

City of Beaufort Department of Planning and Development Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Scott Dadson, City Manager
FROM: Libby Anderson, Planning Director
DATE: October 8, 2014
SUBJECT: Requiring Silt Fencing on Construction Sites

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Currently, there is no specific requirement in the Unified Development Ordinance for silt fencing on construction sites. Large construction projects are required by state regulations to have silt fencing, but small projects, and development on existing platted lots, are exempt from state regulations. At the same time, even small construction projects can result in sediment washing into the street (or onto adjacent lots) and entering nearby water bodies and/or clogging storm drains. Staff is proposing to add a requirement for the installation of silt fencing prior to starting site work. To this end, staff is recommending that Section 7, “General Development Standards,” be amended by adding a new subsection 8 to read as follows:

7.8 Silt Fencing

Silt fencing shall be required around all new construction sites and on other construction sites where there will be significant soil disturbance due to construction activities. Silt fencing shall consist of geotextile fabric stretched across steel or wood posts to be used as a temporary perimeter control. Fencing shall be placed along front, side and rear property lines as required by distance and gradient prior to any site disturbance. On existing single-family lots, the Administrator may waive the silt fencing requirement on some or all sides of the lot based on distance to the property line and/or gradient.

Fabric to be cut to a minimum width of 36 inches with 12 inches of fabric placed into a 6-inch minimum depth trench. Minimum post spacing to be 8 foot on center. Bottom of fabric to be securely held in place by backfilling trench with soil and compacting. Hay bales or equal to be substituted for geotextile fabric in tree root protection zones to avoid cutting of roots. In tidal areas, extra silt fence height may be required.

A construction entrance shall be established with gravel or stone to prevent tracking of soil from construction vehicles onto paved street.

Any fabric that is torn, decomposed, or in any way becomes ineffective shall be replaced immediately. Sediment that accumulates to 1/3 of the height of the fence shall

be removed. Silt fencing shall be removed within 30 days after final stabilization is achieved.

Planning Commission Recommendation

The Beaufort--Port Royal Metropolitan Planning Commission considered this ordinance amendment at their meeting on September 15. The Commission unanimously recommended approval.