

Southside/Los Sures Community Garden Bylaws - 2014

Article I. Name and Purpose

The name of this organization shall be called Southside Community Garden (SCG). It is also known as Los Sures Community Garden. The Garden is located at the corner of S. 4th Street and Hewes Street in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

The purpose of SCG is to promote, create, and maintain sustainable green space in Southside Williamsburg, and to encourage community involvement in neighborhood improvement efforts through gardening, educational workshops, and recreational events.

This is a community-led organization working in conjunction with Southside United H.D.F.C., also known as Los Sures, which seeks to serve the Southside Williamsburg neighborhood.

Article II. Membership and Dues

Membership shall be available to any household that agrees to subscribe to the Bylaws of SCG. A membership is for a single household or organization. "Member and membership" are used interchangeably throughout this document.

Memberships shall run from April 1 through December 31 of each year, but members may join at any time during the year.

Inability to pay membership dues should not prevent any member of the community from joining the SCG. Please notify the board if you are unable to pay.

Members are invited to attend all membership meetings (see Article VI) and agree to be on the membership email list, which includes garden updates, scheduling notices, etc.

Each membership shall be entitled to one vote in matters concerning revisions to the bylaws or other issues put before the general membership of SCG for approval by the Advisory Board.

The garden offers two types of membership: General and Private-bed Membership.

1. General Membership

- General membership is open to all.
- General members have access to all the benefits of the garden, such as composting, workshops, and contributing to the design and organization of the garden.
- Suggested dues for general members are \$10 per year paid at the beginning of the season or when membership begins.
- General members must commit to 2 hours of volunteer work during garden open hours.
- Members must comply with all garden bylaws.

2. Private-bed Membership

- Private-bed membership is limited.
- Private-bed members have access to all the benefits of the garden—such as composting, workshops, and contributing to the design and organization of the garden—in addition to receiving a private bed for their own use.
- Private-bed members must commit to maintaining one's own private bed (see article III) in addition to general maintenance of the common area (see article IV).
- Suggested dues for Private-bed members are \$20 per year, paid at the beginning of the season.
- Members will receive a key to the garden and the combination to the shed.
- Private-bed members must commit to 4 hours of volunteer work during garden open hours to help with the general upkeep of the garden.
- Members must comply with all garden bylaws.
- Failure to fulfill any part of this commitment will result in the loss of the private bed.

Article III. Private Garden Beds

- Individual garden beds will be assigned in the early spring by the Membership Coordinator and are based on availability and garden participation. Returning members are given first priority.
- Permanent beds must be used for growing produce and edible plants, as well as flowering plants.
- Individual garden beds must be planted by May 1st and maintained through the entire growing season. Any individual bed left unattended or not properly maintained for a month or more will be turned over to the Coordinators for reassignment.
- Private bed members are responsible for switching with another member if unable to complete their scheduled volunteer hours. However, each member must still fulfill a total of 4 hours per month.
- Members are invited to stay beyond their scheduled volunteer hours as they wish, but are still required to fulfill their scheduled slot on the calendar. i.e. if Member A is scheduled for April 20 11-1pm & April 27 11-1pm, but in the moment chooses stay the whole day on April 20, they are still required to show up on April 27, unless otherwise given approval for transfer of hours.
- If private bed members (per household) fail to meet their 4 scheduled hours of service per month, and/or fail twice to find a replacement on the day they are assigned a duty, they will be forced to forfeit their bed. One warning will be issued after one month of neglected responsibilities and/or two failures to find a replacement for one's assigned volunteer day. If the member still takes no action within two weeks after this warning, his/her private bed will be revoked.
- No members shall take any plants or produce from an individual's bed without the permission of the bed holder.
- Should there be more demand for private beds than there are available beds, there will be a waiting list and beds will be assigned when/if they open up during the season. Members on the waiting list are invited to use the shared community bed for the growing of produce.
- The Board of Coordinators reserves the right to bypass the waitlist for those who meet the following criteria:
 - o Taken extra initiative in the garden, whether it be on special projects or overall garden maintenance and care.
 - o Been a regular and frequent volunteer at the garden.

