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TO: Planning Commission Ordinance Committee
 FROM: Scott Gustin, Principal Planner & Zoning Division Manager
 DATE: March 4, 2021
 RE: Building Height Increments

Overview & Background

This amendment seeks to improve the connection between two existing sections of code pertaining to building height measurement in the Comprehensive Development Ordinance. Specifically, Sec. 5.2.6 (a) 1 A & B note two starting points for measuring a building's height – from the sidewalk or from the average finished grade around the entire building, depending on the distance from the sidewalk. Sec. 5.2.6 (a) 3 specifies increments for building height measurement along the street façade. The relationship between Sec. 5.2.6 (a) 1 A and 3 is clear. A building's height measured from the public sidewalk is done in increments to account for changes in grade along the street façade. The relationship between Sec. 5.2.6 (a) 1 B and 3 is not clear. How does the requirement for height measurement intervals along the street façade(s) relate to the average finished grade around the entire building? This amendment seeks to clarify this relationship. The end result is simply clarification that measurement of building height is done in increments along the street façade(s) in any case.

Proposed Amendment

Amendment Type

Text Amendment	Map Amendment	Text & Map Amendment
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Purpose Statement

The purpose of this amendment is very simple. It seeks to clarify that building height is measured in increments along the street façade, regardless of whether the building height is measured just from the public sidewalk or from the average finished grade around the entire building.

Proposed Amendments

Deleted language is ~~crossed out~~ and new language is underlined in red.

[Begin text amendment]

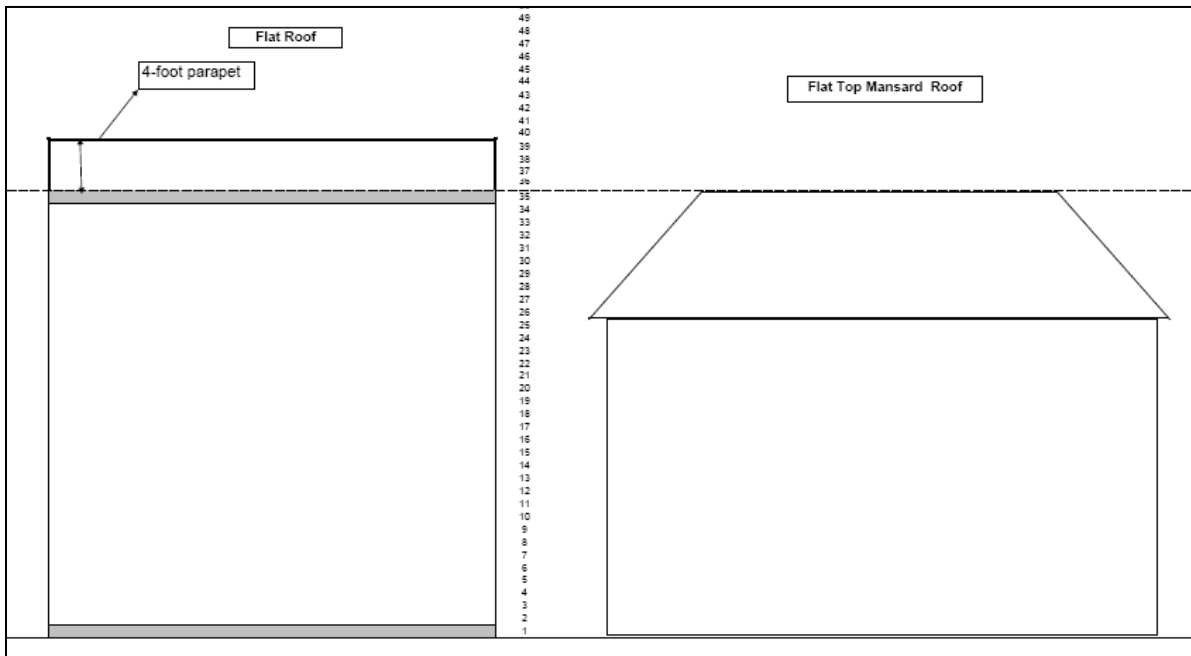
Sec. 5.2.6 Building Height Limits

No structure shall exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height unless otherwise authorized under the district-specific provisions of Article 4:

