



# ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

COMMITTED TO  
PROTECTING & PRESERVING  
ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN

[WWW.ELIZABETHSTREETGARDEN.COM](http://WWW.ELIZABETHSTREETGARDEN.COM)





**OUR MISSION: TO PROTECT & PRESERVE THE MAGIC OF ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN AS A PUBLIC COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE AND TO DETERMINE HOW THE CITY TOGETHER WITH THE COMMUNITY CAN PROTECT THE SPACE FOR GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.**



**Board of Directors**

- Renée Green - Chair
- Joseph Reiver
- Simon Roberts
- April Valencia
- Barry Ranganathan
- Poppy King

**Officers**

- Joseph Reiver  
Executive Director
- Patricia Squillari  
Secretary
- Barry Ranganathan  
Treasurer

**Volunteer Staff**

- Ella Barnes  
Creative Director

Elizabeth Street Garden is a unique community sculpture garden located in the Little Italy neighborhood of Manhattan, between Prince and Spring streets.

Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc. (ESG) is a volunteer based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to exploring every option available to protect and preserve Elizabeth Street Garden and save our much needed community green space in Little Italy.

Our founding members have been involved with the community lead effort to save the garden since its start in 2013. ESG filed its nonprofit Certificate of Incorporation with New York State in October 2016. On January 26, 2017, we received federal tax-exempt 501(c)(3) determination from the IRS. In April 2017, ESG began managing all operations, programs, and maintenance in the garden.

Our committed volunteers dedicate their time and energy to organizing hundreds of free programs, tending to greenery, maintaining the space, and keeping the garden open to the public year-round – over 46 hrs/week during the summer and 28hrs/week during the winter – all while working with local elected officials, businesses, and organizations to protect and preserve Elizabeth Street Garden for the community.

We are forever grateful to all of our many supporters, neighbors, and volunteers who help make the garden such a special place for everyone. With your support, we will continue to do everything we can to protect and preserve Elizabeth Street Garden.

**Letters from the Chairman and Executive Director**

I am pleased to note that 2019 has been our busiest year yet at the garden. We hosted more free programming and events while welcoming more visitors to the garden than ever before. People from the all around the city and the world appreciate the beauty of the garden, the maintenance of which we owe to our dedicated volunteers.

After much preparation, we filed our lawsuit to save the garden; and we thank our attorney Norman Siegel and the others at Siegel Teitelbaum & Evans. This is our best opportunity to ensure that this magical place is preserved.

Looking back, it is inspiring to see how far we've come. Having moved in across the street in 1984, I remember when the garden was first open to the public through the adjacent gallery in 2005. Even now, the City continuously refers to the Garden as a commercial enterprise, harping on a limited account of the adjacent gallery's creation of the space. But now, especially in the nearly four years that ESG has managed the Garden, the non-profit organization has taken over complete financial and operational responsibility along with providing a detailed plan to preserve all of the unique qualities of the space as a Conservation Land Trust.

Each year that our community preserves the Elizabeth Street Garden is a reminder to appreciate all that the space offers to us. Each year, the garden grows as a center for our community, bringing us together and revitalizing us. We're proud to continue fostering a sustainable and independent organization that now operates at the level of many renowned public spaces around New York, all at no financial cost to the City.

We continue to stand against the city's divisive notion of pitting affordable housing against a vital community garden, especially when more viable alternatives exist. We continue to promote a solution to this issue that achieves more affordable housing and more public open space. Despite our efforts, the current administration and our city's formal land use process has failed to take a hard, objective look at the issue, and thus the City has failed our community. This is why we will continue our work to save the garden in the court of law, and beyond that if need be.

Time and time again, I'm reminded that we are not just protecting a garden, we're protecting a treasured piece of true green space and nature, the essence of our community, a place to congregate and learn, and an outdoor museum of art and culture. The garden has grown to be a truly iconic New York City landmark. If we save this space under such heavy circumstances, imagine how much the garden and our organization could grow unburdened.

I would like to share a story I have shared many times because it is so revealing about the Garden. Six years ago and just two days after my husband's death, I was stopped on Prince Street by a woman I didn't recognize, who told me how sorry she was to hear of my husband's passing. I looked at her and asked if I knew her, and she simply said she knew me from the Garden.

I realized then that, while I had chosen Little Italy in which to live out my retirement years because it had a neighborhood feel, it is the very special space that is Elizabeth Street Garden that had transformed it into a community.



Sincerely,

Renée Green  
Chairman



Sincerely,

Joseph Reiver  
Executive Director



# TIMELINE

ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN OCCUPIES LOT 30 OR THE FORMER TOP HALF OF LOT 41 BETWEEN ELIZABETH AND MOTT IN LITTLE ITALY. THIS LAND HAS SEEN NEARLY 200 YEARS OF COMMUNITY FOSTERING, INNOVATIVE EDUCATION, AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE USE.

IT IS ESG'S GOAL TO CONTINUE WRITING THIS UNIQUE HISTORY SO THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS MAY ENJOY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THIS VITAL COMMUNITY HUB.

## SCHOOL BUILT IN LITTLE ITALY

In 1822, the Free School Society builds Public school No. 5 (PS 5) that offers free night school for people of color, public lectures, and community space in addition to schooling for children of all races and economic backgrounds.



## PS 21 EXPANDS TO SPRING STREET

In 1927, the architect expands PS 21 down to Spring St, adding more public outdoor space & a larger community auditorium, while further increasing enrollment capacity.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILT ON LOWER LOT

In 1981, LIRA housing association builds affordable housing on lower lot 41. The City grants LIRA access to the rest of lot 41 under the condition that it be converted to a public recreation area. This never happens and the future garden lot sits empty and neglected for the next 10 years.



## PUBLIC ACCESS VIA GALLERY NEXT DOOR

Upon acquiring the adjacent building in 2005, Allan Reiver provides public access to the garden through the Elizabeth Street Gallery.



## GARDEN REVITALIZED BY COMMUNITY

In 2013, a group of community members works with Allan Reiver to revitalize the space and open the front gates to the public, introducing public programming and developing a significant base of support for saving the Garden.

