



*Deep Listening. Fostering Trust. Bridging Communities.*

## Bee the Change Honey Dinner and Dialogue Report

September 2017

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## Executive Summary

During an 'all-about-bees' community dinner with Bee the Change, the Zeidler Center organized a facilitated dialogue focused on food justice, and environmental resilience in Milwaukee. During this dialogue that took place on August 29, 2017 at the Zeidler Center for Public Discussion, Zeidler Center trained facilitators asked participants to respond to two rounds of questions:

1. *"Beyond Stories about stings, share a personal experience with bees (or bee products) that helps to explain how you feel about co-existing with bees?"*
2. *"What would you like to see happen in Milwaukee, regarding pollinators and environmental resilience?"*

Additionally, participants were asked to engage in Connected Conversation if time allowed, concerning the following questions:

*"What have you heard from your partners in this conversation that you want to talk about further?"*

*"In Milwaukee, where do we need more bees?"*

In response to the first question, participants overwhelmingly shared positive experiences regarding bees and bee products. A great number of participants underlined knowing the importance that bees have for the environment, and hence, for humans, stressing the need to have them around. Several participants did share a certain initial fear, or at least uneasiness when around bees which, in most cases, faded away when learning more about the bees, what they do, and what they need. Differences between honey bees, bumblebees, wasps, etc. were mentioned as important in rationalizing fear. Several participants shared direct experiences they had with beekeepers, either working with or observing them. These interactions appeared to be a turning point in the participant's approach and point of view on bees. In general, several participants noticed a change of one's perception of bees through education. Other participants mentioned the use or consumption of bee products (honey and others) underlining their pleasant taste and health benefits. Participants shared stories about cohabiting with bees in their gardens, planting flowers to attract them and being amazed at their societal model, and the example they can be for a human community. Finally, a few participants, mostly bee keepers, shared their daily life and concerns about keeping bees, including bee survival during the winter, and legalities around the possession of bees in the city of Milwaukee.

During round two, a great number of participants reported wanting more community education and awareness regarding the benefits of hosting bees in Milwaukee, and the needs of bees in the city. Related to that last point, many participants called for less pollution (particularly when it comes to the use of pesticides), as well as a general change in city

landscape, favoring more green spaces, more flowers and less lawn. Several participants brought up the hopes that they had for the city of Milwaukee and its role in bringing bees into its parks and rooftops, and working towards their survival. Wanting more bees in the city, several participants focused on the steps that need to be taken to achieve this goal such as beehives in gardens, more flowers in the city, funding, and facilitating legislation. Other participants focused on individual responsibility to protect the environment, and thus to be a part of the change via responsible consumer practices, planting flowers in their gardens... A few participants wished for more collaboration between entities to achieve environmental resiliency, while a couple of other participants shared their general frustration at the current state of Milwaukee.

During the connected conversation, participants continued talking about topics touched during the questions rounds, as well as new topics. Besides more education, less pollution, and a greener approach to Milwaukee city planning, participants mentioned where and how to maintain bees in Milwaukee as well as what type of bees to have. In addition, participants talked about the Bee the Change program, and other programs in the city that were considered positive and useful. Questions of funding and collaboration between entities were touched as well. Other participants mentioned ways to shop responsibly, calling for a greater involvement of the community in bee keeping activities in Milwaukee.

The individual pledges of participants can all be found at the end of the report. Many focused on contributing to raising awareness around bees, supporting the attempts of individual or institution to have bees, and getting other people involved in bee keeping activities.

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## Participant Responses

**Question Round One:** *"Beyond Stories about stings, share a personal experience with bees (or bee products) that helps to explain how you feel about co-existing with bees?"*

### **Recognition of the importance of bees for the environment/humans and the need to have them around**

- I do not have a personal anecdote about bees, however; I currently work for an environmental not for profit organization.
- I worked with a farmer whose approach to the land was and is natural and holistic. The farmer kept hives of bees for pollination and honey.
- I currently have a direct relationship with the bees through my garden, which is quite extensive and eclectic [flowers-plants-veggies] I recognize the symbiotic relationship that the bees share with us.
- [...] I do have a healthy respect of how they contribute to our survival and abundance of food and other things to help sustain our existence.
- I had a garden when I was younger and I was lucky enough to have beehives around that assisted with harvesting and with my flowers.
- I love flowers, fruits and vegetables and I know without bees we wouldn't have them.
- I have respect for the role they play in the ecosystem. I sense the closeness of the ecosystem to me. It is a very immediate sense of connection to the ecosystem.
- I am a beekeeper now that I am retired these past two years. I am a longtime gardener. I have learned what bees do for the environment, for our food, and their society.
- I have been Vegan for most of my life. Certainly without bees and pollination my diet and options of what to eat will diminish and be limited.
- I enjoy bike rides through the orchards and am aware of the bee's role.
- As a person from an indigenous culture I have a belief in power animals. Although I am terrified of insects, bees kept always appearing in my life. It made me think more about the value of bees. Now I am a beekeeper.
- Sunday afternoon I was working in the yard with a friend. He is not into organics or agri-anything. There are lots of flowers in my yard. He stood there and looked and said, "I've never seen so many different kinds of bees in one place!!" So, I realized that bees have a way of reaching across barriers, connecting to people and people connecting to each other through them.
- Fast forward to 2010, when I first joined Facebook. That is when I began to see many messages regarding the loss of bees in many places in the world. Along with information about causes - pesticides and loss of pollinators. I began to study the issue, and began planting bee pollinators in our own gardens.
- I have always had an appreciation for bees; I grow vegetables on my property for my farmers market.

- Beyond the bees a beautiful backdrop surrounded us. It took me while to make the connection that the more bees we were surrounded by throughout the days the better our surroundings and everything else would felt.
- It's like a wonderland at Alice's garden when they're around. I know we'll be okay when they're present. I have a relationship with bees.
- Bees provide a valuable service to the environment. My exposure has been that if you don't bother them they won't bother you.

