



2024 Garden Handbook

Riverbend Community Garden

Our 21st Year!

At



**A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT
Garden At Your Own Risk**

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SECTION I — RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GARDEN MEMBERS

Riverbend Community Garden (RCG) limits Medford residents to one plot as defined by the attached map. The Medford Garden Commission limits Medford residents to one community garden plot citywide. Any Medford resident who maintains more than one plot within the City of Medford's community gardens shall forfeit their membership and garden fee.

Maintaining a plot does not connote ownership. From one year to the next, a garden member in good standing will be given the option of maintaining the same plot before it is offered to someone else. Plots cannot be subdivided or reassigned by individual gardeners. The sharing of plots is no longer authorized unless you justify your need to share and have explicated authorization from the Steering Committee to do so.

As a garden member, each person will:

1. be a resident of Medford and provide proof of residency; recent tax or utility bill preferred, or a copy of a current MA license will suffice
2. be eligible to serve on the Steering Committee of Riverbend Community Garden
3. be eligible to run for the position of Garden Coordinator, Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer and Steering Committee member at the annual garden meeting
4. be eligible to vote for candidates for the positions of Garden Coordinator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Steering Committee members at the annual garden meeting
5. approve by majority vote and only at the annual garden meeting, amendments to the garden rules which are proposed by the Garden Coordinator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Steering Committee
6. pay an annual fee of \$25.00 for a single plot or \$15.00 for a half plot prior to or during the annual meeting; all fees **must** be paid no later than two (2) weeks after the annual meeting
7. keep his/her children under control and pets either on a leash or at heel, and take full responsibility for any damage they may inflict on Riverbend Community Garden¹
8. except for egregious, flagrant or malicious violations (see 8a.), have the right to receive from the Steering Committee **one written warning for violating garden rules** before facing disciplinary action, which may include terminating your membership from Riverbend Community Garden²
 - 8a. The Steering Committee will automatically terminate a gardener's membership for any violation that the Steering Committee finds to be egregious, flagrant or malicious in nature.
9. cultivate his/her own garden plot by the third Sunday in May, maintain the garden consistently and arrange for its upkeep during any extended absence
10. maintain a neat garden and **remove weeds, rocks and wandering plants** from adjacent paths; exclusive of the perimeter paths which will be maintained on scheduled workdays
11. since this is an organic garden, will not use toxic chemicals, pressure treated wood and will avoid the use of non-organic pesticides and fungicides³
12. promptly remove diseased, infested or otherwise unhealthy plants from his/her garden plot and place them in the garbage, **not in the compost bin**
13. remove from his/her garden plot all plants that have ceased to bear fruits or vegetables
14. abide by composting rules and place rocks and all refuse in the proper disposal areas, **not in the compost bin**
15. conserve water by turning off faucets after using them, heeding water restrictions, utilizing mulch and minimizing midday watering
16. **will not harvest from another member's plot** unless you have written permission to do so, and said permission is registered with the Steering Committee
17. report immediately to the Garden Coordinator(s) any damage or vandalism to the community garden
18. clean his/her garden plot in preparation for winter no later than the Sunday following Thanksgiving; weather permitting
19. help keep the garden secure by closing the gates until locked and scrambling the combination on the shed's lock
20. inform the Garden Coordinator of his/her inability to be in the garden for periods of more than one week
21. notify the Garden Coordinator of any change of address or phone number, or e-mail address within one week of any change
22. will be considerate of surrounding plots and should limit the height of lattice, supports, vegetation, etc. that may be intrusive to surrounding plots

Please note that the shed is for storage of garden supplies purchased by the Steering Committee with your garden fees. The garden supplies are there for use by all garden members. Any gardener who chooses to store their personal gardening supplies in the shed does so with the understanding that your personal gardening supplies may also be used by all garden members. Riverbend Community Garden or the Steering Committee is not liable for any garden supplies or personal belongings that garden members leave in the shed or in their plot.

Continued On Page 4

Continued from Page 4

¹ Two incidents will lead to the exclusion of a child or pet from the garden until the gardener proposes a remedy that is satisfactory to the Steering Committee.

² Before taking disciplinary action, the Steering Committee will issue **one written warning to a gardener or officer** who violates garden rules; however, **no such warning will be issued with regard to missed work days.**

³ Before using any organic pesticide or fungicide, gardeners must inform surrounding gardeners and the Garden Coordinator of its type and of its intended application date at least three days in advance of that date. If permitted, gardeners must always take care not to involve neighbors' gardens in any way. Any gardener objecting to the use of organic pesticides or fungicides for health or environmental reasons should contact the Garden Coordinator. The Steering Committee will decide whether the organic pesticide or fungicide may be applied.

