



Calvert County Zoning Ordinance Update: Articles 26, 27 & 28

Public Forum

November 16, 2023

Introduction

- Initial joint work session in April 2023 which gave an overview of the Zoning Ordinance and the purpose, strategies, and goals of this update.
- Draft Zoning Ordinance was made available to the public May 2023.
- Joint work session and public forum held in June 2023 on the draft Zoning Districts and Zoning Map
- Public forum held in August 2023 on draft Critical Area, Marine & Water Dependent Facilities, and Floodplain articles followed by work sessions with the Planning Commission (PC) and Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in September and October.
- Public forum held in October 2023 on draft Zoning Approvals, Variances, and Appeals, Nonconformities and Enforcement.

Introduction

- Planning & Zoning staff have met with representatives from several organizations and citizens.
- Questions and comments received have been used to create an FAQ section on the Zoning Ordinance Update website.
- Calvertcountymd.gov/ZoningOrdinanceUpdate to access links to draft articles, draft zoning map, where to send public comment, and other supplemental materials.
- The focus of this public forum will be draft Article 26 – Outdoor Lighting, Article 27 - Parking and Article 28 – Landscaping.

Outdoor Lighting

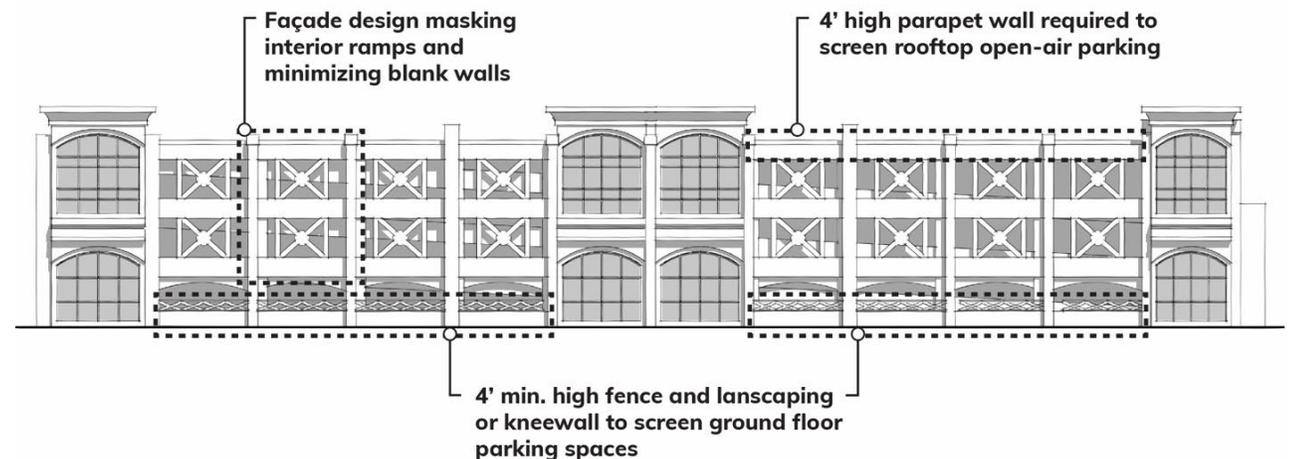
- Purpose, applicability, and exemptions
- To provide outdoor lighting that is dark sky friendly added to purpose section
- Added exemptions for lighting used for signaling purposes and emergency lighting
- Temporary is defined as lasting no longer than 180 days
- Standards for lighting levels, lighting design, control of nuisance and disabling glare, and installation
- Provisions for plan submissions and modifications

Parking

- Location of off-street parking and design standards
- Minimum required parking spaces for specific uses
- Shared parking and off street loading facilities
- Bicycle parking and electric vehicle charging stations
- Commercial and recreational vehicle storage

Parking Structures

- Design standards for parking structures:
 - Shall be designed to minimize blank exterior walls and mask interior ramps through architectural detail and/or public art and landscape;
 - Decorative fence and landscape is required to screen parking spaces on ground floor;
 - Vehicular clear sight zone shall be included at vehicular exit areas.



Minimum Required Parking Spaces

Minimum required off-street parking spaces for specific uses have mostly been left unchanged in this draft with a few exceptions:

- Place of Worship:
 - 1 space per 4 seats of maximum seating capacity in main assembly area or 1 space per 200sf gross floor area in the parish hall (whichever is greater) in current Zoning Ordinance;
 - 1 space per 4 seats of maximum seating capacity in main assembly area and 1 space/300sf gross floor area in accessory buildings or expansions to existing buildings not part of the main assembly area in draft Zoning Ordinance.

Off-Street Loading Requirements

- All industrial, wholesale, manufacturing, warehousing, or storage uses must provide at least one loading area
 - Under the current ordinance, if these uses consist of less than 2,000 square feet they aren't required to provide a loading area
- All commercial retail uses and business and personal service uses that receive products or make shipments must provide at least one loading area
 - Under the current ordinance this requirement only applies to retail commercial uses, and retail commercial uses that consist of less than 25,000 square feet aren't required to provide a loading area

Parking Reductions

Section 6-3.01.E from the current Zoning Ordinance was not included in the draft Zoning Ordinance.

