



CITY OF KIRKLAND

Planning and Community Development Department
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To: David Ramsay, City Manager
From: Eric Shields, Planning Director
Date: March 26, 2007
Subject: GARAGE SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR DETACHED DWELLING UNITS IN LOW DENSITY ZONES; ZONING CODE SECTION 115.43

RECOMMENDATION:

Review existing garage setback regulations and provide direction for any desired amendments.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

Code Requirements

Section 115.43 requires a garage to be set back from the remainder of the front façade of a house if:

- a. The garage door is located on the front façade (*so if the garage is turned sideways, a setback is not needed*);
- b. The lot is at least 50 feet wide at the front setback line (*so lots narrower than 50 feet are exempt from the setback requirement*); and
- c. The garage width exceeds 50% of the total front façade width (*so garages are exempt from the setback when they occupy less than 50 % of the width*).

The garage setback may be measured from the front edge of a covered entry porch that extends across 100% of the remaining front façade.

Issues

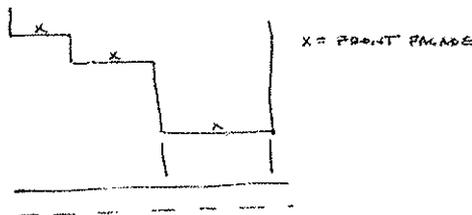
In applying section 115.43, staff has identified a number of issues that need to be reviewed and clarified. Revisions will be proposed as part of the next group of Zoning Code amendments, which is scheduled to be considered by the Planning Commission later this year. Following is a summary of the issues:

1. Is it appropriate to exempt lots less than 50 feet wide from the garage setback requirement as in criterion b? It's not clear why this exemption was included. On narrow lots with narrow houses, the prominence of garages is often accentuated, so this exemption appears to be counter productive. Examples of houses qualifying for this exemption are shown in attachment 1.
2. Is it appropriate to exempt houses where the garage occupies less than 50% of the front façade as in criterion c? The likely intent of this exemption was to take into account the lesser prominence of a garage when it occupies a smaller percentage of a front façade. Even

so, a garage setback is typically an improvement. Examples of houses qualifying for this exemption are shown in attachment 2.

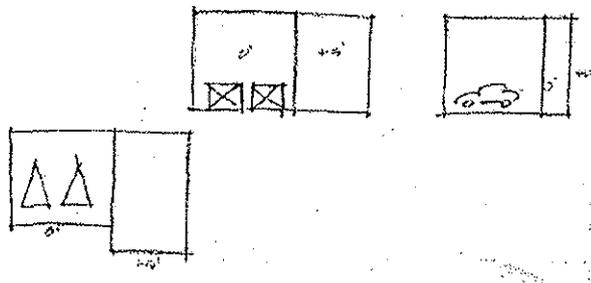
3. Is it appropriate to consider the entire width of the house when considering what constitutes the front façade? The front façades of houses are often staggered with multiple planes setback from one another. Staff has been considering the total horizontal dimension of these planes when measuring the 50%. Examples are shown in attachment 3.

FRONT FAÇADE:



4. In cases where the garage setback applies, the setback is measured from “the remainder of the front façade.” A key question is what is meant by “the remainder?” Taken to the extreme, the garage would be required to be recessed five feet from all other portions of the front façade. However, as noted above, the regulations allow a covered entry porch to be counted in the remaining façade; and by definition, covered entry porches may be no more than one story in height. Therefore, staff has concluded that the required garage setback is met if the garage is set back from a covered entry porch or similar one story enclosed portion of the building. There are two different situations where determining the remainder of the façade is an issue, as described below:

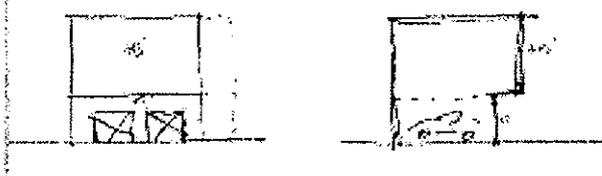
- a. The first situation is where the entire house meets the ground at roughly the same elevation, and the garage is located at one end of the house.



