

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:25 PM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; 'Dave Murphy'  
Subject: FW: Future Of West Hartford UConn Campus

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UConn Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
www.envpolicy.uconn.edu

From: Carlos Espinoza [mailto:carlos.espinoza@uconn.edu]  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:18 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Future Of West Hartford UConn Campus

Good Afternoon Mr. Jason Coite,

I wanted to provide some suggestions for the future of the former UConn campus site. I'm a grad from the SSW and a resident of West Hartford's Elmwood section. I believe the best thing to do with the site is to demolish and build education facilities and offices. With commercial and residential developments flourishing within town limits, we should not lose focus on the education aspect of the town or the state.

The population of the county of Hartford and the town of West Hartford has been growing and its a fair assumption to say that it will continue, therefore we need to also have facilities available for education purposes that will accommodate the new generation of students with the latest in technology, a hub where creative minds can come together to learn and explore ideas no matter what socioeconomic factors.

A vocational style of teaching can be explore for the facility that will engage students so they can learn by doing, I know we already have Prince Tech in the near by area, but the idea could be explored. Another idea could be a place for at-risk students from the greater hartford region where they can get specialized education and training, a community school, that would also be equipped with social workers and guidance counelors that will assist the family and connect them to services.

The goal should be to close the education gap, especially among minority students, so we can reach 95% as a state as a whole, and even higher for minorities who have graduation rates in the 60s and 70s percentile. The graduating class of 2013 had a percentage of 85.5% of students graduating, up from 0.07 from the year before. We should continue the education reforms being performed so that Connecticut can be a leader in education and provide society with skilled, and qualified individuals ready to succeed.

Thanks,  
Carlos Espinoza

--

Carlos Espinoza  
860.817.0195

crlsdnl83@gmail.com

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2014 8:44 AM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; 'Dave Murphy'  
Subject: FW: UConn West Hartford Campus

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UConn Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
www.envpolicy.uconn.edu

From: clestersalchert@comcast.net [mailto:clestersalchert@comcast.net]  
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2014 4:40 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: UConn West Hartford Campus

Dear Mr. Coite,

I am writing as a former student of the UConn West Hartford Campus. I completed the first two years of my undergraduate degree at the UConn WH campus (AKA "Huskie High") in 1978-1979 and 1980-1981. I recall that the buildings were a bit musty and the roof in the library leaked quite substantially when it rained. Otherwise, it was a good experience. I worked my way through college and it was a viable option for me in large part due to the suburban campus.

I would like to see the property continue to be used for educational purposes, if not by UConn then by some other secondary education program. That said, it seems that the buildings themselves may not be worth renovating given the \$25 million in deferred maintenance, if I recall correctly from the Courant article. It is shameful that the buildings were not properly built or maintained, but that in itself should not dictate the overall solution to how to use the property. Housing does not seem like a good choice given the proximity to other housing complexes (e.g. St. Mary's Bishop's Corner) and the added traffic burden that housing would create. Maintaining the open space by adding some playing fields would be a better choice, since there were no sports programs at the campus when I attend school there. So, I hope UConn will facilitate the continued use of the property for secondary educational purposes, perhaps in conjunction with the nearby University of St. Joseph.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Catherine Lester Salchert  
Avon, CT

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2014 8:54 AM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; 'Dave Murphy'  
Subject: FW: Asylum Ave. campus

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UConn Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
www.envpolicy.uconn.edu

From: cvermilyea@charter.net [mailto:cvermilyea@charter.net]  
Sent: Saturday, August 16, 2014 10:05 AM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Asylum Ave. campus

Dear Jason Coite,

Frank Spencer-Malloy in his letter to The Courant was right. Leaving the Asylum Avenue campus for Hartford is a "terrible idea." It's just plain stupid.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Vermilyea Jr., Mansfield, and UConn '67

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 10:00 AM  
To: Dave Murphy; Bolduc, Mark  
Subject: Fwd: West Hartford Campus

-Jason

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chuck Buder <chuckbuder@gmail.com>  
Date: August 14, 2014 at 10:51:41 PM EDT  
To: <jason.coite@uconn.edu>  
Subject: West Hartford Campus  
Good Evening Jason,

Thank you for allowing the public to provide ideas for the property use of the Greater Hartford Campus. As a UCONN alumni and a resident one street away from the campus, it will be "different" to not have UCONN there. I hope that for the future that the buildings and libraries could stay with an academic purpose, but if not, an arts center or outside music center would be nice.

As there are the baseball fields next to the parking lot, it would be great to have the area used as a park, dog park, and as a functional outside music center. Being within the radius of Elizabeth Park, the University of Saint Joseph, and other significant parts of the area, would be an ideal location for continuing the tradition of greatness in the area with outdoor theatre and music.

Thank you for accepting community feedback,

-Chuck Buder

From: ccbaker58@comcast.net  
Sent: Saturday, August 09, 2014 10:29 AM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: UCONN West Hartford

Jason,

Good Day.

My name is Cynthia Baker and I live at 266 Steele Rd. I am writing you today regarding the meeting on Tuesday that my neighbors and I shall be attending. You may have heard about us. We are currently contesting a proposal on Steele for 200 unit apartment facility. This property is in a very heated debate among neighbors and the developer. I am hoping that you are already aware of the situation and that you share our concerns about our neighborhoods.

We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Baker  
266 Steele Rd.

860.232.6733

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 2:40 PM  
To: Dave Murphy; Bolduc, Mark  
Subject: Fwd: Uconn property West Hartford Ct

-Jason

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: diane mikan <dday44@sbcglobal.net>  
Date: August 15, 2014 at 2:33:15 PM EDT  
To: "jason.coite@uconn.edu" <jason.coite@uconn.edu>  
Subject: Fw: Uconn property West Hartford Ct  
Reply-To: diane mikan <dday44@sbcglobal.net>

On Friday, August 15, 2014 2:26 PM, diane Mikan <dday44@sbcglobal.net> wrote:

..Jason Coite

I attended the open forum meeting on August 12, 2014 and wish to put my concerns and opinions in writing for the record.

In yesterday's Hartford Courant - Thursday August 14, 2014 there was an Op Ed piece written by Andrew Dorr entitled West hHrtfort Must Protect its History. His opinions reflect those of the majority of taxpayers and not those of special interests groups. In essence he states when properties like the UConn campus are slated for 'alternative' uses no one hears about it until it is too late. A deal is made before the public is even aware of any changes.

The UConn meeting was publicized days before and placed in the middle of August when many are away or concerned with outside activities.

Mr. Dorr states -

"Before the Elm Theater was sold to Walgreens; before the VFW was torn down and 'relocated' to a spare corner of a parking garage; before the space across from the police station was slotted to become a high-rise hotel; and before the beautiful white house on the corner of Brace Road and South Main Street was razed to be rebuilt as a garish post-modern utilitarian structure, I and some of my neighbors met with West Hartford officials to discuss alternatives to demolishing these interesting time-honored spaces and converting them into ones that marry old and new design and ingenuity. Nobody was interested."

