

*The City of*  
**ROLLING HILLS ESTATES**  
*NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY*

Prepared by the Planning Department

# PREFACE

Pursuant to City Council direction, staff initiated the City-wide Neighborhood Compatibility Study to identify the different patterns of development within each of the City's neighborhoods and to help determine whether a proposal conforms with the Municipal Code.

The study catalogs the predominant architectural characteristics of each district and will help establish minimum development standards to preserve the natural features of the land; minimize the excessive appearance of construction; and minimize impacts to adjacent neighbors.

This information is available to all residents and developers as a planning guide for future residential construction and will serve as a decision-making tool to aid the City Council, Planning Commission and staff in evaluating this construction.

# INTRODUCTION

Neighborhood Compatibility (Section 1816 the Rolling Hills Estates Zoning Code) serves as a regulating mechanism for residential construction. By utilizing design criteria and a review process to restrict and regulate the scale, style, privacy, landscaping, views and construction materials, Neighborhood Compatibility protects and maintains the existing patterns of development within various neighborhoods.

Various districts have been designated throughout the City according to common characteristics such as lot size, zoning and land use designation, homeowner association affiliation, and tract development. An inventory of each district was conducted to identify Neighborhood Compatibility characteristics. This inventory included observations of existing homes, a review of all planning department records, and a review of information provided by the "Real Estate Information Service."

The study gathered exterior architectural descriptions, lot size and square footage for each home in order to determine the common characteristics of the neighborhood. Residents were surveyed to obtain their viewpoint of the scale, style and materials within their neighborhood. This planning guide includes a summary of the inventory information, examples of typical neighborhood residences, examples of incompatible developments and guides for compatible construction.

# DAPPLEGRAY STUDY AREA

*Buckskin Lane  
Dapplegray Lane  
Sorrell Lane*

This area is located at the east end of the City bounded by Palos Verdes Drive North Palos Verdes Drive East. Dapplegray is one of the City's subdivisions which occurred as a combination of tracts during the mid-1940's. At that time, construction was regulated by the County of Los Angeles. However, many of the development standards were adopted in the CC&R's for Dapplegray. White, three-rail fencing, white board and batten siding and shake roofing were the only materials permitted. Homes were not to exceed one story, were to utilize 80 percent gable and hip roofing, have setbacks of a minimum of 20' from the street and were permitted no less than 1,000 sq. ft. in area. Many of these CC&Rs are still in effect today.

Many of the homes in the Dapplegray area are consistent with that found when the peninsula area was first developed. Incorporated in 1957, Rolling Hills Estates adopted guidelines for development after many of these areas were already built. The Palos Verdes Corporation was responsible for the sale and subdivision of many of the properties along Palos Verdes Drive North, for this represented the first major thoroughfare to the Peninsula. Lots were sold in one to five acre parcels with the larger lots found around the perimeter of the subdivisions. This offered new residents the tranquility of country living with the convenience of the city. In fact, this became the slogan used to market the Community in the 1940's.

The Dapplegray area has maintained its feeling of privacy and spaciousness and is literally at the very edge of a teeming metropolis. Many of the homes are located at the top of large down-sloping lots. The deep rear yards extend down into Dapplegray canyon and provide space for horsekeeping and recreation uses. However, the gentle, to very steep canyon slopes often present a challenge in providing adequate level area for these uses. In addition, the rear yards are interconnected with a network of easements for bridle trails. These bridle trail right-of-ways were granted to the Dapplegray Lane Property Owner's Association by the Palos Verdes Corporation in the mid-

1940's to connect Dapplegray Canyon, Strawberry Canyon and Spring Canyon to insure that this area remains accessible for equestrians to the City's trail system. The curving and tree bordered "lanes" in this area were developed without curbs and are outlined by three-rail white fencing. As a result, the rural equestrian atmosphere is visible from both the front and rear areas of these homes.

