

AREA EXCEPTION REVIEW GUIDELINES

Once eligibility has been established, project approval is based on the following set of review guidelines to determine how well it “fits in” with the character of the neighborhood. This determination is based on the project’s context on three levels: relationship to the existing structure(s) and site, relationship to adjacent properties, and relationship to the neighborhood. These guidelines are not intended to dictate architectural style, but rather to contribute to a harmonious result. The focus of these guidelines is compatibility.

The examples given are to illustrate the types of elements that could be considered under each guideline. They are not meant to be all-inclusive or to be absolutes.

A. Relationship of Project to Existing Structure(s) and Site

1. Placement

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the location of the proposed project is compatible with the existing site and the existing structure.

- Example(s): The amount of encroachment into the area exception should be minimized; functional, livable outdoor spaces should be maintained or created; the project should relate to the flow of the existing house; the project should not change the orientation of the overall building with respect to the street; provisions should be made for maintenance to all portions of the building.

2. Bulk

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the mass of the proposed project is compatible with the scale of the existing structure and does not dominate it.

- Example(s): The size, height and volume of the proposed project should be proportional to the existing structure.

3. Design

Intent: The intent of this section is not to dictate design, but to ensure that the design aspects of the proposed project are compatible with the style of the existing structure.

- Example(s): Extremely long building facades should have sufficient building articulation or other “breaks” to avoid a monotonous appearance. More complex rooflines should be incorporated as the size of the building increases. Windows should be proportional to other windows on the building. Attached garages, which protrude from the front facade of the building or have overly wide garage doors, should be discouraged.

4. Other

Intent: The intent of this section is to provide for consideration of issues related to the existing structure(s) and/or site, which may arise during the review process but are not specifically covered above.

- Example(s): Landscaping should be provided as a means of integrating the proposed project with the site and the existing structure.

B. Relationship of Project to Adjacent Properties

1. Placement

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the proposed project is sited in a manner that eliminates or minimizes the negative impacts on neighboring properties.

- Example(s): Privacy for the adjacent parcels should be maintained; solar access for adjacent properties should not be lessened; the ability of an adjacent property owner to construct an equivalent project should be considered; views from the adjacent properties should be maintained.

2. Bulk

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the size of the proposed project does not overwhelm adjoining properties.

- Example(s): The size and height of the overall structure once the project is built should be proportional to the adjacent structures.

3. Design

Intent: The intent of this section is not to dictate design, but to ensure that design-related issues are handled in a manner, which minimizes or eliminates the negative impacts of the proposed project on neighboring properties.

- Example(s): Extremely long building facades should be designed with sufficient building articulation, or other “breaks” to avoid a monotonous appearance; glare on adjoining properties should be minimized; windows should be located in a manner which respects the privacy of adjoining properties.

4. Other

Intent: The intent of this section is to provide for the review of the proposed project regarding other potential negative impacts on adjacent properties that were not described above.

C. Relationship of Project to Neighborhood

1. Placement

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the placement of the proposed project is in keeping with the character of the immediate neighborhood.

- Example(s): The resulting setbacks should be consistent with those typically found in the neighborhood.

2. Bulk

Intent: The intent of this section is to ensure that the proposed project, and the resulting overall structure, are consistent with the bulk characteristics of the immediate neighborhood.

- Example(s): The resulting volume, size, lot coverage, height, width, and depth should be consistent with those typically found in the neighborhood.

3. Design

Intent: The intent of this section is not to dictate the design of the proposed project, rather is it to ensure that the design diversity or homogeneity of the immediate neighborhood is considered when assessing the appropriateness of the proposal.

- Example(s): Design features, such as the shape of the roof(s) or the type and amounts of ornamentation, should be consistent with what is typically found in the neighborhood.

4. Other

Intent: The intent of this section is to provide for the consideration of issues not covered above that will assist in the determination of whether the proposed project “fits in” with the immediate neighborhood in which it is located.

- Example(s): The location of proposed accessory structures should be consistent with those of other properties in the neighborhood; the project should not lessen property values in the neighborhood; the project should not negatively impact the streetscape and public spaces; the project should relate to natural features in a positive manner.