

ALBEMARLE COUNTY CODE

CHAPTER 18

ZONING

SECTION 4

GENERAL REGULATIONS

4.2.5 MODIFICATION OR WAIVER

Any requirement of section 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 or 4.2.4 may be modified or waived as provided herein:

- a. *Modification or waiver by the commission.* The commission may modify or waive any requirement that is not subject to an administrative waiver as provided in subsection (b), as follows:
 1. *Request.* A developer or subdivider requesting a modification or waiver shall file a written request in accordance with section 32.3.10(d) of this chapter and identify and state how the request would satisfy one or more of the findings set forth in subsection 4.2.5(a)(3). If the request pertains to a modification or waiver of the prohibition of disturbing slopes of twenty-five (25) percent or greater (hereinafter, “critical slopes”), the request also shall state the reason for the modification or waiver, explaining how the modification or waiver, if granted, would address the rapid and/or large-scale movement of soil and rock, excessive stormwater run-off, siltation of natural and man-made bodies of water, loss of aesthetic resources, and, in the event of septic system failure, a greater travel distance of septic effluent (collectively referred to as the “public health, safety, and welfare factors”) that might otherwise result from the disturbance of critical slopes.
 2. *Consideration of recommendation; determination by county engineer.* In reviewing a request for a modification or waiver, the commission shall consider the recommendation of the agent as to whether any of the findings set forth in subsection 4.2.5(a)(3) can be made by the commission. If the request pertains to a modification or waiver of the prohibition of disturbing critical slopes, the commission shall consider the determination by the county engineer as to whether the developer or subdivider will address each of the public health, safety and welfare factors so that the disturbance of the critical slopes will not pose a threat to the public drinking water supplies and flood plain areas, and that soil erosion, sedimentation, water pollution and septic disposal issues will be mitigated to the satisfaction of the county engineer. The county engineer shall evaluate the potential for soil erosion, sedimentation and water pollution that might result from the disturbance of slopes of twenty-five (25) percent or greater in accordance with the current provisions of the Virginia Department of Transportation Drainage Manual, the Commonwealth of Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook and Virginia State Water Control Board best management practices, and where applicable, Chapter 17, Water Protection, of the Code.
 3. *Findings.* The commission may grant a modification or waiver if it finds that the modification or waiver would not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, to the orderly development of the area, or to adjacent properties; would not be contrary to sound engineering practices; and at least one of the following:
 - a. Strict application of the requirements of section 4.2 would not forward the purposes of this chapter or otherwise serve the public health, safety or welfare;
 - b. Alternatives proposed by the developer or subdivider would satisfy the intent and purposes of section 4.2 to at least an equivalent degree;
 - c. Due to the property’s unusual size, topography, shape, location or other unusual conditions, excluding the proprietary interest of the developer or subdivider, prohibiting the disturbance of critical slopes would effectively prohibit or unreasonably restrict the use of the property or would result in significant degradation of the property or adjacent properties; or

ALBEMARLE COUNTY CODE

- d. Granting the modification or waiver would serve a public purpose of greater import than would be served by strict application of the regulations sought to be modified or waived.
4. *Conditions.* In granting a modification or waiver, the commission may impose conditions deemed necessary to protect the public health, safety or welfare and to insure that the development will be consistent with the intent and purposes of section 4.2.
5. *Appeal.* The board of supervisors shall consider a modification or waiver as follows:
 - a. The denial by the commission of a modification or waiver, or the approval of a modification or waiver by the commission with conditions objectionable to the developer or subdivider, may be appealed to the board of supervisors as an appeal of a denial of the plat, as provided in section 14-226 of the Code, or the site plan, as provided in section 32.4.2.7 or 32.4.3.9, to which the modification or waiver pertains. A modification or waiver considered by the commission in conjunction with an application for a special use permit shall be subject to review by the board of supervisors.
 - b. In considering a modification or waiver, the board may grant or deny the modification or waiver based upon the findings set forth in subsection 4.2.5(a)(3), amend any condition imposed by the commission, and impose any conditions it deems necessary for the reasons set forth in subsection 4.2.5(a)(4).
- b. *Waiver by the agent.* In accordance with the procedures stated in section 2.5 of this chapter, the agent may waive the prohibition of disturbing critical slopes on any parcel not within the Rural Areas (RA), Monticello Historic District (MHD) or Village Residential (VR) zoning districts in the following circumstances: (i) the critical slopes were created during the development of the property pursuant to a site plan approved by the county; or (ii) the critical slopes will be disturbed to replace an existing structure located on the critical slopes and the extent of the disturbance is the minimum necessary to replace the existing structure with a new structure whose footprint does not exceed the footprint of the existing structure. The agent may grant a waiver if he or she finds that:
 1. The property is not identified in the open space plan as one having any protected resources and a field inspection has confirmed that there are no significant or critical features on the property identified for protection in the open space plan;
 2. There is no reasonable alternative that would eliminate or reduce the disturbance of critical slopes;
 3. The developer or subdivider submitted and obtained approval from the program authority of an erosion and sediment control plan, regardless of whether the area disturbed is less than ten thousand (10,000) square feet; and
 4. The developer or subdivider submitted and obtained approval from the county engineer of a plan that describes how the movement of soil and rock, stormwater runoff, siltation of natural and man-made bodies of water, the loss of aesthetic resources identified in the open space element of the comprehensive plan and, in the event of the failure of a treatment works and subsurface drainfield, a greater travel distance of septic effluent, will be mitigated through design, construction techniques, revegetation, stormwater management and other best management practices.

(12-10-80, § 4.2.5; ; 11-15-89; Ord. 01-18(4), 5-9-01; Ord. 09-18(1), 1-14-09)