

Town of Wellesley Board of Assessors

Grade of Construction Guidelines

Grade is the quality of construction of a residence. The quality of construction of a residence will influence its value and it may vary within a given type of residence.

Examination of both materials and workmanship is fundamental when determining the overall quality of construction. While the quality of the materials and workmanship of individual building components may vary, the overall quality will tend to be consistent for the entire residence. Furthermore, the quality of materials or workmanship will tend to influence the quality of the other. Workmanship is often superficial and its quality can be easily observed. Solid and level floor structures, plumb walls, smooth finish on concrete and plastered surfaces, mitered joints in both exterior and interior woodwork and proper fittings of doors and windows are all indication of better quality workmanship. As with workmanship, the quality of materials is usually apparent during the inspection of the residence. The grades of wood, floor cover, or fixtures, whether standard or custom, are primary indications of the quality of materials.

Design can be another indication of quality. Residences of poorer quality utilize stock plans and are usually a simple floor plan. Higher quality residences are usually individually designed with considerable attention given to detail.

The following is a list of the grades used in Wellesley. A *plus* or *minus* indicator is used to recognize slight variations between houses.

AA+, AA, AA-

Residences of superior quality are designed to be unique stately home and having all the features typically characteristic of mansion-type homes. They are normally built by an architect to the exact needs of the clients and with unique and elaborate architectural styling. Imported materials are often used. Specially designed rooms to accommodate leisure activities such as home theatres, swimming pools, gyms and libraries are often a part of the homes in this category. Costs represent the highest cost in residential construction.

A+, A, A-

Residences of excellent quality are usually individually designed and are characterized by the fine quality of workmanship, finishes, appointments and with attention to detail. They exhibit unique architectural styling. Residences at this quality level are inclusive of excellent material and workmanship and are somewhat unique in design. They may include vaulted or tray ceilings, archways and dual staircases. Costs represent the high cost in residential construction.

B+, B, B-

Residences of very good quality are typical of those built in high quality tracts or developments and are frequently individually designed. Attention has been given to interior refinements and detail. Exteriors have good fenestration with some custom ornamentation.

C+, C, C-

Residences of good quality perhaps mass-produced in above average residential developments or built for an individual owner. Design is usually from standard plans. Good quality standard materials are used throughout. These houses generally exceed the minimum construction requirements of lending institutions, mortgage insuring agencies and building codes. Some attention is given to architectural design in both refinements and detail. Kitchens tend to have several built-ins. There is usually one bathroom for each 2 bedrooms. Interiors are well finished usually having some quality wallpaper or wood paneling. Exteriors have good fenestration with ornamental materials or other refinements.

D+, D, D-

Residences of average quality typically will be encountered more frequently than residences of other qualities. They are usually mass-produced and will meet or exceed the minimum construction requirements of lending institutions, mortgage insuring agencies and building codes. By most standards the quality of materials and workmanship is acceptable, but does not reflect custom craftsmanship. There is a minimal amount of built-in features. Cabinets, doors, hardware and plumbing are usually stock items. Architectural design will include ample fenestration and some ornamentation on the front elevation.

E+, E, E-

Residences of fair to poor quality are generally of low cost construction and are frequently mass-produced. Although overall quality of materials and workmanship is below average, these houses are not substandard and will meet minimum construction requirements of lending institutions, mortgage insuring agencies and building codes. Interior and exterior finishes are plain with few refinements, minimum number of windows and doors. Architectural design is from stock plans and ornamentation is usually limited to the front elevation. Design is seldom other than a square or rectangle.