

## **Report on WabiSabi Community Garden MoCom Community Gardens Project**

*Prepared by Rebecca Mann, February 12, 2024*

### Project Overview

The brand-new community garden at WabiSabi Thrift Store in Moab, UT was a great success in the 2023 season thanks to generous contributions from several community partners. The Grand Conservation District contributed \$1,412 (a portion of \$4,400 total split between this garden and the Arroyo Crossing community garden), Easy Bee farm contributed \$2,000, and Moonflower Community Co-Op contributed \$1,000 through their Seeds to Start program. The staff and board of WabiSabi Thrift Store were also essential in supporting this endeavor, by providing their input on siting and planning for the garden, as well as providing in-kind assistance with groundwork and installation of garden irrigation infrastructure. Moab Community Gardens, a project of the Resiliency Hub through December 2023, orchestrated the construction and installation of the garden and managed the program to match gardeners to plots.

The WabiSabi garden began with conversations in summer 2021. Claire Core and Becky Mann from Moab Community Gardens (MoCom Gardens) met with Liz Dana Han and Leah Bear, directors of WabiSabi, about hosting this garden in the vacant lot at the WabiSabi thrift store. The group agreed that the priority for this new site was to emphasize garden accessibility – both by providing an easy-to-reach location and by creating raised beds, to allow easier physical access for those having trouble working at ground level. Following these initial discussions and planning, efforts were made to seek funding for the project. The Grand Conservation District and Easy Bee farm provided the first huge boost for the endeavor, allowing for the purchase of bed and irrigation materials in fall 2022. Later, the WabiSabi Seeds to Start program provided the funds necessary to complete the work. Three work parties occurred in late 2022 and spring 2023; these involving public volunteers, a college group associated with the Youth Garden Project, and special help from Jess Hough and Amanda Foust as construction leaders. During these events, we constructed raised beds and the irrigation tubing system needed to water them. Kevin Clyde with WabiSabi and Jeff Adams with the Resiliency Hub helped with earthwork in early spring 2023, including site levelling, soil delivery, and soil distribution into beds. The community garden opened in April 2023 and at the opening workday, volunteers created a compost pile and spread sheet mulch to keep weeds controlled. Finally, hand tools were purchased with remaining funds, and a bulletin board and garden guide book were created to lead volunteers in garden tasks and weed identification.

The WabiSabi garden was able to provide growing spaces for a total of seven individuals across five large plots in 2023. The garden met its goal of providing accessible garden space in the heart of Moab; a difficult goal given the rarity and expense of open land downtown. Moab Community Gardens also planted and maintained one large row as a U-Pick garden, which was often frequented by WabiSabi clientele, as observed by WabiSabi staff. Overall, this was a fabulous success in intersecting growing space and locally grown food with the Moab community and people in need of fresh produce.

The Moab Community Gardens project was transferred from the Resiliency Hub to the Youth Garden Project (YGP) non-profit in January 2024. YGP and MoCom Gardens plans to continue using the WabiSabi location to offer plots through the 2024 growing season. YGP is now working with new community partners to identify appropriate locations for the garden beds in to 2025 season, when the WabiSabi Thrift store will be relocating and the current lot will become unavailable. We are looking forward to seeing these garden beds continue to provide a resource to our Moab community and increase access to fresh locally grown food! Thank you to ALL who have supported this effort!

## Summary of Expenditures

A total of \$4,412 was used to develop the WabiSabi community garden, pooled from \$1,412 from the Grand Conservation District (GCD), \$2,000 from Easy Bee farm, and \$1,000 from the Moonflower Seeds to Start grant. This funding covered \$3,243 in bed materials (redwood lumber, fasteners, 100% linseed oil sealant), \$638 in irrigation material (drip line, connectors), \$170 in mulch, and \$362 for garden tools. The specific breakdown of proposed and actual fund allocation is shown in the table below.

### **Grants and Donations Received**

	GCD Grant	Easy Bee Donation	Moonflower Seeds to Start Grant	Total
Award Date	7/18/2022	7/18/2022	12/12/2022	
Amount Awarded to Wabi Sabi Project	\$ 1,412	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	<b>\$4,412</b>

### **Allocation of Funds Spent**

		Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Proposed	Actual	Total Proposed	Total Spent
WabiSabi	Bed Materials	\$ 898	\$ 1,104	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 139	\$ 898	\$ 3,243
	Irrigation	\$ 522	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 397	\$ 637	\$ 919	\$ 638
	Mulch/Soil	\$ 980	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 390	\$ 170	\$ 1,370	\$ 170
	Plants	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 213	\$ -	\$ 213	\$ -
	Hardware/Tools	\$ -	\$ 308	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 54	\$ -	\$ 362
	Undefined	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ -
Totals		\$ 2,400	\$ 1,412	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,400	\$ 4,412

## Garden Development Timeline – Major Milestones

June 2021	MoCom Gardens and WabiSabi staff met to discuss community garden idea
Feb.2022	Garden layout plan finalized
March 2022	MoCom Garden Steward identified for the WabiSabi Garden
July 2022	Funding awarded through Grand Conservation District and Easy Bee Farm
Nov. 2022	Two construction workdays to build raised beds
Dec. 2022	Funding awarded through Moonflower Co-Op Seeds to Start Grant
Feb. 2023	Kevin Clyde levels garden site and delivered garden soil from Easy Bee Farm
March 2023	Montana State University (in conjunction with Youth Garden Project) assembled irrigation for the raised beds Kevin Clyde (WabiSabi board member) installed irrigation manifold Jeff Adams (Resiliency Hub board member) distributed garden soil into beds
April 2023	Volunteer brunch & work day: sheet mulching around garden beds, compost pile Gardens opened to gardeners
June 2023	Volunteer brunch & work day: weeding, compost pile maintenance, sheet mulching
Oct. 2023	Volunteer brunch & work day: weeding, compost pile maintenance, harvesting
Dec. 2023	Volunteer brunch & work day: weeding, compost pile maintenance, harvesting
Jan. 2024	Transfer of MoCom Gardens project from Resiliency Hub to Youth Garden Project





*Build days November 6 & November 12, 2022*



*Finishing touches and irrigation assembly, March 17, 2023*



*Bed shaping, March 19, 2023*





### Sheet mulching, April 1, 2023



### Bed progression!



April 15, 2023



June 10, 2023



June 24, 2023



October 7, 2023

### Tools and gardener materials

