



*Historic Town of*  
**Pawleys Island**  
SOUTH CAROLINA

# Architectural Design Guidelines

## **Versions**

- Version 1 dated June 14, 2021
- Version 2 dated July 12, 2021

# Architectural History of the Island

Pawleys Island, South Carolina, located 70 miles north of Charleston and 25 miles south of Myrtle Beach, is known as one of the oldest family-oriented summer resorts on the East Coast. The three-and-a-half-mile island is connected to the mainland by two causeways spanning the salt marsh and creeks. Pawleys rice planters, who owned plantations on the nearby rivers, first settled Pawleys Island in the early 1700s. The planters knew that it was unhealthy for their families to remain on the rivers during the summer and that the seashore was much healthier. Even though they didn't know about mosquitoes and malaria in the 1700s, they knew enough to get away. By boats and wagons they moved their families, horses, cows, bedding, provisions and furniture to Pawleys in May of each year, where they remained until the first frost in November. Their homes were typically a story and a half with dormers and wrap around porches on the east and south sides of the first floor.

This leisurely existence has developed into the charm of Pawleys that still remains. Nearly half of the occupied island is contained in a "National Register of Historic Places" Historic District. A 1916 drawing of Pawleys shows 23 "early Pawleys homes". The Historic District nomination form states "The original houses on Pawleys are not mansions but summer retreats, sturdily built and large enough to accommodate big families." The nomination continues "Piazas (usually on southeast and southwest walls but sometimes encircling the house on all sides) and the arrangement of doors, windows and hallways for cross ventilation allowed summer residents to take advantage of ocean breezes" and further with "The building style of Pawleys Island Historic District is a variation of West Indian architecture which has been adapted to Pawleys climatic conditions". The description of houses concludes "Because this architectural style is so compatible with the natural Pawleys environment, many of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century buildings have adhered to the traditional design".

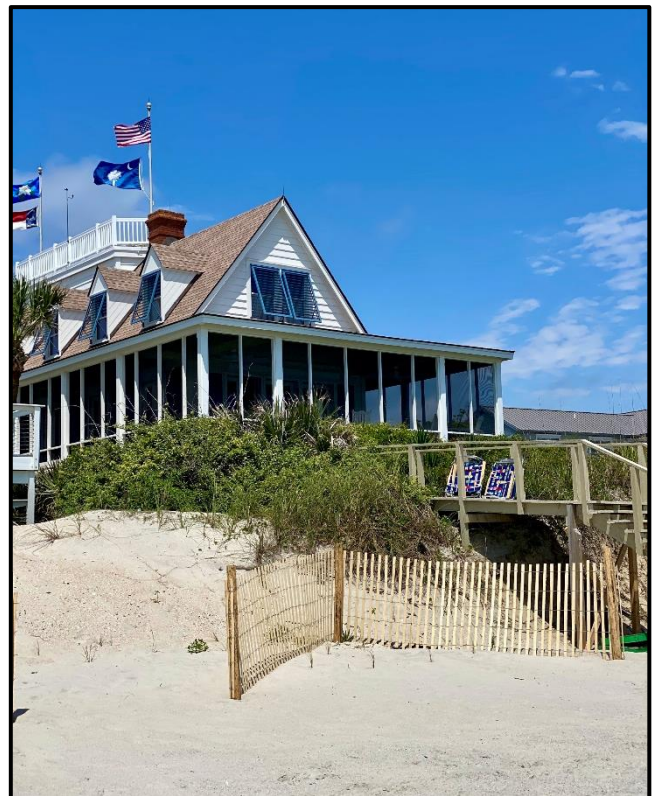
As a result, Pawleys Island has a unique heritage, with many single-family dwellings built with the 'Pawleys Island Look'. The Pawleys Island Look includes architectural elements typical to traditional coastal Carolina cottages, such as steep roof pitches, dormers, first floor wrap-around porches, exposed rafter tails, double hung windows and working or decorative shutters.

Previous efforts to preserve the Pawleys Island Look include a letter dated August 1, 2004 from the Town Council to Pawleys Island Property Owners, in which the Town Council encouraged homeowners and builders to preserve the special look of the houses on the island. Compliance with this letter was voluntary. Unfortunately, experience has shown that voluntary measures have not done enough to preserve the Pawleys Island Look. Many of the newer houses have been built with an emphasis on maximizing the square footage of heated floor space, at the cost of the Pawleys Island Look. The result is often high rise, slab-sided 'big box' houses.

