

EAST ROCKVILLE DESIGN GUIDELINES  
Rockville, Md.



March 12, 2019  
**Draft for Discussion**



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**Bibliography.....**

**Urban Code Sample Pages.....**  
 Code Sample Pages.....  
 SmartCode .....  
 Leander SmartCode.....  
 Cincinnati Form-Based Code .....  
 High River Land Use Bylaw.....  
 Edmonton Mature Neighborhood Overlay .....  
 Westmount Architectural Heritage Area Direct Control .....  
 Character Home Retention Incentive DC District .....

**ADU Code Sample Pages**  
 Gaithersburg Urban Cottage Text Amendment.....  
 Austin ADU Code.....  
 Fayetteville ADU Code.....  
 Portland ADU Code.....  
 Vancouver ADU Code.....  
 Garden Suites: How-to Guide .....  
 Flag Shaped Lots Pilot Program .....

**Architectural Code Sample Pages**  
 SmartCode Architectural Standards .....  
 Kentlands Code .....  
 Norfolk Neighborhoods Pattern Book.....  
 Gulf Coast Neighborhoods Pattern Book .....

**GENERAL NOTES INTRODUCTION**

**Applicability**

- These design guidelines and standards shall apply to all new single-family detached housing construction whether an entirely new building whole building or an addition(s) to an existing building.
- The Design Guidelines and Standards are a supplement to all applicable City codes, ordinances and adopted plans.
- With respect to additions to an existing single-family home, the city's zoning ordinance shall prevail.
- Any new development within an historic district, or any addition to a structure that has been designated as an historic structure, is shall be subject to approval by the Historic District Commission (HDC).
- Provisions of this Code are activated by "shall" when required; "should" when advisory but highly recommended.
- If the provisions of these Guidelines and Standards conflict with provisions found in other City of Rockville adopted codes, ordinances, or regulations, the provisions in these Guidelines and Standards shall control unless otherwise expressly stated.

**Purpose**

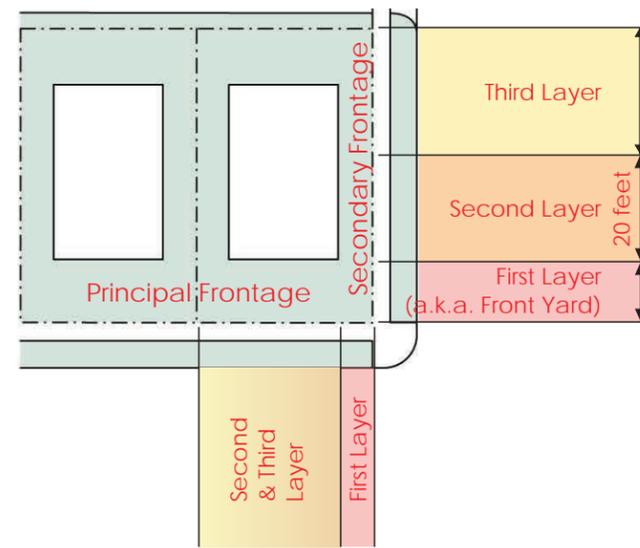
The foundation for the East Rockville Design Guidelines and Standards project is rooted in the 2004 East Rockville Neighborhood Plan. The Plan recommended the preparation of a guide for new construction that enhances both the physical and environmental aspects of the neighborhood.

East Rockville is a well-established neighborhood, located within walking distance of the Rockville Metro Station. Most of the housing stock was built in the 1940s and early 1950s during the development boom that occurred after World War II, however, historic homes dating from the late 1800s, some of the first in Rockville, still stand today. Over the past decade, development pressures have increased and residents have expressed concern about the how the scale and massing of new residential development relates to and impacts the established neighborhood. The intent of the project is to establish a framework that reinforces neighborhood integrity and promotes creative and quality design that is well-integrated into the existing context.

**Goals**

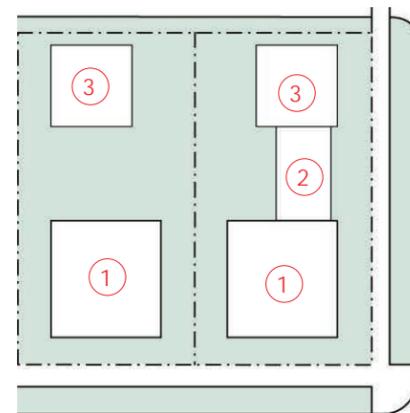
- Preserve and strengthen the unique and established character of the neighborhood.
- Promote complementary and context sensitive development between new and existing structures, while also facilitating creative design.
- Promote site design that preserves the natural features in the neighborhood and minimizes impacts on stormwater management.

**DEFINITIONS: LAYERS**



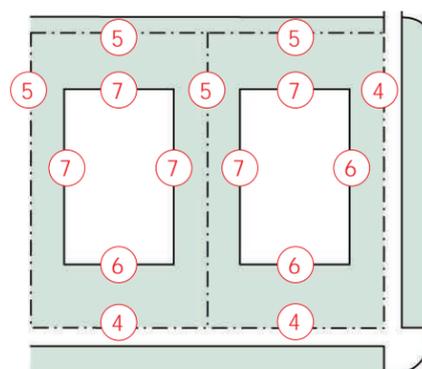
**Layer (First, Second and Third).** A range of depth of a lot within which certain elements are permitted.

**DEFINITIONS: BUILDING DISPOSITION**



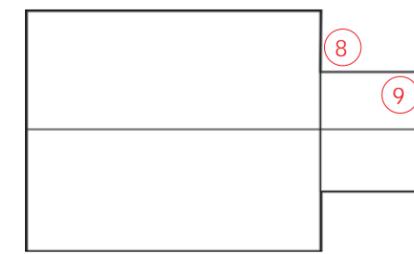
- 1. Principal Building.** The main building on a lot, usually located toward the Frontage.
- 2. Backbuilding.** A single-story structure connecting a Principal Building to an Accessory Building.
- 3. Accessory Building.** An Accessory Building is located toward the rear of the lot and sometimes connected to the Principal Building by a Backbuilding.

**DEFINITIONS: FRONTAGE & LOT LINES, FAÇADES & ELEVATIONS**



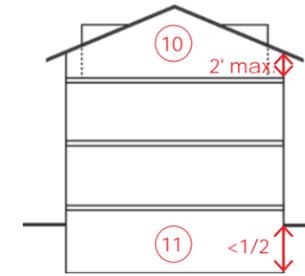
- 4. Frontage.** The area between a building Façade and the vehicular lanes, inclusive of its built and planted components. On a corner lot, the primary Frontage is the Frontage which faces the more primary street (typically the street with the narrower Frontage).
- 5. Lot Line.** The boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates a Lot.
- 6. Façade.** An exterior wall of a building facing a Frontage Line.
- 7. Elevation.** An exterior wall of a building not a facing a Frontage Line.

**DEFINITIONS: BUILDING COMPOSITION**



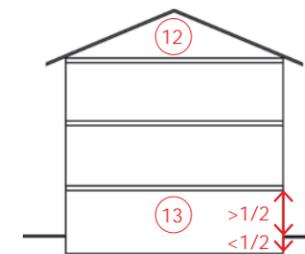
- 8. Inside Corner**
- 9. Outside Corner**

**DEFINITIONS: BUILDING HEIGHT**



**10. Half-story.** A story under a gable, hip, or gambrel roof, the wall plates of which on the least two (2) opposite exterior walls are not more than 2 feet above the floor of such story.

**11. Cellar.** That portion of a building below the first-floor joists at least half of whose clear ceiling height is below the level of the adjacent ground (compare with Basement).



**12. Attic.** The interior part of a building contained within a pitched roof structure.

**13. Basement.** That portion of a building below the first-floor joists, at least half of whose clear ceiling height is above the level of the adjacent finished grade (compare with Cellar).

**Planning Staff Edits = Red Text**

**Community Feedback = Blue Text**

\* = May require change in existing zoning

\*\* = Points for discussion

**General Notes & Definitions**

**BUILDING ORIENTATION (ISSUE 1)**

Building orientation refers to the way a building is positioned on a site and how it relates to its neighbors and to the street. Buildings and front entryways that are oriented toward the street tend to establish a welcoming atmosphere along the block and contribute to a walkable environment.

- 1 The front door shall face the Primary Frontage. On corner lots, the front door may face either the Primary Frontage or the Secondary Frontage.

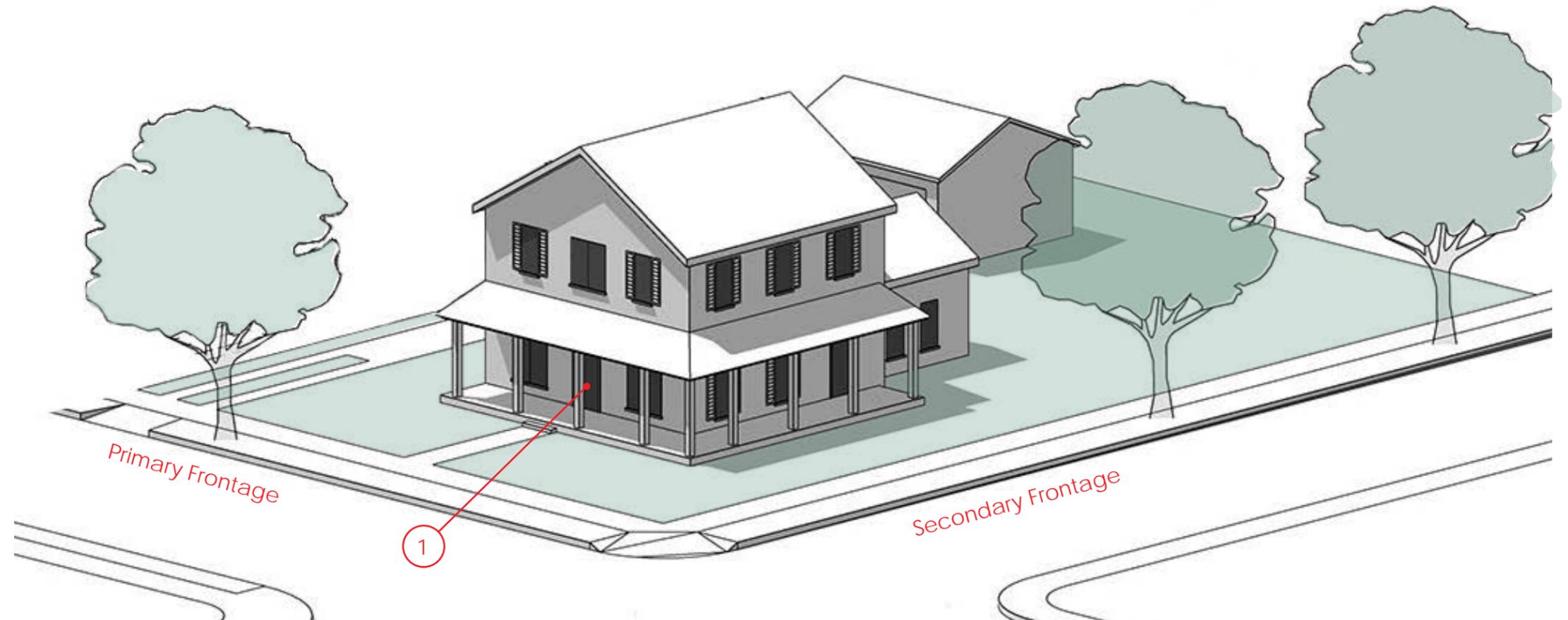
**Alternative Language**

The front entrance of the primary building shall face the primary frontage.

- In the case of an addition or renovation to an existing house, an exception may be made if the design is based on architectural precedent and the entry placement conforms to the historic or original design of the home.

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- Please change to "should."
- No comments other than recommending clarification on expectations/ definition of a front door and whether the use of multiple front doors is allowable
- The requirement is only that the front door face the Primary Frontage, there are no other requirements?
- Keep as a shall.
- Edit, for example: The front entrance of the primary building shall face the primary frontage. Add language, ex: Unless based on architectural precedent/fits the historic design of the home.