- This section states in regard to non-residential parking that, *“The Planning Commission Administrator may allow up to 15% of the required number of parking spaces be reserved for construction in the future and/or designated as overflow parking”*
- Furthermore, the policy from the current Zoning Ordinance is that, *“An administrative variance can be requested to reduce the required parking, up to 15%, if the site cannot accommodate the additional parking spaces as required by Section 6-3.01.E.”*

Bicycle Parking

- A minimum of two bicycle parking spaces or one bicycle parking space for every 5,000 square feet (gross floor area) of retail or office space is required, whichever is greater
- A minimum of two bicycle parking spaces or one bicycle parking space for every 2,500 square feet (gross floor area) of institutional space is required, whichever is greater
- A minimum of one bicycle parking space for every five dwelling units in multi-family residential developments is required

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (EVCs)

- For parking facilities that require 25-49 spaces, when EVCs are installed that serve a minimum of two parking spaces, the minimum required number of parking spaces may be reduced by two.
- For parking facilities that require 50 or more spaces, EVCs that serve a minimum of four vehicles shall be provided.
 - If more than the required amount of EVCs are provided then the minimum required number of parking spaces may be reduced by the amount of parking spaces that can be served by the additional charging stations, not to exceed 10 percent of the minimum required number of parking spaces.

Landscaping

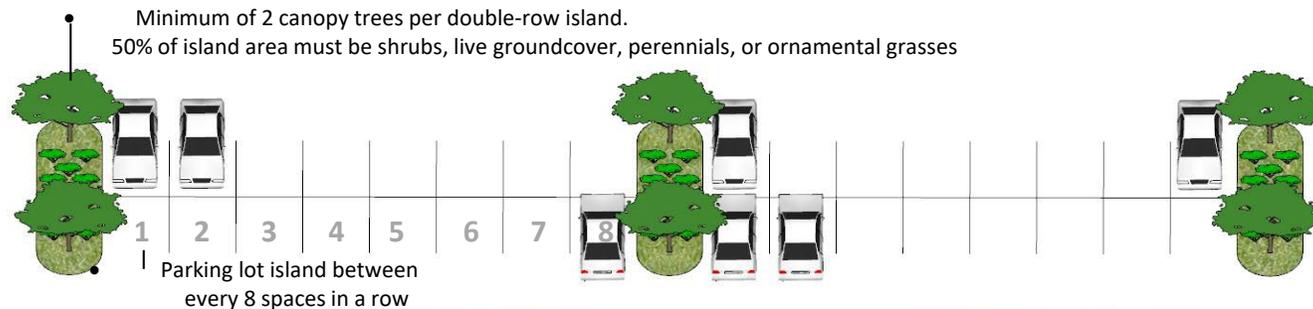
- Selection, installation, and maintenance
- Minimum planting sizes and species diversity requirements
- Parking lot perimeter and interior landscaping
- Landscaping for buffer areas between non-compatible uses
- Site landscape and screening of ancillary uses
- Incentives for the protection of monument trees

Species Diversity

- Diversity among required plant material is required for visual interest and to reduce the risk of losing a large population of plants due to disease
- Table 28-1: Plant Diversity Requirements indicates the percentage of diversity required based on the total quantity of species being used
- For example, if a development requires 45 canopy trees, no more than 18 trees (40%) can be of one species, and there must be a minimum of five different species within the 45 trees
- Street trees are exempt from species diversity requirements

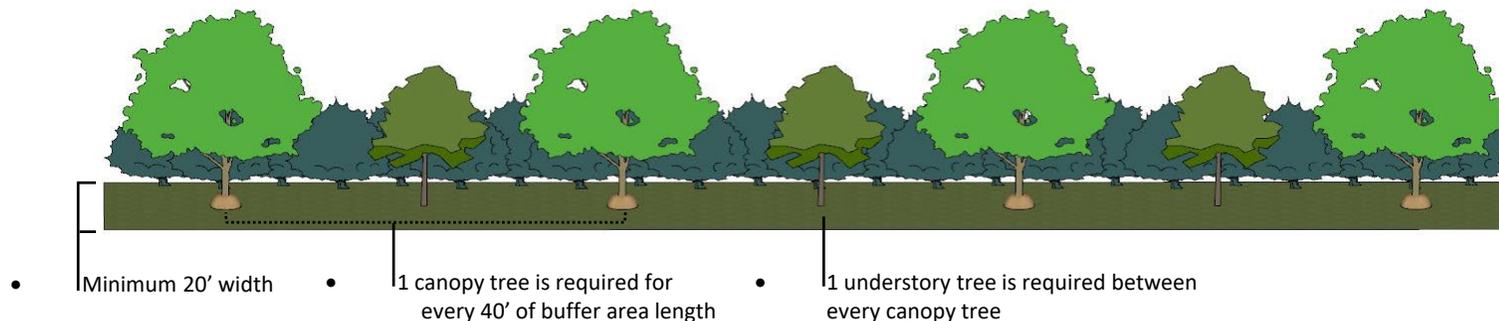
Parking Lot Interior Landscape

- All parking lots of 16 or more spaces are required to have parking lot interior landscape in the draft
 - In the current Zoning Ordinance, landscaping is required within all parking lots having more than 25 spaces
- Parking lot islands landscaped with trees are required between every eight parking spaces in a continuous row in the draft
 - In the current Zoning Ordinance, an equivalent of one parking lot island landscaped with trees is required for every 20 spaces



