

Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel

Submission Form

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	7000 Wisconsin Avenue
File Number(s)	320190090
Project Address	6936 through 7000 Wisconsin Avenue

Plan Type Concept Plan ☐ Sketch Plan ☒ Site Plan ☐

APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	C. Robert Dalrymple	301-961-5208	bdalrymple@linowes-law.com
Architect	Dennis Connors, SK+I Architecture		
Landscape Architect			

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density (SF and FAR)
Project Data	CR-3.0, C-3.0, R-2.75, H-120	Up to 132 feet (with 17.6% MPDUs)	Up to 210,000 square feet / Up to 6.82 FAR
Proposed Land Uses	Multi-family dwelling units (up to 200 units) and 15,000 square feet of nonresidential uses		
Brief Project Description and Design Concept <i>(If the project was previously presented to the Design Advisory Panel, describe how the latest design incorporates the Panel's comments)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check if requesting additional density through the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) If yes, indicate the amount of density (SF and FAR): 117,681 sq. ft. (3.82 FAR) Please see the supplemental narrative attached.		



Exceptional Design Public Benefit Points Requested and Brief Justification	As described in greater detail on the attached narrative, the applicant is seeking a minimum of 20 public benefit points for exceptional design.
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DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.
Laura Shipman, Design Advisory Panel Liaison, laura.shipman@montgomeryplanning.org, 301-495-4558
2. A minimum of two weeks prior to the scheduled Design Advisory Panel meeting, provide the completed Submission Form and supplemental drawings for review in PDF format to the Design Advisory Panel Liaison via email.
3. Supplemental drawings should include the following at Site Plan and as many as available at Concept and Sketch Plan: physical model or 3D massing model that can be viewed from different perspectives in real time at the panel meeting, property location (aerial photo or line drawing), illustrative site plan, typical floor plans, sections, elevations, perspective views, precedent images and drawings that show the proposal in relationship to context buildings and any planning board approved abutting buildings in as much detail as possible. **Provide a 3-D diagram or series of 3-D diagrams that illustrate side-by-side strict conformance with the design guidelines massing and the proposed project massing. The diagrams should note where the proposal does not conform with the guidelines and how the alternative treatments are meeting the intent of the guidelines.**



7000 Wisconsin Avenue
Sketch Plan No. 320190090 (the “Sketch Plan” or “Project”)
Supplemental Narrative for the Design Advisory Panel

I. Brief Project Description

Starr Capital LLC and Woodfield Development Company (collectively, the “Applicant”) are the developers of the property identified as 6936 through 7000 Wisconsin Avenue (the “Property”), located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Woodmont Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue, in the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor of Downtown Bethesda. The Property is located in close proximity to a number of retail, residential, and employment uses. The Property is located within a quarter mile of the southern entrance to the Bethesda Metro Station as well as the new Purple Line Station that are both currently under construction.

The Property is currently improved with a single story retail building of approximately 25,000 square feet of leasable area as well as a surface parking lot with 15 parking spaces, with current tenants including Mattress Firm, Orvis, and a martial arts studio. Vehicular access to the Property is currently provided through a curb-cut on Wisconsin Avenue as well as through a 20-foot public alley located to the rear of the Property with connections to Woodmont Avenue and Bradley Boulevard. The Property is located to the south of a single-story FedEx store and the recently developed Bethesda Solaire project that is located across Woodmont Avenue. Immediately to the south of the Property are a number of retail buildings, including a Verizon store and Sleepy’s Mattress store, and further to the south is the Adagio Apartments closer to the intersection of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue. The Strathmore garden-style apartments are located immediately to the west of the Property across the public alley.

The Sketch Plan proposes a mixed-use development with up to 200 multifamily dwelling units, up to 15,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial uses, underground parking, public/private open space, and private amenities. The Project will provide 17.6% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (“MPDUs”) exceeding the required amount at 15% and in accordance with one of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan’s (the “Sector Plan”) primary objectives of increasing affordable housing opportunities in Downtown Bethesda. While the Property is zoned to allow 120 feet in building height, the Sector Plan states that the height of the Project should be limited to 110 feet unless the redevelopment includes a movie theater. The Sketch Plan proposes a 4,000 square-foot commercial area intended to accommodate a theater; accordingly the Project proposes 120 feet in building height.¹ (Sector Plan, p. 102). While the specific type and design

¹ For purposes of ensuring further compliance with the Sector Plan, the property immediately to the north (7008 – 7034 Wisconsin Avenue and 7106 Woodmont Avenue; Lot 7, Block 2 on Record Plat No. 21866) of the Property is likely joining in the Sketch Plan for the limited purposes of assuring the ultimate provision of a mid-block crossing as recommended in the Sector Plan (discussed below). By virtue of this limited participation in the Sketch Plan, that

of theatre is not defined at this time, the Applicant will restrict this portion of the Project's commercial area to some form of a theater through a condition of Site Plan approval. The Applicant is seeking an additional 12 feet of building height beyond 120 feet (for a total height of 132 feet) through the provision of greater than 17.5% MPDUs as authorized by Section 59-4.9.2.C.3.b of the Zoning Ordinance.

The Sketch Plan provides space for a public through-block connection along the northern boundary of the Property in accordance with the Sector Plan and Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines. While the full public through-block connection can only be realized when the adjacent properties with frontage on Wisconsin Avenue and Strathmore Street are redeveloped (*See Footnote 1*), the Sketch Plan allows for public/private open space as an interim condition that will also serve to break up the massing of this block of Wisconsin Avenue. The Project is designed with all vehicular access and loading to occur along the 20-foot public alley at the rear of the Property. While there is an existing curb-cut that provides vehicular access to the Property on Wisconsin Avenue, the Application proposes to eliminate this access point to allow for more efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation patterns along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor.

II. Alternative Treatment Justification

The Applicant has designed the Sketch Plan to accomplish several important recommendations in the Sector Plan and Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines (the "Design Guidelines") that will allow for the delivery of public benefits and amenities to the future residents of the Project and the surrounding community. More specifically, the Project is designed to deliver the following benefits and amenities:

(1) Through-Block Connection: The Sketch Plan will establish a through-block connection that will ultimately allow for pedestrian connectivity from Wisconsin Avenue to Strathmore Street, with the Project implementing the initial portion of the connection (and interim use as public space) with the remainder of the connection to occur with the redevelopment of the adjacent properties to the north. As illustrated on Page 69 of the Sector Plan and Page 29 of the Design Guidelines, a public through-block connection is recommended along the northern portion of the Property and the adjacent site to the north (7008 – 7034 Wisconsin Avenue and 7106 Woodmont Avenue [the "WPC Property"] – owned by Washington Property Company ["WPC"]). The Sketch Plan incorporates a covered through-block connection that is approximately 22 feet wide and 3 stories tall. Significantly, the Applicant is coordinating with WPC in the establishment and design of the through-block connection and relationship of this northern building façade to the WPC Property to ensure that the mid-block crossing will occur and that the ultimate built condition will allow access to light and air, and reduce the impact of shadows on the public realm on both sides of the through-block connection. The Applicant anticipates incorporating the

property (7008 – 7034 Wisconsin Avenue and 7106 Woodmont Avenue) would also be allowed to utilize the 120-foot height allowance made possible by inclusion of the theater.

WPC Property into the Sketch Plan to establish the through-block connection and an appropriate build-to-line and placemaking on both sides of the ultimate through-block connection. As there are no immediate redevelopment plans for the WPC Property, the inclusion of that site into the Sketch Plan is for the limited purpose of establishing the through-block connection and the build-to-lines for compatibility and to ensure the delivery of this important Sector Plan objective. The Sketch Plan will reflect that future redevelopment of the WPC Property will be through a new sketch plan application for that site at the appropriate time, incorporating the mid-block connection assured through this Sketch Plan.

(2) Theater: In accordance with the Sector Plan recommendations for the Property (Map #109), the full 120 feet of building height allowed under the existing zoning is only permitted if a theater is provided in the Project. (Sector Plan, Page 102). The Sketch Plan includes a 4,000 square-foot commercial space that is intended to accommodate a theater. While the specific type or design of theater is not fully defined at this time, the Applicant will restrict this portion of the Project's commercial area to allow a theater through a condition of Site Plan approval. With the incorporation of the WPC Property into the Sketch Plan for the limited purposes described above (but essentially to establish the ultimate full width mid-block crossing and to allow for better placemaking and compatibility for the through-block connection such that the theater can activate the public realm), the WPC Property will also be considered part of the "Project" for the purpose of being allowed to incorporate the full 120 feet of zoned building height made possible with the inclusion of a theater.

(3) Additional MPDUs: The Sector Plan identifies the creation of additional MPDUs as an overarching goal. To this end, the Bethesda Overlay Zone (the "BOZ") permits an additional 12 feet of building height for development projects that provide greater than 17.5% MPDUs. The Applicant is seeking an additional 12 feet of building height beyond 120 feet through the provision of 17.6% MPDUs as authorized by Section 59-4.9.2.C.3.b of the Zoning Ordinance, which will result in a maximum building height of 132 feet.

Based upon these public benefits and Project amenities, the Applicant is seeking the Design Advisory Panel's support for the use of alternative treatments to Section 2.4.6 (Tower: Separation Distance) and Section 2.4.7 (Tower: Step-Back) of the Design Guidelines. As described in greater detail below, these alternative treatments meet the intent of the Design Guidelines and better allow for the Sector Plan priorities to come to fruition through the Project.

A. Section 2.4.6, Tower: Separation Distance

The Design Guidelines state that tower floors should be separated 22.5 to 30 feet from the side and rear property lines to "allow access to light and air, limit the impact of shadows on the public realm and reduce the extent of large blank walls as new buildings develop at or near the property line." (Design Guidelines, Page 74). However, the Design Guidelines also recommend that a continuous building base be provided along the lower floors of a project. Since the Sector Plan and Design Guidelines recommend a public through-block connection as part of redevelopment of the Property, contradicting the recommendation to provide a continuous building base, the Applicant is unable to provide a continuous street edge through the placement of the building base. As a result, the incorporation of a public through-block connection results in a loss of

density that would otherwise be realized in accordance with the base building placement recommendations in the Design Guidelines.

