



LANSDOWNE WOODS OF VIRGINIA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Policy Resolution Number 7

Rules for Assignment, Use, and Maintenance of Garden Plots

Revised September 4, 2019

WHEREAS, The Declarations provide that the Members shall have all of the power to adopt, amend and repeal Rules and Regulations restricting and regulating the use and enjoyment of the Property or of any portion thereof and the actions of the Owners and occupants that affect the Property, which may supplement, but may not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Association Documents, and;

GIVEN THAT the Lansdowne Woods Members deem it necessary and desirable to establish certain Rules and Regulations for the assignment of and use of Garden Plots;

NOW THEREFORE, THE BOARD RESOLVES THAT the following policy regarding the Assignment, Use and Maintenance of Garden Plots be and hereby is, adopted:

I. PURPOSE

Garden plots are an amenity, available for rent, by residents of Lansdowne Woods of Virginia (LWVA). Gardeners sow, plant and nurture their gardens, and enjoy the fruits of their labors in the form of vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Residents with condominiums overlooking the gardens, and residents walking through the LWVA property, benefit from the beauty of the gardens. Well-maintained Gardens provide necessary food and shelter to butterflies and native pollinators. Equally important, native plant species help support the surrounding ecosystem. When gardens are poorly maintained, residents are forced to view unsightly plots that detract from the beauty of LWVA property; moreover, the ecosystem may suffer. Along with the privilege of renting a garden at LWVA, it is the Gardeners' responsibility to ensure their plot(s) is properly maintained and continues to benefit the whole community. Lansdowne Woods of Virginia Clubhouse Management ("LWVA Management") in conjunction with Lansdowne

Woods of Virginia Gardening Club Officers (“Gardening Club Officers”), have joint responsibility for monitoring the gardens throughout the year, and for ensuring that plots are maintained in accordance with this Resolution.

Garden plot turnover occurs every year, so more desirable plots frequently become available to Gardeners. LWVA Management, in consultation with Gardening Club Officers, manages the assignment of garden plots to Gardeners. It is LWVA policy to provide as many residents as possible with the opportunity to rent a plot, while making multiple plots available to residents when it is evident that all plots will not be assigned for a season. LWVA Management manages the assignment of garden plots using a three-part application process, detailed in Section III of this document. The following schedule governs the assignment process:

- **NOTE:** All dates noted throughout this Policy Resolution refer to *calendar* days, not business days.

Plot rentals last from November 15 through October 15 of the following year.

September 1 – September 15: Gardeners who have worked plots during the current growing season and who wish to extend use of their plots for the following growing season may apply for extensions on *up to two of the garden plots they currently work*. *Any additional plots they have worked during the season will go into the LWVA inventory of plots*. LWVA Management will not accept plot extension applications from Gardeners prior to September 1st.

September 16 – September 30: LWVA will open the inventory of available plots to LWVA residents who have not worked a garden during the current growing season, as well as to single plot Gardeners who have worked only one plot in the current season, and who want to apply for a different plot, or apply for a second plot. LWVA Management will not accept applications from this category of Gardeners prior to September 16th.

October 1 – October 15: LWVA will issue an announcement making available to all LWVA residents, all of the plots that have not yet been rented. Gardeners who wish to garden more than two plots may apply for multiple plots during this timeframe as well. LWVA will not accept applications for multiple plots from Gardeners prior to October 1st.

October 31: LWVA will finalize assignment of garden plots rentals. Gardeners who are giving up their current plot to a new renter must be prepared to clean their plot and remove all fencing, should the new renter wish to transplant perennials or conduct winter gardening.

November 15: New renters can begin working their plots.

December 1: By this date, all Gardeners must clear structures, fencing and vegetation from their plots to make them winter-ready. All perennials must be neatly trimmed back.

December 1st- December 5: Gardening Club Officers will inspect gardens.

II. APPLICATIONS FOR AND ASSIGNMENT OF GARDEN PLOTS

To balance the interests of established LWVA Gardeners and those LWVA residents who wish to rent a garden plot for the first time, LWVA Management has developed a three-tiered application process.

Individual Gardeners must apply for garden plots by submitting an application to the LWVA Management Office. Annual rental assessments for plots are established by LWVA Management. For all applications the following apply.

