

# The Ann Arbor Central Park and Civic Center Initiating the Commons 2021

*On November 6, 2018, 26,746 Ann Arbor Citizens voted 53.11% to 46.89% to pass Proposal A.*

*“The City-owned public land bounded by Fifth Ave., William, Division, and Liberty Streets be retained in public ownership, in perpetuity, and developed as an urban central park and civic center commons to be known as “Center of the City.”*

*Center of the City Commons areas are within the white outlines.*



Developed by **Jeff Crockett** in collaboration with **Alan Haber** and **Odile Hugonot Haber**

# **The Commons** is a progressive, international movement creating self-managed public spaces.

*for gathering...*

*gardening...*

*education...*

*entertainment...*

*relaxation...*



*collective action...*

*public service...*

*mutual aid...*

*sustainability and*

*community building*

**Join the Commons Movement in Ann Arbor**

**<https://annarborcommunitycommons.org/>**

**Check Out the Commons Youtube presentation at:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XJ3wSYtH4>**

# The Community Commons Timeline

2009: The **vision for the Commons** began at the Labor Day Democratic Party picnic at the Black Elks and was inspired by a 2008 Commons publication by Peter Linebaugh titled “The Magna Carta Manifesto, Liberties and Commons for All” Univ. of California Press.”

2010: The **Community Commons Organizing Committee** (A2C2) was formed.

2011: The **Library Green Conservancy** 501c3 was formed for a park on the Library Lot.

2012: An “**Imagine a Park**” open program was held with exhibits and citizen engagement.

2018: **Proposition A** was passed calling for an Urban Park and Civic Center.

2019: The City Council appointed a **Center of the City Task Force**.

2020: In February, the City Task Force made its recommendations and the **Community Commons Initiating Committee** was formed. In October, 2020, the **Council of the Commons** was formed whose membership was determined by City Council.

2021: **The Garden Committee**, known as **The Green Team**, was formed as a group within the Initiating Committee and created this community garden. Four initiating events (see descriptions later) were held on the Commons.

# Contributors

**Initiating Committee:** Geoff Henny, Bonnie Pearce, Frank Wilhelm, Alan Haber, Odile Hugonot Haber, Chad Monfreda, Jeff Crockett, Will Tyler, Amy June Roe, Robert Black and Joet Reoma

**Event Organizing:** Geoff Henny, Alan Haber, Odile Hugonot Haber, Dana Queen, Eric Lipson

**Garden Committee and Volunteers :** Bonnie Pearce, Odile Hugonot Haber, Alan Haber, Chad Monfreda, Rita Mitchell, Jeff Crockett, Anne Bannister, Marsha Benz, Michael D'Archangelo, Bridget O'Brien, Joet Reoma, Shari Thompson, Cynthia Price, Rand Carter, Linda Britt, Cindy and Jim Pierson, Clare Lanaghan, Ilene Tyler, Sue Perry, Jan Luft, Jeff and Christine Crockett

**Flower and Plants Contributors:** Bonnie Pearce, Odile Hugonot Haber, Kathy Griswold, Jeff Crockett, Argus Farmstop on Liberty, Margolis Nursery, Rita Mitchell and Shari Thompson

**Credits:** Maura Thomsen (DDA), Ali Ramlawi (Jerusalem Garden), Tiffany Giacobazz and Scott Spooner (City Foresters), Dr. Ron Suarez and Amy Rose (Web site), Robert Black (Consultation), Linda Wan (Photography), Grafaktri (Wap John & Julie Ritter), Geoffrey Henny (Zoom Management), Eric Lipson, Dmytri Hryciw, Big City Small World Bakery, John Bolz, Mary Thiefels, Will Hathaway

**Musicians and Sound System:** Eric and Mary Frithian, Old Friends Band (Jim (Griff) Griffin, Shekinah Errington and Gary Williamson), Michael Joseph, Eli Heinen Jazz Quintet, Stacey Murray,

# December 2020: **Holiday Tree**

Alan and Odile Hugonot Haber collaborated with **Margolis Nursery, Kevin Leeser and horticulturist Tom Stevens** to secure and deliver a Douglas Fir to initiate the **civic participation** in the Commons. The tree was later moved to Leslie Park Golf Course by **the Forestry Department's Scott Spooner**.

