

Town of San Anselmo

Staff Report
August 8, 2022

For the meeting of August 16, 2022

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Dannielle Mauk, Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: San Anselmo Community Gardens Draft Bylaws and Rules

Recommendation

That the Commission review and approve the bylaws and rules for the San Anselmo Community Gardens at Robson-Harrington Park.

Background

The Town of San Anselmo owns the Community Gardens at Robson Harrington Park. The gardens were created in the 1970's and serve as a space to grow food, plants, recreate, and relax. Historically, the Town entered into an agreement twenty-five years ago with the garden steering committee to manage and operate the gardens.

In the past, the garden steering committee established rules that were approved by garden members. Staff is proposing to establish a set of bylaws and rules that will provide consistency and transparency for the management of the community gardens. Moving forward the gardens would be managed by the Recreation Department with oversight by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Discussion

Over the past six months there have been problems with plot assignments and management of the community gardens. Town Council asked staff to review the overall operations. As a result, staff worked with the Parks and Recreation Commission and created a sub-committee consisting of two Commissioners, two representatives from the community garden's steering committee and one staff member. The sub-committee met on several occasions over a two-month period to discuss and revise the proposed bylaws and rules. The purpose of the revised bylaws is to restore governance and management of the community gardens to the Town. The purpose of the garden rules is to set forth what is expected of community garden members.

With the support of the garden steering committee, the proposed bylaws and the rules were distributed to the community gardeners, and community garden membership meetings were held on July 9 and August 6, 2022, at Robson Park.

The most contentious issue addressed at the general meetings was the residency requirement for garden membership. Most Marin towns only permit residents to be members of their community garden. Currently, residents and non-residents may be members of our community garden. There are 33 garden plots and 10 are held by non-residents. There are 40 people on the waiting list for garden plots, of which 30 are San Anselmo residents. The proposed bylaws presented at the July 9 general meeting provided that commencing January 1, 2024, only San Anselmo residents could be garden members. There was strong resistance by many long-term garden members to the residency requirement. They emphasized that it fell unfairly on elderly gardeners for whom the garden is a vital part of their lives and that it overlooks the critical role these gardeners have played in the development and maintenance of the garden.

Upon further consideration of the valuable contribution of the non-resident members, the proposed bylaws were revised to permit all current members to continue their garden membership provided that 10 additional plots are created by January 1, 2024. All new members must be residents of San Anselmo. The Town will work with the garden steering committee to create the new plots. This will be accomplished in a variety of ways, including creating new plots in existing empty spaces, dividing some plots, and gardeners sharing plots. This will have the effect of providing plots for at least 10 residents on the waiting list. Additional plots will also become available through attrition.

Analysis

Over the years the lack of Town involvement and the need to follow through with compliance issues in a timely manner has led to challenges with the management of the community gardens.

Staff researched the operations of community gardens throughout Marin and found that the majority are managed by their recreation departments. The Recreation Department will work closely with the Public Works Department on maintenance of the community garden and plot inspections.

For the above stated reasons, staff is recommending that the 1997 agreement with the Community Gardens be retired, and the new bylaws and rules be the governing documents for the Robson Harrington Community Gardens. The management of the gardens would be placed under the supervision of the Recreation Department and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Commission will interview and appoint members to the steering committee. Staff will meet at least quarterly with the steering committee to support the management and operations of the gardens.

The bylaws and rules will be re-evaluated annually by the steering committee, Commission and staff, and any updates would be reviewed and adopted by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Fiscal Impact

Currently, the gardeners have an independent account that pays for water usage and annual mulching supplies. Moving forward, the balance of this account will be transferred to the Town and all dues will be collected by the Town and deposited into a town account. Disbursements from this account must be approved by the steering committee and the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department. This

account will pay for the above expenses and any surplus will be used towards maintenance of the gardens.

As part of the new arrangement, there are approximately 5 new plots that will be created in the existing empty spaces. Staff propose to help create the new plots by installing two posts for a new gate, installing the main water lateral, and supplying the materials for new fencing. The total cost for this work would be approximately \$1,200 per plot or \$6,000 total that would need to come from the general fund. Additional plots will be created by current gardeners dividing or sharing existing plots. The new plot holders would be responsible for finishing the fence, installing irrigation, and any other plant bedding.