In addition to the incorporation of a public through-block connection, the Project is designed with a maximum building height of 132 feet on account of the inclusion of a theater and 17.6% MPDUs. Absent these important public benefits and amenities, the Project would only be permitted to achieve a building height of 110 feet. In this respect, the Design Guidelines state that “buildings below 120 feet or with limited property size/width/depth may reduce tower separation or consider party walls.” (Design Guidelines, Page 74). Given the importance of accommodating the Sector Plan recommendations of a through-block connection, theater, and additional MPDUs, the Applicant is proposing an alternative urban design to strict conformance with the Tower Separation Distance recommendation in the Design Guidelines that would irrefutably be allowed without the additional 22 feet of building height added as the “quid pro quo” for the public benefits of the mid-block connection, theater, and additional MPDUs.

More specifically, the through block-connection on the northern end of the Project is proposed to be 22 feet wide and covered above the third story of the building such that a party wall condition exists for approximately 1/3rd of the length of this northern Property line. The remaining portion of the Property (approximately 2/3rds of the total distance) will accommodate 20 feet of tower separation between the Project’s tower and the adjacent site to the north (7008 Wisconsin Avenue). As described in detail above, the Applicant is coordinating with WPC to establish a build-to-line on both properties through this Sketch Plan to allow for a compatible building relationship (and the public through-block connection) between the Project and any future redevelopment of the WPC Property. With respect to the site that is located to the south of the Property, the Sketch Plan is designed to provide approximately 53 feet of tower separation distance along a large portion of this Property line.

B. Section 2.4.7, Tower: Step-Back

The Property’s Wisconsin Avenue frontage is defined as an Urban Boulevard, which generally recommends a base building height of 35 to 70 feet and a tower step-back of 10-15 feet. However, the Design Guidelines note that “on this street type, buildings under 120 feet may consider alternative methods to reduce tower bulk other than step-backs.” (Design Guidelines, Page 14). As noted above, the Project is unable to provide a continuous base building due to the need to accommodate a public through-block connection, which compromises the Applicant’s ability to deliver an economically viable Project with a 10-foot tower step-back above the base building. The Sketch Plan is also designed to slightly exceed 120 feet in building height due to the provision of additional MPDUs. In light of these circumstances, the Sketch Plan proposes a 90-foot base building and 4-foot tower step-back above the base for the entire Wisconsin Avenue elevation. The use of a 90-foot base building allows for the Project to create a datum line with existing development to the south of the Property on the same block. The Sketch Plan’s inclusion of a 4-foot tower step-back and articulation accomplishes the intent of the Design Guidelines by differentiating the tower from the building base.

III. Requested Public Benefit Points for Exceptional Design

The Applicant is seeking a minimum of 20 public benefit points in the category of exceptional design due to the fact that the Project satisfies the criteria identified in the CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines. The Applicant's justification for 20 public benefit points is as follows:

1. Providing innovative solutions in response to the immediate context.

The Project includes a 3-story covered open space which will allow for public access through the Property and establish the initial phase of a through-block connection for the entire block. The ground floor and lower level floors along the 20-foot public alley to the rear will be animated with retail uses. A courtyard is proposed above the ground-floor retail uses (starting at the 2nd floor) which is located at the southwest corner of the Property thereby providing the best access to light and air for both the Project and neighboring properties.

2. Creating a sense of place and serves as a landmark.

The Project includes both multifamily residential and commercial uses, with a portion of the nonresidential area allocated toward a future theater use. The relationship of the theater to the on-site open space as well as access to the Wisconsin Avenue streetscape and public alley to the rear, will help to forge a unique identity for the Project that enhances wayfinding within the entire block.

3. Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner.

The Project will provide a dedication of additional right-of-way on Wisconsin Avenue that will enhance the streetscape with a wide, free and clear pedestrian through-zone that is lined with street trees and landscaping. The retail uses and lobby along Wisconsin Avenue include a 3-story articulation that will turn into a 3-story covered open space perpendicular to Wisconsin Avenue. The multiple retail levels will enhance the public street, wrap internal to the Property and activate the public open space and streetscape.

4. Introducing materials, forms or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way.

The Project, while a mid-block building, includes a base, middle and top. The Sketch Plan incorporates a unique 3-story glassy and highly articulated base, then a middle 6-story frame which relates to the existing neighboring buildings and sets a datum line at the 9th floor, and finally the top 4-stories will be highly articulated with a 4-foot step-back that allows for a human-scaled building edge. The articulation and materials will transition around the building

creating connectivity and a compatible relationship between the Wisconsin Avenue streetscape and rear of the Project that fronts on the 20-foot public alley.

5. Designing compact, infill development so living, working and shopping environments are more pleasurable and desirable on a site.

The Project will provide a variety of uses, unit types, and minimize on-site parking. The Project will enhance the ground planes both at the Wisconsin Avenue streetscape and alley level to provide a porosity within the block and allow for further interaction of the residential uses above and the neighboring existing residential uses to access the ground planes from multiple directions and points of entry.

6. Integrating low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building beyond green building or site requirements.

The Project will remove the existing curb-cut on Wisconsin Avenue and provide all vehicular and loading access from the 20-foot public alley to the rear of the Property, which is consistent with Section 2.3.3 (Servicing, Access and Parking) of the Design Guidelines. The arrangement of the typical floors will provide a courtyard at the southwest corner of the Property, thereby providing access to light and air for both the Project and neighboring properties.

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**7000 Wisconsin Ave
Bethesda, MD**