There may not be, but there usually is, a second story across the entire house. In this case, staff has required the garage to be set back from the remainder of the first story of the house located beside the garage. The portion of the first story extending forward of the garage may be either entirely enclosed or a covered entry porch. The second story of the house may be forward of the garage and/ or set back even with the

garage. Examples of this situation are shown in attachment 4.a.

- b. A second situation is when the garage occupies all or most of the ground level and the rest of the house is above the garage.



Typically, the front entry is located on the level above the garage, the grade of the site is built up in front of the non-garage portion of the house, and a stairway to the front door is constructed into the grade. In such a case, staff has required the garage to be set back from (i.e. tucked under) the entry level of the house, whether it is enclosed or a covered entry porch. Also, staff has allowed portions of the entry level to be set back even with the garage.

One variation of this situation is when the garage is placed below the grade of the abutting street. Such a garage is visually less prominent, but the regulations do not provide an exemption or alternative requirement.

Examples of houses with first level garages and second story entries are shown in attachment 4.b. It would be very helpful for the regulations to be revised to more specifically address this situation.

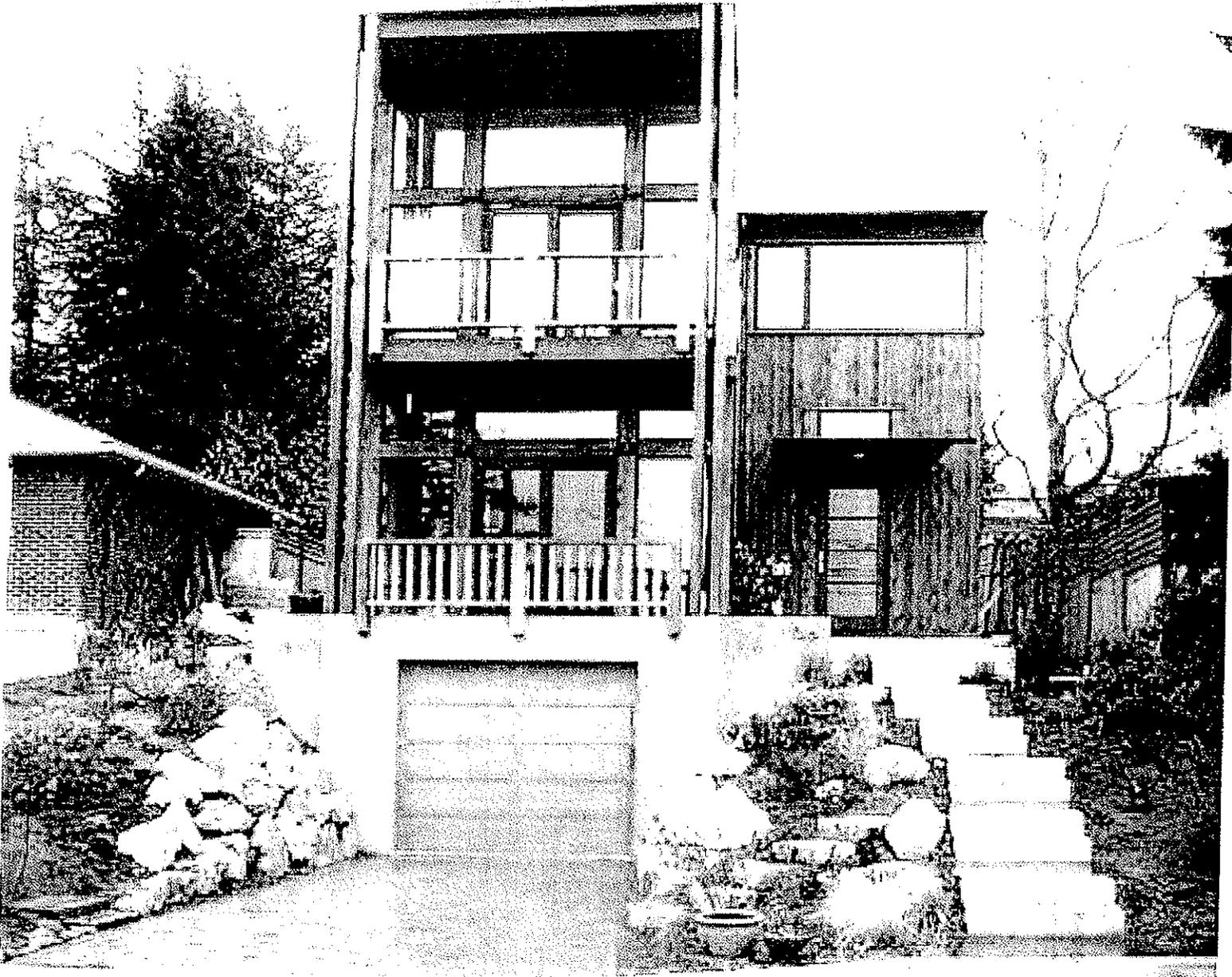
Please note that the houses shown in the attached photographs may or may not fully comply with the existing regulations, as they may have been built prior to the adoption of the regulations or they are in Houghton where the regulations do not apply.