Article IV. Common Areas

Six communal beds will be available for the growing of edible plants. All community members are allowed to plant and harvest produce from the communal beds. One of these beds is reserved for children only.

Small, annual plantings may be sown in communal areas by garden members, using their best judgment and with the understanding that the planting is not permanent. Garden members should place a sign in the planting area stating what they planted. This will prevent the plants from being weeded, planted over or otherwise immediately destroyed. Plants sown in the communal areas are just that: communal. Any garden member may harvest a modest amount of flowers or other plant life cultivated in communal parts of the garden.

Golden Rule of Communal Gardening: If you aren't sure what a certain plant is or what it requires, please ask a Garden Coordinator before you pull it out/prune it/move it.

Proposals for large annual plantings and perennial plantings should be brought to a garden meeting to discuss design, process, funding, maintenance and other project details. No large annual planting or perennial planting should take place until it has been discussed at a garden meeting.

The Garden Coordinators will have an annual garden maintenance plan that takes into account the common areas of the garden, existing and proposed projects, and projects in design and/or construction. These maintenance activities will be divided into large and small tasks. The large tasks will be assigned to garden workdays. The small tasks will be posted on the bulletin board and on the inside of the shed door, and garden members and volunteers should check this list of small tasks during open hours and other times that they are in the garden.

Article V. Garden Policies

- Open Hours – Each member shall sign up and maintain 2 open hours per month throughout the season. Private bedholders must sign up for an additional 2 hours per month. It is the responsibility of each member to find a replacement if they are unable to perform their open hours. Failure to maintain open hours is grounds for membership termination.
- Organic Gardening – No pesticide, herbicides or non-organic fertilizers may be used in the garden. No treated wood may be used for garden beds. We use only organic growing practices.
- Composting – SCG has a public composting area. Gardeners are encouraged to compost kitchen scraps and yard waste materials. Please follow the guidelines posted in the composting area.
- Children – Toddlers and very young children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. Children up to ages 15 must be accompanied by an adult when gardening.
- Animals – Pets are not allowed in the Southside Community Garden, unless they are on a leash. If a pet is disturbing the garden or endangering plants in any way, the pet's owner will be asked to take the pet outside the garden. Owners are responsible for cleaning up after pets.
- Alcohol – Alcohol is prohibited inside the garden.
- Smoking – Smoking is prohibited inside the garden.
- Probation & Termination – Failure to comply with all garden bylaws is grounds for probation. The Board of Coordinators, in accordance with the seriousness of the offense, will determine the member's status. Membership may be terminated for serious offenses.
- End of Season – All individual beds must be cleared of old plants at the end of the season and either mulched or planted with cover crop. All members are expected to assist with 'closing' the garden by cleaning equipment, storing items and removing waste at the end of season workday.
- Gatherings – Active members in good standing are welcome to use the garden for small gatherings upon approval by the Advisory Board. Members holding large gatherings (20-30 people) must provide notice to all garden members before the event. A small fee and deposit will be charged. Member must sign a written contract agreeing to respect garden rules, clean the space, and properly dispose of trash.
- Grievances – All grievances are to be brought to the Board of Coordinators for resolution. If the Board of Coordinators cannot come to a resolution, they may take the concern to the Advisory Board.

Article VI. Meetings of Members

A membership meeting will be held three times per garden season during garden open hours. At this time, members can bring their concerns or ideas before the membership board for consideration by the Advisory Board who will have the final vote on all matters.

Special meetings may be called by a Coordinator on issues related to his or her coordinator responsibilities.

Meeting minutes will be kept and emailed to members within 2 weeks of the meetings.

If ideas or concerns arise from a member, that member may take the idea or concern to the appropriate

Coordinator for consideration.

3 or more members may call a meeting with a Coordinator.

Article VII. Garden Boards

SCG shall be comprised of two boards: the Advisory Board and the Board of Coordinators.

