

ARTICLE VII. CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION AREA OVERLAY DISTRICT

Sec. 32-180. Title.

This ordinance shall be known and referenced as the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District of the Town of Cape Charles.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-181. Findings of fact.

The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries is one of the most important and productive estuarine systems in the world, providing economic and social benefits to the citizens of Cape Charles and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The health of the bay is vital to maintaining the Town of Cape Charles' economy and the welfare of its citizens.

The Chesapeake Bay has been degraded significantly by many sources of pollution, including non-point source pollution from land uses and development. Existing high-quality waters are worthy of protection from degradation to guard against further pollution. Certain lands that are proximate to shorelines have intrinsic water quality value due to the ecological and biological processes they perform. Other lands have severe development constraints from flooding, erosion, and soil limitations. With proper management, they offer significant ecological benefits by providing water quality maintenance and pollution control, as well as flood and shoreline erosion control. These lands together, designated by the town council as Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas (hereinafter CBPA), need to be protected from destruction and damage in order to protect the quality of life in Cape Charles and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-182. Purpose and intent.

- (a) This ordinance is enacted to implement the requirements of § 62.1-44.15:67 et seq. of the Code of Virginia, 1988 as amended, (The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act) and amends the zoning ordinance of Cape Charles. The intent of the town council and the purpose of the overlay district is to: (1) protect existing high quality state waters; (2) restore all other state waters to a condition or quality that will permit all reasonable public uses and will support the propagation and growth of all aquatic life, including game fish, which might reasonably be expected to inhabit them; (3) safeguard the clean water of the Commonwealth from pollution; (4) prevent any increase in pollution; (5) reduce existing pollution; and (6) promote water resource conservation in order to provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the present and future citizens of the Town of Cape Charles.
- (b) This district shall be in addition to and shall overlay all other zoning districts where they are applied so that any parcel of land lying in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Overlay District shall also lie in one or more of the other zoning districts provided for by the zoning ordinance. Unless otherwise stated in the overlay district, the review and approval procedures provided for in other applicable ordinances shall be followed in reviewing and approving development, redevelopment, and uses governed by this article.
- (c) This article is enacted under the authority of § 62.1-44.15:67 et seq., The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, and § 15.2-2283 of the Code of Virginia, which states that zoning ordinances may "also include reasonable

provisions, not inconsistent with applicable state water quality standards, to protect surface water and groundwater as defined in § 62.1-255."

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-183. Areas of applicability.

- (a) The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Overlay District shall apply to all lands identified as CBPAs as designated by the town council and as shown on the zoning district map. Such map, together with all explanatory matter thereon, is hereby adopted by reference and declared to be a part of this article.
- (b) The resource protection area includes:
 - (1) Tidal wetlands.
 - (2) Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow.
 - (3) Tidal shores.
 - (4) A 100 foot vegetated buffer area located adjacent to and landward of the components listed in subsections a. through c. above and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow.
- (c) The resource management area is composed of the following land categories: flood plains; highly erodible soils, including steep slopes; highly permeable soils; non-tidal wetlands not included in the RPA; other lands necessary to protect the quality of state waters or a minimum of 100 feet in width landward of the resource protection area, whichever is greatest.
- (d) The zoning district map shows the general location of CBPAs and should be consulted by persons contemplating activities within Cape Charles prior to engaging in a regulated activity.
- (e) Portions of RPAs and RMAs designated by the town council as intensely developed areas shall serve as redevelopment areas. Areas so designated shall comply with all erosion and sediment control requirements and the performance standards for redevelopment in section 32-189, performance standards.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-184. Use regulations.

Permitted uses, special permit uses, accessory uses, and special requirements shall be as established by the underlying zoning district unless specifically modified by the requirements set forth herein.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-185. Lot size.

Lot size shall be subject to the requirements of the underlying zoning district(s) provided that any lot shall have sufficient area outside the RPA to accommodate an intended development in accordance with the performance standards in section 32-189 when such development is not otherwise allowed in the RPA.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-186. Development criteria for resource protection areas.

- (a) Development in RPAs may be allowed only if it: (1) is water dependent, (2) constitutes redevelopment or development within IDAs, or (3) constitutes redevelopment.
 - (1) A new or expanded water dependent facility may be allowed, provided that the following criteria are met:
 - a. It does not conflict with the comprehensive plan;
 - b. It complies with the performance criteria set forth in section 32-190. of this article;
 - c. Any non-water dependent component is located outside of the RPA; and
 - d. Access to the water-dependent facility will be provided with the minimum disturbance necessary. Where practicable, a single point of access will be provided.
 - (2) Redevelopment on isolated redevelopment sites outside of the designated IDAs shall be permitted only if there is not an increase in the amount of impervious cover and no further encroachment within the RPA and it shall conform to the stormwater management requirements outlined under section 32-189 and erosion and sediment control requirements outlined under section 32-189 of this article.
- (b) A water quality impact assessment shall be required for any proposed land disturbance, development, or redevelopment within RPAs and for any development within RMAs when required by the zoning administrator because of the unique characteristics of the site or intensity of development in accordance with the provisions of section 32-190 of this article.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-187. Conflict with other regulations.