You do not represent West Hartford - I understand that, yet the whole scope of UConn's change was not publicized by the State or the University at or near the beginning consideration when concerned groups could brainstorm and come up with ideas, funding, grants, etc. Flyers around town, constant front page news in the town newspapers, etc should have been done. The fact the the builders of Miracle Field were raising money for ten years and just inaugurated the \$5000,000 field in June

and now are told the parcel will be part of the "sale property' when decisions are made by UConn and the State is callous at best.

So what is to be done -

Publicize your intentions in every media as possible from this point on. I also realize the town has first rights to buy or refuse..But this must be carefully structured and not just thrown. Time and planning is essential. A few days and it's a done deal is not acceptable.

I will echo some preferences I have that some mentioned at the meeting -

- \* sell to another educational institution

- \*sell to those interested in a performance art venue ... like Silver mine in Westport -

  - a place for music, art, theater, writer

- \*another Roland Garos Tennis facility, St. Andrews golf, ... a field of dreams...that is what we need

- \*low rise -residential community condos with lots of parks and open areas

This property cannot go the way of all the others that Mr. Dorr mentioned. There must be a place for the arts and leisure open areas where people can feed their souls and hearts. People must be able to enjoy the beauty of buildings and the open use of space. For all the taxes we pay as citizens of West Hartford, as citizens of Connecticut, and as citizen of the United States of America we need to be heard and provide an environment of possibilities for the youth of this land.

Diane D. Mikan

183 Flagg Rd West Hartford, Ct 06117

cc to town council, Bishop Corner Neighborhood Association, and the Mayor of West Hartford

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 4:41 PM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; Dave Murphy  
Subject: Fwd: wildlife preservation issue at UConn West Hartford campus

-Jason  
Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Hinsch, Elaine" <Elaine.Hinsch@ct.gov>  
Date: August 15, 2014 at 3:10:23 PM EDT  
To: 'Mark Rosenblit' <markrosenblit@att.net>, "jason.coite@uconn.edu"  
<jason.coite@uconn.edu>  
Subject: RE: wildlife preservation issue at UConn West Hartford campus  
[http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2702&q=323466&deepNav\\_GID=1628](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2702&q=323466&deepNav_GID=1628)

Please see the web address above for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's land reviews for state-list endangered, threatened, and special concern species.

From: Mark Rosenblit [mailto:markrosenblit@att.net]  
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 2:59 PM  
To: jason.coite@uconn.edu  
Cc: DEEP Webmaster  
Subject: wildlife preservation issue at UConn West Hartford campus

Hi Jason: I don't know whether you are aware of this, but the two ponds located on UConn's West Hartford campus are filled with turtles and frogs. Any proposal to sell the property needs to be conditioned upon the safe removal and relocation of these creatures.

Regards,

Mark Rosenblit  
Attorney At Law  
14 Coolidge Road  
West Hartford, CT 06117-2318  
ph 860-236-0531  
fax 860-236-4421

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 9:27 AM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; Dave Murphy (davem@miloneandmacbroom.com)  
Subject: FW: Public Comment -- W. Hartford UConn Campus CEPA meeting

From: Hugh Whelan [mailto:whelanh@gmail.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 9:24 AM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Public Comment -- W. Hartford UConn Campus CEPA meeting

Jason Coite  
Environmental Compliance Manager,  
University of Connecticut  
31 LeDoyt Road  
Storrs, CT

Dear Mr. Coite,

As homeowners for 23 years of 14 Sunny Slope Drive -- a neighborhood adjacent to the West Hartford UConn campus -- we appreciated the opportunity to attend the public forum of the CEPA meeting held on August 12th. We also were glad to see the proactive attendance of the West Hartford mayor and town council members.

We are concerned regarding future development plans for the UConn campus. As long-time residents of the area, we greatly value the open green spaces on the campus. It adds greatly to the peace and attractiveness of the area. It is a pleasant place to walk, is quiet (with virtually no activity at night), and provides calming views of open fields and large trees to the adjacent homes.

We sensed in the meeting that the value of the "open green space" that the current UConn campus represents may well be undervalued in the formal evaluation process that seems to primarily be concerned with traffic and wetlands. Our sense was reinforced by the maps that did not even recognize that the campus is an "open green space" and classified the whole area as "high intensity development" and/or R10 residential.

A simple promise that any future development would hold the total building footprints on the land to their current extent would be greatly reassuring to us. We are fortunate as retirees that we have the freedom to move if future development impairs the quality of life for the adjacent neighborhoods. But we have been happy here and would prefer not to move.

Sincerely,

Hugh and Jan Whelan  
14 Sunny Slope Drive,  
West Hartford, CT 06117

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:47 PM  
To: 'Dave Murphy'; Bolduc, Mark  
Subject: FW: Use for UConn property

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UConn Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
[www.envpolicy.uconn.edu](http://www.envpolicy.uconn.edu)

-----Original Message-----

From: Kelly Gaertner [mailto:[kellygaertner@gmail.com](mailto:kellygaertner@gmail.com)]  
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 3:43 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Use for UConn property

I would suggest that a portion of the property be used for a dog park. The West Hartford Dog Park Coalition has been looking for space in town to build a dog park for years.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 3:09 PM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; Dave Murphy  
Subject: Fwd: wildlife preservation issue at UConn West Hartford campus

-Jason

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mark Rosenblit <markrosenblit@att.net>

Date: August 14, 2014 at 2:58:41 PM EDT

To: <jason.coite@uconn.edu>

Cc: <deep.webmaster@ct.gov>

Subject: wildlife preservation issue at UConn West Hartford campus

Hi Jason: I don't know whether you are aware of this, but the two ponds located on UConn's West Hartford campus are filled with turtles and frogs. Any proposal to sell the property needs to be conditioned upon the safe removal and relocation of these creatures.

Regards,

Mark Rosenblit  
Attorney At Law  
14 Coolidge Road  
West Hartford, CT 06117-2318  
ph 860-236-0531  
fax 860-236-4421

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 12:11 PM  
To: 'Dave Murphy'; Bolduc, Mark  
Subject: FW: Comment on UConn Property in West Hartford  
Attachments: West Hartford Dog Park Coalition UConn comment letter.pdf

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UConn Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
[www.envpolicy.uconn.edu](http://www.envpolicy.uconn.edu)

From: Philip Karlin [mailto:[philk@philkarlin.com](mailto:philk@philkarlin.com)]  
Sent: Thursday, August 14, 2014 11:00 AM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Comment on UConn Property in West Hartford

Hello,

I am President of the West Hartford Dog Park Coalition. Please accept the attached statement of our interest in building a dog park within the UConn property.

Thank you.

