

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 14  
REGARDING THE CENTRAL DELAWARE RIVERFRONT OVERLAY DISTRICT**



Matter added to the Bill by amendment is in **bold**.  
Matter deleted from the Bill by amendment is in ~~strike through~~.

Prepared by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission  
**DRAFT: FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY**

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Amending Title 14 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled "Zoning and Planning," by amending Section 14-507 entitled "/CDO, Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay District" and by amending Section 14-203 entitled "Definitions," under certain terms and conditions.

TITLE 14. ZONING AND PLANNING.

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CHAPTER 14-200. DEFINITIONS.

\* \* \*

§14-203. Definitions.

\* \* \*

**(97.1) Dock**

**A structure extending from dry land or a pier over a waterway providing boat access. Docks are typically accessory to marinas.**

\* \* \*

**(234.1) Pier**

**A structure supported by piles, posts, pillars, or fill extending from dry land over a waterway.**

\* \* \*

CHAPTER 14-500. OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

§14-507. /CDO, Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay District.

~~{RESERVED}~~

**(1) Purpose**

**The Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay District is intended to encourage and renew the connection of the city's residents and visitors with the Central Delaware**

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<sup>1</sup> Certain elements of the *Master Plan for the Central Delaware* are addressed by the base zoning district requirements of the new zoning code, and therefore are not specifically represented in this Central Delaware overlay. These include: the waterfront setback along Delaware River, build-to requirements along connector streets (which would be accomplished through CMX-2.5 zoning), and parking lot and garage screening requirements.

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**Riverfront and to promote the development of walkable mixed-use neighborhoods, as consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.**

**(2) District Boundaries**

**The Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay District shall consist of all lots located in the area bounded by the south side of Allegheny Avenue on the north, the pierhead line of the Delaware River, as established by the Secretary of War on September 10, 1940, on the east, the north side of Oregon Avenue on the south, and the east side of Interstate 95 on the west.**

**(3) Riverview Streets**

**For the purposes of this §14-507, “riverview streets” shall include the portions of the following streets that are east of Interstate 95<sup>2</sup>:**

- (a) Mifflin Street and its extension to Christopher Columbus Boulevard then to the Delaware River along a line perpendicular to Christopher Columbus Boulevard.**
- (b) Dickinson Street and its extension to the Delaware River.**
- (c) Washington Avenue.**
- (d) Christian Street.**
- (e) Race Street.**
- (f) Spring Garden Street.**
- (g) Germantown Avenue and its extension to Delaware Avenue.**
- (h) Columbia Avenue.**
- (i) Berks Street and its extension to the Delaware River.**
- (j) Cumberland Street and its extension to the Delaware River.**
- (k) Lehigh Avenue and its extension to the Delaware River.**

**(4) Prohibited Permanent Structures**

**No structure shall be constructed such that it blocks the extension of any of the following existing streets<sup>3</sup>:**

- (a) Dickinson Street to the Delaware River;**
- (b) Washington Avenue to the Delaware River;**

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<sup>2</sup> Includes a subset of connector streets identified by the *Master Plan for the Central Delaware* as essential for pedestrian connectivity (see p. 240-243 of the *Master Plan*).

<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this provision is to prevent the construction of structures on future planned streets. Identifies Germantown Ave, Columbia, Ave and the streets labeled as view corridors on pp. 102-116 of the *Master Plan* that have not yet been platted. Platting some streets, particularly streets that may differ from the existing street alignment, prior to effective date of the overlay may reduce the need for this provision.

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- (c) **Germantown Avenue to Delaware Avenue;**
- (d) **Columbia Avenue to the Delaware River;**
- (e) **Cumberland Street to the Delaware River; and**
- (f) **Lehigh Avenue to the Delaware River.**

**(5) Uses**

- (a) **At least one of the uses provided in §14-507(3)(b), below, shall occupy 75% of the ground floor frontage facing:**
  - (.1) **A riverview street, as set forth in §14-507(3), above;**
  - (.2) **Delaware Avenue in the area between Washington Avenue and Spring Garden Street; or**
  - (.3) **The Delaware River in the area between Washington Avenue and Spring Garden Street.**
- (b) **Required Ground Floor Uses**
  - (.1) **Retail sales;**
  - (.2) **Commercial services;**
  - (.3) **Eating and drinking establishments;**
  - (.4) **Lobbies of hotels, live theaters or cinemas;**
  - (.5) **Libraries, museums, galleries, or exhibition space;**
  - (.6) **Post offices;**
  - (.7) **Enclosed public space, enclosed gardens, public rooms, through-block connections;**
  - (.8) **Entrances to public transit stations or transit concourses.**

**(6) Open Area**

**The minimum open area for lots greater than 5,000 sq. ft. with frontage on the Delaware River shall be 40% of the total lot area.<sup>4</sup> Any waterfront setback required by this Zoning Code shall count as open area.<sup>5</sup>**

**(7) Front Yard Requirements<sup>6</sup>**

**For all new construction on properties fronting on Delaware Avenue or Christopher Columbus Boulevard, front yards shall be permitted; provided, that such front yard**

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<sup>4</sup> The *Master Plan* also recommends a 30% minimum open area for non-waterfront sites (p. 221). This will be accomplished through base zoning. Residentially-zoned lots require 30% open area already and CMX-2/2.5/3 commercial zones require 25% open area.

