

Article XXII Commercial Development Appearance Standards

Section 390. The Purpose and Intent

[a] The purpose and intent of this article is to regulate aesthetic features on commercial building sites to: improve community appearance by requiring developments to use designated exterior color palettes, provide finish materials that enhance the visual interest and regional character of a building, address the human scale through the use of architectural features and detailing, and provide well designed exterior lighting.

Section 391. Applicability

[a] This article is applicable to the publicly visible portions of building elements, as defined herein, in new commercial (non-residential), multi-family (more than three dwelling units), institutional, and industrial uses. Each element of a building shall be evaluated independently for public visibility.

[b] If building elements are not publicly visible at the time of construction due to existing site features (earth berms, heavily wooded areas, existing buildings to remain), then these existing site features must remain indefinitely. If they are altered at any time to allow greater visibility, then the element made visible must comply with the standard.

[c] This article is not intended to supercede more stringent requirements which may exist within the North Carolina Building Code.

Section 392. Definitions

[a] Unless otherwise specifically provided, or unless clearly required by the context, the words and phrases defined in this section shall have the meaning indicated when used in this article.

- [1] Element of a building – an exterior wall, roof, or site wall which is manmade and constructed.
- [2] Public visibility – An element of a building shall be deemed publicly visible when any of the following conditions are met:
 - a. At least 70 percent of the element occurs above adjacent grade and is visible from any street adjacent to the property;
or
 - b. At least 70 percent of the element is, upon staff review, deemed visible from an adjacent residentially zoned property;
or

- c. At least 70 percent of the element is taller than the vegetative buffer at the time of planting.
- [3] Exterior walls - the vertical or nearly-vertical planes which form the exterior envelope of a building.
 - [4] Site walls – retaining walls, screen walls or other vertical or nearly-vertical planes which occur on a property, but are not part of the exterior envelope of a building.
 - [5] Roof area – a single, unbroken, contiguous plane, measured perpendicular to slope.
 - [6] Flat Roof – The external covering of a building having a 2(v):12(h) slope or less.
 - [7] Pitched Roof – The external covering of a building having a slope greater than 2(v):12(h).
 - [8] Field color – a single paint color which is used most extensively in a building’s visible façade.
 - [9] Trim color – a single paint color which is used on a building’s trim, lesser in proportion to the Field Color.
 - [10] Accent color – a single paint color which is used on a building, in the least proportion of all colors used, not to exceed 5% of the façade area.
 - [11] Full cutoff fixture – a light fixture designed so that no light is projected at or above a 90-degree plane running through the lowest point on the fixture where the light is emitted and less than ten percent (10%) of the rated lumens are projected between 90-degrees and 80-degrees.
 - [12] Façade – the face of a building.
 - [13] Volume – a portion of a building which is offset by a minimum of ten feet (10’) in plan or in elevation.
 - [14] IESNA – The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America
 - [15] Primary Public Way – The street that adjoins the property that carries the highest volume of traffic in accordance with Section 231

Section 393. Building Design

[a] Pedestrian-Orientation

The intent of this section is to provide a design of buildings that support a safe and attractive pedestrian environment.

- [1] Primary façade and main building entry shall face the primary public way. If site constraints are present, the applicant’s intent to use a “stock plan” is not a basis for appeal. The Community Appearance Commission may approve a redesign in which the main primary entrance does not face the primary public way provided the following;

- [a] The main building entrance, when not facing the primary public way, shall provide a safe and convenient access for pedestrians from the main building entrance to the primary public way. The pedestrian way must provide additional landscape amenities.
- [b] Entrances which are oriented on a diagonal are permitted, provided that they are integrated with the overall architectural design, and not merely angled appendages or alcoves.
- [c] Ground floor windows or window displays shall be provided along at least [10] percent of the building's (ground floor) street-facing elevation(s); windows and display boxes shall be integral to the building design and not mounted to an exterior wall. Parapets above the first floor are excluded from the calculations when the building is over eighty feet (80') in length.

[b] Exterior Walls

The intent of this section is to require running lengths of walls to be interrupted by architectural features which lend a more human scale to the overall massing.

- [1] Features include:
 - [a] Offsets of the building wall or other elements in plan of four (4) feet;
 - [b] A colonnade with columns or other vertical elements of sixteen feet (16') or less on center;
 - [c] A change in building material, with a maximum of two uses of this option being counted toward the schedules below;
 - [d] Awnings or canopies;
 - [e] Covered entries or porticos;
 - [f] Windows with a minimum width of 2'8" and a minimum height of 3'4";
 - [g] Trellises;
 - [h] Pilasters, which must be a different material or contrasting color than their background;
 - [i] A combination of the above; and
 - [j] Any other type of feature not listed here which is deemed by staff to meet the intent of this ordinance.
- [2] Plumbing, mechanical, electrical service components and gutter downspouts are not considered features and may require screening. Such screening is not considered an architectural feature.

