

## 2017 MORRIS TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY GARDEN MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Morris Township Ted Largman Community Garden at ValleVue Preserve is first and foremost an Organic Garden! To rent a plot(s) at the Garden at ValleVue Preserve, the gardener agrees to abide by all of the rules, policies and practices set forth herein and those posted throughout the Community Garden grounds. The gardener understands and agrees that these rules, policies and practices may be subject to change at any time at the sole discretion of the Township of Morris. The gardener further understands that failure to abide by these rules, policies and practices is grounds for expulsion from the Community Garden for a length of time to be determined by the Township. Please note that the Rules and Regulations may change without notice.

### A. ANNUAL FEES

Gardeners are responsible for the annual rental of a Community Garden standard individual plot.

10 X 10 (100 sq. ft.) = \$20

15 X 15 (225 sq. ft.) = \$40

15 X 30 (450 sq. ft.) = \$60

All gardeners and family members who will be managing a plot must be registered with the Community Garden Staff at the time of application and fees must be accompanied by a signed "Hold Harmless" clause (Waiver of Liability). Everyone who will be in the Garden must sign the Hold Harmless Form. Please note that Membership and Registration fees are non-refundable and must be paid at the time of application.

### B. RULES OF OPERATION – Keep the Gates Closed!

**Hours:** During the 2017 season, the Community Garden will be open from dawn until dusk each day. **Gates must be kept closed at all times to prevent animals from coming into the Garden. The Gates must be secured whenever the gardener is the last to leave at any time during the day.**

**Season opening:** Cultivation and planting can be started by April 1, 2017 (weather permitting) and plots must be tended through the time of fall cleanup which will be completed no later than November 26, 2017. Gardeners should plan on spending at least four hours per week on plot maintenance in order to cultivate a productive and attractive garden plot. Please refer to section Violation of Membership Rules.

**Garden Orientation:** It is mandatory that all gardeners attend the annual Community Garden Orientation and all new members to attend the Introduction to Organic Gardening Classes which will be held at Township Hall on 50 Woodland Avenue. These sessions will be held the first quarter of 2017 and will be announced to all gardeners. This will give you an opportunity to meet your fellow gardeners, review the garden rules and discuss approved materials, hours of operation, volunteer service, special events, classes, the Giving Garden program, etc.

The orientation session will last approximately 2 hours and will be held at various times of the week and evenings to accommodate schedules. Accommodations can be made if this poses a financial hardship. Failure to attend the Orientation Session or required classes or following the guidelines and rules will result in forfeiting your awarded plot. Request for independent orientations will not be accommodated.

**Parking:** Parking shall be in the designated area only. Failure to do so will result in expulsion from the Community Garden. There will be no unauthorized cars or trucks allowed in the Community Garden itself. Please keep in mind that Saturdays and Sundays during the spring and summer months are high visitation days. Plan accordingly! In the future we will be sharing the parking area with hikers who will be using the trails. Be careful when exiting the Garden Parking lot – check for oncoming traffic before you pull out. **The Garden enclosure must be closed at all times to prevent animals from entering the Community Garden area.**

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**Use of Equipment:** No equipment will be provided. Each gardener is expected to bring their own tools, hoses, watering cans and other materials to the site. A small number of wheelbarrows and carts will be provided by the Community Garden and can be used by all participants for transporting tools, flats of plants, seedlings and other materials to their plots. Be sure to return them to their designated area. The Community Garden will not be responsible for personal items left at the plot or in the Community Garden. The use of tools and equipment are at your own risk. Power Equipment can only be used by trained or certified participants such as tilling of the plots.

**Garden Preparation:** Garden plots are offered in AS IS condition and need to be prepared each season by the participating gardeners. All gardeners accept full responsibility for their plot(s) and any and all organic amendments they may or may not require. The Community Garden is not and will not accept responsibility for soil and overall garden plot conditions, including drainage and other related issues. All organic improvements are the responsibility of each gardener, including raised beds. Gardeners must use organic practices in order to prepare and improve their plots. When the soil was tested, no contaminants were found at the garden site. Therefore, NO SYNTHETIC CHEMICAL fertilizers or pesticides will be allowed. Gardeners are also responsible for providing their own seeds or plants and must use their own garden tools to tend their plots. Water will be available on site and the Community Garden will provide a limited supply of compost and wood chips. Certified organic fertilizers may be used if pre-approved by the Community Garden Staff. Only Salt Hay, Pine straw, shredded leaves or Straw may be used at the Garden for mulching. Field Hay and similar seed-bearing cover crops may not be used. Grass clippings can be used if no synthetic fertilizer has been applied to the grass.

