

## Crease Street Garden continues efforts to maintain its space

By Joe DiProsperos November 24, 2021



*Photo provided by Crease Street Garden*

Efforts to maintain a vacated lot-turned-sprawling garden in Fishtown received a major boost this past week.

The Crease Street Garden, located on the 1200 block of Crease Street, has achieved its milestone of raising the \$40,000 needed to trigger a challenge grant from the Penn Treaty Special Services District as part of its bigger goal to raise \$100K of the \$300K needed to purchase the plot of land it sits on. To this point, the garden has raised over \$80,000 in total funds.

"We're super psyched," said Jenni Desnouee, the treasurer of the Crease Street Garden board. "The Penn Treaty Special Services was especially generous with their grant."

It comes after the garden partnered with the Neighborhood Gardens Trust to help the garden obtain government grants that cover a bulk of its purchase price, with the state contributing the rest. That will, in turn, ensure the garden remains non-privately-owned public land for the foreseeable future.

"They're really a nationally recognized leader in securing permanent green space," Desnouee said. "They're really going to help us prepare."

Up until 2009, the lot currently occupied by the garden was city owned, and due to a lack of upkeep, accumulated a large amount of garbage and overgrown bushes, weeds and vines. Starting that year, in conjunction with local officials, community members worked to clean up the debris and create an ornamental garden that neighbors can enjoy.

The garden in its current state features park benches, picnic tables, an assortment of plants and even a small collection of books. It also hosts public and private gatherings, including community cleanups

and gardening events.

Yet with Fishtown continuing to experience rapid development over the years, the garden has been put in a precarious position of late. Desnouee said that ensuring the lot is recognized as a permanent green space is vital to the garden's future, as it will be protected from outside buyers.

She also added that the community has played a vital role in maintaining the garden's pristine appearance, ensuring it has the funds necessary to keep the garden in place long term and, most importantly, raising public awareness.

"People now are actually understanding that it's public and it's available for them," Desnouee said. "And it's really great that people want to use it."