Norhill Historic District Design Guidelines

Item C: HAHC Update

Thursday, November 5, 2026

DRAFT
DELETE THIS ONCE APPROVED

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Updates

- Unresolved “approval conditions” remain after previous meeting
- Feedback on standards before preparing another redline
- Today’s feedback will direct the subcommittee’s work for next month
- Final adoption of the guidelines is a separate step

Subcommittee scope

ASSIGNMENT	AUTHORIZED WORK
June conditions	Address the outstanding conditions from June meeting: • Refine floor-to-area-ratio (FAR) • Reconcile attic/garage spaces with exterior massing • Resolve building plate and ridge height
Feasibility	Verify FAR feasibility under the proposed building setback lines.
Consistency	Copy edit for consistency and correct typographical issues.

Community input reviewed

Surveys, written comments, emails, and community / invited public speakers

SOURCE	PARTICIPATION	LOT BENCHMARK
2024 poll	189 responses	22.1% of 855 lots*
2025 survey	208 responses	24.3% of 855 lots*
September 2026 Public Comment Period	22 submissions	18 unique addresses

Community sentiment over time

PERIOD	WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS
2023–2024	Preserve bungalow character while allowing useful space for families. Disagreement begins over house size and garages.
2025–June 2026	Support for size limits continues. Comments seek workable standards, interior use and a clear path to adoption.
July–October 2026	Process concerns. Mixed reviews over FAR feasibility and proposed exemptions. Desire for flexibility persists.

What the surveys support

CONCEPT	2024	2025
House size related to lot size	2024: 144 of 189 (76.2%)	2025: 160 of 208 (76.9%)
FAR reference point	2024 median category: 2,300 SF	2025 survey weighted average: 0.47 FAR
Second-story rear setback	10 ft: 66 of 189 (34.9%), largest choice	3–5 ft: 94 of 209 (45.0%), largest choice

Decision Matrix

CONCEPT	LIMITS / CHOICE	INCLUDE IN FAR?	MASSING	PRESERVATION
1. FAR	a) June: FAR chart b) October: FAR chart c) Subcommittee suggestion	N/A	Controls floor area within height and setbacks restrictions.	Balances additions with neighborhood scale.
2. Porches	a) June: Front, side and back allowed	June: Up to 240 sf of all porches exempted	June: Proportion similar to context area	June: Protects the front porch pattern.
3. Garages	a) June: upper area counts towards FAR b) New: limited 1.5 story exempted from FAR	June: 585 SF floor excluded New: 1.5 story excluded	Increased massing but restricted by ridge height	Keeps garage scale and privacy in view.

Decision Matrix

CONCEPT	LIMITS / CHOICE	INCLUDE IN FAR?	MASSING	PRESERVATION
4. Plate & Ridge Heights	a) June: one story - 17' max from grade to ridge; two story - 24' max from grade to ridge. b) Same as above but from floor plate to ridge.	N/A	Depends on choice made.	Can maintain harmony throughout the neighborhood if similar.
5. Rear Setbacks - Second Story Additions	a) June: 19-ft setback b) Adjust to maximize FAR allowance	N/A	A smaller rear setback can increase buildable depth.	Balances neighbor impacts with additions. It can also reduce separation from neighboring backyards.
6. Rear Setbacks – Side and Rear Additions	a) June: driveway side 12 ft (1 story) / 13 ft (2-story rear). Corner street side: 10 / 12 ft for 1- / 2-story rear additions b) October: 2-story driveway setback 12 ft. Adds 10-ft street setback for 1-story side additions. Removes garage-width exception.	N/A for setbacks. FAR still limits floor area.	Slightly affects massing depending on which number.	Balance buildable width with separation and privacy.

