

Dobbs Ferry Residential Design Guidelines



Village of Dobbs Ferry
Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, Inc.
Adopted September 28, 2010



Introduction

The Dobbs Ferry Residential Design Guidelines have been created in coordination with the Dobbs Ferry Vision Plan. The purpose of the guidelines is to help realize the overall vision for the Village through quality architectural design. The guidelines are to be used specifically by the Architectural Review Board of Dobbs Ferry to assure good development. Ultimately, the design guidelines do not determine approval- rather the Architectural Review Board must accurately evaluate projects using this document as a guide, making exceptions for site specific situations.

The guidelines for the residential villages of Dobbs Ferry contain two main sections. Section One, "Architectural Styles", introduces the basic architectural building styles that are present in the Dobbs Ferry neighborhoods; these include the Folk, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Italianate, Craftsman, Prairie and Modern styles. Information found in this section references "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester; for further study or discussion of architectural styles not found in Section One, applicants can consult this guide. Section Two, "Design Guidance", includes a set of residential design guidelines which are derived from the architectural styles so as to achieve the same architectural integrity as the more traditional neighborhoods in Dobbs Ferry. The combination of the two sections of this document is meant to help owners classify the architectural style of their home and ensure that proposed changes and new intermittent development is compatible in scale, shape, and material to the original structures.

However, it is important to note that the homes in Dobbs Ferry many times have a diversity of styles and forms, with few homes falling into a single category. So, though the guidelines promote respect for the existing context, they do not expect replicas of buildings from previous times. Rather, it is the responsibility of the owners and designers to look closely at their project and respond to the historical context of the site, using the guidelines for support.



Architectural Styles

Folk
Second Empire
Queen Anne
Colonial Revival
Tudor Revival
Italian Renaissance
Arts and Crafts
Prairie
Modern
Traditional Roof Styles

Folk

Six distinctive Folk house shapes dominated American building through the first half of the 20th century and are shown below. The housing styles were extremely popular across the country, partially due to the light framing techniques and their relatively easy construction. These simple, traditional folk houses are also sometimes detailed with other architectural styles, such as a gable house with Colonial or Greek revival detailing.



gable-front
and wing



gable-front



I-House



hall & parlor



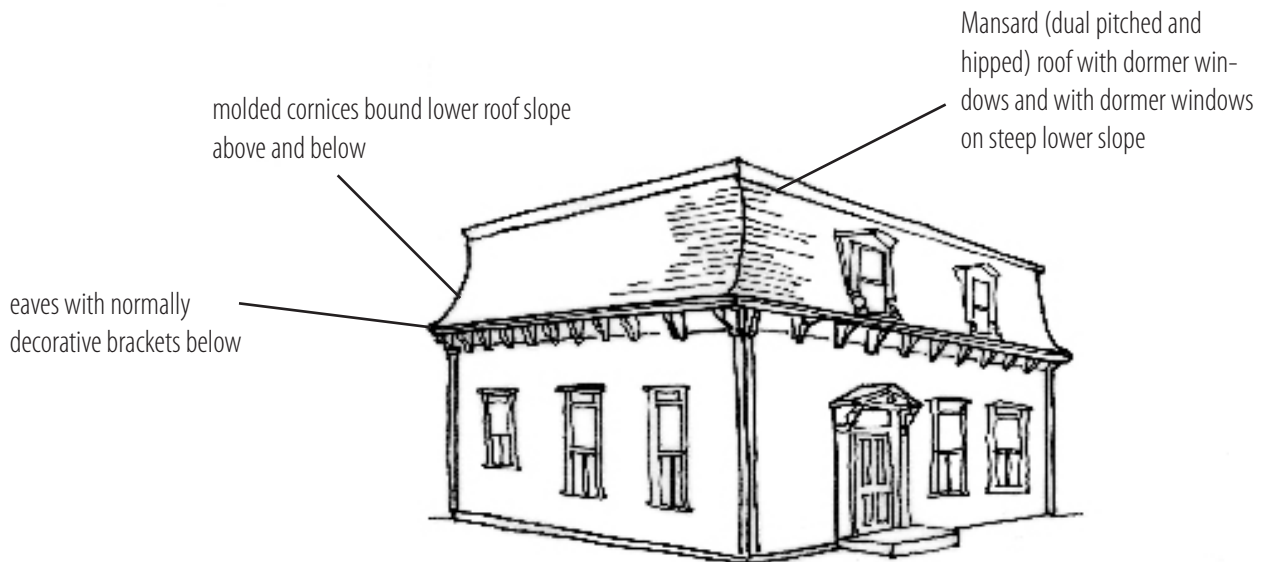
pyramidal



massed-plan, side gabled

Second Empire

This was the dominant style for American houses constructed between 1860-80. The most distinguished feature of this style is the mansard roof, name fro french architect Francois Mansart.



