

Town of Middleborough Planning Board Policy for Mulch Landscaping within Road Layouts.

The Planning Board's policy is to require the developers to provide loam and seed within the road layout from the back of the Cape Cod Berm to the sidewalk and from the back of the sidewalk to the edge of the right-of-way as well as on the non-sidewalk side to the edge of the right-of-way for the following reasons:

- 1) Although this area appears to be the lot owner's yard, it indeed is part of the road and belongs to the town, once the road is accepted. Maintenance of this area will ultimately be the Town's responsibility. Even if one owner is willing to maintain mulch bark or stone treatment a subsequent owner may not be.
- 2) Grass provides stabilization and structural support for the road and sidewalk. Grass provides for good permanent erosion control by stabilizing sloped or sloped shoulder and except for cutting does not need maintenance to adequately perform this stabilization. Grass is less costly to maintain than mulch. Mulch does not provide equal or permanent stabilization and needs annual maintenance to be effective.
- 3) Mulch has an annual maintenance cost because it biodegrades and must be replenished. The underlying landscape fabric must also be periodically replaced. The Middleborough Department of Public Works does not have money in their budget for such items.
- 4) Mulch tends to wash onto sidewalks and roadways and into drainage systems during heavy rains adding to the maintenance requirement and siltation build up in retention basins. Mulch if not maintained will produce weeds that are difficult to remove, can not be cut, and may require the landscape area to be rebuilt to maintain a neat appearance.
- 5) Having a uniform grass strip provides a neater and more orderly appearance for the street, with 200 feet mulch then 200 feet grass the road becomes a patchwork of landscaping.

The Planning Board has voted to require the developer to install the grass strip four feet (4') off the back of the sidewalk to the edge of the road layout.

The grass seed and growth the developer shall conform to is Section M.6.03.03 of the Massachusetts Standard Specifications for Highways and Bridges.

The developer is responsible for maintenance of improvements under the Middleborough Subdivision Rules and Regulations, Section I.H.4, including the planting strip of the right-of-way during the period of construction until the road is Town accepted and the Orders of Taking have been filed at the Plymouth County Registry of Deeds.