Philip Karlin

860-983-5750 or [philk@philkarlin.com](mailto:philk@philkarlin.com)

From: Robert Fressola <bob\_fressola@yahoo.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, July 30, 2014 3:38 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Re: UConn West Hartford campus

Thanks for the email. I will post on our fb page so residents and businesses better understand what the process is - and what will be happening at the 8/12 meeting.

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On Wed, 7/30/14, Coite, Jason <jason.coite@uconn.edu> wrote:

Subject: UConn West Hartford campus  
To: "bob\_fressola@yahoo.com" <bob\_fressola@yahoo.com>  
Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2014, 3:13 PM

Dear Mr. Fressola,

Thank you for calling the other day. I hope you don't mind, but I found your email on the BCNA facebook page. You had questions about the August 12th public scoping meeting scheduled on the potential disposition of the UConn West Hartford campus and about the process we're following in general, and I wanted to follow-up on our conversation.

The August 12th public scoping meeting is UConn's opportunity to present the general options that were listed in the scoping notice along with the respective environmental impacts that are anticipated based the current information we have. The meeting will also provide a chance for people to officially comment on the proposed options.

The scoping meeting is one step under the process established by the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) that a State agency such as UConn must follow for certain types of proposed actions.

The CEPA process related to the West Hartford campus disposition officially began on June 7th, when the CT Council of Environmental Quality's Environmental Monitor website posted the notice of the proposal at UConn's request. That notice started the public scoping period, during which time the public can submit written comments on the proposal.

In general, the sponsoring state agency can also hold a public meeting to review its proposal, but the meeting is not

mandatory unless at least 25 signatures requesting one are received. Here, UConn has voluntarily elected to hold the scoping meeting without the need for signatures requesting one.

Once it's been decided which option will be pursued, and if there are potentially significant environmental impacts with that option, then we will proceed with an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE), which is a more detailed analysis. The EIE, if necessary, has its own public process.

Also note, UConn is planning to have a dedicated webpage online soon with additional information and related materials regarding the West Hartford disposition. Unfortunately, the exact date by which this website will be active is unknown at this time, but I will certainly send you an email when it is ready.

In the meantime, the UConn Office of Environmental Policy maintains an active website for all UConn activities being conducted under the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA), including the West Hartford campus disposition. We update that webpage with information relevant to the CEPA process, such as any materials we present at the 8/12/14 meeting.

Lastly, you are certainly welcome to send written comments for the record at any time through August 17, 2014, the close of the public scoping period. As I mentioned, oral comments and questions received at the August 12th meeting will also be considered part of the record for CEPA considerations.

Regards,  
Jason

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental  
Compliance Manager  
UCONN Office of  
Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
[www.envpolicy.uconn.edu](http://www.envpolicy.uconn.edu)

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Friday, August 15, 2014 4:20 PM  
To: Dave Murphy; Bolduc, Mark  
Subject: Fwd: West Hartford Campus

-Jason  
Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: ROBERT WILLIAMS <robjlw@sbcglobal.net>  
Date: August 15, 2014 at 3:45:23 PM EDT  
To: "jason.coite@uconn.edu" <jason.coite@uconn.edu>  
Subject: West Hartford Campus  
Reply-To: ROBERT WILLIAMS <robjlw@sbcglobal.net>

I have studied the history of the land where The West Hartford Campus is located. It was part of the original Haynes Farm, granted in the late 17th Century. I live on Haynes Road, and the Whiting-Haynes Homestead still stands at 291 North Main Street.

The state has poured millions of dollars into updating the buildings over the past several years. Does anyone see that as a loss now that the campus is moving to Hartford?

The wetlands draw many different birds, especially Red-Wing Blackbirds. We see herons occasionally. One of the largest and oldest white oaks in CT sits on the property behind the student parking lot.

Many of us in the neighborhood enjoy the walks through the campus. The children especially like the frogs in the ponds.

I taught language classes for a short time in the underclassmen building. It is still a fine building, and the library is well-managed.

The prospect that we might lose this beautiful resource is upsetting. I wish that the University of St. Joseph could purchase it.

Robert J. Williams

From: rrdrums <rrdrums@aol.com>  
Sent: Sunday, August 10, 2014 10:31 AM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Uconn West Hartford Campus Meeting

Jason,

The Hartford Courant article regarding the open forum about future use of the Albany Avenue property was vague. Is the meeting August 12th or 19th? It states comments are due 8/17 but doesn't specify which Tuesday the meeting is being held.

If it is This Tuesday, I was hoping to request using a portion of the property for a performance arts center.

Thanks,

Ron Reisner

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

From: Kerry <sportsfun1@yahoo.com>  
Sent: Monday, August 11, 2014 4:58 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: UConn West Hartford Campus

I think before the ground is broken on Raymond Road for the new hotel, talks should begin with the mayor about moving the "much needed" West Hartford hotel to the UConn campus site. That would be a much more suitable site and would not impact the surrounding neighborhoods as much. There would be the needed parking and traffic would be able to use the main roads to the hotel.

WH resident

From: Coite, Jason  
Sent: Monday, August 18, 2014 8:43 AM  
To: Bolduc, Mark; 'Dave Murphy'  
Subject: FW: Proposal for a portion of UCONN, Hartford Campus in West Hartford  
Attachments: Nonprofit Resource Final Project corrected.docx; Final West Hartford Public Garden Logic Model.docx

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Jason Coite, P.E.  
Environmental Compliance Manager  
UCONN Office of Environmental Policy  
ph. 860.486.9305  
[www.envpolicy.uconn.edu](http://www.envpolicy.uconn.edu)

From: Barry Walters [mailto:[barryinct@gmail.com](mailto:barryinct@gmail.com)]  
Sent: Sunday, August 17, 2014 4:47 PM  
To: Coite, Jason  
Subject: Proposal for a portion of UCONN, Hartford Campus in West Hartford

Dear Mr Coite,

I realize that there are more than a few ideas of what can be or should be done with the campus property. Attached, please find a proposal I composed upon initially hearing of the property's potential sale. The proposal for a garden was first brought about as an idea for a class assignment while attending the Hartford Campus for Nonprofit Management. I would be happy to address any questions you may have.

Best,

Barry Walters



# **West Hartford Public Garden**

**Barry Walters**

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# Definitions

## Public Garden vs Botanical Garden

The following is a list of criteria that may be met in part or whole by any institution that is considered to be a botanic garden by the Botanical Gardens Conservation International:

- ✿ A reasonable degree of permanence
- ✿ An underlying scientific basis for the collections
- ✿ Proper documentation of the collections, including wild origin
- ✿ Monitoring of the plants in the collections
- ✿ Adequate labeling of the plants
- ✿ Open to the public
- ✿ Communication of information to other gardens, institutions and the public
- ✿ Exchange of seed or other materials with other botanic gardens, arboreta or research institutions
- ✿ Undertaking of scientific or technical research on plants in the collections
- ✿ Maintenance of research programs in plant taxonomy in associated herbaria.