Most second story homes were constructed as room additions overlaying the

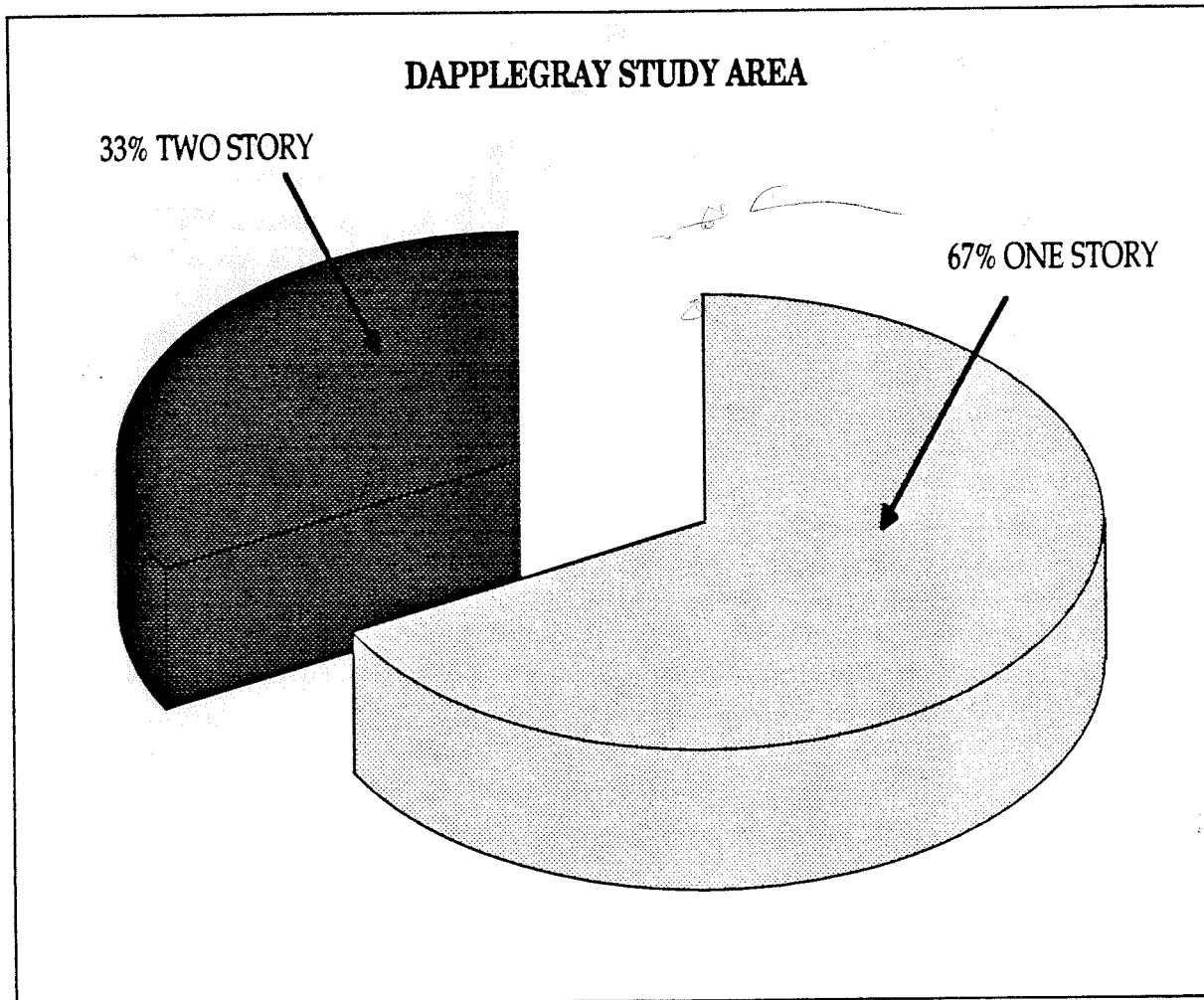
original floor plan or were built in the rear as a split-level residence. The split-level homes often will appear as a single story from the streetside elevation, thus reducing the appearance of a massive or overbearing structure. The lower profile homes utilizing gently-pitched shake roofs are typical examples of good California ranch style architecture.

Today the City's Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance serves the residents by providing a review process to protect and enhance the qualities of living that has made the Peninsula an

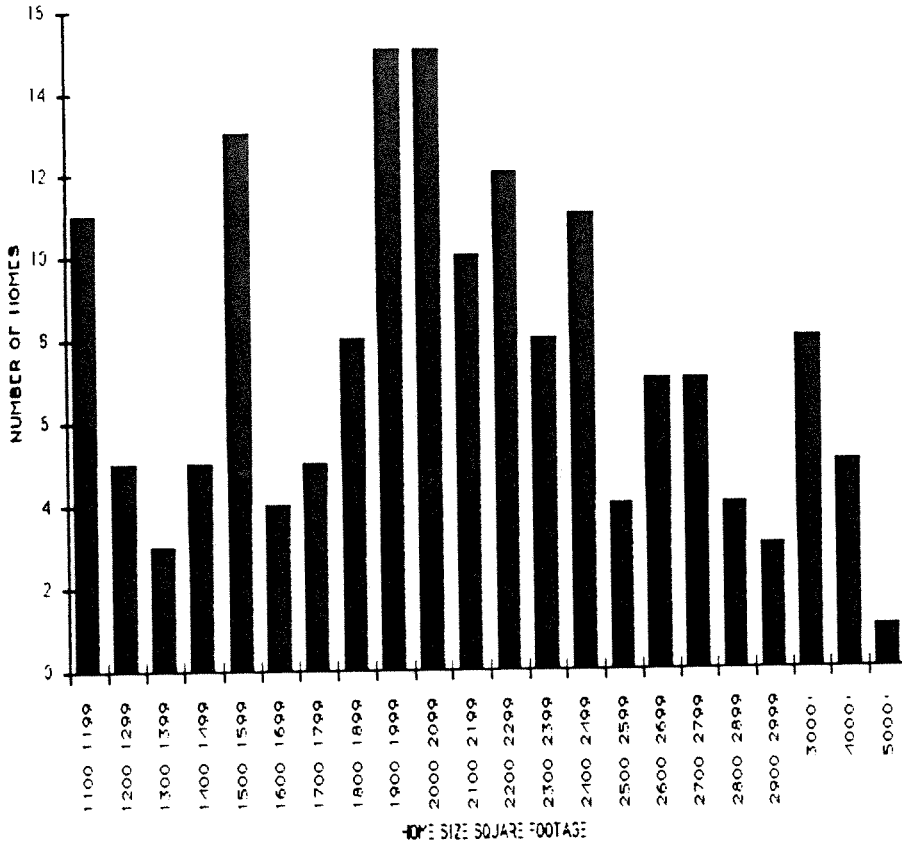
attractive and unique area to live. Projects involving major remodeling are required to conform to new codes while maintaining and perpetuating styles of architecture similar to that of the original development.

