

## **2021 OSH Compost Report**

**Prepared by Angela Martinez Lombardo, Compost Coordinator**

The compost program at the Old Stone House has been a valuable aspect of the park's community service for many years. It is, however, time and energy intensive, especially amongst the wide range of responsibilities expected of the Garden Director. In 2021 the decision was made to hire a compost coordinator to streamline and manage the composting system. We received a capacity building grant from an individual donor, and it continues, thanks to support from Assembly member Robert Carroll, as well as another generous individual donor. OSH's composting program joined the myriad of vendors at the Sunday farmers market. We weighed inputs each week, shared knowledge about the importance of composting and used scraps to generate healthy rich compost which was used throughout the park. A small area of the park was designated as our annual and perennial flower bed, which we used to grow zinnias, marigolds, sunflowers and cosmos, all fed by the park's very own compost. These were incorporated with the wide diversity of over 120 species of plants in the park to create flower bouquets that yielded over \$3000.00 in fundraising sales for the park.

Over the course of 29 weeks from April-November, the compost program served over 100 community members. We redirected 4,081.25- (just over 2 tons) of food waste from the landfill, enriching the soil at the park and creating a sense of reciprocity in the neighborhood's ecology. The compost was turned weekly with the help of our faithful group of around 20 weekly volunteers. Additionally, we worked with community partners, accepting food waste from local business's Cafe Martin and The Park Slope Food Co-op. We were also connected to a local woodworker in Greenpoint for our wood shavings to cut the scraps with. Over the summer, we incorporated lessons on decomposition and nutrient cycling into our summer camp program, Garden Explorers.

In November 2021, we collaborated with Big Reuse, which led to an organic transition to cooperating with DSNY. OSH then became a pilot site for public drop-off as the city reopened its municipal compost program. We now have 5 bins which are open to the public, meaning we can accept a far greater volume of material, in addition to material such as meat and dairy which we could not sustain in our smaller system. The park's compost bins are still very much operational, serving those community members who prefer to have their vegetable scraps processed close to home. Additionally, the Park Slope Food Co-op continues to bring their scraps to us, giving us plenty to process. In 2022, we are looking forward to continuing our work with DSNY. We hope to provide other parks with an example of a successful public compost drop off-site, inspiring more accessibility to compost, and less methane producing material to the landfill. Our own compost continues to enrich the soil of the park, helping us to create ecologically diverse, community-oriented green space.