

Weathersfield Landscape Guidelines for Renovations to Homeowner Personal Property and WSG Common Areas (Revision 02/2021)

Homeowners working together and following these guidelines will ensure that Weathersfield remains an attractive community for all to enjoy while maintaining the value of our town houses. The guidelines are intended to assist everyone in understanding the benefits and requirements of living in a Homeowners Association (HOA) community.

Homeowners are responsible to understand and adhere to **Article VI** "Exterior Maintenance" of the **Weathersfield Covenants** and be aware of any limitations or requirements beyond the guidelines outlined below.

Homeowners will be required to adhere to the guidance outlined in the "Landscape Guidelines for Renovation to Homeowner Property" (revised 02/2021), and Article VI of the [WSG Amended Declaration and Covenants and Restrictions](#) (December 10, 2008). Article VI EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE states, in part:

"In addition to maintenance of the Common Area, WSG VI shall provide exterior maintenance upon each Lot which is subject to assessment hereunder, as follows: paint, repair, replacement and care of roofs, exterior building surfaces, trees, shrubs, grass, walks, and other exterior improvements...Further, the Owner of any Lot may at his election plant flowers indigenous to the local area and in harmony with the surrounding area and maintain portions of his immediate yard provided that such maintenance by the Owner does not hinder WSG VI in performing its maintenance of the exterior of the house and the remaining yard space, In addition, the Owner may, at his/her election, plant shrubs in portions of his/her immediate yard subject to the approval of the Grounds Committee. WSG VI is responsible for maintaining the Common Areas... It is in the best interest of the entire WSG VI that all units be maintained properly..."

As a homeowner, you are responsible for complying with the following points and WSG Article VI to maintain the integrity of structures for which WSG is responsible.

- All bushes, shrubs, trees are cut back below ground floor windows at houses where they are up against railings or siding. This is to protect the wood, window frames, shutters, and siding as well as allowing access to water meters and repairmen.
- Trimming and pruning shrubs, bushes, and trees so that they do not overhang the roof or porch railings.
- Plants or small trees that are taller than 12 feet should be pruned and shaped to enhance beauty and new growth.

These Guidelines for landscape renovations at Weathersfield town houses are to be followed whether the HOA pays for the renovations or the homeowner chooses to do so. Both situations require that the homeowner submit to the Landscape Committee the **Landscape Modification Approval form** found on the WSG website [here](#).

If a homeowner wants to add/renovate in the front, side, or rear of their personal property, a Landscape Modification Approval form must be completed, signed by adjacent neighbor(s), and submitted to the Landscape Committee. The neighbor's signature is to "inform" them. The signature is not requesting their permission. Any concerns that a neighbor has should be addressed with the Landscape Committee Chair.

An **Appendix** is included listing various resources to assist homeowners - as well as any landscaper they employ - to be aware of relevant information on gardening in this area.

Homeowners Accept Responsibility for ALL the following:

1. **Townhome Personal Property - planting in the front, sides, and back of a Townhome's**

Personal Property: Property owners are responsible for knowing their property lines so that they do not plant on Common Areas or the property of their adjacent neighbor.

Personal property is defined as approximately ten feet from the front porch of the townhouse to the sidewalk in front and approximately ten feet along the side of the house extending to the HVAC system.

- Invasive plants may not be introduced.
- Large shrubs and/or trees are planted a safe distance from the home so that at maturity it will not obstruct a ground floor window or create problems for the foundation, water, and sewage lines which are usually in the front of the house and so that branches will not encroach on the adjacent town home.
- Periodic maintenance including pruning is provided by Ruppert Landscape. **(See: Section on Ruppert Landscape)**

NOTE: A Landscape Modification form is required and agreed to before any renovation.

2. **WSG Common Areas:** WSG is responsible to the care and maintenance of all Common Areas that are defined as the land around one's personal property including along the sides and rear of residences and in all parking areas.

Residents or members of a Close are prohibited from planting in or around Common Areas. However, if, due to the Rejuvenation of WSG of January 2021 or if there are dead or dying plants in Common Areas, residents or members of a Close should contact the Landscape Committee to consider a request to plant in their Common Area. Prior to any request, please review the Guidelines cited above and, if approved verbally during inspection by the Landscape Committee, submit a Request Form. The Committee needs to consider both the budget and equity when distributing funds among the residents or Closes and prioritize requests based on the greatest needs first, as determined by the committee.

The Approval form must be submitted regardless of who will pay for and/or complete the work –the HOA or the homeowner or Close. Prior to submitting the Request Form, the resident should review the [Landscape Guidelines for Renovations](#) (this document).

3. **Invasive Plants should not be introduced into the Landscape.** Please see the Appendix for information on invasive plants and/or consult with the Landscape Committee.

Invasive plants/shrubs are to be avoided since they are a problem not only for the individual homeowner's property but adjacent properties as well.

4. **Selecting Appropriate Plants/Bushes/Shrubs**

- Plants and shrubs should be of an appropriate size for the intended space and will not create problems with the foundation, water, and sewage and/or the windows as they grow and spread.
- Plantings should be complimentary to plantings of neighbors close to your home.
- Deer resistant plantings will help in maintaining an attractive appearance.

