

**Code of Ordinances, Town of Blacksburg, VA
Abstracted March 2016**

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CODE

Chapter 2 ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE IV. TOWN DEPARTMENTS

Section 2-420. Department of public works; director.

(a) There is created the department of public works of the town. This department shall provide the functions of public utility facilities construction, operation, maintenance, and repair; maintenance and operation of general properties; street construction maintenance and repair; and landscaping, horticulture, and tree preservation.

...

(d) The director of public works shall assume and carry out responsibility for all landscaping, tree preservation, tree planting, and care for public areas and land of and in the town. The department of public works shall serve as the town's tree department and shall address issues and formulate procedures and measures for the attainment of the town's goals of supporting, maintaining, planting, and preservation of trees in the town. The director of public works shall be responsible for writing and implementing the town's annual community forestry program, in accord with the town's public tree-care policies for planting, maintenance, and removal of trees and street trees, set out in Appendix A, Zoning Ordinance, Blacksburg Town Code. The community forestry program shall include an inventory of trees growing on public property, analysis of the present state of the urban forest with recommendations for future management, methods to address dead and hazardous tree removal, safety, fine pruning, planting, watering, fertilizing, and insect and disease control of trees on public property.

Charter reference—Town to provide public works functions, § 5.01.

Cross references—Sewers, Ch. 18; solid waste, Ch. 19; streets and sidewalks, Ch. 20; water, Ch. 23.

Chapter 3 AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST DISTRICTS

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Section 3-100. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide for procedures to effectuate Title 15.2, Chapter 43 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, relating to the creation of agricultural and forestal districts. It is the policy of the Town to conserve and protect and to encourage the development and improvement of the Town's agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural and forestal products. It is also the policy of the Town to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued natural and ecological resources which provide essential open spaces for clean air sheds, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, as well as for aesthetic purposes. It is the purpose of this chapter to provide a means for a mutual undertaking by landowners and the Town to protect and enhance agricultural and forestal land as a viable segment of the Commonwealth's economy and as an economic and environmental resource of major importance.

State Law reference— Code of Virginia, Title 15.2, Chapter 43, § 15.2-4300 et seq.

Chapter 21 STREET AND SIDEWALKS

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Section 21-302. Encroachments and projections generally.

...

(f) Tree limbs overhanging from private property. It shall be the duty of property owners to maintain trees growing on their property in such a manner that no limbs thereof project over any street at a height of less than fourteen (14) feet, or sidewalk at a height of less than eighty (80) inches.

State Law reference— Authority of town to permit awnings, fire escapes, etc., to overhang streets, Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2011.

Section 21-305. Obstruction by vegetative material, fences, walls or structures unlawful.

It shall be unlawful for any landowner, tenant, firm or corporation to own or maintain, either on private property or a public street right-of-way, vegetative material, wire, fences, walls or similar structures which create a sight obstruction in violation of section 21-304. Any such obstruction may be removed by the town through the process established in section 21-301.

(Ord. No. 1491, § 1, 5-13-08)

APPENDIX A Ordinance No. 1137 BLACKSBURG ZONING ORDINANCE

ARTICLE 1. ADMINISTRATION

DIVISION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 1112 Special exceptions

...

(c) *Criteria.* The Town Council may grant a complete exception from the standard, or it may modify the standard based on the particularities of the site. Any modification of the standard shall be considered a special exception. In determining to grant a special exception, the Town Council shall be guided by the following general considerations:

- (1) The unusual shape or topography of a lot or an adjoining lot;
- (2) The location of existing structures; and
- (3) Whether mature trees can be preserved through the exception.

...

(Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

DIVISION 2. PLANNING COMMISSION

Sec. 1120 Planning commission; powers, duties, and composition.

There is hereby created a Town Planning Commission, which commission shall be known as the "Blacksburg Town Planning Commission," which may be referred to in this ordinance as the "Planning Commission" or "the Commission."

Sec. 1127 Review of special exceptions.

The Planning Commission shall review requests for special exceptions based on the criteria established in section 1112.

(Ord. No. 1184, 6-9-98; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

Editor's note— Ord. No. 1680, § 1, adopted May 14, 2013, amended § 1127 title to read as herein set out. Former § 1127 title pertained to authority to grant exceptions.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS AND USE TYPES

Sec. 2103 Definitions of terms and use types

...

AGRICULTURE The use of land for the production of food and fibre, including farming, dairying, pasturage, agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, and animal and poultry husbandry. A garden accessory to a residence shall not be considered agriculture. The keeping of a horse, cow, pig, sheep, goat, or chicken shall constitute agriculture regardless of the size of the animal and regardless of the purpose for which it is kept. (Ord. No. 1188, § 1, 11-10-98)

BUFFER YARD A yard improved with screening and landscaping materials required between abutting zoning districts of differing intensities or between adjoining land uses for the purpose of decreasing the adverse impact of differing uses and districts.

CALIPER The diameter of the trunk of a tree at the height of twelve (12) inches above grade.

GARDEN CENTER Establishments or places of business primarily engaged in retail or wholesale (bulk) sale, from the premises, of trees, shrubs, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, plants and plant materials primarily for agricultural, residential and commercial consumers. Such establishments typically sell products purchased from others, but may sell some material which they grow themselves. Typical uses include nurseries, plant stores and lawn and garden centers.