[3] Required features must be distributed throughout the building façade and not clustered.

[4] Features shall be provided in accordance with the following feature schedules:

TABLE A
FEATURE SCHEDULE – PLAN

Linear Dimensions, in Plan	Minimum # of Feature Types	Minimum # of Total Features
10' to less than 40'	2	4
40' to less than 80'	3	8
80' to less than 120'	4	12
120'+	5	16

TABLE B
FEATURE SCHEDULE – ELEVATION

Linear Dimensions, in Elevation	Number of Features Required
10' to less than 16'	2
16' to less than 32'	3
32' to less than 48'	4
48'+	5

[5] Features which serve to interrupt the building façade in both plan and elevation shall be credited as such using the above charts. Windows are considered plan and elevation features. See examples in Figure 3 on page 22-14 and Figure 4 on page 22-15.

[c] Roofs

The purpose of this section is to regulate both pitched and flat roof types. The intent is to interrupt expanses of pitched roofs and minimize or prevent the visibility of flat roofs.

[1] Walls shall not appear to terminate at flat roofs. Flat roofs shall be concealed from view by using pitched roof features, parapets, or a mixture thereof. Where only one elevation has this condition, the parapet or other feature will continue four feet (4') along the adjacent elevation. See Figure 5 on page 22-16.

[2] Buildings over two stories above grade may utilize a flat roof, provided the flat portion is not publicly visible. Compliance may not be possible if the adjacent road grade is substantially above the roof in question.

[3] Minimum roof slope for pitched roofs is 4'(v):12'(h).

[4] Publicly visible plumbing vent stacks shall be colored to match the roofing material.

[5] Where a parapet intersects with a pitched roof element, there shall be no apparent breaks in the parapet wall. See Figure 6 on page 22-17.

[6] Awnings or canopies which are illuminated from within must be covered or finished with fully opaque material.

[7] Publicly visible pitched roofs shall be articulated by features in accordance with the following schedule. Features shall be in proportion to the roof area where they appear. Features include:

- [a] Dormers;
- [b] Eyebrows;
- [c] Intermittent gables or hips;
- [d] Vertical offset in ridge line;
- [e] Horizontal offset in ridge line;
- [f] A combination of the above; and
- [g] Any other type of feature not listed here which is deemed by staff to meet the intent of this ordinance.

TABLE C
FEATURE SCHEDULE – ROOF AREAS

Roof Area	Number of Features Required
Less than 1200 s.f.	0
1200 s.f. to less than 1600 s.f.	1
1600 s.f. to less than 2400 s.f.	2
2400 s.f. +	3

[8] No part of this ordinance shall be construed to prevent solar panels or any other type of renewable energy collection or storage method, provided the development follows the massing guidelines established herein.

[d] Materials

The purpose of this section is to establish standards for finish materials used on publicly visible exterior walls. For any publicly visible elevation, a minimum of 25% of the building finish material must be stone or concrete-simulated stone, wood or simulated wood in concrete board (such as “Hardi” products), or brick or concrete-simulated brick.

[1] Mirrorized glass is prohibited from use. Reflective tinted glass is acceptable up to 30 percent tint. Anything above 30 percent tint is subject to review by the Community Appearance Commission.

- [2] Architectural concrete masonry such as split face, or ground-face block is acceptable.
- [3] Stucco and synthetic stone are acceptable finish materials.
- [4] Architectural concrete (containing a pattern or finish) as a finish material is acceptable. Gray, unfinished concrete is prohibited as a finish material. Concrete architectural detail elements intended to be a decorative enhancement for exterior walls and site walls are acceptable
- [5] Other materials subject to staff review and approval include vinyl siding (which should simulate wood grain) and other manufactured materials. Vinyl siding shall be anchored to the exterior envelope sufficiently to avoid the appearance of deformation or bowing across the façade.
- [6] For publicly visible roof surfaces, allowed materials include standing seam metal, asphalt shingles, shakes, tile, or manufactured shingles which give an appearance of shingles, shakes, or other simulated natural material. Sheet materials other than those listed in this section are subject to staff review for use on publicly visible roofs.
- [7] Any materials which comprise less than 10 percent of a publicly visible exterior building wall and are components of windows or trim systems are allowed (example: aluminum storefront, metal corner trim, etc.).
- [8] FRP, PVC, and other composites formed into architectural detail elements such as columns, cornices, etc., are approved for use as long as such material is intended to be a decorative enhancement for the façade.