However, this does not imply that development should result in a very rigid and repetitious manner. Conversely, new projects to either demolish or repair older homes are usually approved with the ranch style features, but may also have varying floor plans to accommodate changing topographical conditions or living needs.

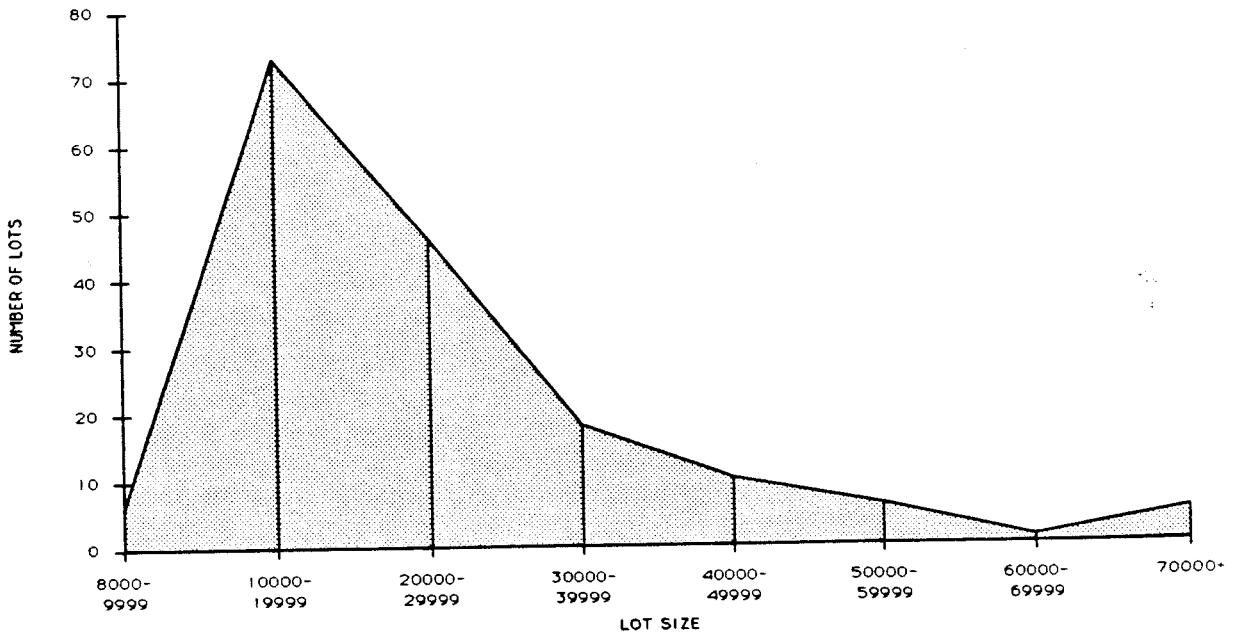
# STATISTICS



ONE THIRD OF THE HOMES IN DAPPLEGRAY ARE TWO STORY WHICH INCLUDES SPLIT LEVEL HOMES .

