

September 20, 2021

To: The Warren Board of Selectmen

Re: The Warren Community Garden @ Wasley Farm

We would like to make a proposal to build and grow a unique Community Garden at the Wasley Farm property on Cornwall Road. We see a community garden as a wonderful addition to our town. Warren has a long history as an agricultural community as well as a town where neighbors support each other. It also would be in keeping with the spirit of Wings and Barbara Wasley who loved their garden and generously shared its bounty with community members during their time on the farm.

A community garden would present many opportunities for these traditions to continue, and the benefits would include:

- A gathering place for community members
- Opportunities for seniors to garden and enjoy fresh produce
- Fresh food donations to the food pantry
- Multigenerational work in the garden
- A learning and teaching opportunity for neighbors to share expertise
- Support Town's responsibility to maintain the property
- Expand outreach ideas to education, partnership to local farms and local schools
- Help support Town people in need of fresh produce

There are numerous examples of successful community gardens in neighboring towns including - Litchfield Community Garden, Judea Garden in Washington, Goshen Farm Sharing Garden, Kent's Community Garden, the Garden of Life in New Milford. We will look to these models for additional guidance on how to best establish a garden that best serves the desires, needs, and capabilities of the Warren Community.

The garden would initially include three sections (please see accompanying site plan) all located in a manner that is complementary to the current hay farming provided by Josh Tanner as a service to the Town for ensuring that the agricultural values of the property are maintained.

1. The first section is directly south of the existing barn and measures approximately 80'-0"x 140'-0". We envision that this area would be divided into smaller plots that could be rented by residents to create their own gardens, and a

larger plot for a communal garden from which all produce could be donated. The garden would be managed using sustainable and regenerative practices.

2. The second section contains the fruit trees and measures approximately 100'-0"x 115'-0". We have a donation offer from a town resident to provide yearly maintenance on the orchard. The fruit could be used to benefit town organizations, for example, potentially allowing the fire company to harvest apples to be used for pies at the Warren Fall Festival.
3. The third section contains the blueberry bushes and measures 120'-0"x 70'-0" with a 12' wide grass access path. The same residents as mentioned in section 2 have offered to help restore and maintain these bushes as well. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every year, a different town organization gets to harvest the berries and then holds a town wide blueberry pancake breakfast, potentially free of charge?

We anticipate funding the construction and ongoing maintenance of the Community Garden with in-kind donations of services such as the orchard maintenance and materials as well as financial donations to purchase any necessary construction materials. We are in discussions with the Warren Land Trust as a potential sponsor for our organization and are gathering Letters of Support from residents and town organizations that we will present at a follow up meeting.

We are asking the Board of Selectmen to lease these three sections to the Wasley Farm Community Garden committee beginning this fall. Our plan would be to complete the ground preparation for the garden so that planting can begin in the spring of 2022, and the orchard and fruit bush maintenance as soon as it can be scheduled.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

The Warren Community Garden @ Wasley Farm Committee

Kathy Newton, Kathy Engle-Dulac, Nathalie Brodhead, Elizabeth Chandler

Warren Community Garden
@ Wasley Farm



Existing barn



Community Garden
80' x 140'



Existing house



Existing Orchards
100' x 115'



Existing Blueberry patch
120' x 70'

