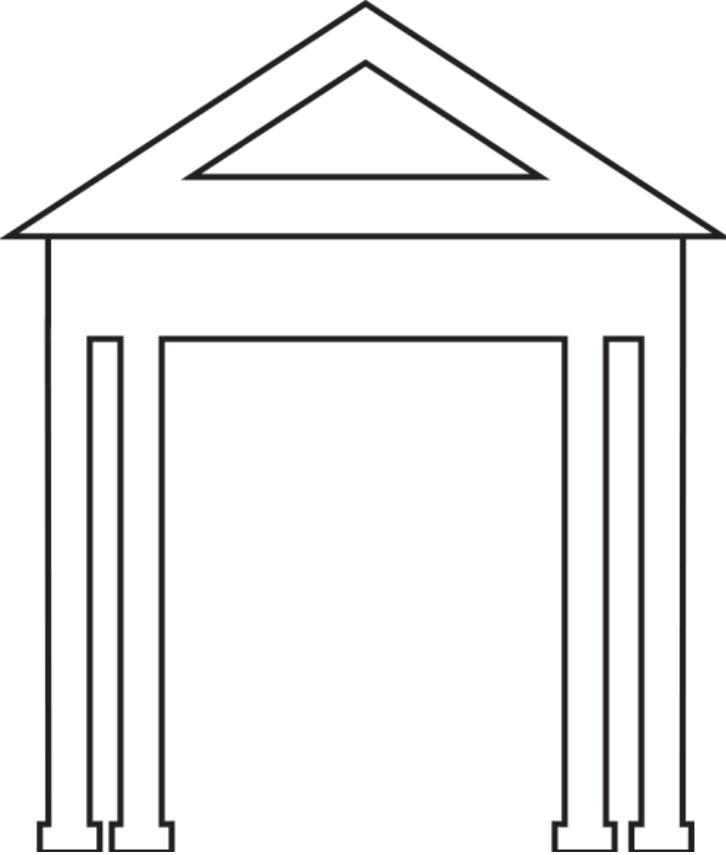


DESIGN GUIDELINES



A grid of architectural icons. The top row shows a window with a mullion, a window with a mullion, and a classical portico. The bottom row shows a window with a mullion, a window with a mullion, a window with a mullion, and a window with a mullion.	<p>Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION</p>
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Updated October, 2007

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Neighborhood Conservation



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Cover design note: Cover icon represents the front entry to the Hargraves Community Center in the Northside neighborhood, the first Chapel Hill neighborhood defined as a Neighborhood Conservation District.

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PURPOSE

Neighborhood Conservation



Purpose of these Guidelines

Chapel Hill is made up of a series of residential neighborhoods that surround and enhance a distinctive downtown and a world-class university. Each of these neighborhoods is unique, and each adds to the personality of the community. Physical design of structures, siting of buildings, size of buildings, landscaping, fencing, and parking arrangements are all features that together contribute to and help define the character of each neighborhood.

Growth and change are inevitable and are desirable, if managed in a form that contributes to rather than detracts from neighborhood character. And because all of these neighborhoods are completely built-out (or close to it), any new development or redevelopment on individual lots will have an impact on surrounding properties.

The purpose of these Design Guidelines is to assist property owners and designers in the planning of new structures and/or improvements to existing structures within existing Chapel Hill neighborhoods. The hope and intent is that these guidelines will be followed to the greatest extent possible, helping to assure that improvements enhance overall neighborhood quality.

Chapel Hill's Land Use Management Ordinance contains regulations and provisions that must be followed as any new development or redevelopment occurs within Chapel Hill. These guidelines are intended to be a supplement to the regulations for development planned within existing residential neighborhoods. The guidelines have been prepared with three specific neighborhoods in mind: Greenwood, Morgan Creek / Kings Mill and Mason Farm / Whitehead Circle. The ideas have general applicability to all existing neighborhoods.

