

Spring Island PRUNING GUIDELINES

Note: The Spring Island Habitat Review Board (HRB) establishes, and monitors compliance with landscaping policy on Spring Island as mandated by the covenants of the Spring Island Property Owners' Association. The Trust Landscape Ecologist represents the HRB with respect to decisions about pruning, plantings and other landscaping actions.

Nature Curtain:

Nature Curtains are located outside the building envelope of Homesite lots. Side nature curtains are a 25' setback from the property line, and the front nature curtain is a 50' setback from the property line. Nature Curtains are areas that are maintained in a native state and serve as an extension of the Nature Preserve. Landscaping activities are not typically allowed within the Nature Curtain. If planting is approved by the HRB only native plants matching the existing vegetation and arranged randomly may be used in this area. Plantings cannot be maintained as one would foundation plantings around a home with regular pruning, weeding, and mulching. No lawns may encroach on the Nature Curtain. No fences or walls may be constructed in the Nature Curtain. Members or their landscape contractors must gain approval of the Trust Landscape Ecologist prior to any pruning or tree removal in the Nature Curtain.

Note: Nature Curtains are not applicable on some Cottage Site neighborhoods such as Old Tabby Links and Pinckney Point Bluff.

View Vistas:

View vistas to amenities such as marsh, pond or golf course shall be maintained as originally approved by the HRB, with sufficient vegetative mass (trees and shrubs) being retained to break up the view of the home from outside the lot. New vistas or the removal of trees or shrubs requires approval from the Trust Landscape Ecologist.

River and Marsh Vistas:

Marshes are delicate wetland habitats that must be protected from runoff by maintaining a thick vegetative buffer at least 30' in width. Beaufort County law also requires protection of this area and enforces it with fines. Pruning in the buffer area (for view vistas) must leave vegetation of varying heights so as not to create a "hedge" appearance. No lawns may be located within a minimum of 30' of the marsh or river edge, but a greater distance is desirable on most lots.

Pond Vistas:

Pond edges are important wildlife habitat and filter runoff. Pruning to achieve views to a pond shall be done with wildlife and pond edge erosion in mind. A variety of vegetation types (trees, shrubs, aquatic plants), and varying heights must be maintained along the pond edge. Pruning must be selective to ensure a filtered view of the home from across the pond. No lawns may be located within a minimum of 30' of the pond edge. One pond access path (less than 5' wide) may be established through the filter vegetation at an acute angle to the pond edge.

Golf Course Vistas:

Views to the golf course from homesites are designed to provide limited views to minimize the home's visibility from the course. This is accomplished by establishing views down the course whenever possible, maintaining, at a minimum, a 75' swath of native vegetation between the homesite and the course. Pruning in this natural area shall not result in a "hedge" appearance, but have varying heights of vegetation. Any portion of this natural buffer area on SIPOA property must be maintained by SIPOA staff. Pathways from the home to the course should be located along a shared property boundary so that the view down the path from the course is into the side Nature Curtain.

Tree Removal Criteria:

Removal of any tree, dead or alive, must have approval from the Trust Landscape Ecologist. Dead trees may provide important wildlife habitat. Removal of crowded trees may benefit the health of adjacent trees. Approval for removal will be based on tree health, presence of nearby trees or saplings, percent canopy closure, danger to property from the tree, and rarity of the tree species.

Meadow Management:

Areas approved for management as open meadows with native grasses and wildflowers should be mowed no more than once a year, preferably in the late winter or early spring. Occasional thinning or pruning of trees to maintain sufficient sunlight to these areas is acceptable. Tree removal or mowing more frequently than once a year must receive approval from the Trust Landscape Ecologist.

Management of Roadsides and Golf Course Borders:

All pruning and vegetation management outside property boundaries in the road right of way or adjacent to the golf course must be performed by the Spring Island Staff. Contact the maintenance office at (843) 987-2031 to schedule maintenance work.