

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, EGBC, BOABC**

**File No: 18-0018**

**INTERPRETATION**

**Page 1 of 3**

<b>Interpretation Date:</b>	June 25, 2019
<b>Building Code Edition:</b>	BC Building Code 2018
<b>Subject:</b>	Determination of Grade for Buildings above a 3.2.1.2. Basement Storage Garage
<b>Keywords:</b>	Grade, basement storage garage, superstructures
<b>Building Code Reference(s):</b>	3.2.1.2.

## Question:

For buildings that are located above a basement storage garage per Article 3.2.1.2., is the grade of each building above the basement storage garage determined separately based on the definition of "grade"?

## Interpretation:

Yes

Article 3.2.1.2. permits a basement storage garage to be treated as a separate building for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.2. and Sentences 3.2.5.12.(2) and (3).

Although not specifically stated in Article 3.2.1.2., this means that buildings that are located above the basement storage garage can also be treated as separate buildings for the purposes of Subsection 3.2.2. and Sentences 3.2.5.12.(2) and (3).

Subsection 3.2.2. includes the following aspects:

- Major occupancy classification
- Building height
- Building area
- Type of construction
- Sprinklers or no sprinklers
- Fire separations and fire resistance rating of floor assemblies
- Fire resistance ratings of roof assemblies,
- Fire resistance ratings of bearing walls, columns and arches

Sentences 3.2.5.12.(2) and (3) permit the use of NFPA 13R or NFPA 13D for the superstructure buildings if the size and occupancy meet the conditions of their use.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

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Page 2 of 3

Since "building height" is one of the aspects included in Subsection 3.2.2., the calculation of building height can be calculated separately for each building that is located above a basement storage garage that is designed to Article 3.2.1.2.

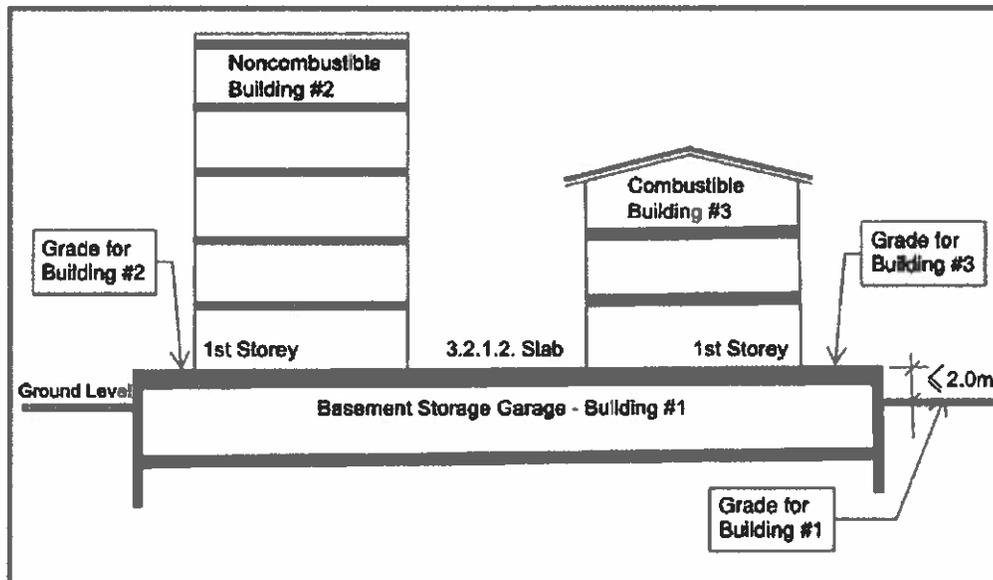
Building height for each building is calculated using grade.

Grade is defined in Article 1.4.1.2. as follows:

*Grade means the lowest of the average levels of finished ground adjoining each exterior wall of a building, except that localized depressions need not be considered in the determination of average levels of finished ground. (See First storey and Note A-1.4.1.2.(1).)*

Since Article 3.2.1.2. permits the building height to be determined separately for each building, grade can also be determined separately for each building as the lowest of the average level of finished ground adjoining each exterior wall of each building.