Attachments:

1. Photos of houses on lots less than 50 feet wide, where garage setbacks are not required.
2. Photos of houses with garages occupying less than 50% of front façades, where garage setbacks are not required.
3. Photos of houses with multiple front faced planes.
- 4.a. Photos of houses with garages located beside the façades from which they set back.
- 4.b. Photos of houses with garages located below the façades from which they are set back.
5. Zoning Code Section 115.43



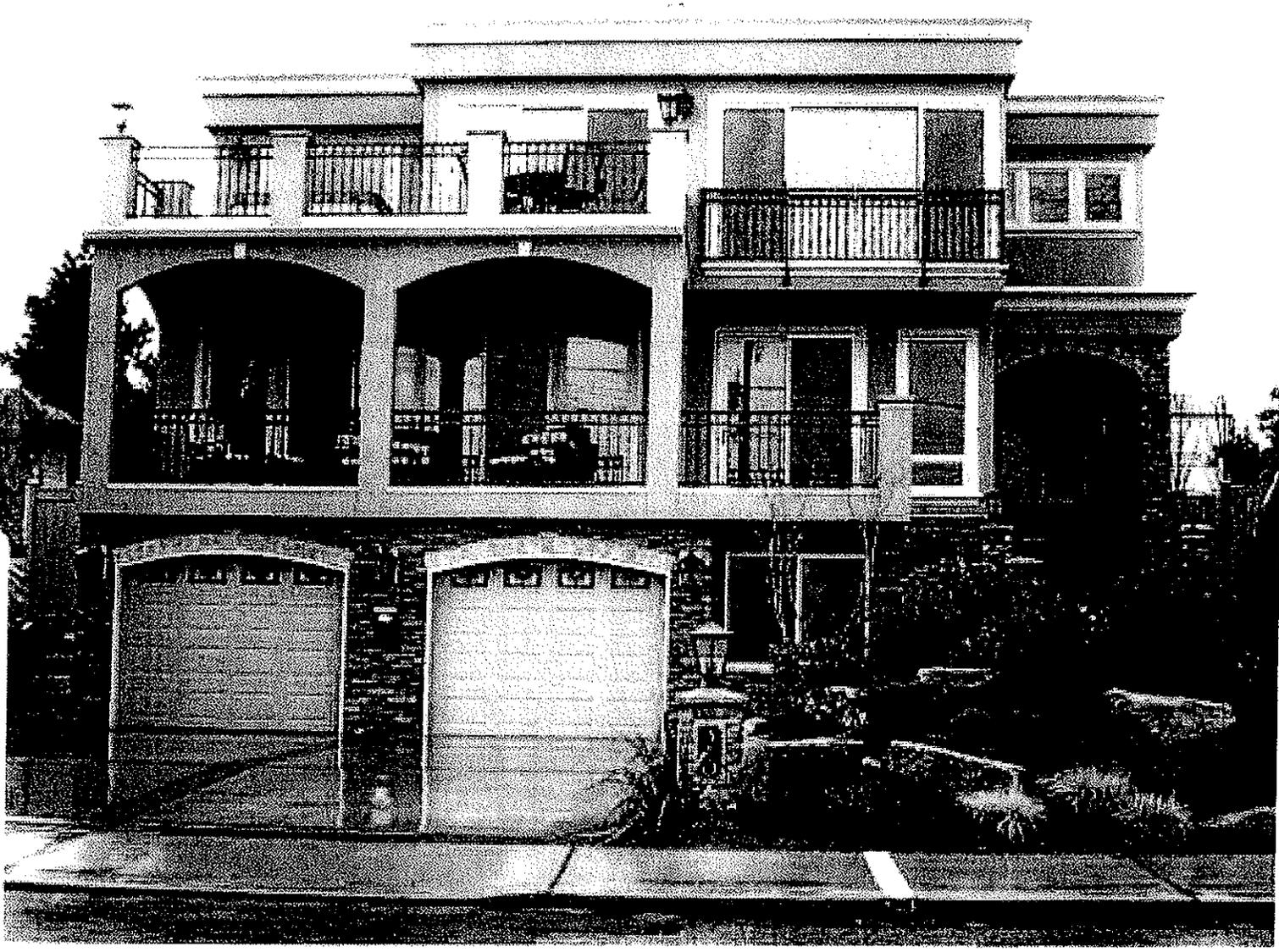
ATTACHMENT 1
Zoning Code Section 115.43 Garage Signback





