

RIDGWAY PLANNING COMMISSION

AGENDA

Tuesday, October 27th, 2020

Regular Meeting; 5:30 pm

ONLINE via Zoom

To join the meeting go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88306905319?pwd=TXA4U1hTdjUvUjgxejBHWfVmdUs2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 883 0690 5319

Passcode: 185408

To call in dial: 346.248.7799 or 408.638.0968 or 669.900.6833

Written comments can be submitted before the meeting to scoburn@town.ridgway.co.us or delivered to Town Hall Attn: Planning Commission

ROLL CALL: Chairperson: Doug Canright, Commissioners: Tessa Cheek, John Clark, Thomas Emilson, Larry Falk, Bill Liske, and Jennifer Nelson

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Landscaping Regulations Update, opening discussion

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2. Minutes from the meeting of September 29, 2020

ADJOURN



To: Planning Commission
From: Shay Coburn, Town Planner; Steve Zwick, volunteer; Lindsey Romaniello, 2019 Intern
Date: October 27, 2020
Re: Landscaping Regulations Update

BACKGROUND

This is the first public meeting to discuss updating the Town’s regulations regarding landscaping. This is being introduced due various requests from the public as well from Town Council and the Planning Commission. The desire to update the landscaping regulations is also addressed in the following:

- 2019 Master Plan: Action item ENV-3c - Update the Town’s landscaping regulations to require low water usage landscaping or xeriscaping.
- 2020 Strategic Plan: Healthy Natural Environment, #14 - Update Land Use code to encourage water conservation and management in line with the Town’s Water Conservation and Management efforts.

EXISTING REGULATIONS

RMC 6-1 Building Regulations

6-1-11 Landscaping

(A) All applications for a building permit for new construction or exterior work on any existing structure shall submit a Landscape Plan for the premises meeting the following requirements:

- (1) The Landscape Plan shall be drawn to scale of 1 inch = 40 feet, or larger, and may be included on the Site Plan.
- (2) The Building footprint, driveways and vehicle circulation shall be shown and located to scale.
- (3) Surface drainage characteristics and proposed structures must be shown.
- (4) Existing and all proposed groundcover, including shrubs and lawns shall be shown.

(B) The plan must provide for the following minimum landscaping elements:

- (1) Groundcover must be adequate to ensure that dust cannot blow from the property and that the soil is stabilized to ensure that erosion is kept to a minimum.
- (2) A minimum of one (1) tree per 2,000 square feet of gross lot area in all zones except Historic Business shall be provided. Trees shall have a minimum caliper of 1-1/2" for deciduous trees and five foot minimum height for evergreens. Trees should be located in such a way that they will not infringe on solar access and views of the adjoining properties or block vehicular sight lines to public roadways.

(C) Landscaping Guidelines are as follows:

- (1) Existing trees and groundcover on the property are encouraged to be retained and not destroyed during the construction process. These plants will be counted towards the minimum standards.



(2) Xeriscape landscaping and drip irrigation are encouraged. Large irrigated areas are discouraged.

(3) Siberian elm and Chinese elm (*Ulmus*); Cottonwoods that bear cotton (*Populus*); Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum slaicaria*); Russian Olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) are prohibited.

(4) The Town Manager is authorized to prohibit additional species with similar nuisance properties.

(D) The building permit shall not be issued until a conforming Landscape Plan is approved by the Town.

(E) A permanent Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued until the Town determines that the landscaping contemplated by the approved plan has been properly installed. A temporary Certificate of Occupancy may be issued if completion is delayed by winter weather.

(F) Following completion of the landscaping, the owner or occupant of the property shall maintain it in good condition thereafter. Failure to so maintain the landscaping is unlawful and is hereby declared to create a nuisance.

(G) Intent: Landscaping is an important element of the experience of the Town of Ridgway that is both functional and aesthetic. Priorities for Landscaping include: low-water use, regionally appropriate design for materials and vegetation. These landscaping regulations will endeavor to provide for an attractive, well-maintained landscape that preserves the overall quality and appeal of the community; provides visual buffers and screens; achieves pedestrian and vehicular separation; preserves and enhances the existing visual character of the community; mitigates adverse effects of drainage and weeds, and conserves water resources. A list of recommended species for use in Colorado is available from the Ouray County Weed Manager and the Colorado State University Extension Service. The lists are not all inclusive but do recommend a variety of plants known to do well in our region of Colorado. In general, plants that are not recognized as hardy or suited to the local climate should be kept to a minimum. Xeriscaping and drought-tolerant and water-saving plants are to be used whenever possible and appropriate. Within the General Commercial District landscaping is important to the drainage, circulation and aesthetic of commercial developments. With larger sites and several buildings, there is the opportunity to create cohesive, appealing and efficient landscape plans that elevate the site as a whole. Landscaping should be used to promote the visual aesthetic of the development from main travel corridors, as well as the pedestrian experience within, through shade trees, plantings, context-appropriate public art and seating. Buffers and medians facilitate drainage during storm events and also provide valuable areas for snow storage during the winter. Landscaping that is visually appealing, functional, and sustainable is desirable for all new development within the General Commercial District.