#### **Initial fear/uneasiness/disinterest regarding interactions with bees/losing fear**

- I am a 15 year old and have never really cared for or liked bees, even though I am not allergic to them, however [...]
- When I started making films with Charlie I was amazed that he opened a hive with no protection for himself, for me, nor for the children! When someone has this knowledge the fear goes away.
- I realized later in life that big bumblebees are gentle giants. I encountered all kinds of bees on the farm.
- I hated bees but ironically we had a beehive growing up. It was scary to hold the actual honeycomb but the need stayed on it. I learned so much about it and I loved all of it.
- That [working with a bee keeper] helped to make me change how I felt about bees too.
- I had a hive at my home I ran from my car to my home to get away from them. I want to learn about being safe around bees.
- I do my beekeeping barefoot and without protection. It is a different feeling and connection once you set fear aside. This has been an invitation for me to go deeper and learn from the bees. I bring my two year old with me and she has no fear and she teaches that to adults.
- It is telling that in my own life, I have very little awareness of bees, and listening to others stories, I realize how detached I am from bees.
- My story does begin with bee stings, because they relate to what I do now in regard to bees. A bee stung my sister, 12 in 1952, while we were in a car driving in a rural area at the beginning of a family vacation. She had a serious allergic reaction. My mom knew that she needed emergency medical help; we found a gas station and called for help. Decades later, while I was biking, a bee flew under my sunglasses and stung my eye. I, too, needed emergency help, but I did not have an allergic reaction, as my sister did. I feared bees.
- I know that I need to stay still when around bees; I am not found of honey.
- I don't understand the fascination with bees although there may be a problem with bees. What is the relevance of discussing bees if glucose is bad for the human body?
- I was able to model his behavior and address my fear of bee stings.
- I never did really understand the insects that stung. I thought they were all aggressive such as wasps, bumblebees, and any other insects that would sting. It wasn't until my daughter entered Marquette and she found out about the honeybees that I began to understand the nature of the honeybee.

## **Direct positive experiences working with/witnessing the skills of a bee keeper**

- I once resided on a farm in Colorado that had bees. [...] Once the Queen was trapped and encased in a very thick enclosed area and the drones /workers were unsuccessful in extricating her from the encasement. The farmer called a woman beekeeper that knew how to conduct the extraction. It was fascinating to watch the process, amazing, if you really want to know. The care and professional way she approached the challenge and the techniques that she demonstrated were indeed; uplifting and it was a wonder to view a person who embraced creatures with honor and respect.
- In High School I volunteered in the garden and the garden had bees. I didn't know about smoke being used to calm bees at first. When someone was smoking the bees would fly through the smoke and they were so calm. I felt courageous to be with the bees.
- Here at the church I play the cello and teach classes. I got to know Charlie and took the bee classes and now I love being up on the roof. There are so many organizations that are involved with the bees. They give us food too! I now know the work of the bees because of the classes. I can see many different results. It is like an explosion.
- I worked with bees for 40 years before I met Charlie. I am amazed at what I have learned. I have met the bees at a deeper level than I had known before. [...] Charlie changed my whole understanding of bees. I have reached a new level of understanding of the interactions people can have with nature.
- I was raised on the farm, too. Mostly, they were revered and swatted. There were some stings. Sometimes I'd pick up a board and find a bee's nest. Later in life pleasant memories are being really in harmony with bees. I have been taken out by a bee-keeping friend and seeing how peaceful and in harmony he is with bees.
- When I first moved to Milwaukee I volunteered at Walnut Way. I got very excited about bees. They also raise bees, and I got to work with them.
- Some years ago, I went to Europe and met this Belgium beekeeper. The method was so interesting. The beekeeper made a beehive out of a dead log and bees would come into the log and make honey in it, and when the bees filled it up he added more logs to the bottom of it. Not too long ago I started my own urban farm in Appleton me learned about growing wild plants and things.
- I met Charlie one time a while ago and learned so much about how to live with them. We should try to keep protecting them.
- When my children were small, a friend kept bees, and she invited our family to visit her and help with the extraction of honey from the honeycombs. Our children watched as the raw honey was turned into useable honey products. They also learned about the bee wax, and about wax candles. These have been life-long learning experiences for our children and me.
- I have no experience(s) good or bad with bees personally, but my brother works with Honeybees.
- Watching Charlie go into a facility that had multiple beehives in an undershirt and not get stung was impressive. I truly enjoy working with others in regard to bees and urban gardens.

- My neighbor first introduced me to a beehive. I'd go and be at the hive on occasion and he would bring me honey. I saw the positive when people sometimes speak only of bees as being bad.
- I am a Biology major at Marquette University, and I had the pleasure of working here at the Bee the Change location with Charlie. He has taught me so much about the nature of the honeybee. I enjoyed being a beekeeper with Charlie in the City of Milwaukee. I am looking forward to spending more time and learning more about the honeybee.

### **Changing perception through Education about bees**

- Part of what I think about regarding co-existing with bees is if I can teach children about bees, they'll respect and care about bees. [I want to do this to help preserve the bee ecosystem.] Bees excite me!
- I make educational films. I have now made 30 or 40 films without a sting!
- I heard about Bee the Change to learn about bee keeping, but I didn't get involved. Then I had a student who was one of the original beekeepers and so I got introduced to the bee keeping. I became so interested that my wife bought me books and materials about bee keeping.
- I went to a bee workshop. It is one part of nature that is interesting. I have an interest in all sorts of living things.
- In 2009 I really looked at honeybees for the first time. I opened the top of a hive and realized that it was vibrating with life. Before that I just thought of them as boxes. Now they were full of vibrating life.
- I wish that I could quit my job so that I'd be able learn more about bees, and maybe start my own hive.
- Besides my roommate having bees in our backyard, my father would take me to an apple orchard when I was younger. It was usually in the fall and the busy would be slower than because it was colder out. My dad would put the honeybees on his hand and have me pet them. He told me they were gentle and ever since it's shaped my view of insects.
- I took an Urban Ecology class at UWM and I learned about bees and their usefulness in urban areas.
- My daughter has educated my husband and I about the honeybee -- how harmless, yet aggressive they can be if the queen is threatened.

