

February 2016

Environment and Energy Commission
City of Columbia

Members of the Environment and Energy Commission:

Due to current review of development ordinances within the city, the Columbia Tree Task Force has been reviewing and providing proposed changes to the landscape and screening ordinance as it pertains to tree management. The landscape and screening ordinance is a small subset of the overall development code.

Key changes to Integrated Draft Landscaping and Screening Code (29-4.5) proposed by the Columbia Tree Task Force include the following:

Under Landscaping and Screening:

[b] Existing parking lots, regardless of size, that are redesigned will be required to comply with landscaping upgrades.

[c] Adds requirement of an approved landscape plan before a land disturbance permit being issued. Adds under plant materials that at least 50% of all trees planted are to be large to medium species and no more than 30% of those can be a single species.

[e] Clarified that Single Family Residence is exempt from screening requirements. When fencing is required (for instance for an industrial area next to a single family home), required landscaping shall be placed between fence and neighboring property line.

[f] All parking areas with more than 100 spaces shall include interior landscaping equal to 10 percent of paved area (including driveways from the public street). In parking areas with more than 150 spaces: in the 10 foot wide landscaping area required between lots we changed number of required trees from of one tree for every 45 lineal feet to 35 feet. Also, gives credit of 2-3 parking spaces having to be built for extra trees planted in paved area with at least 150 feet of growing space depending on where in the parking area they are planted.

[g] Requires that the preservation of existing trees for credit towards tree planting requirements be detailed in an approved tree protection plan. Adds credit is not given for trees as part of their required tree preservation area. Also, further defines that trees contained in an existing or proposed utility or other easement cannot be credited towards required tree preservation, screening and landscaping requirement. Also, 25% of significant trees (changed from all significant trees) over 20 inches (changed from 24 inches) in diameter and in good condition shall be preserved. These are trees outside of the tree preservation and stream buffer and utility easement. Added that all vacant lots, undeveloped land and property to be redeveloped that require a land disturbance permit

shall abide by this section (single family residential lots less than an acre are exempt from this). Further defined that each significant tree that is removed shall be replaced by three medium to large trees (rather than any size). And, added that in lieu of planting trees, a payment of \$750 per tree can be paid to the City of Columbia for planting of public street trees. Also added that significant trees shall not have root area disturbed within 20 feet of drip line, just like the tree preservation area.

Also, under Stormwater Management:

Clarified that the 25% of climax forest protected from development shall remain undeveloped as one continuous stand of timber and be platted as a separate lot. And, further clarified that a landowner requesting annexation into the city shall abide by the tree preservation ordinance. Any land that did not follow the tree preservation ordinance must wait five years before they can be annexed into the city.

The proposed changes above have all been voted on by the Tree Task Force and in cooperation with Chad Herwald, City Arborist in Columbia's Community Development department.

The Columbia Tree Task Force very much appreciates the Environment and Energy Commission's interest in healthy tree management for the City of Columbia and your interest in our proposed changes to the tree ordinance. We at the Tree Task Force understand that the EEC has spent many years supporting the management of trees in Columbia and promoting a healthy urban forest. Thank you for your focus on trees.

Any endorsement the EEC would like to provide in support of the Tree Task Force's proposed changes to the tree ordinance are welcome.

Sincerely,

Ann Koenig, Chair
City of Columbia Tree Task Force