



# Village of Northbrook

## DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING SERVICES

### Zoning Code Interpretation

<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>Clarification of What Constitutes a Bay Window When Computing Floor Area Ratio</b>
<b>Northbrook Zoning Code Section(s):</b>	<b>Article III, Single Family Residential Districts Section 12-206, Definition of Floor Area, Gross</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>January 12, 2012</b>

#### Reason for Interpretation

The definition of the “Gross Floor Area” (Floor Area, Gross in the Zoning Code) excludes certain areas from residential floor area ratio calculations. Bay windows, subject to certain restrictions, are specifically excluded. The following excerpt is taken from the definition of Gross Floor Area:

*“Gross floor area shall exclude the following specific areas:*

- 1. cellar floors;*
- 2. attic floors, regardless of the clear ceiling height;*
- 3. decks and patios;*
- 4. open, unenclosed porches, not exceeding eight feet in depth;*
- 5. chimneys projecting not more than two feet from an exterior wall;*
- 6. bay windows projecting not more than three feet from an exterior wall for a distance not more than 1/3 of the length of such wall provided that such projections shall come entirely within planes drawn from the main corners of the building at an interior angle of 45 degrees with the wall in question; and*
- 7. the first 200 square feet of accessory storage structures other than garages, when authorized pursuant to Paragraph 9-101 D1 of this Code.*

The term “bay window is not defined in the Zoning Code. This interpretation is intended to provide clarity as to what constitutes a “bay window”.

#### Interpretation:

The principal function of the “bay” must be a window and not a building projection. To be excluded from floor area ratio calculations or allowed as a yard encroachment, a bay window must:

1. Meet all of the standards in Section 3-110 H-10-(f) and Section 12-206 F of the Zoning Code.
2. Must have a minimum of 50% glazing on the largest structural element of the bay.
3. May not have a floor, but may have a window seat or storage area.
4. The bay window may not have any appliances or plumbing features as a means of simply being an extension of a kitchen, bathroom, laundry room or other habitable area.
5. The “bay” may only be located in such a manner as to provide light to a single floor of a home.

6. A home may have multiple bay windows, but they must be separate elements.

**Reviewed and Affirmed:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thomas R Poupard', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Thomas R Poupard, AICP  
Director of Development & Planning Services**