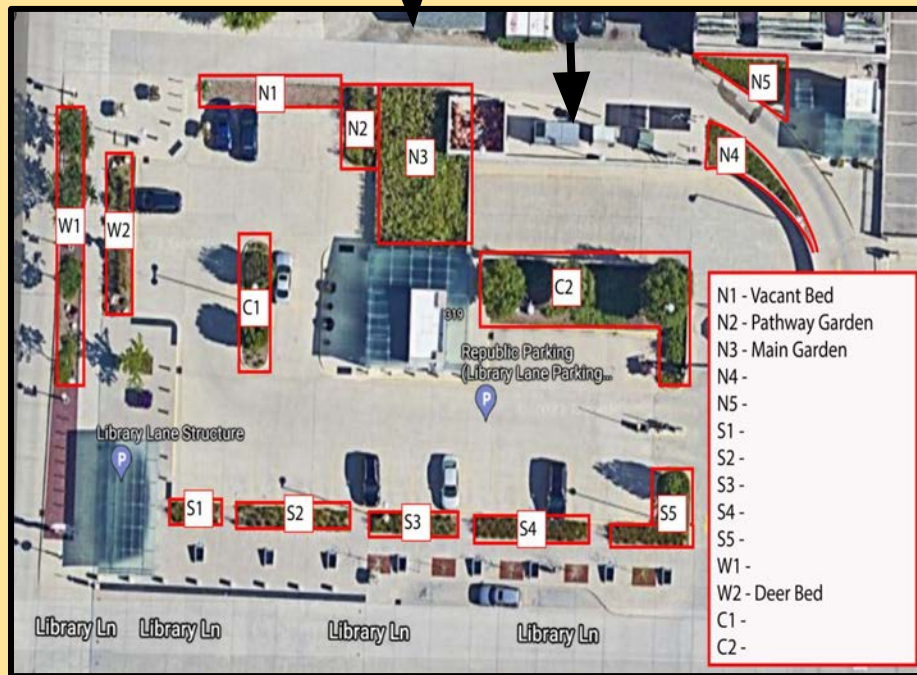
Photo (L to R) unknown bystander, Anne Bannister, her dog, Bailey, Kathy Griswold, Chad Monfreda, Odile Hugonot Haber (holding a Welcome to the Commons sign), Alan Haber, Phil Carroll and Tom Stevens



# The Community Garden Project and *The Green Team*

On March 12, 2021, a garden committee (*The Green Team*) began weekly meetings to plan for a community garden on a plot of land (N3) on the Commons. Planning by **Odile Hugonot and Alan Haber, Chad Manfreda, Bonnie Pearce, Rita Mitchell, & Joet Reoma** included plants selection, plot preparation, weeding, liason with

**City Administrator Tom Crawford** and **DDA Interim Director Maura Thomsen** (securing wood chips). The Garden Site Map was suggested by Joet Reoma, Project Grow Community Gardens Board Member, an MSU-Extension Master Gardener, and a member of the Washtenaw Master Gardeners Association. *The Green Team* added flowers and helped to maintain area C2.



# April 2021: **Preparing the Garden Site**



**Rita Mitchell contacted Maura Thomsen, DDA Interim Director, to secure woodchips set aside from the removal of trees on City-owned properties.**

**Tiffany Giacobazzi, City Forester, arranged delivery of the wood chips delivered to Commons.**

# April 22-25 2021: **Earth Day Event**

## *The Green Brick Road To A Better World*

The first annual Earth Day was April 22, 1970. The annual event is coordinated globally by **EARTHDAY.ORG** and includes 1 billion people in 193 countries.



**Megan Sims dances**



**The appreciative audience applauds.**



**The Commons is accessible**



**Enjoying lunch on the Commons**



**Street activists protest Fermi 2**



**DecaDome Office**

**Event planned by Odile Hugonot and Alan Haber. Temporary seating/tables donated by Will Hathaway. DecaDome provided by Eric Lipson.**



**Ron Suarez set up an open mike for speakers.**

## Early May 2021: **The Planting Begins**



Wood chips were dropped in the parking lot and shoveled into a wheel barrow that was used to distribute the wood chips around the raised garden plot.