SECTION II — RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

A. GARDEN COORDINATOR

The position of Garden Coordinator may be filled by a minimum of one person or a maximum of two people acting as a team.

The Garden Coordinator is charged with:

1. organizing and attending the annual garden meeting (See "Section VI — Model Agenda for Annual Meeting")
2. maintaining an updated list of current gardeners
3. maintaining a current waiting list of potential new gardeners
4. initiating, if necessary, programs to recruit new gardeners, with special attention to the surrounding neighborhood
5. organizing and facilitating, with the Steering Committee, a meeting of the general membership
6. informing the City of Medford of the garden's organizational developments and its physical needs beyond those that can be met independently
7. convening a minimum of one or more Steering Committee meetings a month if necessary during the gardening season (February, May through November)
8. preparing an agenda for each Steering Committee meeting
9. monitoring the garden site at least three times a week and reporting damage and vandalism to the Steering Committee and the City of Medford
10. consistently assessing the condition of the garden and overseeing all corresponding workday activities
11. obtaining check-signing authority with the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer
12. review and approve all invoices submitted by the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer prior to payment

B. TREASURER / ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer are charged with:

1. collecting the annual fees at the annual garden meeting and depositing them into the garden bank account
2. preparing financial reports for the Garden Coordinator and Steering Committee on a monthly basis
3. jointly holding check-signing authority
4. submitting invoices to the Garden Coordinator for review and approval prior to payment
5. attending all Steering Committee meetings

C. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee will consist of a minimum of three and a maximum of five members and a Recording Secretary, if necessary, will be selected from the Steering Committee at its first meeting.

SECTION III — SELECTION OF GARDEN COORDINATOR, TREASURER AND STEERING COMMITTEE

A. SELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF GARDEN COORDINATOR

To be eligible for the position of Garden Coordinator, a member must accept the responsibilities outlined in "Section II — Rights and Responsibilities of Officers." The Garden Coordinator will be elected by a majority hand vote of the membership in attendance at the annual garden meeting of the Riverbend Community Garden. Tenure for the Garden Coordinator will run through the year to the next annual meeting. All people interested in serving as the Garden Coordinator will be responsible for making their interest known at the annual meeting. In the event that there is more than one candidate, the vote will be decided by anonymous ballot. It is expected that the outgoing Garden Coordinator will fully acquaint the incoming Garden Coordinator with methods used to keep records and sustain internal organization

B. SELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF TREASURER & ASSISTANT TREASURER

Any gardener interested in serving as Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer and who can meet the requirements outlined in “Section II — Rights and Responsibilities of Officers” is eligible to run for the position. Tenure for the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will run through the year to the next annual meeting. All people interested in serving as the Treasurer will be responsible for making their interest known at the annual garden meeting. The Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer will be elected by a majority hand vote of the membership in attendance at the annual garden meeting of the Riverbend Community Garden. In the event that there is more than one candidate, the vote will be decided by anonymous ballot. It is expected that the outgoing Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer will fully acquaint the incoming Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer with current record-keeping methods and pass all financial records on to him or her.

C. SELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All gardeners who are interested in serving on the Steering Committee and who accept the responsibilities outlined in “Section II — Rights and Responsibilities of Officers” can volunteer to become committee members. All people interested in serving will be responsible for making their interest known at the annual meeting. In the event that more than ten people express a desire to volunteer as Steering Committee members, seniority within the garden will determine which ten people will be placed on the Steering Committee. At the point where seniority becomes an insufficient criterion to distinguish candidates from one another, names will be drawn from a hat until the Steering Committee has reached its maximum size of ten. The tenure of Steering Committee members will run through the year to the next annual meeting.

SECTION IV — ASSIGNMENT OF VACANT PLOTS

A. ASSIGNMENT TO GARDENERS

Prior to or at the annual garden meeting, vacant plots will be offered to current gardeners who express an interest in moving to a different plot on a seniority basis. Under this option, you must vacate your current spot in accordance with the one plot per gardener provision in Rights and Responsibilities of Garden Members, Page 3. If two or more gardeners are interested in moving to a vacant plot, have the same seniority and joined the garden prior to the development of our current waitlist, their names will be drawn from a hat to determine who has the first choice of plots.

During the gardening season, plots that become vacant will be offered, on a seniority basis, to current gardeners who express an interest in moving to a different plot before they are offered to potential gardeners on the waitlist. Under this option, you must vacate your current spot in accordance with the one plot per gardener provision in Rights and Responsibilities of Garden Members, Page 3. If two or more gardeners are interested in moving to a vacant plot, have the same seniority and their names will be drawn from a hat to determine who has the first choice for the vacant plot.

