



**Town of Westport**  
**Planning and Zoning Department**  
Town Hall, 110 Myrtle Avenue  
Westport, CT 06880  
Tel: 203-341-1030 Fax: 203-454-6145 [PandZ@westportct.gov](mailto:PandZ@westportct.gov)  
[www.westportct.gov](http://www.westportct.gov)

**To: Whom It May Concern**

**From:** Michelle Perillie, Deputy Planning and Zoning Director

**Date:** November 26, 2003, *updated June 13, 2022*

**Re: Determining Average Grade and Measuring Proposed Building Height**

§5-2, Specific Terms, defines Building Height as:

*“The vertical distance measured in feet from the average existing level of the ground surrounding the building or addition thereto and within ten (10) feet thereof up to the midpoint height of a pitched roof or up to the level of the highest main ridge or peak of any other type of structure, or the total number of stories in a building including basements and/or half stories. In cases of buildings with more than one pitched roof and/or dormer, all pitched roofs and/or dormers must comply with allowable building height. The number of points necessary for an “average” computation shall be based on appropriate contour intervals or spot elevations as required by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The existing level shall mean the actual or proposed elevations whichever is lower of the property at the time of application. (Also see §32-7 for satellite dishes and antennas prohibition). The provisions with respect to height shall apply to roof-top mechanical equipment but shall not apply to the following:*

- *Solar panels on a pitched-roofed building provided the highest point of the panels are located no higher than the roof ridge line;*
- *Solar panels on a flat-roofed building which do not extend more than 5-feet above the roofline of a flat-roofed building, provided that the panels are set back at least 6-feet from the edge of the roof on all elevations;*
- *Roof parapets and turrets 3 feet or less in height;*
- *Roof guards, as defined in the Building Code, and rooftop railings not to exceed the minimum height in the Building Code; provided that such railings or roof guards are not solid or opaque;*
- *Cupolas and domes not used for human habitation, clock towers, bell towers and roof ventilators; provided that:*
  - *The cumulative square foot area of these structures cannot exceed 5% of the footprint of the roof area of the building on which it is located, or 100 square feet, whichever is less; and*
  - *The structure shall fit within a 10' x 10' square; and*
  - *The structure shall not extend more than 5 feet above the ridge of the roof or top of flat roof on which it is located.”*

The Building Height definition states:

*“The number of points necessary for an ‘average’ computation shall be based on appropriate contour intervals or spot elevations as required by the Planning and Zoning Commission.”*

The appropriate contour intervals or spot elevations for Average Grade are as follows:

1. Average Existing Grade -At least eight (8) existing elevations points spaced at equal intervals around the proposed building (before construction or grading) are needed. The points will all be located within 10 feet from the proposed outer wall. All corners, both inner and outer, shall have one point. All walls shall have at least one point midway between the corners. An average elevation is then determined using all the above points. All the points must be clearly indicated on the survey/site plan prepared by the surveyor or project engineer.

If any existing spot elevations fall within the proposed footprint of the existing house, such as in the case of an overlapping footprint, the elevations should be taken within 10 feet of the outside of the closest exterior wall.

2. Average Proposed Grade - Is determined by using the same procedure outlined in #1, except the proposed/finished grades must be used.
3. Proposed Elevations for any Building or Structure - The proposed Building Height must be shown on the architectural plans. As required by the Building Height definition, the overall Building Height is measured from the lower of the existing or proposed average grade to the mid-point height of a pitched roof, or to the top of a flat-roofed Building or Structure. If a building has more than one pitched roof and/or dormers; all roofs must comply with Building Height requirements.