

# Article VII – Layout and Design Standards.

## CHAPTER 54 – SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

### Division I – Generally.

#### **Sec. 54-75. – Subdivision Name.**

If a subdivision is proposed to be named, the name shall be clearly stated in the title of the plat. Subdivisions simultaneously creating eleven (11) or more lots shall be required to be named. A subdivision name shall not duplicate, closely resemble, or approximate phonetically the name of any existing subdivision in the County. Changes to any subdivision name shall be subject to review and approval by the Subdivision Agent. Any such change must be recorded in the Circuit Court in a format approvable by the Subdivision Agent.

#### **Sec. 54-76. – Phasing of Development; Development Agreements.**

Any subdivision containing twenty (20) or more lots may be platted, approved, and completed in phases. No phase of development permitted by this section may contain fewer than ten (10) lots. Individual phases shall be subject to the utilities, zoning, plat standards, and other requirements in place at the time of platting, permitting, and/or construction. In situations where said requirements have changed significantly, the Subdivision Agent may enter into a development agreement in lieu of an improvements plan amendment. Such an agreement shall specify what improvements must be completed, the construction details for the improvements, and a reasonable timeframe by which the improvements must be completed. The agreement shall be approved by the Subdivision Agent, the County Attorney, and

recorded in the Circuit Court.

**Sec. 54-77. – Plats Straddling Jurisdictional Boundaries.**

- a. Plats for properties which lie within multiple jurisdictions shall be approved by representatives of all affected jurisdictions. Whenever access to a property is required across land in an adjacent jurisdiction, the owner/subdivider shall demonstrate on the plat that access is legally established and adequately improved to any extent necessary.
- b. In general, lot lines shall be drawn so as not to cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- c. For properties which straddle a boundary between an adjacent county, the Subdivision Agent may approve a plat creating a new lot or modifying an existing lot which results in the lot not meeting the minimum lot standards for the respective zoning district. This is provided that the new or revised lot lines follow the shared county line such that the lot is no longer situated within more than one county.
- d. Where the exact location of the County boundary is ambiguous, the location of the boundary line shall be taken from existing plats of record for adjacent and/or nearby properties in order to establish a linear and consistent record of the line. The Subdivision Agent may allow other means of determining the boundary line location provided such means promote consistency of the boundary line location in the public record.

**Sec. 54-78. – Monumentation.**

As a requisite for completion of a plat, reference monuments shall be set in the field by the surveyor as follows:

- a. *For public road rights-of-way.* Monuments consistent with

the standards of the VDOT Road and Bridge Standards shall be set at every property corner and every change of property line direction.

- b. *For other lot corners and reference points.* Monuments, being iron rods, pipes, or other similar permanent material, shall be set at every property corner, every change of property line direction, and at every reference point as set forth in subsection (c) below.
- c. *Reference monuments.* Where it is not physically feasible to set monuments at property corners, such as with the case of stream meanders, bodies of water, wetlands, prescriptive easements, etc., reference monuments shall be set along the subject property line(s) and marked appropriately on the plat.

**Sec. 54-79. – Waterbodies and Waterways.**

- a. No more than twenty percent (20%) of the area of a lot, so required by this Ordinance and/or the Zoning Ordinance, shall be under water. Lots held in common ownership by a homeowners' association or other owners' association, held by a public entity, or created for stormwater management purposes shall be exempt from this provision.
- b. Lots which contain established FEMA floodplain and/or a mapped dam break inundation zone shall contain enough area outside of the floodplain and/or dam break inundation zone to accommodate a buildable area and associated improvements, or to otherwise be developable. Lots held in common ownership by a homeowners' association or other owners' association, held by a public entity, or created for stormwater management purposes shall be exempt from this provision.
- c. Where a property line is drawn along the course of a waterway, the line shall generally be drawn so as to follow the meandering center of the waterway.

