



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

OVERVIEW

Proposed Lot Line and Lot Width Zoning Ordinance Amendment

What is the Proposed Amendment About?

Minimum lot width is one of the Zoning Ordinance's lot size standards that ensures the orderly development and subdivision of land. The proposed amendment clarifies how lot width is measured on lots that have curved frontage, on through lots, and on reverse frontage lots. The purpose of this amendment is to provide clarity and consistency on the methodology used to determine lot lines and measure lot width.

- **Measuring Lot Width on Lots with Curved Frontage:**

The amendment deletes the portion of the lot line definition which states that “[w]here a lot line is curved, all dimensions related to said lot line shall be based on the chord of the arc”. Based on the lot width definition, lot width is measured at a line parallel to the front lot line at a distance equal to the minimum required front yard. With the proposed deletion to the lot line definition, lot width would be measured at a line parallel to the front lot line at a distance equal to the minimum required front yard on all lots, regardless if the lot frontage has a linear or curvilinear orientation.

- **Measuring Lot Width on Through Lots:**

The amendment clarifies that lot width may be measured from any street line on a through lot. Lot width is reviewed at the time of a lot's creation, which is most frequently at the time of subdivision review and approval. Given that lot width on through lots is based on building orientation and the building orientation is not always known at the time of subdivision, it is not always possible to verify lot width at the time of subdivision approval.

- **Measuring Lot Width on Reverse Frontage Lots:**

A reverse front lot is “[a] residential through or corner lot, intentionally designed so that the front lot line faces a local street rather than facing a parallel major thoroughfare”. The amendment clarifies that lot width is measured in the yard facing the local street on through lots. The current Zoning Ordinance does not clearly state that lot width on a reverse frontage lot is measured from the local street. The proposed amendment would revise the lot width definition to specifically state that lot width on a reverse frontage lot is measured in the yard facing the local street.



Proposed Amendment:

Revise Article 20, Part 3, Definitions by revising the lot line and lot width definitions to read as follows:

LOT LINE: Any boundary line of a LOT ~~as defined herein~~. Where applicable, a lot line ~~shall~~ will coincide with a STREET LINE. ~~Where a lot line is curved, all dimensions related to said lot line shall be based on the chord of the arc.~~

LOT WIDTH: The ~~width of a lot along~~ length of a line parallel to the front street line and lying at a distance from ~~said the~~ street line equal to the required minimum front yard on ~~said the~~ lot.

In the case of a lot ~~which~~ that has an area in excess of five (5) acres, the width may be measured at any point where the minimum lot width is at least 200 feet, provided that such point ~~shall~~ is also ~~be~~ where the front yard is established by location of the principal structure. On reverse frontage lots, lot width is measured in the yard facing the local street. On through lots, lot width may be measured from any street line.

Outreach

- Land Development Services, Site Development and Inspections Division, Technical Forum: 8/28/19
- Board of Supervisor's Development Process Committee: 9/10/19
- Zoning Open House (South County): 9/10/19
- Northern Virginia Building Industry Association/Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NVBIA/NAIOP); Engineers and Surveyor's Institute: 9/19/19
- Planning Commission Land Use Process Review Committee: 10/3/19