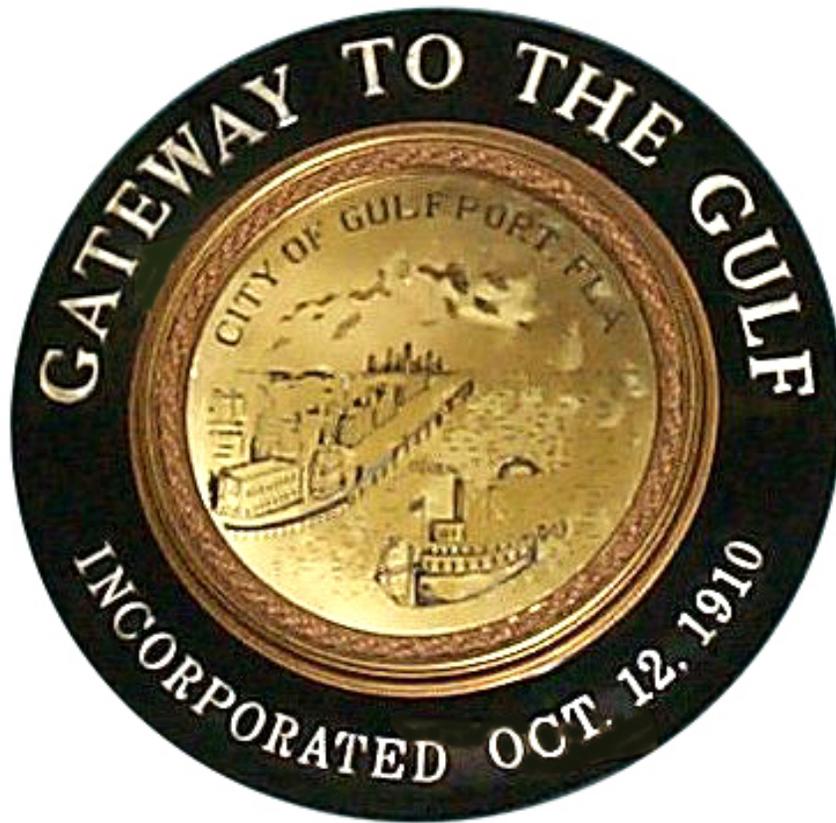


CITY OF GULFPORT  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

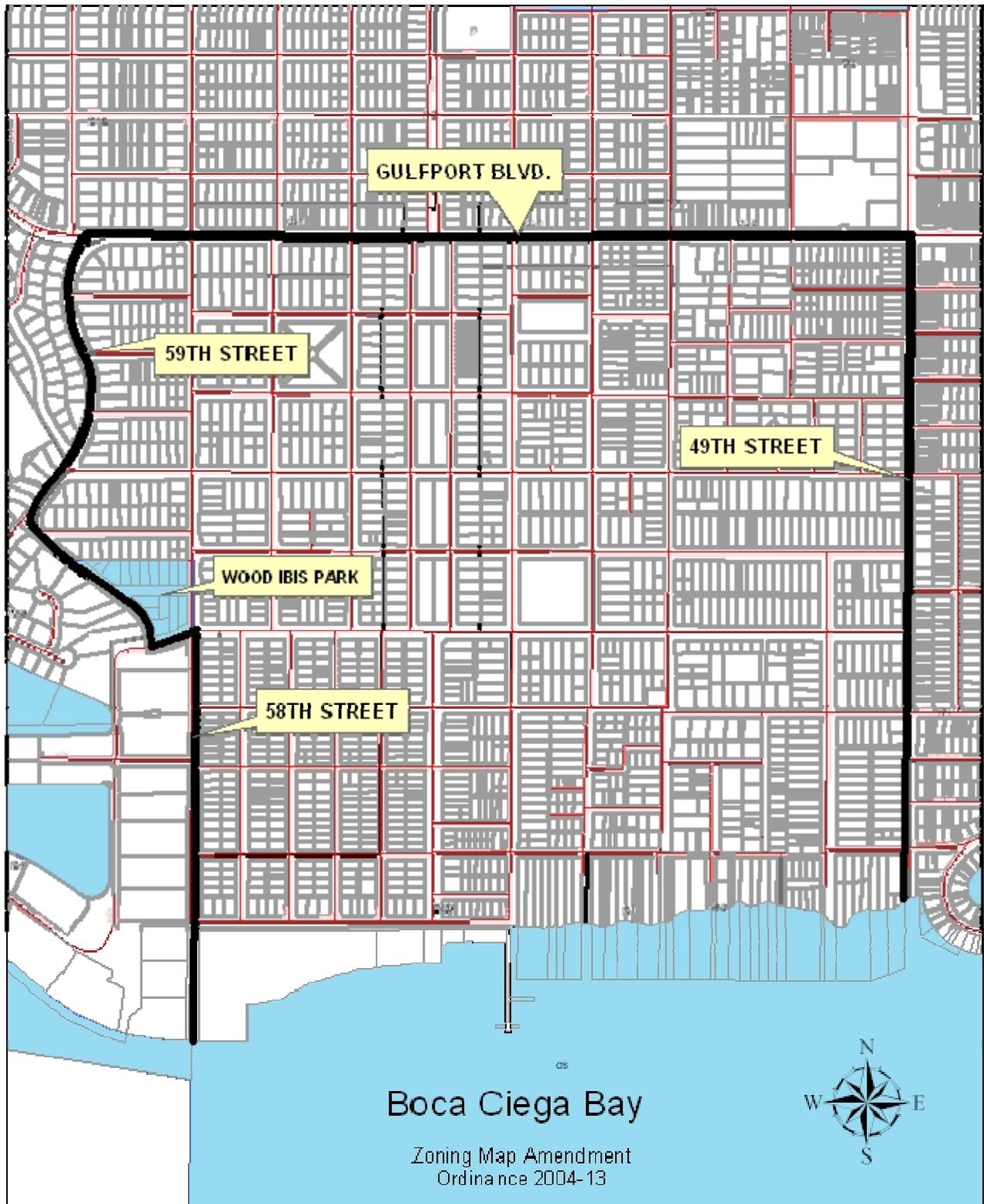


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ORDINANCE 2004-12**

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# Conservation Overlay District Boundaries



## **Sec. 22-5.15 COD (conservation overlay) zoning district.**

(a) Purpose. The City of Gulfport has a unique character that has been created over years of development. The area that this section is intended to cover will be referred to as the Conservation Overlay District. Development of this area started in the early 1900's and continues to be a popular residential area. The original predominant housing types were single story bungalow and cottage styles, many of which were built as vacation homes. These homes were small and have been built onto throughout the years. Currently, there are a number of housing types that have created an eclectic mix of styles that have been remodeled and added to by a diversity of property owners throughout the years. The eclectic nature of the Conservation Overlay District, created by a diversity of housing styles built at a human scale is the very thing that residents are concerned about protecting.

New development pressures and flood plain regulations have created a pattern of development that is inconsistent with the character of these neighborhoods. While this area of Gulfport has attracted new residents because of the character, their desire to build larger homes, devoid of any architectural features or landscaping, next to smaller single story homes is actually leading to the demise of the very thing that attracts new residents to the Conservation Overlay District.

