

CRITERION 7: BULK: SPECIAL METHODS FOR HILLSIDES

- (a) Hillside projects shall use methods that blend with the hillside setting and minimize the building's prominence.
- (b) On sloped sites, the project shall minimize perceived bulk when viewed along with neighboring structures from the downslope side.

INTRODUCTION:

See Introduction for Criterion 6 (Bulk: All Projects)

GUIDELINES:

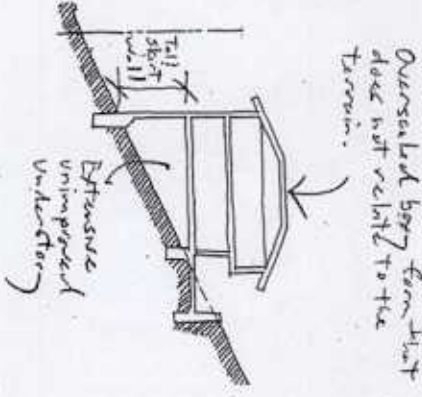
- 7.1 Step building massing with terrain.
- 7.2 Break the building into multiple volumes with staggered setbacks to reflect the irregularity of hillside terrain.
 - 7.2A Use smaller massing elements to soften taller elements.
 - 7.2B Use one-story and lower scale elements such as terraces to transition from the building to the ground.
 - 7.2C Use detached garages and other detached or semidetached building volumes to maximize flexible siting.
 - 7.2D On low to moderate slopes (less than about 40 percent) provide access from the lowest floor to a ground level patio or terrace. Consider such access on steeper slopes.

7.3 Skirt Walls.

7.3A Place floor levels close to and/or partially inset into grade to avoid or minimize tall skirt walls and other tall support structures. In most cases, maximum acceptable skirt wall heights will increase as the building footprint slope increases. On slopes of 20-60%, skirt wall heights should normally not exceed 1-2' per each 10% of slope, with a maximum skirt wall height of about 6' on a 40% slope and about 12' (about one story) on a 60% slope. On steeper slopes, taller skirt walls may be acceptable if a 12' skirt wall would impose excessive constraints for a reasonably sized house, such as requiring three or more levels to obtain 2,400 square feet of living area.

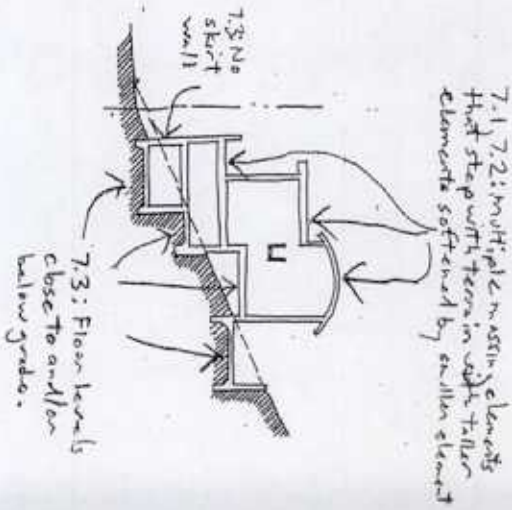
Acceptable skirt wall heights will often require cutting the back portions of the bottom floors into the hillside by up to four feet on slopes up to about 40% and up to six feet or more on steeper slopes.

Original Design:



Overstated by form that does not relate to the terrain.

Revised Design:



7.2: Use one-story and lower scale elements such as terraces to transition from the building to the ground.

Original Design:

Revised Design:



* Monolithic or overwhelming masses poorly related to the topography



* Differentiated masses stepping with the terrain

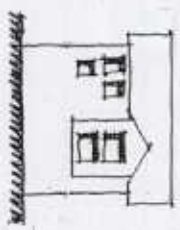
7.3B Deemphasize skirt walls where they cannot be avoided by treating them as architectural pedestals that are clearly subordinate to the primary building volume.

Techniques include:

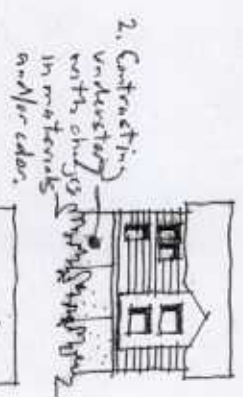
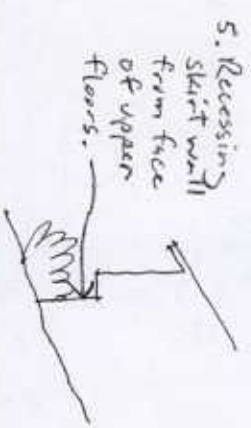
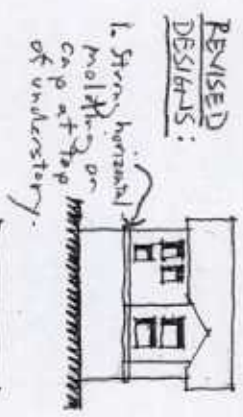
1. Incorporating a strong horizontal molding or cap at the top of the skirt wall;
2. Changing materials and/or colors at the skirt wall to contrast with the primary building volume;
3. Outwardly tapering the skirt wall to create a buttress effect;
4. Integrating terraces at the skirt wall that horizontally expand beyond the building's perimeter; and
5. Recessing the skirt wall from the face of the upper floors.

Additionally, provide trees and/or other landscaping at the skirt wall that will grow taller and faster than required by the Zoning Regulations' landscaping standards to fully screen the skirt wall.