1. FAR

1. June Draft

Lot Size	FAR	Living Area	% of Lots	Notes
3755-4800 sf	0.470	1765-2256 sf	1%	1
5000-5200 sf	0.460	2300-2392 sf	75%	
5201-5550 sf	0.455	2366-2525 sf	9%	
5551-5650 sf	0.450	2500-2543 sf	6%	
>5650 sf	0.445	2514+ sf	9%	

2. October Committee

Portion of the lot area	FAR
First 5,000 square feet	0.46
Next 1,000 square feet, between 5,000 and 6,000 square feet	0.45
Any lot area above 6,000 square feet	0.44

3. November Committee

Lot Size (SF)	Contributing	Noncontributing	Total Lots	Allowable Floor Area (SF)
3,755	1	0	1	1,830
4,100	1	0	1	1,960
4,600	1	0	1	2,149
4,800	1	0	1	2,225
5,000	483	46	529	2,300
5,200	93	8	101	2,376
5,250	8	2	10	2,394
5,300	1	0	1	2,413
5,350	1	0	1	2,432
5,400	4	1	5	2,451
5,450	1	0	1	2,470
5,500	1	0	1	2,489
5,512	53	3	56	2,493
5,550	1	0	1	2,508
5,600	3	0	3	2,527
5,616	45	3	48	2,533
5,650	3	0	3	2,545
5,700	3	0	3	2,564
6,000	1	0	1	2,678
6,136	7	1	8	2,729
6,157	7	1	8	2,737
6,240	20	0	20	2,768
6,750	1	0	1	2,961
7,320	2	0	2	3,176
7,370	1	0	1	3,195
7,488	7	1	8	3,239
7,900	6	1	7	3,395
8,049	1	0	1	3,451
8,450	0	1	1	3,602
10,000	2	0	2	4,188
11,830	1	0	1	4,878
TOTAL	760	68	828	

1. FAR – November Committee Option

Lot Size (SF)	# of Contributing Lots	# of Non-Contributing Lots	Total Lots	Allowable Floor Area (SF)
3,755	1	0	1	1,830
4,100	1	0	1	1,960
4,600	1	0	1	2,149
4,800	1	0	1	2,225
5,000	483	46	529	2,300
5,200	93	8	101	2,376
5,250	8	2	10	2,394
5,300	1	0	1	2,413
5,350	1	0	1	2,432
5,400	4	1	5	2,451
5,450	1	0	1	2,470
5,500	1	0	1	2,489
5,512	53	3	56	2,493
5,550	1	0	1	2,508
5,600	3	0	3	2,527
5,616	45	3	48	2,533

Lot Size (SF)	# of Contributing Lots	# of Non-Contributing Lots	Total Lots	Allowable Floor Area (SF)
5,650	3	0	3	2,545
5,700	3	0	3	2,564
6,000	1	0	1	2,678
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TOTAL	**760**	**68**	**828**	

2. Porches – Exemptions

A. June	B. New Consideration
Front, side, and rear porches combined up to 240 SF. Front porches excluded if they remain unconditioned and have typical proportions.	Open front porches are excluded, unless enclosed or converted to livable space. Exclude side/rear porches up to 240 SF combined.
FAR considerations: • Included: enclosed porches with walls or windows; first-floor open or screened-in porches with living space above • Excluded: open or screen-in porches with no living space above	**FAR considerations:** • Included: Side/rear porches over 240 SF combined; porch and livable space above • Excluded: open or screen-in porches with no living space above

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
Porches	N/A	Comments favor screened porches and excluding open porches from FAR.	Comments seek front-porch changes that match neighborhood.

