Open Space Criteria & Building Height

There are two separate and distinct height regulations in Paradise Valley. The easy one is the Maximum Building Height and is measured vertically above the Lowest Natural Grade (LNG) of the structure. Within the footprint of the building determine the LNG on the grading and drainage plan. The maximum height is a horizontal plane above there (24' above there for R-43 zoned lots). There are some rules about washes and fill that are explained in Article X of the Zoning Code. And there is an exception for chimneys too.

The other regulation is called the Open Space Criteria. This exercise must be done a minimum of four times; one time for each side of the building. From the high point of the building proceed perpendicular to the property line to a point on the 20' setback line. This will determine a Control Point. Starting 16' above this Control Point no building can penetrate a plane rising at a 20% slope toward the center of the lot.

For rectangular buildings on rectangular lots a conventional elevation can easily portray this plane as a line and any penetrations easily recognized. When the building edge is not parallel to the property line an elevation is deceptive and portrayal of this plane will require an additional view perpendicular to the property line or compliance shown by some other method.

One method is to show the roof plan on a site plan with lines at 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60 feet from the property line. Each of these lines can be identified with their respective elevation in relation to the elevation of the Control Point on the 20’ setback line. It is then possible to compare the elevation of the building ridges and other high points to the elevation of the lines.


All Elevations Are Above Natural Grade.

The ridge at High Point #1 (including the roofing material) is the highest part of the building between the side 20’ BSL and the 60’ BSL on the west side. From that point perpendicular to the 20’ BSL is Control Point #1. From 16’ above the elevation of CP #1 a plane rises toward the center of the lot at 20%. HP #1 can be 1366.6’ (16’ 7”) above CP #1 at the 23’ BSL.

Similarly, at the 50’ BSL HP #4 can be 1374’ (22’) above the elevation of CP #4 on the east. It is the hips at HP #2 & HP #3 that are the highest part of the building between the 20’ BSL and the 60’ BSL on the north. From them perpendicular to the 20’ BSL are CP #2 & #3. Since CP #3 is 1351.5’ and the hips are on the 60’ BSL, they are actually limited by the 24’ height above the LNG of 1350.5’ or 1374.5’ rather than 24’ above CP #3 or 1375.5.

Notice that the heights at the 20’ BSL are not the same because they use different Control Points.