[e] Colors

The purpose of this section is to prevent inordinately bright façades and primary color ranges. All new construction elements are subject to color requirements, except pavement markings and signage.

- [1] Acceptable colors for site walls, site lighting, and any other outside construction elements (excluding signage) include that equivalent to Sherwin-Williams series “Essential” and “Fundamentally Neutral” in the *Town of Boone Color Reference Guide*.
- [2] Acceptable field colors and trim colors are those equivalent to Sherwin Williams series “Essential” and “Fundamentally Neutral” in the *Town of Boone Color Reference Guide*.
- [a] The “LRV” Light Reflection Value of field colors must be

below 60. Any colors above “60 LRV” are subject to review by the Community Appearance Commission.

[b] Black is prohibited as a field color in the series “Essential”.

[3] Acceptable accent colors are those equivalent to Sherwin-Williams series “Essential”, “Fundamentally Neutral”, and “Color Options” in the *Town of Boone Color Reference Guide*.

Section 394. Parking Garages

[a] The purpose of this section is to regulate aesthetic features on parking structures to prevent a utilitarian appearance, and to provide a safe, secure environment for patrons, employees and vehicles.

[b] Publicly visible facades must comply with provisions of this article pertaining to exterior walls, materials, and colors.

[c] All above-ground parking floors and decks shall be designed using a continuous façade incorporating window-like openings. The sill of any window-like opening must be a minimum of 42” above the finished floor

[d] Exterior vehicle ramps are subject to review by the Community Appearance Commission to minimize the appearance of tilted ramps.

[e] Elevator and stair shafts shall be topped with gabled roofs or other architectural features and be oriented so that lobbies are visible from the street at each level.

[f] Lighting shall be uniform throughout the structure so that dark hiding places are not created. Lighting levels must conform to IESNA standards.

[g] In the B-1 Central Business District, the façade must be in harmony with the historic look of the area. Facades that are 75% native rock or red brick are presumptively consistent with the historic look of the B-1 Central Business District. Any other combination of materials must be approved by the Community Appearance Commission.

Section 395. Site Walls

[a] The purpose of this section is to limit dimensions of site walls. The intent is to prevent walls which appear to dwarf the human scale and to encourage equalizing cut/fill or majority cut slope methods of grading.

- [b]** No retaining wall may be more than eight feet (8') in height. This height does not include decorative caps that are less than eight inches (8") in height. Screen walls shall not be taller than necessary to conceal the item screened (such as a dumpster, HVAC equipment, etc.)
- [c]** Buildings located near the top of site retaining walls shall be a minimum of four feet (4') horizontally from the top of the retaining wall.
- [d]** Retaining walls, any portion of which are within six feet (6') of a sidewalk or pedestrian way, shall not exceed four feet (4') in height. Subsequent walls must be offset a minimum of four feet (4') in plan. See Figure 1 on page 22-12.
- [e]** A series of two (2) retaining walls must have a minimum of four feet (4') horizontally from the back of the top of the lower wall face to the toe of the upper wall face in plan. See Figure 1 on page 22-12. For three (3) or more walls in series, see item [g] below.
- [f]** The space between retaining walls in series shall be landscaped with appropriate grasses, vines or other ground cover in accordance with provisions of Appendix B and may contain shrubs and trees not to exceed thirty-five feet (35') in height at maturity. This area shall be maintained in accordance with the provisions of Section 369.
- [g]** Retaining walls in series which collectively exceed sixteen feet (16') in height shall have a minimum of one (1), ten foot (10') wide Type "A" buffer (see Section 362), between two of the walls. Retaining walls which are separated by a building, a road, or a parking area shall be exempt from this requirement. See Figure 2 on page 22-13.
- [h]** Publicly visible site wall material and color shall be architecturally compatible with the principle building(s) on site.

Section 396. Lighting

- [a]** The purpose of this section is to regulate the intensity of exterior lighting. The intent is to prevent light from commercial developments from excessively illuminating the property in question, other properties, or the night sky.
- [b]** Only light fixtures which are categorized as full cut-off (FCO) fixtures shall be permitted, except sportsfield fixtures which must comply with Section 393[d].
- [c]** The following are specific standards for lighting intensity based upon the land use involved. Values are presented in allowable foot-candles (fc) maintained (measured horizontally) at grade and are to be averaged throughout the site to avoid hot spots, i.e. areas of extreme light intensity relative to the remainder of the site:

Land Use	Minimum	Maximum	Min./Max. Uniformity Ratio
Pedestrian areas/sidewalks	.2 fc	1.0 fc	
Building entries	1.0 fc	10.0 fc	
Street lighting	.2 fc	1.0 fc	
Open Parking areas	.2 fc to .9 fc	3.6 fc	4:1
Playgrounds		5.0 fc	
Site perimeter		.5 fc	

[d] Lighting for sports fields and outdoor courts is generally in excess of general outdoor lighting levels. Recreation lighting levels established by the IESNA are to be used as the standard. Higher lighting levels for tournament or high league play are sometimes required and must be approved by the Community Appearance Commission. All sportsfields or tennis courts must meet the following minimum standards.