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ATTACHMENT 2
Zoning Code Section 115.43 Garage Setback





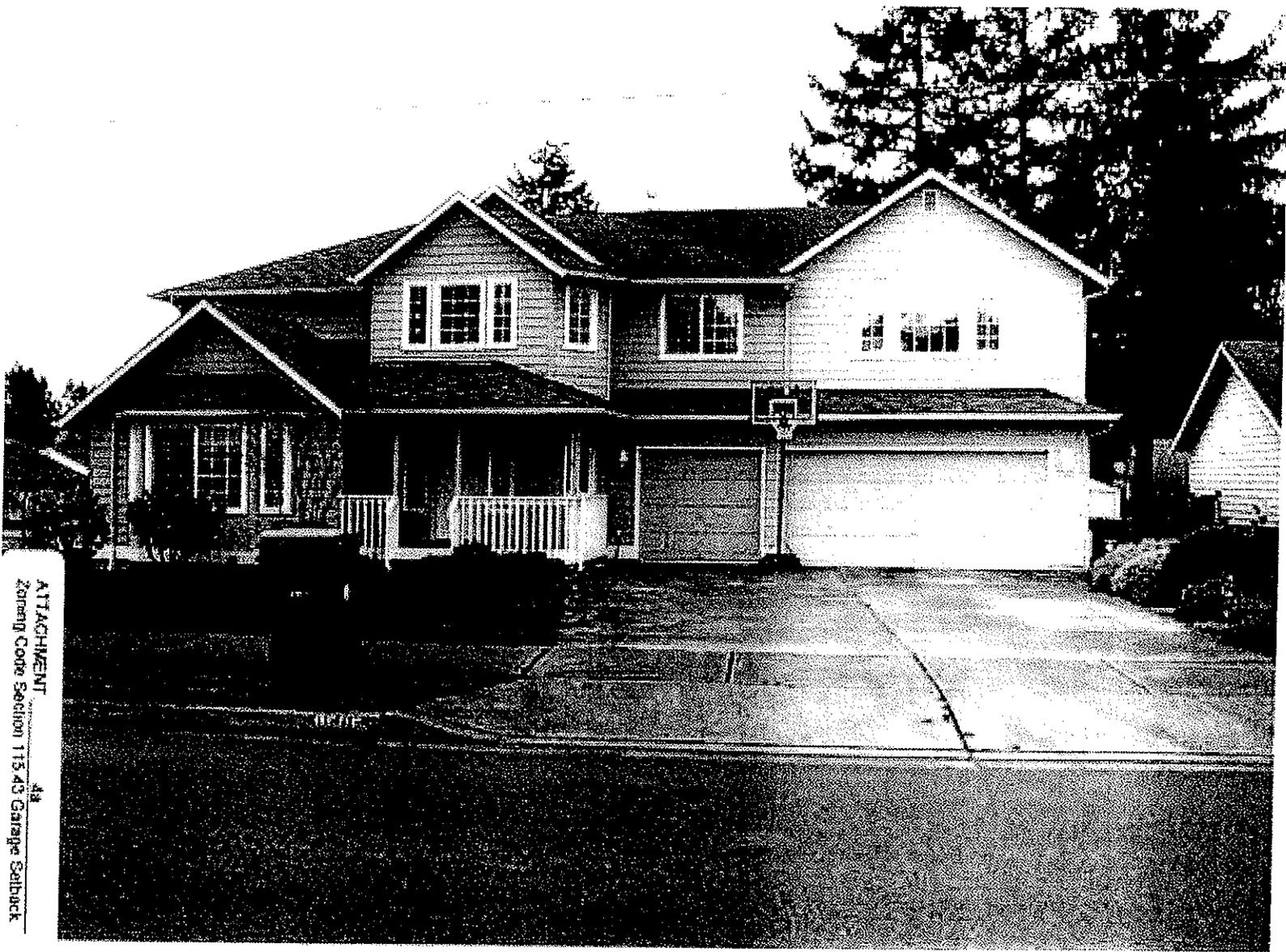


ATTACHMENT 2
Zoning Code Section 115.43 Garage Setback









ATTACHMENT
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Zoning Code Section 115.43 Garage Setback



