

Frequently Asked Questions

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Access to the Grove

There is a pullout space for a vehicle by the grove for those guests who may need help, including wheelchairs and walkers, into the grove. From the pullout there is a path without steps to the left around the stone terrace. We suggest someone help this individual into the grove, get them seated, and then temporarily move the car to the parking by the gatehouse, so it does not appear in the background of your pictures. Depending on your guest’s physical challenge, the driver may then want to bring the car back and drive the individual up to the house where we have handicap parking in front of the bookstore. The door under the Palladian window and balcony does not have steps.

Additional Hours

Additional hours may be contracted in advance with the Manager of Rental Events based on availability and up to 3 months before the event date. Each additional hour or any part thereof is prorated based on the total rental fee. Please note that the alarm at Woodend Mansion is automatically activated, therefore, additional hours for evening events must be contracted ahead of time so the alarm can be reprogrammed.

The rental agreement states the contracted hours (start time and end time). The contracted hours include the entire time allowed for renters, as well as for caterer, vendors, florists, event planners, or other agents to set-up. Renters or vendors are not allowed inside the mansion before their contracted hours, unless additional hours are contracted by the renter, and which

require an addendum to the contract and additional fee. Renter is responsible for informing their contracted hours to vendors.

Address for Guests

Woodend Sanctuary's address is 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

If guests just use their GPS with either Woodend or Audubon Naturalist Society, they might end up arriving through the back gate on Brierly Road. We recommend that you provide Woodend's address and inform your guests that you prefer that they arrive through Jones Mill, and therefore use the address instead of the name. You could also provide them with the following to assist with parking:

When you arrive at Woodend, drive all the way up the driveway. The first parking lot is on the right-hand side across from the Audubon Naturalist Shop. Also, there is parking behind the house, where the main entrance is, and down the driveway diagonally on both sides, towards Brierly Road (exit gate).

Alcohol

Renters can buy and deliver their own alcohol. Red wine and red beverages are also allowed. The caterer provides the bartender.

You may deliver or have delivered alcohol between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm on the Friday before your rental period commences, at no charge. If the event is on a Friday, then the alcohol delivery is allowed on Thursday between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm. The Office Coordinator (Receptionist's office by main entrance) will show you where to store it when you arrive and will cover and label it for you. Beer kegs are not accepted since we do not have a way to keep it cold. Delivery of any other items is prohibited prior to the rental period.

Pick-up: Renter must remove leftover beverages and other items at the end of the event.

Audio Visual Equipment

Audio visual equipment such as screen, projector, TV, DVD, sound system, speakers, microphones, extension cords, and audio-visual technicians are not provided and therefore need to be contracted.

Balloons

Balloons and ribbons may be used in the mansion and on the terrace under the tent but not on the grounds or attached to the signs at the entrance. Do not release balloons into the sky as they are dangerous to wildlife. Everything must be removed from the property at the end of the

event. Audubon Naturalist Society's dumpster are not to be used. Vendors should take all décor remaining items with them.

Beverage Station in the Grove

The caterers may serve iced tea or other beverages in the grove or on the lawn at the top of the steps before entering the grove prior to the ceremony. Guests particularly welcome this touch on a warm day, and it's also an effective way to keep early arriving guests from milling about the mansion while the caterers and other vendors set up. Hot apple cider is always appreciated on colder months.

Butterfly Release

Butterfly release is not permitted at Woodend.

Candles

Votive candles or candles with globes may be used inside the mansion on tables or mantels only. Candelabra may be used for a buffet table if the table is constantly manned. Only battery-operated candles are permitted at floor-level inside or outside the mansion, and only battery-operated candles are permitted outside the mansion.

You may use only battery-operated luminaries outdoors. We've seen luminaries forming a lovely pathway from the grove to the mansion at dusk. We've also seen them lining the pathway from the terrace around to the portico where the bar is often set up. Assign someone to gather them afterwards.

Guests are not allowed to hold candles at any time inside or outside the mansion.

Capacity

The total capacity for the Mansion when the terrace has the tent set-up is one hundred and seventy (170) guests seated in round tables. This figure takes into consideration restroom facilities, available parking, and room for music and dancing.

The custom tented terrace will accommodate up to one hundred and seventy (170) guests for a seated buffet reception, or a recommended one hundred fifty (150) guests for a seated served event, both when using round tables, which allow the maximum capacity.

During the winter months, the capacity is one hundred and twenty (120) guests for a seated reception when the seating is set-up in the Library and the adjacent Conference Room, with the Great Hall as the dance floor. The Great Hall can accommodate up to ninety (80) guests for a

seated reception. Ceremonies in the winter months will require the renter to rent a tent to be set-up in the tented terrace, as Woodend's tent is only set-up from April to November.

Ceremonies

Woodend has the Hemlock Grove for outdoor ceremonies. Renters can hold their outdoor ceremonies in areas other than the grove. The Manager of Rental Events will show all possibilities for outdoor ceremonies during your scheduled site visit.

The south lawn is also a popular place for ceremonies. The grove is shadier, and the south lawn is sunnier and nearer the mansion.

If the wedding ceremony is in the grove facing the stone terrace, the site manager will stop all traffic from coming up the lane while the ceremony is underway. They will try to direct parking near the mansion up until five minutes before your ceremony time, and then will go down the lane to keep guests and others from driving by. Late guests will be asked to park at the gatehouse and walk up to the grove from there.

