

*2<sup>nd</sup> Preliminary Consultation*  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Address:</b>	7123 Sycamore Ave., Takoma Park	<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/10/2018
<b>Resource:</b>	Contributing Resource <b>Takoma Park Historic District</b>	<b>Report Date:</b>	10/3/2018
<b>Applicant:</b>	Samadra and Eric Smith <b>(Rick Vitullo, Architect)</b>	<b>Public Notice:</b>	9/26/2018
<b>Review:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Preliminary Consultation	<b>Tax Credit:</b>	No
<b>Case Number:</b>	N/A	<b>Staff:</b>	Michael Kyne
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Addition		

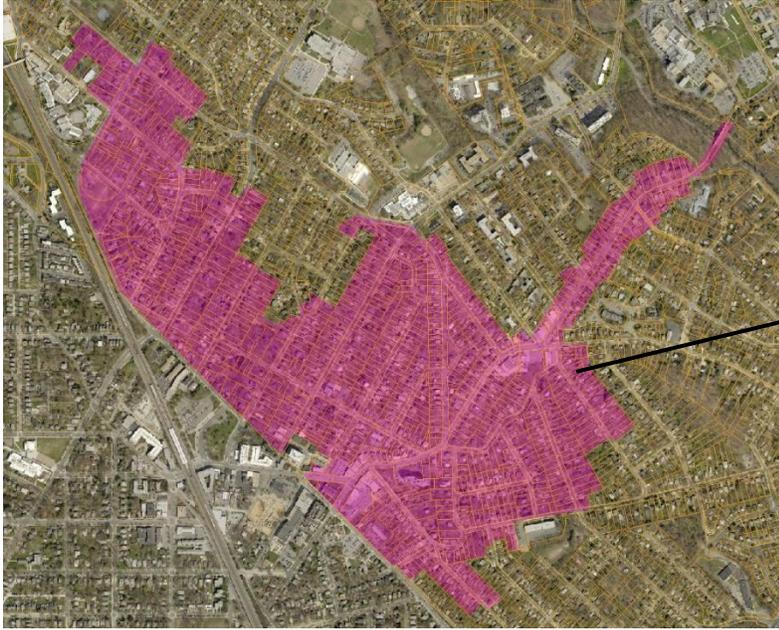
**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application.

**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District  
**STYLE:** 2-Story Craftsman  
**DATE:** c. 1923

The subject property is a c. 1923 2-story craftsman-style Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District. There are two dormers on the historic house – a gable dormer on the north side and a shed dormer on the south side. There is an existing non-historic two-story addition with flat roof at the rear/north corner of the historic house, which projects 5'-2" beyond the north side of the house.



*Fig. 1: Takoma Park Historic District*



*Fig 2: Subject Property*



*Figs. 3 & 4: Front and North (Left) Elevation*



*Figs. 5 & 6: Rear/North (Left) Corner and Rear Elevation*



*Figs. 7 & 8: Rear/South (Right) Corner*



*Figs. 9 & 10: South (Right Elevation) and Existing Shed Dormer*

## **BACKGROUND**

The applicants previously appeared before the Commission at the August 15, 2018 HPC meeting for a preliminary consultation. The applicants proposed to construct a 3<sup>rd</sup>-story rear addition above an existing 2-story rear addition, with proposed new addition extending into and enveloping the rearmost portion of the house's roof. The Commission found that the proposed addition was too disruptive to the scale and massing of the historic house and had the potential to detract from the surrounding streetscape. The Commission recommended exploring alternatives and simplifying the proposed addition to allow the original scale and massing to be perceived.

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicants propose to construct a 3<sup>rd</sup>-story addition above the existing non-historic 2-story rear addition.

## **APPLICABLE GUIDELINES**

When reviewing alterations and new construction within the Takoma Park Historic District several documents are to be utilized as guidelines to assist the Commission in developing their decision. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the *Takoma Park Historic District (Guidelines)*, *Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A)*, and *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*. The pertinent information in these documents is outlined below.