HEIGHT, TREE The measurement taken from the top of the root ball to the top of the trunk. (Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98)

LANDSCAPING The improvement of the appearance of an area by the planting of trees, grass, shrubs, or other plant materials, or by the alteration of the contours of the ground.

LIGHT TRESPASS Light sources casting excessive light upon adjacent property or upon a public right-of-way, also called light spillover.

OPEN SPACE A cohesive body of land designated for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, or open space use, as those terms are defined by Virginia Code 58.1-3230. This definition also includes land in which the Town has an interest of not less than five years' duration which the Town has designated to be retained and used for the preservation and provision of open-space land.

OPEN SPACE, COMMON Land within or related to a development, not individually owned or dedicated for public use, which is intended for the common use or enjoyment of the residents of the development and may include such complementary structures as are necessary and appropriate. Common open space may include, recreation centers, swimming pools, tennis and basketball courts, and similar facilities.

PRESERVATION The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity, and material of a site, structure, or landmark and their existing form and vegetative cover. Preservation may include initial stabilization work, where necessary, as well as ongoing maintenance of these elements.

PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS Publicly owned and operated parks, picnic areas, playgrounds, indoor/outdoor athletic or recreation facilities, indoor/outdoor shelters,

amphitheaters, game preserves, open spaces, and other similar uses. This shall not include Public Recreation Assembly.

SECONDARY CONSERVATION AREA Locally significant features of land. These features should be identified on a site-by-site basis. Types of features which may be locally significant include ridge lines, hilltops, windbreaks, stands of mature hardwood trees, woodlands, farmland, wildflower meadows, and views into and out from the site. Wildlife habitats are locally significant features of a site. Where relevant, soils suitable for septic disposal may be considered significant natural resources of a site. Historic and archaeological features, such as old farmhouses, old foundations, traces of old roads, or rail fences, may also be considered locally significant features of land.

TREE CANOPY All areas of coverage by plant material exceeding five (5) feet in height.

VEGETATIVE BUFFER Perennial vegetation established or left undisturbed adjacent to the shoreline of a watercourse intended to filter out sediment and other nonpoint source pollutants from runoff before it reaches a watercourse.

WETLANDS All lands that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and that under normal circumstances do support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act, in 33 C.F.R. 328.3b, dated November 13, 1986.

WOODLANDS Tree stands, lines of trees, and lands in active forestal use.

(Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98—Reorganization of Article; Ord. No. 1206, § 2, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1215, § 5, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1247, § 8, 9-12-00; Ord. No. 1278, § 3, 11-13-01; Ord. No. 1308, § 4, 8-13-02; Ord. No. 1339, § 4, 9-9-03; Ord. No. 1340, § 1, 8-12-03; Ord. No. 1369, § 2, 10-12-04; Ord. No. 1405, § 1, 8-8-06; Ord. No. 1415, § 4, 7-11-06; Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07; Ord. No. 1450, § 1, 5-29-07; Ord. No. 1509, § 1, 2-10-09; Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09; Ord. No. 1529, § 1, 8-11-09; Ord. No. 1598, § 1, 2-8-11; Ord. No. 1604, § 2, 3-8-11; Ord. No. 1681, § 1, 5-14-13; Ord. No. 1722, § 1, 5-13-14; Ord. No. 1724, § 1, 6-10-14; Ord. No. 1768, § 1, 9-8-15; Ord. No. 1777, § 1, 1-12-16)

ARTICLE III. DISTRICT AND STANDARDS

DIVISION 2. RURAL RESIDENTIAL 1

Sec. 3020 Purpose

The purpose of the Rural Residential district is to provide for residential development at a scale intended to conserve the rural character of the district. Development within the Rural Residential district is intended to promote the following goals and objectives. Development proposals shall be evaluated for their adherence to these goals:

- (1) Conservation of agricultural and forestal lands, including farm fields and pastures.
- (2) Conservation of natural resources including wetlands, floodplains, natural drainage ways, aquifer recharge areas, existing tree cover, steep slopes, ridge lines, hilltops, wildlife habitats, deer wintering areas, stream valleys, locations comprising scenic views or scenic view corridors, and other outstanding natural topography.
- (3) Conservation of a unified open space area.
- (4) Creation of residential developments on a traditional rural scale, with small villages surrounded by agricultural, forestal, or open space lands.

(5) Flexibility and creativity in the design of residential subdivisions, with less suburban-style sprawl and less consumption of open land.

These measures will prevent soil erosion by permitting development according to the nature of the terrain, provide larger open areas with greater utility for rest and recreation, and encourage the development of more attractive and economic site design. They will create a convenient, attractive, and harmonious community, and facilitate the provision of parks, forests, playgrounds and other recreational facilities. These goals are intended to preserve existing agricultural, forestal and other lands of significance for the protection of the natural environment.

(Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98)

DIVISION 3. RURAL RESIDENTIAL 2

Sec. 3030 Purpose

The purpose of the Rural Residential 2 District is to encourage high-quality planned residential development, to preserve agricultural and forestal lands, to maximize the conservation of scenic and recreational open space, and to implement the Comprehensive Plan through the use of open space design and a density bonus system. In reviewing an application for RR2 zoning, the Planning Commission and Town Council should consider, among other things: (Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98)

(a) Whether the proposed development will efficiently utilize available land and will protect and preserve to the maximum extent possible natural features of the land such as trees, streams and topographic features;

...

DIVISION 5. R-5 TRANSITIONAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Sec. 3050 Purpose

The Transitional Residential District is to provide for a transitional land use between low density residential and higher intensity land uses. This is a predominantly residential district with neighborhood character. Conditional uses which are sensitive to and reinforce the residential neighborhood character are appropriate. These typically will involve the conversion or replication of single-family houses. Properties along arterial and collector roads are particularly suited for such conditional uses. The livability or small-town character of the Transitional Residential District is made up of tree lined streets, open space, and greenways interspersed within a more urban residential pattern.

(Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09)

DIVISION 14. DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Sec. 3140 Purpose

The Downtown Commercial district is the heart of Town culturally, geographically, and historically. It lends the Town its small-town architecture, scale, and feel. It is intended to be a predominantly pedestrian area, catering to bicycle and pedestrian traffic with shops and storefronts close to the road, pedestrian scale, wide walkways, street trees and limited off-street well screened parking. The history of the area is retained with preservation of historic structures and replication of style in additions and expansions. The core of the Downtown exudes the vitality of the interaction of people and activities. Commercial opportunities include a diversity of specialty, retail services, cultural, recreation, entertainment activities, and public functions. The district may also contain residential uses suited to a downtown urban environment. Residential uses are limited to locations in the basement of structures or on upper stories above active street level commercial uses. There may be some circumstances and locations within the district where other urban residential

use types that promote year round occupancy and contribute to the fabric of the Blacksburg Historic Overlay District within Downtown may be appropriate.
(Ord. No. 1770, § 1, 10-13-15)

DIVISION 16. PLANNED COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Sec. 3162 Site development regulations

Each planned commercial development shall be subject to the following site development standards.

...

(i) Parking facilities shall be located behind the front building line. The Administrator or Town Council may grant exceptions if necessary due to the shallow depth of a parcel, the location of existing mature trees, or other similar circumstances.

...

DIVISION 23. CREEK VALLEY OVERLAY

Sec. 3230 Purpose

The purpose of the Creek Valley District is to regulate land use and development on lands adjacent to streams in such a manner as to: (1) ensure that development adjacent to creeks will not result in substantial damage to significant environmental resource areas; (2) ensure that creek valley development complements and enhances the protection of natural floodplains provided by the floodplain regulations of this district; (3) control the development that impacts wetlands, steep slopes, and vegetative buffer areas along creeks; (4) ensure that proper planning and design precedes land disturbing activities near creeks; (5) ensure that creek valley drainage and soil conditions are properly identified and incorporated into the planning process for subdivision and site plan review; (6) implement the intent of the Comprehensive Plan; (7) protect and enhance water quality and groundwater recharge processes by protecting the natural capacity of vegetation areas along creeks to filter and purify stormwater runoff; and (8) protect aquatic environments from the warming effects of solar radiation by preserving riparian tree canopy cover.

DIVISION 26. OEPN SPACE DESIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT

Sec. 3260 Purpose

The purpose of the Open Space Design Overlay District is to encourage open space residential design within residential zoning districts. Open space residential design is an alternative method of designing a residential subdivision, at the density prescribed by the underlying zoning district, while preserving thirty (30) percent or more of the site as open space. Open space design results in the more efficient use of land, lower development infrastructure costs, the conservation of land for recreation or aesthetic and environmental enrichment, and an attractive and pleasing living environment. This district is intended to foster high quality site design, significant landscaping and innovative, efficient construction techniques, and promote the establishment of the Town-wide greenway network. Through the use of this overlay district, open space design is permitted in residential zoning districts, without an application for planned residential development zoning.

DIVISION 28. MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Sec. 3303 Additional site development standards

...

(d) Pedestrian Amenities and Transit Facilities.

(1) General Pedestrian Amenities. Each new structure and every expansion to an existing building shall provide pedestrian amenities located to serve the subject structure, as specified herein. The number of general pedestrian amenities provided shall comply with the following schedule:

Size of Structure in Gross Floor Area	Number of Amenities
< 5,000 sq. ft.	1
5,000 – 10,000 sq. ft.	2
10,000 – 50,000 sq. ft.	3
> 50,000 sq. ft.	4

Acceptable pedestrian amenities include the following:

- ...
- b. Installation of street trees that exceed the minimum caliper requirement or minimum height requirement by twenty-five (25) percent;

...
(Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07)

ARTICLE IV. USE AND DESIGN STANDARD

DIVISION 1. AGRICULTURAL USES

Sec. 4103 Forestry operations.

- (a) Creek Valley District standards: Forestry operations conducted in the Creek Valley District shall be conducted in accordance with a Timber Management Plan that has been approved by the Virginia Department of Forestry.

DIVISION 2. RESIDENTIAL USES

Sec. 4241 Two-family dwellings.