RMC 6-6 Residential Design Standards

6-6-4 Development Standards

(G) Landscaping¹: In addition to the requirements of Subsection 6-1-11, the site shall be landscaped to meet the following minimum standards:

(1) Trees: A minimum of one tree per 2000 square feet of gross lot area shall be provided in all zones except Historic Business. Trees shall have a minimum caliper of 1 ½ inch for deciduous trees and a five-foot minimum height for evergreens.

¹ This cross reference is based on Ordinance 03-2020 that has not yet been codified.



(2) In residential zoning districts, trees and shrubs may be placed in any landscape configuration and arranged to compliment the structure. However, of the required trees, a minimum of one tree shall be located in the front yard for each 25 foot of street and on corner lots, one tree shall be located in the street side yard for each 50 foot of street side yard frontage. Landscape elements shall not be located where, at mature size, they will block vehicular sight lines at corners or to public roadways. Where possible, trees should be located in such a way, or be a type, that they will not infringe on solar access and view of the adjoining properties.

(3) Shrubs: The front and street side yard shall include a minimum of one shrub (5-gallon size) per 10 feet of front and side street frontage.

(4) In the case of fractional requirements for the number of trees and shrubs, the number required shall be rounded to the nearest whole number.

(5) Groundcover: Groundcover must be adequate to ensure that dust cannot blow from the property and that the soil is stabilized to ensure that erosion is kept to a minimum. A minimum of 50% of the front and street side yard shall be covered with live vegetation. The remaining area can be vegetative materials, organic or inorganic mulch, flowerbeds, or other acceptable landscape material. River rock, stone or cobbles, if used, shall not exceed 10% of the front or street side yard area. (Driveway area of minimum length and width to provide access and parking shall not be included in the 10% calculation of stone or rock covered area).

Commercial Design Guidelines

II. General Commercial District

b. Site Planning and Parking

8. Trees should be incorporated to provide parking lot shading.

9. Use of landscape/grassed catchment areas and similar designs should be used for managing, controlling and filtering parking lot/site drainage and is part of an overall site drainage plan.

e. Screening and Buffers

Screening and landscape buffers soften the negative impacts of development and can provide a certain element of safety in commercial areas where significant pedestrian interactions are more likely to occur.

Buffers should be constructed to mitigate the view, light pollution (including light trespass and glare), noise, heat, and odor impacts of vehicles, pavement, and higher intensity uses, and other potential negative effects of development.

Buffering may be achieved through a variety of means including but not limited to plantings, fences, walls, site planning, and berming with live vegetation.

Parking areas, outside trash receptacles, large utility boxes, open storage areas, conflicting land uses, mechanical systems and other unattractive views should be screened from the street and public right of way.

Screening of utility boxes, trash enclosures, and similar uses should be around all sides except for those required for access, which will be screened with a gate on the access side.



III. Historic Business District (Historic Town Core)

e. Screening and Buffers

Screening and landscape buffers soften the less desirable impacts of development and can provide a certain element of safety in commercial areas where significant pedestrian interactions are more likely to occur.

Buffers should be constructed to mitigate the view, light pollution (including light trespass and glare), noise, heat, and odor impacts of vehicles, pavement, and higher intensity uses, and other potential negative effects of development.

Buffering may be achieved through a variety of means including but not limited to plantings, fences, walls, site planning, and berming with live vegetation.

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DISCUSSION

The following questions are for discussion during the meeting. The responses (numbered items) under each question are simply included in this memo to help encourage conversation.

What are the goals and purpose for updating the landscaping regulations?

1. Promote water conservation
2. Better align the two landscaping regulation sections (6-1-11 with 6-6) and the commercial design guidelines
3. Ensure costs related to landscaping are not a barrier to workforce housing
4. Maintain community character
5. What else?

What do you NOT like about the existing landscaping regulations?

1. Many times, the required landscaping is installed to get a final certificate of occupancy and then it is neglected or left to die
2. What else?

What do you like about the existing landscaping regulations?