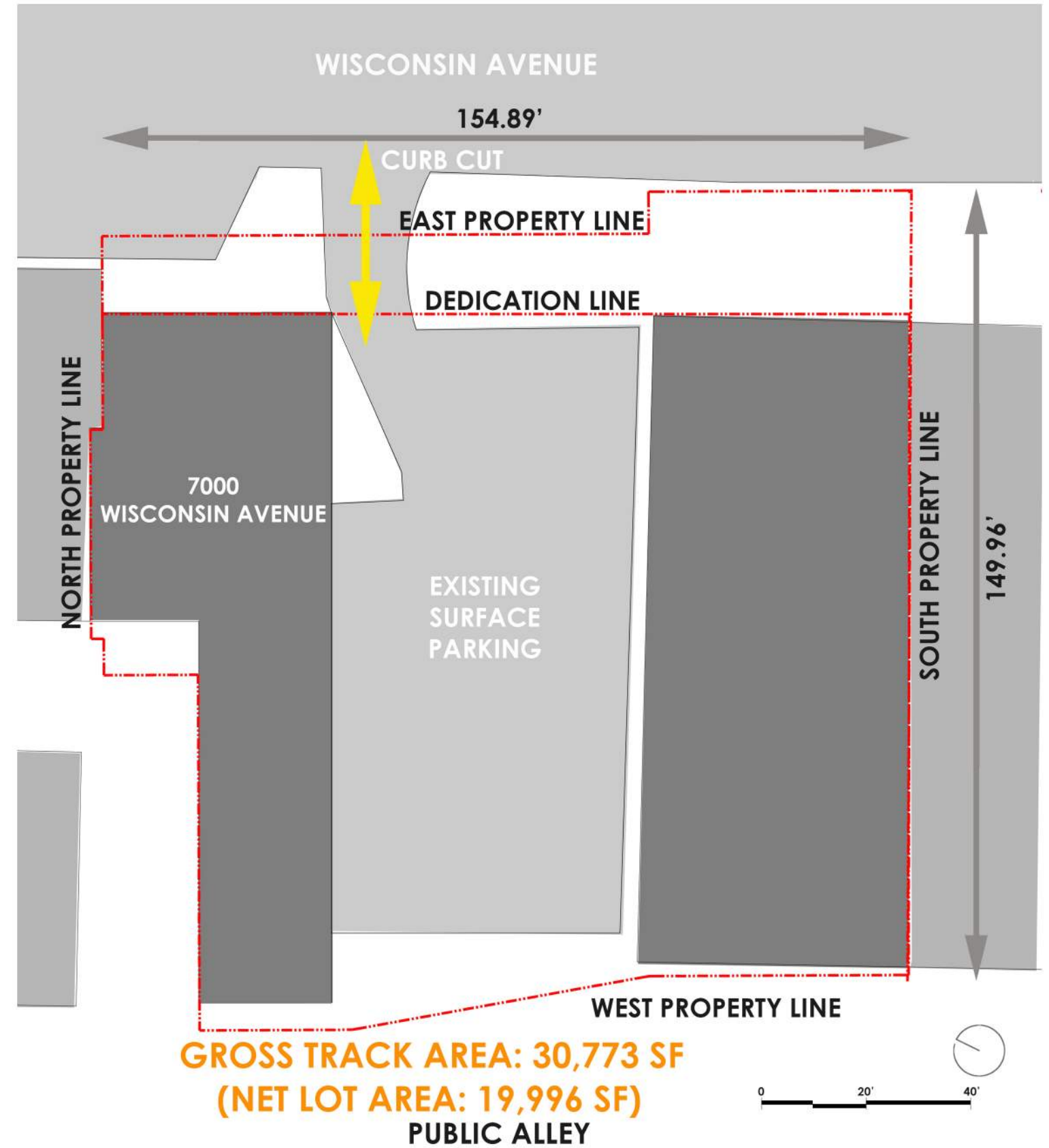
April 10th, 2019

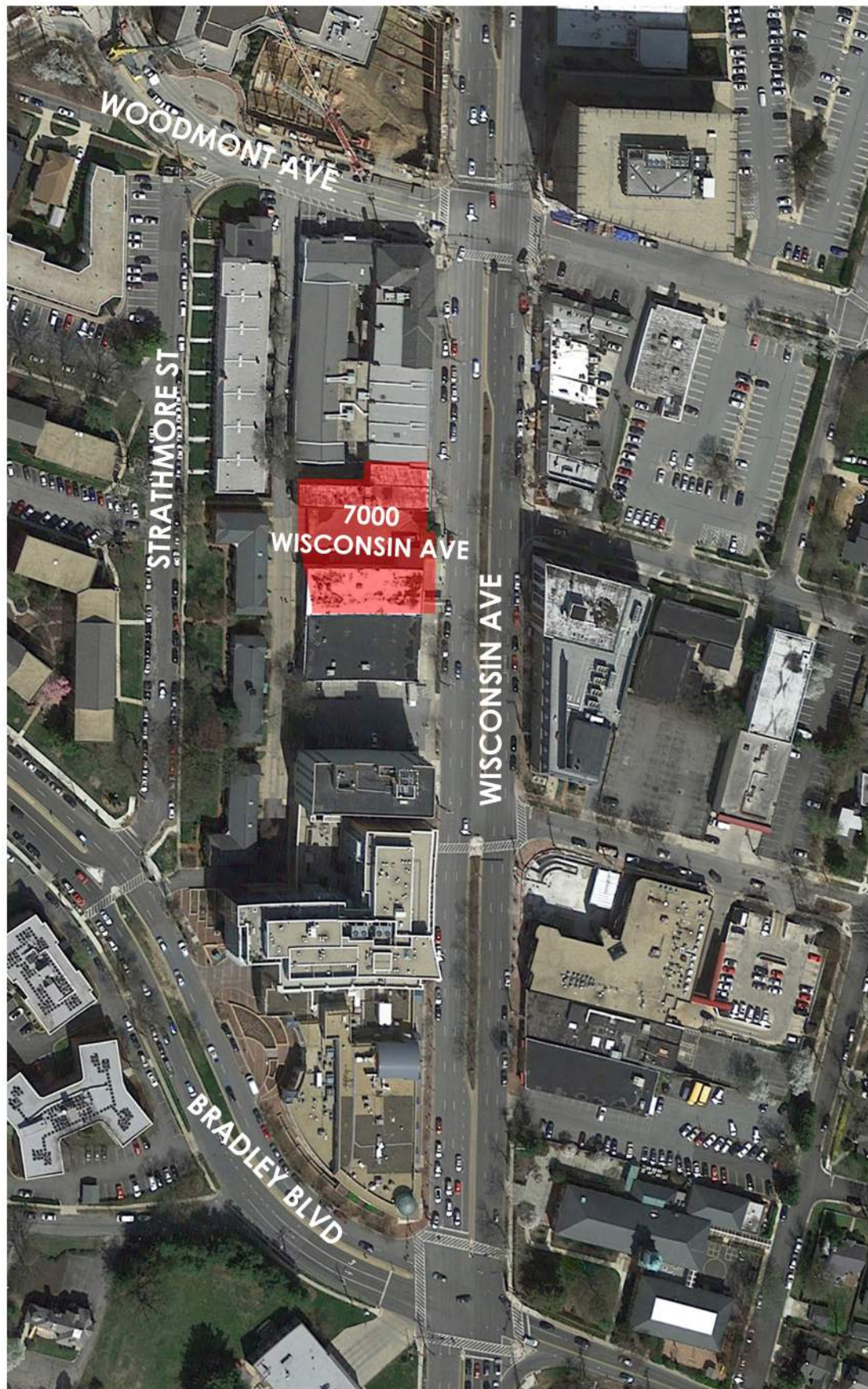
SK+I ARCHITECTURE

Design Advisory Panel - Sketch Plan

**Woodfield Development and
Starr Capital**







AERIAL CONTEXT PHOTO



WISCONSIN AVE NORTH



ACROSS FROM SITE ON WISCONSIN AVE



PROPERTIES ON STRATHMORE



WISCONSIN AVE SOUTH



NEIGHBORING RETAIL AND LAY-BY STREET PARKING



ALLEY AT REAR LOOKING SOUTH

2.1.2 Urban Boulevard

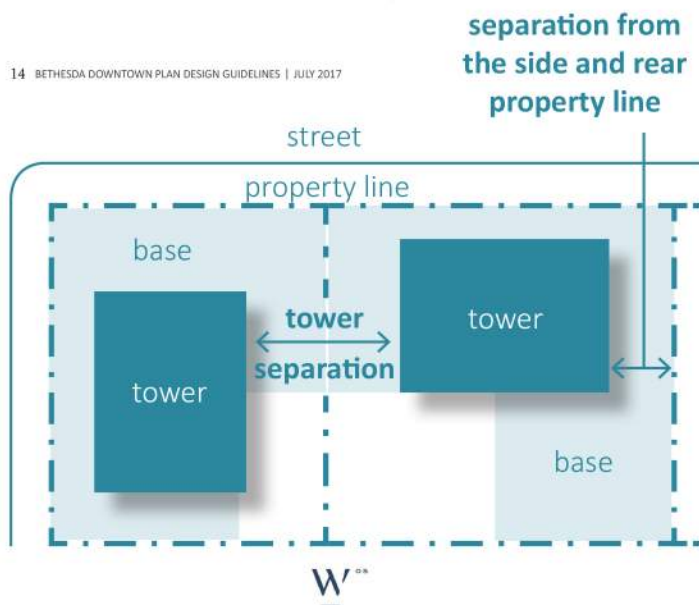
Urban Boulevards typically carry a significant amount of pedestrian, bus and vehicular traffic, and connect to major transit nodes. These streets are predominantly lined by high-rise buildings with a mix of commercial and residential uses. Examples of Urban Boulevards include Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road.

Intent: Building and sidewalk design along Urban Boulevards should ensure both efficient pedestrian flow and comfort despite the prominence of large-scale buildings and streets.

Table 2.01: Urban Boulevard	
Sidewalk Zones	
A. Planting/Furnishing Zone:	6- 10 ft.
B. Pedestrian Through Zone:	10- 20 ft.
C. Frontage Zone**:	0- 10 ft.
Building Placement	
D. Build-to Line:	25-30 ft. from street curb
Building Form	
E. Base Height:	3-6 stories (35-70 ft.)
F. Step-back:	10-15 ft.**
Alternative Treatments	
** On this street type, buildings under 120 ft. may consider alternative methods to reduce tower bulk other than step-backs. These are outlined in Section 2.4.8 Tower: "Menu" of Methods to Reduce Bulk.	

* The Frontage Zone can be minimized or eliminated particularly near transit stations to provide a wider Pedestrian Through Zone.

14 BETHESDA DOWNTOWN PLAN DESIGN GUIDELINES | JULY 2017



2.4.8 Tower: “Menu” of Methods to Reduce Bulk

Intent: Downtown Bethesda is an important location in Montgomery County for increased building heights to accommodate future growth. However, collectively, buildings at taller heights can be an imposing presence on the public realm by casting large shadows, limiting sky views and creating an uncomfortable scale for pedestrians.

A. Limit Tower Floor Plate

Reduced tower floor plates limit shadows on the public realm and allow access to sky view while also improving the quality of the building’s indoor environment.



B. Use Unique Geometry

Varied geometry adds visual interest and helps to reduce the perceived bulk of a building’s upper floors. Angled and curved facades allow a building to be viewed dynamically from different vantage points. They can enhance privacy between towers in close proximity by directing views away from nearby windows.



C. Vary Tower Heights

Whether creating a large development with several towers, or an infill development between multiple existing towers, variation in building height can reduce the imposing massing of several large structures built adjacent to each other.



There are several ways to reduce the actual bulk of a building’s upper floors or to creatively reduce the perceived bulk of the building. Below is a menu of design techniques that can be used to sculpt building towers and achieve a varied skyline responsive to human scale. Every project is not required to apply every method; however, several should be used in combination to best meet the guideline intent.

D. Modulate and Articulate Facades

Techniques to break up large facades and reduce perceived building bulk include shifts in massing to allow for upper floor terraces, green roofs and balconies; changes in facade planes; and varied fins, frames and mullions to add depth to glass facades.



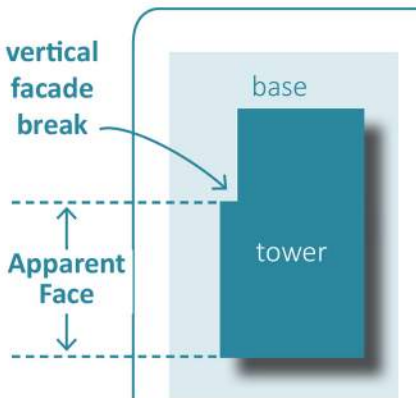
E. Vary Tower Placement and Orientation

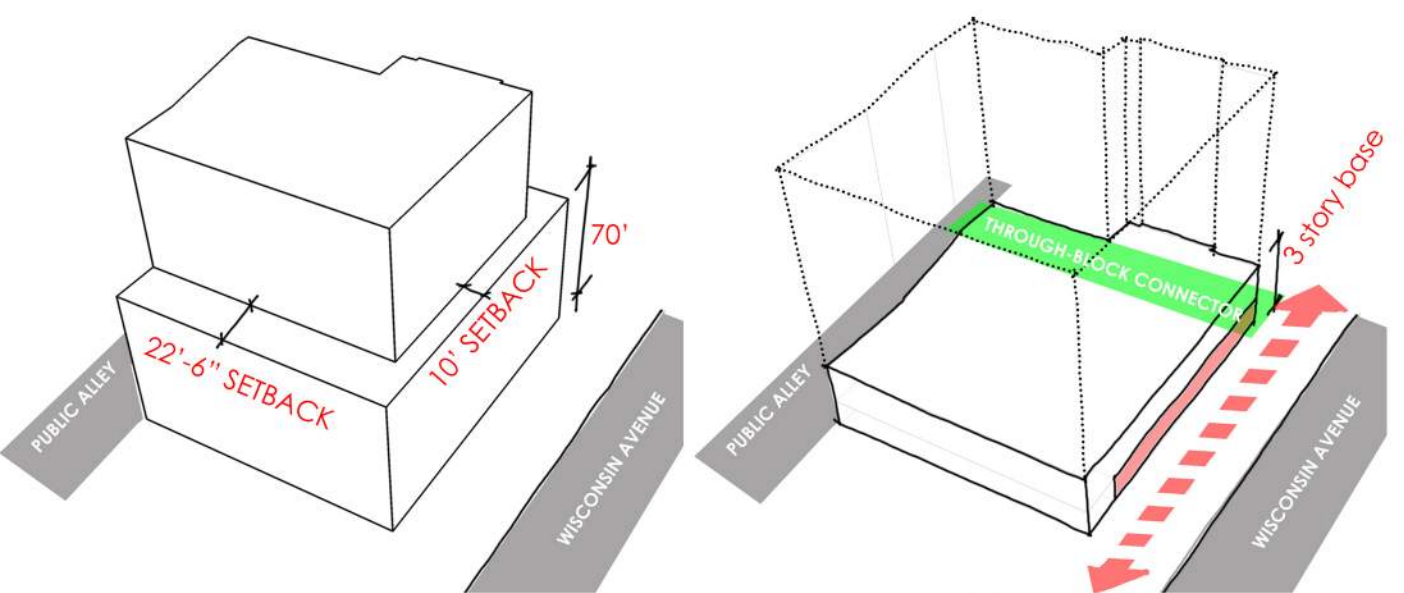
Similar to variation in tower height, variation in tower placement and orientation can increase perceived separation between towers, reduce the perceived imposing massing of several adjacent towers and increase privacy by orienting views in different directions.