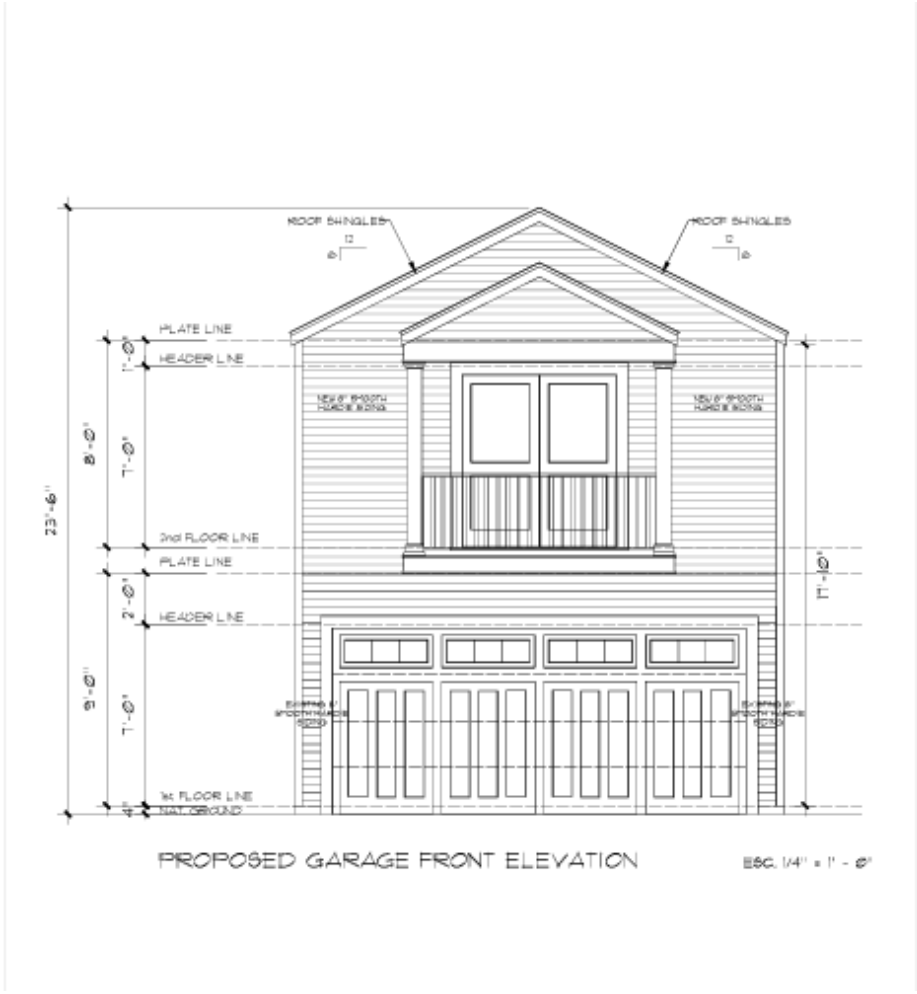
3. Garages

A. June	B. New Consideration
Count all upper garage floor area toward FAR.	Consideration of flexibility

Count 2nd story
• No exceptions
• First floor would be exempt up to 585 sq ft
	• **Conditional 1½ story**
	  • Ridge and pony wall height would need to be specified
	  • All upper windows face interior; any other-facing upper window makes the entire upper level count, without exception
	• **Dormers on Garages**
	• **Potential for Reduced SF credit for 2nd floor only**

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
FAR: second-story garage	Yes: 94 responses No: 35 responses Yes with conditions: 55 responses	N/A	Yes: 5 responses No position: 5 responses Yes with conditions: 3 responses

2 story garage image: 1102 W Gardner



PROPOSED GARAGE FRONT ELEVATION ESC. 1/4" = 1' - 0"



PROPOSED GARAGE WEST ELEVATION ESC. 1/4" = 1' - 0"