1. The regulations are fairly simple and do not require a professional to create the landscape plan
2. What else?



What ideas do you have in regards to updating our landscaping regulations?

1. Create a list of allowed (regionally appropriate and water wise) and prohibited plants (those that require a lot of water)
2. Limit amount of turf grass allowed
3. What else?

ATTACHMENT

1. Example Landscaping Regulations from other Colorado Cities and Towns (note this information was compiled in 2019 and may be a bit out of date)

Attachment 1: Example Landscape Regulations from other Colorado Cities and Towns

Community	Species Requirements	Ground Cover	Landscape Arrangement	Xeriscaping Requirements	Landscape and Water Use Plan Document	Irrigation Systems	Hydrozone Requirements	Water Budget	Low, moderate and extreme in water restriction	Soil
Aspen	Any plants can be used (unless they are considered noxious) and fit the water restriction requirements. Have a species list of recommended plants	Mulch is required for specific species to retain water efficiency	none	none	Has water efficient landscaping document that correlates to county and regional water efficiency plans	Very thorough, requires efficient systems, and encourages no irrigation when using native species in hydrozones	All hydrozones must be identified and shown how much water they will use. all hydrozones shall be planted with similar water use species	Requires a water budget of 12 inches per silt per season. If you incorporate special features, you get water incentive tap breaks	Extreme criteria which extensively addresses many water efficiency elements	Thorough. Addresses types of soil that can be used/added, soil depth for plants, requires soil analysis, stock piling indigenous soil, no herbicides or toxins
Carbondale	none	Any part of site not used for improvements to be landscaped. Control dust and erosion by use of vegetative cover or other means. 40% minimum landscaped area required for multifamily uses in res. districts.		Not specified, low water drought tolerant adaptive plans shall be used suitable for soil and climate	Landscape plan required and shall detail the site showing all natural and man-made features.					none
Castle Rock	Must use approved list. Promotes natural and indigenous. Also requires ample shading in paved areas.	All unpaved site needs to be landscaped.	requires diversity of plants in landscape design.	Highly encourages xeriscaping and the use of mulch and alternative, non-living materials	Has a Landscaping and irrigation regulations document	Need to be efficient and work at 75% efficiency.	Need to have designated hydrozones	No plant may require more than 15 inches of water per season	Extreme criteria which extensively addresses many water efficiency elements	Pretty thorough. Requires soil analysis, stock piling indigenous soil, and non toxic soil amendments
Crested Butte	Requires indigenous plants and has a plant species recommendation list. Commitment to preserve all existing trees and shrubs.	All exposed ground surfaces shall be revegetated.		none	none	none	none	none	Low. However, very concerned with trees	Only mentions soil, when talking about tree removal and tree protection.
Durango	Have an approved list. Very protective of trees and limits removal.	All exposed ground surfaces should be revegetated.	Plans need to be arranged and distributed according to proportioned aesthetic design listed in the plan.	Mulch encouraged	none	Vague- efficient irrigation system recommended	Plants need to be grouped into appropriate hydrozones	Low-water planting only required on steep sloped (>25% grade), no more than 50 of trees/shrubs can be considered high-water use	Moderate. Includes many of the wise water criteria but has vague or loose requirements	Vague- soil needs to be amended when necessary
Eagle	Recommended plant list for trees			not specified	Landscape plan required except for certain commercial projects in Central Business District	Underground sprinkler system required for all landscaped areas in non-residential zone districts				No artificial trees, shrubs, turf or plants may be used as landscape material
Fort Collins	All new developments need to provide a certain amount of tree canopy cover. Limit turf grass.	All unpaved site needs to be landscaped.	mulching required in hydrozones	Highly encourages xeriscaping and the use of mulch and alternative, non-living materials	none	Vague- efficient irrigation system required but no definition of efficient	Group landscaping into hydrozones	Requires a water budget - to be divided into hydrozones, and encourages low to very low hydrozones (0-3 gallons per sqft per season)	Moderate. Includes many of the wise water criteria but is somewhat vague on all of these things	Soil amendment required before construction