- [1] Fixtures must be fitted with the manufacturer’s glare control package. If the manufacturer does not have a glare control package, the fixture specification must be changed to a manufacturer that offers a glare control package.
- [2] Lighting shall be extinguished no later than one hour after the event ends.
- [3] Fixtures must be designed with a sharp cutoff and aimed so that their beams fall within the primary playing area and the immediate surroundings, so that off-site direct illumination is significantly restricted.

[e] Gas station canopies shall be illuminated at a maximum illuminance of 30 fc and individual fixtures shall be flush mounted or have the canopy edge below the lowest light-emitting point on the fixtures. All existing gas station canopies which exceed this standard shall be made compliant within seven (7) years of the date of adoption of this article.

[f] Up-lighting may be used to illuminate a building, landscaping element or architectural feature, provided the lighting design has a maximum illuminance of 12fc, measured in a vertical plane. Down lighting is preferred.

[g] Parking decks and covered parking areas must conform to IESNA standards.

Section 397. Flexibility in Administration

[a] Flexibility in administration is required for this article. When strict application of the standards within this article undermines other provisions of the UDO, then those other provisions take precedence. For example, the

retaining wall height limitation may be increased to afford an opportunity to preserve significant or historic tree(s).

Section 398. Submission Requirements

[a] Development site plans shall graphically illustrate, in both a site plan view and elevation view, those elements which are not publicly visible. Otherwise, each element of the project will be assumed by staff to be publicly visible.

[b] Elevation drawings of each side of the building shall be provided. The elevations shall have materials and colors rendered in such a way that each is distinct.

[c] Elevation drawings shall be accompanied by the following information for each portion of the building, corresponding to the design requirements set forth in Article XXII.

- [1] Largest distance in plan between required features, and the elevation(s) on which this occurs.
- [2] Largest distance in elevation between required features, and the elevation(s) on which this occurs.
- [3] Number of features required and number present in each elevation.
- [4] Name of each type of feature in elevation.

[d] Material samples shall be provided for all synthetic materials not specifically approved by Section 393.

[e] A lighting plan shall be submitted for staff review and approval prior to issuance of building permits. The plan shall contain the following information:

- [1] An area lighting plan, drawn to scale, indicating all structures, parking lots, building entrances, vehicular and pedestrian traffic areas, vegetation that may interfere with lighting, and adjacent land uses that may be adversely impacted by the lighting. The plan shall contain a layout of all proposed fixtures by location, orientation, aiming direction, mounting height and type.
- [2] The submission shall include, in addition to proposed area lighting, all other exterior lighting, e.g., architectural, building entrance, landscape, flagpole, sign, etc.
- [3] A 10' x 10' illuminance grid (point-by-point) of maintained footcandles overlaid on the site plan plotted out to 0.0 footcandles, which demonstrates compliance with light intensity standards specified in Section 396.

Section 399. Community Appearance Commission Review

[a] Alternatives to the appearance standards provided herein may be permitted upon review and approval of the Community Appearance Commission. Applications containing alternatives shall be forwarded to the commission for review at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

[b] The Commission may approve such alternatives if it finds the alternatives involved meet the purpose and intent of the provisions contained within this article.

[c] Unless otherwise specified, the Commission’s review and approval of any deviation from the standards contained herein is required prior to permit approval.

