

SCHUYLKILL RIVER PARK COMMUNITY GARDEN

GUIDELINES AND RULES¹

GENERAL

GARDEN HOURS

Gardeners may be in the garden during daylight hours only.

LOCKING AND UNLOCKING THE GATES

When unlocking the gate or tool shed, immediately lock the padlock onto the gate or chain so that it is secure and set the combination to 0000. Please leave the gate open when gardeners are present.

The last person to leave the Garden is responsible for seeing that all visitors have departed. Ring the bell and announce that the gate will be locked.

Make sure that both gates and the tool shed are locked and the locks are set to 0000.

DOGS AND PETS

Dogs and other pets, either on or off a leash or carried, are not allowed in the Garden at any time. Service dogs accompanying a disabled individual, however, are permitted in the Garden in accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

CHILDREN AND VISITORS

As part of the public park, the Garden is supposed to be open to visitors when Gardeners are present. Be welcoming to people who come in to enjoy the garden, but use your own judgment in each situation. Children should be accompanied and supervised by a parent or other adult when they are in the Garden, whether they are visitors or have parents who are plot holders. No bike riding is allowed in garden.

TRASH, RECYCLABLES, GARBAGE, AND COMPOST

Do not put garden trash in the Schuylkill River Park Trashcans. Trash from maintenance of public areas of the Garden and individual plots should be put in the trash bins or recycling containers provided in the Garden. When the trash bags are full, they should be placed behind the compost bin in the area to the left of the wagons and will be put out by the assigned trash crew. Organic garden products, such as vegetable and fruit waste, may be put into the compost bins as allowed by the posted instructions. Under no circumstances should waste from home or from food served in the garden be placed in the compost bins OR in the trash or recycling receptacles.

PLOTS AND MAINTENANCE

WATERING

Use buckets or watering cans to water your plot. The hoses are for watering only the common areas and the exterior and interior borders and beds. They are not to be used for watering individual plots.

FENCING AND NETTING

If you install fencing, do not nail or staple fencing materials to the plot frame. The fencing material must be completely inside the plot frame.

Netting which may trap birds, e.g., small plastic mesh, is not permitted anywhere in the garden and will be removed. Protection of seedlings can be accomplished by the use of fine mesh ground cloth or chicken wire.

INDIVIDUAL PLOT USE AND CARE

All plots will be allocated only to those residing within the boundary served by CCRA, i.e., North side of South Street to South side of JFK, West side of Broad Street to East of the Schuylkill River.

Non-member lottery plots are for the use of the person whose name was drawn in the annual lottery. Two alternates are drawn to fill any non-member plots given up by the original lessee.

Member plots are for the use of the CCRA resident member(s) who has (have) signed the contract. Due to our legal status with the City of Philadelphia, there is no variance to this rule. A gardener may not simultaneously have a lease for or garden more than one plot during the lease period. Primary maintenance of plots must be performed actively by the CCRA member(s) who signed the Lease Agreement and who is/are assigned the plot. Sharing of a plot with an individual who is simultaneously on the Waiting List is prohibited. Any violation of this Guideline/Rule could result in a reduction of the number of years of lease eligibility of the current plot holder(s) and/or removal of the name of the individual from the Waiting List until the violation is corrected (see also Waiting List Sign-Up Procedure below). Member plot holders must retain current CCRA membership (as defined by the CCRA office) throughout their entire tenure in the Garden.

Any plot not gardened actively by the first of May will be deemed abandoned and transferred to the next eligible party on the waiting list. The pro-rata plot fee will be refunded.

Regular weeding, watering, and harvesting of vegetables and fruit and keeping the adjacent paths clean, raked and free of any obstruction should be performed to maintain plots. Plant material from plots should not impede the pathways and any impeding material will be cut back.

If because of illness / hardship you find it difficult to maintain your plot, let the Chair of SRPCG know so that an alternative arrangement can be developed.

Failure to maintain one's plot (e.g., weeds are overgrown, plants and soil are suffering from a lack of water, fruit or vegetables are rotting, etc.) constitutes a serious violation of the Guidelines & Rules and will be subject to Steering Committee review and action, including reduction in years of lease eligibility or termination of the lease (see section on Violations and Penalties).

COMMUNITY GARDEN WORK RESPONSIBILITIES

All Gardeners are required to attend all announced work days. If your schedule does not allow you to attend, please let the Chair of the Steering Committee know so that an alternative work assignment can be arranged.

All Gardeners are also required to sign up for and complete one week of general garden maintenance chores (e.g., sweeping of the seating area, trash removal, and general tidying).

If you see a public maintenance issue that needs attention, feel free to exercise a sense of community spirit and take care of it.

FALL/WINTER PLOT CLEAN-UP

All renewing garden plots and the surrounding paths are expected to be clear of dead plants, e.g., annuals and vegetables (with the exception of those that can winter-over) and other debris by the 15th of December. Tomato frames, trellises, etc. are to be pulled out of the ground and placed neatly on their side. Watering cans may be left on the ground inside the plot.

Before vacating your plot at any time, or by October 31st in the last year of your plot lease, all root systems, plants, fencing, stones, bricks, etc. must be removed. Removing perennials often involves loss of large amounts of soil. Soil removed from the plot including during the final cleanup must be replaced completely to bring the level to no less than 2 inches below the plot border rail top.