**Building Orientation (Issue 1)**

**BUILDING PLACEMENT (ISSUE 2)**

Maintaining an established setback pattern is a way of preserving neighborhood character. Setbacks may vary slightly to add visual interest, due topography changes, or to conserve a natural feature, but in general, a consistent front yard appearance should be maintained.

1 One Principal Building at the Frontage may be built on each lot. Accessory Buildings to the rear of the Principal Building are also permitted.

2 ~~Façades shall be set back a maximum of 25 feet from the front lot line. An exception for as much as an additional 5 feet may be granted at the discretion of the reviewer for reasons of merit, such as saving a large tree.~~

Minimum setback standards are established by the applicable zoning district.

- New structures and additions should be compatible with the prevailing site arrangement, setback distance and orientation of neighborhood houses to reinforce the existing character of the street.

3 Front setbacks, minimums and maximums, for new structures should be within the range of the prevailing setback pattern established on the block or on adjacent properties. Any existing buildings not conforming to an established setback pattern on the block-face should not be used to determine a setback range.

~~Alternatively, where a Principal Building is proposed on a lot between two adjacent homes, lots with existing Principal Buildings the proposed Principal Building may be setback an average distance between the front setbacks of the adjacent buildings.~~

The following may encroach into the required setback: porches (except enclosed porches), stoops, terraces, ~~light wells~~, balconies, bay windows.

~~\*\* Alternative: Façades shall be set back a maximum of 12 to 25 feet from the front lot line.~~

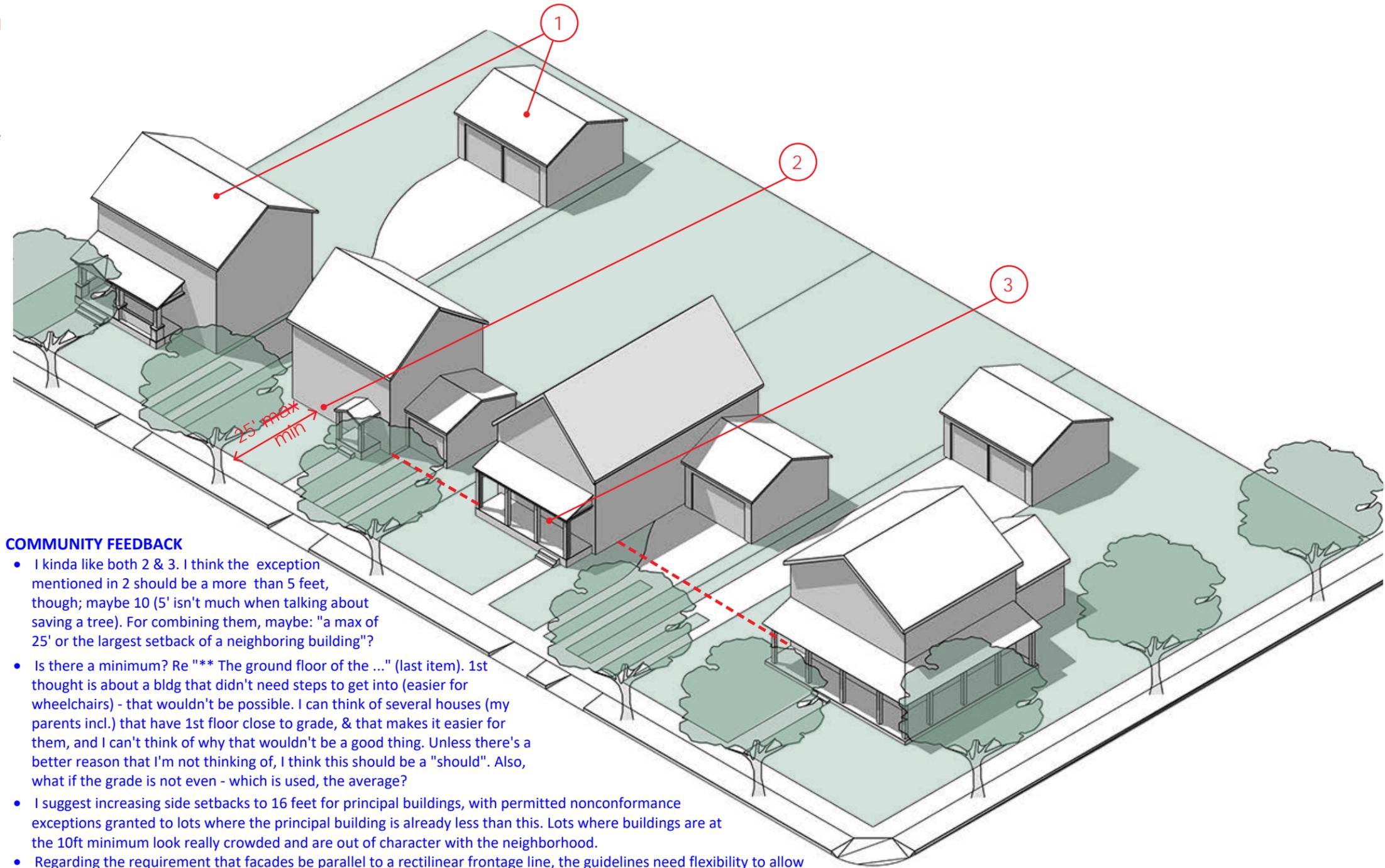
\*\* Façades shall be built parallel to the primary street frontage, a rectilinear frontage line or to the tangent of a curved frontage line.

\*\* Side setbacks for Principal Buildings shall be the minimum required by the building code.\*

\*\* Lots with slopes greater than 10% may request an exception to the setback requirements.

\*\* The ground floor of the Principal building shall be raised a minimum of two feet above the adjacent grade.

- 3), 5th\*\*: I am uncertain what this has to do with lot placement. I question if this is necessary/useful limitation. A number of houses in the area that make up the existing character of the neighborhood are not raised 2 ft above adjacent grade. Additionally, this requirement creates the need for additional (impervious) ramps in order to make a house handicapped accessible.



**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- I kinda like both 2 & 3. I think the exception mentioned in 2 should be a more than 5 feet, though; maybe 10 (5' isn't much when talking about saving a tree). For combining them, maybe: "a max of 25' or the largest setback of a neighboring building"?
- Is there a minimum? Re "\*\*\* The ground floor of the ..." (last item). 1st thought is about a bldg that didn't need steps to get into (easier for wheelchairs) - that wouldn't be possible. I can think of several houses (my parents incl.) that have 1st floor close to grade, & that makes it easier for them, and I can't think of why that wouldn't be a good thing. Unless there's a better reason that I'm not thinking of, I think this should be a "should". Also, what if the grade is not even - which is used, the average?
- I suggest increasing side setbacks to 16 feet for principal buildings, with permitted nonconformance exceptions granted to lots where the principal building is already less than this. Lots where buildings are at the 10ft minimum look really crowded and are out of character with the neighborhood.
- Regarding the requirement that facades be parallel to a rectilinear frontage line, the guidelines need flexibility to allow for alternative "modern" architecture.
- Request use of "façades shall be set back a maximum of 12- 25 feet". Please clarify how slope of 10% is calculated for exceptions.
- Item 3, 4th\*\*, the exception for lots w/ slopes may partly address my concern about adding an addition to the front of house - perhaps this point could be clarified as to what such exception would encompass
- Peerless Rockville fully endorses the discussion item on Building Placement that states that facades shall be built parallel to a rectilinear Frontage line or the tangent of a curved Frontage line, and would like this regulation to be included in the next draft of the Design Guidelines
- 1) Primary frontage? What if there is a secondary frontage? Would a second building on frontage be allowed? it is a completely different view line.
- In General on this page: what about corner lots in terms of setback? Does it provide any flexibility for the secondary frontage, or will it follow the same rules as primary frontage?
- 2) a Shall with exceptions, could perhaps become a should, with a Shall range. I.e.: Façades Should be set back 25 feet from the front lot line. and Shall not be less then 10 ft or more then 35 feet. (Exact distances tbd, used as example). In that case, it provides for flexibility that is described for both an additional distance due to tree, as well as positioning between other houses.
- We need a minimum [front setback]. Homes built right up on the sidewalk are too urban and make it too hard to maintain the canopy.

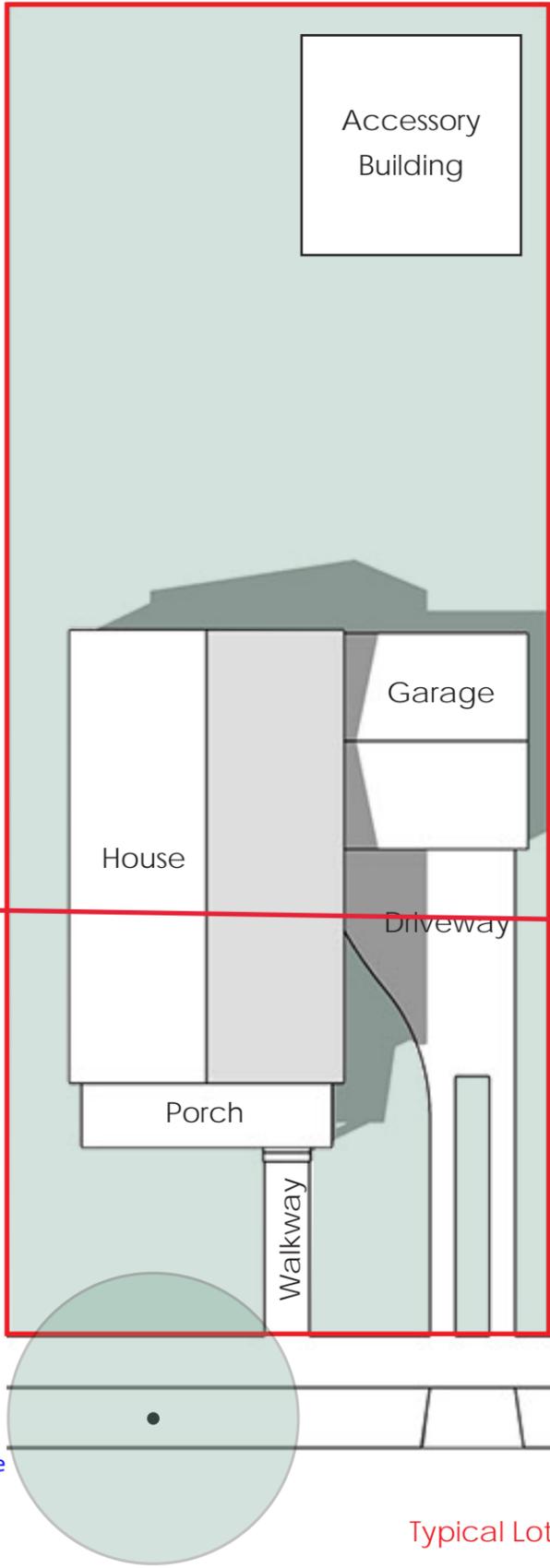
LOT COVERAGE (ISSUE 3)

1 \*\* Lot Coverage shall be a maximum 35% of lot area. Coverage includes all impermeable surfaces with the exception of open porches facing Frontages and Accessory Dwelling Units.