1.5 story garage image: 1136 Key St



4. Plate and Ridge Heights

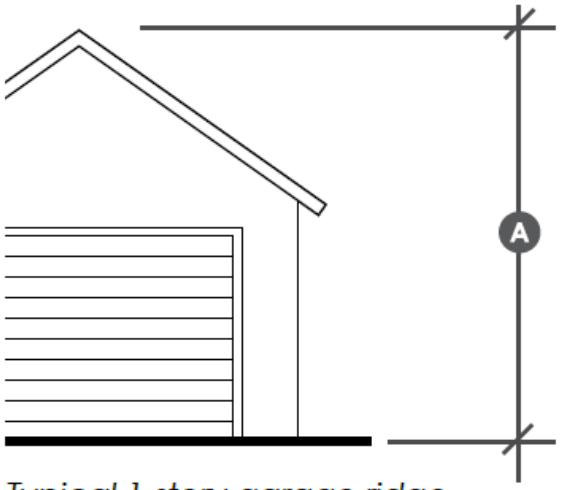
BUILDING TYPE	PLATE HEIGHT	RIDGE HEIGHT
One-story house addition	9 ft from finished floor, or original plate height if greater (add fractions to align with lumber sizes)	Original roof compatibility
Two-story house addition	18 ft 8¼ in above first finished floor	28 ft above grade
Garage	9 ft per story, measured from floor	17 ft one story / 24 ft two stories from grade
Additional Considerations	N/A	N/A

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
Plate and Ridge Height	Some garage comments called for ridge height limits to protect privacy and sunlight.	Support for plate caps; concerns that height limits could make half-story garages unusable.	Requests to measure from finished floor and allow for floor elevation. Mixed views on garage ridge limits.

4. Plate and Ridge Heights – Garages

Suggested garage heights from the 2021 Winter & Company Draft:

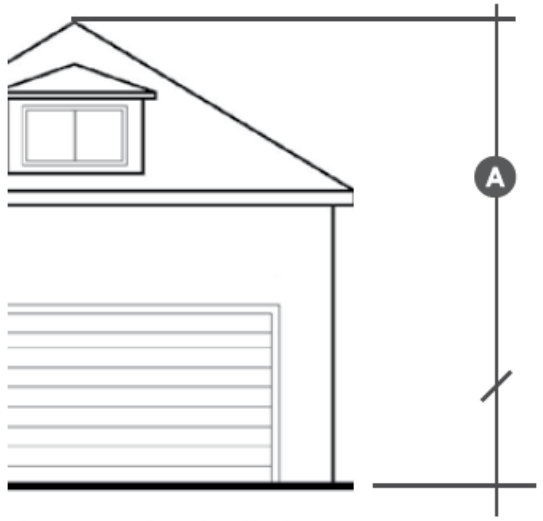
APPROPRIATE 1-STORY GARAGE RIDGE HEIGHT*



Typical 1-story garage ridge height range

Key	Measurement
A	14 -16 ft.

APPROPRIATE 1.5-STORY GARAGE RIDGE HEIGHT



One-and-a-half story garage ridge height max.

Key	Measurement
A	18 ft.

Note:
*The design guidelines related to this topic reflect opinions expressed in previous community input from 2017.

Plate and Ridge Heights – Study Findings

43 original houses measured. Base case: 9-ft first floor, 8-ft second floor, 18-in truss, 1⅛-in subfloor, 6:12 roof and finished floor 28 in above grade.

ISSUE	FINDING FROM THE HEIGHTS STUDY
Plate-height cap	Base assembly: 18′-8⅜″ above finished floor. Draft cap: 18′-8¼″. Exceeds the plate cap by ⅛″ at every house width. Roof pitch cannot resolve this conflict.
Ridge-height cap	At a 28-in finished floor, maximum width under the 28-ft ridge cap is 27.88 ft. The sample's median width is 29.9 ft, giving a 28.51-ft ridge. 14 of 43 houses meet the ridge cap; 29 exceed it.
Items to resolve	Define a consistent grade datum and reconcile diagrams with the text. Test floor assemblies, ceiling heights and compatible roof pitches together. Lower floor elevations or shallower assemblies change the result.