Conclusion

That the Commission review and approve the bylaws and rules for the San Anselmo Community Gardens at Robson-Harrington Park; and recommend them to the Town Council for approval.

Attachment 1: Draft Community Garden By-Laws

Attachment 2: Draft Community Garden Rules

Attachment 3: Comments from the Public

San Anselmo Community Garden Bylaws

MISSION STATEMENT

The San Anselmo Community Garden at Robson-Harrington Park (SACG or Garden) will endeavor to create a sharing and learning environment in a productive, well-maintained community garden where its members are committed to organic gardening practices, stewardship of soil and water, and in cooperation with others for the enjoyment of all.

GARDEN GOVERNANCE

The San Anselmo Parks and Recreation Department will have oversight of the Garden.

A Steering Committee appointed by the Parks and Recreation Commission will help develop policies and coordinate garden activities. The Steering Committee shall consist of 3 or more gardeners and at least one staff member of the Parks and Recreation Department. Steering Committee members will serve for a term of 2 years. The Steering Committee will meet quarterly, and its meetings must comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.

Changes to these Bylaws should be recommended to the Steering Committee and/or Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Commission must approve all changes.

GARDEN DESCRIPTION AND MEMBERSHIP

The SACG is a recreational facility that belongs to the Town of San Anselmo and is controlled by the San Anselmo Parks and Recreation Department.

The garden consists of 33 plots and is located at the Robson-Harrington Park in San Anselmo.

New members of the garden must be residents of San Anselmo. Current non-resident members of the garden may continue their garden membership provided 10 additional plots are created by January 1, 2024. This may be accomplished by creating new plots and/or subdividing existing plots.

A Waiting List for garden membership will be maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department. San Anselmo residents may add their names to the Waiting List anytime during the year.

ANNUAL DUES

Members will pay annual dues as follows:

Annual Dues: \$150

** San Anselmo nonprofit organizations are eligible for a waiver of the annual dues.*

If a member joins the Garden during the gardening year, the annual dues will be \$150 if there are 7 or more months remaining or \$75 if there are 6 or fewer months remaining. Dues are non-refundable.

The Town of San Anselmo (Town) will collect the annual dues, which will be placed in an account for the Garden. The Town will maintain a checking account for the Garden. The Steering Committee may request disbursements from the account, which must be approved by the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department.

PLOT ASSIGNMENT

The annual renewal process and plot assignments will occur prior to the start of the gardening season as designated by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Gardening season begins on February 1st of each year.

The Steering Committee and the Parks and Recreation Department will be responsible for creating, assigning, and configuring garden plots. Renewing gardeners will be reassigned the plot they gardened the previous year.

Available plots will be assigned to new gardeners from the Waiting List. All structures in garden plots must be approved by the Parks and Recreation Department.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GARDENERS TO REMAIN IN GOOD STANDING

The Garden requires active participation. Following is the minimum required of each gardener who desires to be a member of the garden community.

- 1) Be an active gardener
- 2) Follow all garden rules
- 3) Participate in Community Service

COMMUNITY SERVICE

In addition to plot and pathway maintenance, all gardeners are expected to volunteer in the garden. This includes annual garden cleanup days, teaching classes, or any activity deemed appropriate by the Parks and Recreation Department and/or the Steering Committee. Alternate tasks will be assigned to those unable to participate in organized activities.

In addition, it is a goal of the Garden to grow, harvest and contribute food to designated community organizations. A collection bin will be available, and gardeners are encouraged to place vegetables into the bins. Garden volunteers will donate them to designated community organizations. Vegetables should not be left unpicked in garden plots. Each gardener should designate an alternate gardener to pick and donate vegetables from his/her plot rather than let them spoil.

If the community demand for a garden plot is low (waiting list below 10) a Community Plot can be set aside, and its produce will be contributed to designated organizations within the county. The Community Plot may be used for Parks and Recreation Department programming. Existing gardeners will maintain the Community Plot.

San Anselmo Community Garden Rules

Updated August 8, 2022

Mission:

The San Anselmo Community Garden at Robson-Harrington Park (SACG or Garden) will endeavor to create a sharing and learning environment in a productive, well-maintained community garden where its members are committed to organic gardening practices, stewardship of soil and water, and in cooperation with others for the enjoyment of all.

COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES

1. **Code of Conduct:** The code is a tool for understanding and upholding acceptable, safe, and respectful standards for community garden members.

1. Model behavior that respects the human rights of all people:
 - Treat all community members and garden visitors with respect, courtesy, and dignity.
 - Do not harass with the use of insensitive or offensive language such as sexist, ageist, racist, or profane commentary either written or verbal.
 - Refrain from engaging in physical or emotional abuse toward others.
2. Use reasonable care to protect and safeguard Robson Garden property.
3. Follow the rules established by the town for The Robson-Harrington Park.

2. **Annual Dues** Annual dues are currently \$150.00. Payment is due by the Fall meeting. Members will be contacted immediately if Dues are not paid by that meeting date. Dues 14 days past due are grounds for expulsion. There are scholarship funds available through the San Anselmo Parks and Recreation Department.

3. **General Meetings:** There is a minimum of two per year. Members are required to attend at least one meeting per year.

4. **Community Garden Work Days:** All gardeners are expected to help with tasks that benefit the community garden. Everyone is required to participate in the work days. There will be a minimum of two work days per year. Each garden member with their own plot is expected to perform a minimum of 4 hours of work each work day. If two unrelated people share a plot, the expectation is that each

person will perform a minimum of 4 hours of work each work day. Those members unable to participate on the scheduled work day are required to put in at least 4 hours to complete a task, either in advance of the work day, or within 30 days after the work day. The member must contact the work day coordinator to select a task. Sample jobs include weeding and pruning plants in common areas and repairing fences.

Garden Plots:

5. **Maintenance:** Members should maintain their plot in a productive state, either with vegetables, flowers, herbs, or cover crops that do not shade or impede on any other plot. Crops must be harvested when ripe and not allowed to rot on plants. Deadhead perennial plants.
 - If you will be absent from your plot, it is your responsibility to arrange for your plot to be maintained by someone else and for a period no longer than 3 months. You must notify the Steering Committee of an arrangement that is longer than 2 weeks.
6. **Structures in plots:** Growing beds shall be constructed with wood only. Except for seasonal tomato cages and trellis that do not impede on neighboring plots, no structure may be erected in a plot taller than 6 feet and must blend harmoniously with the Robson Park property. Any structure taller than 3 feet that is not for the purpose of seasonal growing is subject to Steering Committee and Parks and Recreation Department approval. All structures must be easily removeable and must be removed when the plot is vacated.
7. **Toxic Materials:** Chemical pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides are not allowed. Garden beds will be constructed with non-pressure treated lumber only. Existing PT lumber should be phased out as soon as possible.
8. **Soil:** Replenish annually with at least 1" or more of organic matter such as compost or manure.
9. **Invasive Plants:** Avoid invasive plants and vines—any kind of plant that takes over and spreads. Invasive plants and vines include, but are not limited to: ornamental grasses, oxalis, fennel, horseradish, mint, dandelion, Jerusalem artichoke, passionflower vine and perennial morning glory vine. The Marin Master Gardeners website has information on invasive plants. Growing marijuana, for any purpose, is prohibited.
10. **Weeds:** Maintain a weed-free plot, including the edges of your plot. Do not allow weeds to spread by seed or invasion.