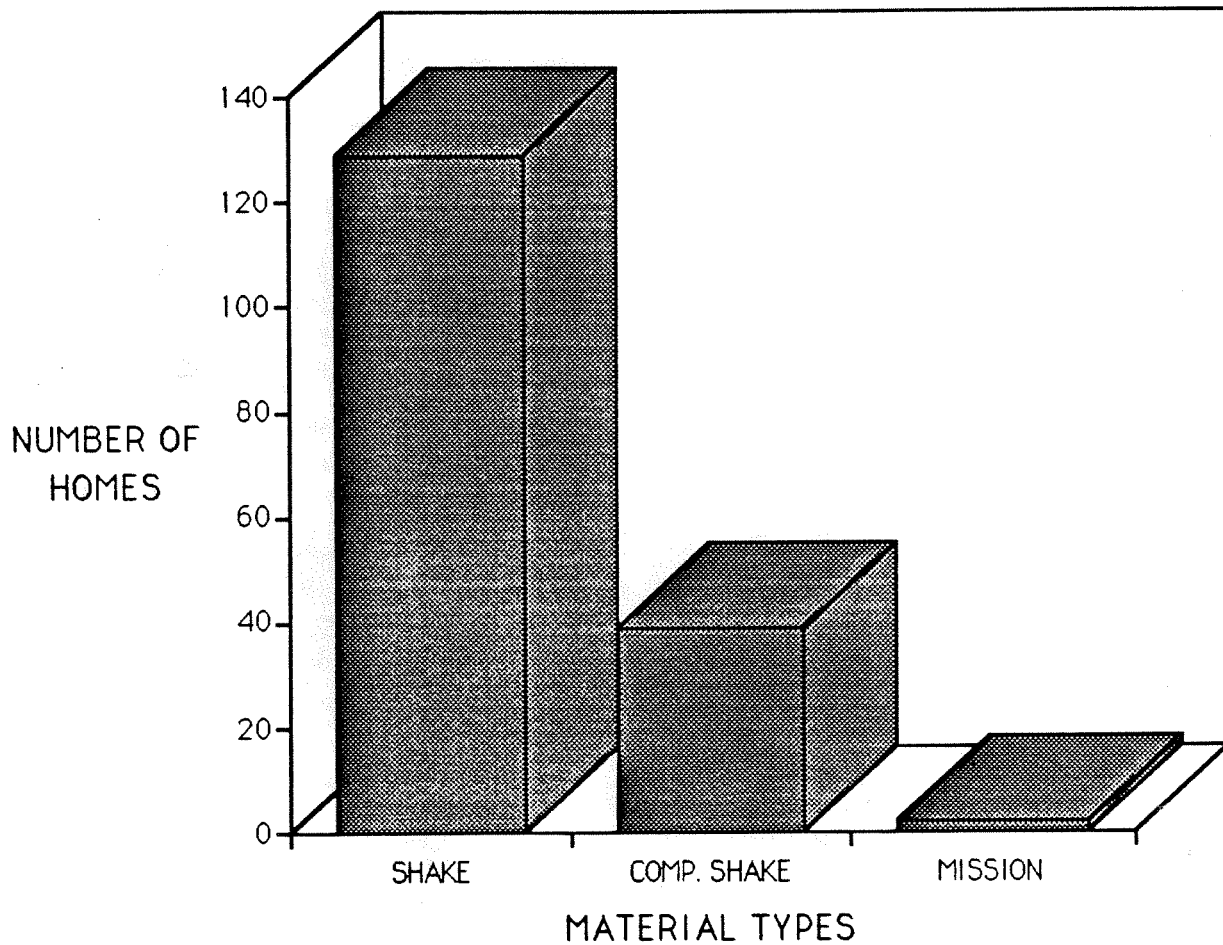


HOMES IN THE DAPPLEGRAY AREA RANGE FROM 1,100 SQUARE FEET TO OVER 5,000 SQUARE FEET. THE MAJORITY OF THESE HOMES ARE BETWEEN 1,500 AND 2,500 SQUARE FEET WITH AN AVERAGE OF 24,275 SQUARE FEET.



LOTS IN THE DAPPLEGRAY AREA ARE GENERALLY LARGER THAN OTHER AREAS THROUGHOUT ROLLING HILLS ESTATES. MOST RANGE BETWEEN 10,000 TO 30,000 SQUARE FEET. A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE LOTS ARE MUCH LARGER, RANGING UP TO ONE ACRE OR MORE.

# ROOFING MATERIALS



THE CC&RS' FOR DAPPLEGRAY HAVE PROMOTED AND ENFORCED THE USE OF BROWN SHAKE ROOFING MATERIAL WHILE A RECENT TREND HAS BEEN TO USE COMPOSITION SHAKE MATERIAL WHICH IS VERY SIMILAR IN APPEARANCE. THE MISSION TILE ROOFING FOUND ON PALOS VERDES DRIVE NORTH WAS INCLUDED IN THIS SURVEY.



# SURVEY RESULTS

The City surveyed the Dapplegray residents to obtain their opinion of development in their neighborhood. One-quarter of the residents responded to the survey with the following results:

	Yes	No	No Answer
Encourage additions	89%	11%	0%
Discourage additions	5%	89%	6%
Allow more lot coverage	50%	42%	8%
Control design	89%	5%	6%
Second story additions that do not obstruct views	82%	16%	2%
Architecture types preferred			
Existing	63%	5%	32%
Ranch	89%	8%	3%
Mediterranean	37%	39%	34%
Cape Cod	61%	24%	15%
Colonial	56%	26%	18%
English Tudor	50%	29%	21%
Contemporary	24%	52%	24%
High tech modern	5%	69%	26%
Pilasters	47%	32%	21%

Residents generally favor maintaining and preserving the rural feeling of the neighborhood while encouraging additions. The existing or ranch style of architecture is preferred with design controls in effect to perpetuate these styles of architecture.