### ***Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8***

- (b) The commission shall instruct the director to issue a permit, or issue a permit subject to such conditions as are found to be necessary to insure conformity with the purposes and requirements of this chapter, if it finds that:
  - (1) The proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of an historic site or historic resource within an historic district; or
  - (2) The proposal is compatible in character and nature with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural features of the historic site or the historic district in which an historic resource is located and would not be detrimental thereto or to the achievement of the purposes of this chapter; or
  - (3) The proposal would enhance or aid in the protection, preservation and public or private utilization of the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district in a manner compatible with the historical, archeological, architectural or cultural value of the historic site or historic district in which an historic resource is located; or
  - (4) The proposal is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
  - (5) The proposal is necessary in order that the owner of the subject property not be deprived of reasonable use of the property or suffer undue hardship; or
  - (6) In balancing the interests of the public in preserving the historic site or historic resource located within an historic district, with the interests of the public from the use and benefit of the alternative proposal, the general public welfare is better served by granting the permit.

- (c) It is not the intent of this chapter to limit new construction, alteration or repairs to any 1 period or architectural style.

### ***Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines***

There are two very general, broad planning and design concepts which apply to all categories. These are:

- The design review emphasis will be restricted to changes that are all visible from the public right-of-way, irrespective of landscaping or vegetation (it is expected that the majority of new additions will be reviewed for their impact on the overall district), and
- The importance of assuring that additions and other changes to existing structures act to reinforce and continue existing streetscape, landscape, and building patterns rather than to impair the character of the historic district.

A majority of structures in the Takoma Park Historic District have been assessed as being “Contributing Resources.” While these structures may not have the same level of architectural or historical significance as Outstanding Resources or may have lost some degree of integrity, collectively, they are the basic building blocks of the Takoma Park district. However, they are more important to the overall character of the district and the streetscape due to their size, scale, and architectural character, rather than for their particular architectural features.

Contributing Resources should receive a more lenient level of design review than those structures that have been classified as Outstanding. This design review should emphasize the importance of the resource to the overall streetscape and its compatibility with existing patterns rather than focusing on a close scrutiny of architectural detailing. In general, however, changes to Contributing Resources should respect the predominant architectural style of the resource.

The *Guidelines* that pertain to this project are as follows:

- All exterior alterations, including those to architectural features and details, should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource and should preserve the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required.
- Major additions should, where feasible, be placed to the rear of existing structures so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way; additions and alterations to the first floor at the front of the structure are discouraged but not automatically prohibited.
- While additions should be compatible, they are not required to be replicative of earlier architectural styles.
- Some non-original building materials may be acceptable on a case-by-case basis; artificial siding on areas visible from the public right-of-way is discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition.
- Alterations to features that are not visible at all from the public right-of-way should be allowed as a matter of course.
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

***Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:***

#2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

#9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

#10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**STAFF DISCUSSION**

In the applicants' previous proposal, the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup>-story addition extended into and enveloped the rearmost portion of the historic house's main roof, connecting to a non-historic shed dormer on the south side (right, as viewed from the front) and to a historic gable dormer on the north (left) side. The previously proposed addition also followed the slope of the south side shed dormer, resulting in an irregular and atypical roof form.

As revised, the proposed 3<sup>rd</sup>-story addition connects to the non-historic shed dormer on the south side but does not extend into the north side of the historic roof or engage the historic gable dormer. The proposed addition has a low, symmetrical, rear-facing gable, eliminating the previously proposed irregular roof form. The addition remains entirely behind the historic massing and is slightly lower the ridgeline of the historic roof.

Staff is generally supportive of the proposed revisions, finding that the proposal will be minimally visible from Sycamore Avenue, and is unlikely to detract from the surrounding streetscape. Staff finds that, by eliminating the extension/connection to the historic gable dormer, much of the original roof form and the original materials/features of the historic gable dormer will be preserved. The proposed fenestration pattern in the addition has also been simplified and made more symmetrical to be compatible with the historic house.