11. **Plant Debris:** Put all plant debris in the green bins; do not dump in the common areas or outside the green bins. When all the green bins are full, members have permission to fill empty black cans. Use the ones that have NO lid first.
12. **Containers:** Members may keep no more than 5 empty containers, such as buckets, and 1 tightly closed storage container per plot. Store tomato cages and stakes together and keep tools tidy and in a manner that does not invite or shelter pests.
13. **Rodents, Mosquitos, Pests:** Members shall not maintain any condition in their plot which allows rodents, mosquitos, or other pests a permanent home. (e.g., No standing water such as bird baths; No piles of stored material that give rodents cover and habitat.)
14. **Water:** Do not waste it! Members pay our total water bill.
 - Use mulch and drip irrigation when possible.
 - Always turn off the main shut-off valve at the top of the garden when you leave to avoid pipe breaks leading to high water bills.
 - Plot holder or designee must be in the garden if water is on.
 - All irrigation systems should have a manual timer. If water is found left on and no one is in the plot, the system will be shut off.
 - Fix or report all dripping and leaking faucets and hose bibs.
 - Minimize watering outside of your plot.
 - All plots must comply with MMWD and San Anselmo water restrictions.
15. **Trees in Common Areas:** Trees in common areas are not to be touched/removed or altered without the approval of the Steering Committee and the Parks and Recreation Department
16. **Trees in Plots:** No trees are to be planted in plots. Current existing trees should be pruned to 6 feet in height or removed.
17. **Picking:** Don't pick what you didn't grow.
18. **Family members and Pets in the Garden:** Children and pets must be supervised at all times. Members must keep dogs on a leash when it is in their plot.
19. **Parking:** Parking is not allowed in the Robson-Harrington parking area Monday – Friday, 3 pm – 6 pm, during the school year. These parking rules may change over time, and members are responsible for complying with posted signs.

20. **Plot Inspections.** The Steering Committee will conduct quarterly inspections to determine whether garden plots are in compliance with the Garden Rules.
21. **Safety:** Members must maintain all common areas in a safe condition.
22. **Changes to Garden Rules:** The Steering Committee and the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department must approve all changes to the Garden Rules.

Gardeners or Plots in Violation of Garden Rules

1. Members will be out of compliance with the Garden Rules if any of the following conditions exist:
 - a Code of Conduct is violated.
 - b Failure to attend at least 1 meeting annually.
 - c Failure to attend or participate in all the work days or common area maintenance.
 - d Failure to pay annual dues by the Fall meeting.
 - e Garden Plot is out of compliance.

Process to Address Noncompliance:

When a member is out of compliance with the Garden Rules, they will be given the opportunity to correct per the below process.

1. **1st incident:** A representative of the Steering Committee will contact the noncompliant member by phone and email to alert the member of the violation. Because every circumstance is unique, a solution including a deadline for compliance will be agreed upon and documented in an email.
2. **2nd Incident:** The member will be contacted by phone and email and in the same manner as #1, but with a notice that the plot will be revoked if there are any further infractions.
3. **3rd incident:** The member's plot privileges will be immediately revoked.

Failure to comply or correct violation(s) within the allotted time agreed upon by the member and the Steering Committee will result in the loss of the gardener's plot. Whether the member can go back on the waiting list will be determined by the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department. When

a gardener has their privileges revoked, they will not be reimbursed dues or for the cost of the structures or plants in the plot.

Rico Villa
280 Redwood Road
San Anselmo CA 94960

June 24 2022

Michael Cerio, Parks and Recreation

RE: Proposed San Anselmo Community Garden Bylaws

As a long time resident of San Anselmo and a member of the community garden, I feel that there should be a provision made for existing gardeners that are out of town residents. I propose to "grandfather" in existing members and require that new gardeners be San Anselmo residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rico Villa', with a long horizontal line extending to the left and right.

Rico Villa
rico777villa@gmail.com
(415) 690-6981

Dannielle Mauk

From: Jason Stoughton <jasonstoughton1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 22, 2022 2:41 PM
To: Dannielle Mauk
Subject: Two quick comments/suggestions regarding new garden rules

CAUTION: External Sender

Hi Dannielle,

As a member of the garden I was forwarded a copy of the new proposed rules. Thank you for the hard work you have put into this. I would like to humbly offer two suggestions that maybe you could consider.

1. Build out of gardens: Some gardeners have built really imposing and "permanent" structures in their gardens including fences and solid wood planter beds that fully cover the garden plot. And this practice is becoming more common over the past two years. They are built as if they will never be removed, which one day they might be if the Town decides to use the space for other purposes, sub-divide among multiple people, etc. at which point the Town would have to spend thousands dismantling them. Additionally, if every gardener built these types of structures it would fundamentally change the look and feel of Robson. In addition, some of these structures have been built by outside work crews which would seem to be a liability for the Town. The town of Larkspur has a requirement for its community garden that anything built in one's plot has to be "easily removed" by the gardener when they leave. In other words, tread lightly on the land.