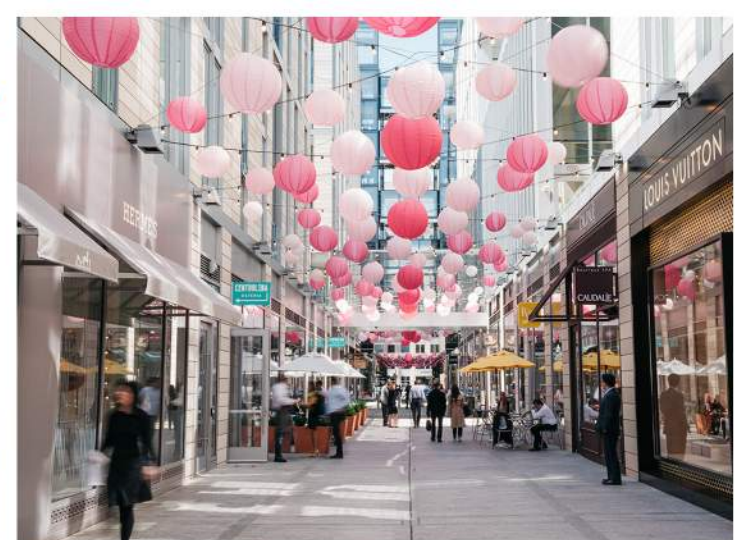
F. Limit Apparent Face

The apparent face is the length of a facade plane that is unbroken by vertical changes in depth. Limiting this length reduces the perceived bulk of a long building facade.

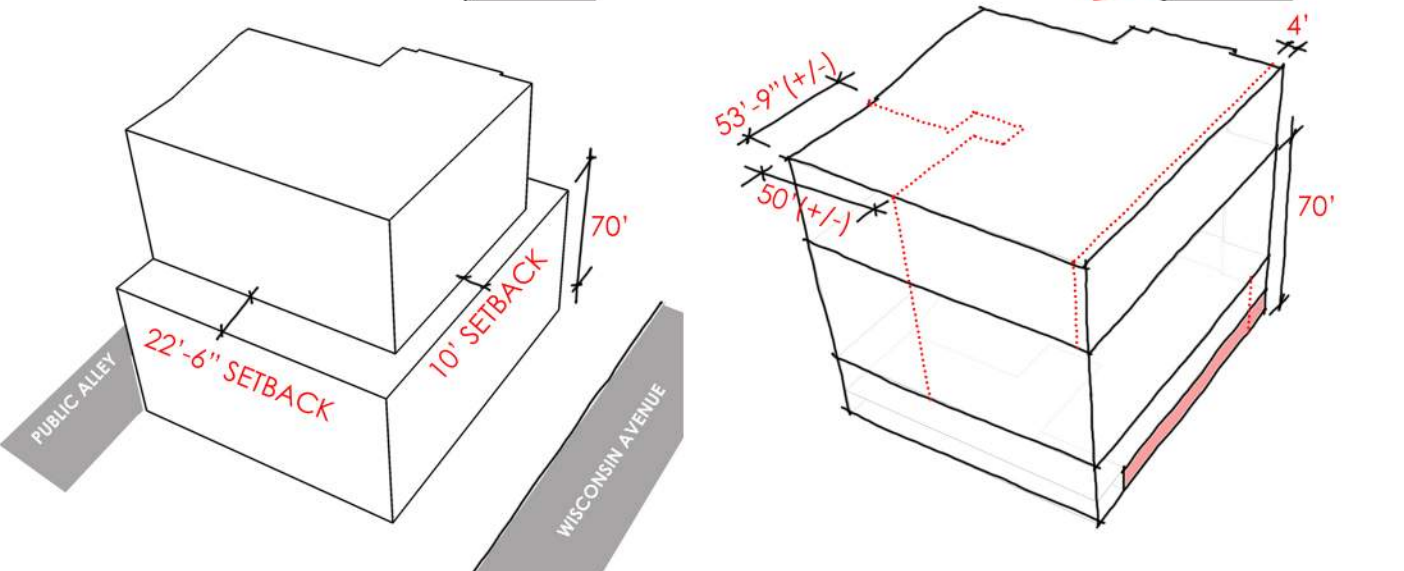




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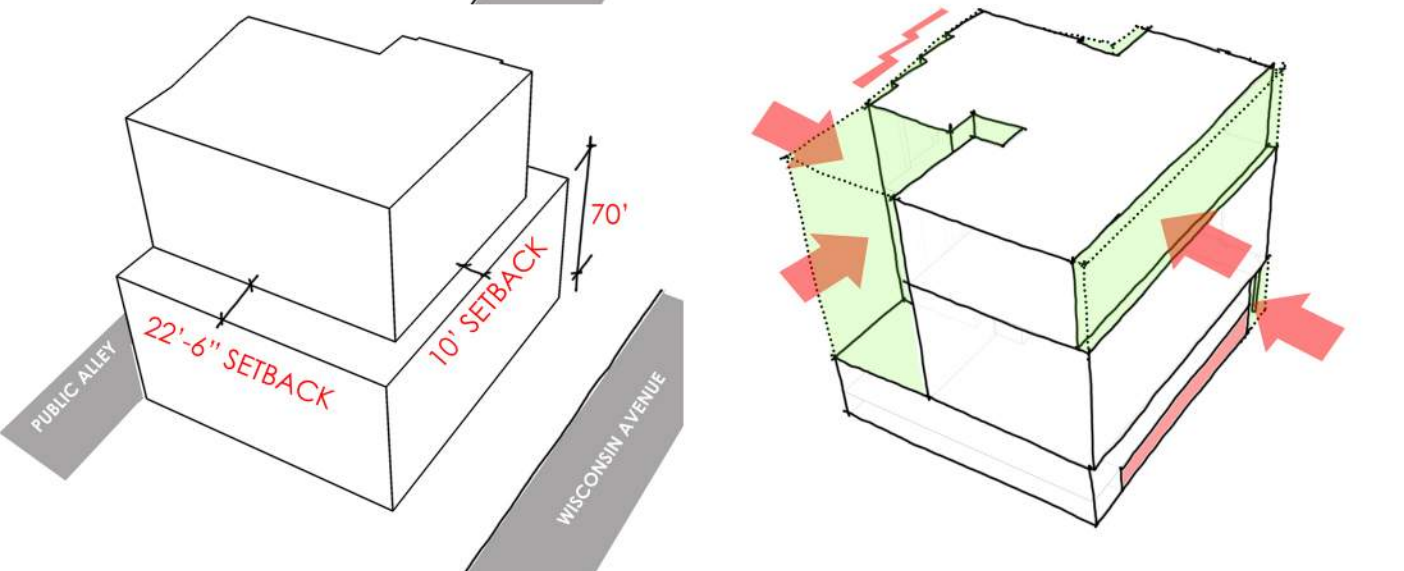
ESTABLISH THE STREET



2



BREAK DOWN THE MASS



3



SHAPE THE TOWER

WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

Bethesda, MD

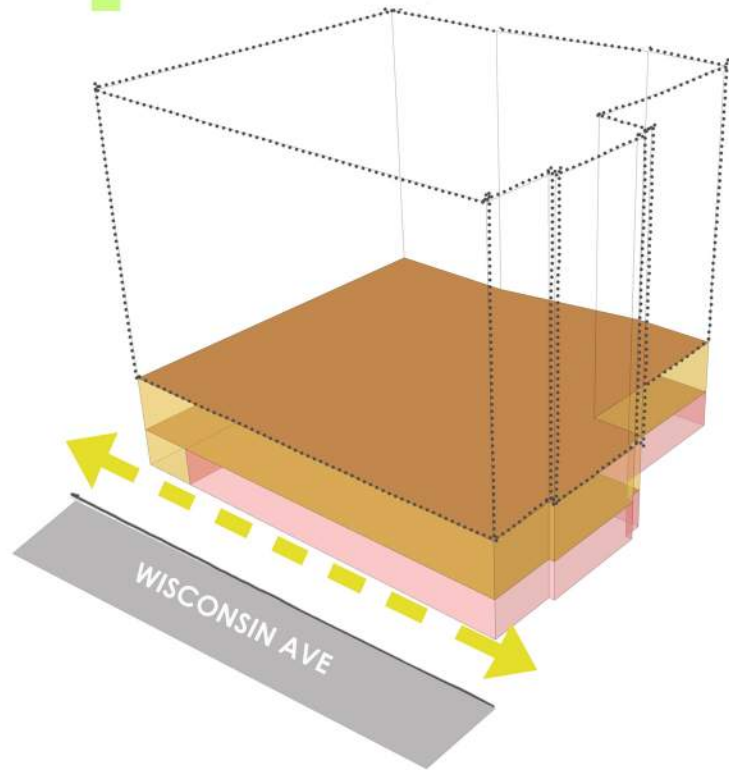
April 10th, 2019

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Massing Concept

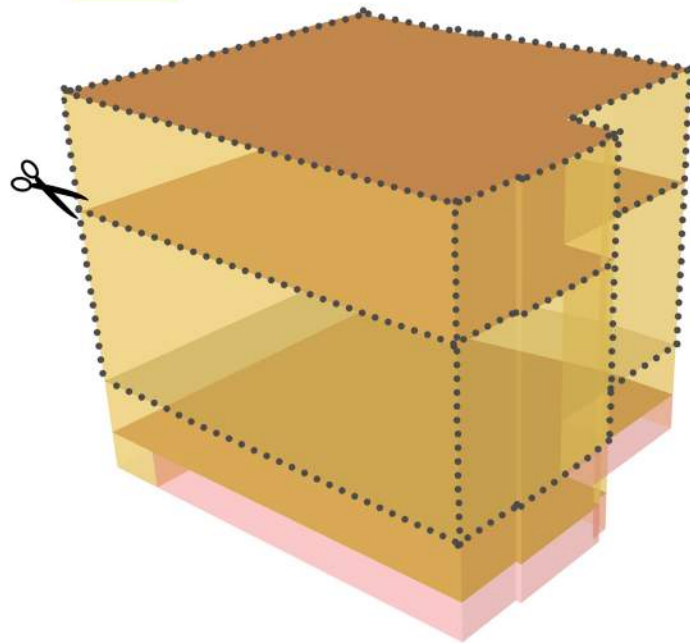
1



BASE: ESTABLISH THE STREET

BUILDING BASE DEFINES STREET SCALE
ESTABLISH RETAIL & RESIDENTIAL FRONTAGE
CONNECT BLOCKS WITH PUBLIC PATH

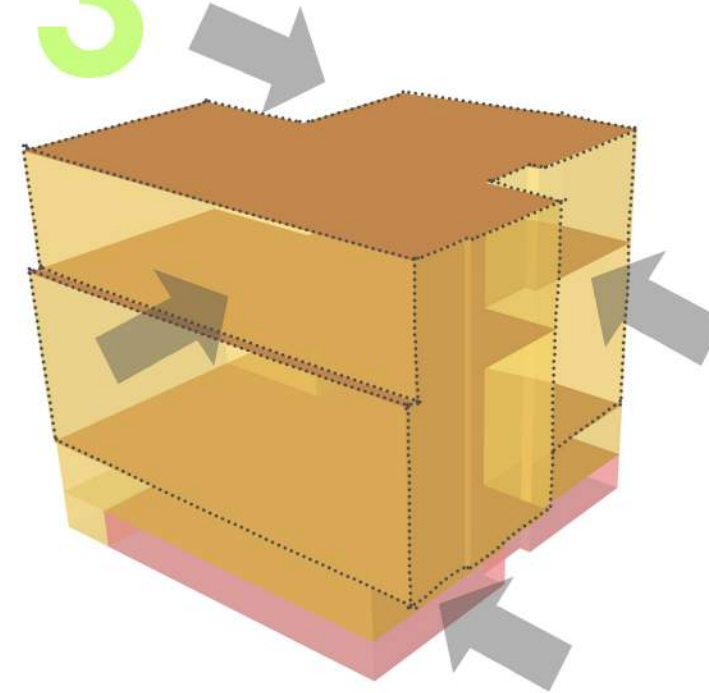
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TOWER: BREAK DOWN THE MASS