In any case where the requirements of this article conflict with any other provision of the Cape Charles Zoning Ordinance and other regulations or existing state or federal regulations, whichever imposes the more stringent restrictions shall apply.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-188. Interpretation of resource protection area boundaries.

- (a) *Delineation by the applicant.* The site-specific boundaries of the resource protection area shall be determined by the applicant through the performance of an environmental site assessment, subject to approval by the zoning administrator and in accordance with section 32-191, plan of development process, or section 32-190 water quality impact assessment, of this article. The zoning district map may be used as a guide to the general location of resource protection areas.
- (b) *Where conflict arises over delineation.* When the applicant provides a site-specific delineation of the RPA, the zoning administrator will verify the accuracy of the boundary delineation. In determining the site-specific RPA boundary, the zoning administrator may render adjustments to the applicant's boundary delineation in accordance with section 32-191, plan of development process, of this article. In the event the adjusted boundary delineation is contested by the applicant, the applicant may seek relief in accordance with the provisions of section 32-191 of this ordinance.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-189. Performance standards.

- (a) *Purpose and intent.* The performance standards establish the means to minimize erosion and sedimentation potential, reduce land application of nutrients and toxins, and maximize rainwater infiltration. Natural ground cover, especially woody vegetation, is most effective in holding soil in place and preventing site erosion. Indigenous vegetation, within its adaptability to local conditions without the use of harmful fertilizers or pesticides, filters stormwater runoff. Minimizing impervious cover enhances rainwater infiltration and effectively reduces stormwater runoff potential.

The purpose and intent of these requirements are also to implement the following objectives: prevent a net increase in nonpoint source pollution from new development; achieve a ten percent reduction in nonpoint source pollution from redevelopment; and achieve a 40 percent reduction in nonpoint source pollution from agricultural uses.

- (b) *General performance standards for development and redevelopment.*
- (1) Land disturbance shall be limited to the area necessary to provide for the proposed use or development.
 - a. Ingress and egress during construction shall be limited to one access point unless otherwise approved by the zoning administrator.
 - (2) Indigenous vegetation shall be preserved to the maximum extent practicable consistent with the use or development proposed and in accordance with the Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook.
 - a. Site clearing for construction activities shall be allowed as approved by the zoning administrator through the plan of development review process.
 - b. Prior to clearing or grading, suitable protective barriers, such as safety fencing, shall be erected five feet outside of the drip line of any tree or stand of trees to be preserved. These protective barriers shall remain so erected throughout all phases of construction. The storage of equipment, materials, debris, or fill shall not be allowed within the area protected by the barrier.
 - (3) Land development shall minimize impervious cover to promote infiltration of stormwater into the ground consistent with the proposed use or development.
 - a. Grid and modular pavements may be used for any required parking area, alley, or other low-traffic driveway unless otherwise approved by the zoning administrator.
 - (4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this article or exceptions or exemptions thereto, any land-disturbing activity exceeding 2,500 square feet, including construction of all single-family houses, shall comply with the requirements of Cape Charles' Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
 - (5) All development and redevelopment exceeding 2,500 square feet of land disturbance shall be subject to a plan of development process, including the approval of a site plan in accordance with the provisions of the Site Plan Ordinance.
 - (6) All on-site sewage disposal systems not requiring a VPDES permit shall be pumped out at least once every five years in accordance with the provisions of the state health code.
 - (7) A reserve sewage disposal site with a capacity at least equal to that of the primary sewage disposal site shall be provided in accordance with the state health code. This requirement shall not apply to any lot or parcel recorded prior to October 1, 1989, if such lot or parcel is not sufficient in capacity to accommodate a reserve sewage disposal site as determined by the local health department. Building or construction of any impervious surface shall be prohibited on the area of all sewage disposal sites or on

an on-site sewage treatment system which operates under a permit issued by the state water control board until the structure is served by public sewer.

- (8) For any development or redevelopment, stormwater runoff shall be controlled by the use of best management practices that achieve the following:
- a. For development, the post-development nonpoint source pollution runoff load shall not exceed the pre-development load based on the calculated average land cover condition of the Town of Cape Charles.
 - b. For sites within IDAs or other isolated redevelopment sites, the non- point source pollution load shall be reduced by at least ten percent. The zoning administrator may waive or modify this requirement for redevelopment sites that originally incorporated best management practices for storm water runoff quality control provided the following provisions are satisfied:
 1. In no case may the post-development non-point source pollution runoff load exceed the pre-development load.
 2. Runoff pollution loads must have been calculated and the BMPs selected for the expressed purpose of controlling non-point source pollution.
 3. If best management practices are structural, evidence shall be provided that the facilities are currently in good working order and performing at the design levels of service. The zoning administrator may require a review of both the original structural design and maintenance plans to verify this provision. A new maintenance agreement may be required to ensure compliance with this article.
 - c. For redevelopment, both the pre- and the post-development loadings shall be calculated by the same procedures. However, where the design data is available, the original post-development non-point source pollution loadings can be substituted for the existing development loadings.
- (9) Prior to initiating grading or other on-site activities on any portion of a lot or parcel, all wetlands permits required by federal, state, and local laws and regulations shall be obtained and evidence of such submitted to the zoning administrator in accordance with section 32-191 of this article.
- (10) Land upon which agricultural activities are being conducted shall have a soil and water quality conservation assessment. Such assessments shall evaluate the effectiveness of existing practices pertaining to soil erosion and sediment control, nutrient management, and management of pesticides, and, where necessary, results in a plan that outlines additional practices needed to ensure that water quality protection is accomplished consistent with the article.
- (c) *Buffer area requirements.* To minimize the adverse effects of human activities on the other components of resource protection areas, state waters, and aquatic life, a 100 foot buffer area of vegetation that is effective in retarding runoff, preventing erosion, and filtering nonpoint source pollution from runoff shall be retained if present and established where it does not exist. The buffer area shall be located adjacent to and landward of other RPA components and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow. The full buffer area shall be designated as the landward component of the RPA in accordance with section 32-183, areas of applicability, and section 32-191, plan of development process, of this article.