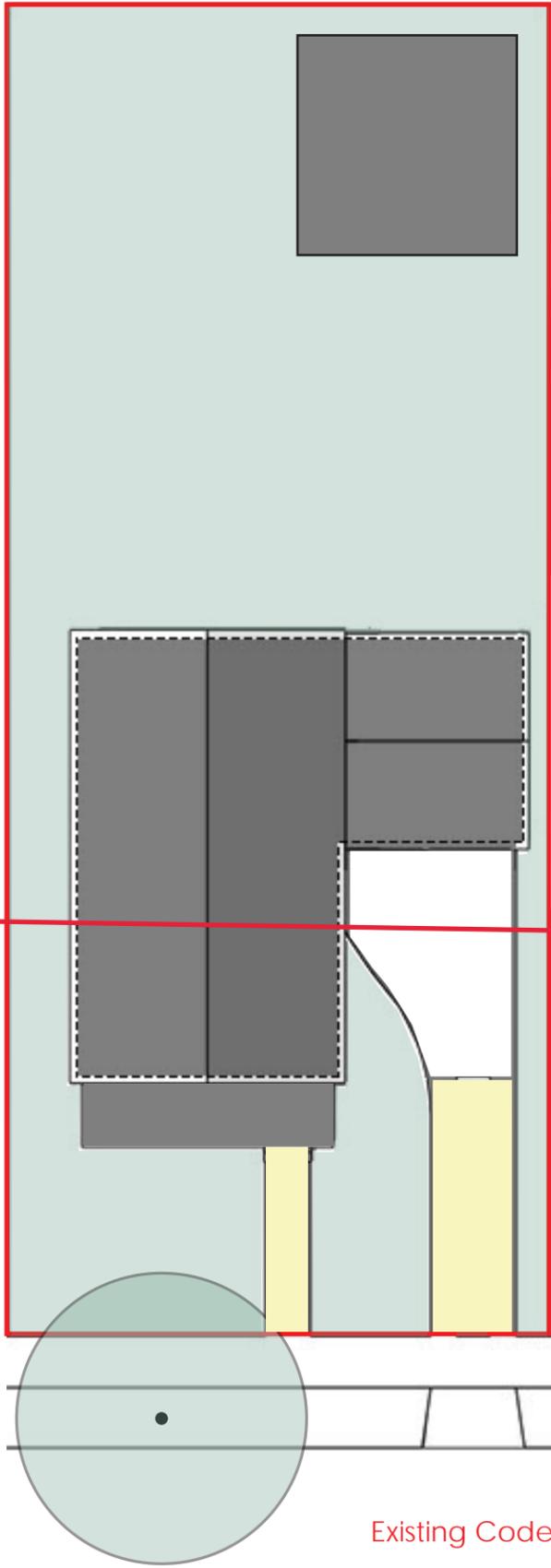
- Property Line
- - - Building Footprint
- < 35% of Lot Area
- Impervious Area < 40% of Front Yard

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

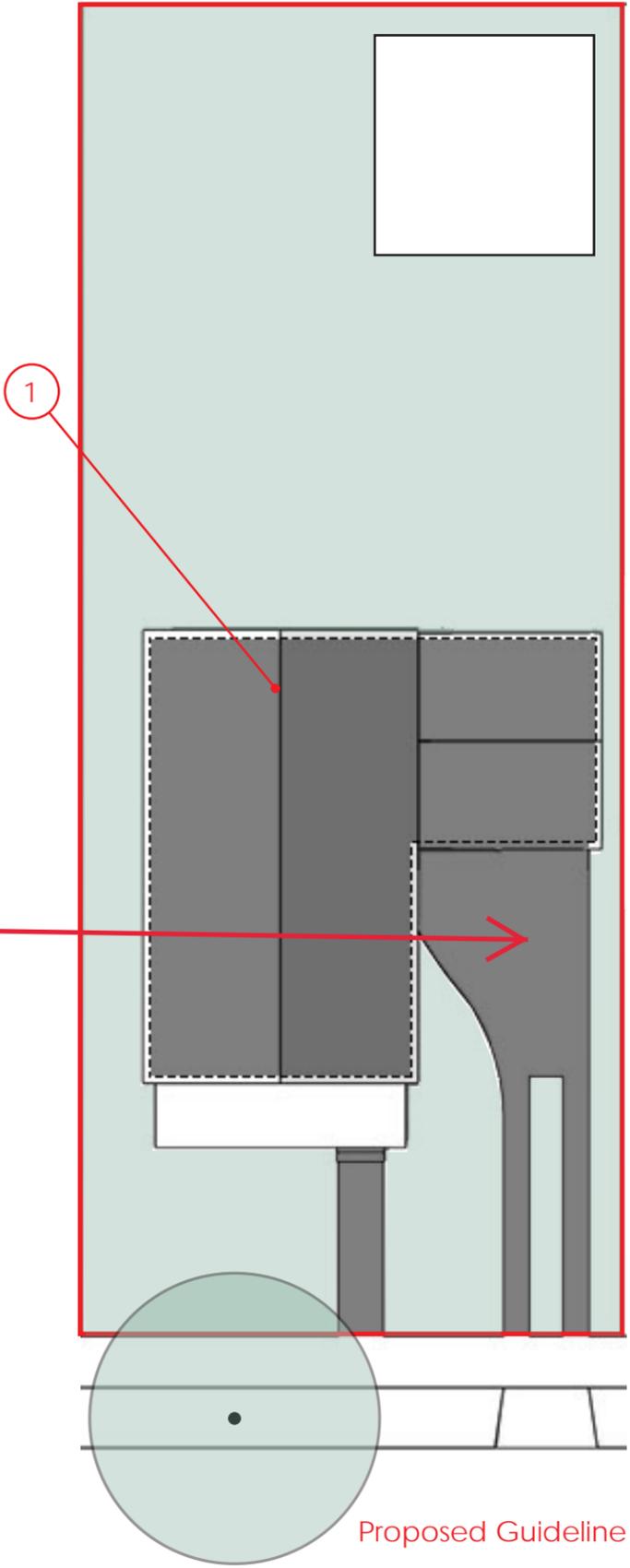
- I'm uneasy about excluding the "Accessory Building". The way it is defined, I think that allows sheds and garages (as opposed to "living in" buildings. I think it was said in the meetings that the desire was to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units, but this seems to say garages, too. I'm not even sure I want Accessory Dwelling units excluded (but I think that'll be dealt with outside of our scope), but I definitely don't think sheds/garages should be excluded.
- I understand the desire to avoid exceedingly large new construction that appears out of proportion to smaller existing homes in the neighborhood, but then again, many lots in East Rockville are quite small, and in my opinion, the allowance for lot coverage percentage should be more generous.
- I suggest counting ADUs in the 35%. Otherwise, you create a huge loophole.
- Need to clarify on the definition of "impermeable surface." Concrete pavers: Permeable or impermeable surface?
- Need clarity on the definition of "dwelling unit" to avoid gaming with the exception (e.g. claiming that a garage is a dwelling unit).
- Table on next page says driveway pavement must be "pervious" so this illustration appears inconsistent with proposed guidelines.
- Recommend allowing exemption of primary walkway as well. In addition, recommend allowing caveats for land coverage percentage based on lot size. For smaller lots (defined by the city) allowing up to 40% coverage.
- I'm sure the 35% restriction was discussed before I arrived - if I understand it the restriction would not include an additional dwelling structure (whether attached or freestanding?)
- Make a distinction between maximum lot coverage by (vertical) structures (such as houses, sheds, accessory buildings, carports, etc) and a maximum lot coverage for flat impermeable surfaces. I suggest that the total coverage cannot be more than 45%, and that the coverage by vertical structures cannot be more than 30%. If no distinction is made, I suggest to raise the maximum lot coverage area to 45%.
- We [Peerless] do question the proposed exclusion of ADUs from the 35% lot coverage max. East Rockville is historically a neighborhood of SF residences and ADUs are not currently legal. While additional zoning regulations may be generated to apply to ADUs, excluding them from the Guidelines provides an opportunity for a proliferation of these structures without the careful regulations applied to the main dwelling.
- When is landscaping a path, that needs to get counted, and when not? if- for the purpose of preventing run-off, A walkway arguable has a limited impact as impervious area. - Could it be "any impervious surface over 4 or 5 ft wide is to be included? Additionally- not counting ADUs concerns me, especially with the aim of expanding accessory bldg use to the potential of accessory dwelling.
- We appreciate the gesture of porches being excluded from building footprint, and limiting driveways - However, we do not believe this is the right way to go about it. We see potential complications with pathways and landscaping, or a terrace (Which, in our understanding will also be counted as lot coverage?) There also seems to be a discrepancy between goals with this page, and the page requiring minimum of 2 cars to be parked on driveway.
- Yes on open porch! Could someone put a 500 SF porch on a house? Love encouragement for pervious cover.



Typical Lot



Existing Code



Proposed Guideline

Lot Coverage (Issue 3)

**PARKING, GARAGES & PAVEMENT (ISSUE 4)**

Garages should not be the prominent feature of the front elevation of the home or of the street frontage. Streetscapes that are dominated by garages and driveways give prominence to vehicles rather than reflecting a walkable, inviting neighborhood.

1) In the First Layer, the following are permitted:

- Driveways of 10 feet wide or less
- Paved ruts Permeable materials and the use of paved ruts are encouraged.

In the First Layer, the following are prohibited:

- Garages
- Carports
- ~~Parking, when an alternative exists (except existing parking which may remain)~~

2) In the Second Layer, the following are permitted:

- Driveways of 24 feet wide or less
- Paved ruts
- Parking
- \*\* Garages and carports of 12 feet wide or less placed a minimum of 5 feet behind the Façade of the Primary Building, if facade is at least 15 feet wide

3) In the Third Layer, the following are permitted:

- Driveways
- Paved ruts
- Parking
- Garages
- Carports

4) Shared driveways are permitted.

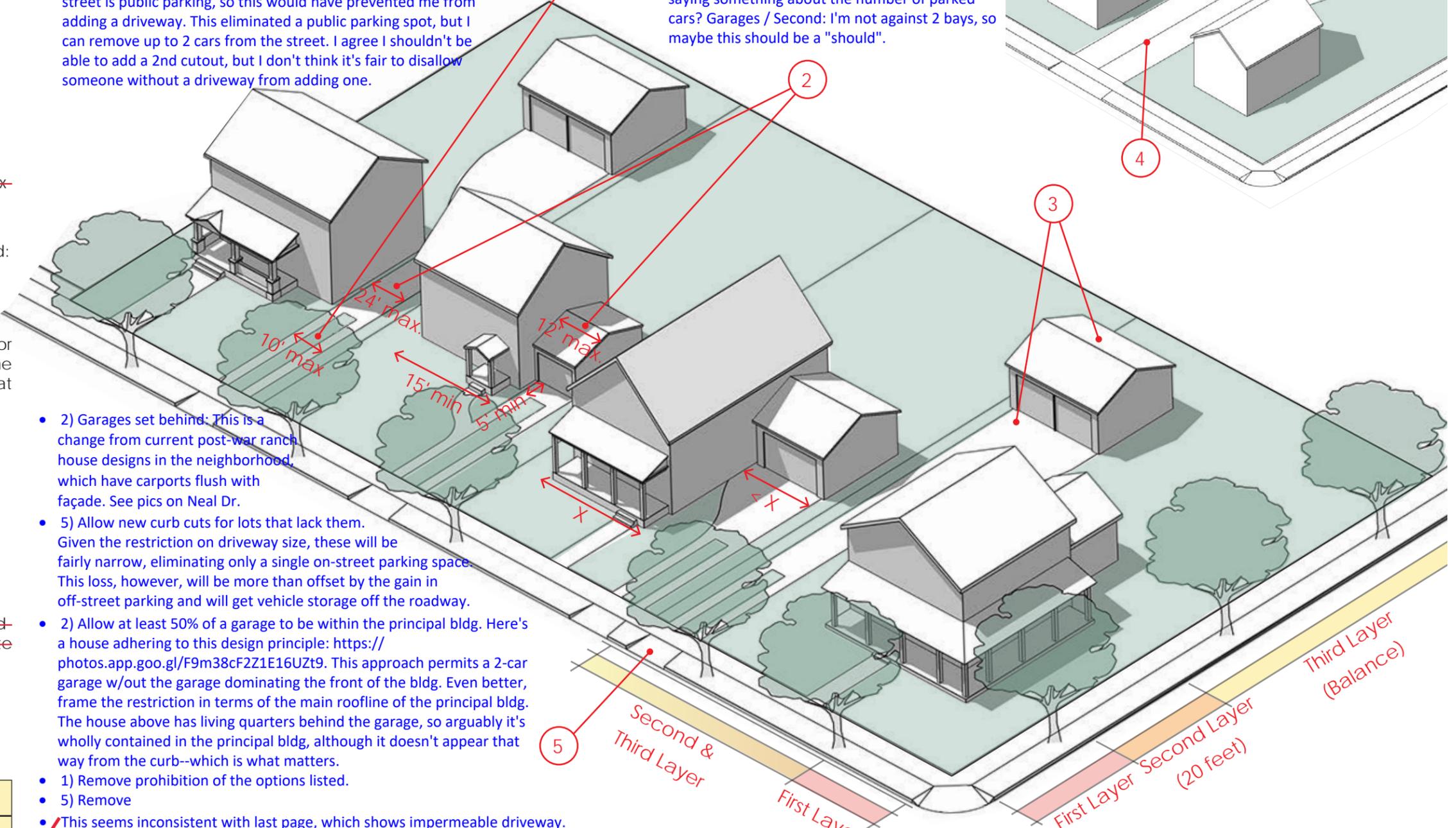
5) ~~\*\* Curb cuts for private driveways shall not be widened or added where doing so would eliminate any on-street parking.~~

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- 1) Parking excluded: May be misunderstanding, but this makes me think that I wouldn't be able to park in my driveway (almost all the driveways on my street end at the front of the house, so that's the only place I can park except for the street). Also, the 10' differs from the 12' in the chart at the bottom (I think).
- 5) I don't think I like this: When I bought my house a few years ago, there was no driveway nor curb cut-out. And the whole street is public parking, so this would have prevented me from adding a driveway. This eliminated a public parking spot, but I can remove up to 2 cars from the street. I agree I shouldn't be able to add a 2nd cutout, but I don't think it's fair to disallow someone without a driveway from adding one.

