

## ARTICLE 14: SITE PLAN REQUIREMENTS

### **Section 14.0 Site Plan Approvals; Purpose**

The purpose of these provisions is to promote harmonious, functional relationships among the various elements within any development, such as: the location of activities, vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, and visual form, thus insuring physical, social and economic compatibility with neighboring developments and conditions, as well as with the community at large. This is further intended to prevent any detrimental impact to the natural environment on and off the site by providing for review and evaluation of site plans for all developments. Although certain minimum standards are prescribed by specific provisions of this section, site plan review will permit maximum flexibility in evaluating each plan on its merits and encourage variety and innovation within the intent and purpose specified for each district while insuring privacy and safety on all levels.

### **Section 14.10 Applicability**

The site plan requirements and review process in this Ordinance shall apply to:

#### **§14.10.11**

All proposed development and structures other than single-family houses and their associated accessory uses.

#### **§14.10.12**

All new parking lots having more than five (5) spaces, and all expansions of existing parking lots by more than five (5) spaces.

#### **§14.10.13**

Any remodeling, enlargement, rearrangement, reconstruction or redesign of any development, which development was lawfully accomplished without an approved site plan prior to the effective date of this Ordinance, if an amendment would have been required for such remodeling, enlargement rearrangement, reconstruction or redesign had the original development been accomplished in accordance with an approved site plan.

**Section 14.20 General Procedures**

**§14.20.10**

The Zoning Administrator shall refer submitted Site Plans for all proposed developments requiring a zoning permit, except for single-family detached residential units, to the Planning Commission, for its review and approval. (Ordinance 1995-06, 6/8/95)

**§14.20.20**

The Planning Commission will review all plans submitted as to architectural compatibility with existing town structures and shall have approval over the architectural compatibility and harmonious development of all multi-family and commercial development, even that subject to critical review by an Architectural Review Board as a part of a duly constituted PD. This review shall apply to for property construction, reconstruction, remodeling, enlargement, rearrangement or maintenance of such property. (Ordinance 1995-06, 6/8/95)

**§14.20.20.10.** In conjunction with its review and evaluation of all plans, where there is a constituted and appointed property owner Architectural Review Board, the Commission shall solicit the critical review in writing of that property owner's ARB. (Ordinance 1995-06, 6/8/95)

**§14.20.20.20.** In any area of the Town where there appears to the Planning Commission to be no duly constituted review board as a part of an approved PD to give written approval and review as to architectural compatibility to the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission shall have the authority to ensure that all such development is harmonious and architecturally compatible with surrounding areas and developments.

**§14.20.30 Multi-Family Developments**

All multi-family construction projects shall be subject to a critical review for safety and fire requirements by the St. Johns Fire District acting with the Zoning Administrator as a part of the permitting process prior to approval of such projects.

**Section 14.30 Preliminary Site Plan**

To facilitate Site Plan review, the developer shall submit a Preliminary Site Plan to the Town for review and comment by the Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission. Because Preliminary Site Plain submissions are likely to contain less detailed information than Final Site Plan submissions, with the result that application of the review criteria to these two submissions may yield different results, all review of Preliminary Site Plans is tentative and subject to reconsideration upon submission and review of a Final Site Plan. However, within

these parameters the Planning Commission may approve elements of a Final Site Plan submission that were tentatively approved in a Preliminary Site Plan and remain unchanged and unaffected by other changes to the proposed development. (Ordinance 1995-06, 6/8/95)

**§14.30.10 Purpose**

Approval of the preliminary site plan is the primary and most significant portion of the approval process. All input concerning the design, location, character and impact of the proposed development should take place during preliminary site plan review. When the preliminary site plan has been approved and accepted by the Planning Commission, no significant changes shall be made without further approval of the Planning Commission in filing site plan for review of the final site plan.

**§14.30.20 Pre-application Conference.**

An applicant for preliminary site plan approval shall meet with the Planning Commission to discuss basic site plan procedures and requirements and to consider the elements of the site in question and the proposed development.

**§14.30.30 Preliminary Site Plan Submission.**

An application for preliminary site plan approval shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator. The applicant or his representative shall submit three (3) copies of the following information for preliminary site plan review:

- (a) A legal description of the property under review for site plan approval.
- (b) Site conditions information, including a topographic map of the site of a scale not smaller than one (1) inch equals sixty (60) feet, showing two-foot contours professionally stamped by a registered South Carolina land surveyor. Where applicable (ocean, marsh, river) the South Carolina Coastal Council critical base line must also be shown. Where the proposed tract is large, a smaller scale may be agreed upon by the Commission and developer.
- (c) Generalized soil types in project area and in surrounding area, if significantly different from project area.
- (d) Information about the type and location of existing vegetation, including a written statement indicating the approximate size and location of major tree groupings and those trees with a trunk diameter of six (6) inches or more at a point four and one-half (4-1/2) feet above ground level. Aerial and on-site photographs may be used to show vegetation. All such information shall be dated and generated within 18 months of the date of application. (Ordinance 1993-03, 6/10/93)

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- (e) A preliminary sedimentation control plan shall be submitted indicating the manner by which on-site generated sediment will be retained. Said plan shall assure that sediment volume from the development leaving the property shall not be increased above the level existent prior to the beginning of construction activity.
  