Section 400. Reserved

Section 401. Reserved

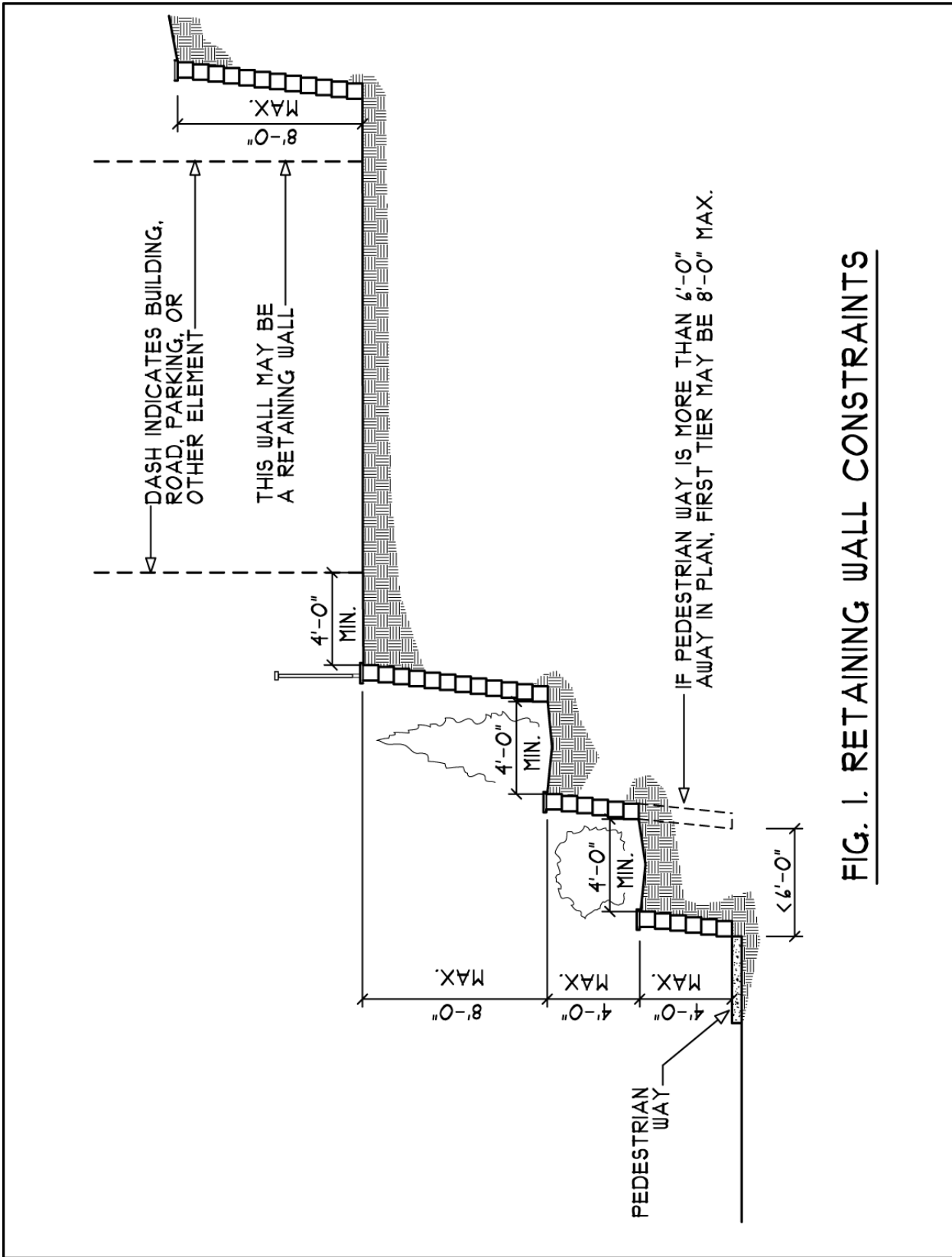


FIG. 1. RETAINING WALL CONSTRAINTS

