

1-25-10

Racine Redevelopment Authority,

As a UW Extension master gardener volunteer for the past eight years and the UW Extension master gardener "Garden of Giving" organizer going on three years I would, without a doubt, have to support the conditional use permit requested by the Racine Urban Garden Network (RUGN) for the property at 734 S. Marquette St.

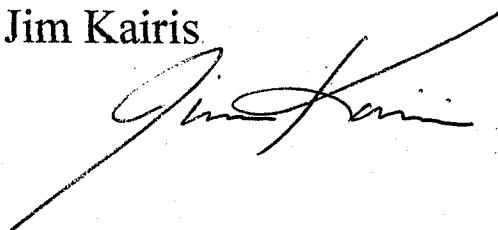
When I am asked to give reasons why a community garden would be a good idea I like to refer to the Greater Grand Rapids Food System Council's – Why Community Gardens. They have listed the benefits in such an easy to follow out-line which makes the "WHY" very easy to understand. Enclosed is their list of benefits.

The RUGN request for having raised beds for people with disabilities, garden plots that will produce vegetables for the food bank and rental plots are all an excellent use of that property.

Training and information regarding community gardens is also available through the Racine/Kenosha Master Gardener Program.

UW Extension  
Master Gardener Volunteer  
"Garden Of Giving"  
Growing vegetables for the Racine County Food Bank

Jim Kairis



**Community Benefits**

- Help reduce crime
- Sometimes reclaim abandoned spaces
- Help create a community presence which may deter crime
- Increase homeland security (as well as being less vulnerable to disruption than other aspects of the current food system)
- Create beauty and tranquility

**Economic Benefits**

- Reduce cost of obtaining food
- Often reduces hunger due to location in low-income communities
- Teach people how to provide for themselves
- Promote local economies, including the non-monetized economy
- Provide opportunity for small-scale entrepreneurial activity

**Educational Benefits**

- Are a great education tool for both youth and adults about how nature works
- Connect us with nature
- Provide youth a constructive outlet for their energies

**Environmental Benefits**

- Promote less dependence on the global/corporate food system with all of its environmental harms
- May reclaim abandoned spaces
- Are generally more intensive in yield per acre and therefore "consumes" less land
- May capture and reuse stormwater runoff
- Diminish the "heat island" effect in urban areas
- Provide the carbon dioxide fixation effects of plant growth
- Generally use little or no pesticides and builds the soil organically
- Shorten the distance of consumer to food, eliminating long-distance shipping, with its negative consequences such as global warming gas emissions and continual replacement of road (and other) infrastructure

**Health Benefits**

- Provide fresh fruits and vegetables (which may be organic as well)
- Fresh fruits and vegetables taste better, making healthy eating easier
- Provide exercise
- Provide an opportunity for those who love gardening
- Connect people with nature and the seasons
- Provide stress relief through contact with tranquil green spaces and the activity of gardening
- Improve mental health thru a variety of factors, including social contact and the sense of accomplishment in growing good food
- Provide an opportunity for exercise and fresh air
- Give people more control over what goes into their food
- Have more nutritional value in food that has not come a long distance causing nutrient deterioration

**Social Benefits**

- Get people more out in and involved with the community
- Bring people together and build relationships
- Provide a means for cultural expression and exchange
- Connect people with their communities



**CENTER FOR  
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

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Tallent Hall

February 2, 2010

I am writing this letter to support the Racine Urban Garden Network (RUGN) proposed Community Plot Garden at 734 S. Marquette Street. The Root River Environmental Education Community Center (REC) is committed to the success of this garden and resulting quality of life improvement in the West 6<sup>th</sup> Street area.

The REC's mission is to provide community members with opportunities to explore the Great Lakes and connected ecosystems through recreation, education, demonstration and research. Public boat rentals, school environmental education programs, citizen science monitoring and public outreach are the components of this effort to connect City of Racine residents to their natural environments.

The REC, located at 1301 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, is in close proximity to the proposed location of the community garden.

There is great potential for cross-pollination of activities between the REC and RUGN. A garden presents many educational opportunities for people of all ages. Use of the garden will also bring more visitors to the West 6<sup>th</sup> Street area and increased visibility for the REC.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Theresa Ford  
AmeriCorps VISTA  
UW-Parkside  
Root River Environmental Education Community Center



February 1, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

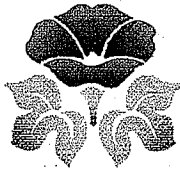
I am writing this letter in support of the Racine Urban Garden Network (RUGN) proposal to build a community garden behind Riverbend Lofts. Racine definitely needs community gardens and RUGN is made up of committed people who can make this project a reality. The location is central and they intend to build raised beds that are wheelchair accessible. The Racine Arts Council fully supports their initiative and hopes to partner with RUGN in the future by providing public art for the garden.

Thank you for considering their request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Jessika L Mikol  
Executive Director  
Racine Arts Council  
jessika@racineartscouncil.org  
262.635.0261  
www.racineartscouncil.org



Potpourri Garden Club

January 31, 2010

Nikki Aiello  
Racine Urban Garden Network  
1528 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Racine, WI 53404

Dear Nikki,

As a Master Gardener and President of Potpourri Garden Club, I realize the importance of community garden efforts.

Starting up community gardens are a great way to get our community to improve their nutrition, gives us a safe food production, food we produce is more cost effective, help people to eat healthier, and get more exercise, it is a learning experience and brings people together. I could go on and on, there are just too many positive aspects. Many forward thinking cities do have community gardens.

Good luck with your great efforts!

Sue Hammel  
Potpourri Garden Club President  
Master Gardener



7133 Michna Road, Racine, WI 53402

January 21, 2010

Nikki Aiello  
1528 W 6<sup>th</sup> St  
Racine, WI 53404

Dear Nikki,

I am writing in support of the proposed Community Plot Garden planned for 734 Marquette Street. The concept and design brings hope and renewal to the Racine Community. It will be a wonderful opportunity for youth and adults, individuals, families, and groups to learn first hand the connection between the foods we eat and how it grows.

The proposed garden will improve the environment and be a great means of education for all who actively participate in the gardening project or for those who come to visit the site.

The community plot gardens will enable people of the neighborhood to produce some of their own organic food, thereby improving their nutrition and health. The entire venture is a way to enhance the neighborhood, develop satisfaction through working with soil and plants, and promote a spirit of cooperation.

I commend you and all who have put their energy and expertise into bringing this urban garden project forward and wish you great success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Janet Weyker".

Sr. Janet Weyker

Eco-Justice Center Director

1/30/10



[www.eatrightracine.org](http://www.eatrightracine.org)

To whom it may concern,  
Eat right Racine is very  
excited about a community garden  
on Marquette street.

Eat right Racine supports this  
100%.

We believe every city needs  
community gardens.

Sincerely,  
Heidi Fanning