

POLICY CONCERNING VEGETATIVE COVER

Adopted July 10, 2013

The original Protective Covenants for North Fort provide in pertinent part:

ARTICLE X

APPEARANCE. Each owner shall keep his building site free from tall grass, undergrowth, dead trees, trash and rubbish, and properly maintained so as to present a pleasing appearance within the subdivision.

Vegetative cover should be maintained in such a manner as to address surface water runoff and prevent soil erosion, particularly in lots near or bordering the pond or area streams. Residents are also strongly encouraged to become familiar with and utilize proper techniques of herbicide, insecticide and fertilizer use in order to minimize chemical runoff into areas waterways.

General liability and personal safety concerns should be sufficient to encourage appropriate action with respect to dead trees and this will not routinely be a matter addressed by covenant enforcement. However, the Board does reserve the right to take appropriate enforcement action with respect to dead trees when necessary. With respect to other vegetative cover, in addition to general appearance concerns it is also important to maintain plant materials in a manner which does not unnecessarily encourage the presence of snakes, rodents and other potentially hazardous wildlife in or near occupied areas.

In general vegetative cover falls into three broad categories: (1) largely undisturbed forested or other "natural" areas, (2) cultivated ornamental or produce garden areas, and (3) open grassy areas. Generally speaking, covenant enforcement will be considered with respect to Categories 1 and 2 only when the area in question is readily visible from any street. Natural areas and ornamental or produce garden areas should be maintained in such a manner that fallen limbs, plant growth or weeds do not result in a poorly maintained or substantially overgrown appearance. Where appropriate, deadheading of spent blooms and removal of vegetable plants and vines which have ceased production are strongly encouraged.

With respect to open grassy areas, it is recognized that the cultivated grass lawn of improved premises should be held to a somewhat higher appearance standard than general vegetative cover of unimproved lots. However all grassy areas, whether occupied or containing structures or not, are required to be maintained so as to present an overall neat appearance when viewed from public access areas. In addition, all lots must be maintained so as not to impinge upon adjacent property interests. This latter consideration includes maintaining grassy cover in such a manner as to discourage the presence of vermin, including but not limited to snakes and rodents.

As a general rule, the grassy areas or lawns of lots with structures shall be maintained so as to discourage growth of weeds and in any event should not be allowed to attain an overall height in excess of eight (8). Grassy areas of unimproved lots shall be maintained so as to prevent to the extent feasible the flowering of weeds and the resultant setting of weed seed. In any event, the owner of any unimproved lot on which the vegetative cover exceeds an overall or general height of 12 inches shall be notified that the lot is in violation and requested to take immediate remedial measures.

These standards shall apply to unimproved lots with broad open areas or primarily forested lots having grassy strips bordering streets. Upon request the Board will attempt to help nonresident lot owners locate appropriate local personnel to provide the needed maintenance services.