**Sec. 54-80 – 54-85. – Reserved.**

**Division II. – Design and Arrangement of Lots.**

**Sec. 54-86. – Arrangement.**

The arrangement of lots and property lines shall be such that there will be no foreseeable difficulties, related to topography, access, utilities, or other conditions, in securing permits for construction and in providing driveway access. The Subdivision Agent shall have the sole discretion to determine what constitutes a foreseeable difficulty.

**Sec. 54-87. – Lot Size.**

1. Lot sizes shall conform to the minimum standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance, except as provided herein or elsewhere in this Ordinance.
2. Lots created for stormwater management or other utility purposes may be less than the minimum lot size specified in the respective zoning district.
3. For any lot located within two (2) or more zoning districts (i.e. a “split-zoning”), any adjustment of property lines or subdivision shall ensure the area contained within each zoning district on each lot meets the minimum lot size for said district. This is to avoid the creation of an otherwise unusable piece of land.

**Sec. 54-88. – Lot Shape.**

- a. The shape of lots within the Agricultural (A) zoning district shall conform to the following provisions:
  1. The shape of lots six (6) acres in size or less shall generally be rectangular or some reasonable variation thereof as may be permitted by the

Subdivision Agent to overcome a unique topographical situation or other situation not generally affecting adjacent lots. Except for pipestems as provided herein, lots shall not contain unusual elongations to meet minimum area, frontage, or other requirements.

2. Except where may be stated in this Ordinance or elsewhere in this Code, lots larger than six (6) acres shall have no minimum standards for shape.
3. Pipestem lots may be permitted as follows:
  - i. The maximum length of the pipestem portion of the lot shall be seven-hundred and fifty (750) feet and the width of the pipestem shall generally be fifty (50) feet.
  - ii. No two (2) pipestems may be adjacent.
  - iii. The pipestem portion of the lot, if subject to an access easement, shall not provide access for more than two (2) lots.
  - iv. In a subdivision under a common plan of development which simultaneously creates eleven (11) or more lots, no more than ten percent (10%) of lots may have pipestems. This figure may be thirty percent (30%) for cluster developments.

b. The shape of lots within any residential zoning district shall conform to the following provisions:

1. Lots shall generally be rectangular in shape with side lot lines at approximate right angles to the front lot line. The Subdivision Agent may allow for minor deviations from this provision to overcome a unique topographical situation or other situation not generally affecting adjacent lots. Except for pipestems as provided herein, lots shall not contain unusual elongations to meet minimum area, frontage,

or other requirements.

2. Pipestem lots may be permitted as follows:

- i. The maximum length of the pipestem portion of the lot shall be five-hundred (500) feet and the minimum width of the pipestem shall generally be fifty (50) feet.
- ii. No two (2) pipestems may be adjacent.
- iii. The pipestem portion of the lot, if subject to an access easement, shall not provide access for more than two (2) lots.
- iv. In a subdivision under a common plan of development which simultaneously creates eleven (11) or more lots, no more than twenty percent (20%) of lots may have pipestems. This figure may be thirty percent (30%) for cluster developments.

c. Lots for nonresidential uses shall be predominantly rectangular in shape. Pipestem lots are not permitted. These standards shall not apply to lots created for stormwater management or other utility purposes.

**Sec. 54-89. – Lot Orientation.**

Except as may be allowed by the Zoning Ordinance or elsewhere in this Ordinance, all lots shall be oriented to face the front lot line such that the lots abut and are served by a road right-of-way or access easement. Unless allowed by the Subdivision Agent for unusual situations or for subdivisions under common plans of development, lots shall be oriented such that rear property lines do not abut the side property line(s) of any adjacent property.

**Sec. 54-90. – Lot Frontage.**

a. Every lot shall have the minimum frontage required by its respective zoning district, except as provided in **Sec.**

**54-77**, and except in the case of cul-de-sacs or other approved turnarounds in which the minimum frontage shall be seventy (70) feet.