**Soil Care:** As with anything we do, please explicitly follow recommendations on material packaging. Noted Gardener Ralph Snodsmith (WOR) always reminded us to follow the instructions on the labels of the package. “A little is good, a lot has to be better” is not a good philosophy! Do not leave any garden soil exposed over the winter. More about Fall Cleanup and Winter Soil Preparation will be available toward the fall.

**Garden Maintenance:** Each gardener is responsible for the maintenance and regular upkeep of his or her plot. All gardens are to be maintained in a clean and neat manner for the entire season. Watering, weeding, harvesting and all other garden related maintenance issues are the sole responsibility of each gardener. A minimum of time commitment of at least 4 hours per week should be allowed for regular maintenance. Each gardener will help maintain the path around their plot including the area where the water spigot is located.

**Giving Garden and excess produce:** The Community Garden will provide a designated area where gardeners who wish to volunteer their time can plant and maintain a GG plot. This produce will be taken to the local Food Banks and Food Kitchens during the growing season. If any gardener has excess produce to donate to the Giving Garden effort, please leave the produce in the cooler at the kiosk. Volunteer time may be accrued by working in the Giving Garden. Be sure to log in your hours in the Volunteer Log Book located in the kiosk.

**Harvesting:** Crops must be harvested once they are mature. If you do not have time or are away, please let us know and we will harvest your produce and take to the Interfaith Food Bank. There is no need to let produce die on the vine!! We will contact you if harvesting is not taking place.

**Weeding and Rocks:** Maintenance of garden plots includes **WEEDING**. All weeds and other similar waste are to be disposed of on your own. All waste, weeds, etc. should be disposed of “off site.” Rocks can be removed to the designated location outside the western gate. Rocks are not to be thrown out into the grassy

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avenues between the neighborhoods. Rocks thrown into the lawn area create a hazard when mowing the lawn.

**Mulching:** Biodegradable mulches such as compost, leaves, salt hay and straw are permitted and encouraged. Dyed or treated wood chips are not allowed. Wood chips (natural) may be used on paths only. Gardeners are encouraged to bring their own straw and organic leaf mulch to improve their soil.

**Composting:** A service area will be provided for finished compost as well as for composting weeds and plant debris. Diseased and insect infested plants should be removed from the Community Garden. Do not place non-garden trash in the piles. As the Morris Township Community Garden is a carry-in/ carry-out facility, please take your non-garden trash home. We need to prevent the possible spread of invasive plants, insects and/or diseases. This year we will be creating a compost area. A list of appropriate materials for the composting pile will be supplied at the Orientation Program. No meat products or bones are to be added to this pile!

**Structures and Materials:** Stakes that mark the plot corners and identify the plot numbers must be left in place all season. No altering of the dimensions of the plot is allowed. Material made of PVC or treated wood (such as lumber for the raised beds or dyed or treated mulch) will not be permitted. Structures (such as hoop tunnels) may be erected if they are pre-approved by the Garden Staff. No structure will be more than 5 feet in height! No CHEMICAL fertilizers or pesticides will be allowed. Insect lures and/or traps are prohibited in the Community Garden. Raised beds will be allowed.

**Community Garden's Watering System:** The water from the Community Garden's watering system is non-potable and is only to be used on the crops. Gardeners are responsible for the proper use of the water facilities including conserving the use of water at all times, abiding by water restrictions if applicable and making sure that water is turned off and not leaking when not in use. Monitor the weather and only water when necessary. Test the moisture of the soil two inches below the surface to determine the need. In general, morning is the best time to water your crops. Hose bibs are located in the center of each neighborhood. Sprinklers are not allowed. Report any problems concerning water to the Garden Staff.

**Outlaw Plants:** No invasive plants (including trees, shrubs, vines or herbs) may be planted. To determine what plants are considered invasive, please use the NJ Invasive Species Strike Team "Do NOT Plant List" <http://www.njisst.org/documents/DoNotPlantList.pdf>. Some plants will not be allowed in the Community Garden because of their nature or potential for impacting adjacent garden plots. No trees or shrubs, Cacti, castor bean, illegal plants and other poisonous plants allowed. Currents and gooseberries are illegal to plant in NJ as they are a host for white pine blister rust. Mint, catnip, Jerusalem artichoke or comfrey are only allowed if planted in pots and may not be planted directly in the soil. Raspberries and blackberries are prohibited due to their weedy nature. Be thoughtful while planting sunflowers, vines, corn, and other tall plants so you do not shade or invade your neighbor's plot.

