

**CITY OF PLYMOUTH
ZONING ORDINANCE
ORDINANCE NO. 16-02**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PLYMOUTH TO DEFINE PORTE COCHERE, ALLOW A FRONT PORCH IN THE FRONT YARD SETBACK ON AN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL DWELLING IF THE GARAGE IS PLACED IN THE REAR YARD, REQUIRE FRONT FACING GARAGES TO BE PLACED BEHIND THE FRONT FACE OF THE DWELLING, PROVIDE STANDARDS FOR PORTE COCHERES ON SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS, PROHIBIT GENERATORS IN ANY RESIDENTIAL SETBACK, ALLOW PORTE COCHERES IN THE SIDE YARD SETBACK ON CERTAIN SIZED LOTS, AND ADD STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAYS.

Section 1. The City of Plymouth Ordains

Chapter 78-1 “Zoning” in the Code of Ordinances of the City of Plymouth is hereby amended by adding the following described text revisions:

Section 2. Modify the following articles (**additions are underlined, deletions are ~~struck thru~~**).

ARTICLE II. – DEFINITIONS

[Modify Section 78-21 DEFINITIONS]

Porte Cochere means an unenclosed, roofed structure located on the same lot, which extends from the principal dwelling over an adjacent driveway that is designed to let vehicles pass under and used for the shelter of those getting in and out of vehicles.

ARTICLE IV. – R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS***[Modify Section 78-43 SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING UNIT STANDARDS]***

Sec. 78-43. - Single family dwelling unit standards.

No residential structure, garage (attached or detached), mobile home, manufactured home, modular home or prefabricated home shall be built unless the dwelling unit has been reviewed by the building official subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Dwelling unit shall conform to all applicable city codes and ordinances and state and federal requirements with respect to the construction of the dwelling.
- (2) Dwelling unit shall be permanently attached to a perimeter foundation. In instances where the applicant elects to set the dwelling on piers or other acceptable foundations which are not at the perimeter of the dwelling, then a perimeter wall shall also be constructed. Any such perimeter wall shall be constructed of durable materials and shall also meet all local requirements with respect to materials, construction and necessary foundations below the frost line. Any such wall shall also provide an appearance which is compatible with the dwelling and other ~~homes~~ dwellings in the area.
- (3) Dwelling unit shall be provided with exterior finish materials similar to the dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (4) Dwelling unit shall be provided with roof designs and roofing materials similar to the dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (5) Dwelling unit shall be provided with an exterior building wall configuration which represents an average width to depth or depth to width ratio which does not exceed three to one, or is in reasonable conformity with the configuration of dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (6) The dwelling shall contain storage capability in a basement located under the dwelling, in an attic area, in closet areas, or in a separate structure of standard construction similar to or of better quality than the principal dwelling, which storage area shall be equal to ten percent of the square footage of the dwelling or 100 square feet, whichever is less.
- (7) The building official may request a review by the planning commission of any dwelling unit with respect to subsections (3), (4), and (5) of this section. The building official or planning commission shall not seek to discourage architectural variation, but shall seek to promote the reasonable compatibility of the character of dwelling unit, thereby protecting the economic welfare and property value of surrounding residential uses and the city at large. In reviewing any such proposed dwelling unit, the building official may require the applicant to furnish such plans, elevations and similar documentation as is deemed necessary to permit a complete review and evaluation of the proposal. When comparing the proposed dwelling unit to similar types of dwelling areas, consideration shall be given to comparable types of ~~homes~~ dwellings within 300 feet. If the area within 300 feet does not contain any such ~~homes~~ dwellings, then the nearest 25 similar type dwellings shall be considered.
- (8) Attached garages that face the street are allowed on lots that are 60 feet wide or greater.
- (9) The total width of a garage attached to a single family dwelling shall:
 - a. Not exceed 50 percent of the width of the entire front façade of the residential dwelling; and
 - b. Is a minimum of 22 feet wide, measured from the exterior of the garage walls.
- (10) Attached garages shall ~~not protrude more than six~~ be located at least four feet ~~in front of~~ the front exterior wall of the residential dwelling, ~~but in no case shall be closer than thirty (30) feet from the front property line.~~