<sup>5</sup> The *Master Plan* calls for a 50' waterfront setback, measured from the top-of-bank, north of Spring Garden and south of Washington Avenue (p. 223). A setback along the entire length of the Delaware is required in a separate section §14-704(5) (Stream Buffers).

<sup>6</sup> Carried over from existing overlay.

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is landscaped or accessible to pedestrians. However, in no case shall any building be constructed so that the front yard when combined with the width of the sidewalk exceeds 25 feet. Seventy-five (75) percent of the building line shall be occupied by the façade of the principal building.

**(8) Building Height**

- (a) The minimum building height shall be 25 ft.
- (b) The maximum building height shall be 100 ft.<sup>7</sup>, except the Commission may permit buildings exceeding 100 ft. if the Commission determines that all of the following criteria have been met:<sup>8</sup>
  - (.1) The lot on which the building is situated is adjacent to a public park of a minimum size of three acres.
  - (.2) The building will not block sunlight to a public park.
  - (.3) The building will not be located within 400 ft. of an existing building that is taller than 100 ft.

**(9) Off-Street Parking**

In any Residential, Commercial, or Special Purpose district, vehicular ingress and egress is prohibited to and from the riverview streets set forth in §14-507(3), above.

**(10) Form and Design**

Single-story buildings containing at least 10,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area of which 75 percent is occupied by a single use shall comply with the following. For the purposes of this section, intermediate floor levels such as mezzanines shall not count as a story. Where a provision of this §14-507(10) conflicts with §14-703, this §14-507(10) shall govern.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The *Master Plan* limits building heights to 8 stories or 90 ft. (p. 224). The new code does not regulate height by stories. General rule of thumb that the code uses is 1 story = 12' to 13' height to allow for modern floor-to-ceiling heights, therefore an 8-story building could be 100 ft. tall.

<sup>8</sup> The *Master Plan* includes additional criteria, such as markers of a significant intersection or waterfront event, sustainable construction criteria, and direct contributions to infrastructure/public space, which are not appropriate for a zoning code and should be implemented through other means.

<sup>9</sup> This is an alternative to prohibiting retail uses larger than 10,000 square feet (p. 220 of the *Master Plan*). It expands beyond the basic form and design requirements in the zoning code because it requires articulation on

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- (a) **Façade articulation is required for each building façade. Between the average ground level and a height of 25 ft., a minimum of 50% of the wall area must include one or more of the following features:**
  - (.1) **Ornamental and structural detail;**
  - (.2) **Projections, recesses, or other variations in planes; or**
  - (.3) **Transparent windows or other transparent glazed area.**
- (2) **For every 10,000 sq. ft. of building area, there shall be 500 sq. ft. of public plaza in proximity to at least one of the building entrances. Bicycle parking required by §14-804(1) (Required Bicycle Parking Spaces) shall be located in the public plaza. The public plaza(s) shall have a minimum of 1 bench and 1 tree per 250 sq. ft. of public plaza. Vehicular traffic and loading are prohibited from accessing required public plazas.**
- (11) **Civic Design Review<sup>10</sup>**
  - (a) **Applicability**

**For any development that fronts on a riverview street, as set forth in §14-507(3), above, and is subject to civic design review under § 14-305(4)(b), the Civic Design Review Committee shall consider, in addition to the criteria set forth at §14-304(5)(f), the criteria set forth at §14-507(11)(b).**
  - (b) **Criteria**
    - (.1) **Whether the building has transparent windows or other transparent glazed area covering at least 50% of the ground floor façade.**
    - (.2) **Whether the sidewalks widths on both sides of a riverview street are consistent with the *Philadelphia Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan*<sup>11</sup>.**

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all 4 sides of the building and increases the percentage of articulated wall area from 30 to 50%. It also requires pedestrian plazas.

<sup>10</sup> Addresses the ground-floor transparency and minimum sidewalk widths recommended on p. 227 of the *Master Plan*.

<sup>11</sup> The *Master Plan* calls for 15 ft. sidewalks on all riverview streets, however 15 ft. sidewalks may not be able to be accommodated on all streets. Instead, the overlay references the *Philadelphia Pedestrian Bicycle Plan* which takes into account street widths.

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CHAPTER 14-700. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.

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§14-704. Open Space and Natural Resources.

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(5) Stream Buffers

\* \* \*

(b) General Standards

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(.2) The following activities and uses are prohibited within the stream buffer:

- (.a) Permanent or temporary structures, except for **docks, piers, and structures accessory to public open space.**<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Amended to exclude docks and piers from the prohibited uses in a setback.