

# Part 4. Building Envelope Standards

## 401. Introduction

- A. The BUILDING ENVELOPE STANDARDS (BES) establish both the limitations and specific requirements for building form and frontages.
- B. The form and function controls work together to create the STREET-SPACE while allowing the building design greater latitude behind the façades.

## 402. General Standards

The following regulations apply to all BES, unless expressly stated otherwise within an individual BES or on the REGULATING PLAN.

### A. Transitions

When the BES designation changes along the STREET-SPACE FRONTAGE or at the BLOCK CORNER within a DEVELOPMENT PROJECT or BES SITE, the applicant has the option of applying either BES for a maximum additional distance of 50 feet along that STREET-SPACE FRONTAGE or around that BLOCK CORNER.

### B. Façade Composition

1. The average length of the COMPLETE AND DISCRETE VERTICAL FACADE COMPOSITIONS along a FAÇADE on a BLOCK FACE shall be no more than 100 feet for Urban Mixed-Use and Urban Residential frontages, and 120 feet for Townhouse/Small Apartment frontages. DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS with STREET-SPACE frontage of less than 120 feet on a BLOCK FACE are exempted from the COMPLETE AND DISCRETE VERTICAL FACADE COMPOSITION requirement for that BLOCK FACE. Provided, however, that the COMPLETE AND DISCRETE VERTICAL FACADE COMPOSITIONS maximum length requirements above do not apply to buildings within ADJACENT TO CONSERVATION AREAS.
2. The average distance between STREET-SPACE entry doors shall be no greater than 60 feet for each FACADE. Provided, however, that each COMPLETE AND DISCRETE VERTICAL FACADE COMPOSITION shall include at least one functioning entry door from the STREET-SPACE.
  - a. The County Board may modify the interval between STREET-SPACE entry doors specified in 402.B.2 above, for certain uses located on the GROUND STORY. Such uses are identified by a reference to the Form Based Code in the “ACZO and N-FBC Use Standards” column of the Building Use Table provided in Section 901, and subject to approval of a use permit, as provided in ACZO §15.4. Such modifications may only be allowed where, in addition to meeting the requirements of ACZO §15.4, the County Board finds that the proposed modifications can be retrofitted to meet standard requirements when the subject use is discontinued and are otherwise consistent with the intent of the Form Based Code. <sup>5</sup>

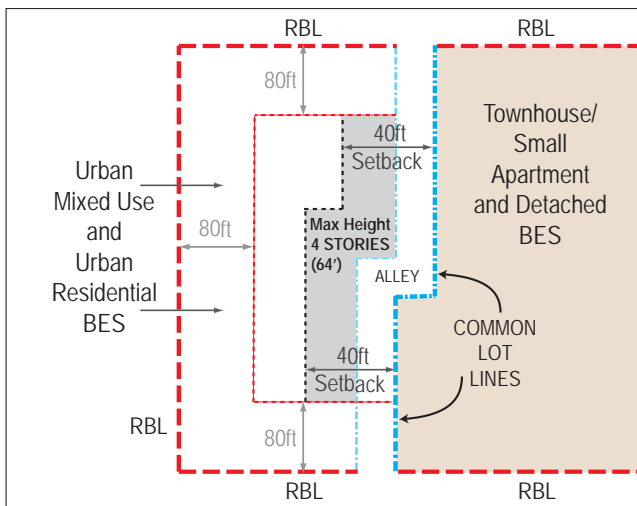
*N-FBC-5: Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Form Based Code Amendment adopted on December 15, 2015*