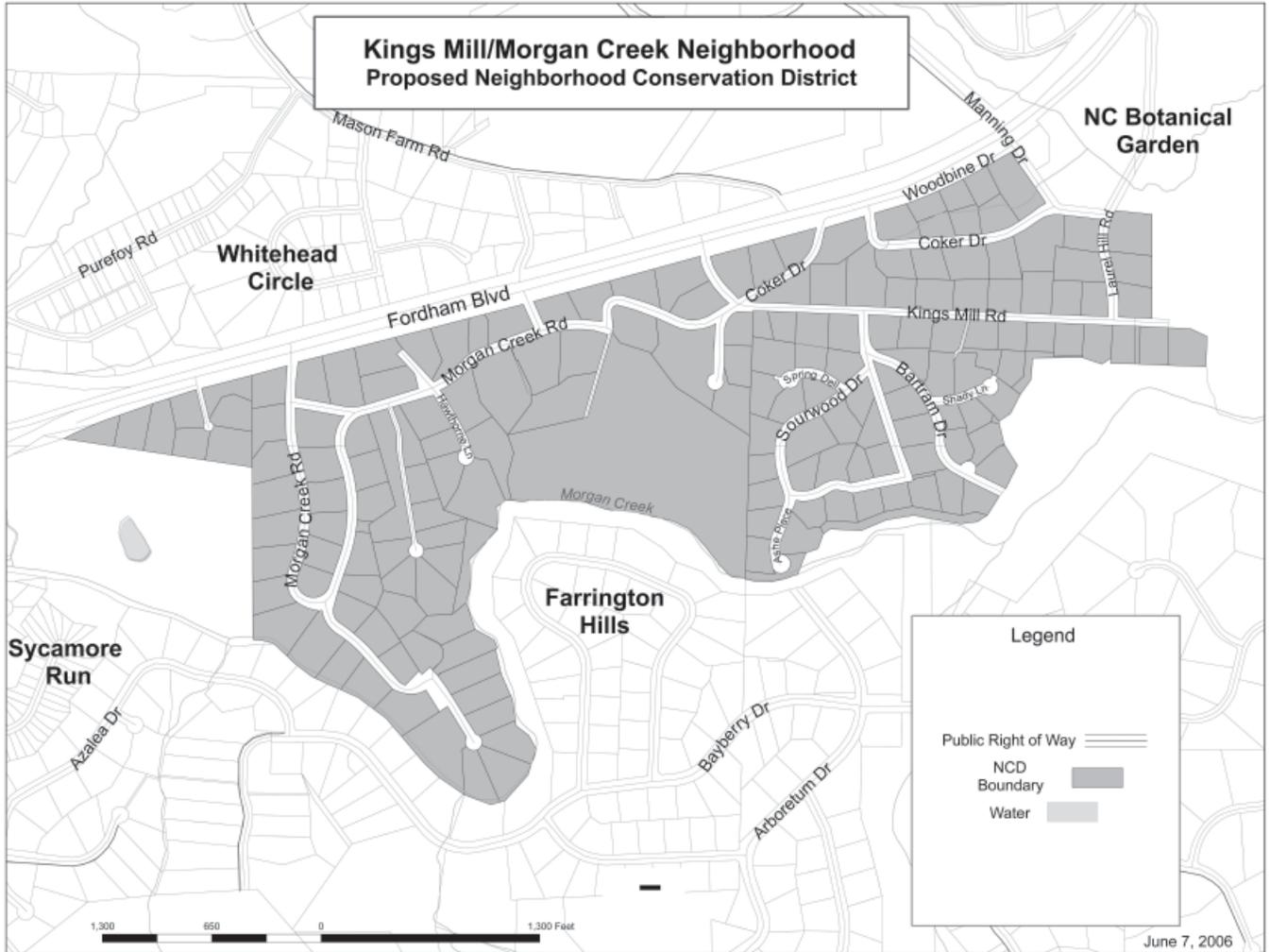
BOUNDARY MAP

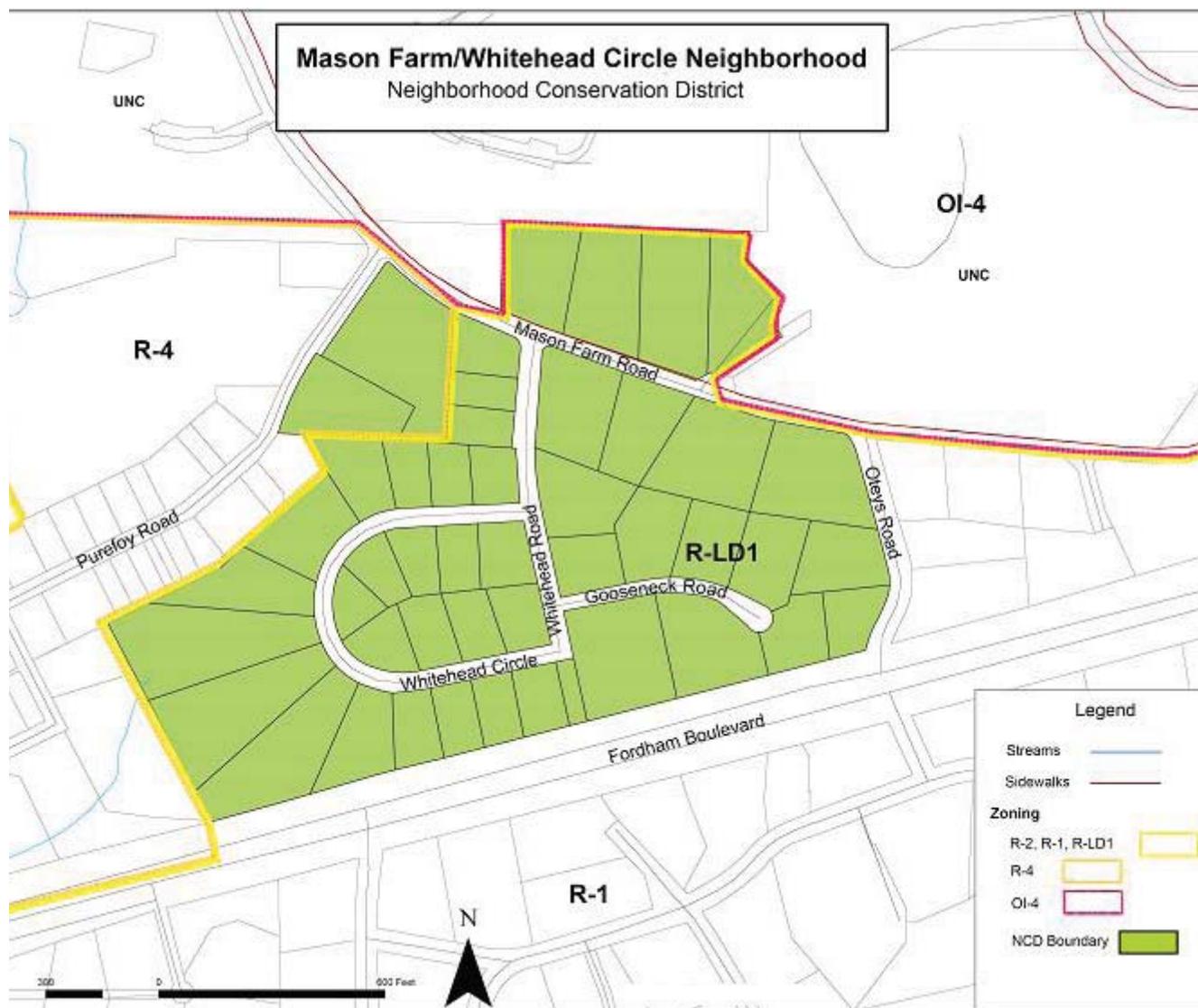
Neighborhood Conservation



BOUNDARY MAP

Neighborhood Conservation





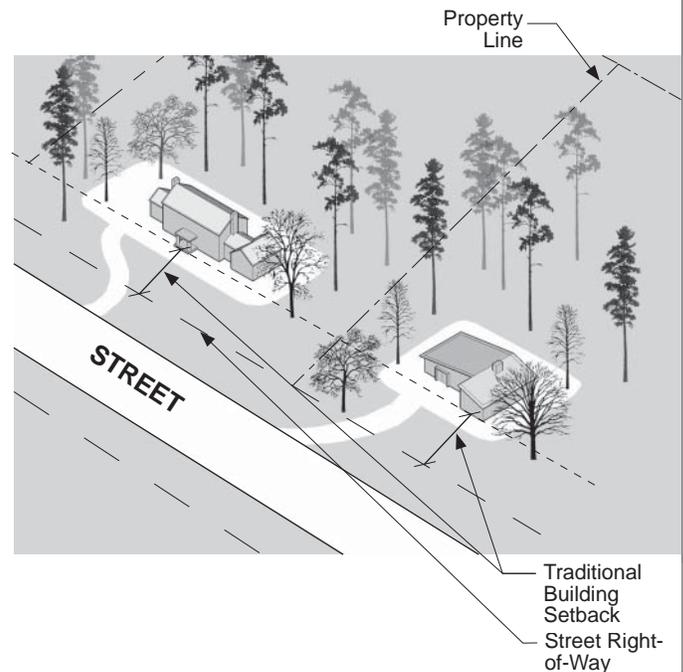


Building Orientation

Unless there is a specific reason to do otherwise, setbacks should be consistent along each block within a neighborhood, and should mirror existing setbacks of nearby structures. When siting new structures, the first preference should be given to placing buildings in a manner that matches nearby setbacks, so as to maintain a pattern along the street.

