

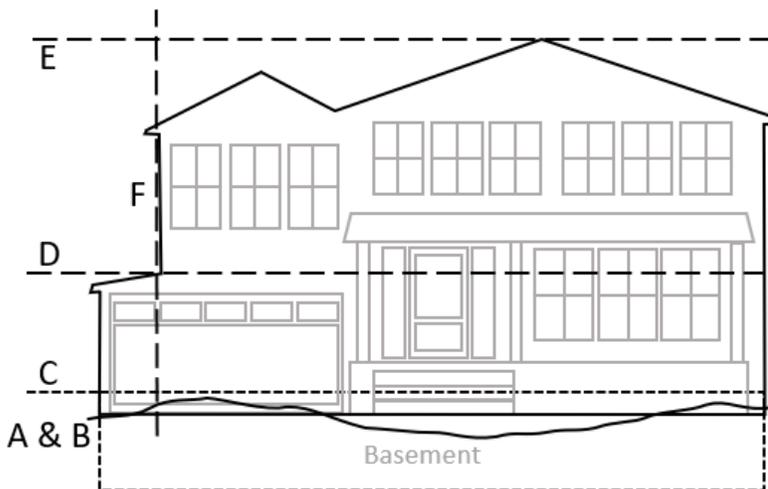
# TOWN OF VIENNA | STRUCTURE HEIGHT & BASEMENT DETERMINATION FOR RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

The building height of any single-family structure cannot exceed **35 feet** or **2 ½ stories** in height. When applying for a permit to increase the footprint and/or height of an existing home, or construct a new home, analysis must be provided showing the proposed structure meets the zoning code for structure height, garage encroachment height, and basement determination. This analysis is done using elevation points on a plat created by a licensed surveyor (Town Code Sec. 18-217 to 18-219).

## WHY A LICENSED SURVEYOR?

Working with your building professional, a surveyor will provide you with the data required to complete the zoning analysis:

- A) The grade, and proposed grade, elevations where the land meets the foundation of the house;
- B) The Average Front Grade based on the grade points on the house facing the front setback;
- C) The elevation of the basement ceiling;
- D) The elevation of the garage roof at the peak height within the side yard setback;
- E) The highest peak of the structure roof;
- F) All zoning setbacks and the location of the setback intersecting the garage.



## CHANGES TO THE EXISTING GRADE

Town Code, Sec. 18-902 Definitions. *Finished lot grade means the finished surface of ground abutting a building or structure.* Sec. 18-211 prohibits the modification of the grade of a lot beyond the natural lay of the land or greater than 3 feet in either direction. If the grade is proposed to change around the foundation of the house, the calculations are done from the proposed grade. The deviation between the proposed and existing grade must be shown on the survey.

## BASEMENT OR 1<sup>ST</sup> STORY?

By Town Code, Sec. 18-212 Structure Dimensions. *Basement*, a basement is partially or wholly underground and not considered a story. The space shall be considered a story and not a basement if the space is exposed more than an average of seven (7) feet from proposed grade points around the footprint of the building to the next floor elevation. If the first level of a home does not qualify as a basement, it is one of the 2 and ½ stories allowed. This is common with additions over existing homes.

## GARAGE HEIGHT

Open carports and garages are permitted to encroach into the side yard setback per Town Code Sec. 18-215.5 - How far carport may project into side yard. Within the setback, the garage cannot exceed 14' in height from the Average Front Grade. The survey must show where the setback intersects the garage. No living space can be located within the setback above or within the garage encroachment.

## STRUCTURE HEIGHT

Per Sec. 18-212-1.A – Building Height – For Principle Structures building height is the maximum vertical dimension measured from the average finished lot grade at the front of the principle building to the highest point of the roof.



