

# Northampton Community Garden

## NEW GARDENER PLOT REGISTRATION / 2022

The Northampton Community Garden is located on Burts Pit Road, just west of Village Hill. The Garden is a program of the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department and is managed by that department, along with a volunteer Garden Committee.

### HERE'S WHAT THE GARDEN PROVIDES

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- Use of a (roughly) 20 ft. x 20 ft. plot
- Access to water at shared spigots
- Access to communal tools, carts, and hand-powered mowers
- Free wood chips and rock dust
- Four issues of the Garden Newsletter (PDF on our website)
- Workshops on gardening topics
- Advice, support, and companionship of other Gardeners

### EACH GARDENER AGREES TO

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- Pay a fee for the use of a plot, as shown on the Registration page
- Abide by the attached Garden Rules and Guidelines
- Abide by Garden deadlines as listed in the Newsletter and on our web site
- Contribute two hours of work on a community project in the Garden for a first plot
- Display a legible, visible sign (easy to find and easy to read) in your plot, showing your plot number
- Follow COVID-19 guidelines, for the safety of all

First-year Gardeners are limited to a single plot per household.

**Orientation for new gardeners** (usually in April) will be announced. We don't know yet whether we will be able to hold a gathering this year.

We look forward to seeing you in the Garden! The Garden Committee / [www.nohogarden.org](http://www.nohogarden.org)

Northampton Community Garden  
c/o Northampton Parks and Recreation Department  
100A Bridge Road / Florence, MA 01062



*Failure to follow these rules and guidelines may result in the loss of your plot and fees.*

### **NO SMOKING**

- The Garden is a smoke-free zone.
- Cigarette butts must not be discarded in compost because of the danger from tobacco mosaic virus.

### **DOGS**

- Northampton law requires dogs to be restrained by a leash at all times.
- Your dog must not be permitted to enter others' Garden plots.
- Your dog must not threaten or jump on other Gardeners
- Please put your dog's waste in the dumpster — NOT in the compost.

### **NO PARKING**

- Cars may not be parked on the grass roads or paths within the Garden.
- You may use a car to deliver material to your plot, but please move it immediately.

### **NO LOUD NOISE**

Many people come to the Garden to enjoy the peace and quiet of nature.

- Please limit phone use to necessary calls only; keep calls short and quiet.
- Please keep radios and conversations to low volume.
- Headphones for radios are a good option.

### **SIGNS**

Every plot must have a legible, visible sign showing the plot number.

- Creativity is encouraged, but the number must be 1 1/2" tall or larger, and the number must be at least 18" off the ground.
- Your sign must be **easy to find** and **easy to read** when volunteer inspectors come through the garden during the season.

### **FOOTPATHS AND PLOT BOUNDARIES**

Each plot is roughly 20 feet x 20 feet. Most plots are arranged in blocks of four. Each block is bordered by a footpath.

- Grass borders around the outer edge of plots must be a minimum width of 2 feet.
- Mowers often can't reach right to the edges of plots, so Gardeners are responsible for keeping the grass immediately touching their plot borders trimmed to a height of no more than 3 inches.
- Do not extend your plot(s) into the footpath.
- Plants, structures, tools, compost piles, tools, hoses, and other impedimenta must NOT intrude on the footpath.

### **BOUNDARIES WITHIN A BLOCK OF FOUR PLOTS**

You should establish the boundaries between plots with your neighbors in the block.

- You may mark them with stakes or create a narrow path.
- Be sure you know where your plot meets your neighbors' plots. Ask before you dig or plant.

### **MOWING**

- Mowing of common paths and common areas is managed by the Mowing Team.
- Only trained Mowing Team members are authorized to use the Garden's power mowers.
- Please keep the edges of your plot(s) tidy, so mowers can get as close as possible to the border of your plot.

## GUIDELINES FOR PLANTING

No new trees.

- If you have existing trees or shrubs in your plot, you are responsible for making sure they do not impede the Garden pathways or create shade in neighboring plots. If you have new “volunteer” trees popping up in your plots, please remove them while they are still small and easy to manage. Any trees and/or shrubs that impede movement in the Garden will be pruned by Garden maintenance teams as necessary.

