

# ZONING INTERPRETATION RECORD

## **Subject of Interpretation:**

Setbacks for accessory structures on single-family lots

## **Zoning Ordinance Section Number:**

7.200

## **Title of Section:**

Additional Area Regulations (General Provisions)

## **Cause for Interpretation:**

The ordinance allows accessory structures to be closer to side and rear property lines than the main residence. The ultimate setback is based on the height of the structure; however, it is unclear how the setback is actually determined. The Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ESLO) uses natural grade to determine height, while non-ESL areas use average top of curb. This interpretation seeks to establish a common formula specifically for accessory structures that will be used throughout the City.

## **Interpretation:**

The purpose of requiring a building setback is to prevent large or tall buildings from being located too close to an adjacent lot. The required setback also seeks to prevent excessive massing and clutter, so that open spaces can be provided in residential areas. It is possible to achieve the goals of the building setback through innovation of design. For example, if a lot owner wishes to build a 2-story guest house/garage on their lot, the building can be designed so that the 2<sup>nd</sup> story element is "stepped back" from the property line. Therefore, the setback requirement for accessory building will be based on the location of the highest point of the building (see attached graphic). For each one (1) foot of building height over ten (10) feet, the building shall step back a minimum ratio of 1:1 (one horizontal foot for each vertical foot of height). If the highest ridge, or parapet wall, is stepped back from the property line a sufficient distance to meet the requirements of the ordinance, than the rest of the building may be closer to the property line, provided the basic setback requirements are still being met, in accordance with Section 7.200.A of the Zoning Ordinance. For lots within the Foothills Overlay (FO), the requirements of the FO shall supersede this interpretation. For lots in subdivisions with amended development standards, the amended development standards shall take precedence in the event of a conflict with this interpretation.

Interpretation By

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Planner

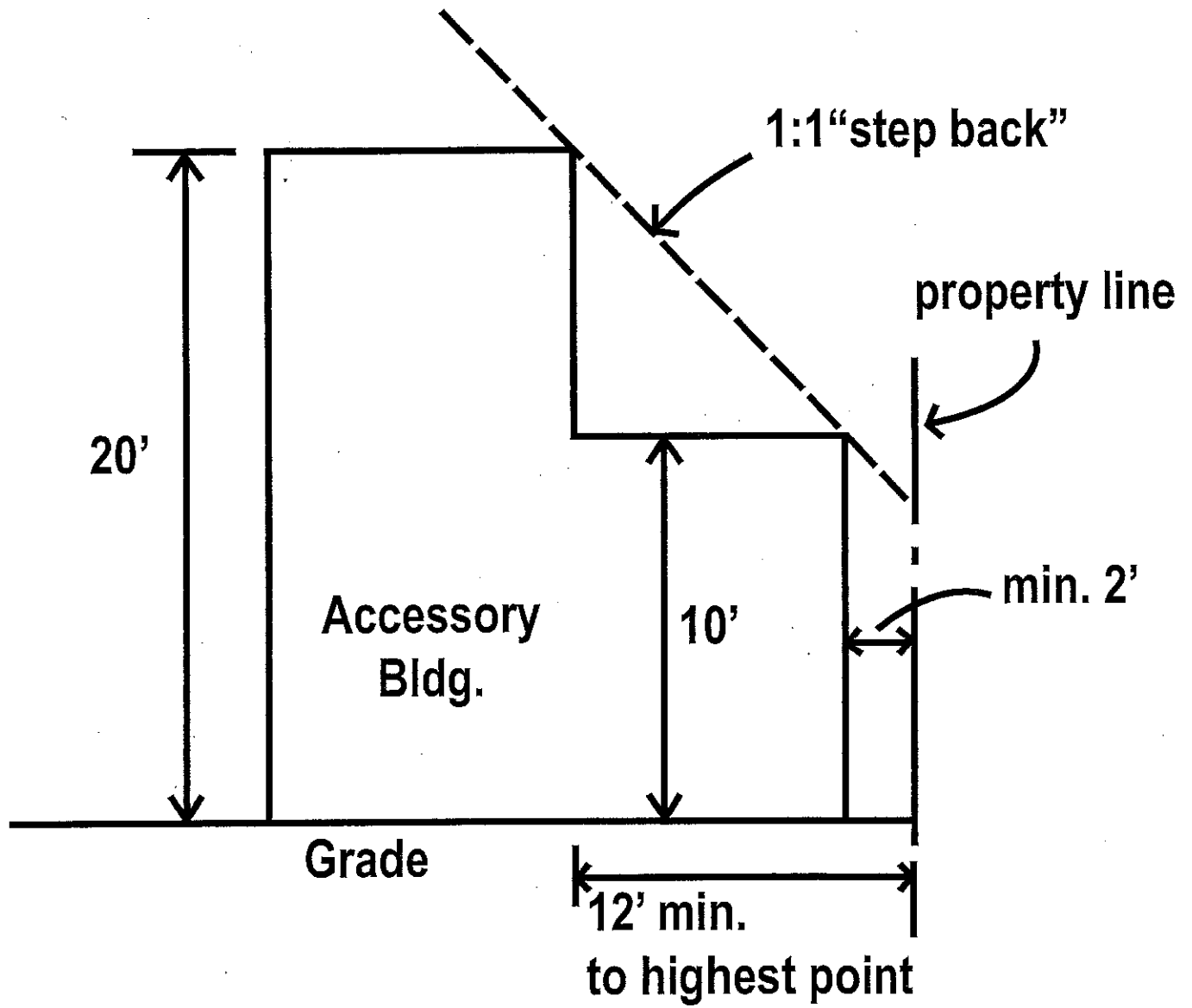
Date

November  
21, 2006

Approved By

Randy Grant  
Chief Planning Officer

**\* Setback from side and rear property lines for accessory bldgs.**



**N.T.S.**