Design Competition for ASU Research Park

Important Dates:

• Design Launch Date: March 4, 2013
• Submission Deadline: April 8, 2013
• Finalists Announced: Beginning-to-mid-April
• Finalists and Judges Luncheon: Mid-to-end of April

Students will submit their designs to Peter.Goldman@asu.edu by April 8, 2013. Finalists will be announced by mid-April. Finalists and judges will attend a luncheon by the end of April. The finalists will present for 10 minutes describing their design and intentions. The judges will then deliberate and award the winner at the luncheon with a $500 cash or item worth prize. The winner’s design will be used for the ASU Research Park Urban Farm.

1. Required Design Features:

• Raised beds, no wider than 4 feet, 18-32 inches high
• Pathways should be smooth, at least 4 feet wide
• Automated irrigation system
• Must include shade structures
• Must include an inviting gathering place, possibly a Ramada with tables and benches
• Must be feasible and easily manageable for students
• Must be easily removable, possibly recycle/reuse the materials in the future
• Aesthetically pleasing, tidy and unique appearance
• Use reclaimed or sustainable materials, low environmental impact
• Materials used should be resilient to handle arid conditions
• Stay within our budget of $5000; provide a brief budget spreadsheet
• Achieve the goals set by the ASU Research Park (see below)

2. Recommended Design Features

• Utilize desert horticulture practices
• Incorporate permaculture into the design
• Orient beds appropriately in relation to sun position during various seasons
• Include a solar power feature or passive solar feature for experimental purposes
• Artfully and tastefully designed structures to appeal to a diverse crowd
• An entrance sign signifying ASU affiliation
• ‘Phase’ your design (e.g. Phase 1: build a central gathering place, Phase 2: build surrounding garden beds, ...)
• Bring new ideas to the table!
3. Achieve goals of the ASU Research Park – Funding Agency of the urban farm

Currently, the site is covered with four to five inches of gravel and has shrubs along two of the four sides of the square, flat plot. The creation of the urban farm allows for a second goal, which is to form a partnership between the ASU Research Park and the School of Sustainability or other departments at ASU. The ASU Research Park mandated four goals that the urban farm team must achieve and design competition participants must abide by; these include:

1. Produce a self-managing farm,
2. Conform to the existing conditions/appeal of the Research Park,
3. Create a better connection between the Research Park and ASU through student involvement, and
4. Utilize a cost-effective design that considers the specific design criteria above.

4. Background Information: Project Synopsis

Peter Goldman, ASU graduate student, was approached in March of 2012 with the opportunity of converting a quarter acre parcel of land on the ASU Research Park campus into an urban farm by Heidi Kimball of Sunbelt Holdings. The ASU research park contracts out parcels of land to tenants, Sunbelt Holdings being the owner of the said quarter acre parcel. This piece of land originally had two tennis courts located on it. These were ripped up and covered with four to five inches of gravel. Sunbelt Holdings reached out to those interested in putting some form of temporary urban farm on the land while it waited on a new tenant or occupier. Through Peter’s sole proprietorship, NeighborCulture, he was given the opportunity to carry this project out as the educational coordinator and manager while making it amenable to the research park’s goals. This project has since progressed to being research collaboration between the Research Park and the School of Sustainability.

Producing a self-managing farm team will rely upon how attractive the farm program is to future farm team members. Key outputs, to ensure the generation of a strategic management plan for the farm program, include the appointment of a semi-permanent farm program coordinator, creation of a system of transferable knowledge and farm maintenance plans necessary to bridge semesters, a design competition for PR in an effort to make the design robust, and the development of a living database or advisory board of community connections. How the final strategic plan looks, and how successful the program ultimately is, is dependent upon levels of involvement from people like you. The ASU Research Park Urban Farm Team is working hard to embed this program in the ASU community for the coming years and need your help.

If you have any questions regarding the design competition email Lainiek Ketchum at lketchum@asu.edu.