As outlined in B. below, plots that become vacant during the growing season will be assigned to people on the waitlist if there are no current gardeners who express an interest in moving to a different plot,

B. ASSIGNMENT TO PEOPLE ON WAITLIST

Prior to or after the annual meeting, the Garden Coordinator will assign vacant plots to people on the waitlist. The order in which individuals are chosen from the waitlist is determined solely by the order in which they expressed interest in obtaining a garden plot. The Garden Coordinator will meet with new members, provide them with a copy of the Garden Handbook and obtain signed agreements, garden fees and proof of residency, as previously defined. All plots that become vacant, for whatever reason, during the growing season will be assigned in the same manner unless current garden members express an interest in moving to a different plot.

SECTION V — GARDEN BEDS

A. RAISED GARDEN BEDS

In the beginning, the original garden plots were designed with 30 inches of space between plots so gardeners could easily maneuver a wheelbarrow around their plot. Over the years, many gardeners built raised beds and extended the dimensions of their plot beyond the original allotments and without regard for the 30 inches of space between plots.

Garden members who wish to build or rebuild their raised garden bed must present plans to the Steering Committee before they begin to build or rebuild their garden plot. The Steering Committee will provide you with the maximum dimensions of your plot. The Steering Committee also reserves the right to limit the height of any fence that you wish to install around your plot especially if it is invasive to other garden plots.

B. NON-RAISED GARDEN BEDS

Those who prefer to garden in non-raised beds are also required to be mindful of the limits of their plots. Some of these non-raised garden beds are becoming increasing closer to neighboring plots and some of the vegetation in non-raised beds becomes overgrown and spills over to other gardens or out onto stone dust and/or playground chip paths.

All plants shall remain within the limits of your assigned plot. The Steering Committee will measure your plot and establish maximum limits if those who plant in non-raised garden beds are not sure of their maximum limits. The Steering Committee also reserves the right to cut back or remove plants that are invasive to other garden plots or that spill out onto stone dust paths and/or playground chip paths.

SECTION VI — MODEL AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING

A. PREPARATION

The Garden Coordinator will complete the following tasks at least two weeks in advance of the meeting:

1. update the membership list
2. inform all gardeners by email or phone of the meeting date, time and location
3. prepare a blank plot map of the entire garden
4. update the waitlist
5. prepare a sufficient number of Garden Handbooks for those garden members who fail to bring one with them to the annual garden meeting
6. prepare a current financial report in conjunction with the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

B. AGENDA

The following is to be used as a template for business matters addressed at the annual garden meeting.

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Financial Report
3. Discussion of Vacant Plots
4. Assignment of Garden Plots
5. Review of Garden Rules and Agreement
6. Signing of Garden Agreements (see Attachments), paying Annual Fees and providing proof of residency
7. Election of Officers
 - Garden Coordinator
 - Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer
8. Election of Steering Committee Members
9. Other: Old Business – New Business

SECTION VII -- YEARLY CALENDAR – Dates & Events Subject To Change

JANUARY

- All financial, membership and organizational records updated by the Garden Coordinator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Steering Committee
- List of current members generated by Garden Coordinator

FEBRUARY

- Map of the garden and updated membership list prepared and sent to membership by Garden Coordinator
- Meeting of current and past year's Garden Coordinator, Treasurer and Steering Committee organized and convened by the Garden Coordinator
- First Steering Committee meeting begins

MARCH

- Annual garden meeting organized and convened by the Garden Coordinator

APRIL

- Gardeners sign agreement, pay annual fees in full and provide proof of residency
- Meeting of Steering Committee held
- Gardening season begins
- Water turned on or when designated by the City of Medford

MAY

- Meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary
- Deadline for cultivating is the third Sunday of the month

JUNE

- Meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary

JULY

- Meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary
- Mid-season Treasurer's report sent to general membership

AUGUST

- Meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary

SEPTEMBER

- Meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary

OCTOBER

- Meeting of Steering Committee if necessary

NOVEMBER

- Water shut off over the first weekend of the month or when designated by the City of Medford
- Final meeting of Steering Committee held if necessary
- All gardens winterized no later than the Sunday after Thanksgiving
- Compost piles turned

DECEMBER

- Officers inform gardeners of whether they intend to remain on the Steering Committee or run for re-election.

