

Liberty Consolidated Planning Commission

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OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES

This procedure will be utilized to preserve open space, open views, and distinct landscape features natural to our environment. The preservation will occur through the use of the following methods:

- **Open Space Protection Through Public Acquisition of Scenic or Recreational Areas**
- **Lakeshore or Riverbank Landscaping**
- **Shoreline Building Placement**
- **Wetland and Natural Drainage Ways**
- **Stormwater runoff and water quality**
- **Ridge Development and View Maintenance**
- **Residential development and Land Division**
- **Historic Preservation and Compatible Building Designs**
- **Parking Lot Design**
- **Sign Advertisements and Placement**
- **Lighting and Utility Poles**
- **Cell Towers**
- **Residential Landscaping**
- **Commercial Buffering Screening and Building Location**

I. Open Space Protection Through Public Acquisition of Scenic or Recreational Areas will be achieved by:

- 1. Identifying the recreation needs of the community, as well as potential recreational attractions for tourists**
- 2. Identifying unique natural or native habitats in or near the community to set aside for public enjoyment**
- 3. Establishing a land acquisition program that will target open space or older facilities that may be adapted for public use.**

- II. Lakeshore or Riverbank Landscape will be utilized to maintain water quality by:**
- 1. Leaving a 50 ft wide strip of trees, shrubs, grasses, and other plants growing along the stream bank or lakeshore to filter out contaminants from the runoff, before reaching the water**
 - 2. If shoreline vegetation has been removed, ensure that native species of trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses is replanted in its place.**
 - 3. Avoiding or limiting the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides that can run off to storm drains, lakes, and rivers**
- III. Shoreline Building Placement will be used to preserve the filtering capacity of shoreline vegetation by:**
- 1. Setting buildings back from shorelines at least 50 to 100 feet to protect the soil-holding capacity of natural vegetation and to avoid degrading the water quality. Benefits include longer building life, less erosion-prone shoreline, better water quality, and better habitat for viewing birds and wildlife, and more attractive shoreline appearance.**
 - 2. Leaving a 50-foot wide greenbelt of trees, shrubs and grasses along riverbanks and lakeshore to hold the shoreline and filter contaminants from runoff.**
 - 3. Creating a place where rainwater can slowly seep into the ground, rather than running off over parking lots and other paved areas directly into water bodies**
- IV. Wetlands and Natural Drainage Ways are used to reduce flooding in the following ways:**
- 1. Designing for surface flow or on-site retention of Stormwater runoff**
 - 2. Leaving a 50-foot-wide buffer or greenbelt of undisturbed trees, shrubs, and grasses next to wetlands**
 - 3. Establishing a minimum setback distance for new buildings located next to wetlands**
 - 4. Protecting the functions and benefits of wetlands, wet areas, and natural drainage ways, no matter how small in size**
- V. Stormwater runoff and water quality will be utilized in the following way:**
- 1. Creating a vegetated or rock-lined drainage channel for Stormwater runoff to slowly seep into the ground, rather than running off into streams, rivers, and lakes.**
 - 2. Designing sediment basins for onsite retention of storm water runoff**
 - 3. Using a pervious type of asphalt that allows water to seep through**
- VI. Ridge Development and View Maintenance will be utilized to show the attractive views of forest-covered landscape by:**
- 1. Minimizing the clearing of trees for building lots**
 - 2. Trying to keep the skyline if trees intact, for a more scenic view from the visual corridor**
 - 3. Locating access roads behind the ridge, shielded from view**
- VII. Residential Development and Land Division will be utilized to maintain the nature of the landscape for wildlife habitat and native plant life by:**
- 1. Clustering the same number of homes on smaller (1/2-1 acre) lots in order to retain a large portion of the original land parcel as scenic open space, forestland, or farmland**

VIII. Historic Preservation and Compatible Building Designs will be utilized to maintain the history of a community by:

- 1. Selecting architectural styles, building sizes, roof angles, and building shapes that will maintain a consistent character to the downtown or neighborhood**
- 2. In high visibility structures, where a neighborhood architectural style is not established, use materials with a subdued appearance, such as wood, stone, brick, and other materials finished in muted colors.**
- 3. Placing parking in rear on busy street, or utilize street parking in quiet sections of town**
- 4. Establishing a historic ordinance to delineate the historic area, and require site plan review as a way to ensure future construction and remodeling will enhance rather than detract from the historic character of the town**

IX. Parking Lot Design can be utilized to affect the visual appearance, vehicle and pedestrian safety and environmental quality of a site by:

- 1. Establishing landscaped parking islands to guide traffic flow, provide some infiltration and reduce runoff, and to enhance the look, and features of the development**
- 2. Placing parking away from the street and behind business to allow for a safe pedestrian entry and to enhance the overall appearance of the building**
- 3. Providing landscaping around the building and parking perimeter to produce a more attractive appearance, to provide a visual buffer (screen), and when necessary, to protect a fragile area, such as a wetland**
- 4. Limiting size of impervious surfaces and not paving overflow parking areas**
- 5. Placing parking behind the building, so pedestrians can safely approach the front of the business**
- 6. Separating parking from the building with a landscaped area, to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and to provide a greener, more natural appearance**
- 7. Constructing parking islands with trees at least two parking stalls in width to provide adequate root growth for tree survival, as well as to create a significant visual impact**
- 8. During winter, large parking islands provide room for storage of plowed snow.**
- 9. During summer, parking islands with trees can provide welcome shade for hot cars**

X. Sign Advertisements and Placements will be utilized to enhance the visual appearance of a community or roadway by:

- 1. Limiting the number, size and height of signs, and prohibit billboards when possible**
- 2. Encouraging little or no illumination of signs**
- 3. Using sign materials that reflect regional landscape, community character, and architectural styles**
- 4. Encouraging franchise establishments to use their logo rather than a large sign , to alert passers-by to their location**
- 5. Recognizing and rewarding businesses, perhaps through a tax incentive or public certificate/awards program, for constructing an attractive sign that is less visually intrusive on the landscape**

- XI. Lighting and Utility Poles will be utilize to illuminate the streets and roadways by:**
- 1. Using “dark sky” parking lot lighting or placing shields over light fixtures to direct light downwards**
 - 2. Using decorative lights fixtures that enhance community character**
 - 3. Placing utilities underground to reduce visual clutter**
- XII. Cell Phone Towers will be used to keep all cell phone users connected by:**
- 1. Camouflaging the cell towers into existing structures, like rooftops, chimneys, church steeples, flag poles, water towers, fire lookouts, clock towers, or farm silos**
- XIII. Residential Landscaping will be utilized to enhance the appearance of a home or a residential area by:**
- 1. Reducing the size of lawn areas and replacing them with native, plant communities**
 - 2. Using primarily native plant species that require minimal watering and are compatible with the local climate and growing season**
 - 3. When possible, leaving the landscape unmowed to avoid disturbing ground nesting birds, toads, and frogs and to allow wildflowers to bloom**
 - 4. Using attractive signs and street lighting**
 - 5. Varying sidewalk alignment for variety**
 - 6. Planting street trees to enhance visual looks and features, providing shade, and establishing natural elements in downtown and suburban neighborhoods**
- XIV. Commercial Buffering, Screening, and Building Location will be utilized to enhance the appearance of a commercial business by:**
- 1. Hiding large parking areas, airports, and commercial storage buildings behind berms and landscaping**
 - 2. Planting flowers, shrubs and street trees around buildings, along the entrance or “gateway” to a town, in the median, or in planters to enhance the visual appearance of a community’s shopping district**
 - 3. Placing parking behind or to the side of buildings**