The desire to build homes with modern interior layouts has lead to the use of readily available tract home construction plans. When built next to each other, using the same architectural style, same general footprint and with little to no landscaping, these designs give the appearance of a new subdivision as opposed to complementing the scale, diversity and maturity of the surrounding neighborhood. Two-story development can create an even greater sense of incompatibility if the design does not include attention to massing or scale. This becomes problematic, particularly with redevelopment of existing structures on smaller lots. Many times the only cost effective way to build an addition is to build up. Flood regulations require elevating structures, which in turn creates a home that is often out of scale with surrounding homes.

The citizenry of the area have voiced their concerns about incompatibility issues with new residential development. Based upon this urging, the City Council instructed staff to develop a set of architectural standards that would still encourage redevelopment of the Conservation Overlay District while protecting the character of this unique part of the City. That character, being defined in part by homes built on a human scale, has created the small town atmosphere found in this area. Human scale is the relationship or proportion between the human form and a structure. Gulfport is in fact a small town and the preservation of that character in the older part of the City is of paramount importance to not only the homeowners within the Conservation Overlay District, but to the City as a whole.

These guidelines are not intended to limit creativity, rather they are established to act as a tool for site-specific design of new and redeveloped structures that recognize and enhance the character of the surrounding neighborhood. The shape of a house, its arrangement of doors and windows, its roof style, its architectural style all make up the character of a house and contribute to the collective appearance of the neighborhood.

