNITY CHANGES

1. In your opinion, have you and/or group members significantly increased their knowledge of any of the following: environmental justice, environmental health, greenspace issues, how your community works or how to solve problems locally?

Before the 2010 planting season began, we had a vote on whether the garden was to be "organic". This led to many thoughtful discussions among the gardeners of the benefits of gardening organically and to the documentation of the guidelines for being an organic garden. Members increased their knowledge significantly on what it means to garden organically.

We truly want our garden community to be representative of the diversity of our larger community. We are fortunate in Chelsea as we have so many community agencies and groups that work to address community needs and issues. We invited the Chelsea Senior Center and the ROCA YouthSTAR groups to join the garden as members. We appreciate the contributions made to the garden by YouthBuild and YouthStar youth. In return we feel we have been a good partner by providing a place where Chelsea youth can have an opportunity to learn new work skills and practice good work habits.

As mentioned above, we will form a sub-committee to address the lack of greenspace and community gardens for Chelsea families.

2. Since the group's formation, have other local environmental issues received community attention and sparked other community activism? If so, what issues?

The garden, its membership and local environmental issues have seen many changes since 1996. However, as noted above since the gardeners have become more active and taken more leadership within the garden, the longstanding issues of the need for green space and community gardens within Chelsea have sparked members' interest which we hope will lead to activism. A number of our new members are keenly interested in finding space for the creation of more community gardens in Chelsea. We will be forming a sub-committee of these interested members who will be working on this issue in the coming year.

A few of our members are specifically interested in making a stronger connection with the Chelsea Community Kitchen in order to organize more of our member to donate produce to the Saturday Soup Kitchen at ROCA.

D. NEGEF'S IMPACT ON GROUP'S WORK

1. Although it's hard to quantify, please tell us if and how NEGEF's grant and support made a difference to your group and its work. If you had not received the grant from NEGEF, what difference, if any, would it have made to your project?

Without NEGEF's funds we would not have been able to purchase soil for the expanded beds, prepare the garden or buy the materials to build the six additional beds, purchase tools and provide stipends to the co-coordinators for the time and effort they volunteered in order to accomplish this year's considerable achievements. Additionally, writing the first grant for NEGEF brought the gardeners together as a group to discuss where we were at, to decide on how to improve the membership participation, to solidify our Chelsea Community Gardeners' Association as an organization, to think deeply about how best to use and develop the physical space of the garden, and to devise strategies for achieving these goals. The garden's leadership and membership have worked extremely hard this

season begin to create an organization that is democratic, inclusive and purposeful. NEGEF's financial assistance in 2010 has been directly responsible for all of the significant achievements noted above.

2. What additional skills, information, trainings would help advance your project?

We can always use assistance in identifying potential funding sources to sustain the on-going governance and maintenance of the garden. Looking forward to the future, we would seek technical assistance to reach the goal of identifying and preserving green spaces throughout the city in order to provide additional community gardens for our residents. We would need help and advice on issues of property acquisition, garden design and fund-raising to actualize the building of future community gardens in Chelsea.

FINAL REPORT SECTION 3: FINANCIAL REPORT

1. Please attach an itemized expense sheet that shows how you spent the NEGEF grant money.

An itemized expense report, prepared by Rob Caro, Treasurer, Chelsea Community Gardeners Association, is attached.

2. Was the NEGEF grant your only source of funds? If not, what additional funds did you raise? From what sources?

NEGEF was the only source of foundation support that we received for 2010. In addition to NEGEF's support, we collected \$425 in dues from members. We also received a significant amount of in kind support. A detailed list of in kind support is attached. Additionally, NEGEF's support contributed to significant changes within the Garden to both the physical structure and the organizational structure that enabled us to apply for and receive support to facilitate seniors from the Chelsea Senior Center taking part in the Garden this upcoming season.

FINAL REPORT SECTION 4: NEGEF PROGRAM EVALUATION

1. Please comment about our program and how you think we can improve it to meet the needs of the grassroots environmental community in New England.

We are truly grateful for NEGEF's support and the changes it has enabled us to make. Please continue to do the wonderful work that you are doing to support small community groups in New England addressing environmental issues. It is necessary and important.

2. Do you know of other community groups that might benefit from our program? Please include names and addresses and we will contact them.

Not at this time.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND IDEAS. YOUR INPUT WILL HELP US IMPROVE OUR PROGRAM.

