

FRIDLEY HOUSING REPLACEMENT PROGRAM: A PATTERNBOOK FOR NEW HOMES



prepared for the City of Fridley by

Robert Gerloff Residential Architects

FOREWORD

The City Council and the Fridley Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) are pleased to present "A Patternbook for New Homes."

This book is aimed at prospective homeowners and builders who are thinking about constructing a new home in Fridley. If you live in Fridley, you are already familiar with the many advantages that Fridley neighborhoods offer. If you are new to the area, the Council and HRA hope you decide to build a new home here in our community.

The intent of this book is to assist prospective homeowners and builders with planning and architectural guidelines for new single family home construction not only on vacant lots owned by the HRA but also in other single family developments.

The days of large subdivisions with many vacant lots are now part of the City's history. Most new single family construction in Fridley can be referred to as "infill housing," or new homes built on vacant lots within an established neighborhood. The guidelines (or "rules of thumb") suggested in this book have been carefully developed to ensure that the homes are compatible with the existing character of Fridley neighborhoods, and that the homes' interiors are responsive to the needs and demographics of the current market.

In addition, the book takes a step further and suggests three house designs for typical Fridley lots, thereby offering a "readymade blueprint" for potential new homeowners. Three different house designs are featured on three different sized lots. The floor plans are annotated with notes pointing to the special features and advantages of each design. An interior "3-D" perspective is also provided.

Finding vacant lots to build on is the first challenge for a prospective owner or builder. The Fridley HRA may own one or several vacant sin-



Gracious and spacious streetscapes, front yards that flow from one house to the next, and private backyards are all hallmarks of the existing Fridley landscape we hope to preserve.

gle family lots. In 1995, the HRA initiated its Housing Replacement Program whereby older, substandard single family properties are purchased on a voluntary basis and replaced with new housing. In many cases, the homes acquired by the HRA are either abandoned or in such a condition to be a neighborhood eyesore. The HRA demolishes the house and then sells the lot for construction of a new single family home. This program has provided the City with a unique opportunity to create new housing and to meet the housing needs of the community and the larger local area.

Robert Gerloff Residential Architects was hired to prepare these guidelines and designs in conjunction with the City. Gerloff and his team are award-winning architects and have extensive experience with single-family home design.

The City Council and the Fridley HRA are committed to keeping Fridley neighborhoods strong and vital. We believe you will find this book

helpful, and encourage you to contact the Fridley HRA offices for further information.

*Mayor Nancy J. Jorgenson,
City of Fridley
Chairperson Lawrence R. Commers,
Fridley Housing & Redevelopment Authority*

“The intent of this book is to assist prospective homeowners and builders with planning and architectural guidelines for new single-family home construction.”

Mayor Nancy J. Jorgenson

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FRIDLEY HISTORIC SOCIETY



365 Mississippi Street in December 1949. A house surrounded by open fields.

PHOTO BY PETER J. MUSTY



365 Mississippi Street in December 1999. Busy streets, mature trees, many remodelings.

INTRODUCTION

Infill housing is always controversial. Logically, one would think that building a new house on an empty lot,

or tearing down a blighted house and building a brand new house in its place, should raise the value of surrounding properties enough to make the neighborhood happy.

But neighbors invariably howl in protest every time an infill house is proposed. And with good reason.

Infill houses almost never fit into their new neighborhoods. The reason is simple: infill houses are typically built from stock designs for new houses designed for the exurbs, even though—by definition—they are built in older, more established neighborhoods with a more homogeneous housing stock.

The cartoon below shows what a high Victorian house might look like if built as an infill house on a Fridley street. Everyone would agree that it looks out of place, that it simply doesn't fit. (Whether you have a right to build such a non-conformist house is a different issue entirely.)

Let's start with the basic agreement—based on the cartoon below—that some infill house designs will fit into the existing neighborhoods of Fridley and some infill house designs won't. If we can agree on this rather obvious assumption, then we need to find some way to describe the characteristics of house designs that *will* successfully fit into the existing neighborhoods of Fridley.

That is the purpose of this book: to help describe the characteristics of house designs that will successfully fit into the existing historic neighborhoods of Fridley.

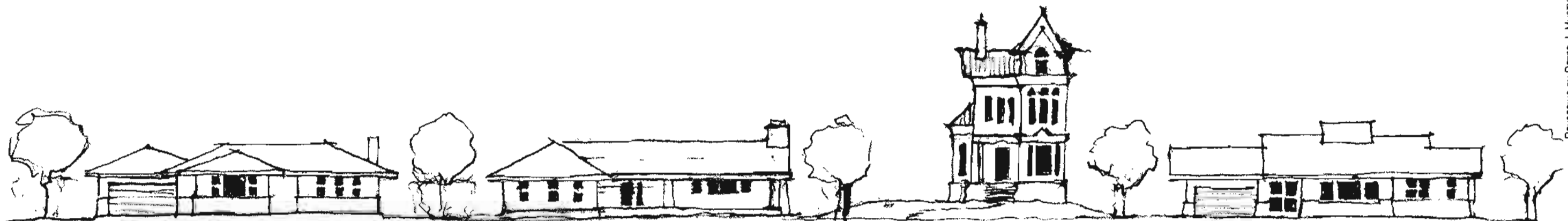
Historic neighborhoods of Fridley? Yes, historic. Many residents are shocked to hear that their neighborhoods, which still feel so new and clean, are beginning to be thought of as historic. In architectural history, any building that survives the wrecking ball for 50 years is considered historic. The first post-WWII neighborhoods built in Fridley are already considered historic, and other neighborhoods will gain historic status soon.

Of course, we could simply make the whole process easier by simply building replicas of 1960s rambler. Then we'd be guaranteed they would fit in. But simply building replicas doesn't make sense, for two reasons:

One, how Americans inhabit their houses is constantly changing and what people expect from a new home is constantly evolving. To be marketable, a new house has to meet current expectations for how a new home functions. Today's new home buyers would never accept a 1960s kitchen, for example. They demand mudrooms and more closet space.

Two, the way American builders build new homes is constantly evolving. Building technology has changed drastically since the energy crisis of the early 1970s. Computer-designed, factory-manufactured trusses are inexpensive and have replaced hand-framing. Old-growth lumber is gone, replaced by composites and engineered lumber. Energy codes restrict the amount of glass in a house. Labor costs are much higher and craftsmen in much shorter supply. Today's houses are more often assembled from factory-made parts than they are built stick-by-stick on site. And for infill houses to be affordable to a wide range of the market, they have to be built using current, off-the-shelf parts and materials.

So what we need, ultimately, is a hybrid: A house that respects its existing neighborhood, yet is attractive to today's buyers and—since it's built using today's technology—is affordable to an average



4 Anyone would recognize that dropping a three-story Victorian house into the low-rise, rambler-dominated housing stock of Fridley would be wildly inappropriate. It's far more difficult to recognize which designs are appropriate for infill housing in Fridley.

“The purpose of this book is to help describe the characteristics of house designs that will successfully fit into the existing historic neighborhoods of Fridley.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRIDLEY HISTORIC SOCIETY

buyer.

This is no small order.

In this book we try to both list a series of “rules of thumb” for both massing and architectural details to help builders design houses that will fit into the existing neighborhoods of Fridley, and then show three examples of house designs that embody those rules on the city’s three most common lot widths.

We hope that this book will be useful to both builders and neighborhood residents by providing a common language for specific ideas that can help infill house designs fit in.

Ultimately all neighbors are asking for is a little respect—for the qualities of their existing homes and the character of their neighborhood.

—Robert Gerloff

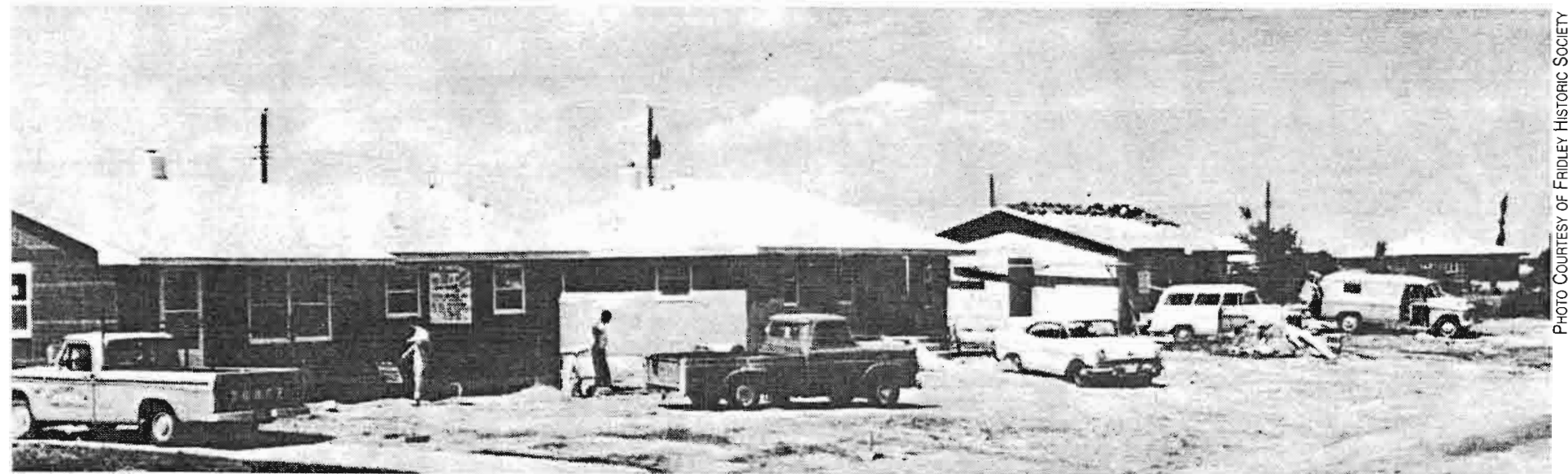


PHOTO COURTESY OF FRIDLEY HISTORIC SOCIETY

TOP: A row of ramblers under construction on Rice Creek Terrace in 1965. BOTTOM: A street under construction in 1965.

ZONING ISSUES

It's a common fallacy that building codes and zoning guidelines are written to produce 'good' house designs.

