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**POLICIES/PROCEDURES/INTERPRETATIONS**

**Height of Residential Shore Line Structures**

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**ISSUE:** The method for determining the height of residential shore line structures is different from that of non shore line structures. Additionally, the code language for determination of height is confusing.

**ANALYSIS:** Height of residential shore line structure is regulated by Section 18.50.330 (B) (14) of the SJC

Section 18.50.330 (B) (14) (Regulations – Location and Design) states:

“The maximum permitted height for residential structures is 28 feet. Residential structures are permitted to exceed this height only when the roof has a minimum 6-in-12 pitch which does not extend beyond a maximum height of 35 feet above the existing grade at the base of the structure. Any residential structure which exceeds a height of 35 feet above existing grade, as measured along a plumb line at any point, shall be permitted only as a conditional use. The applicant must demonstrate that the structure will not result in significant adverse visual impacts, nor interfere with normal, public, visual access to the water. The applicant must also demonstrate that there are compensating factors which make a taller structure desirable from the standpoint of the public interest. Artificially created grades to gain height advantages are prohibited.”

Section 18.20.080 (“Height, shoreline”) contains specific methods for measuring buildings within the shoreline areas. This definition defines the height of shoreline structures as being:

“ . . . measured from average grade level to the highest point of a structure; provided, that television antennas, chimneys, and similar appurtenances shall not be used in calculating height, except where they obstruct the view of the shoreline of a substantial number of residences on areas adjoining such shorelines, excluding temporary construction equipment (WAC 173-27-030).”

Section 18.20.070 defines “Grade, average level” as meaning:

“ . . . the average of the natural or existing topography of the lot, parcel or tract of real property which will be directly under the center of all exterior walls of a proposed building or structure.”

**INTERPRETATION:** Based on the above sections it is determined that the maximum height of residential structures within shoreline areas shall be determined by one the following methods:

**Primary Method:**

Regardless of roof slope, the maximum height shall be 28 feet to the highest point of a structure where the height is measured from the average of the existing pre-development grade as determined from the center of the perimeter exterior walls of the proposed structure; provided that the maximum height of any point of the structure does not exceed 35 feet above the existing pre-development grade directly below such point, as measured by a vertical plumb line.

**Alternate Method:**

Where the structure does not comply with the Primary Method and where the roof slope exceeds 6 units vertical to 12 units horizontal, the maximum height may be 35 feet as measured from the base (lowest point above existing grade on the exterior walls) of the structure to the highest point of a structure; provided that the maximum height of any point of the structure does not exceed 35 feet above the existing pre-development grade directly below such point, as measured by a vertical plumb line.

**Conditional Use:**

Any structure which exceeds 35 feet above the existing pre-development grade directly below such point, as measured by vertical plumb line, shall only be approved as a "Conditional Use". Fills or rising of the existing grade are not permitted to provide a height advantage.