BOSTON GRANTS INITIATIVE GRANTEE PROFILE
Chelsea Community Gardeners Association – Chelsea Community Garden

1. What is the mission or the goals of your group?

The purpose of the Chelsea Community Garden (the Garden) is to build a sense of community through the promotion, creation, and maintenance of community gardens in Chelsea; to teach gardening techniques; and to promote enjoyment of gardening.

2. How long has your group been in existence? The Garden was established in 1996. In 2008, the membership began to take a more active role in leadership of the garden.

3 What issue/issues got your group going?

The Garden was developed to foster community gardening, community building, environmental justice, and providing more green space in the city of Chelsea.

4. How many people started the group?

The Chelsea Community Garden was created in 1996 by the Chelsea Community Connections Coalition under the Collaborative's umbrella. In 2001 the Collaborative's Green Space and Recreation Committee (Green Space) took over coordination of the garden and its activities. In 2009, a group of 4 gardeners met regularly over the season as an ad-hoc steering committee. The group met monthly toward the goals of improving communication and civic participation among gardeners, establishing a more formal membership structure and making improvements to the garden.

5. Is this the first time that the group's "founders" had been "activated"?

If not the first time, with what other issues had they been involved?

When there was an assigned Garden Coordinator who was not a gardener, many gardeners simply viewed the garden from the perspective of their own plot. Since 2009 when the gardeners themselves have become more involved in the running, oversight and funding of the garden, many gardeners have been "activated" beyond their own garden plots. This has resulted in connecting the garden to and utilizing it for many more community concerns. We developed a relationship with the Chelsea Community Kitchen donating the surplus from the communal garden bed as well as a selection of individual beds. This relationship will be continued and more gardeners have committed to contributing their surplus fruits and vegetables. We connected with ROCA youth. We made a connection with the seniors of the Chelsea Senior Center. Both of these relationships will be further developed in the upcoming season.

Many gardeners have stepped up within the garden helping with problem solving, decision making, fundraising, planning and so much more. The gardeners who have been involved for the longest time assert that this is the most exciting time to be part of the Garden. This excitement about the Garden and all of the community issues that can be addressed through community gardening has fostered a commitment to developing additional community gardens within the city.

6. How many people are currently involved as the core group of leaders/workers?

We had an active Steering Committee of four (4) members in 2009, five (5) members in 2010, and have elected an Executive Committee of six (6) for the 2011 season. In addition, in 2010 we were pleased that an additional fourteen (14) very active members were recruited or stepped forward to assume a variety of leadership roles.

7. Is this a membership organization? If so, how many members do you have?

Yes, in 2010 we had 23 families participate as members. We are looking forward to adding an additional 6 families, a group of 12-15 Senior Center participants, and a group of YouthSTAR adolescents from ROCA who will join our membership ranks for the 2011 gardening season.

8. Do you have any paid staff? If yes, how many full-time equivalents?

The Chelsea Collaborative is the garden's fiscal agent. It provides financial assistance, structure, continuity, and clerical assistance. In 2010, the Collaborative did not have a staff person funded as a garden coordinator. In all previous years, the Collaborative funded a staff member as part-

time coordinator to oversee the administrative and organizational functions of the community garden. In 2010, these functions were administered by the membership. In 2010 NEGEF funding enabled us to provide stipends of \$2000 to support the co-coordinators. Since the leadership responsibilities have been shared among all steering committee members, the executive committee decided to split the stipend 5 ways in an attempt to make it a more equitable distribution.

9. What is the role of volunteers? Approximately how many volunteers are involved in your work?

This is essentially an all-volunteer membership-led organization sponsored by the Green Space Committee at the Chelsea Collaborative. Last season we had 23 families as members of the Garden. We are looking forward to the addition of 6 families, 12-15 Senior Center members, and youth from ROCA's YouthSTAR program.

Members help plan and participate in Garden work days to maintain the common spaces, take part in efforts to conduct outreach by distributing flyers, sending emails, and appearing on Chelsea Community Cable, plan and contribute to Garden cookouts and open-houses, organize activities for the many children involved in the Garden, conduct workshops both formal and impromptu, assist with fundraising efforts and grant writing and generally contribute to community building within the Garden and by connecting the Garden to other community agencies, projects, and programs.

10. Approximately how many people in your community can be "mobilized" to support your issue – i.e., go to a meeting, sign a petition, call a city councilor, etc.?

Of the 23 families in 2010, 12 families are very active members. All members must attend an annual initial meeting and are encouraged to attend all garden events. Members are informed by e-mail and phone calls of all of the various activities, meetings and workdays in the garden throughout the year. If faced with an issue for which we would need to mobilize people, we can also count on the support of Green Space, the Chelsea Collaborative and its many members.

