

C. LANDSCAPING, SCREENING AND BUFFER AREAS

1. General standards for landscaping for properties subject to site plan review shall include the following:
  - a. Major trees shall include any of the appropriate native varieties of shade trees, ornamental trees or evergreens.
  - b. Shrubs shall include any of the appropriate native varieties of evergreen or deciduous plants.
  - c. At the time of planting, trees shall be of the following minimum size:
    - shade trees: three-inch caliper measured at three-feet above grade
    - evergreen trees: seven-foot height
    - flowering trees: two-inch caliper, single stem; eight-foot height, clump form
  - d. Trees, shrubs and ground cover within five feet of any paved areas shall be of a variety capable of withstanding damage from salt.
  - e. All plant material shall be nursery grown and conform to the standards of the American Association of Nurserymen.
  - f. Mulched planting beds of an appropriate size shall be placed around all trees and shrubs to retain moisture. Acceptable mulching material shall be leaves, bark, woodchips, gravel or stone, at least no more than four inches in depth and no closer to the stem(s) than five inches.
  - g. Suitable ground cover shall be placed on all disturbed site areas not covered by paving, buildings or mulching for trees and shrubs. Suitable ground cover shall be grass, turf, myrtle, pachysandra, or any native ground cover, stone, gravel or an appropriate substitute. A maximum of 10% of the landscaped area shall be covered by stone or gravel.
  - h. No stone or gravel shall be used for planting beds or ground cover within four feet of pedestrian walkways unless the material is suitably contained within its area.
  - i. Existing trees shall be saved if possible; if grading is required in their vicinity, trees shall be appropriately welled or mounded to protect them from damage.

- j. No trees eight inches or greater in caliper measured three feet above ground shall be removed unless so approved by the Commission.
- k. No paved surface, except for driveways, entry ways or terrace, shall be permitted within six feet of any principal structure.

2. Landscaped buffers shall be provided between any use in a business or industrial district and an adjacent single-family or multi-family residential district, and between any non-residential or multi-family residential use and adjacent uses in a single-family or multi-family residential district.\*

- a. The average width of a buffer for multi-family residential uses when abutting single-family residential uses shall be 20 feet but in no case less than 10 feet; for non-residential uses when abutting single-family residential uses 60 feet but in no case less than 50 feet; for non-residential uses when abutting multi-family uses 20 feet but in no case less than 10 feet; for multi-family uses abutting multi-family uses 20 feet but in no case less than 10 feet.\*
- b. A buffer shall be sufficiently landscaped with continuous native evergreen trees or hedges having a minimum height of five feet, providing screening and separation.
- c. No paving shall be allowed within a buffer.
- d. The Commission may reduce or waive this buffer requirement and instead authorize the substitution of screening as fencing or walls in accordance with the requirements of 29-8.C.3.

3. Screening shall be provided for any objectionable area or view which might be visible from adjacent properties or from the street, including (but not limited to) loading areas, refuse storage areas, and ground-fixed mechanical equipment. Acceptable screening materials shall include:

- a. Native ~~Evergreen~~ hedges having a minimum height of 7 feet at the time of planting,
- b. Fences of timber construction, of a suitable height,
- c. Masonry walls, of a suitable height,
- d. Earthen berms, when covered with native shrubs, trees and/or ground cover, except grass, stone or gravel; or
- e. Any combination of the above materials.

- f. For properties zoned DE-5 or DE-10, any other materials of suitable height, design and location which is deemed appropriate by the Planning and Zoning Commission provided said approval is in accordance with the standards for Site Plan Approval set forth in Section 29-11.A.9. Such screening alternative shall be considered and evaluated on a case by case basis. \*

4. Landscape and Screening Standards for Parking Lots

- a. Objective: To preserve and/or enhance the appearance of off-street parking and loading areas.
- b. Specific Goals:
  - (1) To provide natural visual screening of parking and loading areas;
  - (2) To moderate the microclimate of parking areas by providing shade, absorbing reflected heat from paved surfaces and creating natural wind breaks;
  - (3) To ensure public safety by using landscaping materials to define parking and loading areas and manage internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation; and,
  - (4) To enhance the overall aesthetic quality of parking and loading areas by providing a variety of landscaping materials.
- c. Parking Lot Standards:
  - (1) In off-street parking lots of 10 or more parking spaces, at least 10% of the parking area shall be suitably landscaped with appropriate native trees, shrubs, and other plant materials and ground cover. Such landscaping shall be subject to approval by the Commission, based upon consideration of the adequacy of the proposed landscaping to assure the establishment of a safe, convenient, and attractive parking lot which needs a minimum amount of maintenance, including plant care, snow plowing, and the removal of leaves and other debris.
  - (2) Landscaped areas shall be provided in parking lots, distributed among end islands, interior islands and planting strips. There shall be allocated at least 20 square feet of net planting area per parking space and at least one shade tree and three shrubs per 12 parking spaces or major fraction thereof. There shall be no more than 18 contiguous parking spaces without an interior or end island. In the case of gravel parking lots, enlarged planting strips within and around the parking lot may be provided in lieu of interior and end islands. At