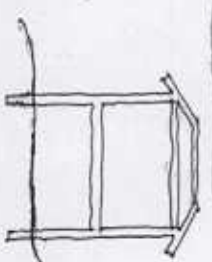
INITIAL DESIGN:



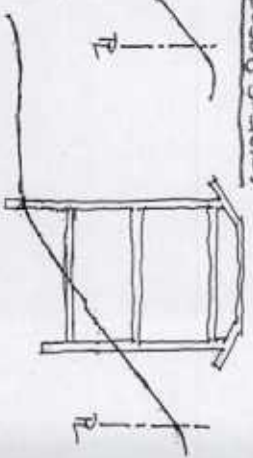
REVISED DESIGN:



INITIAL DESIGN:



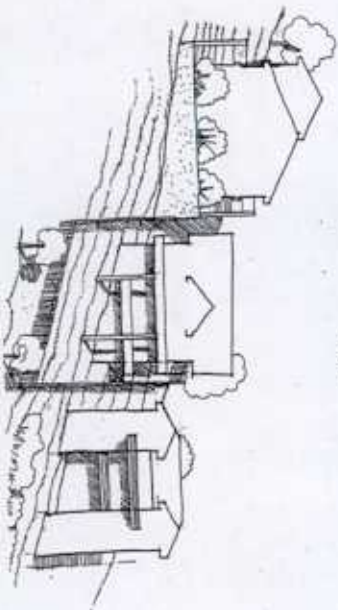
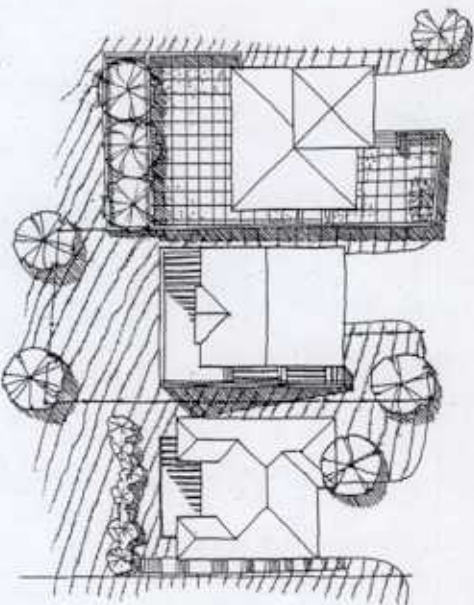
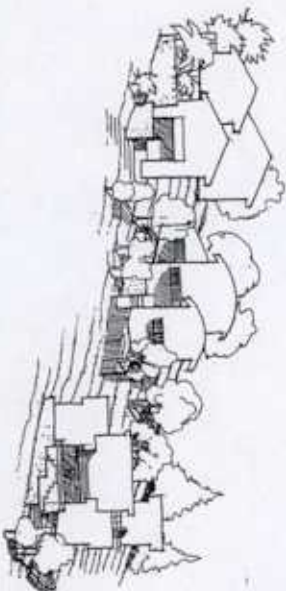
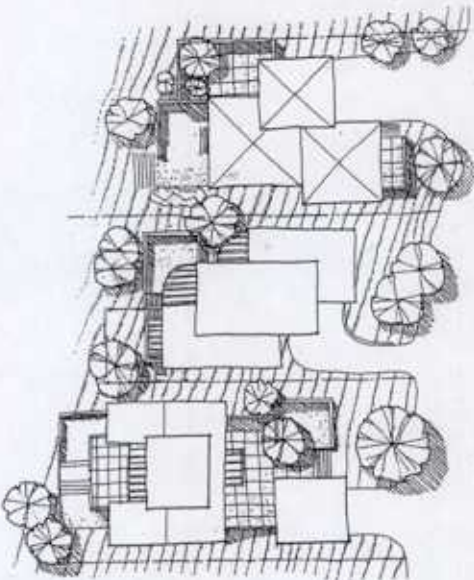
REVISED DESIGN:



7.4 Position the building on the site to minimize height on the downslope side.
 This is usually the portion of the site with the least slope.

7.5 Maintain openness between structures. Avoid long and high building walls close to side lot lines. Provide sufficient side yard setbacks, especially at the front and rear elevations, to allow plantings between structures to help hide the perceived mass.

Buildings that are too close to one another look bulkier than buildings with greater separation.



ENCOURAGED

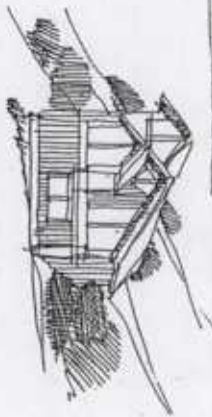
- Openness between houses
- Lower building profiles near side lot line
- Increased side yard setbacks at front and rear elevations
- Integration of building forms into the natural setting

DISCOURAGED

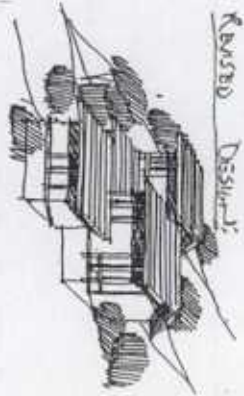
- Long and high building walls close to side lot line
- Consistently narrow side yards
- Monolithic building forms that overwhelm the natural setting