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board consists of two representatives from the garden and a representative of Los Sures. The Advisory Board will meet three times per garden season to discuss the broad agenda for the garden season including special garden design projects, community outreach goals, and special events. The Advisory Board oversees the garden's proper usage and has final vote on all major garden concerns. The Advisory Board's chief concern is to maintain the vision for SCG in its unique position to serve the diverse population of Southside Williamsburg.

The Los Sures representative may veto any major decisions that permanently and/or significantly alter the property, or that are related to issues of liability, insurance, and safety.

Special meetings may be called by a Coordinator or Advisory Board Member.

Each organization is responsible for electing their representative for the Advisory Board each year. The Board of Coordinators will elect the garden's representatives by majority vote.

The Board of Coordinators

The Board of Coordinators shall consist of 5 or more garden members who are regularly working at the garden and heavily involved in its life and community on a weekly basis. These coordinators will ensure smooth operations of the garden, oversee general upkeep and progress of the garden, as well as provide a liaison between all garden members and the Advisory Board. The Board of Coordinators represents the membership and will bring all major concerns and requests before the Advisory Board on the membership's behalf for approval by the Advisory Board. All other decisions that are not major and will not have a large or long-term effect on the garden will be determined by a Coordinator vote and shall require only a simple majority of the Coordinators present at any Coordinator board meeting. Coordinators may also establish and abolish standing and special committees, and consider new Coordinator roles for the next season. Coordinators will meet three times throughout the garden season.

The Coordinators share leadership responsibility for smooth operations in the following areas:

Grounds:

- overseeing the general maintenance and upkeep of the garden grounds, structures, and tools, as well as managing garden access, use, and common area design ideas.
- posting relevant info on the garden shed, communicating specific needs that require attention, and directing various work efforts during open hours.
- managing the garden compost site, making sure proper scraps are being dropped off and members are providing proper care for the bins.

Membership:

- compiling membership registration forms, overseeing and assigning individual plots and garden keys, and overseeing/enforcing commitment to open hours.

Communications:

- internal communications to garden members as well as publicity efforts on behalf of the garden.
- emailing members with weekly updates, keeping minutes for all board and member meetings, updating twitter, facebook, and the website, distributing flyers for events, and generally keeping the garden community well-informed.

Special Projects:

- managing and overseeing execution of all major projects happening in the garden, such as construction, landscaping, etc.

Finances:

- for all distributions and collections for the garden.
- maintaining accurate records of financial matters.
- collecting receipts and submitting them to Los Sures for reimbursement as well as ensuring the petty-cash fund is always replenished.
- fundraising.

Outreach & Events:

- inviting residents of the neighborhood to be a part of the garden and to attend events.
- organizing all garden events, such as potlucks, workshops, games, etc.
- developing strong relationships with community garden/urban farm related organizations and work to broaden the scope of the garden's impact of the Southside Williamsburg community.

Coordinators serve a one-year term and are eligible for re-election. Elections of Coordinators shall be held annually at November's general meeting by secret ballot, with each membership having one vote for each elected office. A member who wishes to hold a Coordinator position may submit a nomination form to the current Board of Coordinators.

Article VIII. Treasury

The Southside Community Garden shall maintain a treasury for common area development and other garden projects. The primary treasury will be in possession of Los Sures. An additional treasury will be set aside for petty cash that is immediately accessible by the Financial Coordinator. This petty-cash treasury will have \$500 in it, and will be constantly replenished by Los Sures, who will receive receipts and ledgers for all expenses.

Itemized receipts must be presented to the Financial Coordinator in advance of reimbursement.

Article IX. Standing Committees

The Board of Coordinators shall create committees as needed and appoint all committee chairs. Upon establishment, committees do not make final decisions, but they bring suggestions and recommendations to the Board of Coordinators for consideration.

Article X. Amendments

These bylaws and the rules and regulations of Southside Community Garden may be amended when approved by two thirds of the Board of Coordinators and a majority vote by the Advisory board. Prior to the vote, notice of the changes shall be available to the members.