(b) **Applicability.** The COD (conservation overlay) zoning district regulations shall apply to all property within the district in addition to any other zoning district regulations applicable to said property. These regulations shall apply to all new single-family and multi-family development and redevelopment or remodeling of existing single-family and multi-family development within the district, as set forth herein.

(c) **Definitions.** The following definitions shall apply to these zoning district regulations:

*Architectural Features* - Features that enhance the residential or human/pedestrian scale. Examples of such architectural features are bay windows, dormers, open porches and entryways, arbors and trellises, garden walls, and window and door awnings;

*Articulation* - The giving of emphasis to architectural elements (like windows, balconies, entries, etc.) that create a complementary pattern or rhythm, dividing large buildings into smaller, identifiable pieces. Articulation also includes the use of projections and recesses that divide large facades into human-scaled proportions that reflect single-family dwellings nearby and avoid repetitive, monotonous, undifferentiated wall planes;

*Block front* – The street front area on both sides of the street extending a full block in either direction from the end of the block the subject property is located on;

*Canopy tree* - Any species of tree that when mature provides a shade canopy, including Oak trees and Pine trees. Such species shall be approved trees as identified in Article XX of this chapter;

*Differentiation* - Showing a difference in appearance. See also articulation;

*Dormer* - A projection from a sloping roof that contains a window;

*Facade* - The front of the building facing or oriented toward the street or roadway, excluding alleyways;

*Human Scale* - The proportional relationship of a particular building structure, or streetscape element to the human form and function. Human scale relates the size and/or height of a structure to the height and mass of a pedestrian traveling along the sidewalk or street adjacent to that structure;



These diagrams help illustrate the concept of human or pedestrian scale. The diagram to the left shows no human scale in relation to the building. The diagram to the right shows human scale features such as columns, awnings, and entryways that bring the same building into relationship with pedestrians.

*Primary Entrance* - The primary or principle pedestrian entrance of all buildings (except outbuildings). The primary entrance is the entrance designed for access by pedestrians from the sidewalk, or street if a sidewalk is not present. This is the principle architectural entrance even though day-to-day residential access may be via a secondary entrance associated with a garage, driveway or other vehicular use area;

*Primary Street Front* - The street or roadway to which the home is oriented;

*Secondary Street Front* - On a lot with multiple street fronts the secondary street front is the street or roadway to which the home is not oriented;

*Scale* - The apparent relationship between two entities, such as the relationship of a building's height to human height, the relationship between different building's heights, or the relationship between the size of an addition and the building to which it is attached;

*Street Tree* - A tree or group of trees that line the edge of a street or roadway. This would include trees in the right-of-way;

*Understory vegetation* - Low to the ground vegetation such as shrubs and similar plants. This definition does not include sod, which is considered ground cover.

(d) Standards. The following standards shall be applied to the design and construction of structures within the COD (conservation overlay) zoning district:

(1) Existing single and multi-family structures. It is the existing single-family structures that for the most part have created the uniqueness and character of this area. For this reason care should be taken to maintain that character when remodeling and redeveloping these homes. The application of these standards ensures that an upgrade to an existing structure does

not detract from the overall appearance and scale of the surrounding neighborhood, while still allowing for redevelopment of the older housing stock and reinvestment into these neighborhoods.

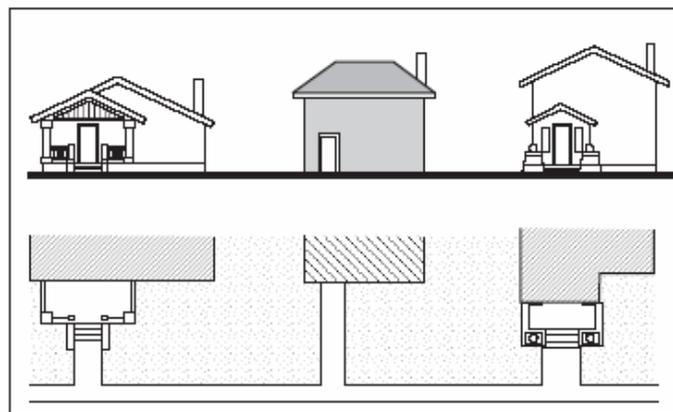
All existing single and multi-family structures in the district shall be constructed in accordance with the following regulations:

A. The remodeling of facades on existing structures shall at a minimum match the design elements of the existing façade. These elements include, but are not limited, to window size and spacing, roof pitch and overhang of eaves of the existing structure. For example, in enclosing an existing garage for extra living space, the façade of the new enclosure would have to provide a number of openings, in the form of doors and/or windows of a size and spacing consistent with those of the existing façade. If however, the garage enclosure is part of an entirely new façade, the new façade elements shall be as set forth in subsection (2) of this section.