- ...
- (d) Additional standards in the R-5 district:
 - Require landscaping:
 - Street trees: One (1) tree per thirty (30) feet of road frontage.
 - Tree canopy coverage: R-5 requirement is twenty (20) percent.
 - Parking lot landscaping: Five (5) percent of the parking lot shall be landscape with trees and groundcover.
 - Tree replacement requirement: Any trees on the site which are a caliper of five (5) inches or more at a height of one (1) foot above the ground, or ornamental trees over twelve (12) feet in height which are to be removed during site development shall be replaced.

...
(Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98; Ord. No. 1215, § 34, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1278, § 12, 11-13-0; Ord. No. 1308, § 11, 8-13-02; Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07; Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

DIVISION 3. CIVIC USES

Sec. 4305 Camps.

- (a) General standards:
 - (1) Any outdoor activity area, swimming pool, or ball field or court which adjoins a residential use type shall have a thirty (30) feet transitional yard, which shall be landscaped in accordance with Article V of this ordinance. Where night-time lighting of such areas is proposed large evergreen trees shall be required in a location appropriate to screen adjoining residences. Any such night-time lighting shall be constructed in accordance with the standards for a residential district contained in Article V of this ordinance.

- ...
- Sec. 4308 Community recreation.**
 - (1) General standards: Any outdoor activity area, swimming pool, or ball field or court which adjoins a residential use type shall be landscaped in accordance with Article V of this

ordinance. Where night-time lighting of such areas is proposed large evergreen trees shall be required in a location appropriate to screen adjoining residences. Any such night-time lighting shall be constructed in accordance with the standards for a residential district contained in Article V of this ordinance.

Sec. 4313 Education facilities

(a) General standards:

- (1) Any outdoor activity area, swimming pool, or ball field or court which adjoins a residential zoning district shall have a type C buffer yard. Where exterior lighting of such areas is proposed, large evergreen trees shall be required in a location appropriate to screen adjoining residences.

...

Sec. 4320 Lighting, public park and recreation area field

The purpose of this lighting is to allow fields in public park and recreation areas to be illuminated at a higher intensity while (i) controlling the spillover of light onto adjacent properties and (ii) protecting public safety by reducing glare from outdoor luminaries.

...

(b) General Standards.

...

- (2) Large evergreen trees or other screening technique shall be required in appropriate locations to screen adjoining residences from light trespass or glare.

...

(Ord. No. 1405, § 2, 8-8-06; Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09)

Sec. 4328 Open space.

...

(b) Additional standards in the RR1 and RR2 zoning districts:

...

(2) Use of open space.

- a. Permitted uses of open space. Permitted uses of open space are agriculture, horticulture, forestry, and open space, as those terms are defined by Code of Virginia 1950 § 58.1-3230, as amended, and cemeteries.
- b. Prohibited uses of open space. The following activities are prohibited in open space:

...

4. The destruction or removal of live trees, except as necessary, in accordance with generally accepted forestry conservation practices, to control or prevent hazard, disease, or fire; provided that trees may be harvested for any purpose, including, without limitation, commercial timber production on a sustained yield basis in accordance with a plan prepared in consultation with a registered professional forester that is designed to protect the conservation values of the open space, including without limitation, scenic and wildlife habitat values.

...

(Ord. No. 1215, § 27, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1247, § 13, 9-12-00; Ord. No. 1258, § 3, 1-9-01; Ord. No. 1339, § 17, 9-9-03)

Sec. 4332 Public parks and recreational areas

General standards:

...

- (2) Where nighttime lighting of such areas is proposed large evergreen trees shall be required in a location appropriate to screen adjoining residences. Any such night-

time lighting shall be constructed in accordance with the standards for a residential district.

Sec. 4338 Religious assembly

(a) General standards:

- ...
- (2) Where exterior lighting of such areas is proposed large evergreen trees shall be required in a location appropriate to screen adjoining residences.
- ...

...

(Ord. No. 1215, § 34, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1308, § 22, 8-13-02; Ord. No. 1339, § 27, 9-9-03; Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

DIVISION 5. COMMERCIAL USES

Sec. 4527 Gasoline station.

(a) General standards:

- ...
- (4) Fuel pumps and canopies over fuel pumps should be located behind the front line of the primary structure unless impractical to do so as a result of the shallow depth of a parcel, the location of existing mature trees, or other similar circumstances, or unless beneficial to surrounding properties to not do so. In such cases, additional street trees or front yard landscaping shall be considered as a condition for approval.
- ...

...

(Ord. No. 1278, § 13, 11-13-01; Ord. No. 1308, § 43, 8-13-02; Ord. No. 1339, § 27, 9-9-03; Ord. No. 1415, § 18, 7-11-06; Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09)

ARTICLE V. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

DIVISION 1. SITE DEVELOPMENT

Sec. 5130 Information required

Every site development plan shall contain the following information. The information contained under the heading, "optional" may be required by the Administrator as appropriate based upon the planning and engineering issues posed by the project, in order to achieve the goals of this chapter [Appendix] [Appendix] and of the Town Code.

