

DRAFT 7/28/25

8.256.142. GENERAL PRINCIPLES GUIDING APPLICATION OF DESIGN STANDARDS

A. BACKGROUND

a. Application

This section is intended to provide a detailed discussion of principles for applying applicable standards for a project as outlined in this Chapter, where not all principles are applicable to development in all design review areas.

Where used in this document, the terms “house,” “home” and “single-family” shall also refer to two-family or duplex residential development.

b. Purpose/Legislative Intent

~~The purposes of the Design Review Districts Chapter (Chapter 28.1) are contained in Section 6565.1.D. Consistent with Section 6565.1.D, the purpose of the Midcoast design standards is to encourage new single-family homes and additions that have their own individual character, while ensuring that they are complementary with neighboring houses, the neighborhood character of each Midcoast community, and the surrounding natural setting.~~

The Midcoast design standards are intended for use by homeowners, builders, architects and designers, by neighbors, and by community groups in their consideration of new single-family homes and additions to existing homes. The Design Review Administrator, the Coastside Design Review Committee, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will also use these standards in their review of projects, as set forth in Section 6565.7.

Each design topic in Sections 6565.20(C) through (G) is divided into two sections: (a) a discussion with illustrations section, and (b) a design standards section. The discussion and illustration section is intended to explain the reasons for the standards and to provide further clarification of the standards' objectives. Illustrations represent examples of how standards may be applied to a design style and are not intended to restrict the range of potential design styles. The design standards section states the regulatory standards. ~~Only the design standards section has the force of law and constitutes the regulatory criteria by which project will be reviewed.~~

Consistent with Section 8.256.010 the design standards are not intended to preclude individual initiative in the design of any particular project, nor to require that substantial additional expense be incurred. There are a variety of creative ways in which a dwelling can be designed to comply with the standards, but still retain its own individual identity. By thoughtful application of the standards and balancing of the design objectives embodied in the standards, an architect or designer can achieve compliance with these design standards and reduce a

project's potential to cause conflict, avoiding costly delays caused by subsequent project revisions.

When the term "to the extent feasible" is used, it shall mean that if a house building can be designed to comply with that standard, without conflicting with other applicable design and zoning requirements, the house building shall comply with the standard. If a building cannot be designed to comply with the standard, it shall be designed to substantially comply.

e. Relationship to Other County Regulations

~~In the Midcoast LCP Land Use Area, the design standards are intended to implement the County General Plan and the Local Coastal Program (LCP). The design standards are separate from, but intended to complement, other required County ordinances including the Zoning Regulations which establish development standards for single family and two family residential development.~~

Consistent with **Section 6565.10**, it shall be the responsibility of the applicant and home designer to comply with both the Design Standards and the Zoning Regulations development standards (e.g., height limit, maximum floor area, setbacks and maximum parcel coverage). The emphasis for design review will be on a home's appearance, not on its actual size or height. As such, compliance with design standards will be achieved by requiring design techniques consistent with zoning development standards and, where applicable, LCP policies, that make homes appear smaller, lower or less massive; house size or height reductions will not be required unless otherwise required by LCP policies.

Other relevant County ordinances include, but are not limited to: (1) the Building Regulations, which establish construction requirements including structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing requirements; (2) Department of Public Works standards for driveways, curb cuts and other work in the public right-of-way; (3) the Heritage and Significant Protected Tree Ordinance, which establish criteria for tree removal; and (4) the Grading Ordinance, which establishes standards for conducting grading activity. Where conflicts exist between the provisions of this section and the policies of the LCP, the policies of the LCP shall control.

B. NEIGHBORHOOD DEFINITION AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

a. Neighborhood Definition

Definition: A neighborhood is defined as the area within 300 feet of an existing or proposed house. Certain factors may be present which would further define or alter the limit of a neighborhood, making it larger or smaller, including, but not limited to, the following:



Figure 1 - Neighborhood

- (1) Significant changes in topography;
- (2) Changes in land use such as from residential to commercial;
- (3) Proximity to designated open space or urban/rural boundary;
- (4) Changes in the land subdivision pattern;
- (5) A wide street or natural feature such as a riparian corridor;
- (6) Noticeable changes in building type, such as from one-story to two-story homes;
- (7) Visibility from off-site vantage points in the vicinity of the project.

b. Neighborhood Context

Discussion: A neighborhood generally has two components: (1) the immediate context, or how a house relates to adjacent houses and natural features, and (2) the neighborhood context, or how a house relates to the visual character and scale of other houses and natural features in the vicinity.

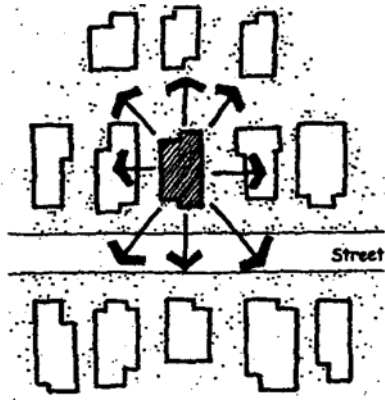


Figure 2 - Neighborhood Context

Discussion: The process of defining a neighborhood begins by defining the immediate area surrounding a house as within 300 feet. Then, other factors may be considered that would further influence the limit of a neighborhood, making it larger or smaller, such as noticeable changes in topography, or proximity to open space or the urban/rural boundary.

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- (6) Noticeable changes in building type, such as from one-story to two-story homes;
- (7) Visibility from off-site vantage points in the vicinity of the project.

c. Neighborhood Character

Discussion: Neighborhood character is the combination of qualities or features within a neighborhood that distinguishes it from another neighborhood. For the purposes of these design standards, the key qualities or features of single-family residential neighborhoods include the appearance of the homes (e.g., architectural style and elements), the collective appearance of the homes (e.g., pattern, scale, size), and the appearance of natural features (e.g., natural

vegetation, landforms).

The architectural elements of a house such as its shape, the arrangement of its doors and windows, its roof style, and its architectural style all contribute to the appearance of the house, which in turn contributes to the collective appearance or character of the neighborhood. Some of the most common architectural elements that contribute to the character of an individual house and the collective character of the neighborhood are listed below:

- 1) How houses are sited on their lots;
- 2) How houses blend with surrounding scenic and natural environments;
- 3) Architectural style, including how house styles compare, contrast or complement each other;
- 4) Scale, or the appearance or proportion of a house relative to others, including the number of stories;
- 5) Arrangement/placement/massing of major building forms;
- 6) Parking and garage patterns;
- 7) Location of entries;
- 8) Roof forms;
- 9) Exterior materials and colors;
- 10) Window type and placement;
- 11) Landscaping;
- 12) Older buildings or features having historic character.

C. SITE PLANNING AND STRUCTURE PLACEMENT.

One of the key elements that define the visual character of an individual house and the neighborhood is how it is located or placed on its site. A single building out of context with its site or neighboring houses can appear disruptive.

a. Integrate Structures with the Natural Setting

New houses, additions and accessory structures should be located, designed and constructed to retain and blend with the natural vegetation and natural landforms of the site, and should be complementary to adjacent neighborhood structures.

1) Trees and Vegetation

Discussion: When siting a new home or an addition on a parcel, the goal should be to disturb as little vegetation as possible, with priority placed on retaining healthy, native species and protected trees, as defined. Fire prevention measures, such as defensible space requirements, should also be considered. Refer to County fire hazard prevention requirements.