When an existing single or multi-family structure erects a second story or a new garage, the elements for new single and multi-family structures shall be as set forth in subsection (2) of this section as it concerns multi-story structures and garages.

(2) New single and multi-family structures. All newly constructed single and multi-family structures in the district shall be constructed in accordance with the following regulations:

A. Façade. The façade of a building is the front of the building facing or oriented toward the street or roadway, excluding alleyways. The primary street front in the case of lots with multiple fronts is the street front that the pedestrian entryway is oriented and that which the majority of houses are oriented towards. The secondary street front is the front that is not designed for primary pedestrian access from the street or sidewalk. Garages may sometimes be located on either primary or secondary street fronts, however the garage is not considered as a pedestrian entryway.

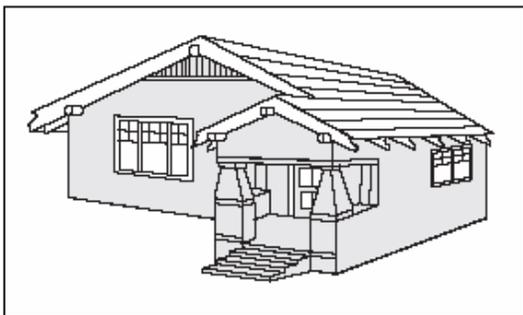


New houses without front porches do not contribute to the richness and warmth of the block.

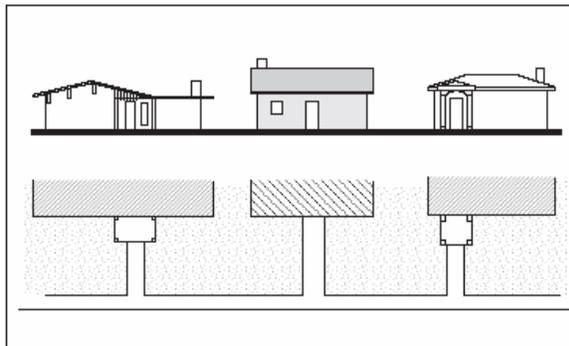
All facades shall be constructed as follows:

1. Finish: All facades shall have a finish treatment such as siding, stucco or similar aesthetic wall treatment. Simply painting an unfinished exterior, like concrete block, is not sufficient to meet this standard. The base material shall have an aesthetic finish.
2. Minimum Features: A façade, whether primary or secondary, shall exhibit at least two (2) of following features:
  - a. Articulation;
  - b. Awnings or shutters; or
  - c. Porches and/or entryway features.
3. Windows: The façade shall have at least one window every 20 feet per floor. The size of any façade window, including the frame, shall be a minimum of nine (9) square feet.

B. Primary entrance orientation. The primary entrance is the entrance designed for access by pedestrians from the sidewalk or street if a sidewalk is not present. This is the principle architectural entrance even though day-to-day residential access may be via a secondary entrance associated with a garage, driveway or other vehicular use area. The entryway is an important feature for maintenance of neighborhood characteristics.



Front porches are fundamental characteristics of some architectural styles and always add a sense of presence and welcome.



The house without an entry feature lacks the architectural interest and sense of welcome of the other houses.

All primary entrances shall be constructed as follows:

The principle entrance of all buildings, except outbuildings such as sheds or garages, shall be oriented directly toward the primary street front.

C. Garages. The location, size, position and appearance of a garage can have a great effect on the appearance of a home and should be designed with care. Garages were not prominent features of the earlier housing stock found within the Conservation Overlay District and should not dominate new housing or redevelopment of existing housing.