(11) **Front Porch Exception for New Single Family Dwellings:**

New single family ~~homes~~ dwellings are encouraged to positively contribute toward neighborhood enhancement and the walkability of the city. Walkability is the extent to which walking is readily available as a safe, connected, accessible and pleasant mode of transport. One way to accomplish walkability is to locate garages at the rear of a lot. Garages at the rear of a lot (whether attached to the ~~home~~ dwelling or as a free-standing detached garage) help to support walkability by:

- Minimizing the width of the driveway at the front of the ~~house~~ dwelling, allowing more space in the front yard for trees and vegetation, and more space along the street for street trees;
- Minimizing the potential of parked cars left in front of the garage door to block the sidewalk;
- Allowing space on the ~~home's~~ dwelling's front façade for windows and other human-scaled architectural elements; and
- Allowing space on the ~~home's~~ dwelling's front façade for a porch, where residents can interact with neighbors on the sidewalk and observe activities on the street.

a. To encourage locating garages at the rear of a lot, new single family residential projects that locate the garage in the rear or retain an existing garage at the rear, may also locate a covered front porch in the front yard setback by up to four feet. In addition, the area that the covered front porch occupies in the front yard setback shall not be considered in calculating lot coverage. To be eligible for this exception, the proposed construction must meet all of the following standards:

- a1. The project includes construction of a new single family ~~residence~~ dwelling on the lot; and
- b2. The project includes construction of a new garage which is located either in the rear of the new ~~building~~ dwelling (attached) or in the rear third of the lot (detached) or retains an existing detached garage for continued use as a garage which is located in the rear third of the lot; and Projects that do not include a new garage are not eligible for the front yard porch exception.
- e3. The front porch that is located in the front yard setback must be:
 - i4. Single-story in height, no higher than fifteen (15) feet, and as measured per the procedures described in section 78-21 of the zoning ordinance for building height; and
 - ii2. No ~~less than four inches or~~ more than eight and one-quarter inches from the elevation of the ~~front door~~ finished first floor (i.e., at-grade decks and patios are not eligible for the front yard porch exception); and
 - iii3. A minimum of six feet in depth (distance between the front exterior wall of the residence and the edge of the porch deck); and
 - iv4. Covered with a roof; and
 - v5. Unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future. This standard does not include open railings and balustrades; and
- d4. The front setback line used to determine where the front porch can be located on the lot shall equal the setback required by sections 78-190 and 78-191.
- e5. On corner lots, porches may be constructed on either or both front facades, or built as one wraparound porch as long as the porch(s) meets the requirements in "1" through "4" above.

6. The final Certificate of Occupancy for the residential dwelling shall not be issued until construction of the qualifying garage is complete.

(12) Front Porch Exception for Existing Single Family Dwellings

To support walkability throughout the city as described in (11) above, existing single family dwellings which construct a new garage in the rear, or have an existing garage in the rear, may also locate a covered front porch in the front yard setback by up to six feet. In addition, the area that the covered front porch occupies in the front yard setback shall not be considered in calculating lot coverage. To be eligible for this exception, the existing dwelling must be occupied as of January 1, 2016. Also, the proposed construction must meet all of the following standards:

- a. The project includes construction of a new garage which is located either in the rear of the existing residential dwelling (attached) or in the rear third of the lot (detached), or retains an existing detached garage for continued use as a garage which is located in the rear third of the lot; and
- b. The front porch that is located in the front yard setback shall be:
1. Single-story in height, no higher than fifteen (15) feet, and as measured per the procedures described in section 78-21 of the zoning ordinance for building height; and
No more than eight and one-quarter inches from the elevation of the finished first floor (i.e. at-grade decks and patios are not eligible for the front yard porch exception); and
 3. A minimum of six feet in depth (distance between the front exterior wall of the residence and the edge of the porch deck); and
 4. Covered with a roof; and
 5. Unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future. This standard does not include open railings and balustrades; and
- c. The front setback line used to determine where the front porch can be located on the lot shall be established using all of the following standards:
1. The front setback line shall equal the setback required by sections 78-190 and 78-191; and
Front yard setback averaging, as described in section 78-191(o) shall not apply; and
 3. For existing dwellings whose front exterior wall closest to the street is greater than the minimum front yard setback required in Section 78-190, then the distance between the front setback line and the exterior wall shall be subtracted from the width of porch allowed in the front setback. For example, if a residential dwelling is setback 27-feet (or two-feet more than the 25-foot minimum front yard setback), then two feet shall be subtracted from the porch width allowed within the front yard setback. This results in a maximum width porch in the front yard setback of four feet.
- d. On corner lots, porches may be constructed on either or both front facades, or built as one wraparound porch as long as the porch(s) meets the requirements in "a" through "c" above.

- e. The qualifying existing garage or new garage must be constructed before constructing the front porch.
- f. Existing residential dwellings with an existing attached garage that faces the street are not eligible for this front porch exception.

(13) Porte-Cocheres on Single Family Dwellings

One porte cochere, as defined by this ordinance, may be attached to a single family dwelling over a driveway to provide shelter for passengers entering and existing vehicles parked in the driveway. A porte cochere may only be attached to a residential dwelling if the residential dwelling is set back a minimum of thirteen (13) feet from the side property line. A porte cochere shall be included in the lot coverage calculation and shall be constructed to meet all of the following standards:

- a. Only one porte cochere is allowed per lot.
- b. The porte cochere shall not be greater than 250 square feet in area.
- c. The porte cochere shall meet the front yard setback requirement.
- d. The porte cochere may be located within a side yard setback if the following requirements are met:
 - i. The existing lot width is sixty (60) feet wide or less, and
 - ii. The porte cochere is placed over a driveway that has a minimum width of nine (9) feet, and
 - i. The minimum distance between the dwelling wall and the opposite porte-cochere columns shall be 9.5 feet.
 - iv. No element of the porte cochere is located closer than two feet from the side property line, including overhangs and similar elements, but excluding gutters.
 - v. Columns located in the side yard setback shall not be greater than 18 inches square in size.
- e. The clearance between the ground and the ceiling of the porte cochere shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet.
- f. The maximum height to the top of the roof shall be no taller than the finished floor elevation of the second floor. The roof structure shall not exceed a 3/12 pitch.
- g. The porte cochere shall be entirely open and shall be supported only by the residential dwelling on one side and modest columns on the other. It shall be unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future.
- h. The roof of the porte cochere shall not be enclosed with railings, shall not be accessible from an opening in the residential dwelling, and shall not be used as a porch, balcony, or similar use.

- i. The porte cochere shall be constructed of materials consistent with the main structure.

ARTICLE V. – RT-1 TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

[Modify Section 78-53 SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING UNIT STANDARDS]

Sec. 78-53. - Single family dwelling unit standards.

No residential structure, garage (attached or detached), mobile home, manufactured home, modular home or prefabricated home shall be built unless the dwelling unit has been reviewed by the building official subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Dwelling unit shall conform to all applicable city codes and ordinances and state and federal requirements with respect to the construction of the dwelling.
- (2) Dwelling unit shall be permanently attached to a perimeter foundation. In instances where the applicant elects to set the dwelling on piers or other acceptable foundations which are not at the perimeter of the dwelling, then a perimeter wall shall also be constructed. Any such perimeter wall shall be constructed of durable materials and shall also meet all local requirements with respect to materials, construction and necessary foundations below the frost line. Any such wall shall also provide an appearance which is compatible with the dwelling and other ~~homes~~ dwellings in the area.
- (3) Dwelling unit shall be provided with exterior finish materials similar to the dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (4) Dwelling unit shall be provided with roof designs and roofing materials similar to the dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (5) Dwelling unit shall be provided with an exterior building wall configuration which represents an average width to depth or depth to width ratio which does not exceed three to one, or is in reasonable conformity with the configuration of dwelling unit on adjacent properties or in the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- (6) The dwelling shall contain storage capability in a basement located under the dwelling, in an attic area, in closet areas, or in a separate structure of standard construction similar to or of better quality than the principal dwelling, which storage area shall be equal to ten percent of the square footage of the dwelling or 100 square feet, whichever is less.
- (7) The building official may request a review by the planning commission of any dwelling unit with respect to subsections (3), (4), and (5) of this section. The building official or planning commission shall not seek to discourage architectural variation, but shall seek to promote the reasonable compatibility of the character of dwelling units, thereby protecting the economic welfare and property value of surrounding residential uses and the city at large. In reviewing any such proposed dwelling unit, the building official may require the applicant to furnish such plans, elevations and similar documentation as is deemed necessary to permit a complete review and evaluation of the proposal. When comparing the proposed dwelling unit to similar types of dwelling areas, consideration shall be given to comparable types of ~~homes~~ dwellings within 300 feet. If the area within 300 feet does not contain any such ~~homes~~ dwellings, then the nearest 25 similar type dwellings shall be considered.
- (8) Attached garages that face the street are allowed on lots that are 60 feet wide or greater.
- (9) The total width of a garage attached to a single family dwelling shall:
 - a. Not exceed 50 percent of the width of the entire front façade of the residential dwelling; and
 - b. Is a minimum of 22 feet wide, measured from the exterior of the garage walls.

- (10) Attached garages shall ~~not protrude more than six feet~~ be located at least four feet ~~in front of~~ behind the front façade ~~or covered porch~~ of the ~~living area for~~ front exterior wall of the residential dwelling, ~~but in no case shall be closer than thirty (30) feet from the front property line.~~

(11) **Front Porch Exception for New Single Family Dwellings**

New single family ~~homes~~ dwellings are encouraged to positively contribute toward neighborhood enhancement and the walkability of the city. Walkability is the extent to which walking is readily available as a safe, connected, accessible and pleasant mode of transport. One way to accomplish walkability is to locate garages at the rear of a lot. Garages at the rear of a lot (whether attached to the ~~home~~ dwelling or as a free-standing detached garage) help to support walkability by:

- Minimizing the width of the driveway at the front of the ~~house~~ dwelling, allowing more space in the front yard for trees and vegetation, and more space along the street for street trees;
- Minimizing the potential of parked cars left in front of the garage door to block the sidewalk;
- Allowing space on the ~~home's~~ dwelling's front façade for windows and other human-scaled architectural elements; and
- Allowing space on the ~~home's~~ dwelling's front façade for a porch, where residents can interact with neighbors on the sidewalk and observe activities on the street.

a. To encourage locating garages at the rear of a lot, new single family residential projects that locate the garage in the rear, or retain an existing garage at the rear, may also locate a covered front porch in the front yard setback by up to four feet. In addition, the area that the covered front porch occupies in the front yard setback shall not be considered in calculating lot coverage. To be eligible for this exception, the proposed construction must meet all of the following standards:

- a1. The project includes construction of a new single family residence on the lot; and
- b2. The project includes construction of a new garage which is located either in the rear of the new ~~building~~ dwelling (attached) or in the rear third of the lot (detached), or retains an existing detached garage for continued use as a garage which is located in the rear third of the lot; and ~~Projects that do not include a new garage are not eligible for the front yard porch exception.~~
- e3. The front porch that is located in the front yard setback must be:
 - 4i. Single-story in height, no higher than 15 feet, and as measured per the procedures described in section 78-21 of the zoning ordinance for building height; and
 - 2ii. No ~~less than four inches or~~ more than eight and one-quarter inches from the elevation of the ~~front door~~ finished first floor (i.e., at-grade decks and patios are not eligible for the front yard porch exception); and
 - 3iii. A minimum of six feet in depth (distance between the front exterior wall of the residence and the edge of the porch deck); and
 - 4iv. Covered with a roof; and
 - 5v. Unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future. This standard does not include open railings and balustrades; and
- d4. The front setback line used to determine where the front porch can be located on the lot shall equal the setback required by section 78-190 and 78-191.

- e5. On corner lots, porches may be constructed on either or both front facades, or built as one wraparound porch as long as the porch(s) meets the requirements in "1" through "4" above.
- 6. The final Certificate of Occupancy for the residential dwelling shall not be issued until construction of the qualifying garage is complete.

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- a. The project includes construction of a new garage which is located either in the rear of the existing residential dwelling (attached) or in the rear third of the lot (detached), or retains an existing detached garage for continued use as a garage which is located in the rear third of the lot; and
- b. The front porch that is located in the front yard setback shall be:
 - 1. Single-story in height, no higher than fifteen (15) feet, and as measured per the procedures described in section 78-21 of the zoning ordinance for building height; and
No less than four inches or more than eight and one-quarter inches from the elevation of the front door (i.e. at-grade decks and patios are not eligible for the front yard porch exception); and
 - 3. A minimum of six feet in depth (distance between the front exterior wall of the residence and the edge of the porch deck); and
 - 4. Covered with a roof; and
 - 5. Unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future. This standard does not include open railings and balustrades; and
- c. The front setback line used to determine where the front porch can be located on the lot shall be established using all of the following standards:
 - 1. The front setback line shall equal the setback required by sections 78-190 and 78-191; and
Front yard setback averaging, as described in section 78-191(o) shall not apply; and
 - 3. For existing dwellings whose front exterior wall closest to the street is greater than the minimum front yard setback required in Section 78-190, then the distance between the front setback line and the exterior wall shall be subtracted from the width of porch allowed in the front setback. For example, if a residential dwelling is setback 27-feet (or two-feet more than the 25-foot minimum front yard setback), then two feet shall be subtracted from the porch width allowed within the front yard setback. This results in a maximum width porch in the front yard setback of four feet.

- d. On corner lots, porches may be constructed on either or both front facades, or built as one wraparound porch as long as the porch(s) meets the requirements in "a" through "c" above.
- e. The qualifying existing garage or new garage must be constructed before constructing the front porch.
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- a. Only one porte cochere is allowed per lot.
- b. The porte cochere shall not be greater than 250 square feet in area.
- c. The porte cochere shall meet the front yard setback requirement.
- d. The porte cochere may be located within a side yard setback if the following requirements are met:
 - i. The existing lot width is sixty (60) feet wide or less, and
 - ii. The porte cochere is placed over a driveway that has a minimum width of nine (9) feet, and
 - iii. The minimum distance between the dwelling wall and the opposite porte-cochere columns shall be 9.5 feet.
 - iv. No element of the porte cochere is located closer than two feet from the side property line, including overhangs and similar elements, but excluding gutters.
 - v. Columns located in the side yard setback shall not be greater than 18 inches square in size.
- e. The clearance between the ground and the ceiling of the porte cochere shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet.
- f. The maximum height to the top of the roof shall be no taller than the finished floor elevation of the second floor. The roof structure shall not exceed a 3/12 pitch.
- g. The porte cochere shall be entirely open and shall be supported only by the residential dwelling on one side and modest columns on the other. It shall be unenclosed by walls, windows or other enclosure at the time it is constructed or at any time in the future.

- h. The roof of the porte cochere shall not be enclosed with railings, shall not be accessible from an opening in the residential dwelling, and shall not be used as a porch, balcony, or similar use.
- i. The porte cochere shall be constructed of materials consistent with the main structure.

ARTICLE XVII. – SCHEDULE OF REGULATIONS

[Modify Section 78-191 NOTES TO SCHEDULE]

Sec. 78-191. – Notes to schedule.

- (o) The established front setbacks for structures within established R-1, RT-1, MU, O-1 and O-2 zoning districts shall be at least 90 percent of the average front yard setback of surrounding buildings. The average setback and front building line shall be determined by examining existing buildings located on the same side of the street and within 200 feet of the subject parcel. If the resulting setback is less than 15 feet, then the allowed setback shall be no less than the allowed setback average. For a single family residential project that meets the “front porch exception” standards listed in 78-43(11) or (12), or 78-53(11) or (12), the average front setback shall be calculated using the front wall of the surrounding ~~buildings-dwellings~~ rather than the edge of any existing porches. In any case, the minimum average front yard setback for an incentive porch shall not be less than fifteen (15) feet. The building official may exclude structures used in calculating average front setbacks when the structure deviates by more than 25 feet forward or back from the average setbacks of other structures found within 200 feet.

[No changes proposed to Sub-sections (p) through (u)]

- (v) For projects that meet the standards listed in section 78-43(11) or (12), or section 78-53(11) or (12) and construct an eligible front porch, the area of the eligible front porch located in the front yard setback shall be excluded from the lot coverage calculation.

ARTICLE XVIII. – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**[Modify Section 78-217 PROJECTIONS INTO SETBACKS]****Sec. 78-217. – Projections into setbacks.**

Projections into setbacks shall be permitted as follows:

Projection...	...Into Front Yard Setback	...Into Side Yard Setback	...Into Rear Yard Setback
At or Below Grade:			
Egress window/areaway recess*	Not permitted	3 feet from face of structure (interior dimension)	3 feet from face of structure (interior dimension)
Stairs from basement	Not permitted	Not permitted	4 feet (interior dimension)
Patios	4 feet, but no closer than 10 feet from the front property line	Not permitted	10 feet from property line
Above Grade but Below Roof:			
Mechanical equipment (i.e. a/c Air conditioning condensers, generators)	Not permitted	Not permitted 4 feet	4 feet
Architectural features, as defined	4 inches	4 inches	4 inches
Awning/canopy	3 feet	Not permitted	3 feet
Balcony	4 feet	Not permitted	4 feet
Bay window (limited to 8 feet in width; maximum 2 per side)	2 feet	Not permitted	2 feet
Cantilevered floor area (Box Out)	2 feet	Not permitted	2 feet
Cellar door	Not permitted	Not permitted	8 feet
Chimney (limited to 8 feet in width)	1 foot	Not permitted	1 foot
Deck**	Not permitted	Not permitted	12 feet, but limited to three feet high
Generators	Not permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted
Porch, uncovered	6 feet	Not permitted	12 feet, but limited to three feet high
Porte cochere (excluding gutters)	Not permitted	2 feet from property line	Not permitted
Roof Area:			
Cornices, eaves, overhangs, brackets, soffits (excluding gutters)	2 feet	2 feet	2 feet
Dormers	1Not permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted

*Areaway construction can project above grade no more than 12 inches.

**The portion of a deck which occupies the rear yard setback shall not be converted into any enclosed habitable spaces.

- (1) Projections containing floor area, including decks, shall be included in the lot coverage calculation. See Sections 78-43 and 78-53 for the front porch exclusion from lot coverage.

ARTICLE XXII. – PARKING, LOADING REQUIREMENTS***[Modify Section 78-273 RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAYS]*****Sec. 78-273. - Residential driveways.**

(1) ~~Driveways used~~New driveways constructed for residential access within the R-1 and RT-1 Districts shall meet all the following standards:

- a. ~~Shall be~~ a minimum of nine feet in width ~~and clear of~~ encumbrances ~~such as columns~~.
- b. ~~Shall be located on the side of the new dwelling that is opposite any existing driveway on an adjacent parcel, when possible.~~
- c. ~~Shall be located at least one foot from the side property line. The one-foot buffer area shall be landscaped with appropriate plant material such as turf grass, perennials or shrubs.~~

(2) ~~Existing driveways within the R-1 and RT-1 Districts may be reconstructed in the same location. Where two existing driveways abut one another, they may continue but shall be relocated if possible; continuation of this condition is discouraged.~~

Introduced: 5-11-2016

Enacted: 7-18-2016

Published: 8-7-2016

Effective: 8-8-2016