

City of Ruston Community Development Department
Director's Administrative Code Interpretation
(Chapter 19.09 RMC)

File Number: INTR 25-0134

Date Issued: August 28, 2025

Subject

Base Grade Determination for a Consolidated Lot in the Stack Hill Subdivision.

Background

Each lot in the Stack Hill Subdivision has a designated base grade recorded on the subdivision plat. The Stack Hill Master Development Plan (MDP) sets the maximum building heights, which must be measured from the base (lot) grade, as specified in RMC 25.01.040. Applicants Gabriela and Steen Raisl applied (Project No. SUB 2025-0134) to consolidate Lots 6 and 7. Lot 6's base grade is 158.5 ft, Lot 7's is 153.7 ft. They request the arithmetic average—156.1 ft—be used as the base grade for the consolidated lot.

Applicable Code Provisions

RMC Title 19 – Administration of Development Regulations (RMC 19.01.011, RMC 19.04.030, RMC 19.09.030) - establishes the authority for the Community Development Director to issue interpretations and provides appeal procedures.

RMC Title 25 – Zoning Code Definitions (RMC 25.99, Definitions) - defines “building site” to include a lot, combinations of lots, or fractions thereof, allowing consolidated parcels to function as a single building site.

RMC 25.01.040 – Residential Zone Building Height Standards - requires building height to be measured from lot grade.

Stack Hill Master Development Plan – Establishes specific maximum building height standards applicable within the Stack Hill Subdivision; measurement must still conform to RMC 25.01.040.

Issue Presented

What base (lot) grade should be used to measure building height under the Stack Hill MDP when two platted lots, each with its own base grade, are consolidated into a single building site?

Interpretation

For the consolidated lot comprised of Stack Hill Lots 6 and 7, the base (lot) grade for building height measurement shall be the arithmetic average of the two original base grades, as guided by RMC 25.01.040:

Lot 6: 158.5 ft

Lot 7: 153.7 ft

$(158.5 + 153.7/2 = 156.1)$

Consolidated Base Grade: 156.1 ft

This base elevation is the reference point for applying height standards to the consolidated lot under the Stack Hill MDP.

Findings

1. The Lot Combination application (SUB 2025-0134) to consolidate Lots 6 and 7 is underway concurrently with this interpretation.
2. RMC Title 25 defines “building site” to include combinations of lots, allowing consolidated parcels to be treated legally as one site.
3. RMC 25.01.040 requires height to be measured from lot grade but does not provide guidance for consolidated base grades.
4. Averaging the two existing base grades is a fair and objective method, avoiding undue advantage (selecting the higher grade) or undue restriction (selecting the lower grade).
5. The interpretation supports transparent and consistent application of height measurement standards in alignment with both RMC and the Stack Hill MDP.

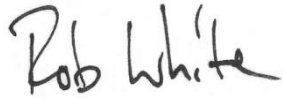
Conclusion

Pursuant to RMC Title 19, the Community Development Director determines that the base (lot) grade for the consolidated property (Stack Hill Lots 6 and 7, Project No. SUB 2025-0134) is 156.1 feet, to be used as the reference for measuring building height under the Stack Hill Master Development Plan.

Notice & Appeal

This Administrative Interpretation is issued under RMC Title 19. Appeals of administrative interpretations shall be submitted to the City Hearing Examiner as provided in RMC 19.01.011, RMC 19.04.030, and 19.09.050. The appeal period is 14 days from the date of issuance and publication.

Issued this 28th day of August, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob White". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font. The "R" is large and loops around the "o". The "W" is also large and loops around the "h". The "i" is small and has a dot. The "t" is tall and has a crossbar. The "e" is small and has a dot.

Community Development Director
City of Ruston