### C. Building Size

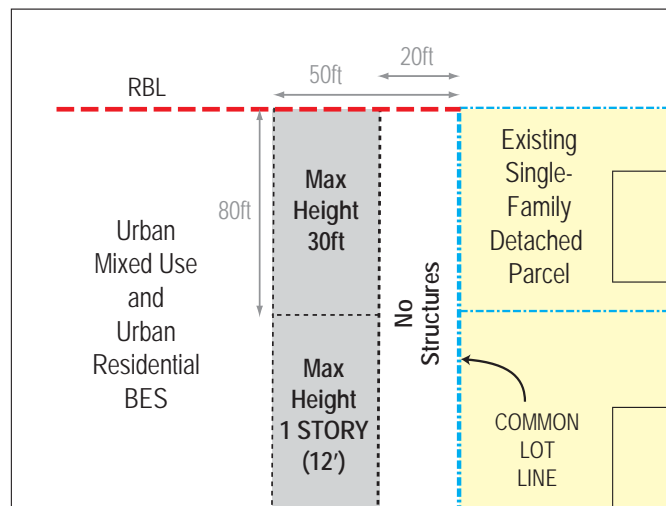
1. The maximum footprint for a building other than a parking structure is 25,000 gross square feet.
2. The maximum continuous FACADE along a single RBL is 200 feet.

### D. Neighborhood Manners

1. For URBAN MIXED-USE and URBAN RESIDENTIAL frontages, the following apply to the BES SITE:
  - a. Where a BES Site has a common lot line with a Small Apartment Building/Townhouse BES or Detached BES, and where any portion of a structure is more than 80 feet from any RBL and less than 40 feet from any COMMON LOT LINE, that portion of the structure shall have a maximum height of 4 STORIES and an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT of 64 feet. (See *diagram 402.D.1.a.*)
  - b. Where a BES SITE has a COMMON LOT LINE with a lot in an R-district or with an RA district occupied by a one-family detached dwelling:
    - (i) There shall be a setback of at least 20 feet from the COMMON LOT LINE. (See *diagram 402.D.1.b.*);
    - (ii) Where any portion of structure is within 50 feet of the COMMON LOT LINE, and within 80 feet of any RBL, that portion of the structure shall have an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT of 30 feet. This requirement supersedes any applicable minimum STORY requirement. (See *diagram 402.D.1.b.*);
    - (iii) Where any portion of a structure is more than 80 feet from any RBL and within 50 feet of the COMMON LOT LINE, that portion of the structure shall have a maximum height of 1 STORY with an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT OF 12 feet. (See *diagram 402.D.1.b.*); and



402.D.1.a.



402.D.1.b.

- (iv) A GARDEN WALL at least 6 feet in height shall be constructed within one foot of the entire length of the COMMON LOT LINE.
2. For TOWNHOUSES and SMALL APARTMENT frontages, the following apply where a BES SITE has a COMMON LOT LINE with a lot in an R district:
    - a. A setback of at least 20 feet from the COMMON LOT LINE adjacent to the R district shall be provided, unless an ALLEY, 26-feet-wide, is provided.
    - b. A PRIVACY FENCE, as specified in the TOWNHOUSE/SMALL APARTMENT BUILDING BES, shall be provided along the COMMON LOT LINE and shall be constructed of opaque materials.
    - c. Where a TOWNHOUSE is on a lot within 30 feet of the COMMON LOT LINE, that TOWNHOUSE shall have a maximum height of 2 STORIES with an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT of 32 feet.
    - d. Where any portion of a SMALL APARTMENT BUILDING is within 40 feet of the COMMON LOT LINE that portion of the SMALL APARTMENT BUILDING shall have a maximum height of 2 STORIES with an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT of 32 feet.
  3. For BES SITES in ADJACENT TO CONSERVATION AREAS:
    - a. There shall be a setback of at least 20 feet from walls of the existing buildings within the CONSERVATION AREA; and
    - b. Where any portion of a structure is within 50 feet of the walls of existing buildings within the CONSERVATION AREA that portion of the structure shall have an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT of 30 feet.