Plantings must not encroach on your neighbors’ plots.

- Put spreading plants like brambles, mint, oregano, or comfrey in the interior of your plot, not on the edges. Anything that grows into a path or into another Gardener’s plot may be pulled out.

Do not plant “invasive” plants.

- The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group has identified 66 plant species as invasive in Massachusetts. If you’re not sure whether something is on the invasives list, please check one of these sites before planting: [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) or [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org), and search for “Invasive Plant” List. Invasives include, but are not limited to, Garlic mustard; Asian or Asiatic bittersweet; Purple loosestrife; and Multiflora rose.

Do not plant Jerusalem artichokes or Miscanthus grasses.

- Once planted, they are almost impossible to eliminate.

## PLOT MAINTENANCE / INSPECTIONS

Teams of volunteers will conduct three scheduled inspections to be sure plots are cultivated and are not being overtaken by weeds, including ragweed.

If you find you need to give up a plot during the season, please notify the Garden Committee as soon as you can so that it can be reassigned.

- Plots must be cultivated by **June 1**. During the **Early June Inspection**, we check to be sure that all plots are under cultivation. Cultivation of your plot must be obvious. If not, you risk the loss of your plot.
- The **July Mid-Season Inspection** checks for ragweed and other weeds. Plots must be free of ragweed, and all other weeds must be under control. If inspectors find ragweed in your plot, it will be tagged. Tagged ragweed and any additional ragweed in your plot must be removed within two weeks, or you risk the loss of your plot.
- The **October Fall Inspection** checks that plots have been cleaned for winter. A plot cannot be renewed for the next gardening season unless it has passed this inspection. All plots registered to the same Gardener must be cleaned at the end of the season, even if the Gardener plans to register for only some of the plots in the following year.
- **Fall plot cleaning** includes removing dead and/or diseased plant matter; cutting down weeds; cutting down sunflowers or vines; trimming or cleaning perennial foliage where appropriate; cutting off seed heads; removing tools, pails, buckets, watering cans, trash, pots, plastic chairs, etc.; closing up and stowing bags of mulch or compost; securing plastic or other mulch materials; removing or laying flat any tomato cages, stakes, or bird baths; securing trellises, arbors, bird houses, etc.; draining and taking home hoses (or coiling neatly and stowing); trimming plot edges; checking that sign with plot number(s) is in legible, visible condition.
- **If a plot becomes overgrown** at any time (i.e., more weeds than cultivated plants), the Gardener will be contacted and asked to establish a date for clearing the weeds. If not, you risk the loss of your plot.

## PLANTINGS IN A PLOT BELONG TO THE REGISTERED GARDENER

- If a Gardener does not plan to return for the following season, remaining plants must be removed by the Fall Inspection date, or the plants will become the property of the next season’s registered Gardener
- If a plot is reassigned during the season, any plants remaining in plot become the property of the Gardener to whom the plot is reassigned.

## PRODUCE IS FOR PERSONAL CONSUMPTION ONLY

The City prohibits the use of your Community Garden plot to grow plants or produce for sale.

## **ORGANIC IS PREFERRED**

The Garden encourages Gardeners to use organic practices and urges the use of the least toxic methods to control insects and weeds.

## **PLEASE CONSERVE WATER**

The Garden pays for all the City water we use, so Gardeners are encouraged to limit water use.

- Water your plot only when necessary, and mulch your plants to reduce the amount of water needed.
- Gardeners using hoses or soaker hoses must be present during watering; no sprinklers are allowed.
- When multiple Gardeners wish to use a water spigot, watering cans take precedence over hoses or soaker hoses, and hand-held hoses take precedence over soaker hoses.
- Do NOT use Garden water for washing cars or filling wading ponds.