If you use a disposable white runner for the ceremony, have someone assigned to roll up the runner immediately after the ceremony. The catering staff can throw it away for you. All trash is removed from the property.

We find that we often stop the musicians, who are playing at the reception, from driving up the front lane during the ceremony. You may want to coordinate the timing with them and provide them the Musician Guidelines.

If you plan to crush a wine glass underfoot during a Jewish ceremony, please wrap it in a napkin prior to stepping on it to contain the glass pieces.

There is no additional fee for a ceremony within the contracted hours.

The caterer will provide and set-up all chairs for the ceremony in the grove, grounds, tent or inside the mansion.

Woodend has excellent back-up plans for your outdoor ceremony in case of inclement weather. If you have up to 80 guests, you may have your ceremony in the Great Hall. If you have more than 80 guests, the tented terrace is your best option. The caterer will set-up just the chairs facing the lawn, and the tables for your reception will be preset with linens and china in the wings of the tent.

Décor Guidelines

Décor items may not be dropped off before contracted hours.

Extensive décor with additional furniture such as sofas and decorative lighting usually requires more time for setup and breakdown. Allow 1 extra hour in the beginning, and 1 ½ hours at the end for breakdown and loadout. These additional hours must be part of the contracted hours.

Garlands and flowers can be attached to the banister with ribbon, not wire nor zip ties. All must be removed at the end of the event.

Clean up debris especially after decorating the banister. The caterer and Site Manager are not responsible for the cleanup after decorations are finished before the event begins. Please do not hide boxes and other debris near the grove. The vendor/person in charge of flowers and/or decorations must remove flowers etc. from the grove before it gets dark. Please note that lighting is not provided in the grove.

Make arrangements to remove all vases, chuppah, arches, rented plants and trees, etc. before the contract time ends, as there might be an event a few hours after yours. Additional hours may be rented by client based on availability.

See the Woodend Dimension file for fireplace mantels when planning décor. Family photos are welcome.

You may want to have optional floral arrangements in the restrooms and such containers should not be breakable.

Hospitality baskets containing items such as small bottles of lotion, sewing kits, Band-Aids, clear nail polish for snagged hose, emery board, tissue, etc. are appreciated by most guests.

Asparagus fern is quite messy. Don't use it unless the florist comes back to clean it up. Sometimes the extra cleanup sends the renter into overtime if left for the catering company to sweep.

Chandeliers are not to be removed from the tent (information also included in your contract).

If lanterns or décor is hung on the cross bars in the tent, all strings or other attachment devices must be removed. Debris left on the will result in clean-up fee to the renter.

Woodend Sanctuary does not provide ladders for insurance reasons. Please bring your own.

All chandeliers, sconces and the lanterns on the brick wall in the terrace are on dimmers (Great Hall, Conference Room, Tent). You may adjust the brightness. Ask the Woodend Site Manager to adjust them for you.

A guest book and/or floral arrangement may be set on our table in the entryway, or the caterers can set up a table for the guest book near the grove or on the lawn near the portico. Our table in the entryway cannot be moved, though.

Consider bringing floral arrangements from the grove to use on a buffet table or elsewhere at the mansion. The caterer will move it for you, please coordinate these details with them.

Woodend does not provide ladder for renters nor vendors. Please plan accordingly.

Event Start and End Time

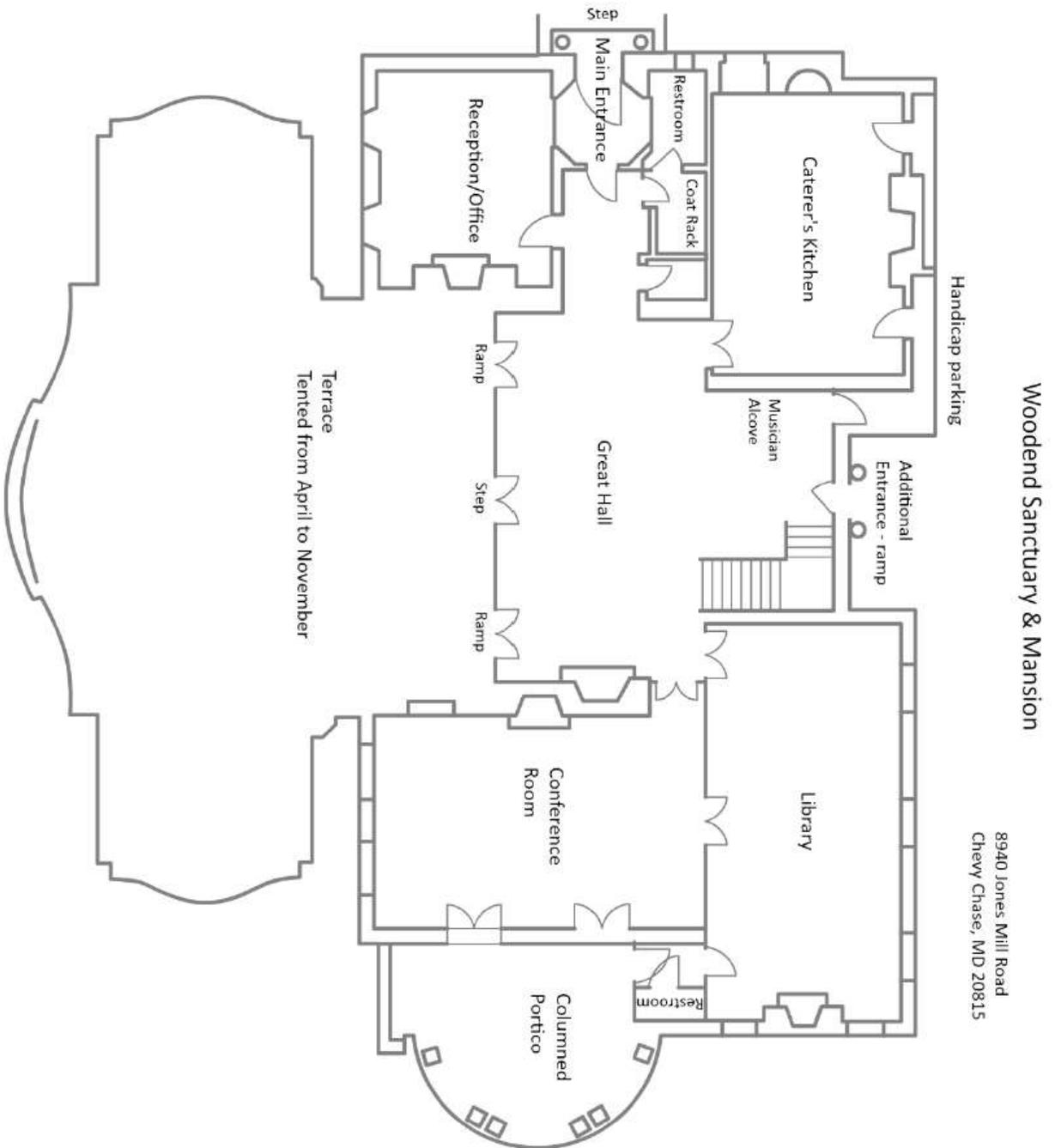
The rental period consists of the start and end time stated in your/your client's contract, not before nor after.