The 100 foot buffer area shall be deemed to achieve a 75 percent reduction of sediments and a 40 percent reduction of nutrients.

The buffer area shall be maintained to meet the following additional performance standards:

- (1) In order to maintain the functional value of the buffer area, indigenous vegetation may be removed, subject to approval by the zoning administrator, only to provide for reasonable sight lines, access

paths, general woodlot management, and best management practices including those that prevent upland erosion and concentrated flows of stormwater, as follows:

- a. Trees may be pruned or removed as necessary to provide for sight lines and vistas provided that, where removed, they shall be replaced with other vegetation that is equally effective in retarding runoff, preventing erosion, and filtering nonpoint source pollution from runoff.
 - b. Any path shall be constructed and surfaced so as to effectively control erosion.
 - c. Dead, diseased, or dying trees or shrubbery and noxious weeds (such as Johnson grass, kudzu and multiflora rose) may be removed and thinning of trees allowed, pursuant to standards adopted by the Town of Cape Charles.
 - d. For shoreline erosion control projects, trees and woody vegetation may be removed, necessary control techniques employed, and appropriate vegetation established to protect or stabilize the shoreline in accordance with the best of available technical advice and applicable permit conditions or requirements.
- (2) When the application of the buffer areas would result in the loss of a buildable area on a lot or parcel recorded prior to October 1, 1989, the zoning administrator may allow encroachments into the buffer area in accordance with section 32-191, plan of development process, and the following criteria:
- a. Encroachments into the buffer areas shall be the minimum necessary to achieve a reasonable buildable area for a principal structure and necessary utilities.
 - b. Where practicable, a vegetated area that will maximize water quality protection, mitigate the effects of the buffer encroachment, and is equal to the area of encroachment into the buffer area shall be established elsewhere on the lot or parcel; and
 - c. The encroachment may not extend into the seaward 50 feet of the buffer area.
- (3) Redevelopment within IDAs may be exempt from establishing vegetation within the buffer area in accordance with section 32-191, plan of development process, of this article.
- (4) On agricultural lands the agricultural buffer area shall be managed to prevent concentrated flows of surface water from breaching the buffer area and appropriate measures may be taken to prevent noxious weeds from invading the buffer area. Agricultural activities may encroach into the buffer area as follows:
- a. Agricultural activities may encroach into the landward 50 feet of the 100 foot wide buffer area when at least one agricultural best management practice, which, in the opinion of the [local soil and water conservation district board], addresses the more predominant water quality issue on the adjacent land - erosion control or nutrient management - is being implemented on the adjacent land, provided that the combination of the undisturbed buffer area and the best management practice achieves water quality protection, pollutant removal, and water resource conservation at least the equivalent of the 100 foot wide buffer area. If nutrient management is identified as the predominant water quality issue, a nutrient management plan, including soil test, must be developed consistent with the "Virginia Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations (4VAC 5-15 et seq.)" administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.
 - b. Agricultural activities may encroach within the landward 75 feet of the 100 foot wide buffer area where agricultural best management practices which address erosion control, nutrient management, and pest chemical control, are being implemented on the adjacent land. The erosion control practices must prevent erosion from exceeding the soil loss tolerance level, referred to as "T", as defined in the "National Soil Survey Handbook" of November 1996 in the "Field Office Technical Guide" of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource

Conservation Service. A nutrient management plan, including soil test, must be developed consistent with the "Virginia Nutrient Management Training and Certification Regulations (4 VAC 5- 15 et seq.) administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. In conjunction with the remaining buffer area, this collection of best management practices shall be presumed to achieve water quality protection at least the equivalent of that provided by the 100 foot wide buffer area.

- c. The buffer area is not required to be designated adjacent to agricultural drainage ditches if the adjacent agricultural land has in place at least one best management practices as considered by the local soil and water conservation district to address the more predominant water quality issue on the adjacent land - either erosion control or nutrient management
- (5) When agricultural or silvicultural uses within the buffer area cease, and the lands are proposed to be converted to other uses, the full 100 foot wide buffer area shall be reestablished. In reestablishing the buffer, management measures shall be undertaken to provide woody vegetation that assures the buffer functions are maintained or established.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-190. Water quality impact assessment.

