

CICERO UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE UPDATE

9.13.2021



UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OUTLINE – CHAPTER 114

Article V. Article 5: Site Development Standards

B. Division 2: Landscaping, Buffering and Screening

1. Purpose and Intent

- a. To ensure the compatibility of different land uses, this Division sets forth standards for the installation and maintenance and preservation of the landscape.
- b. The visual and environmental setting of the Town affects the welfare of the citizens.
- c. The promotion and control of landscaping will preserve and enhance the public health, safety, and welfare of the Town.
- d. These regulations are intended to minimize the harmful or nuisance effects resulting from noise, dust, debris, emissions and poor air quality, erosion, heat, motor headlight glare, the use of impervious ground material, artificial light intrusion, excessive stormwater, objectionable sights, or activities, or similar incompatible impacts conducted or created by adjoining or nearby land uses.
- e. The standards set forth in this Division are not intended to inhibit or discourage innovative design proposals. As the standards provide the minimal framework for landscape proposals, it is anticipated that they will foster and encourage creativity, innovation, and add to the natural beauty of Cicero.

2. Scope

- a. For all new construction and changes to existing uses the regulations set forth in this Division shall apply as follows:
 - (1) New Development. When any development involves the construction of a new, or addition to an existing building that increases the gross floor area by more the 10%.
 - (2) Special Use Permit; Variation; Planned Unit Developments. When development of property requires a Special Use Permit, a Variation, or Planned Unit Development permit.
 - (3) Intensity of Use Increases. The intensity of use of any existing building, structure, or premises is increased through the addition of:
 - (a) One (1) or more dwelling units;
 - (b) The gross floor area of a building is increased to require the construction of one (1) or more additional off-street parking spaces to meet the off-street parking requirement;
 - (c) Uses qualifying for site plan review exceptions in Article 4, Division 2 (Uses), shall not be required to provide additional landscaping.



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- (4) Expansion or Reconstruction of Parking Areas. When any existing off-street parking area is expanded or undergoes major reconstruction. Major reconstruction means the removal of existing pavement and replacement of such pavement. Resurfacing without reconstruction does not constitute major reconstruction.
 - (5) Ground Signs: Monument and Pole. The installation, reconstruction, or relocation of a Ground Sign, as that term is defined in [Article 5, Division 3](#) of this Chapter, shall require landscaping or screening around such sign as defined in this [Article 5, Division 2, Section XXXX](#).
 - (6) Ground-Mounted Mechanical or Utility Equipment. Installation of ground-mounted mechanical or utility equipment shall require landscaping or screening around such equipment as defined in this [Article 5, Division 1, Section XXXX](#).
- b. Chapter 102, Vegetation, should be referenced for general requirements for parkway trees, grading and erosion control, and treatment of diseased trees.
3. Landscape Plan Review and Approval
 - a. Landscape Plans shall be reviewed and approved as directed in [Article 2, Division 6](#) (Site Plan Review), and as set forth herein.
 4. Landscape Plan Requirements
 - a. For each property subject to these regulations, the property owner shall submit a landscape plan to the Zoning Administrator for his review with the building or other permit application, or at the time zoning relief is applied for, whichever is earlier.
 - b. All landscape plans so submitted shall be at an appropriate scale, not smaller than 1 inch = 40 feet. Completed landscape plans shall contain all required information including but not limited to: ownership of the property in question; detailed landscape site plan information; detailed schedule of landscape materials, and irrigation plans, as provided below.
 - c. **Title Block**
 - (1) Name and Address of the Property Owner/Petitioner.
 - (2) Name of Registered Landscape Architect /Contractor.
 - (3) Landscape Architect's /Contractor's firm name and address.
 - (4) Scale data, north arrow, and date and date of any revisions.
 - d. **Landscape Site Plan Information; Location of Existing Conditions and Proposed Improvements**
 - (1) Property lines.
 - (2) Building footprint, with entry and exit points.
 - (3) Identification of all proposed plant materials with planting bed locations and dimensions.