- ...
- (f) Screening, Landscaping, and Buffer Yards:
Mandatory:
- (1) Location, type, size and height of all fencing, and screening, where required under the provisions of Article V, Division 3, Zoning Ordinance, Town Code.
 - (2) Location of required buffer yards.
 - (3) Location, type, height, and detail of any proposed retaining walls.
 - (4) A landscape planting chart showing the planting schedule, minimum size at planting, total canopy percentage, species, and total canopy coverage for the site.
 - (5) The outline of existing groupings of trees. Physically outstanding or specimen trees within the groups shall be shown if they are to be removed.
 - (6) All individual trees with a caliper of five (5) inches or more at a height of two (2) feet above the ground or ornamental trees over twelve (12) feet shall be shown on the plan and labeled as to whether they will be saved or removed.
 - (7) Where applicable, parking lot landscaping.

(8) A landscape design plan, based upon accepted professional design layouts and principles.

...

(Ord. No. 1247, § 19, 9-12-00; Ord. No. 1513, § 1, 4-14-09)

DIVISION 2. OFF-STREET PARKING, STACKING and LOADING

Sec. 5202 Permitted locations.

(1) Off-street parking spaces that are located on the ground and open to the sky may be located in any required yard unless otherwise required for screening, buffering, landscaping, or unless prohibited by other provisions in this chapter or the Town Code. A parking space for an automobile shall have dimensions as specified in the chart and diagram below, unless an exception is granted by the Administrator due to the shallow depth of a parcel, the location of existing trees, or other similar circumstances.

...

(Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98; Ord. No. 1415, § 22, 7-11-06; Ord. No. 1598, § 1, 2-8-11)

DIVISION 3. BUFFER YARDS AND SCREENING

Sec. 5310 Buffer yards—General standards.

(a) Buffer yards shall contain vegetative and/or architectural screening that achieves the purpose of the buffer yard, and which meets the requirements for screening, below. Trees used for screening purposes shall be suitable as defined in Section 5331.

...

(i) Buffer yard dimensions and screening requirements shall be provided as detailed in the chart below:

Abutting District (Higher intensity; where buffer is to be located)	Abutted District (Lower intensity to be protected)					
	RR1, RR2, R-4, R-5, OTR, PR	RM-27, RM-48, PMH	O	DC, GC, PC, RD	I, PIN	MXD
RR1, RR2, R-4, R-5, OTR, PR	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
RM-27, RM-48, PMH	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
O	B	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
DC, GC, PC, RD	C	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	C
I, PIN	D	C	C	C	N/A	D
MXD	C when abutting					

	RR1, RR2, or R-4.					
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Buffer Yards	Architectural	Vegetative
A	4' screen 10' buffer yard small evergreen trees	20' buffer yard, Small evergreen trees and one row small evergreen shrubs
B	6' screen 15' buffer yard Small evergreen trees	30' buffer yard, small evergreen trees, and one row evergreen shrub
C	6' screen 25' buffer yard Large and small evergreen trees	50' buffer yard, large evergreen trees, small evergreen trees, and one row of evergreen shrub
D	8' screen 30' buffer yard Large deciduous and large evergreen trees	60' buffer yard, large evergreen trees, small evergreen trees, and one row of evergreen shrubs

(Ord. No. 1215, § 32, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

Sec. 5330 Screening—When required.

- (a) Screening shall be provided within a buffer yard to ease the transition of one (1) land use or activity to another, to achieve the purposes of the buffer yard. Screening may be accomplished through architectural or vegetative materials.
 - (b) Screening shall be provided, in addition to the requirements listed above, for:
 - (1) All articles or materials being stored, maintained, repaired, processed, erected, fabricated, dismantled, or salvaged, such that the activity is not visible from surrounding properties or roads.
 - (2) Refuse storage and loading areas such that these activities are not visible from surrounding properties or roads.
 - (3) Rooftop and ground level mechanical equipment such that it is not visible from surrounding properties or roads.
 - (4) All trash dumpsters or containers used for recycling shall be screened so that it is not visible from surrounding properties or roads. At minimum, the dumpster or container shall be screened on three (3) sides with architectural screening supplemented by plantings. Screening shall be based upon the standards below and subject to the approval of the Administrator.
 - a. Four (4) foot tall architectural screening is acceptable when household style trash containers are used in place of dumpsters;
 - b. The requirement for supplemental plantings may be waived by the Administrator in cases where dumpsters or containers are added to an existing development. In determining whether to grant a waiver, the Administrator shall be guided by these standards: proximity of the facility to residential structures; efficacy of screening to mitigate any adverse effect of the use; and benefit of the screening relative to its cost.
 - (c) No screening is required within or adjacent to the University zoning district.
 - (d) When a site plan is submitted to modify or expand an existing building or site improvements, or accommodate a change in land use, screening requirements shall only be applied to those portions of the site that are directly affected by the proposed improvements, or change in land use, as determined by the Administrator.
- (Ord. No. 1308, § 63, 8-13-02)

Sec. 5331 Screening—General standards.