1822

1927

1981

2005

2013

1904

1970's

1991

2012

2014



## SCHOOL REBUILT BY MASTER ARCHITECT

In 1904, Master School Architect C. B. J. Snyder builds new PS 21 with more school seats, outdoor classrooms / recreation / public space, & a public auditorium.



## LOT 41 LEVELED & LEFT VACANT

PS 21 is closed and the entire building is torn down in the late 70's, leaving lot 41 leveled and vacant.



## THE GARDEN IS BORN

In 1991, the City enters into a month-to-month lease of the vacant lot with Allan Reiver who plants trees, a lawn and other plants, showcasing sculptures and thus transforming the lot into Elizabeth Street Garden.

## CHIN SLATES GARDEN FOR DESTRUCTION

In 2012, City Councilmember Margaret Chin quietly slates the Garden Lot to be developed with help from the Bloomberg administration in a backroom deal without properly informing the public.



## COMMUNITY FORMS NON-PROFIT

In August of 2014, the community members involved with the garden form Friends of Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc. (FESG).

## HPD ISSUES RFP TO DEVELOP GARDEN

In September 2016, HPD issues an official Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop the garden lot, ignoring 3 years of the community-lead effort to save the space.



## HPD SELECTS DEVELOPERS

In December 2017, HPD awards the Request For Proposal (RFP) to Penrose Properties in partnership with Habitat NYC and RiseBoro and releases plans for a mixed use building comprised of 123 units of non-permanent affordable housing for seniors, luxury commercial retail, and office space for Habitat NYC.



## ULURP ENDS & CITY APPROVES DEVELOPMENT

In June 2019, the ULURP process concludes. Community Board 2 passes an advisory resolution in favor of saving the garden. Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, City Planning Commission, and City Council (with a unanimous vote of 45 - 0, led by Margaret Chin and Speaker Corey Johnson) pass resolutions to destroy the garden for the proposed development.

2016

DEC 2017

JUNE 2019

APRIL 2017

NOV 2018

MAR 2019

PRESENT



## ESG FOUNDED TO PURSUE LEGAL ACTION

In April 2017 members of FESG and the original garden community branch off to form Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc (ESG). ESG assumes sole management and maintenance of the garden, keeping it open year round and providing free public programming and outdoor edu.



## ULURP PROCESS BEGINS

In November 2018, The Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP) begins as the project is reviewed by Community Board 2, the Manhattan Borough President, the City Planning Commission, and City Council.



## ESG FILES LAWSUIT

On March 5, 2019, ESG files a lawsuit against the City of New York and the Department of Housing and Preservation and Development (HPD) with attorney Norman Siegel. Additional papers are filed in November 2019.



## THE GARDEN TODAY

As the lawsuit moves through the State Supreme Court system, ESG continues to manage the garden while providing events for the community and raising funds for the legal case. ESG remains dedicated to protecting and preserving Elizabeth Street Garden by any means necessary.

for more info on our legal case, visit [elizabethstreetgarden.com/legal](http://elizabethstreetgarden.com/legal)



# THE OPEN SPACE ISSUE

OPEN SPACE IS VITAL TO A HEALTHY AND HAPPY COMMUNITY. HOW CAN THE CITY JUSTIFY DESTROYING A GARDEN IN AN AREA ALREADY SO OVER-CROWDED AND DEVOID OF GREENSPACE? HERE ARE THE FACTS.



- Little Italy & SoHo make up 23% of CB 2's population, yet have only 3% of the district's open space. Aside from the Garden, all open spaces in Little Italy & SoHo are paved.
- Little Italy & SoHo combined have an open space ratio of 0.07 acres per 1,000 residents (3 sq ft per resident), leaving the district with one of the lowest ratios of public open space to inhabitants in the city.
- Green space, once developed, can never be reclaimed. The City will never tear down buildings to create parks or community gardens...



## DEVELOPER MARKETING VS THE FACTS

The development is a compromise solution that provides affordable housing and green space.

- The development would destroy 100% of Elizabeth St Garden, eliminating a community garden that draws +100k annual visitors and provides free public programming, access to diverse green space, ample sunlight, cultural interactions, and a center for community.
- The building would occupy 70% of the lot, featuring 123 300-375 sq ft studio units.
- The housing would NOT be permanently affordable.
- The development's inclusion of open space complies with Special Little Italy District Zoning - not a compromising preservation of green space.

The garden site is the only location for the development.

- Community Board 2 has identified an alternative site at 388 Hudson that can provide up to 5x as much housing and possible new public open space. This alternative site is an empty, city-owned gravel lot.

The development will have a 15,600 sq ft community facility & retail space.

- 11,200 sq ft would be Habitat NYC office space. Habitat NYC is a developer partner in this project, with 25% ownership.
- There would be 4,400 sq ft of luxury retail on the ground floor.

The development provides 8,400 sq ft of public space.

- The proposed open space would be privately owned and managed.
- The 6,700 sq ft of open space would be cast in shadow by the new development.
- The remaining 1,700 sq ft would be a paved tunnel lined with luxury retail.

This development reflects the wants and needs of the community.

This development ignores...

- Nearly 7 years of immense community effort and support to save ESG in its entirety.
- +5,500 letters to the mayor, +12,000 petition signatures, +100k annual visitors, thousands of local & city-wide volunteers, & +250 partnerships with public schools, local businesses.
- Extensive support from elected officials, community & parks / garden organizations.

## ALTERNATIVE SITE 388 HUDSON



### A Better Site for Development

- City-owned, gravel-filled lot developed instead of a heavily used community garden
- Can provide up to 5x as much affordable housing and possible additional public open space
- Designated by Community Board 2 to be used for housing "only if" ESG is saved entirely
- Not available for housing if ESG is destroyed
- Close to other senior affordable housing & Tony Dapolito Recreational Center with many programs for seniors

### Garden Destroyed



- 4,400 sq ft luxury retail
- 6,700 sq ft privately owned open space
- 11,200 sq ft Habitat NYC office space
- 77,600 sq ft housing - 123 Units

### Garden Saved + 388 Hudson Developed



- +20,000 sq ft Elizabeth Street Garden
- 300,000 sq ft housing at alt site
- Up to 4,000 sq ft of possible new passive open space using existing DEP easement at 388 Hudson



# PROGRAMMING

see all available programs online at [elizabethstreetgarden.com/calendar](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/calendar)

ESG reflects the vibrant and innovative energy of NYC through our year round free public programming. In addition to planning popular annual events like the Harvest Fest and Summer Movie Nights, ESG accepts programming proposals for community activation of shared public green space. Our full programming schedule underlines the garden's role in creating space for the well-being and interconnectivity of our community.

