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# Staff Report

## Community Services

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**Report To:** Committee of the Whole  
**Meeting Date:** April 24, 2017  
**Report Number:** CSPW.17.039  
**Subject:** Community Garden  
**Prepared by:** Aaron McMullen, Facility Manager/Building Maintenance Coordinator

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report CSPW.17.039 entitled "Community Garden";

AND THAT Council approve the use of the eastern greenspace of the Beaver Valley Community Centre for public gardens as outlined in this report;

AND THAT Council direct Staff to enter into an agreement with Free Spirit Gardens for a term of 3 years with the option to renew annually.

### B. Overview

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This report outlines a request received from Free Spirit Gardens for the usage of the greenspace at the east end of the Beaver Valley Community Centre (BVCC) for public gardens.

### C. Background

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At the September 26, 2016 Council meeting, Council heard from the delegation Free Spirit Gardens, requesting usage of a Town owned plot of land for the purpose of erecting a Community Garden. Council's resolution was as follows:

**THAT Council acknowledge receipt of the correspondence from Matt Code, Free Spirit Tours, requesting donation of a plot of land for the creation of a community garden;**

**AND THAT Council refer this correspondence to Community Services to meet with Matt Code on the availability of land for a community garden and to report back to Council, Carried.**

The correspondence received by Council asked for a donation of a plot of land for the creation of a Community Garden, however, Staff are recommending the donated use of a plot of land.

With the direction from Council, Staff investigated many Town owned lands including the Tomahawk grounds, 177 Bruce Street and the BVCC. Of these grounds, Staff felt that the BVCC greenspace would be the best fit as it offers a desirable plot of land, a central location with

good walkability from residential areas as well as accessibility and parking (Refer to Attachment 1).

Staff met with Free Spirit Gardens on April 5, 2017 to discuss the usage of the BVCC property and their desire to move forward with the project. As part of the discussion, Staff received requests that identified the need for fencing, a shed, supply of water to fill a storage tank, storage of composting and wood chips and signage. Staff requested that Free Spirit Gardens provide the Town with a proposal detailing all aspects and requests for their project which is included as Attachment 2 to this report.

## **D. Analysis**

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Staff feel this venture is a great opportunity for the community at little risk or cost to the Town.

Historical usage of the requested greenspace has involved the Beaver Valley Agricultural Society's annual Fall Fair. In most recent years, the usage of the greenspace for this event has been inconsistent. Staff reached out to the Beaver Valley Agricultural Society's Vice President to determine if a Community Garden would interfere with the Fall Fair in any way. It was determined that use of the plot of land for the gardens will not interfere with the Beaver Valley Fall Fair as the main focus of the event would be on the Moreau Park Property.

In 2011, the Beaver Valley Curling Club and Town Staff identified the greenspace at the east end of the BVCC as a potential location for a future Curling Club Facility. Staff suggest that locating the garden on the property does not dramatically affect the potential as further discussion with the group also identified a potential of alternate locations of the Curling Club Facility on the south side of the building if it was to proceed.

Town Staff have discussed the request from Free Spirit Gardens with the Town's Backflow Prevention and Water Meter Coordinator to ensure all regulations and requirements will be met for the supply of water. The installation of a water meter, dual check valve and the assurance that an air gap would be required at the end of the supply hose into the water supply tank are the recommended requirements. Staff recommend that Free Spirit Gardens be responsible for the water charges related to the water usage for the Community Garden.

In addition, Free Spirit Gardens also requested the installation of a 100 square foot shed, a 75' x 75' x 6' high chain link fence and a timber framed sign stating "Thornbury Community Gardens" with logos for Free Spirit Gardens and community partners. All costs incurred for these items will be the responsibility of Free Spirit Gardens.

## **E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan**

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Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Goal #4: Promote a Culture of Organizational & Operational Excellence

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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Through the Sustainable Path, one of the goals within the Healthy, Active Community and Accessible Health Care, is to ensure that all residents have access to healthy, nutritious foods. A couple of key strategies and actions propose the development of a plan to enhance community food programs and gain support from the residents while also stating the development and implementation of the “community garden” concept.

## **G. Financial Impact**

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Staff recommend that no fees be charged for the use of the land. However, all expenses related to the Community Garden management and operation be the responsibility of the Community Garden organizers including the water fees for usage as determined within the fees and charges bylaw. All costs incurred for the installation of fencing, shed, water tank, gardens materials will be the responsibility of Free Spirit Gardens.