11. Has the focus of your group broadened or changed at all since it first started? If so, in what ways?

Yes, now that we are more organized as a membership-led community group, we are able to reach out more to the community at large. In 2010, we had active on-going involvement with Chelsea Neighborhood Developers Community Garden, Chelsea Community Cable TV, the ROCA YouthSTAR program, MGH Refugee Program and the Chelsea Community Kitchen. In the fall, we did extensive outreach to a broad range of community groups and organizations to publicize the Garden's October Open House and the 2 photo exhibit receptions at the Chelsea City Café's Art Gallery.

We truly want the garden to be an intergenerational space. We wanted to engage more seniors in the garden. As such we initiated contact at the Chelsea Senior Center and MGH's Healthy Chelsea Initiative to explore the challenges that needed to be addressed, the supports that needed to be put into place, and the benefits for all of increased senior participation. We partnered with both agencies to write a grant to support involving Chelsea Latino Seniors in the Garden. We also worked at developing a relationship with youth from ROCA's YouthSTAR program who were working on carpentry projects in the adjacent parking lot and interested in gardening. The ROCA youth fulfilled community service requirements by helping us with our garden clean ups and expansion project. They also are in the process of building an additional shed for the Garden for the upcoming season. We are very excited that they signed up to share a garden plot as well. The Senior Center participants and the ROCA youth will directly involve 25 – 30 new community members as gardeners.

As a number of gardeners are also involved in the Arts, we hoped to use art and the garden together to connect to the larger community. We had hoped to be involved with the ArtWalk for summer 2010. Due to liability and insurance issues we were not able to participate. We did, however, use stakes and Mylar sheets from one of the installments, Shallow Waters, to decorate the garden and keep birds from our "crops." We also discussed more realistic planning for summer 2011. We followed up with CHARCOLL, the Chelsea Artists Collaborative, which

organizes the event. We will have an “invitational” to artists to build scarecrows to display in the Garden prior to the ArtWalk’s weekend. The Garden will then be a site during the ArtWalk. The scarecrows will be exhibited and we’ll have a table with materials for people to make their own scarecrows to take home with them as well as refreshments and information about the garden.

- 12. Have any members of your group run for or been appointed to public office since they started working on your issue/issues?**
If so, for what office? Not since 2009.

- 13. Describe the size and make-up of your neighborhood/community.**

According to the 2000 Census, Chelsea has an estimated population of 35,080 which we believe is closer to 42,000. Our densely populated community is just 1.8 square miles, just 37.6% of which is zoned for residential use. Chelsea is a minority majority city. According to the 2000 Census a full 61% of Chelsea residents identify as Hispanic, Black or African American, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Presently and historically it is a city of immigrants who presently make up 36% of the population. Chelsea’s immigrant population, reflective of its larger population is largely Latino and primarily from Central America. Chelsea is also among the poorest municipalities in the Commonwealth. Home-owners may enjoy small yards, while most residents live in triple deckers or high-rise apartment buildings – often with not even a porch to grow a potted tomato plant. Chelsea has few green spaces for its residents. Most immigrants, especially those from Central America, were born in rural areas where farming and gardening was integral to their lives.

- 14. Who are the constituents of your proposal?**

The Chelsea Community Garden is open to all Chelsea residents. The Garden connects residents across generation, ethnicity and race. Many of our members are recent immigrant whose participation helps them to re-connect with their upbringing - to again cultivate, nurture, observe and appreciate the lifecycles of gardening. Many families garden together. Parents teach their children how to cultivate and harvest their own crops. Community gardening promotes physical activity and cultural sharing. To those who desire to become “greener citizens,” community gardening provides access to nature in our densely populated city, and a resource to educate and link our members to more “green” initiatives in the city.

- 15. Have you networked or shared information/resources with other groups? If so, with whom and how did you find out about them?**

Yes, over the past year we have worked with the following community organizations: YouthBuild/JustAStart, Chelsea Community Kitchen, Chelsea Public Library, ROCA YouthSTAR program, Chelsea Senior Center, MGH Healthy Chelsea Initiative, MGH Refugee Program, Charcoll (Chelsea Artist’s Collaborative), Chelsea Community Cable TV, ACE Alternatives for Community and Environment, Chelsea Neighborhood Developers Community Garden project, and of course the Chelsea Collaborative.

Many of our members have long standing community connections and relationships with these agencies. Additionally, the Collaborative has been working on community issues in Chelsea for over 20 years and offers support as needed to connect to resources.