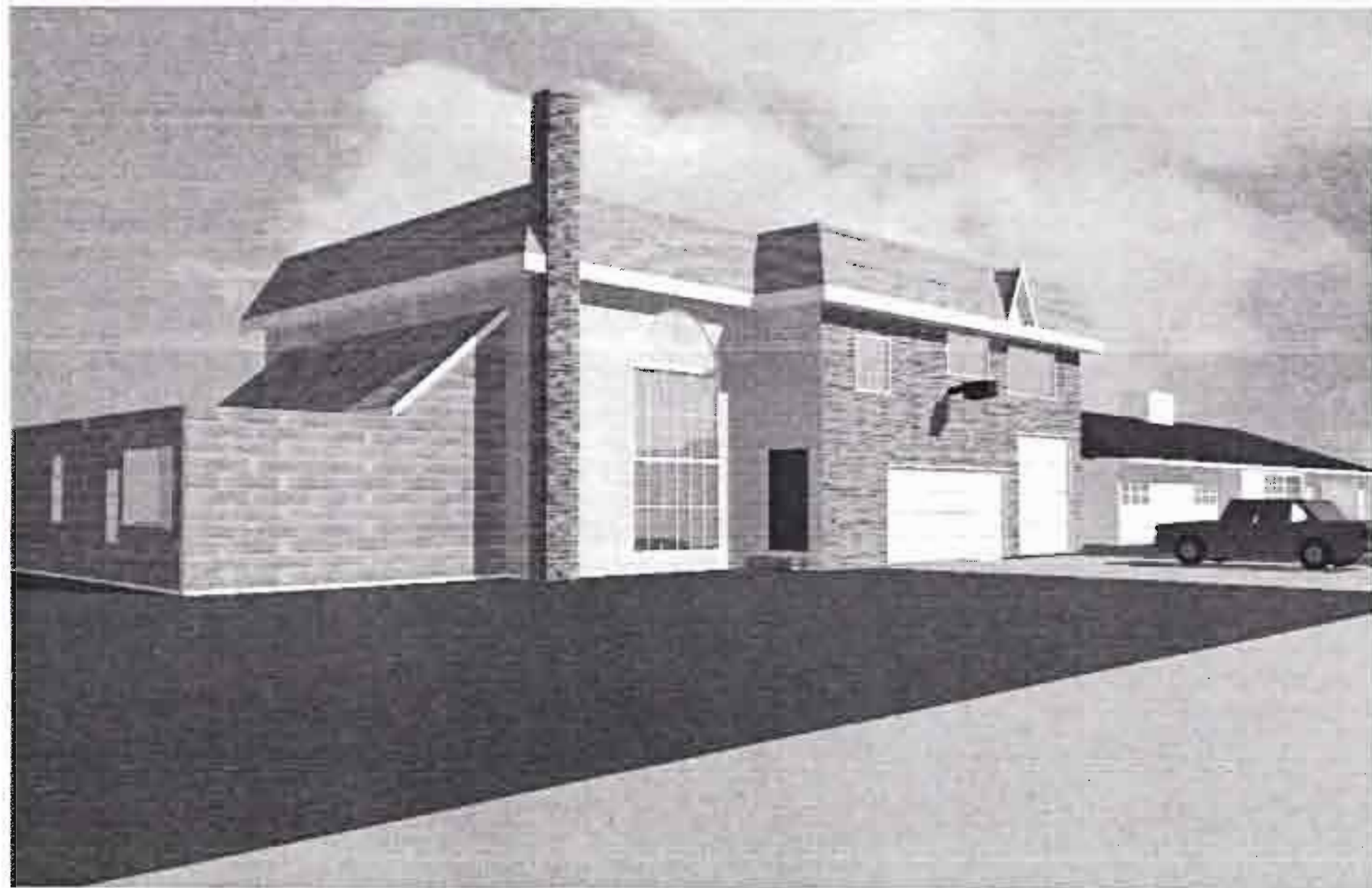
Nothing could be further from the truth. Building codes are written specifically to help protect lives in case of fire, tornado, or earthquake. For example, every bedroom has to have an egress window large enough for a fireman wearing an oxygen tank and carrying a child to climb through. Zoning guidelines are also written to help protect lives. For example, side yard setbacks are written to keep houses far enough apart so a fire in one house won't spread to its neighbors. Neither are written to describe good or even appropriate design.

Also, zoning guidelines are *prescriptive* rather than *proscriptive*; that is, they tell you what NOT to do, but not WHAT to do. For example, the house to the right on this page meets the letter of the law on all Fridley zoning guidelines, but no one would ever want this built on their street. It's hideous.

Of course the word *ugly* doesn't appear once in any Fridley zoning guideline. It can't. Whether a house is ugly or beautiful is purely subjective and rooted in personal taste. Taste can't be defined in any court of law.

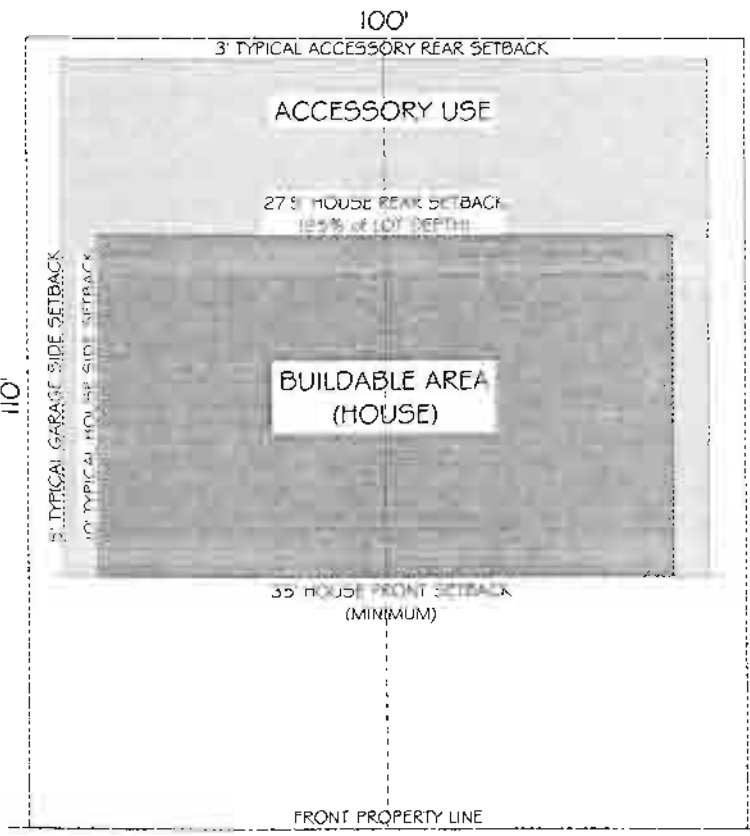
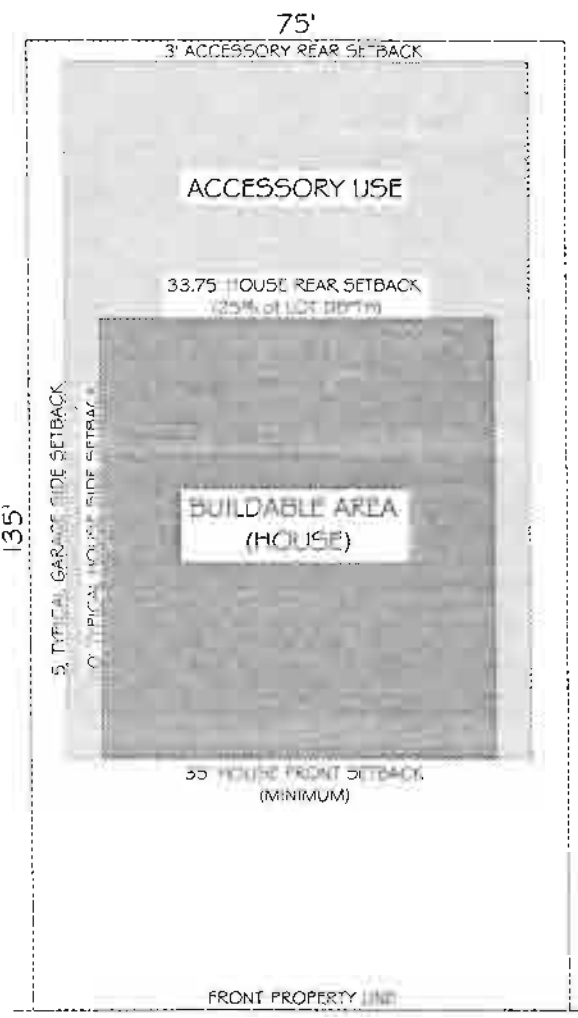
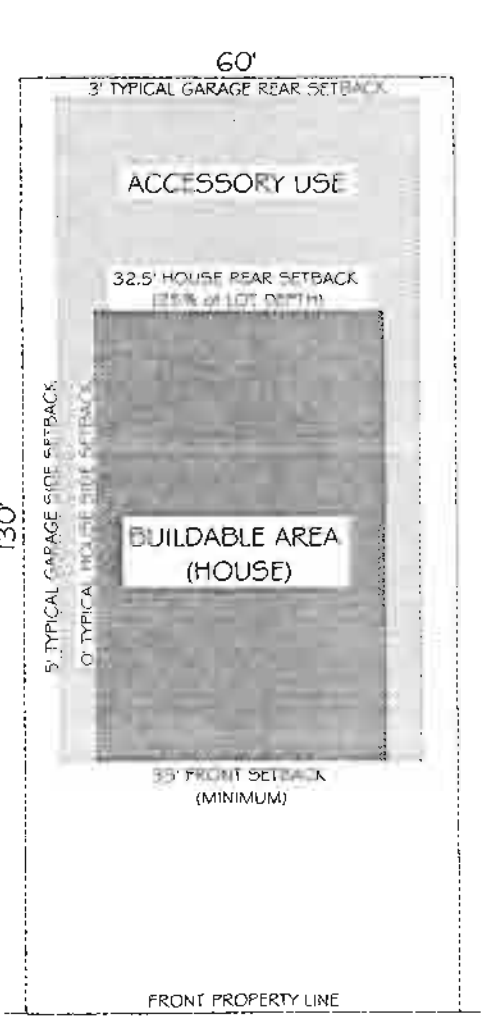
Ultimately the issue with infill housing isn't whether a house is ugly or beautiful, but whether it's appropriate for a given neighborhood. By laying out *rules of thumb* for the massing and architectural details of a house, we hope to help all parties involved—the city, the builder, and the neighborhood—develop a language for discussing what is appropriate and not appropriate for a specific infill house design.

Always remember: just because a house design complies with all building codes and zoning guidelines doesn't mean it will fit into an existing Fridley neighborhood.



Just because a house design complies with all building codes and zoning guidelines doesn't mean it will fit into Fridley's neighborhoods. The hideous house above meets the letter of the law.

“Just because a house design complies with all building codes and zoning guidelines doesn’t mean it will fit into existing Fridley neighborhoods.”



60' WIDE LOT
Zoning typically requires a 75' wide lot, but the 16-square block Hyde Park neighborhood is a special S-1 Redevelopment Zone and new houses can be built on the existing 60' wide lots.

75' WIDE LOT
75' wide lots are probably the most common lot type within the City of Fridley.

100' WIDE LOT
50' wide lots are common in the Riverview Heights neighborhood of Fridley. Since current zoning requires a minimum 75' wide lot for new construction, two lots must be combined to create one larger, 100' wide lot before a new infill house can be built.

AREA: The typical minimum lot size is 9000 sq. ft..

WIDTH: The typical lot needs to be a minimum of 75' wide at the required setback.

LOT COVERAGE: No more than 25% of the lot area can be covered by buildings.

FRONT YARD SETBACKS: The typical front yard setback is 35'.

SIDE YARD SETBACKS: The typical side yard setback is 10'-0" to living area and 5'-0" to an accessory building. On corner lots the minimum setback is 17'-6" (with exceptions).

REAR YARD SETBACKS: The typical rear yard setback is 25% of the lot depth with no more than 40' and no less than 25'. An accessory building can sit within 3'-0" of the rear property line. In the rare exception of lots with a double frontage, typical building lines prevail in lieu of rear yard setbacks.

PARKING: Fridley requires a minimum of two off-street parking stalls on driveway or city-approved hard surface if in the front yard. Driveways and parking pads should sit back 3' from any property line.

HEIGHT: A house can be no taller than 30' measured from grade to peak.

MINIMUM FLOOR AREAS: 1. A one-story house needs a minimum of 1020 finished s.f.
2. A two-story house needs a minimum of 1020 finished s.f. on the main level with at least 768 s.f. of living area and an attached garage of at least 396 s.f. A two-story house with the upper level living space built into the roof needs a minimum main level square footage of 864 s.f., an attached garage of at least 396 s.f. and each upper level bedroom needs to be at least 120 s.f.
3. A split level house needs at least 1020 finished s.f. in the upper two levels and a minimum of 768 s.f. per level provided that it has an attached garage of at least 396 s.f. and the upper level is no more than 6' above grade.

BASEMENT: A basement is required except in flood plain areas.

GARAGE: Fridley requires a double garage for all lots greater than 9,000 s.f. or any lots resulting from a lot split. Garages satisfy off-street parking requirements.

ACCESSORY USES: A detached garage is considered the first accessory building. All accessory buildings together cannot be larger than 1400 s.f. Secondary accessory buildings larger than 240 s.f. require a building permit. Accessory structures can be no taller than 14' from grade to peak.

