



Natural Landscaping Description

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Village of Plainfield Natural Landscaping Permit procedure is designed to promote the use of natural landscaping throughout the Village, especially around detention ponds, to better the environment, reduce storm water runoff rates, preserve water quality, promote urban sustainability, and control erosion. The permitting procedure will also be a vital tool for the Planning, GIS, and Code Enforcement Divisions as it will allow them to have a detailed lay out of where naturally landscaped areas are, what their species composition is, and it will allow them to ensure the areas are being maintained properly. The native plants planted in naturally landscaped areas are plants that evolved naturally in a region before plants from other areas were introduced by people. These plants grew in areas where they could adapt to soil, moisture, and weather conditions. Over time they become resilient to most pests and diseases, and strong enough to survive cold winter months and intense summer heat. Naturally landscaped areas are low maintenance and provide aesthetic benefits year-round.

VILLAGE GUIDELINES

MUNICIPAL CODE – Chapter 6, Article III, Division 2

Sec. 6-81. Definitions.

Naturally landscaped areas shall not be included as weeds or nuisances provided they have received a permit or the owner is able to prove the naturally landscaped area was installed prior to August of 2007. Residential and commercial projects that were approved prior to August of 2007 are exempt from the permitting requirement as well. Single family residential yards are only permitted to have 25% of their yard planted with natural landscaping unless the lot is part of a conservation development, while 100% of other land uses may be planted with natural landscaping.

Naturally landscaped areas shall be defined as designed and cultivated plant communities which are native to the bioregion and self sustaining with minimal resort to artificial methods of plant care. Owners of naturally landscaped areas must perform all necessary ecological maintenance procedures to ensure the health of the naturally landscaped areas and adjacent uses. If one intends to have a controlled burn for the health of the area, he/she must collaborate with the Illinois EPA, the appropriate Fire Protection District, and the Plainfield Police Department prior to the burn.

Sec. 6-82. Weed violation defined.

All Naturally Landscaped areas must be maintained with acceptable ecological maintenance procedures, so that the health of the area and the natural process may be maintained. This may include hand weeding, herbicide applications, timely mowing events, and controlled burns to prevent invasive and undesirable plant material from consuming the site.

Owners of naturally landscaped areas will be required to keep a log of all maintenance activities conducted on the site, along with any receipts or invoices, to be surrendered at request to the Code Enforcement Division of the Police Department. Any premises not so maintained is hereby declared a public nuisance.

BENEFITS OF NATURALLY LANDSCAPED AREAS

Natural landscaping offers several benefits to the surrounding community. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Improving storm water management and controlling flooding.
- Reducing air pollution and the amount of chemicals needed for landscape maintenance.
- Increasing regional biodiversity and decreasing the amounts of pests and diseases.
- Conserving water and preserving its quality.
- Providing historical and cultural interest by restoring and connecting residents to the original landscapes of the area.