50  
Featured  
musicians  
+ artists

92  
Biz + org  
sponsors

214  
Events  
offered

+750  
PS Student  
visitors

+2,300  
Harvest Fest  
Attendees

## GARDEN EDUCATION

Each season the garden serves as an outdoor classroom for both children and adults to learn about urban wildlife, habitat restoration, eco-gardening and sustainable stewardship. In 2019, ESG partnered with iDig2Learn and our Creative Director Ella Barnes to teach over 750 local Public school students about garden enrichment and cyanotype art using nature's elements.

**Sunprinting with Nature Cyanotype Workshop | Community Gardening | Our Roots with the Teen Resource Center | Kid's Story Time | Earth Day Celebration | iDig2Learn Seeds and Birdwatching Workshops**



## WELLNESS

As a healing oasis where visitors can breathe fresh air and rejuvenate, the Garden is a refuge from the surrounding urban environment. Along with weekly Yoga, Ta Chi, and breathing meditation classes, ESG has partnered with NYPD 5th precinct for special community wellness events and the Chinatown YMCA for outdoor senior picnics.

**Vinyasa Yoga | Tai Chi Class | Mindfulness Meditation | Warm from Within Breathing Class | Senior Picnics | Qi Gong | Kundalini Yoga | Zen(in) Run Your Precinct with NYPD 5th Precinct**



## COMMUNITY

As a center for our community, ESG's events provide neighbors and tourists from all different backgrounds countless opportunities to come together and foster a sense of community. At our 7th Annual Harvest Festival, over 2,300 people enjoyed free games, activities, and free food and refreshments donated by over 30 local businesses.

We hosted our largest Winter Solstice Celebration yet, lighting the garden and ringing in the new year with Make Music New York.

**Senior Day with Chinatown YMCA | Easter Egg Hunt Party | Mother's Day Celebration | Father's Day with McNally Jackson Bookstore | ESG Legal Defense Fundraiser | 7th Annual Harvest Festival | Winter Solstice Celebration | LUNGS Spring Awakening | 8th Annual LUNGS Festival**

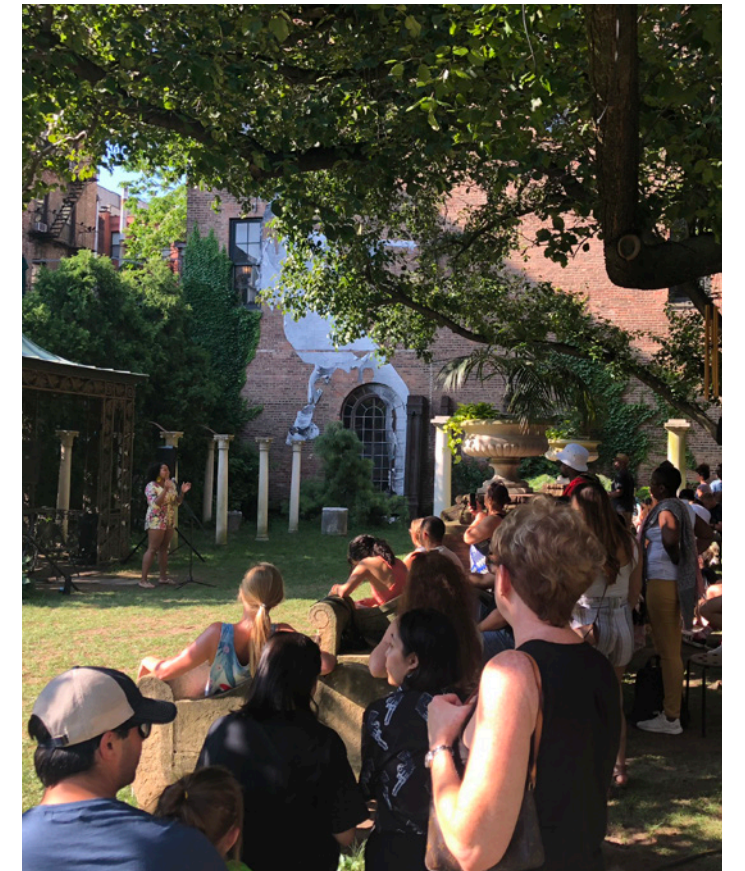


## ARTS & CULTURE

Amidst the balance of nature and statuary, the garden is a place of inspiration for artists, poets, musicians, performers and thinkers of all kinds. ESG celebrated these artistic presences with movie screenings, live music and poetry readings, and our ongoing Call to Artists, showcasing work of all mediums inspired by the garden.

In 2019, ESG hosted the Leo Kuelbs Collection to present a series of work from the DIGITAL FAIRY TALES collection of video art inspired by an array of fairy tales and works from Germany, China, and the USA.

**ESG Call to Artists Feature Program | Inspired Word NYC's Garden Variety: Music and Poetry | Live Music Sundays | Garden Movie Night Wednesdays | Tarot Card Readings | The Leo Kuelbs Collection: Digital Fairy Tales**





# COMMUNITY SUPPORT + INVOLVEMENT

Over the past +6 years, support to save Elizabeth Street Garden has grown to a city-wide level. Hundreds of people enjoy the garden every day and with each new visitor who learns that such a magical place is at risk of being destroyed, ESG gains a new supporter. Our ever-expanding body of supporters includes the following elected officials, individuals, community & parks organizations and local businesses.

