

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2021
MINUTES

This meeting was held via Zoom online meeting services and was available for the public to view, listen and participate via videoconference and dial-in options.

PRESENT: Mark Nickerson, Kevin Seery, Marc Salerno, Rose Ann Hardy, Paul Dagle and Dan Cunningham
ALSO PRESENT: John Holtz, President; Bruce Cohen, Treasurer; and Lindsay Rush, Secretary of the East Lyme Giving Garden.

Mr. Nickerson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and welcomed the members of the East Lyme Giving Garden.

Discussion on possible use of American Rescue Plan funds – East Lyme Giving Garden

Mr. John Holtz stated that he is President of the East Lyme Giving Garden, and introduced Bruce Cohen, Treasurer, and Lindsay Rush, Secretary, who were also in attendance. Mr. Holtz presented a PowerPoint presentation, which is attached hereto as Exhibit 1. He stated that the Mission of the East Lyme Giving Garden is to provide sustainably grown produce to those in need in our community, to make a meaningful impact on local food insecurity. The Garden also provides education on healthy eating and food preparation, sound growing practices, and fosters community engagement. The Garden promotes preservation of our region's open spaces while using sustainable growing methods focusing on regenerative soil practices. We value the diversity within our community and want to provide a common and welcoming space for all. He stated that they plan to provide locally grown, chemical free food to members of our community that are in need; and he noted that there has been an increased urgency at our local food pantries, so they accelerated their plans and were able to help out this past summer by providing 700 lbs. of produce to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantry. Going forward they will be partnering with St. John's Church, the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantry, and the Gemma E. Moran United Way/Labor Food Bank to provide locally grown fruits and vegetables to help feed our community, and Mr. Nickerson noted that they should also reach out to Care and Share. The East Lyme Giving Garden was established in 2020 with a plot of land donated by and located behind Samuel Smith Homestead. In 2021 they received 4.5 acres on Church Lane and in partnership with Flanders Baptist & Community Church are preparing the land for planting. Mr. Holtz stated that in the past month they have been designated at 501(c)(3) and that they have partnered with the Eastern CT Community Garden Association. They have enjoyed a productive partnership with numerous community agencies, raising more than \$50,000 to date. They hope to partner with the schools and the library and stated that they have already developed strong community relationships and strong community support and is an organization that the Town can trust and depend on. Mr. Holtz stated that their needs in order of priority are tools, equipment sheds, a high tunnel and a pavilion. The operating budget for East Lyme Giving Garden is between \$5,000-\$7,000 annually. 100% of the food that is grown will be donated.

Mr. Nickerson and the entire Board thanked Mr. Holtz and the whole group of volunteers for a very organized and successful launch of the East Lyme Giving Garden and pledged his full support to help this group continue to get off to a strong start.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Cunningham MOVED to adjourn the April 21, 2021, special meeting of the East Lyme Board of Selectmen at 7:30 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Dagle. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Sandra Anderson
Recording Secretary

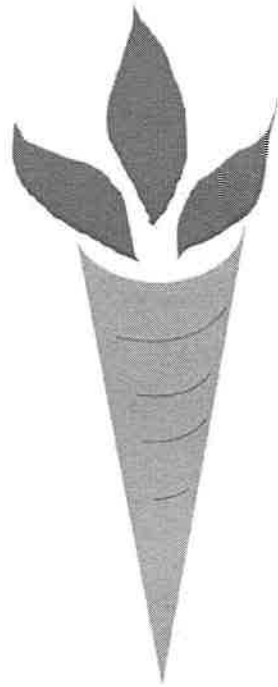
FILED

Apr 29 2021 AT 10:00 AM/PM



EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Exhibit 1



**EAST
LYME
GIVING
GARDEN**

Reducing hunger and
food insecurity in
New London County
through sustainable
agriculture

4 CHURCH LANE,
EAST LYME, CT 06333

East Lyme Giving Garden Mission

To provide sustainably grown produce to those in need in our community to decrease the numbers of people suffering from food insecurity

Engage the community and provide education on sound growing practices and foster future gardeners who will continue to practice regenerative soil practices



Our Neighbors are Hungry

COVID has increased the number of people who don't have reliable access to nutrition: food insecurity.