**Wildlife:** The Community Garden will do everything within its control to manage wildlife to help prevent damage to garden plots, but we make no claim or guarantee against such damage from occurring. The gates must be closed even when you are working in the Garden. Critters can squeeze into very small openings. Please contact the Garden Staff if you see damage to crops in the Garden.

**Important dates for the 2017 Season:** Registration begins January 23, 2017 and will go until April 1, 2017. Any garden plot that is vacant after April 1<sup>st</sup> will be made available to gardeners who would like to purchase

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a second plot. The office is opened Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. By November 31, 2017 all gardens must be cleaned up of debris, weeds and plant material unless permission to plant winter crops is given by the Garden Staff.

**Maintain a valid email address:** to receive important messages from the Community Garden Staff. Both Primary and Secondary Gardeners are encouraged to opt-in to receive email alerts. Information will be also disseminated via our website and kiosk postings located at the main Garden entrance. If you have physical limitations, please note on the registration form. If you do not have an email address, please indicate how to reach you.

**Transferability:** Gardeners may not transfer, exchange or sublet their plot. If you are unable to fulfill your obligations and would like to terminate your agreement with the Community Garden, please contact the Community Garden Staff and remove all personal materials from the plot. Fees are non-refundable.

**Upgrading to a larger plot or moving to a different location:** During the Renewal period this year, gardeners may upgrade to a larger plot if space is available. No guarantee of adjacent plot upgrades can be made.

**Requesting additional plots:** If a gardener wants to rent an additional plot, they may do so during the plot renewal phase. If space is available once the growing season has begun, gardeners may request an additional plot (not to exceed the 2-plot limit).

**Wait list:** Since we are a new Community Garden, members of Morris Twp. may register on a first come first serve basis during the registration period. We will try to accommodate all potential gardeners.

**Volunteering requirements:** Each gardener is expected to provide 4 hours per plot during the season, plus 1 hour for each additional plot. There will be a list of volunteering requests posted on the Community Garden Bulletin Board in the kiosk. They may include:

Site maintenance	Giving Garden	Construction Projects
Path maintenance	Composting	Fall Cleanup

Participation in the Community Garden is contingent upon a gardener's continued maintenance of his or her plot as well as volunteering for a total of 4 hours during the gardening season (plus one hour for each additional plot). Volunteers assist with specific activities for the benefit of the entire Community Garden in general. Log in your time in the volunteer log book which is located in the kiosk at the Gate.

In-garden volunteer workdays will be announced before the April start date. Registration is not required but we ask that you arrive promptly at the designated start times. Depending on the tasks at hand, volunteer days last between 1-4 hours and include garden maintenance, moving compost and wood chips, planting and maintenance of the Giving Gardens and other tasks as needed and identified by the Garden Coordinator.

Additional volunteer activities will be offered outside of the garden and include activities such as invasive plant removal and native plantings. More on this...

### C. RULES OF CONDUCT

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**Behavior:** At all times while on the Community Garden grounds, the gardener agrees to be respectful of other gardeners. The gardener will keep his or her plot and surrounding areas well-tended, dispose of plant material, rocks and extraneous materials on their own. Gardeners will remove anything brought from home. While on Community Garden grounds, the gardener will not engage in any prohibited behavior including the cultivation of illegal plants, flowers, smoking, drinking, gambling, or using illegal drugs. The gardener also agrees and understands that he or she will not bring weapons of any kind, pets or other animals into the Garden as these are prohibited. It is asked that courtesy be shown when using cellular phones. No smoking, chewing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substances are allowed on Community Garden property.

**Removal of items, produce and plantings from the plots of other Gardeners:** Under no circumstances may the gardener or visitors borrow or remove anything from the plots of other gardeners unless specifically asked to do so. In the event vandalism or theft is discovered, please notify the Township Police immediately. State Statute 2C:20-3.a “Theft by unlawful taking” is considered a disorderly persons’ offense. If you witness an unauthorized person “stealing” from a garden plot please call the Morris Township Police. In addition, do NOT water another Gardener’s without permission. Anyone caught in the act of vandalism or theft will be removed from the garden immediately and permanently banned from the Community Garden.

**Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides:** For the health and safety of all participants, organic methods and products should be used in the Community Garden. Non-organic pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and fertilizers even in limited quantities is prohibited. Keep all organic pest control products away from children and remove from the Garden after use. Even organic chemicals can be damaging to native insects and can become toxic in high doses.