**+420**  
Garden  
volunteers

**+10,000**  
Online  
Followers

**+10,500**  
Email  
Subscribers

**+12,000**  
Petition  
signatures

**+100,000**  
Garden  
Visitors



## PARTNERS + IN-KIND CONTRIBUTORS

### LOCAL BUSINESSES

305 Fitness  
Active Spaces  
Ben & Jerry's  
Black Seed  
Blenheim  
Bowery & Vine  
Café Belle  
Café Gitane  
Café Habana  
Café Palermo  
Café Roma  
Cafétal Social Club  
Caffè Palermo  
Caffe Roma  
Chinatown YMCA  
Come To Life  
Economy Candy  
Emporio  
Epistrophy  
Estela  
Everlane  
Extinction Rebellion NYC  
Femme de Poppy  
Ferrara  
Fiat Cafe  
Gimmie Coffee  
Gran Tivoli  
Guayaki  
Heyday  
Horti  
Jacks Wife Frida  
Jing Fong Restaurant  
Julia Hill  
Kate Spade  
La Colombe Coffee Roasters  
La Maison  
Little Cupcake Bakeshop  
Lombardis Pizza  
Lovechild  
Lovely Day  
McNally Jackson Bookstore  
Monica Vinader  
Noodlelove  
NY Nolita Pizza  
NYPL  
Oroboros  
Parisi Bakery  
Parm  
Patchbae  
Peasant  
Peppi's Cellar  
Pera Soho  
Polka Dog Bakery

Pomodorro  
Prince Street Pizza  
Refine  
Rubirosa Ristorante  
Soulcycle  
The Brooklyn Kitchen  
The Butchers daughter  
The Musket Room  
The Nolitan Hotel  
Uptown Pilates  
Wendy Nichol  
West-Bourne  
Wine Therapy  
Yours Truly Cafe



### LOCAL SCHOOLS

City As School  
New York University  
Public School 1  
Public School 110  
Public School 130  
S. Francis College Student Gov. Association  
The New School

### NON-PROFIT + COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Agriitecture  
Charles B Wang Community Health Center  
Common Ground Compost  
Earth Celebrations  
EXCEL program University Settlement  
Farms Not Arms  
Gotham Greens  
Grow To Learn NYC  
iDig2Learn  
Inspired Word NYC  
Lower East Side Ecology Center  
LUNGS Loaisaida United  
Neighborhood Gardens  
Model Activists  
NYCCGC  
NYPD 5th precinct  
NYPL Mulberry St Library  
Peace Accelerators  
Permaculture Action Network  
Public Space Party  
Teen Resource Center (TRC)

### EVENT, PROGRAM + MANAGEMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Adina Schwartz  
Alec Signorino  
Alex Brown  
Alex Levin  
Alexa Morai

Alexandra Sheehan  
Alexia Fisher  
Ali Ghulam  
Alicia Michelle  
Alina Pashà  
Alyssa Wall  
Amanda Diamond  
Amaya Lopez-Silvero  
Amy Angelo  
Amy Kaplin  
Ana Portela  
Ann Pingry  
Anna London  
Anna Smith  
Annina Zheng-Hardy  
Anthony Cacace  
Antonio Biagi  
April Valencia  
Barrett Doherty  
Barry Ranganathan  
Beth Hermelin  
Beth Papaleo  
Brooke Drabkin  
Calli Haramaras  
Callie Monroe  
Camille Newton  
Carla Ashton Carroll  
Carlota Rubio  
Carol L Pierce  
Carol Pierce  
Caroline Mihok  
Charles Birnbaum  
Chloe Diver  
Chloe Saintilan  
Chloés Corner  
Christina Delfico  
Christine Johnson  
Claire Zhang  
Clare Reidy  
Claudia Lamberty  
Costas Dimas  
Courtney Van Jahnke  
Dale Robertson  
Dan Tainow  
Dana Lee  
Danielle Distefano  
Danniella Day  
Danya Hajjaji  
David Mulkins  
Debi Kops  
Denise Pines  
Dom Chang  
Duncan Ransom  
Dylan Goodrich  
Edwin Morris  
Elise Fife  
Elizabeth De Paz  
Elizabeth Smelov  
Ella Barnes  
Ella Steakley  
Elliot Levy  
Emma Wolkenstein  
Erin Mcmonagle  
Federica Pantana  
Fiona Torres  
Gail Goldspiel  
George Oh  
Gianna Foltz

Hannes Bend  
Heather Goldin  
Holly Marshall  
Imogen Whist  
Isa Verkes  
Isabella Fernandez  
Isabella Rao  
Isabelle C  
Jackie Frank  
Jacqueline Pompei  
Jan Lucanus  
Jazmine Robins  
Jessica Jones  
Jimmy Helvin  
Johanna Heimberger  
Joseph Habib  
Judy Chin  
Julia Kimmel  
Justin Dean Thomas  
Katherine Campagna  
Katie McDonnell  
Katie Whitmire  
Katy Nelson  
Kim Kalesti  
Kirsten Theodos  
Kurtis Fitzgerald Pemberton  
Lara Day  
Lauryn Kent  
Leila Edrington  
Li Murillo  
Lilia Fung  
Lindsee Silvetstein  
Lisa Keenan  
Lisa Santandrea  
Liv Behre  
Liz York  
Lori Ferme  
Lucia Pohlman  
Luna Tricola  
Mackenzie Kear  
Madison Norris  
Magali Regis  
Margaret Halsey Gardiner  
Marie Patterson  
Marti Richenstein  
Marvin Mendlinger  
Mathew Simons  
Matthew Arrow  
Maya Gerig  
Mckenna Poe  
Melora Armstead  
Meshakai Wolf  
Michael Bergman  
Michael Fox  
Michael Geffner  
Michele Campo  
Monika Hankova  
Nick Low  
Nikita Sachdeva  
Nina Taylor  
Nisida Spera  
Noel Moore  
Nora Cohen  
Nora Kipnis  
Nord Wennerstrom  
Nova Tricola  
Olivia Hurley  
Paris Venture  
Patricia Squillari

Patrick Johnson  
Paul Antoine  
Paz Perlman  
Penelope Thornton  
Peters Lynch  
Poppy King  
Pr Byrne  
Rachael Scott  
Raymond Figueroa Reyes  
Rebecca Hyatt  
Renée Green  
Rob Ellenberg  
Robert Appleton  
Robert Neville  
Rose Hopkins  
Rosemarie Mientka  
Sandy Reiburn  
Sara Dorzback  
Sarah Drory  
Sarah Levitch  
Scott Cesta  
Shiyun Chen  
Simon Roberts  
Skyler Lapuc  
Sonali Nigam  
Stacey Anderson  
Stephanie Tricola  
Stephen Hopkins  
Stevi Sesin  
Susan Welshman  
Tara Gallagher  
Tarring Qian  
Taylor Hines  
Taylor Lawson  
Teresa Bigelow  
Tess Sullivan  
Tom Boster  
Victoria Zhambaltarova  
Vivian Papaleo