FOOD INSECURITY

Food Insecurity in CT: the Fight to End Hunger Continues

By Caitlin Burchill • Published April 6, 2021 • Updated on April 6, 2021 at 5:58 pm



NEWS // CORONAVIRUS IN CONNECTICUT

Long lines for free food persist a year into the pandemic, causing concern among advocates

Jacqueline Rabe Thomas, ctmirror.org
April 23, 2021 | Updated: April 13, 2021 12 a.m.



POVERTY, SOCIAL SERVICES : by JACQUELINE RABE THOMAS | APRIL 12, 2021



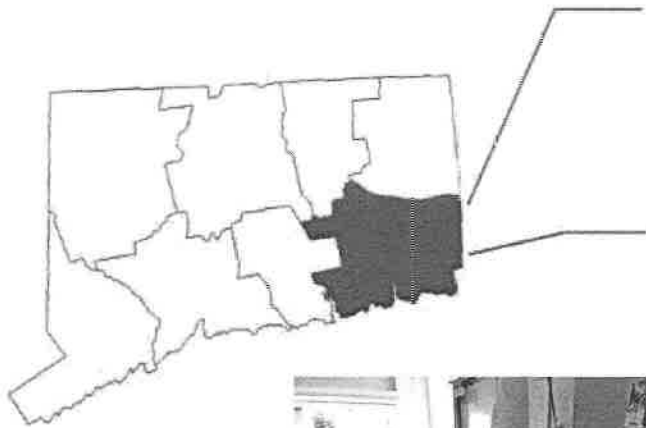
Volunteer Tony Mastromarino, of Stratford, reaches for a bag of apples as he assists a woman picking up groceries at the weekly food pantry event outside Bridgeport Rescue Mission's new Community Care Center, currently under construction in Bridgeport, Conn., April 11, 2021.

<https://www.ctpost.com/news/coronavirus/article/Long-lines-for-free-food-persist-a-year-into-the-16094262.php>

<https://ctmirror.org/2021/04/12/long-lines-for-free-food-persist-more-than-a-year-into-the-pandemic-causing-concern-among-advocates/>

Hunger in New London County

Resources are strained to meet the current need.



15% UNEMPLOYED
more than 10% of our county
lost their job since January

40% STRUGGLING TO AFFORD BASIC NEEDS
Pre-pandemic, represents 10%
of households in poverty + 30%
ALICE Households

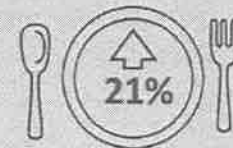


Gemma E. Moran
United Way/Labor Food Bank



\$2,064,378

was allocated by the board to our 42
partner programs for fiscal year 2021.
Allowed flexibility in how funds may be
used during the pandemic.



982,563 MEALS

from March through May,
a 21% increase over last year, we
distributed over 1 million pounds
of food to our network of pantries
and community meal sites
throughout our county.

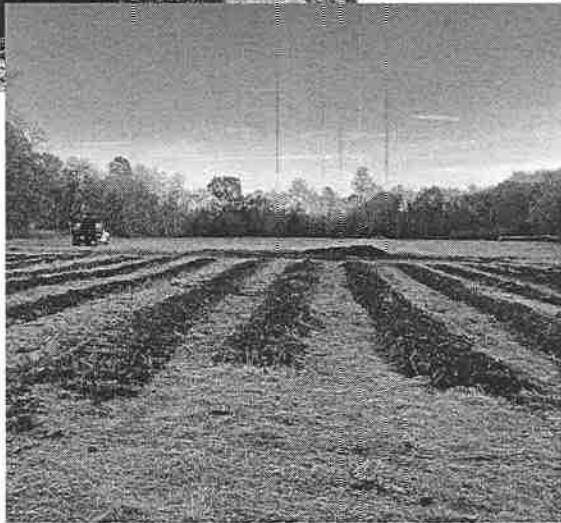


160 VOLUNTEERS

joined us in distributing food to
local pantries and were matched
directly to community non-profit
agencies in their own pandemic
response.