DEFINE TOWER MASS & SPLIT IT TO MINIMIZE BULK

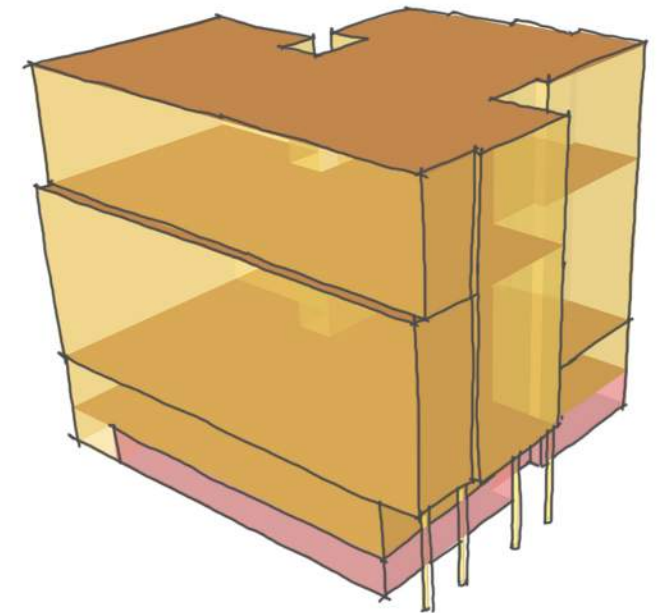
3



SHAPE THE TOWER

ARTICULATE TOWER MASS TO CREATE SETBACKS

4



INFLECT THE TOWER

PUSH/PULL EADGE TO SCULPT THE VOLUME

W^{OD}

WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

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Form Development Diagram

April 10th, 2019

07

SK+I
ARCHITECTURE



STARR CAPITAL



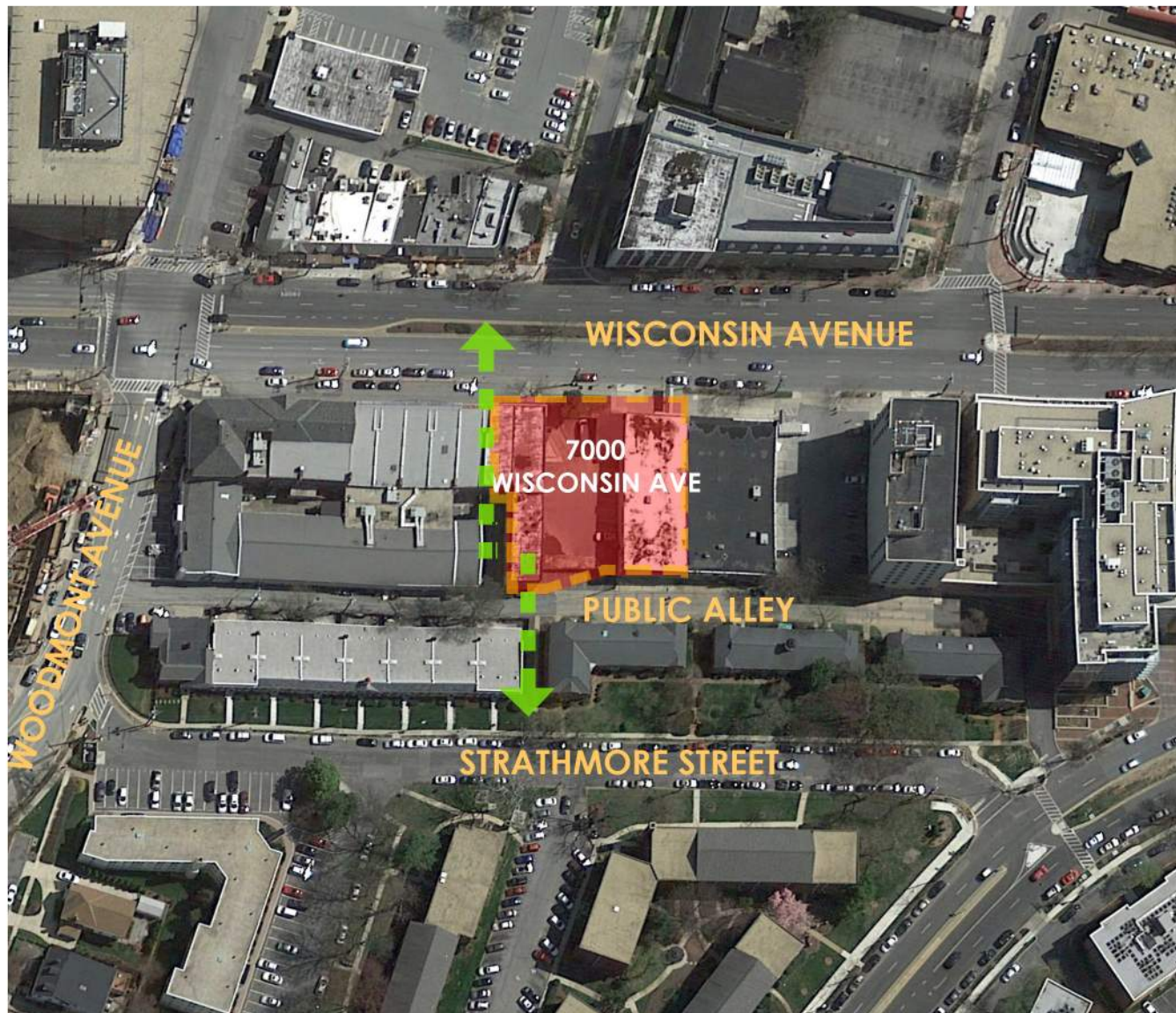
PUBLIC CONNECTION



PUBLIC ALLEY



WISCONSIN AVENE



WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

Bethesda, MD

April 10th, 2019

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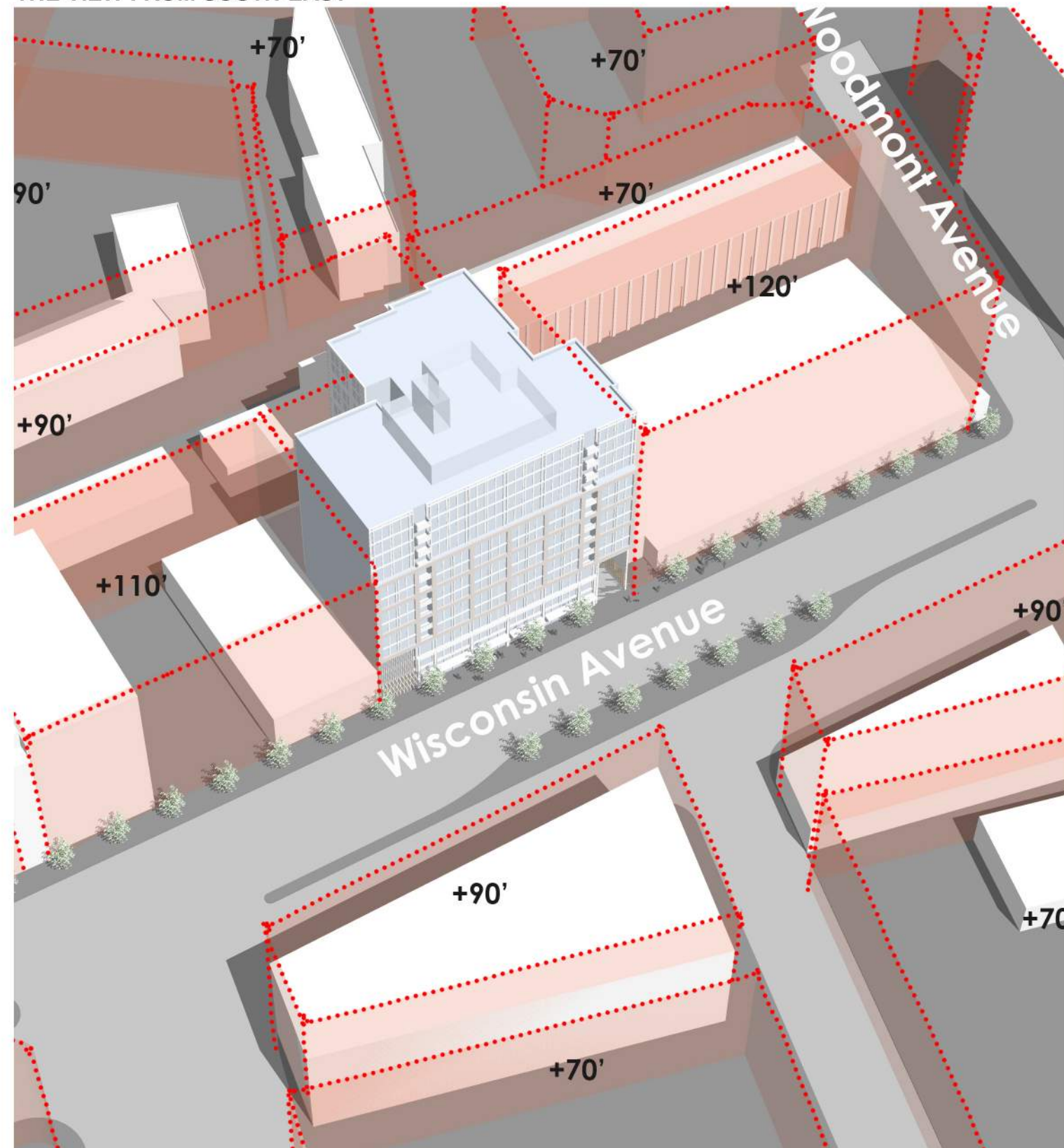
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Public Realm Precedents