TOWN OF  
**VIENNA**  
Virginia

## Department of Planning and Zoning

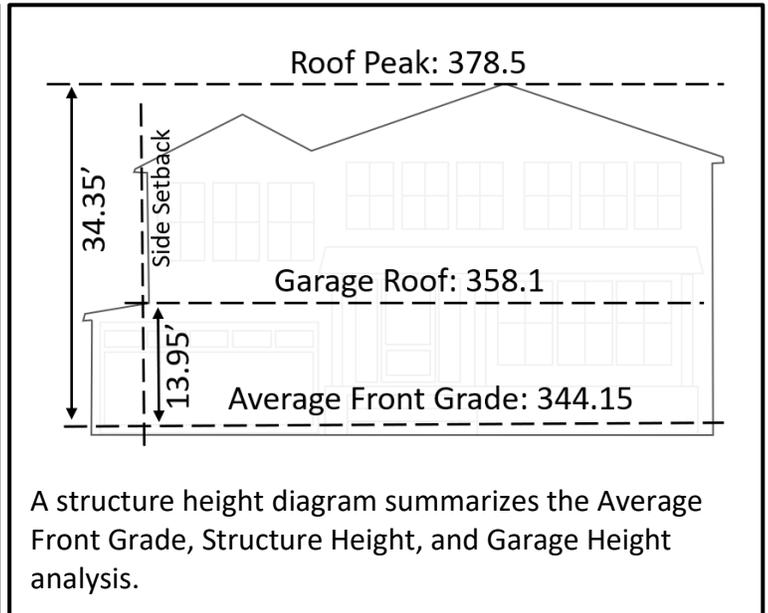
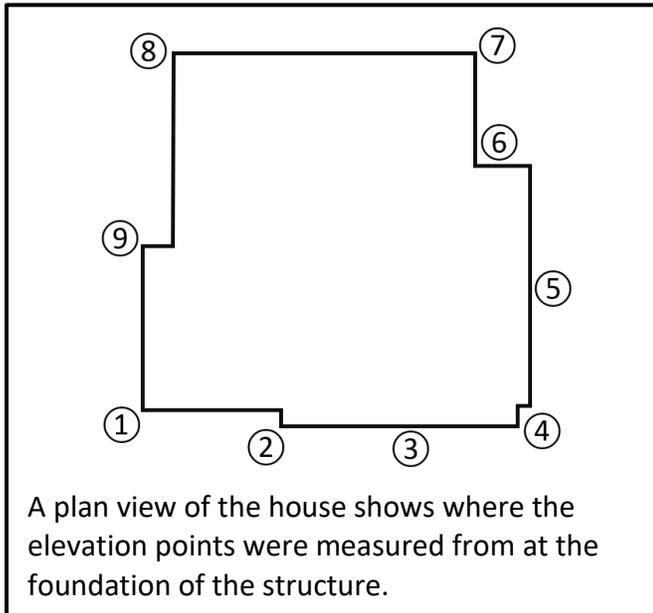
127 Center St. South | Vienna, VA 22180

Phone: 703-255-6341 | Email: [DPZ@viennava.gov](mailto:DPZ@viennava.gov) | [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov)

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## SAMPLE LOT DEVIATION, BUILDING HEIGHT & BASEMENT ANALYSIS

The analysis below demonstrates the addition as proposed would meet all of the code requirements. The basement does not count as a story, the height is not greater than 35' from Average Grade to the Peak of the roof, the garage does not exceed 14' in height within the setback, and the lot grade has not deviated more than 3' feet in one spot.



Lot Deviation			
	Existing Elevation	Proposed Elevation	Difference
1	344	344	0.00
2	344	344.5	0.50
3	341.2	344.2	3.00
4	342	343.9	1.90
5	336.9	339	2.10
6	337	338	1.00
7	338	338	0.00
8	337	338	1.00
9	342	341.5	-0.50

Basement Determination			
	Proposed Elevation	Basement Ceiling	Difference
1	344	347	3.00
2	344.5	347	2.50
3	344.2	347	2.80
4	343.9	347	3.10
5	339	347	8.00
6	338	347	9.00
7	338	347	9.00
8	338	347	9.00
9	341.5	347	5.50
<b>Average of Difference:</b>			5.77

Structure & Garage Height		
		Proposed Elevation
	1	344
	2	344.5
	3	344.2
	4	343.9
Average Front Grade:		344.15
Peak Roof Grade:		378.5
Structure Height:		34.35

<b>Average Front Grade:</b>	344.15
<b>Garage Roof Grade:</b>	358.1
<b>Garage Height:</b>	13.95

Questions? Contact Planning and Zoning at [DPZ@viennava.gov](mailto:DPZ@viennava.gov).



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