- Applicants who wish to have a specific plot must request the plot by number on their application.
- Along with their applications, Gardeners must include the LWVA-established rental assessment for each plot they seek to rent.
- Available plots are assigned on a first come first serve basis. To ensure the accuracy of assignments, LWVA Management shall date and time stamp all applications upon receipt.
- Applicants will certify that they have read and will abide by the intent, rules, and procedures of this Policy Resolution.
- Applicant Gardeners automatically agree to become members of the Lansdowne Woods of Virginia Gardening Club.
- Garden plots are rented to and must be maintained by individual residents -- *not condominium units*. It is possible for each resident of a single condominium unit to rent one or more garden plot(s) *provided that each resident actively gardens the plot(s) rented*.
- Residents may not rent plots in the name of another resident. Moreover, plot assignments are not transferable. If a Gardener does not wish to use his plot(s), or is unable to maintain it, the

Gardener must notify the LWVA Management Office. Generally, all transactions with the LWVA Management Office must be by the resident to whom the plot is assigned.

A. Application Process for Gardeners Wishing to Retain a Plot for the Next Growing Season:

Each year, many LWVA Gardeners express an interest in reserving a given garden plot for the next spring/summer growing season. To offer Gardeners an opportunity to continue working plots they have already cleared and prepared for crops or flowers, LWVA Management affords these Gardeners an opportunity to apply for and receive extensions on *up to, but no more than, two of the garden plots they currently work*. **Between September 1st and September 15th**, Gardeners may request reservations on their two selected plots by submitting the “Plot Extension” application with the LWVA Management Office.

Gardeners who reserve plots during these dates, can expect to receive priority status on the two plots they request. LWVA Management will set aside the Gardener’s requested plots from the overall plot inventory that becomes available for rental by new Gardeners beginning **September 16**.

- 1) The assignment of a second or a different plot a Gardener is contingent upon a determination that the Gardener has consistently met maintenance standards during the rental period that just ended, to include compliance with the intent, rules, and regulations of this Policy Resolution.
- 2) Reassignment of the same plot to a Gardener in succeeding years is contingent upon the Gardener complying with the intent, rules and regulations of this Policy Resolution
- 3) Any “Plot Extension” forms *received after September 15, will be grouped together with those applications for plots that become available for rental on October 1st*. Gardeners will be assigned a plot according to the date and time stamp of their application extension request.

B. Application Process for New Gardeners and Single Plot Gardeners: To encourage the participation of new Gardeners, and to provide single plot Gardeners with opportunities to change their plot or to select one additional plot, between **September 16 and September 30**, LWVA will open the entire inventory of available plots to these residents. These Gardeners may apply for plots at the Clubhouse, by submitting a “Application for Plot” form with the LWVA Management Office.

- 1) The assignment of a second or a different plot a Gardener is contingent upon a determination that the Gardener has consistently met maintenance standards during the rental period that just ended, to include compliance with the intent, rules, and regulations of this Policy Resolution.

C. Application Process for Gardeners who wish to Garden Multiple Plots: Between **October 1 and October 15**, the LWVA Management opens its entire inventory of plots that have not yet been rented *to all LWVA residents*. During this time, Gardeners who wish to apply for more than two plots may submit a “Multiple Plot” application with the LWVA Management Office. Management seeks to accommodate Gardeners’ requests for multiple plots whenever possible however, *it cannot guarantee that Gardeners will be assigned more than two plots in any given season. Gardeners may rent up to 4 plots at any one time, provided there are enough plots available to allow all applicants to rent a plot.* In consultation with Garden Club officers, LWVA Management will make a determination of whether an individual Gardener may rent more than 4 plots in any given season. A track record of two seasons of compliance with this Policy Resolution is a necessary prerequisite to rental of more than 4 plots, provided that the plot renter has consistently met maintenance standards during the rental term that has just ended.

- **Note:** Residents interested in perennial gardening should be mindful of limitations on retaining continuous use of a plot over time. In the event a perennial Gardener is unable to garden the same plot(s) in future years, and the Gardener is unable to transfer perennials to a subsequent garden plot, whenever possible, LWVA Gardening Club Officers will seek to determine potential relocation sites for perennials.

III. RULES FOR USE AND MAINTENANCE OF GARDEN PLOTS

Gardeners are responsible for the upkeep of their plots for the full term of the rental period. To ensure that the LWVA gardens not only benefit, but more importantly, remain safe for fellow Gardeners, LWVA residents, Gardeners must comply with the intent, rules, and procedures of this Policy Resolution when maintaining their gardens. LWVA Management, in conjunction with Garden Club officers, will provide Gardeners with written notice of violations, when they occur. ***If within 14 days the Gardener fails to bring the plot(s) in compliance with this Policy Resolution,***

the Gardener risks forfeiture of their plot(s) and rental assessment, in addition to accompanying fees to be established by LWVA Management.