William Raudenbush  
Xin Lin  
Yuan Wang  
Zachary Cummo  
Zaire Williams  
Zanna Vorstenbosch

### FEATURED ARTISTS + MUSICIANS

Alexandra Sheehan  
Ayanna Williams  
Beau  
Bee Loo  
Carly Ozard Oliva  
Christine Sloan Stoddard  
Cortney Van Jahnke  
David Lindsey  
Dina Gregory  
Ella Barnes  
Elliott Levy  
Emma Rose Jenny  
Eva Alt  
Frank Malloy Iv  
Gillian Doupe  
Glynnis Eldridge  
Grant Stinnett  
Halimah Schmidt  
Hannah Buonaguro  
Heather Goldin  
Jake & Abe  
Jeff Jacobs  
Jess Grippo  
Jess Voss  
John Campos  
John Lander

Jomari Perez  
Justin Dean Thomas  
Justine Arinda Johnson  
Kate Goerlich  
Keren Sound  
Kevin Anglade  
Kristina Nazarevskaia  
Leah Vanessa  
Loisa Fenichell  
Lydia Mamalis  
Mariela Flor Olivo  
Mark Hepworth  
Matthew Rowe  
Maya Ber Lerner  
Octopus Kid  
Oona Chaplin  
Paco Naveira  
Quincy Valentine  
Rossitza Skortcheva Donesky  
Roy Angelo Ruiz  
Shareef Keyes  
Shona Neary  
Todd Colby  
Zohara Nguyen

### GARDEN SUPPORTERS PARK / GARDEN ORGANIZATIONS

596 Acres  
6BC Community Garden  
American Society of Landscape Architects,  
The Cultural Landscape Foundation  
Earth Celebrations

Earth Justice  
Farms Not Arms  
Former NYC Parks  
Commissioner Adrian Benepe  
Friends of Petrosino Square  
Green Below 14  
Green Guerrillas  
Grow NYC  
Loisaida United Neighborhood Gardens  
Lower East Side Ecology Center  
Nelson Mandela Community Garden  
New York City Community Garden Coalition  
The New York Chapter  
Peace Accelerators  
Pleasant Village Community Garden  
The Trust For Public Land

### ELECTED OFFICIALS

Representative Nydia M. Velázquez  
Representative Jerrold Nadler  
City Comptroller Scott Stringer  
State Senator Brad Hoylman  
State Senator Brian Kavanagh  
Assemblymember Deborah Glick  
Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou  
Attorney General Letitia James  
District Leader Vittoria Fariello  
District Leader Keen Berger  
District Leader Paul Newelle

**THANK YOU** to all of our local partners from 2019. Together we were able to expand our community more than ever before. These shared experiences give us a concentrated dose of the magic of the garden and its ability to bring people together in education, revitalization, and celebration.

### OUR 2019 PARTNERS

Active Spaces  
Bowery Alliance of Neighbors  
Charles B Wang Community Health Center  
Chinatown YMCA  
Earth Celebrations  
EXCEL program University Settlement  
Ganni  
Guayaki

Hush City  
iDig2Learn  
Inspired Word NYC  
LUNGS  
Make Music NY  
McNally Jackson Bookstore  
Mulberry St Public Library  
NYC Community Garden Coalition  
NYPD 5TH Precinct

Patagonia  
Peace Accelerators  
St. Francis College Student Gov. Association  
Teen Resource Center (TRC)  
The Cultural Landscape Foundation  
The Endless Co.  
The New School

### COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



In March 2019, we partnered with McNally Jackson Bookstore and The New School to put on a panel discussion exploring the many city-wide issues reflected in the effort to save ESG for our community.

### SPEAKERS

Tom Angotti, editor of Zoned Out: Race, Displacement, and City Planning in New York  
Raymond Figueroa, President of the NYC Community Garden Coalition  
Charles Birnbaum, President & CEO of The Cultural Landscape Foundation  
Alicia Boyd, founder of MTOPP (The Movement To Protect The People) and FLAC (Flower Lovers against Corruption)



# WE ASKED WHAT THE GARDEN MEANS TO YOU.



watch the full video online at [elizabethstreetgarden.com/videos](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/videos)



I can't get rid of that. We need this.



I can come here and plant and make the world a greener environment for everyone.



We have somewhere to go and appreciate nature.



It's a place of education and learning and humanity.



I come to this garden because it's a way for me to communicate with nature.



The Elizabeth Street Garden is a haven from the madness that Manhattan has become.



So this is a nice little mini-vacation for us on Sundays.



This is a happy place.



And the garden is a place to grow food.



As I get older, I really appreciate being able to come here.



It just feels like a place you can call home.



And this is a jewel. I mean this is magnificent.



This park means so much to so many people around here.



We need more of these. We need one of these on every city block.



What the garden has done, they've turned a neighborhood into a community.



It's a little piece of Heaven for all the children at our school that we all get to come to.



I like the garden because they grow a lot of vegetables.



I just wish the garden stays here.



It's the place that we always come to be a family.



You can meet new people and offer yourself to New York City.



I don't want to lose it. At all.



All of my neighbors love this garden. It's a place of vitality and serenity.



To be able to pass on this garden to future generations is very important.



It's so beautiful. So we have to keep this park.



I love that this garden has prevailed. And I hope it does and it could if everybody participates to save.



And it's very multi-generational. It's very multi-cultural.



Taking a walk through this garden is the best argument anybody could make for keeping it.



The garden has been like our home, medicine, where we can feel real community.



And it's really for the middle classes. There's very little here in the city anymore for the middle classes.



I love the flowers in Elizabeth Street Garden.



# HOW WE CAN SAVE THE GARDEN

ESG wants to save the Garden you all know and love! For this reason, we aim to protect & preserve the Garden in a way that allows the unique qualities, statuary, and architectural aspects to remain, while providing the public open green space our community desperately needs.