7.6 Step or slope rooflines with the terrain. Avoid large gables on downslope elevations.

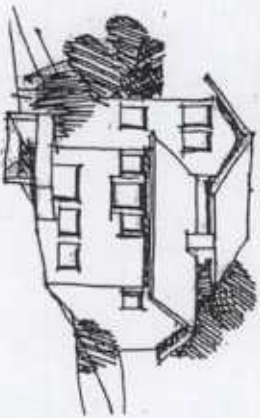
Original Design:



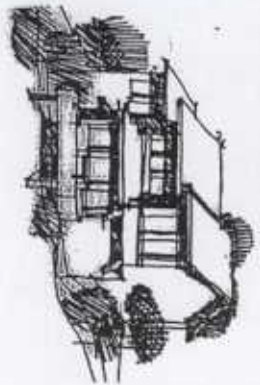
Revised Design:



Original Design:



Revised Design:



7.7 Provide strong shadow patterns on downslope elevations using modest projections such as roof overhangs, plan offsets, and recessed openings. (Note: large cantilevered projections and very wide overhangs can be overly dominant and are discouraged).

Shadow patterns help break up large building masses and provide relief similar to the undulations of the hillside and natural vegetation.

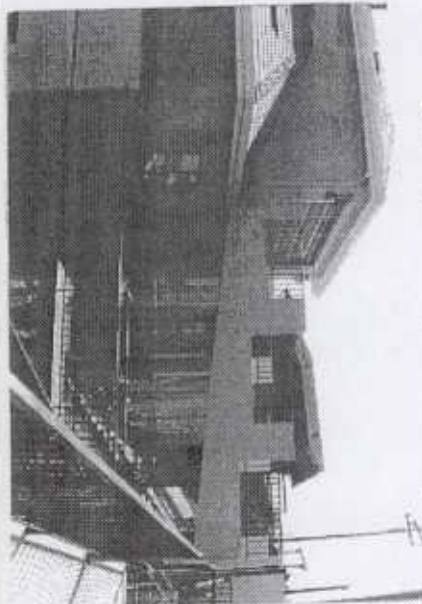
7.8 Materials and Colors. Use materials and colors having a naturalistic quality that will blend into the surrounding landscape.

The most effective colors are earth tones. They can be light or dark, depending on the colors of the surrounding vegetation.

7.9 Minimize visibility of garages and driveways. Locate garages so that the garage floor level is as low as possible relative to the hillside. Design techniques include:

7.9A Avoiding upslope driveways on downslope lots;

7.9B Locating garages and driveways at the low side of cross slope lots.



OAKLAND DESIGN REVIEW MANUAL FOR ONE AND TWO UNIT RESIDENCES
Criterion 8: Neighborhood Compatibility (Context)

CRITERION 8: NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY (CONTEXT)

New construction within 40 feet of a front lot line shall relate well to any strong, positive visual patterns, or "contexts" presented by neighboring buildings within the context area. These visual patterns shall include those created by: (i) roof forms and pitch; (ii) principle entryway treatment; (iii) front setback; (iv) surface materials; (v) windows and openings; (vi) architectural detailing; and (vii) front yard landscaping (see Figure 8-1).

The "context area" consists of the five lots on each side of the project site and the ten closest lots across the street (see Figure 8-2).

This criterion shall apply only if the slope of the project site is 20 percent or less and one of the following situations exists:

- a) At least 75% of the sites (including vacant lots) within 300 feet of and on the same street as the project site are 4,000 square feet or less in area; OR
- b) Within 1,000 feet of the project site, there is a grid system of multiple streets, or the system of streets forms a pattern of a nearly rectilinear grid or the intersection of more than one grid.

This criterion does not apply if there are fewer than 10 houses in the context area.

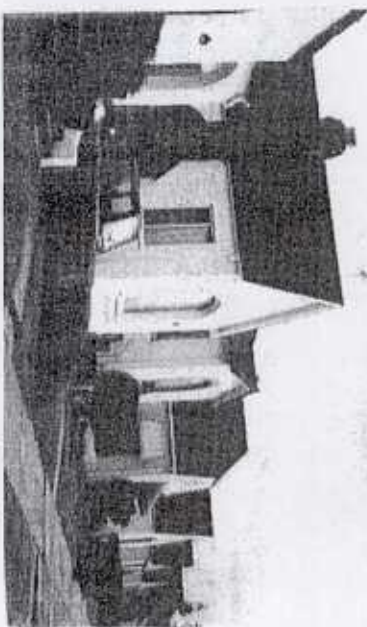


Fig. 8-1. The consistency in setbacks, scale, roof forms, entry ways, materials, and architectural elements provide for a strong neighborhood context.

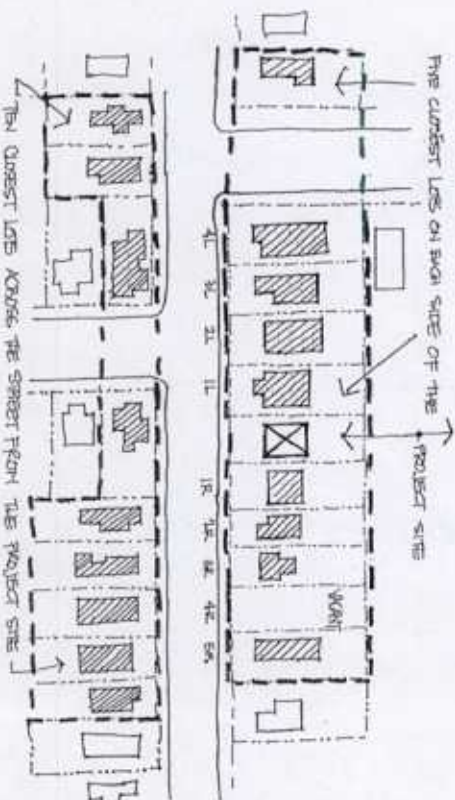


Fig. 8-2. The "context area" consists of the five lots on each side of the project site and the ten closest lots across the street.