### **Working with/consumption of bee products**

- My family and I have a MEAD BREWERY and I often assist with the production. I see one end use product of the natural work of these fascinating creatures.
- I like going to the farmers market for honey straws.
- When I was in Mexico I became ill I have trouble with my digestive system. When I went to the doctor the doctor gave me a new diet and I was told to substitute honey for sugar and ever since then I have been using honey for everything.
- The many different products that come from bees have always fascinated me.
- If not for bees making honey drinks wouldn't taste good.



- [...] I do however eat honey that may not be a vegan food. I found it interesting that you can taste real honey from anywhere and it all tastes different in different locations. Like in India, all the honey had a strong mint undertone, or here in Glendale it was sweeter. Some were bitter elsewhere.
- I love Burt's Bees lip balm.
- I am a pastry chef and enjoy using the flavor of honey and its products.
- I was weaned on sugar and comic strips. As a child honey was too sweet for me, but I was hooked on sugar. I went to Scotland (Findhorn) and we had tea there with honey in it and I learned that honey was the perfect sweetener for tea.
- I've always appreciated bees, I use honey in my tea every day.
- I've used bee products for years and I am amazed how much the cost is for beauty products these days.
- My daughter was really into natural products for a while. After she came to visit from an herbal conference she wanted bees wax. My friend ended up giving her wax and she loved it. My daughter ended up making her own by melting honey in our crockpot and it smelt great!

### **Benefits of bee products**

- Honey has also saved my life. I am a diabetic and when in shock, a spoonful of honey is the perfect antidote because it slides easily down the throat. Honey has antibacterial properties- I believe there is a potential for more uses.
- I have seen how honey has saved the life of my friend in the middle of the night (diabetic).
- I honestly believe honey saved my life.
- In addition to finding that honey was healing for my abdominal problems I also found that honey, or more accurately, propolis balm helped to cure my baby's bad case of eczema.
- She [my daughter] says honey can be used to treat certain allergies.
- Yellow and Black = sting ....I was stung a lot growing up on 15.2 acres of land in Wisconsin. I think it was a wasp. My wife and I are very conscious we choose organic. It was great hearing what all can be done with honey. My wife and I also use lip balm. Our nicknames for each other are Big Bees and Baby Bees. For our wedding everything was bees.

### **Cohabiting with bees**

- I was a student at Marquette University. We went to a farm in Virginia to learn how to make it sustainable. I was expected to stay in a house [overrun] with mice. Instead, deciding that I'd not stay in the house I went out and slept in the barn on the hay. When I woke up the next morning there was something that kept dripping down on my face. I looked up into the rafters, and saw that above my head there was a beehive! I slept with that beehive above my head all week. We co-existed.
- I lived on a farm until my mid-20s. We always had bees. No hives. We had a lot of blossoms. There was clover growing in the field, and bees were always over there. That is why clover honey is probably my favorite type of honey still today.

- I love being out in nature and hearing the humming. I recently went out to visit my mother's grave. Bees were buzzing around, and I found that I was at peace with them. The sound of them is so beautiful at the cemetery. It's good to have them back.
- I had a rusted birdhouse in the back yard. The bees made a hive in the birdhouse, and I didn't want to kill them so I relocated the hive off of my property. I wanted to support and attract the bees so I planted cup flowers to help them. I love bees.
- I have always loved nature. Both of my parents loved nature and passed this love of nature on to me. At our home, I created rain gardens and planted native plants as part of the landscaping at our home, in order to help with bee population.
- I have woods around my house, when I built my house, I only used enough trees to complete the job, and I used what was needed. After that we planted flowers all around the house.
- I was at a conference in California and the entire outside was full of bees. People complained but it was nice to experience it because I'd never had anything like that happen. It made me think about how it was important to learn to live with them.
- Well I'm a gardener. A part of my work is done surrounded by bees. It's good to know when they're around because they're the pollinators.
- My sister has a bee farm and she gave out honey at our wedding. We have a garden and we live to attract pollination and attract bees. The flowers attract more bees.
- My mom is a biotech major. She has the background, and has taught us from little children how to make a better environment by keeping things the way God made them. I am also fascinated by the fact that I can be in the same space with honeybees and not ever being attacked, and that's the way I believe God made it to be.

### **Impressed by bees, bee lifestyle and community – their effect on humans**

- I admire how well they work together as one. They all have a job in their short life span.
- They take care of each other. I've learned this in my life also. The work is for self & society.
- Bees are a spirit animal for me. I love the sense of community that bees have and want my life to have that same sense of community. All the work they do, all their movements, they do for each other. I say Be a bee!
- I work with an arts group that uses images and life experiences as part of a healing process for youth who have been in the prison system. In retreats, youth are asked to reflect on nature, and to reflect upon the natural dance of the bees.
- A lot of my experience is from my early childhood. I've never been afraid of bees. They give me a sense of serenity. I naturally sense gentleness from then. Also my father loved honey.
- I had a seminary partner in the Lutheran Church that started bee keeping. She shared with me that she feels more connected with God. I have experienced seeing her whole demeanor change as the results of bee keeping. It's been a great experience.
- Impressed with my daughters knowledge and the life changing experience for her. It's cool to see her involved. When spending time together she talks about bees.
- I am amazed at how they flew around the world to create honeycombs, and to taste the natural honey that they produce.

