**ORDINANCE 26-17**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 95, "BRUSH, GRASS AND WEEDS," AND CHAPTER 281, "PROPERTY MAINTENANCE," OF THE CODE OF THE BOROUGH OF RUNNEMEDE REGARDING RUNNING BAMBOO**

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Runnemede has previously adopted regulations governing running bamboo in order to protect private and public property from its damaging and invasive spread and to protect the general health, safety and welfare of Borough residents; and

**WHEREAS**, running bamboo is capable of spreading through underground rhizomes and, if not properly confined and maintained, may encroach upon adjoining private property, public property and public rights-of-way; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of New Jersey has identified running bamboo (Phyllostachys) as a prohibited invasive species under the New Jersey Invasive Species Management Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and Council find that it is appropriate to amend the Borough's existing regulations to prohibit the new planting, installation, propagation or introduction of running bamboo while continuing to require the proper confinement and maintenance of running bamboo already existing within the Borough; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough currently maintains substantially duplicative bamboo regulations in Chapter 95 and Chapter 281 of the Borough Code, and the Mayor and Council further find that consolidating the substantive regulations within Chapter 281 will promote consistency in administration and enforcement;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Runnemede, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, as follows:

SECTION 1.

Section 95-9, "Bamboo regulations," of Chapter 95, "Brush, Grass and Weeds," of the Code of the Borough of Runnemede is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety as follows:

§ 95-9. Running bamboo.

The planting, installation, propagation, introduction, confinement, maintenance and removal of running bamboo within the Borough of Runnemede shall be governed by Article VI of Chapter 281 of the Code of the Borough of Runnemede.

SECTION 2.

Section 281-34, "Purpose," of Article VI, "Bamboo Regulations," of Chapter 281, "Property Maintenance," is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety as follows:

§ 281-34. Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to preserve and protect private and public property from the damaging spread of running bamboo, to protect property and indigenous plant materials from its invasive spread, to maintain the general welfare of the residents of the Borough of Runnemede, and to regulate running bamboo in a manner consistent with applicable State law.

SECTION 3.

Section 281-35, "Prohibited acts," is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety as follows:
§ 281-35. Prohibited acts.

A. No owner, tenant or occupant of property, or any person, corporation or other entity, shall plant, install, propagate, introduce, or cause or permit the planting, installation, propagation or introduction of running bamboo (Phyllostachys) upon any property located within the Borough of Runnemede, except to the extent expressly authorized by a conditional use waiver or otherwise permitted pursuant to applicable State law.

B. Nothing contained in this article shall require the removal of running bamboo existing upon property within the Borough solely by reason of its presence as of the effective date of this

ordinance. All existing running bamboo shall, however, be subject to the confinement, maintenance, encroachment, removal and enforcement requirements of this article.

SECTION 4.

Section 281-36, “Duty to confine,” is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety as follows:

§ 281-36. Duty to confine.

A. In the event running bamboo is located upon any property within the Borough of Runnemede, the owner or occupant of said property shall at all times confine and maintain the running bamboo so as to prevent its encroachment, spread, invasion or intrusion onto any other private or public property or public right-of-way.

B. Running bamboo shall be confined by means of a rhizome or underground stem barrier which shall:

(1) Be constructed of concrete, metal or plastic, such as high-density polypropylene, 40 mil or heavier, glued or taped at junctions or clamped with stainless steel clamps;

(2) Be at least three feet deep and project at least one inch above ground level; and

(3) Be slanted outward at the top so that when rhizomes or stems encounter the barrier they are directed upward.

C. Rhizomes that arch, extend or grow over the top of the barrier shall be cut and removed so as to prevent further spreading.

D. Failure to properly confine and maintain running bamboo in accordance with this section shall require its complete removal from the property upon notice from the Borough in accordance with this article.

SECTION 5.

Section 281-37, “Removal,” is hereby repealed and replaced in its entirety as follows:

§ 281-37. Encroachment and removal.

A. In the event it is determined that running bamboo has encroached, spread, invaded or intruded upon any adjoining private property, public property or public right-of-way, the Borough shall notify the owner of the property from which the bamboo originated, in writing, of the violation.

B. The notice shall require the property owner to:

(1) Remove the running bamboo from the adjoining private property, public property or public right-of-way; and

(2) Properly confine the running bamboo against future encroachment in accordance with § 281-36, or completely remove the running bamboo from the originating property.

C. Notice shall be provided by certified mail, return receipt requested, and regular mail.

D. If the property owner does not correct the violation within 45 days of the date of notice, the Code Enforcement Officer may cause a citation to be issued with a penalty of up to $100 for each day the violation continues, enforceable through the Municipal Court of the Borough of Runnemede, together with such civil proceedings for injunctive or other relief as may be appropriate.

E. Nothing contained herein shall be interpreted as limiting the right of an affected private property owner to seek civil relief in a court of competent jurisdiction or otherwise limiting the institution of civil proceedings against the appropriate parties.

F. When running bamboo has encroached upon Borough-owned property or a public right-of-way, the Borough, in its discretion, may remove or contract for the removal of the bamboo from such Borough property or public right-of-way. The reasonable cost thereof shall be the responsibility of the owner of the property from which the bamboo originated and may be assessed as a lien against that property to the extent permitted by law. Such costs may include the installation of an appropriate barrier to prevent future bamboo encroachment.

SECTION 6.

Section 281-38, “Violations and penalties,” shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 7.

If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance shall be declared invalid for any reason whatsoever, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall continue in full force and effect, and to this end the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable.

SECTION 8.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 9.

This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication in accordance with law.

**NOTICE**

The above ordinance was introduced and passed on first reading at a meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Runnemede held on the 29th day of September, 2026, and will be taken up for final consideration and passage at a meeting of the Borough Council of said Borough of Runnemede, 24 N. Black Horse Pike, Runnemede, New Jersey, on the 27th day of October, 2026, at which time and place all persons interested will be heard.

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Beth Miller, Borough Clerk
Upon First Reading