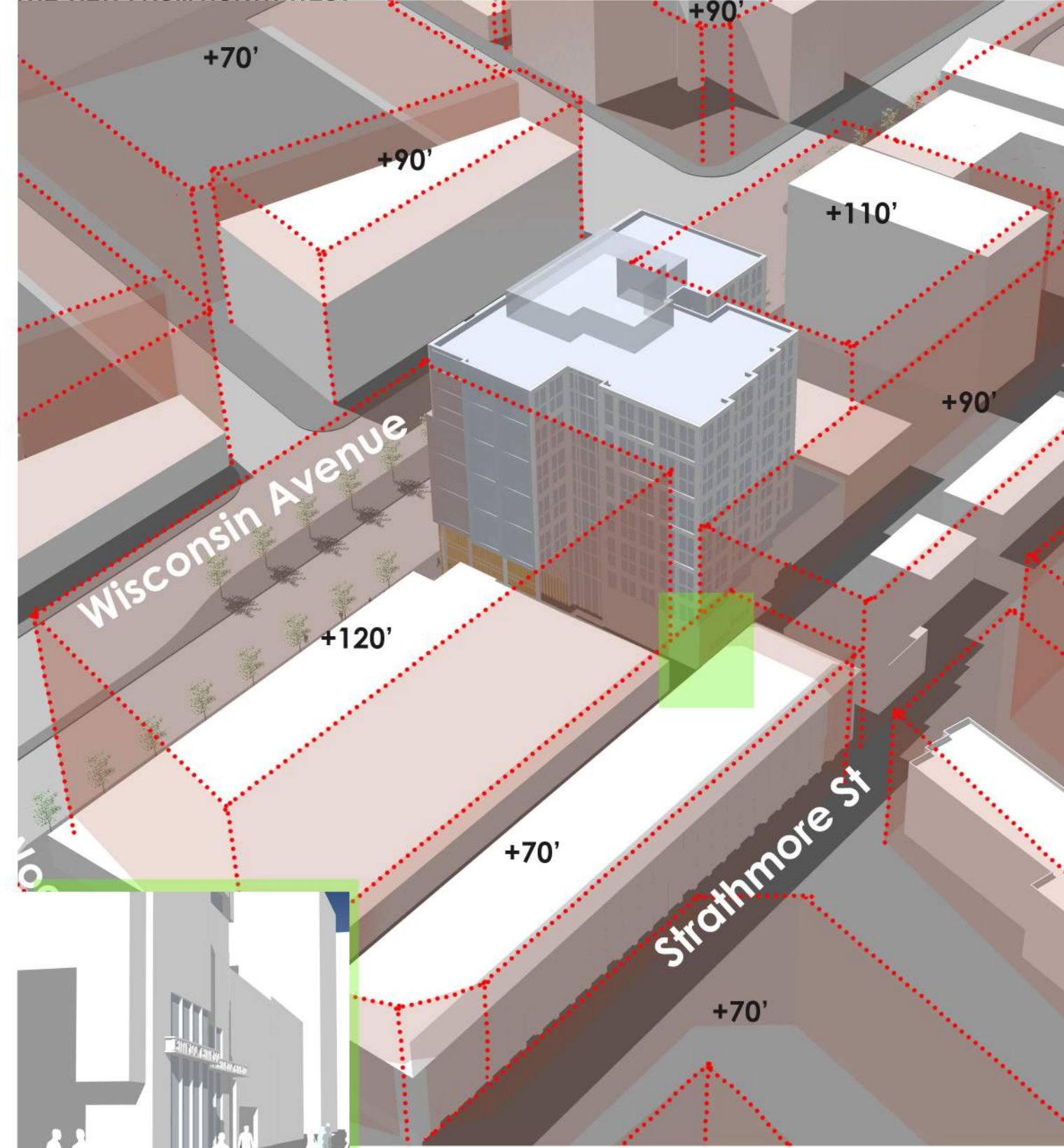
SK+I
ARCHITECTURE

STARR CAPITAL

THE VIEW FROM SOUTH-EAST



THE VIEW FROM NORTH-WEST



The Movie Theater at the public alley

WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

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Bethesda, MD

Massing in Context

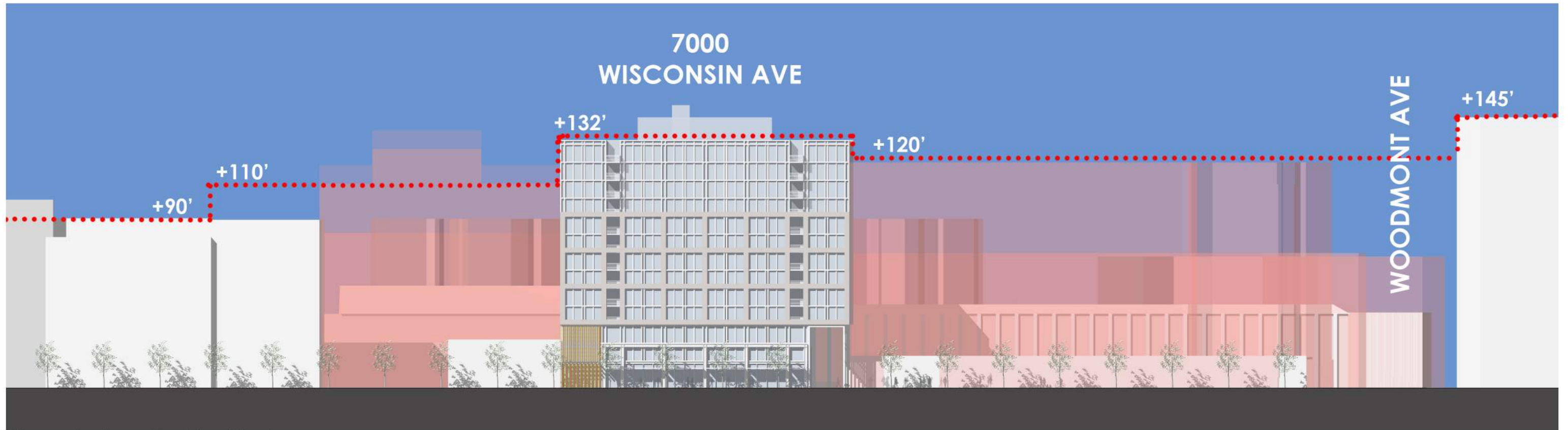
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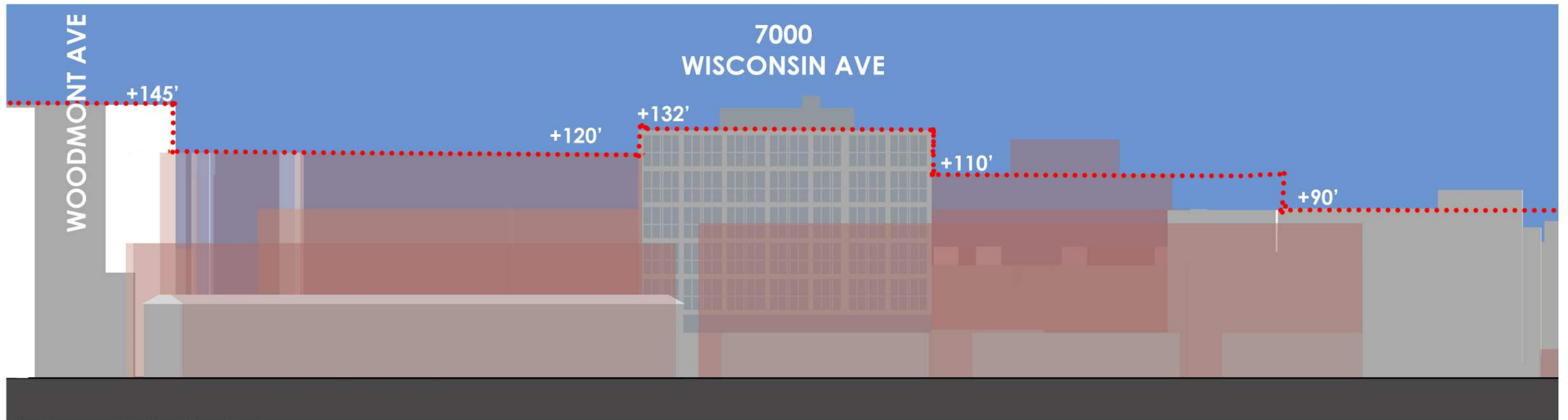
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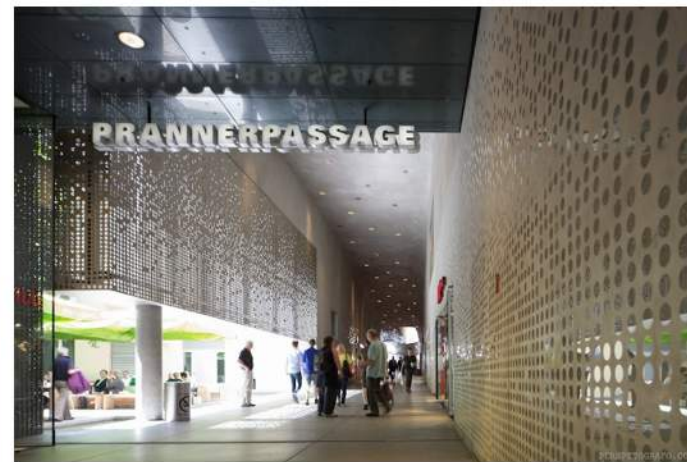
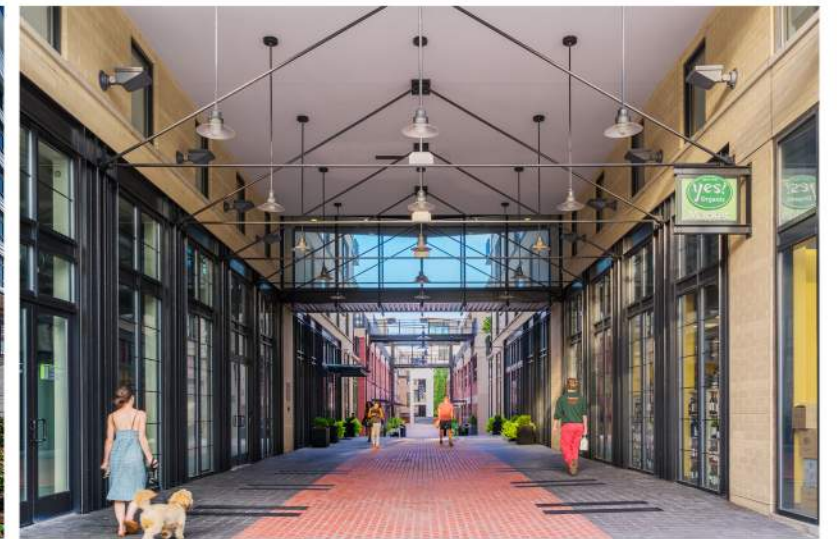
Wisconsin Ave - Looking West



