

# Bouclair HOME

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## Stouffville

1040 Hoover Park Drive  
Stouffville, ON L4A 0K2  
Tel. (905) 640-7985



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Garage sizes in new homes and the width of driveways in front of existing homes face new restrictions in a zoning bylaw passed by the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. There are new rules for home decks, too.

## 'Taj Mahals' banned under new rules

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impossible," Mr. Drozd said. "It was a research project."

Among some of the changes made was to the construction of monster homes on urban lots.

The maximum building length of any single detached, duplex, semi-detached, triplex or fourplex dwelling on a lot with a depth of 35 m or less shall be 17 m from main front wall to main rear wall.

If the lot depth is greater than 35 m, the length of the building can be no more than 19 m based on a ratio of one additional metre of building length for each additional five metres of lot depth.

"That's intended to prevent the scenario in the old part of town with someone coming into town, buying a property with a small house on it, knocking it down and building a Taj Mahal," Mr. Drozd said. "It's to keep things to scale."

Another new regulation is the paving of front yards to accommodate vehicles.

Under the new zoning bylaw, a minimum of 25 to 40 per cent of

landscaped area in the front or exterior side yard is which the driveway is located is required.

"The reality is people have a lot of cars," Mr. Drozd said. "It allows people a little bit of flexibility to widen the driveway, but not pave the whole front yard."

*Now, a deck just needs to be at least three metres away from the rear lot line.*

In conjunction with getting people to park on their property and not on the street, garage construction has been revamped.

Many homes have stairs and doors inside the garage leading into the house.

While this provides great access to the vehicle, the stairs actually prevent cars from fitting into the garage, forcing people to park in the driveway or on the street.

Now, a garage must be of a certain dimension with specific setbacks in order to have stairs and a

door leading into the home.

"The intent is to make sure when the building permit is issued, the builder isn't putting in stairs to obstruct parking," Mr. Drozd said.

What the town cannot do, however, is restrict the use of that garage to vehicular parking only.

"We've all got lots of junk in our lives. So the garage is filled with junk," Mr. Drozd said. "People (now) have the opportunity to use (the garage) for parking. If people choose to fill it full of junk, they do it of their own free will."

"(If you decide) to park on the street and you get a ticket, well, you parked there of your own free will."

Before the zoning bylaw was revamped and a homeowner wanted to build a deck in the back yard, he or she could do so, but its size was based on a complicated formula.

Now, a deck just needs to be at least three metres away from the rear lot line. No front or minimum side yard decks are allowed.

The new zoning bylaw, which was passed by the town a year ago, was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board Jan. 13.

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