## **PLOT FEES, REGISTRATIONS, AND TRANSFERS**

- A plot may not be worked until completed Registration forms and fees have been received by the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department.
- All Garden fees are non-refundable.
- First-year Gardeners are limited to a single plot per household. You may add one plot per year, after the first year, so long as your plot(s) is well maintained.
- Returning Gardeners may register for a maximum of four plots per household.
- City of Northampton residents (who live in Northampton, Florence, or Leeds, with zip codes 01060, 01062, or 01053) pay Garden fees as set by the Garden Committee and the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department. Gardeners who do NOT reside in Northampton pay a surcharge.
- Only one Gardener may register for a plot. The status and residence of that person determines the applicable fee. That person is responsible for observing all applicable Garden rules; that person will receive all Garden mailings. However, more than one person may garden in a plot.
- Registration may be transferred from one Gardener only to the other Gardener listed on the registration form, by written request to [lcochran@gmail.com](mailto:lcochran@gmail.com) or [bwolfson.nohogarden@gmail.com](mailto:bwolfson.nohogarden@gmail.com) or to the Parks and Recreation Department. All other plot assignments are made through the Garden Committee.

## **HANDLE GARDEN WASTE APPROPRIATELY**

- Gardeners are encouraged to maintain compost piles within their plot(s). Please compost only garden-based plant and vegetable material, and cover fresh compost with soil to discourage animals. Do not bring kitchen or animal waste to your compost pile.
- Compostable material may be added to the two common compost areas. Compost piles are for plant and non-diseased vegetable material produced in the garden only. Do NOT add household or animal waste to the common compost areas.
- Large or woody plants and brush, including sunflower stalks, brambles, and anything with thorns, must be placed in the brush pile just east of the wood chips.
- Do NOT put compostable materials in the brush pile.
- All other non-compostable material must be placed in the dumpster in the northeast part of the Garden. This includes metal, plastic, wood, glass, and paper, as well as diseased plant material. The dumpster company requires that we put all vegetation in plastic bags before throwing it into the dumpster. Leave nothing outside the dumpster!
- Durable garden materials in good condition such as tomato cages, bricks, and large stones may be left along the west outer wall of the Garden Shed for other Gardeners to re-use. Materials left in this space may be taken freely by registered Gardeners.
- Waste may not be placed anywhere else, including in paths or over the hill to the north of the Garden.

## **TOOLS, GARDEN CARTS, AND WHEELBARROWS ARE SHARED RESOURCES**

- Please use carts *only* when transporting material; then return to the central area.
- Please borrow tools *only* while you are actually using them.

## **NO BIRD FEEDERS**

- Bird feed attracts bears to the Garden, so they are prohibited. Bird houses are okay.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE IS REQUIRED**

- The registered Gardener for each plot (s) is responsible for completing two hours of work on Community Service projects for the first plot, plus one hour for each additional plot.
- Service projects include participation in clean-up days, mowing, helping at registration, being part of an inspection team, maintaining tools, writing for the Newsletter, or other activities agreed upon by the Gardener and the Garden Committee.
- Registered Gardeners will be contacted about service opportunities by Garden Committee coordinators for mowing, maintaining compost, inspection, etc.
- You may record your hours worked by responding to a prompt in our e-mail reminders.

## **THE GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

is the official means by which the Garden Committee and the Parks and Recreation Department communicate with Gardeners.

- Gardeners are expected to be aware of information (changes in the Garden Rules, deadlines for inspections and registration, etc.) published in the Newsletter.
- Gardeners are responsible for notifying the Garden Committee of changes in e-mail and postal addresses, so that the Newsletter and Garden Committee mailings will reach them.

## **THE GARDEN COMMITTEE**

The Northampton Community Garden is a program of the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department and is managed by the Garden Committee, made up of volunteer Gardeners, in conjunction with the Rec. Department. The Rec. Department reserves the right to approve Garden Committee members.

The Garden Committee is a working group; each member manages one or more aspects of the Garden, such as Mowing, Water and Hoses, Inspections, Trees, Website, Newsletter, etc.