THE STREETScape, FRONT YARD & BACKYARD

Nothing defines Fridley more than its pattern of gracious, tree-lined streets, wide front yards, and spacious

backyards. This pattern is certainly not unique to Fridley—in fact it describes most post-WWII American suburbs—but it's going to be increasingly rare in the future.

Most land in the Twin Cities metro area that's within easy driving distance of the core cities has already been developed. There are no plans to radically expand the existing freeway system, and Twin Cities residents are already fed up with the length and speed of their commutes. Land is simply growing more valuable. New suburban developments are typically more dense than Fridley, with houses built on smaller, narrower, or shallower lots.

The land-use patterns in Fridley are so familiar and seemingly commonplace that it's sometimes hard to even see them. But let's try to point out the obvious:

THE STREETScape:

The streets in Fridley are largely laid out on the grid, which is straightforward and easy to navigate. Yet most streets end in views of houses or trees, with none of the endless vistas of a Chicago, say, or other large cities laid out on the grid. Each group of three or four blocks feels like a compact neighborhood, its own little world.

Curbs are minimal and there are few sidewalks. Driveways lead from the street to private houses, with few pedestrian walks leading from street to house—pedestrians must walk up the driveway to reach the front door.

The streetscape is spacious and gracious. Houses are set back from and don't crowd the street.



PHOTO BY PETER J. MUSTY

THE FRONT YARD:

One front yard flows into the next front yard flows into the next front yard... with almost no interruption. There are almost no front yard fences or hedges, only a scattering of ornamental trees to interrupt the free flow of space. Few toys or bikes or personal possessions are left in front yards, and gardening is usually confined to strips along the front of the house.

Very few houses have front porches or other places to sit and hang out in the front of the house. While front doors are always clearly visible from the street, there is no place to linger.

So while the front yard is private, it really isn't used much. It is a

semi-private buffer between the street and the private world one enters after stepping through the front door.

THE BACKYARD:

It's in the backyard that the homeowner's personality shines through.

Backyards are a world of decks and patios, barbecues and storage sheds. There are tables and chairs, table umbrellas and lounge chairs. There are places to sit and simply enjoy being outside.

Backyards also belong to children. They are packed with sandboxes and swingsets, playhouses and jungle gyms. Children's toys are left



FAR LEFT: The view of a Fridley streetscape from behind the wheel of an automobile.
 BELOW: A view across several Fridley front yards showing the uninterrupted flow of space from one yard to the next. One of the great advantages of living in Fridley's historic neighborhoods is the stock of mature trees. LEFT: The view across a fence into a row of very private backyards, showing storage sheds and children's play equipment.

scattered around, ready for the next game.

Backyards are often fenced or hedged in. One yard is strictly defined from the next.

Gardens and gardening are more intense in backyards than front yards. If a home has a vegetable garden, it's in the backyard.

Backyards are intensely private places.

INFILL HOUSING:

Any infill house design has to respect the streetscape, front yard, and backyard conventions already established in Fridley. For example:

- a large garage thrusting into a front yard means not much of the house is visible from the street, destroying the "gracious and spacious" view of houses so important to the Fridley streetscape.

- a large garage off the front of the house also breaks that feeling of space flowing uninterrupted from one yard to the next, so important to the Fridley front yardscape.

- a house that doesn't open into its backyard space misses the prime private space available in the Fridley landscape.

Keeping these simple patterns in mind when designing an infill design will help that house fit into and respect its neighborhood.

What is most missing from the Fridley landscape is the idea of a front porch, a place on the front of the house—the public world—where people can visit.



PHOTO BY PETER J. MUSTY

GARAGE ISSUES

The size, shape, and orientation of the garage is the biggest battlefield in infill house designs.

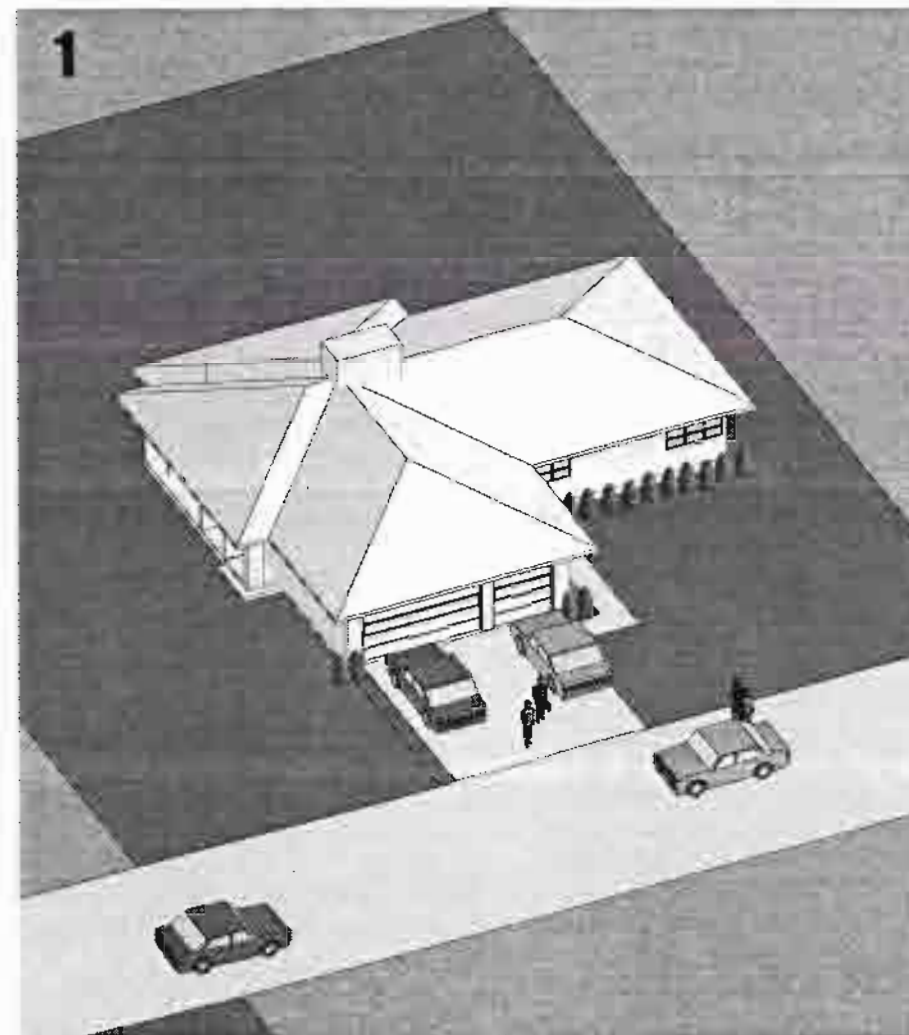
New suburban house designs tend to push the garage forward (toward the street) and pull the house back into the backyard. This makes new suburban developments look like a seemingly endless parade of garage doors. And as more and more new houses are built with three- and even four-stall garages, the raw mass of the garage is overwhelming the house. From the street, your typical new home looks like a garage with a house attached.

These garage-happy house designs simply don't fit into Fridley.

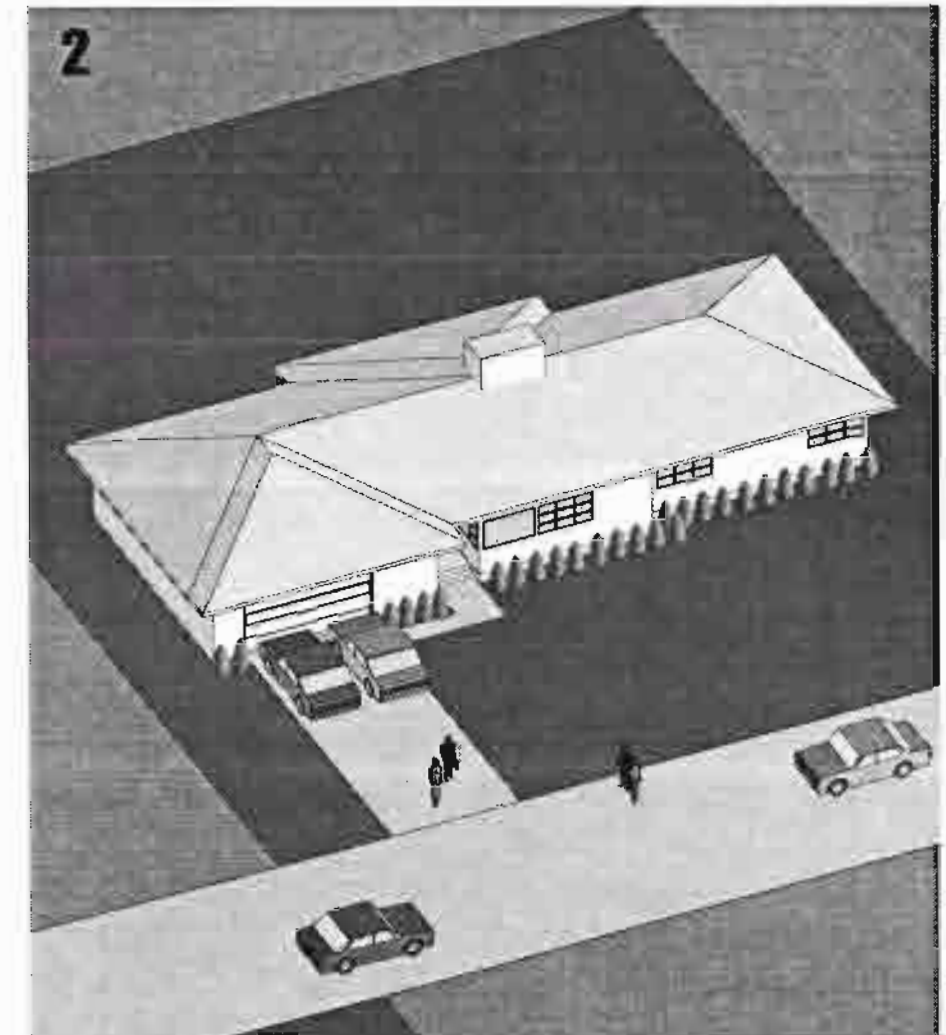
New suburban garages are bulking up because the role of the garage has greatly changed since Fridley was developed in the 1960s: 1) People have more vehicles, toys, and tools that need to be stored in the garage, all of which take up more space. For example, a snowblower takes up more space than a snow shovel; a riding mower takes up more space than a push mower. 2) The garage has largely supplanted the den or the basement workshop as the male's room in the house, hence the joke phrase "a house for her and a garage for him."

New infill houses have to reflect this larger cultural shift in the role of garages while still respecting the existing patterns of Fridley.

Detached garages are also making a comeback. The post-war generation loved the convenience of attached garages. A new generation of home-buyers who grew up in houses with attached garages are often willing to put up with the inconvenience of carrying groceries a few more steps to gain the benefit of more windows and more light inside the house. Plus there's growing concern about the health consequences of attached garages, a topic under intense study.

