Effective Date (09/2021)

Advisory

DETERMINATION OF SETBACK AND LIMITING DISTANCE

BUILDING CODE SERVICES

Determination of Setback and Limiting Distance

This Advisory provides context to determine compliance of the building and projection(s) to setback and limiting distance requirements with the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law (ZBL) and Ontario Building Code (OBC).

The proximity of a building foundation, cladding system(s), exposing building face and permitted projections to a setback or property line play a significant role in determining compliance to the OBC and/or ZBL. The relationship of these elements to a setback or property line can vary from the information provided on a site plan or a survey to wall assembly construction above grade. It is common practice to provide dimensions from the property line to outside face of foundation wall (concrete) but not reference the distance from above grade construction (outside of cladding and projections) to a setback or property line. The definitions below provide background information how to determine limiting distance and setback in accordance with the regulation and by-law.

Definitions

2012 Ontario Building Code-Div. A-1.4.1.2

Limiting distance (LD) means the distance from an *exposing building face* to a property line, to the centre line of a *street*, lane or public thoroughfare or to an imaginary line between two *buildings* or *fire compartments* on the same property, measured at right angles to the *exposing building face*.

Exposing building face (EBF) means that part of the exterior wall of a building that faces one direction and is located between ground level and the ceiling of its top storey or, where the building is divided into fire compartments, the exterior wall of a fire compartment that faces one direction.

Zoning-Zoning By-law 2008-250 Part 1-Definitions (Section 54)

Yard setback means the distance required by this By-law between a lot line, not including a corner lot line, and a building, and includes:

Front yard setback which means the shortest distance between the front lot line and any part of a building, not including a projection permitted under Section 65;

Rear yard setback which means the shortest distance between the rear lot line and the nearest point of the principal building, not including a projection permitted under Section 65;

Interior side yard setback which means the shortest distance between the side lot line not abutting a street and any part of a building between the front and rear yards, not including a projection permitted under Section 65; and

Corner side yard setback which means the shortest distance between a side lot line abutting a street and any part of a building between the front and rear yards, not including a projection permitted under Section 65.

Section 65 means permitted projections into required yards.

See Appendix A for determination of yard setback locations.

Example

The example below provides context how setbacks reported on a site plan, to concrete, can differ from the above grade construction and affect compliance to the OBC and ZBL.

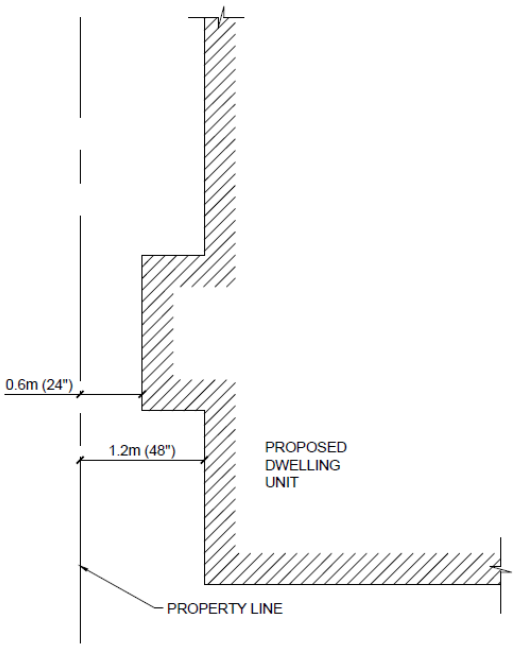

Figure 1-Typical partial site plan

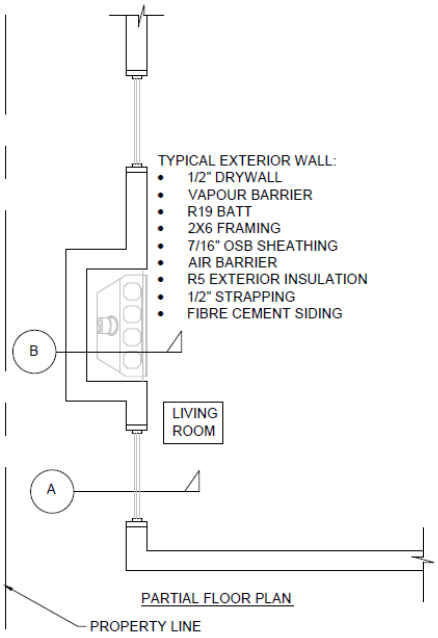

Figure 2-Typical partial floor plan

The partial site plan, shown in Figure 1, provides an example of a typical site plan provided for building permit that demonstrates compliance to the ZBL and OBC. The proposed building is setback 1.2m from the property line. The design also includes a bump-out with a setback of 0.6m from the property line.

The partial floor plan, shown in Figure 2, provides an example of a typical floor plan provided for building permit application. In this example, the construction of the exterior wall assembly uses exterior insulation to satisfy the energy efficiency requirements of SB-12. Exterior insulation can range between 25-50+ mm in thickness. The design includes glazing in the exterior wall referenced to be 1.2m from the property line, as noted on the site plan drawing.

