

Construction Industry Communication #18

From: Tony Celebrezze, Deputy Director
Re: Placement of above-ground utility boxes
Date: February 1, 2022

Background: The Columbus Zoning Code regulates the placement of buildings and structures in relation to parcel lines and public right-of-way lines. This regulation of setbacks applies to above-ground utility boxes which are often required as part of a new construction or when they must be installed retroactively in existing developments. In some cases, it is necessary to install above-ground utility boxes inside the minimum building line.

This Construction Industry Communication provides for limited use of building setback areas for the installation of above-ground utility boxes pending codification. Above-ground utility boxes shall be permitted within the required building line as long as the following conditions are met:

General Requirements

1. An above ground utility enclosure up to 60 inches in height and with a footprint up to thirty (30) square feet is not to be considered a structure.
2. Multiple above ground utility enclosures in the same setback shall be permitted so long as their aggregate height and footprint do not exceed a total of 60 inches and thirty (30) square feet, respectively.
3. Where the Department of Public Utilities requires the retroactive installation of one or more above ground utility enclosures in a residential development, said enclosures are not subject to the building line so long as they are the minimum height and size necessary and shall not be used to house any other devices.
4. Notwithstanding the above provisions, placement of above-ground utility boxes shall be compliance with CC3321.05, Vision clearance.
5. All above-ground utility boxes must be shown on the first page of the site plan submitted for zoning clearance review. If unable to show utility boxes on this page, a note shall be provided on the first page that alerts the reviewer to the page on which the utility boxes are shown.