

Reconnecting Communities By Growing Food

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Presentation For
Masters In Sustainability Studies

Causes and Consequences of Suburban Sprawl

- Causes

- Rapid growth after WWII to accommodate returning soldiers
- Chasing the American Dream

- Consequences

- Isolation from neighbors
- Loss of sense of place



Picture by Julianne Scarola

What Can Be Done?

- Alternatives to suburban life
 - Break isolation of neighbors by creating opportunities to interact within the community

Emergency Communities



Picture by Julianne Scarola



Why Do We Need A Catastrophe To Bring People Together?



Picture by Julianne Scarola

Create Opportunities To Interact

- Community gardens
- Urban gardens
- Backyard Sharing

Positive Effects Of Community Gardens

Personal

- Improved nutrition and physical activity
- Enhanced social and psychological well-being

Neighborhood

- Improved social networks
- Enhanced community capital
- Reduced crime rates
- Improved neighborhood aesthetics
- Residents empowered to become more active in other community life

Urban Gardens

- Not every community has the land or organization for community gardens



Picture by Julianne Scarola



Picture by Julianne Scarola

Project Objectives

I propose to combine all of the benefits of gardening by residents growing and sharing their vegetables with neighbors

- Create social networks within comfort level
- Can work in any available space



Project Goals

- Restoring a sense of community through gardening
- Supplying neighborhood with fresh produce



Picture by Julianne Scarola

Methods and Objectives

Methods

- Online anonymous survey
- Interviews

Objectives

- Assess involvement and satisfaction of suburban communities including Dumont, Ringwood, River Edge, Waldwick, Oradell

Findings

32 participants

- 14 male
- 18 females

Males stated

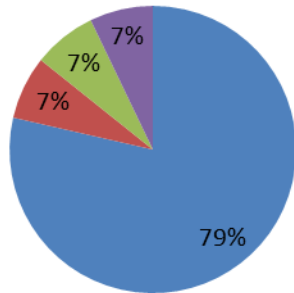
- How their food is grown and where their food comes from
- It is important eat organic and locally grown food

Females stated

- Sense of belonging and where their food comes from
- It is important to be involved in the community and have friendly relationships with neighbors

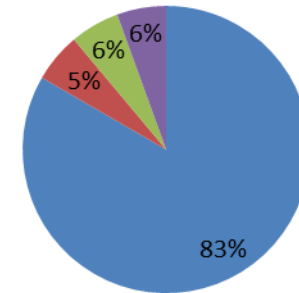
What Does Community Mean To You?

Males
n=14



- Relationships of Place
- Not Much
- Streets Surrounding Your Home
- If I Lived In A Better Community It Would Mean A Lot More

Female
n=18

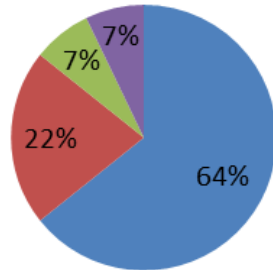


- An Extended Family, A Team
- Too Busy To Participate In Community
- Problems
- Your Zip Code

What Would You Change In Your Community?

Males

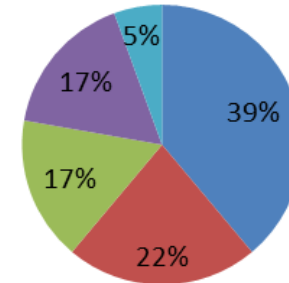
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- Community Participation
- Environmental Concerns
- Everything
- Traffic Patterns

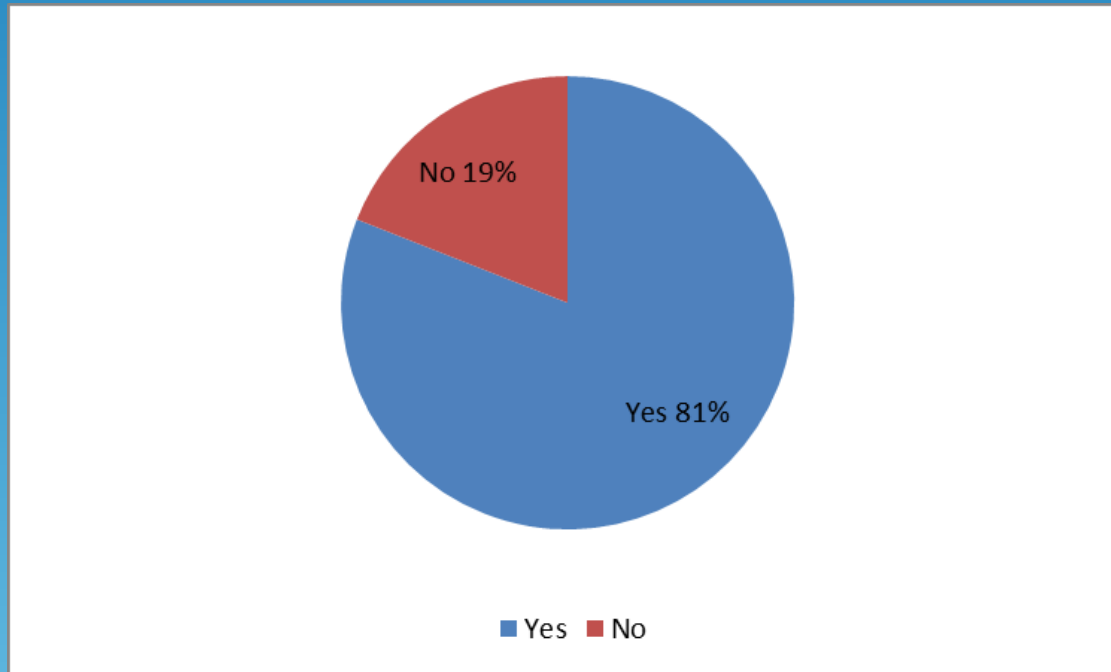
Females

n=18



- Community Participation
- Environmental Concerns
- Traffic
- More Police Enforcement/ Less Drug Use
- Nothing, I Like Mine

Network For Sharing Vegetables In Your Community



Waldwick High School



Picture by Julianne Scarola



Picture by Julianne Scarola

Participants

River Edge



Beverly, Julianne

Oradell



Frank, Margaret

Other Participants

- 5 homes in Ringwood
- 3 homes in Waldwick



Beverly's garden, 2009

If You Are Interested
Contact Me For More
Information

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