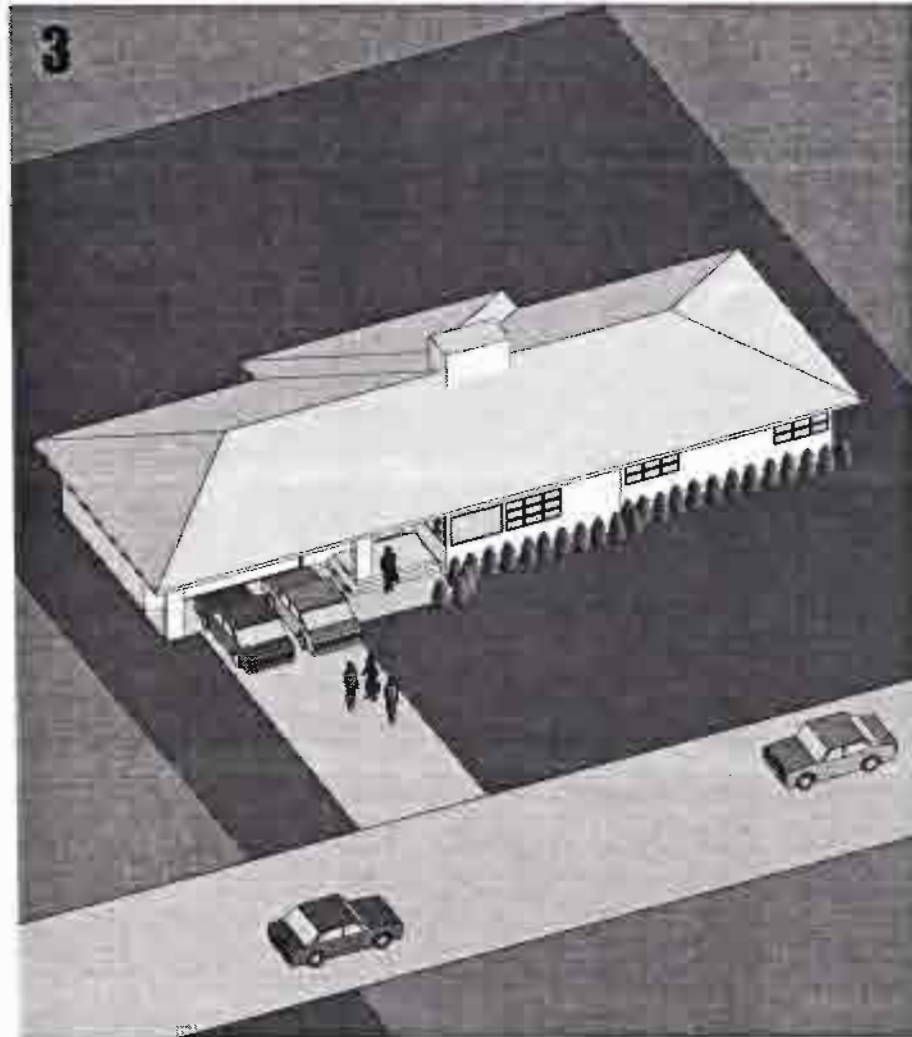


GARAGE PUSHED TOWARD THE STREET: This is how NOT to design the garage for an infill house in Fridley. This garage completely dominates the house. It's a "garage with an attached house." Projecting the garage forward breaks the free-flowing front yard that is so important to the feel of Fridley. The front door of the house is buried and hidden, destroying the neighborly "Friendly Fridley" feeling.

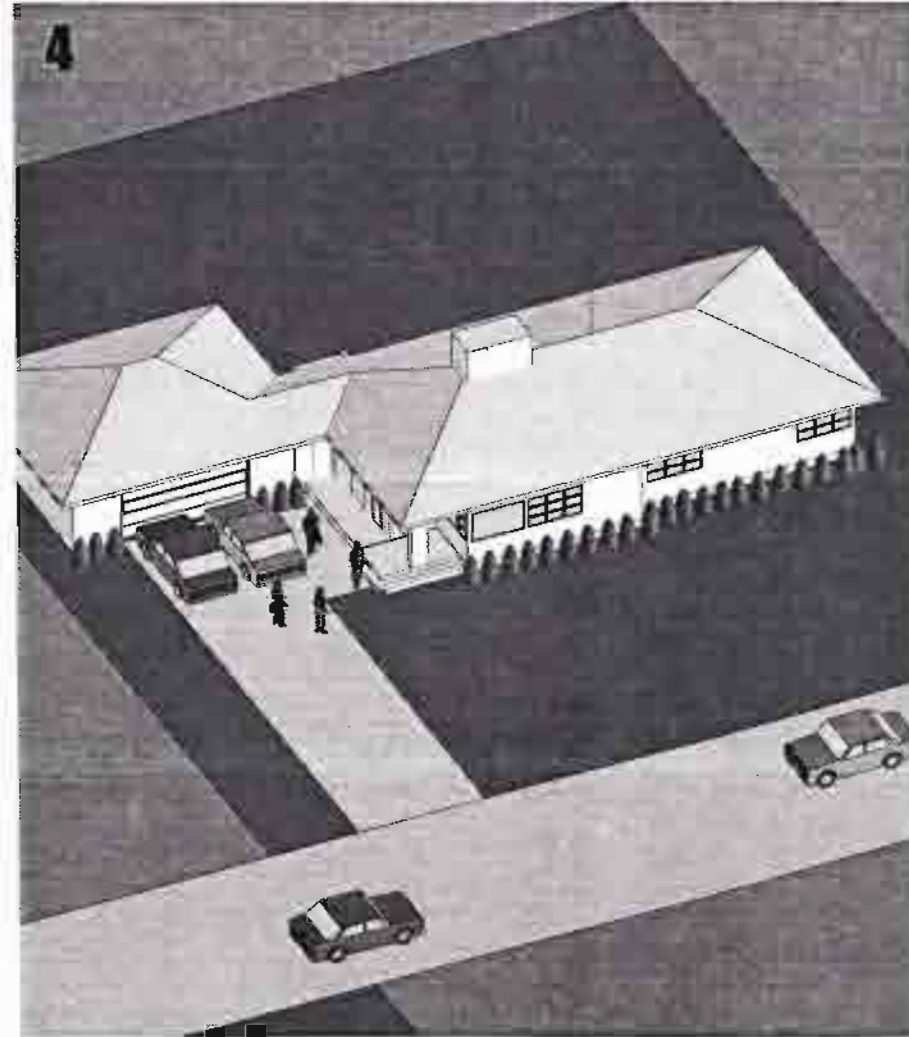


ATTACHED GARAGE FLUSH WITH THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE: This is the prevailing pattern in existing Fridley ramblers. While the garage doors dominate the front of the house, the front door is still visible.

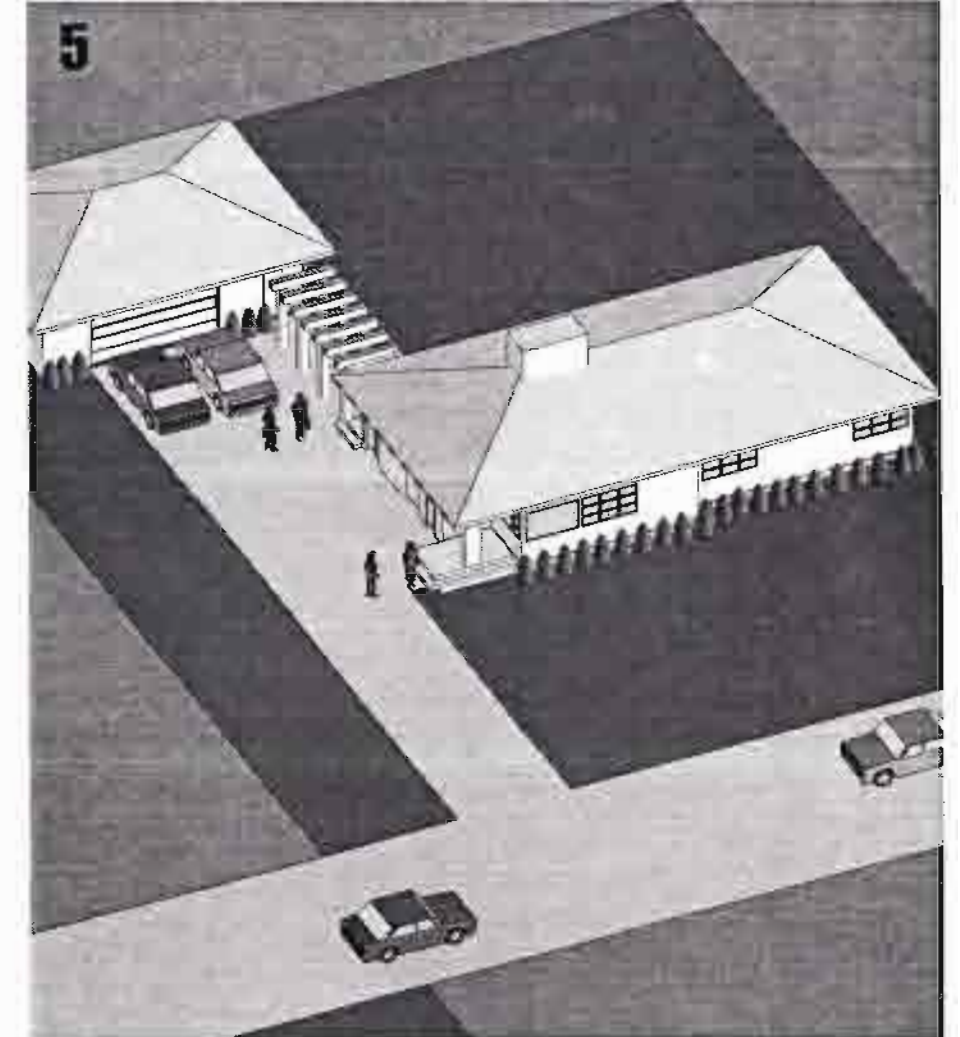
"... the role of the garage has greatly changed since Fridley was developed in the 1960s."



ATTACHED GARAGE WITH GARAGE DOORS SET BACK FROM FRONT DOOR:
This is a great compromise garage location. Simply setting the garage door back even a few feet from the front of the house makes the house look more friendly and inviting, more of a house for people and less a storage barn for cars. At the same time, keeping the garage in line with the house leaves the backyard open and untouched. Any attached garage, however, blocks light and windows on that side, making the house darker and less sunny inside.



GARAGE ATTACHED WITH A BREEZEWAY:
Many older Fridley homes have a garage attached to the main house via a breezeway. The garage is typically set back from the front of the house, creating a wonderful space on the driveway for a basketball court or other hard-surface play. At the same time, the further the garage is pushed back, the more backyard it consumes.



DETACHED GARAGE CONNECTED WITH A COLONNADE:
Pushing the garage all the way to the rear of the lot and connecting it to the house via a colonnade (which could be covered for protection from the rain) chews up a lot of the backyard, but it leaves all four sides of the house exposed to light and sun. Houses with detached garages are inherently lighter and sunnier than houses with attached garages.

MASSING RULES OF THUMB

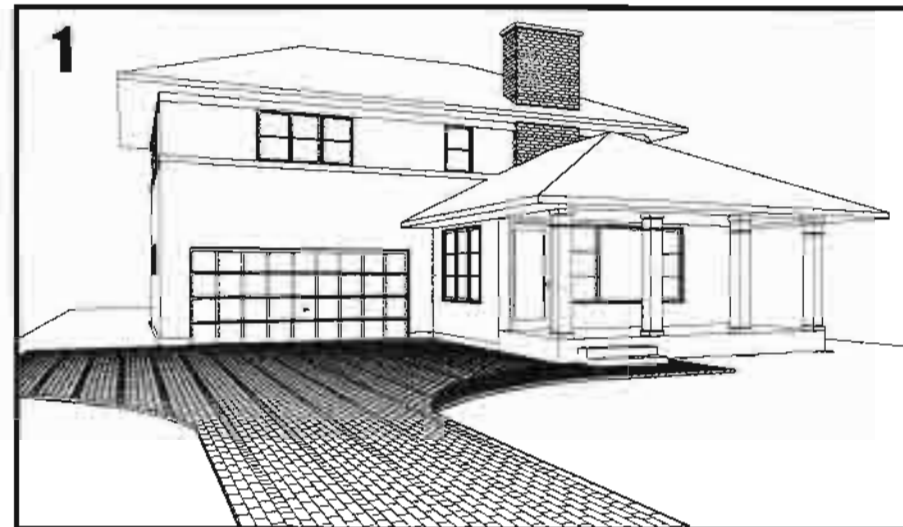
All the architectural detailing in the world won't make a house with inappropriate massing fit in. But if you get the massing right, any architectural detail you add is only frosting on the cake.