In order to preserve the unique architectural heritage of Pawleys Island, in 2021 the Town Council established the Pawleys Island Architectural Review Board and adopted these Architectural Design Guidelines. The purpose of the Architectural Review Board is to promote and enforce these Architectural Design Guidelines for the long-term benefit of Pawleys Island and its residents and visitors.

The photographs on the following pages show examples of the Pawleys Island Look.

## Beautiful Pawleys Island Homes





## Beautiful Pawleys Island Homes



# The Architecture

Pawleys Island Architectural Review Board recommends a license architect and/or design professional, licensed in the State of South Carolina, design and prepare construction for residences to be built on the Island. This assures the Board of a minimum level of competency and aesthetic desirability to maintain compatibility in this unique building environment.

The architect shall, after obtaining the survey required, first visit the site and become familiar with its constraints and opportunities. The site plan will dictate major design development decisions by the architect. For this information, a schematic plan can be formulated for optional site utilization. Consideration should be given particularly to the living area, sleeping areas and service and entry areas. Functional areas should be located at the most suitable areas of the lot. The planning of interior spaces and their transition into exterior spaces should be given high priority. Easy flow from the house to the ground should be emphasized, further integrating the site with the house and permitting easy access to the outdoors.

The design development of the building in this case can only begin after complete site information has been obtained and site planning concepts begun. Restrictions that may dictate the form of the house are elevation size, style, structure and even the site. The following are examples of site and vernacular influenced house forms that are typical of traditional coastal Carolina cottages:



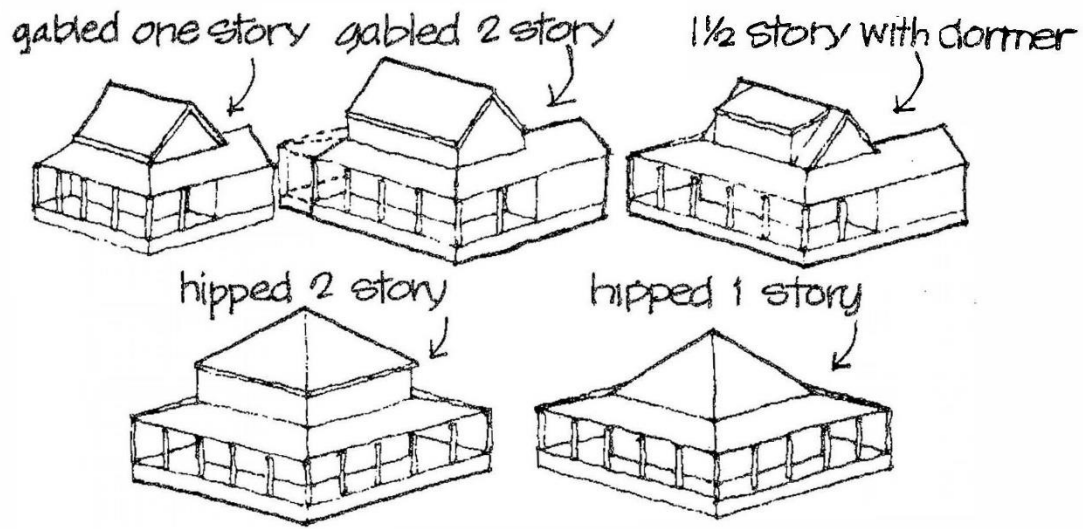
# Form

Traditional coastal Carolina architecture means simple cottage forms, typified by their generous use of covered porches. The form is generally a simple box with extensions. Other characteristics include steep roofs, shingles, dormers, double hung large windows, minimal ornamentation and variation in overall shape and massing. These wood frame cottages on pilings follow traditional vernacular rules for floor plan layout. Climate tempering is achieved with the wrap around porches to shade the summer sun, operable shutters to provide shade and admit breezes, and lattice work and sun screens to provide sun control on porch areas. Steeply pitched roofs are typically comprised of architectural shingles or standing seam metal.