Staff finds that the applicants have responded to the concerns expressed by the Commission at the previous preliminary consultation and asks the Commission to provide feedback regarding the appropriateness of the revised proposal. If the Commission finds the proposal to be appropriate, staff asks that they provide any additional feedback regarding architectural detailing, which would ensure the proposal's compliance with the *Guidelines, Standards, and Chapter 24A* at the HAWP stage.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the following:

- Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based on the HPC's recommendations and return for a HAWP application.



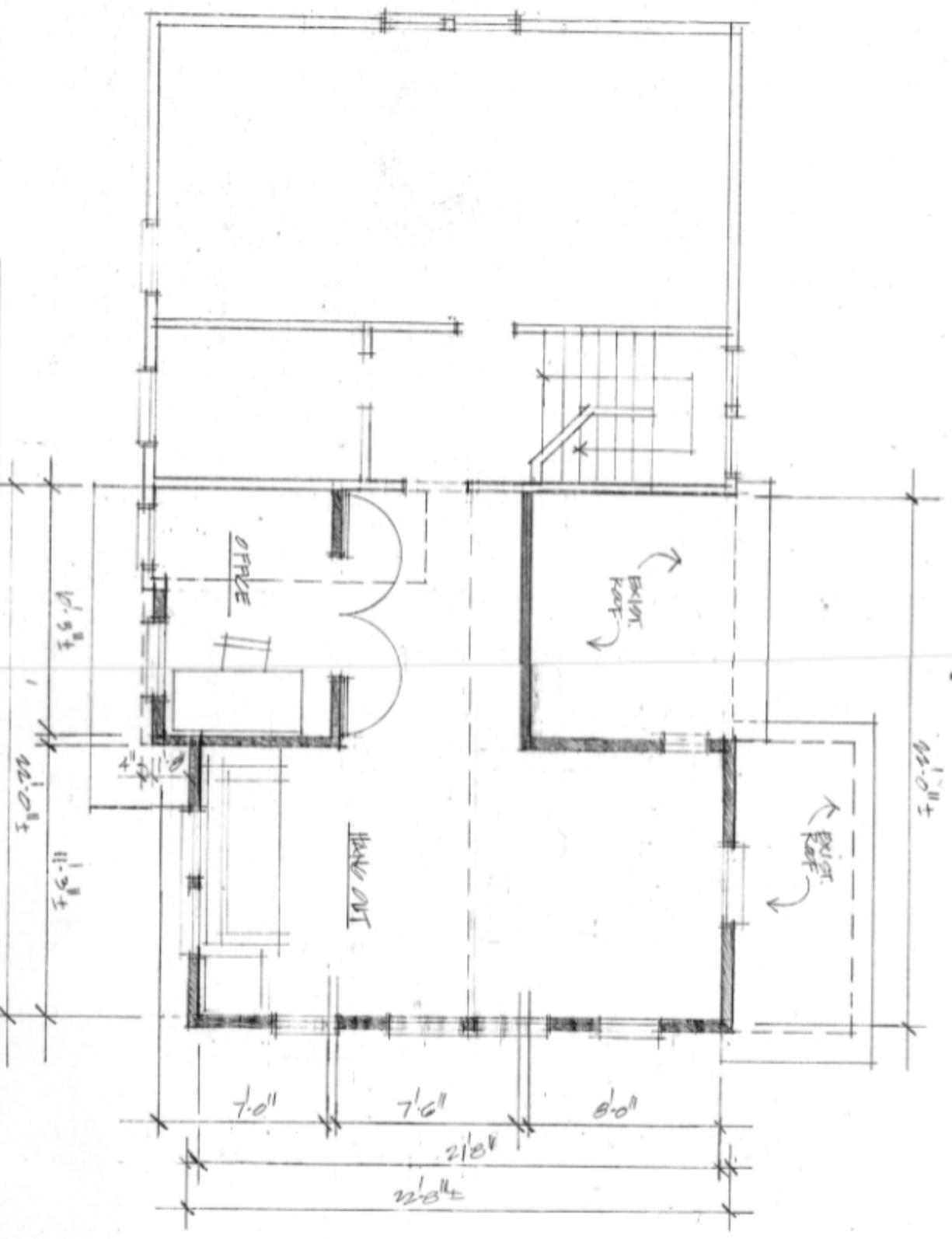
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7123 SYCAMORE  
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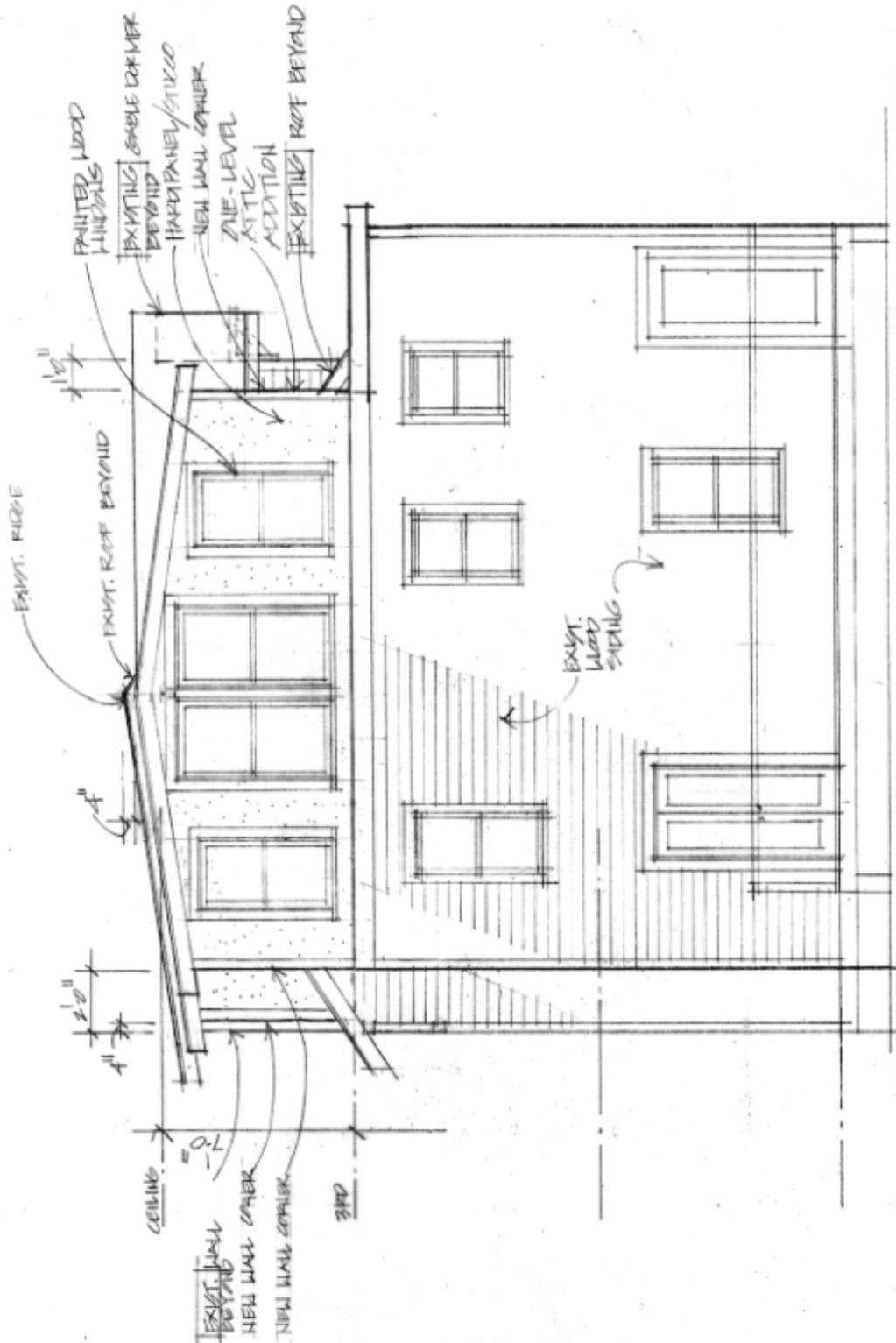
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Mullis Architecture Studio, PC  
7016 Woodland Ave.  
Takoma Park, MD 20912  
(301)806-5447 cell

