

Chapter 3 Project Exercise- Real Estate

Most people have a “dream home” in the back of their mind which they hope to someday build. However, when thinking about your dream home you need to think beyond the house itself and look at other factors. Items like community attributes, local zoning restrictions, family lifestyle, etc. will all play a factor in you and your family’s quality of living.

Assignment

You are in the market for a home and it is time to go house shopping. Using the internet go to real estate websites such as www.realtor.com or www.century21.com , etc, to find a house. Choose the city you live in currently or have an interest in living in some day. When you are looking for a house keep in mind the following primary considerations. You may have to look at sites other than the realtor ones to answer these. For example, type the address of your potential new home into Google Earth and look at what type of properties, structures, etc surround the property.

Site Location & Characteristics
Community Attributes
Zoning Restrictions
Family Lifestyle
Quality of Living
School District
Near or Far from Shopping Areas
Airport or Major Traffic Artery
Is the Community in a Growing Area or Stagnant One?
Topography (Rolling or flat, high, low, dry, wet, trees....)
Climate
Do people take pride in their homes?
Sewer, Natural Gas, Propane, Septic, City Water, Well
Building/ Site Restrictions

These primary considerations are explained in the reading on the following pages.

Print off a copy of the house you choose. In a word document outline and explain the Primary Considerations as they relate to the house you picked. Print this off along with a copy of the real-estate listing for the house you selected and turn in.

3

CHAPTER

Primary Considerations

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- Evaluate a given site with respect to important considerations.
- Discuss key site consideration, restrictions, zoning, and codes.
- Record topographical features of a site.
- List family needs that should be considered when planning a dwelling.
- Describe the basic construction drawings used to build a structure.

Most people have a "dream home" in the back of their mind which they hope to build some day. However, few people think beyond the house itself to the site location and characteristics, community attributes, zoning restrictions, family lifestyle, and quality of living. These considerations, in many instances, are just as important as the size and room arrangement of the house.

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

The site is more than just a plot of land—it is part of a larger community, Fig. 3-1. It is located in a certain school district and is either near or far from shopping areas. An airport or major traffic artery may be nearby. The site is in a growing community or a stagnant one. The topography is rolling or flat, high and dry or low and wet, big or small, wooded or treeless. It is located in a warm or cold climate. The site, next to the house itself, is probably the most expensive item of investment. It must be evaluated carefully to realize its potential as a vital part of the home and its setting.

The characteristics of a site frequently indicate the basic type of house that would be best suited for that site. For example, flat topography lends itself to a ranch or two-story house. A hilly



Fig. 3-1. A homesite is always a part of a larger community—subdivision, city, or state.
(Midwestern Consulting, Inc.)

or sloping site is ideal for a split-level home. A site which has many trees may require a house with large windows and generous use of natural materials. Every effort should be made to take full advantage of site characteristics in planning the home. The structure should appear to be part of the site. It should blend in with the surroundings rather than stand apart from them.

THE COMMUNITY

The neighborhood should be evaluated on the following points: (1) Is the community a "planned" community, Fig. 3-2, or one that has

sprung up with no central theme or forethought, Fig. 3-3? (2) Are the homes in this community in the price range of the proposed house? (3) Are the neighbors in about the same socioeconomic category as the prospective owner? (4) Is the community alive and growing or is it rundown and dying? (5) Does the community have room for growth or is it restricted? (6) Are the residents of the community people who take pride in their homes or seem indifferent toward them? (7) Does the community have modern churches, quality schools, and shopping areas? (8) Are



Fig. 3-2. A planned community neighborhood takes advantage of the natural site characteristics. (Midwestern Consulting, Inc.)