OAKLAND DESIGN REVIEW MANUAL FOR ONE AND TWO UNIT RESIDENCES
Criterion 8: Neighborhood Compatibility (Context)

INTRODUCTION:

The applicant is responsible for photo-documenting the surrounding houses. Photographs must include houses on the five (5) lots on each side of the subject property, and houses on the ten (10) closest lots across the street.

From these photographs, City staff will determine which context issues apply. At least half of the surrounding houses must exhibit similar characteristics in order for a context issue to apply. Characteristics for which context has been established but not considered positive attributes (such as materials not on the approved list in Guideline 8.4, or dominance of open parking in the front) will be eliminated from context consideration.

GUIDELINES:

8.1 Roof Pitch and Form Context

To determine if there is a strong roof pitch and form context, at least 50% of the buildings must have similar shapes (gable, hip, gambrel, mansard, etc.), and similar slopes as defined by four categories:

- Flat: 0 to 1 in 12 slope
- Low: 1 in 12 to 3 in 12 slope
- Moderate: 3 in 12 to 7 in 12 slope
- Sleep: greater than 7 in 12 slope

If there is a roof shape and/or a roof slope context, the proposal should conform to all established contexts, including overhangs if established in the context. In order to be considered as a successful response to this context, the roof form and shape context must apply to at least 75% of the project's roof area. See Fig. 8-3 & Fig. 8-4.

If the roof context includes overhangs, or parapets, then the design should include similar overhangs. The minimum overhang is considered to be 12 inches unless a lesser overhang is appropriate in the context.



Roof pitch and form context established.



Roof form context established, but no roof pitch context.



No roof context.

Fig. 8-3. Roof form context is established if at least 50% of the buildings, in the context area, have similar shapes such as gable, hip, jerkin head, gambrel, mansard, etc. Roof pitch context is established if at least 50% of the buildings in the context area have similar roof slopes as defined by the four categories at left.



Fig. 8-4. The house towards the center of the photo does not meet the roof pitch and form context findings for the neighborhood. However, by beginning the eaves at the same point as the other homes in the neighborhood, it demonstrates successful mitigation.

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8.2 Principal Entryway Context

The entryway constitutes the passageway to the primary entrance(s) of the building.

Front entries are prevalent in most Oakland neighborhoods. An entryway is considered to be located in the front if a significant portion of its form is oriented to, and visible from, the front of the site. See Fig. 8-5.

To determine if a strong entryway context exists, the surrounding houses are surveyed for the following three entry components: (i) location, (ii) type [e.g. projecting with roof, projecting without roof, recessed, etc.], and (iii) floor elevation height.

If an entryway context is established, for any of these three components, the applicable components should be noted and incorporated into the proposal. See Fig. 8-6.

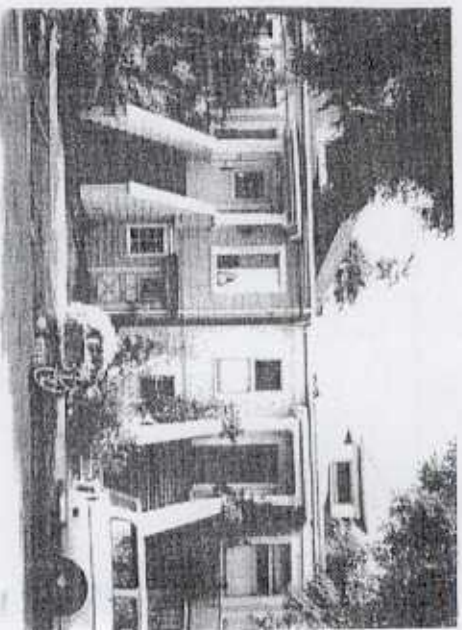


Fig. 8-5. The raised entry porches in this neighborhood create a strong transition between public and private spaces. In addition, all entry units are prominently located relative to the street.

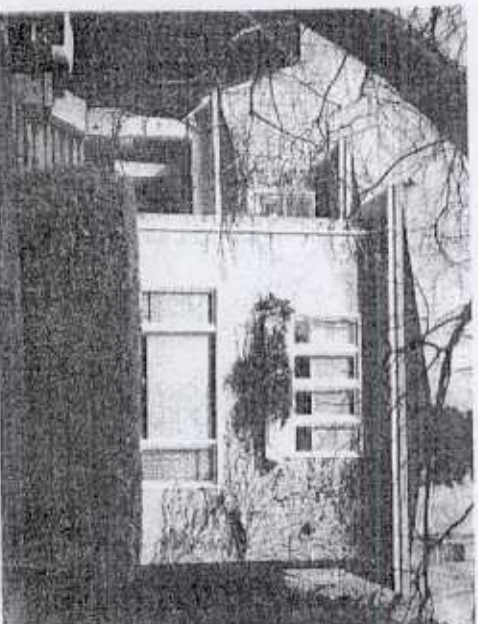


Fig. 8-6. The size, shape and orientation of the porch relative to the dwelling and the integral stairway projecting beyond the front facade of the dwelling provide for a prominent entryway.