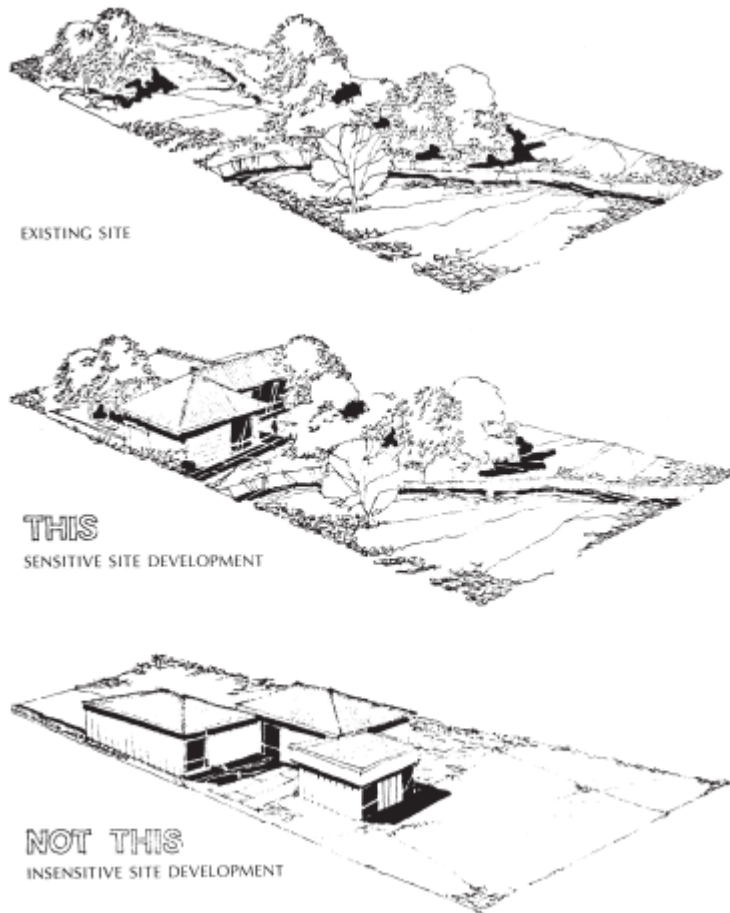
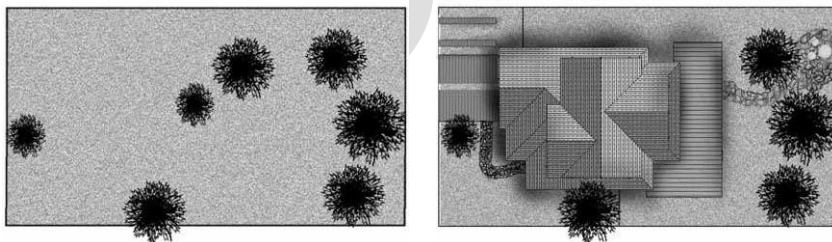


Figure 3 - Illustration of sensitive site development

Figure 4 - On left: Undeveloped site; On right: Sensitive site development to retain vegetation and other natural features



2) Grading

Discussion: As defined in the County Grading Regulations Ordinance, grading is any excavating, filling, or placement of earth materials or a

combination of these activities. Excavation (or cutting) is the mechanical removal of earth material, while filling is the deposit of earth or waste material placed by artificial means. The following design standards are intended to regulate the aesthetic aspects of grading; the technical aspects of grading are regulated by the County Grading Regulations. In the interest of retaining as much of the natural character of the site as possible, an effort should be made to place structures so that grading activity and the area disturbed by grading is limited; however, on sloping sites and where a basement is proposed, it is recognized that a certain amount of excavation may be necessary so that the end result is a house that blends into the site.

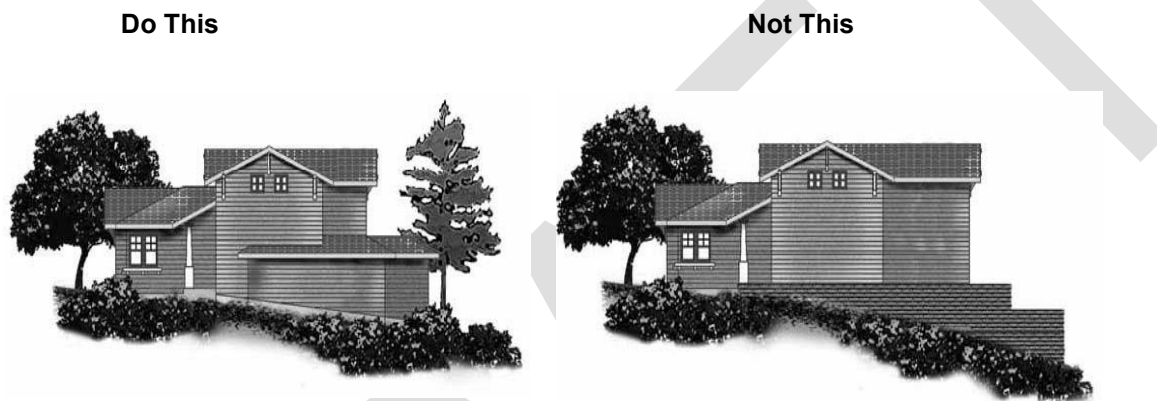


Figure 5 - On left: Structure is designed to blend with the natural contours and features of the site. Only grading necessary for construction was used. On right: Structure is not suited to the terrain. Extensive grading was used to create building pad, and to terrace site beyond the immediate vicinity of the structure.

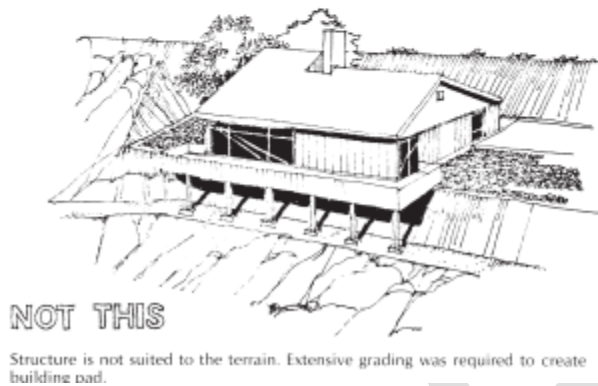
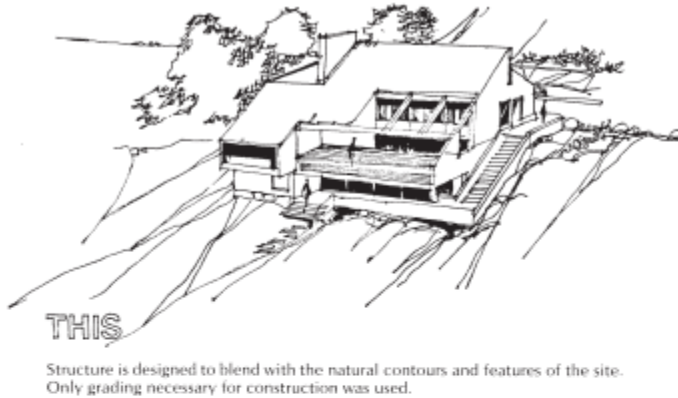


Figure 6 - Illustration of grading that blends with natural topographic contours

3) Streams and Other Drainage Features

Discussion: The Some areas of the Midcoast communities are crossed by a number of streams. In the Midcoast, as well as in Emerald Lake Hills, Devonshire, and Palomar Park addition, many less developed drainage features including swales, gullies and ditches cross the area. In the Coastal Zone, if there is a stream or other drainage feature on or adjacent to your property, you should consult the Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component for policies related to sensitive habitats, riparian corridors and wetlands to determine if these policies apply.

All streams and natural drainage features should be avoided when deciding where structures should be placed to protect the resources from erosion, siltation and polluted runoff. Man-made drainage features may be covered or relocated in order to conform with the design standards of this section, provided that: (1) sensitive habitats are not disturbed and (2) alterations are done pursuant to a drainage plan prepared by a registered civil engineer and reviewed and approved by the Planning and Building Department.