### **Wanting to have bees around – learning about useful flowers to attract bees**

- I don't have any stories to tell, but for the future I'm considering a garden to attract bees.
- I have flowers in my yard that attract bees.
- I don't have any stories, but I'd like to learn about which flowers attract bees.
- I have picked grapes and gotten stung. My husband and I have been planting intentionally to attract pollination and bees, slowly getting rid of the grass.
- I have 22 acres of wetlands, although there are a few buildings. It's a beautiful place with green grass and my sisters and I want to restore the property. It has an urban forest in it that produces a lot of food. I noticed that the bees come for pollination and I'd like to start my own beehive storage. With the help of Charlie there's no way that it can't be done.

### **The work and concerns of beekeepers**

- I share bee keeping tasks with my boyfriend and we lost some bees in the past, however; this past bee season into the winter we were able to feed them [sugar water] and did not harvest all the honey stores that were available for them to survive the winter. It was a relief the following spring to learn that we did not lose but about 2 to 3 percent of the hive.
- I've been a beekeeper for the past 5 years. The first year the greater percentage of bees survived the winter and I was so pleased. But during the past 4 years the entire hive was lost. I consulted with Charlie and we attempted to triage what occurred, however; we never were able to rule out one specific reason for the loss of an entire hive. This has me crestfallen and now I don't know if, next year I'll return to bee keeping.
- I lived in China while in school and was struck by all the different kinds of bugs. Once back here, I looked up videos of what China does to pollinate. Chinese human bee-workers on a truck planting seeds on industrial farms. What can we do to avoid that?
- I'm a bee keeper, and usually when I approach my bees I have on protection, about two months ago, I was tending to my hive and I wasn't wearing any protection. I done this without protection before so I felt comfortable moving the cones. But I must have excited them some kind of way, I not sure how and I got stung twice. I always use protection now.
- I worked as a beekeeper in Anchorage Alaska. I'd like to initiate a co-op of beehives in and around the Milwaukee area. I enjoy working with bees.
- As an intern working with beekeepers I have found the work to be useful and productive.

### **Legalities around bee keeping**

- The mission and vision of the organization is in harmony with changing the municipal laws and statues to change the barriers of the law so that an increased amount of people can keep bees on their property.
- To compound the problem it's ILLEGAL in the municipality that I reside to even keep bees. That's why I have to remain under the radar. I trust that the city alter their decision to be open to reinstituting my joy in [providing stewardship] to these fascinating creatures.
- Unfortunately, at that time, you could not be a beekeeper at your home in Wauwatosa. Now that you can have bees, I may revisit having bees at my home.
- The city of Milwaukee has now passed beehive legislation allowing for the maintenance of beehives.

**Question Round 2:** *“What would you like to see happen in Milwaukee, regarding pollinators and environmental resilience?”*

*“I want to see local officials promote natural gardens; encourage people to use less chemicals; encourage school programs that include information on bees, on native plants, and on rain gardens; talk to friends; invite speakers to religious gatherings and community events; promote the BEE movie.”*

**More community education/awareness regarding the benefits that come from having bees in the city, and the needs of bees**

- I'd like to see increased amounts of discussions, such as this one, where the community is educated about, well even the usefulness of what we call or refer to as WEEDS. In particular dandelions which are crucial to bee health and well being.
- Also spreading the word in other Lutheran Church's and then to other groups and schools, places with flat rooftops with room for gardens. Expand what the Zeidler Center is doing here and do it everywhere.
- They [companies with bee hives on the roof] would then educate their people how to care for the bees. And why.
- Charlie does such a good job of explaining how the farms in the countryside are bad for bees and here in the city we have the diversity that the bees need. We have a pot of gold here in the city. The upstream effort is to convince more people of the diversity of the city as a good place for bees.
- We need education on environmental resilience. We have food deserts. It's important that we allow people to taste and experience different natural food and learn about them. People don't have access to pollination and education is crucial.
- It's all about what goes on in the region. Some areas don't allow you to have a garden to pollinate for bees, like Whitefish Bay. Education is definitely important. We need to learn about the importance of habitat. People would be more prone to do natural things.
- It would be interesting to market or have awareness campaign to get more people involved.
- Bees are great example to teach people about being a community, because the bees all rely on each other.
- Betty Brinn and other frequented places should have a learning garden to house and teach people about bees.
- Expand Bee the Change, specifically speaking about how to attract bees to your garden.
- I don't think it is safe for kids to be around bee, but realistically it's good to have flower gardens for food for the bees. Teach people how to overcome the fear of bees and the culture of bees. Add these teachings to the school curriculum. Have the TV stations tell the stories of bees.
- Continue education like these events. Blighted urban areas and schools could have gardens that are used for food and education.