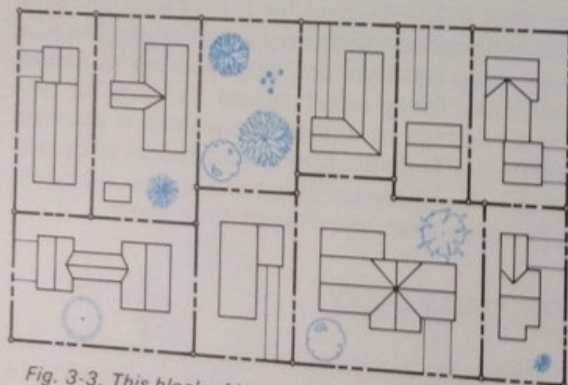


Fig. 3-3. This block of homes represents an example of little planning with no central theme.

such facilities as fire protection, water, sewer, natural gas, and garbage collection available in this community? (9) Is the site near the prospective owner's workplace? (10) Is public transportation available in the community? (11) Does the community have a high rate of turnover due to the resale of homes? These, and many other factors relate to the site selection and eventually to the happiness of the owner. These factors should be considered before selecting a site.

COST AND RESTRICTIONS

It is not possible to state exactly what percentage of the total cost of a home should be allowed for the site. This depends on many considerations. The price, however, should be examined carefully to determine if it takes into consideration needed improvements such as grading, fill, tree removal, and drainage. The cost of the lot should also take into account the amount of frontage it has and whether or not it is a corner lot. Assessments are usually proportional to length of frontage, therefore, corner lots are more expensive.

A title search should be instituted before purchasing the lot to determine if there are any legal claims against the property. The deed, Fig. 3-4, will show any restrictions or easements attached to the property. Restrictions may specify the style of house that may be built on the lot, size of the house, type of landscaping, or even the overall cost of the house. Easements may allow utilities to cross the property or may prevent the filling of a low area which must remain for drainage purposes. The title and deed are very important documents and should be examined carefully by a competent attorney before the lot is purchased.

ZONING AND CODES

Investigate the zoning ordinances in the area where the site is located. It may be zoned commercial or for multiple-family dwellings. This could prohibit building a single-family residential structure. Even if the selected site were zoned for single-family structures, you might find the large open area nearby which plays a large part in the selection of the site, is zoned for apartment buildings. Check the zoning!

Another area for consideration which many prospective buyers fail to explore is local building codes. It is possible that the codes (plumbing, electrical, and building codes) are so restrictive that the type of house that is being

Form 561 5-71
WARRANTY DEED—Statutory Form
C.L. 1948, 365 (3) M.S.A. 26.571

Layyers Title Insurance Corporation

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS: That William C. Brown and Arlene J. Brown, his wife
whose address is 813 Magnolia Lane, Saline, Michigan

Convey(x) and Warranty(x) to Henry B. Jackson
whose address is 507 Highland Road, Jacksonville, Georgia

the following described premises situated in the city of Melvinville
County of Washington and State of Michigan, to-wit:

Commence at the NE corner of the SW 1/4 of Sec. 13, T22S, R21E, run thence
N 89° 47' 38" W 1166.06 ft.; thence S 0° 12' 22" W 505 ft.; thence N 89° 47' 38" W
50 ft. to a POB; said point being on a curve concave to the SE/LY having a radius
of 50 ft.; thence from a T.B. of N 0° 12' 22" E run NE/LY along said curve 52.36 ft.
through an angle of 60°; thence N 0° 12' 22" E 36.70 ft.; thence N 89° 47' 38" W
145.79 ft.; thence S 0° 12' 32" E 80.0 ft.; thence S 89° 47' 38" E 120 ft. to the
P.O.B. together with ingress and egress rights.

Also known as Lot 13, Oak Hammock

for the full consideration of \$10.00 and other valuable considerations
subject to meeting sanitary sewer specifications

Dated this fifth day of July 19

Witnesses: C. E. Howard William C. Brown (L.S.)
D. M. Foster Arlene J. Brown (L.S.)

(L.S.)

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COUNTY OF Washtenaw } ss. _____ (L.S.)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this fifth day of July 19

My commission expires July 1, 19

Charles Barrett
Notary Public, Washtenaw County, Michigan

Instrument Drafted by William C. Brown Business Address 813 Magnolia Lane, Saline, Mich.

County Treasurer's Certificate	City Treasurer's Certificate

Recording Fee _____ When recorded return to _____
State Transfer Tax _____ Send subsequent tax bills to _____
Tax Parcel # _____

Fig. 3-4. A typical property deed containing a legal description of the site.

planned for the site cannot be built. The cost could also be much greater because of code requirements. On the other hand, the codes may be so lax that the quality of homes in the area is poor. Talk with the local building inspector to determine such things as cost of permits, inspections, and regulations. Fig. 3-5 illustrates a typical building permit form.

TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES

The topography of the site is a primary concern. Study the topographical drawings of the

site to determine its slope, contour, size, shape, and elevation. Trees, rocks, and soil conditions may also be indicated on the drawings, Fig. 3-6. These factors may limit the type of structure that may be built on the site.

If the site is out of town and you must provide water and sewer, extra care must be taken in the selection of the proper site. Very hard water, iron water, or the lack of water are problems to be aware of before the house is built. Equipment to handle these problems is expensive and requires constant maintenance. A site smaller than one acre may not meet the code requirements.

VIGO COUNTY
BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION
 VIGO COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT
 201 CHERRY STREET, TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47807

Applicant to complete numbered spaces only. This form must be signed by owner and/or contractor.

1. JOB ADDRESS	
LETTING	TRACT
OWNER	MAIL ADDRESS
2. CONTRACTOR	PHONE
3. ARCHITECT/DESIGNER	PHONE
4. ENGINEER	PHONE
5. LENDER	BRANCH
6. USE OF BUILDING	PROPOSED
7. Class of work	NEW ADDITION REMODEL REPAIR MOVE REMOVE (WRECKING)
8. Describe work:	
9. Valuation of work: \$	

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN SHADED AREAS

SPECIAL CONDITIONS:	Required	Received
RE-ZONING		
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS		
HEALTH DEPT.		
FIRE DEPT.		
APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY	PLANS CHECKED BY	APPROVED FOR ISSUANCE BY

PLUMBING

NEW OR ALTERED SEWER LINES NECESSARY YES ☐ NO ☐

PLUMBING NECESSARY: ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ PLUMBING PERMIT FEE: _____

Number of fixtures to be installed: _____

ELECTRICAL

NEW SERVICE: Required ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ New Service Amperage: _____

Number of circuits to be installed: _____ Electrical Permit Fee: \$ _____

ENGINEERS DEPT.

DRAINAGE		
SET BACK LINES		
ENTRANCE & EXITS		
PARKING SURFACE		
OFF STREET PARKING	SPACES AVAIL.	SPACES NEEDED

AREA PLANNING

ZONED: _____

OTHER: _____

11. SIGNATURE OF CONTRACTOR OR AUTHORIZED AGENT (DATE) _____

12. SIGNATURE OF OWNER IF OWNER BUILDER (DATE) _____

NOTICE
 THIS PERMIT BECOMES NULL AND VOID IF WORK OR CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZED IS NOT COMMENCED WITHIN 120 DAYS, OR IF CONSTRUCTION OR WORK IS SUSPENDED OR ABANDONED FOR A PERIOD OF 120 DAYS AT ANY TIME AFTER WORK IS COMMENCED.
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ AND EXAMINED THIS APPLICATION AND KNOW THE SAME TO BE TRUE AND CORRECT. ALL PROVISIONS OF LAWS AND ORDINANCES GOVERNING THIS TYPE OF WORK WILL BE COMPLIED WITH WHETHER SPECIFIED HEREIN OR NOT. THE GRANTING OF A PERMIT DOES NOT PRESUME TO GIVE AUTHORITY TO VIOLATE OR CANCEL THE PROVISIONS OF ANY OTHER STATE OR LOCAL LAW REGULATING CONSTRUCTION OR THE PERFORMANCE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Fig. 3-5. A building permit must be obtained before construction may begin.

The shape of the site is important. Even though the site is large, it may be long and narrow or some odd shape that will limit construction possibilities, Fig. 3-7. Measure the site and have the measurements and lot lines checked by a surveyor to be sure the boundaries are located where you believe them to be.

FAMILY NEEDS

A truly functional house will represent the lifestyle of those who occupy it. Rather than try to change a lifestyle to fit the house, the structure should evolve from those who will use it.

Family size will be a major consideration in a house design. Ample space should be provided for each member of the family to perform their

chosen activities. Consideration should be given to providing space for these individual and family activities:

Preparing Food	Sleeping
Dining	Relaxing
Entertaining	Working
Family Recreation	Storage
Hobbies	Bathing
Laundering	Housekeeping
Studying	Accommodating Guests
Dressing	Planning

These activities should not be thought of necessarily in relation to specific rooms. Some activities are performed throughout the house while others are restricted to certain areas. The important point is to provide for activities in which the family will be engaged. Let the structure take the shape and arrangement that best serves these needs.

