

Winter Park Community Center Garden

Community Garden, 500 square feet

721 West New England Ave. Winter Park, FL 32789

Walk Score: 80

Pedestrian Audit Score: 89



The Garden Mission Statement:

The Winter Park Community Center Garden is to provide space for Winter Park citizens to garden together - to create a shared vision, to work collaboratively, and to cultivate a place for individuals, families and friends to learn about and to experience the rewards of urban agriculture and gardening.

The Winter Park Community Center is located on West New England Avenue, between Capen Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue, in the historic Hannibal Square neighborhood. Just west of the Community Center's playground, lies a 500 square foot community garden. Although there are several other community gardens in Winter Park, some of which located on publicly owned land, this is the only community garden that will be managed by the City of Winter Park. Helping create a boundary, a black steel fence borders the 500 square feet of gardening space, 300 of which is made up of four 75 square foot raised beds allowing for fifteen 10 x 10 foot plots. Plots are rented by Winter Park citizens either annually or seasonally and provide citizens with space for growing a variety of organic fruits, vegetables, flowers, and herbs. The annual and seasonal fees are necessary for maintaining the garden, purchasing materials, and holding gardeners accountable for their space.



On January 25, 2010, the City of Winter Park approved an ordinance and a bond issue of \$8.1 million to rebuild the Winter Park Community Center and demolish the old one while the CRA would fund an additional \$1 million. With a new focus on sustainable development, the City passed an additional resolution in early 2011 mandating that all future new or significantly renovated city owned buildings be built and designed to LEED standards. The new community center is designed to be more energy efficient, conserve water, and is also healthier for occupants thanks to features such as no-VOC paint. During demolition of the previous building, materials were recycled with the goal of utilizing them for the new building.



Winter Park citizens were also becoming more interested in making the community a more sustainable place to live. When asked which activities and features they would like to be included at the new center, a community garden was near the top of the list. In addition to being able to grow your own produce at the community garden, citizens also have the opportunity to take cooking classes specializing in using local, seasonal ingredients at the center's well-equipped kitchen. Local students are provided a creative outlet with the opportunity to create artwork for the garden. The location also provides citizens the unique ability to walk to other

important destinations such as Laughlin Park, Shady Park, Central Park, the Hannibal Square Heritage Center, Rollins College, Amtrak Train Station, and the Winter Park Library, Civic Center and City Hall. This ability to walk to several locations will also provide several opportunities for community-wide events in the future.



The Winter Park Community Center Garden creates synergy with other community gardens in the area such as the Depugh Community Garden and the Mead Community Garden in effort to provide citizens of all ages the opportunity to work together. In doing so, a sense of place and community is achieved along with the building blocks of a local food system; all fundamental components of a healthy, sustainable community.