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- (4) Treatment of all ground surfaces (ground covers, sod, seed, seasonal beds, paving, impervious and pervious materials).
 - (5) Location of water detention sites.
 - (6) All utilities and lighting.
 - (7) Walls and fences (indicating height and material).
 - (8) Parking spaces and driveway aisles (spaces delineated including dimensions, curbing, and handicapped spaces).
 - (9) Shopping cart collection points.
 - (10) Site contours, existing and proposed.
 - (11) Berms, with one (1) foot interval contours indicated.
 - (12) Sidewalks.
 - (13) Existing tree survey (six (6) inch caliper and above, with drip line, noting trees proposed for removal and planned for preservation).
 - (14) Monument sign locations.
 - (15) Refuse/Recycling disposal areas.
 - (16) Public rights of way/easements, including street widths/drives/approaches.
 - (17) Planters or planting boxes.
 - (18) Trash cans.
 - (19) Other exterior landscape amenities including exterior tables and benches and trash receptacles.
- e. **Schedule of Proposed and Existing Landscape Material**
- (1) List of all proposed plantings, indicating common and botanical names, caliper, height or size, and quantity.
 - (2) List of all existing trees proposed for removal, six (6) inch caliper or greater, indicating caliper, common and botanical names.
 - (3) List of all existing trees, six (6) inch caliper or greater, planned for preservation, indicating caliper size, common and botanical names.
- f. **Miscellaneous**
- (1) Irrigation Plan, including system details and sprinkler head locations, providing for underground irrigation of planting beds or a water supply outlet no greater than one hundred fifty (150) feet from planting beds if required.
 - (2) Methods proposed to protect plants and plant beds.
 - (3) Construction erosion control plan.



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- g. Where applicable, the Zoning Administrator may require less information, or any other additional information to appropriately evaluate compliance with the proposed development or improvement.
5. Planting Design and Preservation Criteria
- a. The landscape design, scale, and nature of landscape material for any given site shall be appropriate to the specific site and structures and shall take into account the location of underground and above-ground utilities. Earthen berms and existing topography shall, whenever practical, be incorporated into the landscape treatment of the site.
- b. **Landscape Design and Selection of Plant Material.** New planting materials used in conformance with the provisions of this Division, shall be:
- (1) High-quality nursery-grown stock. Substandard “B-grade” or “Park Grade” plants are not acceptable.
 - (2) Grown in a climate zone similar to Cicero. (i.e. United States Department of Agriculture Zone 5b)
 - (3) Selected for interest in its structure, texture, color, and its ultimate growth.
 - (4) In conformance with the American Standards for Nursery Stock, ANSI Z60.1-Latest Edition.
 - (5) In conformance with the Schedule of Prohibited Trees and Schedule of Recommended Plants maintained by the Zoning Administrator.
 - (6) For each plant group (canopy tree, evergreen tree, etc) there shall be no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of one genus.
 - (7) Existing trees with an eight-inch (8”) caliper or greater shall be preserved on the property as determined by the Zoning Administrator and shall comply with the requirements of Section 2.5 a. above. Trees that are preserved shall be counted toward compliance with the requirements of this Division.
 - (8) Evergreens shall be incorporated into the landscape plan and treatment of a site, where appropriate to the site as determined by the Zoning Administrator, particularly in required buffers for property zoned residential the screening of refuse holding areas and critical points of required parking lot screening.
 - (9) Shrubs used in sight triangles as defined in Article XXX, Division XXX, Section XXX shall be low growth shrubs that do not exceed thirty inches (30”) in height at maturity.
 - (10) Plant materials shall be placed against long expanses of building walls, fences, and other barriers to soften their effect.

Commented [KS1]: Does the Town maintain such a list?





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(11) Where site characteristics or property dimensions limit the use or survivability of live landscaping as an effective screen, masonry walls shall be used for required screening subject to the regulations set forth in Article 3, Division 1, Section 13 Fences.

c. Installation of Plant Materials

(1) Plant materials of all types and species shall be installed in accordance with the minimum technical specifications of the "Illinois Chapter of Landscape Contractors", including the guarantee and replacements sections.