- (f) A Site Conditions Map including:
  - (1) A general location map showing the relationship of the site to such external facilities as streets, residential areas, commercial facilities and recreation/open space areas.
  
  - (2) The location of all existing structures, streets, rights-of-way, easements and other reservations of the land in the area of the property in question, means of ingress and egress to such property, off-street parking loading and service areas, if any, for or on such property and any screening or buffers on such property and the nature and type thereof.
  
  - (3) The location and size of all existing utilities, including existing fire hydrant locations.
  
  - (4) The location of all water holding or carrying facilities, natural or man-made, including creeks, ponds, ditches, culverts and storm sewers and the direction of surface flow.
  
- (g) A site development plan of professional quality drawn at a scale not smaller than one (1) inch equaling sixty (60) feet. Smaller scale for very large land areas may be accepted if the Zoning Administrator determines such scale will provide the necessary details to determine compliance with this Ordinance. A site development plan must show: (Ordinance 1998-08, 4/28/98)
  - (1) The name of the person or firm who prepared the plans, the name of the developer, the name of the proposed project or development, a North arrow and date.
  
  - (2) The location of all proposed streets, driveways or other facilities designed to accommodate vehicular movement in the development and points of ingress and egress, parking areas including the exact number of spaces and loading and service areas (location of dumpsters and any utility buildings) and a traffic impact analysis of projected trip generation, including methods of circulation for the development.
  
  - (3) The proposed use, location and dimensions of all proposed buildings and structures to be included in the development:

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- (4) For all development, the gross floor area of all buildings and proposed lot coverage.
  - (5) For multifamily residential development, the exact number of dwelling units.
  - (6) Dimensions of all required and proposed yard setbacks and open spaces.
  - (7) Location and dimensions of all open space and recreation areas planned with attention to their adequacy in terms of size and placement, their effect on privacy of adjacent living areas and their relationship to community-wide open spaces and recreation facilities.
  - (8) A preliminary drainage plan, showing the manner of drainage of the property, accounting for drainage from roofs and both impervious and pervious surfaces, and including all proposed control devices such as storm sewers and retention and detention facilities.
  - (9) The percentage of the site that will be covered by buildings and structures and the percentage that will be covered by streets, drives, parking and loading areas.
  - (10) If any items required for submission of a Preliminary Site Plan are inapplicable or irrelevant to a proposed development, the application shall so state, giving the reasons therefore.
- (h) Scaled Site plans for construction of a communications tower or placement of a commercial telecommunication antenna on an existing structure other than a tower previously permitted, must also depict:
- (1) Adjacent land uses
  - (2) The height and typical design of the tower, typical materials to be used, color and lighting on elevation drawings.
  - (3) Other information as requested by staff or the Planning Commission to allow adequate review of approval criteria, including photographs with the tower superimposed to assess visual impact.

**§14.30.40 Preliminary Commission Review**

The Commission shall, in a timely manner, review all preliminary site plans at a public meeting and determine whether they meet the provisions of this Ordinance and other applicable regulations. In denying approval of a preliminary site plan, the Commission shall specify in writing, how or in what respects, if at all, the applicant's site plan may be amended or supplemented in order to meet the requirements of this Ordinance. No

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preliminary site plan shall be approved unless and until the Commission has made findings that the application meets the following criteria: (Ordinance 1998-08, 4/28/98)

- (a) Compliance with the requirements of this Ordinance.
- (b) The proposed development will minimize the detrimental impact to the site and surrounding environmental areas, and meet all buffer requirements. (Ordinance 1998-08, 4/28/98)
- (c) The proposed development will assure safe and convenient ingress to and egress from the property and internal circulation, including access of service and emergency vehicles and design of off-street parking and loading areas.
- (d) The proposed development must be designed and located so as to mitigate the affects of tidal surge, flooding, and other natural hazards associated with placing such development on a barrier island.
- (e) The proposed development will minimize environmental damage caused by the destruction of natural vegetation. (Ordinance 1998-08, 4/28/98)
- (f) The proposed development will provide all required utilities and services, including adequate fire protection capability.
- (g) The proposed development will take all reasonable means of minimizing intrusions of noise, light, odor, dust and other similar annoyances into the privacy, quiet and habitability of surrounding areas; and that lighting fixtures and placement do not constitute a hazard to traffic.

