COMMON AGREEMENTS FOR USE OF COBB HILL COMMON HOUSE

Our hope is that the Common House will be used often and used well. In many ways, the Common House is the living embodiment of the Cobb Hill principles that we have all agreed to. It is in this spirit that we agree to live by the following guidelines:

1. The Common House is our home—an extension of our home for most, a full-time home for some. Welcome. Use it, enjoy it, share it.

2. The Common House is the first built space many guests see and it is a space we all share. As such, it should reflect our shared values and principles. Help make it a place we feel good about using and sharing.

3. The CH is a major investment, representing a lot of money, time, resources and space. Keep this in mind and treat the building, the people who live here, and visitors who stay here, with care, kindness, and respect.

4. Give attention to the space when you are there and notice things that are in need of something (replacement, repair, cleaning, attention). If you are unable to take care of it yourself, please notify the point person responsible for Common House systems. Find ways you can help keep the Common House looking good, working well, and staying clean.

5. As you leave the Common House, remember there will be someone coming in after you. This could be an apartment resident, another community member, or a guest from outside the community. How would you like to leave the space? Pay attention to the heat, the windows, the furniture, the lights. Leave the space in equal or better shape than when you arrived.

6. The common house residents deserve their privacy. The apartment/guestroom wings are for the use of residents and guests staying in the guestrooms.

7. Parents are asked to share these guidelines with children and supervise the younger children while they are in the common house. Help children, as needed, understand what these guidelines mean and how best to implement them. We ask parents to pay particular attention to maintaining those spaces where their children play and hang out.

The following are operational instructions that could prove helpful in answering specific questions about the care and use of spaces in the common house. We expect that these will change as our community changes, and we invite all community members to participate in the ongoing evolution of these instructions. If you see things that need to be added, changed or deleted, please bring them to the attention of the Common House Committee.

1. General Use of Common House

   a) Make appropriate use of all recycling receptacles throughout the house and empty those when full into the common house recycling center in the utility room
   b) Use only ecologically safe materials and supplies in all areas of common house
   c) Thermostats will generally be kept at 62 degrees in every room. If you make a temporary change in the setting, please return it to the standard setting before you leave.
   d) All Cobb Hill residents will participate in cleaning the Common House, according to the posted schedule. The Common House residents are responsible for keeping the kitchen clean while the remaining community is responsible for cleaning the rest of the house.
   e) Except under special circumstances (such as a special scheduled event), quiet hours in the Common House are from 10:00pm to 7:00am.
2. **Kitchen**
   a. The apartment dwellers have one-and-a-half refrigerators and identified cupboards/shelves for their use.
   b. Cooks of common meals and anyone using the kitchen to host events, parties or meetings, are ultimately responsible for insuring the kitchen is cleaned up at the end. Common House Residents pitch in by emptying the dishwashers before and after the meal and doing their best to keep the compost bucket emptied.
   c. Although the expectation is that guests will not use the kitchen to prepare their meals, they are welcome to use the coffee/tea station in the dining room and to use the dining room to eat any snacks/meals they have brought with them.
   • See Appendix B for details on kitchen use during social events and meetings

3. **Fireplace**
   a. Community members are encouraged to use the fireplace.
   b. Anyone starting a fire in the fireplace should be fully knowledgeable about use of the draft and doors.
   c. Close the fireplace doors if you are the last adult to leave the den.
   d. Replace any wood you take from the den supply with wood from the Common House woodpile on the front deck.
   • See Fireplace Guidelines posted next to the fireplace

4. **Mud Room, Entrances and Exits**
   a. Outdoor shoes and boots must be taken off and left in the mudroom or basement.
      Shoes/slippers for use in the Common House may be stored in the mudroom/ basement.
   b. Keep the mudroom tidy by using hooks for coats and other clothing and leaving outdoor and indoor footwear in designated places.

5. **Dining Room**
   a. Cover tables in the dining room to protect the surface if they are being used for art projects (or use the art area in the basement).
   b. Tables should be thoroughly wiped down after any use.

6. **Piano**
   a. The piano was a gift to the community from Dana Meadows. It should be treated with care.
      Please place nothing on the piano.
   b. The piano is available for piano practice and use by adults and children unless it interferes with a meeting or a meal. If there is a meeting or event in the common house, piano players should check in before playing to make sure they aren’t disturbing the gathering.

7. **Pets**
   a. Pets are not allowed in the common house, except in the apartments. Exceptions will be made for service animals.

