

## **(DRAFT) ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES for NON-HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

### **Purpose**

- The purpose of the Pacific Grove *Architectural Design Guidelines* is to assist Owners, Architects and Builders in designing homes that are in harmony with the existing landscape and neighborhood character of Pacific Grove.
- These *Design Guidelines* are not mandatory requirements but serve as a guide for the Architectural Review Board in the design review process. The design concepts and implementation techniques set forth in these *Guidelines* are not meant to discourage innovative design solutions. They are not meant to enforce a mandatory, appropriate style. They are intended to encourage functional, consistent, and environmentally sensitive development within the City of Pacific Grove.
- Property developers have their advocates: The owner, architect, and builder are persuasive voices in support of a project. The Architectural Review Board is meant to act as an alternative voice for the community and neighbors who are heavily invested in their neighborhood and deserve to preserve their quality of life.

### **Goals**

Underlying these *Guidelines* are six main goals. These goals ensure that each design includes careful consideration of the community, site, and landscape and help give consistency to the design approval process. They are as follows:

- Preserve, protect and enhance the existing neighborhood character of Pacific Grove
- Ensure neighborhood compatibility of all property improvements
- Enhance and protect property values
- Respect onsite and offsite views
- Ensure that all buildings and site improvements are in scale with their neighborhood and that they fit comfortably into their community

- Enhance the quality of the finished environment by encouraging high standards in site, landscape, and architectural design

#### DEFINITIONS:

- **Compatible**, as used here, means “capable of existing together without conflict or detrimental effects”. It does not mean “the same as”. For example, a contemporary design might be seen as “compatible” with a traditional neighborhood by careful design of overall size and massing, roof shapes, finish materials, relation to the street, position on the lot etc.
- **Neighborhood and Neighboring** means within a 2-block radius, adjacent structures have the highest priority while those more distant are given diminishing importance.
- **Mass** means the perceived bulk of the overall structure.
- **Scale** means the perceived relationship of human dimension to the size and proportion of the structure and its components.

#### A) BASIC DESIGN PRECEPTS:

1. **Unified Composition:** The Design Concept must be a clear, unified idea. It cannot be composed of unrelated or competing parts. There must be a single dominant element supported by secondary related elements arranged in a balanced composition. (Too hard to understand for the non-professional?)
2. Doors, windows, building projections or other secondary elements within a structure should be arranged in a composition that supports the overall design. Wall, roof, door and window types, finishes and sizes should be consistent throughout the project.
3. In a diverse neighborhood, not all design forms, features or materials present will be appropriate or beneficial to a current project design.
4. Community design standards continuously evolve. Not all forms, features or materials, found in a neighborhood may be up to current standards. (Think aluminum sliding windows and expanses of plain stucco wall.)
5. Maximum floor area ratios, maximum height limits, maximum site and building coverages as required by the Pacific Grove zoning ordinances are just that: Maximums. They are not guarantees or entitlements. Each site is unique. Some sites cannot possibly hold a building that meets the zoning maximums and still fits comfortably into its neighborhood. Careful design can mitigate some aspects of out-of-scale projects, but the Architectural Review Board is responsible for requiring that

reductions be made to a project that will otherwise stand out as inappropriate within its neighborhood context.

