



Town Of Chatham
Department of
Community Development



Town Annex 261 George Ryder Road
Chatham, MA 02633

TELEPHONE (508) 945-5168

FAX (508) 945-5163

Memorandum

To: Attorneys, Builders & Design Professionals

From: Jay Briggs, Building Commissioner/Chief Zoning Officer

February 10, 2020

Subject: Required Setbacks and Building Coverage

As you may be aware initial discussions regarding the interpretation of how setbacks and building coverage are calculated began in April of 2018. Discussions with the Zoning Board of Appeals took place in May of 2018 and December of 2019. Attached is my interpretation of the Bylaw dated November 12, 2019. **The effective date which all architectural and site plans submitted to the Community Development Department must comply with this interpretation is April 1, 2020.**



Town Of Chatham
Department of
Community Development



Town Annex 261 George Ryder Road
Chatham, MA 02633

TELEPHONE (508) 945-5168

FAX (508) 945-5163

Memorandum

To: Chatham Zoning Board of Appeals

From: Jay W. Briggs, Building Commissioner *JB*

Date: November 12, 2019

Subject: Required Setbacks and Building Coverage

To ensure consistency and accuracy of plans provided to the Community Development Department, both existing and proposed setbacks to buildings and structures are to be measured to the nearest tenth of a foot (plus or minus distances shall not be allowed on site plans or as-builts). When locating a building on a site plan or as-built the measurement should be taken from the corner boards. Typical eaves, not exceeding two feet, are specifically excluded from setback requirements as identified in Section III.D.3.f. Roof overhangs in excess of two feet shall be required to comply with the applicable setback for the zoning district as noted in Appendix II of the Protective Bylaw.

The building coverage calculation should also be measured from the corner boards rather than the foundation. In order to ensure the consistency of how building coverage is calculated, it shall be based on the sum of the area of exterior walls (measured at the corner boards), including porches and any cantilevered portions of the dwelling above grade level. Typical eaves, not exceeding two feet, shall not be counted towards building coverage. Roof overhangs in excess of two feet shall be counted towards building coverage for areas which have decks, patios, or stoops beneath. Please note that the total depth of the overhang will be looked at in its entirety without exclusion for the first two feet.

The Town's Protective Bylaw defines the following relevant terms:

"SETBACK LINE" to mean the required minimum distance from any property line that establishes the area within which the buildings and structures must be located on a lot.

"BUILDING" means any structure having a roof supported by columns or by walls and intended for the shelter, housing or enclosure of persons, animals or chattel.

"BUILDING COVERAGE" means the buildable upland portion of a lot which is covered by buildings, including porches but excluding parking areas, pools, decks and any other permanent structures which do not have roofs.

"BUILDABLE UPLAND" means a contiguous area of land, exclusive of any land in a Conservancy District as defined herein, and which is not less than four (4) feet above the water table. Groundwater elevations shall be determined by on-site investigations conducted by a licensed engineer or land surveyor and shall be adjusted for seasonal fluctuations using the U.S.G.S. procedure set forth in Estimating Highest Groundwater Levels for Construction and Land Use Planning – Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

"STRUCTURE" means any combination of materials assembled or maintained at a location on or in the ground or attached to something located on the ground, including but not limited to buildings, tennis courts, swimming pools, and retaining walls.

"LOT" means a designated parcel, tract or area of land established by deed, by plan, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law.

To be equitable to citizens and developers, there shall be a grace period from the date of this memorandum. Plans submitted for approval after December 31, 2019, shall be subject to the above requirements.