**Resident Bee hives:** For the safety and care of the bees at the hives, please stay at least 10 feet from the hives. If you are interested in purchasing the honey, please contact the Community Garden Staff.

**Safety and Security:** Disputes between gardeners that cannot be resolved will be referred to the Garden Manager. In appropriate behavior will be grounds for expulsion from the Garden. .

**Prohibited items:** Unattended watering mechanisms and the planting of invasive species and cover crops are prohibited. Please do not bring anything into the garden that will compromise the safety and enjoyment of other gardeners such as radios, BBQ’s, alcohol or pets (excluding service animals). Participants will hold the Community Garden harmless for any illness that may arise out of consuming food produced on the Community Garden property.

**Gardener Absences:** Gardeners shall notify the Garden Staff by filling an absentee form if you are unable to maintain your plot for any period of time or if you wish to turn your plot back over to the Township for re-assignment to another applicant (please note that Membership and Registration fees are non-refundable). Please also notify the Garden Staff if you wish anyone to enter your plot during your absence. Gardeners must make arrangements for the maintenance during vacation or absences. Remember that all visiting gardeners must complete and submit a “Hold Harmless” form to the Community Garden Staff before working in a plot in the Community Garden. The form is available on the website.

**Visitors, Guests, Children:** The Gardener agrees to accompany and supervise any guest, visitor and/or children brought into the Community Garden at all times and also agrees to be responsible for the conduct of any of these parties. The Community Garden will not be held responsible for any injuries sustained by any visitor, guest or child. All guests are expected to follow the rules and guidelines of the Community Garden. Tree climbing is prohibited.

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**Fall Cleanup:** During Fall cleanup, any stakes, trellising, netting, fencing, plastic materials, tomato cages, watering cans, etc., must be removed from all gardening plots by the Plot Owner. All plants and weeds must also be completely removed. Please note that a thoroughly cleaned garden plot is a condition to being invited to renew your membership for future seasons. This requirement does not include perennial plants or winter crops.

### **D. VIOLATION OF MEMBERSHIP RULES**

In the event the Gardener violates any of the Community Garden's rules, policies, or practices, the Gardener will be issued a written notification by the Township and will be provided with reasonable opportunity to redress/correct the violation. In the event that no redress/correction is made and no response to the notification is received within two (2) calendar weeks of the date of the written notification, a second notice will be issued. If no redress/correction is made and no response is received within two (2) calendar weeks following the second notice, a final notice will be issued informing the Gardener of the Suspension, or total forfeiture of gardening privileges and access to the garden plot(s). Please note that, at the discretion of the Township, a gardener's violation of any rules may result in the gardener being prohibited from future participation in the Community Garden.

All rules, terms and conditions of participation with the Morris Township Community Garden are established by Township of Morris. By executing this Agreement, the gardener acknowledges and agrees that in the event that gardener violates any of the rules, terms and conditions set forth herein, at the sole discretion of the Township, the gardener's participation may be immediately suspended and may result in permanent loss of the use of the gardener's plot. There will be no refund for suspension as the membership and registration fees are non-refundable.

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## E. HOLD HARMLESS CLAUSE

### TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS

I, \_\_\_\_\_ will protect, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Township of Morris from and against any and all losses, penalties, damages, settlements, costs, charges, professional fees, or other expenses or liabilities arising out of or resulting from the performance of the work or the completed operations provided that any such claims, damage, loss, or expense is attributable to bodily injury, sickness, disease, or death, or to injury to or destruction of the tangible property including the loss of the use resulting therefrom; and is caused in whole or in part by any negligent or willful act or omission by \_\_\_\_\_. (Applicant).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This Membership Agreement is governed by, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of New Jersey.

## F. GARDENER'S COMMITMENT

I have read and understand and agree to abide by these rules, policies and practices stated herein for the participation with the Morris Township Community Garden at ValleVue Preserve.

I will not make duplicate keys of any locks at the Community Garden or give my key or lock combination to another person who is not registered with the Community Garden.

Please sign below (keep a copy of this Agreement and initialed Registration form for your records). Please list all secondary gardeners and family members who may come into the Garden. Have them sign this form.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Gardener's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Gardener's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a copy of the [registration form](#), a check for the size plot you wish to garden and a signed copy of this page to:

Morris Township Community Garden  
Parks and Recreation Department  
P.O. Box 7603  
50 Woodland Avenue  
Convent Station, NJ 07961-7603

For more information, please contact Sue Young at 201-274-4285 (cell/text) or at [syoung@morristwp.com](mailto:syoung@morristwp.com)