DCLU

Director's Rule 10-95

Applicant	Page 1 of 3	Supersedes DR 9-94
City of Seattle Department of Construction and Land Use	Publication 5-2-96	Effective 7-1-96
	Code and Section Reference N/A	
Subject Attached vs. Detached as Applied to Accessory Structures and Accessory Uses	Type of Rule Code Interpretation	
	Ordinance Authority 3.060.040 SMC	
Index Land Use Code Technical	Approved [signature]	Date 7/1/96

BACKGROUND

A distinction is made in the use and development standards of The Land Use Code between detached accessory structures and portions of principal structures. For example, provisions allowing portions of principal structures to extend into required yards in the Single Family zones are much more limited than provisions governing detached accessory structures.

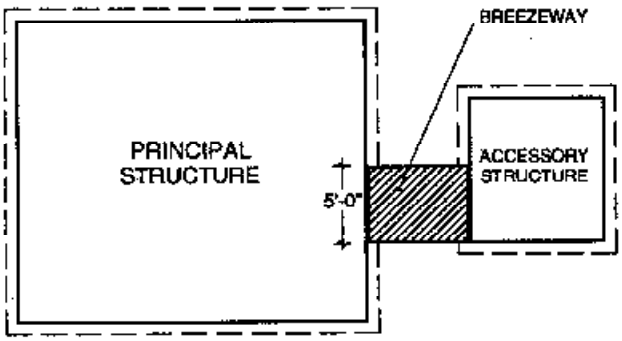
In addition, certain activities and uses such as home occupations and accessory dwelling units are not permitted in detached accessory structures. These accessory uses are allowed only if clearly incidental to the use of the property. They are required to be located in the principal structure to limit the size and impact of the uses on neighboring properties and to preserve the residential character of the property.

Therefore, it is necessary to clearly define the *physical circumstances* that are considered attachment for the purposes of regulating both **accessory structures** and **accessory uses**.

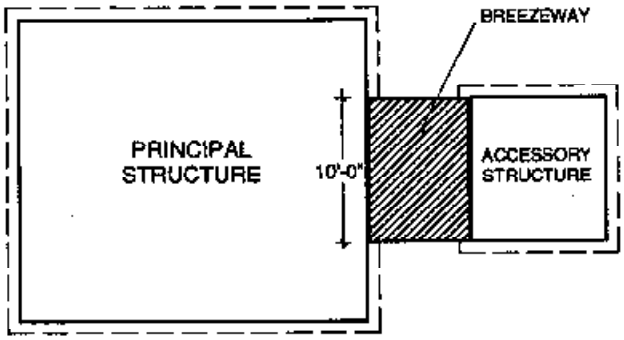
RULE

1. When an **accessory structure** is located in a required yard or setback, the following shall apply:

   a) An accessory structure is *detached* from a principal structure if it is not physically connected to that other structure. However, connection of two otherwise separate structures by a minor attachment shall not render these structures attached. Examples of minor attachments include, but are not limited to, decks 18" or less above grade, arbors and fences, and similar open unenclosed structures. Breezeways no wider than 5'-0", whose connection to the principal structure is no more than 5'-0" wide shall also be considered a minor attachment. Breezeways shall be open on both sides along the length of the pedestrian pathway between structures. The length of the breezeway, considered to be the distance the breezeway extends between the principal and accessory structures, shall not be limited provided all other applicable development standards are met. See examples below.



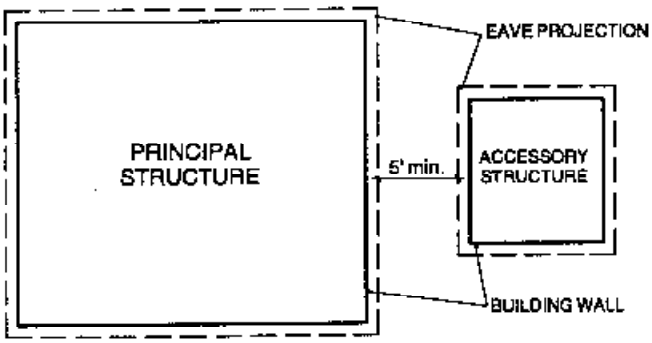
Breezeway considered Minor Attachment



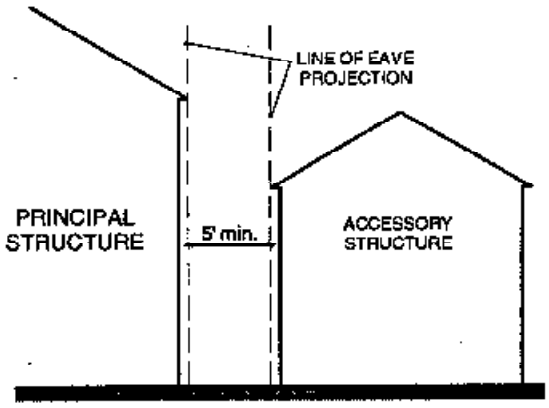
Breezeway attaches Structures

Accessory structures connected by more than a minor attachment shall be considered part of the principal structure, and shall be subject to the development standards for a principal structure.

   b) The required "separation" between principal structures and accessory structures (which are located in required yards or setbacks) shall be determined by measuring the projected horizontal distance from the closest feature on the principal structure (e.g. eaves) to the closest feature on the accessory structure. Minor attachments, described in item "a" above, may be located in the required separation and shall not render the structures attached. See diagram below.



PLAN VIEW



SECTION

c) Existing detached accessory structures located in required yards or setbacks that do not meet the required separation standard for the zone shall be considered legally nonconforming, provided they were built under permit or complied with applicable development standards at the time they were built.

Existing accessory structures located in required yards or setbacks which are connected to principal structures by open, unenclosed attachments which are more substantial than the minor attachments described in item "1a" above shall be considered part of the principle structure and shall be prohibited from expanding, extending or enclosing in any way which will increase the nonconformity.

2. When an **accessory use** is required to be located in the principal structure, the portion of structure where the accessory use is located shall be physically connected by a building component which has usable interior living space on both sides, such as living space on each side of a common wall, or living space above and below a common ceiling/floor system. See examples below.

a) Accessory dwelling units shall be located in the principal structure. The wall or floor which separates the principal dwelling unit from the accessory dwelling unit shall be located such that usable interior space of each dwelling unit is located on each side of the wall or floor. Enclosed garages and similar accessory spaces which are part of the principal structure may be considered usable interior space of a dwelling unit for this purpose.

b) Accessory uses such as, but not limited to, home occupations and bed and breakfast shall be located in the principal structure and shall have direct interior access from within the principal dwelling unit.