The above list does not, however, constitute a comprehensive summary of the activities undertaken by botanic gardens.

BGCI has considered what makes a botanic garden different from a public park or pleasure gardens. In the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation the definition of a botanic garden is as follows:

*"Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education."*

“Scientific research, conservation, display, and education” are the criteria that establish the dissimilarity between a garden for aesthetic purposes and an officially recognized botanical garden. The West Hartford Public Garden will be open to the general public with no or minimal admission fees. The Garden will also offer plants and seeds to other entities for propagation purposes but will not at the outset include scientific research and collection.

## **Healing Garden**

The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) say this about healing gardens: “A healing garden is a somewhat vague term lacking precise design implications, but its purpose is to support generalized healing by helping patients become healthful, well, and whole.” The ASLA goes on to break down a Healing Garden into two distinct subsets. First, “A meditation garden is likely to encourage inwardly focused attention for the purpose of deepening personal knowledge and attaining peace with oneself.” The second in the subset is a contemplation garden. “A contemplation garden provides an ambience conducive to examining issues beyond and/or larger than oneself in a thoughtful, deliberate, perhaps religious or mystical way. When creating either of the two gardens mentioned above, it is the designer’s intent and elements included in the garden’s design that will differentiate the type of garden it is and “serve as catalysts, inspiring individuals to reach further out and thus get closer to their individual goals.”

Typically, a meditation or contemplation garden provide no “hands on” therapy. They are generally a place for a person to sit and enjoy their peaceful surroundings while coming to terms with life changes brought about by physiological or psychological conditions. Often, these gardens are found in hospitals, clinics and treatment facilities. Smilow Cancer Center at Yale-New Haven Hospital for example, has a roof top healing garden on the seventh floor for patients to frequent in a peaceful and non-threatening environment void of the typical doctors, machinery and hospital setting characteristic of most hospitals.

## **Horticulture Therapy**

Horticulture Therapy is not new to the arsenal of treatments for those suffering physiological and psychological conditions. It has been utilized for many years in various forms and situations, often in psychiatric residential facilities. Despite its long existence, there are multiple definitions for Horticulture Therapy. Some of those definitions include:

According to the [Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association](#) Horticultural therapy is:

"The use of plants and the natural world to improve the social, spiritual, physical and emotional wellbeing of individuals who participate in it"

In the words of Mitchell Hewson, Horticultural Therapy is:

“...a tool to develop a relationship with the client to improve their behavioural, physical and spiritual wellbeing”.

Generally it could be said that Horticultural Therapy is the study of horticulture and related humanistic skills to provide a therapeutic basis to promote physical and mental functioning through natural or the manmade environment.

Diane Relf defines Horticultural Therapy in more specific terms in her book:

“...four elements that are essential for an activity to qualify as horticultural therapy if it is to be **considered a profession eligible for the same status as other caring professions:**

-  A defined treatment procedure that focuses on horticultural or gardening activities
-  A client with a diagnosed problem who is in treatment for that problem
-  A treatment goal that can be measured and evaluated

## **Educational Garden**

According to the American Horticulture Society, “Maintaining a connection with the natural world helps children develop healthy social skills, enhances school curricula, strengthens family ties, and fosters an understanding and appreciation of the environment and our place within it.”

Interestingly enough, that very definition could also be considered for the definition of Horticulture Therapy by simply substituting the word “persons” for “children” and modifying the school curricula portion of the definition.

Furthermore, studies have shown that children, who are connected with gardening, tend to develop healthier eating habits. The State of California has worked since 1995 to include gardening in the school curricula with the “Garden in Every School” program. The concept of which is to provide school aged

children experience and education through gardening. California firmly believes that a healthy well fed child will learn better in the classroom. The California Board of Education found that in the years following implementation, which 77% of participating schools scored significantly higher on standardized testing than their nonparticipating peers.

# **Feasibility Study: West Hartford Public Garden**

## **Executive Summary**

The Greater Hartford Region is home to a number of public gardens and planned outdoor spaces. In 1861, the City of Hartford's Bushnell Park was the first publicly approved and financed Municipal Park in the nation. It was designed with the notion of returning a piece of the urban landscape to nature and over 157 varieties of trees and shrubs were selected to return a blighted area to a "green" public space. In 1904, land was donated to the City of Hartford for the purpose of horticulture and preservation. It was to be named Elizabeth Park for a local industrialist's deceased wife. Elizabeth Park still exists today with a variety of gardens for viewing including its most cherished, the Rose Garden. Other gardens, parks and open spaces have been established in the area over the years. Westmoor Park in West Hartford has the vestiges of a working farm and includes community garden plots for lease to local residents. Community gardens dot the urban landscape throughout the Greater Hartford Area and provide farm to table produce to food pantries, farmers markets and individuals. Given the number of public gardens, community gardens and open spaces available in the area, why should money and time be invested into one more?

West Hartford has demonstrated support for community initiatives. There is a strong garden club, active arts community, strong business presence, a somewhat affluent population, and a well-educated public. The Town has multiple economic centers that attract employees and shoppers from around the region. The public school system is well regarded and there is proximity to a number of private schools. Furthermore, West Hartford is central to many health care facilities in Hartford, West Hartford, Farmington, and New Britain. Perhaps most importantly, the Town is very active in economic development to continue driving a successful and desirable community to live, work and play.

The West Hartford Public Garden's (WHPG) mission is to provide a public space for enjoyment of plants and trees presented in a natural and landscaped manner, to provide educational programs to area youth and to provide horticulture therapy programs to assist in improving the lives of those persons with physiological and psychological conditions. Given the mission of the WHPG, the establishment of horticulture therapy programs will set it aside and make the WHPG unique. Combining all of the programs mentioned in the mission statement will create a well-rounded and sustainable garden to enjoy and work for years into the future.

Siting the WHPG may be the most challenging aspect this concept. There are multiple sites throughout the Greater Hartford Area, however, one site in particular stands out and is very desirable to the WHPG. The University of Connecticut, Greater Hartford Campus (UCGHC) occupies 58 acres of land in north central West Hartford. Trout Brook Drive dissects the property and the southern boundary is established by Asylum Avenue which connects the area with downtown Hartford. In the fall of 2012, UCGHC announced a move to downtown Hartford and began seeking a buyer for the property. Interest in the property was immediate but has since diminished somewhat. A portion of the property is undevelopable due to flooding concerns and FEMA flood plain delineations. The WHPG is a compatible use for the land that structures cannot be sited on due to flooding concerns.

Funding for the WHPG will be requested in form of donations, grants and endowments. In the present economy, monies will be somewhat difficult to acquire. It is anticipated that local foundations, health care facilities and donors will be identified to fund the construction and initial operation of the WHPG. Retail activities, continuing access to endowments and grants, donors, and special event fees will be utilized to support and sustain the WHPG into future operations. In addition, fundraising activities will assist the WHPG in sustaining programs while maintaining a reserve fund to utilize during times of economic downturns.

