The Code Official under Section 19.15.010(C)(5)(a) of the Mercer Island City Code (MICC) makes this administrative policy determination and interpretation of the MICC of Mercer Island.

The purpose of this administrative interpretation is to specify a margin of error in impervious surface calculations.

MICC 19.02.020.D.1 requires single family development not exceed certain impervious surface limits based upon the average slope of the lot being developed.

Past practice in DSG has been to verify applicant impervious surface calculations based upon submitted site plans and construction drawings. Applicants either met the limits of MICC 19.02.020.D.1 or applied for Impervious Surface Deviations.

Past practice in DSG has been to largely rely on applicant documents stating the amount of impervious surfaces to be placed on lots. Recently, these calculations received increased scrutiny by neighbors of the proposed developments, and applicants propose impervious surfaces at the very limit of that allowed under MICC 19.02.020.D.1. Therefore, staff began careful measurement of proposed impervious surfaces and disagreed with most applicant calculations. In discussions to resolve the disagreements, staff and applicants agreed that some acceptable margin of error should be adopted for these calculations. Other disciplines, e.g., engineering, apply a margin of error to mathematical and computer aided drafting calculations. Impervious surface calculations are no different in nature from engineering calculations.

In summary, it is concluded that:
1. A margin of error is necessary for administrative calculations of impervious surfaces proposed and allowed on single family lots.
2. Single family zoning includes lots from 8,400 square feet to 15,000 square feet. Therefore, a sliding scale, or percentage, of the lot area is a reasonable and equitable methodology. However, with larger lots the result is an amount of impervious surfaces that would appear to constitute a de facto impervious surface deviation.
3. A reasonable margin of error is 1% of the lot area up to a maximum of 99 square feet.