

## **§54 DESIGN STANDARDS** *Revised 08-01-05*

### **54-1 Purpose**

The following regulations and design standards shall apply to the planning and map layout of streets, lots, parks, recreation areas and other improvements and facilities shown on the subdivision map.

### **54-2 Streets**

Streets shall be planned in such a way as to provide a safe and convenient system for present and prospective traffic and to conform to the following standards.

### **54-3 Classification of Streets**

All existing and proposed streets and vehicular rights-of-way shown on the subdivision map shall be classified by the Commission in accordance with the Town Plan of Development as follows:

#### **54-3.1 Arterial Street or Major Thoroughfare**

The Commission shall classify as "Arterial," a street of considerable length, designed primarily to carry higher volumes of through traffic at higher speeds, to serve major traffic centers of activity and to interconnect towns and cross-town areas.

#### **54-3.2 Collector Street or Secondary Thoroughfare**

The Commission shall classify as "Collector," a street of medium length, primarily designed to carry some through traffic at medium speeds, to serve traffic between arterial and local streets and to connect adjacent neighborhoods.

#### **54-3.3 Minor or Local Streets**

The Commission shall classify as "Minor," a street of generally shorter length, primarily designed to carry local traffic at lower speeds and to provide access to abutting properties.

#### **54-3.4 Private Street or Right-of-Way**

Upon written request of the applicant, the Commission may classify a proposed street or right-of-way as a permanent private street or right-of-way if the Commission shall find that such street or right-of-way will not carry more traffic than is expected on a minor street and that such street or right-of-way will not impair the orderly development of the neighborhood or the safe and convenient circulation of vehicles and pedestrians in the neighborhood.

### **54-4 Street Width**

All streets shown on the subdivision map shall have the following minimum width of right-of-way according to their classifications:

**54-4.1** Arterial, sixty (60) feet.

**54-4.2** Collector, fifty (50) feet.

**54-4.3** Minor, forty (40) feet.

**54-4.4** Private street or right-of-way, twenty (20) feet to serve one (1) lot; thirty (30) feet to serve two (2) to five (5) lots; forty (40) feet to serve six (6) or more lots.

**54-5 Street Alignment**

The minimum radius of curvature at the center line of all streets shall be as follows, unless otherwise approved by the Town Engineer:

**54-5.1** Arterial, six hundred (600) feet.

**54-5.2** Collector, three hundred (300) feet.

**54-5.3** Minor, one hundred fifty (150) feet.

**54-5.4** Private street or right-of-way, one hundred fifty (150) feet on a private street or right-of-way serving six (6) or more lots; seventy-five (75) feet on other private streets or rights-of-way.

**54-6 Street Gradient**

The minimum gradient at the center line of all streets shall be as follows:

**54-6.1** Arterial, not less than one (1) percent nor more than eight (8) percent slope.

**54-6.2** Collector, not less than one (1) percent nor more than eight (8) percent slope.

**54-6.3** Minor and/or private streets, not less than one (1) percent nor more than ten (10) percent slope.

**54-6.4** Street intersections, not more than 6% slope. Gradients at street intersections shall be as flat as practicable on those sections to be used as storage space for stopped vehicles, subject to approval by the Town Engineer.

**54-7 Intersections**

The following standards shall apply to street intersections:

**54-7.1** No more than two (2) proposed streets shall intersect at any one (1) point.

**54-7.2** No streets shall intersect at any angle of less than eighty-five (85) degrees; except that no minor street or private street shall intersect with another minor street or private street at an angle of less than sixty (60) degrees.

**54-7.3** All intersecting street lines shall be rounded at the corner with a minimum radius of twenty (20) feet.

**54-8 Sight Distances**

Clear visibility shall be provided for a minimum distance of 250 feet at intersections, as measured along the center line of the streets, and may be increased by the Town Engineer based on the street alignment and gradients.

**54-9 Relation of Adjoining Areas**

Proposed minor streets and private streets and rights-of-way shall be planned to discourage through traffic, but also to provide a safe and convenient system for prospective traffic in the subdivision. Minor streets shall also provide a safe and convenient system for present and prospective traffic in the neighborhood, and shall be planned where appropriate to provide for continuation of existing streets in adjoining areas and for projection into adjoining properties when subdivided. Proposed streets or rights-of-way which may be projected into adjoining properties shall be carried to the boundary line; no reserve strips shall be permitted.

**54-10 Cul-de-Sac**

Cul-de-sac streets closed at one (1) end by building lots and which will not be extended in the future, shall not exceed 1,200 feet in length.

**54-11 Turnarounds**

A turnaround with a minimum diameter of ninety (90) feet shall be provided at the closed end of a cul-de-sac serving six (6) or more lots. Temporary dead-end streets which may be projected into adjoining property at some future date shall also be provided at the closed end with a turnaround having a minimum diameter of ninety (90) feet, but land for a turnaround on a temporary dead-end may be provided in the form of an easement bearing a condition for automatic termination upon extension of the dead-end. A "back-around" area shall be provided for dead-end streets serving only 2 to 5 lots.