**§14.30.50 Notice and Authority to Proceed**

- (a) In denying approval of a preliminary site plan, the Commission shall specify in writing, how or in what respects, if at all, the applicant's site plan may be amended or supplemented in order to meet the requirements of this Section.
- (b) Upon approval by the Commission of a preliminary site plan, the Commission will furnish the applicant with written notice of such approval and the authority to proceed with the final site plan.

**§14.30.60 Time Limitation and/or Extension for Preliminary Site Plan**

Preliminary site plan approval or a phased project preliminary site plan as granted by the Commission shall be effective for a period of up to one (1) year before final site plan submission must be made.

**Section 14.40 Final Site Plan Applications**

**§14.40.10 Purpose**

This procedure is intended to provide for a review of the details of a final site plan as well as any minor modifications made as a result of preliminary approval.

**§14.40.20 Final Site Plan Submissions**

The application for final site plan review shall be filed with the Planning Commission which shall at a public meeting obtain and make comments concerning the final site plan. The applicant or his representative shall submit three (3) copies of the following information for final site plan review, which shall include all information previously approved during the preliminary site plan review process, in addition to the following:

- (a) A grading plan including all finished elevations and contours.
- (b) The exact location of all public use easements.
- (c) The exact location of all utility services, including connection points to the main systems and fire hydrant locations.
- (d) A landscape plan that meets the requirements of Section (11) of this Ordinance.
- (e) A drainage plan including depth dimensions, cross-section dimension and statement of ratio or percentage of side slope angle of retention or detention facilities. Where applicable because of location, the required plans must meet the requirements of the South Carolina Coastal Council Storm Water Management Guidelines.
- (f) The location of all street signs.
- (g) The size, location and maximum intensity of all exterior lighting fixtures and devices.
- (h) Architectural elevations of all buildings and structures.
- (i) A development timetable, if project is to be constructed in phases.
- (j) A final sedimentation plan indicating the manner by which anticipated sediment and debris, generated within the confines of the development, will be retained on site (examples: hay bales, sediment traps, berms etc., as appropriate to the situation). Sediment yield calculations will be provided by the applicant. The

anticipated sediment yield estimate will be appropriately reduced in accordance with the developer's plan to utilize and preserve vegetation at the site.

- (k) If any items required for submission of a Final Site Plan are inapplicable or irrelevant to a proposed development, the application shall so state, giving the reasons therefore.

**§14.40.30 Final Site Plan Review**

The Planning Commission shall obtain and make comments concerning the final site plan at a public meeting.

- (a) The public meeting shall be held within thirty (30) days of the Zoning Administrator's receipt of a final site plan application.
- (b) Following the public meeting of the Commission, at which comments on the proposed site plan are solicited, the Commission shall review all proposed final site plans to determine whether they meet the requirements of this Ordinance and all special conditions imposed during the preliminary site plan approval process.
- (c) The Commission shall recommend either approval or disapproval of a proposed final site plan within thirty (30) days following the public meeting. In the event the Commission has not rendered a decision within thirty (30) days following the public meeting, the proposed final site plan shall be deemed approved unless the applicant agrees in writing to extend the timeline for such action to be taken.

**§14.40.40 Authority to Proceed**

Final Site Plan approval by the Commission provides the applicant with the authority to proceed with building plans and to apply for a Zoning Permit. Final building plans must be submitted to and approved by the Commission as part of the application for a zoning permit pursuant to §13.50.30. (1/12/89)

**§14.40.50 Time Limitation and Extension**

Final site plan approval, as granted by the Commission, shall be effective for a period of nine (9) months, in which time the applicant must apply for zoning and building permits. If a building permit is not applied for within nine (9) months of the date of final approval, said approval shall be deemed null and void unless extended by the Commission.

**§14.40.60 Approval of Amendments to approved Site Plans**

**§14.40.61** Amendments to an approved Final Site Plan may be approved by the Zoning Administrator, without further review by the Planning Commission or public notice, for the following minor alterations: Any remodeling, enlargement,

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rearrangement, reconstruction or redesign of any part of the development which does not conform to the approved site plan, but limited to, any remodeling, enlargement, rearrangement, reconstruction or redesign, which does not expand the gross floor area; enlarge a building envelope; alter the site configuration through site redesign or other change; make other than minor adjustments or shifts in the location and sitting of buildings, structures, parking bays and parking spaces; make other than minor adjustments in the location of utility tie-ins and dumpsters; make other than minor adjustments in the location and types of landscape materials, excluding changes in location of buffers; make other than minor changes in walkway and bikeway systems; make other than the addition of up to five (5) new parking spaces.

**§14.40.62** All other amendments to an approved Final Site Plan must be referred to the Planning Commission for review and comment, as provided in this Ordinance, prior to approval and/or issuance of a Zoning Permit by the Zoning Administrator. (Ordinance 1995-06, 6/8/95)