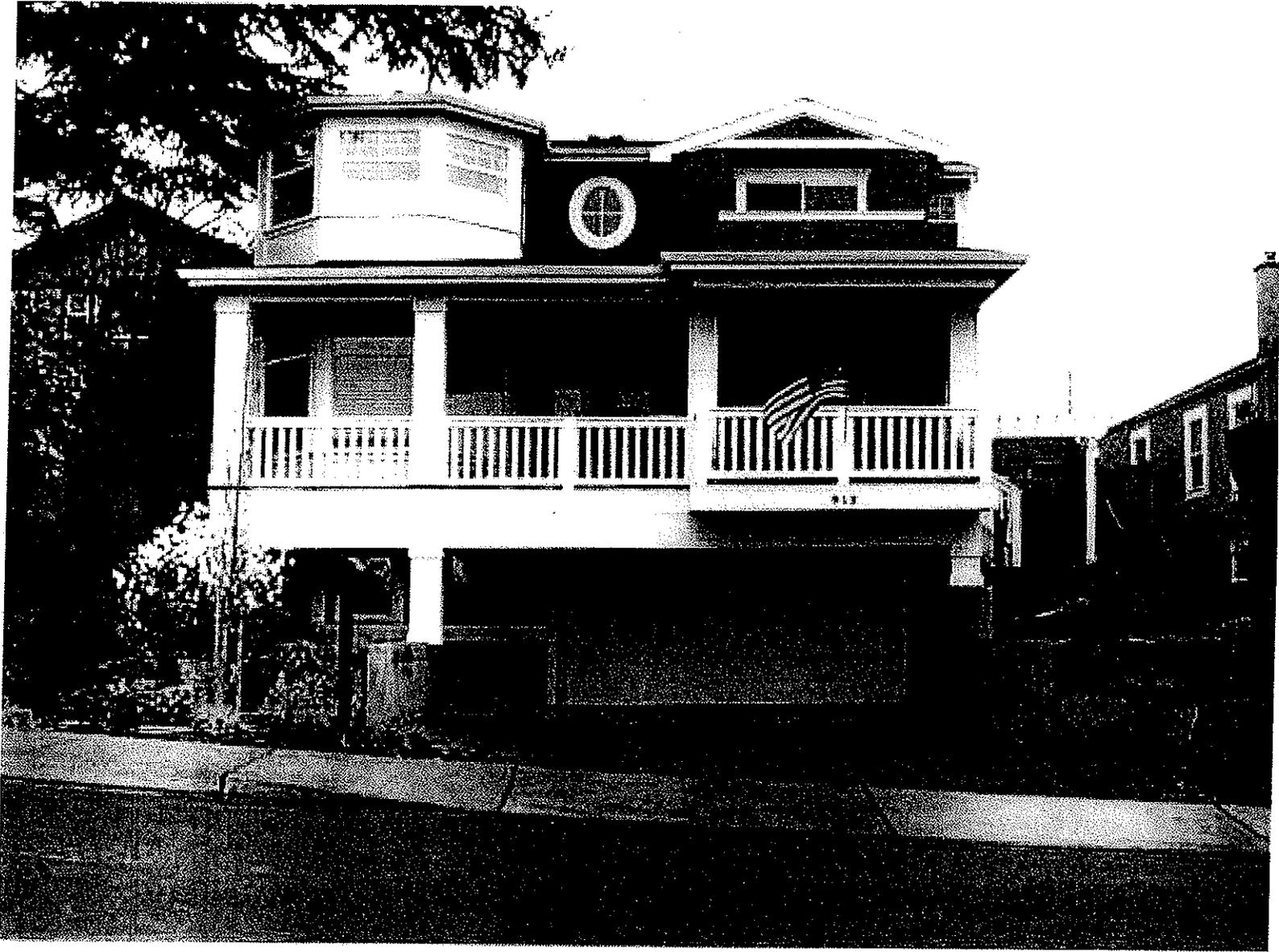




ATTACHMENT
4b
Zoning Code Section 115.43 Garage Setback



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located at least 18 inches on the inside of wood fences when located along any property line. In addition, all electric fences shall be posted with permanent signs which are a minimum of 36 square inches in area at intervals of 15 feet along the fence stating that the fence is electrified.

115.42 Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) Calculation for Detached Dwelling Units in Low Density Residential Zones

1. Gross floor area for purposes of calculating F.A.R. and maximum floor area for detached dwelling units in low density residential zones does not include the following:
 - a. Attic area with less than five feet of headroom.
 - b. Floor area with a ceiling height, including the horizontal supporting members for the ceiling, less than six feet above finished grade. The ceiling height will be measured along the outside perimeter of the building (see Plate 23).
 - c. On lots less than 8,500 square feet, the first 500 square feet of an accessory dwelling unit or garage contained in an accessory structure, when such accessory structure is located more than 20 feet from and behind the main structure (see KZC 115.30 for additional information on the required distance between structures).
 - d. On lots 8,500 square feet or greater, the first 800 square feet of an accessory dwelling unit or garage contained in an accessory structure, when such accessory structure is located more than 20 feet from and behind the main structure (see KZC 115.30 for additional information on the required distance between structures).
