

Fence is latest hurdle for garden

Written by MARK JAEGER

Wednesday, 02 May 2012 16:12

Hearing set on use of barrier to protect crops grown on community plots

Like gardeners waiting for spring blooms to begin emerging, the evolution of a community garden in the Village of Fredonia has been a test of patience.

Garden organizer Tony Randall appeared before the Fredonia Village Board recently to address the latest obstacle to the project — the lack of fencing.

“We are at the stage where we have at least eight people interested in being part of the garden,” Randall said.

He said he envisions the garden plot on a vacant lot in the Stoney Creek subdivision being surrounded by a four-foot, wire fence to keep hungry creatures away from the goodies.

“This would not be a big, stockade fence,” Randall said.

However, he said, village ordinances allow only decorative fencing in residential areas.

Randall said natural animal repellents, like cayenne pepper sauce, will also be used to keep rabbits and raccoons out of the garden.

To ease the concerns of officials, Randall said he would like a waiver from the village allowing only a temporary fence.

“I have found that the little critters tend to find their natural food by July, so 45 days should be sufficient,” he said.

Officials said they supported the project, but contended it made more sense to amend the fence ordinance than to grant a waiver.

Randall said enthusiasm for the project is growing, with volunteers and Boy Scouts offering to erect the fencing and create paths between the plots.

Sympathetic with Randall’s plight, the Plan Commission recommended altering the village ordinance to allow temporary fencing for gardens. The proposed change also says the 45-day restriction can be waived with the approval of the public works director.

A public hearing on allowing a temporary fence to protect the garden will be held May 17, the same night public input will be sought on the plan by a local youngster to raise chickens in a village subdivision.