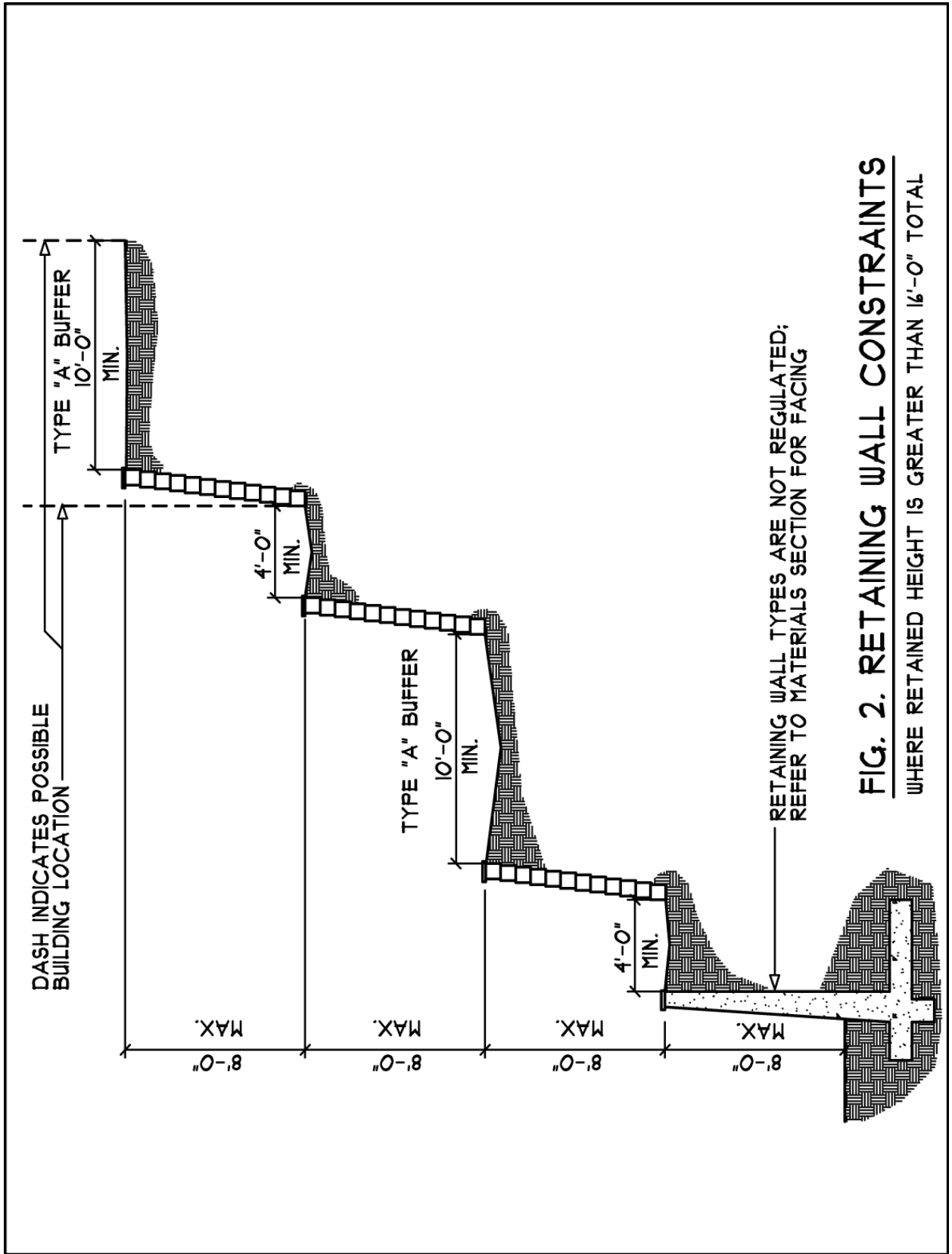


FIG. 2. RETAINING WALL CONSTRAINTS

WHERE RETAINED HEIGHT IS GREATER THAN 16'-0" TOTAL