5. **Selecting a Tree**

- Tree is an appropriate size for the space when it is full grown.
- Full grown tree will not obstruct a window or create problems for the foundation, and branches will not encroach on the adjacent town home.

- No trees measuring six (6) inches or more in diameter (outside bark to outside bark) at four feet above the ground shall be removed without prior written approval of the Landscape Committee. [per the Covenants]

6. Watering/Maintenance of Bushes/Shrubs

- Most new plants and shrubs require regular watering during the first year after they are planted and are the responsibility of the homeowner.
- Replacing any plants/shrubs that die paid for by the homeowner is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain the overall appearance of the Close and WSG.
- Planting shrubs/plants at the appropriate time of the year.

NOTE: In general, shrubs can be planted from February into April or October through December. Perennials will do well if planted in spring into early June depending on individual plant requirements while most bulbs prefer to be planted in the fall.

7. Please discuss the renovation with your adjacent neighbor whose signature will be needed on the Landscape Modification Form. The neighbor's signature is to "inform" them. The signature is not requesting their permission. Any concerns that a neighbor has should be addressed with the Landscape Committee Chair.

Ruppert Landscape: Ruppert's Contract is from January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2023, and includes the following:

1. Spring Clean-up: During the late winter/early spring months, one general landscape clean-up will occur. This service includes: (a) Removal of landscape debris that has accumulated over the winter months; (b) Pruning to remove deadwood from plant material up to 10 feet in height and 3-inch branch diameter.
2. Mulching, Edging and Pre-emergent.
3. Fertilization: Trees and Shrubs.
4. Pruning: Shrubs, perennials, and groundcover – twice yearly.
5. Pruning Trees: Pruning of the deciduous trees will be limited to trees up to 8-inch caliper and pruning to a height of 10 feet and a branch diameter of 3 inches or less.
6. Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
7. Weed Control.
8. Mowing: Lawn areas shall be mowed and trimmed at a finished height of 3-to-4 inches throughout the mowing season. Weather permitting, all lawn areas (personal property if applicable and Common Areas) shall be mowed every 7-to-12 days.
9. Edging.
10. Turf Fertilization: (a) Early Spring; (b) Late Spring; (c) Early Summer; (d) Fall; and {e} Winter Services.
11. Turf Herbicides – Applied March/April.
12. Leaf Removal: - Fallen leaves will be removed three times from all maintained areas in the fall -- October – December.
13. Off-Season Visits: Twice per month to inspect the grounds, gather and remove accumulated debris, weeds, and minor trash (excluding snow removal) from the landscape and parking areas.

APPENDIX: RESOURCES

1. Online Information

The following websites provide information on **Invasive Plants** as well as other valuable information regarding gardening in this area.

NC Extension Service. <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/>

This is a valuable resource to learn about invasive plants as well as extensive information on plants in general.

It is a searchable database offering options for finding a variety of plants and/or shrubs based on sun or shade, water requirements, deer resistant, size and color.

NC Botanical Gardens. <http://ncbg.unc.edu/plants-to-avoid/>

Another source for information on plants that are invasive and should be avoided.

2. Fearington Garden Club [Fearington Garden Club](#)

Fearington Garden Club promotes interest in gardening and conservation of wildflowers, trees and birds and protection of the environment. Meets once a month September-May. Membership is open to all Fearington residents.

Online resource available to Fearington residents: [Fearington Plant Identification and Pruning Guide](#) written specifically for the village; access from the Garden Club website.

3. Public Gardens in Area

Homeowners may wish to visit one or more of the free public local gardens for ideas about plants and shrubs. They range in size from 5 acres to 55 acres. Each offers tours (March-November), plants and gardening materials for sale.

North Carolina Botanical Gardens. Chapel Hill. <http://ncbg.unc.edu/>

Coker Arboretum, UNC campus. <http://ncbg.unc.edu/coker-arboretum/>

Sara P Duke Gardens, Duke University Campus. <https://gardens.duke.edu/about>

JP Ralston Gardens, NC State University, Raleigh. <https://jcra.ncsu.edu/horticulture/gardens/index.php>.

4. Area Commercial Nurseries

There are a number of nurseries in the area to purchase plants/shrubs/trees. Here are several places; more can be found online or by asking neighbors.

Big Bloomers. Sanford. This is a huge nursery with an enormous selection. <http://www.bigbloomersflowerfarm.com/>

Greener Visions Nursery. Chapel Hill off Jones Ferry Road. Shrubs and Japanese Maples. <http://www.greenvisionnursery.com/home>

Get Rooted Nursery. Located Chatham County, off Jones Ferry Road. <http://getrootednursery.com/>

Southern States. Carrboro. Website does not provide any plant information.

Camellia Forest Gardens. Chapel Hill. <https://camforest.com>

5. **Discussion Sessions on Gardening:**

If there is sufficient interest from WSG residents, the Landscape Committee would be willing to organize post-COVID meetings for interested residents to discuss specific aspects of gardening.

- Topics might include – best shade or sun plants, what is most effective in discouraging deer damage, best times to plant shrubs.
- Use of native plants indigenous to NC and the South.
- Gardening experts within WSG or from outside Ferrington Village might be asked to speak.
- Topics may be suggested by Weathersfield residents.