

# Sea Isle proposes ordinance to make island greener

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SEA ISLE CITY - Sea Isle City Commissioners introduced an ordinance Tuesday revising the city's landscaping ordinance and requiring landscaping on private properties.

The ordinance clarifies the definitions of trees, shrubs and bushes and their placement on lots and provides smoother enforcement of the city's tree planting and landscaping ordinances.

Mayor Leonard Desiderio said the ordinance, in addition to clarifying various landscaping elements, would mandate placement of trees and shrubs on proper-

ties to create a greener Sea Isle City.

"People try to get as much off-street parking as possible and they're just putting stones and paved driveways without any green or shrubbery. We'd like to see shrubs and plantings on the property for aesthetic views and for the environment," Desiderio said. "We need some trees and shrubs on these properties. The majority of the homeowners have a shrub or a tree."

According to the ordinance, homes in residential districts and residential properties in commercial districts shall have ten shrubs per dwelling unit. The ordinance mandates one tree per dwelling unit in commercial districts or two trees per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area for

businesses, commercial or industrial uses.

The ordinance requires yards should be made of grass, mulch, stone pavers, crushed stone or washed gravel.

Homeowners wishing to remove trees or remove or move more than five square yards of soil must apply to the zoning officer for a landscaping permit, which cost \$25.

"This (ordinance) now gives the building inspector some teeth in an ordinance that he can go to the builders and say they need to put a couple of shrubs or trees on this property," Desiderio said.

Landscaping should be done in a manner consistent with the city's rules and regulations, according to the ordinance. The use

of unnatural materials, including plastic, that prevent water from permeating the ground, are prohibited in landscaping.

The zoning officer can make exceptions to utility companies that want to prune trees near utility lines or remove diseased trees.

Desiderio said the ordinance's biggest offenders of having properties severely lacking plants are mostly investment properties and rentals.

"If you're living here, you're going to have shrubs and trees and you're going to keep your property up. It's mostly investment properties that don't plant anything," Desiderio said.