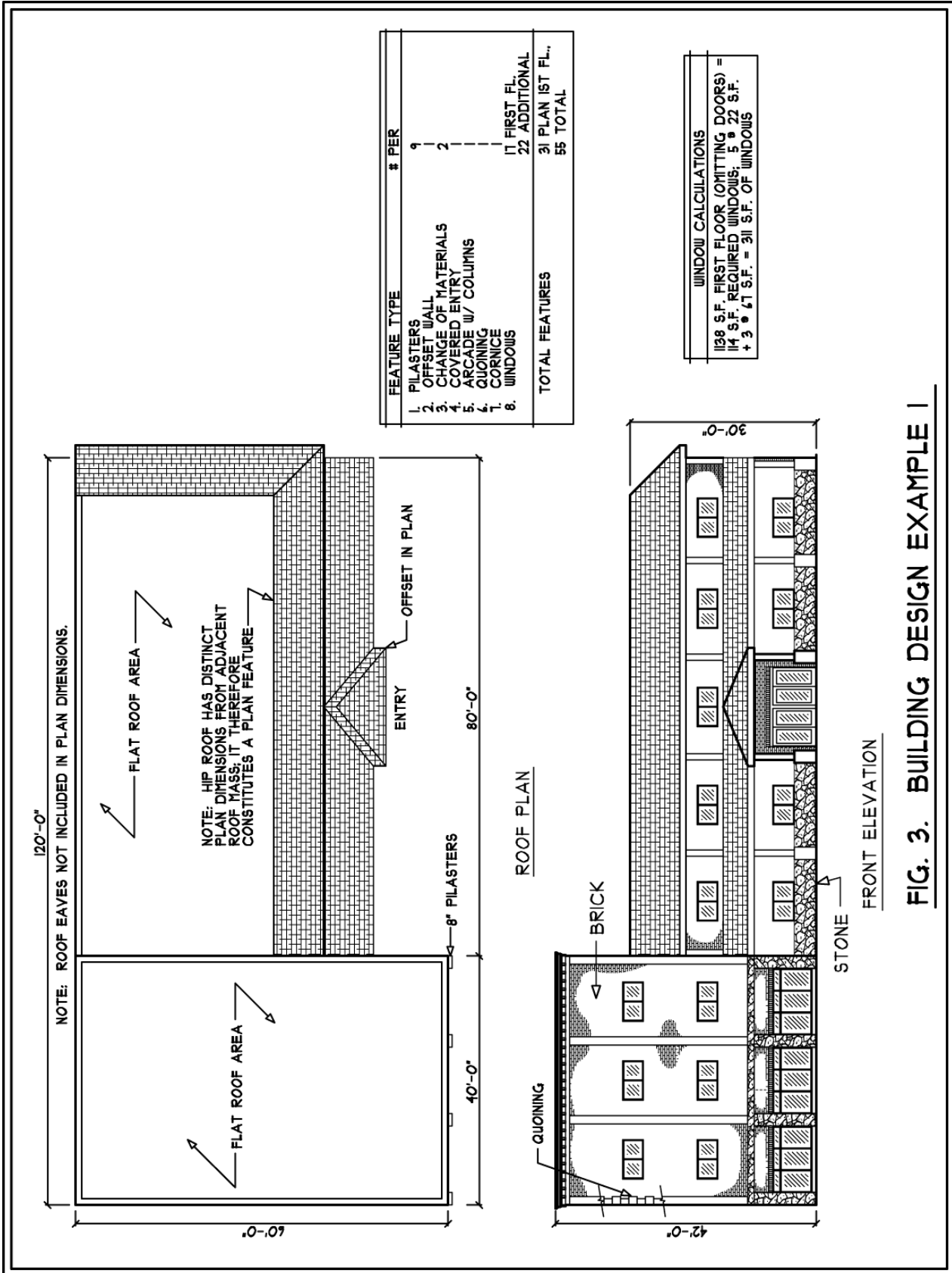


FIG. 3. BUILDING DESIGN EXAMPLE I

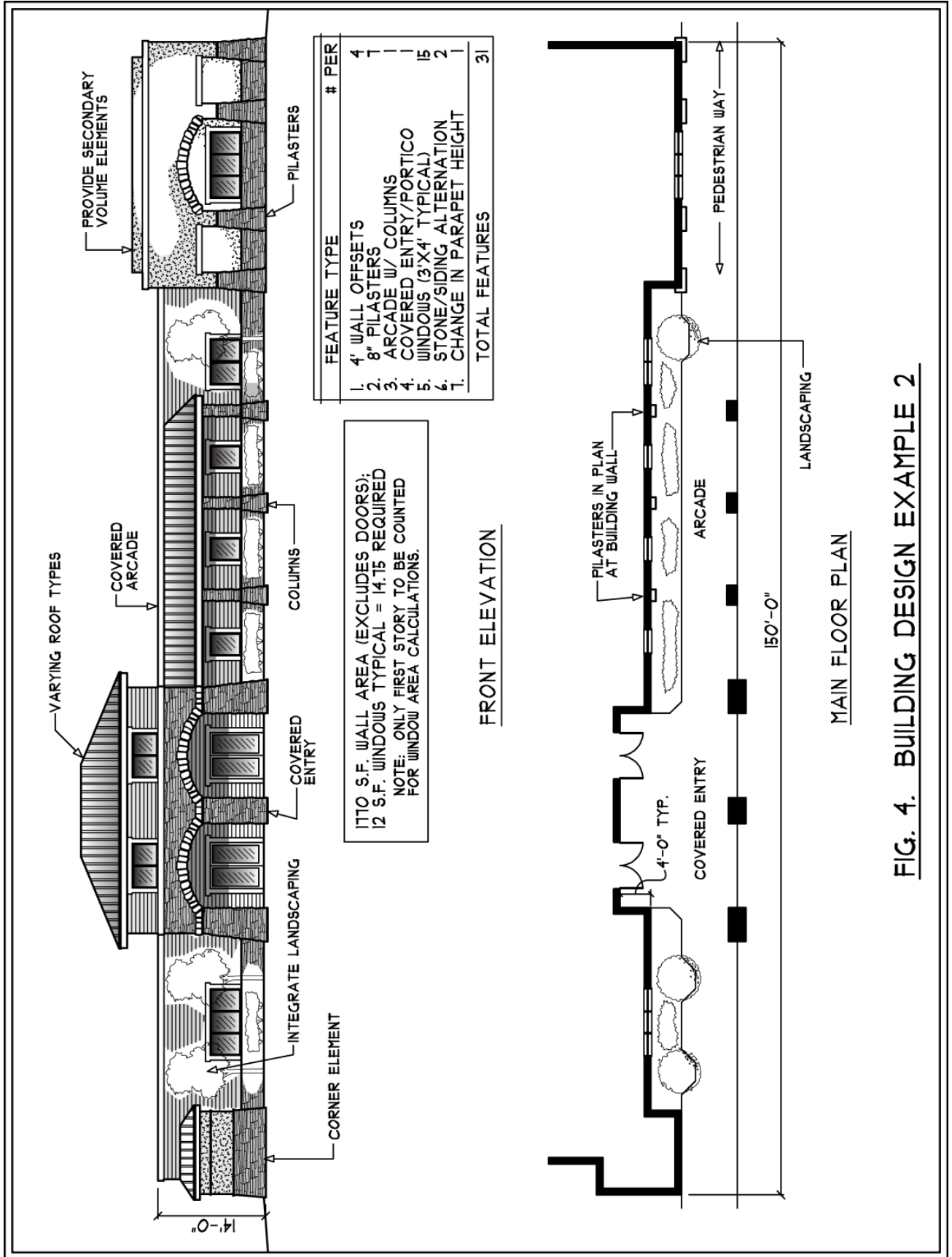