Bonnie Pearce, Michael D'Archangelo, Odile Hugonot Haber, Jeff Crockett and Chad Monfreda, celebrating the completion of spreading wood chips **after three hours in a very hot sun.**

# Early May 2021: **The Planting Begins**



The planting begins. To the left, Alan Haber and Odile Hugonot Haber clear a path for the wildflowers. To the right, the result of the first round of planting. All flowers in these pictures were donated by Bonnie and Odile.

# The Garden: **List of Plants (Area N3)**



## Perennials

**Bee Balm, Shasta Daisy, Purple Coneflower, Red Yarrow, Coreopsis, Blanket Flower, Gayfeather, Feverfew, Lupine, Delphinium, Wildflower mix, and Salvia**

## Annuals

**Sunflower (Russian Grey Stripe), Zinnias, Marigold, Cleome, Tomatoes, Corn and Basil**

# The Garden: **List of Plants (Area C2)**



## Perennials

**Catnip, Echinacea, Milkweed,  
Prairie Dock, Wild Senna,  
Rudbeckia, Rattlesnake Master,  
Butterfly Milkweed**

## Annuals

**Sunflowers (Tall Border mix,  
Citrus, ZinniaFun & Sun Blend, &  
Autumn Beauty)**

# The Garden: **All the Plants Were Donated**

The garden crew poses for photographer Linda Wan prior to planting more flowers donated by Odile and Bonnie.

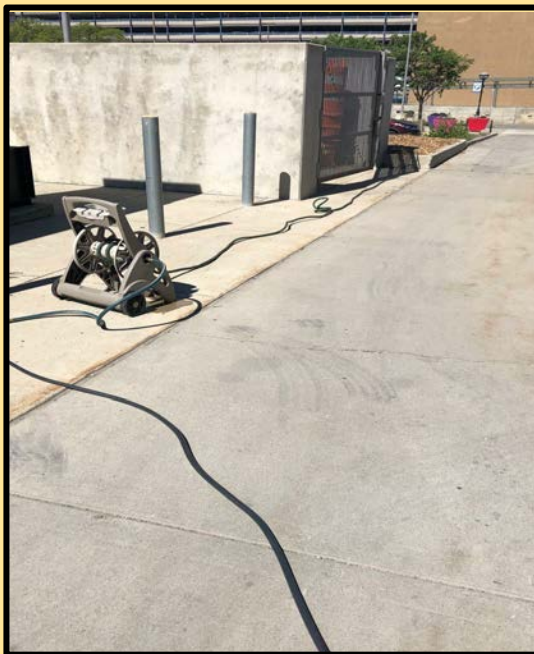


Bonnie, a resident of Northville, first led the Garden Committee Zoom meetings and provided the vision for the garden design. Rand, a friend of Michael and a resident of Florida, volunteered to help during a trip to Michigan.

**L to R: Rand Carter, Michael D'Archangelo, Odile Hugonot Haber and Bonnie Pearce**

# The Garden: **Watering and Irrigation**

Prior to the activation of the irrigation system by **Edward Wheeler of Republic Parking** and **facilitated by DDA's Maura Thomsen**, it was necessary to water plants three times a week using a hose attached to a spigot in the rear of Jerusalem Garden (JG) and a hose reel cart provided by Jeff Crockett.



**Thanks to Ali Ramlawi** (pictured to the left of Alan and Odile) for access to Jerusalem Garden's water. Pictured watering to the left is Michael D'Archangelo. The hoses were used as needed during hot weather.

## July 2021: **Work on the Garden continues ...**



**To the left, Marsha Benz, new member of the Green Team, with her scuffle hoe, which quickly and efficiently removes weeds. In the center, Marsha and Christine removing the invasive creeping yellowcress.**

**Above, the thriving garden after just eight weeks of growth. Some of the sunflowers are eight feet tall. Buds are beginning to appear. The garden is looking GOOD.**

# The Garden: **Our Sign**



**In July, WAP John and Julie Ritter, owners of Grafaktri, provider of visual services located on 1200 N. Main Street, donated this beautiful sign.**

# August 2021



**Above, a bumblebee gathers pollen on a Zinnia.**



**Several of the sunflowers grew to be 12 feet tall.**



**We are learning. While the sunflowers and border annuals did exceptionally well, some of the perennials in the middle did not do as well, possibly due to light and soil conditions along with plant selection.**