Queen Anne

The Queen Anne was the dominant style of home building in the United States from 1880-1900, especially present in the Northeastern region of the nation. The style is known especially for its fanciful detailing and decoration.



* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester

steeply pitched roof of irregular shape, usually with dominant front facing gable

textured shingles used to avoid smoothed wall appearance

often have delicate turned porch supports and spindle work ornamentation



partial or full width asymmetrical porch, usually one-story high and extended one or both side walls

Colonial Revival

The Colonial Revival style refers to a rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch homes of the Atlantic seaboard. The style is inspired by Colonial precedents but is often larger in scale and more free in design details.



* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester



Tudor Revival

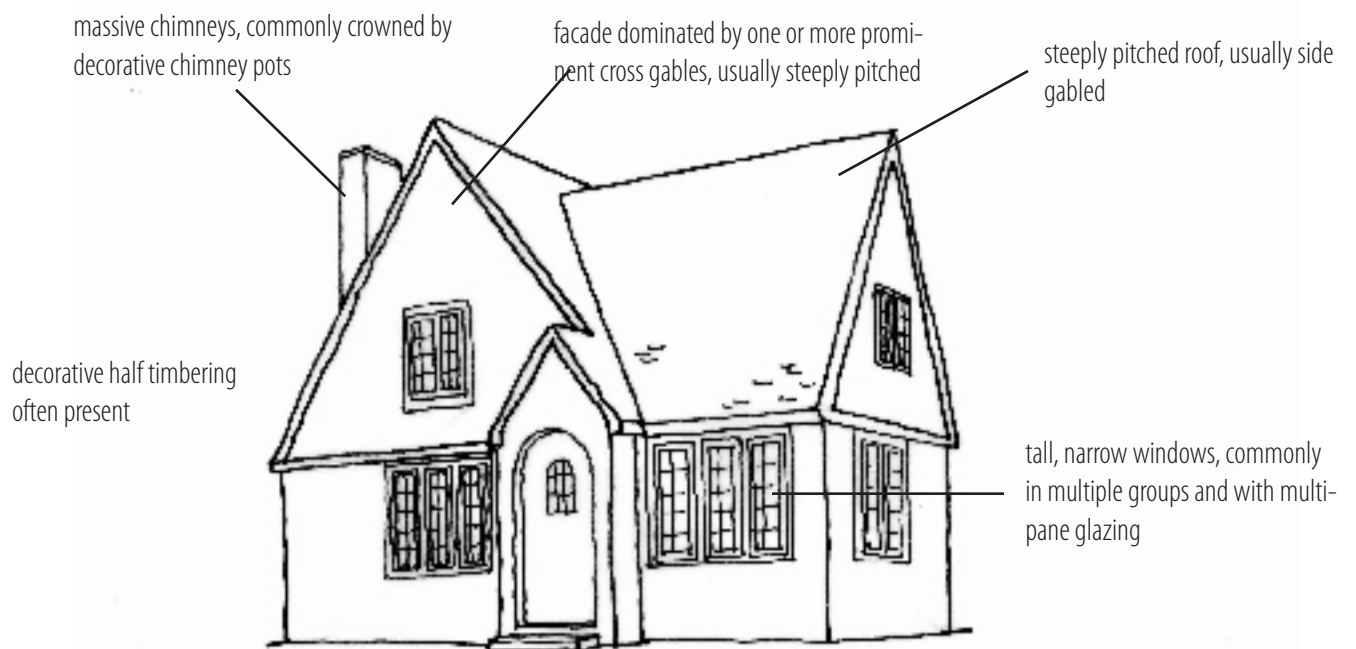
Popular for residences built in the 1920's and 1930's, this style is loosely based on a variety of late medieval English prototypes, from cottages to grand manor houses. The details of the style are freely mixed but often have one commonality, a steeply pitched, front facing gable as a dominant front facade.



* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester

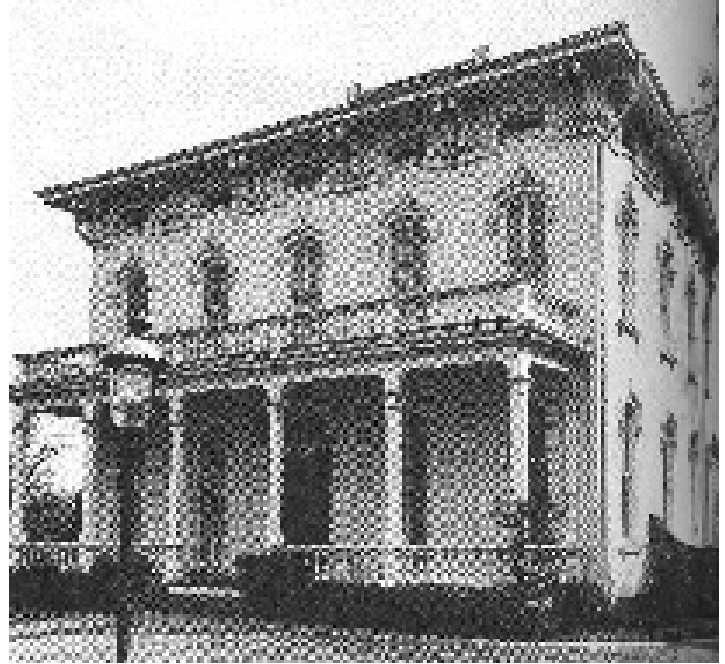


* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester

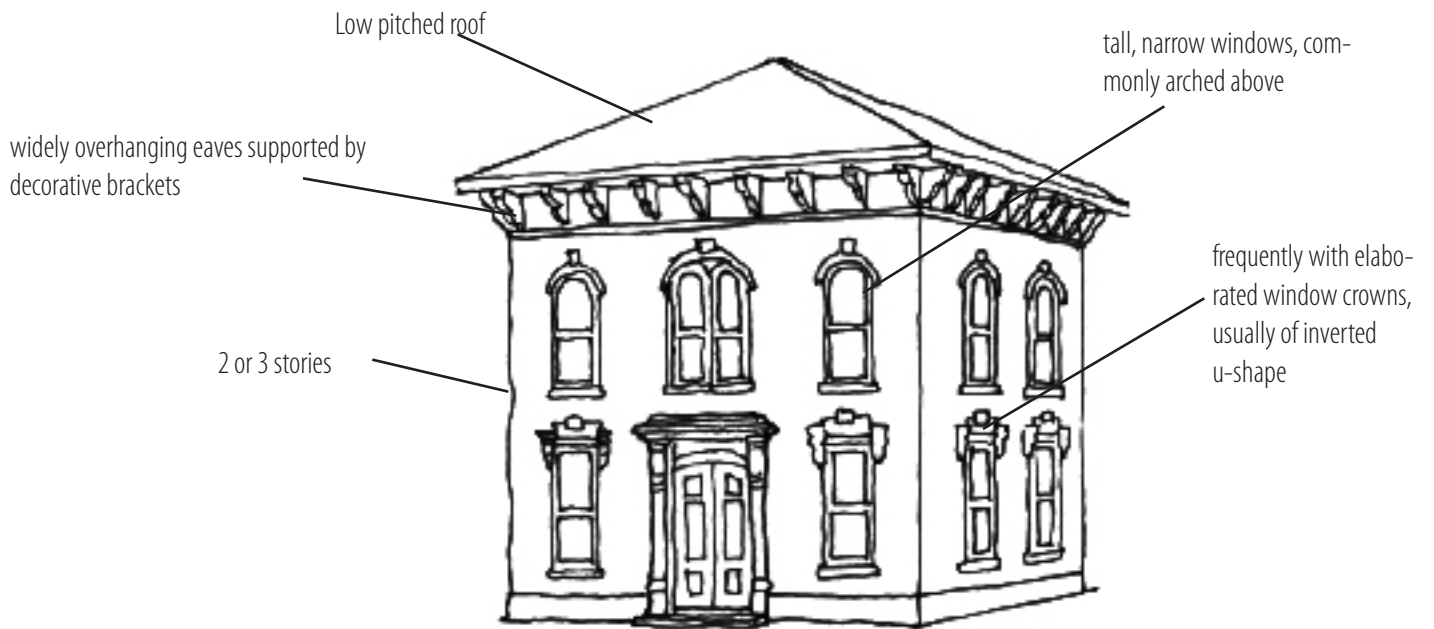


Italianate

Italianate houses were first built in the United States in the late 1830's and were closely related to the Second Empire style. One main detail of this style is a low pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves with decorative brackets.