'Massing' is an architectural term for the shape or form of a house. The existing houses in Fridley have very simple massing. They are long and low and horizontal, with the garage doors either flush with the face of the house or slightly pulled back behind the front door. The roof is a big, low-pitched hip or gable hovering protectively overhead, with deep overhangs and continuous eave lines. Most often a vertical chimney—often made of masonry—nails the house to the ground. The footprint is usually a simple rectangle, without the skewed walls and other complex geometries we see in so many contemporary suburban houses.

Remember the Victorian house that wouldn't be appropriate for Fridley? Many contemporary suburban houses are equally busy, with dormers, multiple gables, fancy geometric windows, and hips all piled on top of each other.

The idea of including a front porch on infill house designs doesn't grow directly out of historical precedent. Very few of the original houses—and certainly none of the ramblers—were built with front porches. Yet a front porch is such an amazing tool for increasing the sense of community in a neighborhood that we decided to include one. They certainly can't hurt the neighborhood.

In general the Fridley aesthetic values plain, simple, and straightforward forms over ornate, complicated, and convoluted forms. When in doubt, keep it simple.



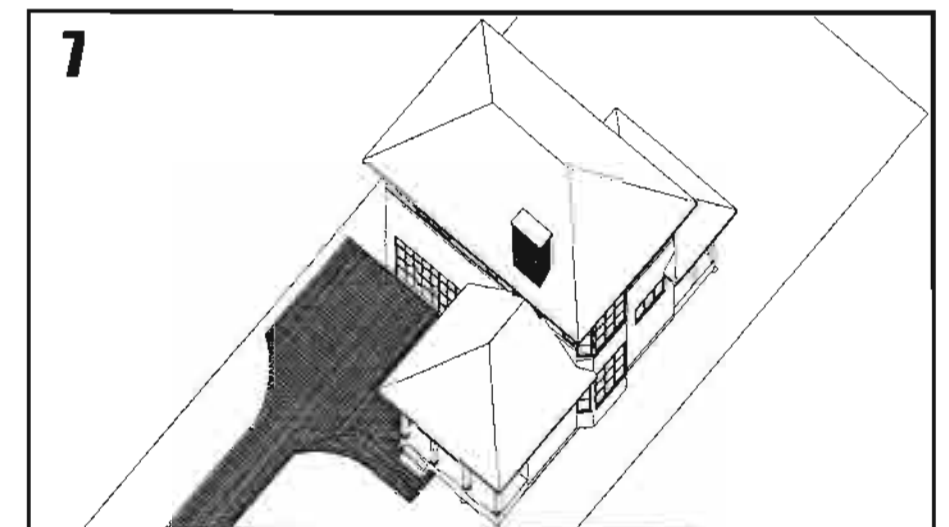
GARAGE DOOR RULE: The garage door must be located further from the street than the front door. No door for a third stall can be visible from the street.



FRONT PORCH RULE: There must be a minimum of 4'-0" x 6'-0" of covered entry at the front door, a place for people to meet-and-greet or sit protected from the elements.

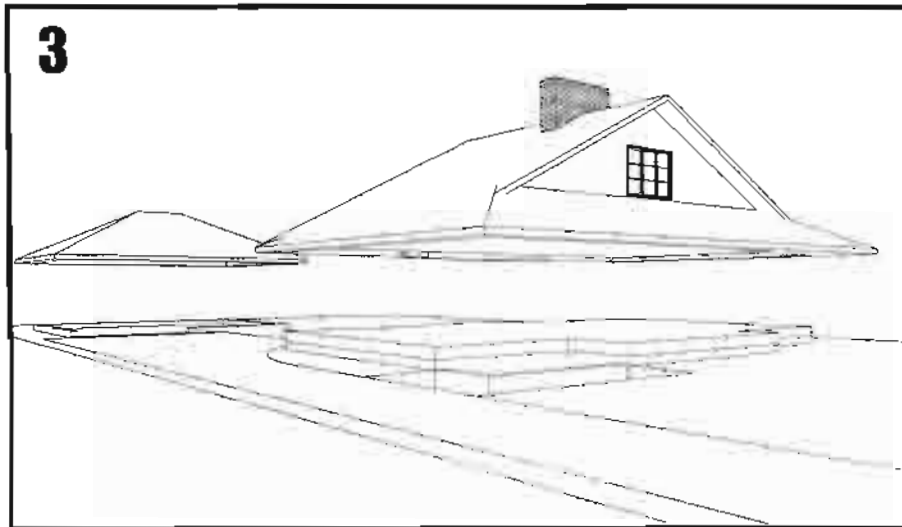


HORIZONTAL RULE: The house must be long and low and horizontal and close to the ground. Ideally the main level should be no more than 12"-18" above grade.

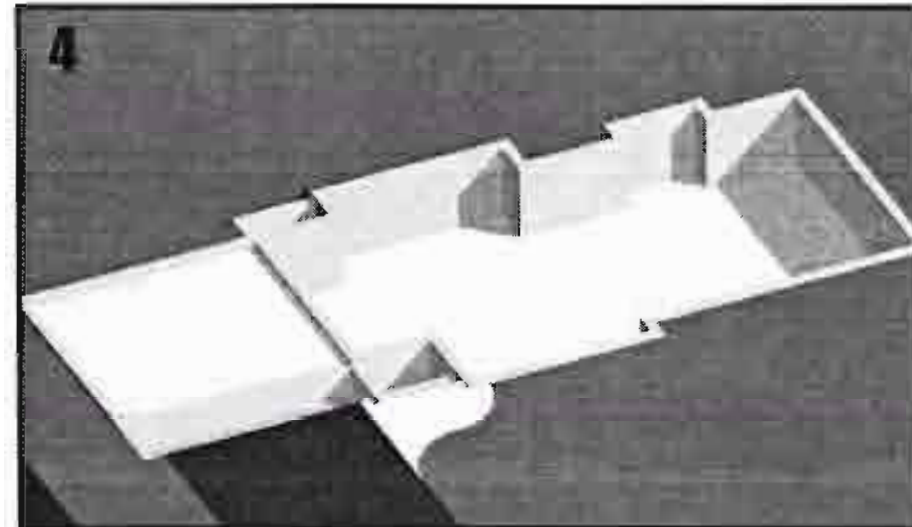


SIMPLE ROOF RULE: The roof must have only one or two forms, with no dormers, no eyebrows or other busy roof constructions.

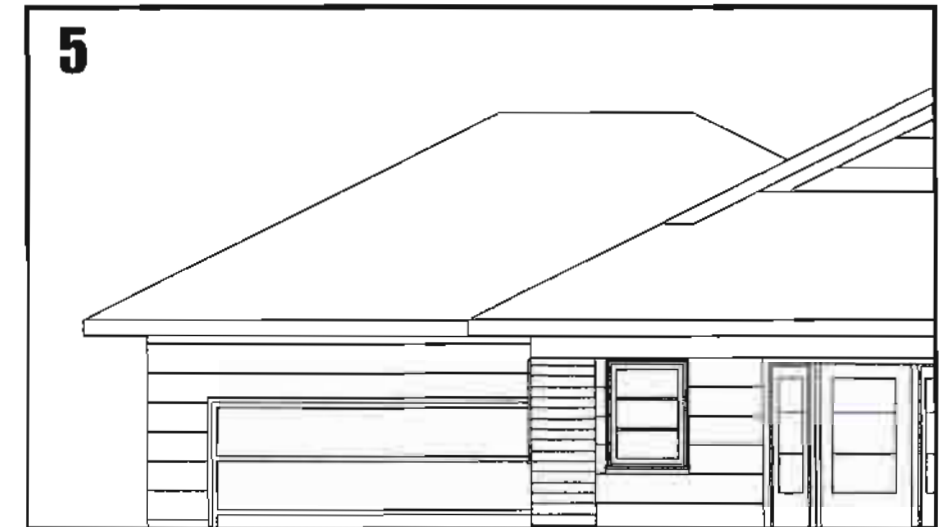
“A front porch is an amazing tool for increasing the sense of community in a neighborhood.”



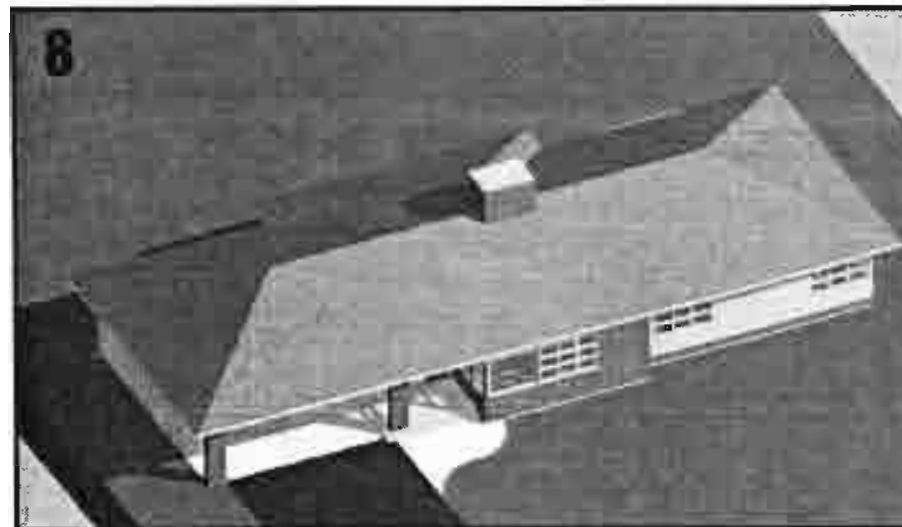
3
BIG ROOF RULE: The roof can be either a hip or a gable, but it should be big and sheltering, with deep eaves and lots of deep insets.



4
SQUARE CORNERS RULE: The footprint of the house must be a simple rectangle or combination of simple rectangles. Avoid angled or skewed walls and other fancy geometries.



5
ROOF PITCH RULE: The roof pitch must be no more shallow than 4/12 and no more steep than 6/12.



6
VERTICAL MASS RULE: The house must be nailed to the ground by a vertical mass, such as a chimney, which breaks up the otherwise long, low horizontal form.



7
CONTINUOUS EAVE RULE: Wherever possible, an eave line should be continuous all around the house.



8
PARALLEL FACE RULE: The long side or face of the house must run parallel to the street to help define the free-flowing front yards so characteristic of Fridley.

ARCHITECTURAL RULES OF THUMB

First focus on getting the massing right. Only then should you begin thinking about the architectural details.

Again, all the architectural detailing in the world won't make a house with inappropriate massing fit in. But once you get the massing right, it's the architectural detailing that really makes a design sing.

The architecture in Fridley—like most post-WWII architecture in America—thrives on straightforwardness. Most of the rules of thumb we list here are intended to help keep the houses simple and straightforward enough to fit into existing Fridley neighborhoods.

For example, when the form of a house is simple and boxy, the window pattern is the main architectural expression. Make certain that the window pattern is itself simple and harmonious.

At the same time, a house can be TOO simple and boxy. There are several tricks for keeping house designs from becoming monotonous. One is to create obvious places for people to gather, like front porches and front stoops. Another is to create a window that breaks all the rules, the so-called “feature” window. Another is to mix materials together, so a bay window, for example, is sheathed in brick rather than siding. And one last trick is to include windows on all elevations, so you're never staring at a blank, featureless wall.