FLOOR ABOVE GRADE	12 in	28 in	30 in	36 in
Houses within ridge cap	32 of 43 (74%)	14 of 43 (33%)	12 of 43 (28%)	2 of 43 (5%)
Maximum width at 28-ft ridge	33.21 ft	27.88 ft	27.21 ft	25.21 ft

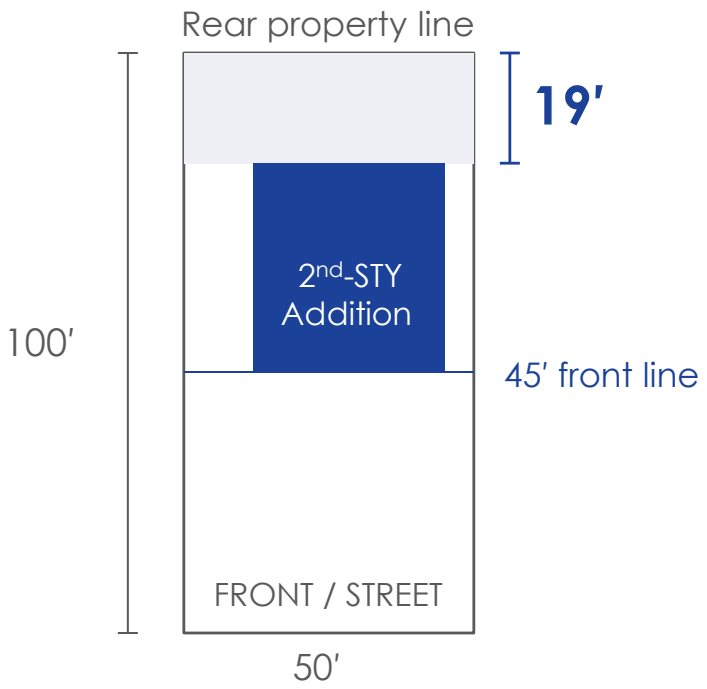
5. Rear Setbacks – Second-Story Additions

APPROACH	SECOND-STORY REAR SETBACK
A. October draft	19-ft baseline at a 15-ft first-floor front setback. Reduce rear setback one foot for each extra foot of front setback. Balconies retain 19 ft.
B. New consideration	• 10-ft baseline, whether to retain the offset, and any minimum rear setback. • Option between 10-19 feet?

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
Second-story rear setback	10 feet: 66 responses 25 feet: 63 responses	Weighted average: 9.7 feet	Repeatably challenge 19 feet