Primary dwelling units should be oriented to face the street.

The primary dwelling unit on a lot, not parking area or accessory structures, should be the main focal point on the lot, as seen from the fronting street.



Example: Driveway and parking should have less visual impact than the primary dwelling unit.

GUIDELINES

Neighborhood Conservation



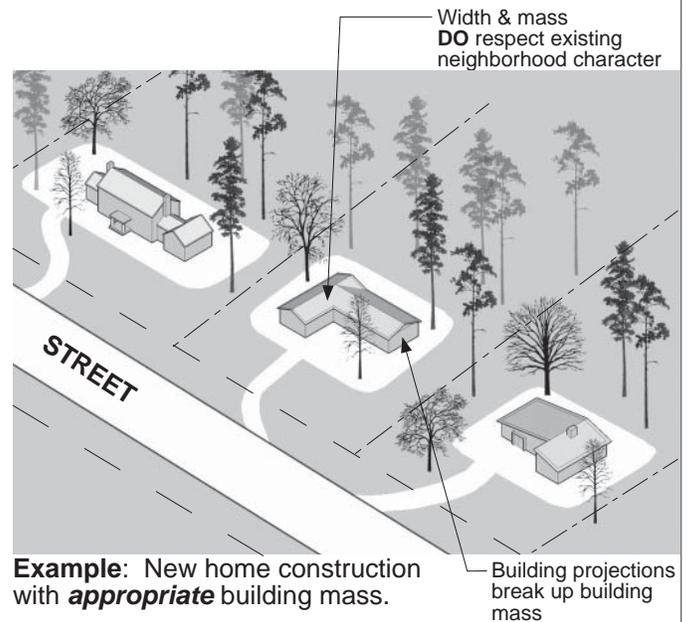
Building Height and Mass

Total floor area of houses should be compatible with their lot size, and should not exceed 15 percent of the lot area.

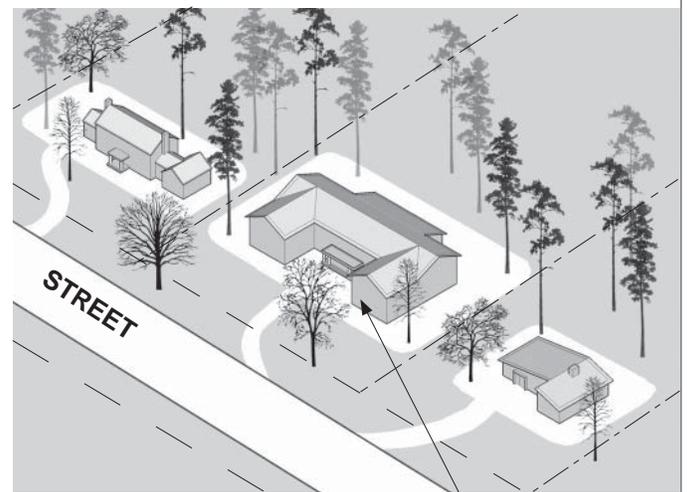
The size of new houses should be generally consistent with the size of houses found in the neighborhood. A rule-of thumb guideline is to avoid building structures more than twice the size of the average size house found in the neighborhood.

Building heights should be generally consistent with the height of nearby structures, as seen from the fronting street. This means that lots that slope down, away from the fronting street, can accommodate taller structures and still maintain the general character of the street. For lots that slope upward away from the street, special attention is needed to building height and rooflines, to avoid a result that towers over nearby structures.

