

Rethinking Nuisance / Property Maintenance Code

Council Objections

Is West Windsor's
Proposal Extreme?

Townships with height restrictions

- **Pennington** – 10 inches
- **Robbinsville** – 30 inches within 10 feet of any roadway or 25 feet of intersection of two roadways
- **Montgomery** – 12 inches tall within 10 feet of a **property line**
- **Freehold** – 30 inches within 10 feet of any roadway or 25 feet of intersection of two roadways

Pennington

Areas allowed to return to natural conditions
must be approved by the Health Department

Effect on your neighbors

Borough of Atlantic Heights

265-3-A Property with landscape plantings, turf, shrubs or hedges, and trees shall be kept from becoming overgrown.

The exterior grounds of the property shall be maintained so that the appearance reflects the level of maintenance in keeping **with the standards of the neighborhood.**

Land to Natural Condition

In residential subdivisions, the owner, tenant or occupant of lands may make an application to the Health Department to allow land to revert back to its natural condition, but in such a manner that will not allow for the establishment of noxious weeds or rodent harborage.

Reforestation with one-half to two-inch diameter or larger assorted pines and hardwood trees is recommended.

Wildflower areas are to be maintained and mowed annually.

Township of Washington

Premises with landscaping and lawns, hedges and bushes, shrubs, flowering and vine plants shall be kept trimmed and from becoming overgrown and shall not be allowed to grow beyond the boundaries of the property lines.

All shall be kept under control **so it does not constitute a blighting factor depreciating adjoining property.**

Property Rights?

Do you have courage to be consistent?

Does your neighbor have rights too?

Is Buffer of 3 feet unreasonable?



Buffers

- West Windsor township code is riddled with buffers on all sides of the property.
 - Deck
 - Fence
 - Driveway

Just to name a few.

Rethinking of entire property code

- Since council believes this is acceptable standard
 - Makes DPW / Health Departments job easier.
 - Most of the complaints received are far better shape than what council believes is acceptable

Suspending enforcement until it's clear what's acceptable.

What's wrong with this picture?



Why are we ticketing these people?





Protected House Next Door



8/7/24
88

Protected House Next Door



Protected House Next Door -3

9/3/24
SS



Unintended consequences

- Stumps are natural too – We spend so much time and money removing stumps.
- Why am I paying \$900 per year to mow my lawn? Let it grow, let it grow, let it grow. At worst I will plant a few meadow-like plants in the middle of grass.

Professional Opinion

- Every professional in township requested a buffer on all sides so they can investigate any complaint
 - Council members ignore the advice after talking with professionals
- Of those opposing the buffer only Andrea came up with a suggestion on changes.

Better to be ignored behind your back than on your face.

Next Steps

- Until council is willing to define acceptable standards, we will only enforce safety related codes
- We may spend money litigating what the code exactly means.
- Unless a code is clearly violated, every resident complaint will be returned with a polite note
 - Council has deemed it to be acceptable