Attachments (Pgs. 8-10)

MYSTIC RIVERBEND GARDEN MEMBER AGREEMENT

- As a garden member I agree to abide by the following rules, which are proposed by the Garden Coordinator, Treasurer, assistant Treasurer and Steering Committee and adopted by the membership of the Riverbend Community Garden. I understand that if I do not follow these rules, my garden plot may be reassigned as herein defined. I also understand that if at any point in the season I am unable to meet particular points of the agreement without assistance, I will notify the Garden Coordinator.
- I will not share my plot with other garden members or nonmembers.
- I will refrain from smoking or vaping in, or around, Riverbend Community Garden.
- I will pay an annual fee, based on an assessment of \$25.00 for a single plot, or \$15.00 for a half plot prior to or during the annual garden meeting; all fees **must** be paid no later than two (2) weeks after the annual meeting.
- I will contribute group work hours during the growing season where I may be required to assist in the general maintenance of the garden (this includes clean-up days, etc.) as seen fit by the Steering Committee. **Please complete the Workday Sign-Up Sheet on the following page.**
- I will keep my children under control and pets either on a leash or at heel, and take full responsibility for any damage they may inflict on the Riverbend Community Garden.
- I will cultivate my garden plot by the third Sunday in May, maintain the garden consistently, and arrange for its upkeep during any extended absence.
- I will maintain a neat garden and remove weeds, rocks, and wandering plants from adjacent paths.
- I will not use toxic chemicals and will minimize the use of natural or organic pesticides and fungicides, with the Steering Committee's approval, always taking care not to involve my neighbor's gardens in any way.
- I will promptly remove from my garden plot all diseased, infested, or otherwise unhealthy plants and place them in the garbage off site.
- I will remove from my garden plot all plants that have ceased to bear fruit or vegetables.
- I will abide by composting rules and place rocks and all refuse in proper disposal areas off site.
- I will conserve water by turning off faucets after using them, heeding water restrictions, utilizing mulch, and minimizing midday watering.
- I will not harvest from other member's garden plots unless I have written permission to do so, and said permission is registered with the Steering Committee.
- I will report immediately to the Garden Coordinator any damage or vandalism to the community garden.
- I will clean my garden plot in preparation for winter.
- I will help keep the garden secure by scrambling the combination to the garden locks.
- I will inform the Garden Coordinator of my inability to be in the garden for periods of more than one week.
- I will notify the Garden Coordinator of any change of address or phone number or e-mail, within one week of any change.
- I understand that the Steering Committee, by majority vote, has the right to revoke my membership to the Riverbend Community Garden for violating garden rules, and that, except for egregious, flagrant or malicious violations which are punishable by immediate dismissal, I am entitled to only one written warning before such action is taken.
- I understand that the shed is for storage of garden equipment, and that any personal items that I choose to store in the garden shed may be used by all gardeners.

ACCEPTANCE OF RULES AND WORKDAY SCHEDULE ~ JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2024

This Page is revised to reduce the Garden Handbook from 11 Pages to 10 Pages. When selecting your workdays, please select 2 Saturdays, or 2 Mondays, or a combination of 1 Saturday and 1 Monday.

The purpose of the workday is to improve and maintain the garden's common areas, to lend a hand to gardeners who need assistance with their plots, to socialize and to have fun! You are required to work 2 community workdays for 3 hours per workday. Or members who wish to work 2 workdays with a spouse or partner will work 1.5 hours per person per workday.

Five Saturday workdays and two Monday workdays (for gardeners who cannot make it on Saturdays) are listed below. The normal hours are 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and may be adjusted depending on the heat index for that day. In the event of a thunderstorm, the workday will be rescheduled for the next day (Sunday) with the same hours. Monday workdays that are rained out will be rescheduled to Wednesday, same week. Please select two workday dates below. The Steering Committee will do their best to grant your selections but reserve the right to reassign workdays to evenly distribute the number of members working on any given workday.

The Steering Committee will send you a reminder a couple of days in advance of your work days. Please call or email the Garden Coordinator if an emergency comes up and you are unable to attend your scheduled work day.