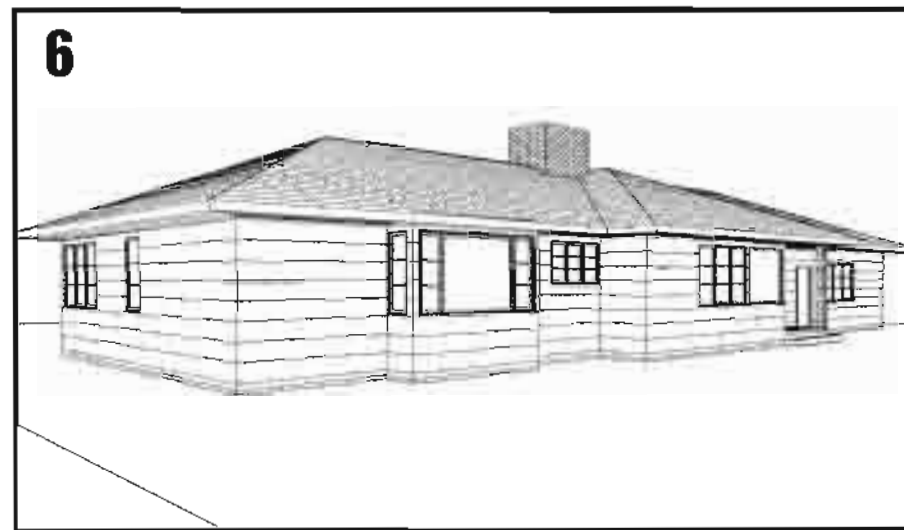
Together these rules of thumb should help create a house that fits into Fridley both in details and massing.



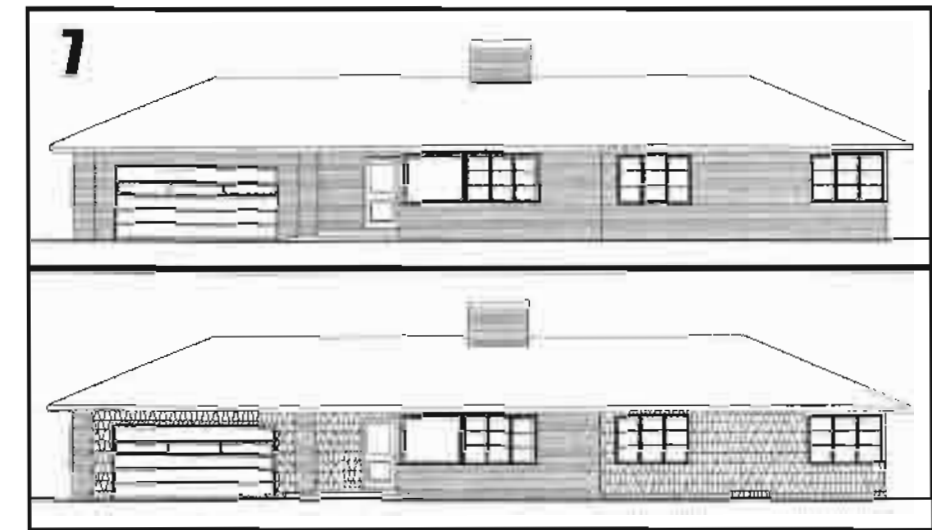
1 SOCIAL STAIRS RULE: There must be a place to socialize at the front door of the house, ideally wide and shallow stairs where people can hang out.



2 FEATURE WINDOW RULE: There must be a feature window, such as a large picture window with flankers or a corner window, which is the focus of the front elevation.



6 WINDOW TYPE RULE: All background windows must be of the same family, whether casement/awning or double-hung/glider, throughout the entire house.

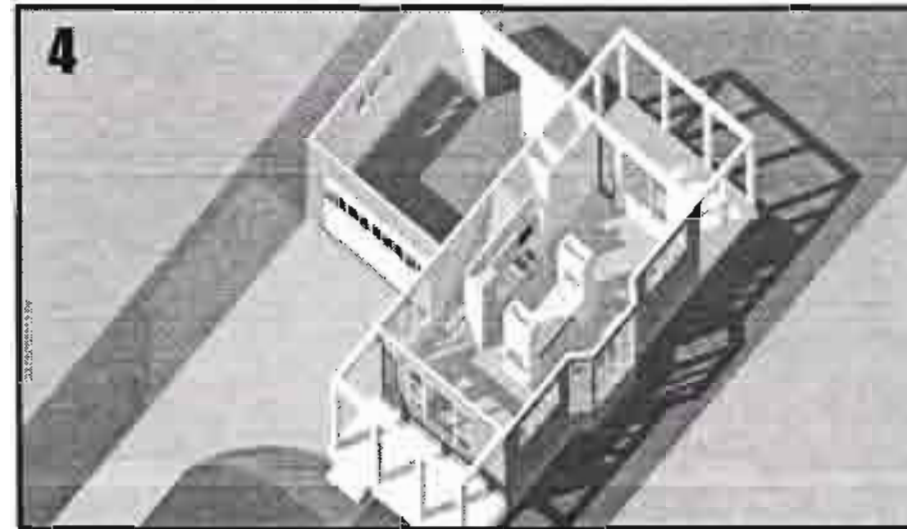


7 DIRECTIONAL SIDING RULE: Long, low and horizontal houses can look overwhelmingly long if sided with a thin, horizontal siding. Stucco or cedar shingles are ideal.

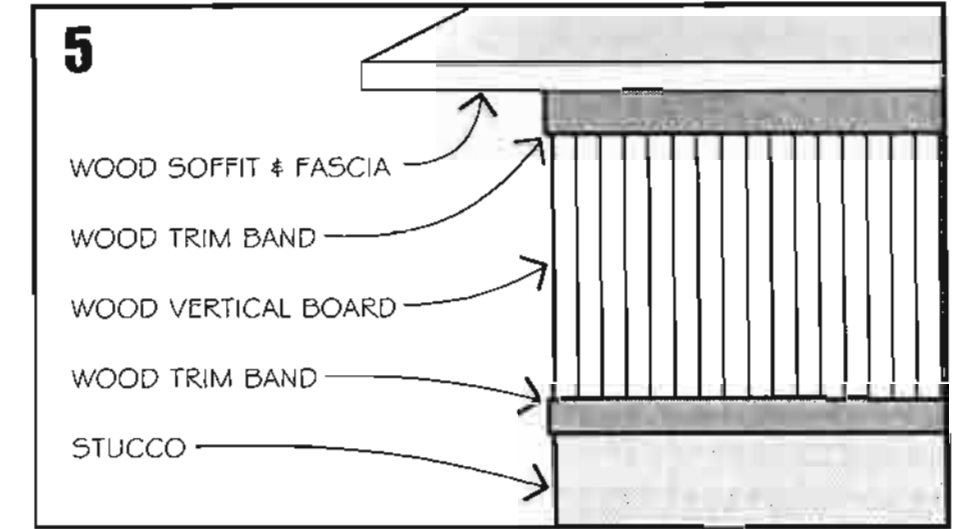
“There are several tricks for keeping house designs from becoming monotonous.”



3
WINDOW PROPORTIONS RULE: Window proportions must be largely horizontal. The sashes on double-hung windows must have horizontal proportions, and casements (except in bathrooms and closets) must be mulled together in groups with horizontal proportions.



4
BLANK WALL RULE: Every elevation must have windows above grade. No blank walls are allowed. This includes garage walls.



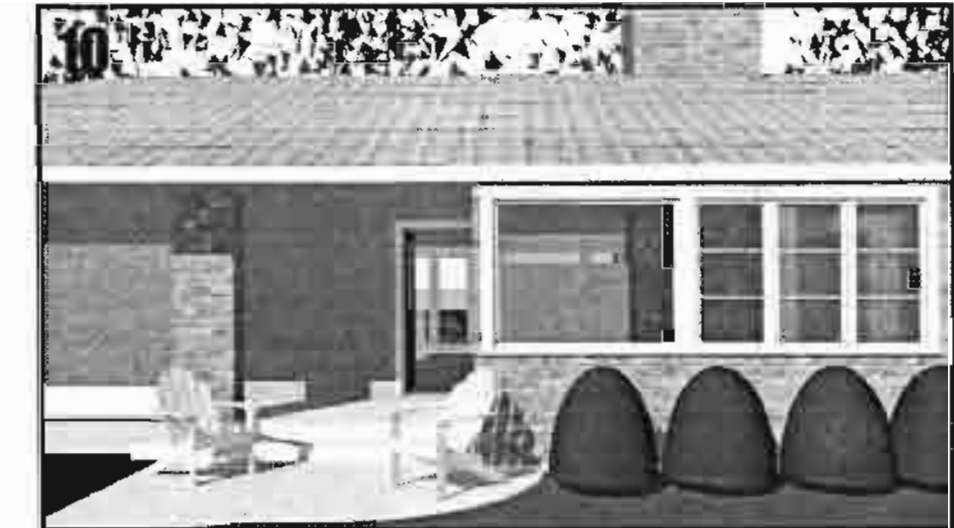
5
EXTERIOR MATERIALS RULE: The front elevation must have at least two but no more than three different materials. Ideally at least one material is masonry.



8
CONTRASTING COLORS RULE: Window trim must be a different color than the siding to create some contrast in the elevation.



9
UNIQUE DESIGN FEATURE RULE: Every house must have some unique design element—a special column at the front porch, a special front window, unique stone, or a different color—that distinguishes it from its neighbors.



10
TRANSPARENCY RULE: Provide a clear visual connection from the front to the rear of the house to make the house seem larger and more connected to the backyard.

INFILL DESIGN FOR A 60' WIDE LOT

Suburban lots have gotten progressively wider through the years, meaning it's very difficult these days to

find decent designs for narrow infill lots.

Without question the most difficult design challenge is shoehorning a double-stall garage onto the site without overwhelming the house. To avoid the look of a "house attached to a garage" we've pulled the front porch in front of the garage doors. This gives the house a friendlier, more inviting look.

In addition we've made the garage "transparent" by adding a large set of doors leading from the garage to the backyard. Our hope is to both make the backyard more inviting and more accessible for lawnmowers, playground equipment, etc.

A main level front room is focused on the fireplace while the back room is focused on a built-in TV. The TV is set up to pivot so people in the kitchen and eating area can also watch it.

At the heart of this house is a compact galley kitchen. All other rooms rotate around the kitchen, which is the focus of family life these days. There is room for eating at a counter and at a dining table built into a large bay window.

Upstairs is a master suite and two bedrooms, each with a walk-in closet, that share a second full bath. Having all bedrooms upstairs will make this design most appealing to a younger family with children.

A front porch and a back porch extend living space to the outdoors and increase the perceived size of what is otherwise a small house.

Not shown is the spacious basement, which could simply be used for storage or it could be developed into a rumpus room for small children, a bedroom for independent-minded teens, or a home office.