Attachment 1: Example Landscape Regulations from other Colorado Cities and Towns

Community	Species Requirements	Ground Cover	Landscape Arrangement	Xeriscaping Requirements	Landscape and Water Use Plan Document	Irrigation Systems	Hydrozone Requirements	Water Budget	Low, moderate and extreme in water restriction	Soil
Grand Junction	Recommended to use native, low water use plants	Addresses trees and shrub size, but not specific on ground cover requirements	none	Recommended use of water wise xeriscaping	none	All landscaping must have permanent irrigation (even native grasses)	none	none	Low. Provides some guidelines but only in the form of recommendation. Does not mention water wise irrigation practices.	Vague - amended and planted with good horticultural practices
Montrose	none	At least 25% of linear footage of the site abutting public street r.o.w. unless alternative approved by city	Inclusive of street frontage requirement, landscaping is required for at least 15% of that part of the site not covered by buildings for sites in res. districts, at least 8% coverage in comm. districts, and 4% coverage in industrial districts	none	Landscape plan required and shall detail the site showing all natural and man-made features. Proposed landscaping to be shown on site development plan or separate landscape plan.	none	none	none	none	none
Ouray	Existing and proposed landscaping features to be identified as to location, common name, botanical name, and size.	Groundcover must be adequate to ensure that dust cannot blow from the property and the soil is stabilized to ensure erosion is kept to a minimum. Vegetative ground covers should be ID as to name and location	Requires diversity of plants in landscape design.	Xeriscape landscaping and drip irrigation encouraged	Landscape plan required and shall detail the site showing all natural and man-made features. Proposed landscaping to be shown on site development plan or separate landscape plan.	Xeriscape landscaping and drip irrigation are encouraged	none	none	none	none
Telluride	Vague- all landscaping must conserve water and be efficient	none	All Landscaping must be alive unless approved specifically. All landscaping needs to be approved by the Historic and Architectural Review Commission (H.A.R.C)	none	none	none	none	none	Low- Telluride does not list many criteria in their code, however there are design standards by the H.A.R.C to maintain the historic feel, which uses many native grasses in its landscaping.	none

PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

September 29, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. The Planning Commission was present in its entirety with Commissioners Emilson, Falk, Liske, Nelson, Councilor Cheek, Mayor Clark and Chairperson Canright in attendance.

1. Application for Replat; Location: SKS Condominiums, Units A and B (formerly Solar Ranches #2B, Lot 87D); Address: 602 Tabernash Lane, Units A and B; Zone: Low-Density Residential; Applicant: Kristin L. Adams; Owners: Kristin L. Adams and Stephen P. Schroeder.

Staff Report dated September 29, 2020 presenting background, analysis and staff recommendation prepared by the Town Planner.

Town Planner Shay Coburn presented an application for replat that would remove an existing condominium plat. Coburn reviewed the criteria for replat and noted the request is in compliance with the Ridgway Municipal Code. She reviewed 7 edits to the new plat map that are required as a result of terminating the condo plat. The Planner noted the edits would need to be made for the final plat and recommend a conditional approval for the request.

The Chairman opened the hearing for public comment and there was none.

ACTION:

Commissioner Nelson moved to recommend approval to the Town Council for the Application for Replat for the SKS Condominiums, Units A and B (formerly Solar Ranches #2B, Lot 87D); Address: 602 Tabernash Lane, Units A and B with the condition that the 7 edits to the plat map noted in the Staff Report dated September 29, 2020 are completed before the plat is recorded. Commissioner Liske seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Planning Commission Bylaws, Review and Consideration of Adoption

Memorandum dated September 29, 2020 regarding the Planning Commission Bylaws; *Town of Ridgway Planning Commission Bylaws*, final draft, prepared by the Town Planner.

Planner Coburn presented the updated *Planning Commission Bylaws* with the edits recommended by the Commissioners at the August Regular Meeting. She explained currently terms are to expire at 2 year intervals which aligns with the Municipal Code. An ordinance will be presented to the Town Council that will change the term to expire at 1 year intervals. She noted the bylaws will be updated to reflect the change if the Town Council passes the Ordinance. There was discussion regarding the term for the alternate commissioner and the Planning Commission agreed the term for the alternate commissioner does not need to be updated at this time.

ACTION:

Mayor Clark moved to approve the *Town of Ridgway Planning Commission Bylaws* including the update to Section 1.B saying the “terms are to expire at one-year intervals” should the Town Council adopt the proposed ordinance. Councilor Cheek seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3. Continuing Education for Commissioners

The Planner reported she is working with other area planners and the Department of Local Affairs to coordinate a refresher training course for planning commissioners. The training will be provided virtually, in the evening. Ms. Coburn proposed January 20, 27 and February 3 as tentative dates for the training. The Commissioners tentatively agreed they could attend the training on any of the proposed dates in accordance with their projected schedules. Planner Coburn will advise the Commission of the actual course date via email.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

4. Approval of the Minutes from the Meeting of August 25, 2020

ACTION:

Commissioner Nelson moved to approve the Minutes from August 25, 2020. Councilor Cheek seconded the motion, with Commissioners Liske and Emilson abstaining, and the motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Christian
Deputy Clerk