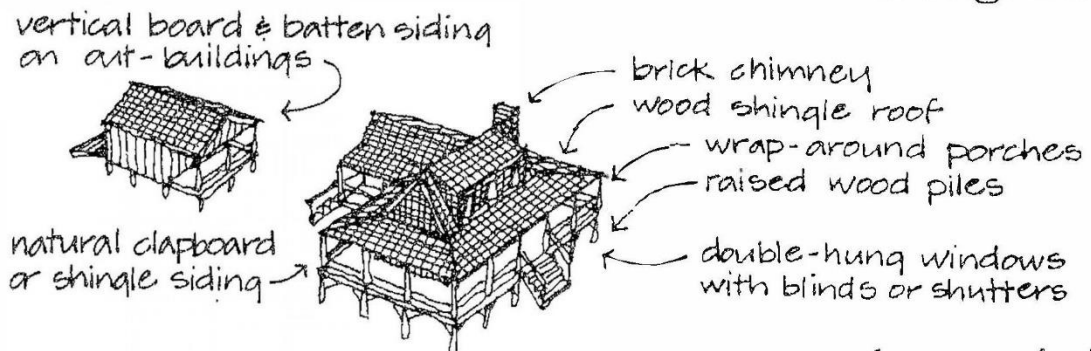
The “Pawley’s Island Look” includes architectural design elements such as:

- A) Classic simple lines of wide covered screened or open porches;
- B) Steep roof pitches;
- C) Single dormers and shed dormers;
- D) Beautiful double hung windows; and
- E) The unique wood look of exposed rafter tails under porch roofs

While a house with the Pawleys Island Look can take many forms and contain a variety of architectural design elements, a house with the Pawleys Island Look will always blend naturally with its environment and setting, and will contribute to the overall ambience of the island. The following diagrams illustrate traditional coastal Carolina architecture and the Pawleys Island Look:



cottage forms



characteristics

Appendix B attached hereto sets forth further drawings that demonstrate how a steep roof pitch combined with single dormers or shed dormers contributes to the Pawleys Island Look.



# **Pawleys Island Architectural Review Board**

## **-Information-**

### **Existing Architectural Design Elements**

The Pawleys Island Unified Development Code already includes several architectural design elements that form part of the Pawleys Island Look, including:

1. Roof pitch – minimum main roof pitch of 7:12 or steeper, and ancillary roofs such as porches and dormers must have a minimum roof pitch of 4:12 or steeper, as required pursuant to Article 3-2.2(I).
2. Size – houses shall have a maximum square footage of 4,000 square feet of heated enclosed living area, and have a maximum lot coverage of 40% of the lot, as required pursuant to Article 3-5.8.
3. Driveways – driveways shall not be constructed of impervious materials as defined in Article 2-47, and not more than 40% of a lot shall be covered by impervious material pursuant to Article 3-5.8.
4. Widow walks - Widow walks, observation decks or sun decks shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, pursuant to Article 3-5.5.
5. Second floor size – second floor total enclosed living space shall be limited to 80% or less of the first floor's total enclosed living space, pursuant to Article 3-5.9.

Please refer directly to the foregoing Articles of the Unified Development Code for the specific requirements of these provisions.

### **Minimum Architectural Design Elements**

In addition to the foregoing requirements, the following architectural design elements are required:

1. Boxy designs – houses shall not have two-story, slab-sided, boxy exterior walls (including screened porches) on any side.
2. Materials – materials approved for use as exterior siding include cedar or other natural wood lap siding and/or shakes, Hardee board lap siding and/or shakes, and board and batten assemblies of those materials. Other materials (e.g. brick) would also be considered based on the usage and design aesthetic of the home. Materials specifically not permitted include vinyl or aluminum siding, and non-cementitious stucco (EIFS) systems.

Satisfaction of the Existing Architectural Design Elements and the Minimum Architectural Design Elements shall not be construed as giving rise to any by-right entitlement of approval of an application, which shall remain subject to review and approval of the Architectural Review Board.

### **Encouraged Architectural Design Elements**

In addition to the foregoing required architectural design elements, there are other design elements that contribute to the Pawleys Island Look and are therefore encouraged by the Architectural Review Board, including:

1. Minimum roof pitch of 9:12 or steeper.

2. No stacked porches (i.e., porches on the first floor and second floor should not be the same size). Second floor porches (if any) should be substantially smaller than first floor porches.
3. Exposed rafter tails.
4. Double hung windows.
5. Working or decorative shutters and/or Bahama shutters.
6. Exterior siding colors using white or neutral colors, rather than primary or garish colors.
7. Houses that 'blend in' rather than 'stand out' with their neighbors.
8. Designs that preserve, to the extent possible, existing trees and vegetation.