If you are a vendor providing services for an event at Woodend, please verify the exact time the house will be unlocked for renter and vendors, and don't assume you can arrive a few hours before and stay a few hours after. Woodend Mansion is closed on weekends and is open during the contracted hours for each event. If needed, additional hours may be rented based on availability.

Some guests will not leave until you do. If you linger in the bridal room or library after the music stops, for instance, some caterers will feel uncomfortable breaking down until you and your guests leave. You can discuss this with them prior to the event and give them permission to go ahead and break down and load out.

We recommend closing the bar to alcohol 30 minutes before the music stops to have some control over alcohol consumption. You don't want your guests leaving with a drink in their hand. You may want to consider serving coffee, too. You hire the bartender through the caterer and responsibility for your guest's welfare ultimately rests with you.

Floor Plan Woodend - Mansion and Tent



Flower Petals, Rice, Confetti

No confetti, glitter, rice, flower petals, or anything similar may be used, distributed, thrown or otherwise released inside or outside the Mansion, provided however that flower petals may be dropped on a runner during a ceremony if the runner is subsequently rolled up with the petals captured inside for disposal by the vendor. Woodend will provide birdseed on the day of the event, at no charge, upon request for outside use only.

We suggest bubbles, and pinwheel that will blow in the breeze, as alternatives to the above, and kids love them. Two articles from the Huffington Post provide you with several great ideas.

[Click here](#) to read the first article.

[Click here](#) to read the second one.

Food and Beverage

All red food, red beverages, including red wine are allowed.

Food stations with open flames must be manned the entire time.

Renter agrees to hire a caterer from Woodend's approved list, without exceptions. Only caterers on Woodend Approved List of Caterers can operate at Woodend. Renters understand and agree that they are not allowed to handle food nor beverage, nor bring outside food to Woodend other than the food brought by the approved caterer, except for the cake and any additional items approved prior to the event date by the caterer, since caterers must handle and serve all food items.