Table at bottom:

- Parked cars / First: See #1 above - I don't think that's feasible on my street. Parked cars / Second: "50% of building width" - Does this mean that the width of the area that cars can park is no wider than 50% of the principal buildings width? Or is it saying something about the number of parked cars? Garages / Second: I'm not against 2 bays, so maybe this should be a "should".



- 2) Garages set behind: This is a change from current post-war ranch house designs in the neighborhood, which have carports flush with façade. See pics on Neal Dr.
- 5) Allow new curb cuts for lots that lack them. Given the restriction on driveway size, these will be fairly narrow, eliminating only a single on-street parking space. This loss, however, will be more than offset by the gain in off-street parking and will get vehicle storage off the roadway.
- 2) Allow at least 50% of a garage to be within the principal bldg. Here's a house adhering to this design principle: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/F9m38cF2Z1E16UZt9>. This approach permits a 2-car garage w/out the garage dominating the front of the bldg. Even better, frame the restriction in terms of the main roofline of the principal bldg. The house above has living quarters behind the garage, so arguably it's wholly contained in the principal bldg, although it doesn't appear that way from the curb--which is what matters.
- 1) Remove prohibition of the options listed.
- 5) Remove
- This seems inconsistent with last page, which shows impermeable driveway.
- 6) Add prohibition of parking large recreational vehicles, boats, and non-functional vehicles in any on-street parking or in the First Layer.
- 1) a nice goal to not have the front yards be full of cars. However, it seems close to impossible to enforce and/or a potential frustration for homeowners
- 2) last bullet: After the community meeting, we have specifically been looking for examples within the neighborhood. We do not believe a garage is a block in the "front porch environment" if placed equal or 5 feet in front of primary building either. This creates a need for more driveway length which is almost more bothersome.
- 5) I do not think this is a restriction that is necessary street parking in many areas of the neighborhood is no problem. Why limit driveways? that seems to be a key character of this neighborhood.
- 5) What flexibility or consideration is given to corner lots and/or extremely wide lots? Could there be a limit on the width of the driveway depending on the amount of primary and secondary frontage? Could there be a limit of 1 driveway on each: primary frontage, and secondary frontage. This most certainly is not a SHALL. perhaps a should. or none at all.

Layer	First	Second	Third
Pavement Width	12' Maximum	24' Maximum	No Maximum
Pavement Material	Shall be Pervious or Ruts	Should be Pervious or Ruts	Should be Pervious or Ruts
Parked Cars	None	50 % of Building Width	No Maximum
Garages	None	1 Bay max. & 5' min. Behind Façade	Unlimited

**Parking, Garages & Pavement (Issue 4)**

**ADDITIONS (ISSUE 5)**

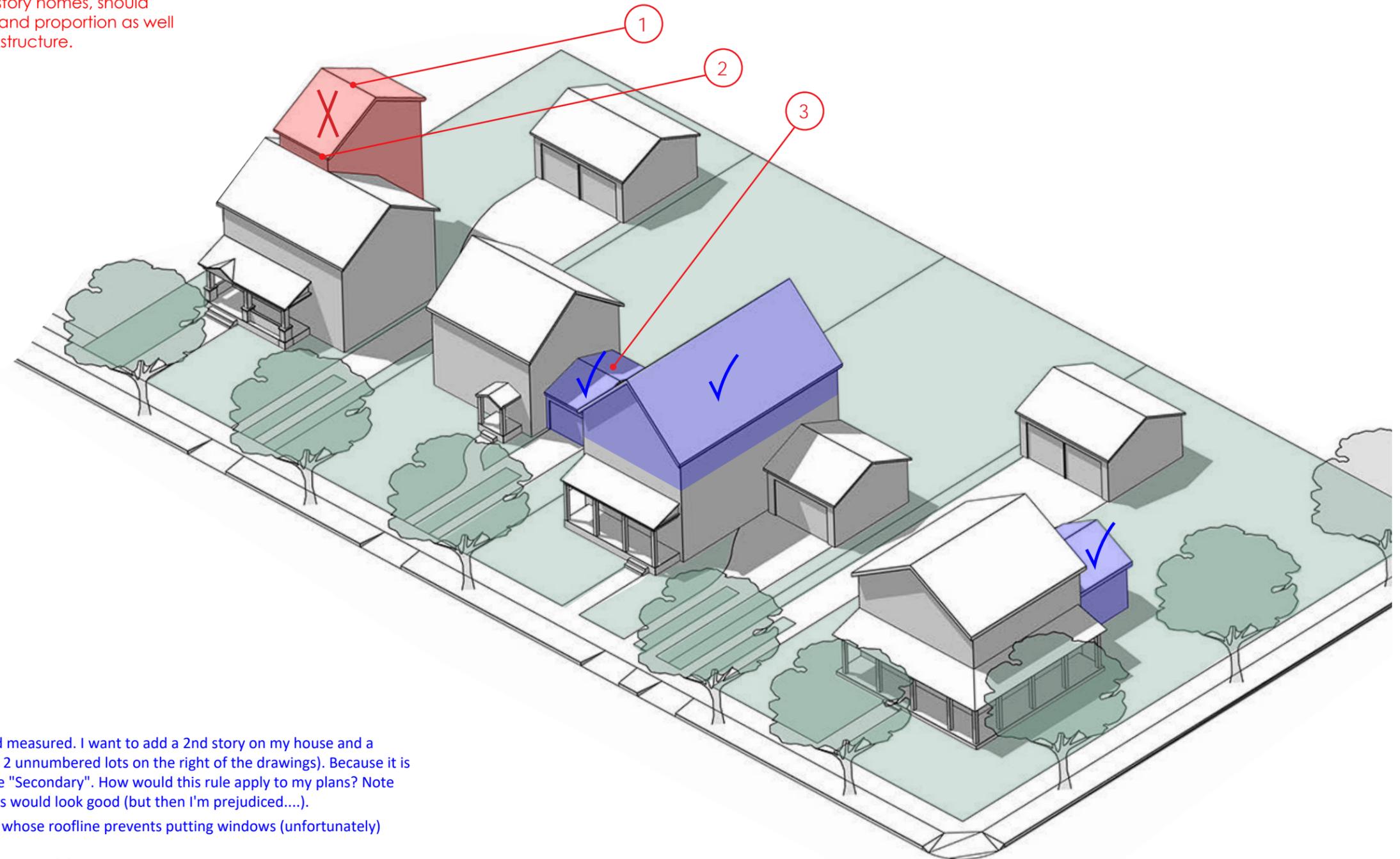
Additions should complement the design and proportions of the original structure. They should be concentrated toward the rear or the side of the existing structure whenever possible. The overall height, massing, and proportions should relate well to adjacent structures as well as to the larger neighborhood context. Additions with a proposed second story along a block of predominantly one-story homes, should demonstrate particular sensitivity regarding the overall scale and proportion as well as window placement and privacy of the new portion of the structure.

- 1 The ridge of the roof of an addition shall not be higher than the ridge of the roof of the Principal Building unless the addition adds a full story to the Principal Building.
- 2 The eave of an addition shall not be higher than the eave of the Principal Building unless the addition adds a full story to the Principal Building.
- 3 Additions to an existing Principal Building shall should be secondary in massing, scale and detail to the Principal Building.

Additional stories shall appear structurally feasible, i.e. openings should be directly above openings in the existing story below.

Façades of an additional story shall should be the same material as the existing story below, or, an acceptable, appropriate transition between materials shall be included in the design.

Window proportions in additional stories shall should match those of the predominant windows in the original structure. Alternatively, a style-based justification may be presented or if the windows in the original structure are of poor proportion, an administrative waiver may be requested from the Planning Director.

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- 3) Para 1: I don't understand how that would be implemented and measured. I want to add a 2nd story on my house and a single story extension on the back (so kind of a combination of the 2 unnumbered lots on the right of the drawings). Because it is more than the size of the current house, I'm thinking it wouldn't be "Secondary". How would this rule apply to my plans? Note that my current house is small (640 sq ft), so I \*think\* the additions would look good (but then I'm prejudiced....).
- 3) Para 2: I'm a little uneasy here, too. My house has a front porch whose roofline prevents putting windows (unfortunately) above the windows on the first floor (on the front of the house).
- I mostly support this proposal if it is established as flexible guidelines, not rigid rules.
- 3) Change shall to should in the last 2 paragraphs.
- 1) Change rule from shall to should.
- 3) This may be a hardship, especially to some of the smaller homes.
- 3) last point: This sounds like a Should, not a Shall. - due to the "alternatively" section.
- 3) 3rd point: Façades of an additional story "should" instead of "shall". This should be an issue that is encouraged. Fine as is, too.

**Additions (Issue 5)**

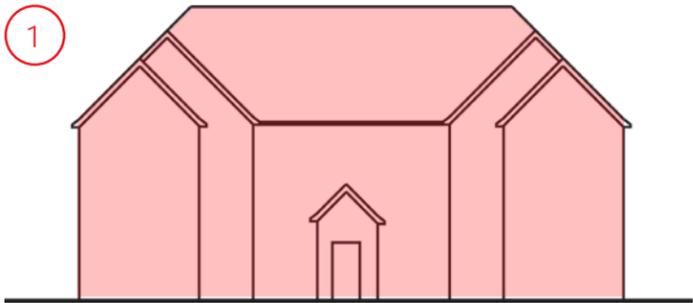
**BUILDING MASSING & SCALE (ISSUE 6)**

The size of a typical single-family home is larger today than it was in the first half of the 20th century, when many of the homes in East Rockville were built. Finding a balance between flexibility in design, changing preferences in housing size and styles, and respecting established neighborhood character is one of the primary challenges for design guidelines in older neighborhoods.

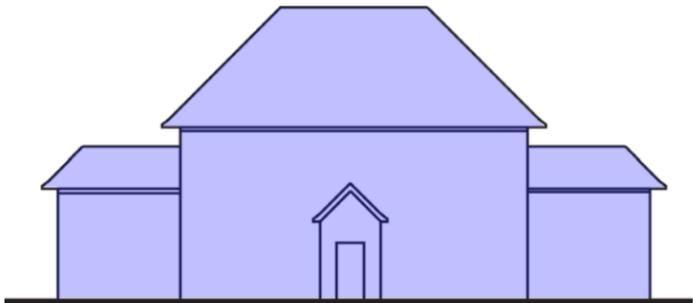
The massing and scale of new construction can have the greatest impact on neighborhood character. Larger construction should be sensitive to the existing smaller-scaled neighborhood context. Roof lines, simplified variations in elevation massing, windows, and porches, among other treatments, can have a significant impact on the perceived mass of a building.

