

# Zoning Code Comparison of New Single Family Home Construction...



## City of Rochester, New York Single Family Residential Design Primer

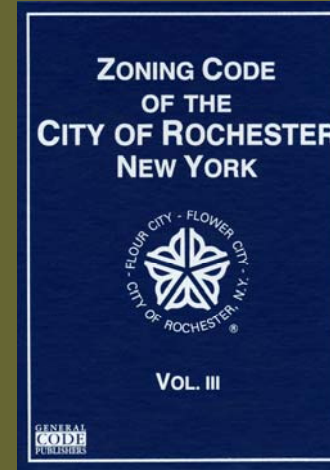


**Relevant Code Sections...**

The following code sections address the construction of new single family housing units within the City.

- Chapter 120-11: Lot, Area, and Yard Requirements
- Chapter 120-12: Bulk Requirements
- Chapter 120-160: Residential Building Design Guidelines

Other related sections include Chapter 120-167 on Fences & Walls and Chapter 120-173 on Off-Street Parking.



### Introduction

One of the key campaigns in the Rochester 2010: The Renaissance Plan is to create vital urban neighborhoods throughout the community. In order to help achieve this campaign, the City's Zoning Code includes design guidelines and standards. The residential design guidelines were created to ensure that infill housing complements, not necessarily mimics, the surrounding neighborhood. The information presented in this handout is meant to illustrate the regulations contained in the City's Zoning Code. A review of this document should NOT serve as a substitute for a thorough review and application of the City's Zoning regulations. The Zoning Code can be found online at [www.cityofrochester.gov](http://www.cityofrochester.gov).

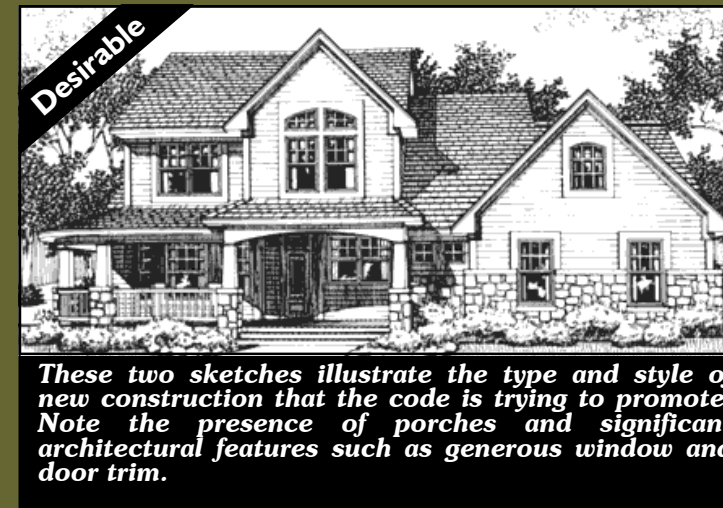


Image Sources: [www.tndhomes.com](http://www.tndhomes.com) & [www.jamesfahy.com](http://www.jamesfahy.com)



These two sketches illustrate the type and style of new construction that the code is trying to limit. The most dominate feature of the designs are the garage doors. As a result, the architectural contribution to streetscape is very limited.



## How To Apply The Design Guidelines

According to the City's Zoning Code, "new infill single-family, dwelling units shall be constructed to be generally compatible with other existing dwelling units or accessory buildings on the same block frontage within 200 feet. This provision shall be satisfied by constructing the subject dwelling so that at least four of the following features are similar to nearby properties:" In order to help gauge compatibility, these seven questions need to be answered. The photo to the right is provided to help illustrate the seven key code elements:

- 1: What is the dominant roof style in the neighborhood? (e.g., front facing gable, mansard, hip, A-frame, or flat)
- 2: What is the typical building massing? (e.g., ranch with attached garage; two-story with attached garage; bungalow)
- 3: What is the placement of the garages along the street? (e.g., attached/front-loaded, attached/side-loaded, or detached/alley-loaded)
- 4: What exterior building materials are widely used? (brick, clapboard)
- 5: How does the proposed floor area compare to the existing homes? For example, the floor area of the proposed single family dwelling unit shall be no less than 80% and not more than 145% of the average floor area of other single-family dwelling units, as indicated in the City Tax Assessor's records, within 200 feet of the subject lot, including single-family dwelling units along both sides of the street of the same block.
- 6: Are front porches common along the street?
- 7: Is there a consistent pattern of window and door openings? (e.g., central door and four windows; offset door and three windows).



### Tale of Two Homes...

The photo to the left shows a new home that dwarfs the existing housing stock and is completely out of character with the small, bungalow type houses that define the neighborhood. By comparison, the photo to the right, shows a home completed in 2005, adjacent to those that were constructed in the late 1920's. The scale, window heights, and porches make it difficult to determine which house is newly built. As a result, the new home blends into the fabric of the neighborhood and enhances the character of the street.