Builders should also take advantage of the opportunity to improve local storm drainage systems and protect streams and drainage features from erosion, siltation, and polluted runoff by improving water retention and

movement on site, prohibiting runoff onto neighboring properties, and preventing overloading of local stormwater systems. Please refer to Section 6565.20(E) for guidelines regarding landscaping and paved areas that should be used to enhance project appearance and stormwater pollution control. Please also refer to the County's Drainage Manual for specific requirements. ~~Stormwater Pollution Prevention program publications, available at the Planning Counter, for further information and innovative ideas on this topic.~~

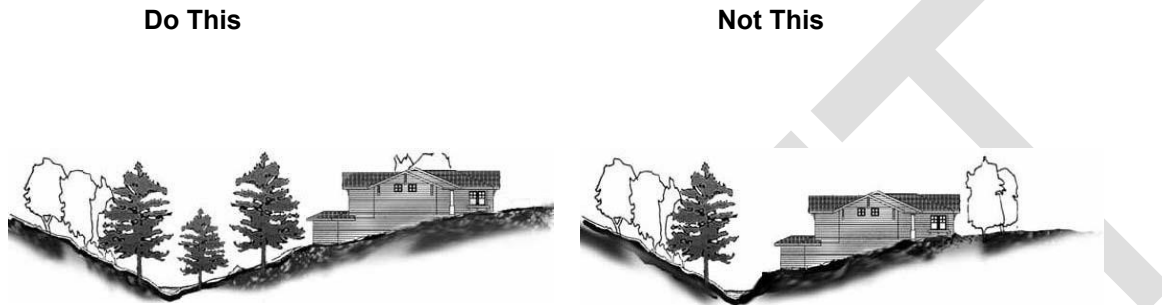


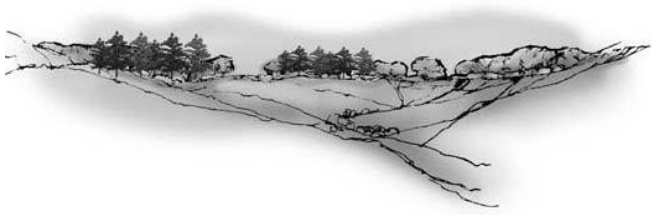
Figure 7 - On left: Structure is set back to avoid alteration of natural drainage feature. On right: Structure is too close to natural drainage feature

4) Ridgelines, Skylines and View Corridors

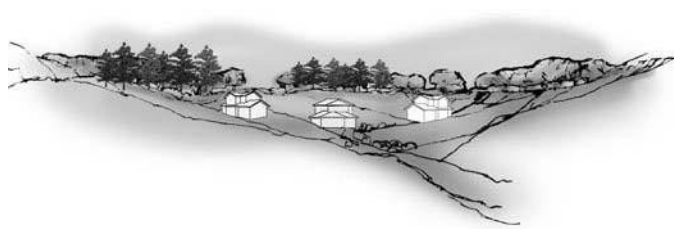
Discussion: The varied terrain of the Midcoast of hillside design review communities offers scenic views of ~~both the ocean, such as in the~~ Midcoast, and the hills that should be protected.

The County's General Plan and the LCP Visual Resources Component contains policies protecting ridgelines and skylines. ~~As defined by LCP Policy 8.7, r~~Ridgelines are the tops of hills or hillocks normally viewed against a background of other hills. A skyline is the line where sky and land masses meet. ~~The Cabrillo Highway Scenic Corridor offers perhaps the most significant public views in the Midcoast; however, other public views should be considered as well~~Both private and public views should be considered. A public view is a range of vision from a public road or other public facility, such as the significant public views in the Midcoast from the Cabrillo Highway Scenic Corridor (see Planning GIS Map). It is important to note that, for areas in the Coastal Zone, the LCP may require the maximum building height for structures located on a ridgeline or skyline to be lower than the maximum allowed by the Zoning Regulations.

Existing



Do This



Not This



Figure 8 - In middle: Structures blend with existing landforms and vegetation. On bottom: Ridgeline silhouette has been destroyed through the removal of vegetative masses and natural landforms.

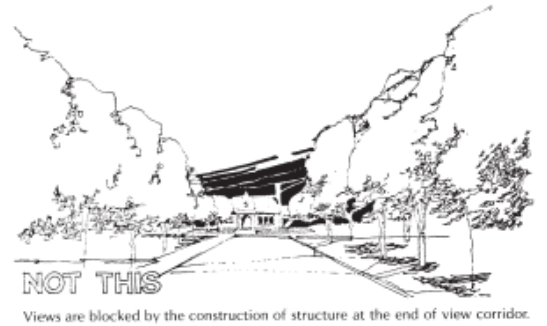
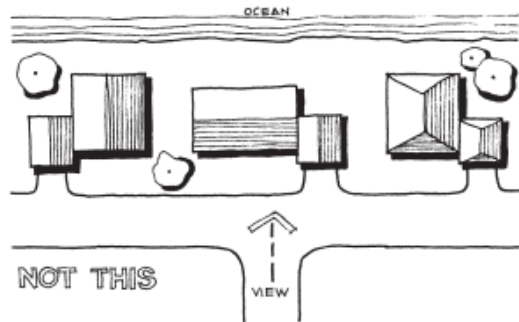
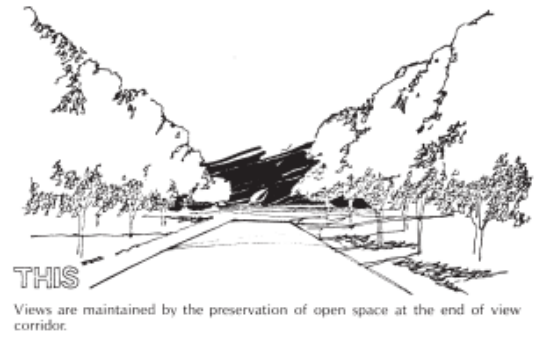
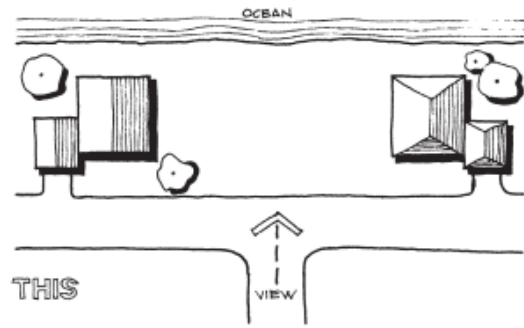


Figure 9 - Illustration of placement of development relative to view corridors

5) Relationship to Open Spaces and Cliffs and Bluffs

Discussion: In some areas of Montara in the Midcoast, the neighborhood's proximity to designated open space is one of the factors which defines the neighborhood character, and special attention should be paid to those transition or buffer areas where residential and open space land uses meet.

For properties along the ocean, structures should be set back from bluffs and cliffs so as to protect natural land forms and to minimize the intrusion of structures into views from scenic areas.