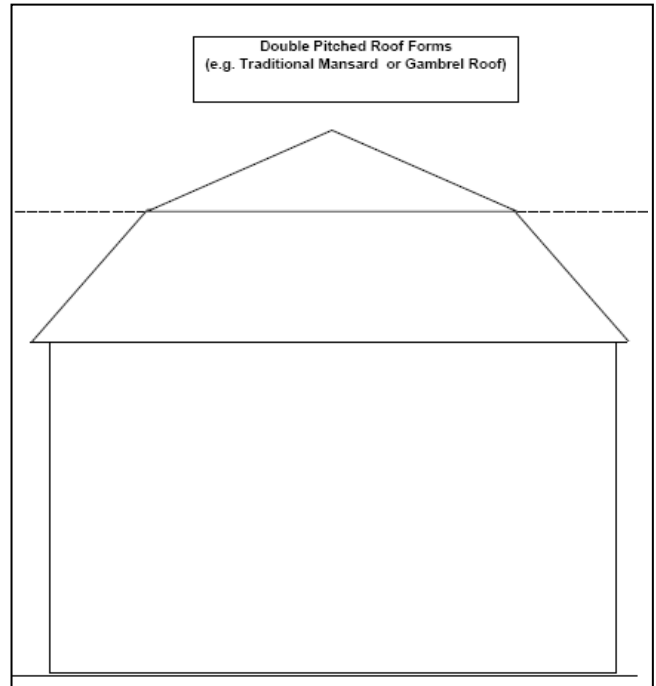
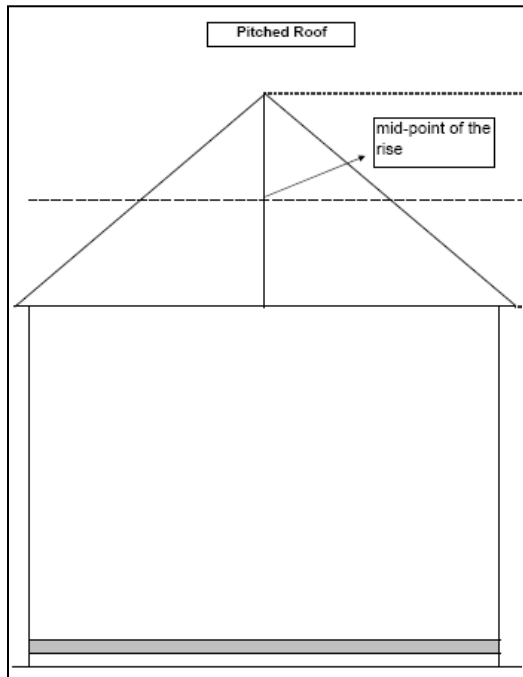
(a) Height Measurement:

The maximum height of any building shall be measured as follows:

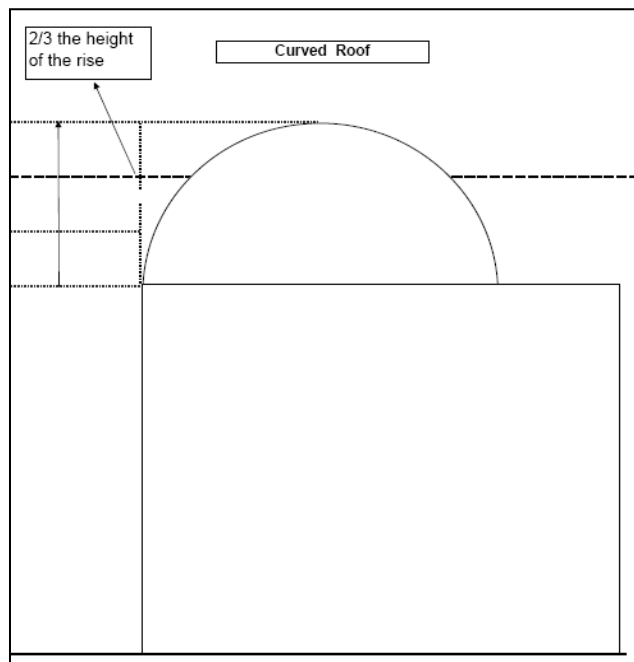
1. Starting Point: Building height shall be measured from:
 - A. a public sidewalk, alley, or other public way where it is within a ~~10~~⁵⁰-foot horizontal distance of an exterior wall on the front of the building; or,
 - B. the average finished grade within a 10-foot horizontal distance of all exterior walls of the building. In cases where a property line is within a 10-foot horizontal distance of an exterior wall, the average grade shall be measured between the property line(s).
2. Ending Point: Building height shall be measured to:
 - A. Flat Roof: the highest point of the decking of a flat or flat-topped mansard roof. A parapet no taller than four (4) feet shall not be considered part of a flat roof for the purposes of measuring building height;



