e. Xeriscape and other Landscape Guidelines

XERISCAPE™ is an overall water-conserving landscaping and gardening concept that produces beautiful, water efficient, water sustainable landscapes that are in harmony with our dry, arid climate. Examples of Xeriscape often include limited bluegrass lawns, irrigated separately from trees and shrubs, and include a wide variety of plants grouped by water needs. The term Xeriscape was coined in 1981 by a team of landscape architects, contractors, horticulturists, irrigation specialists. Xeriscape is a combination of the word “landscape” and the Greek word “xeros,” which means dry. The Xeriscape concept is based on seven principles of gardening: planning and design, limit turf areas, selecting and zoning plants appropriately, improving the soil, using mulch, irrigating efficiently and maintaining the landscape.

It is important to note that Xeriscape is NOT ZEROSCAPE. It does not mean removing all turf and installing rock/bark/hardscape. When submitted requests for Xeric designed landscapes, be specific in the request on design, placement, and especially the type of plants to be installed. (See Appendix H for the recommended plant list.)

Specific criteria that all landscapes will be responsible for meeting include the following:

1. All landscapes including xeriscapes will be reviewed by the architectural committee. All landscape plans must include a top down plan view with plants drawn to their mature sizes. Mature sizes in Castle Rock are 75% of the mature sizes listed for Denver, Colorado. See the Town of Castle Rock plant species list for correct sizing.

2. All newly installed landscapes must have soil amendments per the Town of Castle Rock landscape regulations. Minimum Town soil improvements are 3 cubic yards of organic matter per 1,000 square feet of landscape area. This organic matter should be rototilled into a depth of 4 to 6 inches.

3. Irrigated turf areas are limited by residential lot sizes as more fully described in the Landscape Regulations as they may be amended from time to time. Please refer to the Landscape Regulations for the maximum irrigated turf areas permitted by the Town of Castle Rock. Areas devoted to the cultivation of native and/or drought tolerant/resistant grasses are exempt from installation square footage limitations.
4. Artificial turf is not allowed in front yard and back yard landscapes or front yard and back yard xeriscapes.

5. Plants placed on the same irrigation valve and located next to each other in the landscape should have the same water requirements. For example, plants requiring low water amounts should not be watered with plants requiring high water amounts. Plants requiring high water amounts should be planted near down spouts and in lower areas in the yard that collect water.

6. Irrigation type must be appropriate for the plant type. Shrubs, perennials and trees should be drip irrigated, while turf should be irrigated using spray and rotor heads. (There are exceptions to these rules such as trees planted in the middle of the yard and watered with the turfgrass. And also some narrow areas of turf which would be more efficiently irrigated by subsurface drip irrigation).

7. Irrigation must not result in water waste as defined by the Landscape Regulations. This definition includes but is not limited to water being sprayed onto hard surfaces or running off onto sidewalks or gutters.

8. Irrigation controllers should be set to water turf grass areas in compliance with the Town of Castle Rock Water Use Management program. Controllers should be programmable and battery back-ups and have rain sensors attached.

9. All Owners are directed to the Landscape Regulations for the policies and procedures, design criteria and construction methods and materials in the Town of Castle Rock. The Landscape Regulations should be reviewed and complied with in the course of landscaping. Approval by the Architectural Committee does not constitute assurance that landscape improvements comply with the Code or the Landscape Regulations, nor does approval assure that a permit or approvals are not also required from applicable governmental bodies.