



April 5, 2024

Department of Planning & Community Development  
124 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477-5088  
Attn: Kelly Douglas

***RE: PS24-0010 - 2075 Walton Creek Rd. - Variance Request for Retaining Wall Standards 418.C.2***

Dear Kelly,

The Applicant is requesting a Variance to sections 418.C.2 of the City of Steamboat Springs (City) Community Development Code (CDC) for the Walton Creek Townhomes proposed for 2075 Walton Creek Road (Lot9, Ski Ranches Filing 3).

**Criteria:**

**418.C.2:** The maximum overall height of a retaining wall, as measured from the lowest point of final grade at the base of the retaining wall to the top of the wall, shall be in accordance with Table 418-1.

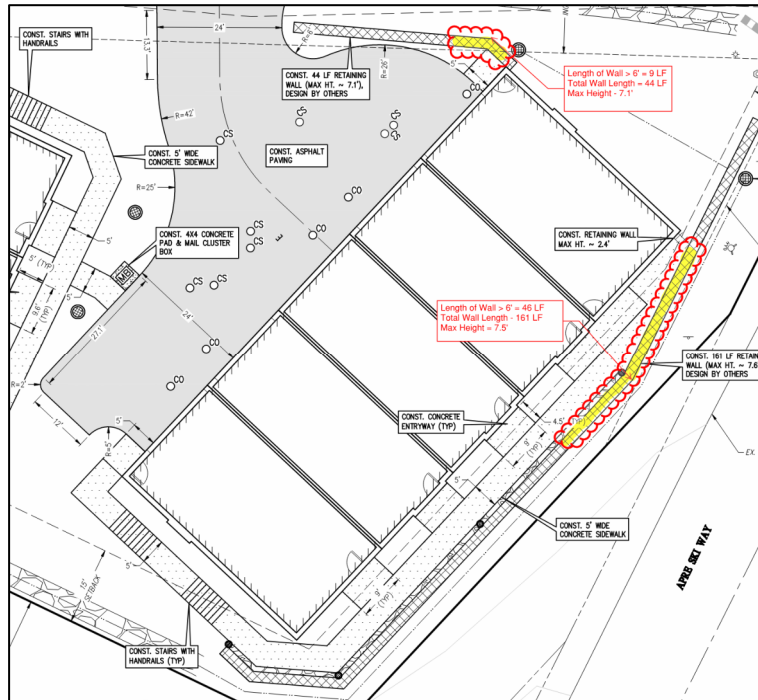
**Table 418-1. Retaining Wall Height**

Location	Height
Within Lot Line Setback Area	6' max. <sup>1</sup>
Within Building Envelope	11' max.

<sup>1</sup> Retaining walls exceeding 6 feet in height within a required lot line setback on an existing platted lot may be permitted by the Planning Director upon a finding that the applicant has demonstrated the wall height is necessary to achieve driveway access to the lot.

**Proposed:**

The proposed design includes retaining walls within the lot line setback area that exceed 6 ft. for approximately 55 LF of the total 205 LF of retaining walls proposed (approx. 26.8% of the length). Refer to the highlighted areas in the image that follows.



Variance Criteria: The following addressed criteria is from Section 719.D of the Code:

The development of a Residential multiple-family building on this site requires a variance to CDC Section 418.C.2 Below are our responses to the Development Plan Variance Criteria:

**1. The Variance will not injure or adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property, or the applicant has accurately assessed the impacts of the proposed Variance and has agreed to mitigate those impacts.**

Retaining wall height exceeding 6 ft. within the lot setback lines at some areas will not adversely impact legal conforming uses of adjacent property.

**2. The Variance is compatible with the preferred direction and policies outlined in the Community Plan and other applicable adopted plans.**

This variance would be compatible with and help promote the following policies outlined in the Community Plan:

- Policy CD-1.4: Encouraging high quality site planning and building design.
- Policy H-1.3: Integrate housing in mixed-use areas.
- Policy LU-2: Supporting infill development and redevelopment.

- Policy LU-3: Supporting and planning for cohesive and mixed-use neighborhoods that serve year-round residents and visitors.

**3. *The Variance application meets either the criteria for unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty, as applicable, or the criteria for an acceptable alternative:***

**Acceptable Alternative:**

The proposed development provides the following acceptable alternative(s) to the standard: The purpose and intent of the code standard will not be achieved by strict application of the standard in the particular circumstance.

The purpose and intent of the code standard is to minimize the impact of retaining walls on adjacent properties. The height exceeding 6 ft. in the locations identified above does not impact adjacent properties, as the height of the wall relative to the ground on the side visible to the adjacent properties is much less (ranging from 6" to approximately 1.5' high, and follows the grade accordingly). The retaining walls will actually help enhance the adjacent property to the South, as they create a nice visual barrier between the new townhomes and the existing gravel access drive to the adjacent property.

The retaining wall heights are compliant for 73.2% of the total linear footage of retaining wall, and the 26.8% where the heights are slightly higher than what the code stipulates will not impact the adjacent properties anymore than they would have if the height were within compliance (a foot or so shorter in height). Therefore, strict application of these standards does not further the intent of the code in this circumstance.

Thank you for your consideration regarding this Variance request.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Riegler