



CLIENT ASSISTANCE MEMO

Allowed Height in Height Restricted Area (SFR)

Understanding Height Allowances in the City's Height Restricted Area

To protect views and maintain the existing residential character, the City limits heights of structures within the view basin. This area is known as the Height Restricted Area and is depicted on the City's Height Restriction Area Map. This memo addresses the standard for residential uses located within the City's Height Restricted Area which are not located in the Historic District. **Please contact staff for assistance in determining if this is the correct memo for your location.**

To assure that height limitations are complied with in the view basin, the applicant is required to provide a site topographic survey with your building permit application so we can determine that your proposal complies with the height limitations in the code. Additionally you will be required to submit a survey of the ridgeline of the house after it is constructed to document that the construction of complied with the permitted height.

Height limitations applicable to Residential Uses in the Height Restriction Area:

There are two height measurements that apply to Single Family Homes. The height limitations are often referred to as the Uphill and Downhill height limitations. Your home must comply with both. The text below is taken from GHMC 17.99.370(D) and the definitions of terms contained in GHMC 17.04. On the back of this sheet is a sketch showing the application of these standards.

Uphill Height Limitation:

- **Measurement Location:** Building height may be measured from any point of the natural grade that is within defined buildable areas; provided, that the point of measurement is within 50 feet of the building footprint. Natural grade is the grade existing on the lot for the last 60 months unless you are located in a recent plat.
- **Maximum allowed uphill height:** 16 feet.

Downhill Height Limitation: No portion of the structure may exceed 27 feet above natural and finished grade. This is measured at the building footprint. While we refer to this as the downhill height limitation the requirement applies to all portions of the building.

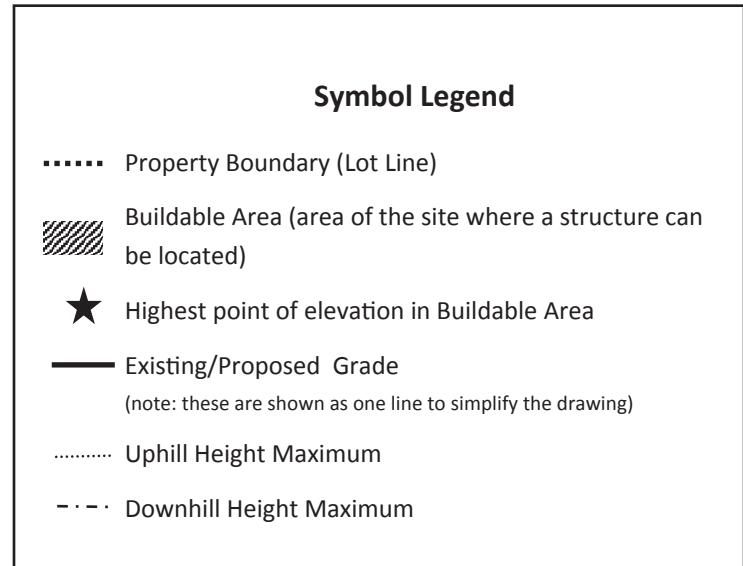
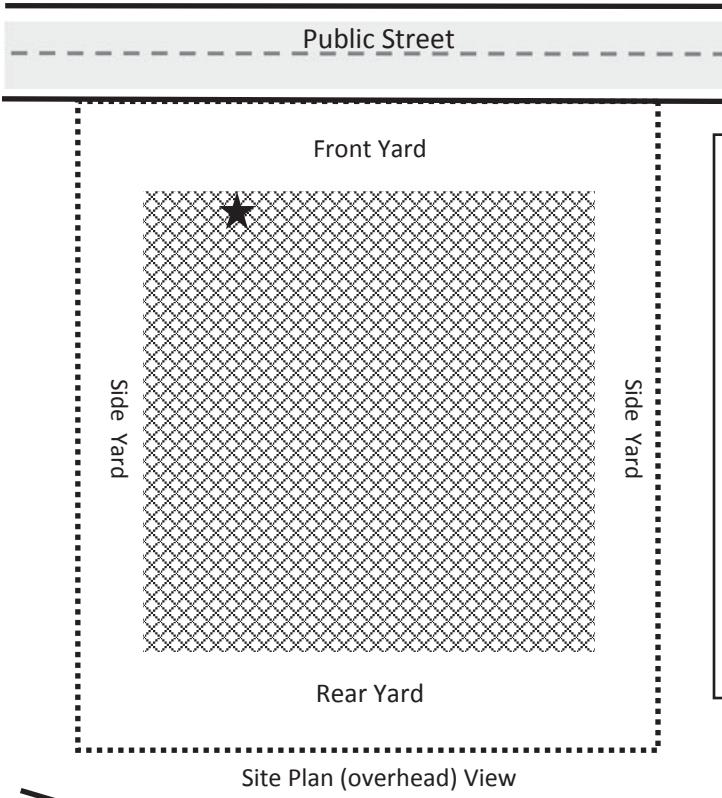
Design Standard related to Height