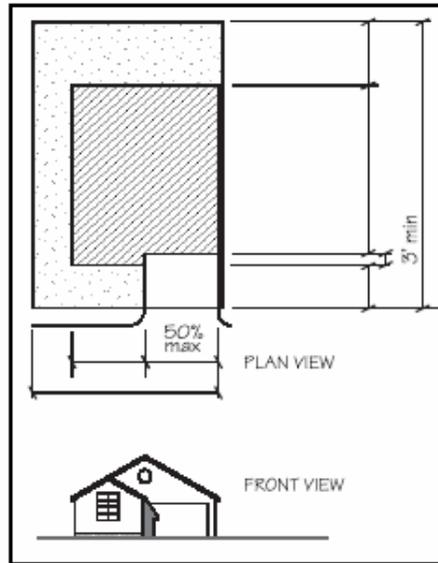


This illustrates the use of a recessed garage with a prominent entryway/porch feature

Garages shall be constructed as follows:

The garage shall not be the prominent feature of the front façade. A garage shall be staggered from adjacent garages and shall not be placed beside an existing garage on an adjacent property, unless both adjoining and adjacent properties have garages located directly adjacent to the subject property. At least 2 of the following features shall be used in designing new garages, unless the garage is placed facing the secondary street front on corner lots, or the garage is placed toward the rear of the property facing an alleyway:

1. Articulation of the façade to set the garage back from the rest of the façade;
2. Use of a side load garage with window openings as per the façade requirements;
3. No more than one half (1/2) of the façade shall be used for a garage; and
4. A prominent entryway with open porch shall be used that spans one half (1/2) of the façade.



Garage no more than half the width of the house.

D. Landscaping. Landscaping has a dramatic affect on the appearance of a home and in making new homes appear more mature and in keeping with the existing neighborhood character. The maintenance of existing tree canopies and street trees creates continuity between established neighborhood development and new infill development. Understory (low to the ground) and foundation plantings mitigate the severity of new construction by melding nature with urbanization. A newly completed home, without landscaping, often leads to the feeling that it does not “fit in” with the surrounding neighborhood. A well thought out landscape plan can make that same home look like it was built years ago.

The following landscaping shall be required:

1. General: A minimum landscaped area of 20 square feet of landscaping per 1000 square feet of lot area shall be required. This is inclusive of any green space or permeable surface regulations set forth in the applicable zoning district.
2. Street Trees: When street trees are present on the block, at least one tree per 50 linear feet shall be planted along the street front, which may be in the right-of-way. The minimum requirement for street trees shall be four (4) inches in diameter, as measured at breast height, with a minimum height of eight (8) feet. The species shall be of the same type as other street trees found along the block face. If there is a mature existing street tree canopy on the property meeting the foregoing requirements, no additional street trees shall be required. Alternative species may be used if overhead utility lines make replication of the existing tree canopy impractical, and the spacing requirement shall be adjusted to meet the intent of providing a canopy cover when said trees mature.

3. Canopy trees: There shall be a minimum of two (2) canopy trees per site. At least one of these trees shall be placed within the front yard. Existing canopy trees and required street trees (as long as they are canopy trees) may be applied toward this minimum. The minimum size shall be four (4) inches in diameter, as measured at breast height, with a minimum height of eight (8) feet. Adjustments to the required location of canopy trees may be made to accommodate an existing tree canopy.

4. Existing trees: Encroachments of new structures into the required side and rear yard setbacks to accommodate existing mature canopy trees are allowed without a variance provided such encroachments do not project by more than 25 percent of the required setback.

5. Foundation Plantings: All façades shall include foundation plantings along the periphery of the façade, excluding driveway areas. There shall be a minimum planting area of three (3) feet in width landscaped with understory vegetative materials. Foundation plantings may be counted toward the landscape requirements set forth elsewhere in this section.

E. Multi-story structures. Single story houses dominate the single-family homes found within the Conservation District. With the trend toward larger homes, multi-story development and redevelopment is becoming popular in an effort to maximize the useable area of small lots. Floodplain regulations require elevation of structures above a defined flood elevation. Many people elect to build above the required flood elevation to take advantage of the large space left under the structure for garage and storage areas.

This type of larger scale development can dwarf adjacent single story development and disturb the character of an area simply due to the scale and bulk of the new or remodeled home. Attention to massing and scale can help to offset these disturbances and even be used to create the uniqueness that has lead to the creation of the neighborhood character.