- (a) *Purpose and intent.* The purpose of the water quality impact assessment is to: (1) identify the impact of proposed development on water quality and lands within RPAs and other environmentally sensitive lands; (2) ensure that, where development does take place within RPAs and other sensitive lands, it will be located on those portions of a site and in a manner that will be least disruptive to the natural functions of RPAs and other sensitive lands; (3) to protect individuals from investing funds for improvements proposed for location on lands unsuited for such development because of high ground water, erosion, or vulnerability to flood and storm damage; and (4) specify mitigation which will address water quality protection.
- (b) *Water quality impact assessment required.* A water quality impact assessment is required for (1) any proposed land disturbance, redevelopment or development within an RPA, including any buffer area modification or encroachment as provided in section 32-190. of this article; (2) any development in an RMA as deemed necessary by the zoning administrator due to the unique characteristics of the site or intensity of the proposed development. There shall be two levels of water quality impact assessments—a minor assessment and a major assessment.
- (c) *Minor water quality impact assessment.* A minor water quality impact assessment pertains only to a development within CBPAs which causes no more than 5,000 square feet of land disturbance and requires any modification or encroachment into the landward 50 feet of the 100-foot buffer area. A minor assessment must demonstrate that the undisturbed buffer area, enhanced vegetative plantings, and any required best management practices will result in removal of no less than 75 percent of sediments and 40 percent of nutrients from post-development stormwater runoff and that the remaining buffer area will retard runoff, prevent erosion and filter nonpoint source pollution the equivalent of the full undisturbed 100-foot buffer area. A minor assessment shall include a site drawing to scale which shows the following:
 - (1) Location of the components of the RPA, including the 100-foot buffer area;
 - (2) Location and nature of the proposed encroachment into the buffer area if needed including type of paving material; areas of clearing or grading; location of any structures, drives, or other impervious cover;
 - (3) Type and location of proposed best management practices to mitigate the proposed encroachment.

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- (4) Location of existing vegetation onsite, including the number and type of trees and other vegetation to be removed in the buffer to accommodate the encroachment or modification;
 - (5) Revegetation plan that supplements the existing buffer vegetation in a manner that provides for pollutant removal, erosion and runoff control.
- (d) *Major water quality impact assessment.* A major water quality impact assessment shall be required for any development which (1) exceeds 5,000 square feet of land disturbance within CBPA and requires any modifications or encroachment into the landward 50 feet of the 100-foot buffer area; (2) proposes to disturb any portion of any other component of an RPA or proposes to disturb any portion of the buffer area within 50 feet of any other component of any RPA; or (3) is located in an RMA and is deemed necessary by the zoning administrator. The information required in this section shall be considered a minimum unless the zoning administrator determines that some of the elements are unnecessary due to the scope and nature of the proposed use and development of land.
- (1) The following elements shall be included in the preparation and submission of a major water quality assessment:
 - a. All of the information required in a minor water quality impact assessment as specified in section 32-190(c);
 - b. A hydro-ecological element that:
 1. Describes the existing topography, soils, hydrology, and geology of the site and adjacent lands.
 2. Indicates the following:
 - i. Disturbance or destruction of wetlands and justification for such action.
 - ii. Disruptions or reductions in the supply of water to wetlands, streams, or other water bodies.
 - iii. Disruptions to existing hydrology including wetlands and stream circulation patterns.
 - iv. Source location and description of proposed fill material.
 - v. Location of dredge material and location of dumping area for such material.
 - vi. Location of and impacts on shellfish beds or submerged aquatic vegetation.
 - vii. Estimation of pre- and post-development pollutant loads in runoff.
 - viii. Estimation of percent increase in impervious surface on site and type(s) of surfacing materials used.
 - ix. Percent of site to be cleared for project.
 - x. Anticipated duration and phasing schedule of construction project.
 - xi. Listing of all requisite permits from all applicable agencies necessary to develop project.
 3. Describes the proposed mitigation measures for the potential hydroecological impacts. Potential mitigation measures include:
 - i. Proposed erosion and sediment control concepts; concepts should include minimizing the extent of the cleared area, perimeter controls, reduction of runoff velocities, measures to stabilize disturbed areas, schedule and personnel for site inspection.

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- ii. Proposed water quality and quantity stormwater management system.
 - iii. Creation of wetlands to replace those lost.
 - iv. Minimizing cut and fill.
 - c. A landscape element that:
 - 1. Identifies and delineates the location of plant material on site, including all trees two inches or greater diameter at breast height. Where there are groups of trees, stands may be outlined.
 - 2. Describes the impacts the development or use will have on the existing vegetation. Information should include:
 - i. Limits of clearing based on all anticipated improvements including buildings, drives, and utilities.
 - ii. Clear delineation of all trees and other woody vegetation proposed to be removed.
 - iii. Description of plant species to be disturbed or removed.
 - 3. Describes the potential measures for mitigation. Possible mitigation measures should include:
 - i. Replanting schedule for trees and other significant vegetation removed for construction including a list of possible plants and trees to be used.
 - ii. Demonstration that the design of the plan will preserve to the greatest extent possible any significant trees and vegetation on the site and will provide maximum erosion control and overland flow benefits from such vegetation.
 - iii. Demonstration that native plants are to be used to the greatest extent possible.
 - (e) *Submission and review requirements.*
 - (1) Eight copies of all site drawings and other applicable information as required by subsections (c) and (d) above shall be submitted to the zoning administrator for review.
 - (2) All information required in this section shall be certified as complete and accurate by a professional engineer or certified land surveyor.
 - (3) A minor water quality impact assessment shall be prepared and submitted to and reviewed by the zoning administrator in conjunction with section 32-191, plan of development process, of this article.
 - (4) A major water quality impact assessment shall be prepared and submitted to and reviewed by the zoning administrator in conjunction with a request for rezoning, special use permit, or in conjunction with section 32-191 of this article as deemed necessary by the zoning administrator.
 - (5) As part of any major quality impact assessment submittal, the zoning administrator may require review by the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department (CBLAD). Upon receipt of a major water quality impact assessment, the zoning administrator will determine if such review is warranted and may request CBLAD to review the assessment and respond with written comments. Any comments by such CBLAD will be incorporated into the final review by the zoning administrator provided that such comments are provided by CBLAD within 90 days of the request.
 - (f) *Evaluation procedure.*