Strathmore St - Looking East

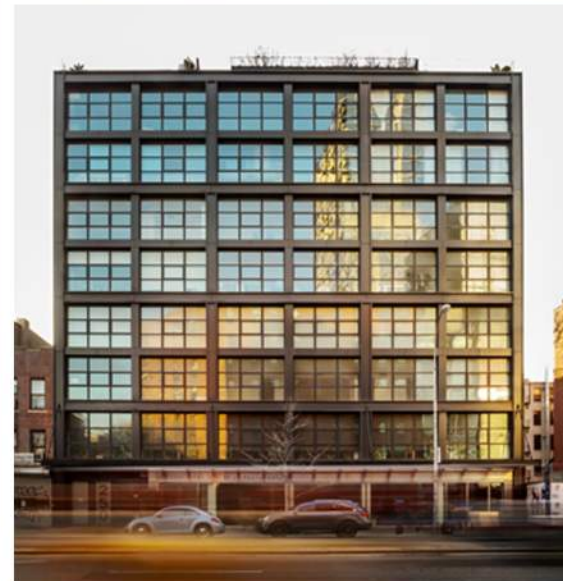


Perspective view from Wisconsin Ave





Perspective view from Wisconsin Ave



W[™]

WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

Conceptual and for Illustrative Purposes Only

Bethesda, MD

Middle Design

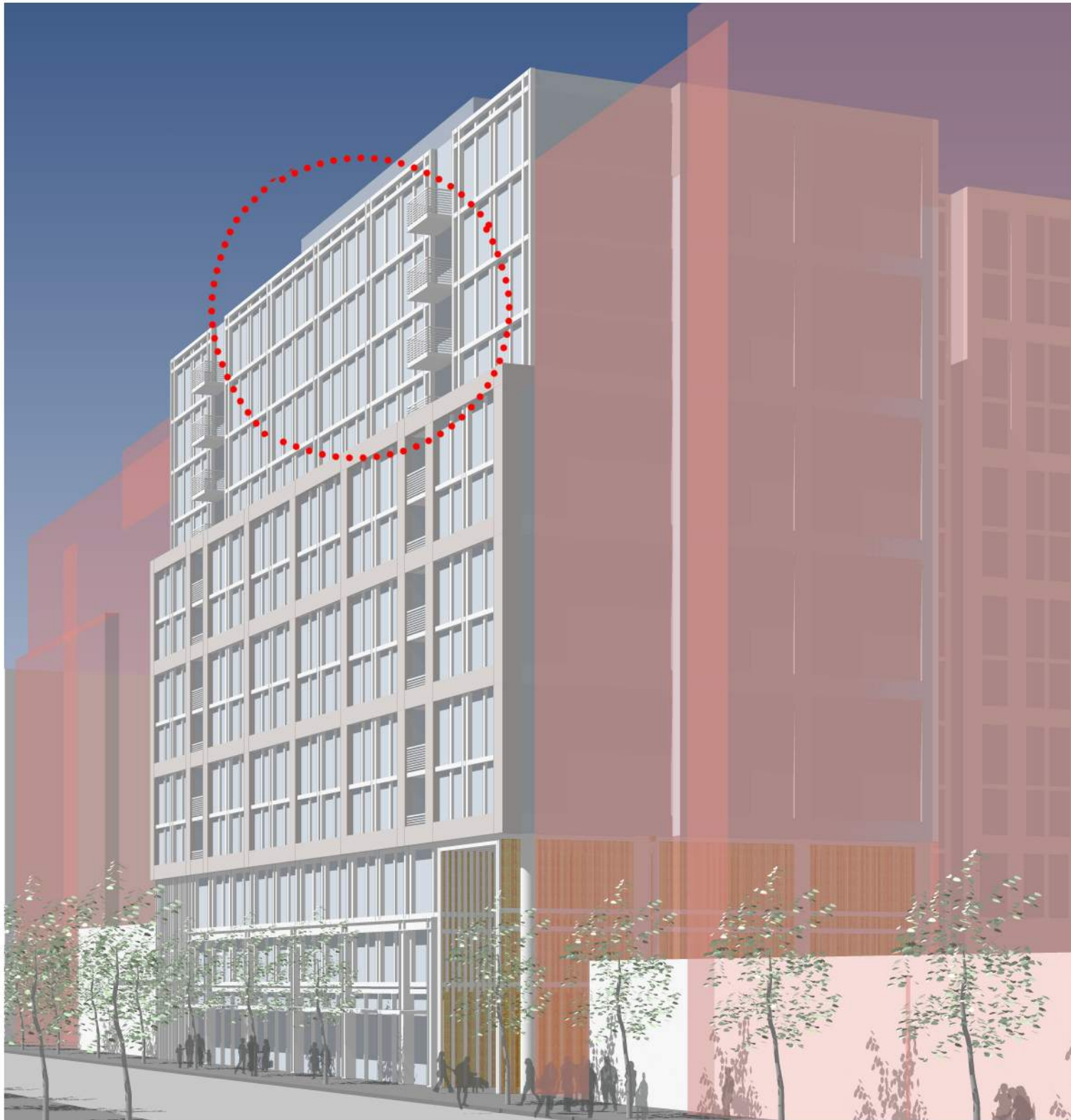
April 10th, 2019

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SK+I
ARCHITECTURE



STARR CAPITAL



Perspective view from Wisconsin Ave