# September 2021



**Zinnias**



**Pumpkin**



**Corn**



**Coreopsis**



**Cosmos**



**Feverfew**



**Shastas Daisies**



**Marigolds**

# September 19-25 2021: **Peace Week**



## Peace Week Ann Arbor 2021

announcement, event / By AnnArbor Community Commons

## PEACE WEEK ANN ARBOR: EVERYONE IS INVITED

SUNDAY to SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19-25, 2021

Ann Arbor Community Commons  
Fifth Avenue and Library Lane

### Ann Arbor Peace Week 2021 Itinerary



**Sunday 19th: 12 - 3 pm**

"Fostering a culture of peace and non-violence" "Imagine a Park" Regathering visions for Commons



**Monday 20th: 12 - 3 pm**

Beauty is a test of truth. Bring Art to the Commons. 6-9pm build a storytelling place for making peace with nature.



**Tuesday 21st: 12 - 3 pm**

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE Noon to 3 Crowd-sourcing questions and ideas for the PEACE TABLE Telling the Story. Resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security



**Wednesday 22nd: 12 - 3 pm**

Discussions of Outstanding Questions local and global: Groundcover voices, housing and homelessness, policing, lines 3 and 5, water, indigenous rights, Nuclear Weapons, Climate Calamities, from the war system to the peace system, Afghanistan, Palestine, Yemen, Honduras, Haiti, Cuba, China, Ukraine, terror, 9/11, Covid, Green New Deal...and more, New Work/New Culture, economics ...what is the commons?



**Thursday 23rd: 10am - 6pm**

BOOK TABLES : Searching for Knowledge. Books from the old Wooden Spoon and other stores. NOON: OPEN MIC and Video: SAY your piece of the peace



**Friday 24th: 10am - 6pm**

MORE BOOKS, and decluttering BAZAAR Flea Market, Potlatch excess stuff give away



**Saturday 25th: 12pm**

Stating the VISION saying the Truth.



**Saturday 25th: 6pm**

Dancing the PEACE REVOLUTION



# Peace Week: History of Indigenous People in Washtenaw County



**Odile Hugonot Haber, Deisha Myles and Alan Haber**

## Peace Week:

### Preparation



**Odile and a volunteer passerby created a peace day poster.**

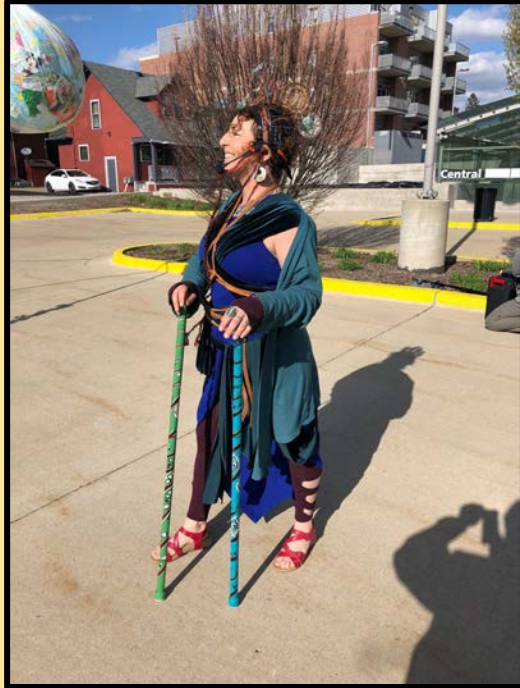
### Sharing the Story



**Stephan Trendov describing a concept drawing of the overall Commons proposal with visitors**

# Peace Week

**Saturday, September 25: Dancing for Mother Earth**



To the left, Megan Sims begins her dance with poetry. To the right, the audience claps at the conclusion of the performance. The DecaDome office appears in the background

# October 3: The Fun, Art, Nutrition Event (F.A.N.)



# F.A.N.: Promoting with Posters



# F.A.N.: Sponsors



## Kip Barry Cabaret

Local Magician donating  
performance and  
entertainment.



## TreeTown Murals

Local Business sponsoring and  
attending the event.



## Bsquared Design Studio

Local Artisan and Spiritual  
Guide. Offering readings and  
consultations.



## A2Scooter

Local Scooter Shop and  
Sponsor. ANN ARBOR'S  
ORIGINAL SCOOTER SHOP.