- 16. How have you gained knowledge about your issue?**

We have gardeners with skill levels and knowledge bases from novices to master gardeners. We learn and grow together as gardeners sharing our experiences and knowledge. We have shared our knowledge with the Chelsea Neighborhood Developers Community Garden Project and gained knowledge from the sharing experiences as well. We continue to develop the cross gardens relationship and knowledge base. Additionally, we have a good relationship with Boston Natural Areas Network (BNAN). They provide technical assistance and invite us to all their workshops.

17. If your group is more than a year old, can you quantify any of your “successes”?

Examples might be toxic sites cleaned up, greenspaces/community gardens created, amount of money raised, legislation passed, etc.

We increased our community outreach efforts exponentially this past year. Thanks to our resident photographer/videographer, Melissa Shook we were able to produce shows for the local cable TV station and mount a photography exhibit at the Chelsea City Gallery. The local newspaper and even the Boston Globe covered our efforts which made the larger community aware of our garden.

We invited the Chelsea Senior Center to use the tall elderly/handicapped beds and wrote a grant to support bringing 15-20 Latino elders to Garden. We feel very hopeful about this grant. The ROCA YouthSTAR group has taken an interest in gardening. They helped with the fall's massive cleanup effort and got to know the garden and gardeners. The youth are looking forward to planting their garden plot in the spring. After our Open House in the fall, we have many more families on the waiting list than beds to accommodate them, even after the construction of the new beds. We initiated an annual get-together with the Chelsea Neighborhood Developer's community gardeners which we look forward to sustaining.

18. What are your long-range financial plans for sustaining your group?

We depend on the Collaborative to be our fiscal agent. We plan to establish a fund-raising committee among interested members. We will continue to draw on the assistance of the Collaborative's Development Coordinator as needed to help us to identify potential sources and to assist with proposals. The Chelsea Community Fund has awarded us partial support for our efforts to bring more seniors into the garden for this upcoming season. CHARCOLL, the Chelsea Artists Collaborative, is also providing partial assistance so that the garden can take part in their Annual Artwalk. We are awaiting a decision from the Chelsea Cultural Council on a grant to cover the costs of the labor and materials for our second Annual Garden Photo Exhibit. We received much support last season in in-kind support from labor to build the new beds, to seeds, to mulch, to a children's sandbox and so much more. We are truly grateful for NEGEF's support. We could not have gotten to this point without your support. We hope you will consider funding us again for this upcoming year.

Finally, by following our by-laws and maintaining good communication among the members, especially the new members, we hope to continue to create and nurture a more active and participatory membership that can creatively plan for a stable economic future for the Chelsea Community Garden.

19. What are the biggest challenges your group/ community/neighborhood faces?

Two of our biggest challenges, both short and long-term, are equal civic participation and good communication among the members. We have been extremely successful in improving both areas this year and we look forward to continuing in the next, especially with the new Senior Center project and the ROCA YouthSTAR group, as well as the addition of 8 new families to our 2011 membership. Our bi-lingual coordinator, Roberto Hinojosa has been a tremendous help with communications with our Spanish speaking membership and Krishna Kharel has volunteered to be co-coordinator of the garden, which is a great thing for communication with our Bhutanese families.

The third is a long-term challenge. We would like to expand the concept and availability of community gardens throughout the city. We have a number of new members who would like to work on this issue and we plan to create a committee to work with the Chelsea Green Space Committee and Chelsea Neighborhood Developers Community Gardeners to research finding open space areas and funding in order to build more community gardens in Chelsea.

20. What skills do you feel you and/or members of your group could use to help move your issue forward (e.g., community organizing, fundraising, media and message development, board development, etc.)?

We need help in finding ways to preserve green spaces throughout the city for community gardens. We need help and advice for both property acquisition and fund-raising to actualize the building of future community gardens in the city.