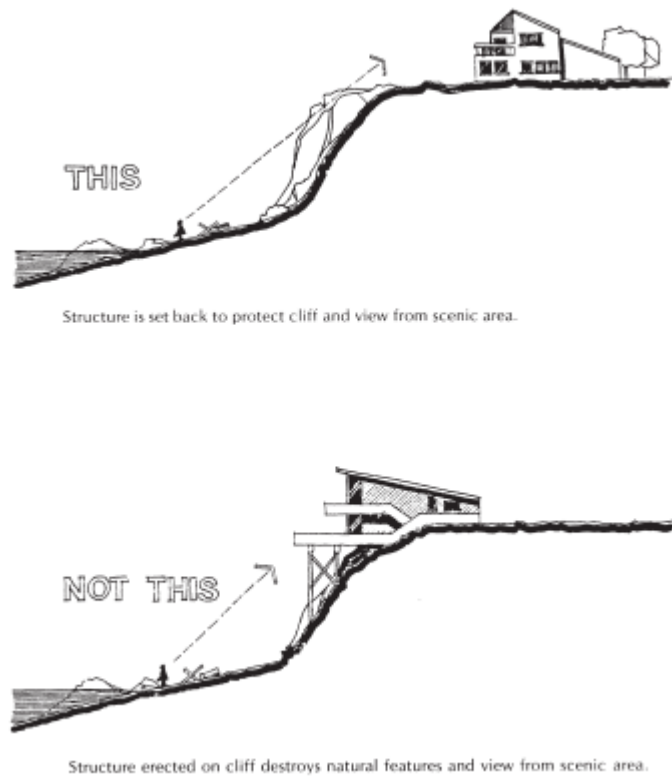


Figure 10 - Illustration of development sited relative to scenic areas.

b. Complement Other Structures in the Neighborhood

Most home building in the Midcoast takes place on “infill” lots - vacant parcels next to developed lots with existing homes. As such, careful attention must be paid to the placement, orientation and design of new homes and additions to ensure that they are complementary to other homes in the neighborhood.

1) Privacy

Discussion: Privacy is one of the keys to a property owner’s enjoyment of their property and their quality of life. The placement of a new home or an addition, and/or the location of windows on a new home or an addition, can have a significant impact on privacy, both for the neighbors and for the occupants of the new home. Decks and balconies can provide outdoor living space and add architectural interest to a home. However, they must be carefully designed to avoid substantially affecting neighbors’ privacy. It is particularly important to consider the impact the placement of a new structure, windows, and/or exterior lighting, and/or outdoor deck and patio areas may have on privacy when setbacks are the minimum allowed by the Zoning Regulations. This may involve modifying a proposed floor plan or proposing other architectural solutions or landscaping to enhance privacy. To reduce the potential for future privacy conflicts, a project designer

should also consider the probable location and intensity of development that is likely to occur on parcels in the vicinity of the proposed project.

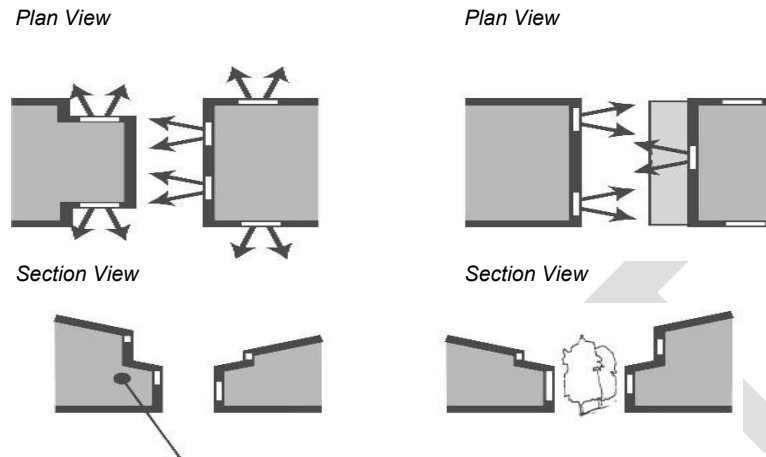


Figure 11 - On top: Windows are arranged and offset from neighbors to maximize privacy. On bottom: High windows and clerestory windows allow light inside with minimal privacy impacts.

Landscaping or obscure glass can also reduce privacy impacts.

Note: When using landscaping to create privacy also consider the potential view impacts that could occur from mature trees.

2) Views

Discussion: Homes in the hillside areas ~~Midcoast~~ enjoy a variety of views. Some are views of the ocean, others are of the hills, and others are vistas through the neighborhood. Views add value and enjoyment to a property; however, private views are not protected by County regulations. Due to the configuration and size of some parcels and their topography, there may be no way to build without affecting someone else's view. However, when designing a new home or an addition, an effort should be made to minimize the effect on views from neighboring houses. Possible methods to minimize view blockage include: locating living space where it would have less view impact, increasing the setback of second stories, lowering roof plate heights, and choosing roof forms that minimize mass. To reduce the potential for future view conflicts, a project designer is encouraged to also consider the probable location and intensity of development that is likely to occur on parcels in the vicinity of the proposed project.

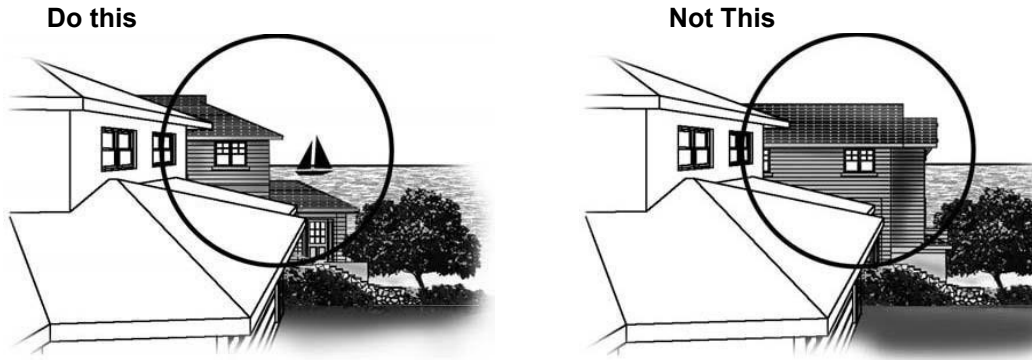
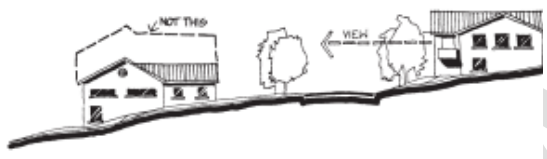
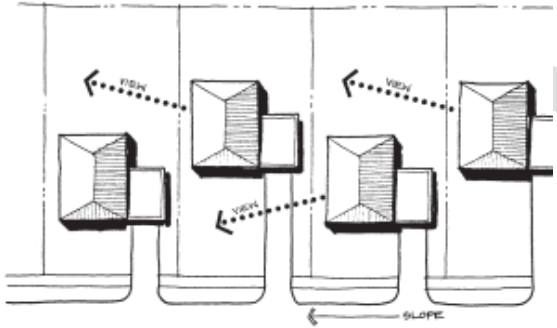


Figure 12 - On left: A second story stepped back from the front and sides minimizes view blockage from neighboring homes. On right: A more massive second-story creates greater view blockage.



Height of structure is designed to protect views from uphill structures.



Structures are located to maximize views on sloping lots.

Figure 13 - Illustration of siting of development in a manner sensitive to views.

D. ELEMENTS OF DESIGN One of the greatest challenges of residential construction in the Mideast is the building of a contemporary home that is compatible with surrounding, older homes of varying styles built during previous eras when the construction of smaller homes, and sometimes homes of lower quality, was more typical. The architectural elements of a house can affect its apparent mass, architectural character, and the visual quality of the neighborhood. Every effort should be made, by following these guidelines, to place new structures so that they blend with those existing nearby and to achieve a

higher quality of design and construction.

Elements of design explored further in this section include: (1) building mass, shape, and scale; (2) architectural styles and facades; (3) roof design; and (4) exterior materials and colors.

a. Building Mass, Shape and Scale

The apparent mass of a building is determined by the actual size of the building, and whether or not the building shapes and facades are simple or broken into more varied forms.



THIS

Structure relates in size and scale with adjacent buildings.



NOT THIS

Continuous repetition of shapes and forms without variation creates a dull, uninteresting appearance.



NOT THIS

Conflicting shapes, forms and styles create an unharmonious appearance.

Figure 14 - Illustration demonstrating development shape relative to the shape of neighboring buildings.

