

City of Virginia Beach
Development Services Center
DSC INFORMATION NOTICE #84
December 19, 2001

TOPIC: *Recent Amendments to City Zoning Ordinance (CZO)*

BACKGROUND:

Citizens are concerned about the changing character of several neighborhoods in the City due to the construction of large “box-like” single-family and duplex structures. Several amendments to the City Zoning Ordinance (CZO) were recently approved to reduce the building mass and impervious cover in the R-5R Residential District. In addition, the rear yard setback for duplexes and semi-detached dwelling structures in the R-5R Residential District were increased. Rear and side yard setbacks for accessory structures, 150 square feet or less, were reduced in all of the residential districts.

ITEM #1: *Rear and Side Yard Setbacks for Some Accessory Structures*

The minimum rear and side yard setbacks for accessory structures 150 square feet or less and eight (8) feet in height or less (measured from the eaves) were reduced to five (5) feet when not adjacent to a street or body of water. The previous minimum setbacks for all accessory structures varied from twenty (20) to five (5) feet in the various residential districts. Larger accessory structures still require the previous setback distances. Please remember, all accessory structures, regardless of size, must adhere to the appropriate setback.

ITEM #2: *Floor Area and Garages Greater Than 500 Square Feet in the R-5R Residential District for Single-Family Dwellings*

The area of a garage, in excess of 500 square feet, is now considered as “floor area” when computing the allowable lot coverage for single-family structures in the R-5R Residential District.

Example:

Lot size: 5,000 square feet

Allowable Lot Coverage: lot size (5,000 square feet) x 35% = 1,750 square feet

Allowable floor area: allowable lot coverage (1,750 square feet) x 200% = 3,500 square feet

Proposed structure’s “floor area” must be equal to or less than 3,500 square feet.

“Floor area”: as defined in Section 111 of the City Zoning Ordinance plus the area of the garage over 500 square feet

ITEM #3: *Impervious Cover for Single-Family Lots in the R-5R Residential District*

The maximum impervious cover for all lots in the R-5R Residential District is 60% in any watershed. The definition for “maximum impervious cover” is found in Section 103 of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Ordinance.

ITEM #4: Duplex and Semi-Detached Dwellings in the R-5R Residential District

A new chart listing the dimensional requirements for duplex and semi-detached dwellings in the R-5R Residential District was adopted. The following changes are found in this new listing:

- A. The minimum rear yard setback was increased from 10 feet to 20 feet.
- B. The square footage of the garages in the duplex or semi-detached structures (includes both units), in excess of 1,000 square feet, is considered as “floor area” when computing allowable lot coverage. See ITEM #2 for example of calculation.
- C. The maximum impervious cover for each lot, as defined in Section 103 of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Ordinance, is 60%.

Example:

Total lot area or lot size: 10,000 square feet

Allowable impervious cover: 10,000 square feet x 60% = 6,000 square feet

ITEM #5: Site Plan Requirements

When submitting duplex site plans for site plan review to the Development Services Center (DSC), the following requirements must be provided:

- A. architectural plans with the “floor area” calculations; and
- B. impervious area cover calculations for the lot.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 27, 2001

CONTACTS:

City Zoning Ordinance Amendments

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