### **History of the Project**

The WHPG is in an infancy state. No site has been formally selected and funding has not yet been secured. The purpose of this document is to establish a preliminary feasibility study to present for siting and funding purposes.

### **Brief description of the West Hartford Public Garden**

Public Gardens worldwide are well recognized for the roles that they play in public education and recreation. Why is there a need for additional public gardens in the greater Hartford area? The WHPG will raise public understanding of the importance of environmental protection and the importance of plants for our daily lives, Educational programs for Children and Horticultural Therapy programs for those with physiological and psychological conditions.

Key components of the WHPG will include a general garden planted with native New England plants, shrubs and trees, working fruit and vegetable garden, herb garden, public event area, greenhouse, an office and work area, and garage/storage area. The extent, size and complexity of each component will be variable upon land made available.

## **Need and Origins of Concept**

The concept of a public garden featuring Horticultural Therapy programs was born from the presence of Healing Gardens at medical facilities visited. While meditation and contemplation are both very valid and important pieces of a person's recovery from such conditions as cancer, HIV and other long term illnesses, they only provide a person with opportunity while visiting or hospitalized. The WHPG will offer an outlet for recovering patients to not only meditate and contemplate; it will also give the patient the means to work the garden. This in turn, will provide that person with a connection with the earth and with life which has been shown to assist patients in the healing process psychologically. In addition, it these patients will act as a key part of the sustainability of the garden as they will provide on a volunteer basis some of the work needed to keep the garden in operation.

Other programs, such as the educational programs will offer area school children hands on experience with gardening and will illustrate the importance of farming and providing wholesome produce to area food pantries. As part of the curriculum, environmental issues will also be explored and discussed.

In a survey of area gardens, many provide some elements of educational programs. No healing garden or community garden in the Greater Hartford Area were found to provide a patient with a hands on gardening experience to assist with the healing process. The West Hartford Public Garden will provide that gardening and additional educational programs that other area gardens do not.

## **Project Name**

The name of this project shall be the West Hartford Public Gardens. This moniker establishes sense of place, that there will be a garden and a status that is open to the public.

## **West Hartford Public Garden Mission Statement**

The West Hartford Public Garden's (WHPG) mission is to provide a public space for enjoyment of plants and trees presented in a natural and landscaped manner, to provide educational programs to area youth and to provide horticulture therapy programs to assist in improving the lives of those persons with physiological and psychological conditions.

## **Major Goals and Objectives**

- 🌿 Provide Horticulture Therapy Programs.
- 🌿 Provide Educational Programs using horticulture, the environment and sustainability as themes.
- 🌿 Maintain and display living collections of native New England plants.
- 🌿 Document and clearly label the collections.

- 🌿 Display the collections in a horticultural attractive setting.
- 🌿 Promote awareness and knowledge of plants and the importance of biodiversity in the local community.
- 🌿 Develop, support and promote the role of the WHPG as a focus for botanical and horticultural excellence.
- 🌿 Develop the landscape in West Hartford site to provide an attractive place for visitors.
- 🌿 Establish a landscape design consultancy to work with other public and private institutions providing technical advice, planning and native plants.
- 🌿 Grow native plants to replenish the collections, to sell to visitors and provide plants for the landscape design consultancy.
- 🌿 Interpret the collections by linking them to aspects of life in the community.
- 🌿 Provide training courses for the local community in horticulture, permaculture and organic gardening techniques, to improve their plant knowledge.
- 🌿 Develop staff skills at all levels by appropriate training.
- 🌿 Consult and involve all staff in planning WHPG and its work.
- 🌿 To ask for, listen to and act upon staff suggestions and ideas, at all levels.
- 🌿 Review policy and practice once a year and publish an Annual Report.
- 🌿 Follow an environmentally-friendly approach in planning the Garden.
- 🌿 Develop links with other institutions in United States with some shared aims.
- 🌿 Develop links with other gardens in the region and worldwide.

### **Aims and Objectives of the West Hartford Public Garden**

- 🌿 Plan, develop and maintain the gardens in an aesthetically pleasing manner in order to attract visitors to the Garden.
- 🌿 Make available and promote the use of indigenous plant material in order to foster an appreciation of plants in the wild.
- 🌿 Reproduce plantings typical of an ecosystem to promote appreciation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 🌿 Establish small living collections of exotics to extend the period of interest of the Garden.

### **Legal Status of the Garden**

The WHPG will exist as a nonprofit 501c3 organization. West Hartford Public Garden will be governed by a Board of Directors (the Board) representing and consisting of those sectors of the community for which the garden serves. Members of the Board will serve a term of three years with an opportunity to serve an additional term. There shall be a Director of the West Hartford Public Garden who will serve at the will of the Board. The Director will be a member of the Board providing monthly updates to the entire Board either in person or via electronic means on the operations of the garden. The Board will be responsible for establishing annual budgets and adjusting budgets as conditions warrant. The Board will be required to play key roles in fundraising activities for the garden. An initial staff will consist of consultants and support staff for the creation, maintenance and operations of the garden and its grounds. It

is desirable to establish a relationship with the Town of West Hartford and UConn to assist with maintenance and operations.

### **Availability of Sites**

The town of West Hartford is quasi urban/suburban in nature. Areas of town are considered much more urban with smaller parcel sizes and denser populations while other areas are more suburban with large parcel sizes and lower densities. Overall, there is a small aggregate of available land to build large scale projects upon. Open space is much revered and is protected from development. The nature of the WHPG is such that it could qualify as open space. Any structures present will be small and serve the purposes of supporting the garden and its activities. There are several possible sites, they include portions of the UConn, Greater Hartford Campus in the north central portion of town, Westmoor Park in the northwest portion of town, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) land in the west and northwest, and several smaller parks located throughout the Town of West Hartford. Of these large undeveloped parcels, Westmoor Park was bequeathed to the Town for the purpose of open space and to preserve its farming heritage for residents to enjoy, MDC land is set aside as open space and serves as water supplies for area towns and cities, and the smaller parks are large and are unlikely locations for a garden of even modest size. The UConn, Great Hartford Campus sits on 58 acres. Of that 58 acres, a good portion is considered undesirable and/or undevelopable due to flooding concerns. A public garden should be considered an appropriate use for such land with considerations given to flooding threats to the garden and adjacent streets and properties. In fact, the Town will be provided an opportunity to correct flooding issues in the area through cooperation with the WHPG by providing assistance, both engineering and financial to solve issues afflicting those adjacent property owners.

