**Bylaws**

Hershey’s Mill Nature Committee (HMNC)

(aka Hershey’s Mill Nature Group – HMNG)

(Revision January 2024)

The **HMNG** operates under Bylaws of the Hershey’s Mill Homeowners Association and is identified as “**Hershey’s Mill Nature Group**”. Robert’s Rules of Order shall be used as a reference for all parliamentary proceedings. The intent is for this to be a living document that can be appropriately modified by approved amendments as the HMNG evolves over time for the betterment of Hershey’s Mill. References to HMNG SC refers to the Steering Committee of the HMNG (see Article IV – Management).

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**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

**Hershey’s Mill Nature Committee (HMNC) – aka HMNG**

**ARTICLE II**

**PURPOSE**

1. To help promote and enhance the natural landscapes and wildlife within the common areas of the Hershey’s Mill Master Association (HMMA).
2. Further, the Nature Group is encouraged to interact with the Golf Course Superintendent of Grounds, Hershey’s Mill Landscape Division Superintendent, and the individual Villages within Hershey’s Mill on programs/projects consistent with the Vision/Mission of the Nature Group. It is the intent of the Nature Group to be a resource to the entire Hershey’s Mill community.
3. To contribute to the cooperation, communication, and education of the community regarding these resources.
4. To encourage resident involvement in activities to appreciate and enhance the natural life of Hershey’s Mill.

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERS**

**Member**

As HMNG is a Standing Committee of the HM Master Association, all homeowners and residents of Hershey’s Mill are members.

a. While there will be no dues to be a member of the HMNG, there may be a fee to cover the expenses associated with a particular event/activity that is being sponsored by the HMNG.

b. Members can participate in any of the HMNG public meetings, activities and events offered.

**Resident**

A resident is defined as a homeowner, household member, or renter of a home within Hershey’s Mill. All residents must be registered with Security as a resident.

**ARTICLE IV**

**MANAGEMENT**

The governance and management of the HMNG shall be vested in the Steering Committee (SC). The HMNG SC shall consist of 3 Officers appointed by the Board of Directors (BOD) – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer—and four additional members-at-large nominated by the Officers and approved by the Board of Directors (BOD) of the HMMA. All members of the HMNG SC must be residents of Hershey’s Mill.

**Management**

1. The HMNG Officers:
2. Chair -- is responsible for the overall function of the HMNG, shall preside over all meetings of the HMNG, SC and act as liaison to the HMMA BOD liaison. The Chair shall be a member of all HMNG subcommittees.
3. Secretary -- shall be responsible for minutes and communication within the HMNG.
4. Treasurer -- shall be responsible for the maintenance of the HMNG income and expense finances of the HMNG.

2. Four (4) additional SC members will participate in SC meetings and undertake activities as assigned by the Chair such as chairmanship of NG subcommittees, liaison with the Landscape Committee, liaison with the HMGC Greens Committee, and liaison with the HM Landscape Division, and such other Village Committees as may be appropriate.

3. Chairs/Co-Chairs of subcommittees will be identified by the SC to oversee the HMNG’s various activities/events which may include but not be limited to:

1. Nest Box Monitoring
2. Natural Lands Stewardship
3. Native Plant Landscaping/Pollinator Gardens
4. Communication
5. Special Events/Lectures

**Appointment to the HMNG Steering Committee**

HMNG officers and members-at-large will serve for a term of one year. Individuals may be re-nominated for a position following their year in office. Residents interested in serving on the HMNG SC should submit their name to the secretary by October 31st of each year.

**Vacancies**

In the event a HMNG SC position becomes vacant, the Chair, with HMNG SC approval, has the authority to appoint a replacement to complete that term of office.

**ARTICLE V**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

1. The HMNG Steering Committee may, at its discretion, form an Advisory Council for the purpose of assisting the Steering Committee (and/or Subcommittee) in achieving the Nature Group’s Mission and Vision.
2. The Council has no governance responsibility, but rather is directed toward identifying issues and proposing solutions/recommendations to the Steering Committee (and/or Subcommittee).
3. The Advisory Council, as a whole or individual Council members, should communicate directly with the appropriate leaders of the Steering Committee or Subcommittee.

1. The number of individuals on the Council is undetermined, but under usual circumstances the number should not exceed five (5).
2. Advisory Council members serve for a period of two (2) years and may be reappointed.
3. Advisory Council members may come from former Nature Group/Steering Committee members who have made major contributions to the success of the Nature Group and who provide a link to the Group’s institutional memory; individuals who provide subject matter expertise; and/or individuals who provide a link to other organizations who share a similar interest with the Nature Group.
4. Individuals being considered for service on the Advisory Council may be proposed by any member of the Steering Committee and be invited to join the Advisory Council following a majority vote of the Steering Committee.