With regard to actual size, new homes and additions must meet the building floor area standard set by the Zoning Regulations. However, even a home that complies with this standard may appear massive or bulky, if the building shape and/or facade is too simple. Simple forms often may appear more massive and larger, while houses with more variety in their forms could appear less massive and often more interesting. Simple forms may be appropriate in a modernist architectural design. Likewise, long, blank walls may appear more massive than walls with spaces and corners that create shadows and architectural interest.

Finally, a house should appear to be proportional, or in “scale,” with other buildings in the neighborhood.

The following standards encourage building designs that reduce apparent mass and increase compatibility with the neighborhood.

- 1) Utilize Existing Building Envelope: Where feasible, convert underutilized uninhabitable spaces (such as attics, understory/crawl spaces) within the existing building envelope into habitable space, before adding additional height to the building.

- 2) Relationship to Existing Topography

Discussion: Many existing lots in the Midcoast are on steep slopes, and in many cases, the topography of a site is its key natural characteristic. New homes and major additions should be designed so that the structure will follow the existing contours of the land. A building’s appearance of bulk can be reduced by shaping the building forms so that they harmonize rather than contrast with the existing topography.

While projects proposing the use of either manufactured homes or stock building plans are not prohibited, such projects may encounter difficulty in conforming to the existing topography and to other design standards. Applications for such projects should be prepared to the standards of this section.

Do this



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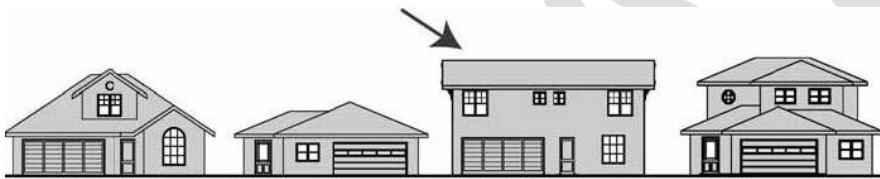
Figure 15 - Building forms step down with the existing grade and there is no unused under-floor space.

- 3) Neighborhood Scale

Discussion: “Scale” refers to a relative level or degree, or a proportion or relationship between two things. Neighborhood scale refers to the appearance of a home in relation to other homes in the neighborhood; is it properly related in size, height or other characteristics (shape, level of detail or articulation, etc.) to other homes in the neighborhood?

Or is it out of proportion to other homes? Whether a house appears proportional to adjacent homes is determined by the size and height of the house and whether the building shapes and facades are simple or broken into more varied forms. For example, large homes generally look less massive if they have more varied, rather than simple building forms. As such, even homes of different sizes can be in scale with one another if they share other architectural characteristics including building shape, simplicity or complexity of building form, and architectural styles and details. Where adjacent homes are not built to conform to these design standards (e.g., they have little articulation and appear out of proportion, boxy or massive), project designers are encouraged to avoid repeating such mistakes in an effort to be in scale with the neighborhood.

Do This



Not This

Figure 16 - On top: This house appears out of scale because its form is too simple. On bottom: The revised design became compatible with its neighbors by stepping back the second story and providing variation in the roof and building forms.



THIS

Structures relate in size and scale, creating a harmonious appearance from the street.



NOT THIS

Structure does not relate to adjacent buildings, interrupting the visual rhythm of the streetscape.

Figure 17 - Illustration of building size and scale relative to neighboring buildings.

4) Second Stories

Most homes built today are two-story homes, and a common way to increase the size of existing homes is to add a second story. This presents a challenge, when the parcel being built on is surrounded primarily by one-story homes, or where a new two-story home or second-story addition has the potential to impact the privacy and views of existing homes. The following sections describe how two-story homes and second-story additions can be designed to be compatible with, and have minimal impact on, existing homes.

a. Second-Story Location

Discussion: Since a second-story over a portion of a house will visually emphasize that area of the home, placing the second-story over just one portion of the home can make it appear unbalanced. Placing the second story over the entire first story can make the home appear boxy. Locating the second story toward the center of the first story and away from property lines results in a more balanced, less boxy appearance and increases light into neighboring properties.



Figure 18 - These second stories held toward the center of the property allow greater sunlight into neighboring properties and help protect views and privacy.

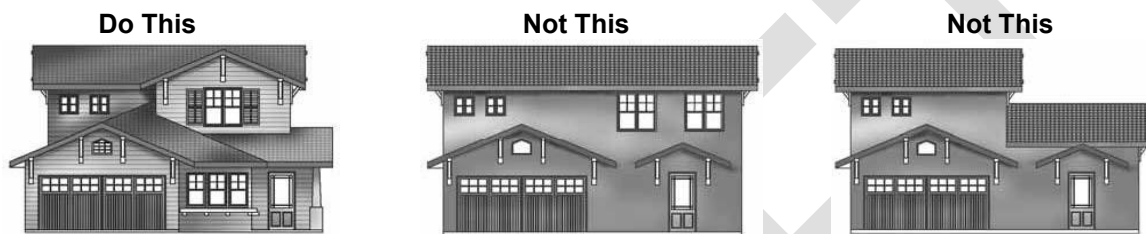
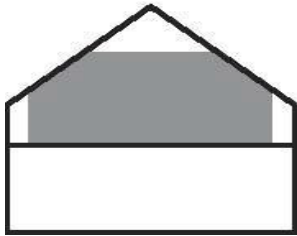


Figure 19 - On left: This second story addition centered over the lower floor away from property lines appears less boxy.

b. Lowering the Eave Line

Discussion: One way to make a two-story home more compatible with its single-story neighbors is to lower the eave line of the second-story roof. Lowering the eave line also ties the two stories of a house together. Setting second-stories back into the area of rooflines is often a solution for meeting Daylight Plane requirements, and it generally will lower the apparent height of the home. Lowering the eave line of the second-story roof can also reduce the apparent building mass, which may result in the scale of the building being more compatible with its neighborhood.

Do This



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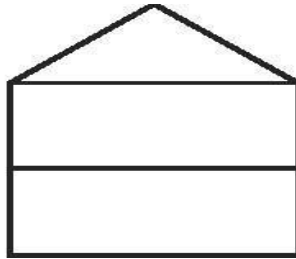


Figure 20 – On left: Second floor rooms in attic space allow; On right: Full height second story results in tall walls and a more massive appearance to the home.

Do This

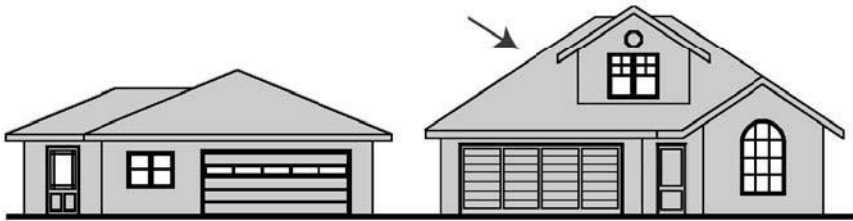


Figure 21 - Second floor stepped back from property line and held within the roofline of the main portion of the home.

Not This

Figure 22 - Avoid creating tall two story exterior walls that are less compatible with single story neighbors.

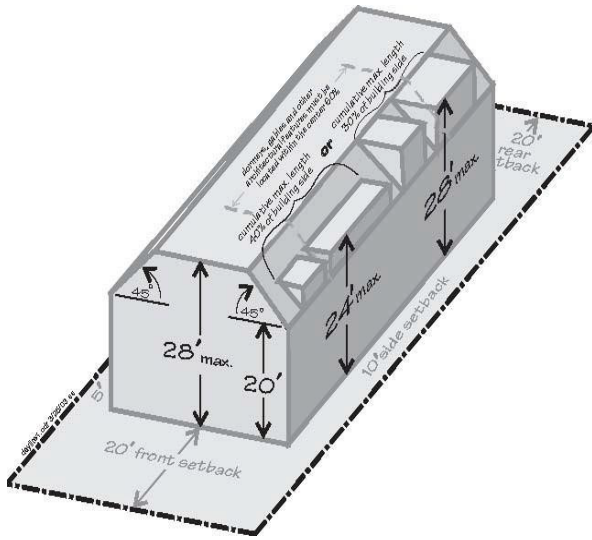


Figure 23

5) Daylight Plane/Facade Articulation

Discussion: The Daylight Plane /Facade Articulation requirements contained in the County Zoning Regulations are included below as a starting point for designing a two-story home or a second story addition. For more detail regarding facade articulation, please refer to Section 2, Architectural Styles and Facades.