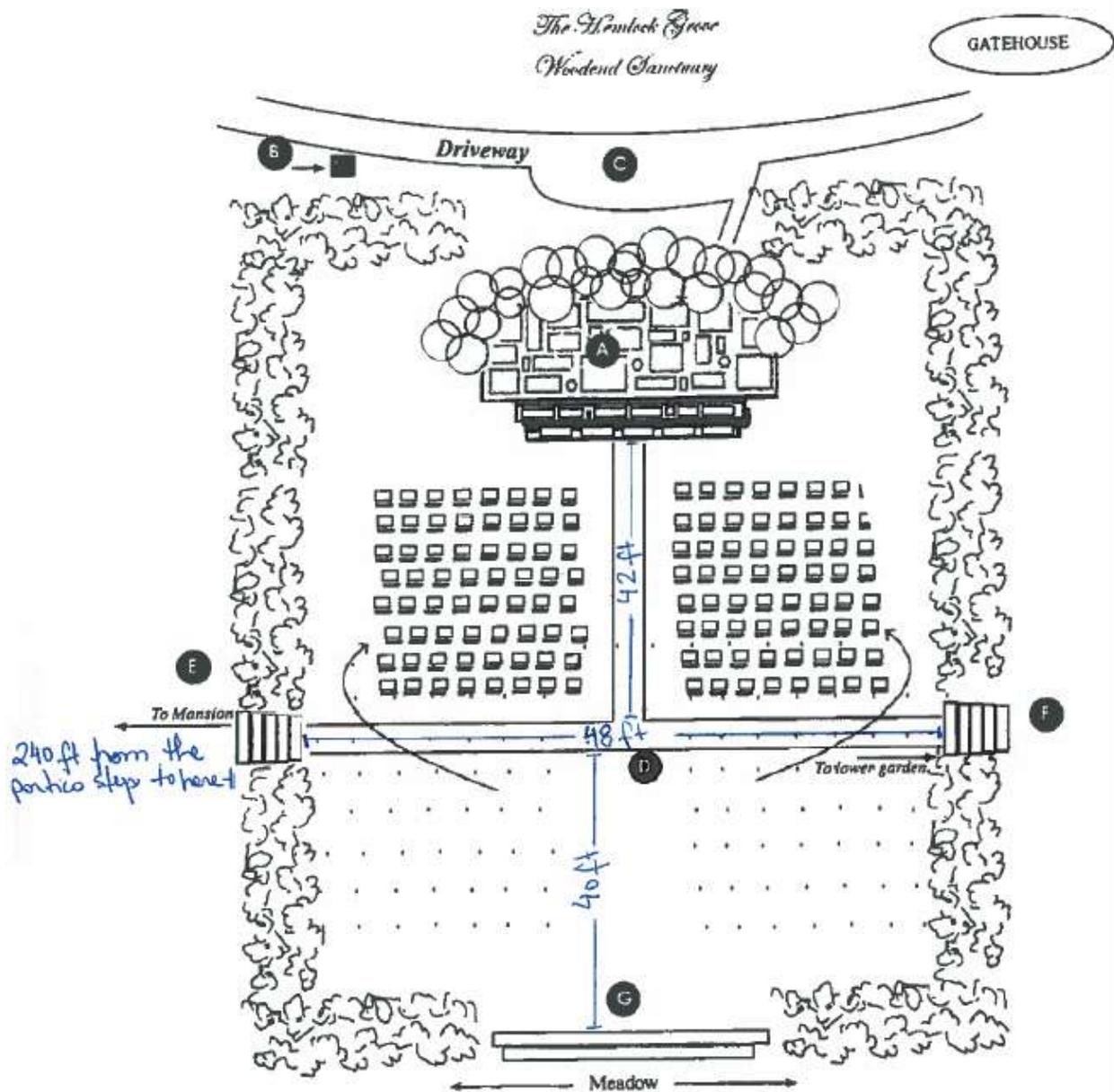
The catering company provides or arranges to provide and set-up the tables, chairs, linens, and all food/beverage-related equipment, as well as chairs for the grove.

The caterers on our list automatically provide a meal to Woodend's Site Manager at no cost to you.

All food and beverage set-up including food/beverage-related equipment, must be done by the caterer, who is also responsible for the clean-up. Caterer is also responsible for ice and mixers.

Bartenders, waiters, and attendants must be hired through the caterers.

Grove at Woodend Sanctuary



A and G Ceremony sites, either facing the stone steps, or facing the meadow. There 2 steps at the back of the grove with no railing.

B Lamp post with electrical outlet (2 outlets, max 5 amps). To reach to front center of ceremony site A, you will need 75 ft. extension cord.

C Handicapped access. Pull-off with path leading into Grove. Move car to the Gate House lot (School) before ceremony.

D Chairs are set-up by the caterers in theater style, or another style of your choice, either facing ceremony site A or G.

E Eight steps leading into the Grove, with a 16' long railing. Distance from steps to mansion, approximately 150 steps.

F Steps down to lower garden.

Hotels in the Area

A list of hotels near Woodend Sanctuary is available at woodendsanctuary.org.

Lawn Games

Lawn Games are permitted during your event; however, all games must be removed from the property within your contracted hours. Tables with crafts and stickers for kids are not permitted in the manor or anywhere outside.

Any crafts provided to entertain children during your event must be manned by a childcare provider, who will be also responsible for the cleanup of such materials.

Map of the Sanctuary



Meals for your Vendors

Remember, your band, photographer, planner, etc. will need to eat. Decide if they can participate in your menu, or if a separate box meal will be provided for them. They may use the Naturalist Lounge (Library) for their break.

The caterers on our list automatically provide a meal to the site manager at no cost to you.

Music

Musicians playing in the grove or on the lawn for the ceremony are not generally using speakers, therefore they can usually set up again near the mansion to play during cocktails on the lawn.

Although amplified music is only permitted inside the mansion, you can amplify a speaking/singing voice in the grove, as long as the volume complies with the Montgomery County Noise Control Board stipulation of 65 decibel limit to the edge of the property, which translates into “conversational level.” Horns and live bands will not fit within conversational levels.

You can control the length of your event by directing the music to stop at a certain time through your contract with your Dj or musicians and by closing the bar. Also, be sure your caterers and musicians are on the same schedule at the end of your event to avoid overtime costs.

Musicians, DJs, Bands

Grove – Outdoor Ceremony, Receptions

One electrical outlet is located at the base of the street lamp along the front lane adjacent to the Hemlock Grove where most of the wedding ceremonies occur. The capacity of that outlet is up to 5 amps, or 600 watts. Music should be kept at conversational level, which translates to 65 decibels to the edge of the property, to comply with the Montgomery County Noise Control Board. You may continue to play during cocktail hour on the lawn next to the house at conversational levels.

