

Article IV – DESIGN

SECTION 401 – General Standards

1. General standards that apply to all areas:
 - a. A subdivision or land development must be coordinated with existing development in the neighborhood so the entire area will be developed harmoniously.
 - b. In all subdivisions or land developments, every precaution shall be taken to preserve all natural features and historic features determined to be worthy or preservation by the Borough. Examples of such features would include, but not be limited to, large trees or stands of trees, watercourses, historic areas and structures, and scenic views.

To ensure the protection of such features, the Borough may require additional information to be submitted:

- i. A grading plan showing the existing and proposed ground elevations relative to the features.
 - ii. The accurate location of the features to be protected.
 - iii. An explanation of the precautions to be taken by the developer to protect such features.
- c. The Pennsylvania Clean Streams Act requires that all earthmoving activities within the Commonwealth shall be conducted in such a way as to prevent accelerated erosion and the resulting sedimentation; and that all persons engaged in earthmoving activities shall design, implement, and maintain erosion and sedimentation control measures which effectively prevent accelerated erosion and sedimentation. These measures must be set forth in a plan as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources and must be available at all times at the site of activity.
- d. In areas of a subdivision or land development where the average slope exceeds fifteen (15) percent, the Borough may recommend modifications to these regulations.
- e. Where the lots in a subdivision are large enough for re-subdivision or where a portion of the tract is not subdivided, suitable access shall be provided.

2. Additional Standards for Flood-Prone Areas:

- a. Where not prohibited by this or any other laws or ordinances, land located in flood-prone area(s) may be platted for development with the provision that the developer construct all buildings and structures to preclude flood damage in accordance with this and any other laws and ordinances regulating such development.
- b. No subdivision and/or land development, or part thereof, shall be approved if the proposed development and/or improvements will individually or collectively, increase the one hundred (100) year flood elevation more than one (1) foot at any point.
- c. Building sites for residences or any other type of dwelling or accommodation shall not be permitted in any floodway area. Sites for these uses may be permitted outside the floodway area if the sites or dwelling units are elevated to a height at least one and one-half (1 ½) feet above the elevation of the regulatory flood elevation. If fill is used to raise the elevation of a site, the fill area shall extend out laterally for a distance of at least fifteen (15) feet beyond the limits of the proposed structures.
- d. Building sites for structures or buildings other than for residential uses shall also not be permitted in any floodway area. Also, such sites for structures or buildings outside the floodway shall be protected as provided for in “c” above. However, the governing body may allow the subdivision and/or development of areas or sites for commercial and industrial uses at an elevation less than one and one half (1 ½) feet above the regulatory flood elevation if the developer otherwise protects the area to the height or assures that the buildings or structures will be flood proofed at least up to that height.
- e. If the Somerset Borough Council determines that only a part of a proposed plan can be safely developed, it shall limit development to that part and shall require that development proceed consistent with this determination.
- f. When a developer does not intend to develop that plat himself and the Borough Council determines that additional controls are required to ensure safe development, it may require the developer to impose appropriate deed restrictions on the land.

Such deed restrictions shall be inserted in every deed and noted on every recorded plat.

SECTION 402– Street Design

1. General

- a. The location and width of all streets shall conform to any official map or comprehensive plan or to such parts thereof as may have been adopted by the Borough.
- b. The proposed street system shall extend existing or recorded streets at the same width but in no case at less than the required minimum width.
- c. Where in the opinion of the Planning Commission it is desirable to provide for street access to adjoining property, streets shall be extended by dedication to the boundary of such property.
- d. New minor streets shall be designed so as to discourage through traffic, but the developer shall give adequate consideration to providing for the extension and continuation of major and collector streets into and from adjoining properties.
- e. Where a subdivision abuts an existing street of improper width or alignment, the Planning Commission may require the dedication of land sufficient to widen the street or correct the alignment.
- f. Private streets (streets not offered for dedication) shall meet the design standards of these regulations.

2. Streets in Flood-Prone Areas

The finished elevation of proposed streets shall not be less than the one hundred (100) year flood elevation. Drainage openings shall be sufficient to discharge flood flows without unduly increasing flood heights.

3. Alleys

Alleys shall be prohibited except where found to be necessary.

4. Intersections

- a. Number of Streets – No intersection shall involve the junction of more than two (2) streets.

