



EZ Permit Standards: Retaining Wall

Obtain permits for building a retaining wall without submitting plans by meeting the Conditions and Design Limitations below. Any deviations from this permit standard will result in permit revocation.

No building permit is required for retaining walls that do not exceed two (2) feet in height measured from the lowest level of grade to the top of the wall where no surcharge is supported, and that do not impound Class I, II, or III-A liquids.

This standard may not be used to legalize work performed without permits. The legalization of work shall require the submission of plans.

Exception: This EZ Permit Standard may be utilized to legalize engineered pre-cast masonry walls that comply with this standard and are constructed in accordance with the manufacturer’s specifications.

Construction Requirements

Conditions

EZ Permit Standard does not apply to sloped backfill conditions or to the support of surcharge loads. Such conditions of sloped backfill and/or surcharge load support will require engineered details and drawings.

- All retaining walls located along a street frontage in the following areas must be approved by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission:
 - Central Roxborough Conservation Overlay [Title 14-504(7)(b)]
 - Ridge Park Roxborough Conservation Overlay [Title 14-504(8)(a)]
 - Powelton Village Conservation Overlay [Title 14-504(9)(a)]
 - Wissahickon Conservation Overlay [Title 14-504(10)(b)]
 - Strawberry Mansion Village Conservation Overlay [Title 14-504(11)(b)]
- All retaining walls abutting the following areas must be approved by the Philadelphia Art Commission:
 - Parkway Buffer Area [Title 14-502(2)(b)(.19)]
 - Independence Hall Area [Title 14-502(2)(b)(.11)]

Masonry Retaining Walls

Materials

- Retaining Walls shall be constructed of either:
 - Brick
 - Stone
 - CMU (*Hollow units to be filled*)
 - CMU wall to be parged on soil side with minimum 1/16” thick coating.

Height Limitations

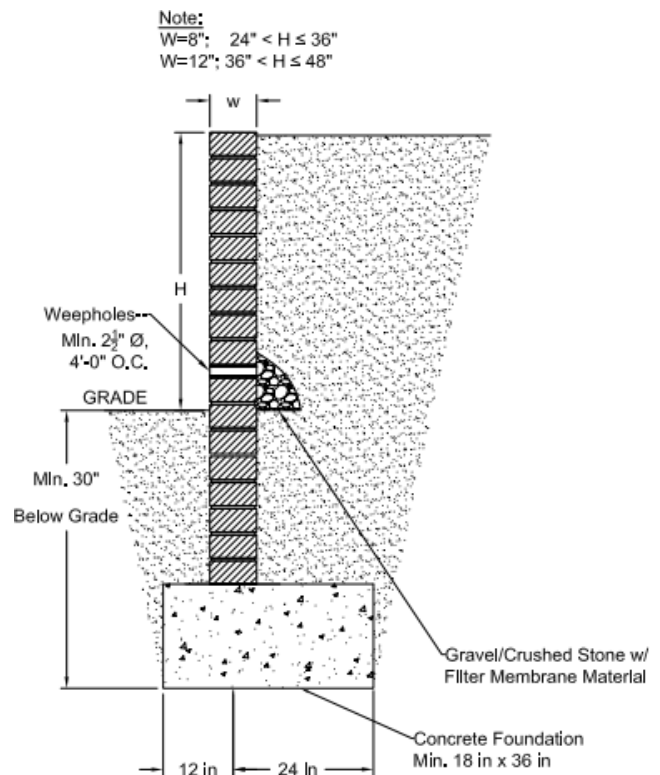
- 8” Solid Masonry: Max. 36” High
- 12” Solid Masonry: Max. 48” High

Concrete Foundation

- Minimum size: 18” x 36”
- Minimum depth: 30” below grade

Weep-holes

- Minimum Diameter: 2½”
- Maximum Spacing: 4’-0” O.C.
- Stone or crushed gravel fill to be located behind weepholes; Min. Fill Width = 12”





EZ PERMIT STANDARDS
RETAINING WALLS
 For New Retaining Walls. Revised 6/2023

Engineered Pre-cast Masonry Retaining Walls

- Height Limitations: Max. 48" high
- Installation: Pre-cast masonry retaining wall and hardscaping to be installed as per manufacturer's installations. (No exceptions.)
- Complete manufacturer's installation instructions must be available on site for inspector.

Streets Dept. Approval of Retaining Wall

All encroachments into the public way require Streets Dept. approval. Provide the following information referencing the location of retaining wall relative to property lines.

PA One-Call notification is required.

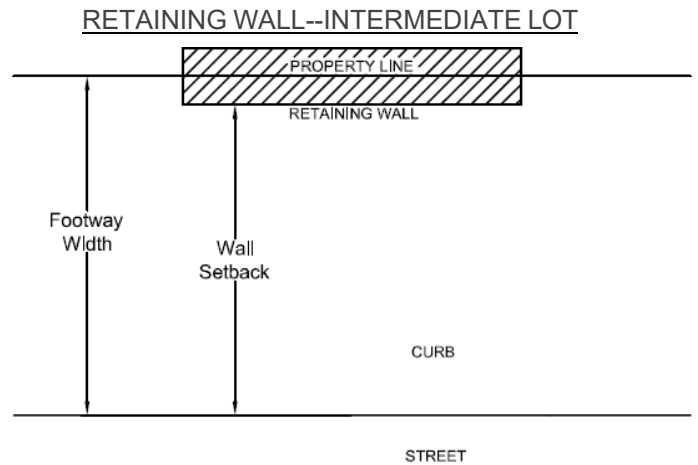
RETAINING WALL - INTERMEDIATE LOT

Street Name: _____

Retaining Wall Width (Front): _____

Footway Width (Front): _____

Wall Setback (Front): _____



RETAINING WALL- CORNER LOT

Street Name (Front): _____

Retaining Wall Width (Front): _____

Footway Width (Front): _____

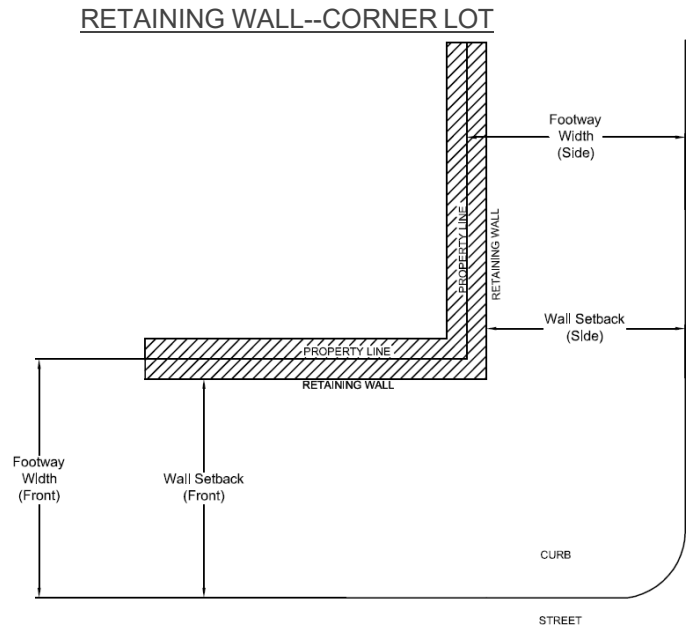
Wall Setback (Front): _____

Street Name (Side): _____

Retaining Wall Width (Side): _____

Footway Width (Side): _____

Wall Setback (Side): _____



AP# _____ Signature: _____