



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Planning and Community Development

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Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

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For Immediate Release

August 21, 2012

Parking Lot Landscaping Ordinance Effective September 1st

As a reminder to property owners and area developers, beginning September 1, 2012, properties constructing new, or adding to existing, parking lots will be required to meet new parking lot landscaping requirements. These provisions affect parking lots in all zoning districts except those associated with single family detached and duplex dwelling units.

The new landscaping provisions were approved on April 24, 2012, and although the revisions had been discussed for some time, the City provided a transition period of over four months to allow individuals with plans in progress to submit plans under the existing landscaping requirements or to design for appropriate changes. To build under the current parking lot landscaping regulations, comprehensive site plans shall be submitted and accepted by the Planning and Community Development Department before September 1st. All plans submitted on or after September 1st shall meet the new provisions.

The proposed ordinance was written to build on the current regulations requiring landscaping of at least 15 percent of the area to be used for parking and maneuvering. The base requirement of 15 percent has not been increased; however, additional provisions were established to ensure that developments and properties are developing in a way consistent with the guidelines of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The main difference being the proposed regulations would require vegetation to be planted.

The concept of adopting landscaping requirements has been part of the City's Comprehensive Plan for many years. A strategy in achieving that concept is now listed on the Plan's Priority Implementation Strategies for the First Five Years: The 2011 – 2016 Action Plan; specifically, Strategy 8.4.5 states "to consider adding street tree planting and other landscape requirements for new development and redevelopment in the City's land use codes." The new provisions should help attain the objective to preserve and expand green spaces and tree planting in the City.

The ordinance can be found in City Code Section 10-3-30.1 Parking Lot Landscaping. For more information, contact the Planning and Community Development Department at 540-432-7700.

The Department of Planning and Community Development plans for the orderly and efficient development of the community by ensuring the general, health, safety, and welfare of the community through interpreting and administering development codes, reviewing development proposals, conducting inspections, and maintaining a comprehensive plan of the City. The Department is comprised of three divisions: Building Inspections, Engineering, and Planning and Zoning.

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