

SECTION 67 – OUTDOOR ILLUMINATION & DARK SKY PRINCIPLES

Statement of Purpose:

The Town of Morris Planning & Zoning Commission has pro-actively incorporated Low Impact Development (LID) measures and other best practices into its local regulatory framework. These town-wide outdoor illumination standards & criteria align with responsible outdoor lighting principles and night sky-friendly design as supported by the [International Dark-Sky Association](http://darksky.org) (IDA)(darksky.org).

In accordance with IDA's five (5) principles of responsible outdoor lighting:

1. All outdoor illumination shall have a clear purpose.
2. Light should be directed only to where it is needed.
3. Light should be no brighter than necessary.
4. Light should be used only when it is useful.
5. Warmer light colors shall be utilized in outdoor illumination where possible.

Incorporating responsible outdoor lighting standards into the Town of Morris Zoning Regulations will help permit reasonable uses of outdoor lighting for nighttime safety, utility, security, and enjoyment while preserving the ambiance of the night; curtail and reverse any degradation of the nighttime visual environment and the night sky; minimize the glare and obtrusive light by limiting outdoor lighting that is misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary; conserve energy and resources to the greatest extent possible; help protect the natural environment from the damaging effects of night lighting.

Definitions:

Clutter - bright, confusing and excessive groupings of light sources

Essential Lighting – lighting used for indicating ingress and egress, security, and life safety

Glare – excessive brightness that causes visual discomfort

Light trespass – (aka spillage) light falling where it is not intended or needed

Light pollution – inappropriate or excessive use of artificial light

Skyglow – brightening of the night sky over inhabited areas

Standards & Criteria:

The following requirements apply to all light fixtures in new and renovated construction in any zoning district that requires a Site Plan or a Special Exception. Outdoor illumination includes all light fixtures mounted on buildings, signs, structures, poles, bollards, and/or ground surfaces.

- A. All outdoor lighting shall be designed, located, installed, and directed in such a manner as to as to prevent objectionable light and glare;
- B. All exterior lights shall be low-level lighting, shielded to prevent glare and light trespass, and contained to the target area.
- C. All lighting for newly proposed parking and pedestrian areas shall employ full-cutoff type fixtures.
- D. Lighting used to display building, signage, and aesthetic features shall be properly aimed downward, not up-lighted, except as otherwise provided (*eg lighting for flags see J*).

E. All building lighting for security or aesthetics shall be full-cutoff or a fully shielded/recessed type, not allowing any upward distribution of light;

F. Unshielded Floodlighting is prohibited. Fully shielded wall-pack and wall mount fixtures activated by a motion detector and/or on a timer are permitted.

G. No direct light source shall be visible beyond the property lines of the lot it serves.

H. **Gasoline Service Stations.** All area lighting associated with gasoline service stations shall be full-cutoff and under-canopy lighting shall be recessed so that the lens is recessed or flush with the bottom surface of the overhead structure;

I. All Non-Essential Lighting shall be turned off after 10:00 pm. Non-Essential Lighting applies to display, aesthetic, parking, and sign lighting. Motion or infrared sensor lighting control are encouraged for all outdoor lighting.

J. Lighting designed to illuminate the U.S. flag shall be low-level and focused directly on the flag;

K. The height of luminaries, except streetlights in public rights-of-way, shall not exceed a height of eighteen (18) ft from the average ground level to the highest point on the fixture.

L. Exemptions: Traditional seasonal lighting and temporary lighting used by Police, Fire Department, and/or Emergency Services and Essential Lighting are exempt from these Regulations.

Lighting Plan Applicability:

For all projects subject to Site Plan review and/or a Special Exception, the applicant shall provide a lighting plan that indicates that the Standards & Criteria (A-L) are met (as applicable) and that the following five (5) principles for responsible lighting are also met:

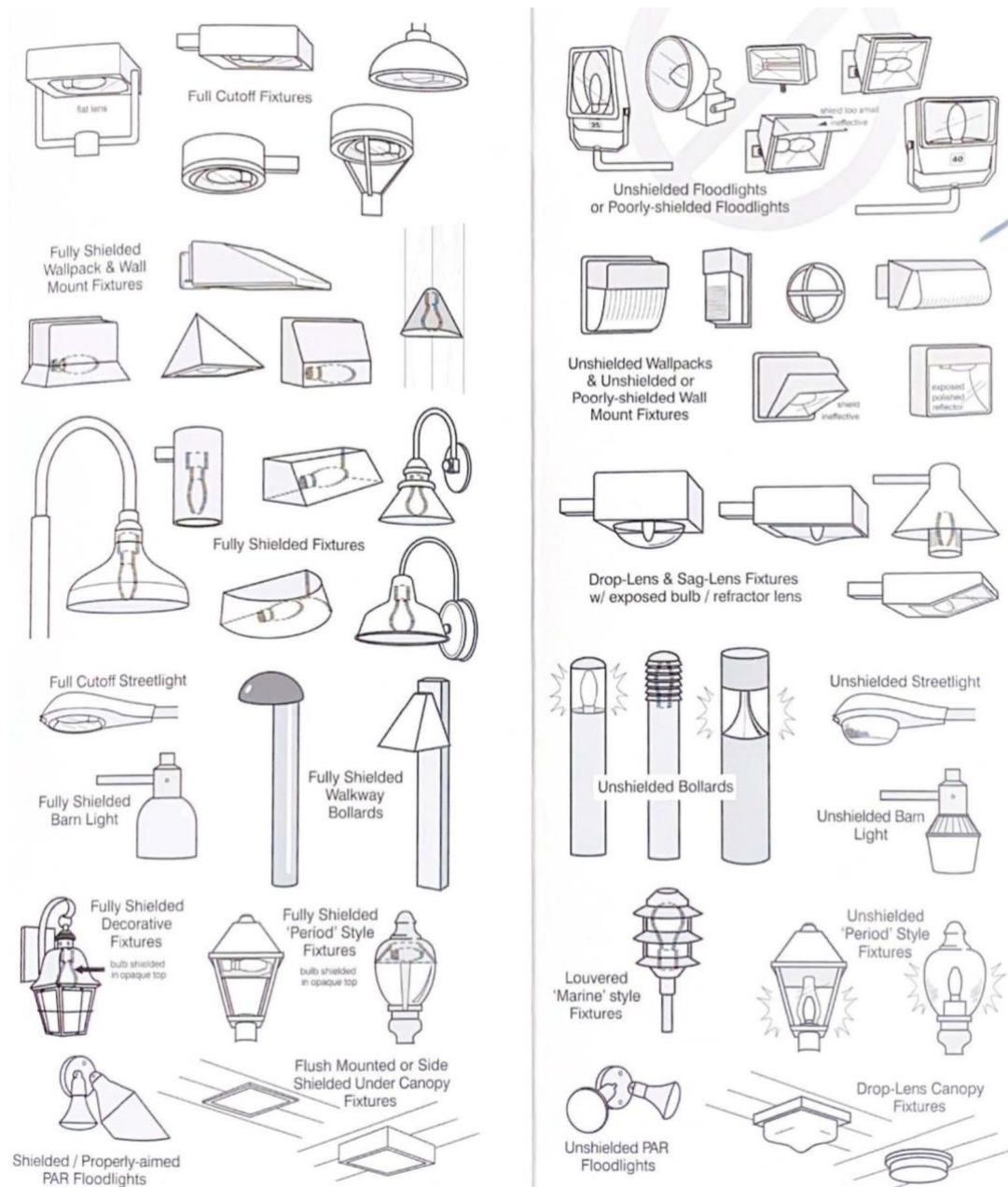
1. All outdoor illumination shall have a clear purpose.
2. Light should be directed only to where it is needed.
3. Light should be no brighter than necessary.
4. Light should be used only when it is useful.
5. Warmer light colors shall be utilized in outdoor illumination where possible.

The Commission shall retain the right to request that a third-party lighting engineer to evaluate a lighting plan. The Commission may also condition Special Exception approval by requiring specific provisions necessary to provide for public health and safety, to address topographic and/or other physical site characteristics, and/or to protect historic, scenic, cultural, and/or environmental resources.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that as existing lighting wears out that new fixtures and bulbs adhere to these standards and criteria.

Graphic Examples:



Source: mcdonaldobservatory.org/lighting