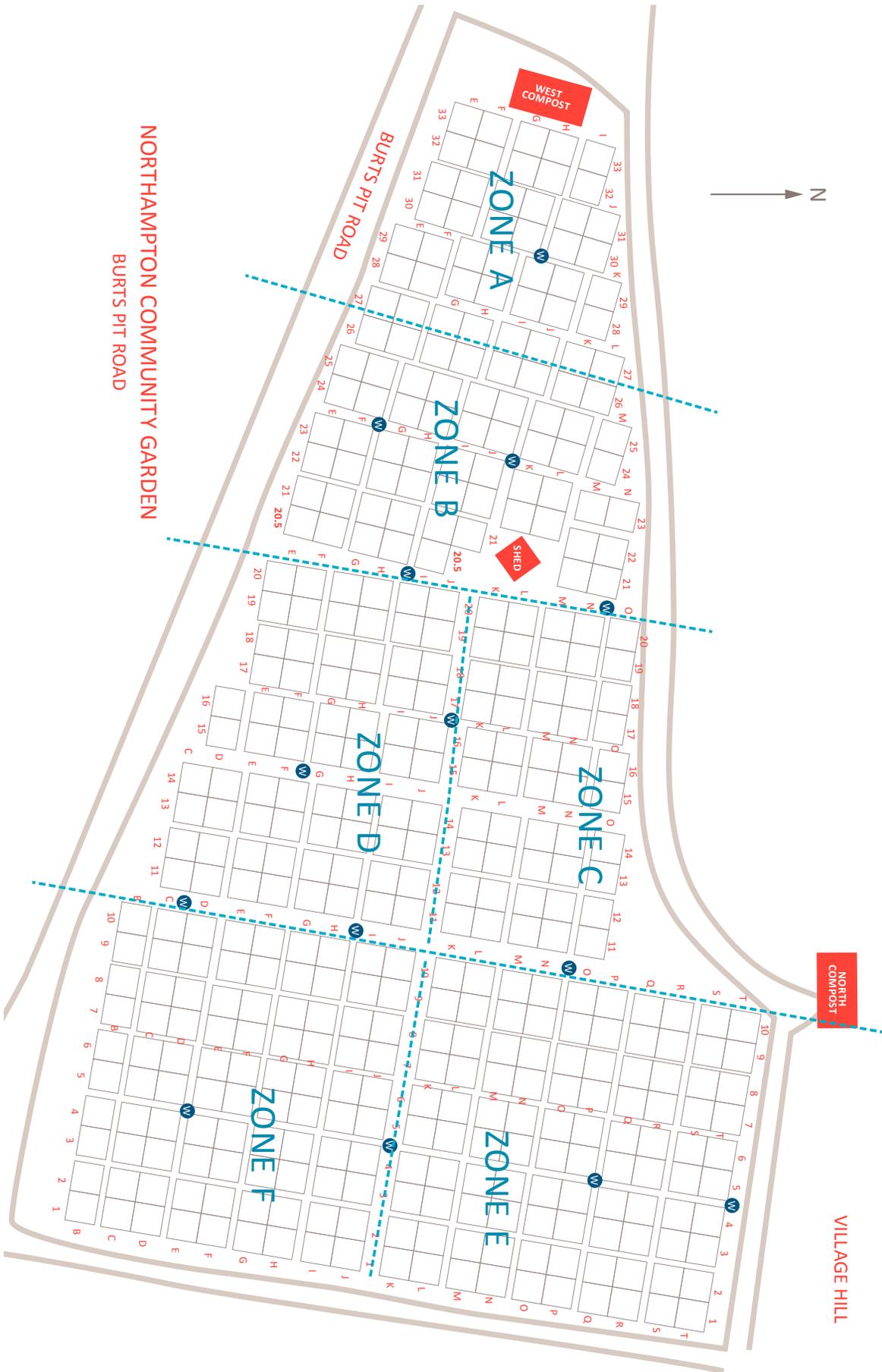
These rules and guidelines cannot account for every situation that may arise. The Garden Committee, in concert with the Parks and Recreation Department, is responsible for resolving any questions about the applicability of rules in a particular situation.