Chelsea Community Gardeners Association 2010 Garden Expenses.xls

Garden Expenses		12/31/10	
Category	Date	Description	Cost
Office Supplies			\$ 30.00
	22-Feb	Meeting room	20.00
	22-Mar	Meeting room	10.00
Soil/Compost			\$ 4,053.50
	13-May	Compost + delivery	390.00
	10-Sep	Tree removal	670.00
	22-Sep	Landscaping	1880.00
	1-Nov	Lumber for new plots	587.50
	3-Nov	Soil new plots	526.00
Garden Supplies			\$ 556.56
For 2009	6-Aug	Garden Supplies	43.58
	13-May	Supplies (tape, numbers & letters)	9.38
	4-Feb	Garden keys	22.47
	1-Aug	Peat & Perlite	20.88
	22-Jun	Screws	2.69
	6-Jul	Sand for sandbox	7.02
	7-Sep	Hose & Nozzle	36.98
	7-Sep	w/w service contact - 3yrs	49.99
	7-Sep	w/w gas can & oil	13.97
	7-Sep	w/w 2 gallons gas	5.60
	3-Nov	Rental generator 55 @ 5	275.00
	3-Nov	Spikes	69.00
Garden Tools			\$ 488.80
	13-May	Garden tools (trowel, mini brush)	13.47
	11-Jun	Bulb planter	2.49
	26-Aug	Sears tools (hammer, hoe, ax, etc)	102.95
	29-Aug	Weed wacker (w/w)	167.99
	7-Sep	Garden tools	201.90
Water Expenses			\$ 227.26
	9-Jun	Water bill	8.08
	9-Jun	Water meter	195.00
	3-Aug	Water bill	24.18
Garden Events			\$ 376.32
	28-Aug	Cook Outs	171.89
	29-Aug	Foil	1.06
	27-Aug	Water	4.98
	28-Aug	Ice	12.45
	24-Aug	Pizza - monthly meeting	69.25
	13-Jul	Pizza - monthly meeting	26.50

Chelsea Community Gardeners Association 2010 Garden Expenses.xls

	14-Oct	Chelsea City Photo reception Market B	48.82	
	15-Oct	Chelsea City Photo reception Stop/Shop	16.56	
	15-Oct	Garden Open House -Market Basket	24.81	
Soil Testing				\$ 162.00
	7-Sep	Soil Test	162.00	
Stipends				\$ 2,000.00
	5-Oct	Coordinator - Misty	500.00	
	5-Oct	Groundskeeper - Joe	500.00	
	26-Oct	Co-Coordinator - Roberto	400.00	
	26-Oct	Co - Coordinator - Margaret	500.00	
	15-Nov	Translator - Krishna	100.00	
Mulch				
Fruit Tree Labor				
Garden Sign				\$ 75.00
	3-Nov	New sign	75.00	
Other				\$ 264.44
	7-Sep	Joe Rubin mileage	43.01	
	1-Oct	Joe Rubin mileage	181.43	
	25-Sep	Eng -Spanish By-Laws Translation	40.00	
	Total			\$ 8,233.88

Chelsea Community Garden In Kind Donations	
Donor	Donation/s
Au Bon Pain	pastries and coffee for events and meetings
Barrett Tree Service East	woodchips
Burnett and Moynihan Lumber	free lumber delivery
Chelsea City Café	gallery space for Photography Exhibition food, drinks, and labor for October opening
Chelsea Collaborative	translation and meeting space
Chelsea Floor Covering Co	used rugs to cover weeded areas
Chelsea Neighborhood Developers	use of tables, chairs and a grill for events and use of spare gloves for 5 ROCA youth for work parties
City of Chelsea	trash pickup, wood chips, turning water on, and water shut off
Costin Carpenter Construction Co.	woodchips
David Wardwell	used deck planking for construction of a small community strawberry bed and other small herb beds
ROCA YouthSTAR Program	5 work days involving 15-23 youth helping to clean, mulch, organize, and plant
Whole Foods North East Regional Kitchens	plastic buckets for BNAN and the Garden
YouthBuild/JustAStart Program	a weeks worth of labor to build new beds
Garden Member	Donation/s
Bob Boulrice	b-bque grill
Margaret Carsley	announcement post cards for Photo Exhibition, 4 blueberry bushes and strawberry plants, use of sifting screens
Martha and Ted Coates	one sign for one of the fences
Elaine Cusick	donation of 15 raspberry bushes, children's plastic tools
Clayton Fountain	2 blueberry bushes
Eveyln Hinde	seed packets
Jennifer and Charles Klauder	sandbox, children's tools, and granite for paving
Linda Munitz and Rob Caro	redwood garden bench and chair
Joe Rubin	wrought iron bakers rack for a plant stand and storage, metal chairs, and use of sifting screens
David and Alison Rudolph	painted and donated a second English sign for the gate
Krissy Shook	large orange bucket for holding children's plastic tools
Melissa Shook	labor and materials for Photography Exhibition and (2) one hour videos (one at the CCG/CND cookout in September and one of the YouthBuild just a Start project in November
Enesa Skopljak	2 blueberry bushes