2. Meeting attendance: There is a requirement that every gardener attend at least one of the two meetings per year. In the past the requirement has been "in person", despite requests to add a Zoom component. It is hard to do for those who work, parent, coach, volunteer, etc. and I am hoping that with the new rules we can add a Zoom option.

Thanks!

Jason Stoughton

Michael Cerio, Cat Austin Alexander

Concerning the proposal to kick those of us who do not reside in San Anselmo out of Robson Community garden:

More than a third of us would be removed from our plots that we have worked so hard on, spent so much money on, and contributed to the communal space outside of our own plots. We are emotionally connected to the garden as well.

Other community gardens throughout the state have grandfathered in their existing "outsiders" and let them drop out through attrition. This seems the only fair plan. We have spent so much time, effort and money building our soil, weeding the communal areas to make the garden enjoyable for the many people who wander through.

The city might be surprised when they have to pay the money, do the planning, do the upkeep, etc. if they take over what we have successfully managed in a friendly, gentle manner between our own diligent members for the last however long the garden has been a community garden.

I think you are making a grave mistake.

*Martha Shaw
231 Frustuck Ave
Fairfax CA. 94930*

Dannielle Mauk

From: Karen Petterson <kepetterson@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2022 12:19 PM
To: Dannielle Mauk
Subject: SACG personal feedback from the meeting

CAUTION: External Sender

Danielle,

I have yet to speak up except as a secretary to the community garden, but after the Saturday meeting I feel I must give my perspective as one of those "new gardeners that doesn't stick around" that the more senior gardeners were referring to. I am in my 4th summer in the garden. The most senior gardeners are definitely the old guard and many of them - as you heard and saw - are non-residents. They are very resistant to new ideas, and new ways of organizing. It has not been easy to be an involved new member. As long as I comply with their system and don't make waves, I am accepted. I believe new gardeners are not going to be a big problem, in fact they will be an asset and more fully ready to be a part of something new than the old guard is. This CG could definitely be organized in a manner that more closely works with the community and I applaud the Parks and Rec department involvement.

I believe the commission's recommendation for the CG to be a residents only project is the correct recommendation. Giving them another year is a generous compromise; most have already been here 10-20 years. With as many community gardens as there are in Marin, they can join the one in their own town and will grow to love it too!

When I talk with my San Anselmo neighbors about the garden and they find out there are non-residents in plots it is practically a conversation stopper, they are united in their voice that non-residents should not be in the CG while residents sit on the waitlist.

Sincerely,
Karen Petterson
417 Laurel Ave
330-256-1075

Dannielle Mauk

From: Barb and Roger Jobin <dixonjobin@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 7:18 AM
To: Dannielle Mauk
Subject: Garden Plots at Robson Park

CAUTION: External Sender

Dear Danielle:

I am a member of the Friends of Robson Committee and my husband and I own the property adjacent to the Park so we are highly invested in the Park both literally and figuratively. We have been concerned about the oversight of the gardeners plots so we are happy to learn that they will now be under the guidance of the Park and Rec Dept.

Occasionally something has shown up in a plot that causes us to say "they approved that?" until we learned there was no approval process or oversight for what each Gardener chose to do with their plots. And those occurrences are also somewhat counter productive to the efforts of FOR to beautify the Park. We are recommending that guidelines be established as to what each gardener is allowed to put in their plot. In a perfect world, these guidelines will be a consensus by both groups (gardeners and Park and Rec). Any variance beyond those guidelines should go before a design review process (as we had to do when we built our house). We hope the theme of those guidelines is "what meets the needs of the gardeners AND doesn't detract from the beauty of the park but in fact enhances it." Consistency of design elements is perhaps a good start.

It is in the interest of the gardeners and all of the people who enjoy the Park to be vigilant to its maintenance and preservation. We hope your guidelines adhere to the mission of its use and the commitment the Town made to the Robson Harrington Families when they accepted stewardship of the Park.

Please let us know how we might be better stewards too.
Thank you for your consideration,
Barb and Roger Jobin
101 Magnolia Ave.

Sent from my iPad

Gay Kagy
280 Redwood Road
San Anselmo, CA 94960

July 11, 2022

Cat Austin-Alexander, Vice Chairman
Parks and Recreation Commission

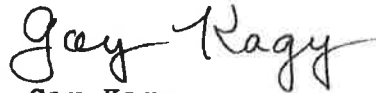
Re: Proposed Bylaws

The threat of evicting 13 members of the San Anselmo Community Garden has already provoked alarm and concern. If Parks and Recreation wishes to establish a congenial working relationship with the gardeners dropping the harmful retroactive residency requirement would be a good beginning.