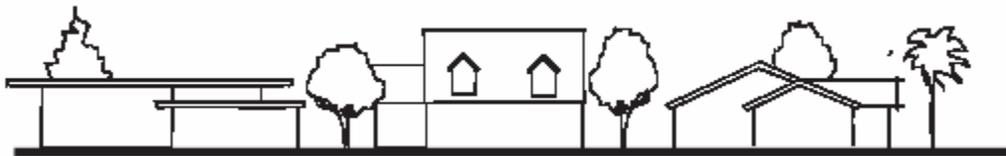
House no. 3 appears out of scale because its form is too simple.



The revised design of House no. 3 became compatible with its neighbors by stepping back the second story and providing variation in the roof and building forms.

The following regulations apply to structures having more than one (1) story, whether each story is for living or habitable area or not:

1. Façade Variations: Repetitive, monotonous, undifferentiated wall planes shall not be permitted. Buildings shall be articulated with projections, recesses, covered entryways, porches, balconies, covered box or bay windows and/or similar features, dividing large facades into human scaled proportions.



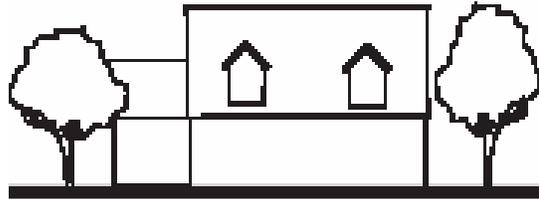
Good Example of providing human scale and compatibility with adjacent home through the use of dormers and maintaining a single roof eave line.



Poor example – While this example does exhibit some standards the entryway is out of scale and there are too many roof pitches.

2. Second story differentiation: The second living or habitable story shall be differentiated from the ground floor, or first living floor in a home required to be elevated to meet FEMA related regulations, by utilizing the following features:

- a. Setbacks. The second living or habitable story shall be set back from the side and front building lines of the ground floor, or first living floor in a home required to be elevated to meet FEMA related regulations, by no less than two (2) feet, and shall be centered over the ground floor when not prohibited by required engineering practices and/or FEMA related regulations. The foregoing setback shall not be required where the eave line of the roof, at the façade (or façades in the case of a lot with multiple fronts), is brought down to the ground floor eave line (see illustration below). Dormers shall not make up more than two-thirds ( $2/3$ ) of the second floor façade width. The only projections allowed into the second story setback area are roof overhangs of no more than 18 inches. No cantilevering of a structure over the front or side of the ground floor shall be allowed.



This illustration shows a 2-story house with the eave line of the roof at the first floor level. Dormers are used on the second floor.

**Do This**



This second story addition centered over the lower floor appears balanced.

**Or this**



This second story is an example where engineering practices or regulations make it impractical to center the 2<sup>nd</sup> story addition over the lower floor.

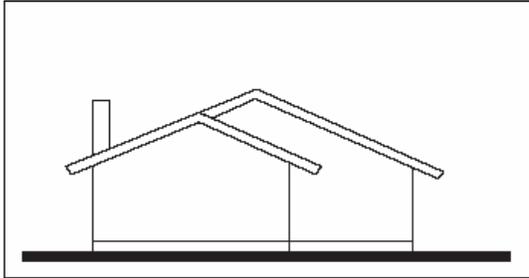
**Not This**



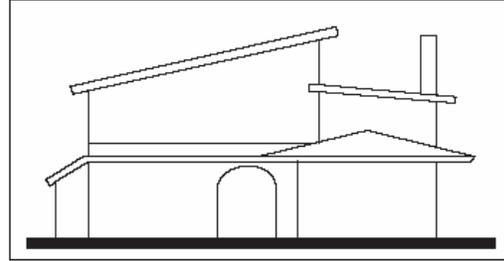
This second story located only over garage appears out of balance.

- b. Articulation of the second story. The second living or habitable story shall be articulated in a way that differs from the ground floor, or first living floor in a home required to be elevated to meet FEMA related regulations, through the use of projections, recesses, balconies, covered box or bay windows, awnings and/or similar features.

F. Roofs. Roof shape and type can be the most obvious element in defining the appearance of a house and a neighborhood. When designing a new home or an addition, it is important to consider the massing of roof forms and neighborhood roof patterns and compatibility.



All roof elements should have the same slope.

