

Deputation – Elizabeth Cunningham
Item 6E – Q1 2026 Tenant Engagement Refresh Update
TSC Public Meeting – June 4, 2026

I am an [REDACTED] Street Co-op resident and community garden participant. I was thrilled when I was invited to become involved in the 220 Oak Street Community Garden. The plot I have revitalized had been severely overgrown and neglected for what appeared to be many years. It is one of several plots that have remained unused despite annual calls for TCHC tenants at [REDACTED] Street to garden at the community garden.

Since becoming involved, I have invested considerable time, effort, and personal funds into improving the soil and developing a productive garden that benefits TCHC. At no point would I consider applying for or using external funding, such as LIFT grants, to support my individual plot or divert resources away from TCHC.

Throughout the winter of 2026, I spent significant time communicating with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], the former Volunteer Garden Coordinator, about opportunities to secure external funding that could expand access to the garden and support much-needed improvements. My goal was to help strengthen the garden as a shared community resource.

[REDACTED] requested and scheduled a meeting with me for May 28, 2026, to discuss the garden. On May 27, she called to cancel the meeting and advised that a new garden policy had been approved in February 2026. On May 29, 2026, [REDACTED] circulated the policy, which stated that [REDACTED] Street Co-op residents would no longer be permitted to participate in the [REDACTED] Street Community Garden.

This decision came as a surprise. Prior to this announcement, [REDACTED] had asked me to care for the TCHC strawberry plot, which I have continued to maintain. I also attended TCHC garden meetings throughout the winter and actively participated in discussions about the garden's future.

The co-op community members who garden at [REDACTED] Street have contributed significant time, labour, knowledge, and friendship to this space. [REDACTED] Street Co-op residents have worked alongside TCHC residents for many years to help build, maintain, and sustain the garden. Given this history of partnership and contribution, the manner in which this change was communicated feels dismissive of the efforts and commitment that co-op members have invested over decades.

I respectfully propose that [REDACTED] Street Co-op residents remain eligible to participate in the [REDACTED] Street Community Garden. The garden has long been a shared community space, strengthened through the contributions of both TCHC and [REDACTED] Street Co-op residents, and I believe that continuing this partnership is in the best interests of the garden and the community it serves.