- (a) Screening shall be continuous and in place at the time of occupancy. If vehicular or pedestrian access through the screen is necessary, the screening function shall be preserved.
- (b) Screening may be architectural or vegetative, per the requirements below:
- (1) Acceptable architectural screening materials include stockade fences, decorative masonry walls, brick walls, and earth berms, and other like materials approved by the Administrator.
 - (2) Architectural screening shall be at least four (4) feet in height, shall be supplemented with plantings, and shall be subject to the provisions of Blacksburg Town Code Section 21-304, "sight triangles established."
 - (3) Vegetative material shall be alive and in good health.
 - (4) Small evergreen trees shall be at least four (4) feet in height at planting and allowed to grow to at least six (6) feet in height. Large evergreen trees shall be at least six (6) feet in height at planting and allowed to grow to at least ten (10) feet in height. All required evergreen vegetation shall be maintained in good condition.
 - (5) Deciduous trees shall be at least one and one-half (1½) inches caliper or ten (10) feet to twelve (12) feet in height. They shall be supplemental and not deemed to be adequate screening in themselves.
 - (6) Acceptable vegetative plantings include any tree listing in the "recommended list of trees" for screening purposes; or yew, box honeysuckle or similar dense hedge.
- (c) Screening design and development shall be compatible with the existing and proposed land use and the development character of the surrounding land and structures.
- (d) Screening shall be of sufficient density and diversity to achieve the intent of this section. However, at the time of planting, the spacing of trees shall not exceed twelve (12) feet on center, and the planting pattern shall be staggered. Shrubbery shall be more closely-spaced. Specific exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the Administrator to encourage quality and creativity of design where the intent of this section is met.
- (e) Existing vegetation within buffer yards shall be considered as a substitute for otherwise required landscaping or screening, if in the opinion of the Administrator, the type, size, and density of the existing vegetation complies with the standards and intent of this section.
- (f) When a proposed buffer yard has a variation in elevation of greater than ten (10) vertical feet at any point, the required screening or landscaping within the yard shall be placed to maximize the effectiveness of the screening or landscaping, as determined by the Administrator.
- (g) Trees planted to meet any of the screening requirements may also be used to meet any other landscaping requirement within this Article.
- (h) Screening required by this section shall be applied equally to all similarly situated properties. Modifications to these standards may be granted in writing by the Administrator based on the existence of any of the following circumstances on the proposed building site, or surrounding properties:
- (1) Natural land characteristics such as topography or existing vegetation on the proposed building site would achieve the same intent of this section.
 - (2) Innovative landscaping or architectural design is employed on the building site to achieve an equivalent screening or buffering effect.
 - (3) The required screening and landscaping would be ineffective at maturity due to the proposed topography of the site, and/or the location of the improvements on the site.
 - (4) The topography of adjacent and surrounding sites is such as to render required screening ineffective at maturity.
- (Ord. No. 1247, § 20, 9-12-00; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

DIVISION 4. LANDSCAPING

Sec. 5400 Landscaping—Purpose.

The preservation of existing trees and vegetation, as well as the planting of new trees and vegetation, can significantly add to the quality of the physical environment of the community. The regulations outlined herein are designed to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Town. Trees can provide the following benefits to the community:

- (1) Provide buffers and screens against noise, air pollution, and unsightly and incompatible land uses;
- (2) Reduce the hazards of flooding and aid in the control of erosion and storm water runoff. Trees also assist in the stabilization of soil and replenish groundwater supplies;
- (3) Act to moderate extremes of temperature and provide shade;
- (4) Absorb carbon dioxide and supply oxygen in our atmosphere, which is an essential ecological function in the preservation of human and animal life. Trees can provide a haven for birds which, in turn, assist in the control of insects;
- (5) Aid in energy conservation;
- (6) Are physiologically, psychologically, sociologically and aesthetically necessary counterpoints to the man-made urban setting.

Sec. 5410 Landscaping—When required.

The requirements of this division apply to any development for which a site development plan is required by Article V, Division 1, "Site Development Plans," section 5100.

Sec. 5420 Landscaping—General standards.

- (a) Acceptable trees include, but are not limited to, those identified as suitable for the intended use in the "Recommended list of trees" figure below. Acceptable vegetative ground cover consists of shrubs and ground cover including grass. Using standards from recognized texts on the subject, the Administrator shall decide the appropriateness of any such trees and ground cover.
- (b) Species of trees shall not be planted if the roots cause damage to public works, the branches are subject to a high incidence of breakage, and the fruit is considered a nuisance or high maintenance, as determined by the Administrator.
- (c) The planting of trees shall be done in accordance with the standardized landscape specifications jointly adopted by the Virginia Nurserymen's Association, the Virginia Society of Landscape Designers and the Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.
- (d) All trees shall be planted in good condition and meet "American Standard for Nursery Stock" (1990), ANSI Z60.1-1990, as may be amended.
- (e) The developer shall plant, or install, as appropriate grass, tree grates, porous pavers, or similar pervious surfaces, which shall extend to twice the initial drip line of the newly planted tree. Minimum tree grate size shall be five square feet.
- (f) Trees planted to meet any of the requirements below may also be used to meet any other screening or landscaping requirement within this Article.

Sec. 5425 Tree replacement requirements.

Any trees on the site which are a caliper of five inches or more at a height of one foot above the ground, or ornamental trees over twelve feet in height which are to be removed during site development shall be replaced up to the maximum canopy coverage required in Section 5426 below.

(Ord. No. 1247, § 21, 9-12-00)

Sec. 5426 Canopy coverage requirements.