**54-12 Street Names and Street Address Numbers**

All streets, serving more than one (1) lot, shall be named and shall bear the names which are appropriate to the character of the Town and which do not duplicate or too closely approximate in spelling or sound existing street names in Westport. All proposed lots shall be given a street address number, by the Department of Public Works.

**54-13 Street Monuments and Signs**

Two (2) street monument sites, preferably on a tangent and with an unobstructed line of sight between them shall be provided for each eight hundred (800) feet of street or right-of-way and shall not be less than two hundred (200) feet apart. The location of monument sites shall be subject to the approval of the Town Engineer and Police Chief.

**54-14 Existing Streets**

Proposed subdivisions abutting an existing public or private street or State Highway may provide for proper widening of the right-of-way of such street or highway to the width appropriate for the classification given such street or highway by the Commission and may provide for proper widening of the traveled path of such street or highway to a width of not less than twenty (20) feet, exclusive of curbs and gutters and/or may provide for proper improvement of the traveled path of such street or highway to other Town road standards, such as surfacing, curbs, and drainage, when deemed necessary by the Commission for public safety.

**54-15 Street Lines**

Street lines on each side of a proposed street shall be parallel or concentric arcs. The boundary line between a private street intersecting an existing or proposed Arterial, Collector or Minor street shall be clearly delineated on the map.

**54-16 Street and Driveway Planning**

Proposed street and driveways shall be planned in such a manner as to provide safe and convenient access to proposed lots and with due consideration for accomplishing an attractive layout and development of the land in the subdivision and in the neighborhood. Streets should in general follow the contour of the land.

**54-16.1** The center line of any proposed street shall be staked out in the field from its beginning to the center of the turnaround or its end. The stakes shall not be more than 100 feet apart.

**54-16.2** All proposed streets shall connect with or extend from an existing improved street with at least a 20 feet travel path.

**54-16.3** No driveway locations shall be relocated without the prior approval of the Commission.

**54-17 Lots**

The area, shape and frontage of proposed lots shall conform to the Zoning Regulations of the Town of Westport and shall be of such shape, size, location, topography and character that buildings can be reasonably constructed in conformity with the requirements of the Zoning Regulations. Lots shall be of such character that they can be occupied and used for buildings purposes without danger to the health and safety of the occupants and the public. Any lot which is found to be unsuitable for occupancy and building by reason of swamps, water or flooding conditions, unsuitable soil, topography, ledge rock or other physical conditions shall be combined with another lot that is suitable or shall be marked "Not an Approved Building Lot" on the subdivision map.

**54-17.1** Three or more contiguous rear lots shall be served by a street.

**54-18 Utility Easements**

Easements, at least fifteen (15) feet in width or greater if required by the Town Engineer, shall be provided for all storm water and sanitary sewer pipes that are not to be installed in the streets. Easements shall also be provided for the full width of the channel of any stream or drainage ditch which will carry drainage runoff from any proposed street, existing street or streets which may be constructed in the future on the undeveloped land within the watershed. Easements at least fifteen (15) feet in width, or greater if required by the Town Engineer, shall also be provided for any storm water or sanitary sewer pipes to be installed in proposed private streets of rights-of-way when such pipes serve an existing public street or a proposed street that may be proposed for acceptance by the Town. Easements shall also be installed in the future to serve undeveloped land within the watershed that normally drains across the area of the proposed subdivision.

**54-19 Channel Encroachment Lines**

Channel encroachment lines shall be provided along any brook, stream or river for the purpose of preventing encroachment upon and construction of the natural water channel or flood prone areas by buildings, structures, filling or other activities, facilities and construction. The channel encroachment lines shall be based on sound engineering calculations anticipating a 25-year storm and/or 100-year flood potential and recognizing proper alignment and gradients of the channel. A note shall be placed on the subdivision map explaining the channel encroachment lines and stating the restrictions against building, structure, and activity encroaching upon the channel.

**54-20 Pedestrian and Conservation Easements**

**54-20.1 Public Access Easements**

In subdivisions where the proposed street system does not conform to the anticipated pattern of pedestrian circulation, particularly in the vicinity of schools, parks, playgrounds and open space, the Commission may require the provision of easements of at least ten (10) feet in width for the establishment of pedestrian ways for public access.

**54-20.2 Conservation Easements**

In subdivisions where there are environmentally sensitive and/or ecologically fragile natural resources such as wetlands, steep slopes in excess of 25% or scenic vistas, the Commission shall require the provision of appropriate conservation easements, as deemed necessary, to protect and preserve such natural resources and in locations deemed proper by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Unless approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, within the area of the easement, it shall not be permitted to : (a) erect, build or place any buildings or other structures on the land, (b) disturb the topography of the land within said area from its present condition, (c) alter the vegetation (d) dump trash or any unsightly or offensive material.

**54-20.3 Location of Easements**

The locations and boundaries of any such easements shall be clearly shown on the subdivision map and physically identified on the ground with monuments where appropriate.