### **Threats and Pitfalls**

The number one threat to the West Hartford Public Garden and its success is funding. Given its status as a 501c3, the Garden will be able to seek funding from foundations, grant makers and potentially government sources. Sustainability will depend in large part upon the success of the garden to solicit donations at the door, fundraising efforts and the ability to attract and/or establish an endowment. Further monies will be derived from retail activities on the site's grounds.

The site may see some opposition from area homeowners. It will be vital address any concerns immediately and with the involvement of those who live and work nearby. Mediation of flooding concerns and addressing traffic issues must be considered and conveyed to the area residents.

Presence of other gardens and parks in the area should pose no threat to the garden. In fact, the WHPG will provide an additional reason for those who live and work in the Great Hartford Area to visit West Hartford to explore the many amenities the town has to offer, thus generating additional revenues from retail and food sales.

### **Description of Site**

The most desirable site for the location of the West Hartford Public Garden is located in the north central portion of the Town of West Hartford on the UConn, Greater Hartford Campus. The site is relatively central within the Town of West Hartford with access from West Hartford Center and I84 to the south, The Farmington Valley and points west via Route 44/Albany Avenue and Trout Brook Drive to the west, North Main Street and Trout Brook Drive to the north giving access to Bloomfield and northern Connecticut, The City of Hartford and points east via Route 44/Albany Avenue and Asylum Avenue. The UConn, Greater Hartford Campus is bounded by Lawler Road to the north, University of Saint Joseph to the east, Asylum Avenue to the south and a row of homes addressed from Lincoln Avenue to the west. Trout Brook Drive dissects the campus. Structures consisting of classroom buildings and an operations garage occupy a portion of the area west of Trout Brook Drive. There is also a small stream parallel to Trout Brook Drive. Two small ponds can also be found west of Trout Brook Drive. A large parking area occupies land to the east of Trout Brook Drive. That parking area is bounded by a small stream, West Hartford Little League Baseball fields and a low-lying wooded area to the north and east of the parking area.

### **Garden Infrastructure**

The WHPG will require construction of access to and parking for the site. Access from Trout Brook Drive and/or Asylum Avenue is desirable to prevent traffic on Lawler Road. The parcel of UConn property to the east of Trout Brook Drive currently supports two access points from Trout Brook into the facilities primary parking area. The parcel to the west of Trout Brook Drive currently has access from Asylum Avenue and Lawler Road.

Public utilities including Power, water, sewer, and telephone are available to the site. Fiber optics are also nearby.

The WHPG will require a series of pathways wide enough to carry pedestrian traffic as well as utility vehicles. The extent the pathway network will be established during the planning process.

The WHPG will require a greenhouse, an operations center including a garage, staff work area, restrooms, and a small visitor's/ information center and space supporting retail activities on site.

A public gathering area will also be planned for the WHPG. This area will provide space for small gatherings including meetings, outdoor classes and weddings and other private events. Private events will be charged a rental fee for use of the grounds to assist in funding the operations of the garden.

### **Likely cost and possible funding**

The garden will work to quickly to become self –sustaining using revenues garnered from retail activities, rentals of public event space, donations “at the door”, minimal small scale fundraising activities, one large scale fundraising activity such as a “Farm to Table Dinner”, and grants. An endowment for ongoing support of the WHPG will be sought for long range financial security. At no time, shall the WHPG depend upon general donations and grants for day to day operations.

*How much is the Garden likely to cost?* The WHPG will be working in conjunction with an Engineering firm with experience in landscape architecture, water resources and civil engineering to plan and establish cost estimates to construct the garden. Once these plans have been completed and approved, ongoing maintenance and staffing costs can be determined. The WHPG will rely on a volunteer force for portions of daily operations.

*How would the development of the garden be funded?* Funding for the WHPG will rely on donations and fundraising activities. Area foundations identified as potential sources of funding include The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and The Knox Park Foundation. Additionally, larger hospitals and medical centers are also potential sources of income. Fundraising activities through events and requests for donations will supplement monies raised. Government funding is unlikely given the state of State and Municipal budgets. However, a partnership with the Town of West Hartford is desirable to assist in the maintenance and operations of the garden. There is precedent as the West Hartford Little League relies on the Town of West Hartford's Public Works departments to maintain the UConn Little League Complex. UConn may be an additional partner and collaborator, assisting with programs and identifying examples of New England flora to include in the garden's displays.

*Will funding be available for recurrent costs and on-going maintenance?* The WHPG strongly wishes to establish a foundation to support the recurring costs and on-going maintenance costs. The WHPG wishes to secure an endowment for financial security purposes.

## **Likely Stakeholders**

The WHPG will encourage partnerships and collaborations with parties that are a good fit for the success of the garden's operation and sustainability. Likely stakeholders include, the Town of West Hartford, West Hartford Public Schools, Area private schools, Greater Hartford Healthcare Facilities, and UConn. To ensure success of the garden, all of the aforementioned parties are desired. Additional stakeholders may be identified at a later date.

## **Visitors to the West Hartford Public Garden**

The Greater Hartford area has supported area gardens for many years. Elizabeth Park sees thousands of visitors every year. The WHPG will attract area residents to the gardens, its programs and special events. The potential is great and with an attractive formula to attract visitors, the garden will be a success.

## **Management**

As mentioned previously in the legal status of the garden, the management will consist of a Director who will be charged with the day to day operations of the garden. The Director will be a member of a team of Board of Directors who will make budget decisions, fundraising activities, assist with hiring decisions and assist with program development.

## **Staffing**

Initial staffing will consist of a Director, an Operations Manager, a Programs Administrator, and a Horticulturalist/Botanist. The Director of the WHPG will act as the Senior Manager of the site. Start-up funding for staff will be included in fundraising and grants sought prior to garden opening the grounds for business. On-going fundraising, retail activities and rental fees will assist in continued funding for staff retention.

## **Volunteer Involvement**

Volunteers will play a vital role in the operation and success of the WHPG. Specifically, the horticulture therapy program will benefit from a volunteer force. That volunteer force will be manned by individuals seeking therapeutic respite by working the garden per a program outlined by a horticulture therapist and in cooperation with a physician and/or psychologist or psychiatrist. The WHPG will also seek volunteers to assist in day to day operations of the garden to provide volunteer and leadership opportunities to individuals and to support the garden in controlling payroll costs.

Partnerships with local healthcare facilities such as cancer treatment centers, HIV houses such as St Phillips house in Plainville and other professional treatment services. Volunteer staff will be provided communal space in a planned staff area share by all staff at the WHPG. By placing the volunteers with other staff, any questions, issues or problems raised by the volunteers can be addressed in a timely manner.

### **Planting Materials**

Suitable planting material will be available through local wholesale and retail nurseries in the area. Native New England flora will be used in the plantings of the garden and much will be obtained locally. Those varieties not available locally will be sought out in other locales in the New England Region. Once initial plantings have been made during construction, propagation will be utilized to replace existing plants and for retail activities.