8.3 Building Setback Context

If there is a setback context, the proposal's setback should be within 3 feet of the context's average setback, or as close to it as zoning requirements allow.

The average front yard setback is determined from Sanborn maps. Wherever possible, the proposal should maintain the prevalent setbacks and reinforce the block face. Where the average setbacks violate current zoning standards, the front of the building should be located as close to the street as allowed by the zoning standards. See Fig. 8-7.

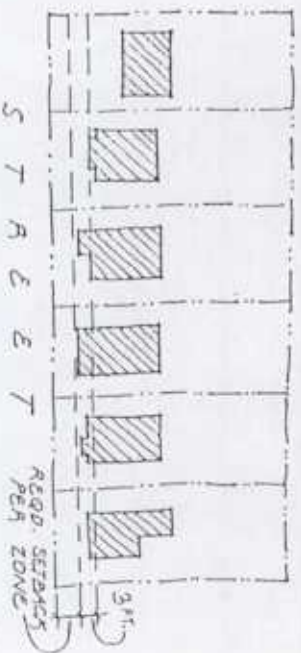


Fig. 8-7. The setback context is established if, within the context area, at least 50% of all front facades are located within 3 feet of each other.

8.4 Building and Surface Materials Context

If there is a materials context, the proposal should either use the same material as the context material on all walls visible from the street or a combination of materials that includes the context materials on at least 50 percent of the wall surfaces. See Fig. 8-8.

To determine the existence of building materials context, 50% or more of the surrounding buildings must have similar materials used on their primary façade. See Fig. 8-9. Only the following materials will be considered: [a] wood siding (dimensional lumber); [b] board and batten siding, including plywood if minimum 1" x 2" wood battens are used at minimum 8-inch intervals; [c] wood shingles; [d] cement plaster (stucco) applied wet at the job site; [e] brick; [f] stone; [g] pre-cast concrete masonry units; [h] cement fiber or similar synthetic siding resembling wood siding; or [i] glass.

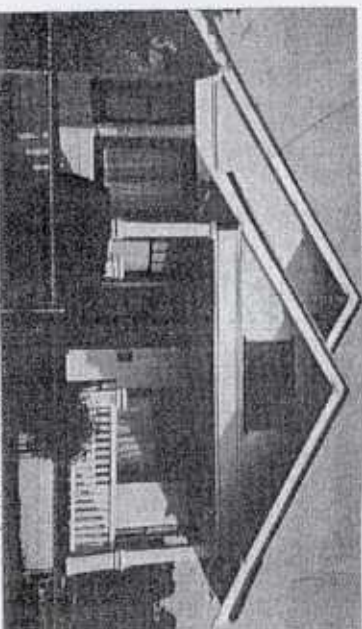


Fig. 8-8. The balanced use of multiple materials provides for houses well integrated into a context of either stucco or horizontally sided wood houses.

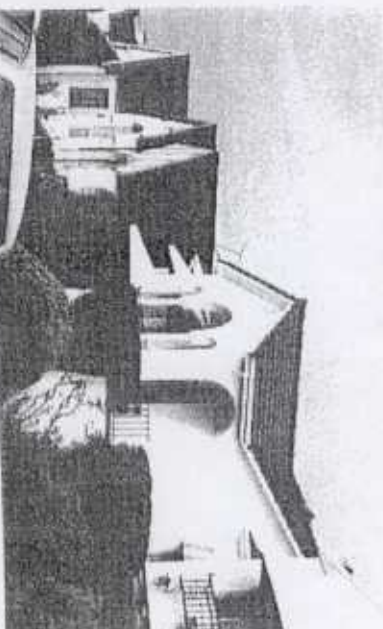


Fig. 8-9. Because more than 50% of the buildings in this neighborhood have stucco facades, the building material context is established.

OAKLAND DESIGN REVIEW MANUAL FOR ONE AND TWO UNIT RESIDENCES
Criterion 8: Neighborhood Compatibility (Context)

8.5 Windows and Openings Context

To determine the existence of a strong windows and openings context, the surrounding buildings must display similar treatments of windows and openings in terms of their size, number, materials, proportions, and composition on the facades viewable from the street. See Fig. 8-10 & Fig. 8-11.

If there is a windows and openings context, the proposal should respond to or approximate the prevailing characteristics identified in the context.



Fig. 8-10. The consistent use of windows facing the street create a more unified streetscape and foster a sense of community.

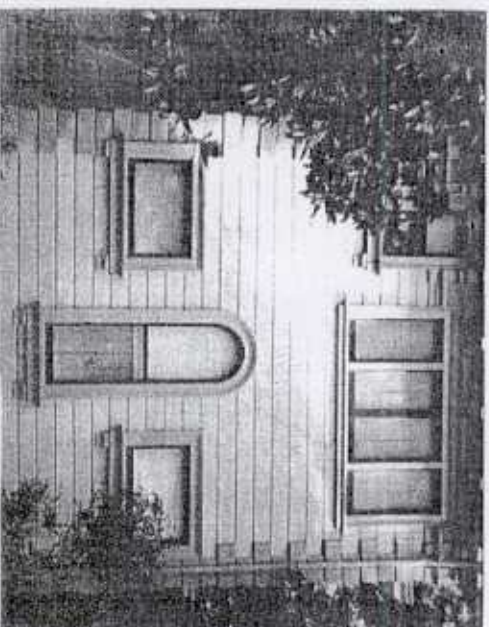


Fig. 8-11. Despite the rectangular window context, the proportions and attention to detail of the arched window create a rich visual character.