Cornices, canopies, eaves, roof overhangs, chimneys, fire escapes, stairways; landing places; uncovered porches, and similar architectural features may extend into the daylight plane at the front, side, or rear yard, to the extent allowed by Zoning Regulations [Section 6406](#).

Chimneys, pipes, mechanical equipment, antennae, and similar equipment may extend into the daylight plane up to a maximum of 36 feet as required for safety or efficient operation.

Dormers, gables and other architectural features located in the center 60% of the house may extend into the angled portion of the daylight plane, subject to Design Review Committee approval, provided that:

- (b) The combined length on any building side does not exceed 40% of the length of that total building side, and the height of such features does not exceed 24 feet
- (b) The combined length on any building side does not exceed 30% of the length of that building side, and the height of such features does not exceed 28 feet.

ii. —

iii. ~~Facade Articulation Option~~ Facade articulation shall be provided on all building sides, and is subject to approval by the Design Review Committee. Facade articulation is intended to break up the appearance of shear walls through the placement of projecting or recessing architectural details, including decks, bays, windows, balconies, porches, overhangs, and cantilevered features.

iv. ~~In order to approve proposed facade articulation, the Design Review~~

~~Committee must find that: (a) all building facades are well articulated and proportioned, and (b) each building wall is broken up so as not to appear sheer, blank, looming or massive to neighboring properties.~~

6) Wall and Facade Articulation

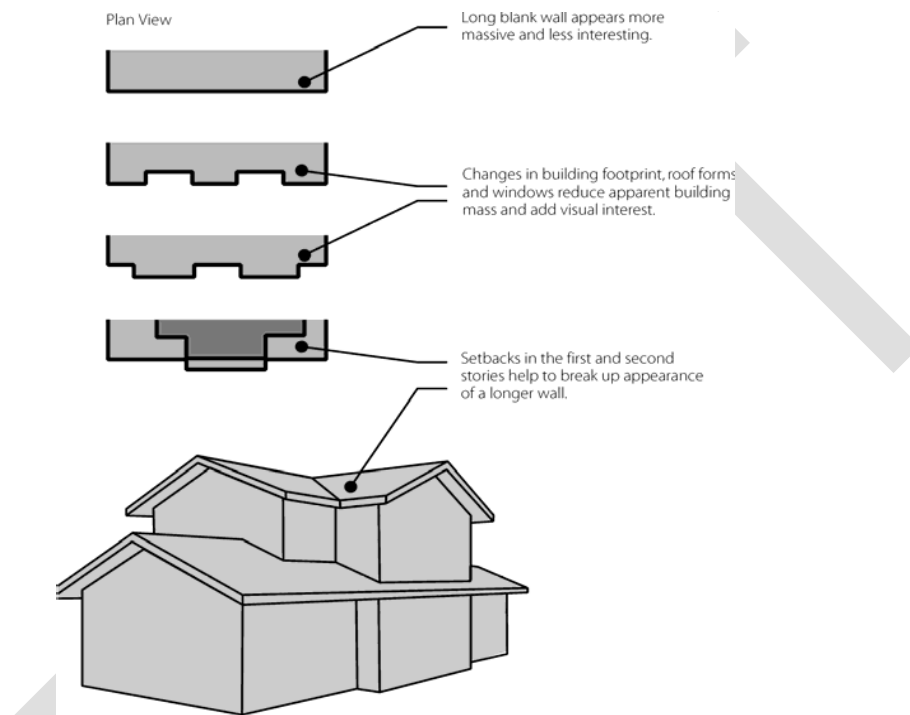


Figure 24

Discussion: Wall Articulation: Building wall gaps that articulate the walls of the house create shadows and contribute to the architectural character of the home. These changes to the form of a building can have a great effect on the apparent building mass. Longer flat walls generally appear more massive and less interesting. Adding steps and breaks to long or tall walls will reduce apparent mass and add visual interest. Likewise, changes in building materials or colors and ~~appropriate~~ architectural details can help break up long or tall walls and keep a house from appearing massive or boxy.

For the Midcoast, in some instances, including modern architectural design styles, wall articulation may be waived by the Design Review Committee to allow for a distinct, well designed style.

- v. ~~Facade Articulation: Option~~ Facade articulation shall be provided on all building sides, and is subject to approval by the Design Review Committee. Facade articulation is intended to break up the appearance of shear walls through the placement of projecting or recessing architectural details, including decks, bays, windows, balconies, porches, overhangs, and cantilevered features.
- vi. ~~In order to approve proposed Adequate~~ facade articulation, the Design Review Committee must find that: (a) all building facades are results in well articulated and proportioned building elevations, and (b) in which each building wall is broken up so as not to appear shear, blank, looming or massive to neighboring properties.

b. Architectural Styles and Features

Many architectural features can affect whether or not a house appears to be compatible with its neighborhood, including building bulk and height, which are discussed in the previous sections. Other important elements in defining compatibility include architectural style and architectural details, such as window, door, and garage patterns and types.

1) Architectural Style

Discussion: When designing a new home or an addition, architectural style should be evaluated by considering what building elements define the architectural style of the house (e.g., building shape, roof design, exterior materials, window size and type, etc.), what defining elements are common to other houses in the neighborhood, and what elements characterize the natural setting (e.g., vegetation, landforms, etc.).

There are many different architectural styles present throughout the Emerald Lake Hills, Devonshire, Palomar Park, Midcoast, and other communities within Design Review areas. In some neighborhoods, the architectural style is more defined than in others and on some houses it is more apparent than on others. Designing a home and choosing a style that is complementary to adjacent homes can be challenging when the homes are of many different styles, have no defined architectural style or do not conform to these Design Standards (e.g., they have architectural details that are inconsistent or out of proportion for the style). In that case, a project designer should strive for a style that at least is not jarring or disruptive in appearance when compared to adjacent homes, and foster compatibility through other elements of design such as similar building shapes, exterior materials or colors, window/door styles, and roof massing and design. In the Midcoast, Wwhile no particular architectural style is prohibited, a style that reflects the Midcoast's coastal, semi-rural, diverse, small-town character (e.g., coastal craftsman) will more readily be found to be complementary to the neighborhood.

Finally, consideration should also be given to the natural setting, and a complementary style chosen depending on whether the site is, for example, steeply sloped, heavily wooded, or more open in character.

2) Openings

Discussion: Windows and doors are often the most visually distinctive features on a house. They are a link between private and public space and can provide a sense of security for both. They also can establish an architectural rhythm and affect the apparent mass of the house. There may be a proportion to the openings - vertical or horizontal - that is common to the house or the neighborhood. Dominant window/door materials or style - such as an arched shape or divided windows - should also be considered.



Figure 26 - On left: Style and materials of new second-story windows match and appear compatible with the original first -story of the house. On right: These new second-story windows are of different shape and proportions and material (metal vs. original wood) t

3) Entries

Discussion: Front walkways, front doors and windows, and front porches that face the street make for safer neighborhoods by keeping “eyes on the street” and create a human-scaled appearance to a building. The design and prominence of entries in the neighborhood should also be considered.

Do This



Not This



Figure 27 - On left: Scale of entry is compatible with other features of the house. On right: Entry is out of scale and has a commercial appearance.