- 1) Building massing shall communicate hierarchy.
  - Larger structures should be distributed into smaller "modules" to minimize the perceived mass of the building.
- 2) Garages shall not be in the primary mass of a building. Garages shall be setback beside or located behind the Principal Building.
- 3) Buildings shall **should** have simple massing (few Outside Corners), a similar overall height and similar floor-to-floor height.
- 4) No single plane of a Façade shall be more than 40 feet wide.
  - Long, uninterrupted exterior walls should be avoided. Articulating exterior elevations adds variation to the mass and can be accomplished by recessing a portion of the wall, changes in roof lines, a change in materials, and articulated window openings, among others.

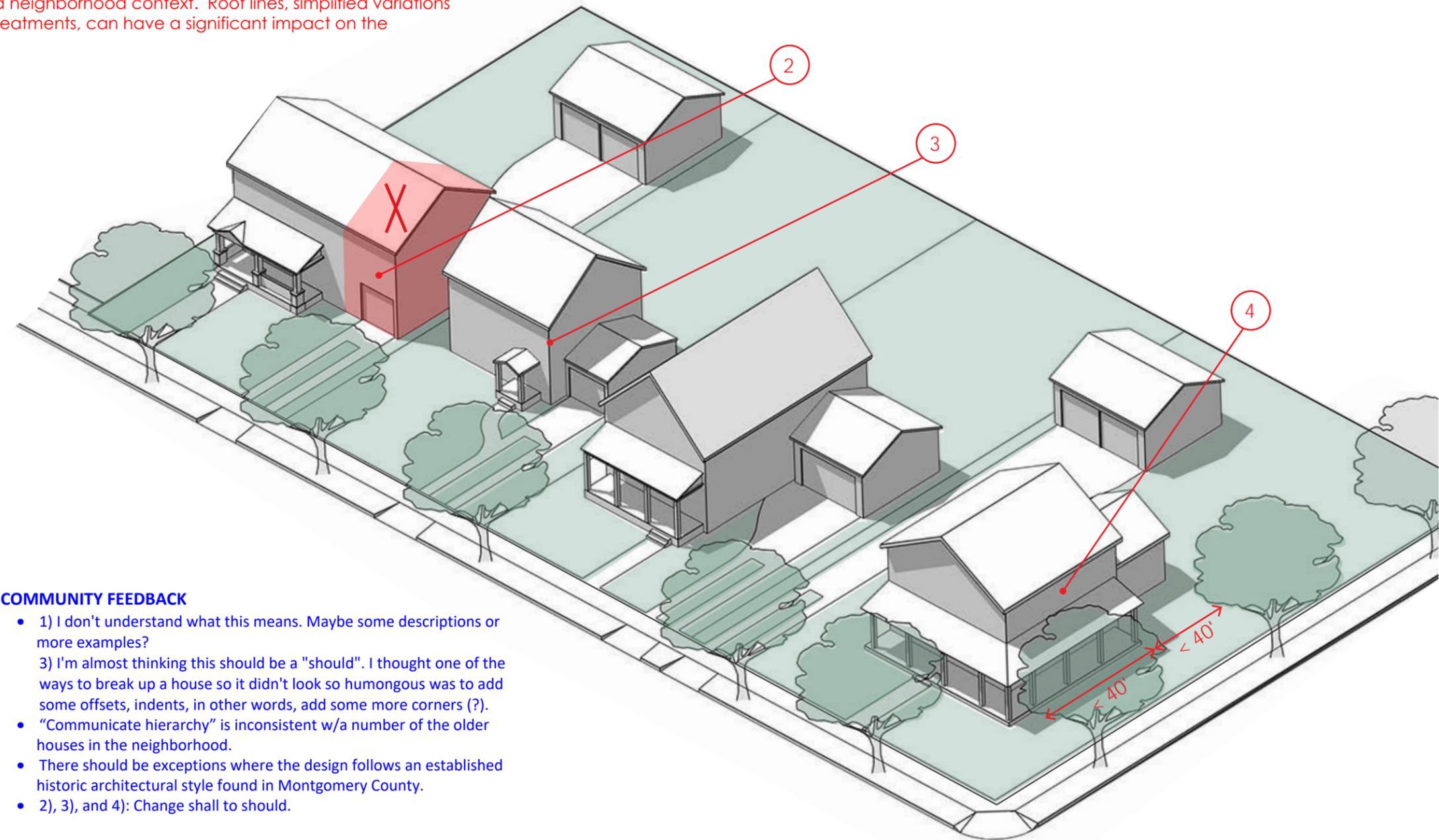
Buildings heights should be stepped down toward adjacent homes and toward the street.



Don't



Do



**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- 1) I don't understand what this means. Maybe some descriptions or more examples?
- 3) I'm almost thinking this should be a "should". I thought one of the ways to break up a house so it didn't look so humongous was to add some offsets, indents, in other words, add some more corners (?).
- "Communicate hierarchy" is inconsistent w/a number of the older houses in the neighborhood.
- There should be exceptions where the design follows an established historic architectural style found in Montgomery County.
- 2), 3), and 4): Change shall to should.

**Building Massing & Scale (Issue 6)**

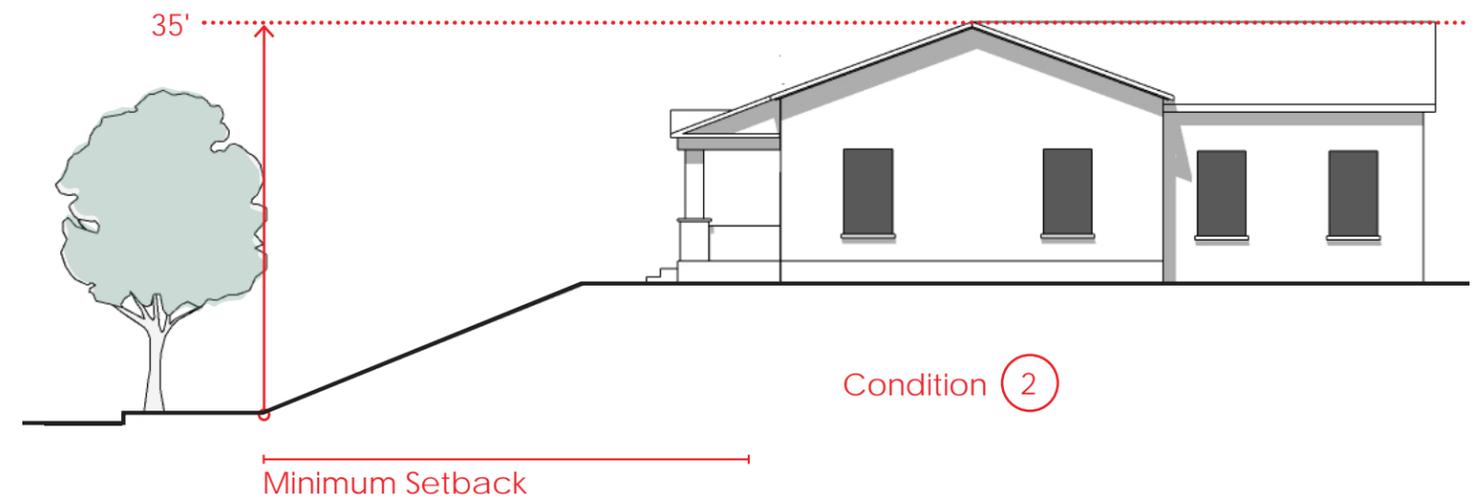
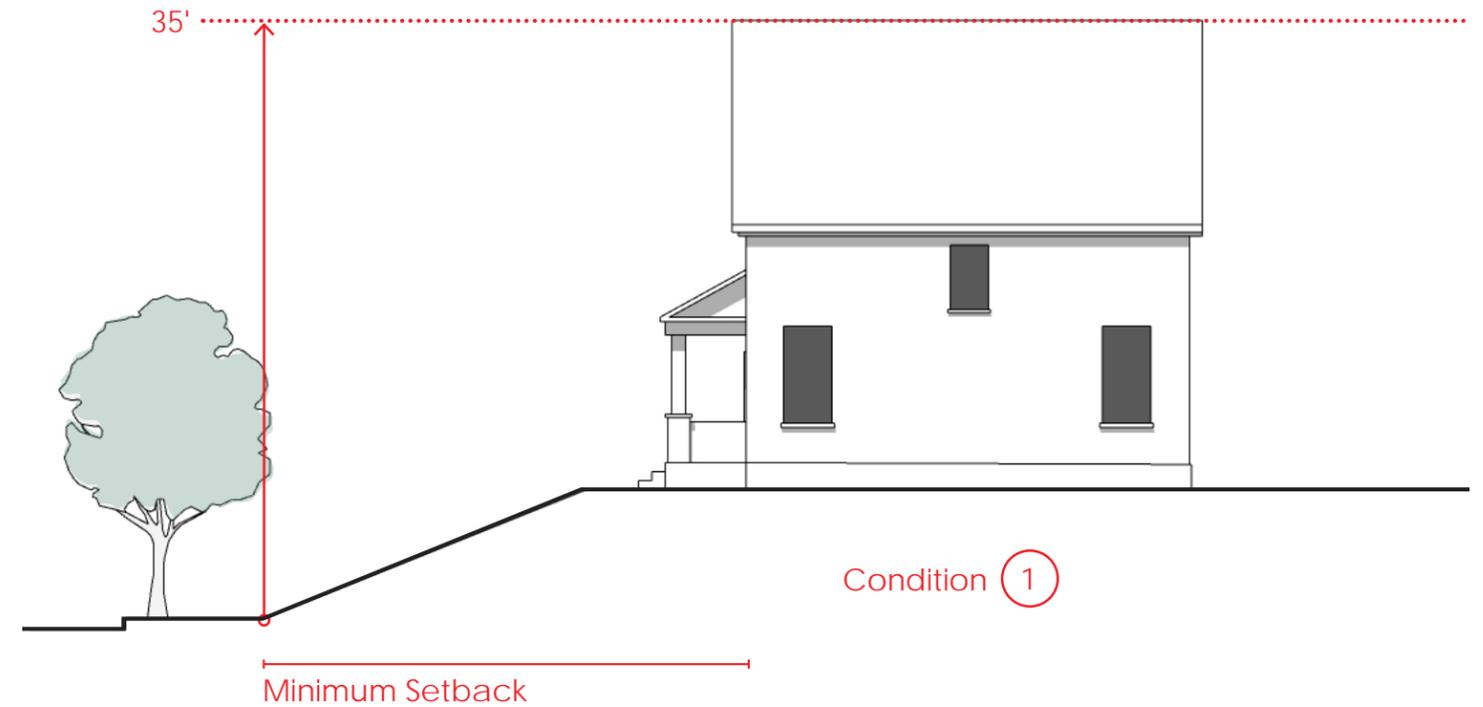
**BUILDING HEIGHT (ISSUE 7)**

- 1 On lots which slope upward from the public right of way, height shall be measured from the average grade at the front property line.
- 2 \*\* On lots where this regulation reduces the permitted building height to fewer than 2 stories, a bonus to maximum lot coverage may be granted at the discretion of the Planning Director.

Buildings shall be limited to a maximum height of 35 feet. Height is measured to the peak of the roof.

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- In condition 2, I'd rather see them be allowed to go up to 2 levels rather than encroach on neighbor's set-backs. There's a house on my street that has a very steep front yard, and they have a 2 story house on top which I think is well done. Maybe measure the 35' from the average elevation of the front yard? When combined with the "first floor 2 feet above grade", this seems to be unfair to people with steep front yards (to limit them to one story this way).
- I mostly support this proposal if it is established as flexible guidelines, not rigid rules.
- 1) I suggest reducing the max height to 25 feet. I haven't literally measured any houses, but I've been estimating heights all weekend. My estimate is that 25 feet allows for foundation, two floors, and a pitched roof. 35 is really high given how flat most lots are. In addition to the exception specified on Page 48, properties on grades can be granted additional height equal to the average grade of the lot and its two adjacent neighbor lots.
- 1) Recommend measuring from primary level instead of grade.
- 2) last point: Why update existing code on this? - it could encourage multiple smaller roof pitches, but I am afraid it sooner will encourage very low, flat roofs.
- 2) How is "maximum lot coverage" defined?