- b. Corner lots and other lots with two (2) or more frontages shall be considered as having multiple distinct frontages, each meeting the minimum length required by their respective zoning district(s).
- c. Double and triple frontage lots shall be prohibited except where deemed necessary by the Subdivision Agent to provide separation of residential development from arterial highways via service roads, or to overcome specific disadvantages of topography and orientation. Where allowed, the frontage along the arterial highway and/or other secondary frontage shall be clearly identified with a hashed area on the plat and a statement that no access may be provided across said frontage(s).

**Sec. 54-91. – Residual Lots.**

- a. Residual lots shall be considered lots for the purpose of this Ordinance and the Zoning Ordinance, and shall meet all applicable requirements related thereto unless otherwise exempted by this Ordinance.
- b. Residual lots shall be a single lot and may not contain multiple parts, and must be labeled appropriately on the plat. For properties already in multiple parts, the residue shall not be further partitioned beyond what already exists.
- c. Residual lots that do not meet the minimum lot requirements must be added to adjacent lots or otherwise disposed of rather than remain unusable lots.
- d. Any residual lot six (6) acres or less in size must be surveyed and shown in its entirety on the plat.
- e. Any residual lot greater than (6) acres in size may forego plat approval by VDH, provided the appropriate note

regarding residual lots is affixed to the face of the plat.

**Sec. 54-92. – Lots Bisected by Right-of-Way Dedications/Reservations.**

- a. Any lot which was bisected or otherwise split by a previous dedication/reservation of public right-of-way, where such dedication/reservation was requested, acquired, or required by the County or the Commonwealth of Virginia, shall remain considered as a single lot. However, the Subdivision Agent may approve a subdivision plat showing the resulting pieces as separate lots, despite the presence of nonconformities introduced by the right-of-way dedication. Such an approval shall be pursuant to all requirements of this Ordinance regarding approval of plats except with regards to said nonconformities. In such situations, existing plats recorded in the Circuit Court may be used in lieu of a current field survey in order to produce the record subdivision plat.
- b. Any new dedication/reservation of public right-of-way which bisects or otherwise splits an existing lot shall not create any nonconforming lots. If this situation is unavoidable, said lots shall be considered not buildable until the nonconforming situations are corrected.

**Sec. 54-93 – 54-98. – Reserved.**

**Division III. – Design and Arrangement of Blocks.**

**Sec. 54-99. – Standards; Relationship to Zoning Ordinance.**

For subdivisions which utilize a grid and/or parallel arrangement of roads which form blocks of lots, this division shall prescribe standards for the design and arrangement of



blocks. The utilization of such a street pattern shall be preferred for subdivisions in residential zoning districts. Where a particular zoning district prescribes standards for blocks, those particular standards of the district shall control. The Subdivision Agent or the Commission, as the case may be, may modify standards in this section whereby the modification better serves a transportation or utility need or better addresses issues related to topography.

**Sec. 54-100. – Block Length.**

In the Agricultural (A) zoning district, blocks shall have a maximum overall length of sixteen hundred (1,600) feet. In a residential zoning district, blocks shall have a maximum overall length of eight hundred (800) feet or no more than ten (10) contiguous lots, whichever is the shorter distance.

**Sec. 54-101. – Block Width.**

The width of a given block shall be wide enough to accommodate two (2) tiers of lots in addition to any space in the between the tiers for alleys, pedestrian features, and other shared infrastructure. The Subdivision Agent may approve a single tier of lots for situations where the subdivision abuts an arterial or collector road, railroad, or where topography or other conditions makes more than one tier impractical.

**Sec. 54-102. – Block Orientation.**

Where a proposed subdivision adjoins a collector or arterial road, blocks shall be oriented so that direct access is prohibited to such roads and so that ingress and egress in general is minimized.

**Sec. 54-103. – Blocks for Nonresidential Uses.**

The design of blocks for nonresidential uses shall be determined

by the Subdivision Agent based on principles of good traffic circulation, efficient utility layout, limitation of grading, and buffering of adjacent properties and uses.

**Sec. 54-104 – 54-109. – Reserved.**