- **Note,** When Gardeners are away or incapacitated, they are responsible for making arrangements for someone to take care of their plot(s). If this cannot be done, LWVA Management must be notified.

A. Fencing of plots: Fences must look neat, blend in with the natural look of the garden, and be as unobtrusive as possible. Fencing must be constructed of dark green or black plastic or wire mesh. All fencing must be supported by neat looking stakes which support the natural look of the garden. ***Fences and fence stakes must not exceed 5 feet in height*** and are limited to the inner boundary of the Gardener's plot(s).

B. Internal Support Structures and Adornments on Plots: Poorly constructed internal support structures -such as plant stakes, trellises, cages, poles, and other supports - have potential to harm fellow Gardeners and their plants, clutter gardens, and detract from the overall beauty of the LWVA gardens. Thus the following apply in all instances:

- 1) Internal support structures must be neat, uniform, and blend in with the natural look of the garden. Internal structures ***must not exceed 6 feet in height***, must not unduly shade nearby Gardener's plants, or pose a safety hazard.
- 2) Stepping stones, small bird baths, garden plaques, statues, windchimes, and hanging baskets, in good taste are permitted in garden plots, provided they do not interfere with neighboring plots.
- 3) All internal structures should be on the plot only when being used. During the growing season, all structures which are not in use, must be taken down and stored in the unit owner's personal storage area
- 4) All structures must be taken down and stored in the unit owner's personal storage area no later than December 1st.

C. Garden Maintenance: Maintenance of garden plots is a major responsibility which Gardeners should consider before applying for a garden plot. Weeds and invasive plants must not be allowed to grow voluntarily in plots, and may ~~they~~ not be planted in plots. Weeds and invasive plants must be prevented from going to seed so they will not spread to neighboring gardens.

- 1) Pathways have mulch-covered surfaces so that they serve as drainage routes for excess water. The mulch must not be covered with dirt, sand, or leaves, or otherwise damaged by digging. Paths must be kept open and free of obstacles at all time.
- 2) Bags of mulch, fertilizer, etc. must not be placed on pathways, and they may not remain on the plot for longer than 14 days.

D. Debris Management: Compost bins or piles may not be built or maintained anywhere on the LWVA property, *to include its' woodlands*. Gardeners must dispose of dead vegetation, weeds, and roots, in the containers behind each shed.

- 1) **All non-organic material (pots, stakes, tools, plastic bags, netting, fencing, tarps, and other debris) must be placed in or next to the refuse bins behind each shed.**
- 2) *Dead vegetation must not be piled or dumped in other areas of surrounding woodlands.*
Piles of non-composted vegetation do not deteriorate effectively, and adversely impact the native ecosystem, and mar the beauty of surrounding LWVA woodlands.
- 3) Rocks may be placed inconspicuously in the woods.

E. Inactive Plots: LWVA garden plots provide residents with an opportunity to grow plants that, generally, would not be viable indoors. *Gardeners who rent plots must work the plots.* LWVA Management, in consultation with Gardening Club officers, will reclaim a plot not showing substantial evidence of being worked by May 15, weather permitting. Thereafter, if a garden plot is not worked or maintained for 4 consecutive weeks of the growing season, LWVA Management, in consultation with Gardening Club officers, will reclaim the plot. Reclamation of a plot may result in potential fines to be established by LWVA Management.

- Tarpaulin covers, in the form of fabric, black plastic, or other weed preventative garden-cloth material may be placed over a garden plot in order to contain weeds. If a Gardener elects not to grow plants, but wishes to keep the tarp on the plot, the Gardener must cover the tarp with at least 1 inch of mulch within 14 days of placing the tarp on the plot. The mulch must be maintained so the tarp will be visually unobtrusive and blend in with the overall garden landscape.

F. Prohibitions on Chemical Herbicides/Pesticides: Most LWVA gardens contain plots where vegetables and fruits are grown for consumption. *The use of chemical herbicides and pesticides*

can harm fellow Gardeners and LWVA residents, owing to their toxicity. Further these chemicals damage the native ecosystem, sicken wildlife and pets. **All chemical herbicides, pesticides and fungicides -- to include but not limited to -- Knockout, Preen, Off, RoundUp, and Sevin, are strictly forbidden for use in LWVA gardens since they contain toxic materials that pose both human and environmental health risks.** Organic herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides may be used sparingly, and only when needed.

