

From Retention Pond to Business Opportunity: A New Model for Urban Agriculture

By
Leah Samson-Samuel
President



THE SEED





Movin' Out, Inc.

Movin' Out

Non-profit in Madison, WI

- **Affordable housing options for people with disabilities**
- **Started in 1992 by a group of parents**
- **Developed and owns Elven Sted**



Elven Sted

Multi-family housing development

- **Located in Stoughton, WI**
- **Thirty-two units of new multi-family housing**
- **Several units are adapted to meet accessibility needs of family members with disabilities**
- **Low to mid-income residents**

Howard Mandeville

Executive Director of Movin' Out

- **First envisioned a rain garden in the retention pond with wetland prairie species**
- **Saw the potential for a micro-enterprise with the sale of high-value, hand-harvested wild flower seeds**
- **Movin' Out obtained grant funding to explore the feasibility of such a project, develop a work plan, and initiate planning to identify and assist an entrepreneur to take on this project**



The Retention Pond

- Mitigates runoff from the Elven Sted paved areas and also from the immediate neighborhood around Elven Sted
- After passing through the retention ponds the storm water travels to the Yahara River
- The area to be used for planting is just under ¼ acre.



THE SEEDLING





Leah Samson-Samuel

President, Madison Environmental Group, LLC

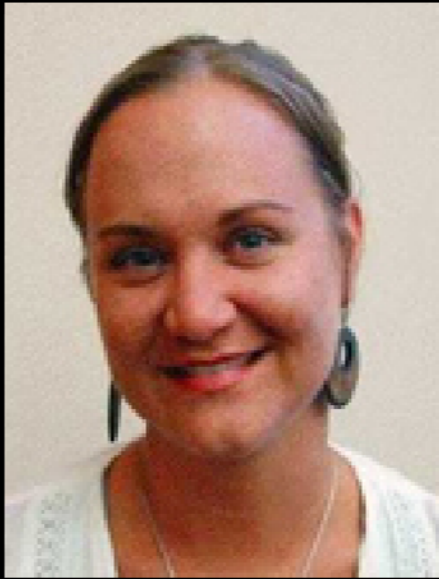
- **Facilitate the feasibility analysis**
- **Coordinate design consultation**
- **Community volunteer planning**
- **Business planning**



Corrine Daniels

Director, Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries

- **Consulted on the financial and logistical viability of the venture**
- **Recommended Species based on yield, market value and unmet demand**
- **Recommended required tools, equipment and facilities**
- **Given generous support with Applied Ecological Services resources**



Shannel Trudeau-Yancey

Self-Employment Coordinator, Progressive Community Services

- **Developed a business description in order to recruit potential proprietors**
- **Created community connections to facilitate the search for a prospective business owners**
- **Created a partnership with the UW-Extensions Master Gardener program for job coach support**

THE PLANT





Brittany Romine

Owner, Tiger Lily Seeds

- **21 year old Stoughton Resident**
- **Passionate about big cats and gardening**
- **Hard working, inquisitive, and protector of the earth**

“My version is one of a comforter, a prodder, a global business thinker, and liaison--- all within my role as a parent!”



Andrea Romine

Brittany's mother

- **Amazing– patient, loving, inspiring, and endless energy**
- **Works full time, prominent Brittany's business, and is a single mother of 3**

Angie Riker

Brittany's Vocational Support

- **Avid gardener and biology degree**
- **Vocational job coach, mentorship, and critical thinking**
- **Inspires, motivates and shares this experience with Brittany**





Patricia Fields

Brittany's Support Broker, ARC-Wisconsin

- **Coordinated community support**
- **Advocates for Brittany's social service support**
- **Creates goals and plans for Brittany's future**

THE BLOOM



Tiger Lily Seeds

- Registered business
- Completed website this winter
- Plants and cards available for sale
- Harvest seeds to sell to Taylor Creek and make crafts
- Potential growth to other storm ditches in Stoughton



Tiger Lily Seeds

- **Creating community connections between non-profits, for profits, Elven Sted residents, Stoughton residents**
- **Opportunities to include others and keep growing more connections**



THE SEED



Lessons learned

- Soil quality is critical
- Flexibility with business plan
- Balance between keeping the business plan person centered and still engaging the large support team
- Pray for rain





New seed:

- **Duplicating this project in other urban developments**
- **Transforming an unique idea into reality**

Contacts

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