Building in the Town of Vienna

Single-Family Detached Dwellings

Prepared by the Department of Planning and Zoning, March 2018
127 Center Street South, Vienna, VA 22180
Building Height

Building height is calculated by subtracting the average front grade of the building from the peak ridge elevation. The building height of any building cannot be more than 35 feet high. A sample building height calculation is shown above. It is important to note that this differs from Fairfax County’s building height calculation.

Make sure that the building height on the grading plan matches the building height on the architectural plans. The grading plans and architectural plans must match in all dimensional aspects. It is strongly advised that the proposed building height not be too close to the maximum of 35 feet since there is no room for margin of error.

Lot Deviation

Be sure to include both the existing and proposed lot elevations around the entire building footprint and show the lot deviation (proposed elevation minus the existing elevation). This can be shown and often is shown in tabular form. The Town of Vienna Code dictates that no lot deviation can exceed plus or minus 3 feet. An example of a lot deviation table is shown below.

More information on building height/lot grade can be found online at [http://www.viennava.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1852](http://www.viennava.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1852).
Zoning Setbacks

All zoning setbacks should be shown on the site plan/grading plan as a Building Restriction Line (BRL). Each zone has different zoning setbacks and regulations. They can be found on the accompanying PDF (http://www.viennava.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/218) or in the Town Code (http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=14916). Several more commonly used residential setbacks and regulations are also included on Page 4. Make sure setbacks are shown from the front of the home to the front property line, rear of the home to the rear property line, as well as sides or corners of the home to the corner/side property lines.

There are several exceptions in regards to setbacks and they are listed below.

Sec. 18-167. - How far carport may project into side yard.

An unenclosed carport or garage may project into a required side yard for a distance not to exceed five feet; provided, however, that any yard on the side street of a corner lot shall not be reduced to less than ten feet in width. Notwithstanding the above, any such unenclosed carport or garage permitted to project into a required side yard as set forth in this chapter shall be single story, not to exceed 14 feet.

Sec. 18-168. - Porches; projection into required yard area prohibited.

Any one-story or two-story enclosed or unenclosed porch shall be considered a part of the building in the determination of the size of any yard and shall not project into any required front, side, or rear yard.

Sec. 18-169. - Bay windows, eaves, decks and other architectural features.

A. The space in any required yard shall be open and unobstructed except for:

1. The ordinary projections of minor architectural features in the form of window sills, belt courses, cornices, eaves, steps, and chimneys, and accessibility improvements such as basement areaways and window wells, provided such features shall not project more than four feet into any required yard;

2. The projection of major architectural features such as bay windows, box windows, cantilevered floor areas, oriel, and other such features as determined in the sole and reasonable discretion of the zoning administrator, provided that such features shall not project more than two and one-half feet into any required yard, or exceed two stories in height or ten feet in length. Additionally, the combined length of all such features shall not exceed one-third of the total length of the building façade upon which they are placed; and

3. Decks, which shall not project more than four feet into any required yard, except as specified for rear yards in the RS-16, RS-12.5, RS-10 and RTH zones.
# Zoning Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN ZONING DISTRICT</th>
<th>SETBACKS (in feet)</th>
<th>MAXIMUM HEIGHT LIMIT</th>
<th>MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FRONT</td>
<td>SIDE/CORNER</td>
<td>REAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS-10</td>
<td>A. Minimum of 50 feet from centerline (C/L) if street right-of-way is of &quot;variable width&quot; or is less than 50 feet in total width</td>
<td>12&quot; / 25</td>
<td>35 feet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. 25 feet from street line if right-of-way is 50 feet or greater in width</td>
<td>*Minimum setback of 40 feet for buildings other than dwelling and accessory buildings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS-12.5</td>
<td>A. Minimum of 55 from C/L;</td>
<td>15&quot; / 25</td>
<td>35 feet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. 30 feet from street line if right-of-way is 50 feet or greater in width</td>
<td>*Minimum of 30 feet for buildings other than dwellings and accessory buildings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RS-16</td>
<td>A. Minimum of 60 from C/L;</td>
<td>15&quot; / 25</td>
<td>35 feet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. 35 feet from street line if right-of-way is 50 feet or greater in width</td>
<td>*Minimum of 30 feet for buildings other than dwellings and accessory buildings</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lot Coverage

The Town of Vienna has strict lot coverage regulations for residential development. The Town Code states that only 25% of the lot can be covered in residential zones RS-10, RS-12.5 and RS-16. Lot coverage includes the area of buildings, accessory buildings, automobile parking spaces and access, sport courts, tennis courts, patios and terraces. Areaways, window wells, steps, lead walkways, fireplaces, chimneys and any cantilevered features are not included in lot coverage. Lot coverage should be listed and broken down by the different features on the grading plan. Please note that lot coverage calculations are different from impervious surface area calculations. Impervious surface area calculations should also be included on the grading plan and includes all impervious surfaces.