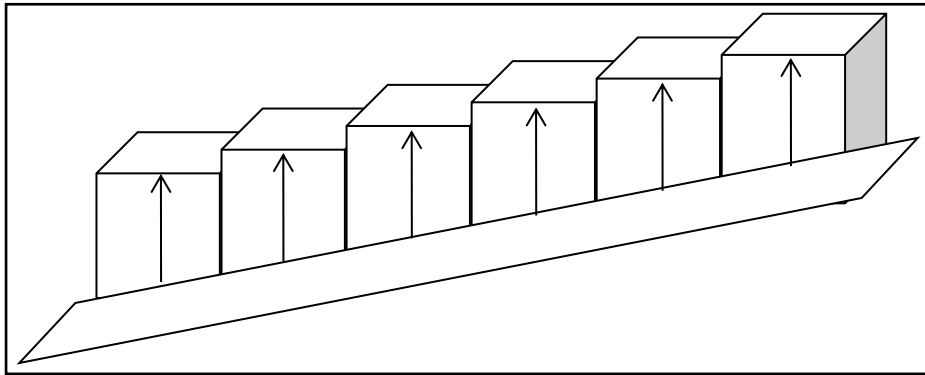
- B. Pitched Roof: the midpoint of the rise between the roofplate and the ridge of the highest gable of a pitched or hipped roof. A double-pitched roof (e.g. gambrel or double-pitched mansard) shall be measured to the roofplate of the highest pitch; or,



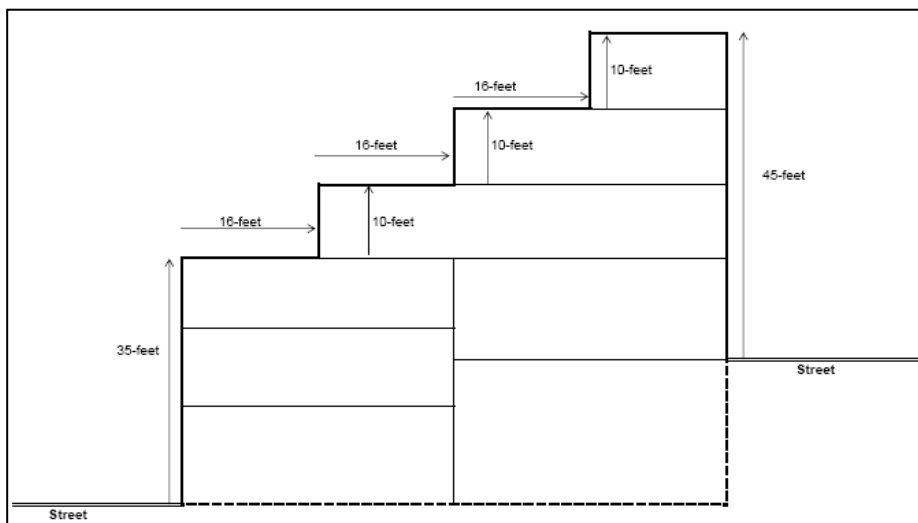
- C. Curved Roof: a point two thirds ($2/3$) the vertical distance from the point at which an exterior wall varies from a 100% slope and to highest point of the roof.



- D. Other Roof Forms: Building height shall be measured as determined by the administrative officer in a manner that most closely reflects the intent of subsections (a) through (c).
3. Measurement Interval: To encourage a variation in building heights relative to terrain changes and encourage a variation in roof form, building height shall be measured along the street façade beginning in increments of no less than 16-feet or more than 32-feet from lowest corner, or where two streets intersect if a corner lot, and at an interval of no less than 32-feet or more than 65-feet for the entire length of the street façade (s). This measurement interval applies when using either height measurement starting point as noted in (a) 1 of this section.



4. Lots Fronting on Two or More Streets: Where a lot, other than a corner lot, fronts on two or more streets, the building height shall be measured along each street façade. Where the streets are at differing elevations, the building height may gradually increase above the maximum height allowed on the lowest street provided that any such additional height along the lowest street shall be set-back a minimum of 16-feet for every 10-feet of additional building height up to the maximum height allowed on the highest street.



5. Illustration: To illustrate height and bulk of the structure, the DRB may require the developer to prepare a scale model, computer visualization, illustrations, or other renderings of the proposed building in context with its surroundings.

[End text amendment]

Relationship to planBTV

This following discussion of conformance with the goals and policies of planBTV is prepared in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §4441(c).

Theme	Dynamic	Distinctive	Inclusive	Connected
Land Use	Conserve	Sustain	Grow	

Compatibility with Proposed Future Land Use & Density

The proposed amendment does not impact the types or density of potential land use and density. It clarifies that building height measurement is done in increments along a building’s street façade(s) in all cases.

Impact on Safe & Affordable Housing

The proposed amendment has no impact on housing safety or affordability.

Planned Community Facilities

The proposed amendment has no impact on planned community facilities.

Process Overview

The following chart summarizes the current stage in the zoning amendment process, and identifies any recommended actions:

Planning Commission Process				
Draft Amendment prepared by: Staff	Presentation to & discussion by Commission	Approve for Public Hearing	Public Hearing	Approved & forwarded to Council
				Continue discussion
City Council Process				
First Read & Referral to Ordinance Cmte	Ordinance Cmte discussion	Ordinance Cmte recommend as modified	Second Read & Public Hearing	CCOC Recommends Approval & Adoption
				Rejected