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- (1) Upon the completed review of a minor water quality impact assessment, the zoning administrator will determine if any proposed encroachment into the buffer area is consistent with the provisions of this article and make a finding based upon the following criteria:
 - a. The necessity of the proposed encroachment and the ability to place improvements elsewhere on the site to avoid disturbance of the buffer area;
 - b. Impervious surface is minimized;
 - c. Proposed best management practices, where required, achieve the requisite reductions in pollutant loadings;
 - d. The development, as proposed, meets the purpose and intent of this article;
 - e. the cumulative impact of the proposed development, when considered in relation to other development in the vicinity both existing and proposed, will not result in a significant degradation of water quality.
 - (2) Upon the completed review of a major water quality impact assessment, the zoning administrator will determine if the proposed development is consistent with the purpose and intent of this article and make a finding based upon the following criteria in conjunction with section 32-191.
 - a. Within an RPA, the proposed development is water dependent.
 - b. The disturbance of any wetlands will be minimized.
 - c. The development will not result in significant disruption of the hydrology of the site.
 - d. The development will not result in significant degradation to aquatic vegetation or life.
 - e. The development will not result in unnecessary destruction of plant materials on site.
 - f. Proposed erosion and sediment control concepts are adequate to achieve the reductions in runoff and prevent off-site sedimentations.
 - g. Proposed storm water management concepts are adequate to control the storm water runoff to achieve the required performance standard for pollutant control.
 - h. Proposed re-vegetation of disturbed areas will provide optimum erosion and sediment control benefits.
 - i. The development as proposed is consistent with the purpose and intent of the overlay district.
 - (3) The zoning administrator shall require additional mitigation where potential impacts have not been adequately addressed. Evaluation of mitigation measures will be made by the zoning administrator based on the criteria listed above in subsections (1) and (2).
 - (4) The zoning administrator shall find the proposal to be inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this article when the impacts created by the proposal cannot be mitigated. Evaluation of the impacts will be made by the zoning administrator based on the criteria listed in subsections (1) and (2).

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-191. Plan of development process.

Any development or redevelopment exceeding 2,500 square feet of land disturbance shall be accomplished through a plan of development process prior to any clearing or grading of the site or the issuance of any building permit to assure compliance with all applicable requirements of this article.

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- (1) *Required information.* In addition to the requirements of this Ordinance or the requirements of the Cape Charles Subdivision Ordinance, the plan of development process shall consist of the plans and studies identified below. These required plans and studies may be coordinated or combined as deemed appropriate by the zoning administrator. The zoning administrator may determine that some of the following information is unnecessary due to the scope and nature of the proposed development.
- a. The following plans or studies shall be submitted unless otherwise provided for:
 1. A site plan in accordance with the provisions of this ordinance; or a subdivision plat in accordance with the provisions of the town's subdivision ordinance;
 2. An environmental site assessment;
 3. A landscaping plan;
 4. A storm water management plan;
 5. An erosion and sediment control plan in accordance with the provisions of the Cape Charles Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance.
- (2) *Environmental site assessment.* An environmental site assessment shall be submitted in conjunction with preliminary site plan or preliminary subdivision plan approval.
- a. The environmental site assessment shall be drawn to scale and clearly delineate the following environmental features:
 1. Tidal wetlands.
 2. Tidal shores.
 3. Non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow.
 4. A 100-foot buffer area located adjacent to and landward of the components listed in subsections 1 through 3 above, and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow.
 5. other sensitive environmental features as determined by the zoning administrator.
 - b. Wetlands delineations shall be performed consistent with the methods and procedures used and accepted from time to time by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
 - c. The environmental site assessment shall delineate the site-specific geographic extent of the RPA.
 - d. The environmental site assessment shall be drawn at the same scale as the preliminary site plan or subdivision plat and shall be certified as complete and accurate by a professional engineer or a certified land surveyor. This requirement may be waived by the zoning administrator when the proposed use or development would result in less than 5,000 square feet of disturbed area.
- (3) *Landscaping plan.* A landscape plan shall be submitted in conjunction with site plan approval or as part of subdivision plat approval. No clearing or grading of any lot or parcel shall be permitted without an approved landscaping plan.
- a. Landscaping plans when required shall be prepared and/or certified by design professionals practicing within their areas of competence as prescribed by the Code of Virginia and must meet the following requirements:
 1. The landscaping plan shall be drawn to scale and clearly delineate the location, size, and description of existing and proposed plant material. All existing trees on the site two inches or greater DBH shall be shown on the landscaping plan. Where there are groups of trees,

stands may be outlined instead. The specific number of trees two inches or greater DBH to be preserved outside of this construction footprint shall be indicated on the plan. Trees to be removed to create a desired construction footprint shall be clearly delineated on the landscaping plan.

