

PROPOSED FT. GROUNDS NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY ORDINANCE

Executive Summary

Background and Rationale

The historic Fort Grounds Neighborhood in Coeur d'Alene is a mix of mostly single-family homes varying in size from 585 SF to 6204 SF. The average size is approximately 3121 SF.¹ Lot sizes vary from 3158 SF/.07 acre to 22789 SF/.52 acre. The neighborhood has in roughly the last decade experienced the demolition of a number of older and for the most part small existing homes and their replacement by residential structures which have in many cases maximized the square footage permitted by existing ordinances. Other cities have faced a similar trend. Some have responded with ordinances to restrict the size and scale of structures based upon the size of the building lot. Over-sized residential structures can and do have measurable and negative impact upon adjoining properties and the neighborhood in general. They negatively impact available views, sunlight, vegetation and natural soil percolation. These over-sized houses are starting to proliferate in the Ft. Grounds, threatening to materially and permanently alter the existing character of the Fort Grounds Neighborhood. The purpose of the proposed ordinance described below is to recognize the value in maintaining the general character and feel of older Fort Grounds residences, while acknowledging that both renovation and replacement of houses in the neighborhood will continue into the future. The ordinance described below is modeled after an ordinance adopted around 2006 by the City of Austin, Texas.

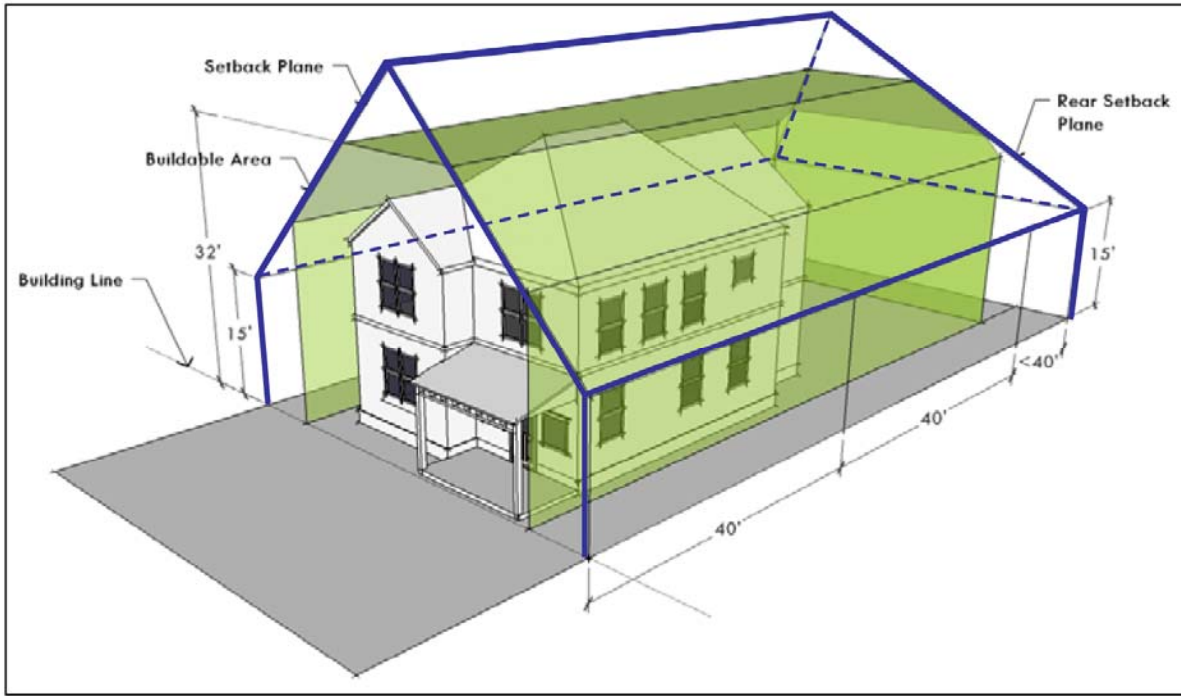
Proposed Ordinance Summary

The proposed ordinance will:

- Define the Fort Grounds Neighborhood as an area bounded on the east by Park Drive, the west by Hubbard Avenue, the south by West Lakeshore Drive² and the north by the centerline of the east/west alley between Empire and River Avenues, and create an overlay district wherein special rules of development will apply;
- Adopt an additional limitation on the total amount of gross floor area that can be developed based upon a "floor area ratio" (FAR) of 0.4 of gross floor area to each 1.0 foot of lot area, but allowing a minimum of 2300 square feet of floor area;
- Establish a 3-dimensional set-back regimen to govern the "scale" of new structures, using a "virtual tent" mechanism at a maximum height of 32 feet; [See attached illustration.]
- Provide for certain exceptions to the "tent" requirements for eaves, gables, dormers, chimneys, and certain features not designed for occupancy;
- Establish side wall articulation standards to prevent the construction of massive uniform side walls;
- Adopt definitions as necessary, including Gross Floor Area, (to exclude below grade livable space) for use in computing FAR and Natural Grade from which to measure maximum building height, (i.e. top of the curb).
- Provide for the prohibition of a covered porch, deck or other structure within the front setback zone;
- Adopt a maximum "lot coverage percentage" requirement in addition to the FAR, in order to preserve a minimum of open space;
- Adopt an maximum 75% "impervious surface" limitation to insure ensure percolation of storm water run-off and minimum amount of landscaped area;
- Provide for exceptions to accommodate exceptionally small building lots; and,
- Containing a savings clause recognizing the need to replace structures destroyed by fire or other casualty occurring after adoption, applicable to structures in existence as of the adoption date, (i.e., a "grandfather clause").

¹ This calculation excludes basement area. Not all residences have basements and basement floor area is excluded in the proposed FAR ratio calculations.

² To the extent any of the lots north of West Lakeshore Drive which also include ownership of property south of W. Lakeshore Drive to the mean high water mark of Lake Coeur d'Alene, that beach property is already subject to plat and ordinance restrictions which prohibit most structures. It is intended that this beach area not be considered in computing gross lot area for the purpose of complying with FAR, lot coverage or impervious surface requirements.



• **Figure 10: Buildable Area (Combination of Yard Setbacks, Maximum Height Limit, and Setback Planes)**

The heavy blue line indicates the "tent" formed by the side and rear setback planes. The buildable area is the smallest area included within the front, side, and rear yard setbacks; maximum height limit; and the combined side and rear setback planes (shown here as the green area).