### **Hazard Mitigation**

Hazards that may need addressed at the UConn site include: flooding, fire and wind and storm damage are possible. Appropriate levels of insurance will be acquired to cover injury, loss of life and/or structural damage to the facilities.

The WHPG will work with the Town of West Hartford and other interested regulatory agencies to improve drainage in and around the site to prevent flooding of area streets, homes and the garden.

All municipal and state codes will be followed during construction of the WHPG. Structures will be equipped with necessary fire suppression to avoid any injury, loss of life and damage to the infrastructure.

Wind and storm damage may include damage to structures and the garden's plantings. Appropriate planning will be made prior to construction to minimize potential hazards to prevent damage or injury.

### **Use of Chemicals**

The WHPG will use any natural and environmentally safe methods available to it to control weeds and pests on the garden property. Partnerships with local nurseries and UConn will be fostered to assist the garden in keeping the garden free of hazardous chemicals.

### **Commercial Opportunities**

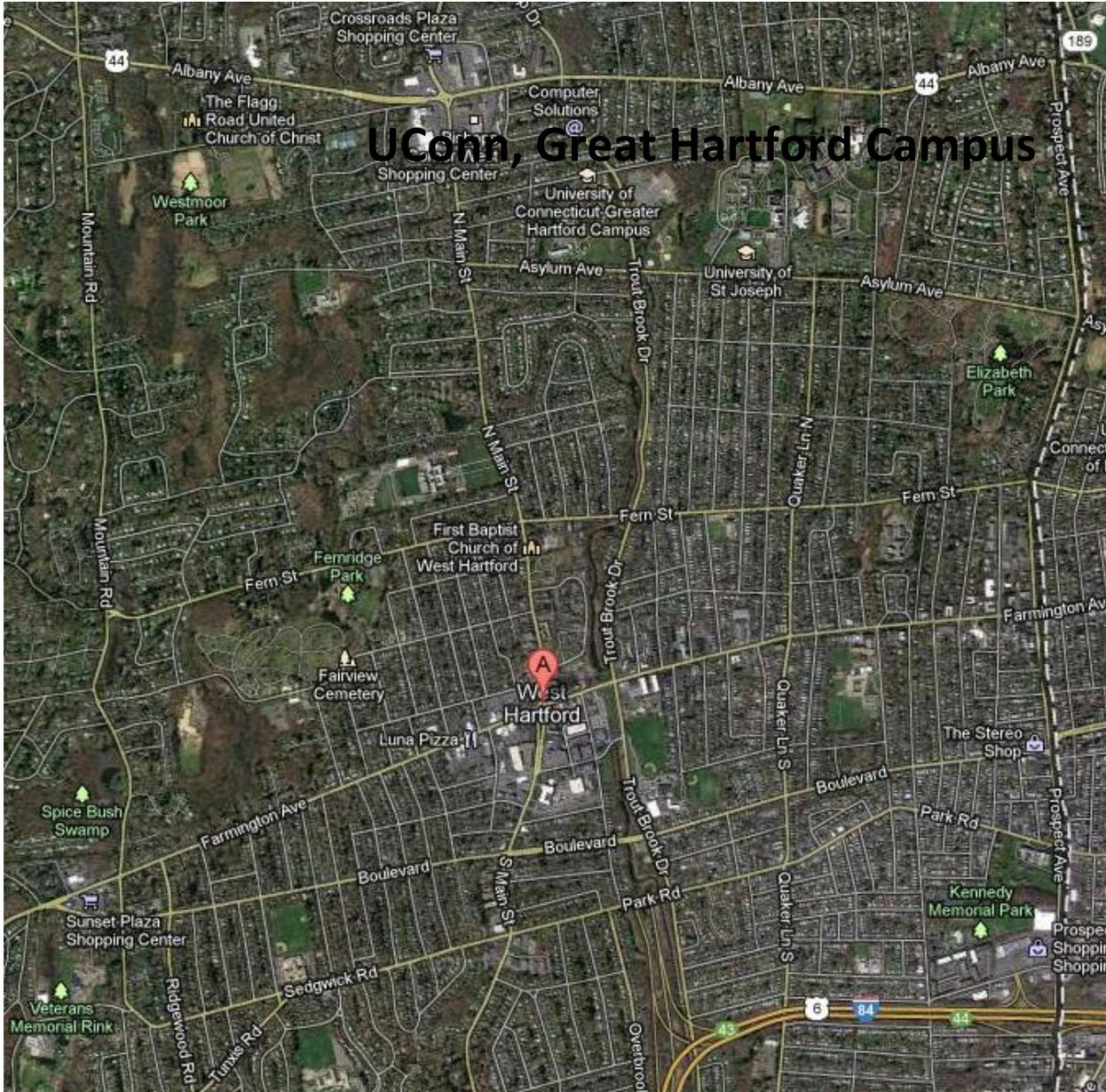
The WHPG will include commercial activities. Those activities will include sales of plants and seeds to visitors and other gardens, making the grounds available for tours and classes and rental fees garnered from events such as weddings, meetings and reunions. Food and drink is a possibility for planned events at the garden but not as an everyday offering.