## **H. In consultation with**

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Director of Finance and IT/Treasurer

Director of Community Services

Backflow Prevention and Water Meter Coordinator

Deputy Treasurer/Manager of Accounting and Budgets

Vice President, Beaver Valley Agricultural Society

## **I. Attached**

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1. Community Garden Site Map
2. Free Spirit Gardens Community Gardens Proposal

Respectfully submitted,

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Aaron McMullen  
Facility Manager

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Shawn Everitt  
Director of Community Services

For more information, please contact:  
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519-599-3131 extension 340

Community Garden Site Map





## Thornbury Community Gardens Proposal

Free Spirit Gardens, with community partners, propose the creation of Thornbury Community Gardens.

### Details

**Location:** Greenspace at the East side of Beaver Valley Community Centre

**Time Frame:** Build April 2017, Grand Opening Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup>

**Secured partners:** Town of the Blue Mountains, The Longtable event

**Potential Partners/funders:**

- Thornbury-Clarksburg Rotary club
- TD Canada Trust
- Home Hardware
- Zwarts Landscape Supplies
- Blue Mountain Village Foundation
- Beaver Valley Outreach

### The Garden

75'x75' will be fenced with 6' chain link fencing. Within the fencing, 10 raised garden beds will be installed (10'x4') and 10 in-ground garden beds will be created (10'x15'). A small 10'x10' garden shed will be also positioned within the fencing. Outside of the fencing a timber framed sign will be positioned that states "Thornbury Community Gardens" with logos of Free Spirit Gardens and community partners.

Plot rentals are \$50/season. This includes one assigned plot, compost and mulch materials, water, use of tools, and workshops. 20 plots will be available for the 2017 growing season with an expected growth to 40 plots by 2018 pending interest/demand/resources.

### Roles and Responsibilities

**Free Spirit Gardens (FSG)**, a registered charity, has successfully managed a 70+ plot community garden in Collingwood for 6 years. FSG will oversee the installation and continuing management of the Thornbury Community Gardens. This includes advertising the gardens to the community, installing the gardens, fundraising and handling garden finances, communications with gardeners, handling waivers and payment, ensuring gardens and paths

are maintained, hosting workshops for the public and community groups, and gathering the support of community partners and volunteers.

**The Town of the Blue Mountains** is asked to assist with supplying water and the initial turning of the soil. While a hose bib off of the watermain on Elma Street would be ideal, we understand that construction is to happen in 2018 on Elma which would be a convenient time to install a water line directly to the gardens. In the interim, we would fill a 500 gallon water tank with a hose running from the arena on a weekly basis. FSG would like to request that the town provide this water as a donation. During installation, FSG requests the assistance of the Town of the Blue Mountains staff in turning the sod with the use of a tractor or rototiller.

**Please see attached draft budget.**

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Thank you for considering this project. Since the growing season is short and Mother Nature does not wait, please help us to get planting by May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017!

*Matt Code (705) 351-0135 [freepiritgardens@gmail.com](mailto:freepiritgardens@gmail.com)*

*Kimberly Edwards (519) 379-3634 [kimberly.edwards@freepiritgardens.org](mailto:kimberly.edwards@freepiritgardens.org)*

## Thornbury Community Gardens Draft Budget

Prepared by: Free Spirit Gardens			Mar 15/2017		
Expenses		Income			
Description	Source	Amount	Description	Amount	
<b>LABOUR</b>					
Free Spirit Installation Labour (40hrs@25/hr)		\$1,000	20 Plot Rentals at \$50	\$1,000	
Free Spirit ongoing Maintenance/Admin (50hrs @25/hr)		\$1,250	Long Table Event	\$500	
Workshops (5@150 each)	<i>FSG in kind</i>	\$750			
<b>MATERIALS - most can be sourced in-kind</b>					
Wood For 10 Raised Beds		\$2,000			
Triple Mix		\$450			
4 Garden Forks		\$120			
4 Shovels		\$120			
4 Hard Rakes		\$120			
4 Garden Hoes		\$120			
Fencing with gate		\$2,000			
Rain Barrels		\$100			
Compost Bins		\$400			
Wheelbarrow		\$100			
Shed		\$3,000			
wood chips	<i>FSG in kind</i>	\$400			
500 gallon water tank		\$350			
<b>TOTALS</b>		EXP:	<b>\$12,280</b>	INCOME:	<b>\$1,500</b>

Most of the expenses are in the initial build and set up.  
 Once the tools and infrastructure are in place we will be able to support ourselves  
 with annual income from plot rentals which will also grow as we build more garden beds.