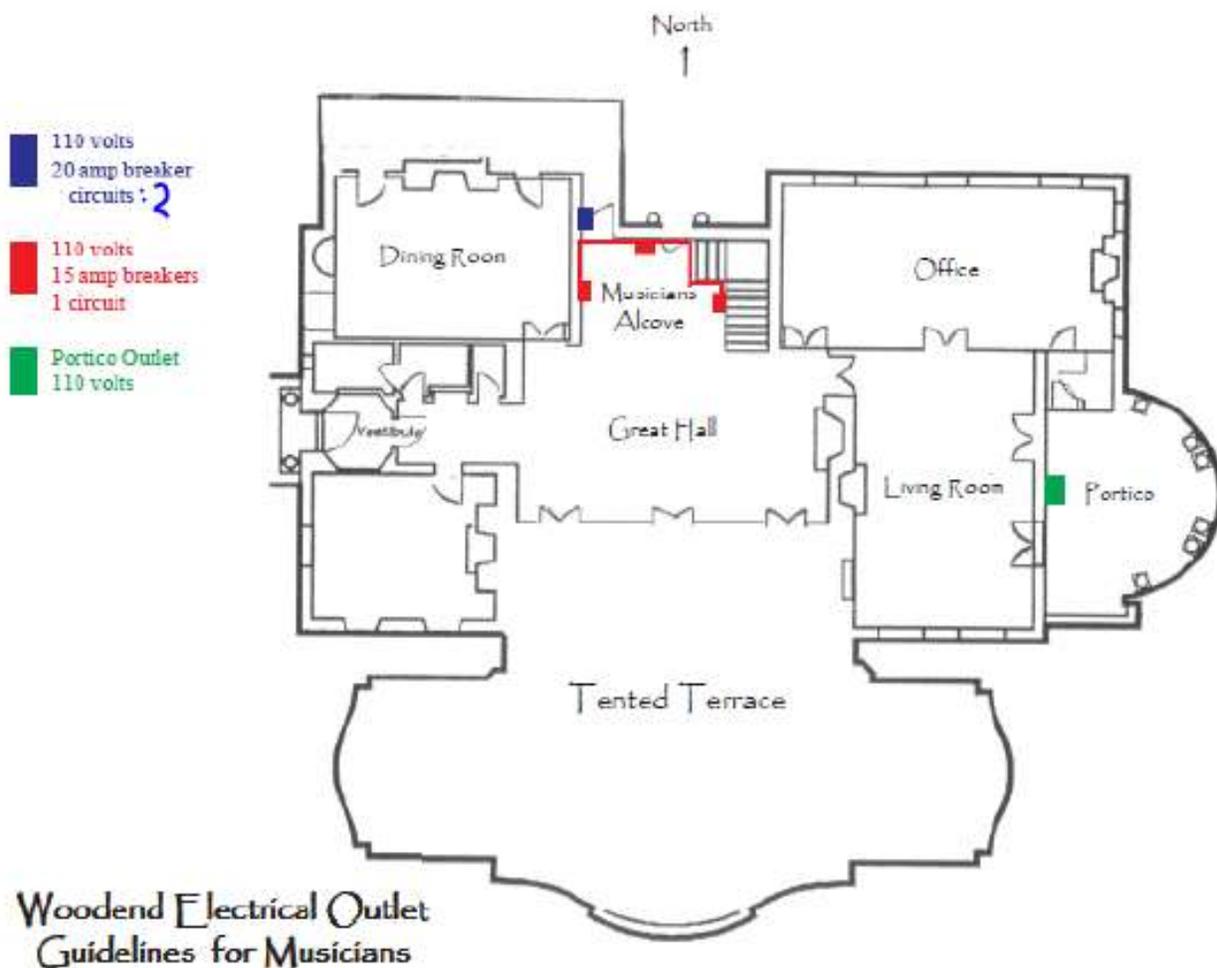
Inside Woodend Mansion

During the reception, no amplified dance music is permitted beyond the confines of the mansion and tented terrace to comply with the Montgomery County Noise Control Board. Acoustic music may be played anywhere at conversational levels. Dancing typically takes place in the great hall on hardwood floors with bands or deejays set up in the staircase alcove. This alcove has 3 electrical outlets. (20 amps on the same circuit), and an additional outlet with 2 separate circuits (20 amps each) located just inside the hallway door to the kitchen (see electrical layout).

If you are scheduled to play only for the reception, and the ceremony is scheduled for the grove, check the time with your client. We do not allow cars and trucks to drive by the grove up the front lane while the ceremony is in progress. If your arrival time corresponds to the same time as the wedding ceremony, come through our back entrance. Please request a map if

needed. You may TEMPORARILY park in the cul-de-sac parking lot in front of the Audubon Naturalist Society Shop while you load through the side door directly into the great hall. You MUST then move your vehicles down the back lane and park on Brierly Road. The close-in parking lots are reserved for guests and the shop parking lot for their customers and for handicap parking. You are limited to 20 minutes. You are welcome to store instrument cases in the library.