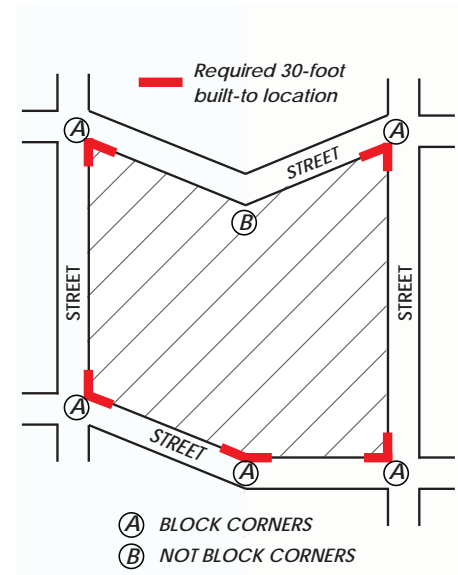
## E. Height

1. The height of all buildings is regulated in STORIES, with an ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT measured in feet. The minimum length and height of the FACADE that is required at the RBL is shown on the appropriate BUILDING ENVELOPE STANDARD.
2. An ATTIC STORY is not included in the ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT measurement or in the maximum STORY limit.
3. Maximum STORY HEIGHTS are used only to determine the ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT. They do not constrain the configuration of individual STORIES. Any individual STORY may exceed the required maximum STORY HEIGHT so long as the ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT is not exceeded, and no individual STORY has less than the required minimum CLEAR HEIGHT.
4. Where any part of a parking structure is located within 30 feet of another building constructed or approved under this Code that portion of the parking structure shall be no taller than the allowable height for that building's primary roof ridge or parapet height.

5. A MEZZANINE is internally accessible from, and a continuation of, the GROUND STORY use. Any STORY above the GROUND STORY that does not meet the definition of a MEZZANINE shall be considered a STORY.
6. The prescribed minimum CLEAR HEIGHT for an individual STORY shall be met by at least 80 percent of that individual STORY area.
7. The GROUND STORY HEIGHT for URBAN MIXED-USE and URBAN RESIDENTIAL buildings is measured from the average elevation of the fronting CLEAR SIDEWALK to the second STORY floor.
8. Roof access for amenities is permitted. Occupiable space for associated amenities, building code requirements or other common area space are permitted within the penthouse enclosure.

## F. Siting

1. Building FACADES shall be built-to the RBLs as prescribed in the BES.
2. Building FACADES shall be built-to the RBLs within 30 feet of a BLOCK CORNER, unless otherwise specified in the BES. (See diagram 402.F.2).
3. The GROUND STORY finished floor elevation requirements for each use shall be met for all points within 30 feet of any RBL.
4. A STREET WALL shall be required along any RBL frontage that is not otherwise occupied by a FACADE. FENESTRATION requirements shall apply to STREET WALLS.
5. The RBL incorporates an offset area (or depth) of 30 inches behind that line (into the BUILDABLE AREA) allowing for jogs, FAÇADE articulation (detail and composition), etc. unless otherwise designated herein. Therefore, where the FACADE is placed within that 30-inch zone, it is considered to be “built to” the RBL.
6. No part of any building may be located outside of the BUILDABLE AREA except overhanging eaves, AWNINGS, SHOPFRONTS, BAY WINDOWS, STOOPS, steps, BALCONIES, CANOPIES, or ramps. STOOPS, steps and ramps shall not be located within the CLEAR SIDEWALK. For appropriate COMMERCE and RETAIL uses, in addition to the above elements otherwise permitted, temporary displays or cafe seating may be placed within the DOORYARD.
7. No part of any building may be located outside of any designated LOT BUILDING LIMIT except overhanging eaves, BAY WINDOWS or SOLAR SHADES, or CANOPIES. Where designated on the REGULATING PLAN, the LOT BUILDING LIMIT shall delineate the minimum setback, superseding the minimum setback identified in the subject BES.
8. There is no required setback from ALLEYS except as otherwise indicated in the BES. For locations identified on the REGULATING PLAN for future ALLEY construction, a minimum 13-foot wide area along the width of the rear of the lot shall be preserved for future alley construction and shall be maintained in a clean condition. The developer shall dedicate an easement for purposes of the future



402.F.2.

shared alley, with easement dedication, to serve DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS along either side of the future alley.

