

Warren St. Marks Community Garden

623 Warren Street/94 St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn, NY
11217

Block 0934, Lots 19, 66, 68

See wsgarden.org for mailing address and other contact information.

[Revised March 2015]

Welcome! In the 1980s the Warren St. Marks Community Garden was transformed from a vacant lot full of debris into a peaceful and vibrant garden thanks to the volunteer work of people in this community.

We rely on each and every member to help with planting, weeding, watering and other chores to maintain this lush green, and to keep our gates open to the general public on a regular basis.

The deed to our garden is held by a land trust, the Brooklyn Alliance of Neighborhood Gardens, or BANG! We are part of the land trust itself, and have a representative and alternate on its board. We follow its bylaws, which are available on our website.

MISSION STATEMENT

We promote and protect green space in our neighborhood, provide a safe and beautiful place to garden and to learn gardening skills, and promote community by providing neighborhood residents with a place to meet and work together.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to anyone 18 years or older. A member in good standing honors the bylaws and rules, pays an annual fee, participates in the care of the garden as prescribed in bylaws and rules, and helps make decisions that benefit the garden group.

The annual fee and Garden Rules are approved at the Annual General Membership Meeting and posted for each year's growing season. These are subject to change during the course of the year by vote of the steering committee. Members in good standing – those who have fulfilled the above requirements for the preceding year – may renew. Those who did not meet the previous year's commitments must return to good standing according to the garden's rules before they can renew.

Types of Memberships

Individual.

An individual member gets one key and one vote and joins one team.

Household.

A household membership encompasses those living in the same residential unit. The household membership gets one vote and one key, and is responsible for joining one team. Any and all members of the household can contribute to the team.

Institutional.

Groups like schools and religious and civic organizations may join. The institutional member gets one vote and one key, and is responsible for joining one team. Any and all members of the institutional group can contribute to the team.

The terms “member” or “membership” apply equally to individual, household, and institutional members.

In the case of a household or institutional membership, the person who signs the registration form will be responsible for the household or institution.

BYLAWS OF THE WARREN ST. MARKS COMMUNITY GARDEN

ARTICLE 1: ORGANIZATION & GOVERNANCE

Section 1.1 Steering Committee. Volunteer coordinators oversee the garden as part of a steering committee that promotes the garden's mission. All members participate on work teams whose leaders report to coordinators.

Major decisions are made by the entire garden community and by consensus whenever possible.

Section 1.2. Composition. The Steering Committee includes but need not be limited to (1) an administrator and (2) treasurer and coordinators for (3) the garden, and (4) membership. At least one position must be filled by a resident of the garden's immediate block.

Section 1.3. Eligibility. Any member in good standing is encouraged to seek a spot on the Steering Committee, whose members are elected at the annual General Membership Meeting.

Section 1.4. Replacements. Should a coordinator step down during the growing season, the Steering Committee may vote in a replacement. The vote, like other matters of significance, requires the participation of a majority of the coordinators.

Members will be informed of such votes ahead of time, so that they may participate in the discussions.

Section 1.5. All members in good standing are welcome to attend and/or propose agenda items at Steering Committee meetings.

Section 2.1 Deed-holder. Our garden also holds a board position on the Brooklyn Alliance of Neighborhood Gardens. Our garden's BANG representative or alternate attends the umbrella group's monthly meetings and operates as a conduit for information to and from the garden. The BANG representative and alternate are invited and encouraged to attend steering committee meetings.

Section 3.1 Environmental Guidelines. We are responsible to our environment. We compost (except for invasive weeds), and we do not use non-organic pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers.

Section 4.1: Annual Meeting. Our most important decisions take place at the Annual General Membership Meeting. Decisions and actions of the previous year are reviewed. Ideas for the future are solicited and discussed. Elections for the Steering Committee are held, as well as for the BANG representative and alternate. A plan for the coming year is laid out. A budget is approved.

Section 4.2. Revisions to bylaws. Any revisions to bylaws and garden rules are reviewed along with other matters of significance.

Section 4.3. Voting. All members and prospective members are invited and encouraged to attend, but voting is reserved for members in good standing. A majority of steering

committee members need to be present to vote on garden changes.

Article 2: EVENTS

Section 1.1: Eligibility. Members in good standing for at least three months may also have barbecues or other events, subject to the approval of the events coordinator and the following rules.

Section 1.2: Conditions. All garden parties and events are open to all members. Gates must remain open. There are no private parties.

Section 1.3: Fees. There is a suggested donation for formal ceremonies, like weddings. The garden charges a fee for commercial use.

Article 3: FINANCES

Section 1.1: Income. The Garden's income consists of dues, grants, donations, and other fundraising.

Section 1.2: Budgeting. Income and expenditures are accounted for in the budget review at the Annual Meeting, and operating funds are set aside for garden materials, tools and scheduled events in the budget approved at the Annual Meeting.

Section 1.3: Reimbursements. All reimbursement requests must be approved and filed with the treasurer within 90 days of the purchase. Failure to follow these procedures may result in the member not being reimbursed.

Article 4: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Section 1.1: Process. If there is a conflict between members or in the governance of the garden, mediation will occur in three ways, in the following order: 1. The steering committee's monthly business meeting. If that fails, then 2. The steering committee's monthly business meeting, with the presence of a mediator agreed upon by both parties. If that fails, then 3. As a last resort, a general membership meeting will be called to discuss the issue and resolve the conflict with the help of a moderator.

Article 5: GENERAL

Section 1.1. Other laws. The garden strives to comply with New York safety and legal codes.

Section 2.1: Construction. Structural additions or alterations to any portion of the garden are subject to the approval of the Steering Committee. Nontoxic building materials, organic when possible, should be used.

Section 3.1: Postings. All notices, information and ornamentation not pertaining directly to gardening activities are subject to coordinator approval before posting or installing in or around the garden.

Section 4.1: Neighbors. We operate with consideration for those living in the buildings adjacent to the garden and of all of our neighbors on Warren Street and St Marks Place.

Section 5.1: Inclusivity. No persons will be denied access to the garden or be otherwise subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, handicap, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Section 6.1: Concerns. Members concerned with the observance of the garden rules as they apply to themselves

or to other members should contact the coordinators to resolve questions or disputes.