- I'd love for people to understand that bees won't hurt you. We need more information on bees, more Bee Awareness. More introduction at an early age about safety around bees as well as the opportunity to see hives.
- I have 2 kids; Kids don't learn anything about bees at schools, far as I know there is no bee curriculum being taught at any level at any school public or private. Our kids need to learn how to co-exist with bees and understand how important bees are to our eco-system.
- I'm a former teacher and I believe education would be the first step. I'm shocked at the things students don't learn these days.
- Education is my answer. We need to show kids how to make things and be lively. We need to show people this type of work can be fun and exciting! Classes should be diverted to environmental resilience and herbalism. Healing can come from bees and I don't know if many people know that!
- In k-12 it should be mandatory to know how to eat healthy. This needs to be in the education system and should be as mandatory as math. Campaign consciousness is raising about bees. There needs to be more community awareness and should become a city project.
- I'd also say education and exposure! We should be handing out information along with products that help sustain bees and hurt. This may stimulate someone to act.
- Just moved from Chicago area and based on my experiences from Chicago I am very curious and dreamy about awareness where food is present and where food is accessible. I surmise that city people think differently about access and accessibility, community awareness of bees and thinking what would this look like.
- I am not from Milwaukee. I have no particular interest in Milwaukee, I am from Dubuque and I want to get as much information take with me and do with my home city project. Whatever Milwaukee does I'm going to try and be a part.
- I'd like to see more environmental awareness and education in Milwaukee. More education as to why cause is important and a sense of community involvement.
- I'd like to see more people who are not afraid of bees, and I believe the reason that they are afraid is that they just don't know about bees. In reality, I wish I had room to keep and store bees for myself.
- How safe are bees? I feel people should be more aware that it's pretty safe to keep bees anywhere because bees really rely on each other. I feel that more education is needed to understand the nature of bees. I didn't have this teaching until my later years in life. I find it to be fascinating, even to just hear some days, the bees buzzing. They are really good and safe for our environment.
- I'd really like to see much more possibility of relating with the youngsters. I'd like to teach others to pass it on, especially in the inner city.
- My task is to create the film that will tell the story so well the funding will come to promote bees in the city.

### **Less pollution around - Change city landscape**

- I like to not have as many pesticides and bee hives so the bees can live.

- Continued dialogue with politicians to discuss pesticides that are harming bees and other flying species.
- When dealing with a huge problem I like to consider what we should not do. For one we have too much mowing that if stopped would encourage more diverse landscapes. We need to manage our land spaces differently. Conservation needs to shift from natives to edibles that can sustain people. Also we need to have fewer cars burning fossil fuels on the roadsides in the country where bees are trying to sense the presence of food. Then too the industrial model of agriculture needs to shift to more open pastures will forage crops for animals such as clover and alfalfa. We should not give up on our rural areas but seek the changes that will make them sustainable. Eventually we will have to recognize that the countryside is where there is the most habitat possibility for bees to find diversity. We must raise bees everywhere and change the industrial food system.
- We have to stop using pesticides.
- The Urban Ecology Center is restoring the habitat and diversity in the parks.
- Less grass and more flowers.
- The expansion of community gardens increases the need for pollinators.
- There is an issue with water. We need healthy water. There is too much pollution in the rivers from corporations. We can never be truly healthy with dirty water.
- We need to repair damaged waterways and areas. We need to look at what we need. We are only looking at the needs of businesses and not considering the environmental impact. We need objective information not a sales pitch. I grew up on the Great Lakes and the water was clear enough to see the fish swimming. Now the water is only clean way up north.
- We need better management of resources. Restructuring, Reduction, Composting.
- We need to create green spaces for bees to inhabit
- At the present I am happy with the new planters that have been installed all over the city. I've watched what has happened with new North Western Insurance building down town. There is a large green area in front of the building. I have a friend who is building a new house and he had to cut down 50 trees to build it, he is responsible to replant 50 trees one for each tree that he cut down. It is a shame, when I was young we would see butterflies everywhere, especially the Monarchs butterflies, this year I have only seen two. It's a shame.
- I'd like to see more planters around buildings where concrete structures have replaced rural areas.
- The chemicals and pesticides used in the area are hurting and effecting our bee population.
- I have fond memories of bees and my grandchildren coexisting. I want to see the development of bee coops in order to address the problems with pesticides.
- I suggest that we should put bee coops in county parks. The question is how populated do we want our bee gardens and coops.
- How do we sustain bee-coops?
- I respect Charlie's work. He has educated so many in the Milwaukee area about bees.
- Beekeeping is not for everyone.
- I have a rental property that has an urban garden and multiple beehives on it.

- I live in the Riverwest area and I am amazed as to how popular urban gardens and environmental concerns are pronounced.
- I'd like to see more gardens in Milwaukee. I am creating a Bee interest group with the Urban Ecology Center.
- I want to know about the strain of South American killer bees that were supposedly a problem in the country.
- As a Vietnam veteran I find the use of Agent Orange and pesticides problematic for insects and people.

### **Roles of the city of Milwaukee in the survival and increase of bees**

- Also; reeducation of the cities and municipalities around the environment and the city's responsibilities to contribute to the effort by producing copious amounts of literature to increase awareness and actions which directly would assist in a myriad of levels from WINDMILLS/RECYCLING etc.
- I'd love to see city and county ordinances to protect the environment, specifically, bees. Also, to increase the amounts of GREEN SPACE within urban areas.
- City Leaders that sponsored solar energy should take interest in bees and sponsor programs that are helping bees. Also having bee hives on the rooftops of flat buildings. Figuring out how to get extra bees.
- I lived in Bay view, and there was a wind turbine there. It made me proud of Bay View, but I wondered why there aren't more there. Our parks don't have lots of flowerbeds. I'd like to see more of a commitment from our parks to grow perennials, etc. I'd love to see the City of Milwaukee give an incentive to residents to grow bee-friendly flowers, and give awards to those who go above and beyond.
- On the same vein, I think we have a lot of space in Milwaukee County that's not being utilized. We have recreation buildings that are not being used. If people in the area are open to bees or ecology, open it up to community groups from the neighborhood to use the buildings. They could store their hardware for bee keeping and put hives on top. We could create bee-cology.
- Milwaukee has been a pioneer of urban gardening and I believe that it can be a pioneer for bee keeping. I believe Milwaukee has what it takes to create a bee movement, not only locally, but nationally as well.
- I'd like to see Milwaukee become a bee friendly community, encouraging people and organization to become beekeepers. The city officials should take the lead to discourage harmful chemicals so bees can thrive. Parks, gardens and county grounds should have bee homes.
- I'd like to see more natural areas in the parks rather than planned areas. Regarding resilience, Houston now has a new normal and this could be an opportunity to make changes that will resist another disaster.
- I'd really like Milwaukee to get more creative in using what creatures are made for.... including grass-eating goats and sheep instead of lawn mowers. Milwaukee could be a creative leader in this area.