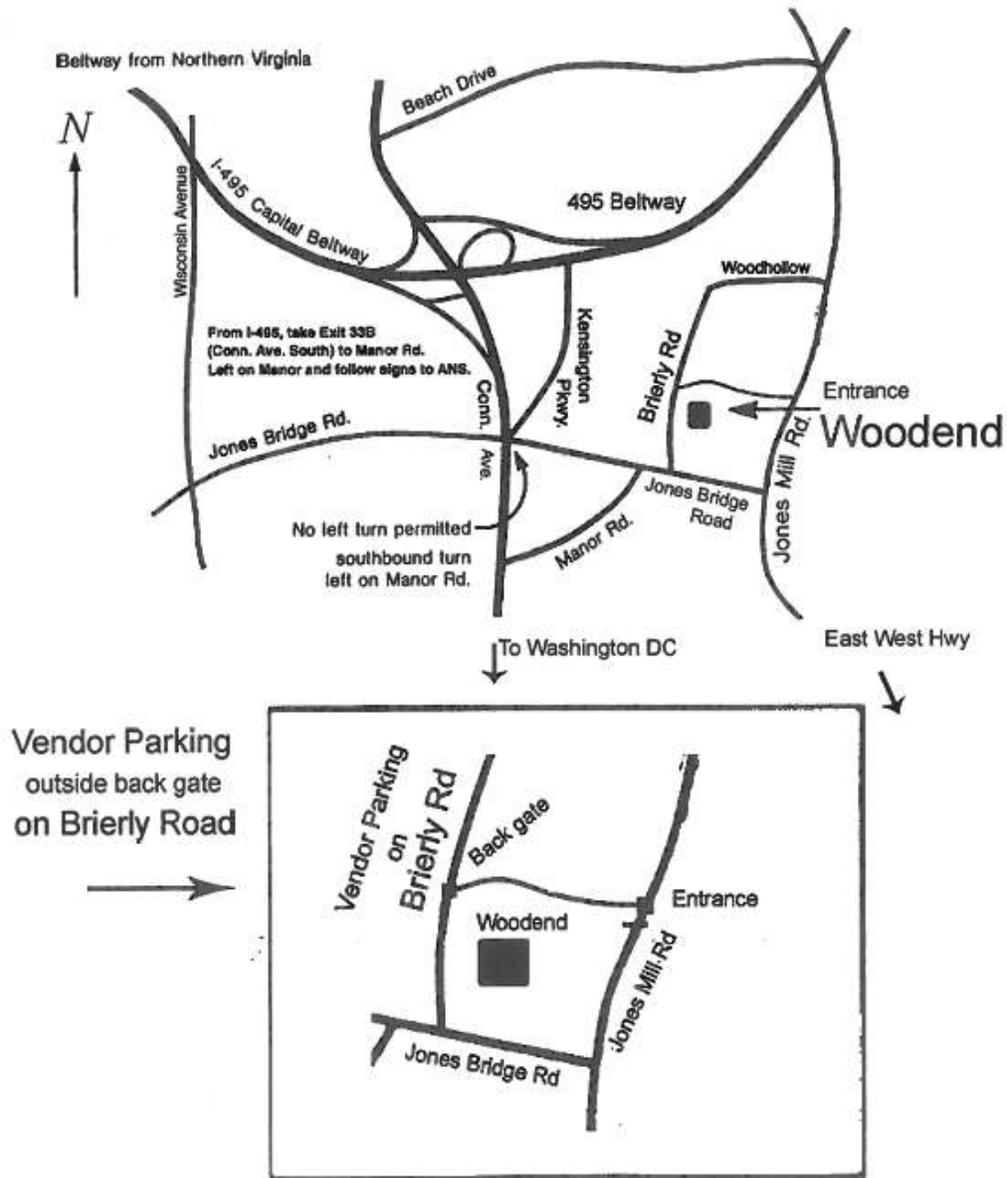
The doors to the tented terrace may stay open during the reception. Keep the outside door closed behind you so the neighbors don't complain about the "noise." Please be aware that the handicap parking space is near that door too, and you must make way for wheelchairs if needed. No sub-woofers. Either use wireless speakers or bring your own threshold mats to cover the wires. Tape is not allowed on wood floors. Damage or tape residue will incur charges.



Parking

The Site Manager assigned to your event will direct traffic near the mansion by the gazebo, unless the event is small enough that the parking is obvious. We have two obvious parking lots plus parking on the diagonal down the back lane toward Brierly Road on both sides. You may contract with a valet service if you wish.

Parking Area for Vendors



Payment

The initial deposit is due with the signed contract. The remaining balance and the security deposit are due 120 days before the event date.

Checks are payable to: Audubon Naturalist Society. Add rental date to the check, and mail it to:

Audubon Naturalist Society
Attn.: Manager of Rental Events
8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Pets

Pets are not allowed at Woodend Sanctuary, including the mansion, surrounding grounds and property.

Rehearsals

Due to Woodend's heavily booked event calendar, wedding rehearsals are not guaranteed and can only be booked Monday through Friday. Please request the Rehearsal Form to the Manager of Rental Events. There is a fee for rehearsals, please refer to page 1 of your contract.

- Monday through Friday*: scheduled on the hour, for one hour, based on availability, between 10am-12pm.

* During summer camp weeks in June, July and August, and during Spring Break camp week, rehearsals will only be scheduled after 5:00pm and if there is not an event booked that evening.

Rehearsal time is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

You may not interrupt another wedding/event rental, preparations, cleaning hour, or classes taking place at Woodend.

We recommend that you only invite those who are in the wedding party to avoid distractions and running into overtime, which is subtracted from your security/damage deposit.

Due to the time limitation, we recommend that you plan a rehearsal itinerary in advance to ensure that it will flow efficiently.

