



City of New Haven

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Legislation Text

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ZONING AMENDMENT OF THE NEW HAVEN BOARD ALDERS AMENDING AND RESTATING THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 60.1 - EXTERIOR LIGHTING.

WHEREAS: The City of New Haven has experienced the emergence of new outdoor lighting that warrants new categorization and regulation; and

WHEREAS: the unique nature of this lighting has created quality of life concerns for residents and businesses in New Haven neighborhoods.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that Section 60.1 of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance is amended and restated as follows:

ARTICLE VI

SECTION 60.1 Exterior Lighting.

60.1.1 Purpose. To require useful and necessary outdoor lighting within the City that promotes energy efficiency; reduces Light Pollution, Light Trespass, Glare and other offensive light sources; protects and retains the visual character of the City and its neighborhoods; and reduces impacts to the residents' public health, safety, and welfare. The health, safety, and welfare of wildlife and the environment should be considered.

60.1.2 Applicability. The standards herein apply to all new and renovated Exterior Lighting. Renovations include changes in light type, mounting height, location, size, brightness, and number of light sources. Renovations do not include, without limitation, routine maintenance such as changing lamp or bulb, ballast, starter, photo control, housing, lenses, and other similar components, and are permitted, provided such renovations do not result in a higher lumen output. This Section also applies to lighting for Indirectly-Illuminated Signs, as defined in Section 60.3.

60.1.3 Lighting Plan, Defined.. A Light Plan must include (a) a plan sheet identifying the location and height of all new, existing, proposed and renovated Exterior Lights (including but not limited to area, architectural, canopy, soffit, landscape, flag and Sign lights), type of fixture, type of light, and brightness (in lumens and/or footcandles, as appropriate), (b) manufacturer specifications or cut sheets for each lighting fixture, and (c) a photometric plan. A Light Plan is required as a part of any application for zoning approval (including but not limited to site plan, special permit, special exception and planned developments).

60.1.4 Design Standards. All Exterior Lighting must be designed, located, installed, and directed in the following manner unless otherwise exempt or prohibited:

A. In general, all exterior light sources must be directed downward. The lighting must also be, as much as physically possible, contained within the target area.

B. Parking Lot and Security Lighting. All outdoor light fixtures within a parking lot, vehicular circulation area, or pedestrian area must be of a Full Cutoff or Fully-Shielded type.

C. Architectural Lighting. Lighting for building facades and Indirectly Illuminated Signs is permitted subject to the following:

- i. Uplighting does not exceed 900 lumens.
- ii. Upward aimed light is Fully-Shielded and fully-confined from projecting into the sky, eaves, roofs, or overhangs. The light must be fully confined within the vertical surface of the wall being illuminated.

D. Unshielded Lighting. Floodlighting is discouraged, and if used, must be shown that the type of fixture proposed is not objectionable because it (a) prevents Glare for drivers and pedestrians and light above a horizontal plane, and (b) mitigates light trespass beyond the property line. Unshielded, motion activated lighting will not be triggered off the property on which the fixture is located and must go off within 5 minutes of activation. Unshielded lighting creating Glare or Light Trespass is required to be re-aimed and/or fitted with a shield device to block the Glare.

E. Lighting Curfew. On all parking fields, including surface lots, parking decks and top levels of parking garages which contain a minimum of 4 light poles, the lighting must be reduced by at least 50% of full operational levels within 30 minutes after the close of business. Because certain minimum lighting levels are recommended for safety and security, parking field lighting does not need to be reduced to less than an average .2 footcandles as measured horizontally at the surface on which the light pole is mounted in accordance with Illuminating Engineer Society (IES) Standards

F. Height. Exterior Lighting must not exceed twenty (20) feet in height from the point on the ground directly below the fixture to the highest point on the fixture. Lighting mounted higher than twenty (20) feet may be permitted through the site plan review process, either by Staff or the Commission, as applicable, depending on the site conditions.

G. Maximum Light Levels at the Property Line.

- i. The maximum light level at any point on the property line cannot exceed: .1 footcandles within or adjacent to a property with a residential use or .2 footcandles when adjacent to properties with other uses. Where the adjacent property is a residential use or mixed-use and the first floor is not residential, the maximum light levels at the property line cannot exceed .2 footcandles.

- ii. Color. Because blue light brightens the night sky more than any other color of light, lighting must have a color temperature of no more than 3000 Kelvins. Exterior Lighting that has warmer light spectrums are preferred.

- iii. The Staff or the Commission, as applicable, may determine that certain light fixtures are exempt from these requirements of this Section because they do not adversely affect an adjacent property owner or the night sky or because they are necessary for the functioning of the use.

60.1.5 Exempt Lighting. The following Exterior Lighting is exempt from the provisions of this Section:

- A. Lighting required by the Federal Aviation Authority;
- B. Temporary lighting associated with an event authorized by the City of New Haven with duration of less than 15 days;
- C. Temporary traditional seasonal lighting;
- D. Temporary lighting used for emergency purposes by the New Haven Police Department or New Haven Fire Department;
- E. National, state and municipal flag lighting;
- F. Monument lighting;
- G. Sport stadium and athletic field lighting, not including tennis court, basketball court and similar court games not located in a stadium, provided stadium and athletic field lighting applications must submit a photometric plan demonstrating compliance with Maximum Light Levels at the Property Line. Scoreboards are governed by Section 60.3.10 pertaining to Outdoor Sports Lighting;
- H. Lighting required by building code.

60.1.6 Definitions pertaining to Exterior Lighting.

- A. EXTERIOR LIGHTING: Fixed artificial lighting to illuminate outdoor areas
- B. FULL CUTOFF or FULLY-SHIELDED: A light fixture designed to control the view of direct light, in which the light source is enclosed, and hidden from view on all sides except the light-emitting opening.
- C. GLARE: Excessive brightness that interferes with vision. Glare interferes with pedestrians' and drivers' ability to safely navigate and poses a public health and safety concern. Glare from Exterior Lighting at the time of the passage of this ordinance must come into conformance with the operational requirements for lighting under this Section.
- D. LIGHT POLLUTION: That portion of artificial lighting which is directed or cast outward or upward and does not illuminate the ground or structure for which the lighting was designed or intended but rather aims into the sky, adjoining properties, public rights of way, and other areas in a way that impacts others' enjoyment of their personal property, public spaces and dark sky.
- E. LIGHT TRESPASS: Light pollution affecting adjoining or nearby property.
- F. UPLIGHT or UPLIGHTING: Illumination from a light fixture aimed generally upward (including at angles upward) rather than illumination from above.