9. The PARKING SETBACK LINE is 30 feet behind the RBL and extends, vertically from the first floor level as a plane, unless otherwise indicated on the REGULATING PLAN or in the BES. Vehicle parking shall be located behind the PARKING SETBACK LINE, except where parking is provided below grade, on-street, or as otherwise indicated on the REGULATING PLAN or in the BES.
10. CORNER LOTS and through lots shall satisfy the build-to requirements for all RBL frontages, and the DOORYARD, FRONT YARD and PRIVATE OPEN AREA requirements for each designated BES, and shall meet the BUILDABLE AREA restrictions for each designated BES. For such lots, garbage bins and pick-up locations and loading docks shall be located behind the PARKING SETBACK LINE.

## G. Private Open Area

1. Any required PRIVATE OPEN AREA shall have at least 1 tree per 800 square feet, of at least 3 1/2 inches in diameter at 4 feet above grade and eight feet in overall height. Where new trees are planted to meet this required, they shall be no closer than five feet to any COMMON LOT LINE. Urban Mixed-Use BES SITES that are reusing existing structures with no ground level PRIVATE OPEN AREA are exempt from this requirement.
2. Species must be selected from a list approved by the County's urban forester. Trees listed on the Arlington County's Invasive Species list are prohibited from PRIVATE OPEN AREAS.
3. Any BES SITE that includes either a PUBLIC SPACE or a PRESERVED NATURAL AREA shown on the REGULATING PLAN may reduce the required PRIVATE OPEN AREA by a percent of the total required PUBLIC OPEN AREA. This percentage shall be equal to the percent of the total site area occupied by the required PUBLIC SPACE and/or PRESERVED NATURAL AREA.

## H. Garage and Parking

1. Curb cuts and driveways, except those along ALLEYS, shall be located at least 75 feet away from any BLOCK CORNER or parking GARAGE ENTRY on the same BLOCK face.
2. No DEVELOPMENT PROJECT may create any new curb cuts on Columbia Pike.

## I. Elements

1. No window may face (be at an angle of less than 90 degrees from) a COMMON LOT LINE within 20 feet, or within 10 feet for BES SITES designated as DETACHED, unless:
  - a. The view from that window is screened within the BES SITE, between the window and the COMMON LOT LINE (e.g. by a PRIVACY FENCE or GARDEN WALL), or

- b. The window sill is at least 6 feet above its finished floor level.
2. Neither BALCONIES nor STOOPS may project to within 5 feet of a COMMON LOT LINE. BALCONIES may encroach within the public right-of-way.
3. Neither BALCONIES nor STOOPS shall be enclosed above a height of 44 inches from their floor, except with insect screening and/or columns/posts supporting a roof or connecting with a BALCONY above. BALCONIES may be a single floor platform or multiple platforms stacked at the upper STORY levels. In order to be counted towards the required PRIVATE OPEN AREA, a BALCONY shall have a minimum occupiable area of 40 square feet, with no dimension less than 5 feet.
4. ATTIC STORIES are permitted within all BES frontages. On the RBL/FACADE side of the roof-pitch (BLOCK interior elevations are not restricted), windows in ATTIC STORIES may be located only in DORMERS and/or windows in gable-ends.
5. At least one functioning entry door shall be provided along each GROUND STORY FAÇADE. No GROUND STORY FACADE may include a section greater than 75 feet without a functioning entry door, unless otherwise specified in the BES.
6. PRIVACY FENCES may be constructed along all COMMON LOT LINES, except those that are forward of an RBL, and along ALLEYS. PRIVACY FENCES shall have a maximum height of 7 feet.
7. BAY WINDOWS shall create an opening of between four and eight feet in the main wall and shall project no more than 42 inches beyond the RBL.
8. DORMERS are permitted so long as they do not break the primary eave line, are individually less than 15 feet wide, and their collective width is not more than 60 percent of the REQUIRED BUILDING LINE FAÇADE length. DORMERS do not constitute a STORY when they meet the foregoing standards.
9. GROUND STORY AWNINGS and CANOPIES shall maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 4 feet from any point where the TREE LAWN meets the CLEAR SIDEWALK and shall maintain a CLEAR HEIGHT of at least 10 feet above the CLEAR SIDEWALK.
10. All FRONT PORCHES shall be completely covered, either by a roof, or by being inset into the main body of the building. FRONT PORCHES may be screened when all architectural elements (columns, railings, etc.) occur on the outside of the screen on the side facing the STREET-SPACE. The finished FRONT PORCH floor height shall be no more than 8 inches below the first interior finished floor level of the building to which it is attached. FRONT PORCHES shall not extend past the DOORYARD into the CLEAR SIDEWALK.

