

**NARRATIVE Application 224-31 MOD: Proposed Amendments to Various Sections of the
City of Stamford Zoning Regulations**

9/26/2024

1. Purpose

The purpose of this amendment to the City of Stamford Zoning Regulations is to clarify the regulations for users.

2. Proposed changes

a. Amend Section 3.B. “Permitted Obstructions”

The proposed change would add retaining walls, and ground and pole signs as items to be considered permitted obstructions in all yards. Currently, the Zoning Regulations do not contain regulations where these items could be located, and they would have to be considered Accessory Structures which are not permitted in front yards.

In addition, certain emergency generators for single-, two- and three-family homes would be added to the list of permitted obstructions. Except for smaller lots, where they would be limited to the side and rear yards, they would be allowed in the front yard as well. This change is expected to make it easier for homeowners to get permits for emergency generators.

**b. Amend Section 3.B., “Substantial Renovation or Alterations” and Add new Definition for
“Market Value”**

Currently, the regulations contain conflicting definitions of Substantial Renovation or Alteration and Market Value. The proposed text change would create a uniform definition that defines Market value as the “appraised value of a structure of building as shown on the tax records”. For non-residential structures, the replacement value could be used for assessing the value, based on an appraisal by a licensed professional. Section 9.B.2.cc. would become obsolete and is therefore proposed to be deleted.

c. Amend Section 4.E., “Pet Stores”

The proposed text amendment would create two categories of pet stores, Pet Stores, Supplies and Accessories Only, and Pet Stores, Full Service. No cats or dogs would be allowed to be sold in Pet Stores, Supplies and Accessories Only. In Pet Stores, Full Service, cats and dogs would be permitted to be sold. Pet Stores, Full Service would only be permitted in C-I, M-L and M-G districts subject to Special Permit approval. The purpose of this text change is to prohibit “puppy mills” and reduce noise and other impacts on sensitive neighboring uses.

d. Amend Section 3.B., “Lot Corner”

Current corner lot regulations require all corner lots to have front yards on both streets, and side yards along the other lot lines, making development and location of parking on these lots difficult. The proposed text change would retain this regulation for single-family and two-family districts but define in all other districts the shorter street front as the front yard, and the lot line opposite the shorter street front the rear yard.

e. Amend Section 4.E., “Public Charitable Institution” and replace it with “Outpatient Counseling, Advisory Health Services, and Social Services”

The revisions would clarify the existing definition and update outdated and potentially offensive language.

f. Move Section 2.F., “Parking Management Plans” and 2.G., “Transportation Demand Management Plans” to Section 12 and update numbering of Section 2.

Transportation Demand and Parking Management Plans are tools for mobility planning and are therefore more appropriately located in the Mobility Section (Section 12.) of the Regulations.

g. Update Section 9.R.5.b(2) of the Zoning Regulations (requirement of a 40,000sf food market in the SRD-N District)

Section 9.R.5.b(2) of the Zoning Regulations requires the location of a 40,000sf food market in the SRD-N District, which is coterminous with the Yale and Towne site. While the original language led to the development of the former Fairway supermarket, the site has since been vacant, as no supermarket operator could be found. It is hoped that with this text change, which would eliminate this requirement, at least a smaller food store would locate in this zoning district.

h. Update Sections 5.E.4. (C-D District), 5.U.3 (NX-D District) and 5.II.4. (TCD District)

This amendment would clarify that the mixed-use standards of these section apply to mixed-use buildings only, not mixed-use developments.

i. Amend Section 12.J.1. Bicycle Parking Applicability Requirement

This amendment would clarify that if individual garages are provided for each unit, such as in townhouse developments, no separate bike parking would need to be provided.

j. Amend Section 12.L.2., Parking standards for Electric Vehicles

Current regulations require that 10% of all parking spaces, in parking facilities with 10 or more parking spaces, are set aside as EV parking spaces. This is not practical where parking is reserved for individual

units such as in condos or townhouse developments. The proposed text requires in these instances that one parking space per unit is wired for electric vehicle charging.

k. Amend Section 12.K.6.a. and b., Street Tree Planting Requirement

The proposal would reduce the required cash deposit or bond for street trees from currently \$2,500 to \$1,000 per tree which is more aligned with the actual cost of replacing a tree.

l. Amend Section 6.B.12., General Requirements for PAAS

This change would allow to meet the City’s PAAS requirement also by donating land or granting a permanent access easement. It would also provide a valuation of that donation of land (twice as much land would have to be donated than provided for an onsite PAAS). The text also proposes to reduce the fee-in-lieu for some PAAS from currently \$35 to \$25. This reduction would only apply where the PAAS is a trail which is cheaper to build than a plaza or other PAAS in higher density areas.

m. Delete Footnote 22 from Appendix B.

This footnote does not provide any additional standards/limitations. It is redundant because it only references back to the district regulations.

n. Replace in the text “Section 7.K.” with “Paragraph 3 in the Definition for Yard”.

Section 7.K. was deleted as part of the reorganization of the regulations. Paragraph 3 in the definition for yard contains the requirements previously contained in Section 7.K.

o. Amend Section 2.E.3.

This is a technical correction to update an outdated reference. Section 7.R. originally referenced in this section was moved to Appendix B, Footnote 6.