East Lyme Giving Garden History

We are a group of volunteers who stepped in to fill a need for fresh, nutritious food..



Established in 2020

- 20 raised garden beds at Samuel Smith Homestead
 - 700 pounds of produce
 - 100% donated to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen and Pantry of East Lyme

Expanding in 2021

- 4.5 acre (with Flanders Baptist & Community Church)
 - preparing site and soils for spring planting
- 501(c)3 organization
- Partnered with Eastern CT Community Garden Association

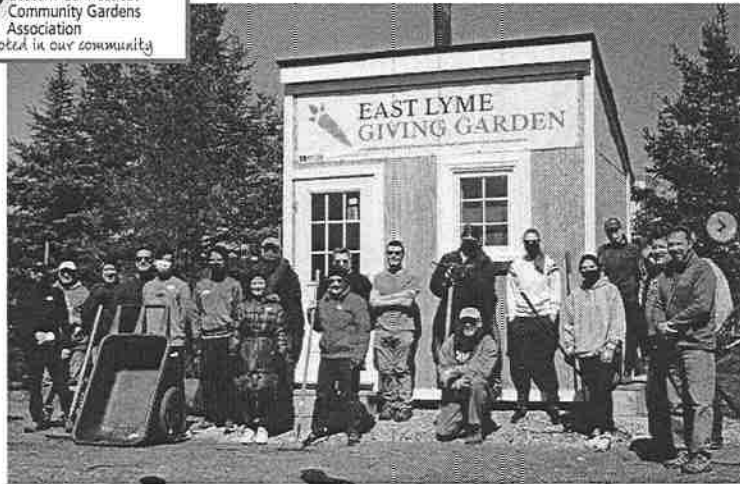


Progress Since October

- **Ready to grow in our new space:**
 - prepped 10,000 square feet of garden for spring planting
 - 500 seedlings in partnership with ECCGA, more with our own volunteers
- Professionalized, diverse organizational structure by functional line
 - Safety advisor (Steve Brooks, head of Pfizer EHA)
 - Electronic database of donors / volunteers
- Constructed rate limiting infrastructure :
 - entry building for organizing the volunteer workforce and electrical distro
 - pump house for irrigation system
- Sourced 100% organic compost to avoid chemical fertilization
- Installed low water-use drip irrigation system with wifi control
- Community partnerships:
 - \$14,000 of goods and services raised through local business donations
 - \$30,000 raised (projected) by June through Sustainable CT
 - \$6000 Community Fund of SE CT
 - \$2000 Society of Women Environmental Professionals of CT
- 501(c)3 designation with the IRS and CT Secretary of State

Partnerships with Local Groups

The sustainability of our project depends on the depth and breadth of our community partnerships.



Already volunteered

- Niantic Lions Club
- Shoreline East Lyme Leos Club

Expressed interest in future projects

- Boy Scouts
- Girl Scouts
- Rotary Interact Club
- Lacrosse club



Strong Community Support

We are diligently developing ties across the community.