Gardeners who fail to comply will not be eligible to have their names on the waiting list at any time.

WAITING LIST SIGN-UP PROCEDURE

Eligible non-current gardeners may request their name be added to the waiting list by emailing centercity@centercityresidents.org or calling the Center City Residents' Association office at 215-546-6719.

If you are in your final year, eligible for a plot and want to continue, you may put your name on the Waiting List on or after May 1 of your final year in the garden by calling the Center City Residents' Association office at 215-546-6719 or emailing centercity@centercityresidents.org.

A non-CCRA member gardener who was awarded a one-year public plot and thereafter joins CCRA may place his or her name on the Waiting List at any time after joining CCRA.

The name(s) on the waiting list must include all parties residing at the CCRA membership address. You may not have a plot in your name and be listed on the Waiting List in the name of anyone else at your address. Non-compliance will result in the highest position duplicate name being removed from the Waiting List. (See bylaws for more information on the waiting list.)

PLOT TRANSFER PROCEDURE

Current SRPCG Gardeners returning in the following season may request a plot transfer (e.g., 10x20 to 10x10 or any other move between same or different size plots) by sending a message to the steering committee (srpcginfo@srpcg.org). Names will be placed on a transfer list and available plots will be offered in the order requests were received. The remaining plot renewal period travels with the gardener. Plots transfers are not guaranteed and are contingent upon availability. Plots available from those rotating out of the garden will be offered to fulfill transfer requests before being offered to those on the general waiting list.

EXTENDED ILLNESS / SABBATICAL POLICY

A Gardener who falls seriously ill or faces an unexpected binding commitment (e.g., academic sabbatical) may take a maximum one year leave of absence from his/her plot. The plot must be relinquished and will become available to the general waiting list/transfer list. Upon the Gardener's return, he/she will have first choice of comparable size or smaller plots from the transfer/waiting list. If the Gardener notifies the Steering Committee of his/her intended absence on or before March 1st, he/she will not lose time from the remaining term of his/her renewal period. If the Gardener notifies the Steering Committee of his/her intended absence after March 1st, he/she will lose one year from the remaining term of his/her renewal period.

VANDALISM OR DAMAGE TO PROPERTY

Gardeners who vandalize, deface, or remove SRPCG or individual Gardener's property-- a serious violation -- will not be eligible for plot license renewal or inclusion on the waiting list. If the damage results in a monetary loss for the SRPCG, legal recourse may be taken. If the damage or other violation is corrected to the satisfaction of the Steering Committee, these remedies may not be applied.

GARDEN PRACTICE

Gardeners may not plant outside their plot boundaries without the specific permission of the SRPCG Chair.

PLANT MATERIAL FORBIDDEN IN THE GARDEN OR REQUIRING SPECIAL CARE

Lilacs, raspberries, blackberries and mint should be contained in heavy plastic aboveground containers placed inside the plot. Plants of this type have extensive root structures that result in the loss of large quantities of soil that will need to be replaced.

Bindweed, Bittersweet, Japanese Honeysuckle, Japanese Knotweed, Goutweed, Globe Thistle, Purple loosestrife, and cardoons are forbidden.

Bark or wood mulch of any sort may not be used within the boundary of the Schuylkill River Community Garden.

VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

The violations listed here may result in the Steering Committee reducing the outstanding time on a Gardener's lease by one year or, for serious, multiple, and/or repeated violations, the lease may be terminated (see Multi-Step Process below). These measures will not be executed lightly. They will be used *only* as a last resort and reflect a Gardener's continual non-response to the Steering Committee's requests for action.

Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Neglecting a plot, e.g., not planting, weeding, watering or harvesting regularly; this is a serious violation.
- Shirking community garden responsibilities, such as not participating in the weekly chores program, and/or not participating in scheduled clean-up days and/or not attending the annual meeting without prior notice.
- Leaving plot in disheveled condition at the end of a gardening season.
- Vandalizing, defacing or removing SRPCG or individual Gardener's property, including but not limited to borrowing Garden tools for home/personal use without permission; this is a serious violation.
- Misusing the compost bins, e.g., disposing of home food waste materials.
- Growing forbidden plants (See above in Plant Material Forbidden in the Garden).
- Violation of the "No Pets" Rule (see General section above).

Multi-Step Process

The Steering Committee will not exercise these measures without notifying the Gardener having committed such a violation, in writing, prior to the decision. The notice of violation will be relayed to the gardener via email and/or telephone; if no response, the gardener will be notified by certified letter. If no satisfactory response has been received within three weeks of the certified letter, the Steering Committee will reduce the remaining lease eligibility by one year.

For serious violations and/or multiple or repeated failures to follow the expectations laid out in the lease agreement and these Guidelines and Rules, termination of the lease and reassignment of the plot to the next eligible person on the waiting list shall be considered, following the multi-step notification process described above. A gardener whose lease is thus terminated may ask to be placed on the waiting list as of the plot reassignment date.

Any Gardener who has received a penalty as described above has the right to appeal the decision, either in person or in writing, at a meeting of the Steering Committee.

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