

## **Truth and Politics, Will they ever exist together?**

A community garden can help transform people who happen to live in the same place into a united community. It celebrates diversity in individual plots while creating opportunities for people to work together and learn from each other—about gardening, food preparation, and more. They learn to respect each other's differences and to appreciate what they have in common. Community gardens build relationships that last beyond the growing season.

As creating a community garden is a substantial project requiring sustained effort over several years, it takes a strong commitment from at least three to five individuals to create and manage a successful garden. Just because you build it, doesn't mean they will come. In fact, seldom is a garden that was designed and built by outsiders adopted and sustained by a community. Engage the community from the beginning.

Begin by identifying who will be gardening. Will it be youth, families, seniors, a special population, or people in a specific geographic region? All your decisions will be driven by the goal of meeting the specific needs of the gardeners.

### **Form a planning committee and make preliminary decisions**

Include those who will be gardening, nearby residents, and potential partners. Identify and invite leaders within the community and other interested people to an organizational meeting and social gathering. Including food at events is always a plus. Develop a well-organized leadership team with committees assigned to specific tasks (for example: recruitment, partnership development, special events, garden organization). Develop bylaws (see appendix) that clarify the purpose and objectives of the garden. Determine how decisions will be made and what process will be used to select leaders. Clarify how work will be shared and who will be responsible for what. Decide on the scope of garden including the size and the components (fruit trees, berries, shared community plot for large crops). Make management decisions including whether there will be any restrictions on the use of pesticides and fertilizers. Choose a name for the garden.

Create a prioritized budget and a wish list of desired donations and update it regularly (see appendix). Identify how you will raise money (membership dues, fund raising, grants, sponsors).

Consider the need for insurance as well as potential sources and costs. Explore whether any of your partnering organizations can provide insurance for free or at a minimal cost. Many landowners require liability insurance, but many insurance carriers and their underwriters are reluctant to cover community gardens. Consider working with a firm that represents many different carriers, and get at least one quote from one of the ten largest insurance carriers.



Hamilton Community garden

During a recent State of the Township address, the mayor of Hamilton talked about the community garden in his 15-minute address. An address where the mayor could not be bothered to introduce himself to those who watched. It would appear that no one ever went back to the garden after the June photo opportunity as seen below. Being committed to this program is necessary to build trust and camaraderie in the community. A team of residents who recently saw this are teaming up to beautify the garden that is being ignored. There is no signage at the garden to welcome residents. There are small plaques on each box which appear to have a family name on it. It is uncertain if that box is for that family or that family donated the box and its contents.



### [\(12\) 2023 Hamilton State of the Township Address - YouTube](#)

In the mayoral address, the mayor stated that the “State of the township is as strong as ever. Never been in the history of the township an increase in taxes for three years”. “They focus on every dollar” “Provide same services as a cost-efficient price.”

If one listens to the 2021 or 2022 address by the mayor, there definitely were numerous cut and paste moments. But this year the lack of introduction appears the local mayor has grown an ego so large that he feels he needs no introduction. He is the new Beyonce just without the ability to sing. Mayor Yaede also used to state that residents have never seen consistent tax relief year over year.

“Grants are a huge influx coming into our township”. \$450K went to Hamilton for a new generator at the senior center and those with developmental and physical disabilities in the township he went on to say in his address. Residents are quite curious about what programs are being developed with this \$450,000 grant. If the grants are that plentiful, maybe the state should ensure the towns are utilizing the grant money properly. When there is no oversight, empty garden beds are the result.

At this year's National Night out, the ability to focus on those with developmental and physical needs at the event again was ignored. Residents who pulled up to the event were told there was not any handicap parking available. Yet, when one went inside, residents who could do flips on balance beams were parked along the dog park area. This is an area that the mayor confirmed prior to the event would be used for handicap parking. An eyewitness saw a US Senator, Linda Greenstein walking from the neighborhood very slowly due to a walking issue. Does not matter who you are, the Hamilton township team is clearly not focused on meeting the needs of anyone with special needs in the township.