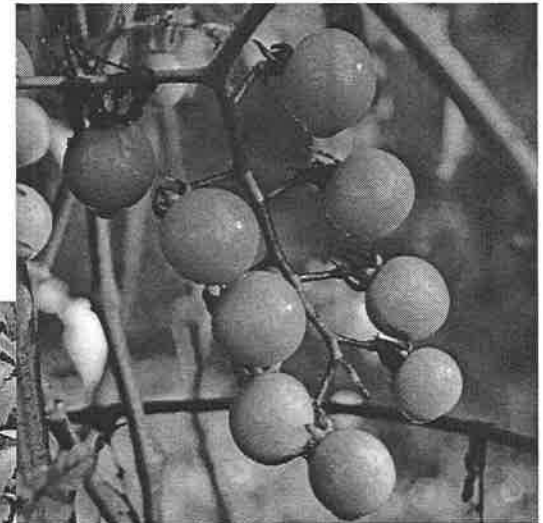
- Riverhead Building Supply- East Lyme
- True Value Hardware- East Lyme
- Geico of Waterford
- One Sign- Essex
- Majestic Electric- East Lyme
- Benchmark Wealth Management- Old Lyme
- Shagbark Hardware- East Haddam
- The CBD Store- Niantic
- The Parcel Center- Flanders
- Lombardi Gravel and Stone- Waterford
- Costco- East Lyme
- Norcom Mortgage- Niantic
- Eversource Energy- Berlin
- McPhee Electric- Farmington
- Flanders Baptist Church- East Lyme
- Eastern CT Community Garden
- Maxum Irrigation- East Lyme
- Crescent Beach BNI- East Lyme
- Green Acres Landscaping- East Lyme
- Guys Oil- Niantic
- Stanley Black and Decker
- Crescent Beach BNI



Growing Plans for 2021

Both literally and figuratively, we are growing the garden's produce and our organization.

- 10,000 sq. ft growing area prepped with organic soil amendments
- Seedlings (tomatoes, carrots, etc.) started with ECCGA
- Increase donations to 3000 – 5000 lbs
- Develop volunteer organizational Capabilities
- Determine 2022 community needs