(a) Trees shall be provided within the limits of construction to the extent that at twenty years from the date of planting, tree canopies or covers will provide at least the following minimums:

Zoning District	Tree Canopy
RR1	20%
R-2, R-5	20%
OTR	20%
RM-27, RM-48	10%
GC, O, IN, R&D, MXD	10%
Planned Districts	Per Users Above

(b) Existing trees or wooded areas which are to be preserved, at the applicants option may be included to meet all or part of the canopy requirements, provided the site plan identifies such trees and the trees meet the standards of size, health, placement, etc. set out in this section. The Administrator shall evaluate use of existing trees to ensure they have adequate health and strength to allow such use.

(c) Existing trees designated to be included as part of these requirements shall be protected during construction by fencing placed at a distance in feet equal to or greater than the diameter of the tree in inches at the height of 4½ feet.

(d) The extent of canopy at maturity shall be based on published reference texts described below, generally accepted by landscape architects, nurserymen, and arborists.

(Ord. No. 1215, § 33, 5-11-99; Ord. No. 1439, 4-10-07)

Sec. 5427 Parking lot landscaping.

(a) The following provisions are intended to require that 5% of the entire parking lot, excluding the access drive, is landscaped with trees and vegetative ground cover. The area of the parking lot is the square foot area of the parking spaces and aisles and interior parking lot islands, excluding access drives that do not contain either parallel or perpendicular parking spaces.

(b) Within the parking lot there shall be planted one tree per ten spaces, rounded down to the closest whole number.

(c) Planter islands or peninsulas containing trees shall be located within the parking lot, such that each island or planter is surrounded on at least 3 sides by parking lot or an access road to the parking lot. Their size shall be eighteen feet square in area, or equal total area in irregular shapes such that adequate space is provided for adequate tree canopy maturation.

(d) Planter islands may be combined or placed together such that more than one tree may be provided in the combined planter island, so long as the total space equals a multiple of the requirements above.

(e) Perimeter plantings may be used to satisfy this requirement in parking facilities less than forty-two feet in width.

(f) Perimeter planting beds at least 10 feet in width shall be provided whenever a parking area is immediately adjacent to a public right-of-way. If a question arises as to whether or not a parking area is immediately adjacent to a public right-of-way, the Zoning Administrator shall make the determination. (Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98)

(1) Plantings within this area shall include trees and vegetative ground cover.

(2) Berms may be used in addition to, but not instead of plantings.

Sec. 5428 Street trees.

(a) In addition to the requirements set out above, in every development requiring a site development plan, there shall be planted on or adjacent to the site an average of at least one tree for every thirty feet of public street frontage.

(b) The trees shall be planted adjacent to the public right-of-way on the site being developed, or with the concurrence of the developer, and the Administrator in the public right-of-way.

(c) The Administrator may reduce or eliminate this standard based on the size, street frontage, existing vegetation, and specific conditions of the site.

Sec. 5429 Recommended tree species.

Acceptable trees include, but are not limited to, those identified as suitable for the use intended in the table below:

RECOMMENDED TREE SPECIES

Species Name	Minimum Height/ Caliper	Canopy at 20 years (sq. ft.)	Suitability
Acer rubrum "October Glory", October Glory Red Maple	2½"	314	P,L
Acer palmatum, Japanese Maple	5'	177	L
Acer rubrum columnare, Columnare Red Maple	2½"	314	P,L
Acer saccharum, Sugar Maple*	1½"	314	L
cer pseudoplatanus, Sycamore Maple*	2½"	314	P
Acer platanoides, Norway Maple	2½"	314	P
Acer saccharaum columnare, Columnare Sugar Maple*	1½"	314	L
Amelanchier arborea, Serviceberry*	6'	201	L
Betula nigra, River Birch*	2"	254	L
Carpinus caroliniana, American Hornbeam*	2"	177	L
Celtis occidentalis, Common Hackberry*	2½"	380	P,L
Cercis canadensis, Eastern Redbud*	5'	201	L
Chionanthus virbinicus, White Fringe Tree*	1½"	113	L
Betula nigra, River Birch*	2"	254	L
Carpinus caroliniana, American Hornbeam*	2"	177	L
Celtis occidentalis, Common Hackberry*	2½"	380	P,L
Cercis canadensis, Eastern Redbud*	5'	201	L
Chionanthus virbinicus, White Fringe Tree*	1½"	113	L
Crataegus phaenophydrum, Washington Hawthorn*	4'	113	L,S
Fagus grandifolia, American Beech*	1½"	177	L
Fagus sylvatica cuprea, Copper Beech	4'	177	P
Fraxinus americana, White Ash*	2.5"	254	P,L