8. **Use by Children**
   a. Children are welcome to use the Common House for appropriate recreational activities. The Rec Room and Art Area in the basement, and the Kids Playroom on the first floor, have been set up for all ages to use for active play. The den and attic are for more quiet activities—board games, hang-out time, slumber parties, etc. However, the attic space may be used for larger productions such as plays or other performances, and movies.
   b. Children under age eight may not use the Common House without a caregiver present.
   c. There should be no running in the Common House.
d. If anything is damaged or broken during use, children are expected to inform a parent or adult immediately and figure out a way to clean up or fix the problem.
e. Cobb Hill kids are asked to participate in cleaning up designated areas of the Common House (such as the basement & playroom) as scheduled during Community Work Days.

9. Guest Rooms
a. Guest rooms are to be used by friends and family only. Visitors we don’t know yet should stay elsewhere.
b. All guests must have a host on the hill.
* See Appendix A: How to Host a Guest in the Common House for further details on hosting guests

10. Storage
a. Apartments have designated storage space in the basement room. These are private spaces and are intended for the use of the apartment residents only.

11. Utility Room
a. Sound from this room travels directly into the first floor residences. For this reason, special care should be made to honor Common House quiet hours (10pm – 7am). It is expected that all washer and dryer use will be started after 7am completed by 10 p.m.

12. Basement Area
a. The recreational area, in the first two “bays” of the basement, and the Art Area, are for use by all Residents and their guests.
b. The Exercise Area is for use by people aged 12 and older
c. Please be respectful and do not disturb items contained in the storage areas in the basement (Common House Resident storage areas, bikes, lawn equipment, beekeeper’s equipment, etc.)
d. Guidelines are posted in the art area. Anyone using that space is expected to follow those guidelines.

13. Cheese Room
a. Cobb Hill Cheese enterprise members will be responsible for cleanliness and temperature of the cheese room.
b. For reasons of sanitation and temperature, only those involved in the cheese enterprise may enter the Cheese Room. (Occasional access to utility panels may be necessary.)

14. Root Cellar
a. Those who use the root cellar are expected to take responsibility for their own items: label, check periodically for spoilage, “bring out the dead” at the end of the storage season, and generally maintain a clean and tidy space.

15. Porch/Community Grill
a. Any adult resident can use the grill at any time. It is a shared resource.
b. Clean the grill after each use.
c. If propane is low, please replace it and give the receipt to current Treasurer for reimbursement.

• 16. Common House Telephone
a. The telephone in the Common House kitchen to be used primarily for inter-community communication between the Common House and other residences. We do not have long distance service from this phone.
APPENDIX A: HOW TO HOST A GUEST IN THE COMMON HOUSE

Notification & Preparation:
- Reserve a guest room through the Guest Room Calendar (located on the shelf to the right of the water pitchers in the Common House kitchen).
- Please advise common house residents a week in advance, if possible—either by email with “Guest room” in the subject line or a phone call to each resident. Please share what time of day your guest will be arriving (especially if they are coming in late) and how long they will be staying. If your guest cancels, please notify the Common House residents.
- Before your guest arrives, check the guest room and make sure it is ready (bed made, room clean, towels & other linens provided).

Informing Guests of Expectations
The host will make sure that certain protocols are understood and followed by guests:
- Recognizing and treating the common house as both a private home and a shared building
- Respecting private spaces in the common house
- Proper use of the composting toilets
- Common House Guidelines such as no pets, no shoes indoors, quiet hours, etc.
- Safety issues around farm animals, buildings, and equipment

In addition, hosts are asked to share with the guests the GUEST ROOM GUIDELINES posted in each guest room, which welcomes guests and shares with them useful information about staying in the Common House.

When Your Guest Arrives
- Please escort your guest to the guest room. Common house residents would also like to be introduced personally to guests when possible so that they know their names.
- If guests will be arriving after 10:00 p.m., or returning to their room late in the evening, please ask them to be especially quiet as common house residents may be sleeping.
- If your guest will be using the coffee/tea area in the dining room, please make sure they have everything they will need (coffee/tea, utensils, sugar, etc.)

When Your Guest Departs
- Once your guests leave, please be sure to change sheets and towels and clean the room within 48 hours (or sooner if someone else will need the room).
- Please clean the coffee/tea area, if it has been used.
APPENDIX B: HOW TO HOST A SOCIAL EVENT OR MEETING AT COBB HILL

Residents are welcome to host social events using the Common House and other common grounds and facilities. (Note: we assume that event hosts are also participants.) As long as they follow these guidelines, Residents do not need to seek permission for such events. However, communication and coordination is needed, especially for events that depend on the use of the kitchen, which may generate noise that may drift to peoples’ homes within the Common House or on the Hill, involve large numbers of people, or require parking management. If you plan to use the Common House as a backup location for another event (e.g. in case of rain), please also follow these guidelines.