(2) Minimum Plant Sizes at time of installation shall be:

- (a) Shade Trees: two and one-half (2 1/2) inch caliper.
- (b) Ornamental Trees: two (2) inch caliper or if in clump form, six (6) feet in height.
- (c) Evergreen Trees: five (5) feet in height.
- (d) Shrubs required for screening: three (3) feet in height; shrubs used for other purposes: eighteen (18) inches in height.
- (e) Ground Cover: spaced no less than twelve (12) inches on center.
- (f) Perennials: spaced no less than is recommended for the particular species.

d. Plantings on any portion of the public right-of-way provided by an adjacent property owner, association, or individual, that are removed as a result of Town utility construction or maintenance, or other Town activities, may be replaced at the sole responsibility of the property owner, association, or individual. The Town shall not be required to replace any plant material in the public right-of-way.

6. Minimum Landscape Requirements for Non-Single Family Residential Lots

- a. Each duplex dwelling shall be planted with deciduous trees totaling at least six (6) inches caliper per lot, evergreen trees totaling at least six (6) feet in height per lot, and a minimum of 12 shrubby plants per lot.
- b. Each townhouse or garden court dwelling unit and associated parking area shall be planted with deciduous trees totaling at least four (4) inches caliper per unit, evergreen trees totaling at least three (3) feet in height per unit, and a minimum of ten (10) shrubby plants per unit.
- c. Each apartment development and associated parking area shall be planted with deciduous trees totaling at least 18 inches in caliper per gross acre, evergreen trees totaling at least 18 feet in height per gross acre, and a minimum of 15 shrubby plants per gross acre.
- d. Credit shall be given against the above requirements for existing trees that are preserved.
- e. Minimum planting requirements shall be maintained at all times.





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7. Minimum Landscape Requirements for Off-Street Parking Lots

a. **Perimeter Screening Required**

- (1) Every off-street parking lot or parking area containing five (5) or more parking spaces shall be set back, buffered, and screened from public view and adjacent property by a perimeter landscaped area having a minimum width of eight (8) feet, or, where screening by a masonry wall, a minimum width of five (5) feet.
- (2) The minimum width for the perimeter screening area shall be measured from the property line and shall not include any parking overhang.
- (3) Screening within the perimeter setback area shall consist of a masonry wall, densely planted hedge, decorative fencing, or massing of shrubs, installed in a manner to inhibit public views of the parking area.
- (4) Perimeter screening shall be continuous, except for breaks as may be permitted for sidewalks, driveways, and sight triangles.
- (5) Masonry walls used for perimeter screening shall have a minimum height of thirty (30) inches and a maximum height of thirty-six (36) inches. Such walls shall have a finished surface that is the same or closely similar to the masonry of the principal building, if applicable.
- (6) Shrubs planted as perimeter screening shall be at least three (3) feet in height at the time of installation.
- (7) The surface of the perimeter setback area shall be suitably covered with grass, ground cover, or similar vegetation and periodically mulched. Impervious materials such as asphalt, concrete, or a layer of stone are prohibited.
- (8) A six (6) inch continuous poured-in-place concrete curb shall separate all drive and parking surfaces from landscape areas.
- (9) The Zoning Administrator may recommend a creative alternative of berms, walls, shrubs, trees, or other material, which has the effect of providing a minimum three (3) foot high visual screen of parking areas.



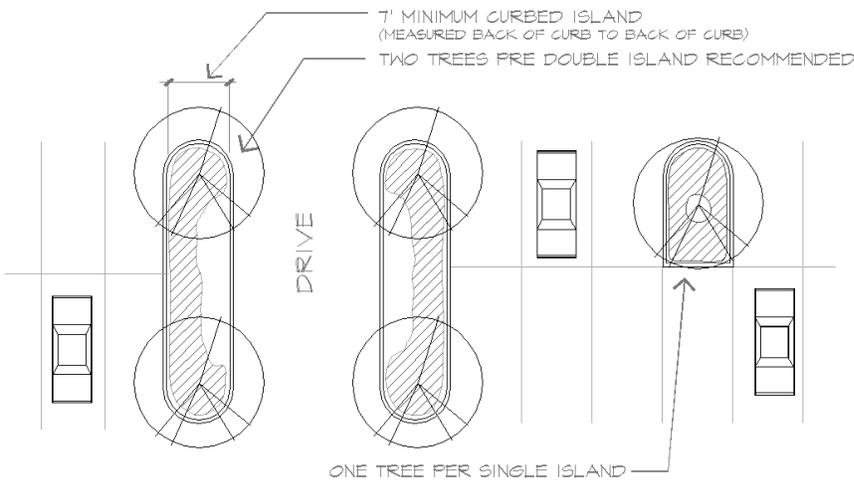
Example of a bio-swale buffer screening the off-street parking lot from the perimeter.



