

Updates and Follow Up Requested by the Community
Presented by Paige Oliverio
Sustainable Food Policy Board Regular Meeting
27 January, 2014

Requests for Jerry Rusthoven RE: New Urban Farm Code...

A date when the new code and related applications will be published in their complete form so that we can start using them.

Who farmers can contact for thorough assistance and completion of their required steps to comply with city code.

Where people can find all the documents they need to begin applying for Urban Farm and Market Garden COs.

When farmers are expected to complete their compliance obligations.

Requests for Meredith Gray/PARD, the Office of Sustainability, and SFPB...

Who will now be that single point of contact for people who want to start community gardens or urban farms both on city-owned or private land?

That single point of contact was previously handled at the SUACG office at PARD. Now that SUACG only handles community gardening on PARD land.

In 2010 Council passed an ordinance as a result of a resolution from the Sustainable Food Policy Board that recommended the city "(2) Name a single point of contact within the City of Austin to support community members in establishing and sustaining urban farms and...community gardens."

and the SFPB approved a letter to Council in support of "allocating budget for an FTE to be a single point of contact for Community Gardening and Urban Farming."
(<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=159565>).

In a letter announcing the hiring of a Conservation Program Coordinator, Director

Hensley writes "This position will serve as a resource and coordinator for community groups interested in establishing community gardens on city owned land as well as a focus on working with groups to promote sustainable urban farming. This position will provide technical assistance such as appropriate permits, approval and or use agreements necessary to use city land."

(<http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=152917>)

Austin non-profit organizations like Urban Patchwork and Sustainable Food Center do our best to help gardeners and farmers, but ***our organizations also need a clear path and point of contact in order to continue our support of Urban Farms, Market Gardens and Community Gardens.***

In addition to extensive language regarding the establishment of community gardens in the city, the ordinance also states:"§ 14-7-41 ADMINISTRATION OF URBAN FARMS. - An Urban Farm on city owned land will be managed by the city under an appropriate contracting method, as determined by the city manager."

We're looking for resolution on what that "appropriate contracting method is for farmers to use city owned land, and a program that helps make it possible.