Below, you will find different models of how our community can save the Garden. To the left is ESG's vision for a sustainable future as a Conservation Land Trust. Please note that before any of these options can be fully pursued, we must stop the City's plans to destroy the Garden.



## Conservation Land Trust (CLT)



## Mapped NYC Park Land (MPL)



## Green Thumb Garden (GT)

### HOW

A CLT is a nonprofit corporation that preserves and stewards open spaces on behalf of the community. An existing nonprofit, such as ESG, can act as the CLT. As a CLT, ESG would own the land and continue to program and keep the garden open to the public.

Lot ownership would be transferred from DCAS to NYC Parks. A management agreement with NYC Parks could be arranged for ESG to maintain operation. The Garden would be saved in perpetuity. There is no record of a community-founded garden becoming MPL.

ESG would be transferred to Parks department, but the land would not be official MPL. Parks jurisdiction has provided significant protection for hundreds of gardens, but it doesn't have the extra protections of MPL.\* Licensed garden status offers greater protection and if ever threatened, the community would be heavily involved in the process.\*

### ACCESS/HOURS

ESG would manage hours – same as now (46hrs/wk) or more. A requirement could also be negotiated by the City and Community Board. With ESG no longer having to fight to save the Garden, we could focus our funds on keeping the Garden open longer.

The Garden would be open dawn to dusk, or otherwise designated by Parks.

ESG would manage hours - same as now (46hrs/wk) or more. With ESG no longer having to fight to save the Garden, we could focus our funds on keeping the Garden open longer. The requirement for GT is 20hrs/wk.

### PHYSICAL SPACE

As a CLT, the unique qualities, statuary and architectural aspects of the Garden would remain. Gardening plots would remain for public gardening/farming.

In accordance with NYC Park regulations, all statuary and architectural elements in the garden would be removed.\* Any monument on MPL would have to be accepted into the City's collection and reinstalled, costing thousands.\* The planting of any tree, plant, flower, shrubbery or other vegetation requires written approval from Parks.

GT garden rules are looser than MPL and could allow for most of the unique qualities, statuary and architectural aspects of the Garden to remain.\*

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As is or more. ESG would own the land and manage the space with neighbors, volunteers, and staff. ESG would continue to expand upon community involvement.

All NY Parks regulations would be observed. The Garden would be managed by Parks or by ESG if a management agreement can be made within Parks regulations.

As is or more. ESG would still manage the space with neighbors, volunteers and staff.

### FINANCING

ESG would fundraise and continue a conservative garden rental program. No city funding needed. NYC Parks budget could be reserved for park equity needed elsewhere around the city.

The Garden would be funded by the New York City Parks Department, unless a management agreement with ESG stated otherwise.

ESG would fundraise and continue a conservative garden rental program. GT gardens are eligible to receive city funding and supplies.

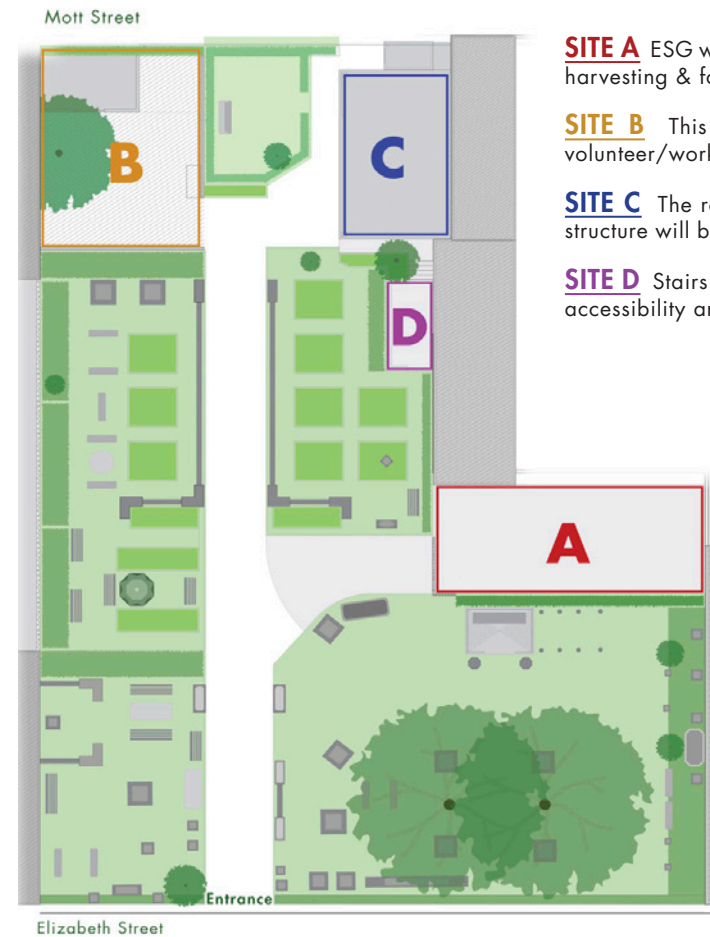
\* Statements obtained from a Senior NYC Parks Community Outreach & Development Representative.



# ENVISIONING A BRIGHT FUTURE

Saved in its entirety, Elizabeth Street Garden has the vast potential to grow as an environmentally & financially sustainable energy efficient community garden with improved year-round public access.

As a Conservation Land Trust, ESG will require no City funding in order to maintain the Garden's physical upkeep, hundreds of free public programs, staffing, and future plans. ESG will establish the areas listed below. These future plans are only possible if the Garden's current size and state is preserved.

