

ZONING REGULATIONS

297 Attachment 19

Charles County

Appendix I

Superior Design Criteria for Cluster Developments, Single-Family Attached Residential in the RM and RH Zones, and Planned Development Zones [Added 4-13-2010 by Bill No. 2010-06; 9-21-2021 by Bill No. 2021-02]

Superior design. When creating or evaluating a project with superior design, the following criteria shall be used and applied to the project whenever possible, or as applicable:

- A. Rural development project criteria: A rural development project that is superior in design demonstrates optimal land use planning and contains a combination of the following elements which exceed the requirements for a conventional subdivision:
- (1) The proposed open space:
 - (a) Exceeds the amount required by this chapter and includes areas not already protected by this chapter;
 - (b) Connects to other adjacent open space areas which are at least 10,000 square feet in size, and can serve as wildlife corridors in accordance with Maryland's Green Infrastructure Guidelines; or
 - (c) Includes landscaped areas and clearly defines maintenance responsibilities.
 - (2) The forest conservation design exceeds the County's and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program requirements, including planting and mitigation standards;
 - (3) The proposed agricultural use lots, if any, contain one or more of the following elements:
 - (a) Lots which are greater than 25 acres and contain more than 50% Class I-IV soils as classified by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service;
 - (b) Lots which maximize the use of existing agricultural infrastructure (such as barns, silos, equipment storage areas) and cleared or existing crop land; or
 - (c) Lots where the primary use of an agricultural use lot is forestry, the lot contains productive soils for silviculture and is of sufficient size and design that is viable for forest harvest operations as determined by a qualified state licensed forester.
 - (4) The proposed development includes shared pedestrian and bicycle facilities and bike racks where desired or applicable;

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- (5) The proposed development includes a trail system within and connecting open space or roads to adjacent properties, or alternatives such as mowed grass or pervious concrete, and signage provided at trail heads and along trails;
 - (6) The proposed development relies on the limited use of flag-shaped lots, while maintaining individual yard privacy and limiting clearing of individual building sites;
 - (7) The homes in the proposed development will have views of open space, not backs or sides of other homes;
 - (8) The development demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship through the use of one or more of the following elements:
 - (a) Conservation landscaping;
 - (b) Water reuse;
 - (c) Use of renewable energy, or other energy efficiency measures detailed in HOA covenants for private lots and/or community facilities;
 - (d) Limited or no stream crossings; or
 - (e) Disturbance of steep slopes or other environmental features on lots are minimized.
 - (9) The proposed design ensures that predevelopment views from existing roads and other scenic views are preserved;
 - (10) The development minimizes impacts to or protects historic viewshed features, such as farm houses and farm roads, barns, fence lines, meadows, forests or farm land views from existing roads;
 - (11) The proposed street tree caliper is larger than required;
 - (12) The proposed development includes vehicle or pedestrian inter-parcel connections to adjacent neighborhoods or connecting to existing vehicle or pedestrian facilities;
 - (13) Loop roads are provided within the proposed development; and
 - (14) The proposed development minimizes the use of culs-de-sac and any islands within proposed cul-de-sac are landscaped.
- B. Development district project criteria: A development project that is superior in design demonstrates optimal land use planning and contains a combination of the following elements, which exceed the requirements under the base zone regulations (Article VI):
- (1) Open space that is integrated into the neighborhood as urban parks or pocket parks and open space maintenance responsibilities are clearly defined;

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- (2) The forest conservation design exceeds the County's and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program requirements, including planting and mitigation standards;
- (3) A mix of housing types;
- (4) Diverse architectural design types that include such features as:
 - (a) Garages that are not the most predominant design feature and are setback further from the street than the house frontage;
 - (b) Side-loaded or rear-loaded garages; and
 - (c) Front or side porches which facilitate placement of under-roof seating adjacent to the entry door and provide an opportunity for residents to interact within the neighborhood.
- (5) Community gathering facilities, such as a covered pavilion, community bulletin boards, community art or community centers, gardens or other similar amenities;
- (6) Shared pedestrian and bicycle facilities and bike racks where feasible;
- (7) Covered bus stops;
- (8) A trail system within and connecting open space or roads to adjacent properties; or alternatives such as mowed grass or pervious concrete, with improvements such as lighting, street furniture and landscaping, and signage provided at trail heads and along trails;
- (9) The development demonstrates its commitment to environmental stewardship through the use of one or more of the following elements:
 - (a) Conservation landscaping;
 - (b) Water reuse;
 - (c) Renewable energy, or other energy efficiency measures detailed in HOA covenants for private lots and/or community facilities;
 - (d) Limited or no stream crossings; or
 - (e) Disturbance of steep slopes or other environmental features on lots are minimized.
- (10) A plan to relocate existing trees to meet some of the landscaping/street tree requirements or street tree caliper provided that is larger than required;

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- (11) Sidewalks on both sides of the street, which shall be at least five feet in width, where feasible, as determined by the Planning Director; this element applies solely to projects that have single-family detached and/or multifamily housing units;
- (12) Vehicle or pedestrian inter-parcel connections to adjacent neighborhoods or tying into existing vehicle or pedestrian facilities;
- (13) A grid of interconnected street network with parks or civic uses in or near the center of neighborhoods; and
- (14) Designated additional visitor parking of at least 10% above the number of parking spaces required in Article XX of this chapter and spread throughout the project. This element applies solely to projects that have multifamily housing units.