Fraxinus lanceolata (Marshall's Seedless), Green Ash Marshall's Seedless*	2½"	177	P,L
Crataegus phaenopydrum, Washington Hawthorn*	4'	113	L,S
Fraxinus lanceolata, Green Ash*	2½"	177	P
Ginko biloba, Ginko (Male Variety)	1½"	133	L
Gleditcia tricanthos inermis, Sharemaster Thornless Honey Locust	2½"	314	P,L
Ilex opaca, American Holly*	5'	38	L
Juniperus virginiana, Eastern Red Cedar*	4'	38	S
Koelreuteria paniculata, Golden Rain Tree	1½"	177	L
Liriodendron tupilifera, Tulip Poplar*	2½"	254	P,L
Malus floribunda, Japanese Flowering Crab	4'	177	L
Metaequola glyptostrobolies, Dawn Redwood	1½"	177	L
Nyssa sylvatica, Sour Gum*	1½"	177	L
Ostrya virginiana, American Hophornbeam*	1.5"	254	L
Oxydendrum arboreau, Sourwood*	5'	113	L
Picea abies, Norway Spruce	4'	177	S
Picea glavca, White Spruce	4'	113	P
Pinus strobus, White Pine*	4'	177	S
Platanus occidentalis, American Sycamore*	1½"	491	L
Platanus acerfolia, London Plane Tree	2½"	380	P,L
Prunus serrulata kawanzan, Kwansan Cherry	4'	177	L
Prunus serotina, Black Cherry	5'	133	L
Quercus palustris, Pin Oak	2"	254	L
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak*	2½"	177	P,L
Quercus alba, White Oak*	2"	254	L
Quercus rubra, Northern Red Oak	2½"	254	P,L
Quercus accutissim, Saw Tooth Oak	1½"	177	L
Quercus robur fastigiata, Pyramidal English Oak	2½"	79	P,L
Quercus macrocarpa, Bur Oak	2½"	177	P,L
Quercus montana, Chesnut Oak*	1½"	177	L
Quercus coccinea, Scarlet Oak*	2"	254	L
Tilia americana, American Linden*	2"	314	P,L
Tilia cordata greenspire, Greenspire Linden	2½"	177	P,L
Tsuga canadensis, Canada Hemlock*	4'	177	S

X Cupress ocypari leylandii, Leyland Cypress	2½"	113	S
Zelkov serrata, Japanese Zelkova	1½"	177	L
Zelkov serrata village green, Village Green Zelkova	1½"	177	L

P = Parking Lot and Street Trees

L = General Landscape Trees

S = Screening Trees

* = Use of native species is encouraged

Sizes shown in feet are height; sizes shown in inches are caliper
(Ord. No. 1184, adopted 6-9-98; Ord. No. 1308, § 64, 8-13-02)

Sec. 5440 Landscaping—Modifications.

(a) Tree canopy and tree replacements shall not be required of playing fields and other nonwooded recreation areas, and other facilities and uses of a similar nature.

(b) Tree canopy provisions shall not apply where they would negatively affect the preservation of wetlands.

(c) Landscaping requirements of this Section shall be applied equally to all similarly situated properties. Modifications to these standards may be granted in writing by the Administrator based on the existence of any of the following circumstances on the proposed building site, or surrounding properties:

(1) Natural land characteristics such as topography or existing vegetation on the proposed building site would achieve the same intent of this section.

(2) Innovative landscaping or architectural design is employed on the building site to achieve an equivalent screening or buffering effect.

(3) The required screening and landscaping would be ineffective at maturity due to the proposed topography of the site, and or the location of the improvements on the site.

(4) The topography of adjacent and surrounding sites is such as to render required screening ineffective at maturity.

(d) When a site plan is submitted to modify or expand an existing building or site improvements, or accommodate a change in land use, landscaping requirements shall only be applied to those portions of the site that are directly affected by the proposed improvements, or change in land use, as determined by the Administrator.

(e) No landscaping or screening shall be required which in the opinion of the Administrator interferes with traffic safety, or which violates Town Code Section 21-304.

(Ord. No. 1419, § 1, 12-11-07; Ord. No. 1680, § 1, 5-14-13)

Editor's note— Ord. No. 1680, § 1, adopted May 14, 2013, amended § 5440 title to read as herein set out. Former § 5440 title pertained to landscaping—exceptions.

ARTICLE V. REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGN STANDARDS, PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND RESERVATION OF LAND FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES

DIVISION 3. STREETS

Sec. 5-319. Street trees.

Street trees shall be provided along all collector and arterial streets within or adjacent to a proposed subdivision, in accordance with Section 5428 of the Zoning Ordinance [Appendix A].

(Ord. No. 1217, § 2, 12-14-99)

**APPENDIX B Ordinance No. 1217 BLACKSBURG SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE
ARTICLE III. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS**

Sec. 3-100. Definitions

(a) For the purposes of this appendix, the words and terms set out in this section shall have the meanings described below. Any word or phrase used in this appendix shall have the same meaning as that set forth in the Town of Blacksburg Zoning Ordinance.

(b) Any reference to this ordinance includes all ordinances amending it. All distances and areas refer to measurement in a horizontal plane.

(c) Definitions:

...

Public improvement: Any drainage ditch, roadway, parkway, sidewalk, bicycle or pedestrian way, tree, lawn, off-street parking area, lot improvement, or other facility for which the Town may ultimately assume the responsibility for maintenance and operation, or which may effect an improvement for which local government responsibility is established.

...

(Ord. No. 1217, § 2, 12-14-99; Ord. No. 1339, § 30, 9-9-03; Ord. No. 1465, § 1(d), 2-12-08; Ord. No. 1550, § 1, 12-8-09; Ord. No. 1744, § 1, 12-9-14)