## **Use of Social Media**

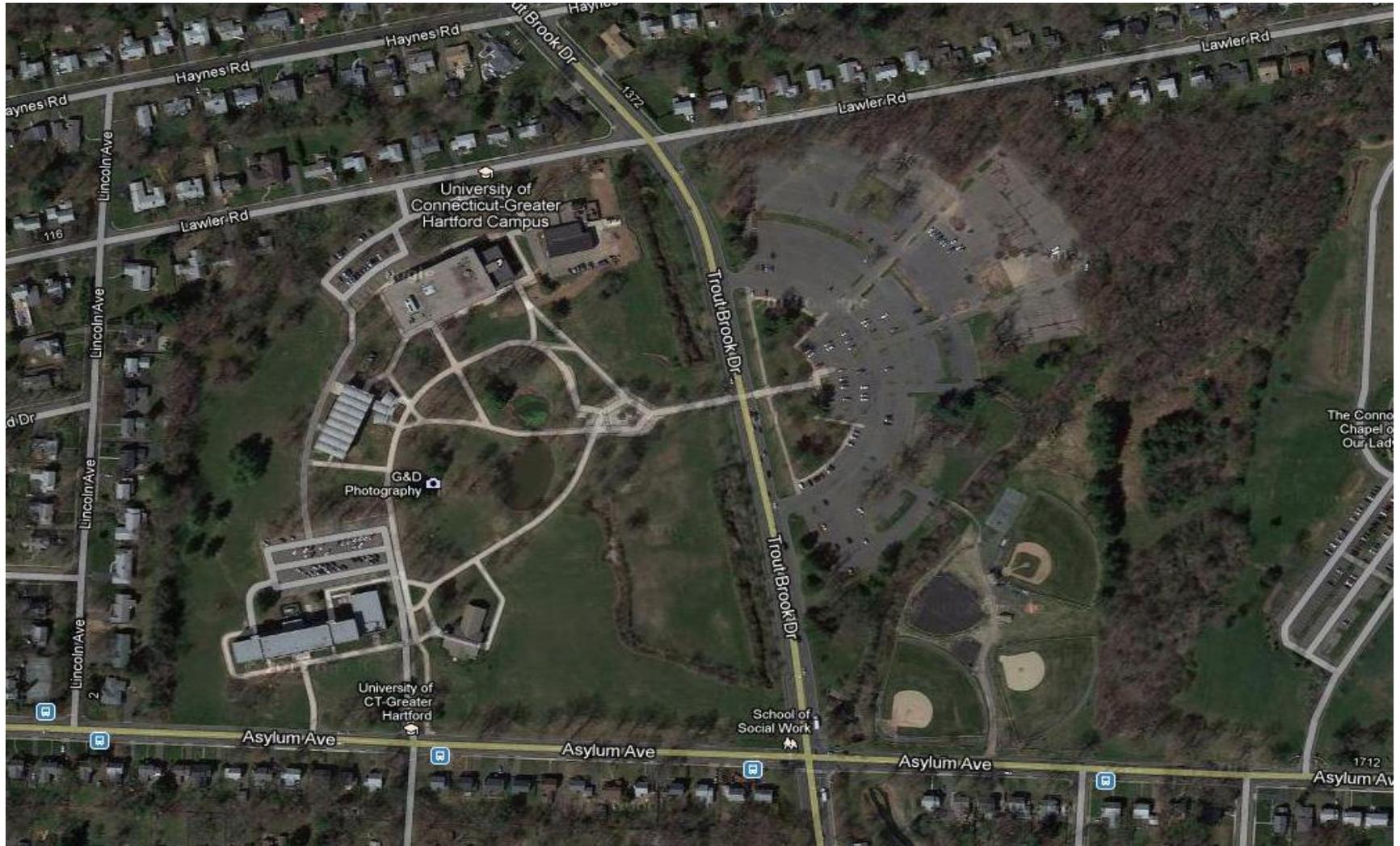
The WHPG will maintain a presence with social media outlets such as a formal website and a presence on Facebook and other free or low cost sites. At this time, an introductory Facebook page has been launched and will be built upon in the coming weeks. The page can be located at the following address:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/West-Hartford-Public-Garden/342131915909448?fref=ts>

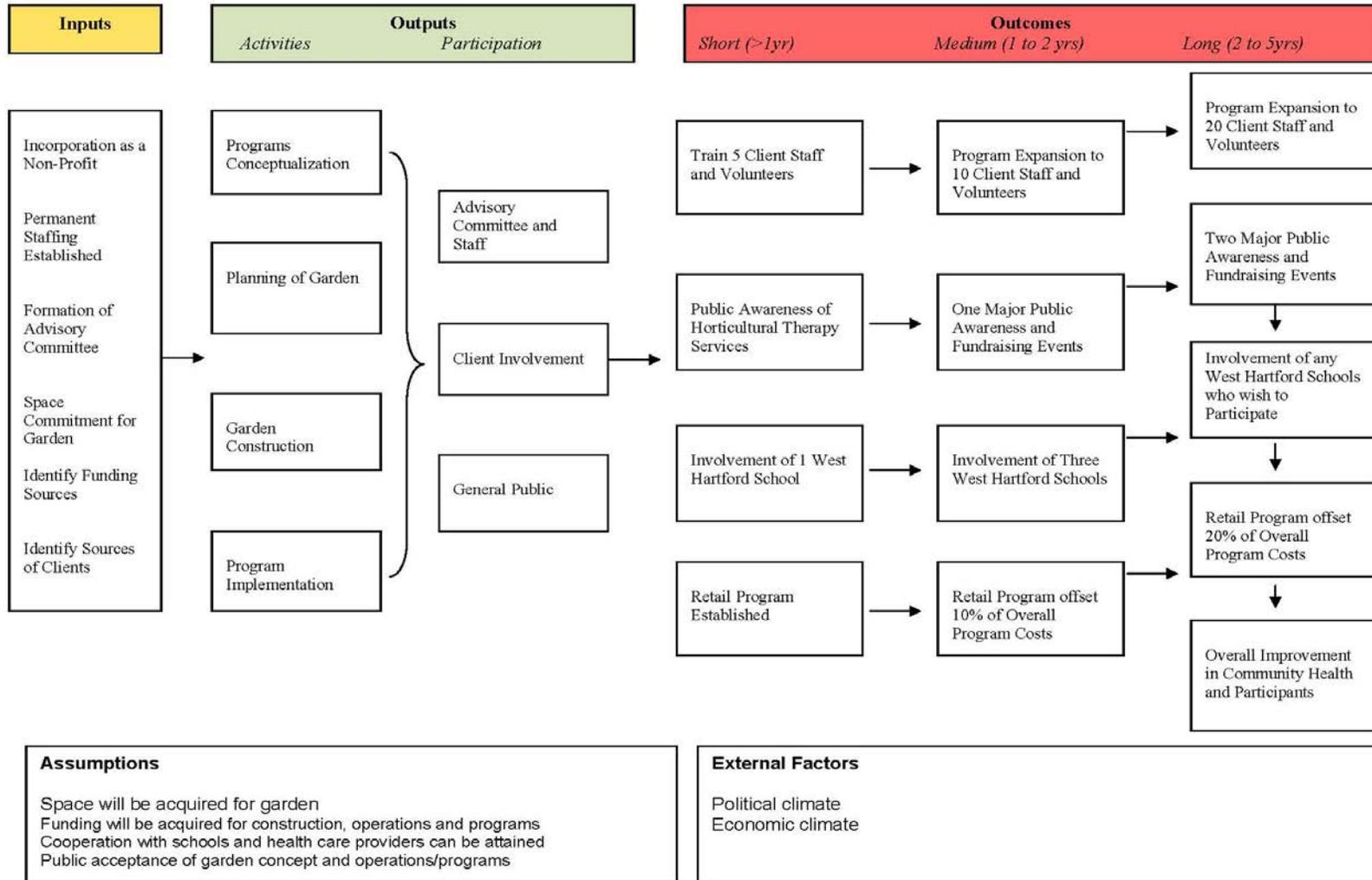
# Town of West Hartford



# UConn, Greater Hartford Campus Site



## Appendix A – Logic Model for West Hartford Public Garden



## Works Cited and Consulted

American Horticultural Therapy Association. <http://ahta.org/horticultural-therapy>

Botanical Gardens Conservation International. <http://www.bgci.org/resources/information/>

Bushnell Park Foundation. <http://www.bushnellpark.org/history/>

California Board of Education. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/gardenoverview.asp>

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# Appendix A – Logic Model for West Hartford Public Garden