8h Like Reply



Bill Deptula

I wanted to go but when I pulled up to entrances to the park I was told they weren't sure if they had handy cap parking usually isn't a problem but this time it was

7h Sad Reply

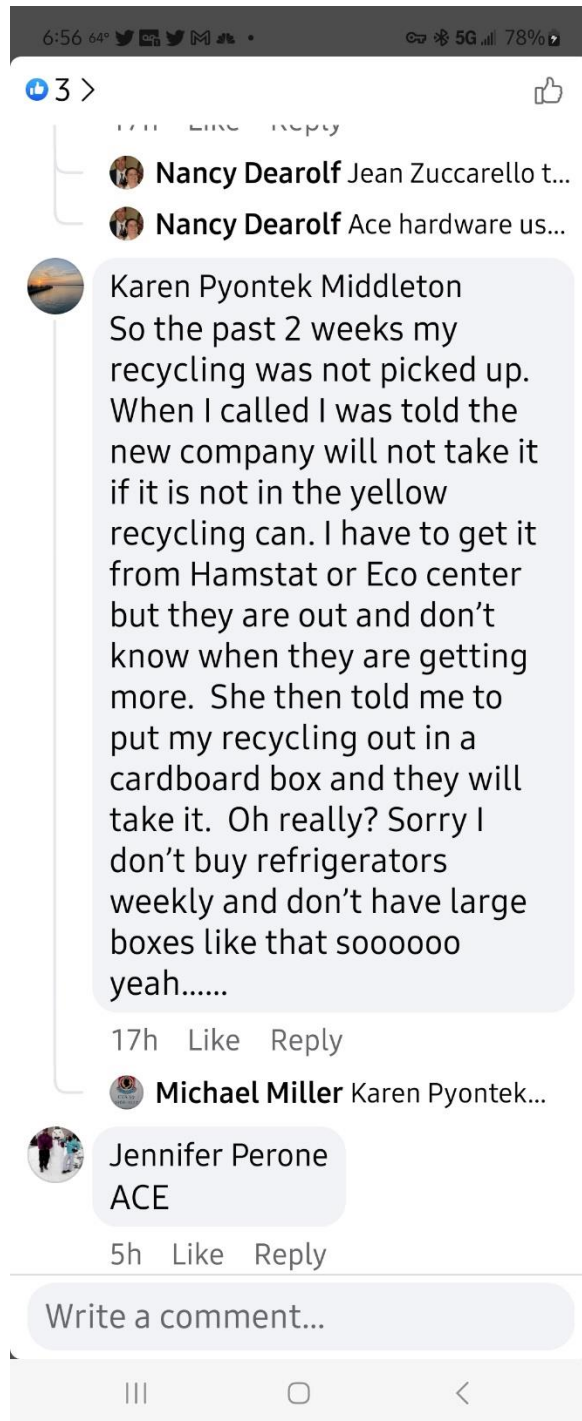
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James Steven M...  
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Residents are running into issues getting recycle cans and having their recycle picked up. Calls to HAMSTAT bring this result below.





During the mayor's state of the township address he also mentions how after the largest fire that ever happened in Hamilton, Goodall rubber, they realized that

they were in desperate need of a new ladder truck because they were not ready with warehouse fire. It's a good thing the township received a grant to buy a ladder truck. There have been numerous warehouses approved by the township and one must question, how are they approved by the fire chief, and we did not even have the equipment to fight the fire. Why not be proactive and ensure the town could have been ready for the fire, versus finding a way to be ready after the fact.

The mayor also shared that \$1.5 million in grant money is going to the health department. Again, residents are interested in knowing what new programs will be implemented from that \$1.5 million.

**Additional comments in the Mayoral address:**

Sell Greenwood ave to school district. What is that going to cost? Refurb, tear down and build new? What is that going to cost taxpayers?

Open Space preservation: 35 acres acquired in Cornell Heights, 16 acres across from Hamilton rec center on Kuser, foreclosure of properties that were delinquent for a decade. Why did it take so long to react to these? Oh, right there is an election in November!!

300 grand for electric garbage truck grant the town received. What are the costs of ownership of that garbage truck? Has the town mapped that out or will there be a HUGE surprise and the 300 grand truck could turn into garbage itself when we cannot support the ownership of it.

Sources

[How to Organize a Community Garden | NC State Extension Publications \(ncsu.edu\)](#)

[\(12\) 2023 Hamilton State of the Township Address - YouTube](#)

[Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton Opens New Community Garden | Princeton, NJ News TAPinto](#)