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b. Interior Parking Lot Landscaping Requirements

- (1) A planting island equal in area to a parking space shall be located at each end of a parking row and after each fifteen (15) parking spaces within a parking row.



Example of a Planting Island Equal to a Parking Space

- (2) The installation of bio-filtration swales for landscaping and stormwater management purposes is encouraged.
- (3) Each parking island shall include at least one shade or evergreen tree. At least fifty percent (50%) of the remaining portions of the surface of the planting island shall be suitably covered with grass, ground cover, or similar vegetation. The remaining area shall contain landscape mulch. A layer of stone or impervious materials such as asphalt and concrete is prohibited.
- (4) A six (6) inch continuous poured in place curb shall separate and surround all interior landscape island areas, except when designed for bio-filtration purposes.
- (5) All areas within or at the edges of parking lots that are greater than fifty (50) square feet and not designed for parking stalls, drive aisles, or shopping cart collection points, shall be curbed and landscaped with sod, ground cover, shrubs, or trees.





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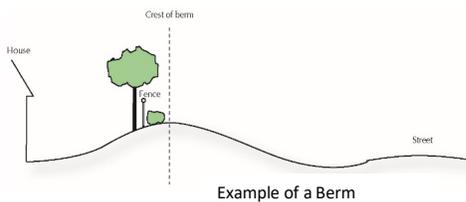
(6) Except those designed as bio-infiltration islands, all landscaped islands shall have a minimum topsoil depth of three (3) feet and mounded to a center height of six to twelve (6-12) inches above the top of curb height.

8. Minimum Landscape Requirements for Foundations Plantings

- a. Where a front yard setback is required, a minimum building foundation landscape area of five (5) feet in width shall be located immediately along the front and sides of all buildings.
- b. Where a front yard setback is not required, the applicant shall install planters where possible.
- c. Except for building entryway areas and sidewalks as may be permitted, the surface of the required foundation landscape area shall be free of paving or other impervious surfaces and shall be landscaped.
- d. A six (6) inch curb shall separate all foundation landscape areas from the drive aisle and parking areas.
- e. Foundation landscaping shall be provided and shall include a variety of shade trees, ornamental trees, hedges, shrubs, evergreens, and ground cover in a manner which accents building entranceways and architectural features, softens large expanses of building walls, and screens mechanical equipment.

9. Landscape Buffer and Screening Requirements between Zoning Districts

- a. A minimum ten (10) foot landscaped and screening area shall be located along the length of any property line located in a commercial zoning district, and a minimum fifteen (15) in an industrial zoning district when adjacent to property zoned residential.
- b. Required screening shall consist of a six-foot (6'), 75% opaque fence or six-foot (6') foot high berm, or a combination thereof, as well as one (1) shade or ornamental tree every eight (8) linear feet, and one (1) shrub every five (5) linear feet.
- c. Screening shall be continuous along the property line.
- d. Berms shall be utilized to the maximum extent feasible.
- e. Evergreen trees and shrubs shall be used to the greatest extent feasible in a fashion to inhibit views from residential property.
- f. The surface of the setback area shall be suitably covered with grass, ground cover, or similar vegetation and periodically mulched. Impervious materials such as asphalt, concrete, or a layer of stone are prohibited. The landscape buffer shall not be used for parking, loading, servicing, or storage.