Restroom Trailers

If you decide to rent a restroom trailer, the Manager of Rental Events must be informed in advance and approve the restroom trailer rental for your event at Woodend, including the drop off and pickup times.

The vendor must provide own generators and water tank. They can only park the trailer on designated parking areas, and parking on the lawn is not permitted.

Please don't assume that it can be dropped off on Friday and picked up the following Monday, as there could be an event booked the day before and/or after yours.

Set-up/Clean-up

Set-up and clean-up can only be done by the vendors, not renters.

The first 2 (two) hours of your contract are generally required by the caterer for the set-up and the last 1 (one) hour for the clean-up; it is at the discretion of the caterer to decrease the time needed for their set-up based on the Renter's event requirements. If the caterer asks for additional set-up time, it is solely the discretion of Renter whether to approve it.

Site Manager

Woodend assigns a Site Manager to each evening and weekend event.

The Site Manager is the first person to arrive and unlock the house, and the last person to leave. The Site Manager is not a wedding/event planner, nor a Day-of Coordinator. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to hire at least a Day-of Coordinator who will organize the flow of your wedding, keep track of time, and create a timeline for all tasks involved to make your wedding stress-free and very enjoyable. Woodend provides a list with vendors familiar with the space after your contract is received.

Site Managers have an extensive list of tasks related to the mansion and property, such as ensure the rooms used are unlocked, signs are in place, AC or heater are set-up as needed, restrooms are monitored and cleaned if needed during the event, direct traffic during the arrival hour, ensure no cars drive by the grove during your ceremony, and many other house-related tasks. The Site Manager will be available to assist in any house-related requests.

The Site Manager can pull all of the sidewalls in the tent or just some. They don't need to be all open or all closed.

The Site Manager uses the library as their base so they are easily found if needed. During winter months the Reception's office is their base.

Sparklers

Sparklers and fireworks are not allowed in [Montgomery County](#) and therefore not allowed at Woodend either: "In Maryland, private use and possession of fireworks, including sparklers, is illegal and carries a \$500 fine."

Staging Areas

Woodend offers two staging areas: one on the 2nd floor (no elevator), private, and part of the Library, semi-private. Please note that the Library is also used by planners, the Site Manager and any vendor that requires a meal or storage space during your event

Storage

Woodend does not have storage space; therefore, we cannot accept for storage decorations, chuppah, flowers, frames, or any items for your event. Everything brought in for your event must be removed by the end of your contracted hours. Please inform all your vendors, including event planners.

Temperature in the Mansion and Tent

We do have quite a lot of shade, and the tent was designed with a much higher ceiling than most tents so warm air has further to rise. Also, the tent was designed to feel 10 degrees cooler than in the sun by using blackout material in the canopy. We also install fans in the corners of the tent.

Ductless air conditioning units are located high on a wall in each room of the mansion and cooling towers are supplemented if needed.

We also install heaters in the tent at no cost to you when the weather turns cool. The mansion is well heated too.

Tent

Woodend's tent has cathedral windows, so even if the tent is closed, guests can still walk around and look through the windows. We recommend that you assign ushers to direct guests where you want them to be, or order and place signs around the tent if you don't want your guests in the tent during certain periods of time.

We have tent heaters available at no additional cost and they are ready when needed.

You may arrange to rent a heated tent to cover the stone terrace when the Woodend tent is not available. It does not need to cover the entire terrace but only for as much space as you need. It must have 10' sides so it is tall enough to peak above the beautiful stone work around the center French door. Please call the Manager of Rental Events if you are considering this possibility.