Please Note: *You will forfeit your garden membership for failure to fulfill your workdays.*

The garden fee is \$25.00 for a full plot and \$15.00 for a half plot. If you cannot attend the annual meeting, please mail your Acceptance of Rules and Workday Sign-Up sheet, your garden fee (make check payable to **Riverbend Community Garden**), and a copy of your proof of residency, to the current Treasurer: Robert Veneziano, 500 Salem Street #503, Medford, MA 02155. **We must receive your payment and a copy of your proof of residency no later than April 30th, 2024, if you wish to maintain your membership for the 2024 garden season.**

Saturday Workdays for 2024: (Garden Member's Copy – Keep this for your records)

May 04 _____ Jun 01 _____ Sep 07 _____ Oct 05 _____ Nov 02 _____

Monday Workdays for 2024: (Garden Member's Copy – Keep this for your records)

Jul 08 _____ Aug 05 _____

Cut Here

Saturday Workdays for 2024: (Garden Coordinator's Copy – Submit with your garden Fee)

May 04 _____ Jun 01 _____ Sep 07 _____ Oct 05 _____ Nov 02 _____

Monday Workdays for 2024: (Garden Coordinator's Copy – Submit with your garden fee)

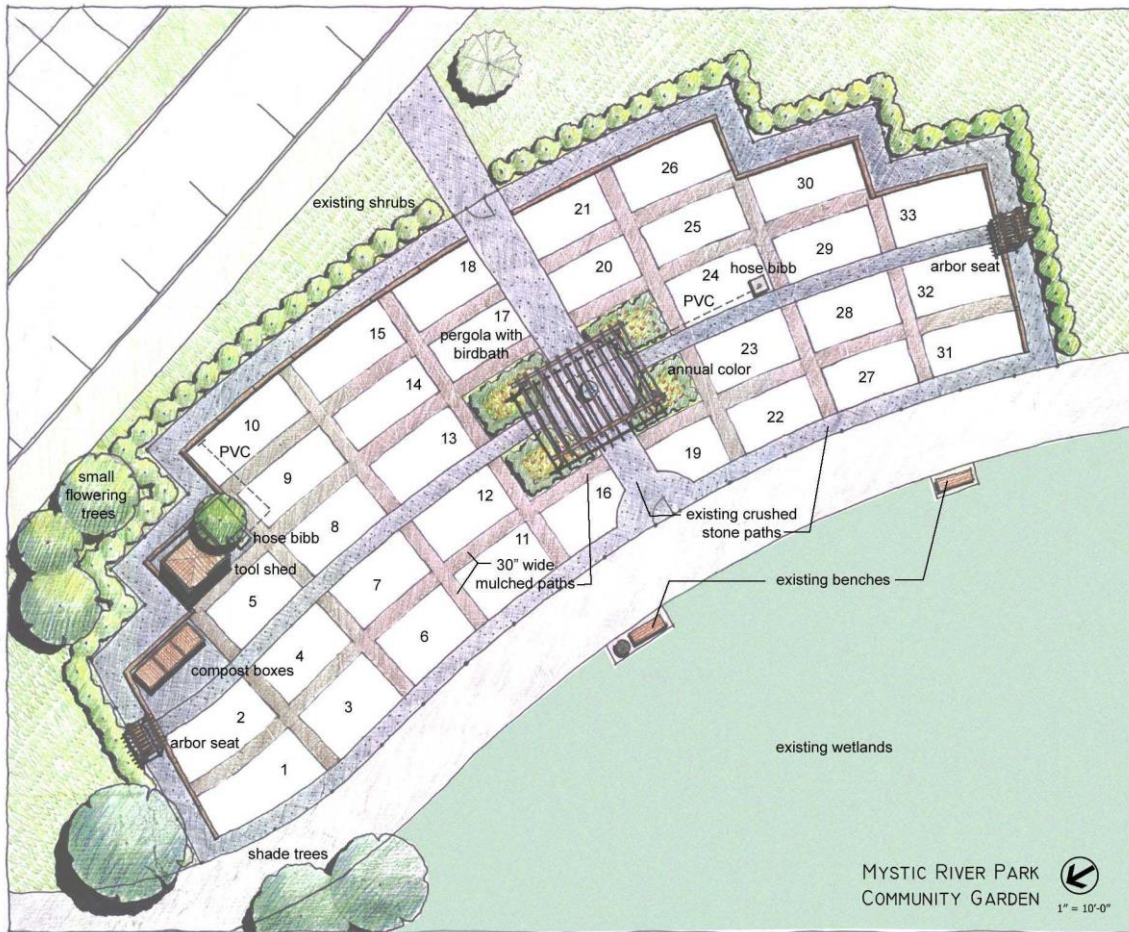
Jul 08 _____ Aug 05 _____

By signing below, I agree that I have read the Garden Handbook and will abide by the 2024 Rules of Riverbend Community Garden:

Print _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Riverbend Community Garden



Notes:

- Full Plot 5 above was divided into 2 Half Plots: 5.5A & 5.5B
- There are 4 Half Plots at the 4 corners of the pergola: 34.5, 35.5, 36.5 and 37.5