2. Any required buffer area shall be clearly delineated and any plant material to be added to establish or supplement the buffer area, as required by this Article, shall be shown on the landscaping plan.
 3. Within the buffer area, trees to be removed for sight lines, vistas, access paths, and best management practices, as provided for in this article, shall be shown on the plan. Vegetation required by this article to replace any existing trees within the buffer area shall also be shown on the landscaping plan.
 4. Trees to be removed for shoreline stabilization projects and any replacement vegetation required by this article shall be shown on the landscaping plan.
 5. The plan shall depict grade changes or other work adjacent to trees which would affect them adversely. Specifications shall be provided as to how grade, drainage, and aeration would be maintained around trees to be preserved.
 6. The landscaping plan will include specifications for the protection of existing trees during clearing, grading, and all phases of construction.
- b. Plant specifications.
1. All plant materials necessary to supplement the buffer area or vegetated areas outside the construction footprint shall be installed according to standard planting practices and procedures.
 2. All supplementary or replacement plant materials shall be living and in a healthy condition. Plant materials shall conform to the standards of the most recent edition of the American Standard for Nursery Stock, published by the American Association of Nurserymen.
- c. Maintenance.
1. The applicant shall be responsible for the maintenance and replacement of all vegetation as may be required by the provision of the article.
 2. In buffer areas and areas outside the construction footprint, plant material shall be tended and maintained in a healthy growing condition and free from refuse and debris. Unhealthy, dying, or dead plant materials shall be replaced during the next planting season as required by the provisions of this article.
- (4) *Stormwater management plan.* A stormwater management plan shall be submitted as part of the plan of development process required by this article and in conjunction with site plan or subdivision plan approval.
- a. Contents of the plan. The storm water management plan shall contain maps, charts, graphs, tables, photographs, narrative descriptions, explanations, and citations to supporting references as appropriate to communicate the information required by this article. At a minimum, the storm water management plan must contain the following:
1. Location and design of all planned storm water control devices;
 2. Procedures for implementing non-structural storm water control practices and techniques;
 3. Pre- and post-development non-point source pollutant loadings with supporting documentation of all utilized coefficients and calculations;

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4. For facilities, verification of structural soundness, including a professional engineer or Class IIIB surveyor certification.
 - b. Site specific facilities shall be designed for the ultimate development of the contributing watershed based on zoning, comprehensive plans, local public facility master plans, or other similar planning documents.
 - c. All engineering calculations must be performed in accordance with procedures outlined in the current edition of the Virginia Stormwater Management Handbook.
 - d. The plan shall establish a long-term schedule for inspection and maintenance of storm water management facilities that includes all maintenance requirements and persons responsible for performing maintenance. If the designated maintenance responsibility is with a party other than the Town of Cape Charles, then a maintenance agreement shall be executed between the responsible party and the Town of Cape Charles
- (5) *Erosion and sediment control plan.* An erosion and sediment control plan shall be submitted that satisfies the requirements of this article and in accordance with the town's erosion and sediment control ordinance in conjunction with site plan or subdivision plan approval.
- (6) *Final plan.* Final plan for property within CBPAs shall be final plats for land to be subdivided or site plans for land not to be subdivided as required in the Cape Charles Subdivision Ordinance and this ordinance.
- a. Final plans for all lands within CBPAs shall include the following additional information:
 1. The delineation of the Resource Protection Area boundary
 2. The delineation of required buffer areas .
 3. All wetlands permits required by law.
 4. A maintenance agreement as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Zoning Administrator to ensure proper maintenance of best management practices in order to continue their functions.
 - b. Installation and bonding requirements.
 1. Where buffer areas, landscaping, storm water management facilities, or other specifications of an approved plan are required, no certificate of occupancy shall be issued until the installation of required plant materials or facilities is completed in accordance with the approved site plan.
 2. When the occupancy of a structure is desired prior to the completion of the required landscaping, storm water management facilities, or other specifications of an approved plan, a certificate of occupancy may be issued only if the applicant provides Cape Charles a form of surety satisfactory to the zoning administrator in an amount equal to the remaining plant materials, related materials, and installation costs of the required landscaping or facilities and/or maintenance costs for any required storm water management facilities during the construction period.
 3. All required landscaping shall be installed and approved by the first planting season following the issuance of a certificate of occupancy or the surety may be forfeited to the Town of Cape Charles.
 4. All required storm water management facilities or other specifications shall be installed and approved within 18 months of project commencement. Should the applicant fail, after proper notice, to initiate, complete, or maintain appropriate actions required by the

approved plan, the surety maybe forfeited to the Town of Cape Charles. Cape Charles may collect from the applicant the amount by which the reasonable cost of required actions exceed the amount of the surety held.

