



**TOWN OF WILLSBORO**  
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICE

October 14, 2016

Mark and Tracie McGill  
51 Corlear Drive  
Willsboro, NY 12996

Re: TAX MAP #: 21.9-2-13.000 51 Corlear- application # 2657

Thank you for your application and request for a Retaining Wall permit/Variance.  
As you know the Building Permit application is denied for the Town of Willsboro Zoning Law:

- 1) Section 6.12 Setback from the Shoreline
- 2) Section 6.14 Lakefront and Shoreline Tree Cutting Restrictions.

Your request for a Variance will require a completed application which you can submit to the Town Clerk.

As you requested, I reviewed your applications and offer the following responses:

- 1) Original structure was built too close to the lake and is supported by poorly placed fill.
- 2) Erosion of the fill is expected for the lack of trees and woody vegetation which should naturally exist in that location on the lakeshore.
- 3) Covering the shoreline with ramps and decks prevents vegetation from establishing, which would prevent erosion and filter storm water.
- 4) Reference was made to consulting an engineer, but no engineering work or letter with recommendations is provided.
- 5) No references are made to the more preferred methods of shoreline stabilization (see enclosed).
- 6) This type of vertical wall refocuses the wave energy to the sides of the wall which increases erosion and eventually undermines the wall.

Thank you for your interest in Willsboro NY!

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Rock (Code Enforcement Officer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Building Fire Safety Inspector and Building Inspector)

CC: Zoning Board of Appeals  
Encl.

## SHORELINE VEGETATION CUTTING

Shoreline cutting is restricted under the APA Act [806(3)]: within 6 feet of the mean high water mark, no vegetation may be removed, except 30% of the lot width of an individual shoreline lot may be clear of vegetation; this limitation applies to all vegetation, including shrubs, bushes and herbaceous plants such as grasses. Within 35 feet of the mean high water mark, not more than 30% of the trees larger than 6 inches in diameter at breast height may be cut. Proposed retaining wall construction and rip rap installation projects must comply with all shoreline cutting requirements. In designated river areas, the cutting limitations are more restrictive.

If a proposal requires vegetation removal in excess of the minimum shoreline cutting restrictions, a variance from the Adirondack Park Agency will be required. If the proposal involves freshwater wetlands or a river designated as a Wild, Scenic, or a Recreational River, then an Agency permit will likely be required and additional restrictions may apply.

## SHORELINE STABILIZATION OPTIONS

Whether or not an Agency permit and/or variance are required for a shoreline stabilization project, landowners should employ the least structural or "softest" approach available to address existing shoreline erosion problems. Hardened shorelines are only a temporary fix for erosion problems, which are usually caused by the removal of shoreline and riparian vegetation. The character of the natural shoreline and riparian zones should be retained or restored whenever possible. Currently, the Agency recognizes the following four basic approaches to addressing shoreline erosion problems, ranked in order of preference, with the first option being the most desirable.

1. Non-structural: simplest, cheapest, and most effective where problems are minor and the land is least disturbed; may include simply re-planting native vegetation within the eroded area.
2. Bioengineering: uses vegetation, both through plantings and for structural purposes, to provide stability and resistance in light to moderate wave action. Includes live staking, brush layering, and brush matting
3. Biotechnical: combines bioengineering approaches with some degree of structural design where higher wave energy exists and/or severe erosion has occurred. Includes matting or vegetated gabion walls or mattresses, vegetated cribbing, vegetated rip rap, or keyed native toe-boulders.
4. Structural: expensive, requires maintenance, and causes the most severe environmental impacts. Under conditions of extreme wave energy or severe erosion, structures may be required; they can include structures like bulkheads, revetments, cribs, and gabions made of native stone or timber.

Additional guidance may be found in "The Shoreline Stabilization Handbook" by Northwest Regional Planning Commission, 7 Lake Street, Suite 201, St. Albans, Vermont 05478. <http://www.nrpcvt.com/publications.html>

Please be aware that this flyer is only intended to provide general information regarding Agency jurisdiction. If an Agency permit or variance is required (or if the property has previously been subject to Agency review) then other restrictions may apply.