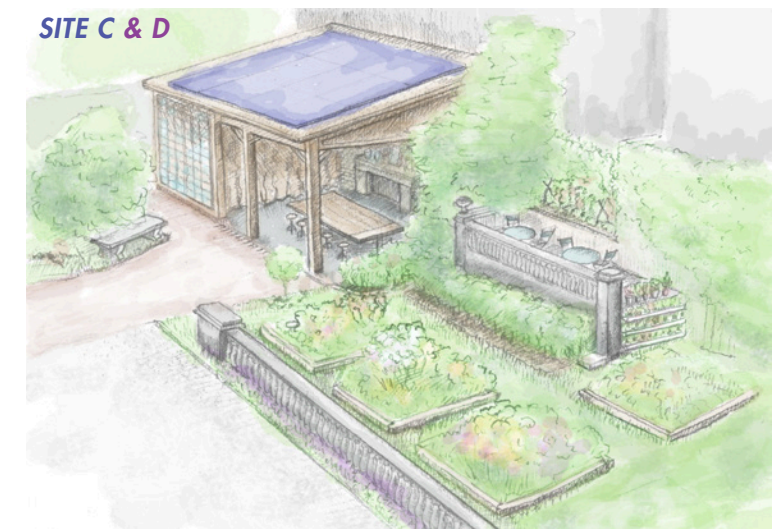
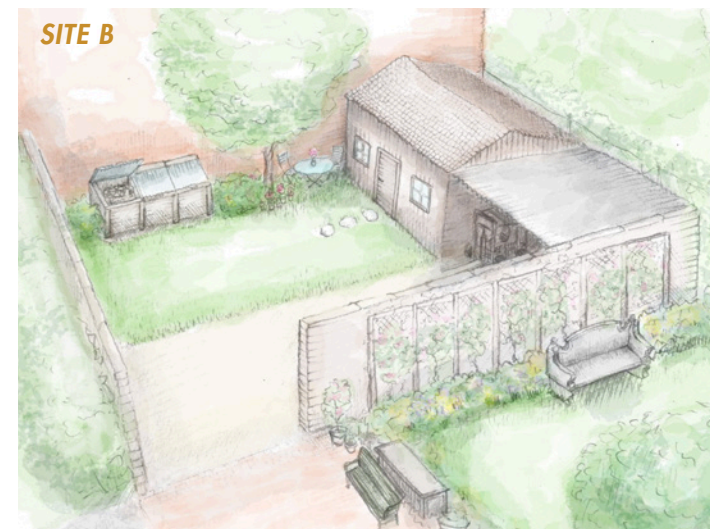


**SITE A** ESG will use this area to build a new greenhouse conservatory for year-round gardening, harvesting & food security.

**SITE B** This area will be cleaned to make room for a composting station and improved volunteer/work shed and storage.

**SITE C** The roof of the lean-to will be equipped with solar panels for energy sufficiency. The structure will be further outfitted so that it can be better utilized by the public through the winter.

**SITE D** Stairs to the existing balcony will be rebuilt. Tables and chairs will be added to increase accessibility and square-foot usage.



Renderings courtesy of Ella Barnes



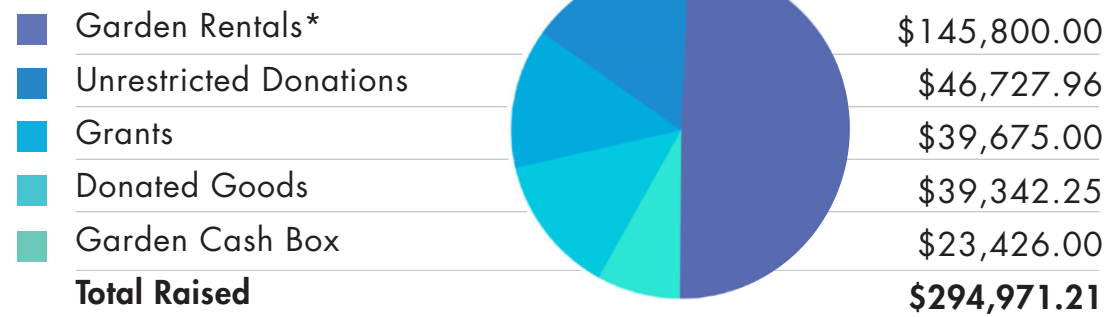
# FINANCIAL REPORT FY 2019

**DID YOU KNOW**  
Elizabeth Street Garden is an official NYC Monarch Butterfly Waystation

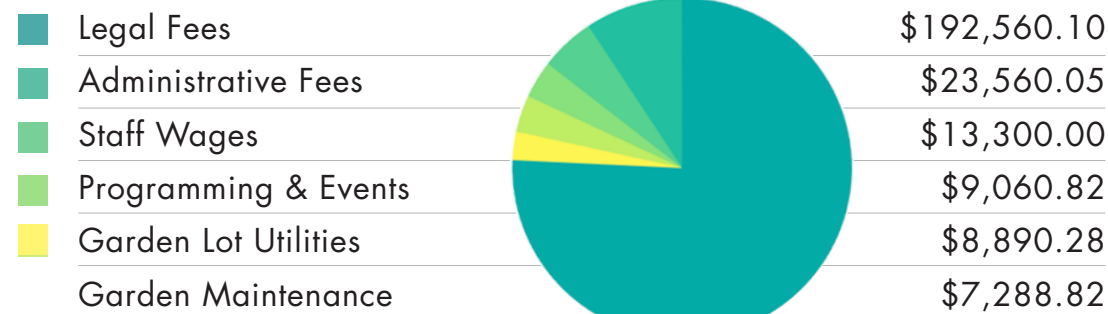
**THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GENEROUS DONORS FROM 2019! IT IS YOUR CHARITY THAT FUELS OUR EFFORTS AND WE ARE EXTRAORDINARILY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK THE MANY DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED THROUGH OUR CASH DONATION BOX IN THE GARDEN. EVERY CENT COUNTS!**

All donations made to ESG go directly towards our legal efforts to protect and preserve Elizabeth Street Garden, research, PR, Garden maintenance and operations, and free public programming offered in the Garden for all.

## Earnings Report FY 2019



## Expense Report FY 2019



## RENTALS

interested in renting the Garden?  
[elizabethstreetgarden.com/rentals](http://elizabethstreetgarden.com/rentals)

Elizabeth Street Garden hosts events, video/photo shoots, and weddings in order to raise enough funds required to protect & preserve the Garden.

100% of the money raised from events goes into the nonprofit and directly towards our efforts to save the Garden for the community; legal defense fund, PR, free public programming, and garden operations & maintenance.

After the garden is saved, the rental program would allow ESG to continue expanding our public operations and maintenance of the space without relying on any city department budget whatsoever; making ESG completely self-sustainable.

