

RETAINING WALL PERMIT APPLICATION

Planning Department, City of Grand Haven
519 Washington Avenue, Grand Haven, MI 49417
Phone: (616) 935-3276 Email: zoningpermits@grandhaven.org

JOB ADDRESS _____ DATE _____

OWNER'S NAME _____ TELEPHONE # _____

OWNER'S ADDRESS _____

EMAIL: _____

CONTRACTOR'S NAME _____ TELEPHONE # _____

CONTRACTOR'S ADDRESS _____

EMAIL: _____

DESCRIBE RETAINING WALL (Height(s), Type, Location) _____

REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ **Site Plan Drawing** of the lot showing all buildings, lot lines, the location of the street or streets, where the Retaining Wall will be installed, and existing and proposed drainage patterns shall be submitted with this application.
- ☐ **Retaining Wall Detail** showing the proposed height(s) and material of the Retaining Wall.
- ☐ **Permit** will be issued only after receipt of all required paperwork and after a proper plan review is completed by the zoning administrator.
- ☐ **Permit fee: \$50.00**

By signing below, applicant agrees to perform the described work in accordance with all applicable sections of the City of Grand Haven Code of Ordinances. *Signer will insure that all inspection requests are made a minimum of 24 hours prior to the requested time.*

SIGNATURE _____

☐ Contractor ☐ Owner ☐ Agent

Office Use Only

Permit #: _____ Date Received: _____ Fee: _____

Date of Approval: _____ Date of Denial: _____ Approved by: _____



DEFINITION

RETAINING WALL: Any vertical assembly, with a horizontal length-to-thickness ratio greater than three, consisting of materials assembled and designed to resist the lateral load action of soil.

RETAINING WALL REQUIREMENTS (Section 40-327 of the Grand Haven Zoning Ordinance)

A. Retaining Walls

1. Intent. The intent of these regulations is to maintain, as much as possible, the natural contours and vegetation of the slopes and elevation changes throughout the City of Grand Haven while recognizing that some improvements may be acceptable to avoid erosion and manage runoff.
2. Application Procedure
 - a. Unless otherwise specified in this section, Retaining Walls and changes in grade shall require a Land Use Permit issued by the Zoning Administrator.
 - b. Retaining Walls that exceed 48 inches in height or that project above a line drawn at a 45 degree angle from the property line, where the horizontal plane is the existing elevation at said property line, towards the proposed retaining wall(s) shall require a Special Land Use Permit in accordance with **Section 40-116** and a Site Plan Review in accordance with **Section 40-115**, and, at a minimum, include the following:
 - i. A site plan, prepared by a design professional, which shall ensure stability against overturning, sliding, lateral soil loads, water uplift, and acceptable soil resistance at the base of the retaining wall. At the discretion of the Planning Commission, a sealed plan prepared by a structural engineer may be required.
 - ii. Setback dimensions from all property lines and existing structures to all proposed retaining wall(s) or the point of beginning of the grade change(s), whichever is closest.
 - iii. Existing and proposed contour elevation lines in one foot increments.
 - iv. A storm water runoff and management plan which clearly displays the storm water discharge and management proposed to avoid any additional runoff and/or erosion onto adjoining properties or the public way. All systems shall include drainage pipes behind the wall to remove storm water from behind wall and discharge to a point away from the wall.
 - v. A landscaping plan, which at a minimum, shall include all proposed ground cover, plants, shrubs, trees, and all fences including location and setbacks from property lines.
 - vi. For changes in grade and retaining walls that are within the land areas regulated by Federal or State laws, all Federal and State approvals shall be obtained prior to all Planning Commission reviews.
 - b. All new Retaining Walls located in the Sensitive Areas Overlay District shall follow the procedures of Section 40-422.
2. Location
 - a. Retaining Walls shall be located so as to not obstruct the clear vision corners as regulated in **Section 40-307**.
 - b. No Retaining Wall shall be placed closer than one (1) foot to a public parking area, public road, or public sidewalk.
3. Height
 - a. The height of a retaining wall shall be measured straight up vertically from the existing grade to the upper most point at the top of the wall unless the retaining wall assembly includes footings for stability and building code compliance at which time the wall height shall be measured from the top of the footing to the upper most point at the top of the wall.
4. Design and Type



- a. The placement, location and design of a Retaining Wall shall not modify or alter existing drainage patterns.
- b. Excavation needed for the placement, location and design of a Retaining Wall shall not undermine the grade of the adjacent property.
- 5. Maintenance/Replacement
 - a. Retaining Walls shall be maintained to retain their original height and configuration. Elements of a Retaining Wall that are missing, damaged, destroyed or deteriorated shall be replaced and repaired to maintain conformity with the original Retaining Wall height and configuration.
 - b. Maintenance or replacement of an existing Retaining Wall shall require a Land Use Permit from the Zoning Administrator.
- 6. Additional Conditions
 - a. All new retaining walls and repair or replacement of existing retaining walls over 48 inches in height shall require a building permit under the Michigan Building Code or Michigan Residential Code respectively prior to excavation. All retaining walls, regardless of height, shall comply with the requirements of the building codes and be constructed in accordance with the product manufacturer's specifications.
 - b. The Zoning Administrator reserves the right to request any of the requirements in Section 40-327, A, 2, b above to complete an administrative review.
 - c. While every effort has been made to effectively address each Retaining Wall request it is impossible to predict each configuration possible. At the discretion of the Zoning Administrator, such non-typical Retaining Walls can be forwarded on to the Planning Commission for Site Plan Review in accordance with Section 40-115 of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - d. Retaining Walls that result in a decrease or a lower elevation in grade from the existing elevation of the land area are permitted as long as such change in grade and retaining walls are within the setback footprint required for the principal structure. All such decreases and lower elevation changes in grade and retaining walls outside the required setback footprint of the principal structure shall only be permitted after an Administrative review and approval.
 - e. The Planning Commission, at its discretion and as a condition of Special Land Use approval, may require a guardrail for protection from fall from the top of retaining walls. Such guardrail system(s) shall be constructed with materials and designs which reflect the character of the immediate neighborhood, are constructed of approved exterior use materials, and are constructed according to manufacturer's specifications and the Michigan Building Code.



RETAINING WALL REVIEW

FIGURE 3-11