- b. Angle of Intersection – Right-angle intersections shall be used wherever possible. In no instance, however, shall streets intersect at an angle of less than seventy-five (75) degrees.
- c. Horizontal Alignment – Approaches shall follow a straight line for a distance of at least one hundred (100) feet from the intersection of the center lines.
- d. Vertical Alignment – Intersections shall be approached on all sides by leveling areas; such leveling areas shall have a minimum length of one hundred (100) feet (measured from the intersection of the center lines) within which no grade shall exceed a maximum of four (4) percent; furthermore the maximum grade within any intersection shall not exceed one (1) percent in any direction.
- e. Intersection Sight Distance – Proper sight lines shall be provided and maintained at all intersections. Measured along the street center line at a height of three (3) feet, there must be a clear sight triangle of seventy-five (75) feet. Where either of the two (2) streets is a collector street a clear sight triangle of one hundred (100) feet shall be required and where either of the two (2) streets is an arterial a clear sight triangle of one hundred fifty (150) feet shall be required. No building structure or other visual obstruction shall be located within this triangle area.
- f. Intersection Curb Radii – Design of curb of edge of pavement must take into account such factors as types of turning vehicles, likely speeds of traffic, angle of turn, etc., but in no instance shall the radius of the curb or edge of pavement be less than the following:

<u>Intersection</u>	<u>Curb Radius</u>
Minor with Minor Street	15 feet
Minor with Collector	25 feet
Collector with Collector	35 feet

- g. Distance Between Intersections – Minor and collector streets shall not intersect arterial streets on the same side at less than eight hundred (800) foot intervals and shall be in alignment with any existing or proposed streets intersecting from the opposite side.

5. Streets Not in Alignment

If streets are not in alignment, the distance between the center lines of streets opening on opposite sides of an existing or proposed street shall be no less than one hundred fifty (150) feet.

6. Sight Distance

Sight distance must be provided with respect to both horizontal and vertical alignment. Measured along the center line, from height of eye of 3.75 feet to height of object on roadway of 0.5 feet, this sight distance must be as follows:

Collector Street	= 200 feet
Minor Street	= 100 feet

7. Curves

Where connecting street lines deflect from each other at any one point by more than ten (10) degrees, the line must be connected with a true, circular curve. The minimum radius of the center line for the curve must be as follows:

Collector Street	= 300 feet
Minor Street	= 150 feet

Straight portions of the street must be tangent to the beginning or end of curves. Except for minor streets, there must be a tangent of at least one hundred (100) feet between reverse curves.

8. Street Widths

a. Minimum street right-of-way and cartway shall be as follows:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Right-of-Way</u>	<u>Cartway</u>
Arterial	- as determined by the Planning Commission after consultation with the Borough Engineer and PennDot.	
Collector	60 feet	36 feet
Minor	50 feet	30 feet
Cul-de-sac	50 feet	30 feet
Marginal Access	40 feet	24 feet
Alley or Service Drive	20 feet	20 feet

b. Provisions for additional street width (right-of-way, cartway, or both) may be required when determined to be necessary by the Planning Commission in specific cases for:

i. Public safety and convenience.

- ii. Parking in commercial and industrial areas and in areas of high density development.
- iii. Widening of existing streets where the width does not meet the requirements of the preceding paragraphs.

9. Cul-de-sac Streets

Cul-de-sac streets designed to be so permanently shall not exceed five hundred (500) feet in length, and in residential areas, shall not serve more than twenty (20) dwelling units. The paved turn-around shall have a minimum diameter of eighty (80) feet and a legal right-of-way of one hundred (100) feet in diameter. In non-residential areas, cul-de-sac streets may exceed five hundred (500) feet in length when, under special circumstances, the Planning Commission deems such additional length necessary.

10. Street Grades

- a. The minimum grade of all streets shall not be less than one half percent (0.5%). The maximum grade shall be as follows:

Arterial	- as determined by the Planning Commission after consultation with the Borough Engineer and PennDot.
Collector	- seven (7) percent
Minor	- ten (10) percent
Alleys	- ten (10) percent

- b. Vertical curves shall be used in changes of grade where the difference exceeds one (1) percent and shall be designed for maximum visibility.

11. Slope of Banks Along Streets

The slope of banks along streets measured perpendicular to the street center line shall be no steeper than the following:

- a. One (1) foot of vertical measurement for three (3) feet of horizontal measurement for fills.
- b. One (1) foot of vertical measurement for two (2) feet of horizontal measurement for cuts.

12. Partial and Half-Streets

The dedication of half-streets at the perimeter of new subdivisions is prohibited.

13. Names of Streets

Names of new streets shall not duplicate or approximate existing or platted street names, or approximate such names by the use of suffixes such as "lane," "way," "drive," "court," or "avenue." In approving the names of streets, consideration should be given to existing or platted street names within the postal delivery district served by the local post office. New streets shall bear the same name or number of any continuation or alignment with an existing or platted streets.

14. Reserve Streets

Controlling access to streets by reserve strips is prohibited except where their control is definitely placed in the Borough under conditions approved by the Borough. A reserve strip is a parcel of ground in separate ownership separating a street from other adjacent properties or from another street.

SECTION 403 – Blocks

1. General

The length, width, and shape of blocks shall be determined with due regard for:

- a. The provision of adequate sites for buildings of the type proposed.
- b. Topography.
- c. Any other codes, plans, or ordinances.
- d. Requirements for safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian circulation, including the reduction of intersections with major streets.