5. After all required actions of the approved site plan have been completed the applicant must submit a written request for a final inspection. If the requirements of the approved plan have been completed to the satisfaction of the zoning administrator, such unexpended or un-obligated portion of the surety held shall be refunded to the applicant or terminated within 60 days following the receipt of the applicant's request for the final inspection. The zoning administrator may require a certificate of substantial completion from a professional engineer or Class IIIB surveyor before making the final inspection.
- (7) *Administrative responsibility.* Administration of the plan of development process shall be in accordance with this ordinance or the town's subdivision ordinance.
- (8) *Denial of plan, appeal of conditions or modifications.* In the event the final plan or any component of the plan of development process is disapproved and recommended conditions or modifications are unacceptable to the applicant, the applicant may appeal such administrative decision to the planning commission. In granting an appeal the planning commission must find such plan to be in accordance with all applicable ordinances and include necessary elements to mitigate any detrimental impact on water quality and upon adjacent property and the surrounding area or such plan meets the purposes and intent of the performance standards in this article. If the planning commission finds that the applicant's plan does not meet the above-stated criteria, they shall deny approval of the plan. In the event of a denial of appeal to the planning commission, the applicant may appeal such decision to the town council. Said appeal shall be made within 15 days of the negative decision. Further appeals by the applicant shall be established by law.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-192. Non-conforming use and development waivers.

- (a) The lawful use of a building or structure which existed on September 11, 1990, or which exists at the time of any amendment to this article, and which is not in conformity with the provisions of the overly district may be continued in accordance article II division 4 of this chapter. No change or expansion of use shall be allowed with the exception that:
 - (1) The zoning administrator may grant a non-conforming use and development waiver for structures on legal non-conforming lots or parcels to provide for remodeling and alterations to such non-conforming structures provided that:
 - a. There will be no increase in non-point source pollution load;
 - b. Any development or land disturbance exceeding an area of 2,500 square feet complies with all erosion and sediment control requirements of this article;
 - c. The intent of article II, division 4, non-conforming uses, is upheld.
 - (2) An application for a non-conforming use and development waiver shall be made to and upon forms furnished by the zoning administrator and shall include, for the purpose of proper enforcement of this article, the following information:
 - a. Name and address of applicant and property owner;
 - b. Legal description of the property and type of proposed use and development;

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- c. A sketch of the dimensions of the lot or parcel, location of buildings and proposed additions relative to the lot lines, and boundary of the resource protection area;
 - d. location and description of any existing private water supply or sewerage system.
- (3) A non-conforming use and development waiver shall become null and void 12 months from the date issued if no substantial work has commenced.
- (4) An application for the expansion of a nonconforming structure may be approved by the zoning administrator through an administrative review process provided that the following findings are made:
- a. The request for the waiver is the minimum necessary to afford relief;
 - b. Granting the waiver will not confer upon the applicant any specific privileges that are denied by this article to other property owners in similar situations;
 - c. The waiver is in harmony with the purpose and intent of this article and does not result in water quality degradation;
 - d. The waiver is not based on conditions or circumstances that are self- created or self-imposed;
 - e. Reasonable and appropriate conditions are imposed, as warranted, that will prevent the waiver from causing a degradation of water quality;
 - f. Other findings, as appropriate and required by the Town of Cape Charles are met; and
 - g. In no case shall this provision apply to accessory structures.
- (5) In accordance with Code of Virginia § 15.2-2283. additions to nonconforming structures for the purpose of providing reasonable modifications in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 shall not be considered an expansion of a nonconforming structure.
- (6) In accordance with the Code of Virginia § 15.2-2307.H, nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent the owner of a valid nonconforming mobile or manufactured home from replacing that home with a newer manufactured home, either single- or multisection, that meets the current HUD manufactured housing code. Any such replacement home shall retain the valid nonconforming status of the prior home.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-193. Exemptions.

(a) *Exemptions for utilities, railroads, and public roads.*

- (1) Construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of electric, natural gas, fiber-optic, and telephone transmission lines, railroads, and public roads and their appurtenant structures in accordance with (i) regulations promulgated pursuant to the Erosion and Sediment Control Law (§ 62.1-44.15:51 et seq. of the Code of Virginia) and the Stormwater Management Act (§ 62.1-44.15:24 et seq. of the Code of Virginia), (ii) an erosion and sediment control plan and a stormwater management plan approved by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, of (iii) local water quality protection criteria at least as stringent as the above state requirements are deemed to comply with this article. The exemption of public roads is further conditioned on the following:
- a. The road alignment and design has been optimized, consistent with all applicable requirements, to prevent or otherwise minimize the encroachment in the resource protection area and to minimize the adverse effects on water quality.