PROPOSED TILED FLOOR PLAN  
1/4" = 1'-0"

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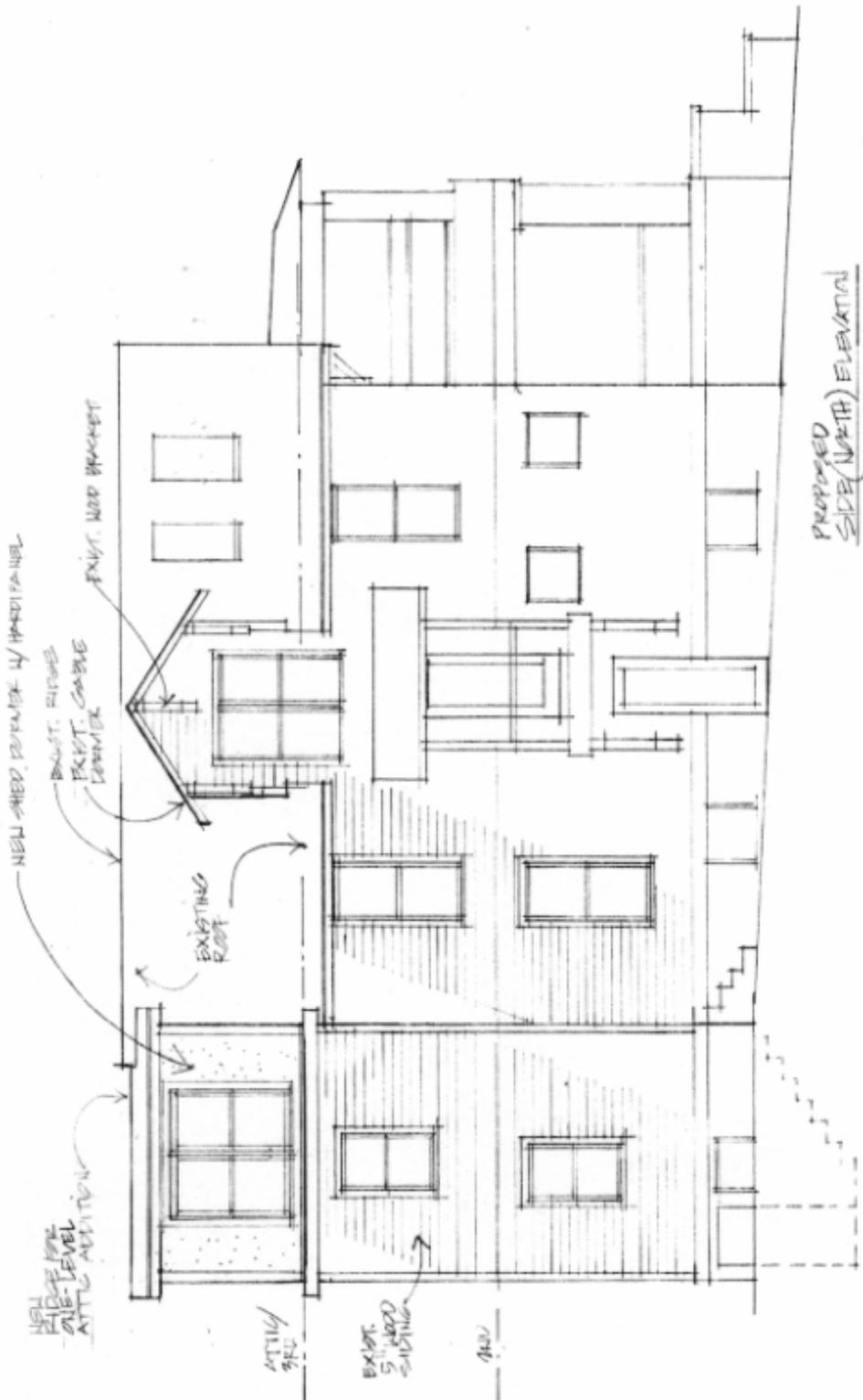




