

Biogaian Meeting Minutes
2/23/15

Present: Doug (facilitator), Patricia, Helen (scribe), Susie, Sadhana, Brent, Katie

Check-in: what is the most difficult thing you've ever grown?

Garden Fence:

2014 estimates: Ranch style \$2682, Farm style \$1642, but we used recycled fishnet instead. Fishnet needed repair this spring (Patricia repaired over 20 breaks, some new breaks already noted). Doug proposes dividing the cost of a more permanent fence over several years, potentially replacing one side at a time.

Discussion focused on where the money would come from, even in smaller amounts: the Biogaian budget? A special assessment or individual contributions?

Alternatives were suggested: planting sorrel and clover around the perimeter as alternative food for the rabbits, or stringing another length of fishnet on the existing fence. We decided to continue using fishnet for the current year. We have some fishnet already, and Brent volunteered to call about getting more. Katie will research a biodynamic approach to suppressing bindweed.

Intern update:

Stephanie Amargi is currently coming once a week until mid-March.

Steven Miller: coming June 1- mid-October

Gabriel deGodoy: coming March 21-April 15 from Brazil

Michael Venturas and Gabby Garver, both of whom are looking for paid positions, might come if job prospects don't work out.

UW students for spring quarter will start April 6th if they choose Songaia as a site. Piglets will discuss the best timing for their rotations, which could include meal prep, depending on their class objectives.

Rat reduction:

Multiple ratholes have riddled the Keyhole. It used to be rockiest part of garden, but hugelkultur improved the soil. The tunnels might be aerating the soil. We have been placing traps in the compost piles, killing four rats. A weasel has been sighted in the hugelkultur east of the food forest. A barn cat for the goat shed has been suggested, but is unlikely to get approved by the community. It would have to be someone's pet, and there is already one wild cat living on Paul's Property. Warfarin can also poison wildlife. Low-strength long-acting rodenticides have the least amount of collateral damage. How could we attract more predators/deterrants? More peppermints or daffodils suggested. For now we will continue to use traps, and Katie/Patricia will research importing a Northwest garter snake.

Keyhole beds

Re-building the Keyhole beds might destroy some of the tunnel complex, though the rats will likely re-tunnel. Piglets are reworking Keyhole beds as much as possible.

Arborist work

At the last community meeting, potential arborist work was brought up. Trees for Life has done periodic evaluations in the past, using money from landscaping reserves. Scotts Tree Service makes better chips than Seattle Tree Service. Patricia will clarify with LSC which trees were concerning and

contact Trees for Life for another evaluation.

Lawn renewal update

No estimate yet obtained, Patricia will make calls.

Swale update

Blackberries were cleared a month ago, and some mud removed from culvert. It would likely pass inspection even though some rock and mud in front of the pipe needs to be cleared out. Doug will ask James for help with clearing the rock as a garden gym exercise. The swale will only need periodic weed-eating.

Privacy screen between Units 9 and 7

Katie is interested in creating a living willow lattice and wonders if she need Biogaians to approve it. If sight-lines would be obstructed, Biogaians would have to approve. She and Doug will look at the site and her design.

Next Meeting: March 23rd

Facilitator: Helen

Note-taker: Patricia