



PLAN COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Title/Address:	Discussion regarding Design Standards and Guidelines for the RT Traditional Residential Districts
-------------------------------	---

City Staff:	Russell Colby, Planning Division Manager
--------------------	--

PUBLIC HEARING		MEETING 8/22/17	X
-----------------------	--	----------------------------------	---

APPLICATION:

ATTACHMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

From Chapter 17.06 of the Zoning Ordinance, “Design Review Standards and Guidelines”:

- Section 17.06.010, “How to use this chapter”
- Section 17.06.060, “Standards and Guidelines - RT-1, RT-2, RT-3, RT-4 and CBD-2 Districts (one- and two-family dwellings only)”

SUMMARY:

The Plan Commission recently heard an appeal request regarding the application of the RT Design Standards and Guidelines to plans that had been submitted for a building permit. Following the conclusion of the item, the Commission requested that staff schedule a discussion regarding whether modifications to the Standards and Guidelines should be considered.

At the meeting, staff is looking for general direction from the Plan Commission. This direction will then be presented to the Planning & Development Committee of the City Council. The Planning & Development Committee can then choose whether to direct staff to file a General Amendment application to modify the zoning ordinance. The General Amendment application, with the specific proposed changes to the ordinance, would then be presented to the Plan Commission at a future public hearing for a recommendation.

Staff will present background information on the following topics:

- The purpose of the RT Traditional Residential Districts
- Why Design Guidelines were adopted
- What the Guidelines do and not do require

Staff will be seeking feedback on the following:

- Should architectural style be regulated by the Design Guidelines? (Examples: a list of allowable styles, or a requirement to match the style of existing buildings in the area)
- Should the Design Guidelines stipulate allowable and/or prohibited architectural elements or building materials? (Examples: requiring a pitched roof, requiring certain siding types)
- What review and approval process should be followed? (Examples: Administrative/staff level-current process; Administrative with an option to request a Commission-level review under certain circumstances; Commission-level review process for new buildings only, Commission-level review process for all new buildings or large additions)

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Provide feedback to staff.

INFO / PROCEDURE:

Discussion only.

17.06.010 – How to use this chapter

1. Standards and Guidelines

The Standards and Guidelines of this Chapter shall apply to applications for Building Permits and Site Development Permits as provided in Section 17.04.230 (Design Review). The Standards and Guidelines of this Chapter shall also apply to applications for Special Uses (Section 17.04.330) and Planned Unit Developments (Sections 17.04.400, et seq.).

The provisions of this Chapter include “Standards” and “Guidelines”, both of which must be addressed in order to obtain Design Review approval. “Standards” are specific requirements that must be met. A Standard typically offers little flexibility unless options are provided within the Standard itself. A Standard may establish requirements not otherwise contained in this Title, or may refer to other requirements more fully set forth elsewhere in this Title or the St. Charles Municipal Code. “Guidelines” are descriptions of design characteristics intended to be applied with flexibility. Where a proposed design does not precisely follow the guideline, it may still be acceptable if the applicant can show how it meets the intent for that group of standards and guidelines and the purpose and intent of this Title, in particular Section 17.04.230.

2. Applicability of Building Design and Material Standards to Existing Buildings

Existing buildings that do not comply with the building design or building materials standards of this Chapter shall comply with the following standards:

1. Building alterations or additions constructed primarily at the side or rear of a building may be constructed with the same design and materials as the remainder of the building, provided an addition does not exceed 50% of the gross floor area of the existing building.
2. Any building additions to, or reconstruction of, street-facing building elevations shall comply with this Chapter to the extent practical to achieve a cohesive architectural design for the building. The Director of Community Development may grant exceptions where an applicant can demonstrate that conformance would be incongruous with the architecture of the building or would be impractical to construct (for example, re-facing a building façade with masonry material where no foundation exists to support the masonry).

[\(2011-Z-1](#) [1]: § 3 and 4)

17.06.060 – Standards and Guidelines - RT-1, RT-2, RT-3, RT-4 and CBD-2 Districts (one- and two-family dwellings only)

17.06.060 Standards and Guidelines – RT-1, RT-2, RT-3, RT-4, and CBD-2 Districts (one-and two-family dwellings only)

A. Site Layout and Context

Intent: To ensure building placement is compatible with neighboring properties and reflects the development pattern of the surrounding neighborhood.

Standards:

1. Buildings facades shall be oriented to the street. Front facades should squarely face the street

and should not be set at an angle. However, if adjacent homes are set at an angle the new home may be similarly sited.

1. Site grading shall be consistent with that of adjacent properties. The slope and elevation of the property shall not be altered in such a manner that results in an artificial change of grade.
2. The amount of front or exterior side yard covered by driveways shall be limited per Section 17.24.070Z.

Guidelines:

1. Setbacks (front, side, rear) should generally follow the averages for the block on which the new house is located. Front and exterior side yard setbacks may be reduced based on averaging of existing principal building setbacks along the street frontage of a block – See Table 17.12-2 for setback requirements.
2. Building and site layout should be compatible with existing topography and vegetation. Preservation of existing trees, particularly older growth trees, is recommended.
3. The coverage of driveways and parking areas in the front and exterior side yards should be minimized to the greatest extent possible.

B. Garages

Intent: To reduce the appearance and prominence of garages in order to maintain a pedestrian friendly streetscape.