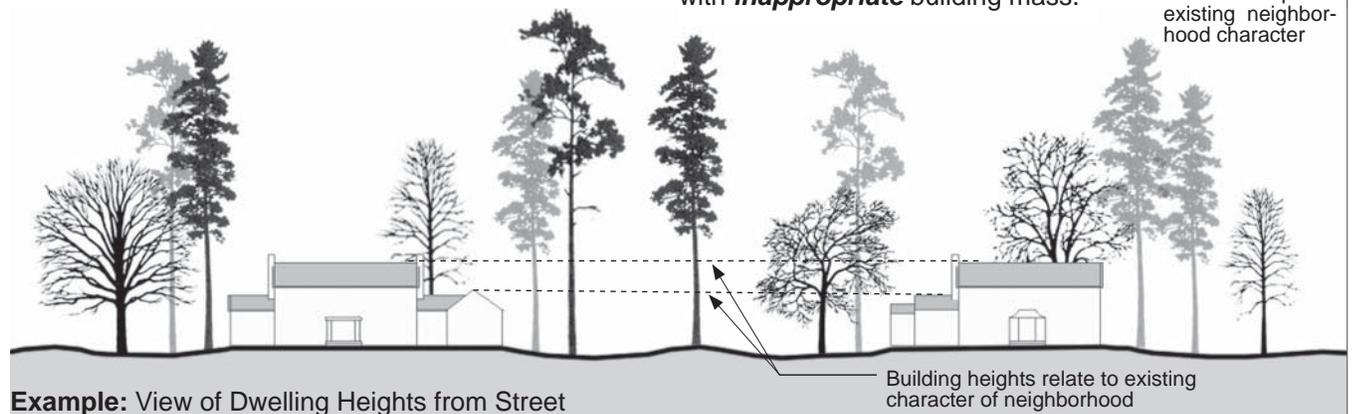
Dwelling units that are taller than adjacent dwellings should avoid creating a dominant roofline by screening the roofline with trees or through design techniques, such as stepping down the roof of the dwelling towards shorter adjacent structures.



Example: New home construction with *appropriate* building mass.



Example: New home construction with *inappropriate* building mass.



Example: View of Dwelling Heights from Street



Site Design and Tree Protection

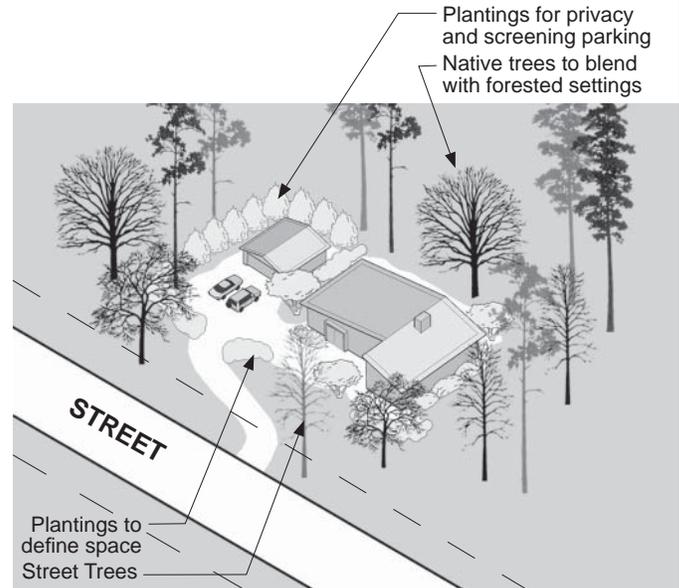
Buildings should be placed on a site in a manner similar to the placement of other structures on nearby properties.

Landscaping should add to the natural appearance of the neighborhood and enhance safety.

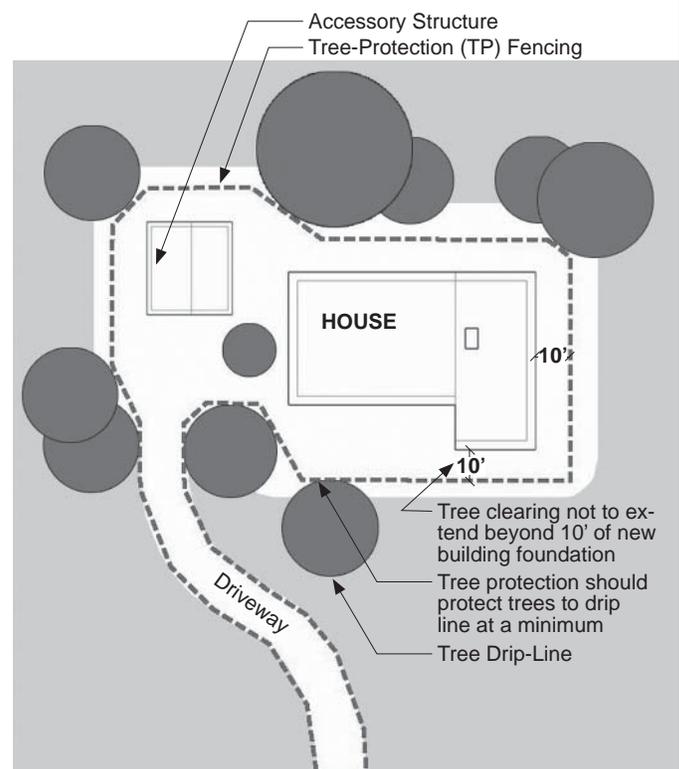
In keeping with the natural setting of the neighborhood, trees larger than 18” in diameter at breast height should be preserved, where feasible. For trees that are to be preserved on a site, special care is needed during construction to avoid damage to the tree and its root system. The Chapel Hill Public Works Department maintains information on best practices to help assure the viability of trees that are to be preserved within or adjacent to a construction area, and reference to that material is encouraged.