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- (2) Construction, installation, and maintenance of water, sewer, and natural gas and underground telecommunication and cable television lines, owned, permitted or both by the Town of Cape Charles, shall be exempt from the overlay district provided that:
 - a. To the degree possible, the location of such utilities and facilities shall be outside RPAs;
 - b. No more land shall be disturbed than is necessary to provide for the proposed utility installation;
 - c. All construction, installation, and maintenance of such utilities and facilities shall be in compliance with all applicable state and federal requirements and permits and designed and conducted in a manner that protects water quality; and
 - d. Any land disturbance exceeding an area of 2,500 square feet complies with all Cape Charles erosion and sediment control requirements.
 - (b) *Exemptions for silvicultural activities.* Silvicultural activities are exempt from the requirements of this article provided that silvicultural operations adhere to water quality protection procedures prescribed by the Virginia Department of Forestry in the 1997 edition of "Best Management Practices Handbook for Forestry Operations [Technical Guide].
 - (c) *Exemptions in resource protection areas.* The following land disturbances in resource protection areas may be exempted from the overlay district: (1) water wells; (2) passive recreation facilities such as boardwalks, trails, and pathways; and (3) historic preservation and archaeological activities provided that it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the zoning administrator that:
 - (1) Any required permits, except those to which this exemption specifically applies, shall have been issued;
 - (2) Sufficient and reasonable proof is submitted that the intended use will not deteriorate water quality;
 - (3) The intended use does not conflict with nearby planned or approved uses; and
 - (4) Any land disturbance exceeding an area 2,500 square feet shall comply with all town erosion and sediment control requirements.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-194. Exceptions.

- (a) A request for an exception to the requirements of sections 32-186 and 32-189(c) of this overlay district shall be made in writing to the board of zoning appeals. It shall identify the impacts of the proposed exception on water quality and on lands within the RPA through the performance of a water quality impact assessment which complies with the provisions of section 32-190.
- (b) The Town of Cape Charles shall notify the affected public of any such exception requests and shall consider these requests in a public hearing in accordance with § 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, except that only one hearing shall be required.
- (c) The board of zoning appeals shall review the request for an exception and the water quality impact assessment and may grant the exception with such conditions and safeguards as deemed necessary to further the purpose and intent of this article if the board of zoning appeals finds:
 - (1) Granting the exception will not confer upon the applicant any special privileges that are denied by this article to other property owners in the overlay district;
 - (2) The exception request is not based upon conditions or circumstances that are self-created or self-imposed, nor does the request arise from conditions or circumstances either permitted or non-conforming that are related to adjacent parcels;

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- (3) The exception request is the minimum necessary to afford relief;
 - (4) The exception request will be consistent with the purpose and intent of the overlay district and not injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, and is not of substantial detriment to water quality; and
 - (5) Reasonable and appropriate conditions are imposed which will prevent the exception request from causing a degradation of water quality.
- (d) If the board of zoning appeals cannot make the required findings or refuses to grant the exception, the board of zoning appeals shall return the request for an exception together with the water quality impact assessment and the written findings and rationale for the decision to the applicant.
- (e) A request for an exception to the requirements of provisions of this article other than those in sections 32-186 and 32-189(c) shall be made in writing to the zoning administrator. The zoning administrator may grant these exceptions provided that:
- (1) Exceptions to the requirements are minimum necessary to afford relief; and reasonable and appropriate conditions are placed upon any exception that is granted, as necessary, so that the purpose and intent of this article is preserved.
 - (2) Exceptions to § 32-189(b) may be made provided that the findings noted in section 32-194(c) are made.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-195. Enforcement.

- (a) Any person who: (i) violates any provision of this ordinance or (ii) violates or fails, neglects, or refuses to obey any Town of Cape Charles or its official designee's final notice, order, rule, regulation, or variance or permit condition authorized under this ordinance shall, upon such finding by an appropriate circuit court be assessed a civil penalty not to exceed \$5,000.00 for each day of violation. Such civil penalties may, at the discretion of the court assessing them, be directed to be paid into the treasury of the Town of Cape Charles for the purpose of abating environmental damage to or restoring Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas therein, in such a manner as the court may direct by order, except that where the violator is the Town of Cape Charles itself or its agent, the court shall direct the penalty to be paid into the state treasury.
- (b) With the consent of any person who: (i) violates any provision of any Town of Cape Charles ordinance related to the protection of water quality in Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas or (ii) violates or fails, neglects, or refuses to obey any Town of Cape Charles or its official Designee's order, rule, regulation, or variance or permit condition authorized under such ordinance, the Town of Cape Charles may provide for the issuance of an order against such person for the one-time payment of civil charges for each violation in specific sums, not to exceed \$10,000.00 for each violation. Such civil charges shall be paid into the treasury of the Town of Cape Charles for the purpose of abating environmental damage to or restoring Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas therein, except that where the violator is the Town of Cape Charles itself or its agent, the civil charges shall be paid into the state treasury. Civil charges shall be in lieu of any appropriate civil penalty that could be imposed under subdivision 1 of this subsection. Civil charges may be in addition to the cost of any restoration required or ordered by the Town of Cape Charles body or official.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-196. Severability

The provisions of this ordinance shall be deemed to be severable, and if any of the provisions hereof are adjudged to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining portions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect and their validity shall remain unimpaired.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Sec. 32-197. Effective date.

This ordinance was duly considered following a required public hearing held on November 18, 2024, and was adopted by the Town Council of Cape Charles, Virginia, at its regular meeting held December 19, 2024.

(Ord. No. 20241219A, 12-19-2024)

Secs. 32-198—32-209. Reserved.