### FOUNDATIONS

Lily Auchincloss Foundation  
Patagonia

### INDIVIDUALS

Abi Pilloni  
Abigail Burman  
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# A CASE TO SAVE THE GARDEN

A letter from ESG Attorney Norman Siegal

In 2019, the Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc. (ESG) along with other petitioners filed a lawsuit against the City of New York (and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the NY City Council and the NYC Planning Commission.)

The case involves an attempt by the City of New York to destroy a unique cherished garden and community gathering space in an area that is in urgent need of open green space. The lawsuit maintains that the City's plan to destroy the garden violates applicable zoning laws, fails to comply with the Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP), the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the City Environmental Quality

Review (CEQR). It argues that the Negative Declaration was improper, that the assessment of the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts was inadequate and did not constitute a "hard look" at zoning, open space, historic and cultural resources, neighborhood character, public policy and cumulative impacts and that an Environmental Impact Statement was mandated.

ESG contends that the City's plan must be done in accordance with applicable law. And, very simply, it did not do so here. Hopefully, we will succeed in this litigation and the garden will be preserved.



[elizabethstreetgarden.com/legal](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/legal)



## Community Garden Advocates Sue City Over Development of Senior Citizen Housing

By Eden Turner • Published March 13, 2019 • Updated on March 14, 2019 at 3:04 pm

### What to Know

- 1 A battle over a green space in Lower Manhattan is pitting advocates for green space against those fighting for affordable housing.
- 2 New advocates for the Elizabeth Street Garden are suing to slow the process for the green to be developed into housing for seniors.
- 3 The garden has been earmarked for development into a seven-story building for low-income seniors.

A small garden in Lower Manhattan has become the battleground for a heated debate that is pitting advocates for public green space against those who support affordable housing.

Now garden advocates are suing the city, which plans to sell the land to build a seven-story building for low-income seniors.

With much of Lower Manhattan making way for luxury retail space, offices and hotels, the picturesque sculpture garden nestled in between Elizabeth and West 10th Little Italy has become a quiet refuge for neighborhood locals.



From a public school in 1822, to a changing ground in 1970, and then to a private sculpture yard leased from the city by Alan Reiser in 1990, Elizabeth Street Garden has a long history of changing face. But it was only in the last five years that it bloomed into what it is today: a community sculpture garden offering volunteer run organizations and services to the public.

## Lawsuits filed against Elizabeth Street Garden affordable housing project

Opposition to plans to tear down the Nolita garden and build housing argue that project is unlawful



Opponents of a **contested city-backed housing project** that will raze the Elizabeth Street Garden have followed through on months of legal threats, and have filed lawsuits against the development.

The garden and a separate non-profit devoted to protecting the garden are each filing suits against the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) this week in Manhattan Supreme Court, charging that the city's environmental review failed to rigorously evaluate the impacts of the green space's loss. They're asking the court to mandate that the city conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) before moving forward with plans to replace the one-acre open space with affordable senior housing.

"Respondents failed to take a hard look at relevant areas of environmental concern—specifically, Zoning, Open Space, Neighborhood Character, and Public Policy—with respect to the Proposed Project, and failed to recognize the adverse environmental impacts that may result from the Proposed Project," the suit filed by the Elizabeth Street Garden, which maintains the green space, states.

The redevelopment project, known as Havens Green, would bring 123 studio apartments, 12,000 square feet of ground-level retail, and some 8,000 square feet of open space to where the garden now stands. But opposition to the plan has been fierce, with **Community Board 2 vetoed the proposal**. The project has divided local elected officials—City Council member Margaret Chin is in favor, while Assembly member Yuh-Lin Yiu is against. Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer **announced she'd lead the way** to lead to the next step in the **Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP)**.

## A Lush Urban Garden or Senior Citizen Housing: Which Would You Choose?

149



By Luis Ferré-Sadurni

March 7, 2019

[What you need to know to start the day: [Get New York Today in your inbox.](#)]

The Elizabeth Street Garden's paved paths meander around a granite balustrade from the early 20th century, limestone lion statues, benches and beds of roses and daffodils.

For years, the half-acre of green grass and leafy trees, tucked in

## Elizabeth Street Garden Advocates Sue City To Block Takeover

BY ELIZABETH WEE  
MARCH 14, 2019 3:59 P.M. • 17 COMMENTS



Elizabeth Street Garden. PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN

A nonprofit group is suing the city to prevent the Elizabeth Street Garden from being redeveloped for affordable housing, the latest step in a years-long battle that has galvanized open space activists to preserve the half-acre city-owned plot in Nolita.

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

## • GET INVOLVED •

questions? comments? email us at [info@elizabethstreetgarden.com](mailto:info@elizabethstreetgarden.com)

## VOLUNTEER

We always need volunteers to help keep the garden open to the public. From an hour on the weekend to ten hours every week, take a break from the city and get your nature fix.

Sign up online for an orientation with one of our volunteer coordinators and join the team!



[elizabethstreetgarden.com/volunteer](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/volunteer)



## SPONSOR + PROGRAM

If you're a local business owner, consider sponsoring an event or program. Also, spread the word about our rentals - 100% of the money goes back into the nonprofit and towards our efforts to save the Garden.

Have an idea for a new program or event? We want to hear it! Submit your idea online - open to all individuals and organizations.



[elizabethstreetgarden.com/rentals](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/rentals)  
[elizabethstreetgarden.com/programs](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/programs)

## DONATE

to our legal defense fund! ESG has retained Norman Siegel of Siegel Teitelbaum and Evans LLP. Together, we have developed a legal strategy to stop the city from destroying the garden. Donate online or mail a check made out to Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc. to **209 Elizabeth Street, New York, NY 10012.**

Elizabeth Street Garden (ESG) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions made to ESG for charitable purposes are tax-deductible to the extent of the law.



[elizabethstreetgarden.com/donate](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/donate)

## LINK UP + SHARE

Visit the garden and experience the magic! Share your photos with us on social media by tagging us, pinning your location, and using our hashtags.

#ElizabethStreetGarden #saveESG

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Be sure to join our mailing list to stay informed about our free public programs, special events and latest news.



[elizabethstreetgarden.com/sign-up](https://elizabethstreetgarden.com/sign-up)





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