

## Artist –in-Residence Community Gardens Site Visit

May 19, 2010

Tricia Wasney, Manager of the Public Art Program, introduces this year's Artist-in-Residence Program, telling the attendees that it is geared towards visual artists, and will be longer than the past three residencies, for a total of 15 months. An office space will be made available to the artist, and the artist will be working with City staff and the gardeners weekly to address the needs of the gardens and implement a plan for installation of plants and artworks. She briefly goes over the Call to Artists then introduces Karl Thordarson, from the Public Works Department, City of Winnipeg.

Karl talks about the City's role in the Program, the gardens themselves, and their differing needs. He mentions the permanent art, both functional and otherwise, that they are hoping to have integrated into the gardens through the residency.

Tricia introduces Stephanie Voyce from the Downtown BIZ, who talks about the programs they have implemented to bring art to Portage Avenue, including the Sculpture Walk which included temporary sculptures installed in planters. She shows a diagram of the key planters along Portage Avenue that will be the site for the planter portion of the project. She explains that the armature used to install the Sculpture Walk pieces have been saved, and can be used again if needed.

Questions are opened to the attendees:

Q. (to Karl) Would there be a particular number of gardens?

A. You'll see that there are many different types of gardens – large scale such as these along Churchill Drive; smaller inner city sites; gardens geared to seniors. There are about 20 on City property, and we are thinking about 5 to 6 permanent works.

Q. (in regards to Key Planters) Is this to be a permanent thing?

A. We would like to establish a plan that will be maintained, yes, for at around the next five years.

Q. Will the work be removed from the site?

A. It would depend on the nature of the work, sculptural, or plant based. Some plants may need to be over wintered.

Q. Will the planting be perennials?

A. Yes, perennials may be very appropriate – methods, advice and expertise from City staff and others will be available.

Q. Are you expecting proposals for the permanent artworks?

A. We are not expecting proposals at this stage. The final work is expected to evolve out of the residency and dialogue. What we want addressed in the application at this point is why the opportunity is interesting to you, how your art practice fits into this context, how the project could benefit from your approach. A broad expression of interest is good. The selection is made by a jury who will first select a shortlist from all applications received. The shortlisted artists will be invited to an interview and the final selection will be made from that process.

Q. Where did the idea for working in community gardens come from?

A. Karl and Tricia met on site at the Spence Community Compass, A WITH ART project (See project here: <http://www.winnipegarts.ca/index.php?/wac/artwork-article/148/> ). It was serendipitous as Karl wanted to pursue art related projects for the gardens and Tricia was looking for a new site for an artist residency and also wanted to develop more projects that were landscape or garden based.

Q. What will the community involvement be? Will there be workshops?

A. The artist will meet with gardeners over winter to discover the needs of the community and space. There is no expectation that there will be workshops with community, but they can be implemented if desired.

Q. Could water, power, etc be included as an element?

A. Installing something new might be challenging given the budget, but anything is possible in that context. It would take further discussion with the City to determine what is possible.

Q. Which gardens will be chosen?

A. It will be a collaboration between the artist, the City and the community.

Q. How permanent do the planters have to be?

A. They should include a planting plan for 3 – 5 years, the work for the community gardens should be permanent.

Q. How do people get a plot in a community garden?

A. Community groups can lease a plot, and individuals apply for a plot.