## Hankra Jewel

Local Jewelry Artisan making  
metal sculpted art.



## Library Green Conservancy

Ann Arbor residents working to  
create an urban park and civic  
center.



## A2C2 Initiating Committee

Locals spearheading the work  
to organize and bring to life the  
Community Commons.

## Community Co-Sponsor

## Holiday's Restaurant

2080 W Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

**Big City-Small World Bakery,  
Megiddo Peace Project,  
Women's Intl. League for Peace &  
Freedom, NewHouse R&D**

# F.A.N.: Soul Songstress Stacey Murray



**Jazz Singer of the Year, 2019 Detroit Black Music Awards**

**<https://www.staceymurray.com/>**

# F.A.N.: “Old Friends”



**L to R, Jim (Griff) Griffin, Shekinah Errington and Gary Williamson**

# F.A.N.: **Amazing Magic Show**



**Kip Berry of Ann Arbor**

**<https://www.kipbarryscabaret.com/>**

**F.A.N:** Temporary seating in front of a tent with a sound system provided an excellent venue for performers and visitors. The flat open space is handicapped accessible and could accommodate large crowds.



# **F.A.N.: The Community Garden attracted many visitors.**



**The Zinnias at their peak attract a passerby.**



**Monarch butterflies and bees were frequent visitors this past summer.**



**Above right, as a photographer takes close-ups, Odile Hugonot Haber (seated) answers questions about the garden.**

# F.A.N.: Art on the Commons



**Mary Thieffels of Tree Town Murals provided paint and posters for visitors.**

<https://www.treetownmurals.com/>



**Jeff Crockett stopped to help complete a poster as a community activity.**

# F.A.N.: Chalking the Commons



**Excited young visitors create beautiful drawings as a parent watches.  
The chinks were donated by Robert Black.**

**F.A.N.: Booths were set up on the East, South and West sides.**



**“Big Sister Little Sis” Handmade Crochet with  
Dana Queen and Elizabeth Ricciardi**

**<https://www.etsy.com/shop/BigSisterLittleSis>**

**F.A.N.: To the right, the Ann Arbor Public Power A2P2 booth.**



<https://www.facebook.com/a2publicpower>

# F.A.N.: The Hankra Jewel booth



<https://www.hankrajewel.com/>

# F.A.N.: BSquaredSpiritual Arts and Design Studio



**Bonnie Beth Owner**  
**Astrology Consultation, Jewelry and Clothing Design**  
<https://www.bsquareddesignstudio.com/>

# October: **Garden Winterization**



**Left to Right: Rita Mitchell, Joet Reoma, Shari Thompson, Ilene Tyler, Jeff & Christine Crockett, Chad Manfred, Cindy & Jim Pierson, Alan Haber and Odile Hugonot Haber upon the completion of the winterization protocol.**

# November 7: **The Growing Community Event**



Ann Arbor  
Central Park and  
Civic Center Commons

## ***"GROWING COMMUNITY"***

***FREE PUBLIC EVENT***

**SUNDAY, NOV. 7TH | 2-6 PM**

★ LIBRARY LANE ★  
AND 5TH AVE.



# Growing Community: Eli Heinen Jazz Quintet



## Growing Community: **K Michael Joseph, KMJ Music Underground**



<https://www.facebook.com/kmichaeljoseph/>

# Growing Community: **Speakers**



**Julia Bahya**  
Emcee  
extraordinaire



**Jeffrey Taite and Deisha Myles:**  
Native American Recognition



**Chad Monfreda:**  
"Common Good"



**Alan Haber**  
Expressing an Invitation for  
the Potawatami To Return to  
Ann Arbor

# Growing Community: **More Speakers**



**Peter Linebaugh:**  
History of the commons  
and commoning



**Odile Hugonot Haber:**  
The Ann Arbor Commons Locally



**Jeff Crockett:**  
The Story of the Green Team  
and the Community Garden

# Growing Community:

## State Rep. Yousef Rahbi, 53rd District



**L to R, Jack Eaton, Bill Diesenroth, and Chad Monfreda converse with Yousef Rahbi**



**Yousef Rahbi  
The Future of Sustainable  
Energy in Washtenaw County**

# Growing Community: A Great Turnout Throughout The Day!



# Growing Community: Meeting, Demonstrating, Contributing



All Peoples Planet Parade



Climate Action Display



To the right, Alan Haber welcoming commoners



DecaDome Office Information Point

# Growing Community: **The Story of the Community Garden**



Interested visitors learn about development of the Community Garden.