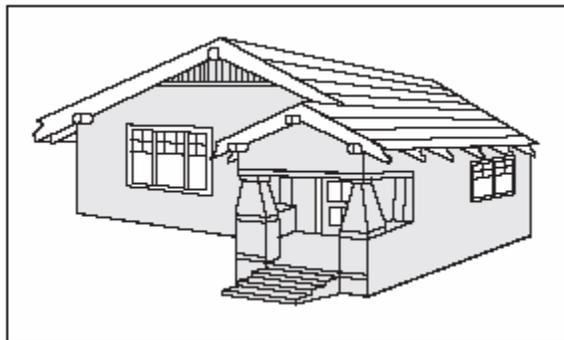


Roof elements with varied slopes result in a building that looks confused and unattractive.

Roofs shall be constructed in accordance with the following:

1. Pitch: Roofs shall have a minimum pitch of 4:12. Mansard and flat roofs shall only be used on structural exposures that will not be seen from a street front, unless the flat roof or mansard is part of an architectural style that routinely uses this feature, such as Spanish and Mediterranean architectural styles.
2. Overhang: A minimum overhang of 12 inches shall be provided for roof eaves. A roof overhang may encroach into the required yard setbacks by a maximum of 18 inches.

G. Setback encroachments. Architectural features may extend into the required front and side yard setbacks by no more than 25 percent of the required yard setback, without a variance. Allowable encroachments extend only to the architectural feature(s). For purposes of this paragraph an open porch shall be an unenclosed area, which may have a pitched roof tied into the main structure.



H. Adjacent homes. When homes built next to one another are similar in appearance with little to no differentiation they take on the appearance of a subdivision or tract home. This is not consistent with the character of the Conservation District. While

many of the homes may have been the same when they were originally built, time has changed their original appearance through remodeling efforts, maturing of landscaping and individualization of the properties by a multitude of different owners. Different techniques should be employed in new construction and redevelopment that give the appearance of individuality.

Adjacent homes shall be constructed in accordance with the following:

When permits for construction of two (2) or more adjacent homes are issued within two (2) years, each later issued permit shall only be issued if the home to be constructed thereunder has at least two (2) of the following, as it relates to the adjacent homes already permitted:

1. Difference in architectural style/type;
2. Difference in roof type (i.e. hip vs. gable);
3. Difference in façade profile; and
4. Difference in footprint orientation.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

### FAÇADE

- All facades have a finish treatment such as siding, stucco or similar aesthetic wall treatment
- At least one window every 20 feet per floor
- Window are a minimum, including frame, nine (9) sq. ft. in size

### PRIMARY ENTRANCE ORIENTATION

- Principle entrance is oriented toward primary street

### GARAGES - At least two (2) of the following features are present

- Articulation of the façade to set garage back
- Use of side load garage with window openings as per the façade requirements
- No more than ½ of the façade is used for garage
- A prominent entryway with open porch is present that spans ½ of facade

### LANDSCAPING

- Minimum landscaping area of 20 sq. ft. per 1000 sq. ft. of lot area
- Street Trees – One tree/50 linear feet, 4 inch DBH, 8 feet high
- Canopy Trees – 2 canopy trees per site, one must be in front yard
- Existing Trees
- Foundation Plantings – 3 foot wide landscape area along facade

### MULTI-STORY STRUCTURES

- Façade Variations – building shall be articulated with projections, recesses, covered entryways, porches, balconies, covered box or bay windows and/or similar features, dividing large facades into human scaled proportions
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Living or Habitable Story Setbacks – 2 foot setback from side and front building line, and centered
- Articulation of Second Story – 2<sup>nd</sup> living story shall be articulated in a way that differs it from ground or 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

## **ROOFS**

- Pitch – 4:12 minimum
- Overhang – 12 inch minimum – maximum of 18 inches may overhang into required yard setbacks

**SETBACK ENCROACHMENTS** – Architectural features as defined in the ordinance may extend by no more than 25 percent into a required yard setback without a variance

**ADJACENT HOMES** – When permits for construction of 2 or more adjacent homes are issued within 2 years, each later issued permit shall only be issued if the adjacent home to be constructed has at least 2 of the following:

- Difference in architectural style/type
- Difference in roof type (i.e. hip vs. gable)
- Difference in façade profile
- Difference in footprint orientation