 - e. Uncovered and covered decks, porches, and walkways.
2. Floor area with a ceiling height greater than 16 feet shall be calculated as follows:
 - a. The first 100 square feet of such floor area, in aggregate, shall be calculated only once toward allowable F.A.R.;
 - b. Floor area in excess of the first 100 square feet shall be calculated at twice the actual floor area toward allowable F.A.R.
3. *This section is not effective within the disapproval jurisdiction of the Houghton Community Council.*

115.43 Garage Setback Requirements for Detached Dwelling Units in Low Density Zones

1. In a low density zone, the garage must be set back five feet from the remaining portion of the front facade of a dwelling unit, if:
 - a. The garage door is located on the front facade of the dwelling unit; and
 - b. The lot is at least 50 feet wide at the front setback line; and
 - c. The garage width exceeds 50 percent of the combined dimensions of the front facades of the dwelling unit and the garage.
2. In measuring the garage setback, the front facade of the dwelling unit shall include covered entry porches that extend across 100 percent of the remaining front facade, but shall not include other elements that are allowed to extend into the required front yard, pursuant to KZC 115.115.
3. *This section is not effective within the disapproval jurisdiction of the Houghton Community Council.*

115.45 Garbage and Recycling Receptacles and Dumpsters – Placement and Screening

1. Placement – All garbage and recycling receptacles and dumpsters, including underground facilities, must comply with either of the following: