



CITY OF BURLINGAME
Community Development Department
MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 2, 2019 **Study Session**

TO: Planning Commission **Meeting Date:** April 8, 2019

FROM: Planning Division Staff

SUBJECT: **Discussion of Planning Commission Procedural Issues and Architectural Elements**

Planning Division staff wishes to bring the following items to the Planning Commission for discussion and direction.

Timing of Staff Report Deliveries: Currently staff reports, attachments and plans are delivered to the Planning Commission on the Thursday evening prior to the Planning Commission meeting, providing the Commission up to four days to review the materials. Recently, we received inquiries about the possibility of delivering packets one day earlier (on Wednesday).

Planning staff has always provided exceptional customer service by giving applicants enough time to submit required information so that projects can be processed in a streamlined manner. Although it is the difference of only one day, how that day lands on the calendar impacts timelines for application resubmittals. Shortening the time period to submit information may require some projects to be postponed to a later agenda, which as a result would lengthen the processing time. In addition, given the current workload in the division, it may be a challenge for staff to deliver packets on Wednesdays.

However, staff can consider including electronic copies of the plans along with the Draft Agendas, which are emailed to the Commission ten days in advance of the meeting. We welcome any other ideas for discussion.

Possibility of Canceling a Planning Commission Meeting in the Summer: During the summer of 2018, several Commissioners had planned to be absent and as a result, the second meeting in July was canceled due to a lack of quorum. Please provide us with your anticipated absences during the summer. If there are enough absences planned for a particular meeting during the summer, staff would like to discuss canceling a meeting with the City Manager. This will also help staff plan accordingly with project applicants. Similarly, if it would be helpful for commissioners to anticipate a scheduled canceled meeting in the summer (similar to the City Council meetings that are canceled in the summer, and the second Planning Commission meeting in December), this could be incorporated into the annual Planning Commission calendar.

Architectural Elements – Metal Roofs: In recent months, the Planning Commission has reviewed several applications for additions and new homes which included metal roofs. In reviewing these applications, the Commission has expressed varying thoughts on if and when metal roofs are appropriate. The Commission expressed a desire to have a more in-depth discussion regarding this issue.

Below are comments from meeting minutes from various projects reviewed within the last year:

- *Don't believe standing seam metal roofs are appropriate for Burlingame. This is not a seaside, farming or rural community.*
- *Concerned that we're seeing metal roofs in more projects.*
- *Think it is an appropriate look for this architecture and it's something we've approved before. Think it fits in the neighborhood.*
- *Not about what we like and don't like, but determining whether it fits the guidelines and pattern of the community. Don't think they belong in Burlingame.*
- *Concern is whether or not the project starts to look too commercial. When we've approved metal roofs or have reviewed any other materials, it's based on whether or not the application is done in an appropriately residential fashion. Think the application is consistent with the residential application.*
- *City Council has debated, on behalf of community and for us, where it's appropriate to have more contemporary designs.*
- *Architecture previously approved fits this neighborhood. Metal roof for this particular project fits the architecture and therefore is supportable.*
- *Like metal roofs, have had plenty of discussions about metal roofs in different neighborhoods. Have seen metal roofs scattered throughout several neighborhoods.*
- *Concerned that once we start approving them, when do we say one project be approved with metal roof and another one can't.*
- *Feel that Burlingame Hills is an area that can support modern architecture.*
- *When assessing appropriateness of metal roofs to the house, style of house had a lot to do with it.*
- *Preponderance of composition shingle and clay tile roofs in neighborhood made me question whether or not it is appropriate, even though the design warrants it.*
- *Because house is located uphill rather than looking down on an entire roof, helps solidify decision that this is the right roofing material.*
- *There are cases where a metal roof may not be approved where it's been allowed elsewhere. It's not a matter of preference, but whether or not it fits a given context of a project. That is the criteria we use throughout the design guidelines.*
- *Worried that there will be metal roofs everywhere, it would significantly change character of the City.*
- *Appreciates the restraint on the standing-seam metal roof, that it is not used across the entire house.*
- *Proposed standing seam metal roof helps to add texture to the front facade.*
- *Not concerned with metal roofing because there is not much of it on this house.*
- *Don't typically review color because it can be changed. However, on a metal roof the color will remain for a long time. When project returns, provide something that is more definitive on metal roof color, want to avoid bright color.*
- *Concern with potential colors of metal roofs in general. Unlike other exterior materials such as walls and windows which may change over time, roof colors will be long lasting particularly for standing seam metal roofs.*
- *Good mix of materials. The metal roof complements the house, works well in this application.*
- *Metal roofs seems akin to the consensus to not allow vinyl windows. Does not believe metal roofs fit in Burlingame. This one feels gratuitous.*
- *The steeper the roof, the more prominent the metal roof becomes.*
- *Struggling with the "extreme farmhouse" style; not sure it fits with the neighborhood. The standing seam metal roof pushes the design over the top. Worried about this type of roof taking over in Burlingame.*

Community Development Department Memorandum

April 8, 2019

Page 3

Although the Neighborhood Design Guidelines do not specifically discuss roofing materials, attached you will find the Roof Design Component for reference.

The Neighborhood Consistency Subcommittee will be taking up this matter in the future. However staff thought it would be productive for the full commission to provide general input on this issue beforehand, and then allow the Neighborhood Consistency Subcommittee to develop a specific recommendation to bring back to the full commission for consideration.

Attachments:

Neighborhood Design Guidelines – Roof Design Component



City of Burlingame

BURLINGAME CITY HALL
501 PRIMROSE ROAD
BURLINGAME, CA 94010

Draft Meeting Minutes Planning Commission

Monday, April 8, 2019

6:00 PM

City Hall Conference Room A

a. Discussion of Planning Commission Procedural Issues and Architectural Elements

Attachments: [Memorandum](#)

[Residential Design Guidebook - Roof Design Component](#)

Timing of Staff Report Deliveries:

- > Having online access is fine on Wednesdays; feels like not enough time on Mondays to speak with staff; okay with emailed plans.
 - > Does not look at the packet until Friday night and over the weekend; Thursdays still work, and even if the packet came earlier still would not look at it.
 - > Would be helpful to receive large documents such as big EIRs or Neg Decs at least one meeting ahead of time. Could then have time to research specific questions.
 - > Weekends are mainly the time to review.
 - > Long agendas and major projects can be challenging to get through, but can't get to it until the weekends.
 - > Sending plans ahead of time would be helpful. Would still want a hard copy as well.
- >>> Conclusion: Keep delivery schedule as is, but send electronic copy of agenda and plans earlier in the week (in addition to hard copy deliveries). For major projects, especially with EIRs – would like to receive documents at least one meeting before scheduled for hearing to have time for review.

Possibility of Canceling a Planning Commission Meeting in the Summer:

- > Would prefer to retain full summer schedule to avoid a backlog.
 - > Would prefer to hold meetings even when there are absences, provide four commissioners are in attendance.
 - > Commissioners should inform the Planning Manager of absences as soon as they are known so that agendas can be planned accordingly.
- >>> Conclusion: No cancelled meetings in the summer.

Architectural Elements – Metal Roofs

- > Can go back to neighborhood consistency subcommittee after every commissioner has had chance to share their thoughts.
 - > Neighborhood Design Guidebook was originally meant to capture the "low hanging fruit." The guidelines were mostly concerned with scale, massing and FAR, and did not address materials specifically.
 - > The original writers tried not to be too descriptive; did not want a level of detail that would be found in CC&Rs
 - > Don't want to get into the realm of specifying particular manufacturers.
 - > Metal roofing makes a building look industrial look, not modern. It can cheapen architecture.
 - > The first criteria would be whether the design looks residential; if so, then does the metal roof fit the house and support the architecture?
 - > Not proposing to outlaw metal roofs, but it needs to be considered as an element in the overall design.
 - > Color is a major issue, as well as the pitch. Either could overwhelm a house, so needs to be more subdued.
- >>> Conclusion: Evaluate metal roofs on a case by case basis, as part of the design review process. Would like to restrict color selection; perhaps consider a palette range and provide guidelines, or codify what are acceptable roof pitches and extent of roof coverage.

Component 6: Roof Design

Roof Design

Beyond Mass and Scale, Roofs are one of the most notable and formative elements in defining neighborhood character. The design should include visible entries and components for human use.

Houses in a neighborhood will include roof patterns that are distinctive and repeatable. It is important to observe the patterns and create a building that is consistent with that pattern in order to conserve the character of the existing neighborhoods.

Example houses may include flat roofs with parapets, pitched roofs or combinations. Consideration should be given for the basic size and shape of example roofs in the neighborhood.

Additionally, Design Professionals should be sensitive to the pattern of roof details and the ways those details relate to roof form. Particular attention should be paid to the size and configuration of fascia boards, gutters, outriggers, barges, rafter size and treatment and dimensions of overhangs. All of these items serve to define a roof and will be reviewed for compatibility.

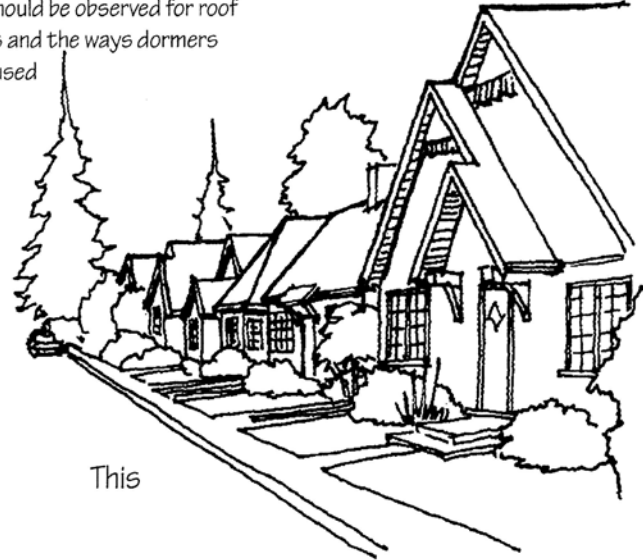
Refer to Burlingame Zoning Ordinance for related components:
Building Height and Exceptions (25.26.060 & 25.26.073)
Declining Height Envelope (25.26.075)

Applicable Findings:

The following Findings in the Design Review Ordinance apply to this Component of the Guidelines:

- Compatibility of the architectural style with that of the existing character of the Neighborhood.
- Architectural style, consistency, mass and bulk of structures, including accessory structures.
- Interface of the proposed structure with the structures on adjacent properties.
- For additions: Compatibility with the architectural style and character of the existing structure as remodeled.

Example houses should be observed for roof type, slope, details and the ways dormers and monitors are used



This



Not This

Roof unlike any other in the neighborhood

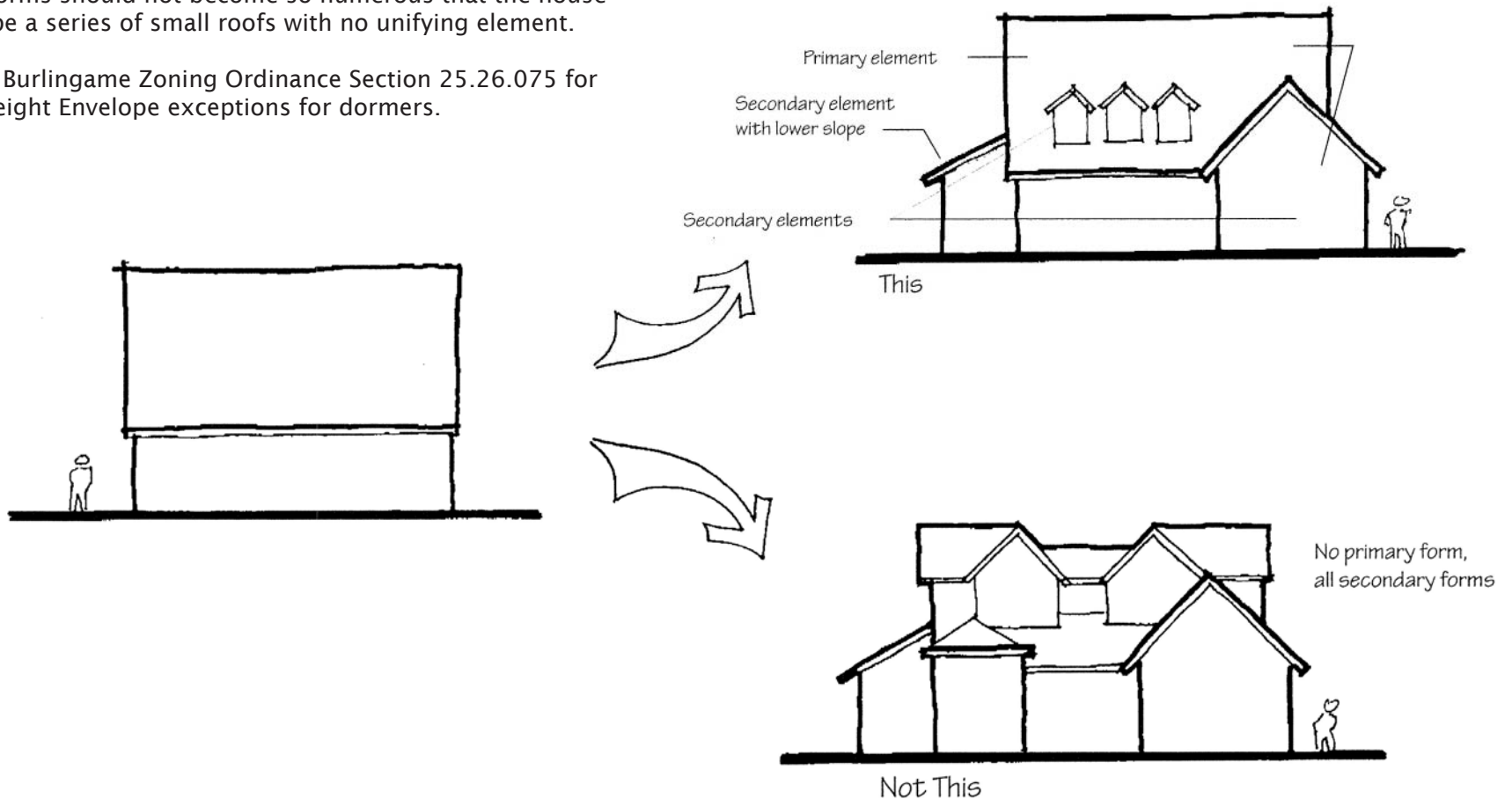
Articulation

Roofs should be articulated in ways that support the desired Mass and Scale of the building. Typically a Primary Roof Element should be defined which relates closely to the actual size and Mass of the house. Secondary forms can then be articulated which may include or otherwise identify important components of the house.

Secondary forms should not become so numerous that the house appears to be a series of small roofs with no unifying element.

Refer to the Burlingame Zoning Ordinance Section 25.26.075 for Declining Height Envelope exceptions for dormers.

Roof slopes can vary in some circumstances, particularly in situations where an additive element such as a shed or a monitor may include a lower roof slope than the primary form. This variation should be used with restraint and limited to traditional usage.



Component 6: Roof Design

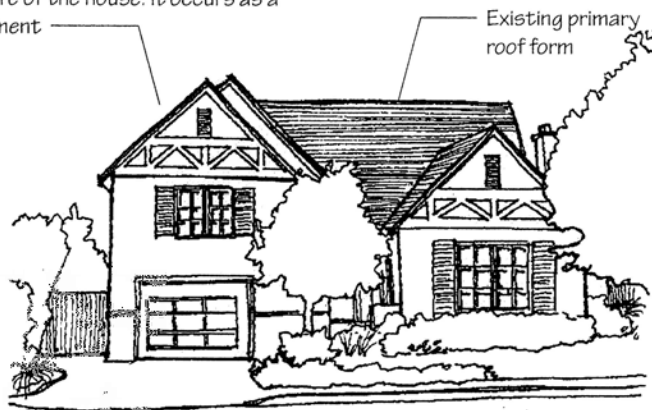
Additive Elements

Additive elements to the roof form should respond carefully to the mass and scale of the building and should not become too large. Elements which are too large compete with the primary forms of the roof and make the roof look more like trim attached to a two story building.

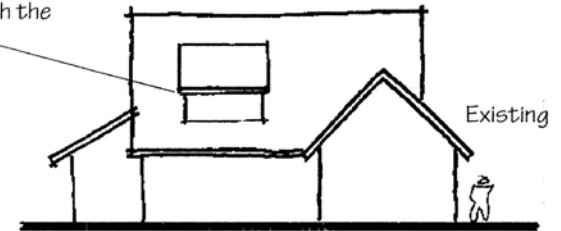
Use of dormers and monitors (shed dormers) to add space to an attic will require design professionals to think "attic" rather than "second story".

Additionally, additive elements that are different in style than the existing residence will not support the continuity of the architecture.

Additive roof form consistent with the architecture of the house. It occurs as a secondary element

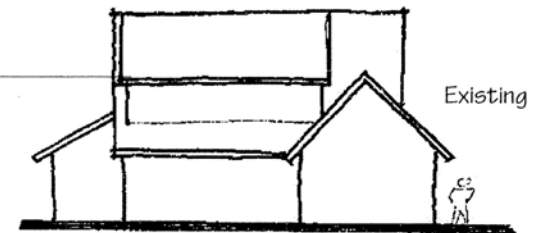


New Monitor, compatible with the existing roof



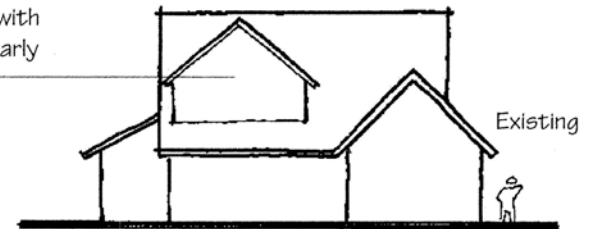
This

New Monitor: too large for the existing roof, it looks like a second story



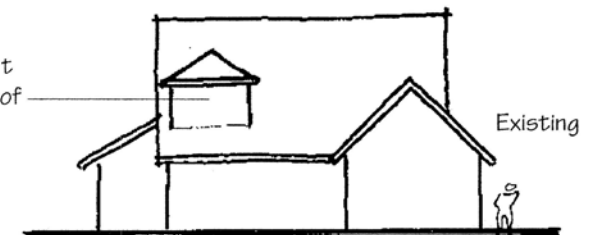
Not This

New Dormer: Consistent with the existing roof, while clearly a secondary element.



This

New Dormer: Of a different style than the existing roof



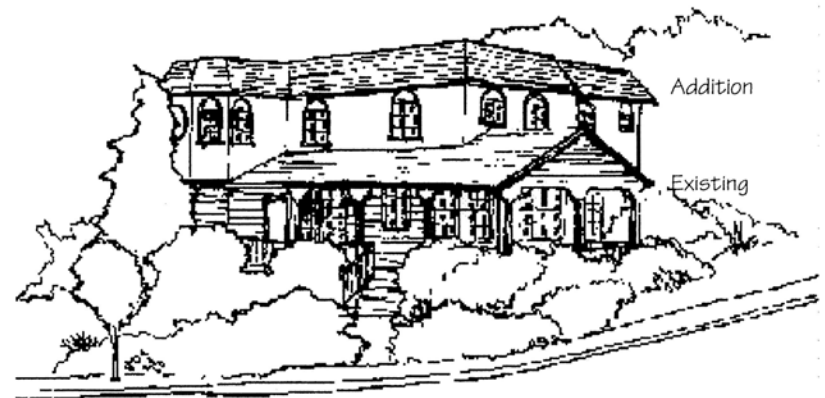
Not This

Consistent Roof Forms

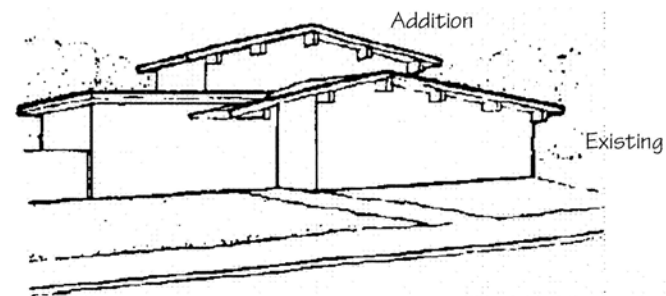
A critical element in unifying a building and relating additions to existing forms is the consistency in roof forms. The roof is one of the most important identifying elements for a house. It is largely responsible for defining the character of a building.



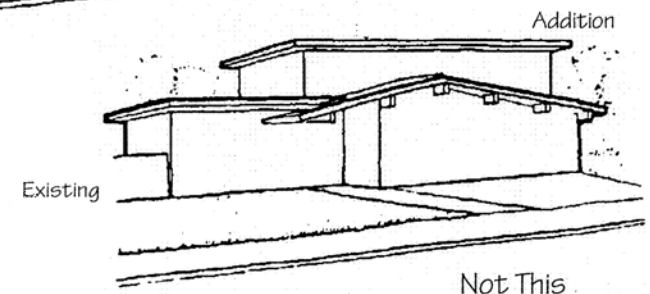
Additionally, the articulation of the roofs will form a pattern. Some neighborhoods will include simple, sweeping hip roofs, while others will include gabled roofs with numerous dormers or monitors.



Not This



This



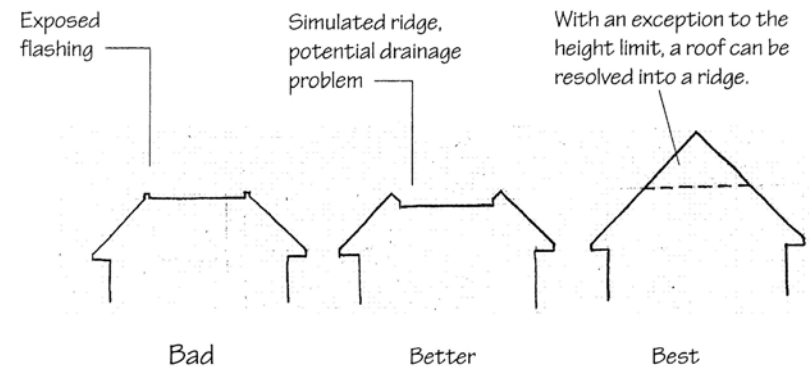
Not This

Variable Roof Forms

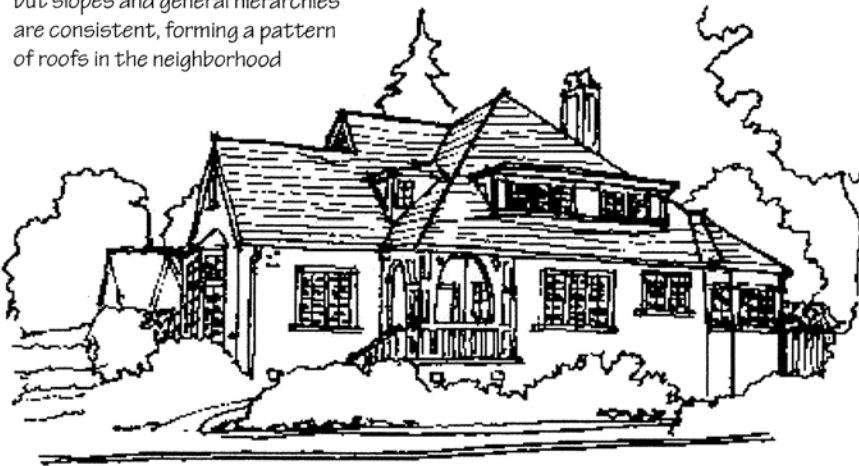
Randomly varying roof forms are probably not supportive of Neighborhood Compatibility. There are, however, numerous precedents for variable roof slopes and forms. Numerous architectural styles include combinations of sheds and gables, sheds and hips and sloping and flat roofs.

If a proposal includes varying roof forms, they should be justified based on the architectural style and the pattern in the neighborhood.

If varying forms occur simply to make interior spaces work, there may be a need to redesign the interior layout to achieve a compatible roof form.



Hips and gables intermixed, but slopes and general hierarchies are consistent, forming a pattern of roofs in the neighborhood



Sometimes roof forms are varied to accommodate height limitations. Hip roofs are often "clipped" to remain under this limit.

When a flat roof is included at the top of a sloped roof, flashing will be apparent where the transition occurs, making the roof unsightly and the clipping apparent.

It is more desirable to request a height exception in order to resolve a roof properly in a ridge or peak.

Roof forms and materials have a close relationship with the general character and style of a building. When a particular style is existing or adopted, the roof form should be consistent with that style. Tudor Revival buildings will have somewhat different roof slopes and forms than a Spanish Colonial Revival building.

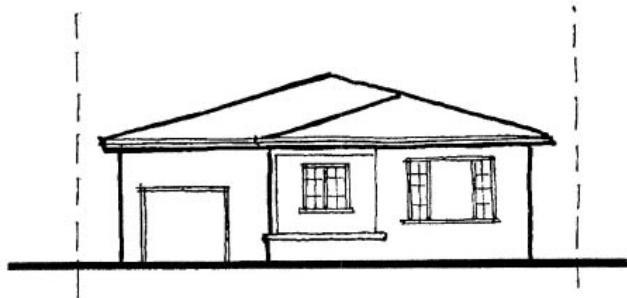
Substantial Additions

When substantial additions are proposed, the overall roof form (as well as the architectural style of the house), may need modification.

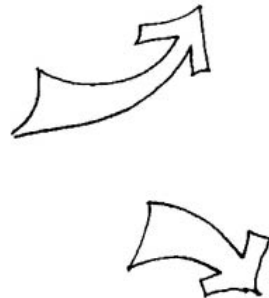
Low sloping roofs on single story ranch houses may not adequately engage a large second floor addition. The result may be a residence that does not meet the criteria for Mass and Scale.

Roof management can be an effective tool for housing a large space in a building of appropriate Mass and Scale.

When a flat roof is included at the top of a sloped roof, flashing will be apparent where the transition occurs, making the roof unsightly and the clipping apparent.



With a substantial addition, the entire roof may need to be redesigned. Often a roof for a one story ranch house does not support the addition of second story architecture.



Integrated Roof

This



Layer Cake

Not This

It is important to avoid the "layer cake" look in second floor additions. Most existing two story houses look more integrated, as though all parts were designed as one.

The "layer cake" looks like a floor was flown in and dropped on an existing house.

In some cases it may be necessary to design smaller spaces to achieve integration of the additional forms.



Numerous roof patterns will occur. In many cases, there will be a number of roof patterns in a given neighborhood. Where this occurs, scale and mass become driving factors in shaping the design.

As a design progresses, a roof form will emerge as a result of the internal organization of the building. As this occurs, the designer should be sensitive to similar forms in the neighborhoods. Details and configurations should then be harmonized with the example forms seen in the neighborhood.

Design Review Criteria

Compatibility is achieved through consistency in roof form and articulation. Compatible designs will include the following elements:

- Consistent roof slope throughout.
- Limited use of inconsistent roof forms when appropriate to the architecture of the building.
- Consistent roof materials throughout.
- Roofs articulated into Primary and Secondary elements, with primary element(s) relating to the Mass and Scale of the buildings in the neighborhood.
- Roof slopes and materials consistent with the character or style of the building, including scale of materials.
- New roofs consistent with the level of articulation of existing roofs.
- Response of the roof design to the mass and scale of the building: The roof should be consistent, however the roof design may require the floor plan to be adjusted to achieve an overall compatible design.
- Avoidance of "layer cake" appearance to second story elements.