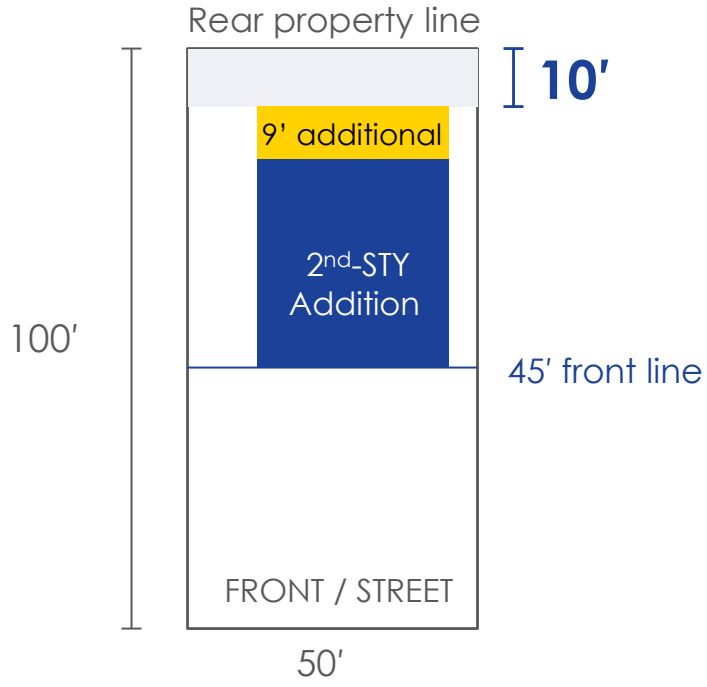
5. Second-Story Rear Setbacks

A. June approach



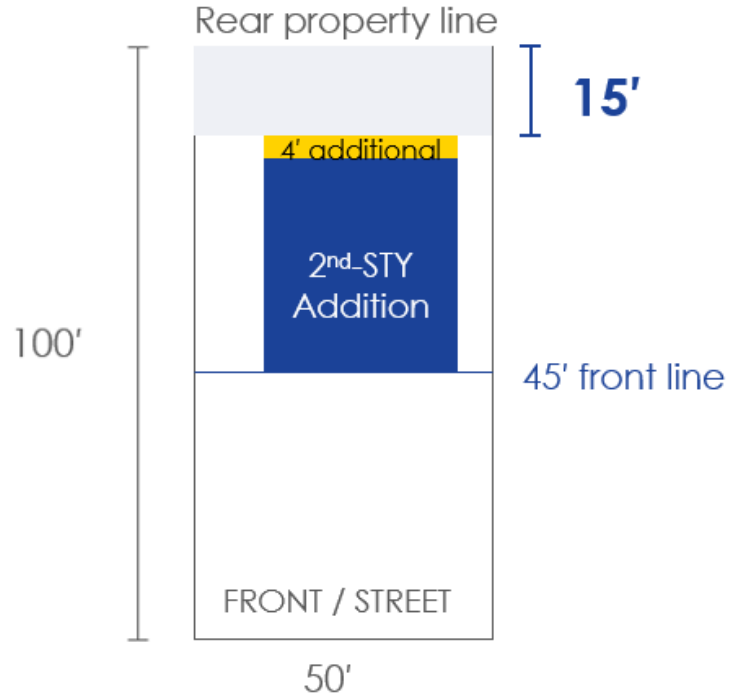
36′ potential second-story depth (5,000 sf lot)

B.10′ consideration



45′ potential second-story depth (5,000 sf lot)

C. 15′ consideration



40′ potential second-story depth (5,000 sf lot)

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
Rear setbacks	10 ft: 66 responses 25 ft: 63 responses	Reported average: 9.7 ft (approximately 10 ft)	Repeated objections to the 19-ft requirement

6. Side Setbacks – Additions (Side and Rear)

APPROACH	SIDE-SETBACK STANDARDS
A. June draft	Interior driveway side: 12 ft for one story / 13 ft for two-story rear additions. Corner street side: 10 ft for one-story rear / 12 ft for two-story rear additions. Two-story width: limited to original house, except garage connections.
B. October draft	Reduces two-story driveway setback to 12 ft. Adds 10-ft street setback for one-story side additions on corner lots. Removes the garage-connection width exception.
C. Commission direction	Select 12 or 13 ft for two-story driveway setbacks. Decide whether to retain the original-house-width limit.

Both drafts: other-side setback 3 ft with a fire-rated wall and ≤25% glazing, otherwise 5 ft.
One-story side additions retain a 12-ft driveway setback.

PUBLIC INPUT	2024 poll	2025 survey	2026 comments
Side setbacks	Leading choices (other / driveway): 1 story: 3–5 / 12 ft 2 stories: 3–5 / 14 ft	Averages (other / driveway): 1 story: 4.1 / 11.7 ft 2 stories: 4.8 / 12.7 ft	Requests for width flexibility and a 5-ft upper side setback.

Next Steps

- Confirm decisions
- New draft
- Vote to approve draft
- Forward to Quality of Life
- City Council vote

Thank You!

Geoff Butler 832-393-6528
Geoff.butler@houstontx.gov

Jacqueline Brown 832-393-6587
Jacqueline.brown@houstontx.gov

Samantha de Leon 832-393-6541
Samantha.deleon@houstontx.gov

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