- I'd like to see a shift in practices and in local government ordinances. Simple things like planting native plants in our own gardens.
- Enjoy Milwaukee's green spaces and river trails; work to protect our green spaces, public parks and parkways, and our river trails; support urban planners.
- I'd like to issue a challenge to Milwaukee and surrounding areas when building houses to put sanctuaries for bees and other insects so that the environment is always in balance and bees can make a comeback.
- Also the Office of Sustainability can be doing things to solve these problems on a citywide basis. They could decide what the focus could be.
- It would be nice if Milwaukee could be the champion to start the movement but first look up best practices from other cities.
- The city should provide more public spaces for bees and their maintenance.
- My daughter has become a beekeeper here in Milwaukee but I want her to come back home. I want Milwaukee to do whatever it can do with quality of pollinators and the way we use the bees.
- I'd like to see tax dollars used to educate and bring community together and I'd like to see individuals donate to the cause of pollinators. I'd like to see what it looks like if we had no bees, how it would affect us financially. We need more gardens in our parks and neighborhoods. I love Milwaukee because it's so green and I have more choices in education and every cause.

### **More bees in the city!**

- More people should have beehives in their gardens, so their gardens can grow and people can get honey.
- I'd like to see more companies step forward – especially downtown and have bees on their roofs. People in houses may have more reluctance. It would be like what this church has done.
- I like what Walnut Way Is doing with the urban gardens and changing open lots into gardens for pollination. More is better, not just on walnut but all throughout the city.
- Hives on rooftops, more and more of those!
- I'm hooked on Zeidler. The word "zeidler" mean beekeeper in German. Let us foster zeidlers. Let's make a push for beekeepers in this area.
- More bees. More beekeeping. More rooftop bees. Definitely need more bees. My plum tree was covered in blossoms in April but I got few plums. We need some hardier bees.
- Bees are so vital in assisting with diversity in our urban environment. There are approximately seven strands of bees. I am glad that Milwaukee is allowing bees to be raised in the area.
- I am not from Milwaukee, but I am from Michigan. The reason that I am here is that my daughter is a student at Marquette, and I don't understand why wouldn't every building have some form of beekeeping system. I'd like to see bees and other insects go back to their natural way of life so things can grow and feed the population.



## **Steps to be taken**

- With more investment in the city we can even create jobs for people. Also it may be we in the city will raise the bee that will be able to survive in the changes already here and those coming. There are unknowns that such diversity may help us keep bees alive. This can happen in our city. The model here at this church is powerful. Funding is a challenge.
- I don't know that something can exist if we allow the environment to be the motivator for what it becomes. I see value in The City for the people who live here. I don't know. I have a bunch of questions. It depends on what are the assets for the community, and the resources they have to shape what they want. How local does that decision-making become? I don't know.
- There are too many rules and regulations such as needing a neighbor's permission to keep bees.
- I'd also like to see ordinances that allow homeowners to move from green lawns to more natural gardens with native plants.
- Create some laws and codes to achieve protection for bees especially in urban areas.
- I want to support ordinances that promote sustainable living in both urban areas and suburban areas.
- I have been connected to nature all of my life, thanks to my parents. Now, I work with an agency where I can stay connected to nature and to help others do so, too. We build rain gardens, encourage the planting of native plants and natural grasses; encourage a change in ordinances, as well as community and corporate policies and practices; encourage the establishment of bee hives, too.
- I think there are too many apartment complexes without refuge areas on site for animals to live and prosper.
- I think we could have more gardens around Milwaukee. Is there any ordinance to have beehives in Milwaukee? I think it would be nice if some of these organizations had hives. We have structure in the city. It could be taken up as a project.

## **Individual responsibility as responsible consumers**

- Thinking more about buying local so we don't have so diesel fuel in the air killing bees. Instead of buying blueberries in the winter I'm going to think about what I can buy to prevent diesel fuel maybe frozen fruit instead fresh.
- Right now I go to farmers market and by double everything and freeze them so they last longer.
- I want to talk about the role of the individual as shown by this church. My experience here has shaped my thinking. I am skeptical about big solutions for problems such as new legislation. Here we have a small community effort. Tonight we have a hundred people here after two years of work. I believe in this type of grassroots work. This is the way to organize a powerful agency of change.
- If we taught people and they see what they can do [as individuals] to help fix the problem. [Individually people can] grow flowers, have a hive, help keep bees, etc., not mulching, leaving open dirt for the bees, buy and plant organic, garden, [provide] plants are good for

bees, support products that come from what bees make, put holes in a stick in your garden, the education component, and there's the growth component.

- I drive through the city and happy to see little small gardens through the streets and that can bring more pollination. I believe that if one person starts to make a garden then other people will follow especially once they know how important it is. I was at the botanical gardens and witnessed how the bees pollinated off of the rocks in the water. That was so interesting and make you see how even more important natural habitat is.
- We can also be aware of letting people know which products they're buying that can kill the bees.

### **Need Increase collaboration towards achieving environmental resiliency**

- What I'd like to see is increased amount of true collaboration within agencies – community based organizations around the issues of environmental resiliency.
- Bee the change points out the cross pollination of groups: Zeidler, Church, Marquette, others. This is collective impact that is uplifting. This is a tide that lifts all boats.
- Work with others to bring about change in both personal behaviors and community ordinances.

### **Frustration**

- I'd love to see my personal level of FRUSTRATION diminish, due to the lack of awareness of environmental issues being discussed in the local media and addressed by the cities.
- I live in the inner city. Most yards don't have grass. Dogs in the neighborhoods create dirt spaces. I'd like to see a way to connect with nature.