# Requirements for Approval of New and Addition Construction

## **Application requirements**

All applications for review by the Architectural Review Board must be in the form included in these Architectural Design Guidelines, and must include all of the information set forth in Article 12-7 of the Pawleys Island Unified Development Code.

## **Application fee for Architectural Review Board review**

At the time of submittal of an application, a \$800 review fee must be paid. Denied applications that are revised and re-submitted, or applications that are otherwise revised after review by the Architectural Review Board, may incur an additional review fee not to exceed \$800 at the discretion of the Architectural Review Board.

Appendix A – Form of Application

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICATION

### PAWLEYS ISLAND ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

SITE PLAN

FLOOR PLAN

ELEVATIONS

OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

LOT #: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS OF PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ARCHITECT: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTRACTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

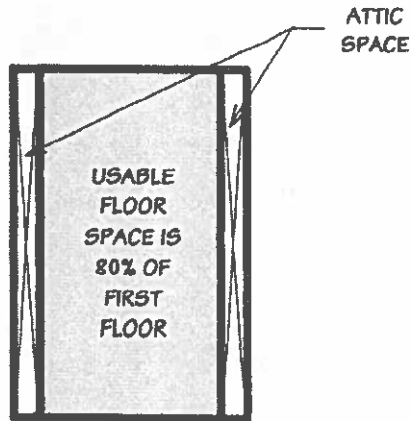
VARIANCE REQUESTED (DESCRIBE ON QUESTIONNAIRE)



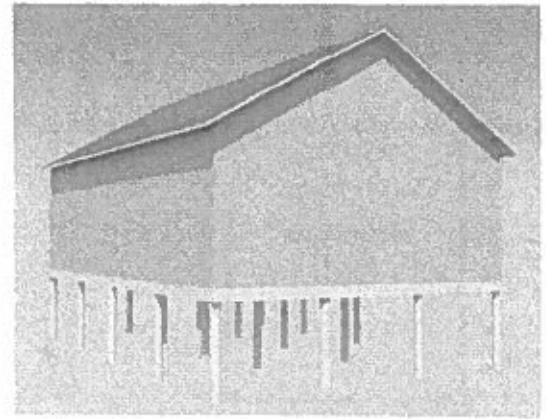
## Appendix B – Additional drawings demonstrating the Pawleys Island Look



