

Architect Hafeez Contractor

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OFFICE OF THE DIR (Plg.)
MPR/TC, D.D.A. N. DELHI-2
Dy.No.....1428.....
Dated.....18/11/11.....

November 16, 2011

✓ The Director (Plg.)

MPR

DDA

6th Floor, Vikas Minar

I. P. Estate

New Delhi 110002

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Read Central Dy. No
Dated17-11-11.....
R&D Section, Vikas Minar
Delhi Development Authority
Testing Asstt

Subject : Advertisement in The Times of India on 04/10/2011 Seeking Suggestions for Mid Term Review of Master Plan for Delhi 2021

Dear Sir,

During the process of designing buildings in Delhi we have been constrained by several provisions of the Master Plan and other stipulations resulting in designs that are compromised in terms of quality of space, efficiency of construction etc. We therefore suggest the aspects listed below should be reviewed.

1. Basement Roof Level / Plinth Level

We feel these parameters are inter-related. Top of basement is required to be a minimum of 900 mm and a maximum of 1200 mm above the surrounding ground level as plinth level and basements outside the building footprint have to be flush with the ground. This results in an odd basement structure and moreover it is not understood why such norms have been stipulated.

If fire tender movement is of concern, then this can be addressed through design (with Delhi Fire Service approval). If the need to have the plinth higher than ground level is the concern then this can be addressed through design specific to the needs and conditions of specific sites. What should be of concern is to eliminate the need for people (especially old &handicapped) to climb 900 mm to 1200 mm from surrounding ground level to get to the plinth and the complications to the structure.

It is suggested these restrictions be removed completely.

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2. Stilt Floor Height

Stilt floor clear height is required to be 2.40 m. If the ground floor has habitable spaces then the height has to be atleast 2.75 m but since this is too low, the height tends to be in excess of 3 m. This results in a very odd first floor level slab – the slab in fact has to be a folded slab or there has to be a structurally sealed off void for getting a level first floor which is a waste of resources and cost.

Furthermore, the floor to ceiling stilt height of 2.40 m is effectively much less because of beams, light fixtures and sprinklers and their piping. For the sake of proper design and for getting meaningful parking spaces in stilts, it is suggested stilts be of the same height as the rest of the ground floor and this 2.4 m restriction be removed. Also stilts should be permitted outside building footprints to allow for more parking. Such stilts can have gardens on top as on basement tops.

3. Atriums

Cost of land in Delhi being what it is means FAR is very precious. This results in entrance lobbies of even very tall residential blocks with, perhaps, upto 100 flats or more having a main entrance on the ground floor which is virtually a replication of upper floor lift lobbies. This is a poor entrance experience for occupants of such buildings and experience is important for permanent occupants. This constraint in design can be eliminated by permitting an entrance atrium which will be excluded from FAR calculations. The limit of such free from FAR atria can be worked out. There should also be no restriction on the height of the entrance hall.

Even where atria are permitted (hotels and commercial) there is a curious condition which states the sky has to be visible. The logic for this is hard to understand because such buildings will always have lighting systems installed in the atrium. Moreover, in tall buildings light from the top of the atrium will not reach the bottom of the atrium i.e. the ground floor. Therefore solid structural roofs should be allowed for closing atria tops because this, in no way, will compromise the primary functions of atria in modern buildings which are : being the hub of circulation systems on all floors and additionally being the milling around space on ground floors. In fact, atria should be allowed to shift around in plan after every few floors in tall buildings because this opens up interesting design possibilities.

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4. Circulation Spaces, Staircases, Exit Ways & Means of Escape

Such spaces are currently designed for the minimum mandatory requirements but this does not mean the experiential aspect of such spaces is good. Much better quality spaces should be provided but, again, because of FAR considerations this is not feasible at present. Therefore it is suggested that circulation spaces/staircases/exit ways/means of escape should be excluded from the purview of FAR calculations and this will then open up the possibility of providing ample such spaces.

5. Balconies

For those living in multi-storied group housing towers, the only private open spaces are balconies which are permitted free of FAR only as pure cantilevers of upto 1200 mm. This width is very restrictive for meaningful usages like furniture placement etc. and should be extended to atleast 1800 mm. The pure cantilever aspect is also very restrictive because balconies can very conveniently be designed in offsets on the building façade with two or three sides continuous with the floor slab (also results in a more stable structure) and with more than one room opening out on to such balconies.

Therefore it is suggested that width of free of FAR balconies be increased to 1800 mm and upto three sides supported balcony structures be allowed.

We hope you will appreciate the above concerns and suggestions thereof in the mid-term review of MPD 2021 and incorporate them in the revised version of MPD 2021.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,


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For Architect Hafeez Contractor

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Copy to:

- 1) Hon'ble Union Minister, MoUD
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi
- 2) Secretary, MoUD
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi
- 3) LG, Delhi,
Raj Niwas, Delhi
- 4) VC, DDA
Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi
- 5) Commissioner Planning-I, DDA
Vikas Minar, I P Estate, New Delhi
- 6) Commissioner Planning-II, DDA
Vikas Minar, I P Estate, New Delhi
- 7) Director, Delhi Division, MoUD
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi

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