Notification:
- As a courtesy, please check in with Common House residents before scheduling a meeting, to make sure that there aren’t any concerns that need to be addressed.
- Once you have checked in with CH residents, schedule the event by notifying the community (via email) and posting the event on the community calendar. A reminder email to the community 24-48 hours before the event is appreciated.
- Because the Common House is not a public venue, events may generally not be publicly advertised (flyers posted in public venues like coops, schools, libraries; public bulletin boards; newspapers or radio ads; or notices)
- If an event will prevent CH residents from using the kitchen to prepare their meals, permission for kitchen use needs to be granted by the residents. It is expected that the host will provide meals to the residents to minimize the effects of disrupted use of space.
- The community is open to occasional special events (3-4/year) that go past the 10pm quiet time in the Common House. Requests for such events should be brought to the Common House Committee for consideration.

Informing Guests of Expectations
The host will make sure that certain protocols are understood and followed by guests:
- Recognizing and treating the common house as both a private home and a shared building
- Respecting private spaces in the common house
- Proper use of the composting toilets
- Common House Guidelines such as no pets, no shoes indoors, quiet hours, etc.
- Safety issues around farm animals, buildings, and equipment

In addition, hosts are asked to share with the guests the EVENT GUIDELINES posted in the mud room, which welcomes visitors and shares with them useful information about the Common House.

Pre-Event Checklist
Recommended practices before hosting an event include:
1. Check the spaces to be used before the event to be sure they are clean and that furniture and other materials are in place.
2. Be sure there is toilet paper, wood shavings, and clean towels in the restrooms, and that the restrooms are clean.
3. Empty dishwashers and drain boards if you will be using them later for clean up.
4. Post signs to indicate where to park, where the restrooms are, where visitors should leave their outdoor shoes, which areas are private and not to be entered, which entrances should be used.

Clean Up
Following an event, hosts are expected to see to the clean up of all spaces used. Immediately after:
clean up the kitchen, empty dishwashers and drain boards, empty compost, wipe tables. Within 48 hours (or sooner if another event is scheduled before then):
1. See to the cleanliness of restrooms; collect and replace dirty towels, replenish supplies.
2. Pick up all trash, sort recyclables, and empty trash and recycling containers if needed.
3. Sweep or vacuum floors, wipe up spills.
4. Replace all furniture and other materials where they belong.
5. Remove signs and store them in their designated space.
APPENDIX C: “OPEN SOURCE” USE AGREEMENT

Background:
The idea behind “open source” is to promote free access to a resource. In the case of open source software, users are given the source code and are encouraged to use and improve that resource through whatever means they have available—paying for it, adding to or modifying it, sharing it with others, etc. Likewise, we think of the Common House as a resource to be shared and improved upon. Rather than charging for this resource, we will be transparent about the actual costs for the use of the space, offering some examples of ways people might contribute. This could mean a group using the Common House might pay a fee that is commensurate with the group’s budget, they might choose to volunteer at a workday, or identifying a community need and find a way to fulfill it.

We see this as a more dynamic and open approach to sharing our Common House than a set fee structure, as guests are invited to add value to our community in whatever way is comfortable for them.

The Agreement:
Cobb Hill will allow use of the Common House by groups, according to our Common Rules and Agreements, with no fixed Use Fee. Instead we will invite people to contribute as they feel moved, and will provide them with information about how they might contribute to the costs of use, the improvement of the space, or to the support of community goals. We then leave it up to the user to decide if and how they will contribute. This is much like a voluntary fee structure, except we would be more open about the needs of the community and the user would have freedom to choose how to contribute.

Sample “Script:"
We are happy to host your group in our Common House. While we do not have a set fee for meeting use, we do recognize that Cobb Hill members devote time, energy, and resources to the maintenance, upkeep, and improvement of this space. These costs range from the very large (staining the outside of the common house, adding a carpet runner to muffle sounds on the stairs, etc.) to the relatively small, like the expenses for common house supplies. Often groups who make use of the space feel moved to give back in order to support the maintenance of the space for others who may come after. We have had donations of a rug for the den, an outdoor grill for use by large groups, and a fire safety ladder. Other groups have made financial contributions to help pay for supplies and upkeep. And other groups have offered “sweat equity” by stacking wood or weeding gardens. Any contribution of time, talent or treasure, while not required, would be appreciated.