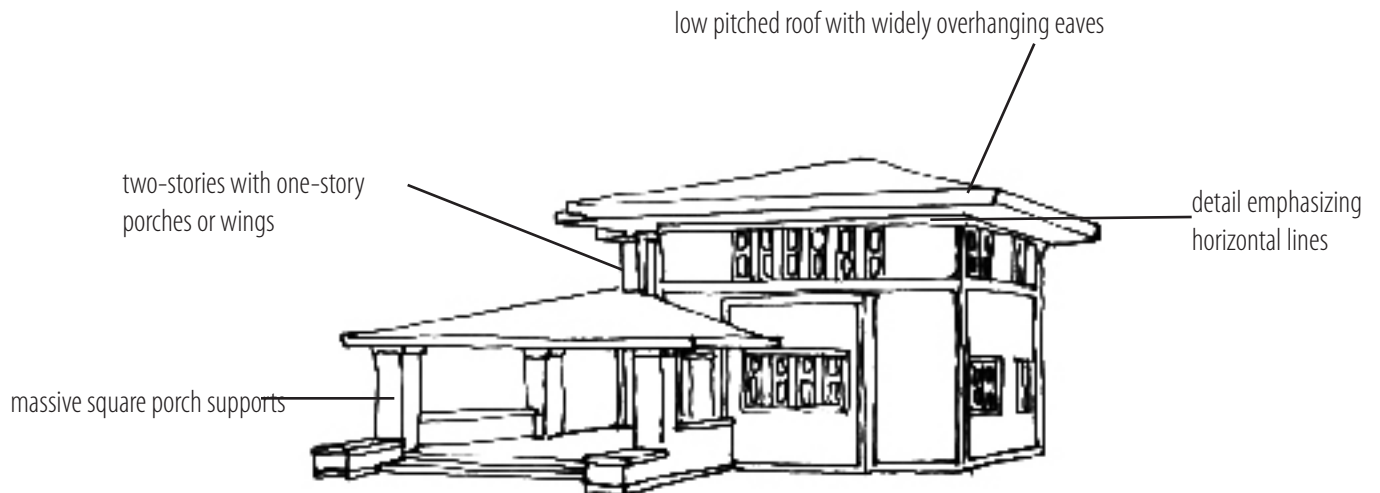


* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester



Craftsman

The Craftsman style of houses was the dominant style for smaller houses built throughout the country from about 1905 through the early 1920's. The style originated in southern California.



Prairie

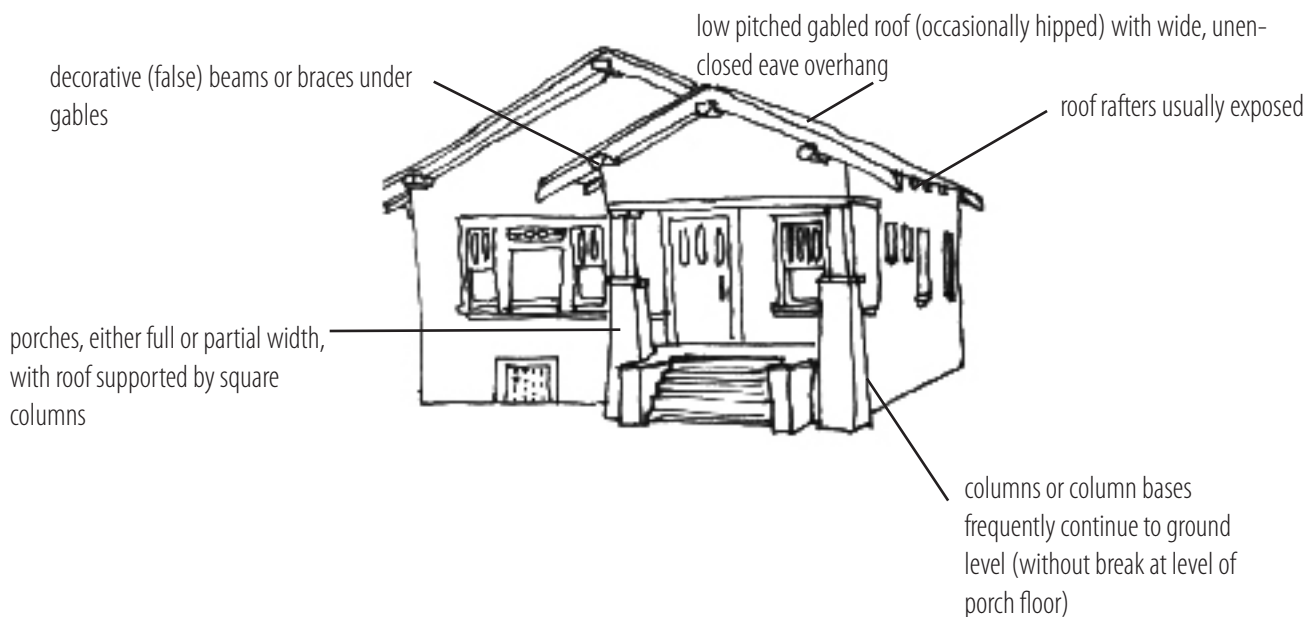
The Prairie style originated in Chicago and vernacular examples spread throughout the United States. The architect Frank Lloyd Wright's early work is in this style and he is acknowledged as the master of the prairie house.



* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester



* image from "A Field Guide to American Houses" by Virginia and Lee McAlester

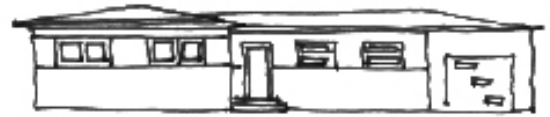


Modern

After World War II, construction resumed and houses based on historical precedent were largely abandoned in favor of new variations of modern styles. The minimal traditional style is loosely based on the previously dominant Tudor style of the 1920's and 1930's. This house style became popular in the late 1930's and was dominant through the 1940's and early 1950's. By the early 1950's the minimal traditional style was being replaced by the ranch style, which dominated through the 1960's and are still popular today. Also appearing in the 1950's, the closely related split level style began to emerge. The contemporary modern style that was found primarily in the architect-designed houses of the 1950's, 60's and 70's completely eschewed traditional style and detail and instead favored exposed supporting beams, contrasting wall textures and materials, and unusual window shapes and placements. The most recent modern architectural style is the shed style, which like the contemporary style forgoes traditional detailing and is common in architect-designed homes of the late 1960's-1970's. These five styles are the most common modern styles built since 1940, but many additional modern houses have appeared, often inspired by energy conscious design and advancements in building technologies.



minimal
traditional



ranch



split-level



contemporary



shed

Traditional Roof Types

Each architectural style can often maintain different roof forms but generally are derived from a set of traditional roof types which are illustrated below.

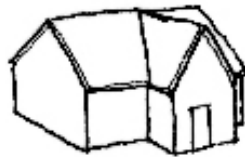
Gabled



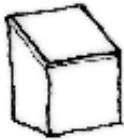
side gabled



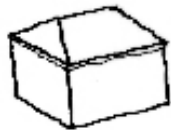
front gabled



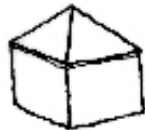
cross gabled



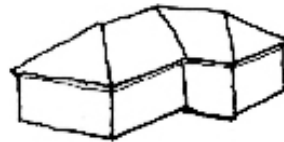
shed (half gabled)



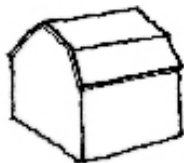
simple



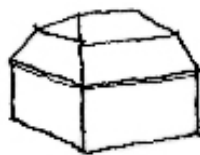
pyramidal



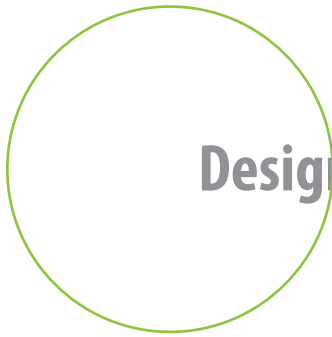
cross hipped



gambrel



mansard



Design Guidance

Roof Design
Facade Treatment
Site Layout and Orientation
Building Massing and Scale
Major Additions to Existing Homes

Roof Guidelines

Roof designs should respond to the following guidelines:

- Simple roofs should have a single roof type.
- Larger buildings should have more complex roofs with lower, secondary roof types; roof should read as cohesive in total and should be consistent with the architectural style of the building. (i.e., a main pitched roof could be combined with secondary roof types, but roof must read cohesively and relate to the architectural style of the structure.)

DO

Do have secondary roofs consistent with style of building

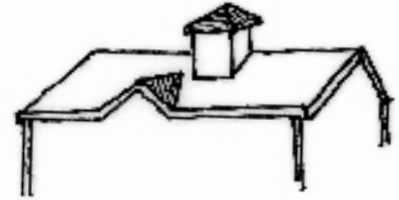


Roof Guidelines

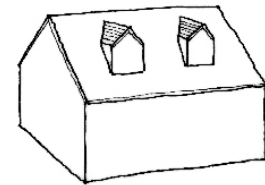
- Large roof expanses should incorporate dormers, turrets, skylights and other features to help reduce the scale of pitched roofs. The number and scale of dormers or other features should match the pitch of the main roof to maintain design consistency.
- The face of the dormer should be minimal in height and made up mostly of window area.
- The roof pitch of gable dormers should match the roof pitch of the main roof.
- Roof overhangs of 6–18" are encouraged when feasible at roof edges.
- The following roof materials are encouraged: asphalt shingles, slate, synthetic slate, and wood shingles.