Such a move would honor those experienced and dedicated seniors for their extended contributions to the benefit of the park. Some have spent most of their adult life (40 years) tending their plots, forming friendships, and advising visitors about gardening.

There are extensive areas within Robson Park that could be made available for garden plots. This would accommodate people waiting for openings and solve the issue of common areas maintenance.

Sincerely,


Gay Kagy

(415) 457-2168

Attachment 3

Dear *Michael Cerio,*

I am writing to address the new proposed by-laws suggestion that non-residents of San Anselmo be evicted from Robson-Harrington garden. I feel that this discriminates against two disadvantaged groups: low income renters, who cannot afford to buy a home in Marin County, and the elderly.

If you are a renter and wish to garden, you face a barrage of problems. The flat, sunny land needed to grow vegetables and flowers is at a premium in Marin, and the vast majority of rentals don't have it. If it exists, expensive infrastructure comes first, for the ever present deer and gophers; then irrigation and soil enhancement. This comes out of the renter's pocket, as landlords are not obligated to provide these luxuries, and if the renter has to move in a few years, well, too bad. Additionally, and this is a continued point throughout my letter, gardens take time, years, and commitment.

The proposed eviction affects 13 people, gardening in 10 of the 33 plots. All but 3 of these are retired, in their 70's and 80's. Most lived in San Anselmo when they joined the garden-some 10, 15, 30, 40 years ago. The steps, and distance from parking, are special problems, which most of us will not be able to keep up with indefinitely. On the other hand, the physical challenge of the terrain provides healthy exercise. There is a chance to grow food and flowers, and for many, a primary source of social interaction.

Many of us have served on the board for several years, and all have been conscientious with the upkeep of our own plots and general care of the park.

I am one of the 13. I am 73 years old, and my life has always been about plants. I had a landscaping company, a degree in horticulture, and worked at Sunnyside Nursery in San Anselmo as the bedding and vegetable buyer, tender, educator, for 27 years. I joined the Robson Harrington Garden about 12 years ago. Time moves on; the nursery closed, I retired, I had to move, and could not find another rental in San Anselmo; I now live nearby.

Over the years I have put thousands of dollars and countless hours enhancing and maintaining my plot here at Robson-Harrington. It's an easy one to find, just below the house, with the beautiful roses and perennials-about half flowers and half vegetables. I am diligent about its care, as it is a source of pride, and if feedback from people strolling by is to be believed, a source of pleasure for the community. I served 7 years on the garden board as "plot coordinator"-keeping the list of people who wished to join, gently encouraging those who were no longer actively participating to leave, and welcoming new members in the garden, until last year, when I stepped down.

I suggest that we non-residents be "grandparented" in, as opposed to being forced to vacate. The existing agreement, if I'm getting it straight, implies non residents were allowed if there weren't San Anselmo residents waiting. For the future list, I'd suggest residency at time of application, with leniency towards those who have been forced to relocate to another neighborhood...giving renters the same opportunity to garden as homeowners.

Luanna Helfman

Thank you,
Luanna Helfman

415 320 9213

Dear Council Member,

We are at a rare inflection point with Robson Harrington Park.

As a town, we are exploring how to comply with increased demands on housing, potentially adding another 800 housing units to our local neighborhoods and further shrinking already modest sized yards.

Public parks, necessary for physical and emotional well being, and their accessibility to residents of all ages, are critical as we plan for that future. This is all occurring at the same time as you are working with 0.16% of our residents on guidelines for their own personal share of a fourth of Robson Harrington Park.

So, perhaps this is a good time to take a step back and ask some serious questions. "Is this what was originally intended for this park?" Is the park accessible and safe for residents of all ages? How is the park positioned to meet the needs of our town as we grow?"

I've attached a copy of The Robson's Agreement with the Town of San Anselmo below, recorded July 8, 1968. It's quite lengthy so I've pulled two sections that I feel are most applicable to the decisions being considered.