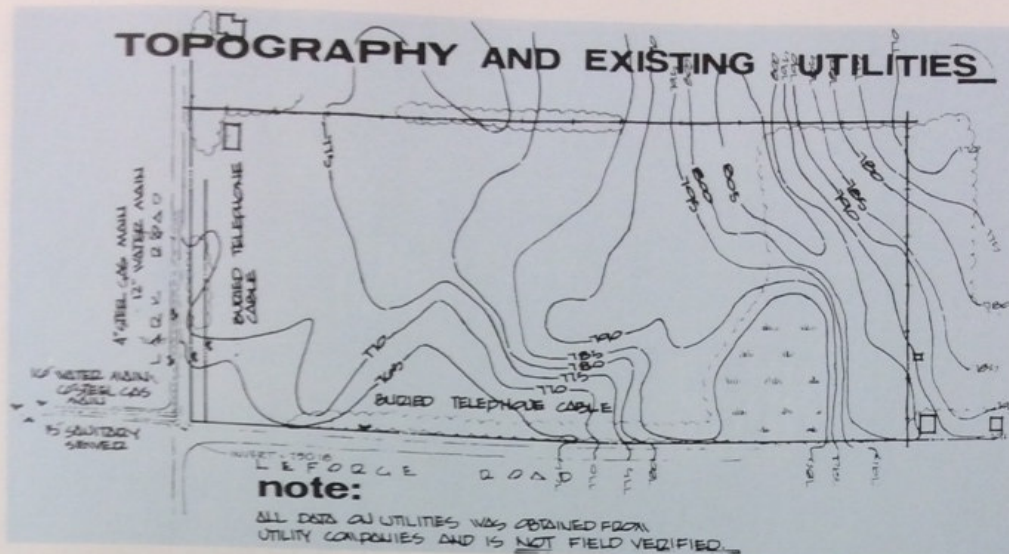


Fig. 3-6. A site plan which shows topographical features such as contour, elevations, trees, and property lines. (Midwestern Consulting, Inc.)