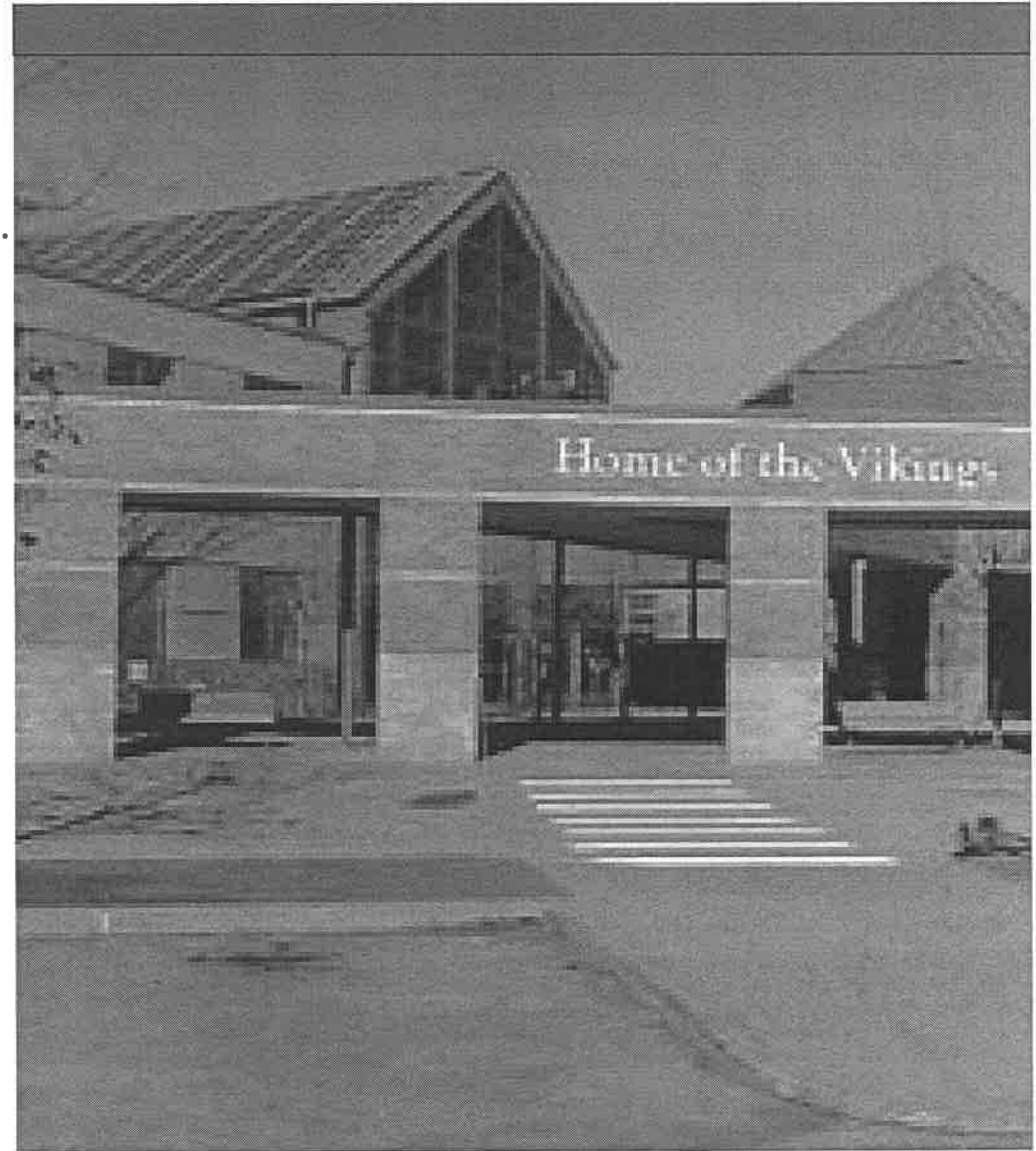


Community Outreach

Our dual mission requires us to educate ourselves and our neighbors .

Education is a key component of our mission:

- Highlight sustainable growing practices and environmental conservations
- Nutritional education leading to chronic disease reduction
- Bring attention to local hunger
- Engage community spirit



What funds would enable: Years 2-3

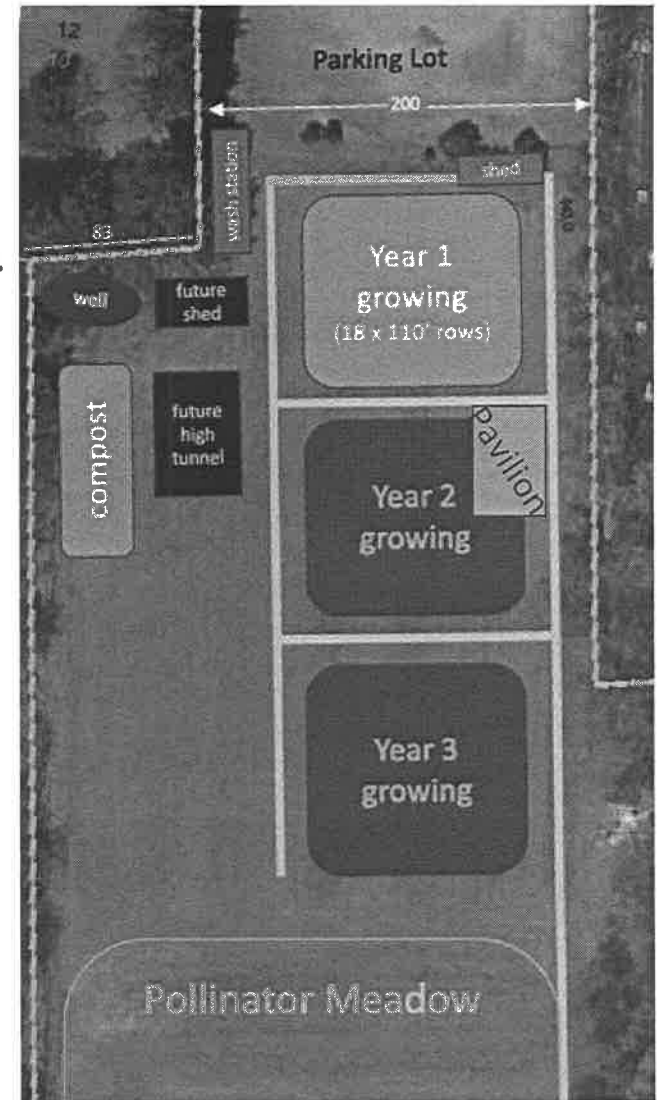
Funding now would accelerate our education mission and growing capabilities.