PROMISED REAR ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"

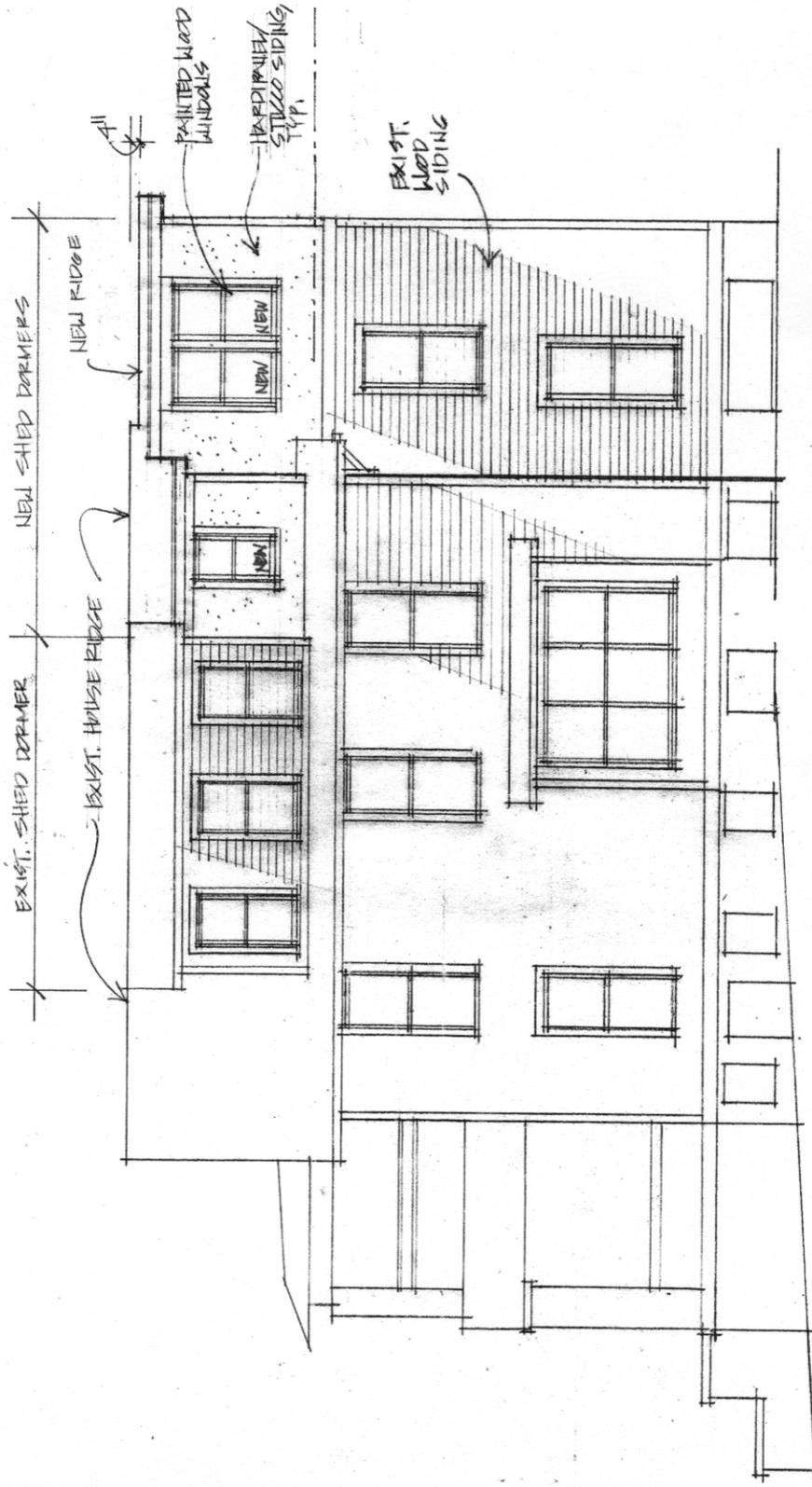
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