

Retaining Walls

Definition: A wall or terraced combination of walls, 4 feet in height or greater, to hold soil and other earth materials at a higher position.

1. General Provisions:

- a. Height: The height of the retaining wall shall be the distance from the grade at the base of the face of the retaining wall to the grade at the back for the wall at the same section. For walls that are not a constant height, the largest of these measurements shall be used.
- b. Terracing: The construction of a retaining wall, or terraced combination of walls, greater than 4 feet in height requires a special permit. When a combination of retaining walls are within 25 feet of each other (measured from front-face of wall to front-face of wall), height is measured from the base of the lowest wall to the grade at the back for the highest wall.
 - *Alternate Language*: In a terraced retaining wall system, if two retaining walls are separated by a distance of at least two times the heights of the two walls, the walls shall be considered as separate walls; if two retaining walls are separated by a distance of less than two times the height of the higher of the two walls, the walls shall be considered a single wall.
- c. Setbacks: Retaining walls greater than four feet in height shall not be located within 10 ft of a property line. Retaining walls four feet or less in height are not subject to such requirement. No retaining wall shall encroach on the required setbacks without a special permit.

2. Special Permit Criteria: A special permit for a retaining wall may be issued provided the Special Permit Granting Authority finds:

- a. The lot presents challenging topography which limits the use of the property, such that it could not be improved without the implementation of retaining walls;
- b. That the requested retaining wall will not adversely impact adjacent property, neighborhood, or the public; and
- c. That the proposed retaining wall is the minimum structure necessary to allow the subject property to be reasonably utilized.