a minimum each double bay of parking shall be separated by a planting strip of 15 feet in width along the length of the parking aisle. In no event shall the amount of shrubbery and trees in a gravel parking lot be less than that required for a paved parking lot.\*

(a) End islands shall be:

- provided at each end of each row of parking spaces;
- curbed and landscaped; and
- a minimum of 9 feet wide by 17 feet long for a single row of spaces and 9 feet wide by 34 feet long for a double row of spaces.

(b) Interior islands shall be:

- provided within the parking area in an arrangement subject to approval by the Commission;
- curbed and landscaped; and
- a minimum of 9 feet wide by 17 feet long for a single row of spaces where provided for every 12 spaces and a minimum of 14 feet wide by 17 feet long where provided for more than 12 spaces; and 9 feet wide by 34 feet long for a double row of spaces where provided for every 12 spaces and a minimum of 14 feet wide by 34 feet long where provided for more than 12 spaces.\*

(c) Planting strips shall be:

- provided in every other set of interior parking spaces between abutting rows of spaces;
- curbed and landscaped; and
- a minimum width of 10 feet (15 feet if a pedestrian walkway is provided).

(3) Screening shall be provided for parking areas visible from adjacent properties or from the street. Acceptable screening materials shall include:

- (a) ~~Native~~ Evergreen hedges having a minimum height of four feet at the time of planting;
- (b) Earthen berm, when covered with native shrubs, trees and/or ground cover, except grass, stone or gravel;
- (c) Fences of timber construction or masonry walls, if approved by the Commission; or,

(d) Any combination of the above materials.

- (4) Trees in or adjacent to parking lots shall be of a variety suitable for a parking lot environment which provide shade or are capable of providing shade at maturity.

5. Native and Non-Invasive Plants.

The use of native and ~~those non-native non-invasive~~ plants ~~which are not invasive~~ in developed landscapes and in open spaces within the Town will help maintain healthy ecosystems by mitigating the effects of habitat loss and fragmentation of our natural areas and will protect and promote native and non-invasive vegetation appropriate to the particular soil, topography, and hydrology of a site.

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- (a) Native plant is a plant (terrestrial or aquatic) that lives or grows naturally in the Northeast region of North America without direct or indirect human intervention.  
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Native plants are required in the landscape plan and apply to any new or replacement plantings, including trees, shrubs, grasses, ground\_covers and herbaceous perennials.

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~~*Due to the high wildlife value of native trees, 100% of new and replacement tree plantings on municipal properties will be native to the Northeast. New and replacement shrubs will be a minimum of 85% natives for municipal properties. New and replacement grass and ground cover plantings will be 100% native for municipal properties. New and replacement herbaceous perennials will be a minimum of 75% native for municipal properties.*~~

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~~*Every effort should be made to select and plant straight-species of native plants that are local ecotypes. The use of cultivars and nativars is discouraged, as their value to wildlife is unproven.*~~

~~*(b) Exercise care to source plants and seeds that have not been treated with neonicotinoids, which are deadly to pollinators and other insects.*~~

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- ~~(e)(b)~~ Exclusions from the use of native plants include existing trees and plants, annual plants and plants grown for food, and lawns, green roofs or other applications that have a convincing reason to use non-native plants.

- ~~(e)(c)~~ Without exception, plants that are invasive species or potentially invasive plant species as cited on the current CT Invasive Plant List [(updated periodically by the CT Invasive Plants Council in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 22a-381a through Section 22a-381d) - see Attachment 1] shall not be included in Town landscaping. Any updates to the List will immediately be incorporated into ~~this~~ Town's Invasive Plant Ban. All Town Departments are directed to consult the List before considering any new

plantings on Town-owned land or on State-owned land for which the Town is responsible.