

## **Bioretention Swale: Best Practices & Maintenance Guidelines**

**March 2026**

The bioretention swales in our community are engineered systems designed for essential stormwater management. To ensure these areas drain properly and remain in compliance with local standards, homeowners are asked to follow these maintenance requirements:

### **I. Structural Integrity & Drainage**

- **No Heavy Equipment:** Do NOT operate lawnmowers within the swale. Equipment weight compacts the engineered soil mixture, which impairs drainage and can lead to standing water.
- **Keep the Area Clear:** Do NOT place rocks, landscape objects, debris, or yard waste in the bioretention area. These items obstruct the intended water flow.
- **No Trees:** Do NOT plant trees within the bioretention area, as their root systems can interfere with the drainage infrastructure.

### **II. Landscaping & Maintenance**

- **Pruning Schedule:** Large woody shrubs should receive a "hard prune" between late November and February while the plants are dormant. This encourages healthy regrowth and spreading in subsequent seasons.
- **General Upkeep:** Trim shrubs periodically between November and February to maintain healthy growth. Ensure any vines are cut out of the large shrubs.
- **Planting Requirements:** If replacing vegetation, use only native plants with shallow root systems.
- **Low-Maintenance Option:** Homeowners may choose to leave the area mulched only (no plantings).

### **III. Approved Plantings**

Original plant lists for each building lot are documented on the HOA Website:  
[www.reserveatpilottown.com](http://www.reserveatpilottown.com)

#### **A. Recommended Herbaceous Species**

1. Obedient Plant
2. Blue Flag
3. Joe Pye Weed

## **B. Original/Approved Shrubs**

1. Arrow Wood
2. Bayberry
3. Bottle Brush Buckeye
4. Button Bush
5. Blueberry
6. Inkberry
7. Spice Bush
8. Winterberry
9. Witch Hazel

*Note: These shrubs typically grow between 5' – 10' in height. The Sussex Conservation District generally does not recommend planting these larger species in the swale areas.*