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- g. An eight (8) foot high masonry wall within a five (5) foot landscape setback area may be utilized as an alternative to meeting the minimum ten (10) foot width requirement. Masonry walls are subject to the regulations set forth in Article 3, Division 1, Section 13 Fences of this Chapter.
10. Miscellaneous Landscape Requirements
- a. **Landscaping of Monument/Ground and Pole/Pylon Signs**
- (1) For every one (1) square foot of total sign face area of the ground and pole sign, one square foot of landscaped area shall be installed immediately adjacent to the base of the sign.
 - (2) The landscaped area shall consist of plantings such as, but not limited to, shrubs, evergreens, flowering plants, and ground cover plants. Landscaping bark, mulch, sod, or seeded areas shall not be considered in calculating the square footage of the required landscaped area.
- b. **Landscaping and Screening of Ground Mounted Mechanical and Utility Equipment**
- (1) All ground-mounted mechanical equipment, including heating and air conditioning units, shall be screened by a solid fence, wall, or densely planted evergreen landscape planting at a maximum height sufficient to obscure such equipment from view from all adjacent streets and adjacent lots used for residential purposes.
 - (2) All fences installed to satisfy the screening requirement shall comply with the regulations of Article 3, Division 1, Section 13 Fences, and with all other applicable Town Code regulations.
- c. **Screening of Vehicle and Equipment Storage Areas Accessory to Motor Vehicle Sales and Service Businesses**
- (1) Motor vehicle parking areas where damaged vehicles are awaiting repair or sale or operable vehicles are stored for return to customers such parking areas must be screened from view of all public rights-of-way and all residentially zoned property. Such parking areas are not permitted in required setbacks.
 - (2) Screening must be opaque and a minimum of six (6) feet in height, and may be in the form of walls, fences, berms, or landscaping. Such vehicle storage areas must not be visible from adjoining streets or properties.
 - (3) No automobiles may be parked, stored, or stacked higher than the screening fence or wall. Where landscaping or berms are used for screening, a landscape plan is required. All screening must be installed before using any such area for vehicle storage purposes.





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(4) All vehicle parking areas in existence as of the effective date of this Chapter that do not comply with the requirements of this section shall be required to come into compliance as a condition for the issuance of any required permits for performance of work on such parking areas.

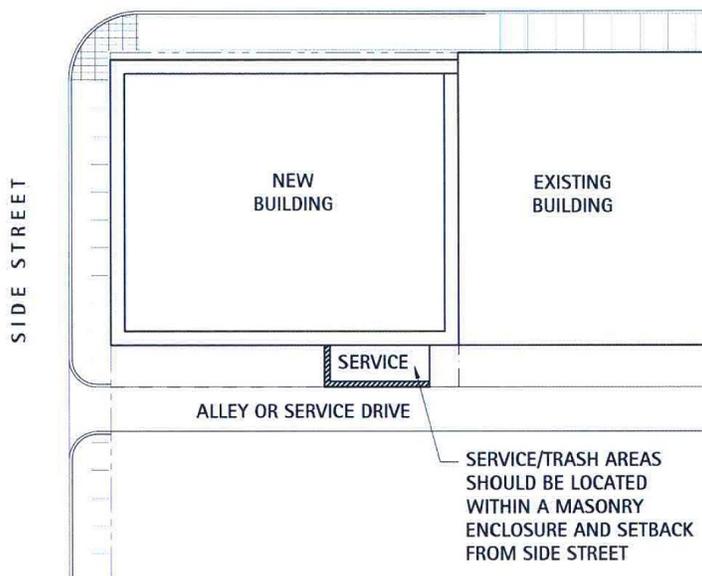
d. **Screening of Garbage Dumpsters and Trash Bins**

- (1) The dumpster, trash bin, and screening provisions of this subsection apply to all development types where such dumpster and trash bins are stored outside the building. They apply to new construction and when any exterior remodeling, addition, or construction is done to a permitted development type.
- (2) All outdoor garbage dumpsters and trash bins must be screened on four (4) sides, three of which are by a permanent 6-foot tall opaque masonry wall of material and color to match the primary structure. Door and gate appurtenances must be opaque, hang square and be plumb at all times. Dumpsters and trash bins must be located behind the front building line and located at or near the rear property line. The opening of any trash enclosure may not be oriented toward Roosevelt Road. On corner lots, dumpsters must be located behind the front building line and setback a minimum of 20 feet from any side street right-of-way.
- (3) Figure 22: Dumpster and Trash Bin Enclosure/Screening Example