DO

Do incorporate features to reduce the scale of pitched roofs



Do match the pitch of gable dormers to the pitch of the main roof



Facades

The elevation treatment given to residences should respond to the following guidelines:

- Design of main facades should reflect scale of nearby development through modulation of vertical and horizontal elements such as changes in predominant wall plane, use of projections, alignment of cornices, etc.
- Design treatment of sides and rear of proposed buildings should be substantially consistent in appearance and quality of materials to the treatment given to main street frontage.
- Building entries should be emphasized through use of well-designed awnings, porticos, porches and other architectural elements. Metal awnings are discouraged.



Do reflect the scale of nearby development through modulations in facade



Design awnings to be consistent with the architectural style

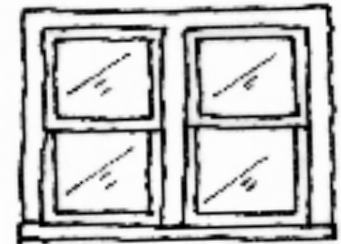
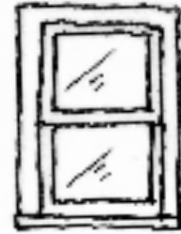


Facades

- Vertically proportioned window openings are preferred.
- Single Cased and Multiple-Ganged Windows are encouraged.
- Window style should be consistent across the entire exterior of a building, and should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.
- Window openings should achieve a general balance in terms of their placement on building facades.
- The use of traditional materials in an historic context is encouraged: Wood, Clapboard, Shiplap, Board and Batten, and Shingle, Brick and Stone.
- Vinyl, asphalt and other synthetic siding materials are discouraged.
- Varied bands of siding materials and patterns are discouraged.

DO

Do use vertically proportioned, Single Cased or Multiple Ganged Windows



Site Layout and Orientation

Site planning for new commercial or light industrial development within the business corridors should consider the following:

- Prevailing setback should be incorporated.
- Vehicular access should occur from rear when alley exists.
- Front yard landscaping is encouraged as a way to mediate public/private space, an appropriate hedge height can be estimated at two to four feet, depending on scale of front yard and setback.
- One-story porches of any size are encouraged including entry porches, full front porches or wrap around porches.

DO

Do encourage front porches



DO

Do maintain vehicular access from the side or rear



Site Layout and Orientation

- A raise in grade from street level to the first level floor of a house is encouraged in neighborhoods of Dobbs Ferry where such grade changes are currently predominant.
- Enclosure of front porches is discouraged.
- Driveways should be located at the rear of side of homes; exceptions to this may include a paved courtyard if the house is very close to the street.
- Houses should have one main entry area from street, even if homes contain multiple units.
- Minimize site disturbance when possible
- Minimize disturbance of existing trees when possible

DO

Do maintain one main entry area from street, even if home contains multiple units.



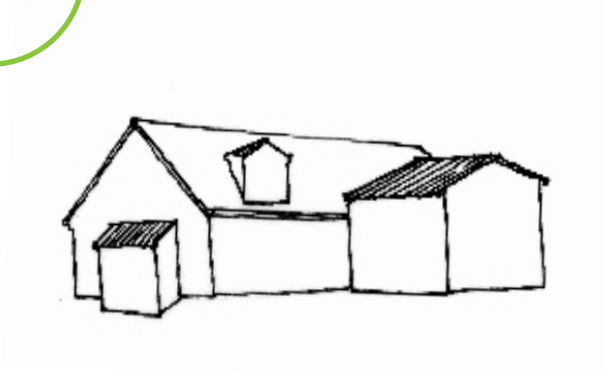
Building Massing and Scale

In Dobbs Ferry’s residential neighborhoods, the visual impact of larger-scale structures and additions to existing buildings should be reduced by the consideration of the following guidelines:

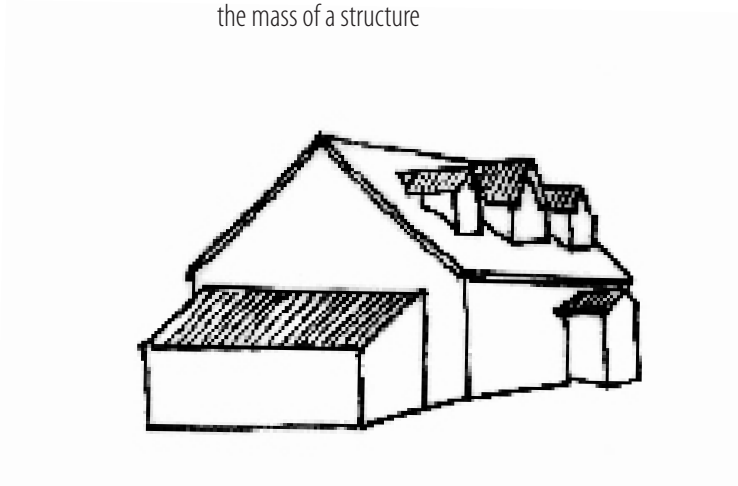
- Building footprints should be modulated to achieve varied building shape and mass. Varied footprint shapes create opportunities to provide more complex building shapes with the addition of small-scale wings or additions to the main building.
- Massing should be differentiated through the use of wall offsets and setbacks that articulate the horizontal and vertical planes of the building.



Do modulate building footprint for interest



Do use wall offsets and setbacks to break up the mass of a structure



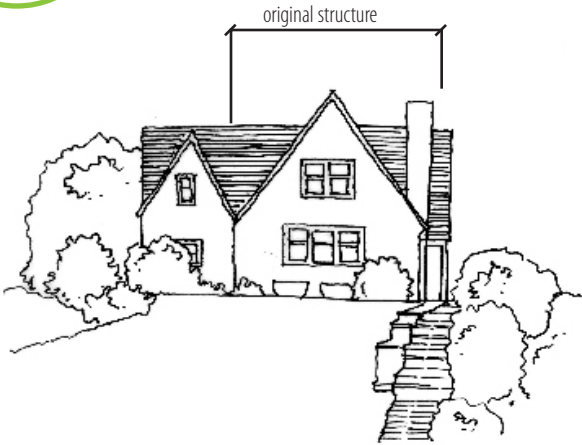
Major Additions to Existing Homes

Many homes within the residential neighborhoods of Dobbs Ferry have been undergoing facade rehabilitations, alterations, and additions to their existing structures. These alterations and additions many times do not affect the exterior of the structure, but in cases where alterations do change the exterior of the building, the following guidelines apply:

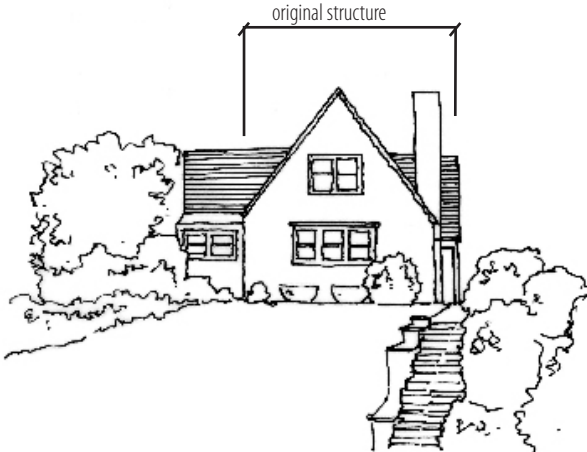
- When possible, additions should be placed to the rear of the existing structure so as to not interfere with the original facade of the house.
- Any additions to existing homes must maintain a roof design that is consistent with the architectural style of the buildings and should not look like “add-ons”.
- Generally, additions should be constructed as new wings to existing buildings rather than vastly altering the building form.
- Combining Mansard Roofs with any other roof form is strongly discouraged.
- Enclosed porches drastically change the integrity of a facade and are strongly discouraged.

DO

Do incorporate additions as new wings rather than “add-on” pieces.



Do incorporate additions with consistent roof styles to the original architectural style of the structure.



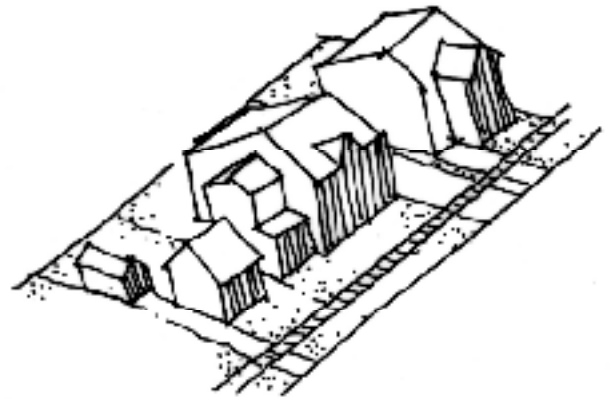
Contextual Design

Thus far, this set of guidelines have somewhat addressed the issue of contextual design through recommending prevailing setbacks and facade design that relates one house to its neighbor. However, the issue of contextual design is important not only on a micro-level of individual houses, but is also fundamental to the architectural integrity of a larger community or village. The following guidelines address the idea of context through street proportion, building mass, building height, and through the design of building faces.