**Building Height (Issue 7)**

**Height** – (Zoning Ordinance, §25.03.03.c.3. – Terms of Measurement)

(a) **Generally** – Except as otherwise provided, the height of a building is measured from the level of the approved street grade opposite the middle of the front of the building. The height is measured to:

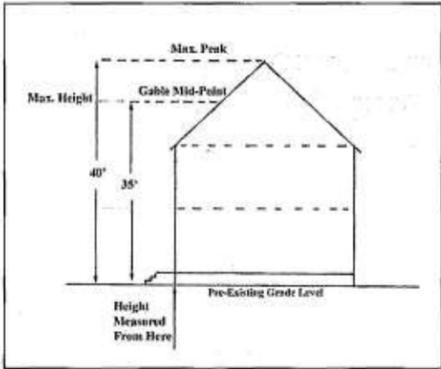
- 1. The highest point of roof surface of a flat roof;
- 2. The deck line of a mansard roof; or
- 3. The mean height level between the eaves and ridge or peak of a gable, hip, or gambrel roof, except as set forth in Section 25.10.09 (relating to special height provisions in the R-60, R-75, and R-90 zones)

(b) **Exceptions:**

- 1. **Greater Than 35' Setback** – If a building is set back 35 feet or more from the street line, the building height is measured from the average elevation of the finished grade along the front of the building.
- 2. **Corner Lot Exceeding 20,000 Square Feet** – On a corner lot exceeding 20,000 square feet of area, the height of a building may be measured from either adjoining street grade.
- 3. **Terraces above Street Grade** – If the building is located on a terrace above the street grade, the height is measured from the top of the terrace.
- 4. **Through Lots** – For a through lot, the height may be measured from either street grade, provided that the maximum height permitted on the higher street extends to a point 150 feet from the lower street line, at which point the

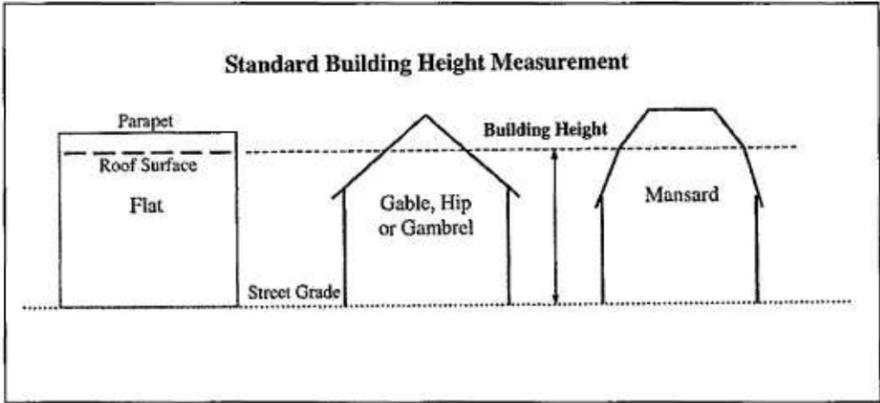
5. **Special Provision for Lots in the R-60, R-75, and R-90 Zones** – (from Section 25.10.09) –

- a. **Height of Residential Buildings** – The height of residential dwellings in the R-60, R-75, and R-90 Zones is limited to 35 feet, measured at the mid-point of the front of the building from the surface of the pre-existing grade to the mid-point of a gable, hip, or mansard roof or to the roof surface of a flat roof. In the case of a gable, hip or mansard roof, the height to the peak of the roof cannot exceed 40 feet.
- b. In cases where the existing grade of the lot slopes below the street grade, building height will be measured from the finished street grade, provided that construction of the dwelling required re-grading of the lot for purposes of positive drainage of wastewater and stormwater to the street.



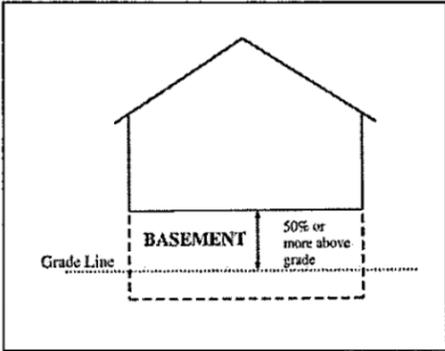
- **Pre-Existing Grade** (from Zoning Ordinance Definitions, §25.03.02) – The height of the ground prior to construction or earth moving by human means as of March 16, 2009.

**Attic** – The Rockville Code does not define attic. The Code does adopt the ICC International Building Code, 2015 Edition (Section 5-86). As “attic” is not one of the words modified by the City to replace any definitions in the IBC, the City would apply whatever definition of that term would be found in that Code. I do not have a copy of the 2015 version, however, to say what is that definition.



maximum height must be measured from the lower street.

**Basement** (from Zoning Ordinance Definitions, §25.03.02) – That portion of a building below the first floor joists, at least half of whose clear ceiling height is above the level of the adjacent finished grade (compare with Cellar)



**Building Height (Issue 7)**

**BUILDING ARTICULATION (ISSUE 8)**

Articulating a building facade means to provide a variation to its surface, such as framed windows, adding a porch, or off-setting a portion of the elevation. Articulation gives texture to exterior walls, and simple treatments can provide architectural interest and break up the bulk of large structures.

1) Façades shall be between 15% and 35% openings (openings being the combination of doors and windows, excluding garage doors) with the exception of sunrooms which are made of only windows and doors.

2) The front of the house and the location of the front door shall be clearly visible from the street.

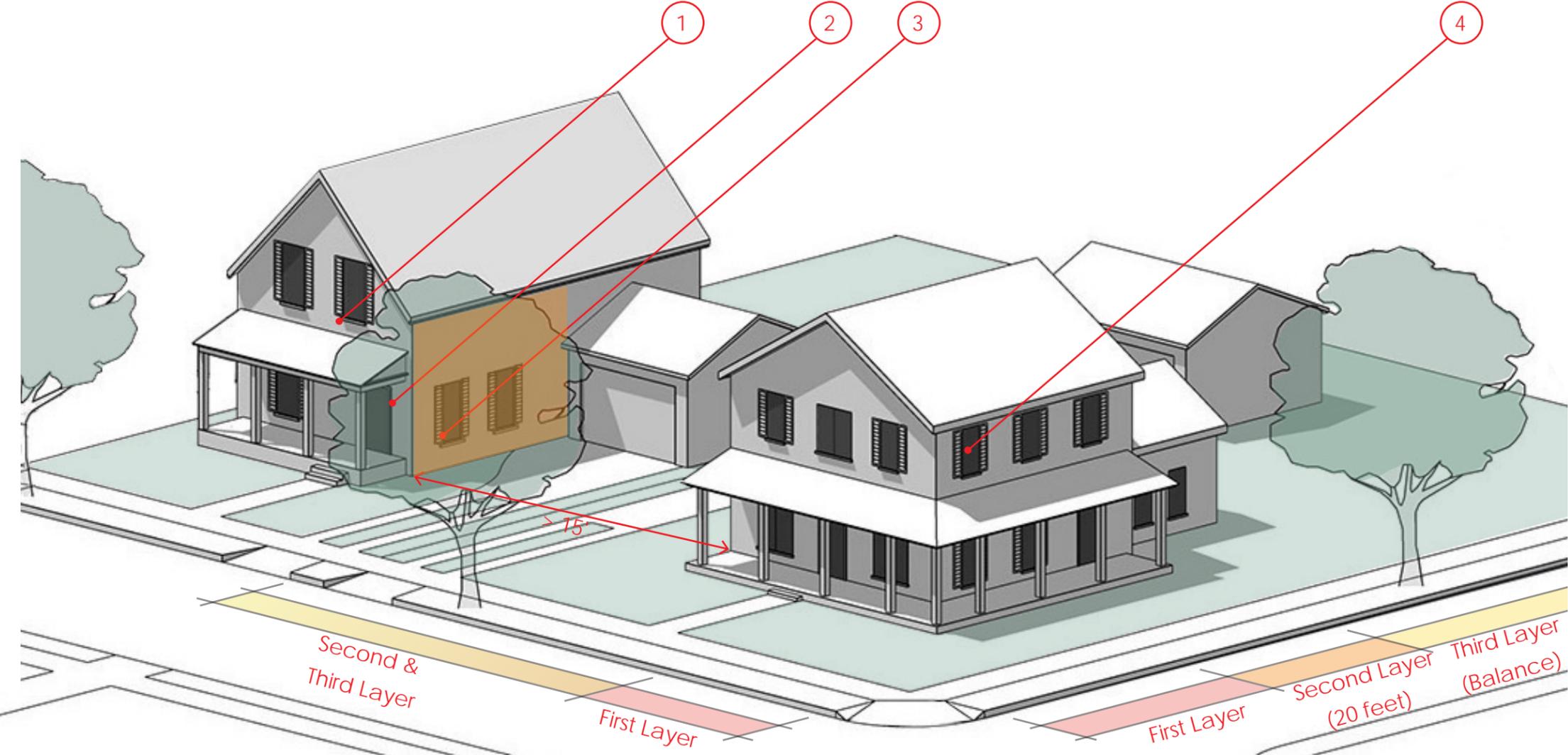
3) Side elevations shall utilize one or more of the following methods to avoid large, blank walls:

- Have a 4-foot deep, 10-foot long inset which interrupts any plane of 40 feet or greater.
- Include windows. (If the Principal Building is more than 15 feet from an adjacent house, windows are required in the Second Layer on that side wall. These windows are required to follow the standards for windows facing Front-ages.)

Include windows along all walls visible from the public realm. Large areas of blank wall are strongly discouraged along all façades of the house.

4) The style and proportion of windows should be generally consistent across all façades of the structure.

On corner lots, both façades shall should be similarly designed and detailed. See also "Windows & Doors (Issue 12)" on page 54.



**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- 2) Maybe I'm misunderstanding this, but I plan to have some small trees and plants in my front yard that would (somewhat) block the view of parts of my house front. If that's the case, then I think this should be a "Should".
- 1) How do sunrooms get accounted for? Do they get added to the numerator or denominator for purposes of the percentage test, or are they omitted from both?
- 1) Change shall to should.
- 2) Front door coverage described in issue 1. Suggest removing duplication and clarifying clear placement here.
- 3) and 4) Change shall to should.
- 4) How will this be enforced if altered after initial construction? is this enforceable? otherwise perhaps make it a SHOULD?

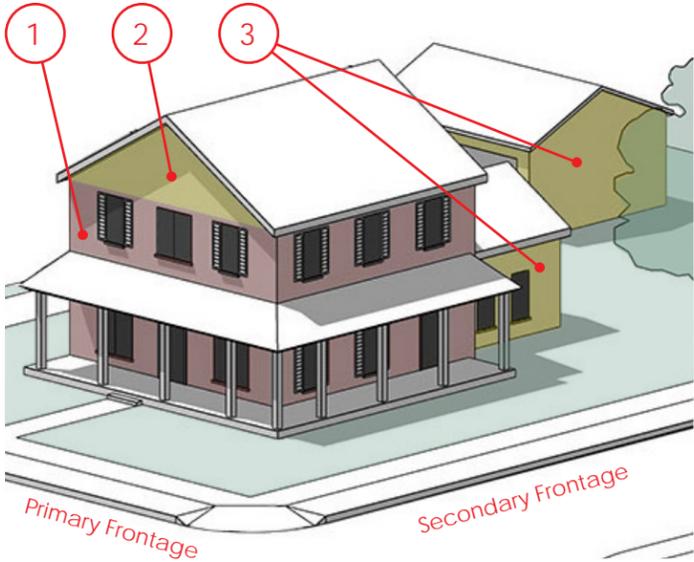
**BUILDING MATERIALS (ISSUE 9)**

- 1 The walls of the Principal Building shall be one of the following materials: brick (not simulated brick), stone (not simulated stone), painted wood, engineered wood or light weight cementitious siding (not vinyl siding), stucco.
- 2 Gable ends in the Principal Building shall be one of these materials as well, however, the material shall be of equal or lesser durability than the material of the Principal Building.
- 3 The walls of Backbuildings and Accessory Buildings shall be one of these materials as well, however, the material should be of equal or lesser durability than the material of the Principal Building.
- 4 \*\* It is recommended that if different materials are to be used on the same house the materials be used to differentiate the foundation, building walls and top (gable end for example) and/or the principle building, back building and outbuilding or similar such distinctions. It is generally recommended that materials not change at outside corners (brick front, siding side) as this makes the material appear more like wallpaper than the structure of the building.

