Starting a community garden in Passaic, NJ

Presenter: Patsy Herrera
Why start a community garden?

There are benefits to a Community Garden:

● In Passaic County, New Jersey almost 50,000 people — 1 in 6 children — struggle with food insecurity.
● Poor nutrition can lead to lasting deficits in cognitive, social, and emotional development. Studies show that food insecure children are twice as likely to develop health problems overall.
● Neighborhoods with many poor or low-income residents often have fewer resources that promote health (e.g., full-service grocery stores offering affordable and nutritious foods, parks and recreational facilities that encourage physical activity).
● Make the space feel like it is their own and part of the community.
Passaic, NJ

Stats:

- Poverty Rate: 33.1%
- Population: 71,057
- Median Age: 29.8
- Median Household Income: $34,920
- Median Property Value: $309,700
- Borders Clifton, Garfield, Wallington, and Rutherford
Data cont.
Where

We were considering

- Park
- Library
- Church
- Empty lots

We wanted a place that was closest to people, where having a car would not be necessary because parking can be a huge hassle, along with other things.
Figuring it out...

- Not something I could have started on my own
  - Went out with my dad and talked about the parks and history
- Had help from friends, family, professors
  - Spoke with people in PSEG ISS and MSUCCG
- Decided to start with communicating with the people in city hall
- Sent email, and thinking about other logistics
Concerns

- Insurance
- Limiting spending for resources
- Need more volunteers/people
- To rent or have used for the public
Where do we go from here?

- Some weird timing, given the current situation, we took a step back

- Taking this time to make sure that we can figure out the logistics and find more people to get involved

- Understand that this may not be possible right now, but are hopeful to have it ready by next year
Feedback
or
Questions
Sources

- https://datausa.io/profile/geo/passaic-nj
- https://www.cumac.org/hunger-in-nj
Thank you!