Refer to the drawings below which illustrates some examples for calculating grade for each building.



*Patrick Shek*

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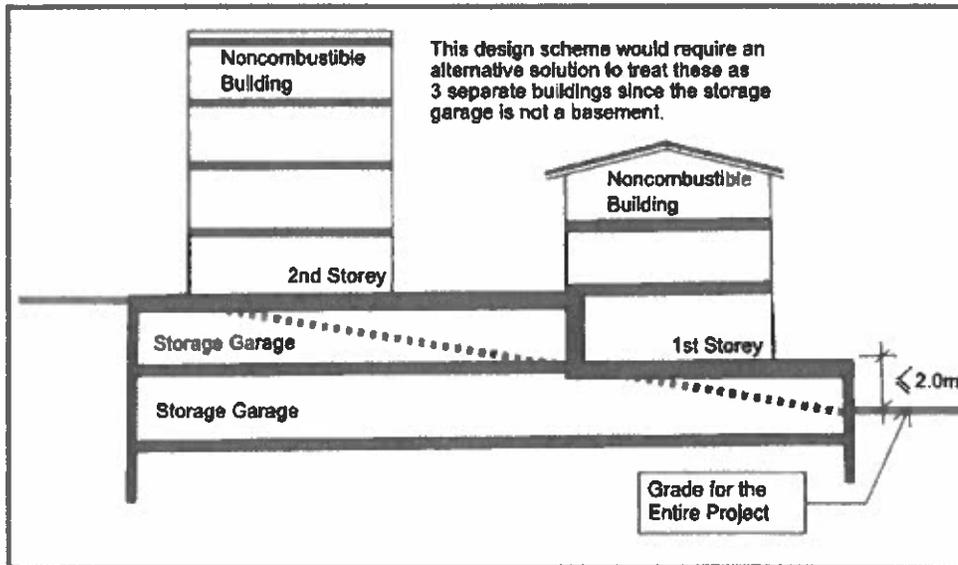
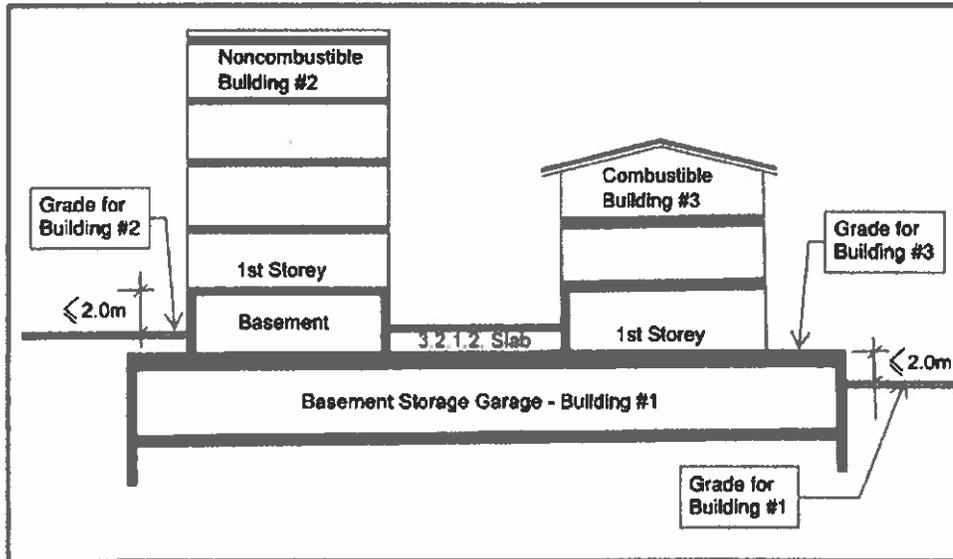
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Page 3 of 3



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