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e. **Screening of Loading Docks and High Activity Areas**

- (1) All loading docks; commercial facilities with drive-thru services; automotive repair and service; car washes; and other similar high activity uses associated with any development type that is adjacent to a residential zoning district must be completely screened by a 6-foot high masonry wall and must not be visible from adjacent property or street right-of-way.

f. **Screening of Accessory Storage**

- (1) Any development type that involves the storage of materials, products, or equipment outside of a fully-enclosed building must be completely (100%) screened from public view and must not be visible from abutting properties or any street right-of-way.

g. **Water Supply; Underground Irrigation**

- (1) A water supply to irrigate landscaping is required within one hundred fifty (150) feet of all landscaped areas. Installation of an underground irrigation system is recommended.

h. **Changes to Approved Landscape Plan**

- (1) Any change to an approved Landscape Plan shall require the prior approval of the Zoning Administrator.





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11. Landscape Maintenance Required

- a. Property Owners shall be responsible for ongoing maintenance, fertilization, repair, and replacement of all vegetation, barriers, and landscape planting materials.
- b. Replacement plantings shall be no less than the minimum required size or the size indicated in the approved Landscape Plan, whichever is greater.
- c. The Property Owner shall make replacement plantings promptly after any plant has died but no later than one hundred twenty (120) days after notification by the Town of violation of this Chapter unless a time extension for inclement weather is given
- d. Planting beds shall be initially, and thereafter periodically, filled with soil and mulched in their entirety, with shredded bark or another organic equivalent.
- e. Grass, sod, and lawn areas shall be periodically and routinely mowed during the growing season.

12. Variations

- a. A Property Owner may file an application for administrative relief when compliance with the requirements of this Division for a new or pre-existing building poses a practical hardship in accordance with the procedures and standards in **Article 2, Division 4** (Administrative Adjustment).

13. Tree Removal and Replacement

- a. Removal of any tree greater than eight (8) inches in DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) or having an aggregate diameter of fifteen (15) inches DBH or larger shall only occur for the following reasons:
 - (1) Tree is dead or dying;
 - (2) Tree is diseased;
 - (3) Tree is damaged or injured to the extent that it is likely to die, or that it constitutes a hazard to persons or property; or
 - (4) Removal of the tree is consistent with good forestry practices.
- b. Tree removal shall only be performed by a registered tree removal or forestry contractor.
- c. Removal of any tree greater than eight (8) inches in DBH requires two (2) new tree saplings of not less than three (3) inches caliper.
- d. Replacement trees shall only be of a species approved by the Town.
- e. **Alternative Tree Replacement Location**





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- (1) If the Zoning Administrator, determines that full tree replacement according to the requirements of the Division will result in the unreasonable crowding of trees on the lot where construction activity is taking place, or would be otherwise inconsistent with current best practices, the Zoning Administrator may designate that some or all of the replacement trees required to be planted in the public right of way or other publically-owned lands by Town or other governmental agency.
- f. All replacement trees designated for the public right of way or Town property shall only be of those species permitted by the Town and shall be installed by the Town and not by the permittee.
- g. **Payment In-Lieu of Tree Replacement**
 - (1) If the Zoning Administrator determines that the full replacement of trees as required by this Division would result in unreasonable crowding of trees upon the lot where construction activity will occur, a permittee may be allowed to pay the Town a fee in lieu of making such replacement in kind. The Town has no obligation to grant such a request. If the request is granted, the following regulations shall apply:
 - (a) This fee shall equal the tree replacement value based upon the average cost per tree inch of trees as determined by the Town.
 - (b) The tree replacement fee must be received by the Town at the time of issuance of a building permit, or the date of the damage or removal for which the replacement is required.
- h. **Penalties**
 - (1) For any tree designated for preservation that is damaged, razed, or removed without the prior written approval of the Zoning Administrator, a monetary fine (as scheduled in the Town's Fee Ordinance) shall be assessed upon the owner of the property on which the trees were damaged or removed. No building permits or licenses for the property shall be issued or given final approval until said charge is paid and a Replacement Tree Plan is prepared and approved by the Zoning Administrator.