## ROOFING MATERIAL SURVEY

	YES	NO	NO ANSWER
Cal Shake	76%	3%	21%
Wood	68%	16%	16%
Flat Ceramic Tile	53%	15%	32%
Barrel Ceramic Tile	42%	29%	29%
Composition	29%	32%	39%
Rock	5%	63%	32%

Cal Shake, wood, and composition roofing materials are most preferred given they resemble cedar shake or similar roofing materials.

# COMPATIBILITY

**B**esides complying with the City's residential development standards, proposals shall preserve the open space and rural character of the City by minimizing the appearance of an overbuilt property to both public and private view.

*To minimize the appearance, designs must reduce the height of structures; maximize open space; maintain the bulk and mass of similar surrounding structures; avoid stark, unbroken exterior walls; and incor-*

*porate compatible roof pitch features. In addition, the square footage of the residence and the total amount of lot coverage should reflect the rural character of the City and the respective neighborhood.*

# COMPATIBLE

The homes in Dapplegray will be reviewed to insure that ranch style design features are incorporated into new construction projects and remodels. These include lower profile additions to both single and second stories to minimize the appearance of a massive or bulky structure from public and private view. The use of white board and batten siding combined with brown shake roofing are the most common design features in Dapplegray. Some homes have utilized brick and P.V. stone to accent the ranch style of architecture without dominating the exteriors of the homes. The extensive use of three-rail white fencing has helped to distinguish Dapplegray from other Rolling Hills Estates communities.

Due to the sloping topography of many lots overlooking canyon areas, split-level additions have become very common and represent good alternatives to second story additions because of the lower profile appearance from street level. Gable roofing facing canyon areas will help to reduce the second story appearance as these types of additions face properties in adjacent communities. The original CC&Rs restricted homes to one-story which may explain why only one-third are two-story today.

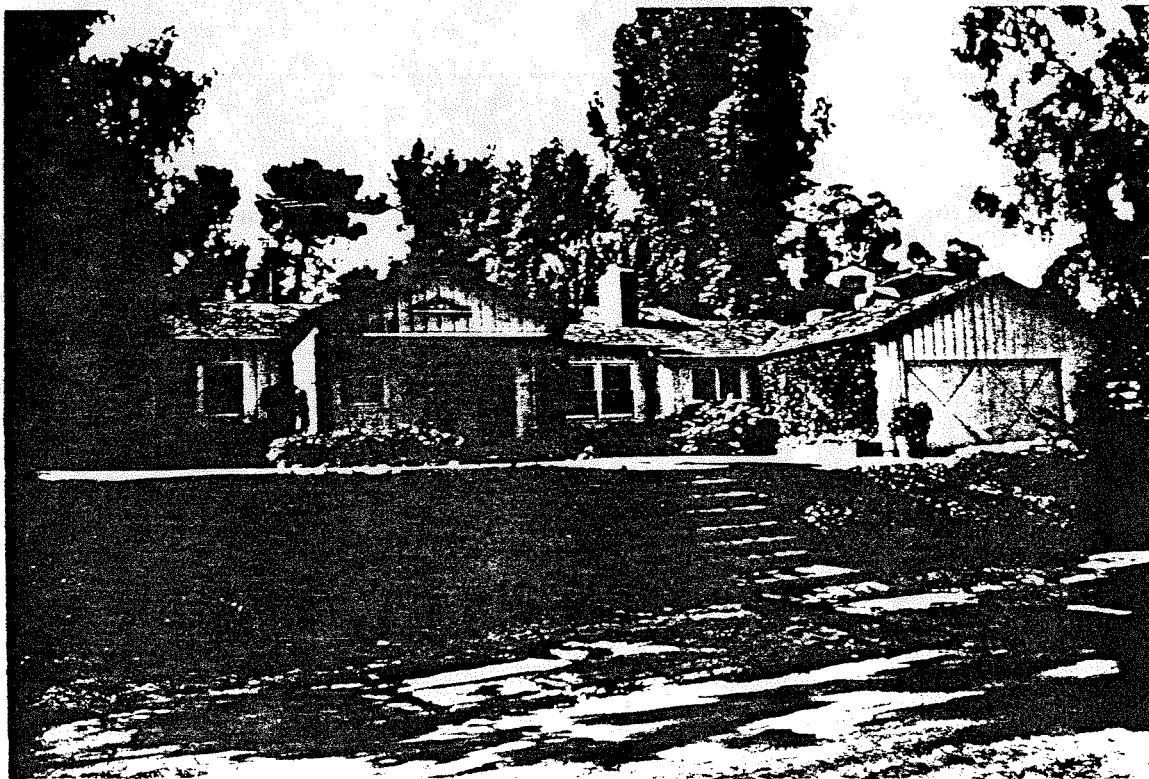
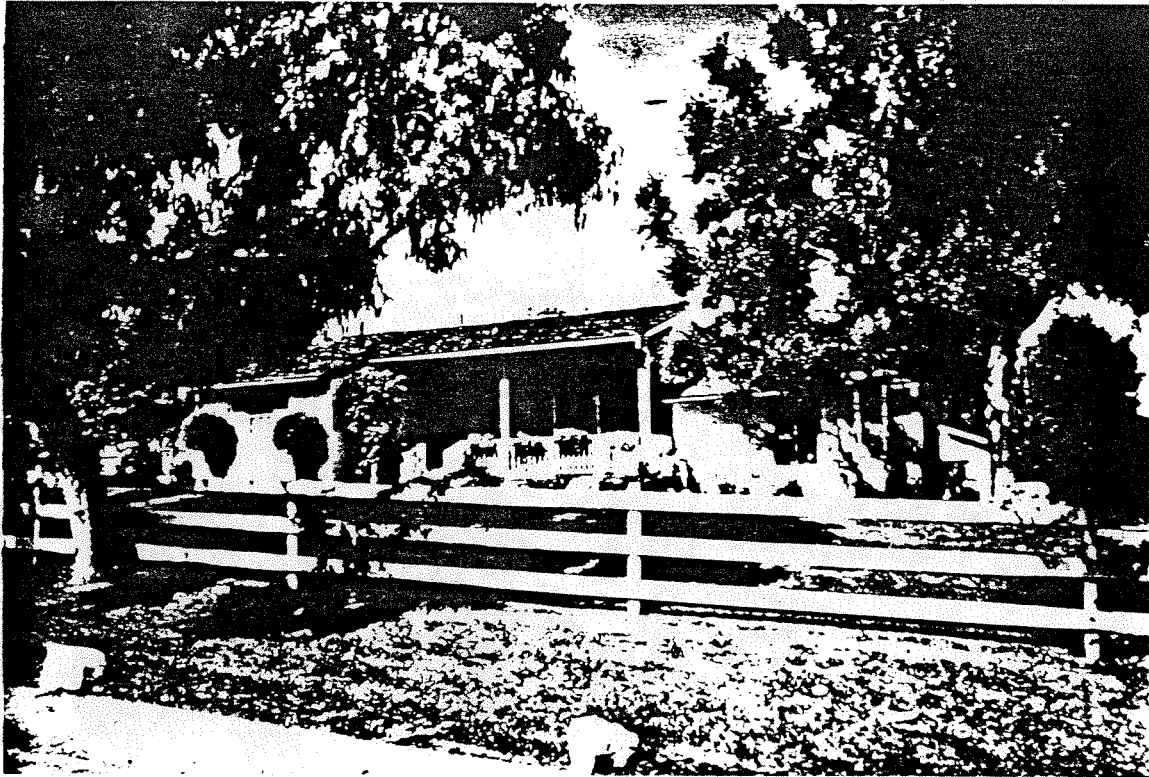
In other instances, the topography has limited one's ability to improve their home, restricting additions from projecting towards the front property line. In most cases, a variance is required to build within the front yard area. Properties

which have extensive setbacks from the street are sometimes adjacent to properties with much shorter setbacks. This fluctuation in setbacks could allow for the home with the larger setback to come closer to the street. However, alternative rear yard proposals should be considered first. Grading should be minimized to preserve the natural topography of the area.

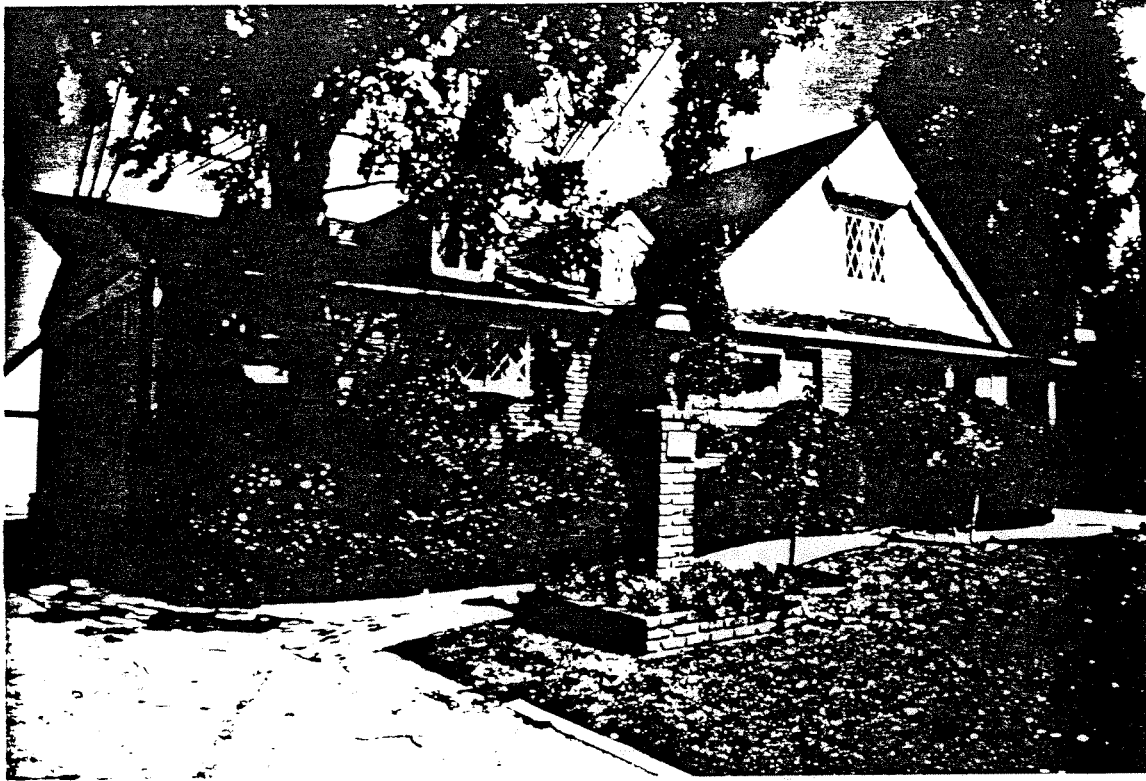
Construction in Dapplegray should generally follow these design guidelines:

- Maintain low-profile additions
- Utilize shake roof material or composition shakewith gable and hip rooflines, large eaves and exposed ridge rafters
- White board and batten siding with brick and P.V. stone to compliment overall designs.
- Three-rail white fencing
- Variation in building elevations, setbacks, and roofline.

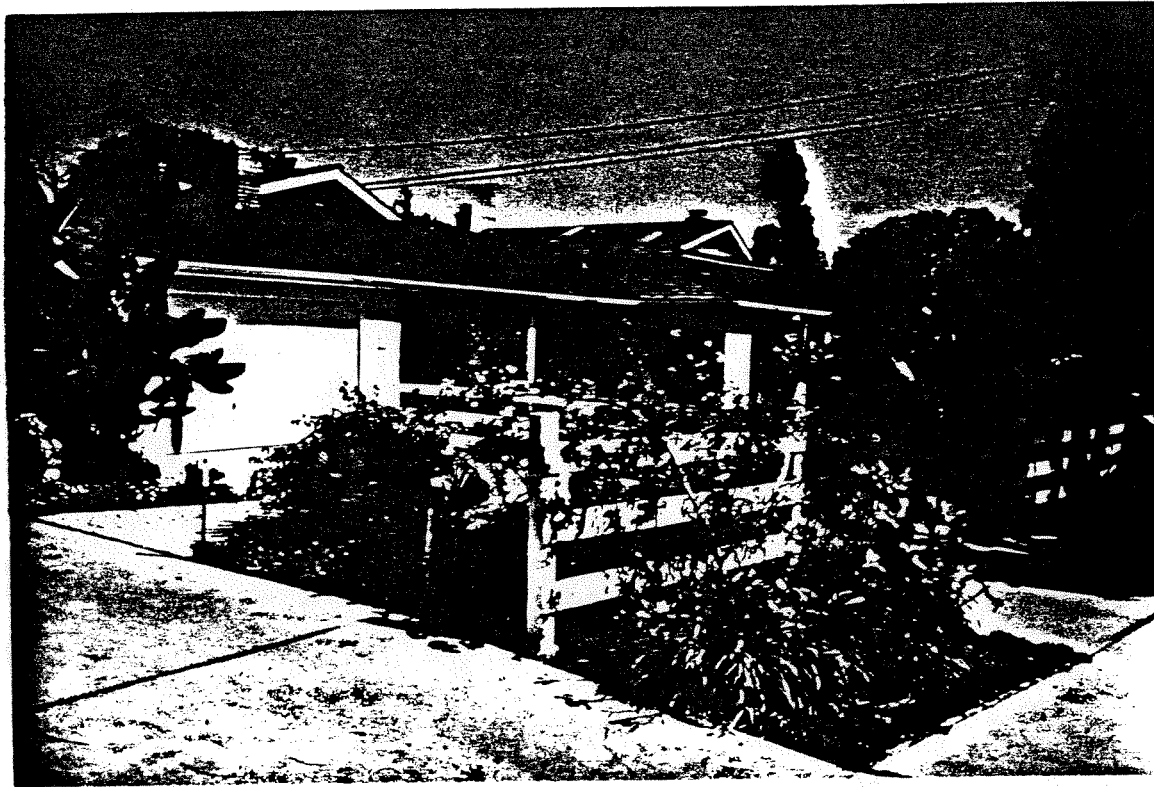
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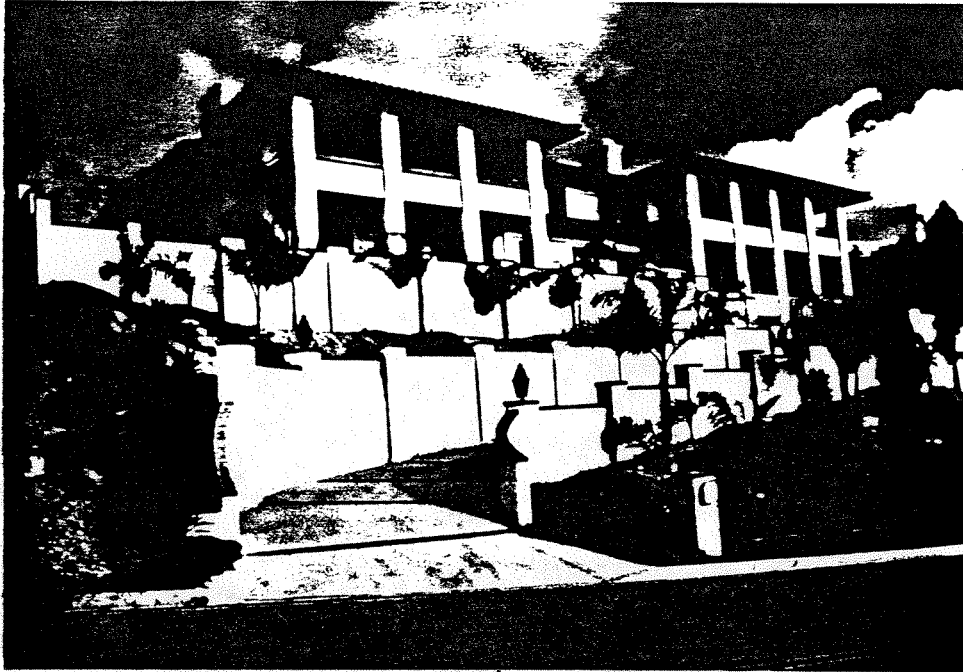