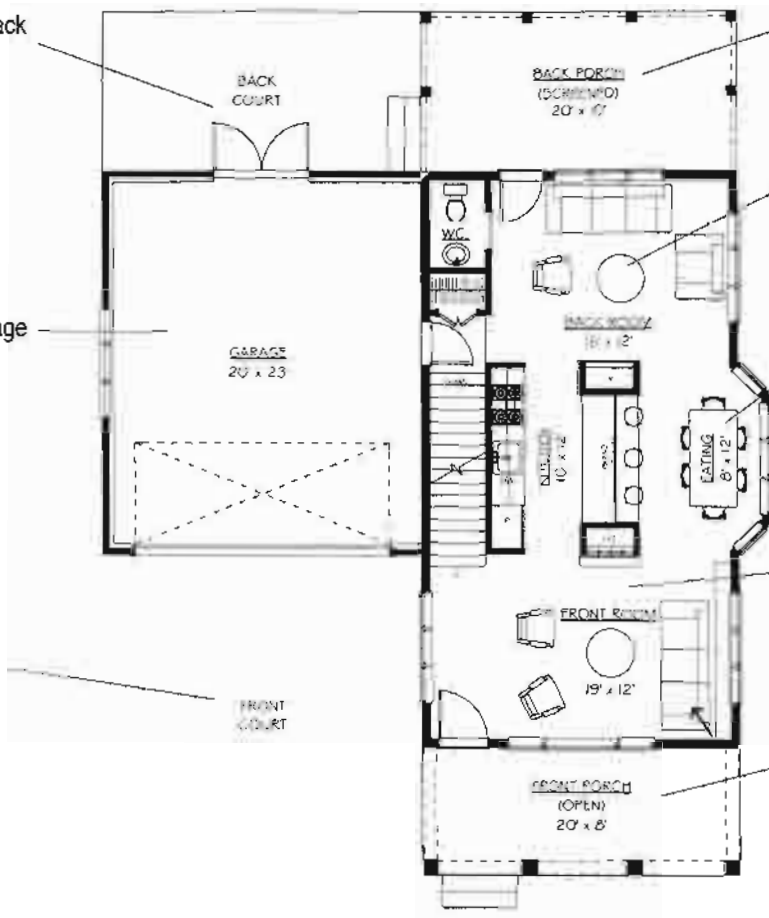
SQUARE FOOTAGE	
UPPER LEVEL FINISHED	976 S.F.
MAIN LEVEL FINISHED	736 S.F.
TOTAL FINISHED	1712 S.F.
BASEMENT	576 S.F.
GARAGE	480 S.F.

Pulling a front porch in front of the garage doors creates a wonderful courtyard for basketball or other hard-surface play.

Doors lead from garage to back court for easy access to backyard

Narrow but deep double garage

Front court has hard-surface play area for kids



Optional screen porch for protection against mosquitoes

Family room space focused on a built-in TV

Big bay window creates sunny dining nook

Living room space focused on fireplace

Front porch is large enough for Adirondack chairs

Larger than normal children's bedrooms

Walk-in closets in all bedrooms



Comfortable master suite with large bay window



Potential legal bedroom can double as storage

Generous egress pits provide plenty of light

Spacious laundry and bath

Corner niche provides room for TV or computer desk

Potential lower level family room or study



ABOVE: A view from the front room looking into the kitchen and family eating area toward the back room. View taken from arrow on plan.

INFILL DESIGN FOR A 75' WIDE LOT

75' is the most common lot width in Fridley, but that doesn't mean the house design has to be commonplace.

We've tried to design a house that will work for a family for many years.

The house has a main-level master suite—with direct access to the backyard—that would work well for a retired couple. Two bedrooms and a full bath upstairs would work well for teen-age children or for guests.

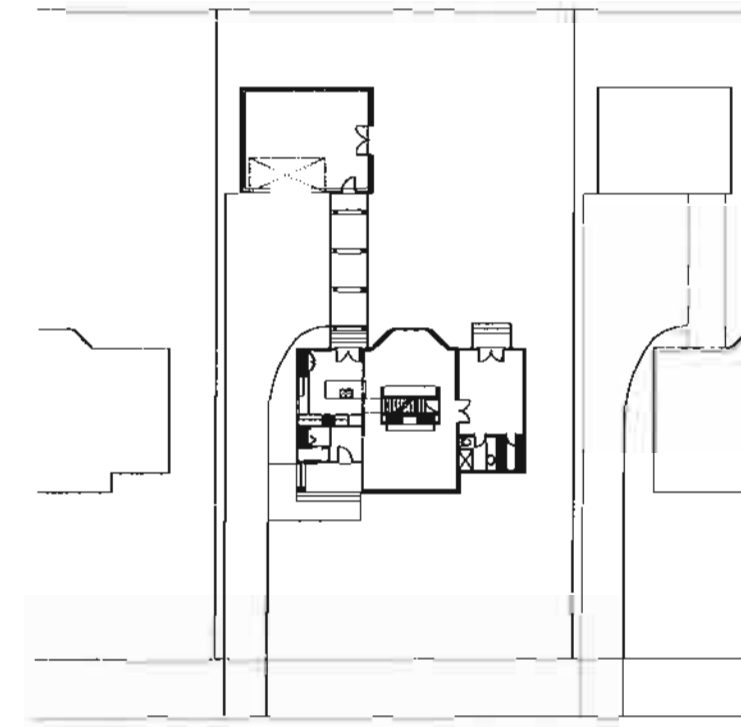
The sunny, light-filled front room is set up as a formal living room focused on a fireplace, while the back room—with its spacious bay window overlooking the backyard—could either be a family-type room focused on a TV, a play area for small children, or a formal dining room focused on a buffet.

A spacious L-shaped kitchen with a generous island provides a place for the family to gather.

Downstairs the spacious basement could be used for storage, future bedrooms, a home office, or playroom.

Probably the most controversial element of the design is the detached garage. We detached the garage because, as we discuss in "Garage Issues", not everyone wants an attached garage. Many younger families in particular are happy to trade the convenience of an attached garage for the benefits of a detached garage: more light, more windows on more sides of the house, no danger of exhaust fumes cascading into the house, and a more compact, more aesthetically pleasing design.

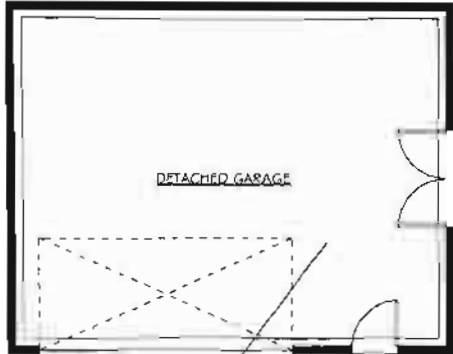
We connected the garage to the kitchen/mudroom with a colonnade. This could be covered with a fiberglass or solid roof to provide rain and snow protection, or it could be covered with trellis material and planted with vines for a more Old World feel.



SQUARE FOOTAGE

UPPER LEVEL FINISHED	624 S.F.
MAIN LEVEL FINISHED	1364 S.F.
TOTAL FINISHED	1988 S.F.
BASEMENT	1364 S.F.
GARAGE	616 S.F.

A front porch and large, light-filled front bay window make this story-and-a-half design attractive and inviting. A colonnade connects the detached garage to the kitchen/mudroom.



Extra large garage with doors leading directly to the yard

Covered colonnade between garage and house

Kitchen island is a place for the family to gather

Detached garage allows extra windows in kitchen

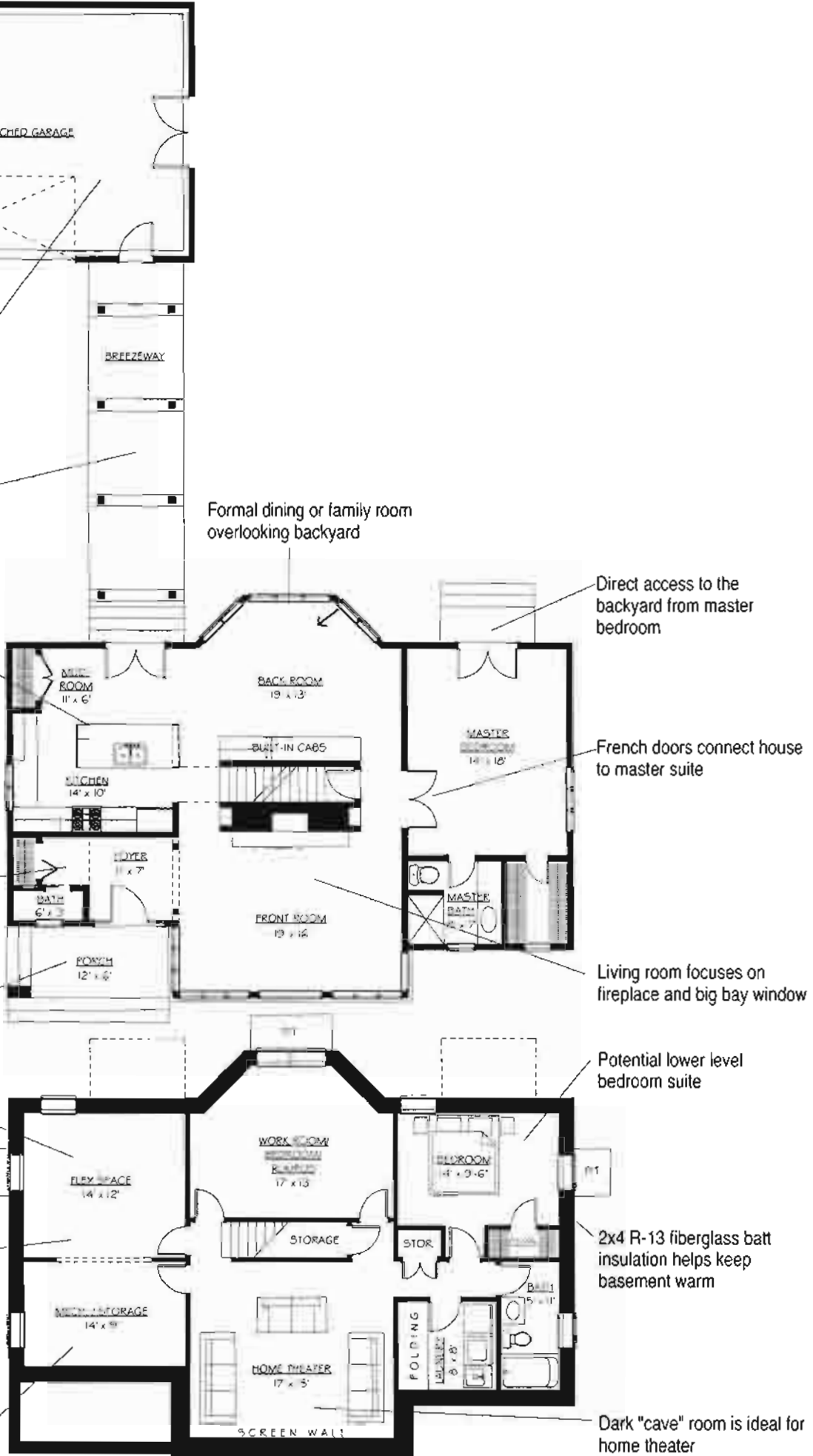
Separate mudroom with half-bath off front entry

Front porch is a place to gather and greet neighbors

Flex space can be storage, bedroom, study/home office or unfinished play area

Ceiling must be 7'-6" min. for a legal bedroom

Rigid insulation below slab helps keep slab warmer



Formal dining or family room overlooking backyard

Direct access to the backyard from master bedroom

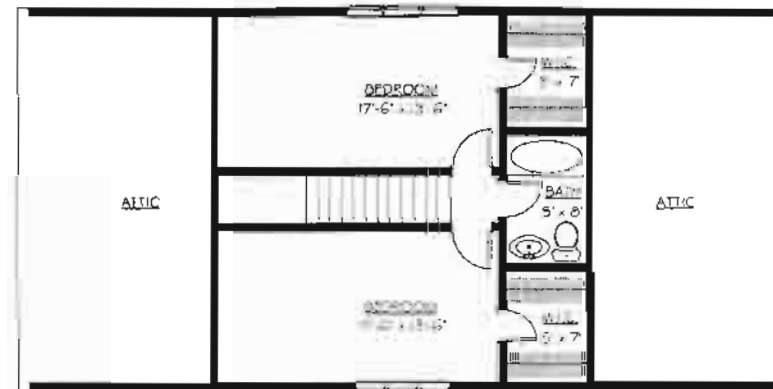
French doors connect house to master suite

Living room focuses on fireplace and big bay window

Potential lower level bedroom suite

2x4 R-13 fiberglass batt insulation helps keep basement warm

Dark "cave" room is ideal for home theater



Looking from the back room into the kitchen work area, showing the eat-in island. View taken from arrow on plan.

INFILL DESIGN FOR A 100' WIDE LOT

There are many problems with the most common 1960s rambler designs that we try to correct in this

“rambler re-design” for the 100' wide lot.