8.6 Architectural Detail Context

The existence of an architectural detail context is determined by the overall presence of detailing on existing buildings in the area.

If there is an architectural detail context, the proposal should respond to or approximate the prevailing characteristics identified in the context. See Fig. 8-12.

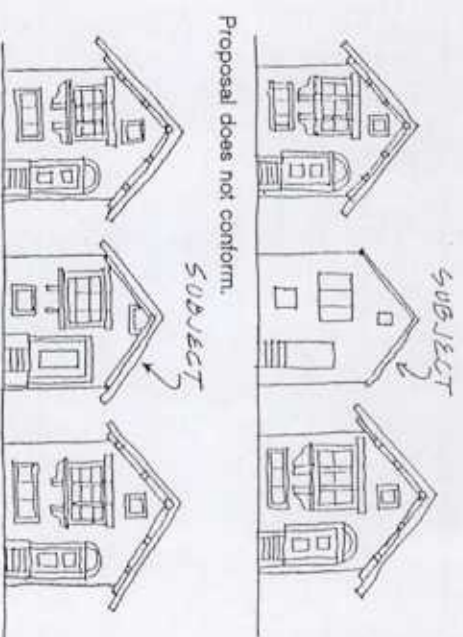


Fig. 8-12. The use of door and window trim, window sill detailing, detail of the door, and detailing of the entry stairs establishes an architectural detail context.

8.7 Landscaping Context

To determine the existence of a landscaping context, there must be a strong, positive presence of trees, shrubs, and ground cover in the context area. This Guideline will not apply if such landscaping exists, but is sparsely located or not maintained. See Fig. 8-13.

If there is a landscaping context, the proposal should conform to all established contexts (trees, shrubs, groundcover) and provide adequate watering facilities for its maintenance).



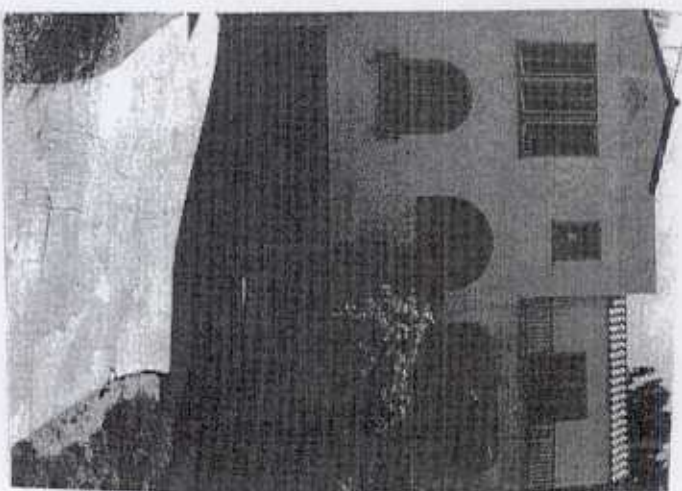
Fig. 8-13. A visually rich neighborhood character is created through the successful use of landscaping.

CRITERION 9: SITE ACCESS AND PARKING

- (a) *Parking areas, garages, driveways and other parking provisions shall be sited to minimize their visual impact on the street and shall be subordinated to the house, landscape and pedestrian entrance.*
- (b) *Where physically feasible, unenclosed parking spaces shall be visually screened from the street and other significant vantage points.*
- (c) *Visible portions of the driveway shall minimize the use of paving, and use natural or decorative materials and designs.*
- (d) *Garages shall be architecturally consistent with the residence and enhance the main building's streetscape appearance.*

GUIDELINES:

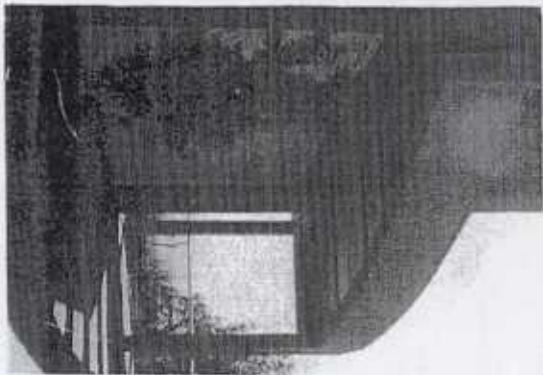
- 9.1** Where possible, locate garages and parking areas at the side or rear of the property away from public view.
- 9.2** Consider alternatives such as carports, screened parking (behind retaining walls or earth berms etc.), tandem parking or other techniques that minimize the impact of driveways and garages.
- 9.3** Consider using pairs of single-car garage doors and other architectural or landscape features, such as an overhead trellis etc. to improve the scale and appearance of street fronting garages.
- 9.4** Use architectural detailing on garages consistent with the design of the main building.
- 9.5** Avoid large expanses of concrete or asphalt paving. Where possible, minimize paving by using concrete tire strips (usually 18" maximum width), open grid pavers planted with turf or groundcover, and/or decorative paving materials such as bricks, unit pavers, or stamped, colored and textured concrete.