Expand to ~25,000 square feet of growing space

Diversify the vegetables grown

Add an educational component, targeting diverse town constituents

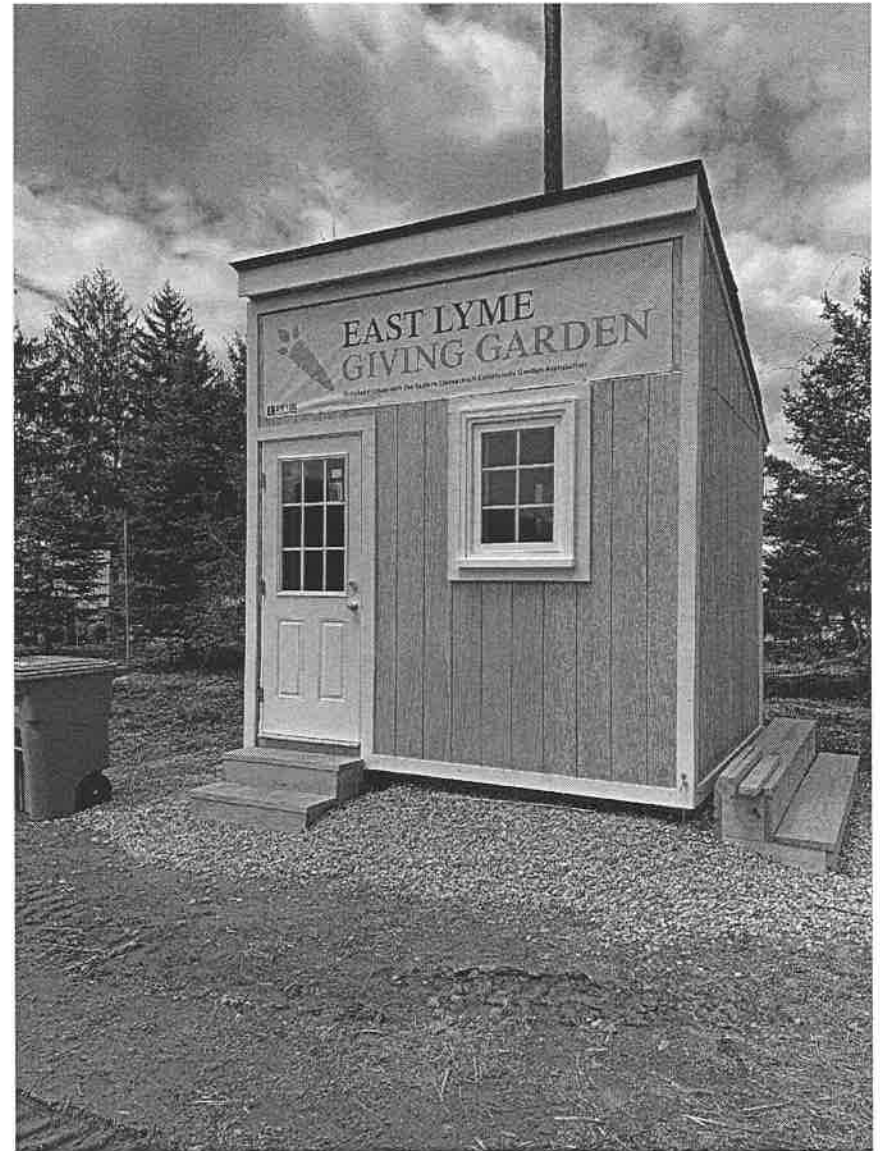
Engage a broader and more diverse set of volunteers



Unmet Garden Needs

Our request:

- Equipment shed (\$10k)
- High tunnel (\$15k)
 - extend growing season
- Pavilion (\$7k, stage 1)
 - Enrich educational possibilities
- Tools/irrigation -\$10k



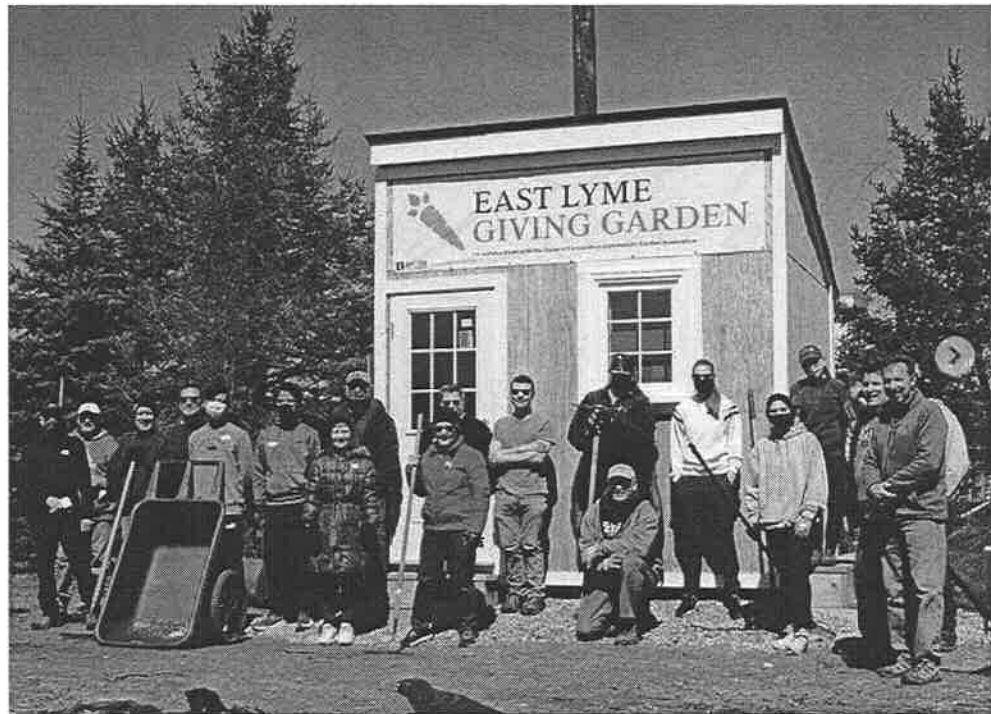
East Lyme Giving Garden Family

Board of Directors

- President- John Holtz PhD, MBA
- Secretary- Lindsay Rush PhD
- Treasurer- Lisa Picarazzi
- Growing – Liz Farley
- Site Operations- Bruce Cohen PhD

Other primary members

- Mark Christensen, Sally Uden, Denise Dinsmore, Steve Brooks






Contact Information

Please reach out to any of our dedicated volunteers for more information

Bruce Cohen	bdcohen@sbcglobal.net
Mark Christensen	greenacresinc@sbcglobal.net
John Holtz	john.holtz98@gmail.com
Ming Holtz	
Lisa Picarazzi	lisahpic@aol.com
Lindsay Rush	lindsay.rush@gmail.com
Sally Uden	saluden@gmail.com



  - East Lyme Giving Garden
 - eastlymegivinggarden@gmail.com
www.eastlymegivinggarden.org