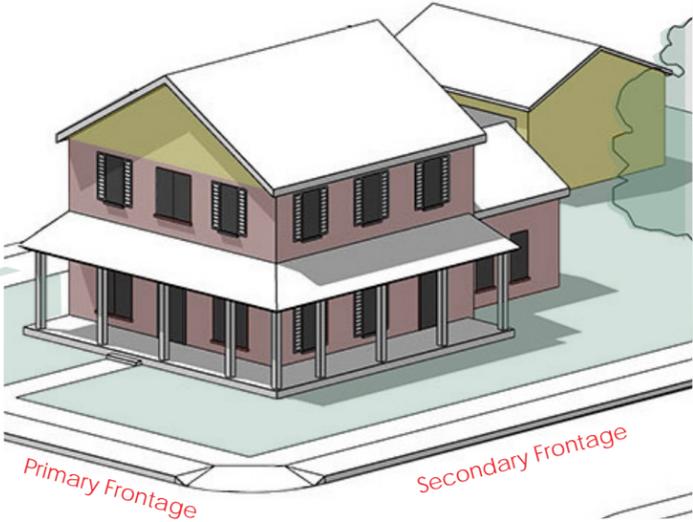
The foundation shall be masonry (including concrete).

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

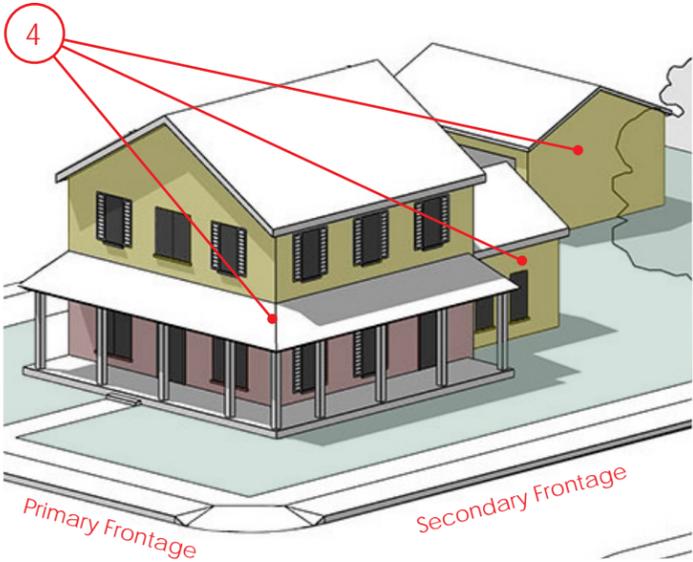
- I think these should all be "Shoulds". They sound like good guidelines, but I don't like to see them interfere with a) creativity, b) newer materials, or c) alt. materials. So long as it is safe, then I'm fine with materials being whatever
- 1) Vinyl siding should be permitted. It is found throughout the neighborhood in post-war houses. See photos of houses adjacent to comments on previous pages.
- Replace all "shalls" to should. Make stipulations that they have to be safe and within all building codes.
- Change rules from shall to should, as safety should be leading, not aesthetics having major cost and maintenance implications.
- 1) Alternatively: Houses may be built of any standard commercially available construction materials and need to meet all required safety guidelines. (we don't care.)
- 2) "Should" instead of "shall". Add "weight" after durability..... "durability and weight".



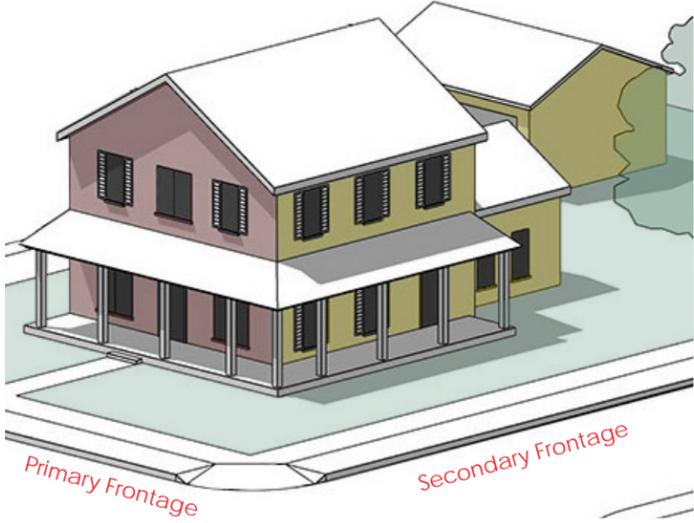
Do: Using one or two materials for the Principal Building and another material for the Backbuilding and Accessory Building is permitted.



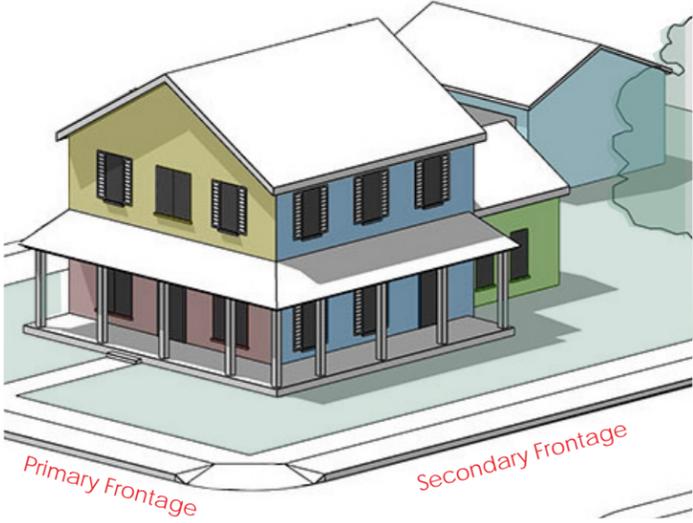
Do: Using one or two materials for the Principal Building and Backbuilding and another material the Accessory Building is permitted.



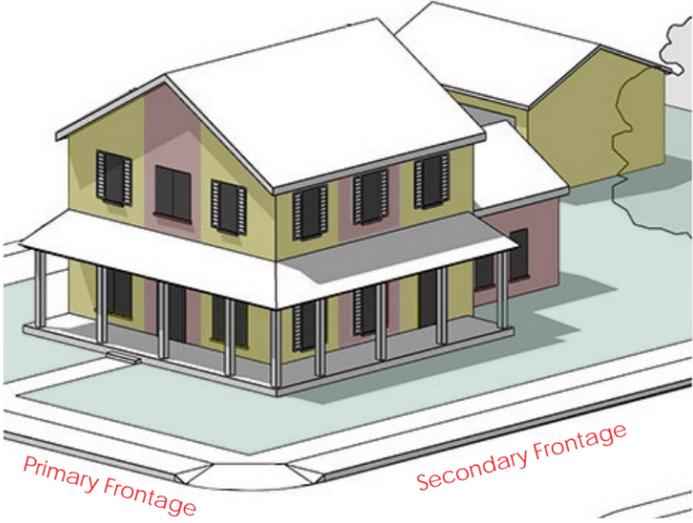
Do: Transitioning between materials between floors is permitted as long as the material on the bottom is the more durable of the two.



Don't: Material transitions around outside corners are not permitted.



Don't: Using more than two materials per Principal Building and one per each Backbuilding and Accessory building is not permitted.



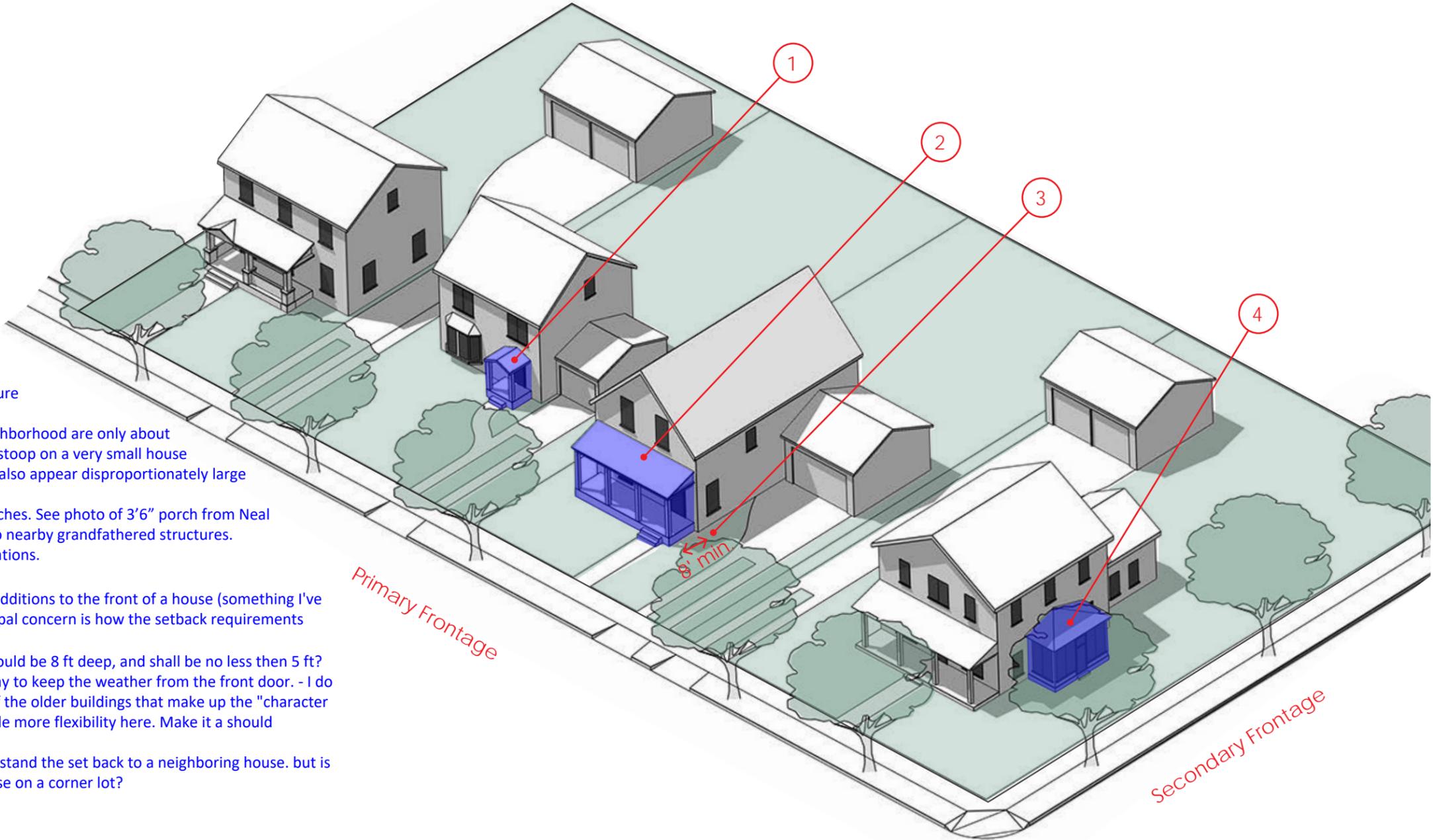
Don't: Single planes should not have transitions between materials.

**PORCHES & STOOPS (ISSUE 10)**

New Principal Buildings shall include a front porch or stoop.

- 1 Covered Stoop
- 2 Open Porch
- 3 Porches and stoops shall be a minimum of 5 & 8 feet deep.
- 4 Enclosed porches shall not be in the First Layer of primary Frontages.

Porches may project into the front setback to a maximum of 12 feet.