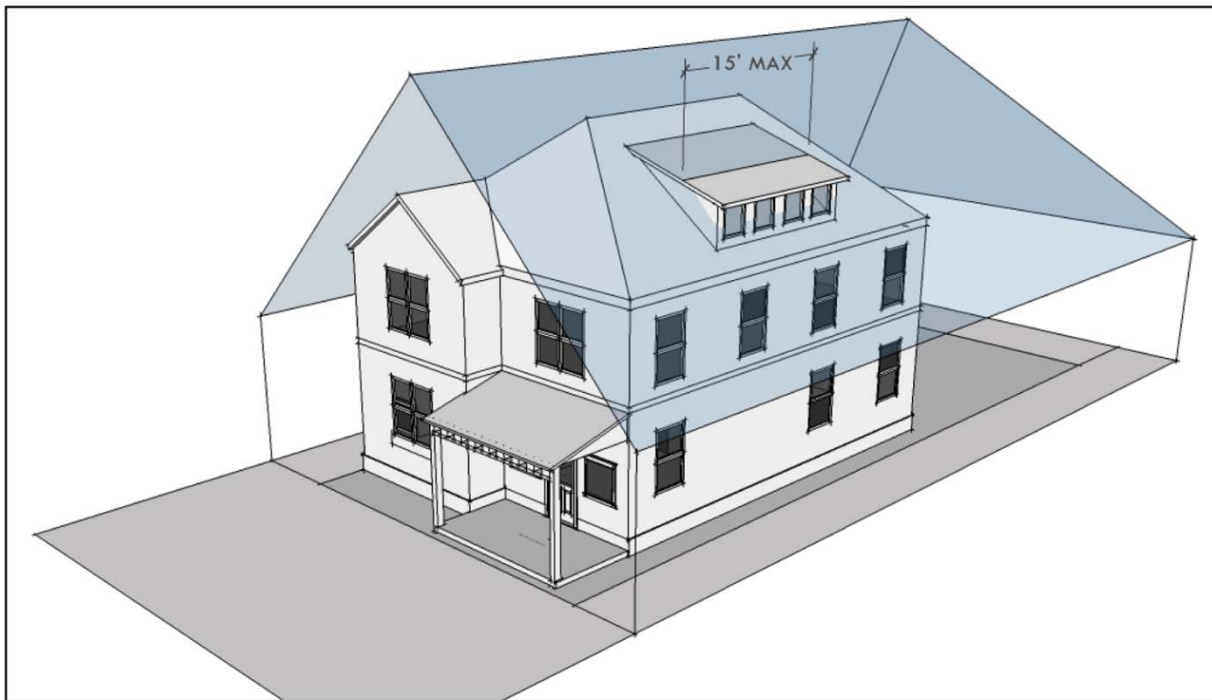
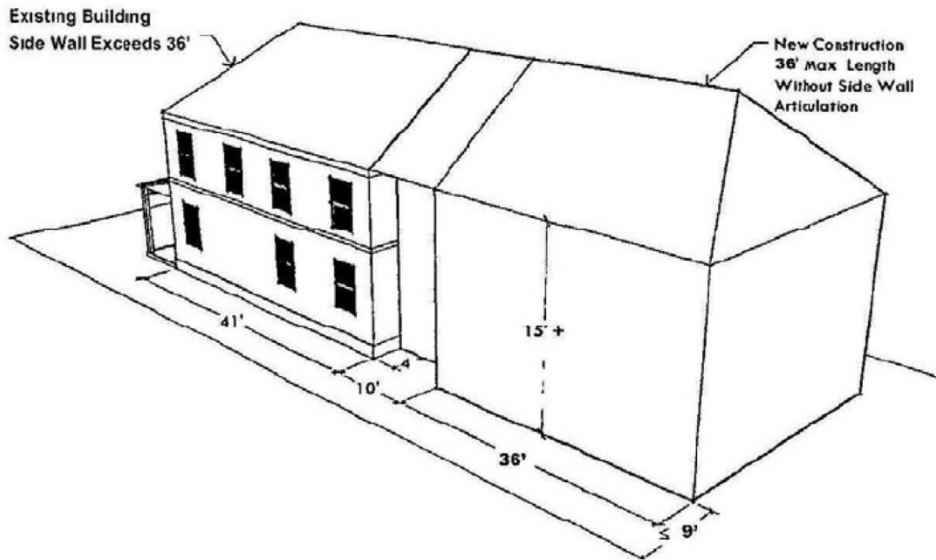


Figure 16: Dormer Exception (Gable or Shed)

One or more dormers with a combined width of 15 feet or less on each side of the roof may extend beyond the setback plane. The width of the dormer is measured at the point that it intersects the setback plane.



• **Figure 18: Side Wall Articulation (Existing Side Wall Exceeds 36 Feet)**

Articulation is required for side walls on additions or new construction that are 15 feet or taller and located within 9 feet of the side lot line. No wall may extend for more than 36 feet without a projection or recession of at least 4 feet in depth and 10 feet in length.