# NOT COMPATIBLE

The trend for the past several years has been towards building large additions or completely removing an existing home and replacing it with a home three or four times its size. While the community, as a whole, seems to be in favor of this transformation on a project-by-project basis, caution must be taken to avoid losing the priceless rural atmosphere of the Dapplegray area.

The following photographs reflect homes that may be considered attractive within certain urbanized areas but are not compatible within the Dapplegray area, and should be avoided.

RETAINING WALLS WHICH ARE NOT COMPATIBLE

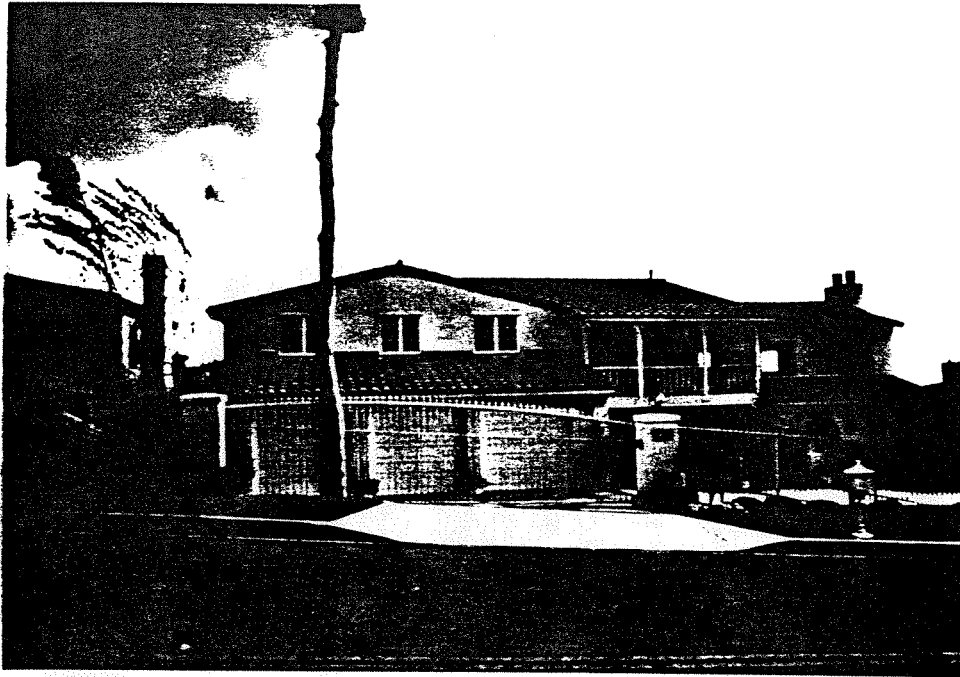


MASSIVE SECOND STORY HOMES





PILASTERS WHICH ARE NOT COMPATIBLE



TWO STORY HOMES WITH NO VARIATION



**RETAINING WALLS WHICH ARE NOT COMPATIBLE**



**MASSIVE TWO STORY HOMES**



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