

This application was left open at the November 17, 2020 meeting to include a qualifier to describe under what scenarios the Commission could waive the coastal buffer requirements. The pertinent language now reads: **Where appropriate, the Commission may waive this requirement upon a finding that by virtue of the lot size, use, or relationship to and/or character of the coastal resources, the buffer will have no impact on mitigating adverse impacts.**

PLPZ202000224 – Buffer plantings in coastal zones

PURPOSE: The purpose of this amendment is to ensure that vegetative buffers are included where appropriate. Preservation of tidal wetlands and coastal waters is valuable as they provide many ecological services of importance to the community. Accordingly, on coastal sites, the proposal shall include a naturalized vegetated buffer to protect environmentally sensitive and/or ecologically valuable natural resources such as tidal wetlands, open water, slopes in excess of 25%, coastal bluffs and escarpments, beaches, and dunes. The configuration of the buffer shall be in balance with the remaining uses of the property in order to protect and preserve such natural or coastal resources. In the event an applicant purports a buffer is not feasible, the burden to justify this position shall lie with the applicant. Plantings shall be salt-tolerant and dominated by native species. The applicant shall provide written justification for the configuration and composition of the buffer (For further background, please refer to *"Tidal Wetlands Buffers" guidance document by DEEP's Office of Long Island Sound Programs*)

This proposal is in keeping with Objective 4.3 of the 2019 POCD, which reads: Continue to strengthen resiliency measures against natural hazards, rising sea level, and the increase in the severity of storm events to allow Greenwich to quickly rebound from, adapt to, and thrive amidst changing conditions or challenges. See also, Objective 4.3(m.): Encourage the use of living shorelines and other non-structural flood and erosion control techniques on both public and private property where appropriate.

Proposed text is in bold and deleted text is denoted via strikethrough

Amendment:

Section 6-111 D. Standards

In addition to the standards of Sec. 6-15 of the “Building Zone Regulations” the Planning and Zoning Commission, in reviewing coastal site plans, may take into consideration the recommendations of any Town agencies or outside specialists with which it consults, such as but not limited to the Conservation Commission, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, Department of Health and the Department of Parks and Recreation in determining whether the proposed activity:

- (1) Is in accordance with the Plan of Development/Land Use Plan. (1/1/87)
- (2) Preserves important open space and other features of the natural environment.
- (3) Does not materially obstruct significant waterfront views.

(4) Does not unreasonably adversely affect storm drainage, sewerage disposal or other municipal services.

(5) Is consistent with all the above purposes as authorized by the State Coastal Management Act.

(6) Include a naturalized vegetated buffer to protect environmentally sensitive and/or ecologically valuable natural resources such as tidal wetlands, open water, slopes in excess of 25%, coastal bluffs and escarpments, beaches, and dunes. Plantings shall be predominantly native species and salt-tolerant. Where appropriate, the Commission may waive this requirement upon a finding that by virtue of the lot size, use, or relationship to and/or character of the coastal resources, the buffer will have no impact on mitigating adverse impacts.

~~(6)~~ (7) Potential adverse impacts as enumerated in Sec. 22a-93(15) and 22a-93(17) of the State Coastal Management Act on both coastal resources and future water dependent development activities may be acceptable upon a Commission finding that the benefits of the proposed activity to the public are greater than the adverse impacts. In determining the acceptability of the above, the Commission shall consider: (1/1/87)

(a) The characteristics of the site, including the location and condition of any of the coastal resources.

(b) The potential effects, both beneficial and adverse, of the proposed activity on coastal resources and future water dependent opportunities. (7/31/80)