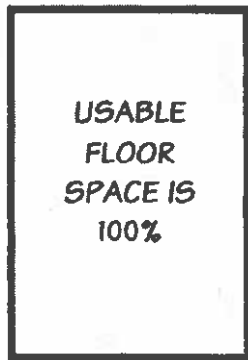
MAIN FLOOR PLAN



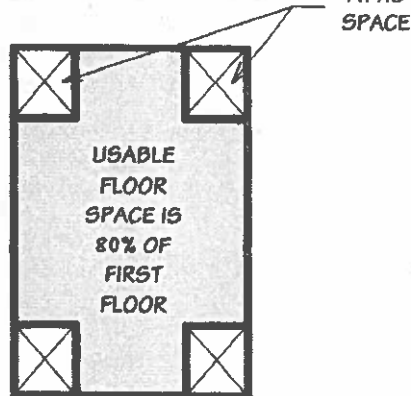
UPPER FLOOR PLAN



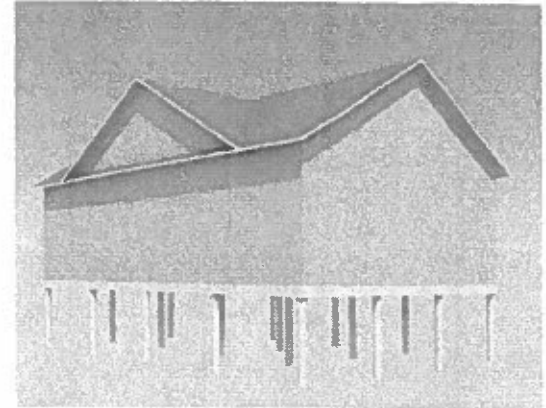
SIMPLE GABLE



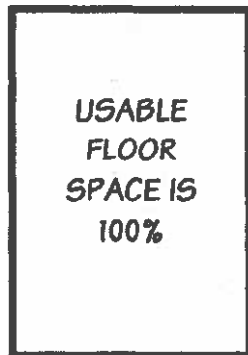
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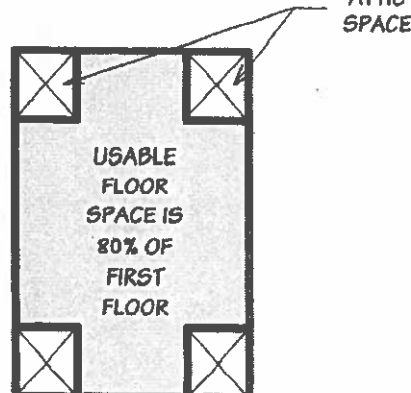
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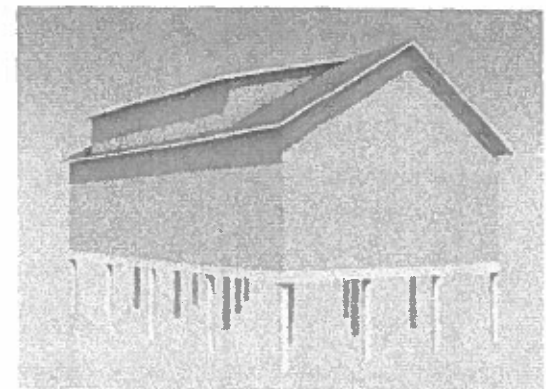
CROSS GABLE



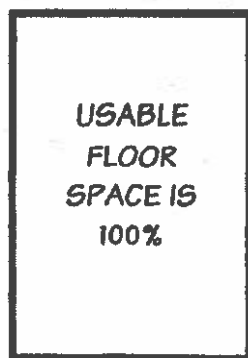
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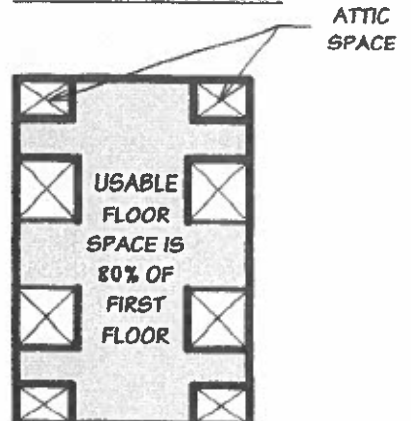
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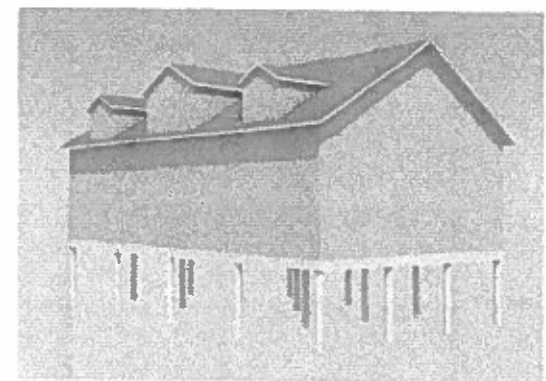
SHED DORMER