If you have questions, please e-mail them to the Garden Committee (Larri Cochran and Betsey Wolfson, Chairs) at [noho-garden@googlegroups.com](mailto:noho-garden@googlegroups.com) or leave a message with the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department ([recreation@northamptonma.gov](mailto:recreation@northamptonma.gov) or 413-587-1040).

A member of the Garden Committee will get back to you.

## **PLEASE NOTE**

These rules and regulations are subject to change.



**NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN / PLOT REGISTRATION**

➤ **PLEASE SIGN & RETURN**

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PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Today's Date .....

PRIMARY GARDENER.....

Address.....  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

Contact\* .....  
E-MAIL PRIMARY PHONE SECOND PHONE

SECOND GARDENER (in same plot, if any) .....

Address.....  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

Contact\* .....  
E-MAIL PRIMARY PHONE SECOND PHONE

\*We will contact you by **e-mail** whenever possible.  
 I do not use e-mail. Please contact me by **U.S. mail**.

**REGISTRATION FEES**

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- Garden plot ..... \$ 25 .....
- OR – A Northampton\* resident **65 or over** may register for a plot for..... \$ 10 .....
- Please list birthdate.....
- Non-resident\*\* surcharge (pay once each year) ..... \$ 10 .....
- Total .....

Northampton residents may qualify for financial assistance (for a maximum of **two plots**).  
A confidential application form is available at the Northampton Parks and Recreation Department.  
\*“Northampton residents” live in Northampton, Florence, or Leeds, in zip codes 01060, 01062, or 01053.

**To help us select the best available plot for you**, please answer the following questions.

Do you have children who will be joining you at the garden?.....

Would you prefer a plot near parking?.....

Do you have difficulty walking?.....

Do you prefer shade or sun in your plot? .....

A copy of the Garden Rules and Guidelines is included in this packet.

Please read the rules carefully; then sign the statements below.

I have read, I understand, and I agree to abide by Northampton Community Garden Guidelines and Rules.

Signature(s) ..... Date .....

**RECREATIONAL AND VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES RELEASE FORM**

I, the undersigned, do hereby consent to my participation in voluntary or recreation programs of the City of Northampton.

I also agree to forever release the City of Northampton, and all their employees, agents, board members, volunteers and any and all individuals and organizations assisting or participating in any voluntary or recreation programs of the City of Northampton from any and all claims, rights of action and causes of action that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from personal injuries to myself or property damage resulting from my participation in the City of Northampton voluntary activities or programs.

I also promise, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all legal claims and proceedings of any description that may have been asserted in the past, or may be asserted in the future, directly or indirectly, arising from personal injuries to myself or property damage resulting from participation in the City of Northampton voluntary activities or recreation programs.

I further affirm that I have read this Consent and Release Form and that I understand the contents of this Form. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to choose not to participate in said programs. By signing this form, I affirm that I have decided to participate in the City as a volunteer or in its recreation programs with full knowledge that the Releasees will not be liable to anyone for personal injuries and property damage that I may suffer in voluntary activities with the City of Northampton or recreation programs.

Signature of Participant, or Parent/Legal Guardian if under 18 years old:

Signature(s) ..... Date .....

**NEWSLETTER**

The Community Garden Newsletter is the means by which important information is communicated to Gardeners. The Newsletter is published four times per season. You'll receive an e-mail announcement when each issue is ready for downloading. E-mails are sent from the "Northampton Parks and Recreation Department." Look for the subject heading "Greetings from the Community Garden."

Gardeners are responsible for promptly downloading the newsletter.

**Please notify the Garden Committee about changes to your e-mail or postal address.**

If you do not use e-mail or are unable to access the newsletter from our website, we will send you a hard copy by U.S. mail.

A calendar of Garden events is posted, and all Newsletters are available at: [www.nohogarden.org](http://www.nohogarden.org).

**COMMITMENT TO LEAVE A CLEAN PLOT**

I understand that it is my (our) responsibility as a Community Gardener(s) to leave my plot(s) in good condition — according to the guidelines for Fall Cleanup — when I give up the plot(s).

Signature(s) ..... Date .....