## **B) NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY:**

### **PURPOSE:**

- To ensure that the project is compatible with adjacent existing development. (Pacific Grove General Plan Chapter 2, goal 2, Policy 2).
  - To balance a property owner's ability to develop with the desirability of maintaining existing neighborhood character. (Pacific Grove General Plan Chapter 2, goal 2, Policy 3).
6. Strive to harmonize and blend with the scale and rhythm of the streetscape. Work within the planning patterns predominant in the neighborhood. For example, in some areas building fronts align along a street. In wooded areas building often appear more as an individual structures set into the trees. Single story houses, front porches, gable roofs, wood siding, bay windows or other design features may be common within an existing neighborhood. A designer should identify such features and acknowledge these in their own design.
  7. The mass, scale, and height of new buildings should blend well with the overall character of the neighborhood. Avoid designs that are disproportionate in size or are of incompatible character to adjacent or nearby homes.
  8. The mass and scale of an addition to a building should blend well with the structure it is added to. It should not be of disproportionate size or of inharmonious character and style. It should complement and balance the overall form of the existing building.
  9. The pitch of the roof on an addition should complement the existing structure's rooflines.
  10. Roof Lines of new structures should be compatible with the pitch and character of roofs seen in the neighborhood.
  11. Height, massing, materials and color should be utilized to create a design that is compatible with its neighborhood and fits into the natural landscape. (Note: In R-1 zones color is not subject to design review)
  12. Avoid large blank wall surfaces or unbroken roof planes facing the street. A more appealing façade can be achieved using changes in wall direction, roof alignment, wall offset or elevation. In addition, bay windows, porches or balconies may be used to break up an otherwise flat or uninteresting façade.

13. The garage should not dominate the street view of a home. Consider locating a garage entry away from the street or breaking up the garage façade or its door to appear less prominent.

**C) RELATIONSHIP TO SITE, TOPOGRAPHY AND LANDSCAPE:**

14. Strive to preserve existing public view corridors.

15. Establish building setbacks from property lines that will respect natural topography and trees. The required setbacks may need to be increased to protect existing site features.

16. A building should be designed to preserve and take advantage of the natural slope of the land and any other natural site attributes. Stepping a building down to minimize changes in the natural grade and using roof shapes o follow natural grade are appropriate strategies.

17. Significant trees are a community asset and must be preserved, protected and incorporated into the project design.

18. The project design should take into consideration all existing trees both on the site and overhanging the site in order to avoid unneeded cutting and trimming. Protect root systems of all trees to remain. Refer to the Public Works Department, City Forester and Title 12 of the Pacific Grove Municipal Code.

19. Maximize landscaped areas. Take seriously the restrictions on building and site coverage intended to maximize landscaped areas.

20. Minimize paved areas. Paving should be permeable wherever possible.

**D) GOOD NEIGHBOR CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Strive to protect neighboring property owners' access to privacy and reasonable access to light, air and sunshine (Pacific Grove General Plan Chapter 2, goal 2, Policy 10).

21. Attempt to locate taller sections of buildings where they will not obstruct sunlight to adjacent yards, patios or rooms.

22. Attempt to preserve some portion of neighbor's views by carefully positioning or limiting the width, depth or height of proposed building elements.

23. Try to place new windows where they will respect privacy between properties.

24. Second floor balconies and decks should be designed and located to minimize the loss of privacy for neighboring properties.
25. Rooftop decks and decks above the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor level are unacceptable unless neighbor privacy issues and public visibility of the deck and its guardrails are minimized.
26. Use landscaping to provide screening for neighbor privacy.
27. Position outdoor lighting so that no direct light extends onto neighboring properties. Minimize the number, intensity and height of light sources. Use shielded lights that are directed downward wherever possible.
27. Landscape lighting should be low intensity and fixtures should be unobtrusive.

**E) MATERIALS, FEATURES AND FINISHES:**

28. Materials and finishes used traditionally and predominantly in the neighborhood are recommended.
29. Architectural features found commonly in the neighborhood are recommended.
30. The scale of architectural features such as porches, roof overhangs, bay windows, chimneys, etc. should be appropriate to the style and proportions of the building.
31. Door and window proportions should relate to the style of the building and those seen traditionally in its neighborhood.
32. Exterior light fixtures shall be compatible with the architectural style of the project.
33. Chimneys should be clad in traditional, non-flammable materials such as plaster, stone or brick.
34. Most artificial materials do not lend quality to a project. The more obvious the falseness of the material or finish the less appropriate it tends to be. Examples are vinyl windows and doors, embossed wood grain on siding or garage doors, and false slate or clay tile roofing.

**F) A FINAL CAUTION:**

35. It is inappropriate to disregard the ARB's suggestions and return to the Board without changes. Such action will likely lead to outright denial by the