G. Plantings: Gardeners most commonly plant vegetables fruits and flowers. The LWVA Gardening Club encourages the use of native plants whenever possible since these are generally less disease-prone, less disruptive to the ecosystem, and support butterflies, native pollinators, birds and other wildlife. To ensure all LWVA Gardeners can derive enjoyment from their garden plots, Gardeners agree to comply with the following guidelines.

- 1) Gardeners must consider the effect of plant height on neighboring plots. Plants exceeding 4 feet must ~~be~~ not unduly shade ~~of~~ nearby plots.
- 2) **No trees or shrubs may be planted or allowed to grow voluntarily in garden plots.** Dwarf varieties of plants are acceptable, ***provided the following:*** *they are trimmed and neatly kept throughout the growing season and winter, and in no way interfere with neighboring gardens.* Gardeners who choose to plant a dwarf shrub are responsible for removing the shrub upon the transfer of their plot to another Gardener.
- 3) Plantings of invasive vines, and of any plant with invasive root systems (mint, ivy, etc.), *is permitted on a limited basis only: All plants with spreading or invasive roots must be confined to a solid pot (with no holes for drainage). Plants and roots must not be allowed to extend beyond the confines of the pot. If buried in the ground, the pot must be buried no deeper than within two inches of the rim.*
- 4) Overwintering of perennials, annuals and herbs is acceptable, but plants **must be trimmed and neatly kept to a 4-foot maximum during winter months.** Any dead growth on perennial or annual plants that have finished producing, must be removed or cut back promptly. **All perennials, annuals, and herbs must be cut back by December 1.**
- 5) Plantings shall not extend beyond the garden plot's wooden beams and must not block pathways. Plantings must not appear cluttered or become an eyesore. All dead flowers, leaves and vegetation must be removed promptly.

H. Water: Water and garden hoses that reach every plot are supplied by LWVA for Gardeners' use, weather permitting. After watering, Gardeners must shut off water to economize on its use, and to avoid damage to nearby gardens or common areas. Gardeners are expected to return and coil the hose, free of any kinks around the hose reels. Should garden hoses or taps become damaged or broken, Gardeners should advise the LWVA Management Office.

I. Garden Sheds and Tools: A shed for the storage of community garden tools only is located near each of the gardens behind Riverbend, Blue Ridge, and Potomac Ridge buildings, respectively. Garden sheds contain community tools that Gardeners are free to use in the maintenance of their gardens.

- 1) Gardeners wishing to use the sheds will be **charged a minimal fee to cover the expense of making keys and locks.**
- 2) Garden sheds must be locked after each use.
- 3) Gardeners must not use garden sheds for the storage of personal items or tools. When personal items are discovered, they will be disposed of immediately.
- 4) Gardeners must return all tools to the shed after each use, in clean, reusable shape.
- 5) Community tools must not be left on garden plots; this exposes tools to the elements, and deteriorates them.

J. Fall Cleanup: To avoid gardens becoming an eyesore over the winter, Gardeners are required to remove all fencing, debris, cages, flower pots, stakes and tools from their plots. Plots must be cleared of all dead and dying plants and leaves, and perennials must be appropriately pruned/cut back for the winter. *All Fall cleanup of gardens must be accomplished no later than **December 1.***

*Between December 1 and December 5, Gardening Club Officers will inspect the garden plots and will note any garden plot holders who have not completed fall cleanup in compliance with this Policy Resolution. If a plot is not in compliance, LWVA Management will then notify the Gardener, in writing, of any violations found. **If the plot remains in violation after 10 days of notice being given, LWVA Management, in consultation with Gardening Club officers, will contact the Gardener to ascertain the reason for the Gardener's failure to bring the plot into***

compliance. Should the Gardener be permanently unwilling or unable to bring the plot into compliance, it will result in forfeiture of the Gardener's plot for the upcoming growing season in addition to fines to be established by LWVA Management.

K. Late Autumn/Winter Gardening: Gardeners who have been approved to work a plot for another year, may grow winter crops, or cover crops to improve the soil on their plot.

- 1) If a winter Gardener wishes to protect plantings from deer and other predators, netting and stakes **not to exceed 3 feet in height** may be employed. **Once winter crops have been harvested, the Gardener must remove all netting and stakes promptly** to ensure wildlife does not become ensnared.
- 2) *Gardeners are expected to remove dead leaves and other debris resulting from their winter crops or perennials throughout the winter.*