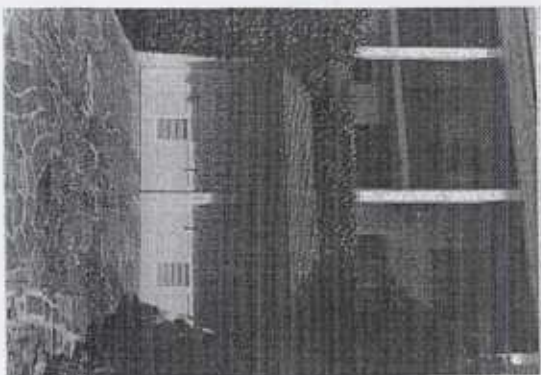
DISCOURAGED

▶ *Driveways with expansive pavement that overwhelms front yard*

ENCOURAGED EXAMPLES OF DRIVEWAYS AND GARAGES



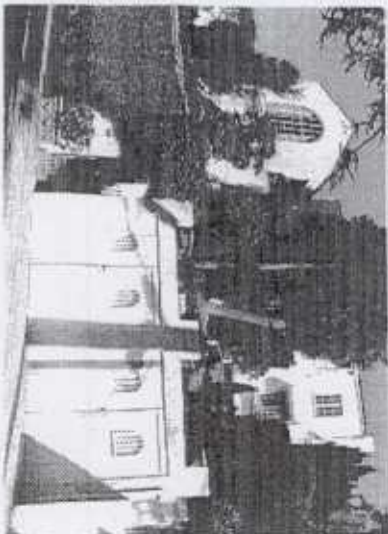
▶ An architecturally integrated canopy provides shadow and interest, reducing the impact of the garage



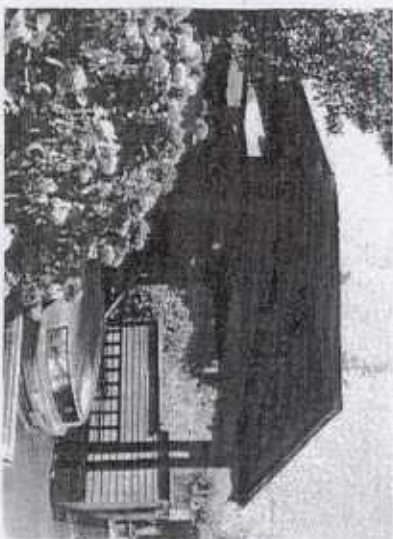
▶ An architecturally detailed double door garage, pavers and landscaping improve the scale and appearance of the house



▶ A single wide garage underneath a projecting upper level and paving strips keep parking subordinate to the house and yard

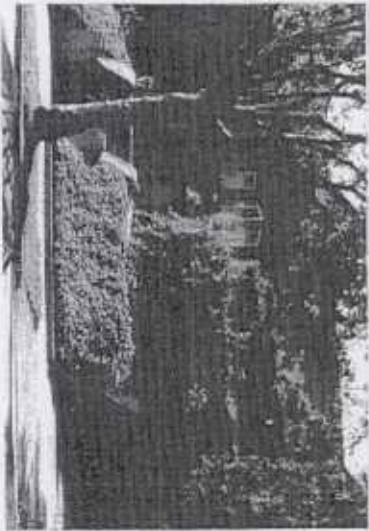


▶ A detached two-door garage with entrance gate and roof terrace, exhibits good attention to detail and allows for generous front yard open space and landscaping

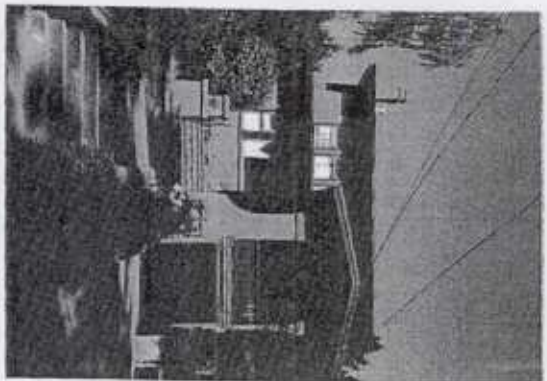


▶ A well detailed carport reduces mass at street, provides visual interest and uses landscaping to screen automobiles

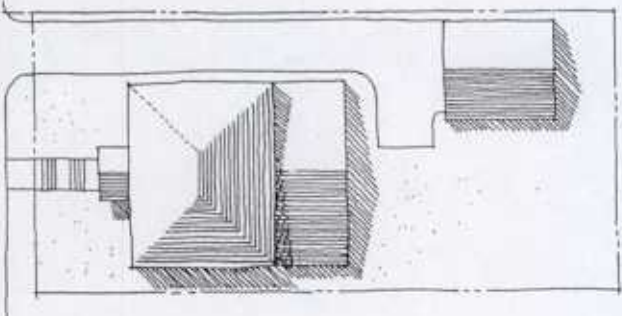
ENCOURAGED EXAMPLES



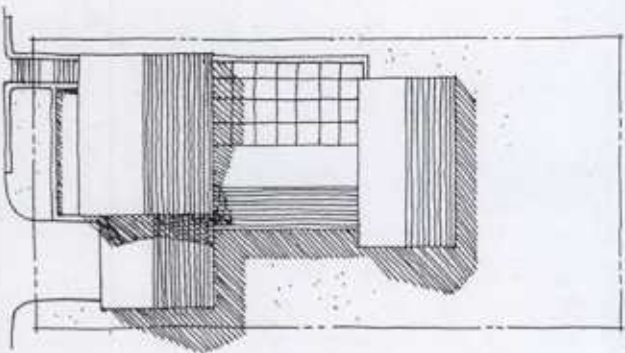
▶ Detached garage set into hillside allows for focus to be on front yard