During construction of a site, tree clearing should be limited to driveway areas and within ten feet of a new building’s foundation.

When trees are to be removed from lots in circumstances where there are adjacent residential neighbors, notification of those neighbors is encouraged prior to the commencement of the clearing activity.



Example: Landscaping should add to the natural appearance of the neighborhood.



Example: Tree protection during new construction.



Accessory Apartments

Town regulations require that a primary residence that includes an accessory apartment must be designed to maintain the appearance of a single-family residence.

Accordingly, if an accessory apartment has a separate exterior entrance, such entrance should be located to the side or rear of the primary dwelling unit, and should resemble a secondary entrance to the primary dwelling unit (should look like a side or back door).

Accessory apartments, if not contained within the structure of the primary dwelling, should be constructed using materials consistent and compatible with the primary residence.



View from street

Example: Home *before* accessory dwelling construction.



View from street

Example: Home *after* accessory dwelling construction. Accessory dwelling is located to side of primary dwelling unit and blends with existing architecture of home.



View from street

Example: INAPPROPRIATE addition of accessory dwelling unit. Accessory dwelling gives structure the appearance of a duplex. Entry to accessory dwelling should reside on the side or rear of the structure.

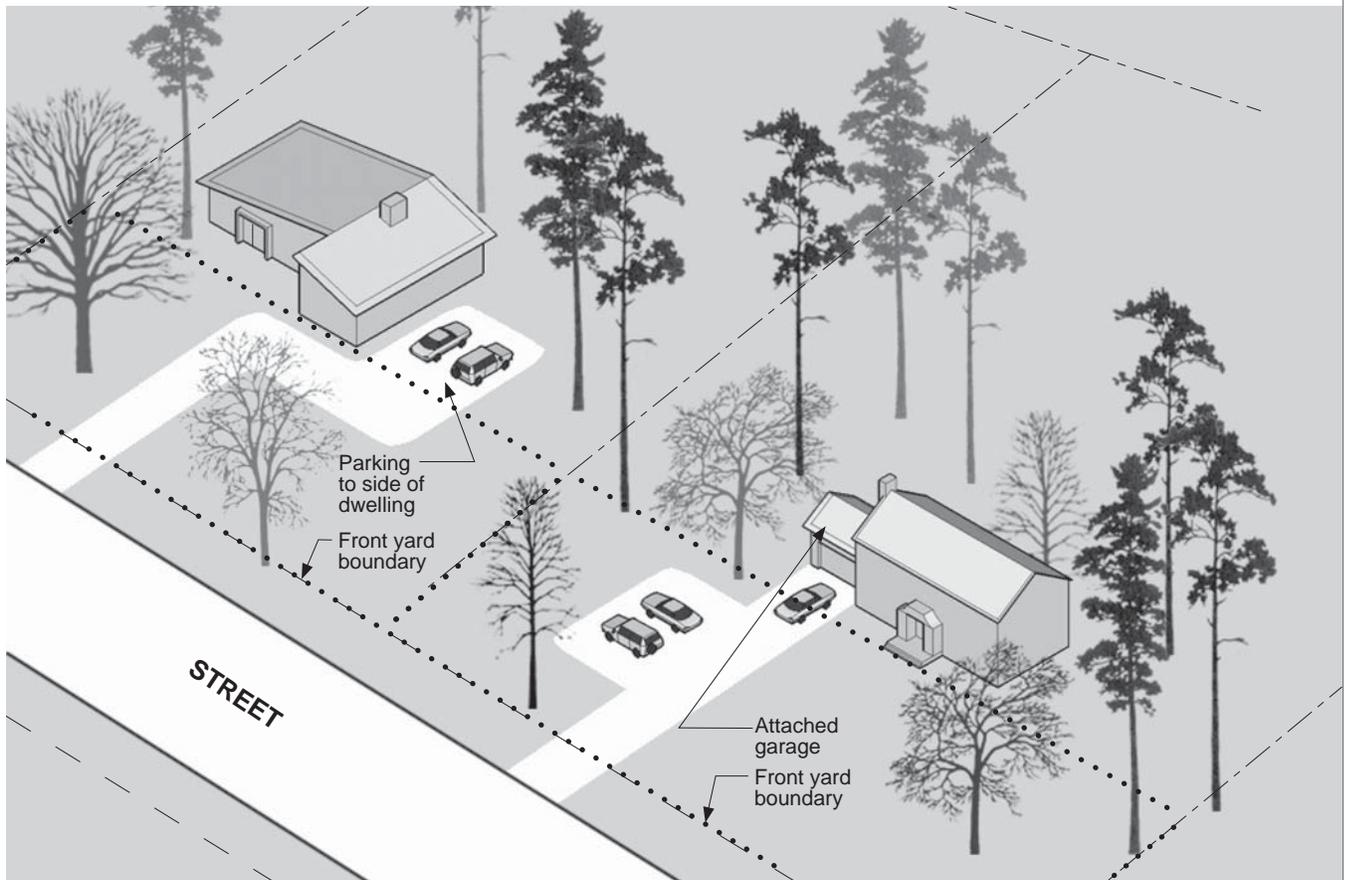


Parking

Parking areas and garages should be located at the side or to the rear of a house. If a garage is to be placed to the side of a house, the front face of the garage should be set back from the front face of the house.

Front yard parking and driveway areas together should not exceed 25% of the front yard. Front yard is defined as the area from the street right-of-way to the front face of the house.

Parking and driveway areas should be clearly distinguished from other parts of the front yard.



Example: Parking scenarios in character with the neighborhoods.



Fencing

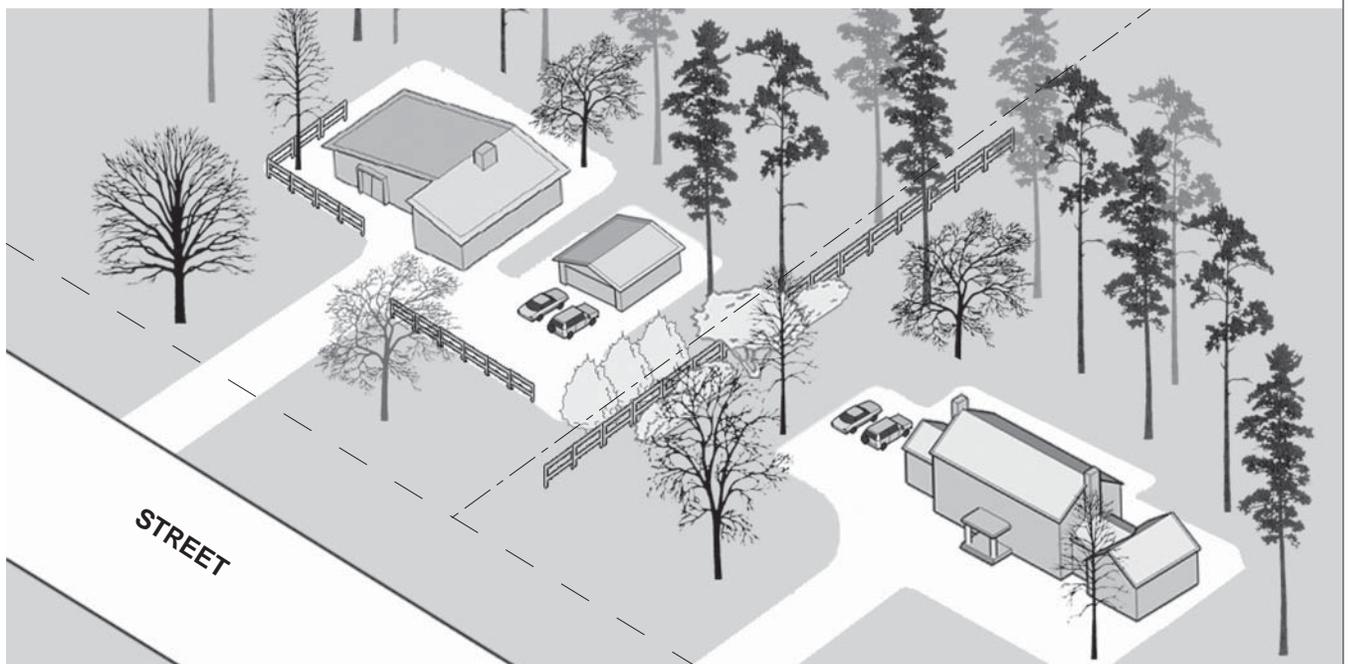
Where possible, landscaping should be used in lieu of structured fencing.