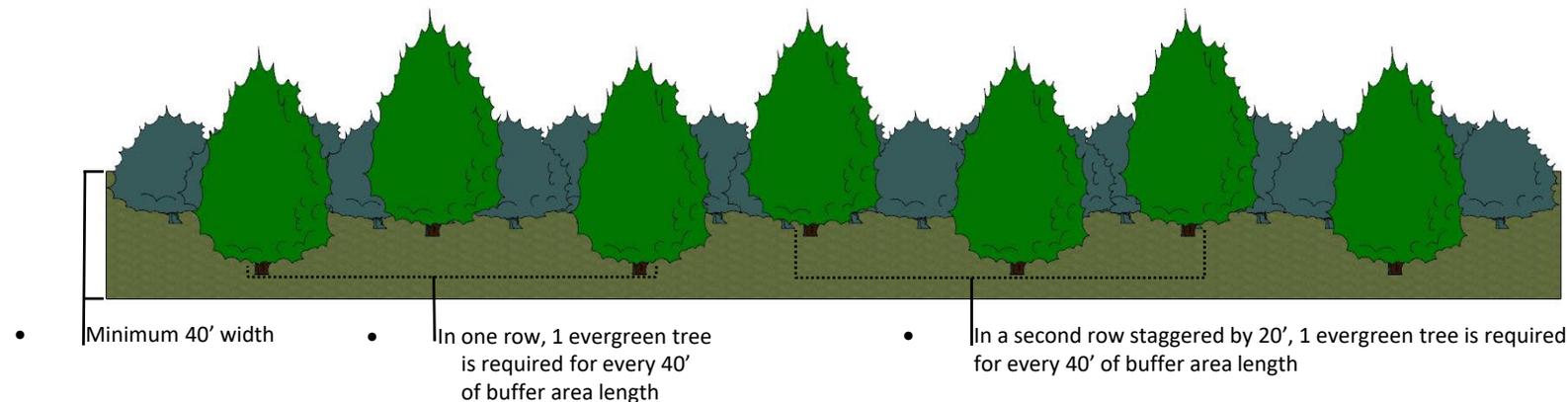
Buffer Areas

- Buffer areas are required between the side and/or rear setbacks and property lines where a multi-family or townhouse development abuts a single-family or duplex development
 - Buffer areas must be a minimum of 20 feet in width; and one canopy or evergreen tree shall be planted for every 40 linear feet of buffer area length. One understory tree must be planted evenly spaced between canopy or evergreen trees.



Buffer Areas

- Where a nonresidential use is adjacent to an existing residentially used property, a property with an active residential building permit, or a property with a non-compatible use the buffer areas shall be a minimum of 40 feet in width.
- Two staggered rows of evergreen trees are required within the buffer area.



Site Landscaping

Site landscaping section added to draft Zoning Ordinance:

- Includes landscaping requirements for the area between buildings and street and parking areas for townhouse, multi-family, and nonresidential developments;
- Planting area is required along 60% of the area between the building and street or parking area (to include canopy trees, understory trees, shrubs, perennials, ornamental grasses).

Street Landscaping & Monument Trees

- In both residential and nonresidential developments canopy trees must be planted within a minimum five foot planting strip on both sides of the road and the spacing between canopy trees must not be less than 30 feet on center and no more than 60 feet on center, unless a greater or lesser distance is beneficial to a particular species.
- The following provision has been added to the draft Zoning Ordinance, *“Tree species that bear fruit or nuts are prohibited.”*
- The following provision was added to this article, *“If a monument tree is removed without permit approval it shall be considered a violation and a fine of \$10,000 may be imposed for each violation.”*

Proposed Revision Highlights

Article 26 - Outdoor Lighting

Providing outdoor lighting that is dark sky friendly added to purpose section; revisions made based on recommendations from county staff with expertise in outdoor lighting

Article 27 - Parking

Provisions added for parking structures; revisions to off-street loading requirements; revisions to bicycle parking requirements; provisions for electric vehicle charging stations revised

Article 28 - Landscaping

Added species diversity requirements; strengthened parking interior landscape requirements; strengthened buffer area landscape requirements; added site landscaping requirements

Public Forum Wrap-Up

- The next public forum is scheduled for December 14, 2023
- Public comment period for Articles 26, 27, 28 closes December 1st
- Members of the public can submit comments to
ZOupdate@calvertcountymd.gov
- Questions – Contact:
Will Hager, 410-535-1600 ex. 8553
will.hager@calvertcountymd.gov
Rachel O’Shea, 410-535-1600 ex. 2339
rachel.oshea@calvertcountymd.gov