One, the typical center bearing wall tends to make rooms feel narrow and claustrophobic, so we've punctured that center wall to allow space and light to pass from the front of the house to the rear. The large fireplace/pantry/broom closet mass between the front and back rooms doesn't go all the way to the ceiling.

Two, rooms opened either to the front yard or the backyard, making the house feel as though it had been sliced in two, so we've designed it so the main living spaces have views to both the front- and backyards.

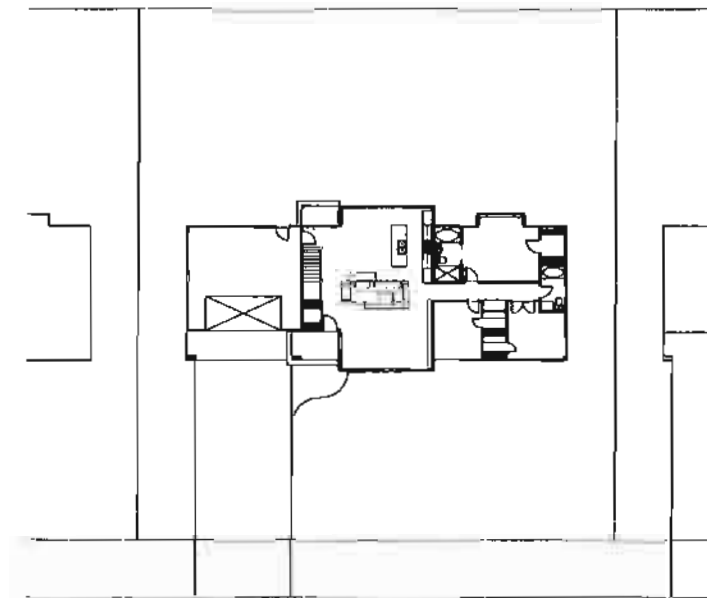
Three, the kitchens are small and don't work well for social gatherings, so we've designed an island to gather around and comfortable bays to sit in and visit.

Four, there are circulation choke-points, so we've designed the new house with a circular circulation.

Five, too often the main living space didn't have a focus, so we've included a dominant fireplace/TV space in the front room. The TV could be hidden in cabinetry next to the fireplace. Also bookcases could be built in along the bedroom wall, making the room feel even more finished.

Six, too often the house sits like a lump in the landscape, so we've tried to extend living spaces into the outdoors through a protected front porch and a sliding glass door leading to a backyard patio.

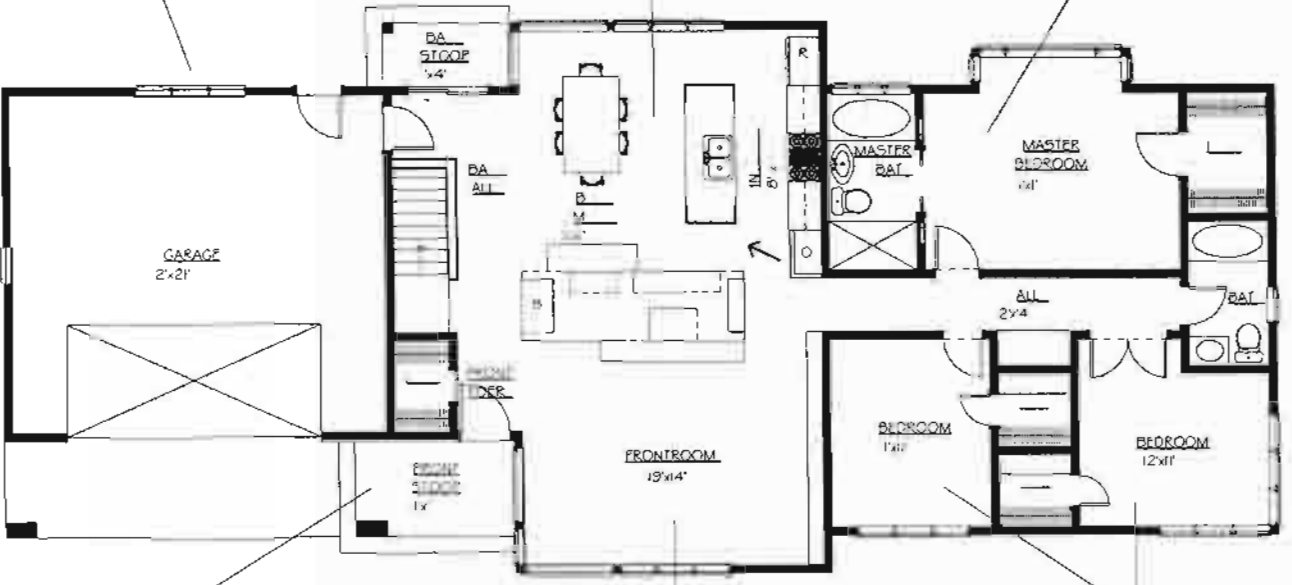
Our hope is that this “rambler re-design”—with its master suite and luxurious bathroom, two additional bedrooms and a spacious basement (not shown)—will work for either retirees or families with children.



SQUARE FOOTAGE	
MAIN LEVEL FINISHED	1660 S.F.
TOTAL FINISHED	1660 S.F.
BASEMENT	1660 S.F.
GARAGE	528 S.F.

Pulling the garage door back from the front face of the house and creating a front porch place to gather makes the house seem much more inviting.

Spacious garage has windows overlooking the backyard



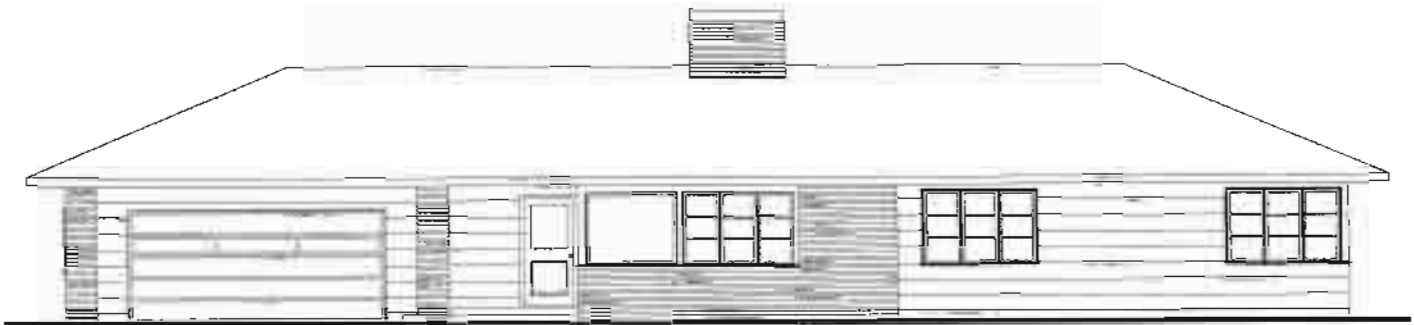
Front porch is a place to gather and greet neighbors

Combination kitchen and family room space with desk and possible fireplace

Spacious master suite with separate tub and shower

Front room can be a formal living room focused on a fireplace

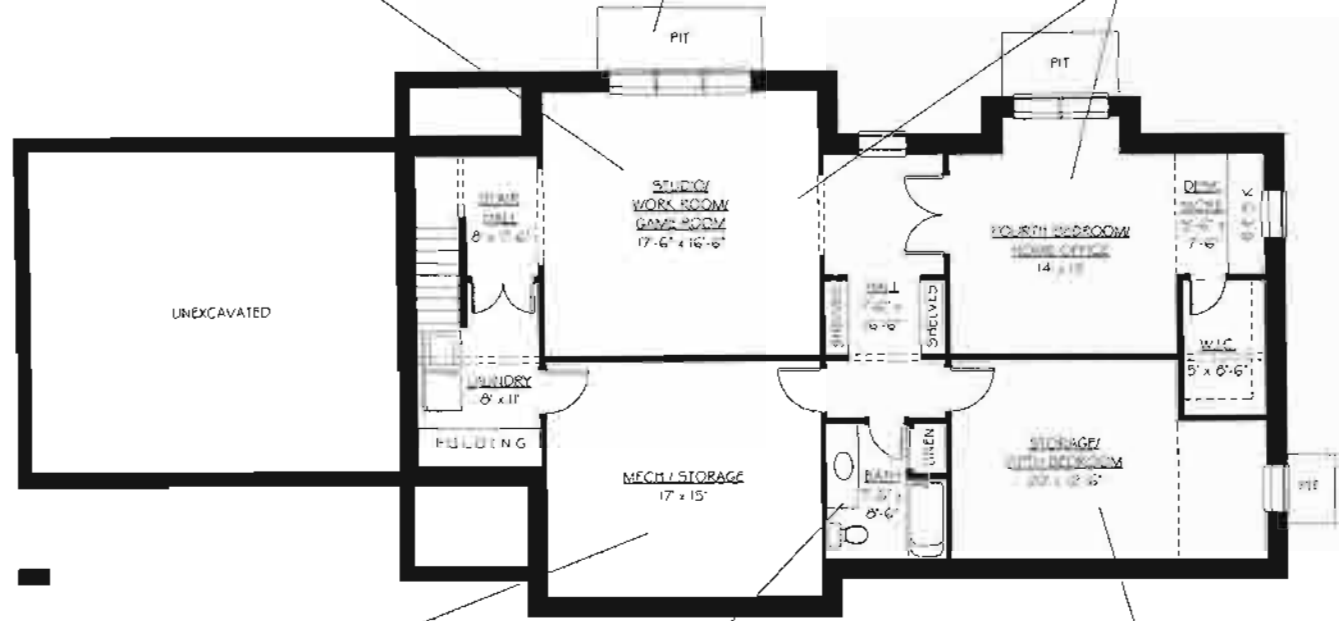
Two spacious bedrooms can be used for children, guests, or home offices



Formal but flexible layout allows for changing uses over time

Possible walk-out here if site allows

Light filled 'back-yard' rooms make a great office or bedroom suite



Unfinished utility room on the darker side of basement

Full bath centrally located for easier access

Extra storage room doubles as legal bedroom



Looking from the kitchen across the island and family eating area and into the backyard. View taken from arrow on plan.

“Every city needs to continually update and fine-tune its housing stock to remain healthy. Respecting existing patterns can minimize the controversy and speed up the process.”

CONCLUSION

This study outlines the expectations of the Fridley HRA for infill designs. The Fridley HRA expects that builders will make every effort to follow the rules of thumb listed in this study and to respect the existing fabric of Fridley when they design and build new infill housing.

We hope this study will give a common language of ideas to both builder/developers thinking of designing infill houses and neighborhood residents concerned about the impact an infill house will have on their neighborhood and quality of life.

Every city needs to continually update and fine-tune its housing stock to remain healthy. Respecting existing patterns can minimize the controversy and speed up the process.

PROGRAM NOTES

The Fridley HRA has administered the Housing Replacement Program since 1995. The purpose of the program is to remove older, dilapidated, and substandard housing and replace it with new housing. The overall goals are to help improve the appearance of Fridley's neighborhoods, offer more housing choices, and enhance property values. The primary focus of this program is single family residential neighborhoods.

The program is subdivided into two parts: the first involves acquiring and removing existing housing. We should emphasize that this is strictly voluntary; no one is forced to sell their home to the City. The second part involves the re-use of the property once it

has been acquired. In most cases the house is torn down and the property is offered for sale. Parties who wish to purchase a property must prepare plans and specifications that follow the guidelines outlined in this book.

In addition, the buyers will be required to work with a licensed home builder, who will in turn enter into a development contract with the Fridley HRA. This document spells out the obligations of each party and ensures that the home meets minimum requirements. For a current list of available sites and a Builder Information Packet, contact the Housing Coordinator at 612/572-3591. The Fridley HRA is an Equal Housing Opportunity Agency.