### **Other**

- I am not clear about the problem with the pollinators and environmental resilience.

**Connected Conversation** – *“What have you heard from your partners in this conversation that you want to talk about further?”, “In Milwaukee, where do we need more bees?”*

### **Where and how to have bees in Milwaukee/what bees?**

- It depends on what kind.
- Mitchell Park could use a bee hive.
- Throughout the whole city. I started thinking about all of the rooftops. That’s untapped territory.
- Our schools. We need to provide education on bees. That’s carrying it forward.
- There’s been an effort all over the city to plant more fruit trees.
- At elderly care centers. Many feel that they have no purpose, and for them to become beekeepers would restore that.
- Honey bees are not native. Bumble bees are. Are honey bees the answer? Are there the same stresses (with bumble bees)?
- Most native bees have already gone extinct.
- Vanilla has to now be hand pollinated due to lack of bees. Price increased 500%.
- Bees live approximately 30 days, so how long will Queens live? About 2 years.
- Last year all my bees froze.
- I’m in the bee club, and members do spend a lot of money to house bees for the winter months.
- Typically; bee keepers will purchase two inches of rugged insulation to keep bees warm in the winter, but far as I know, the bees still freeze in the winter in Wisconsin. The winter weather will kill bees for sure.
- I think we need more bees in the inner city. The homes are more condensed and there’s not enough open land. Suburbs have more opportunity for nature because of the open land.
- On rooftops of buildings. If we could get some of the business owners of buildings to allow use of the space on top of their buildings, and get people involved in taking care of the bees, that would be a start.
- Getting more college students, Biology majors and anyone else in the medical field to experience the nature of honeybees and why that is important that we should make more space for them.

### **Less pollution/greener approach to life and Milwaukee**

- There are so many signs to keep pets off the grass because of heavy pesticide spray. If it's not safe for pets then it's not safe for humans.
- People need rain water.
- Rainwater is not much of a hazard as it was in the past, people were concerned of acid and mercury and gas from high levels of CO2 and nitrous oxide.
- Pesticides are always sprayed where bees drink from and there the nest.

- I have Ashe trees on my street and in my yard. Every year they inject and pump each of those trees with pesticides to keep the trees from rotting. This affects how plants grow in my yard. I don't have many pollinators in my yard.
- It's cheaper to pollinate-if more communities did it we would save so much more money.
- My grandfather lived north of green bay and was working in the woods and out of nowhere a plane flew overhead and dumped a ton of pesticides all over the area my granddad was. Eventually he had to go to the hospital because he couldn't retain water being affected by that spray. Hopefully some government plane won't fly over our neighborhoods and spray us.
- I want to start a campaign to decrease pesticide use in my neighborhood.
- While a machinist at Harley Davidson a company rep told me it's cheaper to drop waste and pay the fine than to make changes. We need to hold corporations accountable. No lip service.
- It is difficult to undo the damage.
- It can be done, Germany did it. Prevention would be more effective.
- We are losing the natural filters of the plants.
- I love the idea of using goats, livestock for control of invasive species like garlic mustard and buckthorn.
- Return to a natural economy. In a natural economy bees are a natural part.
- The idea of a terrarium, a complete system. In a city we can still have those related systems.
- Permaculture versus monoculture.
- Once upon a time there was grazing allowed in Madison.
- People that seem to have an interest in the honeybee are very helpful to the environment.

### **Ways of hosting bees in the city**

- Doesn't seem too hard to add a bee hive or 5 to a garden, maybe a couple hundred dollars per hive.
- We need more bees all over Milwaukee especially on top of buildings with flat rooftops.
- Museums and public buildings should consider hosting bees.
- Changes in the laws.
- Resiliency.
- With an overall goal of helping bees the plan needs to be to reclaim habitat, to rehabilitate habitat. That is the need in the country. In the city it is a little different in that we have backyards and neighbors who need to be cooperative of the beekeeper. Bees do not stay put on one property. So overall we need to emphasize land use. We need a consistent ethic for land use. Bees connect us all. Many elected in municipalities need to be educated about the benefits of bees to the whole.
- There need to be policy changes. Instead of limiting legislation we need to subsidize those who have bees. They are providing a public service.
- I think there is a curative effect for beekeepers.
- We need green infrastructure like water and rocks.
- Know what bees are attracted too.
- What kind of flowers do I need to plant to attract bees?

- What does it take to start a bee hive?
- We need more bees in urban areas in Milwaukee. Golf courses are a great idea-an untapped resource. Having bees there raised awareness.

### **Collaboration between different entities – Bee the change program - Funding**

- The program here is amazing. There is outreach to the community, education, social opportunities. There is the hands-on work of maintaining the bees and the harvest. There is the spinning and the making of products. There is the media story. There is the removal of bees from house and the capturing of swarms.
- There is lots of intermingling of groups: Zeidler, Marquette, The Choir, there are hives at Concordia for VGI. There is the education of children who learn not to be afraid even when someone is stung the remedy is to chew some plantain and the hurt goes away.
- There is much to learn in these projects. Can we tap into the colleges to do research on the lessons learned? These are non-profits. They can use the help of those who can access funding. These are self-motivated people. These groups can use the assistance of helpers who can organize to seek funding for this kind of citizen science. There is a connection to research institutions in science and social policy.
- The organizations are volunteer based. There needs to be consideration of compensation for those who are working 20 hours or more a week. Some projects may be short term but for longer projects compensation needs to be developed.
- The use of student volunteers has problems in that the work force shifts away every few years. How can we create stability? The community idea is very strong in the business plan. It just needs to find a way to be profitable.
- The trained people here at this church are ambassadors for bees.
- I think we can have bees anywhere such as on a flat roof at a church and on window shelves and patios. I think it's cool for the church. I look at how it has brought so many people together for conversation and learning.
- Considering parks are controlled by the county and it would affect the budget, I think it could be run by volunteers. It's a matter of finding out how do you begin such as money and people have to have a way to donate. Church's would be a great place also.