Page 3 Section 4:

"CITY (San Anselmo) further agrees that the said real property above described shall never be sold in whole or in part, or subdivided, or used for private or commercial purposes"

Page 10 Section 2:

The following uses with respect to the future operation of the park were authorized and included, A. Parking (still in place today) "B. The construction and maintenance of a children's playground with any and all of the usual equipment and apparatus including a modest wading pool. C. Conducting a teen-age program of an educational nature, including arts and crafts, and the installation and maintenance of all necessary books, tools, equipment and machinery with respect to such use. D. Conducting a program for "senior citizens of an educational and recreational nature..."

In Robson Harrington Park today, 33 gardeners, 13 of whom are non-residents, have fenced in and padlocked nearly 25% of the total 2.68 acre lot. This is an area larger than Creek Park. All the while, off leash dogs, failing walls and condemned structures render

anything below the upper yard unwise for free play especially for the very young or the very old.

Despite the need, we can all agree that a full scale redesign is not feasible at this time. However, I believe that if we take some time to outline goals for the park and keep these goals in mind as opportunities such as these present themselves we'll eventually get there.

Larkspur, a comparable town in size and residency has a robust community garden from which we might be able to draw inspiration. Below is a comparison of the two:

San Anselmo/Robson Harrington Park Community Garden Key Facts:

- San Anselmo's population: **12,623 over 2.68 mi²**
- **33 gardeners** (20 San Anselmo residents/13 non-residents)
- **278 sq. ft. per gardener**
- All are individual gardens for personal use only

Larkspur/Piper Park (Larkspur) Community Garden Key Facts:

- Larkspur's population: **12,363 over 3.24 mi²**
- **78 gardeners** (Larkspur/Greenbrae only)
- **93 sq. ft. per gardener**
- The entire garden is fenced but gardeners and volunteers are allowed access to all of the gardens, compost, tool shed and communal orchard
- Volunteers tend to the communal orchard by pruning, weeding, mulching and spraying as necessary
- Committees see to the general upkeep of the garden including path maintenance and irrigation lines. This includes leak detection and replacement of leaky hose stands as well as referrals of broken wooden hose posts and borders to public works for repair
- Specialized committees like the Rose Committee, complete the winter pruning in common areas and offer professional guidance to those with plots on correct pruning methods. Pruning of individual garden roses is available for a small fee
- Projects necessary for the overall improvement of the garden, but not taken care of by a committee, are divided into tasks and completed by gardeners on Garden Work Days with the help of volunteers
- More information about the Larkspur community garden and images can be found [here](#)

Given this data, here are my suggestions for a path forward at Robson Park.

Phase I

1. Reduce/Standardize the size of the individual gardens to 100 sq. ft. Residents on the waiting list (45) would be motivated help with this as it gives them an opportunity to “get in”
2. At this point, to the extent possible, standardize the look of the new planting beds in order to improve aesthetics
3. Create a common garden area, perhaps the area with the fig trees. This area is not currently part of the garden but the fig trees are well established and with some tending would flourish. This would show a commitment to the garden as you are adding to it with an existing orchard, not just taking it away.
4. Adjust the guidelines to San Anselmo residents only allowing current non resident gardeners to “partner” with a local gardener off our wait list if they wish to continue
5. Contact Marin Office of Education about having this fall’s **Regional Occupation Program Construction Group** build a tool shed for gardeners at Robson

If you are unfamiliar with this program, it partners many Tam District students with seasoned Marin builders to learn about building through hands-on construction. One of the sheds behind Redwood HS was built by my son’s Drake team in 2017. (still standing, fingers crossed:) More information, as well as contacts, can be found [here](#)

Phase II

1. Replace individual fences with one common fence and one lock system
2. Communal Orchard (Fig Tree area) to be fenced as well. This creates on large shared garden
3. Invite community to help in garden work days
4. Set up two days a year when the garden is open to visitors. Gardeners could sell/swap seed offer advice etc.

I have some ideas on who to partner with for materials and a fundraiser to help with costs so this is all possible and could be implemented quickly.

Making these changes would immediately return several thousand square feet back to the park, increase access to additional residents and foster community through a shared garden space.

