

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax
Operational Policy**

Subject: Planting and Other Modifications to the UUCF Grounds

Number: III.G.

Effective Date: November 2008

Approved By:

Revised: September 2010

The Property Stewardship Council (PSC) is chartered to serve as the organizational component that represents the interests of the Congregation as responsible stewards for facilities and natural resources that comprise the UUCF campus. It is in that role that the Council establishes policy for care of the grounds.

Policy

No landscaping or hardscaping additions or modifications to the grounds of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax may be made without consultation with and subsequent agreement by the PSC. In the event that staff, a member or friend of the Congregation and the PSC cannot reach agreement on a planting, addition or modification to the grounds, the chairperson of the PSC shall bring this to the attention of the Coordinating Team (CT), which shall be responsible for resolving the issue.

Minor additions or modifications that do not permanently or significantly alter the grounds require only PSC review and approval. Additions or modifications that would result in more permanent or significant altering of the grounds require CT approval. Finally, major additions or modifications require both CT review and approval by the Board. In situations where the individual(s) proposing the change and the PSC cannot agree on its categorization as “minor,” “significant,” or “major,” the PSC will refer the issue to the CT for clarification.

Procedures

The PSC should be consulted before the purchase of plants or other materials for UUCF grounds.

1. The Property Stewardship Council will evaluate proposed additions of new landscaping and/or hardscaping features to ensure the location/placement of the proposed addition does not conflict with utility rights-of-way, easements, planned/existing land use or other elements of existing plans for the campus. The PSC will similarly evaluate proposed additions of new shrubs, trees or hardscape features to existing landscaping beds.

2. Consistent with principles underlying UUCF's Green Sanctuary certification and the Seventh Principle, the PSC will not approve proposed plantings that include invasive plant species. Further, the PSC will encourage the use of native species over non-invasive alien species whenever possible. Plants should be nursery-propagated or propagated from responsibly collected seed. The PSC will not allow planting of natives collected from the wild. A number of 'native plant' resources are available:

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation includes a listing of plants native to our area: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/nativeplants.shtml.

The Virginia Native Plant Society maintains a listing of invasive alien plants species—<http://www.vnps.org/invasive.html>—as well as a listing of local nurseries that sell native plants—<http://www.vnps.org/nurslist.htm>.

The PSC will, at its discretion, allow non-invasive alien species when native species are not suitable for the proposed addition. Examples of permissible exceptions might include: deer-resistant varieties, species of personal significance planted in memoriam, non-native annuals used for RE/educational plantings (e.g., zinnias, cosmos, marigolds), vegetables, etc.

3. The PSC will consider initial installation costs, as well as long-term maintenance issues in terms of labor and costs, when evaluating proposed changes. All addition or modification plans must include a viable plan for ongoing maintenance with clear responsibility assigned, and the person(s) or organizations so assigned having agreed in writing to that assignment.
4. The PSC will consider other issues as determined by the specific proposal including, but not limited to, safety, aesthetic and accessibility considerations.
5. The PSC, with approval from the Coordinating Team, will remove any additions that have not been approved.