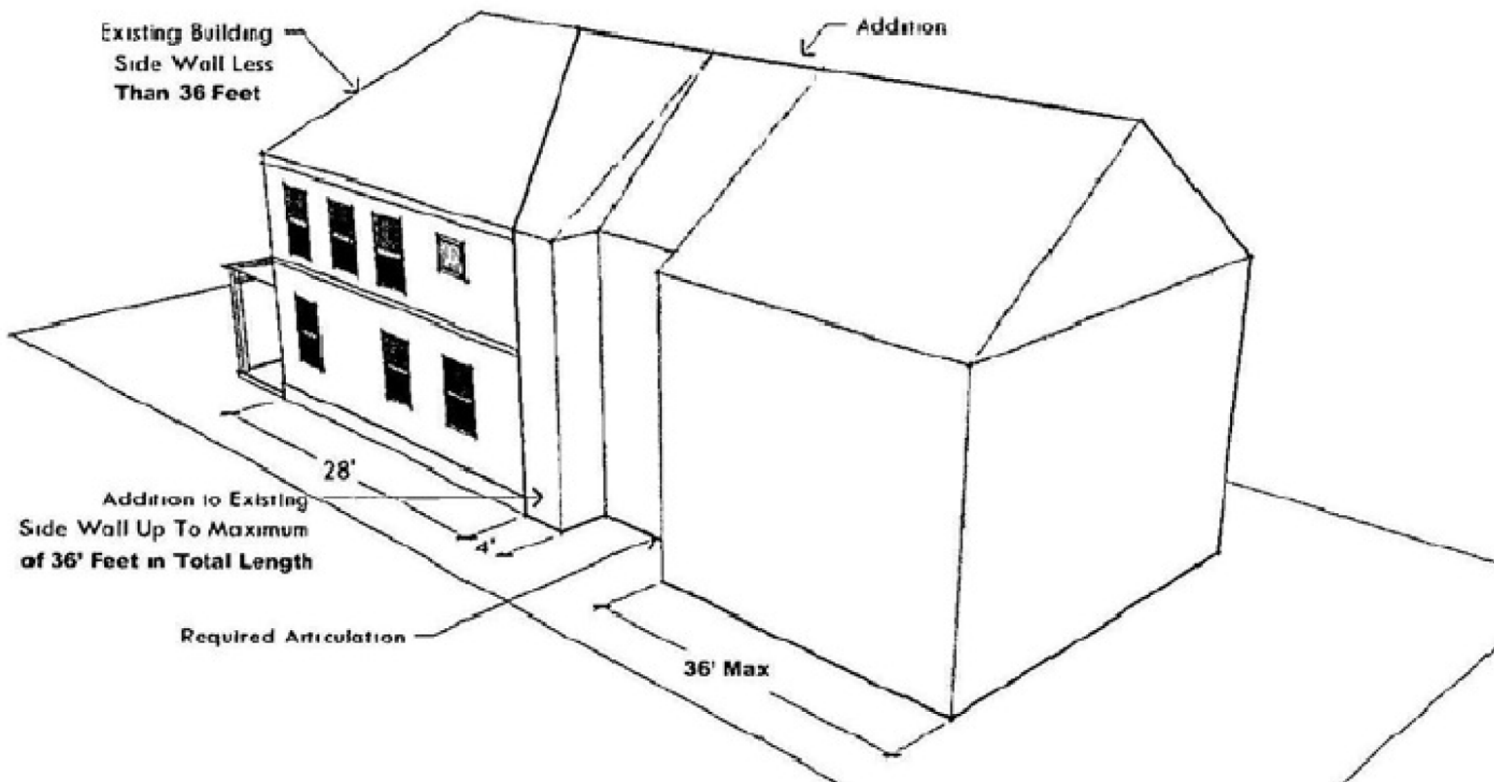


Figure 19: Side Wall Articulation (Existing Side Wall Less Than or Equal to 36 feet)

An addition to an existing building may extend a side wall up to a maximum of 36' in total length without articulation.