11. The finished STOOP floor height shall be no more than 8 inches below the first interior finished floor level of the building to which it is attached. STOOPS shall not extend past the DOORYARD into the CLEAR SIDEWALK.

## J. Building Functions

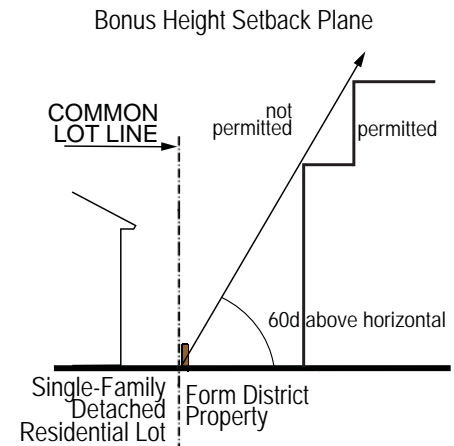
Allowable uses for GROUND STORIES and upper STORIES are identified in all BES. Additional use standards are provided in *Part. 8 Building Use Standards*.

## K. Civic Buildings <sup>5</sup>

Publicly-owned CIVIC BUILDINGS are exempt from *Part 6. Architectural Standards* and this *Part 4* except for *402.D. Neighborhood Manners* and all other regulations applicable to lots in an R district or in an RA district occupied by a one-family detached dwelling.

## L. Bonus Height

1. Where a property has been identified on the REGULATING PLAN as a BONUS AREA, it is eligible for approval to exceed the maximum STORY limit and ULTIMATE BUILDING HEIGHT identified in the relevant BES in exchange for AFFORDABLE HOUSING or PUBLIC SPACE. (See *Part 2. Administration*).
2. When approved for bonus STORIES, the FACADE above the BES-prescribed maximum STORY limit shall be set back at least 5 feet from the RBL.
3. Individual bonus STORIES have a maximum STORY HEIGHT of 12 feet.
4. Where a property approved for bonus STORIES shares a COMMON LOT LINE with a lot in an R district or an RA district occupied by a one-family detached dwelling, in addition to the applicable regulations in *D. Neighborhood Manners* above, no part of the building shall exceed the height of a 60 degree plane, measured from grade at the COMMON LOT LINE. (See *diagram 402.L.4.*)



402.L.4.

## 403. Green Building Standards

- A. All Urban Mixed Use and Urban Residential BES SITES shall achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver Certification, except as allowed below.
- B. All Small Apartment, Townhouse, and Detached BES SITES, and for DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS earning Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) affordable housing tax credits, shall achieve LEED Certification, Earthcraft certification (with the Energy Star certification compliance path), or equivalent green building certification. Green Home Choice is permitted for Detached and Townhouse BES SITES.
- C. All proposals that include major\* renovation of existing units in either CONSERVATION AREAS as shown on the REGULATING PLAN, or in other existing buildings proposed to remain, shall achieve Earthcraft certification or LEED certification. (Note: \*Major renovation as defined by Earthcraft to determine eligibility for certification).

*N-FBC-5: Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Form Based Code Amendment adopted on December 15, 2015*

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