

410 Landscaping Standards

410.1 So as to provide buffer between adjacent residential and non-residential uses and create a healthy, safe and aesthetically pleasing environment, the Planning Commission, shall require a landscape plan be prepared as part of any Conditional Use application. Such a plan shall also be required whenever any non-residential use is proposed in any district so as to buffer parking areas and buildings from the highway, each other and other uses.

410.2 The landscape plan shall specify locations of all mature shade trees or other species of six (6) inch caliper or greater and indicate existing vegetation to be removed or preserved. It shall demonstrate how building materials, colors, and textures will be blended with the natural and man-made landscape. It shall also include visual depictions of the proposed landscape from the perspective of persons who will view the site from the highway or adjoining properties. Specific locations, varieties, sizes, winter hardiness, and schedules for all proposed plantings shall, too, be provided as part of the plan.

410.3 Landscape plans shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect or other design professional qualified to perform such services and include consideration of all man-made and natural features, including signs.

410.4 The Planning Commission, in reviewing a landscape plan, may employ the assistance of design professionals and seek the non-binding advice of interested civic organizations concerned with community beautification. They shall also specifically consider the following before approving, approving with modifications or disapproving the use:

- A. The plan should promote attractive development, preserve existing vegetation to the maximum extent possible, enhance the appearance of the property and complement the character of the surrounding area.
- B. The plan should use landscaping to delineate or define vehicular and pedestrian ways and open space.
- C. The plant material selected should be of complementary character to buildings, structures and native plant species and be of sufficient size and quality to accomplish its intended purposes.
- D. The plan should effectively buffer the activity from adjoining land uses as may be necessary and soften the impact of other site development as contrasted with the natural environment.
- E. The plan should be realistic in terms of maintenance and use materials which, as a minimum, are winter hardy to Zone 4.

410.5 Landscaping Standards. All new landscaping required shall meet the following minimum specifications:

- A. The minimum branching height for all shade trees shall be eight (8) feet.
- B. Shade trees shall have a minimum caliper of three (3) inches (measured 4 feet above grade) and be at least twelve (12) feet in height when planted.
- C. Evergreen trees shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet in height when planted.
- D. Shrubs shall be a minimum of 24" in height when planted. Hedges shall form a continuous visual screen within two (2) years after planting.
- E. A buffer screen at least twenty-five (25) feet in width along any residential lot line shall be provided in the case of any Conditional Use or Special Exception. It shall include, at a minimum, one (1) evergreen tree for every fifteen (15) linear feet of property line. An additional row of

evergreens meeting these standards and off-set such that each row serves to place trees between the gaps of the other, shall be permitted as a substitute for the stockade fence. The width of this buffer may be reduced along the rear and side lot lines for good cause, but not along the front lot line or to less than ten (10) feet. Other yard areas not adjoining residences shall be subject to subsection F below.

F. A landscape strip at least twenty-five (25) feet in width, that includes at least one (1) deciduous tree for every thirty (30) linear feet of perimeter lot line shall be required for any non-residential Conditional Use or Special Exception. Such deciduous trees shall also be accompanied by smaller shrubs and ground cover as may be required to effectively separate and buffer the activity from the highway but still allow for visibility of the use. The width of this buffer may be reduced along the rear and side lot lines for good cause, but not along the front lot line or to less than ten (10) feet. See also Section 402.3.

G. All lot area (except where existing vegetation is preserved) shall be landscaped with grass, ground cover, shrubs, or other appropriate cover. All landscaped areas shall be protected from salt runoff using appropriate edge treatments.

H. The preservation of mature shade trees shall be required unless there is no alternative but to remove them. These may be used to meet requirements of this section provided the Code Enforcement Officer or Planning Commission, as the case may be, determines the purpose of this section is achieved.

410.6 Where it is determined that a proposed use would not have a significant impact on the natural environment, adjoining landowners or the view from a public highway, these requirements may be appropriately modified.

410.7 A performance guarantee in the amount of one-hundred-twenty-five percent (125%) of the cost of materials and installation may be required to assure that all landscaping survives in a healthy condition one (1) full year. The Code Enforcement Officer or Planning Commission, as the case may be, shall determine the amount of the guarantee. The Code Enforcement Officer shall have the right to enter upon the property to inspect the landscaping and, after notifying the owner of any deficiencies, to require that the guarantee be used to pay for the replacement of any dead, dying, diseased, stunned or infested plant materials.

410.8 All applicable requirements of these landscaping regulations shall be fully met prior to the Code Enforcement Officer granting a Certificate of Occupancy for a new building or use.

410.9 If a Development Tract includes 10 or more acres of lot area and 3 or more commercial buildings, then a minimum average of one deciduous shade tree shall be planted for every 10 new off-street parking spaces. Such trees may be planted anywhere on the tract that is consistent with the Township-approved plans.