

**Proposed Enhancements for Szegda Farm, with the focus on the area adjacent to the Pole Barn and Community Garden.**

*The SFMC is responsible for developing and recommending changes and improvements from the current status and use of the property. (In the interest of continuing the discussion of future improvements Dave Bull and Bob Ulkus submit these suggestions to the SFMC for consideration as action steps to be completed in 2018 and over the next five years.)*

These actions are proposed for strategic and financial-budget planning. They are listed in priority order. As funds become available from disparate sources, flexibility in funding order changes is certainly welcome.

The Szegda Farm open space welcomes environmentalists, hikers, wildlife spotters, community garden enthusiasts, and non-game oriented recreational events. The potential exists to further utilize and develop this beautiful, quiet area for Columbia Town citizens. Such development would require a minimal investment in labor, materials, equipment, and supplies. Much of the operational and supervisory work is being done by dedicated volunteers. The following proposals can support future improvement in agricultural and recreational appreciation to our citizens. We ask your serious consideration of these investments.

PROPOSED ACTION	COMMENT	
<p><b>1. Expansion of the Community Garden Area.</b></p> <p>1.1 CG – to remove existing fence</p> <p>1.2 Contractor to remove gates install new fence &amp; reinstall gates.</p> <p>1.3 Purchase 5-6 foot side gate</p> <p>1.4 Remove sod in new areas</p> <p>1.5 Define sitting area with stone dust.</p> <p>1.6 Lengthen entry paths with chips or stone dust.</p>	<p>Started in 2008, the garden out grew its capacity in 2016 -17. The current plan expands the area of the garden in the fall of 2018.</p> <p>SFMC /rec budgeted and awarded funds to contract fence installation. Arrange a meeting with selected contractor to review scope of work prior to installation and communicate timeline to gardeners.</p> <p>CG to fund one new side gate to access weed dump and to allow for equipment access within garden.</p> <p>Recruit a local farmer to disc plow or pay for roto till or cover sod with tarps prior to installation.</p> <p>Delivery of one load of chips prior to May 2019 w/ stone dust for paths and sitting area in the future.</p>	

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<p><b>2. Signage that is appropriate to the décor of the property.</b></p>	<p>Additional regulatory &amp; trail head signs needed. Add general information signage at kiosk. Signs needed for regulation enforcement, how to report a concern, general rules, and pertinent information relating to trail use, permitted activities, seasonal activities, etc. and to advise the public regarding notification of ownership and the TOC regulations. This will help avoid misunderstandings of access and assist enforcement.</p>	
<p><b>3. Replacement of mower and plan for purchase of new compatible equipment.</b></p>	<p>Mowing of the CG and related farm acreage is done by volunteers who perform the mowing. 90% is done with a “hand me down” SCAG mower which proves adequate for secondary areas. However for the central areas the mowing quality is not at an acceptable standard for the continuous use. A shorter cleaner cut is required for public walking greenways, surrounding the entrance to the farm, pole barn and community garden.</p> <p>This action retains the SCAG for secondary use, and budgets for eventual replacement, however also requests a “new” 4’ deck riding mower for the primary areas to insure a quality job while insuring the SCAG remains available for existing fields and outlying trails. Additionally, a transport cart to be pulled by the tractor would provide substantial capability for general functionality supportive to program preparation, and allows for lawn grass collection for compost management, and improved operational support for the farm and community garden.</p>	
<p><b>4. Sustainable Maintenance of the SCAG and Gravelly Mowers and other farm equipment.</b></p>	<p>Adequate and complete annual maintenance of the SCAG is absolutely mandatory to enable volunteers to mow all areas of the CG and farm throughout the year. This action proposes a line- item for summer maintenance and emergency repair /replacement on equipment. It also seeks to clarify the timeline &amp; means to maintain equipment over the winter.</p>	



<b>PROPOSED ACTION</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	
<p><b>7. Seating area within the community garden.</b></p> <p><b>7.1 Wooden Benches strategically placed throughout the property</b></p>	<p>Construction of a stone dust area within the garden area for sitting. A picnic table has been provided by the rec department. Gardeners could purchase a pop up sun shelter for this area that may be replaced in the future by a pergola.</p> <p>Public trail areas which enjoy substantial habit and popular use historically offer benches to sit and take in the beauty of the surrounding, and allow for “taking a break” if winded or tired. The Szgeda Farm Trail system is being used more and more, and becoming more popular each year. The need to invest in wooden trail benches across the property would bring the trail system up to the appropriate standard that accounts for increased public participation.</p>	