2. Block Length

The length of residential blocks shall not ordinarily exceed five hundred (500) feet or be less than two hundred fifty (250) feet.

3. Block Depth

The residential blocks shall be of sufficient depth to accommodate two tiers of lots except where prevented by the size, topographical conditions, or other inherent conditions or property, in which case the Planning Commission may approve a single tier of lots.

4. Commercial or Industrial Blocks

Blocks in commercial and industrial areas may vary from the elements of design detailed above if required by the nature of the use. In all cases, however, adequate provision shall be made for off-street parking and loading areas, as well as for traffic circulation and parking for customers and employees, as may also be required by the Borough's Zoning Ordinance.

SECTION 404 – Lots

1. General

- a. The size, shape, and orientation of lots shall be appropriate for the type of development use contemplated. Insofar as practical, side lot lines shall be at right angles to straight street lines or radial to curved street lines.
- b. Where feasible, lot lines shall follow municipal boundaries rather than cross them, in order to avoid jurisdictional problems.
- c. Generally, the depth of residential lots shall be not less than one (1) not more than two and one-half (2 1/2) times their width.
- d. Depth and width of parcels intended for non-residential area shall be adequate for the use proposed and sufficient to provide satisfactory space for onsite parking, loading and unloading, setbacks, and landscaping.
- e. If, after subdividing, the exists remnants of land, they shall be either incorporated in existing or proposed lots, or legally dedicated to public use, if acceptable to the municipality.

2. Lot Frontage

- a. All lots shall front on a public street, or on a private street if it meets the requirements of these regulations.
- b. Double frontage and reverse frontage lots should be avoided except where essential to provide separation of residential,

commercial, or industrial developments from arterial or major street to overcome specific disadvantages or topography and orientation.

- c. A planting screen easement of at least ten (10) feet, and across which there shall be no right of access, shall be provided along the line of lots abutting such traffic artery or other disadvantageous use.

3. Lot Dimensions

See the Somerset Borough Zoning Ordinance.

4. Permits for Individual Sewage System

- a. The developer shall arrange for soils evaluation tests to be made on all tracts not served by sanitary sewers.
- b. Soils evaluation tests shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.
- c. The results of the soils evaluation tests shall be submitted to the Planning Commission in a report signed by the developer and by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources or other officially designated agent responsible for administration of sewage facilities.
- d. From the results of the soils evaluation tests, the lot size shall be established large enough to provide for the specified minimum area required for the absorption fields as prescribed by the Department of Environmental Resources Rules and Regulations, but in no case shall the lot size be less than the requirements of the Borough Zoning Ordinance.
- e. The approval of the Planning Commission shall not be given to a development where individual sewage systems are to be provided, unless the size of lots, the results of the soils evaluations tests, and the disposal system conform to the Department of Environmental Resource's Rules and Regulations.
- f. For lots lacking permits for individual sewage systems, the developer shall note in land sale contracts that there is no community sewage system available, that a permit for an individual system will have to be obtained, and any other disclosure information as required by Act 280 of 1976.

5. Lot sizes and Slopes

The minimum lot area established may be increased by the Planning Commission if reports from the Borough's Sewage Enforcement Officer or the Soil Conservation Service indicate that because of slope or surface runoff, subsurface drainage of septic tank effluent is likely to result in a hazardous condition.

6. Wedge-Shaped Lots

In the case of wedge-shaped lots, no lot shall be less than fifty (50) feet in width measured along the arc at the front street right-of-way line.

7. Corner Lots

Corner residential lots must have enough extra width to permit appropriate setbacks from both streets.

8. Building Setbacks

Refer to the Somerset Borough Zoning Ordinance.

9. Side and Rear Yard Setbacks

Refer to the Somerset Borough Zoning Ordinance.

10. Off-street Parking

Refer to the Somerset Borough Zoning Ordinance.

11. Access Driveways

- a. Where access is to a state road or highway, a written permit of authorization must be obtained from the District Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation approving the location, design, and mode of construction of that portion of the driveway within the state right-of-way. The design, construction, and maintenance of such driveways shall conform to Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Regulations, Chapter I, Regulation 100.
- b. Driveways without direct access to a state highway shall conform to Borough Ordinance 1031.

SECTION 405 – Easements

1. Utility easements shall be provided for wires, conduits, storm and sanitary sewers, gas, water, and/or other utility line intended to service abutting lots. No structures or trees shall be placed within such easements. Local utility companies shall be consulted by the developer when locating utility easements.
 - a. The minimum width of such easements shall be fifteen (15) feet.
 - b. Wherever possible, such easements shall be centered on side or rear lot lines.
2. In residential subdivisions of five (5) or more dwelling units, electric, telephone, and cable TV utility distribution and service lines shall be installed underground in compliance with the rules and regulations of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.
3. In residential subdivisions of less than five (5) dwelling units, except where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission that underground installation is not feasible because of the physical condition of the lands involved, all electric, telephone, and cable TV utility distribution and service lines shall be installed underground.