### **More education on bees**

- Marquette curriculum in the science department can include more about the bees. Also, I encourage the help of those who can organize the details of the organization in a financially soluble way.
- For 40 years the bees I worked with were a pain to work with. Now I am enjoying every moment.
- When you think of a baby calf or a rabbit the comfort level is almost automatic. But with bees we have to educate to get to that level. They have a wildness that is not tamed. When we have wildness in coyotes, foxes, wolves, bears we tend to suppress their populations. There is a cultural bias to overcome. Bees still will hold their wildness as they come to us and in doing so they may tame us.
- Not afraid of bees, but I am not sure what to do around bees. Children are afraid of bees.

- I have not seen any honey bees in a long time. They get a bad rap, but they are very gentle.
- I think we need bees in the county parks and they should be visited often giving people an opportunity to educate themselves.
- Having a generation of people – adults and children – getting more experience with the organic part of nature.
- Keep educating people about bees. Getting children involved in planting flowers and teaching them about how bees get pollination.

### **How to shop responsibly**

- I'm going to consider winter foods from greenhouses and farmers markets that harvest things in the winter.
- Winter Farmers Markets begin in March with 20-30 vendors and they are in Jamesville with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).
- Try to buy local because of the pollution.
- Cantaloupes from Wisconsin taste just as good as the imported ones.
- Responsibility.
- Awareness.
- My wife and I shop at whole foods and outpost for organic food and we came here to check this event out. We bought some honey tonight.

### **More involvement from the community in bee keeping activities**

- Increasing participation from children and youth regarding the environment.
- I belong to three bee clubs. The community can be encouraged to get out of their backyards and work to create a funding stream.
- I think we need bees in all kinds of places such as church, community and the community centers. I think we could build a community around bees to raise awareness.
- I believe we need bees wherever you can bring community together.
- It would be nice to see more and more people getting involved and having the first-hand experience with honeybees.
- Frustration

## Pledges

- If my friend buys bees I'll help her take good care of them.
- I'll encourage people who are interested in bees to check out how much it would cost to host bees in their gardens
- I'll promote to others I know a lot of people and can bring it up in conversation
- I'll tell my friends in school to stop trying to catch and kill the bees
- I'll let my friends know that if they move around and start running away from the bees that's when they sting you but if you stay still don't won't touch you.
- I'll educate myself more about bees and the habitats how they function and operate so that I can educate others about them.
- I'll work to get the County to stop spraying round up on baseball fields.
- I'll make pollination a larger part of the youth education that I do using Charlie's model.
- I'll invite more people to my house to see the bees. I'll work on club members to expand their vision of their role with bees.
- I'll continue to hone my film skills to make that convincing film about bees.
- I'll promote the community approach to bee culture.
- I'll Google what kind of flowers honey bees like and plant them in my yard.
- I'll help start the new group at the Urban Ecology Center.
- I try to keep flowers in my yard. I have a vegetable garden in my yard. [I'll keep that up moving forward.]
- When I have a back yard I think I'll get a beehive.
- I'd love to get a beehive. I have a roof.
- You have to have a city permit to have a beehive.
- Gardening. I'd love to get a beehive in the future. Also, educating. I love educating children. I can educate myself, and them about bees.
- Support pollination in different areas and get beekeeping in whitefish bay.
- Education and finding ways to educate about the bees
- Grateful that my career helps me to fix the real issues
- Testify my experience in new areas and Make people aware.
- I'll plant more flowers to attract more bees in my yard.
- I'll plant more flowers.
- I'll petition the county board to add flowers and gardens to city properties to attract bees, and decrease pesticide usage in parks and boulevards.
- I'll plant more flowers and petition my neighbors to use no chemicals to spray their yards, only natural things.
- I'll advocate for Marquette to have more beehives and add additional flowers to my yard to attract bees.
- I'll raise my awareness of how my actions affect the environment
- I'll continue to volunteer here each week.
- I want to learn more about bee products and share that knowledge with others. It's not just about the honey.

- I'll continue to educate and encourage people with gardens and beekeeping and will specifically include information about bees.
- Planting more flowers.
- Will tell 5 people about bees.
- Do my utmost to raise consciousness about bees and what they do.
- Speak (again) with UWM about bringing hives to their rooftop gardens.
- I'll explore doing some volunteer work with either or both Victory Garden Initiative and Charlie's Bee Colonies.
- I'll continue to support the work of a youth organization, "We Got This", which both teaches and pays young people in arts programs. I'll also see how we can more directly integrate bee care in our work.
- I'll contact administrators for our 200-unit apartment complex about exploring the possibility of rain gardens near the rain drains of our complex. I'll also contact the forestry department in our village to see if rain gardens could be planted on the boulevards and on the green spaces along frontage roads.
- I'll expand use of rain gardens in our home area; I'll explore the possibility of adding bee colonies on the rooftop at the company where I work.
- I'll ask my father about the possibility of planting a rain garden at our home.
- I've been inspired to do more by these conversations! I'm going to try and encourage people to do more planning.
- We can do more as a city for food waste recycling. We should buy beehives and put them around the city.
- I'll substantially explore what I can do to positively affect pollinators.
- Expand community gardens in my town.
- My husband and I are planting our yard to get rid of grass as we are trying to attract pollinators though my husband is afraid of bees.
- I live in an apartment building with a balcony so we will intentionally put flowers on the balcony. I plan on bringing my confirmation students here (REDEEMER) to learn and raise awareness with the students.
- I plan to educate the community in my interest group that I am creating at the Urban Ecology Center.
- Education.
- Yeah, education. I'd think education. Education gives hope. I need to learn more.