Thank you for your consideration,
Elizabeth Grasso

Dannielle Mauk

From: markwblackburn@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, July 16, 2022 4:08 PM
To: Dannielle Mauk
Subject: Fwd: community garden

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

CAUTION: External Sender

Dannielle Mauk
Director of Community Services
San Anselmo

Dear Dannielle Mauk,

We are writing about the proposal to evict members of the San Anselmo Community Garden who are not residents of San Anselmo.

We support everything that you have heard from Margaret O'Meara, whose letter to you we have read.

Like her, my wife and I are among the gardeners who work one-third of the garden's plots and do not live in San Anselmo.

When we joined the garden more than fifteen years ago, membership was limited to residents of Marin County. In practice, only

residents of San Anselmo or adjoining towns wished to have a plot in the garden. There were no gardeners who lived in, say, Mill

Valley or Sausalito or Novato.

Even so, we waited five years for our names to rise to the top of the waiting list.

Rather than evict us from the plot we have worked on for so many years, we think it is worth considering the creation of new plots on the substantial amount of unused land that adjoins the existing garden. Quite a few plots could be created that way, perhaps as many

as the 13 in question now, without causing loss to anyone.

We invite you to consider this as an option.

Sincerely,

Mark Blackburn & Larken Bradley

San Rafael

July 16, 2022

Dannielle Mauk

From: Barb and Roger Jobin <dixonjobin@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2022 7:36 AM
To: Dannielle Mauk
Subject: Re: Garden Plots at Robson Park

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

CAUTION: External Sender

Hi Danielle,

Thank you for your response. While the review requirements cover all structures higher than 3' we are also hoping the garden plot rules will cover all fencing and garden bed installations too. There are many people who have said they would like to see the fencing surrounding the garden plots standardized and made of a material that is more aesthetically pleasing than the random styles and materials currently in use.

If your meeting was on the 16th....I missed it. When I googled the Park and Rec meeting dates it looked like the zoom meeting will be on the 19th at 7pm?

Was the 16th a special meeting regarding Robson Garden Plots?

Thank you for any clarification you can offer, Barb

Sent from my iPad

> On Jul 13, 2022, at 11:37 AM, Dannielle Mauk <dmauk@townofsananselmo.org> wrote:

>
> Hi Barb and Roger:
>
> Thank you for your comments. We have put a provision in the proposed by laws for inspection of any structure taller than 3ft moving forward. The by-laws will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission on August 16th and then we will schedule a date for adoption by the Town Council.

>
> Stay Safe and Healthy!
> Dannielle Mauk
> Director of Community Services
> www.townofsananselmo.org
> dmauk@townofsananselmo.org

>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Barb and Roger Jobin <dixonjobin@mac.com>
> Sent: Wednesday, July 13, 2022 7:18 AM
> To: Dannielle Mauk <dmauk@townofsananselmo.org>
> Subject: Garden Plots at Robson Park

>
> CAUTION: External Sender
>

>

> Dear Danielle:

>

> I am a member of the Friends of Robson Committee and my husband and I own the property adjacent to the Park so we are highly invested in the Park both literally and figuratively. We have been concerned about the oversight of the gardeners plots so we are happy to learn that they will now be under the guidance of the Park and Rec Dept.

>

> Occasionally something has shown up in a plot that causes us to say "they approved that?" until we learned there was no approval process or oversight for what each Gardener chose to do with their plots. And those occurrences are also somewhat counter productive to the efforts of FOR to beautify the Park. We are recommending that guidelines be established as to what each gardener is allowed to put in their plot. In a perfect world, these guidelines will be a consensus by both groups (gardeners and Park and Rec). Any variance beyond those guidelines should go before a design review process (as we had to do when we built our house). We hope the theme of those guidelines is "what meets the needs of the gardeners AND doesn't detract from the beauty of the park but in fact enhances it." Consistency of design elements is perhaps a good start.

>

> It is in the interest of the gardeners and all of the people who enjoy the Park to be vigilant to its maintenance and preservation. We hope your guidelines adhere to the mission of its use and the commitment the Town made to the Robson Harrington Families when they accepted stewardship of the Park.

>

> Please let us know how we might be better stewards too.

> Thank you for your consideration,

> Barb and Roger Jobin

> 101 Magnolia Ave.

>

> Sent from my iPad