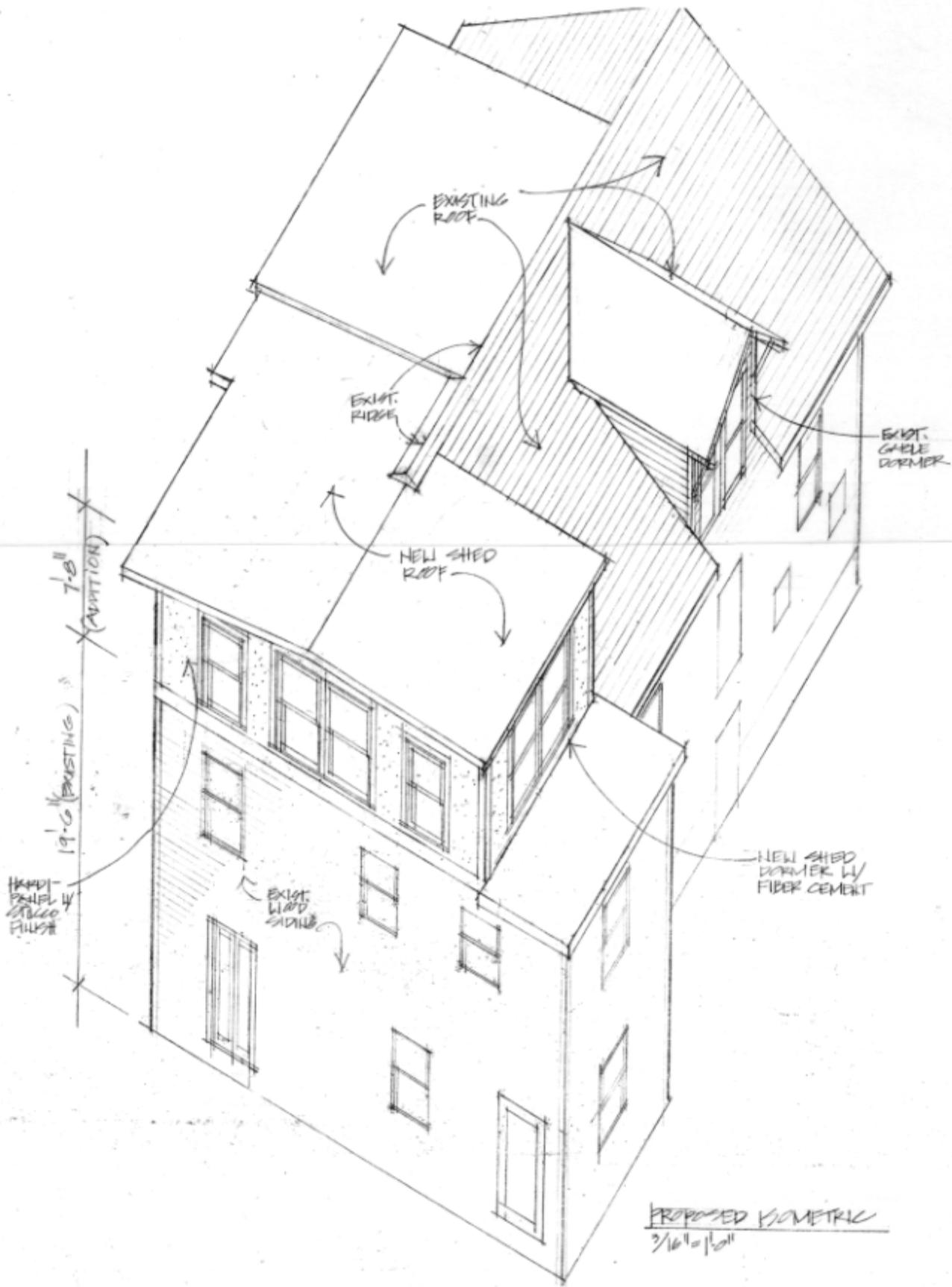
PROPOSED SIDE (NORTH) ELEVATION

5



PROPOSED  
SOUTH  
ELEVATION

(4)



PROPOSED ISOMETRIC  
 3/16" = 1'-0"

6