

Landscape Policy
The Village at Mount Hope Bay
Approved, November 2022

The Village at Mount Hope Bay (VMHB) Landscape Committee is composed of members of the community committed to ensuring the landscape satisfies the needs of current residents and is sustainable for the future. The committee maintains common garden areas and shade trees and oversees planting and maintenance of personal garden areas (PGAs) located within the community. The committee makes recommendations to the VMHB Board of Directors regarding plant replacements and/or enhancements for common garden areas and PGAs and reviews completed applications for substantial landscape modifications. The committee does not oversee lawn care, the infrequently mowed hillsides, or the irrigation system, although the committee may advise on these areas if asked by the Board.

Common Garden Areas

Common garden areas include:

The gardens at the entrance to the community at the north gate on Main Road and the gardens at the south gate along Schooner Drive and the entrance to the clubhouse parking lot.

The gardens around the clubhouse and the pool.

The island beds found throughout the community.

The gardens around the basins.

The gardens surrounding the two midrise buildings.

The ornamental trees planted throughout the property.

These commonly owned areas serve an important role in the aesthetics of the entire community. The design and maintenance of these restricted-planting areas are overseen by the Landscape Committee, with input from the VMHB Property Manager. However, residents may garden in island beds and established midrise gardens after filling out a Substantial Landscape Modification form and obtaining approval from the Landscape Committee and the Board of Directors.

The Property Manager and the Landscape Committee will make recommendations for plants and maintenance of all areas, with cost estimates, to the Board of Directors each year in fall. The HOA will include an allowance in each fiscal year's budget based on these recommendations.

As a rule, only dead or dying trees and shrubs will be removed from common garden areas. Trees will be monitored by the Landscape Committee and Property Manager, and a certified arborist will be consulted on a regular basis to determine best practices for pruning trees for tree health and for maintenance and safety issues.

Personal Garden Areas

Personal garden areas (PGAs) are the original common element areas that lie within approximately 10 to 15 feet of townhouse foundations. They can include entry gardens, foundation gardens, small gardens underneath trees, and small driveway trees. These garden areas are considered "common elements" under VMHB Rules and Regulations and are owned by the community.

The HOA provides maintenance for all PGAs, including applying mulch annually, raking out debris in spring and fall, weeding, hard edging, some shrub pruning, cutting back of perennials and ornamental grasses in fall or spring, and removal of all debris. Residents should water plants in their PGAs as needed.

All requests for additional maintenance or changes in PGAs should be submitted in writing to the Property Manager; residents should not communicate directly with the landscape service about any maintenance.

Owners may do minimal enhancement to PGAs surrounding their unit such as planting perennials, bulbs, annuals, and small shrubs that are not on the Restricted Plant List found on the community website (www.villagemhb.com). Residents are allowed to have well-maintained container gardens (including vegetables) in any areas of their PGAs and on their decks and porches. Owners may embellish their PGAs with tasteful garden ornaments that do not get in the way of garden maintenance. Vines that climb onto/into/around wooden painted building structures are not allowed in PGAs. Owners are responsible for maintaining their standardized window boxes and the plants inside them.

Owners may have small areas in the ground near their units devoted to traditional vegetables. These areas must be located along the west side of the unit and be sited and designed in a manner not to distract from the aesthetics of the community. Vegetable plants must not be taller than five feet and should be compact or bush varieties. Tall vegetables such as sweet corn and indeterminate tomatoes are not allowed. Plants with extensive vining habits such as pumpkins and winter squash are not allowed. The areas must be weeded and well-maintained and all debris disposed of at the end of the growing season. It should be noted that VMHB is built on what was once an oil-tank farm and the soil may not be suitable for growing vegetables in many areas. Owners take responsibility for any toxicity problems that may arise from eating vegetables grown in the ground.

If homeowners have a “dead” plant they feel should be replaced by the HOA, they must contact the Property Manager and get approval from the Landscape Committee before removing it. Once plants are determined to be dead or dying, they will be removed by the landscape contractor and replaced with a suitable plant selected by the Landscape Committee.

Opt-Out Option for PGAs

Owners who want to garden and maintain their own PGAs may opt out of contracted landscape services. Owners choosing to opt out must weed, water, prune, deadhead, remove debris, and do anything else required to keep the PGA in a condition acceptable to the Landscape Committee. The landscape service will still do hard edging, apply mulch, and do a spring and fall clean out. Owners wishing to opt out must notify the Property Manager regarding that preference in writing prior to March 1 of each year. If you don't indicate a preference, you will be on the full maintenance schedule for that year.

Substantial Landscape Modifications of PGAs and Common Garden Area Beds

Substantial landscape modifications are defined as:

Any significant expansion or reduction in size of an existing PGA (10 square feet or more).

Any significant redesign of a PGA. (Removing or replacing more than 50 percent of the existing plants.)

Any pruning, addition, or removal of trees 20 feet or more in height.

Any gardening an owner wants to do in a common garden area island bed, including around the midrises.

Substantial changes must be approved by the Board of Directors after review and recommendation by the Landscape Committee. The Landscape Committee review will include a determination that the modification is compatible with the landscape design and character of the community. The plant list must not include any plants on the Restricted Plant List found on the website.

The form for Substantial Landscape Modifications is found on the website. Completed forms should be submitted to the Property Manager. Residents should realize it will take some time for the forms to be approved by the Landscape Committee and the Board of Directors.