Standards:

1. Garages shall meet the provisions of Section 17.22.020 Accessory Buildings and Structures, including but not limited to: requirement to provide access from a public alley; limitations on garage door width; and requirements to set back street-facing attached garages from the remainder of the building
2. Detached garages shall be consistent with the architectural style of the house. Use of similar window styles, exterior materials, and trim detailing is required

Guidelines

1. Detached or rear-loaded garages are recommended. A Building Coverage bonus shall be provided where a detached garage or an attached garage accesses via an alley is provided. See Table 17.12.2.

1. Street-facing doors on attached garages should incorporate glass panel windows.
2. The use of individual bay doors (single stall) is preferred over double-wide doors, particularly

for street-facing attached garages. Stepped back, separate garage doors should also be considered to further soften the impact of a street-facing attached garage.

C. Massing and Proportion

Intent: To reduce the appearance of mass and to encourage new houses to match the scale of the existing neighborhood.

Standards:

1. Buildings shall comply with the Bulk Requirements provided in Table 17.12-2 (including Setbacks, building coverage, and building height).

Guidelines:

1. Scale, proportions, and height should be compatible with adjacent homes and with the general characteristics of homes in the surrounding neighborhood. For example, effort should be made to limit the height, or reduce the appearance of height, of a two-story house constructed among single-story houses.

1. Simple building forms and shapes are encouraged.
2. The following methods may be incorporated to reduce the apparent mass of a home:
 - a. Step back portions of the home. For example, set the second story back a number of feet from the first story or add an unenclosed porch on the first story.
 - b. Use dormers to break up roof mass, if consistent with the architectural style of the home.
 - c. Incorporate horizontal design detailing to visually break up flat walls. Examples include wide skirt boards, mid-section trim between stories, frieze boards along roof eaves, partial or complete gable returns, or a change in siding or masonry patterns or materials.

D. Roofs

Intent: To encourage roofs and rooflines that add character and interest to a home, while blending with the roof forms found throughout the existing neighborhood.

Guidelines:

1. The form, pitch, and scale of roofs should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
2. Roof form, pitch, and scale should match the architectural style of the house.
3. Simple gabled and hipped roof forms are preferred.
4. Eaves that extend a sufficient distance to create shadow lines are encouraged if appropriate for the architecture of the structure.
5. The roof of the garage and other accessory structures should mimic the roof of the house in both form and pitch.
6. Mansard and flat roofs should be used only if appropriate for the architectural style of the house.

E. Architectural Details

Intent: To promote architectural interest and design that complements the traditional building styles found in older neighborhoods.

Standards:

1. “360 degree architecture” is required, meaning that facades must be designed to be viewed from all directions. At a minimum, the same window types and similar trim detailing to the front elevation must be used on the side and rear elevations.

Guidelines:

1. Use of masonry should be consistent on all facades. Use of masonry on the front façade only is discouraged.
2. The use of exterior trim detailing is recommended. In addition to the window casing, such detailing includes: wide vertical corner boards, skirt boards, frieze boards, and midsection trim.
3. The limited use of decorative elements such as gable trusses, exposed rafters, arched doors and windows, quoins, pediments, etc. is encouraged, provided such elements do not overwhelm or clutter the home’s appearance and are appropriate for the architectural style of the home.
4. All window openings should be articulated by window casing of at least four (4) inches if the primary all material is sliding.
5. Shutters should only be utilized where appropriate for the architectural style of the building. If shutters are used, they should exactly match the window size.
6. Chimneys should be masonry when located on a street-facing elevation.

F. Windows, Doors, and Entrances

Intent: To promote an inviting presence that contributes to the pedestrian friendly character of the neighborhood.

Guidelines:

1. The home’s primary entrance should be located at the front of the house, facing the street.
2. The front entry should be the predominate feature on the front elevation. Multi-story entry features should be used only when architecturally appropriate.
3. Open, full-width front or wrap-around porches are recommended to emphasize the front entrance. Porches should be at least six (6) to eight (8) feet in depth and constructed in a manner so as to be fully functional. Porch detailing should be consistent with the architecture of the house.
4. Unenclosed Porches are permitted to encroach up to eight (8) feet into the front, exterior side or rear yards.

Unenclosed porches are not included in the calculation of Building Coverage. For the definition of an Unenclosed Porch vs. Enclosed Porch and Building Coverage see Ch. 17.30. For information on permitted yard encroachments, see Section 17.22.030.

5. Windows should be incorporated on all elevations.
6. Window openings and panes should be similarly proportioned throughout.
7. Windows should be placed in a manner that creates a balanced elevation on all sides of the house.
8. Double-hung or casement windows are preferred. The use of fixed and large, undivided pane windows should be limited.
9. The use of window muntins (divides) should be consistent for all windows.
10. The style of windows and doors (particularly the front door) should complement the architectural style of the house.
11. In addition to window casing, design elements such as window muntins (divides), window sills, and head trim, should be incorporated if such details are appropriate for the architectural style of the house.

G. Additions and Exterior Alterations

Intent: To ensure additions and exterior alterations are complementary to the existing home and blend with the neighborhood.

Standards:

1. Additions and exterior alterations shall abide by the applicable standards and guidelines in Section 17.06.606 A-F.

Guidelines:

1. Additions should match the scale and mass of the original structure.
2. Additions and exterior alterations should match the existing house in exterior materials, color, architectural style and detailing, window proportion and type, and roof form, pitch, and color.

[\(2015-Z-25](#) [1]: §5)