

 <p>ST. CHARLES SINCE 1834</p>	PLAN COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY			
	Project Title/ Address:	General Amendment (City of St. Charles) Half-Story Definition and Regulations		
	City Staff:	Russell Colby, Planner		
Please check appropriate box (x)				
	PUBLIC HEARING 4/19/11	X	MEETING	
APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:				
General Amendment				
ATTACHMENTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS				
General Amendment Application				
Staff Memo				
Photos				
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:				
<p>Staff has filed an application to amend the definition and requirements for one-and-one-half story buildings in single-family residential districts.</p> <p>See the attached Staff Memo.</p>				
RECOMMENDATION / SUGGESTED ACTION (<i>briefly explain</i>):				
<p>Conduct the public hearing and continue the hearing to May 3. Based on feedback from the Commission, Staff will present the amendment text for a recommendation at the meeting on May 3.</p>				
<i>For office use only:</i>		<i>Agenda Item Number:</i>		

CITY OF ST. CHARLES

TWO EAST MAIN STREET
ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS 60174-1984



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING DIVISION

PHONE: (630) 377-4443 FAX: (630) 377-4062

GENERAL AMENDMENT APPLICATION

CITYVIEW	
Project Name:	_____
Project Number:	<u>2011</u> -PR- <u>003</u>
Application Number:	<u>2011</u> -AP- <u>008</u>

Received Date

RECEIVED

St. Charles, IL

APR 1 - 2011

CDD

Planning Division

Instructions:

To request an amendment to the text of the St. Charles Zoning Ordinance, complete this application and submit it with all required attachments to the Planning Division.

City staff will review submittals for completeness and for compliance with applicable requirements prior to establishing a meeting or public hearing date for an application.

The information you provide must be complete and accurate. If you have a question please call the Planning Division and we will be happy to assist you.

1. Applicant:	Name	Phone
	Address	Fax
		Email
2. Billing: <i>Who is responsible for paying application fees and reimbursements?</i>	Name	Phone
	Address	Fax
		Email

Handwritten entries:
 1. Applicant: Name: City of St. Charles; Phone: 630-377-4443; Address: 2 E. Main St., St. Charles, IL 60174; Email: rcolby@stcharlesil.gov
 2. Billing: Address: Same

Attachment Checklist

- APPLICATION:** Completed application form
- APPLICATION FEE:** Application fee in accordance with Appendix B of the Zoning Ordinance.
- REIMBURSEMENT OF FEES AGREEMENT:** An original, executed Reimbursement of Fees Agreement and deposit of funds in escrow with the City, as provided by Appendix B of the Zoning Ordinance.
- WORDING OF THE REQUESTED TEXT AMENDMENT**
One (1) copy of Proposed Amendment (Letter Sized) and one (1) Electronic Microsoft Word version on CD-ROM

Requested Text Amendment

To amend Section(s) (See below) of the St. Charles Zoning Ordinance. The wording of the proposed amendment is: (attach sheets if necessary)

17.12 Residential Districts, pertaining to bulk requirements
for one and one-half story buildings

17.30 Definitions, pertaining to definitions for "story"
and "half story"

I (we) certify that this application and the documents submitted with it are true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

Russell Gay

Applicant

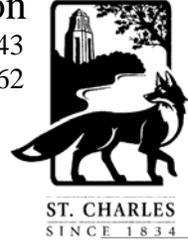
4/1/11

Date

Community Development
Planning Division

Phone: (630) 377-4443

Fax: (630) 377-4062



STAFF MEMO

TO: Chairman Todd Wallace
and Plan Commission Members

FROM: Russell Colby, Planner

RE: General Amendments To Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance)
Requirements for One-and-one-half story buildings in Residential Districts

DATE: April 15, 2011

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Name: General Amendment – One-and-one-half story Residential Buildings

Applicant: City of St. Charles, Community Development Dept., Planning Division

Requested Action/Recommendation:

Conduct the public hearing and close if all testimony has been taken.

Continue the public hearing if necessary.

II. BACKGROUND

The 2006 Zoning Ordinance created new single-family residential districts tailored to fit existing development patterns in the City. The “RT” Traditional Residential Districts were specifically designed to fit the pattern of pre-World War II neighborhoods surrounding the downtown area.

One significant goal of the new Zoning Ordinance was to control the size or mass of new single-family homes built in the RT neighborhoods. In the early 2000s, a number of homes in the RT districts had been torn down and replaced with newer, much larger homes that were considered to be out of character and scale with the older neighborhoods.

To help regulate the overall size of new houses and additions in the RT districts, a new “Building Coverage” standard was adopted. This standard effectively limits the overall footprint of roofed structures on a lot to a percentage of the total lot area.

The Building Coverage standards were set based on research of existing neighborhoods. The standards are as follows:

- For structures less than 1.5 stories, 30% of the lot area
- For structures over 1.5 stories, 25% of the lot area
- Additionally, “bonuses” of additional square footage are offered for detached or alley-accessed garages.



A two-tiered system of Building Coverage percentages was created to encourage 1 and 1.5 story buildings to be compatible with existing older architectural styles. One and 1.5 story buildings are allowed a larger building footprint and reduced minimum side-yard setbacks.

The two-tiered system was adopted in favor of 1 and 1.5 story buildings for the following reasons:

- Shorter buildings and buildings that appear to be less massive are usually more compatible with older neighborhoods, where building footprints are typically small compared to today’s building standards
- The typical 1 or 1.5 story building has architectural design features that are common in older neighborhoods, such as lower, sloping roof forms and window and shed dormers. These roof forms reduce the visual size of the structure by breaking up the apparent mass of the building
- Shorter buildings can be closer to side-yards without having a negative impact, because they usually do not have a full two-story wall abutting a neighboring property

III. ANALYSIS

Although there was consensus that a 1.5 story residential building should be encouraged in the RT districts, there was no detailed analysis of how to define a “half story” in technical terms for administering the ordinance.

The 2006 Zoning Ordinance carried forward the definition of a “half-story” from the 1960 ordinance. The definition from the 1960 ordinance had not been frequently referenced or applied.

The current definition:

Story. *That portion of a building included between the surface of a floor and the surface of the floor next above, or if there is no floor above, the space between the floor and the ceiling or roof above it. A basement shall be counted as a story for the purposes of this Title; a cellar shall not be counted as a story, but shall be included in any calculation of gross floor area if it otherwise meets the applicable criteria. (Ord. 1960-16 § III (part).)*

Story, Half. *A space under a sloping roof which has the line of intersection of roof decking and wall not more than three (3) feet above the top floor level and, in which space, not more than sixty percent (60%) of the floor area is completed for principal or accessory use. (Ord. 1960-16 § III (part).)*

Staff was recently approached regarding an interpretation of the definition. Attached to this Memo is a diagram showing a simple graphical interpretation of the Half-Story definition. Staff researched requirements in nearby communities and found the City's definition is similar to other communities.

In reviewing the definition, Staff has identified a number of issues with the current "Half Story" definition:

- The definition is confusing to interpret for users of the ordinance and difficult to apply to a set of complex building plans
- The definition regulates the internal finished area of the building, which may have no relation to the outside visual "mass" of the building
- The definition does not control the overall mass of the building, because a structure can be constructed with an unfinished interior space and not be considered more than a half-story. (Building height is regulated separately regardless of whether the structure is 1 or 1.5 story.)
- The definition effectively prevents the addition of usable gable projections and window and shed dormers in sloping roofs, which are a characteristic feature of older neighborhoods
- The definition encourages steeper roof slopes that visually add mass to the building

IV. PROPOSAL

Staff proposes that the Half-Story definition be rewritten to regulate only the exterior "mass" of the structure, with no regulation of the interior spaces. Staff would like feedback from the Commission on what they would consider to be a Half-Story house, based on images of houses in St. Charles. Images of example houses are attached for review.

Based on feedback, Staff will draft appropriate language for a Plan Commission recommendation.

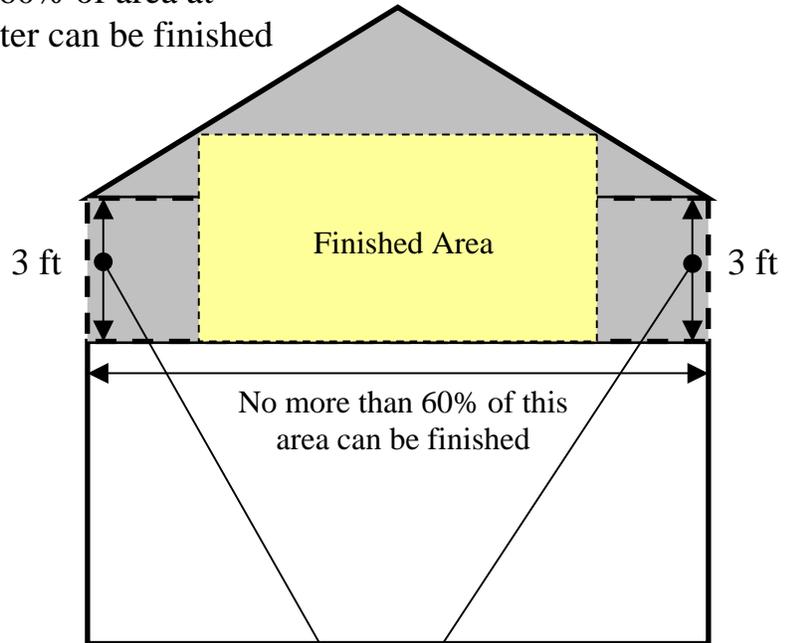
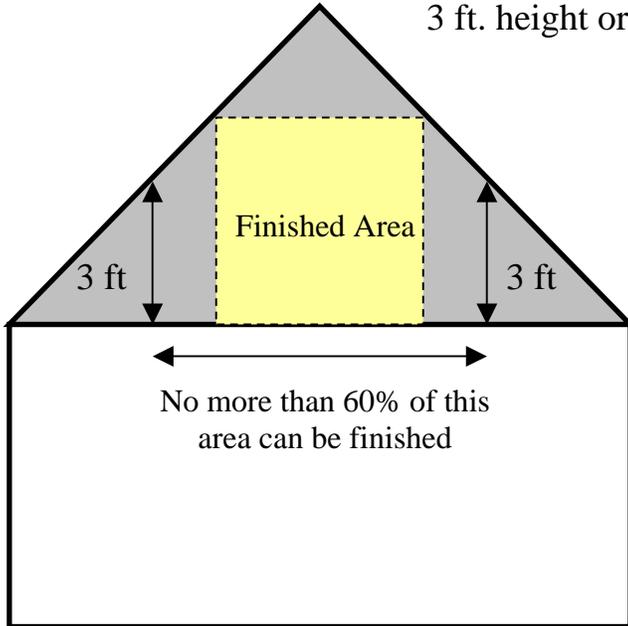
V. REQUESTED ACTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Conduct the public hearing and continue the hearing to the May 3 meeting. Based on Plan Commission feedback, Staff will present the amendment text for a recommendation.

Current Half-Story Definition

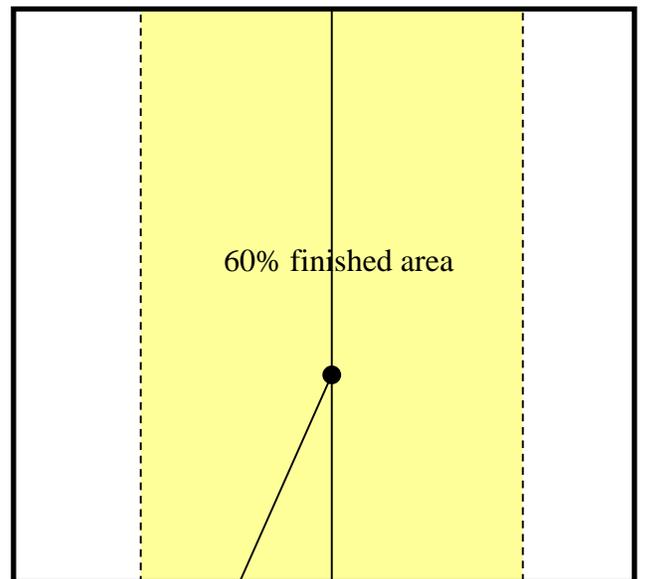
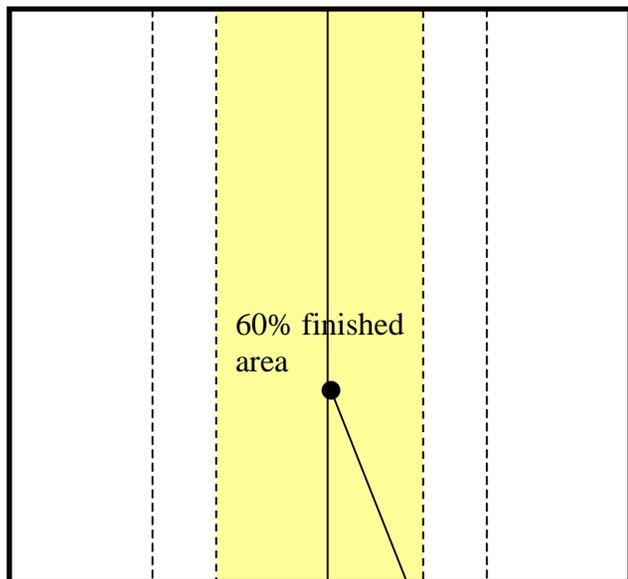
Section/Side View of Building

No more than 60% of area at
3 ft. height or greater can be finished



Wall height above 1st floor cannot exceed 3ft.
(Roof must intersect wall at 3 ft. or lower)

Plan/Overheard View of Half-Story



Roof ridge line

Pictures of example houses
with a 1.5 story appearance