MAIN FLOOR PLAN

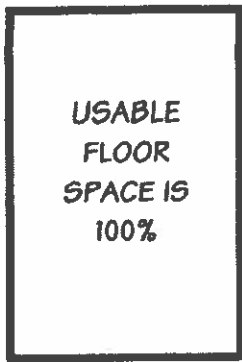


UPPER FLOOR PLAN

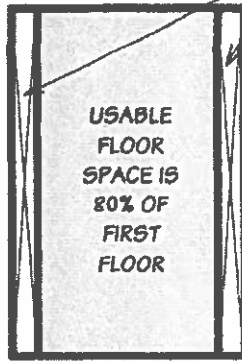


TRIPLE GABLE

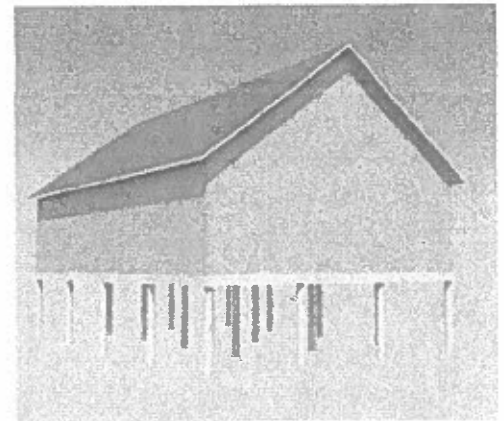
7:12 SLOPE EXAMPLE



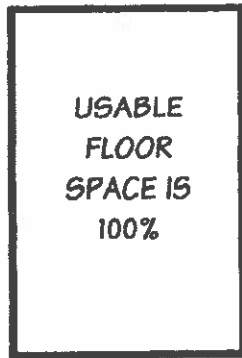
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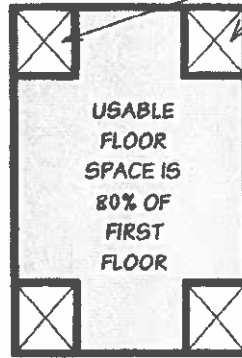
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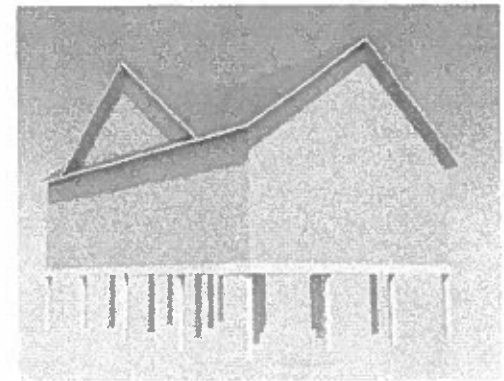
SIMPLE GABLE



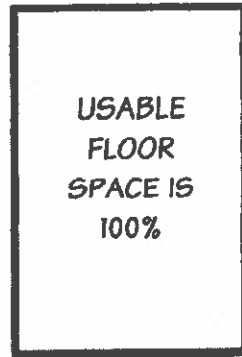
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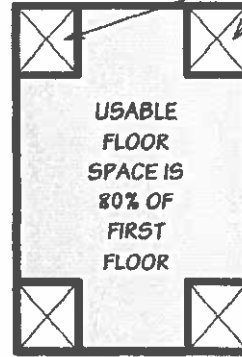
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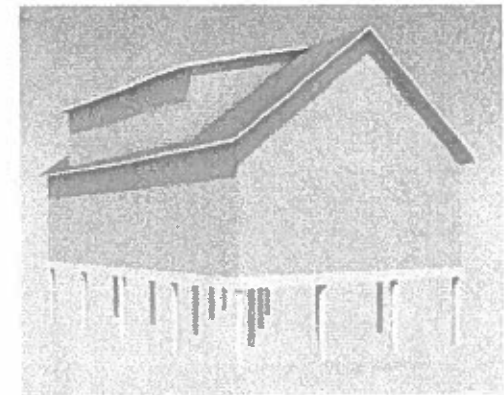
CROSS GABLE



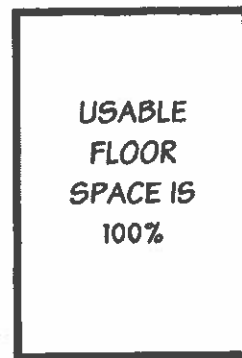
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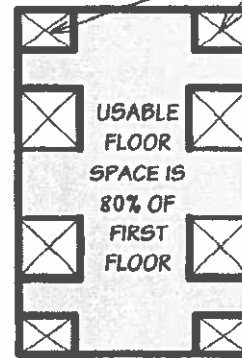
UPPER FLOOR PLAN



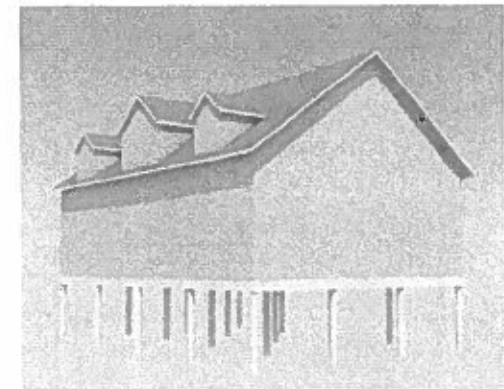
SHED DORMER



MAIN FLOOR PLAN



UPPER FLOOR PLAN



TRIPLE GABLE

9:12 SLOPE EXAMPLE