The City additionally requires that all house designs **“Avoid visually looming wall planes”** GHMC 17.99.490(D). The specific text of this standard requires that no wall plane, excluding gable areas, may exceed a height of 22 feet above any point of finished grade. Additional wall plane area may be allowed (subject to maximum building height limits) only if it is stepped back at least eight feet from the lower wall plane, or if it is in a dormer that is stepped back from the lower wall plane. Step-backs from decks, balconies or other spaces not fully enclosed do not meet this step-back requirement. This requirement applies only to prominent facades. Prominent facades are those that are visible from a public road, waterway, and always includes the façade facing the access road (even if it is private). Please be aware that additional flexibility can be obtained for this design requirement through the Alternative Design Process.

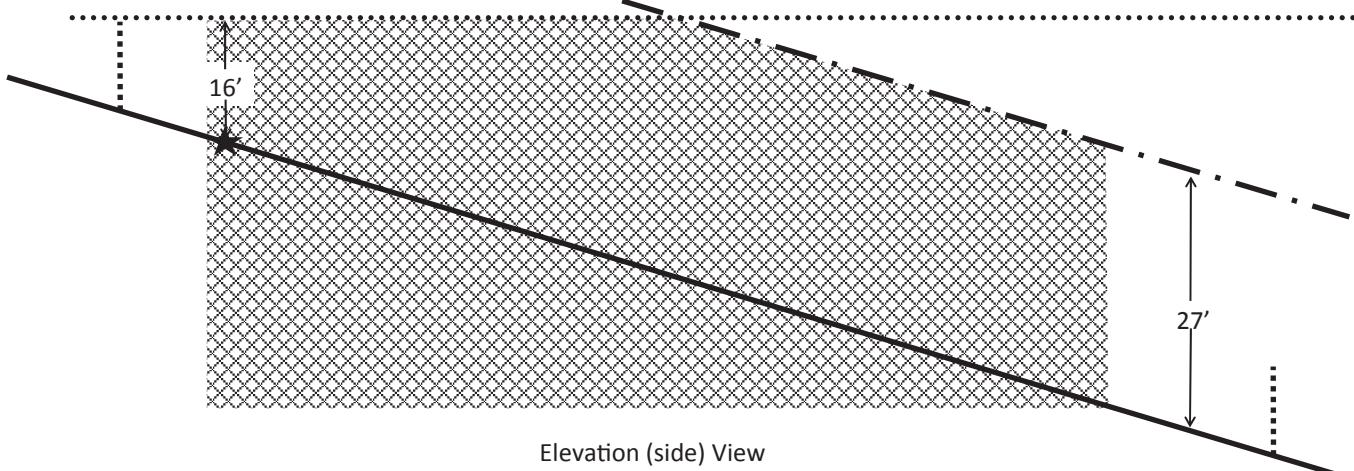
Client Assistance Memos are not intended to replace the Gig Harbor Municipal Code. Should you have any questions regarding this information please call the Planner of the day at (253) 851-6170

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Please note the buildable area below is shown as extending below grade as you may excavate a basement. Compliance with the downhill height limitation is determined based on the existing and proposed grade at the exterior footprint of the residence.



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