



Electrical Site Lighting - Information Sheet

What, if any, exterior wall & pole light shielding requirements exist?

There is not a specific answer to this question as it depends on a number of variables. The Zoning Ordinance specifically regulates site lighting for parking areas and parking lots, and states:

Parking areas and parking lots shall be provided with lighting during the non-daylight hours when such are in use. Lighting shall be designed and installed so as to concentrate illumination within the parking area or parking lot and to prevent glare on adjoining properties and streets. The height of lighting structures shall not exceed the height limit of the district in which they are located, and in no case shall such height exceed thirty-five (35) feet. When lighting is required by this subsection, the intensity of illumination within the area devoted to parking shall be not less than one (1.0) footcandle, provided that in no case shall the intensity of illumination exceed one-half (0.5) footcandle at any property line abutting a lot in an R or RO District.

Lighting requires a minimum of 1-footcandle intensity within the parking area or lot, but cannot exceed .5-footcandle when adjoining residentially-zoned property. A photometric study will more accurately dictate these variables and, thus, photometric plans are required for site lighting of parking areas and lots. Obviously, different pole heights, lighting type and style and shielding will impact these figures.

Within *City Old & Historic Districts*, exterior lighting installations of any kind require specific design review of the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR). In addition, some properties have specific conditions placed upon them by Special Use Permit (SUP), Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) or Plan of Development (POD) approvals. Typically the Ordinance requirements established by the new amendment are mirrored for these properties.

Minimum & Maximum foot-candle requirements

Parking areas and lots requiring lighting be provided must provide a minimum 1-footcandle within the parking area or lot, but cannot exceed .5-footcandle adjacent to residentially-zoned property.

Height restrictions

The Ordinance restricts all light structures to not more than thirty-five feet (35') in height, but several districts restrict them to lesser heights. The UB (Urban Business) zoning district restricts light structures to twenty-eight feet (28') with the R-MH (Mobile Home District), RO-1 (Residential-Office) and B-1 (Neighborhood Business) districts restricting them to twenty-five feet (25') in height.

Lighting-type (manufacturers & style) requirements

The type of lighting will be dictated by the requirement to meet the illumination intensity requirements, whether it is located with a *City Old & Historic District* requiring Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) approval or, in certain limited instances, there is a specific City approval (SUP, BZA or POD) requirement on the development. In these instances, the specific manufacturer is not important, but only the type and style of lighting proposed.

Permitting Suggestions

It is recommended that electrical permit applications for properties be separated to accommodate the building (interior) electrical work and lighting and any exterior site lighting, so as not to delay issuance of the permit(s).

Other Lighting Issues

The Zoning Ordinance (Section 114-670) specifies, "lighting shall be located, directed or shielded so as not to shine directly on adjoining properties or to create a traffic hazard by means of glare or similarity to or confusion with traffic signals, warning lights or lighting on emergency vehicles." (*Emphasis added*). Although not definitive, this has been historically interpreted to preclude property owners from installing flood lights that are directed specifically onto adjoining properties. A flood lamp directed onto an adjoining house would meet the "directly" rule. A street light, though of great illumination intensity, spreads light over a wide area with the main purpose to provide light below and to diffuse light along the street line; this would not meet the "directly" rule. However, more importantly, lighting shining into streets, flashing lights or similar illumination causing traffic or other inherent danger, would not be allowed. Very few complaints of this nature are received, but the Zoning Administrator having discretion on a case-by-case basis.