4) Garages and Carports

Discussion: 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. While in most cases it is preferable to emphasize the front entrance of a home, rather than the garage, a prominent garage may be unavoidable, particularly on steeply sloping lots. In some neighborhoods, there may be an established pattern in the size, position or appearance of garages. Examples of patterns that meet the design standards are garages with single rather than double garage doors, or garages facing away from or set back from the street. If there is no established pattern, greater flexibility in design and appearance of garages should be considered.

Figure 28 - Plan View; Garages appear less prominent when facing away from or set back from the street.

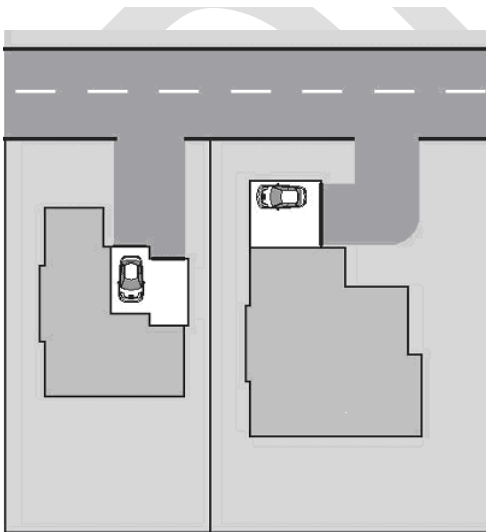




Figure 29 - When a prominent garage is unavoidable, choose decorative garage doors that are consistent with the home's architectural style.

c. Roof Design

Roof shape and type can be the most obvious elements 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.

1) Massing and Design of Roof Forms

Discussion: The mass of a roof and how it is articulated into different shapes contributes to the character of a house. Most houses with sloped roofs, and many with flat roofs, have a primary roof form and smaller secondary and minor forms that contribute to the overall style of the house. Evaluate the massing of the roof form and determine how it will benefit the appearance of the house and be compatible with the neighborhood.

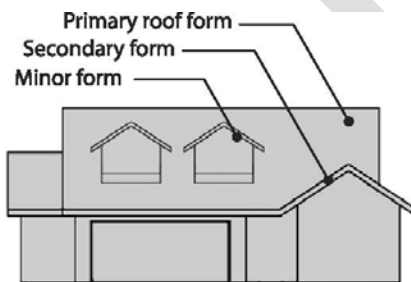


Figure 30 - Roof Form Hierarchy

a. Design Compatibility

b.

~~c. **Discussion:** Some neighborhoods have roof patterns that are distinctive and repeatable from home to home. Other neighborhoods have greater variety or less distinctive roof forms, and greater deviations from neighboring roof forms could appear acceptable. Roof patterns are created through the roof slope, materials and massing of roofs. Evaluate the pattern of roofs in the neighborhood.~~



Figure 31 - These two-story houses all display roof forms compatible with their architectural style and compatible with neighboring roof forms.

d. Exterior Materials and Colors

Discussion: Exterior materials and colors should complement the style of the house and that of the neighborhood, and blend with surrounding natural features when viewed from a distance. These standards are not intended to interfere with individual initiative, but rather to encourage compatibility within neighborhoods and with the natural setting. When selecting materials and colors, consider the type and character of materials and colors, number of different materials and colors, the quality of materials, and how ornamentation is applied. While no building material or color is prohibited as a matter of policy, as with other design elements, the neighborhood context provides direction for the choice of materials and colors. Use of complementary materials and colors will help a house appear compatible with its neighbors and blend with its natural setting including surrounding vegetation and landforms. Darker rather than lighter exterior colors may be used to reduce the apparent mass of a home.



Figure 32 - The exterior materials and appropriate ornamentation of these houses complement the natural setting.

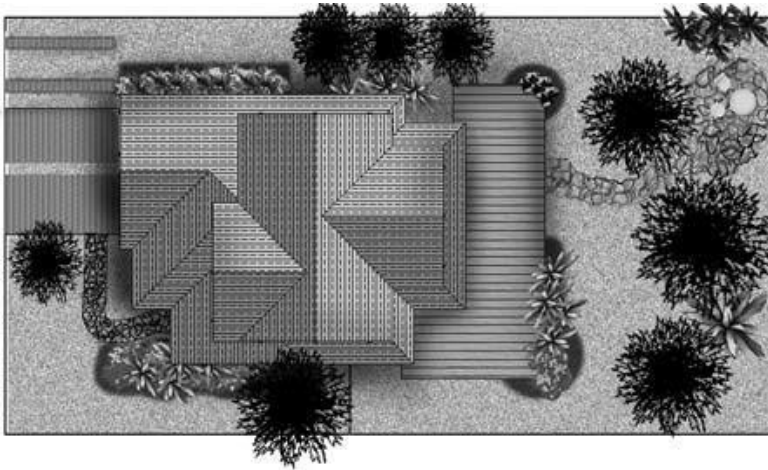
E. LANDSCAPING, PAVED AREAS, AND FENCES, LIGHTING AND NOISE.

While the appearance of new residential structures is of primary importance, ancillary development on a residential site can also have a significant visual impact, and should be designed carefully to complement a new or remodeled home and to prevent adverse impacts to neighboring properties. The following section provides guidance and standards for landscaping, paved areas, fencing, and lighting and noise.

1. Landscaping

Discussion: Landscaping should complement and enhance the design of the home and overall site, while harmonizing with the overall landscape character of the neighborhood. New landscaping should also harmonize with existing trees and vegetation remaining on site. Landscaping should not be used in place of other more permanent architectural solutions, but should be used to accent or enhance architectural features. When developing a landscape plan, consideration should be given to water availability and the function of the landscaping - to provide shade or screening, or to protect privacy - and location and species should be selected accordingly. ~~For more detailed landscape plan requirements and specifications, please see the County's Minimum Standards for Landscape Plans.~~

Do This



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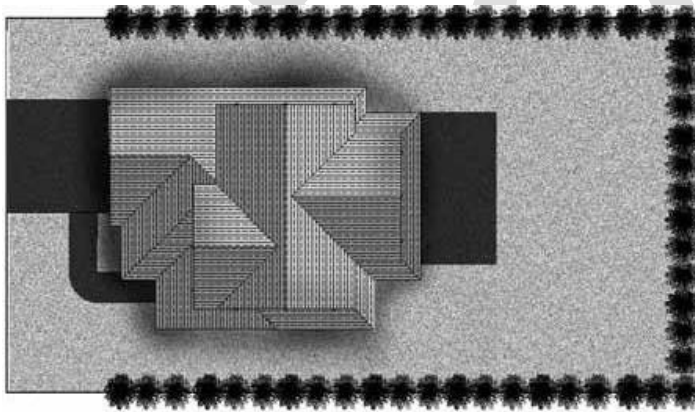
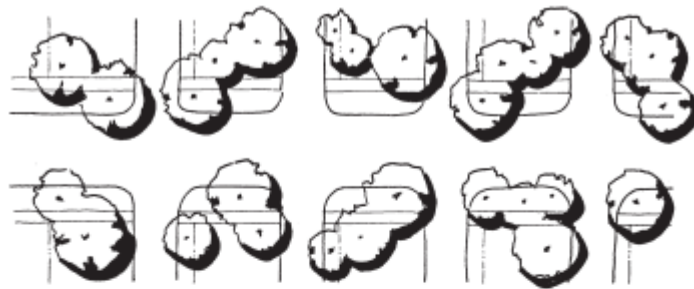
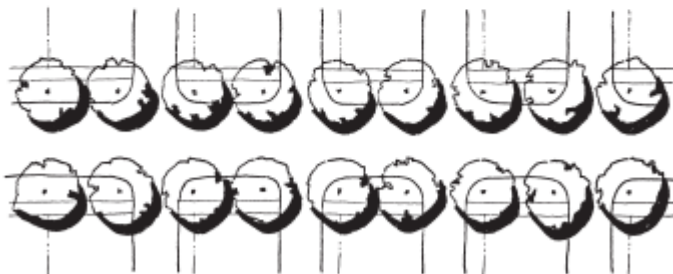


Figure 33 - On left: New landscaping harmonizes with existing trees and natural character of the neighborhood. On right: Landscaping does not present a natural appearance. Allow linear patterns if presented within an overall modern design concept



THIS

Introduced vegetation is planted in an irregular fashion to give an informal character.