Fencing should be used to restrict trespassing, create privacy, and enhance the character of the property.

For properties that do not front a major thoroughfare and where feasible, fences located along a property's street frontage should not obscure views onto the property. A general rule is to limit the height of street frontage fences to 3 feet and to limit the opacity of the fence to 50%.

Front yard fences should, in general, be lower than backyard and side fences.

Fences should be constructed using materials consistent and compatible with other existing fences in the neighborhood.



PLANTING DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Conservation



Landscaping

There are many plants that are adaptable to the climate, soils, and growing conditions in Chapel Hill. There are also a number of plants that should be avoided due to their tendency to out-compete native and other non-invasive plants.

The Town recommends that applicants contact a landscape professional for assistance with plant selection. Ultimately, tree and shrub selection shall be based on site specific conditions. Some general guidance on these conditions is provided below.

Tree Selection

Tree selection should be based not only on specific site conditions, but also consideration of the ultimate size of the tree, whether or not it is a deciduous (loses leaves in winter), its growth habit (upright, rounded, weeping, etc.), and adaptability of the tree to a particular growing condition (tolerant of full sun, poor drainage conditions, heavy compacted soils, etc.).

Large, spreading trees should be used where there is room for the tree to attain its full, mature size. Large trees should not be planted under or near overhead power lines.

Some desirable species for this area may include, but are not limited to:

<i>American Holly</i>	<i>Kousa Dogwood</i>
<i>Bald Cypress</i>	<i>Laurel Oak</i>
<i>Carolina Cherry Laurel</i>	<i>Lusterleaf Holly</i>
<i>Carolina Silverbell</i>	<i>Red Buckeye</i>
<i>Chastetree</i>	<i>Red Maple</i>
<i>Common Crape Myrtle</i>	<i>Southern Magnolia</i>
<i>Eastern Red Cedar</i>	<i>Sweet Bay Magnolia</i>
<i>Eastern Redbud</i>	<i>Tulip Tree</i>
<i>Flowering Dogwood</i>	<i>White Oak</i>
<i>Gingko</i>	<i>Willow Oak</i>
<i>Green Ash</i>	<i>Yaupon Holly</i>

Shrub Selection

Shrubs should also be selected based on specific site conditions (full or part-sun, soil conditions, drainage). They can be used for a number of functions beyond aesthetics.

Evergreen shrubs can be used to screen driveways or undesirable views such as air conditioning units. Shrubs can be planted as a hedge to provide some privacy/screening as an alternative to fencing. And, shrubs can be used to define yard areas or to provide a buffer between the front yard and the street or sidewalk.

Some desirable species for this area may include, but are not limited to:

<i>Aaronsbeard</i>	<i>St. Johnswort</i>	<i>Indian Hawthorne</i>
<i>American Beautyberry</i>		<i>Inkberry Holly</i>
<i>Bridalwreath Spiraea</i>		<i>Japanese Aucuba</i>
<i>Cleyera</i>		<i>Japanese Holly</i>
<i>Common Camellia</i>		<i>Japanese Kerria</i>
<i>Common Cherry Laurel</i>		<i>Oakleaf Hydrangea</i>
<i>Common Witchhazel</i>		<i>Rose-of-Sharon</i>
<i>Double Reeve's Spiraea</i>		<i>Summersweet</i>
<i>Doublefile Viburnum</i>		<i>Sweetshrub</i>
<i>Dwarf Waxmyrtle</i>		<i>Thunberg Spiraea</i>
<i>Florida Anise</i>		<i>Virginia Willow</i>
<i>Flowering Quince</i>		<i>Winter Honeysuckle</i>
<i>Gardenia</i>		<i>Wintersweet</i>
<i>Glossy Abelia</i>		<i>Yucca</i>

Invasive Plants

Invasive plants are those that have the potential to out-compete other non-invasive species in the natural and built landscape. Ultimately this can lead to reduced diversity of plants, plant disease infestations, and loss of wildlife (including song bird) habitat.

Below is a listing of trees and shrubs prohibited from use on landscaping plans for development applications and strongly discouraged in non-regulated landscaping projects within the town.

Prohibited Trees:	Prohibited Shrubs:
<i>Mimosa</i>	<i>Multiflora Rose</i>
<i>Princess Tree</i>	<i>Privet</i>
<i>Tree of Heaven</i>	<i>Russian Olive</i>
<i>White Mulberry</i>	