**ARTICLE VI**

**FINANCIAL**

**Budget**

The SC shall prepare and submit, to the HMMA Finance Committee, an annual budget by July 31st, (or earlier as requested by the HM finance committee) for the upcoming calendar year.

The budget shall include, but not be limited to:

* Expenditures associated with activities and facilities.
* Requests and recommendations for capital for maintenance, improvements and additions.
* Income from events and social activities (fund raising).

The HMNG financials shall be reviewed, by the HM Finance Committee, quarterly, or as otherwise required by the HMMA Finance Committee.

**Expense Request Procedures**

Expense Requests shall be in writing on the HMNG Request Form. The request may be turned into any HMNG SC member, and should include:

* The item(s) requested,
* Their purpose,
* The date requested,
* The date needed by, and
* Any other pertinent information

Expense Requests will be evaluated each month at the HMNG SC meeting. No individual SC member may approve or deny any request, and all requests must be approved by a majority of the SC. Any expenditure that has not been approved in advance by the HMSC could be denied reimbursement. If an urgent request is made, a Zoom or in-person meeting or an email vote may be called for the SC’s denial or approval. All approved requests for payment shall be submitted to the MA managing agent by the Treasurer.

**Limitation of Powers**

1. The HMNG SC has full discretion on how funds are distributed up to $1,000; however, consideration must be given that expenditures are reasonably allocated between the various activities as to the number of their active participants and specific needs of each activity.
2. No individual group, within the HMNG, shall be permitted to retain their own checking account(s). All monies collected, by **any** HMNG activity, shall be put into the:

**Hershey's Mill Homeowners Association (Checking Account)**

**Hershey's Mill Nature Group**

**1389 E. Boot Road**

**West Chester, PA**

1. Purchases or projects requiring amounts in excess of $1,000 should be submitted to the HMMA Finance Committee for approval. Such submission should include statements of the purpose or need for the purchase or project; the total cost including the bidding process, if any; and an accounting of the, then current, HMNG available financial resources; what contributions, if any would be required of the MA, and what contribution would be made by the HMNG.
2. If approved by the HMMA Finance Committee, the purchase or project will be referred to the MA BOD for approval. If the amount exceeds $25,000, the matter will be referred to the MA for approval.

**Fees, Food, Party Supplies and Alcohol**

* There may or may not be fees associated with a particular event or activity.
* Social gatherings (including food, beverages, and supplies) are self-supporting and shall not be supported from the HMNG treasury.
* Tickets or charging for food and beverages when hosting social events is permitted.
* Alcohol shall not be provided or sold but may be brought by residents on a “bring your own” basis.

**ARTICLE VII**

**MEETINGS**

There shall be one “All Resident” meeting per year in the Fall (typically October).

**Special Meetings**

The HMNG SC may call a special meeting at any given time when deemed necessary. Notice of said meeting shall be published and made available to all residents in advance of the scheduled meeting date. The subject of the meeting must be included in the notice.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**COMMITTEES**

**Subcommittees and Special Committees**

There are a few different types of Committees:

* There may be **Subcommittees** that have a particular focus and shall be chaired by a member of the SC. The HMNG SC is responsible for recruitment and assignment of Chairs/Co-Chairs of such committees, and the purpose of such a committee would be coordination and administration of tasks outlined by the HMNG SC.
* The HMNG SC may also have occasion to put an Ad Hoc Committee together for research and reporting around various other topics as they related to HMNG SC planning objectives.

**ARTICLE IX**

**ORGANIZATION**

The following diagram depicts the HMNG and where it fits in the Hershey’s Mill hierarchy. In summary:

* The Hershey’s Mill Nature Group reports to and works under the direction of the Hershey’s Mill Board of Directors, who are responsible for authorization and approval of the HMNG Bylaws*.*

Diagram

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**ARTICLE X**

**AMENDING THE BYLAWS**

Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the HMNG SC. Final approval of the amended Bylaws is subject to the approval of the HMMA Documents Committee and the HMMA BOD.

In summary:

The HMNG SC reports to and works under the direction of the HMMA BOD, which is responsible for authorization and approval the HMNG Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XI**

**AMENDMENTS**

Amendments, after they gain approval from the HMNG SC and HMMA BOD, will be added below.