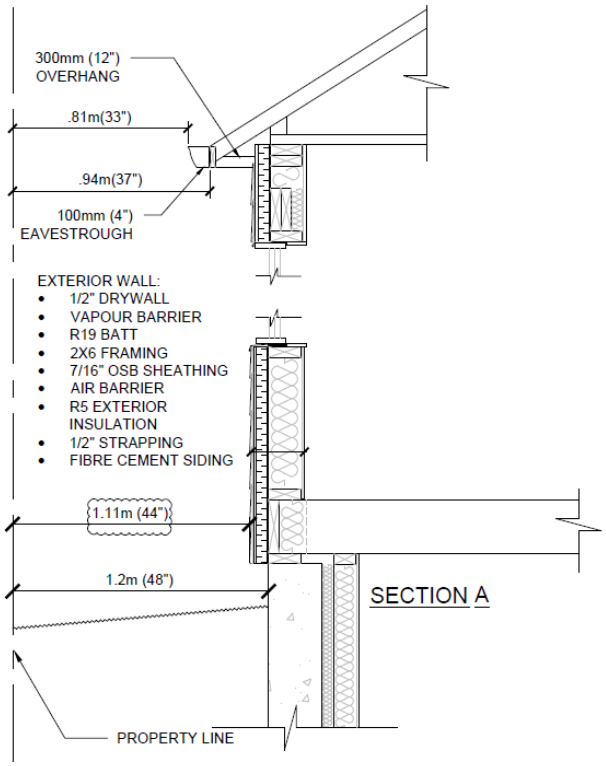

Figure 3-Partial wall section at the 1.2m setback indicated on the site plan.

The building section, shown in Figure 3, provides context how above grade construction can provide challenges in determining compliance to the OBC and ZBL. Designers must review the constructability of the building to determine compliance to the OBC and/or ZBL.

Building Code

Designers shall confirm the limiting distance of the exposing building face to the property line to determine if unprotected openings are permitted along the building façade. The site plan indicates the wall was located at 1.2m from the property line. When reviewing the construction of the exterior wall, the limiting distance of the exposing building face is reduced to 1.11m. Therefore, using the definitions and methodologies for the determination of unprotected openings provided in the OBC, unprotected glazing would not be permitted along this building façade. Additionally, as the exposing building face now has a limiting distance less than 1.2m to the property line, the construction of the exterior wall would also require a fire resistance rating.

Zoning

Designers shall confirm above grade construction as it can impact the location of a building on a property. Using the example above, determining setbacks for combined side yards can alter the total setback by using measurement provided on the site plan versus' the location of the massing above grade.

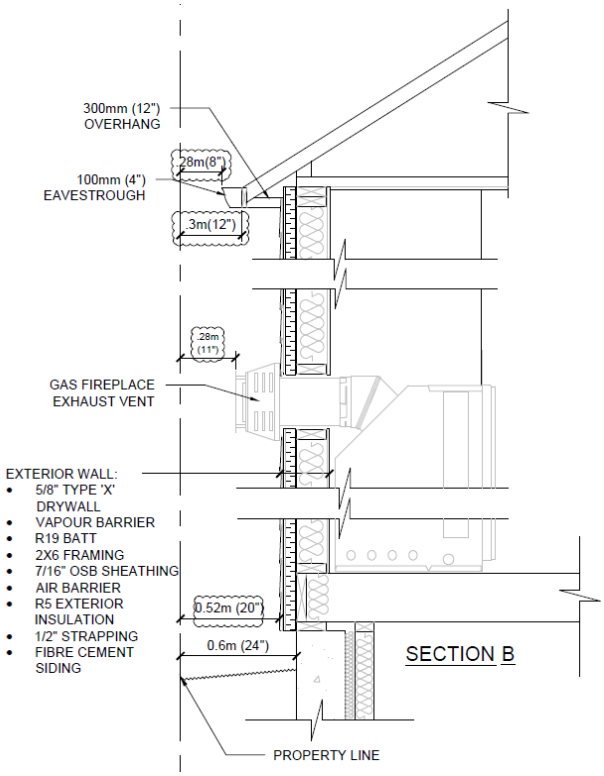

Figure 4-Partial wall section at the 0.6m setback indicated on the site plan.

Similar to Section A, the building section shown in Figure 4 provides context how above grade construction can provide challenges in determining compliance to the OBC and ZBL. The focus of this example is to demonstrate how projecting elements play a critical role in determining compliance to applicable law. Identifying projecting elements outboard of the building footprint is difficult, however, paramount in determining compliance to the OBC and/or ZBL.

Building Code

Designers shall determine required construction of the exposing building face as regulated by the OBC. In the example above, the location of the exposing building face is within 0.6m of the property line. The OBC requires exposing building face be constructed with a fire-resistance rating and cladded in non-combustible cladding.

Zoning

Designers shall be aware of projecting elements and their location to a required setback. As indicated on the partial floor plan, a gas fired fireplace is proposed in the living room alcove. All gas fired appliances require venting to the exterior. In the example above, the fireplace exhaust is located through the exterior wall. The location of the exhaust vent would not satisfy the requirements of Section 65 of the ZBL. Similar to the location of the exhaust vent, the eavestrough would not satisfy the requirements of Section 65 of the ZBL.

Determining setbacks for combined side yards can alter the total setback using the measurements provided on the site plan, to concrete, versus' the location of the massing above grade.

How to determine compliance

The sections below provide some direction on how designers are to demonstrate compliance with the ZBL and OBC.

New construction:

Buildings located within 300mm of the minimum zoning setback or property line require the designer to provide a wall section to demonstrate compliance of the proposed construction to the OBC and ZBL. The designer must dimension the foundation, exposing building face and permitted projection to the setback and/or property line. An example of required dimensions can be found in Figures 3 and 4.

Existing construction:

Buildings located within 300mm of the minimum zoning setback or property line require the designer to provide an Ontario Land Surveyor's survey (OLS) to establish the location of the existing building on the property.