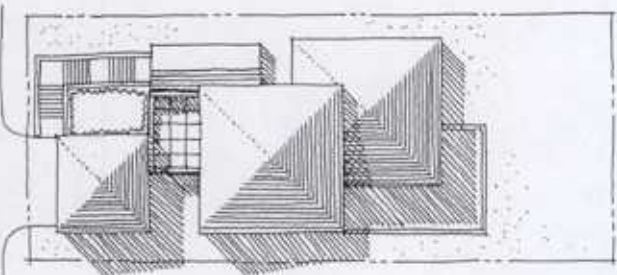
▶ Garage under entry porch deemphasizes parking



▶ Garage located at rear of the site



▶ Garage or carport, as an attached wing

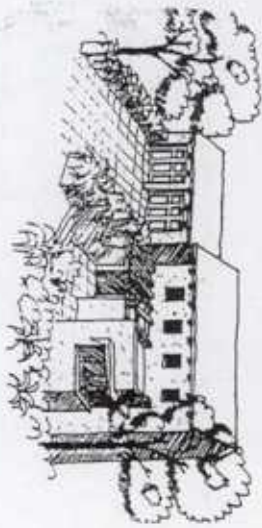


▶ Detached garage close to the street, example has upper and lower entries

Special Guidelines for Hillsides:

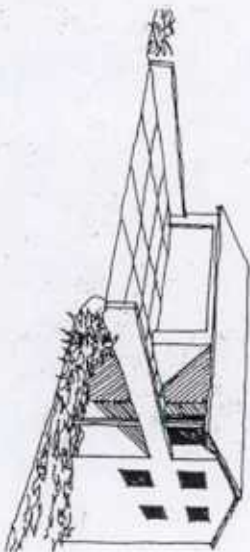
9.6 Consider a partially or fully detached garage on steep up- or down-sloping lots. Also consider a roof level/carport parking solution on steep down-sloping lots.

9.7 On hillsides, mitigate blank skirt walls at the sides of driveway bridges with distinctive guardrail designs, landscaping that will become tall enough within five years to screen the skirt walls, terraced planters with cascading vines, attached exterior stairs, pergolas/trellises, and/or variations in the wall forms and surface treatment.



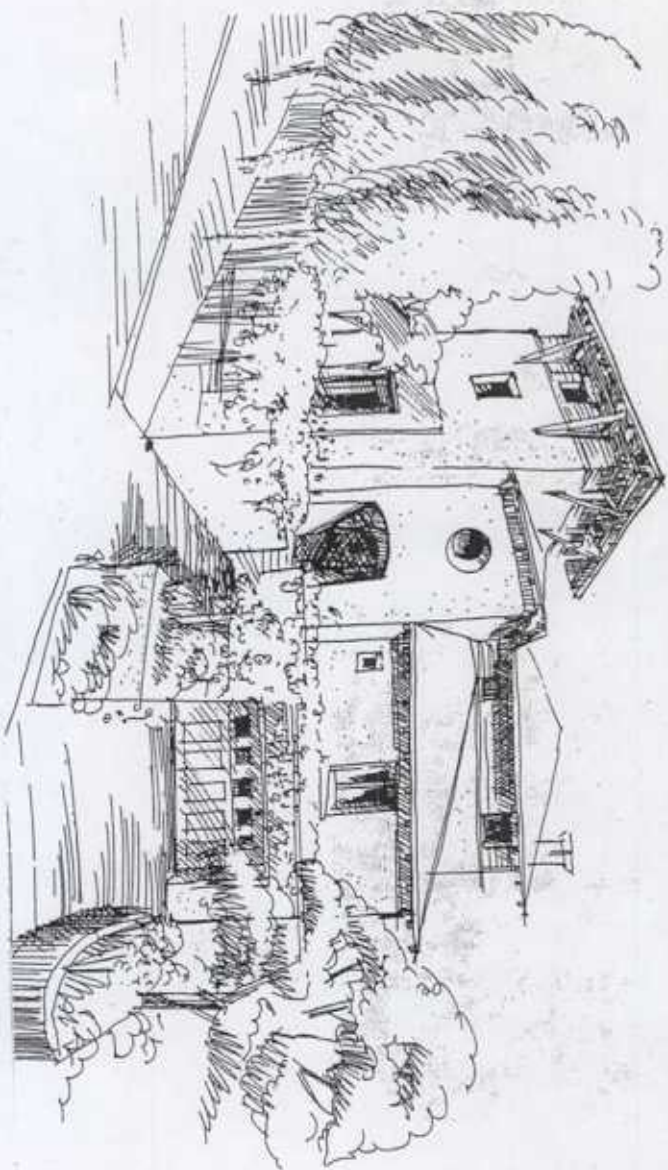
ENCOURAGED

- ▶ Minimal and decorative paving
- ▶ Attractive garage doors
- ▶ Planters with cascading vines



DISCOURAGED

- ▶ Blank, double-wide garage door
- ▶ Large expanse of concrete dominating front yard
- ▶ Visible undersides of driveway bridge



*Attractive recessed garage door
complemented by planters and
trellis*



*Garage is recessed and below
projecting entry deck*