

*An informational packet on House Location Surveys  
compliments of*



**Why do I need a survey?**

**Why does a survey cost this much?**

**Are my property corners set?**

**Are surveys regulated?**

**What do these terms mean?**

**What does the survey plat show?**

# Why do i need a survey?

**"A survey is the only reliable way of obtaining and confirming basic information about a property"**

- 1.The location and existence of the property.
- 2.The relationship of the property to adjoining property.
- 3.Discrepancies between actual occupation or use and the recorded description.
- 4.The location of physical improvements in relation to the boundary line of the property.
- 5.Items that are obvious upon inspection that are not necessarily recorded.

**Upon request, a surveyor is the only person who is uniquely qualified to determine whether:**

- ♦ property violates zoning ordinances
- ♦ Whether the property is in a flood plain.

# Why does a survey cost this much?

## The Survey Process

**Research** - Determine the description of record for the subject property and all adjoiners.



**Field** - Identify evidence in the field of corner monumentation (stone, iron pipe, chisel mark, cedar stake, tree, etc.). Measure and field locate all physical improvements.

**Computations** - Compare the evidence in the field with descriptions of record, when in the Land Surveyors professional judgment enough evidence corresponds to the descriptions of record, the Surveyor shall prepare a plat.

**Drafting** - Prepare a plat showing the relationship of the description of record and physical improvements.

# Are my property corners set?

## § 54.1-407. Land surveying.

Notwithstanding the provisions of any regulation promulgated by the Board for Architects, Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, Certified Interior Designers and Landscape Architects, a land surveyor shall not be required by Board regulations to set corner monumentation or perform a boundary survey on any property when (i) corner monumentation has been set or is otherwise required to be set pursuant to the provisions of a local subdivision ordinance as mandated by § 15.2-2240 or subdivision 7 of § 15.2-2241, or where the placing of such monumentation is covered by a surety bond, cash escrow, set-aside letter, letter of credit, or other performance guaranty, or (ii) the purpose of the survey is to determine the location of the physical improvements on the said property only, if the prospective mortgagor or legal agent ordering the survey agrees in writing that such corner monumentation shall not be provided in connection with any such physical improvements survey. The provisions of this section shall apply only to property located within the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, King George, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania and Stafford; and the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas and Manassas Park.

# Are surveys regulated?

## **18 VAC 10-20-380. Minimum standards and procedures for surveys determining the location of physical improvements; field procedures; office procedures.**

- A. The following minimum standards and procedures are to be used for surveys determining the location of physical improvements on any parcel of land or lot containing less than two (2) acres or metric equivalent (sometimes also known as "building location surveys," "house location surveys," "physical surveys," and the like) in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The application of the professional's seal, signature and date as required by these regulations shall be evidence that the survey determining the location of physical improvements is correct to the best of the professional's knowledge, information, and belief, and complies with the minimum standards and procedures set forth in this chapter.
- B. The professional shall determine the position of the lot or parcel of land in accordance with the intent of the original survey and shall set or verify permanent monumentation at each corner of the property, consistent with the monumentation provisions of subdivision C 4 of 18 VAC 10-20-370. All such monumentation, other than natural monumentation, shall, when feasible, be identified by temporary witness markers. When the professional finds discrepancies of sufficient magnitude to warrant, in his opinion, the performance of a land boundary survey (pursuant to the provisions of 18 VAC 10-20-370), he shall so inform the client or the client's agent that such land boundary survey is deemed warranted as a requisite to completion of the physical improvements survey. The location of the following shall be determined in the field:
1. Fences in near proximity to the land boundary lines and other fences which may reflect lines of occupancy or possession.
  2. Other physical improvements on the property and all man-made or installed structures, including buildings, stoops, porches, chimneys, visible evidence of underground features (such as manholes, catch basins, telephone pedestals, power transformers, etc), utility lines and poles.
  3. Cemeteries, if known or disclosed in the process of performing the survey; roads or travelways crossing the property which serve other properties; and streams, creeks, and other defined drainage ways.
  4. Other visible evidence of physical encroachment on the property.

# What do these terms mean?

<b>AWN</b>	Awning	<b>N/F</b>	Now or Formally	<b>Set Back:</b> Distance from property line to principle structure
<b>BE</b>	Basement Entrance	<b>OVHD</b>	Overhead	
<b>BRL</b>	Building Restriction Line	<b>PG</b>	Page	<b>Ties:</b> Distance from the physical improvement to the description of record. Ties are related to the subject property. (ie., on 1.4', means the improvement is on the subject property 1.4 feet)
<b>CO</b>	Clean Out	<b>POL</b>	Point On Line	
<b>CONC</b>	Concrete	<b>RET</b>	Retaining	
<b>CTV</b>	Cable Television	<b>R/W</b>	Right of Way	
<b>DB</b>	Deed Book	<b>STP</b>	Stoop	
<b>IPF</b>	Iron Pipe Found	<b>TELE</b>	Telephone	
<b>IPS</b>	Iron Pipe Set	<b>WM</b>	Water Meter	
<b>LP</b>	Light Pole			
<b>MY</b>	Minimum Yard			

# What does the survey plat show?

## 18VAC10-20-380. (C)

The plat reflecting the work product shall be drawn to scale and shall show the following, unless requested otherwise by the client and so noted on the plat:

- The bearings and distances for the boundaries and the area of the lot or parcel of land shall be shown in accordance with record data, unless a current, new land boundary survey has been performed in conjunction with the physical improvements survey. If needed to produce a closed polygon, the meander lines necessary to verify locations of streams, tidelands, lakes and swamps shall be shown. All bearings shall be shown in a clockwise direction, unless otherwise indicated.
- North arrow, in accordance with record data.
- Fences in the near proximity to the land boundary lines and other fences which may reflect lines of occupancy or possession.
- Improvements and other pertinent features on the property as located in the field pursuant to subsection B of this section.
- Physical encroachments, including fences, across a property line shall be identified and dimensioned with respect to the property line.
- On parcels where compliance with restriction is in question, provide the closest dimension (to the nearest 0.1 foot or metric equivalent) from the front property line, side property line, and if pertinent, rear property line to the principal walls of each building. Also, all principal building dimensions (to the nearest 0.1 foot or metric equivalent).
- Building street address numbers, as displayed on the premises, or so noted if no numbers are displayed.
- Stoops, decks, porches, chimneys, balconies, floor projections, and other similar type features.
- Street name(s), as posted or currently identified, and as per record data, if different from posted name.
- Distance to nearest intersection, based upon record data. If not available from record data, distance to nearest intersection may be determined from best available data, and so qualified.
- Building restriction or setback line(s) per restrictive covenants, if shown or noted on the record subdivision plat.
- The caption or title of the plat shall include: the type of survey performed; lot number, block number, section number, and name of subdivision, as appropriate, or if not in a subdivision, the name(s) of the record owner; town or county, or city; date of survey; and scale of drawing.
- Adjoining property identification.
- Easements and other encumbrances set forth on the record subdivision plat, and those otherwise known to the professional.
- A statement as to whether or not a current title report has been furnished to the professional.
- The professional shall clearly note inconsistencies found in the research of common boundaries between the land being surveyed and the adjoining land(s).
- Professional's seal, signature and date.
- Name and address of the land surveyor or registered business.