Deck Coverage

Decks have their own separate deck coverage calculations. Decks can only take up 5% of the entire lot area. Deck coverage does not include steps. Like the lot coverage calculations, the deck coverage calculations must be shown on the site/grading plan. Examples of lot coverage and deck coverage calculations are shown below.

**Example Lot Coverage**

- House: 2,274 Sq. Ft.
- Porch: 175 Sq. Ft.
- Driveway: 710 Sq. Ft.
- Shed: 120 Sq. Ft.
- Patio: 164 Sq. Ft.

Total: 3,443 Sq. Ft.

Lot Coverage: $\frac{3,443}{20,000} = 17.22\%$

**Example Deck Coverage**

- Deck: 301.5 Sq. Ft.

Total: 301.5 Sq. Ft.

Deck Coverage: $\frac{301.5}{20,000} = 1.51\%$
Submitting Plans

Beginning June 9, 2017, Fairfax County and the Town of Vienna will allow for concurrent processing of Infill Lot Plans and Lot Grading Plans. The new process will begin with the submission of an application at the County’s Permit Application Center, with typical minimum submission requirements for a new single family detached dwelling; the application will be processed and after payment of the filing fee, architectural plans can immediately be submitted to the County for review. At the same time applicants will need to submit all required electronic documents, per Vienna LTI 16-006 Dated August 22, 2016, to the Town of Vienna (buildingpermitreview@viennava.gov) for review. Once the Town of Vienna has approved the site related plan set, the Town will stamp the plan set electronically and submit an electronic approval to the County Building Division.

Please note that demolition building permits and construction building permits for single family detached dwellings will now track simultaneously under the same plan set and be approved simultaneously. However there will still be separate permits. If the applicant wishes to have a demolition permit approved prior to the construction building permit, the applicant will have to apply for an Agreement in Lieu of Plan.

LTI 16-006

Beginning September 1, 2016 the Town of Vienna will be changing our administrative procedures for Infill Lot Plans and Lot Grading Plans. In order to cut down on paper waste and applicant paper costs, the Town will only accept digital PDF copies of the Civil and Architectural plans and County Building Permit at initial plan submission and all subsequent resubmittals.

Note that infill lot permit applications will not be considered as fully submitted and accepted applications until digital plans and all associated applications and materials are submitted.

File names must be in the following format:

- **Permit Application**: Site Address - Demo Permit.pdf
  - Example: 111 Harmony Dr SE - Demo Permit.pdf

- **Demo Plan**: Site Address Demo Submission #.pdf
  - Example: 111 Harmony Dr SE – Demo - Submission 3.pdf

- **NSFD Plan**: Site Address – NSFD - Submission #.pdf
  - Example: 111 Harmony Dr SE – NSFD - Submission 3.pdf

All emails have to be less than 15 mb in size or the emails containing the PDF files will be rejected by the system.

**Fees**

Demolition applications have a set fee of $75.00.
New construction applications have a set fee of $550.00.
Residential Certification of Occupancy Procedure

1. Complete the top portion and signature box of an application for a Certificate of Occupancy (available in the Planning and Zoning Office or online at the forms and applications website http://www.viennava.gov/index.aspx?NID=268) and return to the Planning and Zoning Office.

2. Before construction proceeds above the foundation, hire a licensed land surveyor or registered engineer to produce a Wall Check survey and submit 2 copies of this plat to the Planning and Zoning Office. The Wall Check survey needs to show the footprint of the house (and all other buildings on the lot) and the height, or elevation, of the foundation wall.

3. Submit a scaled front elevation drawing showing the average front grade and the peak elevation (to verify building height in accordance with the Town Code). Call (703) 255-6341 to schedule an appointment for field check of height measurement.