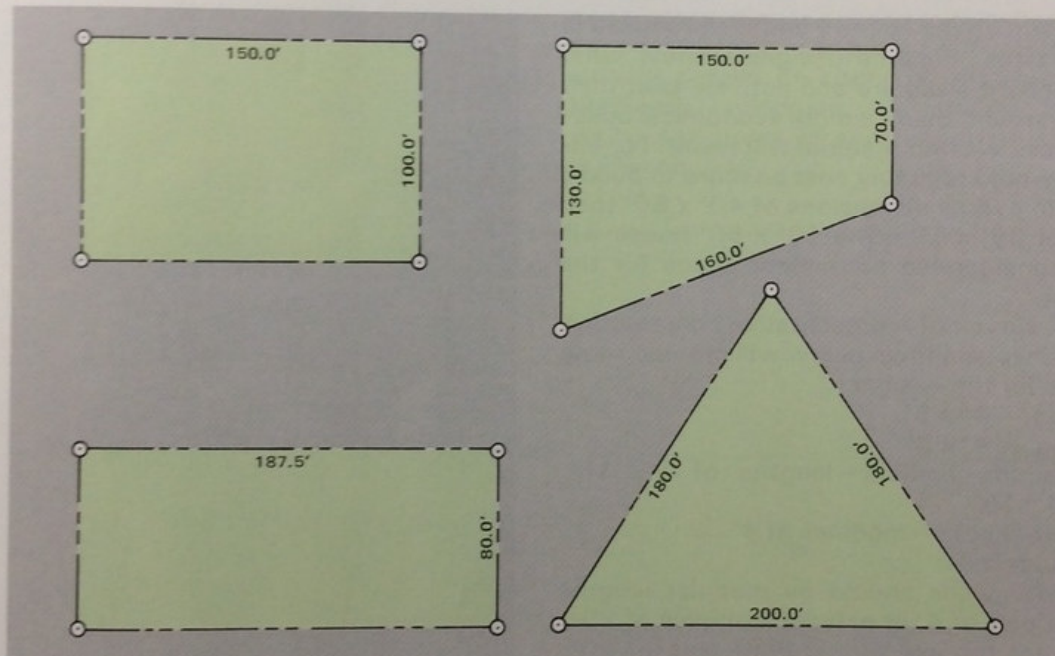


Fig. 3-7. Property shape is important in determining the size and style of the house to be designed. Note that each of these sites has 15,000 sq. ft. of area, yet the triangular plot appears the largest.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A residential structure should not be planned entirely from an "inside-out" approach. Consideration should be given to the exterior design, size, and materials, Fig. 3-8. These additional factors add a unity to the structure and enhance its overall appearance. Consideration should also be given to the salability of the home.

MODULAR ASPECTS

Much is heard today about the advantages and disadvantages of **modular construction** (use of building materials based on 4 inch units of measurement, or modules). The fact remains that a house is a combination of many parts and these must fit together to form the whole. These parts are basic construction materials which are



Fig. 3-8. Design is important. Note how the lines and use of materials complement each other in this unique ranch structure. (The Atrium Door and Window Corporation)

available across the country and are produced in standard sizes. If home designers know what these standard sizes are and actively plan their structure around them, a more economical building with less wasted material will result. For example, it would probably cost no more to build a house with overall dimensions of 40' x 60' than a house of 39' x 59'. The 40' x 60' house will provide considerable extra floor space for the same cost.

A quick survey of representative construction material sizes as shown below will provide some guidelines for the designer:

Plywood — 4' x 8'

Paneling — 4' x 8'

Construction Lumber—lengths of 8', 10', 12', 14', 16'

Concrete Blocks—modules of 4'

Typical guidelines:

1. Exterior walls should be modular lengths (multiples of 4' or at least multiples of 2').
2. Plan for the use of materials with as little waste as possible.
3. Plan exterior rooms with an eye on standard sizes. (Example: carpet is produced in 12' and 15' widths.)
4. Walls should be modular heights (multiples of 4').

QUALITY OF LIVING

The location of the site, the characteristics of the site itself, Fig. 3-9, the size and layout of the house, and many other factors all add up to a certain quality of living. It is the designer's job to

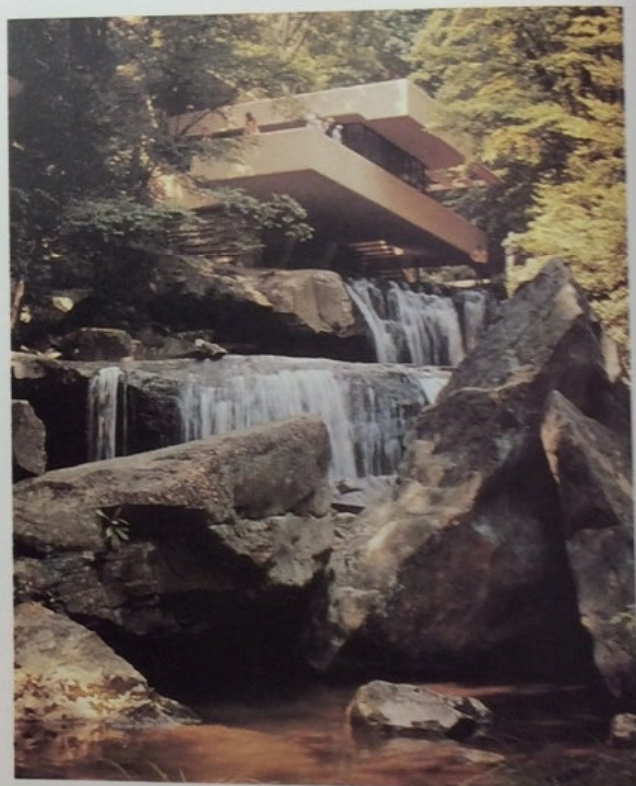


Fig. 3-9. Imagine the site and design considerations necessary to construct this Frank Lloyd Wright home. (Western Pennsylvania Conservancy)

take advantage of as many aspects as possible to increase the quality of living in the structures being designed. The quality of living provided by the structure is a measure of the success of the designer in solving a problem.