FIG. 4. BUILDING DESIGN EXAMPLE 2

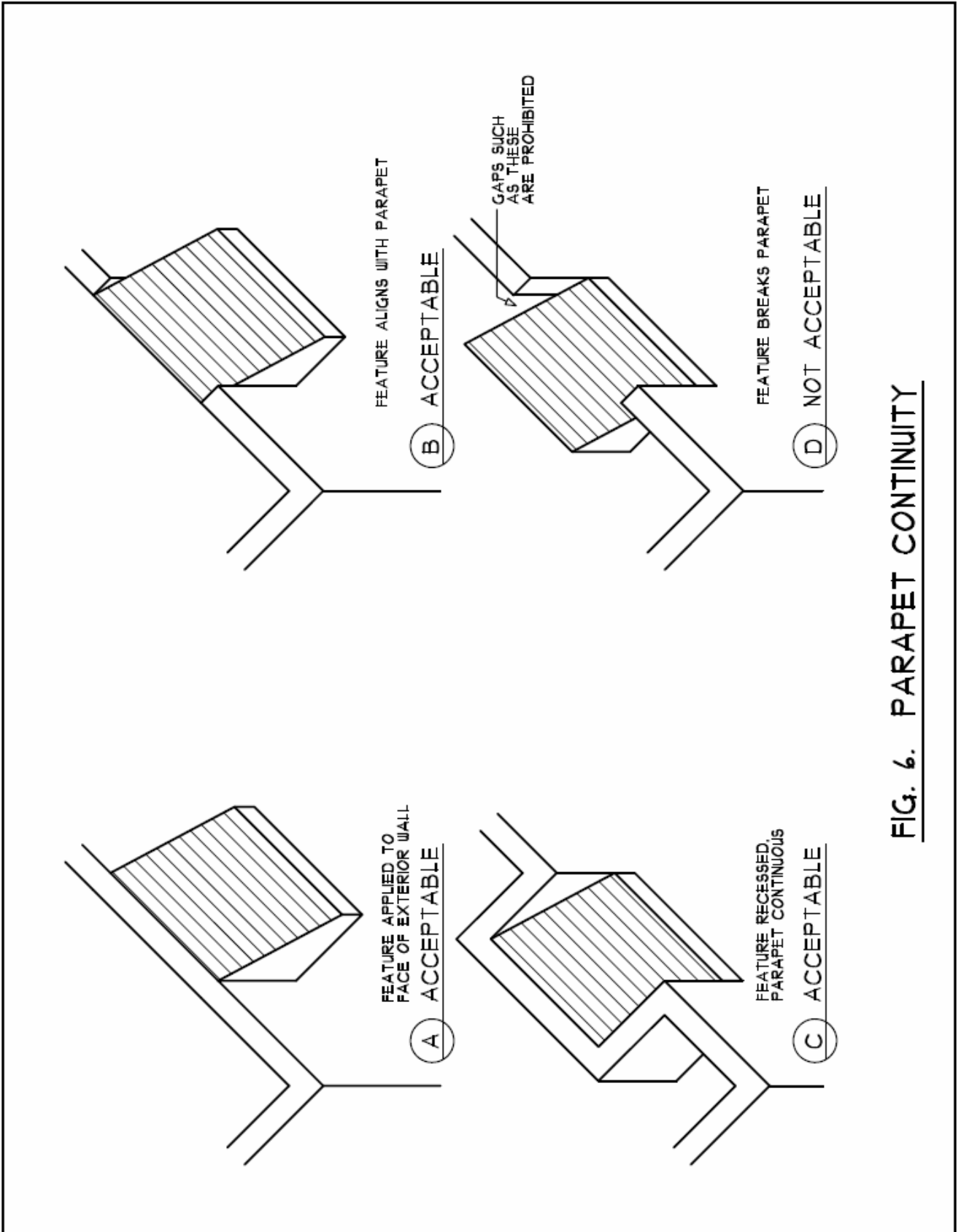


FIG. 6. PARAPET CONTINUITY