4. Once construction is complete, obtain a Final Survey from a licensed land surveyor or registered engineer and submit 3 copies of this plat to the Planning and Zoning Office. This survey must show the exact location and height of the completed building, accessory buildings, and all other improvements, plus all driveways and parking areas and the composition of each. It must also include the BRL, lot coverage calculation, IPR or IPS, and environmental features such as RPA, RMA and Floodplain Boundaries. The plat shall also include a lot deviation calculation showing that the final lot grades have not deviated more than three feet from the existing grade.

5. If a SWM facility is being built with the project, a construction record drawing of the permanent stormwater management facilities shall be submitted for review and approval to the director of Public Works prior final occupancy. The construction record drawing shall be appropriately sealed and signed by a professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, certifying that the stormwater management facilities have been constructed in accordance with the approved plan. Provide documentation that the Stormwater Management Maintenance and Inspection Agreement have been recorded with the land records at the County. If Nutrient Credits are being purchased in lieu of a SWM facility, provide a receipt of purchase to show that the Nutrient Credits have been obtained.

6. Check to ensure that all final steps of construction have been taken as required by the Department of Public Works, Department of Parks and Recreation and Department of Planning and Zoning, including the planting of grass seed or sod, trees and pavement of the driveway in a permanent surface. NOTE: If this new dwelling is part of a newly approved subdivision, all public improvements must be installed prior to final approval by the Town (and subsequent issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy).

7. Call the Planning and Zoning Office once Fairfax County final inspections are completed. (Please note that 24 hours prior notice to inspection must be given.) For new residential dwellings, and prior to this “as-built” in-field inspection, an inspection fee of $400.00 will be charged.

8. The Town of Vienna Zoning Inspector will inspect and get the signatures off the panel box. For those properties within a Resource Management Area (RMA) or a Resource Protection Area (RPA), an inspection will also be required to determine if Best Management Practices (BMPs) comply with the Water Quality Impact Assessment (WQIA).

9. A PDF scan of the approved (signed by the Town) site plan is to be provided to the town by email, CD or other means of electronic transfer prior the occupancy permit is approved. Email plans to DPW.Plans@viennava.gov

10. Allow at least 3-5 business days from the submission of the Final Survey and completion of all inspections for the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy (application fee is $75.00).
Tips

1. Scales on Grading Plans and Architectural Plans must be accurate.

2. The building footprint dimensions on the site plans/grading plans and the dimensions of the floor plans on the architectural plans must match. Building heights must also match.

3. Please show square footage calculations of each floor on the architectural plans.

4. Lot coverage, setbacks and building heights are inspected by Zoning Inspectors. Make sure everything is in compliance with the Town of Vienna Code.

5. Make sure line weights on the drawings are appropriately scaled and legible. Do not clutter plans with unnecessary information. Use thicker line weights for proposed features (house footprint, etc.) and create a separate landscape plan if the plan is too busy.

6. Separate sheets are suggested for grading plans, demo plans, landscape plans and E&S plans.

7. Draw and label all window wells, chimneys, fireplaces and cantilevered areas on site plans.


9. Please consult the Town of Vienna Code (http://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=14916) or contact the Department of Planning and Zoning if you are unsure or have questions regarding any zoning regulations (703-255-6341).

10. When plans are approved and picked up please read through all attached paper work. This includes regulations on temporary signs, inspection requirements and the residential certificate of occupancy.

11. During all construction phases keep the yards clean and make sure the grass is maintained and kept below 6 inches.

12. Adhere to the Town of Vienna Noise Ordinance, Section 10-20.1 which states that “the making, creation or maintenance of excessive, unnecessary or unusual loud noises, unusual and unnatural in their time and place and which disturb the usual peace, quietude, tranquility and normal enjoyable use of any residential area are detrimental to the public health, safety, convenience, welfare and prosperity of the residents of the Town of Vienna and constitute a public nuisance.”

13. Any construction taking place between 8 PM and 7 AM Monday through Friday and 8 PM and 9 AM Saturday, Sunday and Holidays shall be considered a public nuisance with enforcement provided by the Town’s Police Department. In addition please be reminded that no work by contractors shall be permitted at all on Sundays.

14. Fence permit applications need to be filed separately from the Single Family Dwelling permits.

15. Additional information can be found on the Building Permit Brochure (http://www.viennava.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/220).

16. The Town’s Zoning Map and other maps, which may provide assistance, can be found online (http://www.viennava.gov/index.aspx?nid=271).