**54-21 Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas**

Land for park, recreation and open space areas shall be provided and reserved in each subdivision as deemed necessary by the Planning and Zoning Commission and in locations deemed proper by the Commission. The amount of open space for these purposes shall not exceed 10% of the total acreage of the subdivision. The land reserved shall be of such location, shape, topography and general character as to be usable to satisfy the needs determined by the Commission. Proper pedestrian reservation of land shall also conform to any Town Plan of Development pertaining to parks, playgrounds, recreation areas and open spaces.

Land for open space may be deeded as follows:

- (1) To the town for active or passive recreational purposes or for conservation; or
- (2) To a private association (such as a nature conservancy or the Aspetuck Land Trust) legally constituted for conservation purposes; or
- (3) To a private association consisting of the owner(s) of the lot(s) within the subdivision or resubdivision for a use determined by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**54-21.1 Payments in lieu of open space.**

As provided under Section 8-25 and 8-25b of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commission may authorize the applicant to pay a fee to the town or pay a fee to the town and transfer land to the town in lieu of any requirement to provide open space in the subdivision. Such payment or combination of payment and the fair market value of the land to be transferred shall be equal to ten per cent of fair market value of the land to be subdivided prior to the approval of the subdivision. The fair market value shall be determined by an appraiser jointly selected by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the applicant, but the cost of such appraisal shall be paid by the applicant. Instead of an appraiser the Town Assessor could determine the current market value upon agreement of the applicant and the Commission. This value would be binding upon the parties. A fraction of such payment in lieu of open space, the numerator of which is one and the denominator of which is the number of approved lots in the subdivision, shall be made at the time of the sale of each approved lot in the subdivision and placed in a fund which shall be used for the purpose of preserving open space or acquiring additional land for open space or for recreational or agricultural purposes.

**54-21.2 Exceptions**

As provided in Section 8-25(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the open space requirement of this section shall not apply if the transfer of all land in a subdivision of less than five parcels is to a parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle or first cousin for no consideration, or if the subdivision is to contain affordable housing, as defined in section 8-39a of the Connecticut General Statutes, equal to twenty per cent or more of the total housing to be constructed in such subdivision.

**54-22 Flood Prone Areas**

If a proposed subdivision is located in a flood prone area, as designated on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) as published by the Federal Emergency Management

- (1) it shall be designed to minimize the impact on the flood prone area;
- (2) all public utilities and facilities, such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water systems, shall be located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage; and
- (3) adequate drainage shall be provided to reduce exposure to flood hazards. For residential structures the lowest floor (including cellar or basement elevation) must be equal to, or above, the base flood level.

For non-residential structures the lowest floor (including cellar or basement elevation) must be elevated or flood-proofed to or above these minimum finished floor elevations. Non-compliance with these elevations shall preclude the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance and/or a Certificate of Occupancy. Base flood level data shall be utilized from the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) in Flood Zone A1-A30 and V1-V30 in Flood Zone A the base flood level data from alternative sources shall be reasonably utilized.

**54-23 Aquifer Impact**

In order to help maintain drinking water standards, sanitary wastewater discharge into on-site septic disposal systems should not average more than 350 gallons per gross acre per day within that portion of the primary recharge area of the Saugatuck River Aquifer located north of the Kings Highway Bridge (State Rt. 57) as shown in the "Guide to Ground Water & Aquifer

Protection" report for Westport by SWRPA dated July, 1980. Larger average discharges may require either the installation of community sewerage systems or public sanitary sewers or the construction of smaller buildings i.e. fewer bedrooms or less gross floor area.

## **54-24 Solar Access and Design**

The purpose of this section is to encourage energy conservation, energy-efficient patterns of development and land use, and the use of solar and other renewable forms of energy.

### **54-24.1 Standards and Conditions**

In addition to the other design standards and improvement requirements of these regulations, all subdivisions or re-subdivisions of land involving 4 or more building lots or 5 or more acres, whichever is greater, shall conform to the following standards and conditions:

#### **54-24.1.1 Lot Lines**

Insofar as practicable, the side lot lines of all lots shall be at right angles or radial to the street on which the lot has frontage unless the purpose of lot line orientation is to secure greater solar access or protection or control thereof.

#### **54-24.1.2 Street Layout**

Streets should, in general, follow the contour of the land and should have a location and grade which accomplishes an attractive layout and development of the land, which preserves natural terrain, large isolated trees and desirable woods and other vegetation; and which will enhance property values in the subdivision. When few natural constraints exist which limit street layout and location such as, but not limited to, steep slopes and unsuitable soils, streets should have an east-west orientation to the greatest extent possible with acceptable variations of ten (10) degrees to the northwest and twenty five (25) degrees to the southwest in order to provide for orientation of lots and buildings to the south, and thereby to encourage the use of solar energy systems.

#### **54-24.1.3 Building Location and Orientation**

The location and orientation of proposed principal residential buildings shall be such that each building has maximum solar access, i.e. the longest building wall should be south oriented.

#### **54-24.1.4 Septic System**

Septic system should be located on the south side of the house in order to protect the future solar access by removing trees and other vegetative cover that would cast a shadow on the building.

#### **54-24.1.5 Natural Vegetation**

The removal of large isolated trees and desirable woods and other vegetation, particularly those existing plant materials which serve as wind barriers and aid energy conservation, should be avoided.