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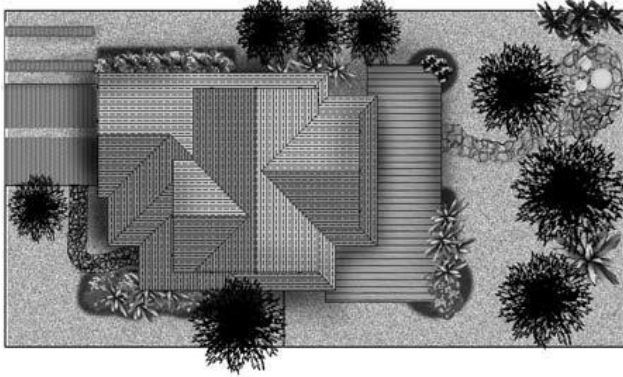
Introduced vegetation is planted in a linear pattern which produces a rigid appearance.

Figure 34

2. **Paved** Hardscape Areas

Discussion: Environmentally sensitive planning and design of paved or hardscape areas (e.g., paving, pavers, impervious/pervious concrete) on site will produce a more natural appearance and prevent stormwater pollution by reducing the volume of surface runoff, increasing infiltration, and preventing pollutants from entering the creeks and ocean. Please refer to the County's Drainage Manual Stormwater Pollution Prevention program publications, available at the Planning Counter, for further information and innovative ideas on this topic.

Do This



Not This

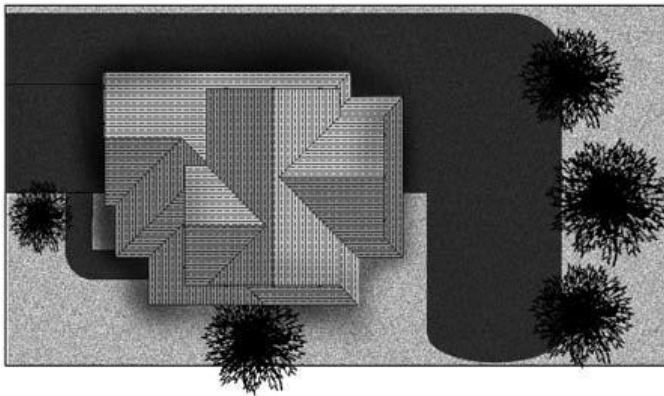
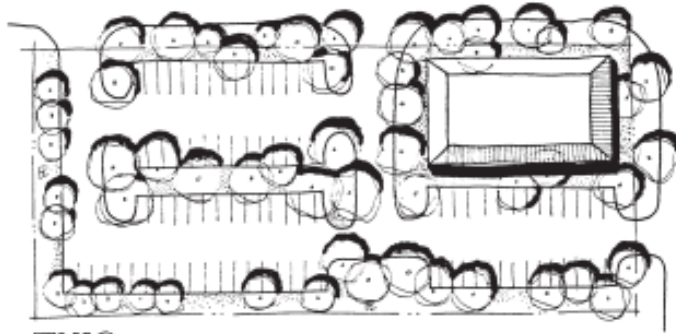
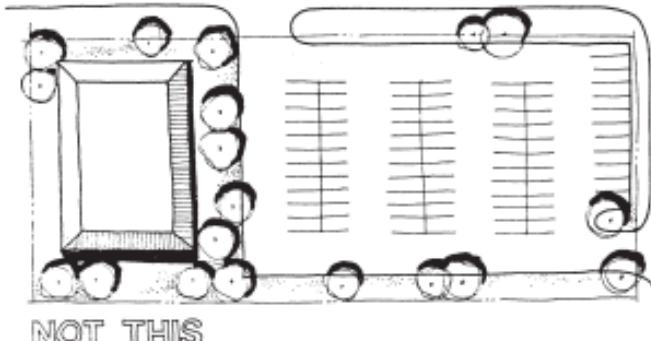


Figure 35 - On left: Amount of hardscape and size of driveways, walk- ways and parking areas minimized; alternatives to asphalt and concrete used. On right: Hardscape covers most of lot.



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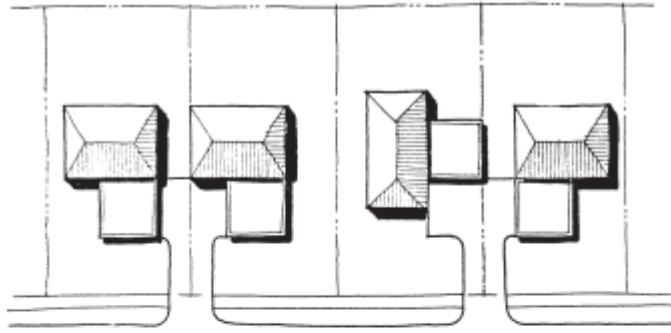
Visual interest is added to the parking lot through the extensive use of landscaping.



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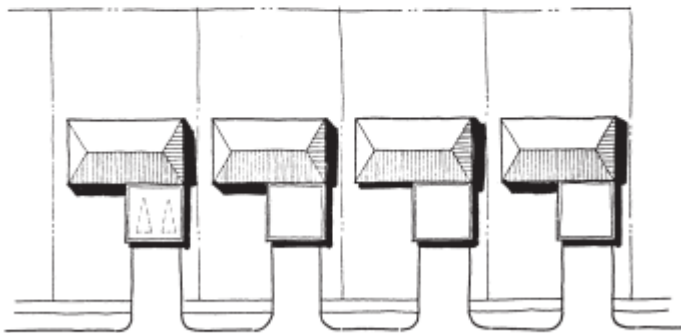
Large unbroken expanses of parking area with little landscaping lack visual interest.

Figure 36



THIS

Common driveways are used to reduce curb cuts and to increase the amount of usable open space.



NOT THIS

Individual driveways increase the number of hazardous curb cuts and create smaller, less usable open space areas.

Figure 37

3. Fencing

Discussion: Site fencing should complement and enhance the design of the home, while harmonizing with the overall character of the neighborhood. Fencing should be considered and designed as an integrated part of the project, not left as an afterthought when the project is completed. Fences and walls shall comply with the height limits specified in Section 6412 of the Zoning Regulations.



Figure 38 - Fence designs enhance the homes' architectural style.

4. Lighting

Discussion: The location and style of exterior and interior lighting chosen for a single-family home can have a significant impact on the home's design.

Lighting standards are necessary in order to protect the night sky from unnecessary light pollution and to minimize impact to surrounding homes and the natural environment. It can also affect adjacent neighbors, or depending on topography, more distant views from scenic corridors. An appropriate lighting plan will complement the home's design and provide adequate light and security for the subject site. At the same time, the plan should prevent direct light and glare from extending in any direction, including upward, beyond the boundaries of the site. In general, low-level lighting directed toward the ground is preferred.

Do This Not This Not This



Figure 39 - On left: Low-level light is directed toward the ground. In middle: Lighting is high intensity and is not confined to the site. On right: Light and glare extend in all directions, including up.

F. UTILITIES AND ANCILLARY STRUCTURES. Utilities and ancillary structures are a necessary, but often unsightly, component of residential construction. Consideration should be given to minimizing the visual impact of such facilities. Property owners and project designers are encouraged to coordinate building, utility and ancillary structure placement at the start of a project, so that all zoning, environmental health and design standards can be met.