



Riverside Neighborhood Garden

2011 Report



About Grow Team ONE

Grow Team ONE (Old North End) is a grassroots community organization in Burlington, Vt. that cultivates leadership and learning through gardening.

The all-volunteer group is a resource for residents who want to learn about growing, harvesting, and preserving food; facilitates the creation of sustainable home and neighborhood gardens; and aims to increase access to fresh produce in Burlington's Old North End.

Grow Team ONE's two gardens, the Archibald Neighborhood Garden and Riverside Neighborhood Garden, provide safe, affordable garden space for 33 households and 4 youth groups, and Grow Team ONE's workshops and events are open to all!

Community and business support

Grow Team ONE extends a big THANK YOU to everyone who helps our gardens grow - especially the volunteers, neighbors, and businesses who offer contributions and in-kind support, including:

American Flatbread Burlington Hearth

Burlington's Community and Economic
Development Office

Burlington's Community Development
Block Grant program

Burlington Housing Authority

Burlington Parks and Recreation
Department

Burlington Permaculture

Burlington Time Banks

Chittenden Solid Waste District

City Market

Dot's Market

Elmore Roots Nursery

Friends of Burlington Gardens

Gardener's Supply

Healthy City Youth Farm

Intervale Community Farm

Intervale Compost Products

Koenig Cedar Company

New England Grassroots
Environment Fund

Panadero

Pitchfork Farm

Red Wagon Plants

ReSOURCE YouthBuild

RivenWoodCrafts

Round River Design

Shelburne Farms

Skinny Pancake Restaurant

UVM Plant and Soil Sciences
Department

UVM Soil Testing Lab

Vermont Community Garden Network

Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden
& Grand Isle Counties

Growing Community and Food Security in Burlington's Old North End

www.growteamvt.com

Riverside Neighborhood Garden

The Riverside Neighborhood Garden was established in 2009 in partnership with Burlington Housing Authority and Burlington Parks & Recreation.

Located at the intersection of Manhattan Drive and Intervale Avenue, behind the 669 Riverside Avenue Apartments, the garden has 12 full-size plots, 4 half-size plots, a common herb bed, apple and plum trees, raspberries, and blueberries. Burlington Parks & Recreation Summer Program and DREAM have youth plots onsite.

In 2011, 12 households had garden plots at the site. Four of these households live at the BHA apartments and the remaining eight live within five blocks of the garden site.

All of the BHA residents and half of the other gardeners have expressed an interest in returning to the garden in 2012. With additional outreach, we hope to fill the open slots with BHA residents.

Grow Team ONE and the Riverside gardeners are grateful for Burlington Housing Authority's support and partnership. BHA's recognition of the important role of community-based food production is a big step toward strengthening the physical, social, and environmental health of our families and neighbors.



Successes

2011 was a building year for the Riverside Neighborhood Garden. The garden community was strong and site improvements made great strides toward making the garden feel more permanent.

The garden was very productive and gardeners were able to grow hundreds of pounds of food for their families and neighbors.

Several events were held at the garden site, including workshops and potlucks. The events brought the gardeners together and introduced other community members to the garden.

City Market offered cooking workshops for gardeners, local children, and other community members. The workshops were well attended and included picnics in the garden.

The Riverside Community Room was an excellent site for garden organizer meetings, workshops, potlucks, and other events.

Partnerships with the Community College of Vermont, the ReSOURCE YouthBuild program, Tuttle Middle School, and COTS brought teams of volunteers to the site to help with planting projects, site improvements, and the shed and shade structure.

New plantings outside the garden gate made the site more attractive and created a more welcoming entrance to site. A wattle fence defined the back edge of the garden and made the area more secure for children. The shed and shade structure will provide tool storage, rainwater collection, and gathering space. The innovative design has attracted a lot of attention and is a model for other garden projects.

A group of Riverside gardeners started an English Language class for their fellow gardeners and other BHA residents. The class has been very successful and has resulted in a stronger sense of community at the garden and at the apartments.



Challenges

The Riverside Neighborhood Garden site faced a few challenges in 2011. A ground hog family decimated many of the early crops before several of the animals were removed. Gardeners had to build protective fences around their plots to protect against the remaining animals.

The shed and shade structure building project is taking much longer than expected. The ReSOURCE YouthBuild crews were a big help, but were not able to complete the project. The Grow Team member in charge of the project has been working diligently outside of his full time job and personal obligations and the project is almost complete, but there is still some finishing work to be done in the spring.

Plans to expand the garden further east in order to increase the number of garden plots were put on hold due to the cost and coordinating time required to develop an appropriate site improvement plan.

Future Plans

Grow Team ONE's vision for the garden includes increasing the number of garden plots so more people can garden at the site; continuing site improvements to make the entrance more welcoming; involving more neighbors in the care of the shared areas; and increasing the garden and food education at the site.



A volunteer crew from the Community College of Vermont installed a raised bed and trellises and planted perennial flowers to beautify the entrance of the garden site.