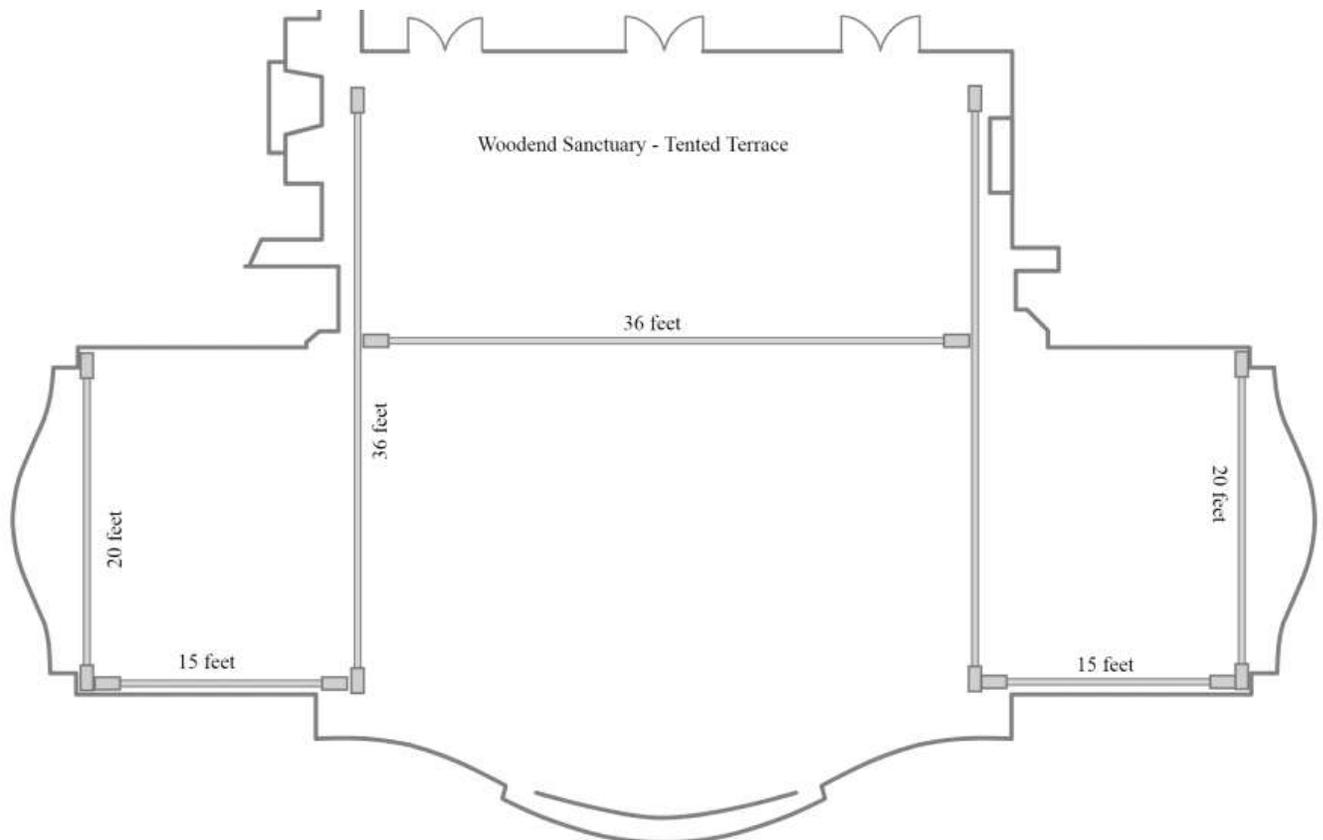
Nothing can be attached to or hang from the chandeliers and sconces inside or outside the house and tent, nor to the structure of the tent.

Tent chandeliers may not be removed.

Decorative lighting must be approved by the Manager of Rental Events and provided only by the exclusive vendor allowed to hang lights in the tent or attached to its structure, and if approved, may be added within your contracted hours. Please inform your vendors.

Additional flooring structure is not permitted on the terrace or inside the house. Bands don't need stage at Woodend.

Tent Dimensions



Ushers

You may want to assign ushers or friends to take gifts into the house as guests arrive before they stroll down to the grove. This is another way to keep early arriving guests from milling about the house while the caterers are setting up.

If most of your guests plan to drive to Woodend, you may want to consider ushers to direct guests from the parking by the manor to the grove. The Site Manager will direct traffic at the top of the driveway by the gazebo.

Vendors

The only required vendor is the caterer. We do recommend that vendors who have never done an event at Woodend schedule a visit to get familiarized with the space. All vendors must follow the guidelines provided to all renters with the countersigned contract.

The rental agreement states the contracted hours (start time and end time). The contracted hours include the entire time allowed for caterer, vendors, florists, event planners, or other agents to set-up. Renters or vendors are not allowed inside the mansion before their contracted hours, unless additional hours are contracted by the renter, and which require an addendum to the contract and additional fee. Renter is responsible for informing their contracted hours to vendors.

Walk-through

The walk-through is a separate meeting that you would have with your caterer and any other vendors (DJ, band, florist, etc.), including Woodend's Manager of Rental Events for the first 10 minutes, and it should be scheduled a few months before your event so you can finalize the details and make sure all vendors are on the same page. It should be separate from the rehearsal, and it's usually done during business hours.

Woodend Mansion is a private property and holds corporate events and environmental classes during business hours. Therefore, any walk-through with any vendor inside Woodend Mansion needs to be scheduled in advance with the Manager of Rental Events.

Woodend Dimensions

ROOM DIMENSIONS

Great Hall – 20' x 35' (17.5' x 35' from first step of staircase to French doors), plus Musicians Alcove near staircase (15' x 17')

Living Room – 20' x 30' (17' x 30' from fireplace to French doors)

Dining Room – 18' x 25' (Often used as a catering kitchen April – November)

Musician Alcove - 15' x 17'

FIREPLACE MANTELS

Great Hall: 74" long, 53" high, 6 ½" deep

Living Room : 89" long, 63" high, 8" deep with 9" protrusions

Dining Room : 85" long, 62" high, 8 ¼" deep

STAIRCASE

Treads: 45" wide

Stairway: 20 steps with three 4-pace landings, and one 7-pace landing under Palladian window

Banister: 50' in length to top landing on second floor

PALLADIAN WINDOW

Height from windowsill ledge to top of Palladian arch on middle window is 9'.

Middle windowsill ledge is 7" x 48"

Each side windowsill ledge is 7" x 21"

CEILING HEIGHT

First floor of mansion - 11' 3"

BATHROOM SHELVES

Measurements of shelves (radiator covers) in first floor bathrooms:

Library/portico bathroom - 7 inches deep x 22" across

Main bathroom next to front door - 10 ½ inches deep x 17' across

Toilet Tank covers for baskets etc.:

Library/portico – 7 inches deep x 17" across inside lip

Main bathroom next to front door – 7 inches deep sloping to 5 inches on both sides x 17"

GROVE

The stone staircase leading to the Hemlock Grove has 8 steps, with a 16' long railing.

There are 2 steps at the back of the grove with no railing.

Last review: 12/12/2018