**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**

- First line: Need flexibility to account for different styles of architecture
- 3) Should be "Should". Sounds like good guidance, but too limiting.
- The original concrete stoops on most of the small houses in the neighborhood are only about five feet deep, and requiring a minimum eight foot depth for a new stoop on a very small house would not only result in increased impervious surface area, it might also appear disproportionately large in relation to the house.
- Many historic houses in the neighborhood have much narrower porches. See photo of 3'6" porch from Neal Drive. There should be flexibility on porch size if it is similar in size to nearby grandfathered structures.
- Define stoop and porch with respect to measurements or differentiations.
- 3) and 4) Change shall to should.
- As I mentioned during the meeting, these provisions don't address additions to the front of a house (something I've been considering and my house is at the top of a "slope"). My principal concern is how the setback requirements affect frontal additions
- 3) Porches, 8 feet deep - seems extremely deep. - could this be a Should be 8 ft deep, and shall be no less than 5 ft? Stoops of 8 feet, seems extremely deep, while only designed as a way to keep the weather from the front door. - I do not believe they should have the same requirements. Also - many of the older buildings that make up the "character of the neighborhood" do not have porches 8 ft deep. Perhaps provide more flexibility here. Make it a should
- 4) point 2: Should? - no strong preference either way.
- 4) point 3: How about a side set-back in case of a corner lot? I understand the set back to a neighboring house. but is there a way to provide flexibility to the secondary frontage of a house on a corner lot?
- 3) "Should" instead of "shall"

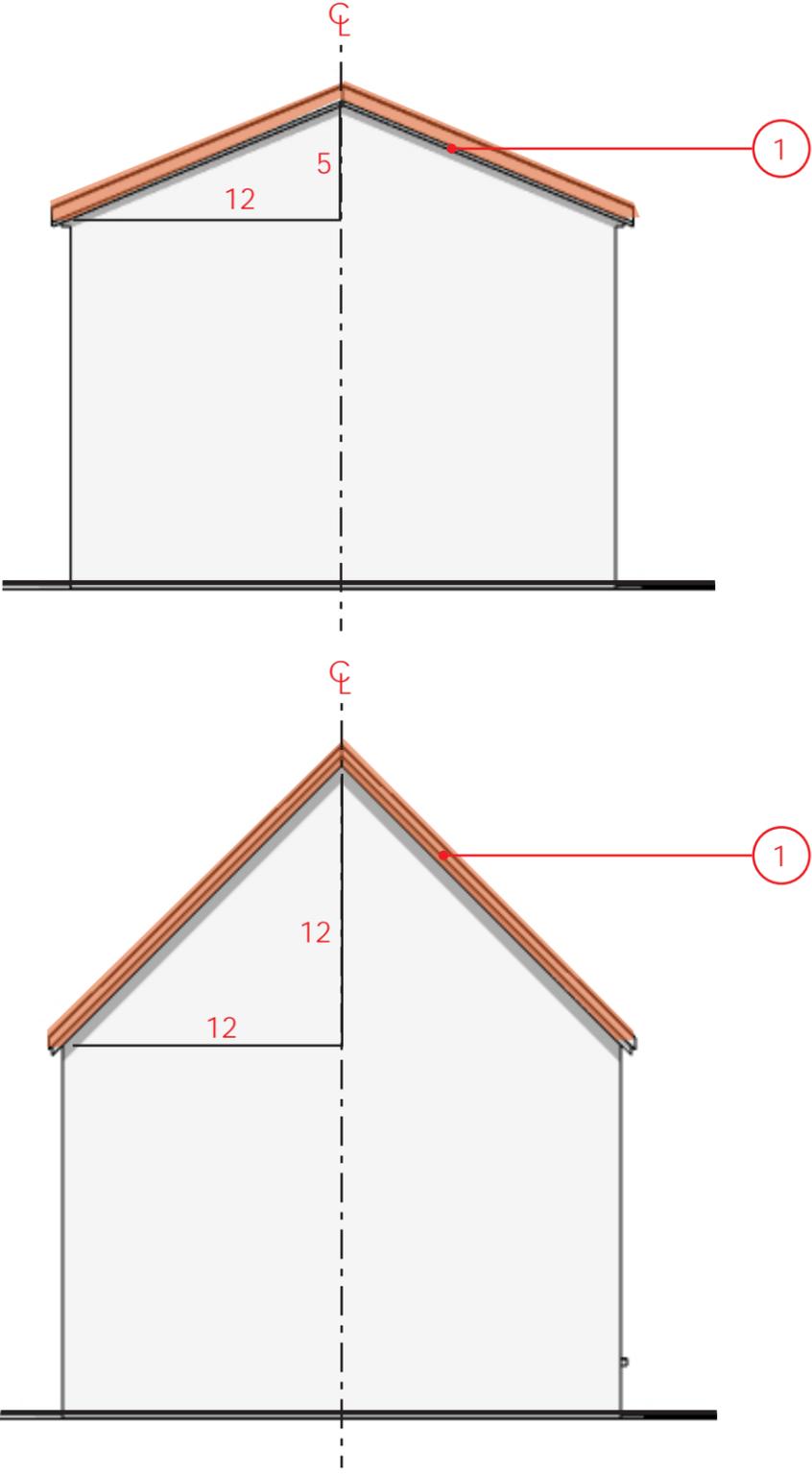
ROOF PITCH (ISSUE 11)

- 1) Pitched roofs shall be symmetrically sloped. The slope shall be 5:12 to 12:12
- 2) Porch roofs and attached shed roofs shall be 2:12 to 4:12.

Roof pitches shall be style appropriate.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

- 1) Does that prevent a dormer being added to one side (whose roof slope would not be symmetrical)? If so, I'd vote for making this "Should".
- Need flexibility to allow for other roof styles consistent with contemporary designs found in Montgomery County, MD. For example, 1950s "butterfly" roof designs or 1950s style flat roofs should be permitted. See page 44 of Montgomery Modern: Modern Architecture in Montgomery County, Maryland, 1930-1979 by Clare Lise Kelly, 2015.
- Change all shalls to should.
- 1) Do dormer windows need to be described here? what if a dormer window ends up being the side of (almost) the entire rear of building (i.e. raising the roof on the back? could we say that when raising the roof on the back, the original roof line shall stay visible?
- Add something along the lines of: Other roof lines that are appropriate to their architectural style and in keeping with the immediate couple of blocks may be permitted/approved by the director of planning.



Roof Pitch (Issue 11)

## WINDOWS & DOORS

- 1 All openings including porches, windows and doors, as well as window panes, shall be vertical or square in proportion.

The style and proportion of windows should be generally consistent across all facades of the structure. Exceptions to this can be made however for the occasional specialty or decorative window as a design accent in the facade.

- 2 Windows on any given Façade shall be consistent with each other in size, proportion and style.

- 3 Sliding doors are not permitted in Façades facing Frontages.

- 4 Brick Mold and Openings in Masonry Walls. Masonry openings should have brick mold. Openings in other types of wall should never have brick mold. Brick mold should be wider than 2" and should be used on the top and sides of all masonry openings.

- 5 Door Surrounds in Masonry Walls. Brick should never be visible between a door and its casing, if any.

- 6 Casing Principles for Openings in Wood Walls. All doors and windows should have casing, specifically: a lintel (aka head), face frame (aka jamb) and sill. Casing should be at least 3-1/2" wide. Head casing should be wider and more elaborate when the jamb casing is only 3-1/2". Mullion casing should never be narrower than 3-1/2".

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

#### WINDOWS & DOORS

- Items 4-6: Not sure what this means, but I am concerned that it may be overly restrictive.
- Remove first, second, third point. Not sure where these recommendation came from but examples or issues of concern should be provided. Consider making the stipulations "shoulds" for these design elements. Small windows of round or octagonal shapes should be allowable
- Item 1: Should? I can't imagine why it wouldn't at the moment, but perhaps there is need for flexibility to the rule here.
- Item 2: What about windows of additions, second floors, etc. where there is a natural change in proportions?
- Item 5: Can a picture of this be included?

## LANDSCAPING

- 1 \*\* Existing trees over 6" Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) in the First Layer shall remain.

- 2 A minimum of two trees shall be planted in the First Layer for each 30 feet of Frontage width (existing trees may be counted).

- 3 Exposed foundation walls shall should be screened with planting if concrete and should be screened with planting if brick or stone.

- 4 Chain link fences are not permitted in the First and Second Layer.

- 5 Fences in the First Layer shall not exceed 4 feet in height.

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

#### LANDSCAPING:

- Issue 1: Does this mean a driveway or porch cannot be added if a 6+"DBH tree exists there? I'm a tree-hugger, but I don't think that's fair. I'd be fine if a new tree was added elsewhere in the property to replace it, though.
- Issue 3: I'm a little nervous about this one. I have cinder-block foundation, sparged (sp?) on the outside, and painted, similar to many others on my street and I think they look fine. I'm always good for more plants, but I don't think I like this one.
- Issue 4. I think I'm ok with "shall" in the first layer, but should be "should" in the second layer.
- Issue 1: Need exception for diseased trees?
- First bullet point make should, allow for relocation not removal, make contingent on health/safety of tree.
- Third, fourth, fifth points make shoulds.

## OTHERS?

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

#### OTHER

- Taken overall, the proposed new guidelines seem somewhat excessively restrictive in my opinion, especially for a neighborhood that's already very architecturally diverse, and located so close Rockville's urban center and Metro station.
- I like many of the guidelines, but I am worried that they are too restrictive when it comes to architectural style. The Robert Llewellyn Wright House (1957) designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is located in Bethesda, MD, 10 miles from East Rockville. Many other modern styles appear in the county. A book on these mid-century styles was recently published and is available at the Rockville Public Library: Montgomery Modern: Modern Architecture in Montgomery County, Maryland, 1930-1979 by Clare Lise Kelly, 2015. It was actually sponsored by the Montgomery County Planning Department. The author is a senior architectural historian with the county. <https://www.montgomeryparks.org/montgomery-modern-book-wins-award-from-county-preservation-group/>
- In general there should also be more inspector leeway or opportunities for inspectors to evaluate on street or block specific concerns
- Clarification that these new rules ("the shalls") are ONLY applicable to new buildings and new additions, NOT to existing structures.
- Make a distinction WITHIN East Rockville: exempt the NORTH-EAST part of EAST Rockville of most of the new rules, since houses and lots are much smaller there, and income levels tend to be lower / more diverse. Many of the new "shalls" have cost implications for (new/current) home-owners, and they are relatively a bigger burden to lower-income families in the NORTH EASTERN part of East Rockville. For example: Issue 5, point 3 on "additions" leaves home-owners of the typically 768 sq feet houses very limited in their future expansions options, as they are required to be "secondary" in massing, scale and detail etc. Consequently, I suggest that for that section of EAST Rockville only the "lot coverage" rule applies, but with an increased maximum percentage for lot coverage of 45%. Within the lot coverage issue, I propose we make a distinction between flat surfaces and actual structures, as per my below suggestion. I hope that by ONLY introducing this "lot coverage" rule there (and exempting them from the other "shalls"), you are able to limit the scale of new structures and additions, while at the same time, you leave some flexibility for the lower-income families to adjust/expand within their (more limited) capabilities, to keep things affordable and livable for those families, and to make sure they are not "pushed" out by the restrictions of new rules that do not work for their family.
- Current house: 768 sq feet with in a 3 BR and 1 BA house. Hope that within the next 3-10 years, we can do an addition, so that kids can have their own bedroom and so that we can add a bath, a small office and expand our tiny living room. Bigger houses in East Rockville area are currently unaffordable to us, but we hope we can stay in this area, as we really enjoy living here. We were thinking of aiming for a simple and small 2 story addition in the back of our current house, but apparently with these new rules, we would then now also need to make our main house 2 stories tall, which would be way too expensive for us. We had some contractors giving us estimates last year, and they gave us a much higher price for building up on the current structure, then for expanding in the back. The new rule on additions (Issue 5, point 1) would thus likely make things unaffordable for us. Another examples of rules with cost implications are building material (no vinyl?). I believe that our current house siding (which looks like vinyl, but is not) is not available anymore, so maybe it will be difficult for us to exactly match it, even though we would probably try to get something close to it (i.e. vinyl), it would be expensive to re-do the siding of the entire house, even more expensive if vinyl would not be allowed (Issue 9, point 1).
- Peerless would also like to take this opportunity to encourage the City, in deference to the historic importance of the character of East Rockville to consider greater protection of these resources in the future, such as through historic designation or a Conservation District.
- Encourage diversity of housing in the intent statement.

## Windows & Doors and Landscaping (Issues 12 & 13)