- Street Proportion is the relationship between the height of buildings on each side of the street and the width of space between those buildings. All new development in the Village should analyze the existing context of building massing and street proportion.
- The mass and shape of new buildings should step back and down to provide a transition on sites that are next to, or across the street from, existing buildings that are lower in scale.
- Overall building heights should reflect the prevailing context of neighboring structures, with a maximum height limit identified in the applicable zoning.
- Appropriate design treatment should be applied to all building faces to ensure compatibility with surrounding properties, this applies especially to homes on irregular lots.

DO

Do step building massing or add porches, bays or other elements to provide transition to lower development.



DO

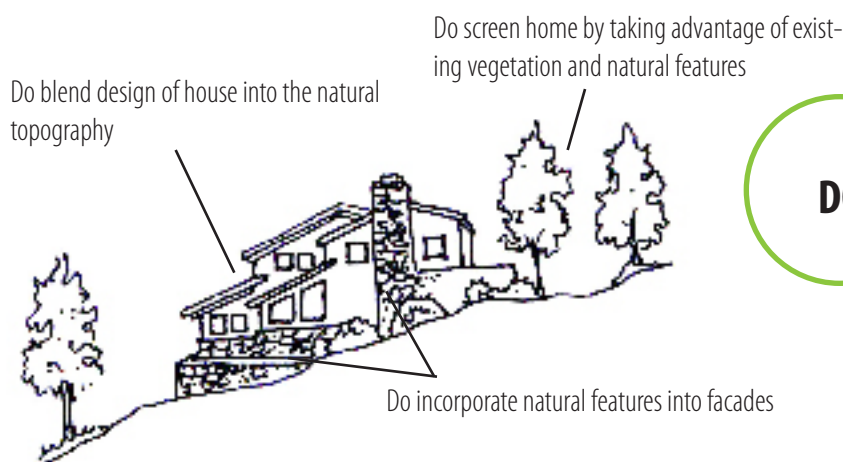
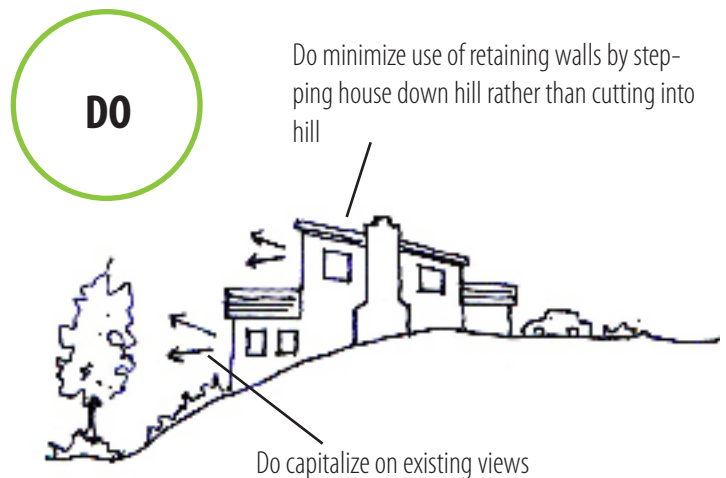
Do encourage street enclosure, proportionality and continuity.



Homes in Hillside Areas

Many Dobbs Ferry neighborhoods are located in areas with steep topography. Homes in these neighborhoods should be designed carefully so as to preserve views and assure compatibility with the surrounding natural context. To accomplish this, the following design guidelines apply to homes in the hillside areas:

- The placement of new homes and additions to existing houses should adapt to the surrounding terrain and should be compatible with existing topography.
- Screening prominent development on hillsides is encouraged by taking advantage of existing site features for screening such as tree clusters, depressions in topography, existing vegetation and setbacks.
- Retaining walls should be minimized through the adaptation of building design to existing topography. However, when used, retaining walls should blend with the natural topography in terms of scale, materials and massing. Overall, minimal heights and massing for retaining walls are encouraged as well the use of high quality materials such as stone.



- Darker, earth toned paint colors and natural materials for house exteriors are encouraged so as to help the structure blend in with the surrounding natural environment.
- Decks and porches should be integrated with the overall design of the house.
- Decks and porches should be integrated with the overall design of the house.
- Minimize any exposed concrete foundations and paint a dark color for screening purposes
- Minimize the dominance of front driveways through garage placement and by adapting building structures to surrounding topography.



Do incorporate natural features and dark, earth tone paint colors on housing exteriors



Do minimize dominance of driveways through garage placement.

