WATERTOWN MASSACHUSETTS
RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
PUBLIC MEETING #1

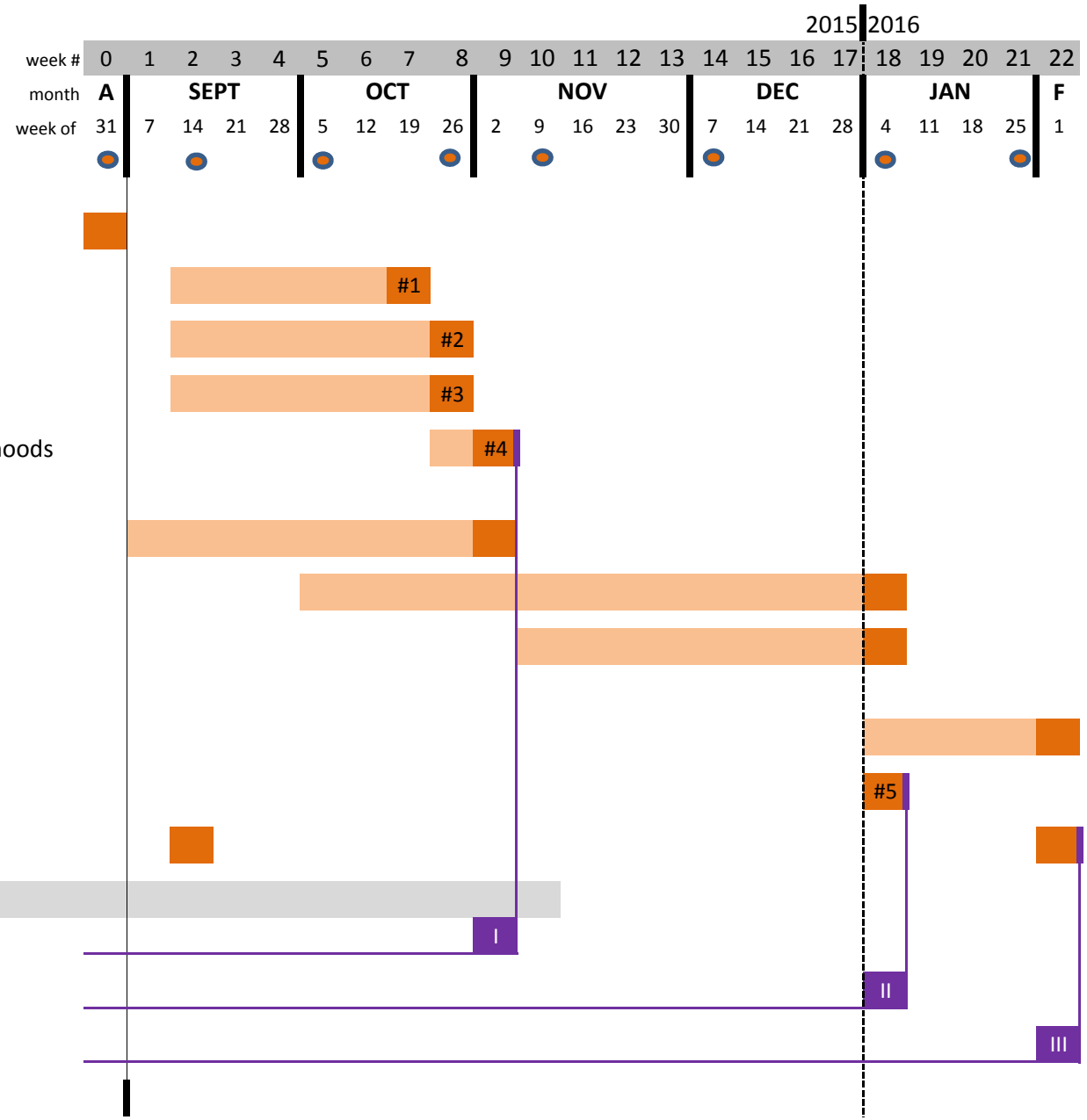
OCTOBER 20, 2015

architecture
urban design
GAMBLE
ASSOCIATES

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Watertown, MA

GAMBLE ASSOCIATES 10/4/2105 update



CLIENT MEETING

Phase I **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- A. Meet w/ Planning Staff + Neighborhood Tour
- B. Community Listening Session 1*
- C. Community Listening Session 2*
- D. Community Listening Session 3*
- E. **Community Forum #1***: Preserving Our Neighborhoods

Phase II **PRELIMINARY RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS (14 weeks)**

- A. Residential 3d model prototypes
- B. Diagrams, photographs, drawings and text
- C. On Line Visual Preference Survey

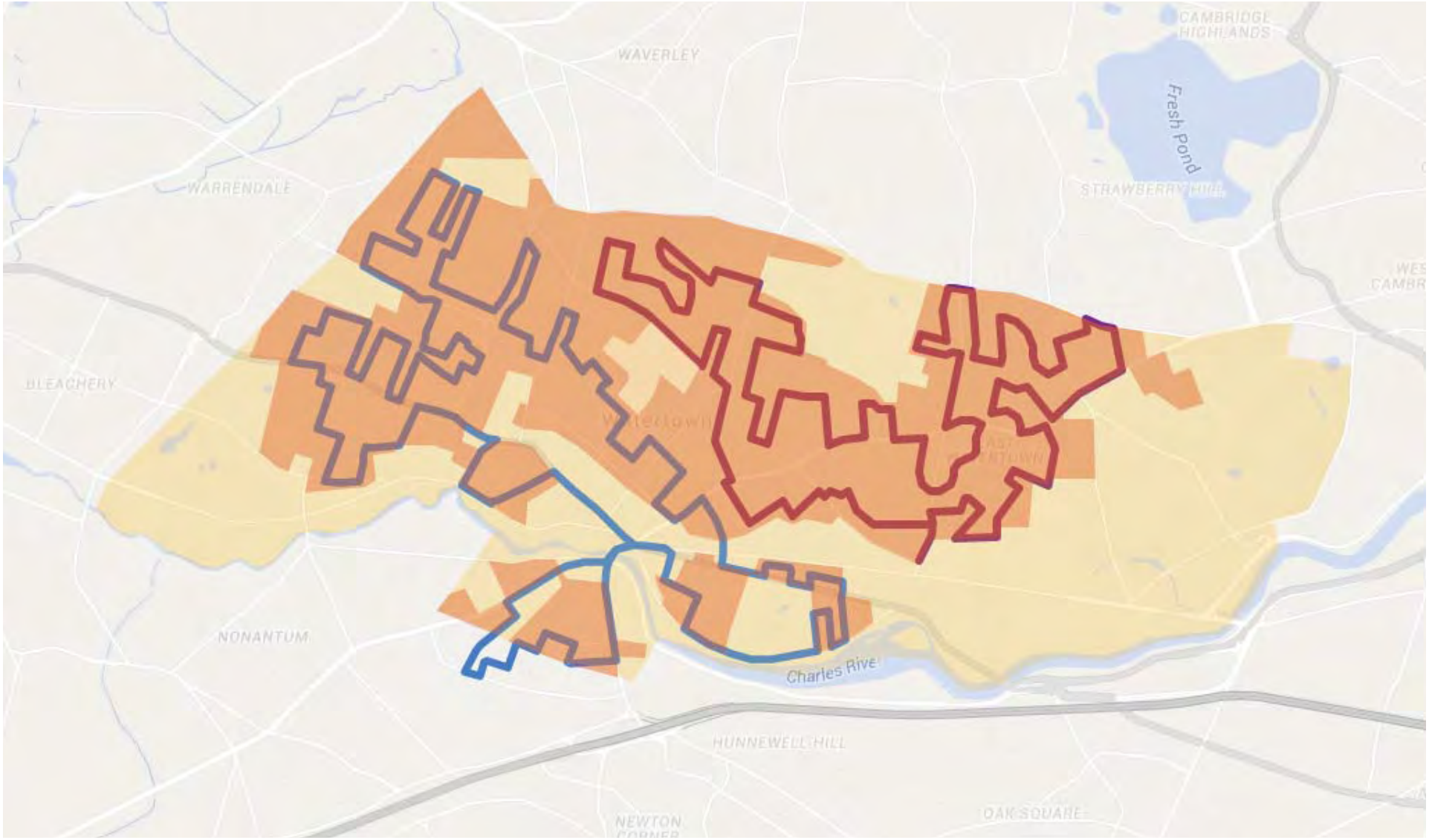
Phase III **FINAL DESIGN STANDARDS (five weeks)**

- A. Finalize Standards
- B. **Community Forum 2***: Draft Design Guidelines
- C. Town Council / Planning Board meetings

PRODUCTS by Phase

- I. Summary Review of Neighborhood Pressures
- II. Preliminary Residential Standards (Poster)
- III. Final Standards (Document print/on-line)

**Location of community meetings to be confirmed*



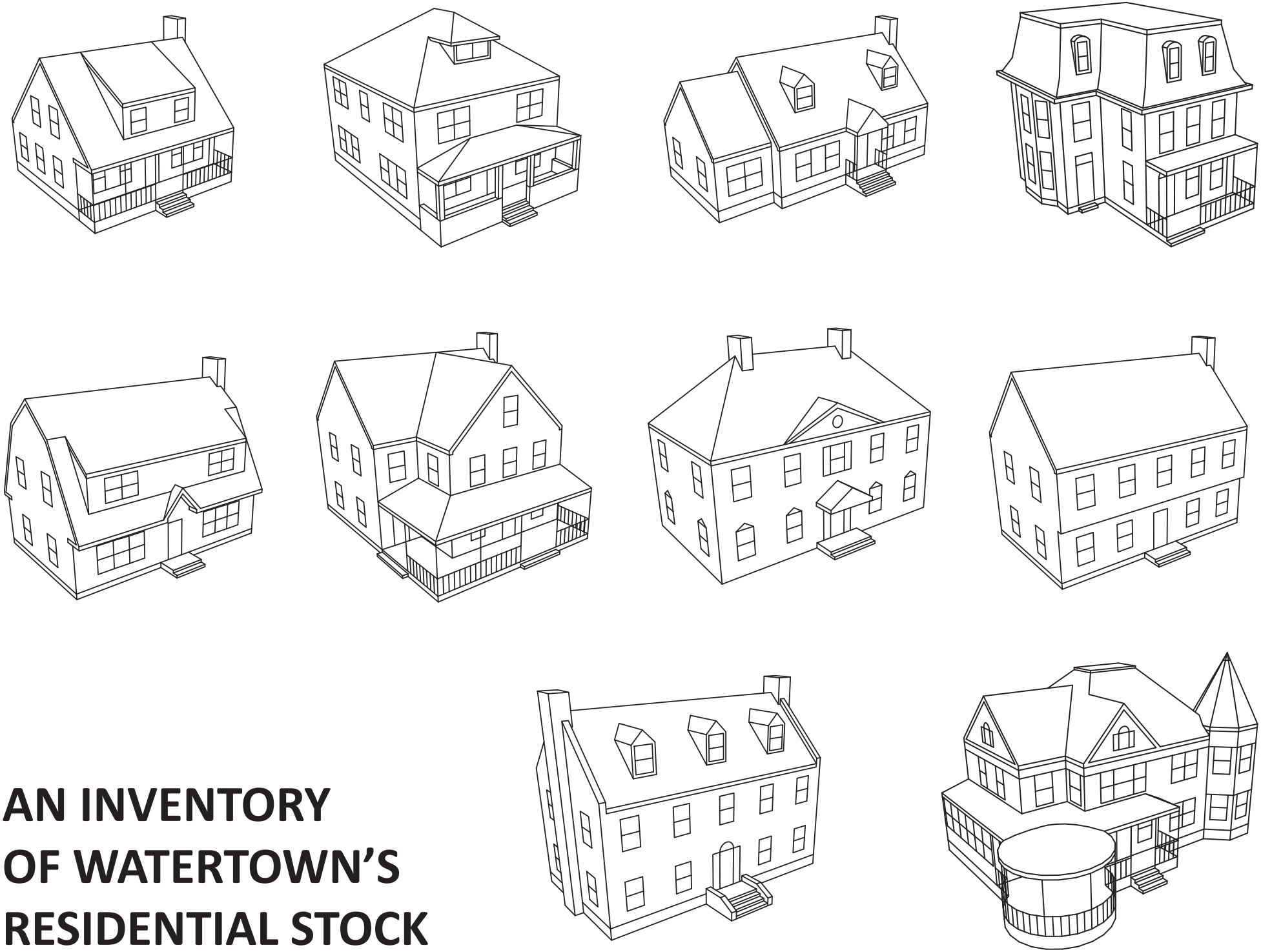
SURVEY OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

TOWN OF WATERTOWN

RESIDENTIAL FABRIC

ROUTE #1

ROUTE #2

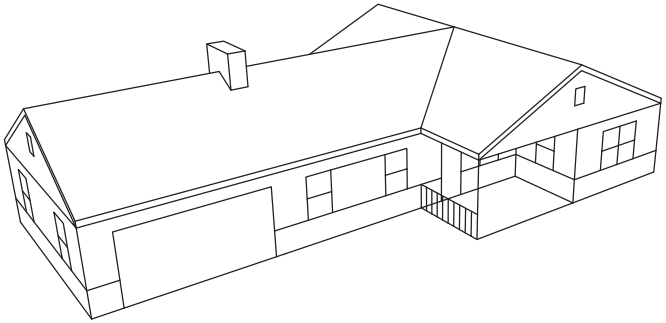


AN INVENTORY OF WATERTOWN'S RESIDENTIAL STOCK

DOUBLE-DECKER

- ONE UNIT ABOVE THE OTHER
- SHORT FACADE FACED TO STREET
- USUALLY 2-LEVEL FRONT PORCHES
- SEPARATE ENTRANCES FOR UNITS
- BAYS SPANNING MULTIPLE STORIES

RANCH



- BROAD, 1-STORY SHAPE
- USUALLY BUILT LOW TO GROUND
- LOW-PITCH ROOD W/O DORMERS
- WIDE ROOF OVERHANGS
- ASYMMETRICAL FACADE

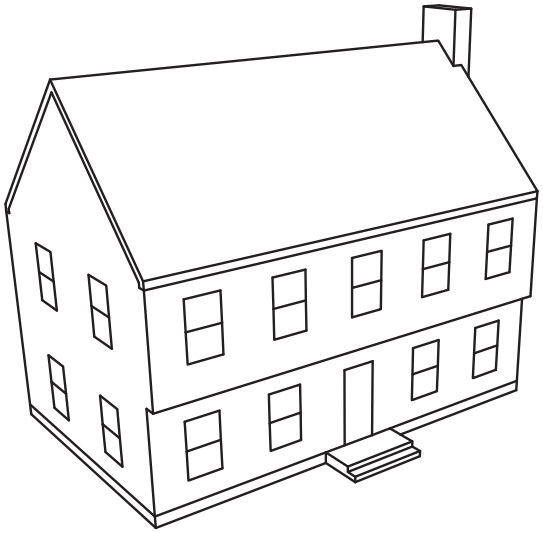
BUNGALOW

- LOW PITCHED GABELED ROOF
- 1 TO 1 1/2 STORIES TALLS
- FULL OR PARTIAL WIDTH PORCH
- SQUARED OFF COLUMNS
- CLAPBOARD OR SHINGLE CLADDING

CAPE COD

- SINGLE STORY HEIGHT
- SHALLOW ROOF OVERHANG
- FREQUENTLY SMALL ADDITIONS
- SYMMETRICAL GABLE DORMERS
- MINIMAL DETAILING

COLONIAL

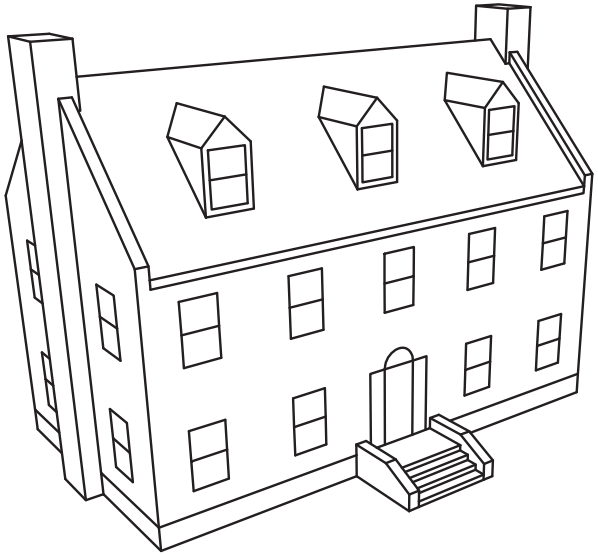


- GABLE PARALLEL TO STREET
- ACCENTUATED FRONT DOOR
- SIMPLE RECTANGULAR MASSING
- SYMMETRICAL FACADE
- SIMPLE DETAILING

FARMHOUSE

- TYPICALLY CROSSED GABLE ROOF
- OCCUPIABLE THIRD HALF-STORY
- GABLE END FACING STREET
- PARTIAL OR FULL FRONT PORCH
- CLAPBOARD CLADDING

FEDERALIST



- LARGE, FLANKING CHIMNEYS
- BRICK CLADDING
- SYMMETRICAL FACADE
- HEAVY, DETAILED CORNICE
- GABLE PARALLEL TO STREET

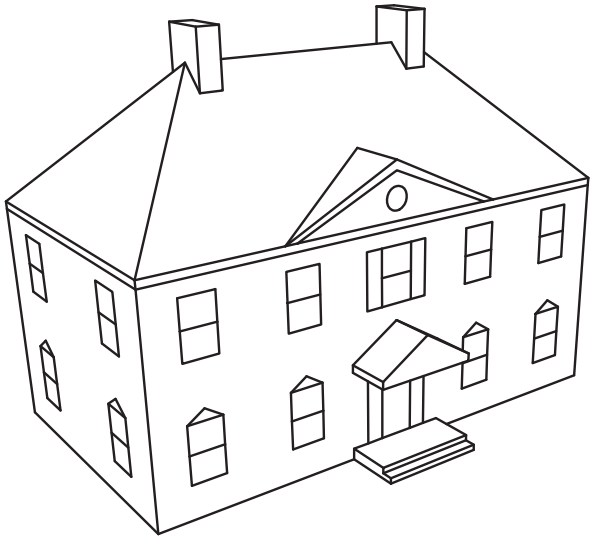
FOURSQUARE

- SQUARE FLOORPLAN
- HIPPED ROOF W/ DORMER
- PARTIAL OR FULL FRONT PORCH
- DEEP ROOF OVERHANGS
- PAIRED WINDOWS ON FRONT

GAMBREL

- GAMBREL ROOF FORM
- TYPICALLY HAS SHED DORMER
- SYMMETRICAL PRIMARY FACADE
- SIMPLE DETAILING
- CLAPBOARD OR SHINGLE SIDING

GEORGIAN

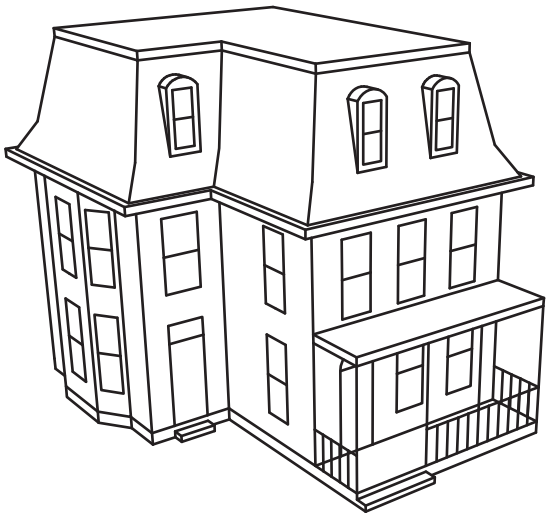


- CENTERED FRONT DOOR
- CORNICE WITH MOLDINGS
- OFTEN HAVE ROOF PEDIMENTS
- SYMMETRICAL FACADE
- HIP OR GABLE ROOF PARALLEL TO STREET

QUEEN ANNE

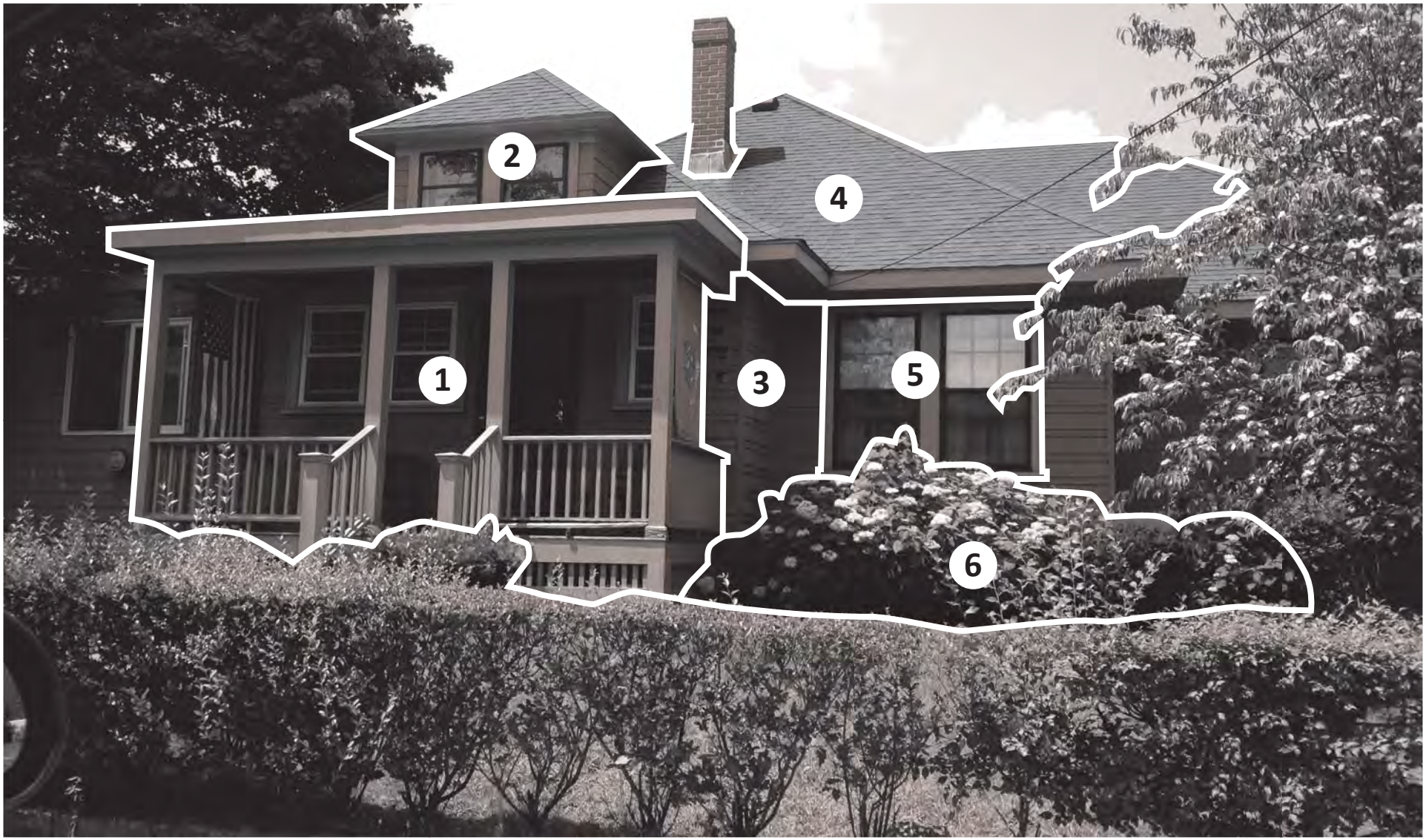
- STEEP, IRREGULAR ROOF FORM
- PATTERNED SHINGLES
- PRIMARY, FRON FACING GABLE
- ASYMMETRICAL FACADE
- PARTIAL OR FULL-WIDTH PORCH

2ND EMPIRE



- MANSARD ROOF
- DORMERS ON STEEP SLOPE
- DECORATIVE BRACKETS BENEATH EAVES
- CORNICES AT BOTTOM AND TOP OF ROOF

LESSONS LEARNED: “THE GOOD”



1 Large, welcoming porch creates threshold between interior and exterior.

2 Hip roof dormer reinforces entry and breaks up primary roof form.

3 Board and batten pattern siding creates rhythym and visual interest.

4 Primary hip roof form has deep overhangs that create shadow lines.

5 Double window element mirrored in hip roof dormer ties upper and lower levels together.

6 Dense plantings soften transition from house to ground and add privacy buffer.

1 Visually heavy, natural materials ground the building and create a “base.”

2 Unifying primary gable roof gives visual heirarchy to roof forms.

3 Hip-roof dormer breaks up primary roof and adds visual interest.

4 Landscaping softens the transition from the building to the ground.

5 Turret form breaks up massing and anchors the center of the building.

6 Recessed entry and small porch signal entry.

7 A variety of window forms and munton styles add visual interest.

8 Lighter, natural shingle siding delineates upper story.

9 Single-lane driveway with parking at rear downplays the car’s importance.

1 Large, wlecoming wrap-around front porch breaks down central mass of house.

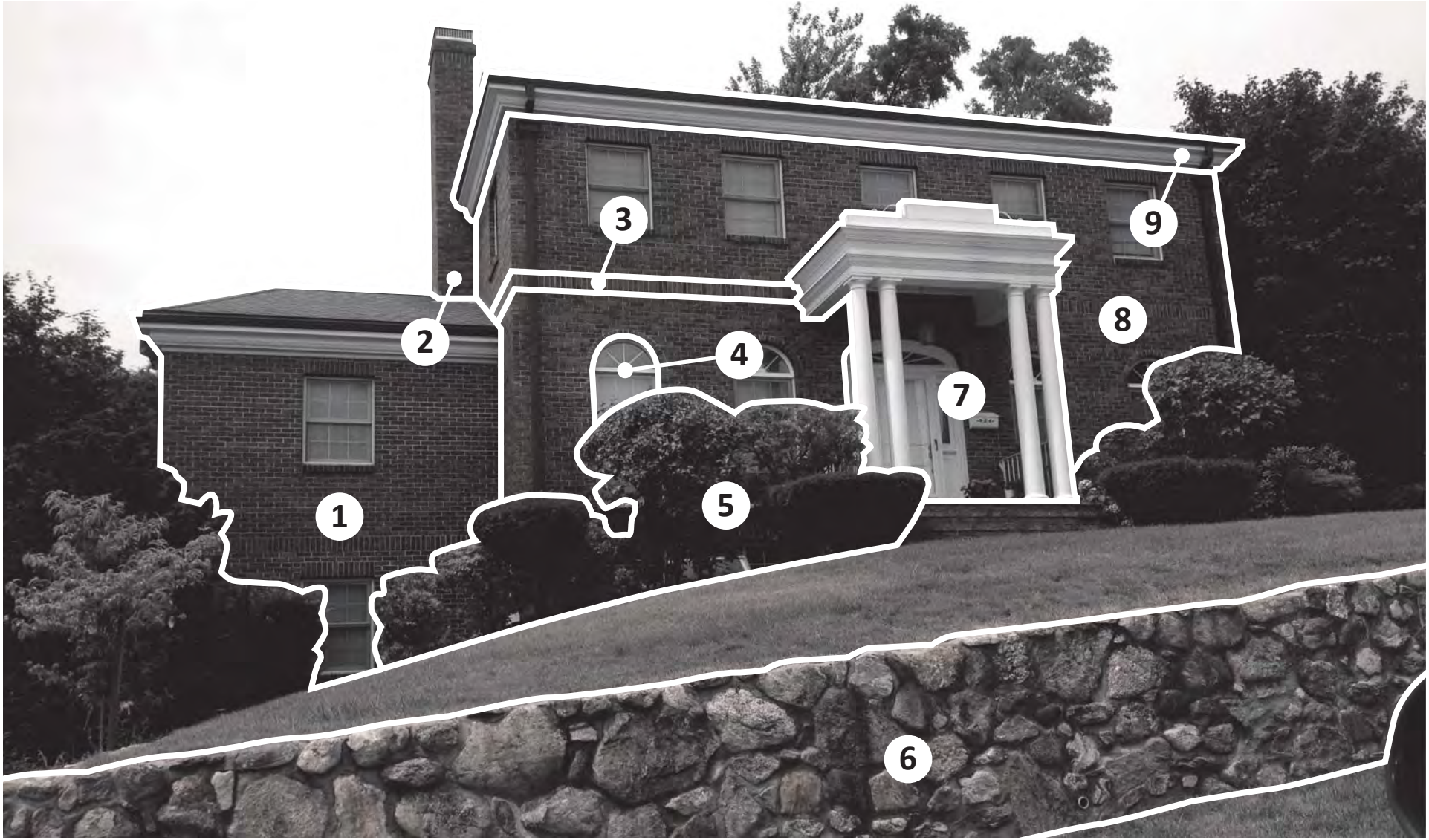
2 Bands of differently collored and shaped shigles add visual interest.

3 Dog house dormer breaks up large, single roof form.

4 Arch-topped windows on ground floor echo the roof form of the turret.

5 Turret form adds vertical element and visual focal point that balances porch.

6 Dense, varied vegitation integrates house into the surrounding landscape.



1 Massing broken down into primary and secondary heirarchical forms.

2 Prominant vertical chimney contrasts horizontal form of main house massing.

3 Soldier course of brick at floor transition adds subtle detail to facade.

4 Arch-topped windows add visual interest and detail.

5 Vegetation softens the transition from the building to the ground.

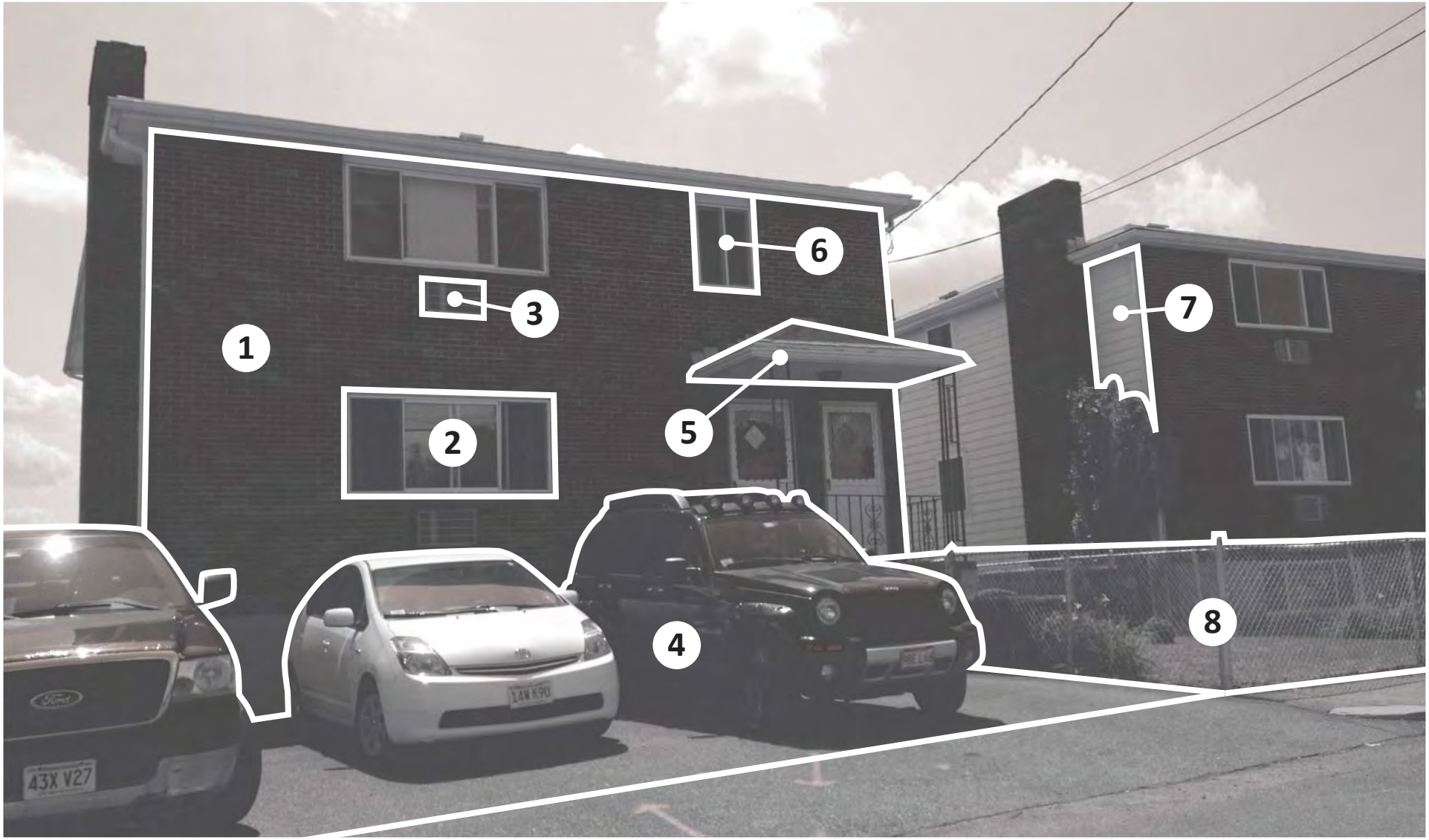
6 Natural stone retaining wall adds character and material richness.

7 Well-defined entry with high level of detailing.

8 Brick is a natural, durable building material.

9 Intricate cornice with deep overhang accenuates transition to roof.

LESSONS LEARNED: “THE BAD”



1 Single, large boxy form with no depth or ornamentation.

2 Small, infrequent windows with a low percentage of overall glazing.

3 Exposed mechanical systems visible from public right-of-way.

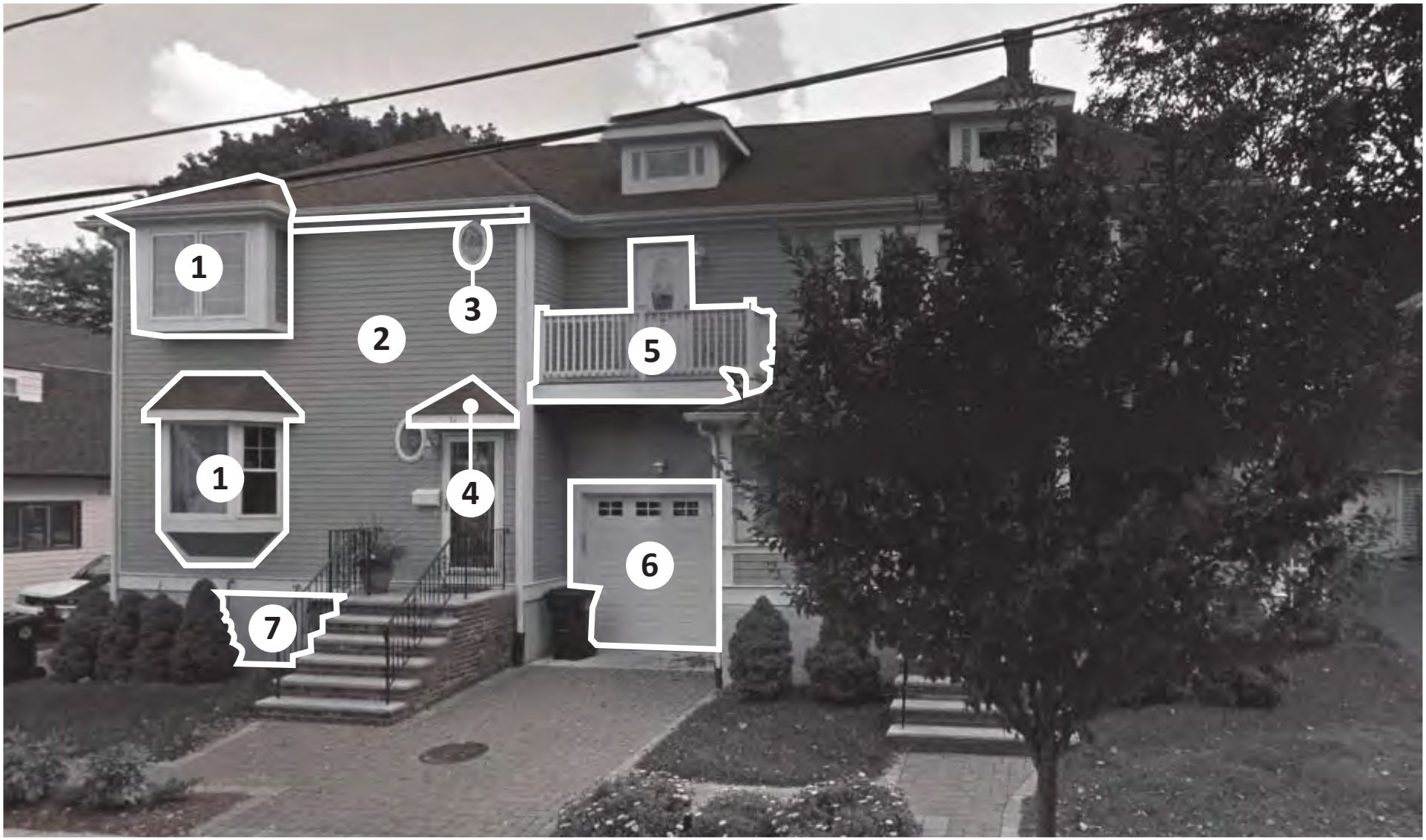
4 Impermeable asphalt parking in front setback of building.

5 Entry lacks detail and is underscaled for building mass.

6 Windows lack alignment with other facade elements of the building.

7 Vinyl siding on sides of th building appears cheap.

8 Chain link fencing should not be employed as a fencing material.



1 Different architectural styles for adjacent bays looks discordant.

2 Flat, mono-material surface lacks enough detail / transparency.

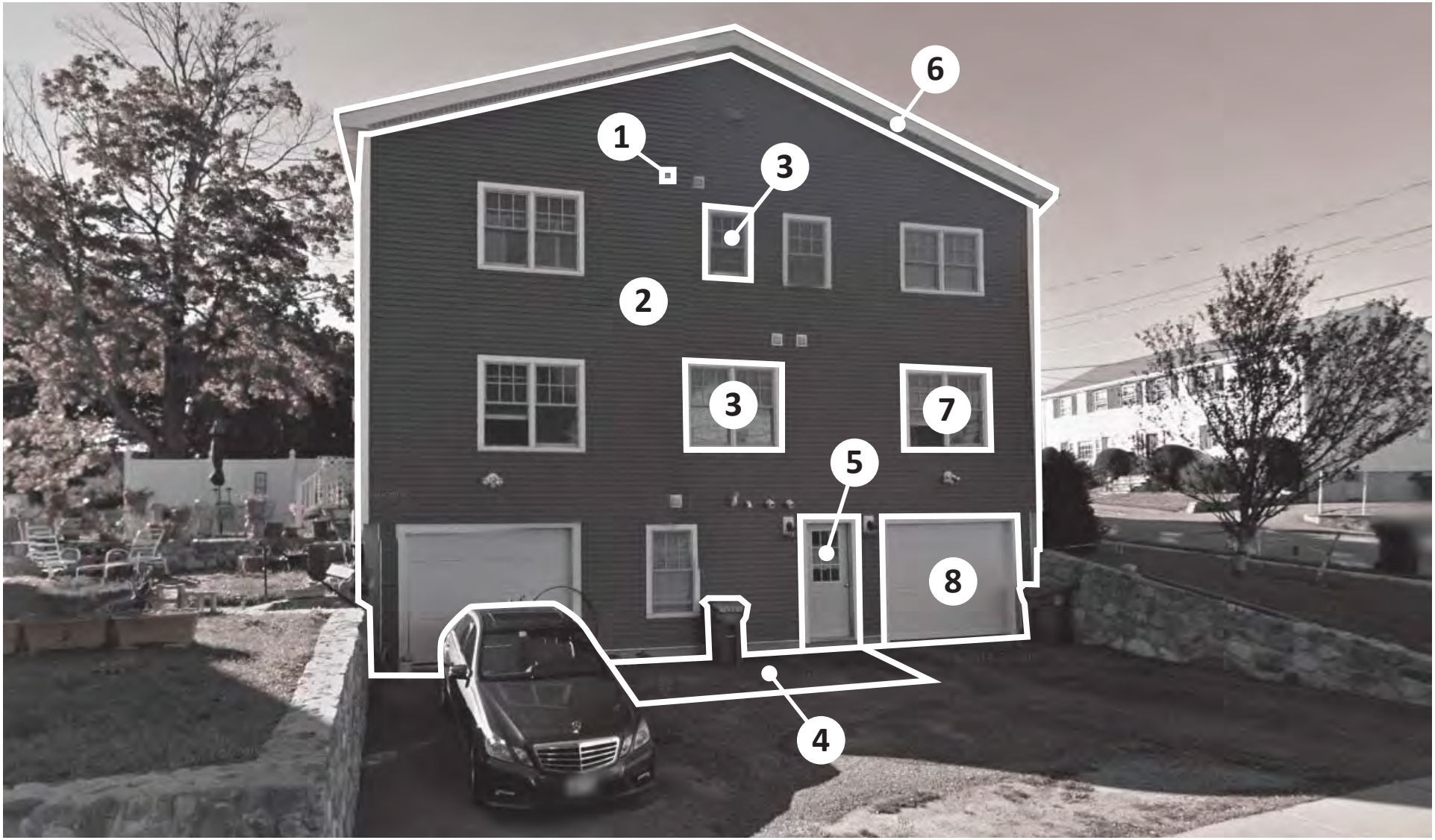
3 Oval window trim overlaps facia board, causing an awkward condition.

4 Underscaled entry overhang lacks detailing.

5 Awkward placement of balcony with lack of corresponding detailing at door.

6 Centrally located garage door where entrance for people should be.

7 Tall exposed concrete foundation lacks material richness.



1 Vents should not be visible from the public way.

2 Large, flat single elevation lacks depth and variation.

3 Windows fail to create a harmonious, aligned facade composition.

4 Lack of vegitation at base to soften transition and allow infiltration.

5 Lack of awning, portico, or other entry elements to embelish doorway.

6 Shallow roof overhang fails to emphasize roof transition.

7 Repetative windows of the same size and style.

8 Garage doors lack detail and feature too prominently on the facade.

1 Car-centric garage anchors corner instead of porch or entrance.

2 Mechanical vents are visible from the public right-of-way.

3 Repetative window size and style across all floors and room types.

4 Oversized dormers are out of scale with the composition of the house.

5 Recessed entries fail to diminish size of facade and lack any level of detailing.

6 Large, flat, single facade makes the building appear large and boxy.

7 Gas and water hook-ups visible from the public right-of-way.

BUILDING SITING

GARAGES + PARKING

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

ROOF FORMS

FACADE ELEMENTS

PORCHES + ENTRIES

SIDING + MATERIALS

DETAILING + FENESTRATION

PLANTING + LANDSCAPE

A POTENTIAL FRAMEWORK FOR ORGANIZING THE RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

BUILDING SITING

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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GARAGES + PARKING

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ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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ROOF FORMS

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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FACADE ELEMENTS

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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PORCHES + ENTRIES

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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SIDING + MATERIALS

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DETAILING + FENESTRATION

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PLANTING + LANDSCAPE

Idelitis mi, omnimus, con nobis doluptation rehenim olore, tem del ma voluptius volloreperit litae velis sin prem incto maximil im reni aturi tem asim doluptate quas eius volorun tiatur, sima volest, erchiciat endusda ntibus minctendi que consequod eum rehendebisti si dolorehenda non pro deni aute voluptaque et aut quate quae am rerum doluptat aspis unt etur?

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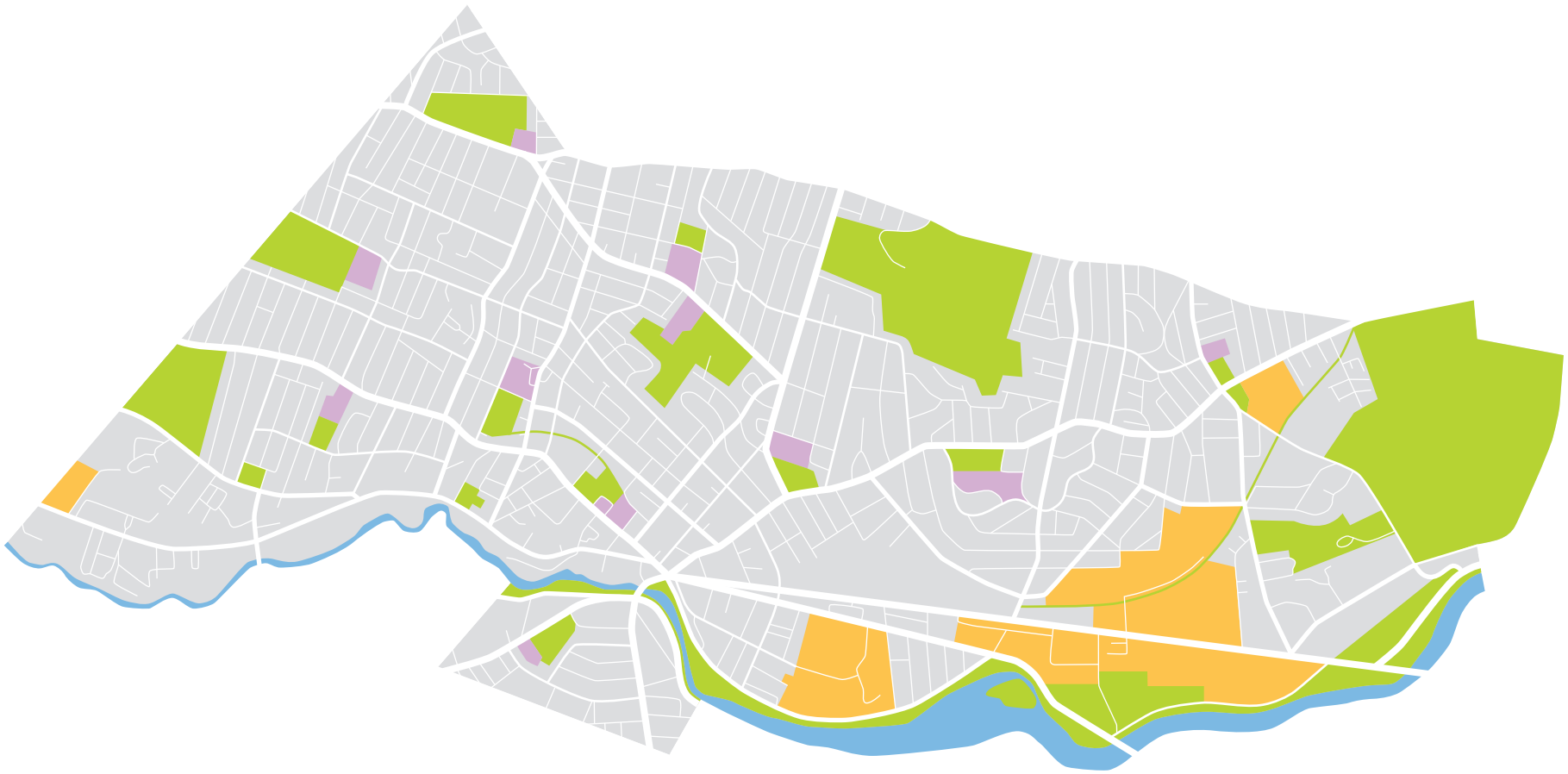


WATERTOWN RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

CURRENTLY IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS

SINGLE-FAMILY KNOCK-DOWNS

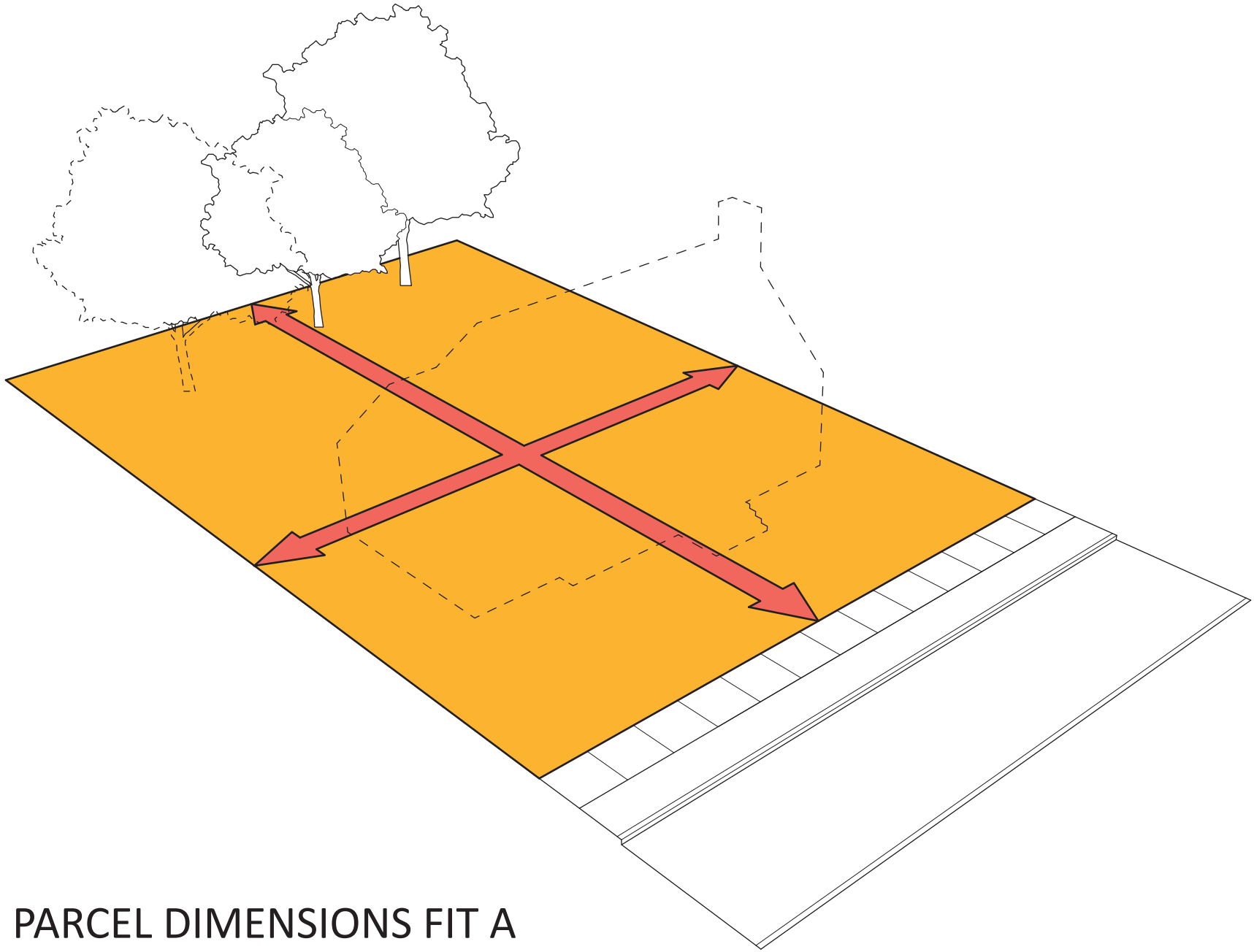
REAR AND SIDE ADDITIONS

DORMERS AND ROOF ADDITIONS

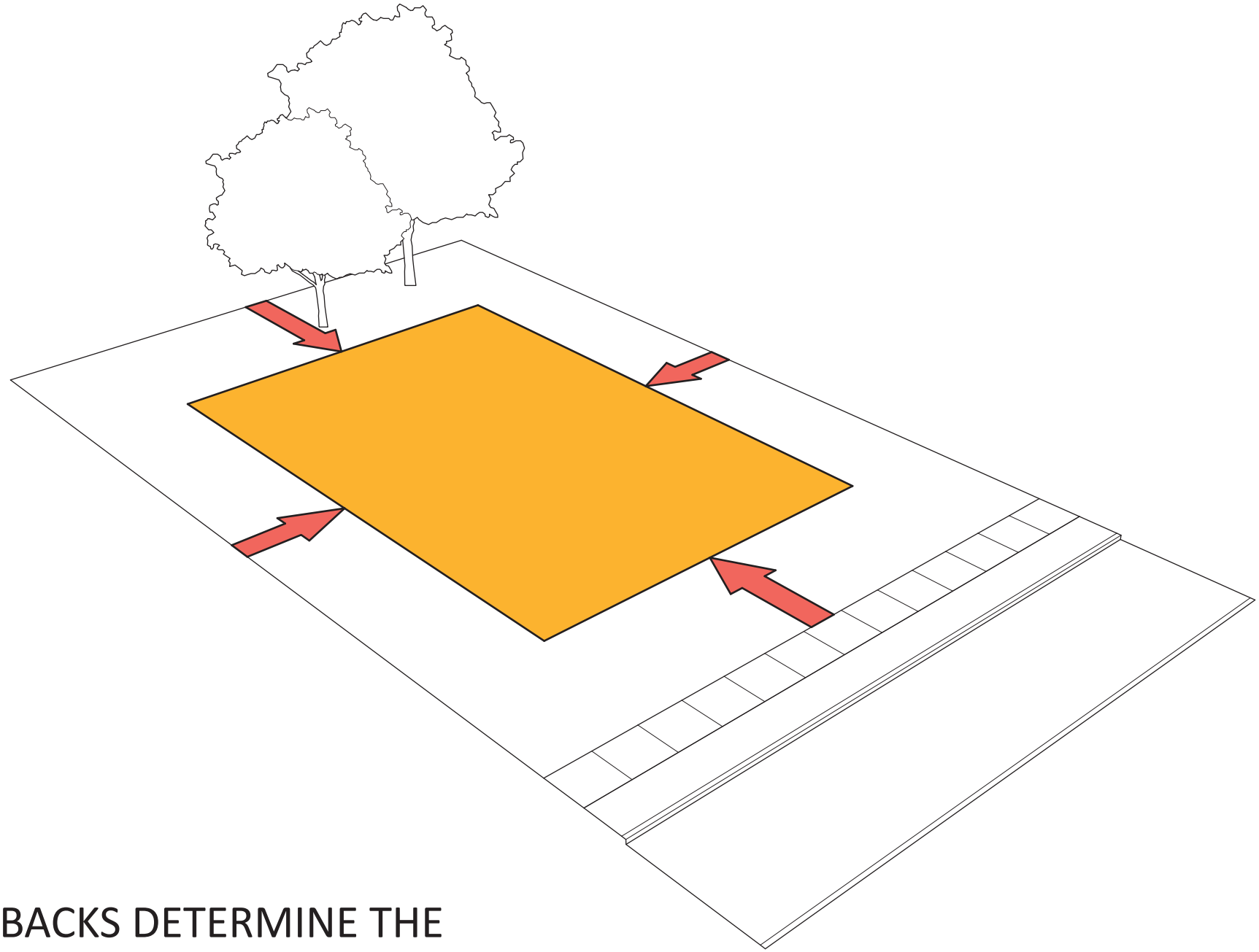
architecture
urban design
GAMBLE ASSOCIATES

SINGLE-FAMILY KNOCK DOWNS

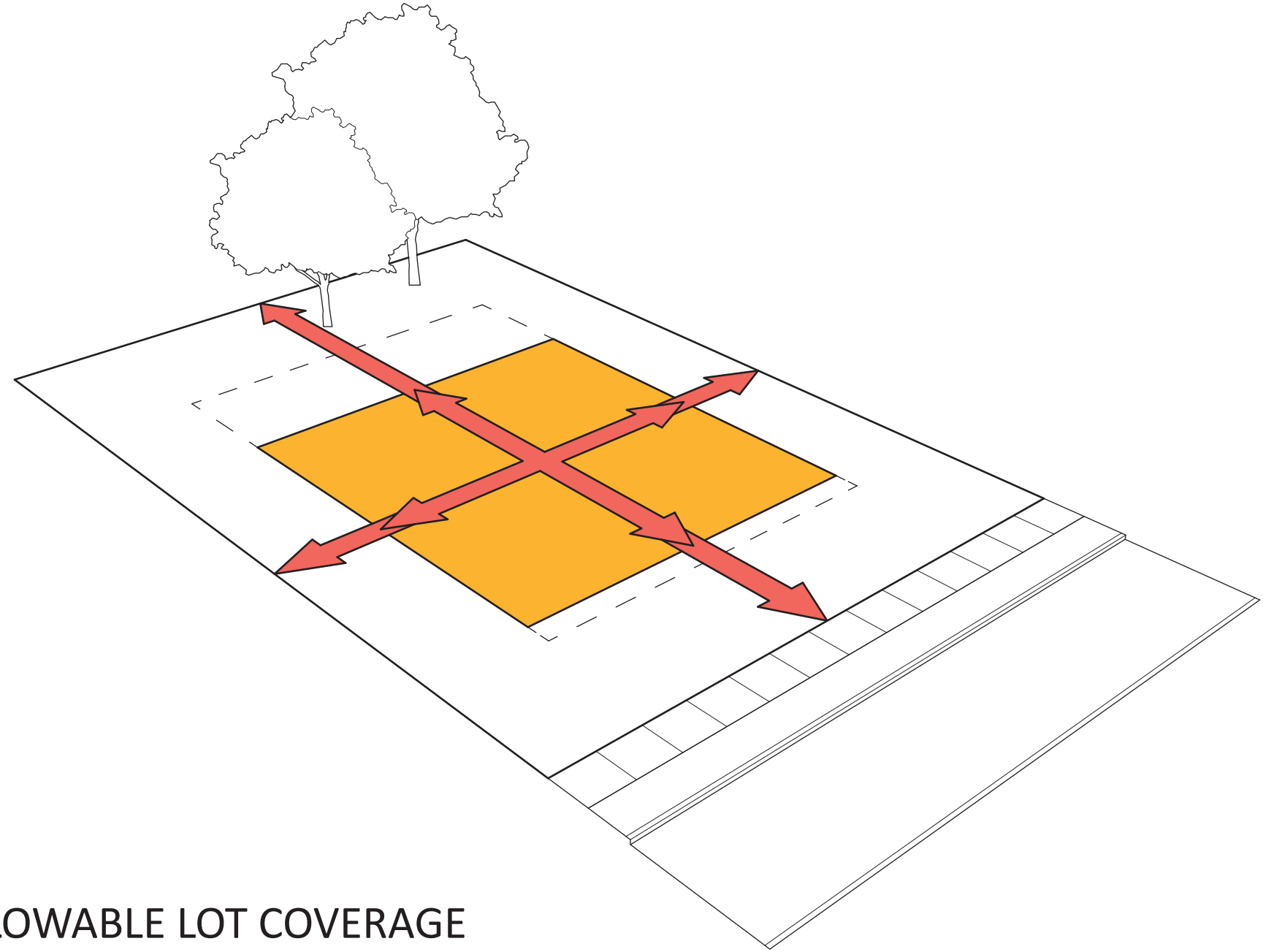
AN EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY
HOME ON A LARGE LOT



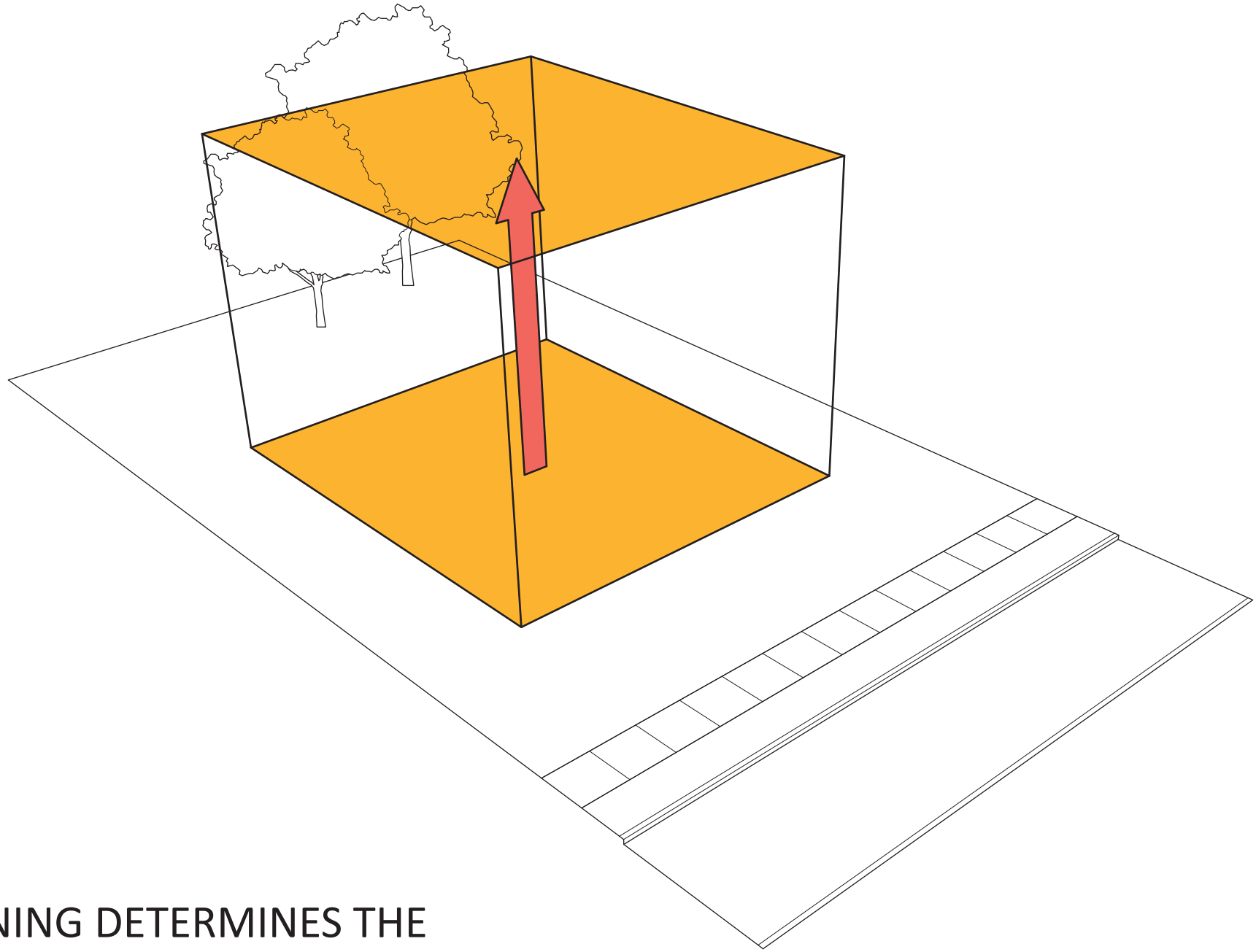
THE PARCEL DIMENSIONS FIT A DEVELOPER’S PRO-FORMA



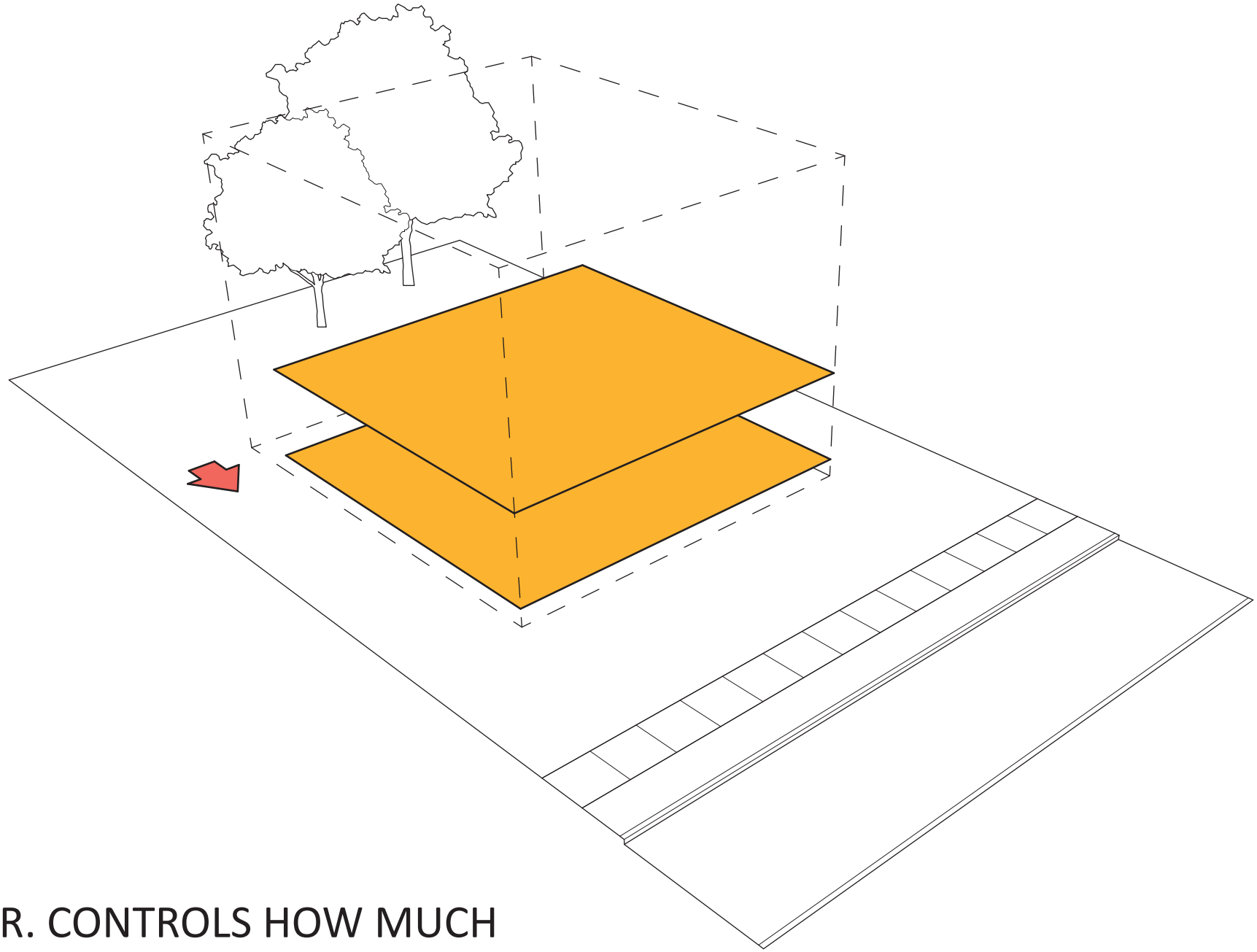
SETBACKS DETERMINE THE
BUILDABLE FOOTPRINT



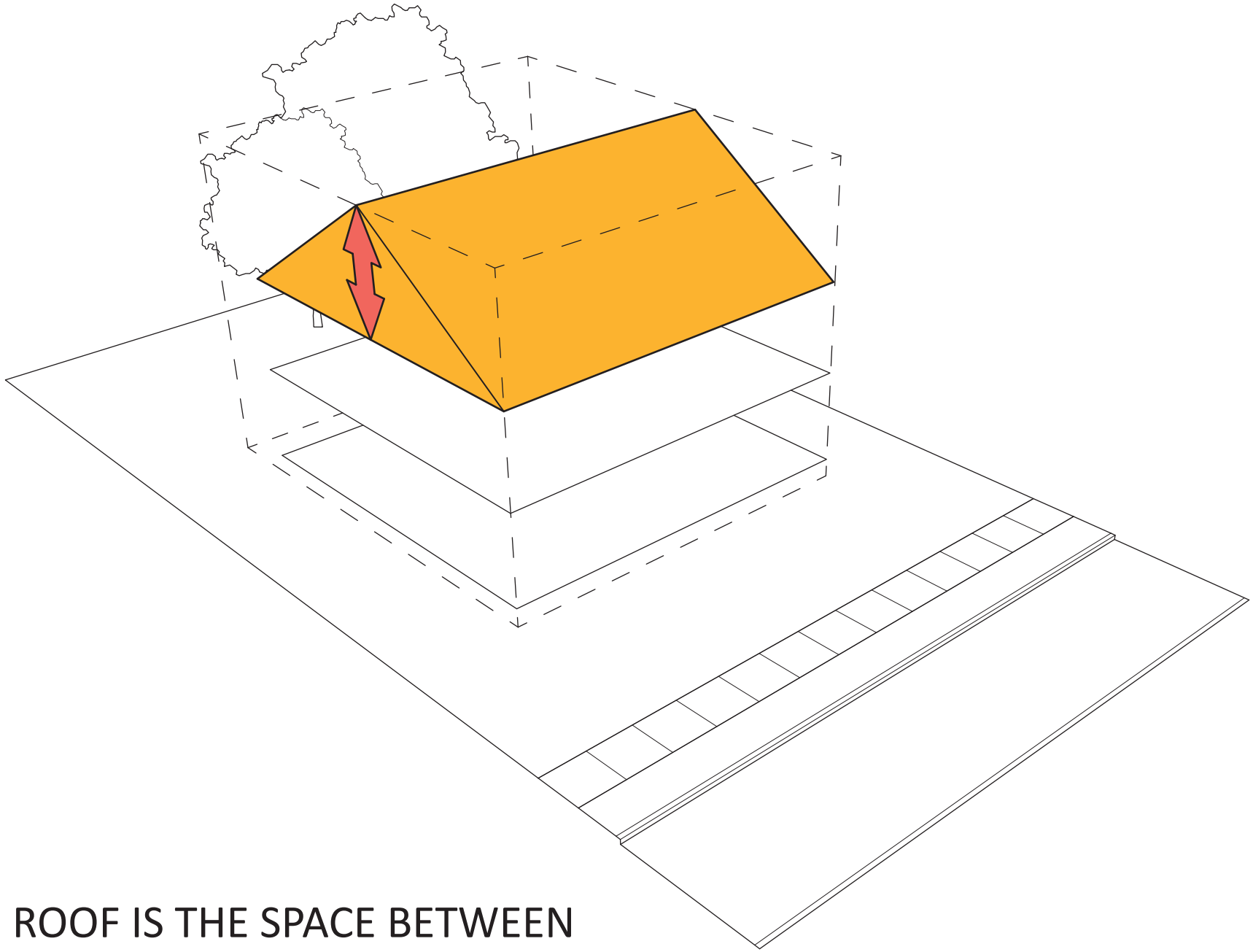
ALLOWABLE LOT COVERAGE
REDUCES THAT SQUARE FOOTAGE



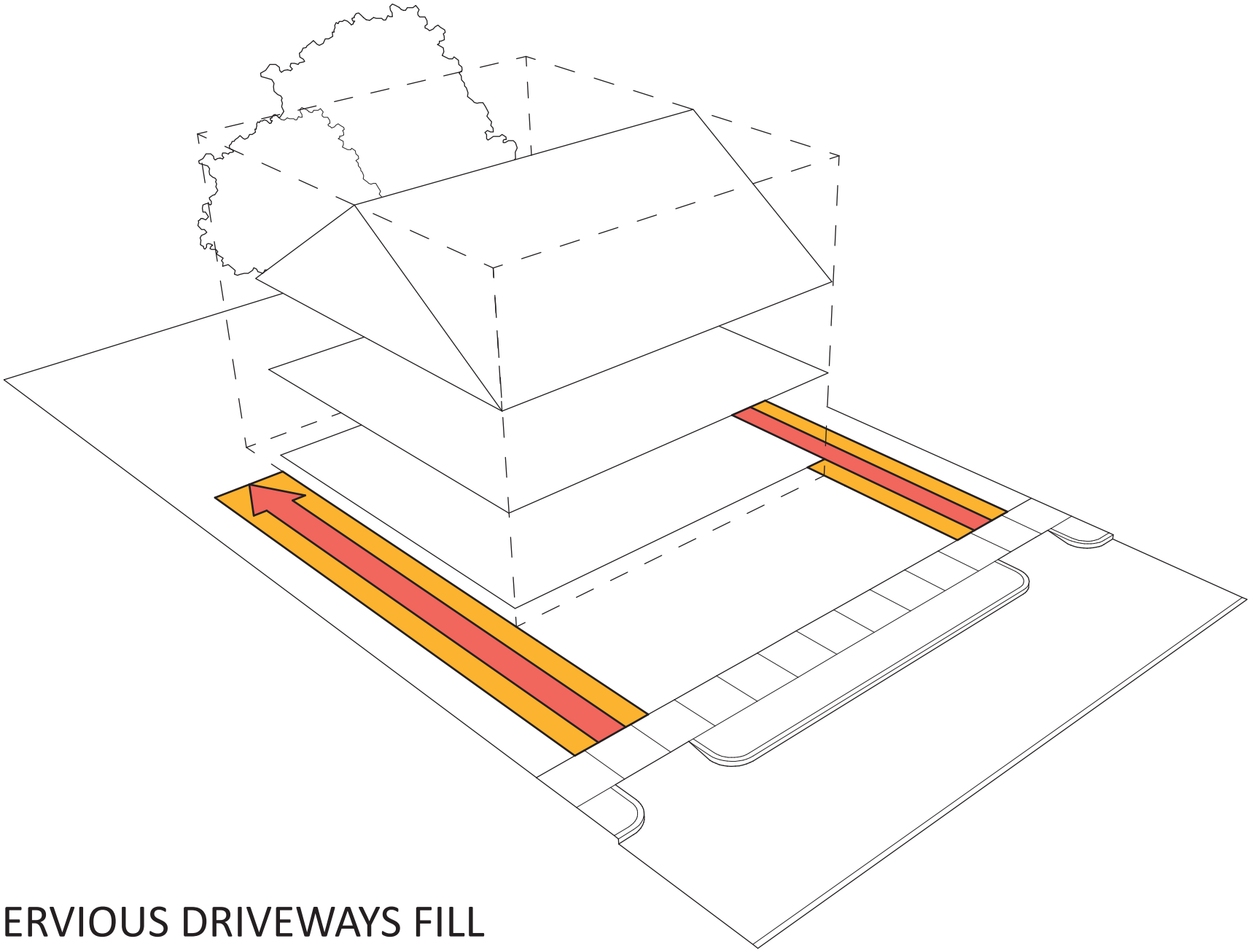
ZONING DETERMINES THE
ALLOWABLE HEIGHT LIMIT



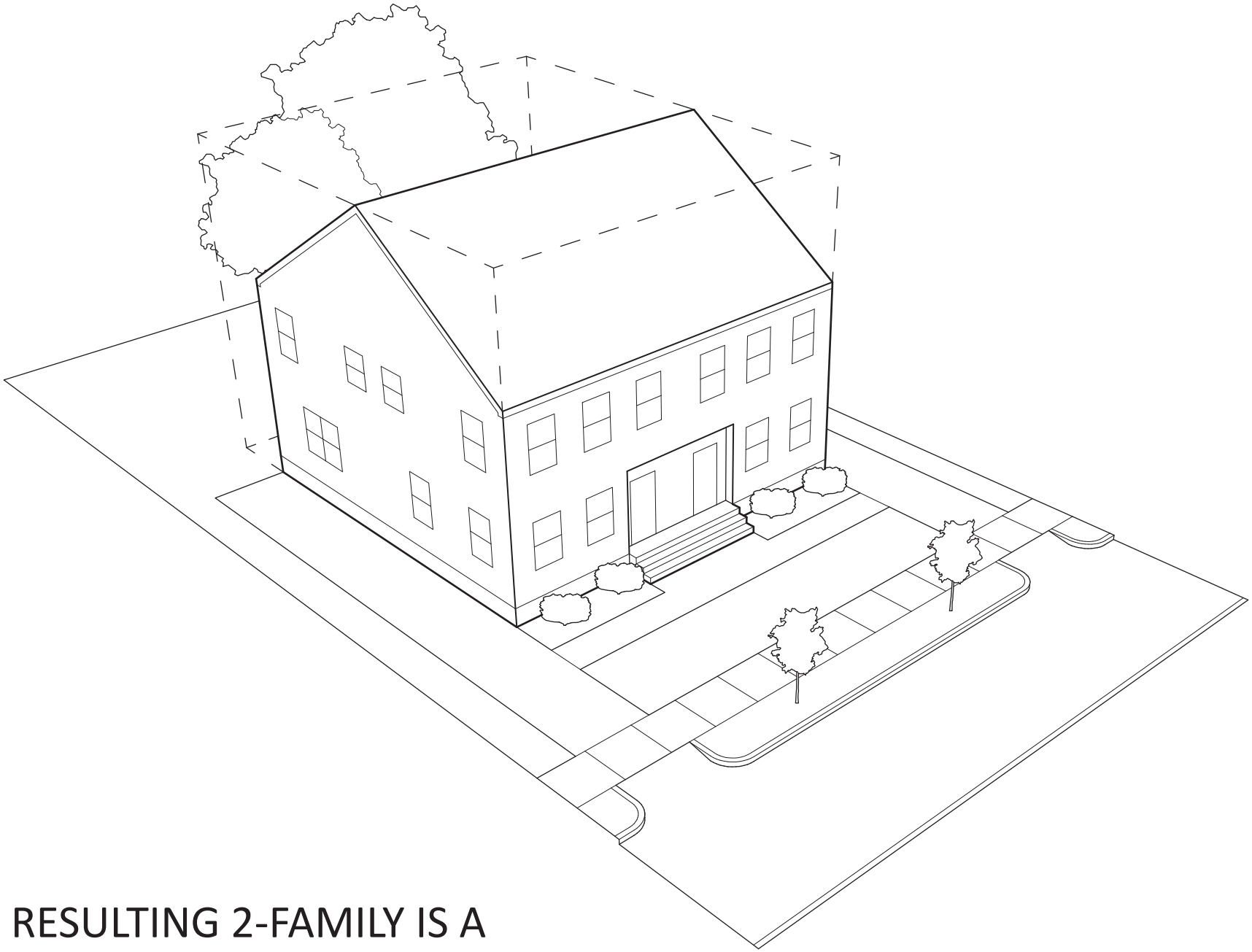
F.A.R. CONTROLS HOW MUCH
INTERIOR SF IS ALLOWABLE



THE ROOF IS THE SPACE BETWEEN
THE 2ND FLOOR AND ZONING ENVELOPE

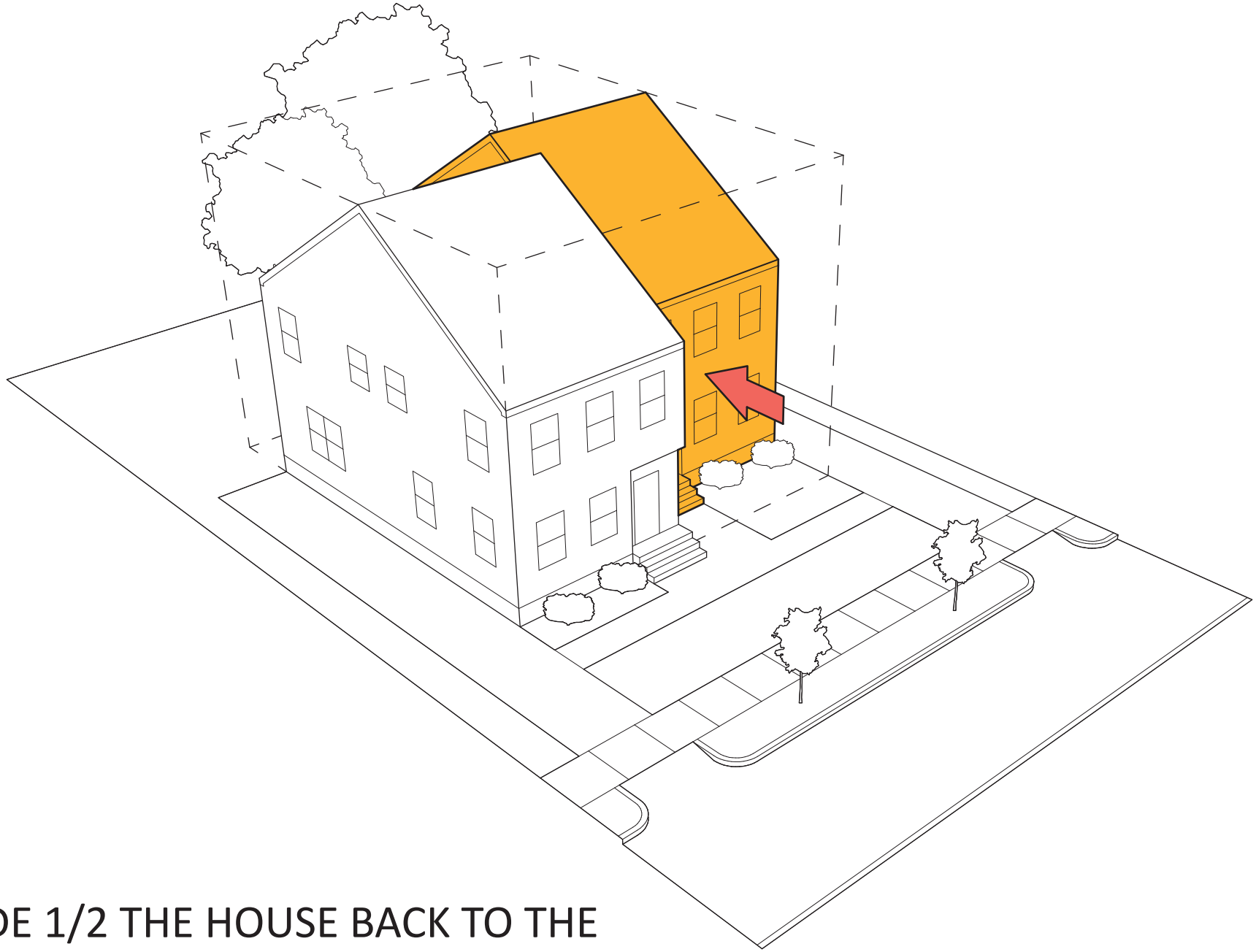


IMPERVIOUS DRIVEWAYS FILL
IN THE SIDE YARD SETBACK

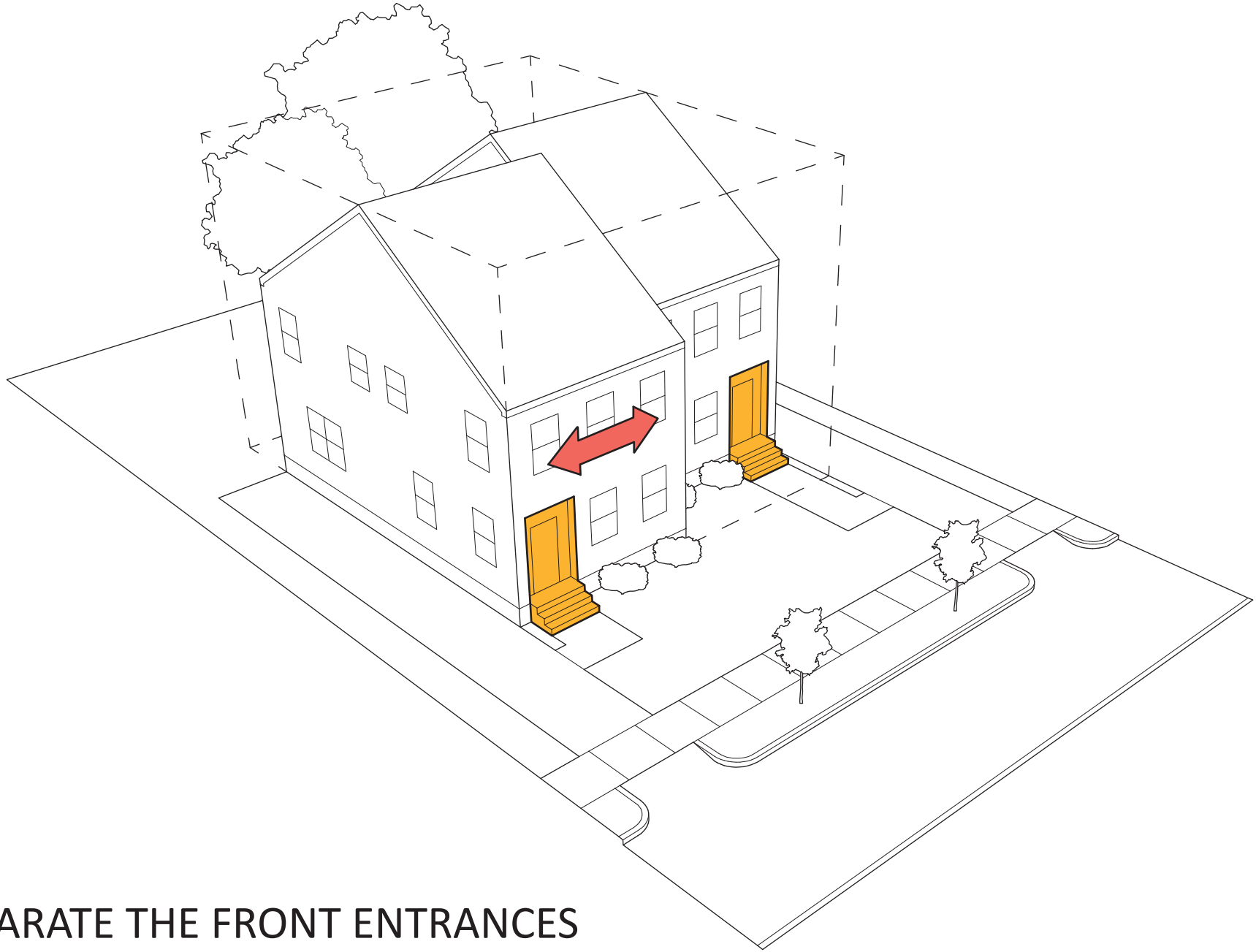


THE RESULTING 2-FAMILY IS A
SIMPLISTIC BOX WITH LITTLE DETAIL

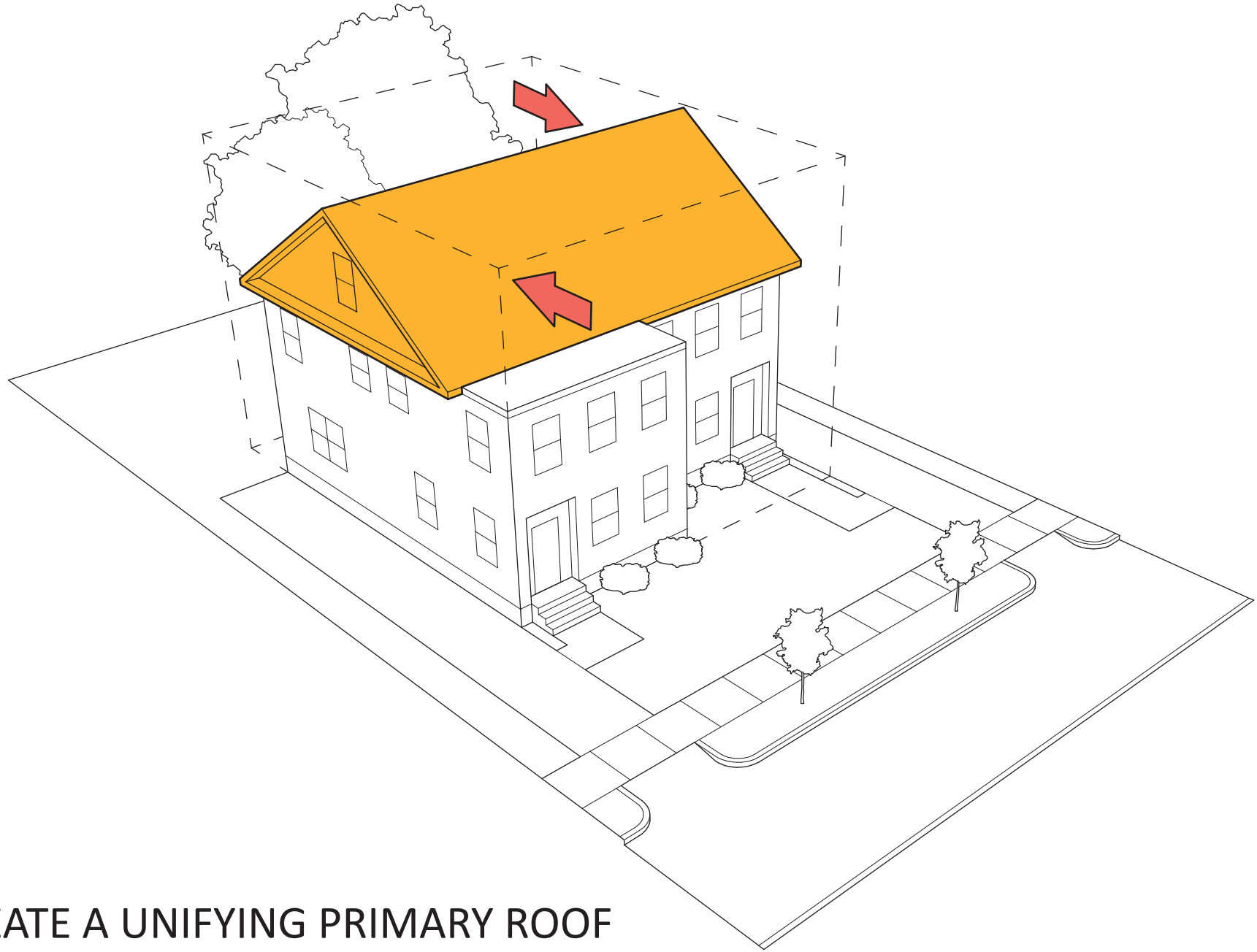
WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE THIS SITUATION?



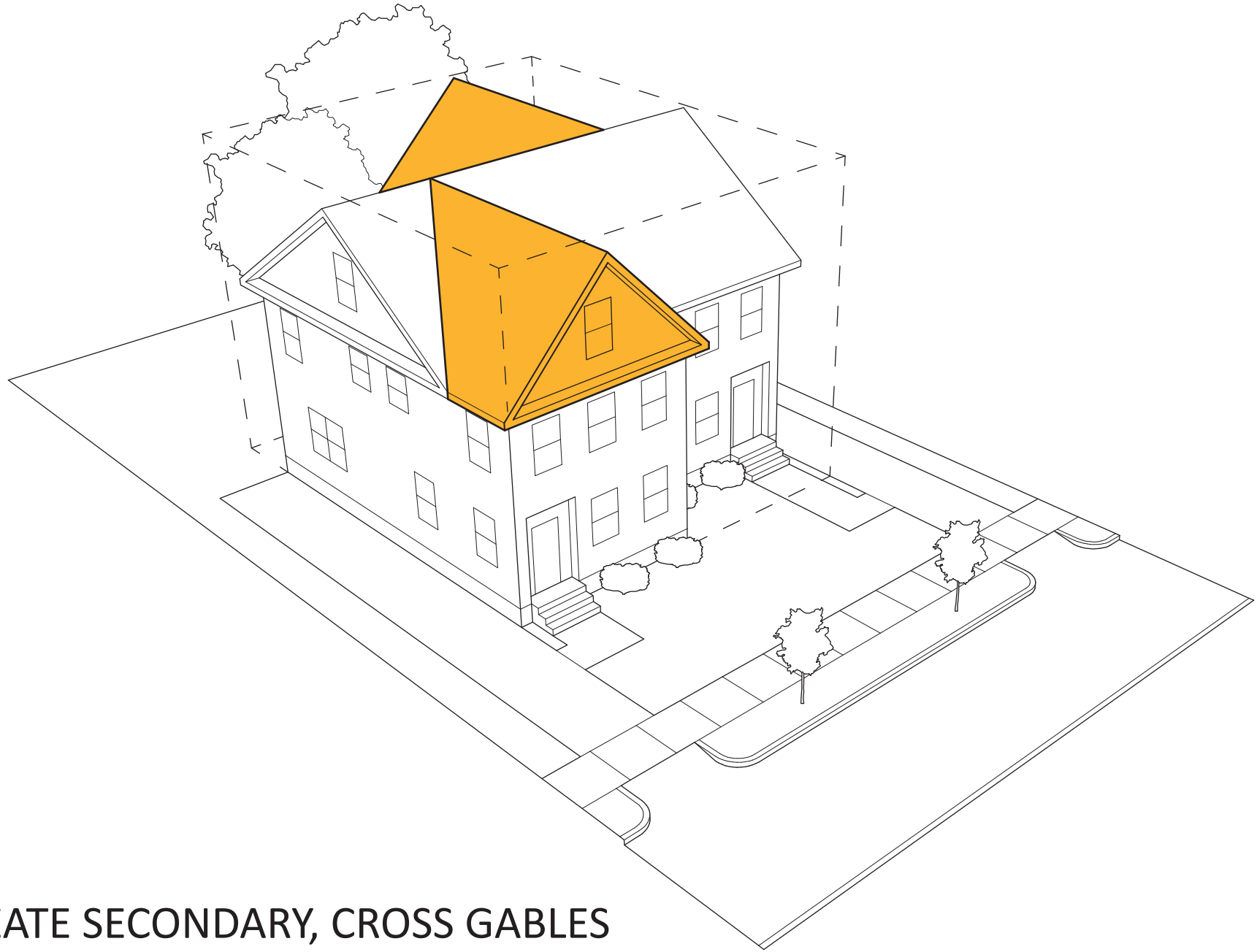
SLIDE 1/2 THE HOUSE BACK TO THE REAR OF THE ZONING ENVELOPE



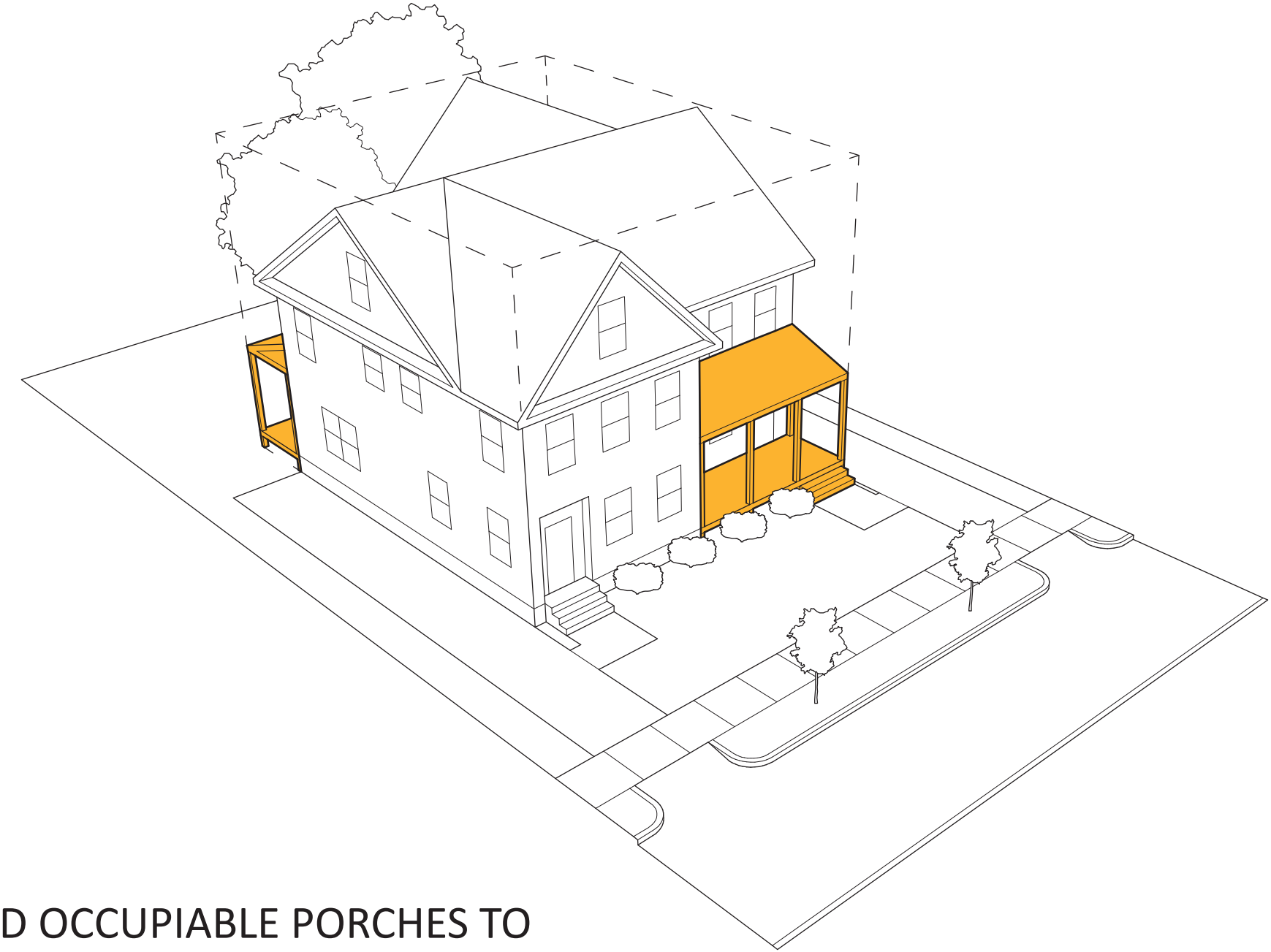
SEPARATE THE FRONT ENTRANCES
TO DISTINGUISH THE RESIDENCES



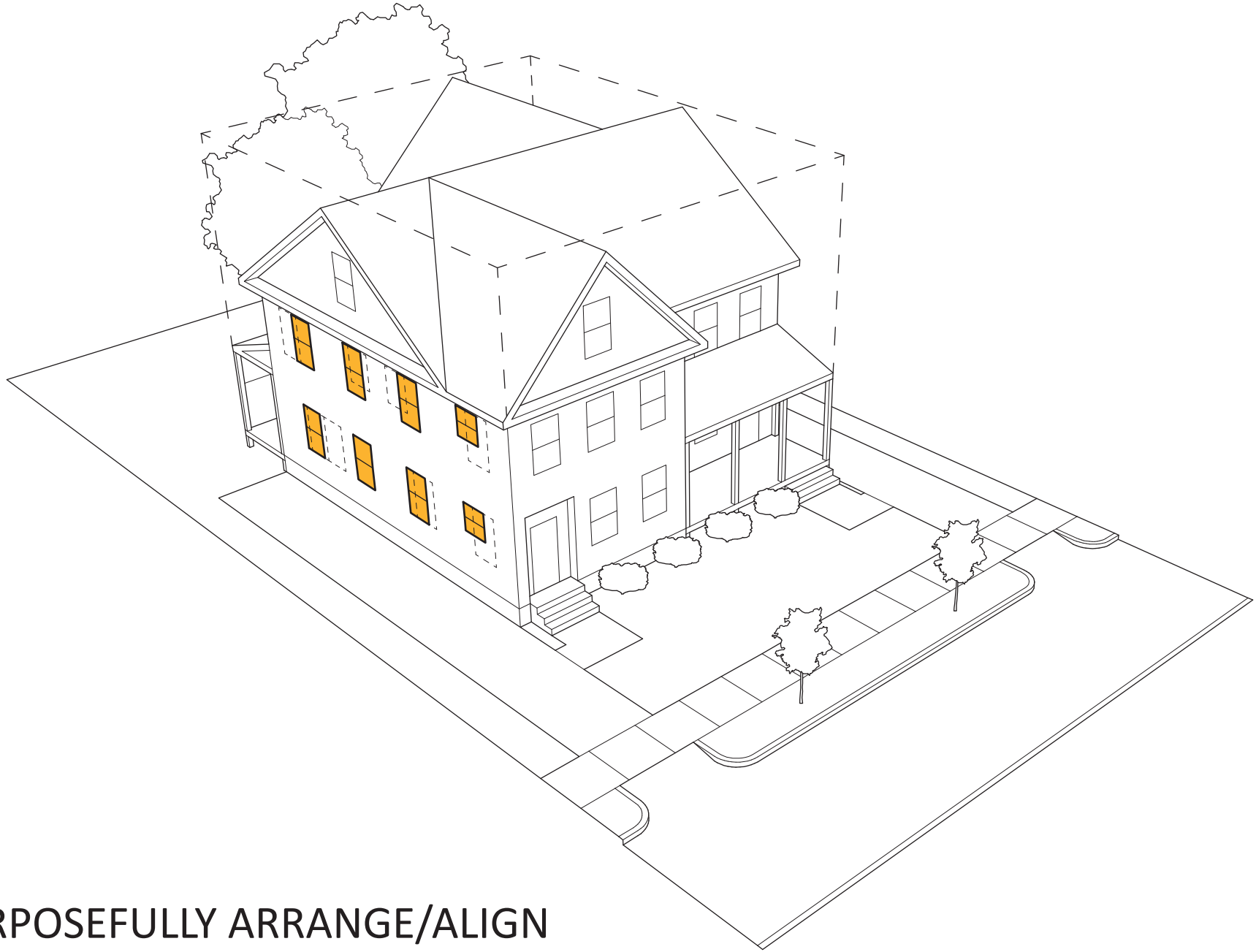
CREATE A UNIFYING PRIMARY ROOF FORM WITH EAVES AND WINDOWS



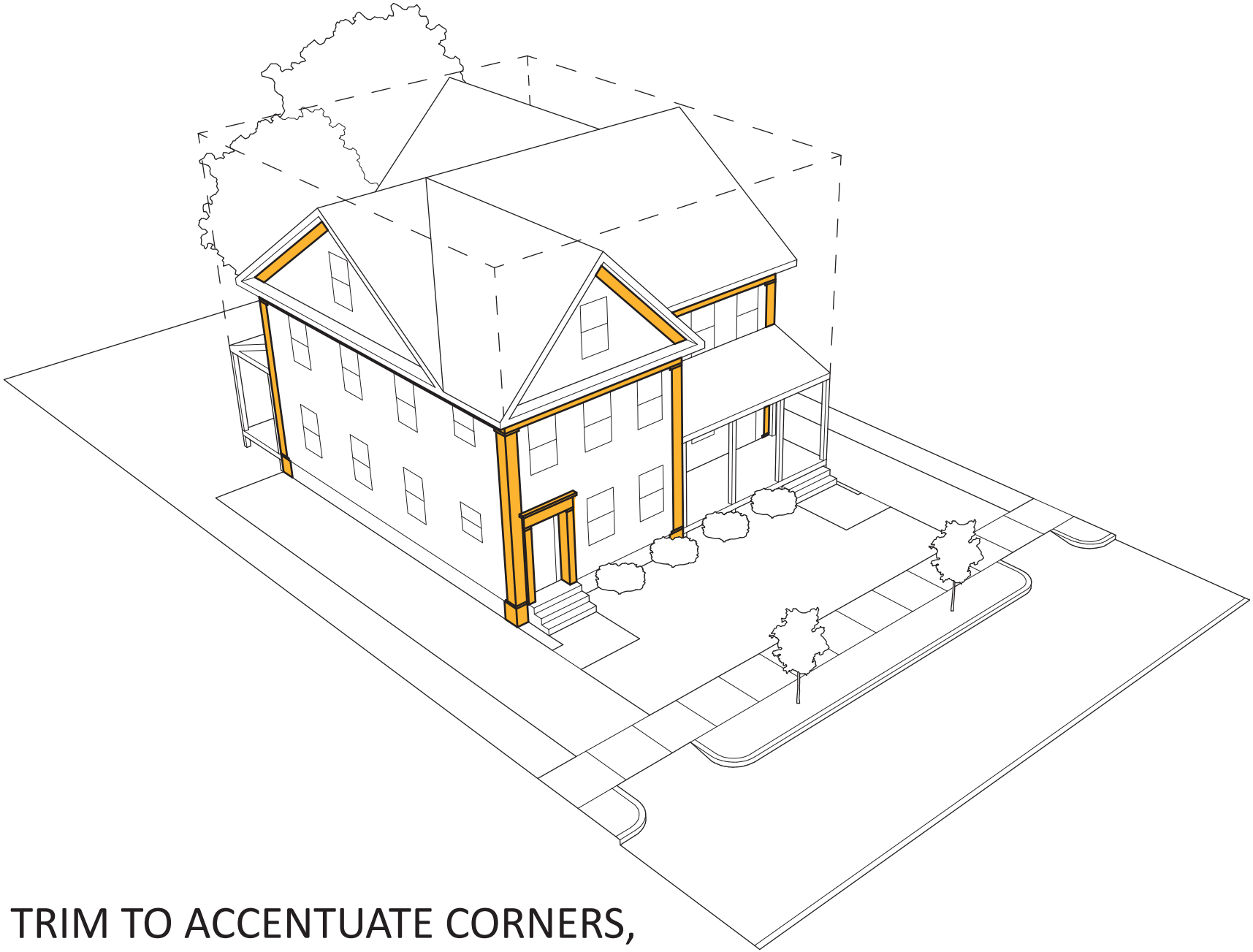
CREATE SECONDARY, CROSS GABLES
TO BREAK DOWN THE MASSING



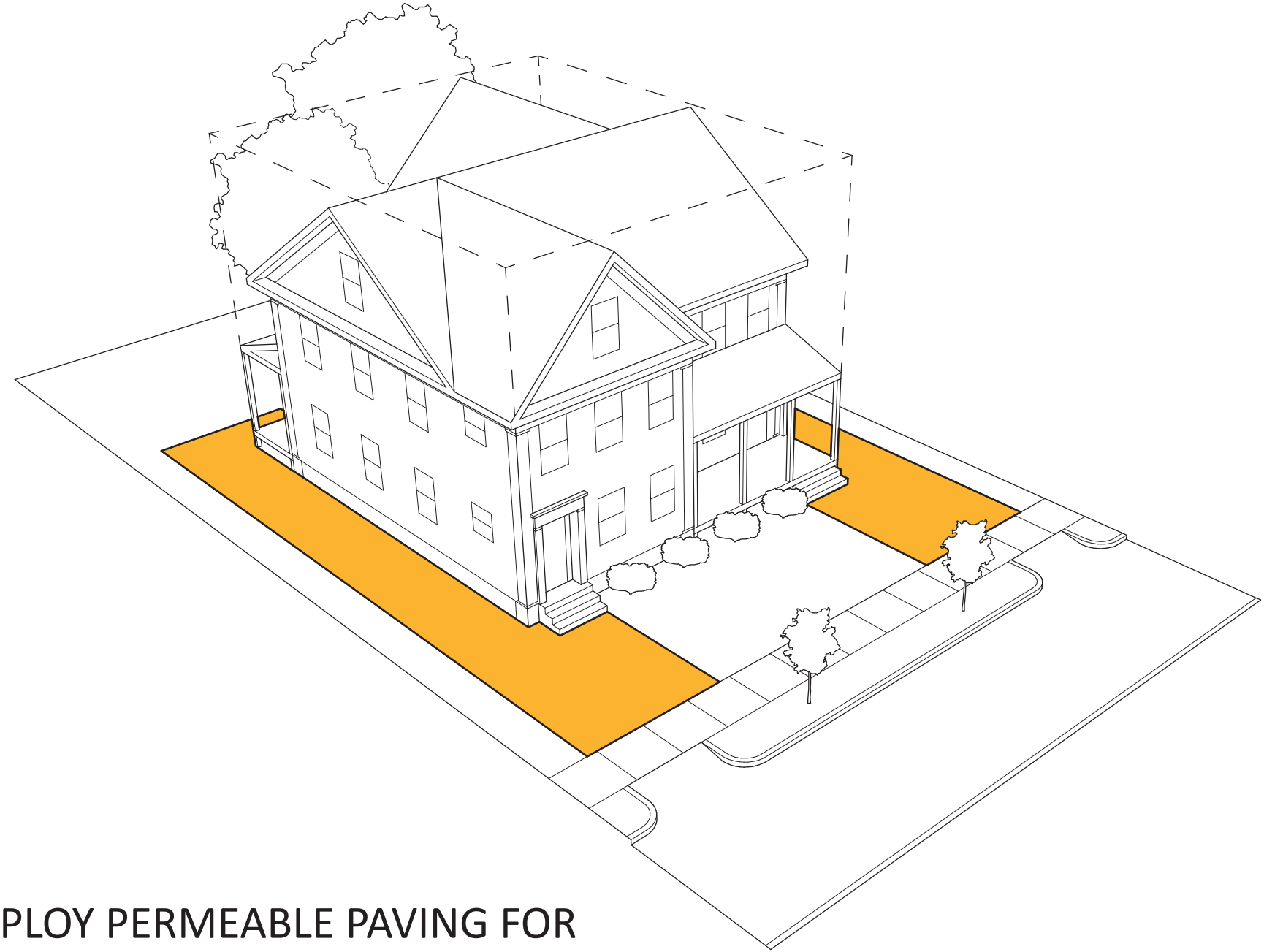
ADD OCCUPIABLE PORCHES TO
DIMINISH THE APPARENT HEIGHT



PURPOSEFULLY ARRANGE/ALIGN
WINDOWS VISIBLE FROM THE STREET

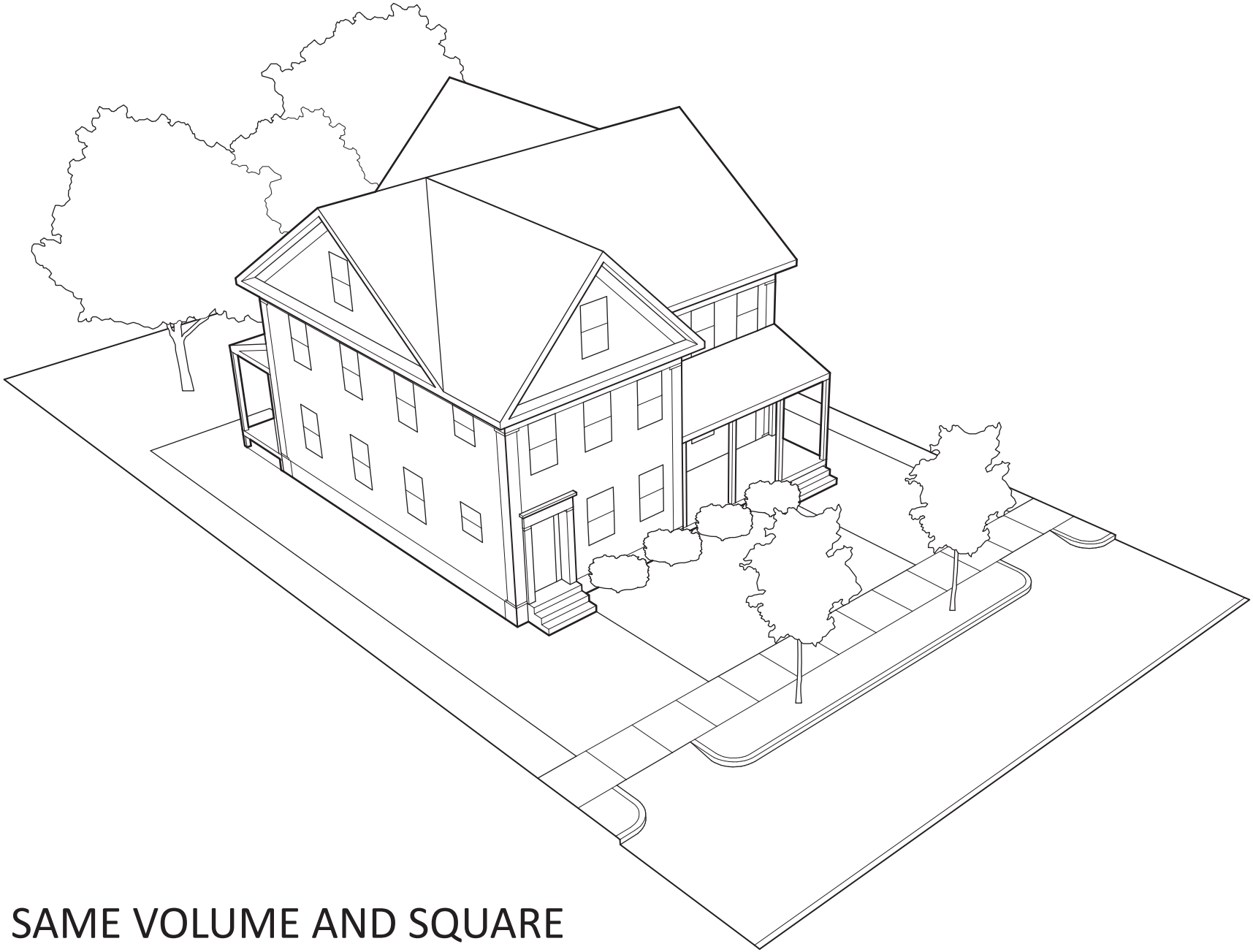


USE TRIM TO ACCENTUATE CORNERS, ENTRANCES, AND MATERIAL TRANSITIONS



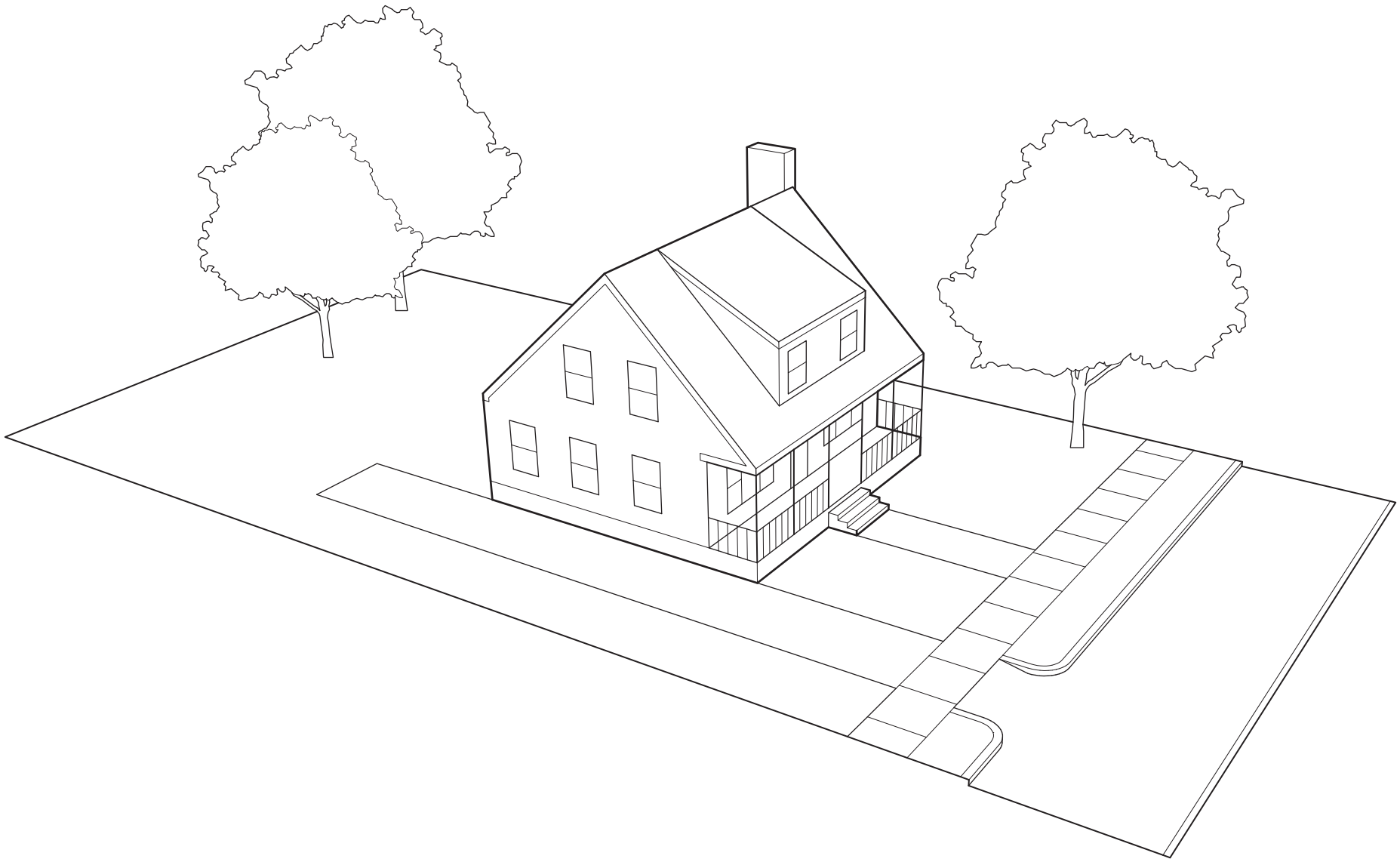
EMPLOY PERMEABLE PAVING FOR DRIVEWAYS AND WALKWAYS

PLANT ROBUST, NATIVE LANDSCAPING,
AND RETAIN EXISTING MATURE TREES

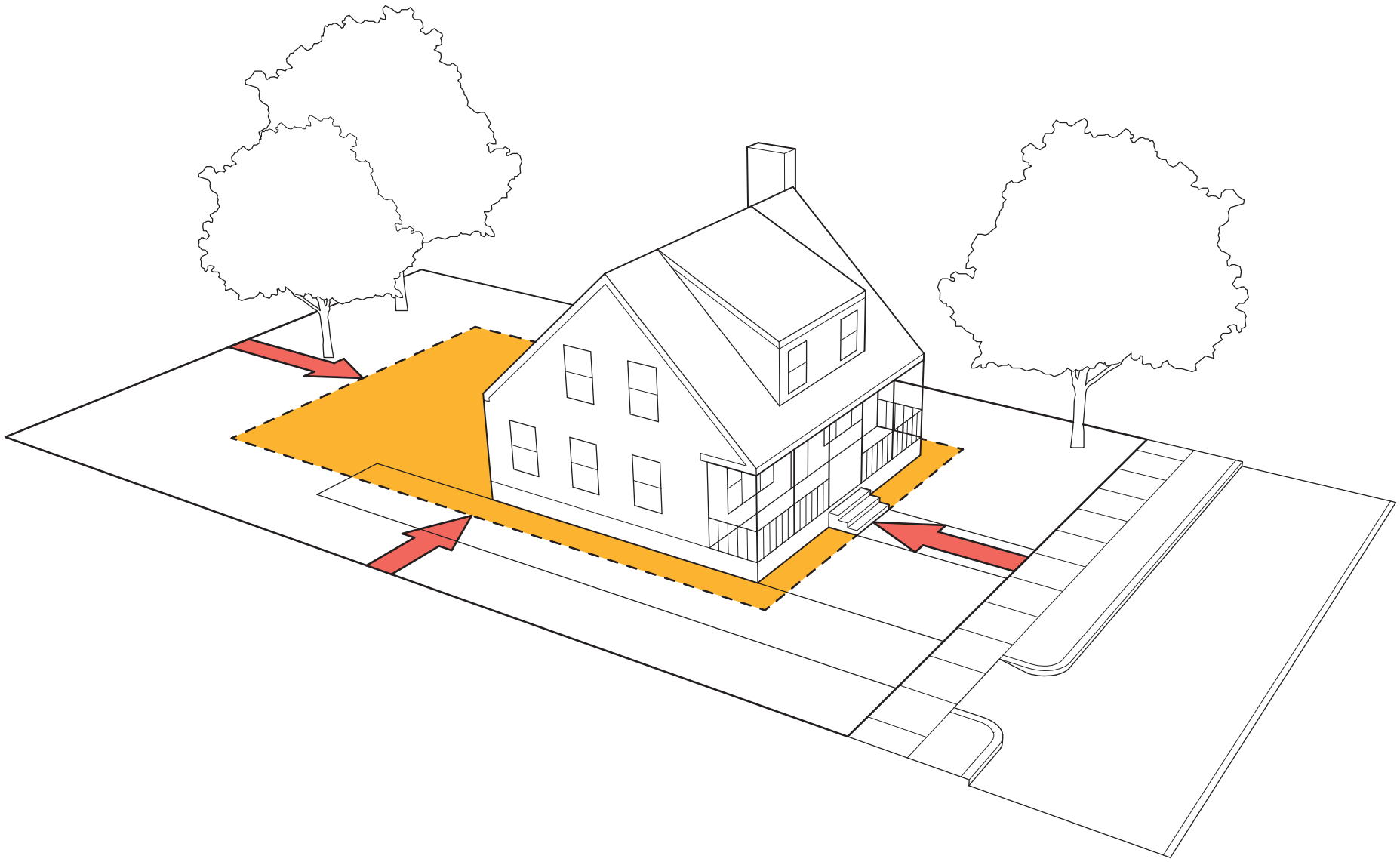


THE SAME VOLUME AND SQUARE FOOTAGE, WITH MORE CURB APPEAL

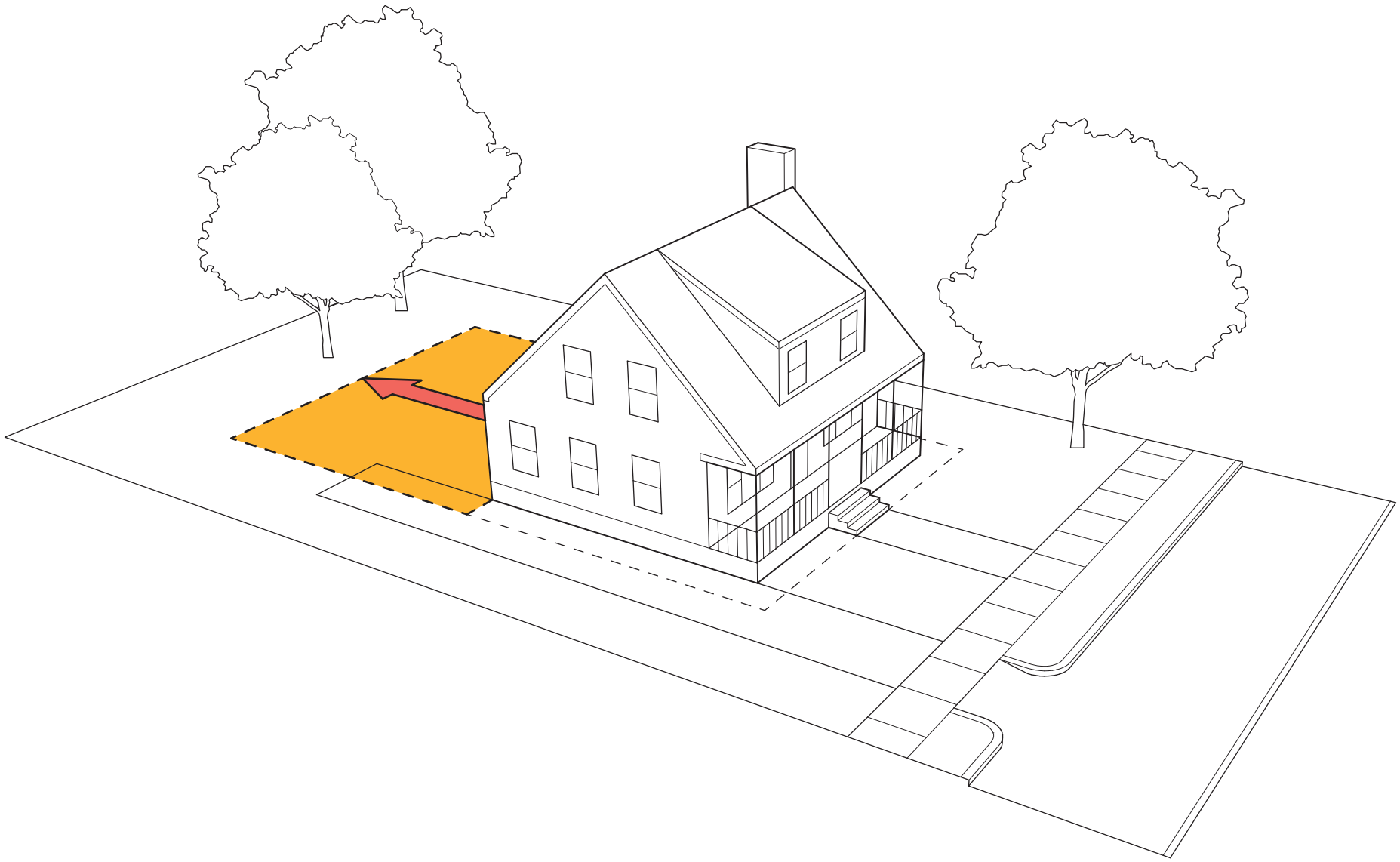
REAR AND SIDE ADDITIONS



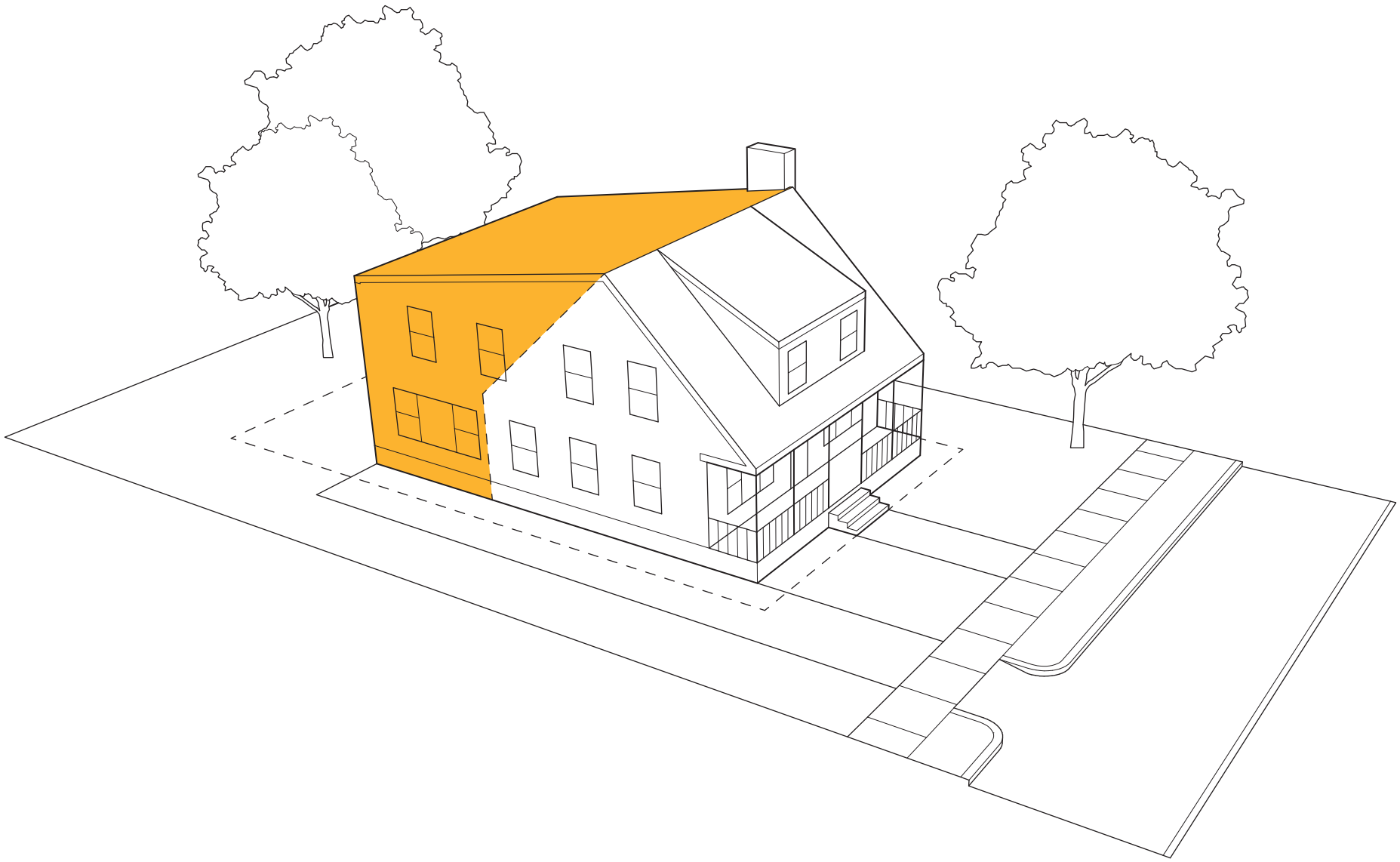
A SMALL BUNGALOW HOME
ON A THIN, DEEP LOT



SETBACKS DETERMINE WHERE AN ADDITION CAN BE BUILT ON THE LOT

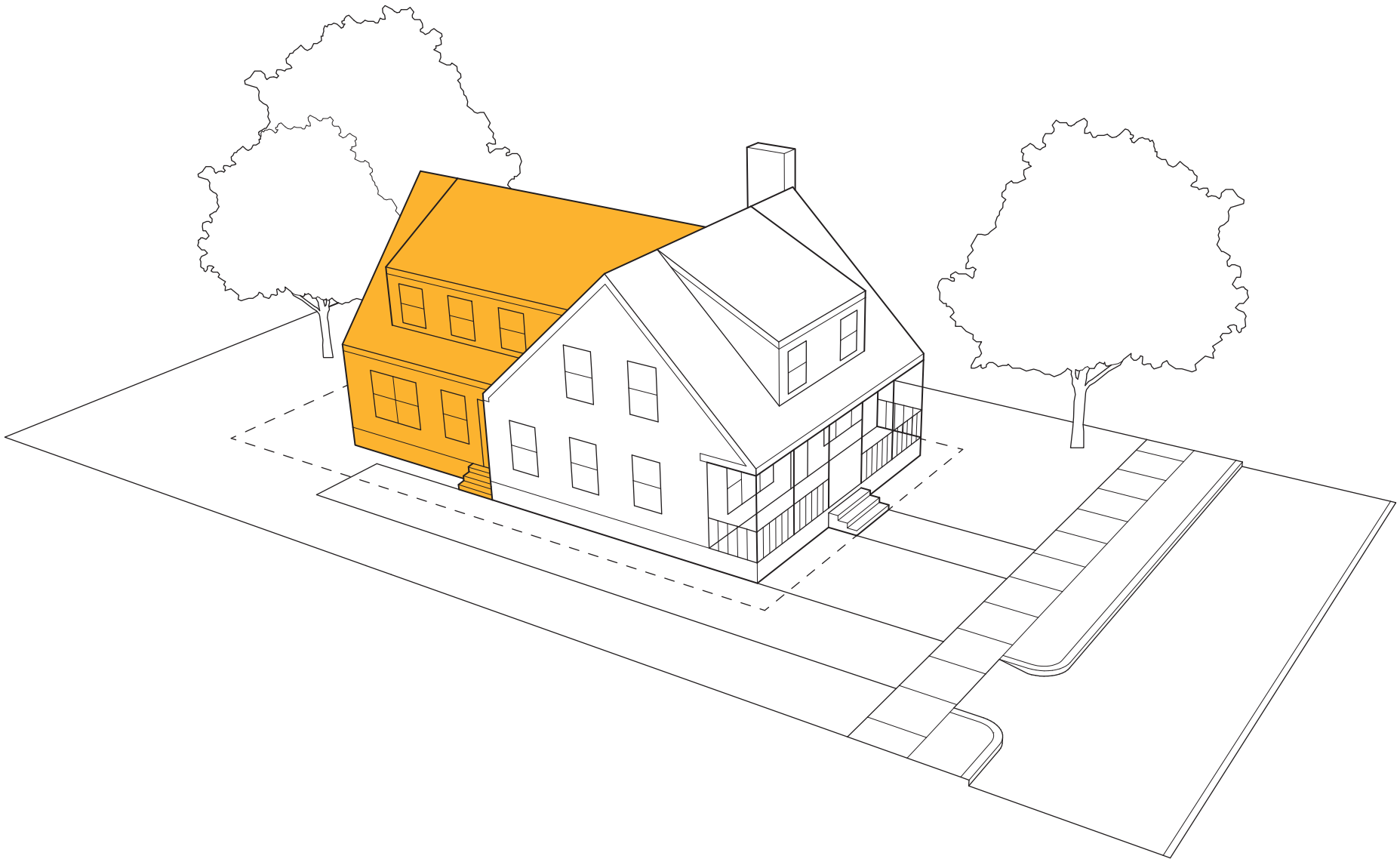


THE ONLY ALLOWABLE PLACE TO
EXPAND IS TO THE REAR OF THE HOME.



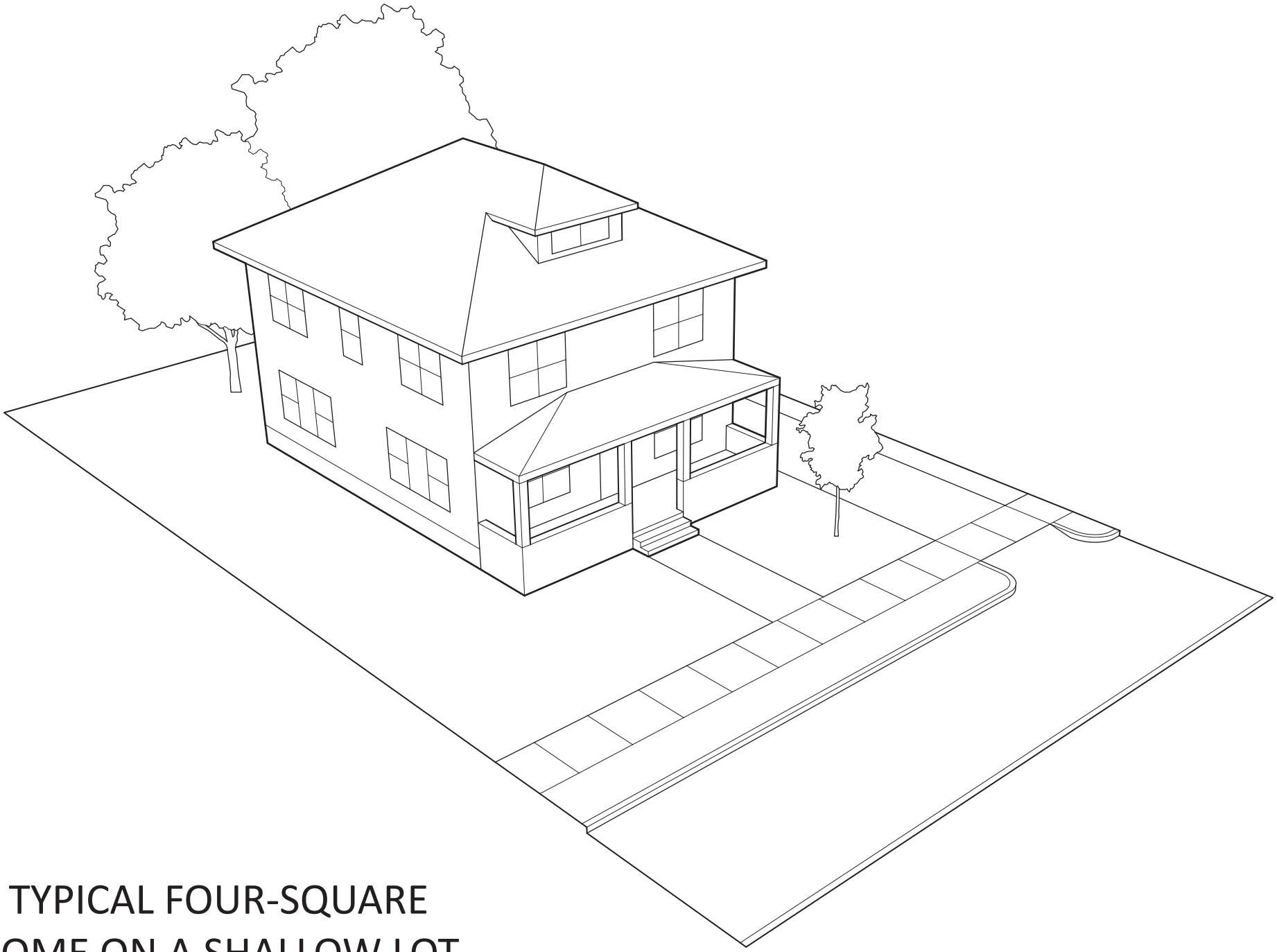
A LARGE, BLOCKY ADDITION CREATES A SINGLE, OVERPOWERING MASSING

CREATING A SEPARATE ROOF FORM AND ALIGNING THE WINDOWS HELPS

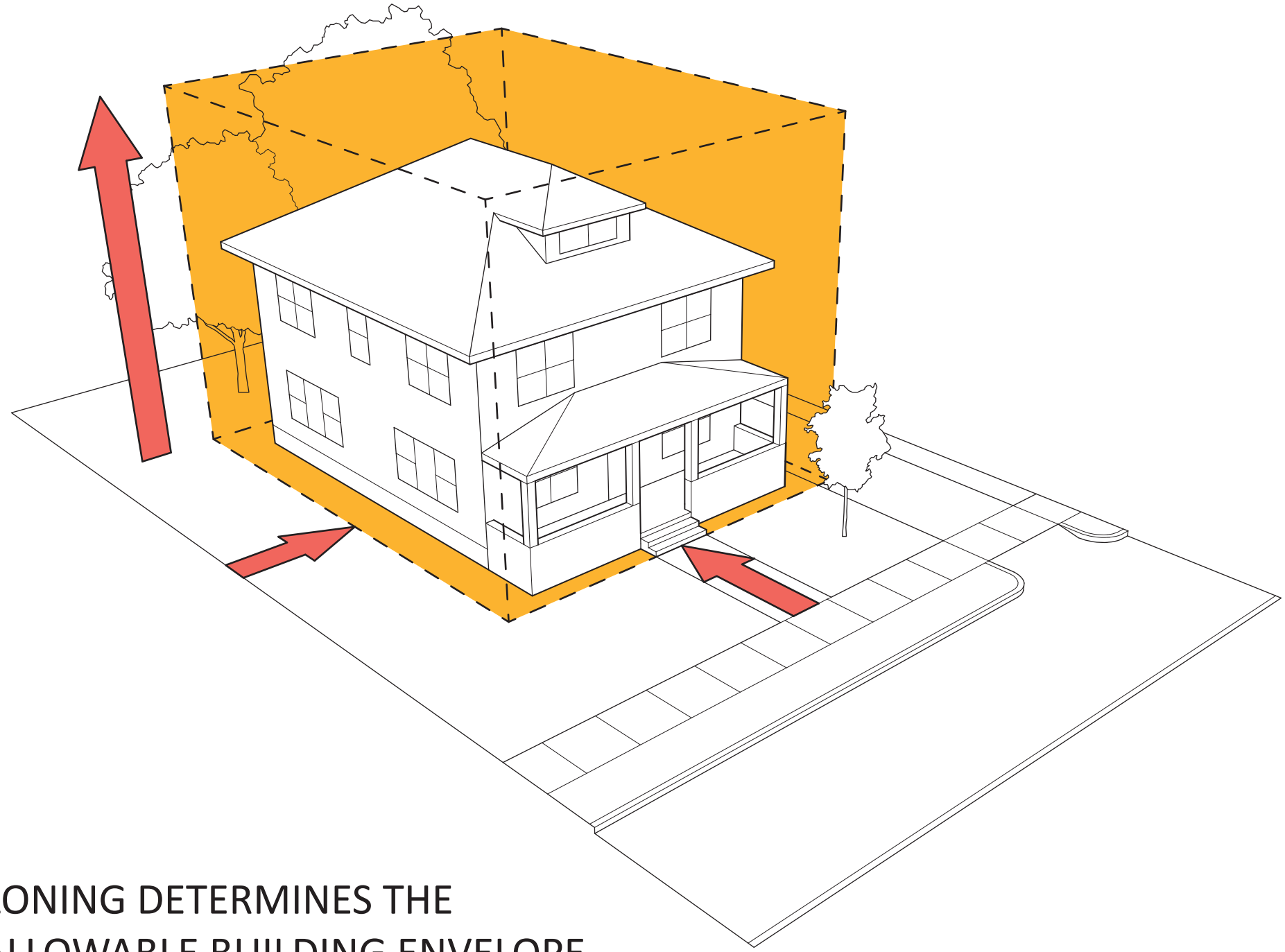


USING THE LANGUAGE OF THE ORIGINAL HOME
CREATES A MORE VISUALLY HARMONIOUS ADDITION

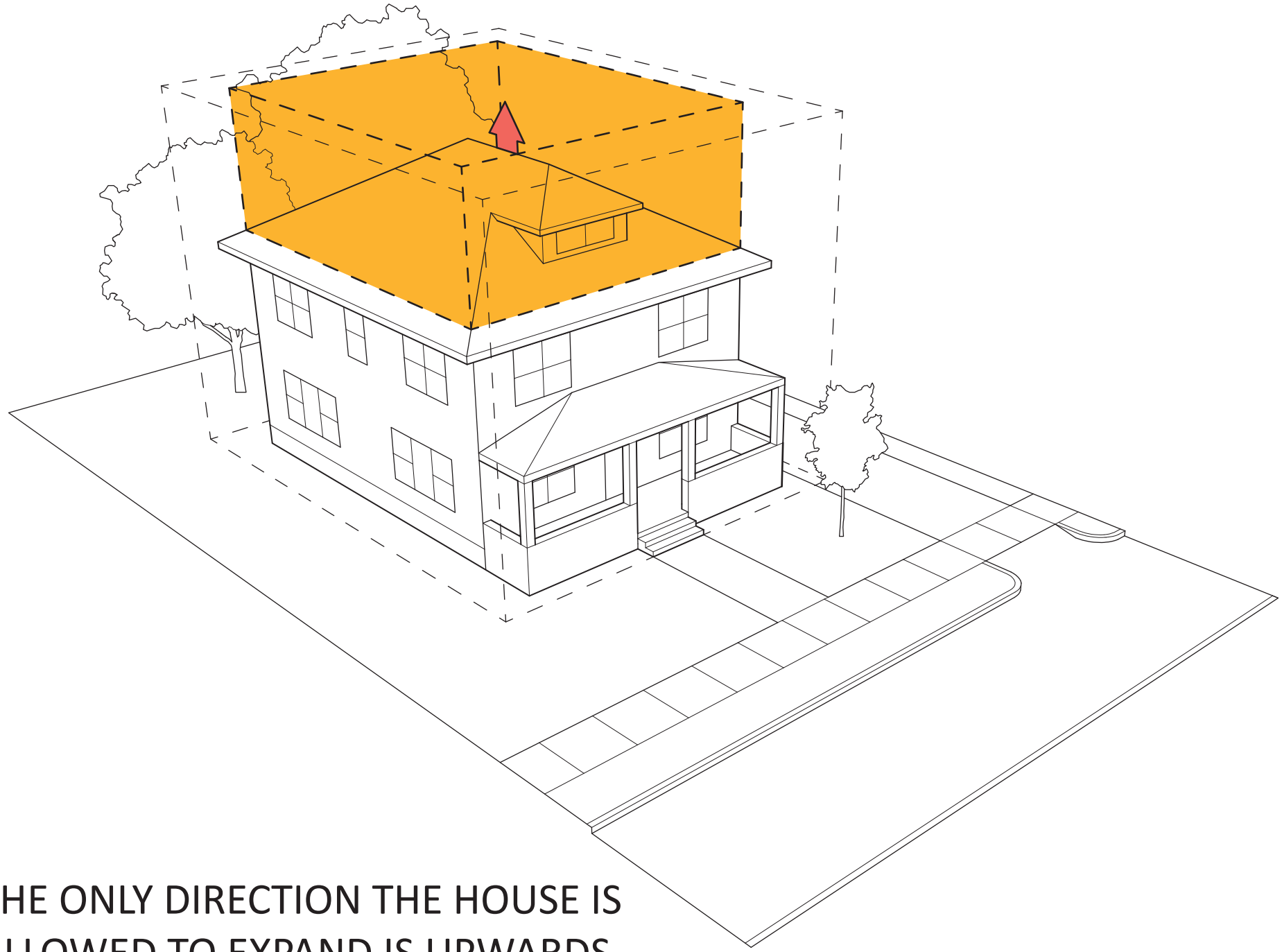
DORMERS AND ROOF ADDITIONS



A TYPICAL FOUR-SQUARE
HOME ON A SHALLOW LOT

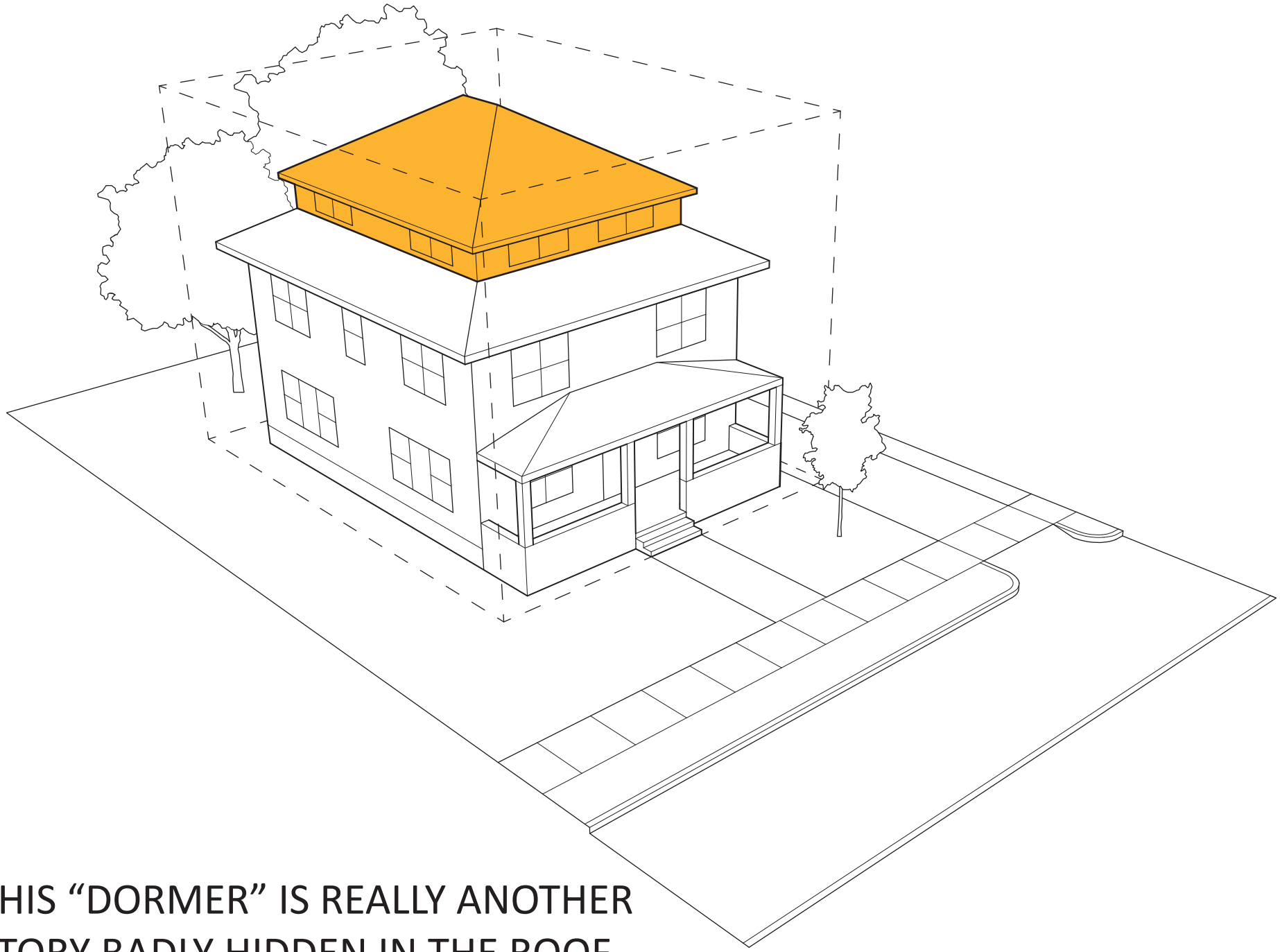


ZONING DETERMINES THE
ALLOWABLE BUILDING ENVELOPE

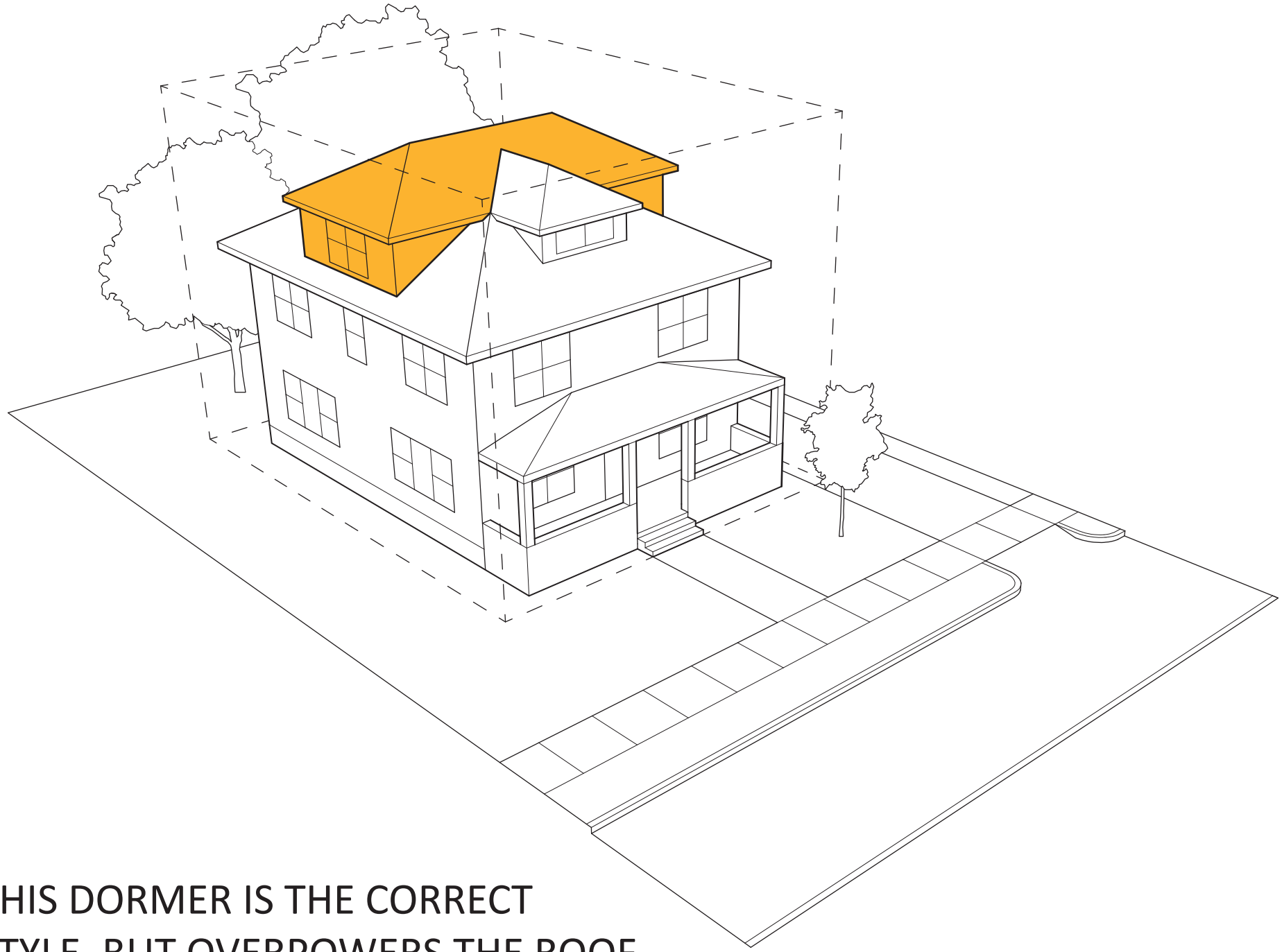


THE ONLY DIRECTION THE HOUSE IS ALLOWED TO EXPAND IS UPWARDS

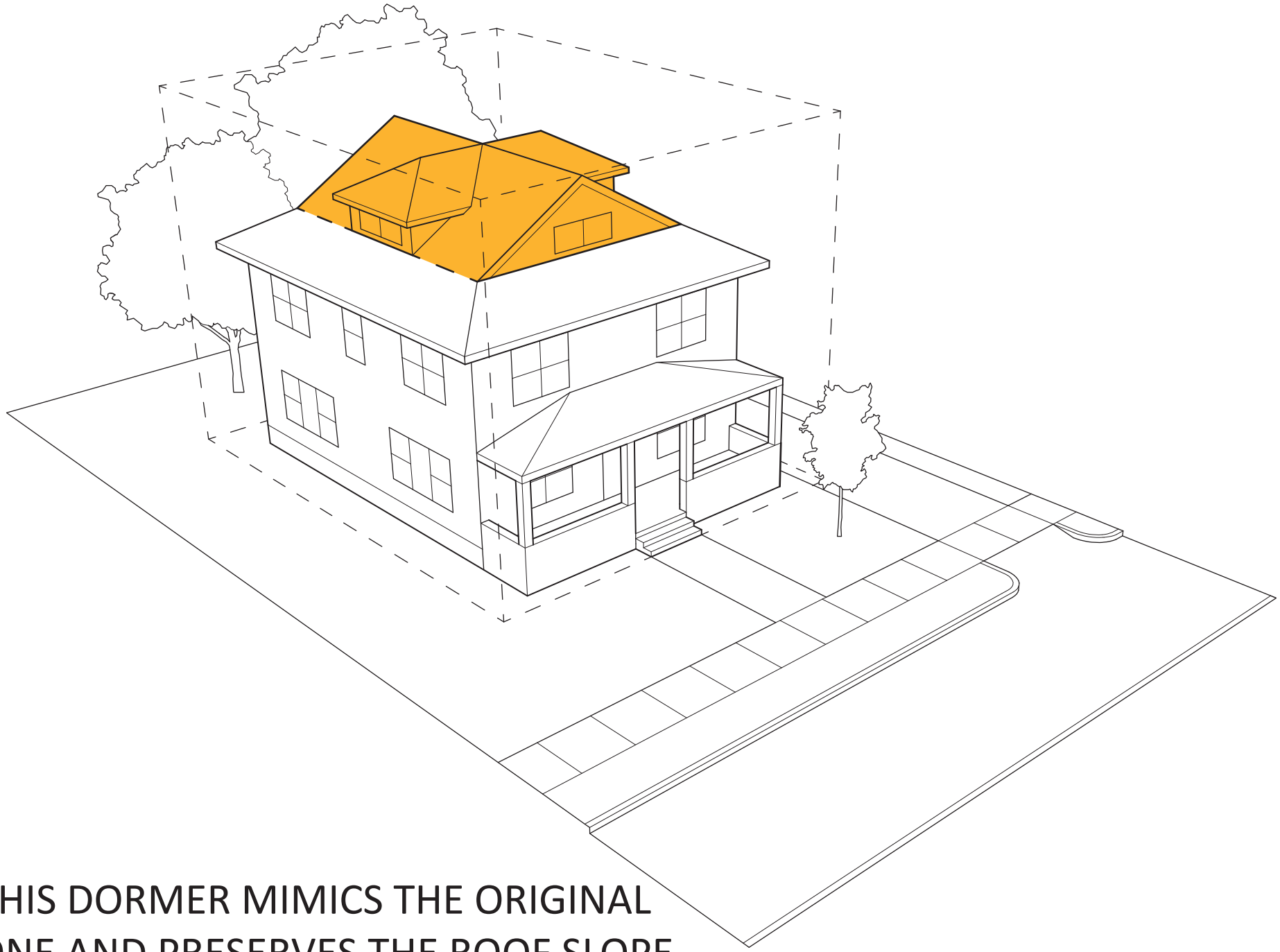
THIS DORMER IS OVERSIZED AND
ISN’T THE SAME ARCHITECTURAL STYLE



THIS “DORMER” IS REALLY ANOTHER STORY BADLY HIDDEN IN THE ROOF



THIS DORMER IS THE CORRECT STYLE, BUT OVERPOWERS THE ROOF



THIS DORMER MIMICS THE ORIGINAL ONE AND PRESERVES THE ROOF SLOPE