# December, 2021: **Celebrating Solstice**



**“For the Solstice and all holidays,” Alan and Odile Hugonot Haber donated and helped plant this Avatar Blue Spruce in the northwest corner of the Community garden. Jan Luft, Linda Wan, Peter Linebaugh, and Jeff Crockett assisted.**

# Community Engagement



**1st Ward Council Member  
Disch kindly pitched in.**



**Adam Zemke stopped  
by on his way home  
from Ann Arbor Scooter,  
Co.**



**1st Ward CM Hayner with  
Arrowwood Hills resident James  
Daniels enjoyed the sunflowers.**

# Community Engagement II

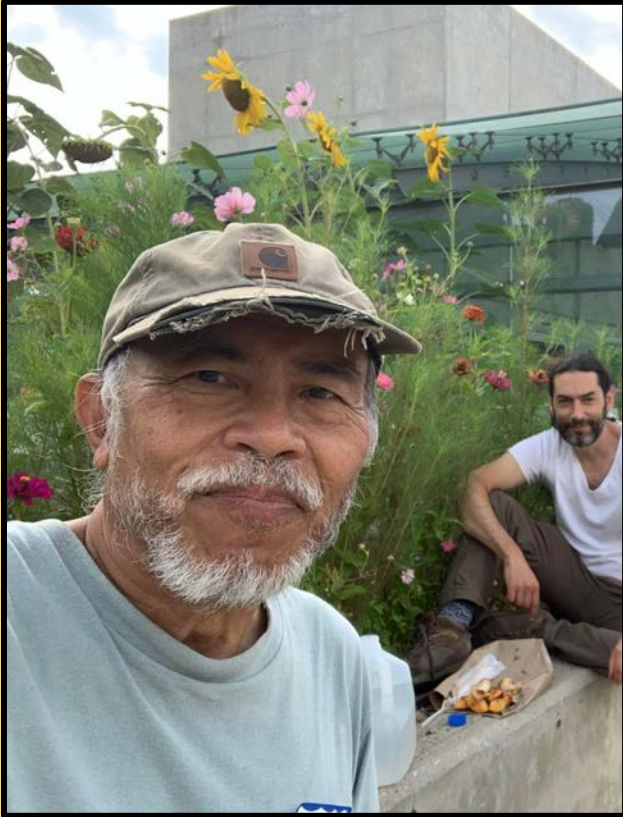


**5th Ward CM Erica Briggs and Council of the Commons member helped prune the vegetable garden during her tour.**



**Dr. Missy Stultz, Sustainability and Innovations Manager for the City of Ann Arbor, has agreed to work with us to incorporate features in our gardens that support sustainability.**

# What's Next for the Gardens?



**Joet Reoma and Chad Monfreda are helping us plan for next year. We are considering dividing the large plot into several smaller plots with a sun powered fountain in the middle. We are considering expanding into other plots on the Commons site with volunteers consulting with and learning from local Master Gardeners.**

**We believe that the garden plots on the Commons will offer educational opportunities for local gardeners to include winterization strategies such as:**

- 1. Cleaning the garden**
- 2. Enhancing the garden soil with compost & mulch**
- 3. Composting garden waste**
- 4. Using cover crops**
- 5. Preparing the garden for Spring cultivation.**

**Finally, with the help of Dr. Missy Stultz, we intend to add features that support sustainability and educate the public.**

# What's Next for Activating the Commons?



**In the City Charter, the Center of the City includes Liberty Plaza and the Kempf House. These two sites will be included in future planning for activating the Commons.**

**Outreach to local organizations will increase in event planning for 2022.**

**WiFi, Flexible seating, public toilet and storage space in the parking structure are high on the agenda for 2022.**

**Make no mistake, building the Commons in Ann Arbor is a once in a lifetime opportunity with its large, flat open areas and central locations. It will require partnerships with City Government, DDA, local business, non-profits and all of Ann Arbor. We can do this! Join in!**





Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed citizens can change the world;  
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

(Margaret Mead)



**To volunteer and help activate the Commons, sign up at:**  
**<https://annarborcommunitycommons.org/volunteer-today/>**