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WOODFIELD
DEVELOPMENT

7000 Wisconsin Ave.

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Bethesda, MD

Top Design

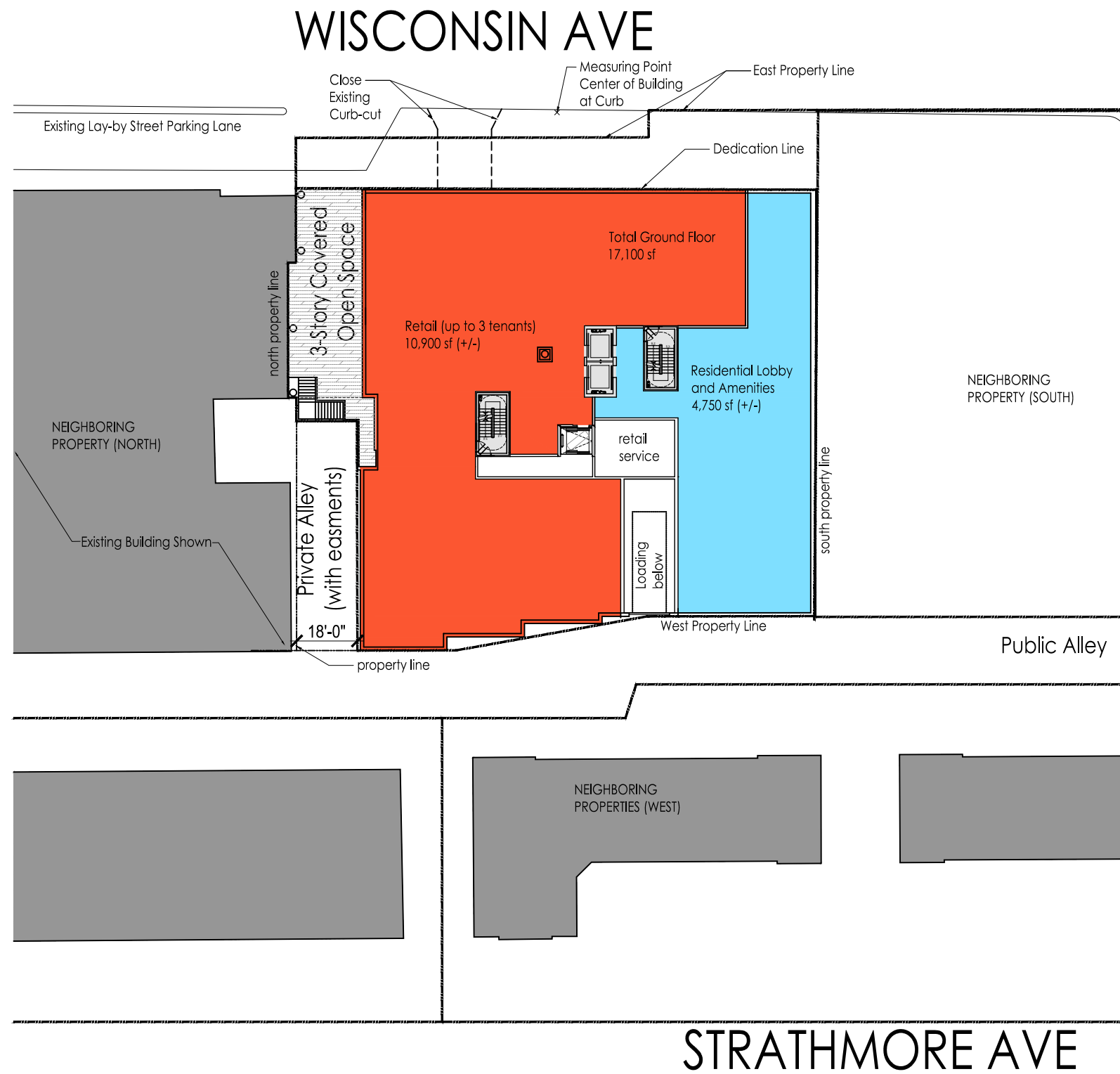
April 10th, 2019

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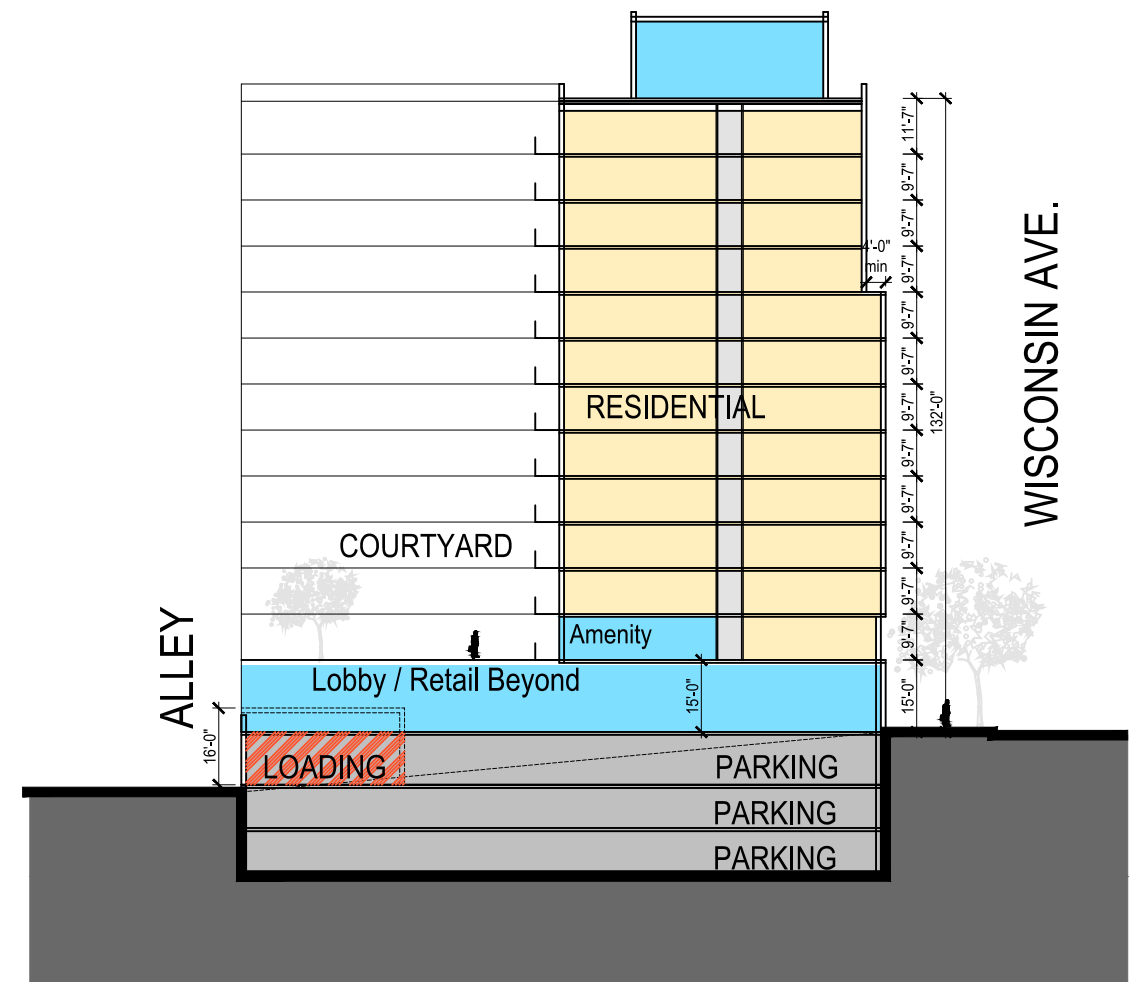
SK+I
ARCHITECTURE



STARR CAPITAL

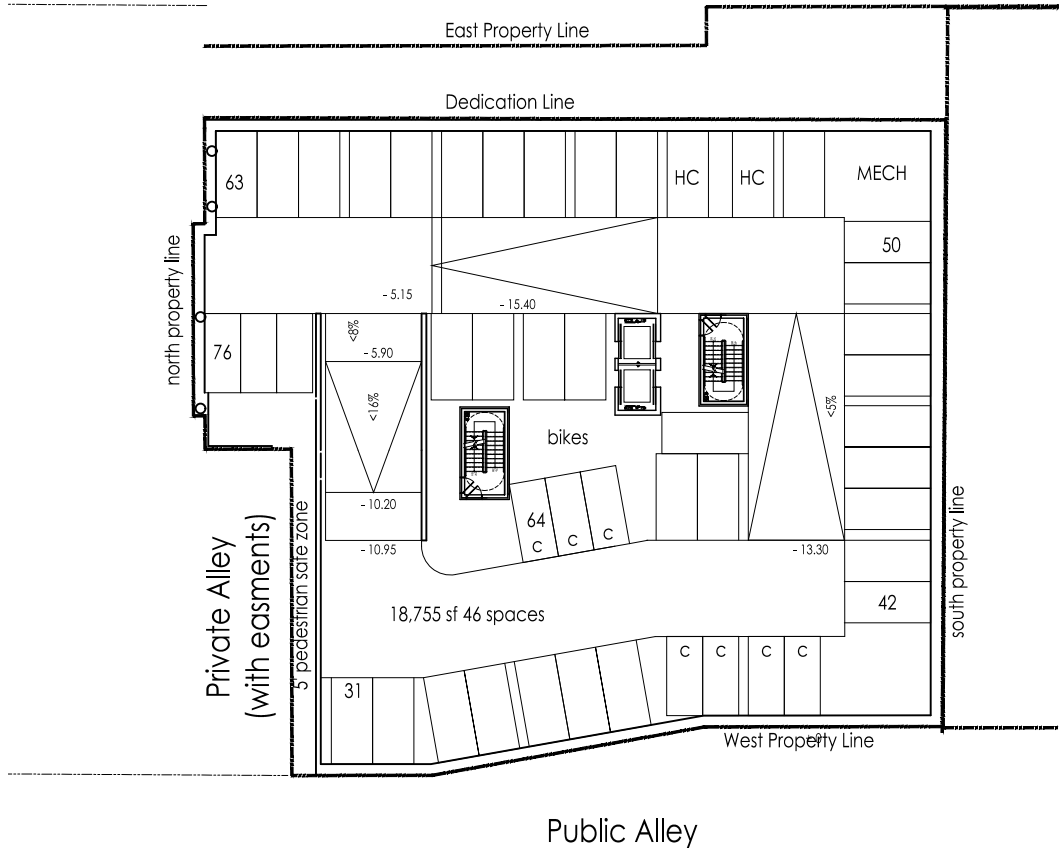


2 Ground Level Plan
SCALE: 1" = 40'



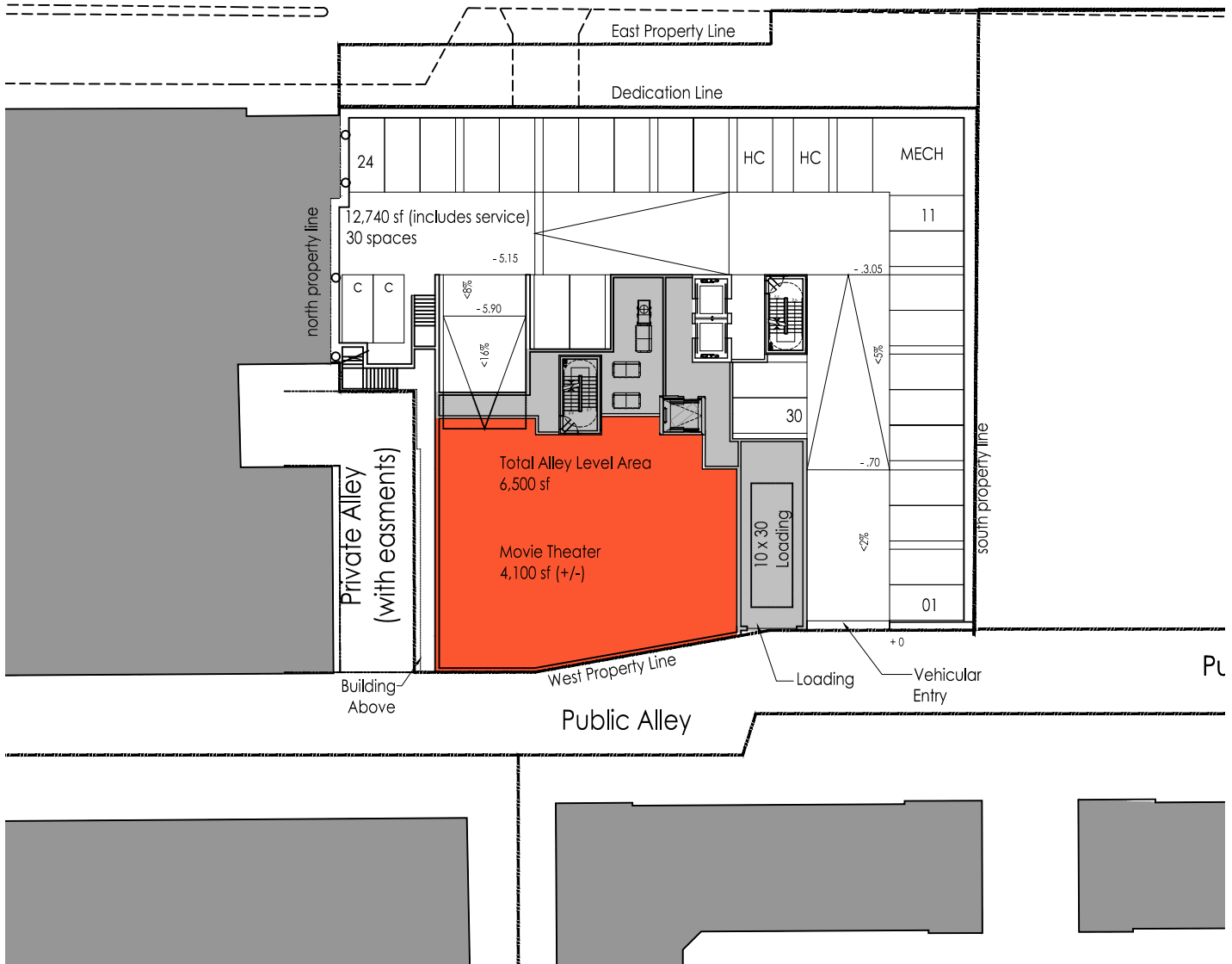
1 Building Section
SCALE: 1" = 40'

WISCONSIN AVE



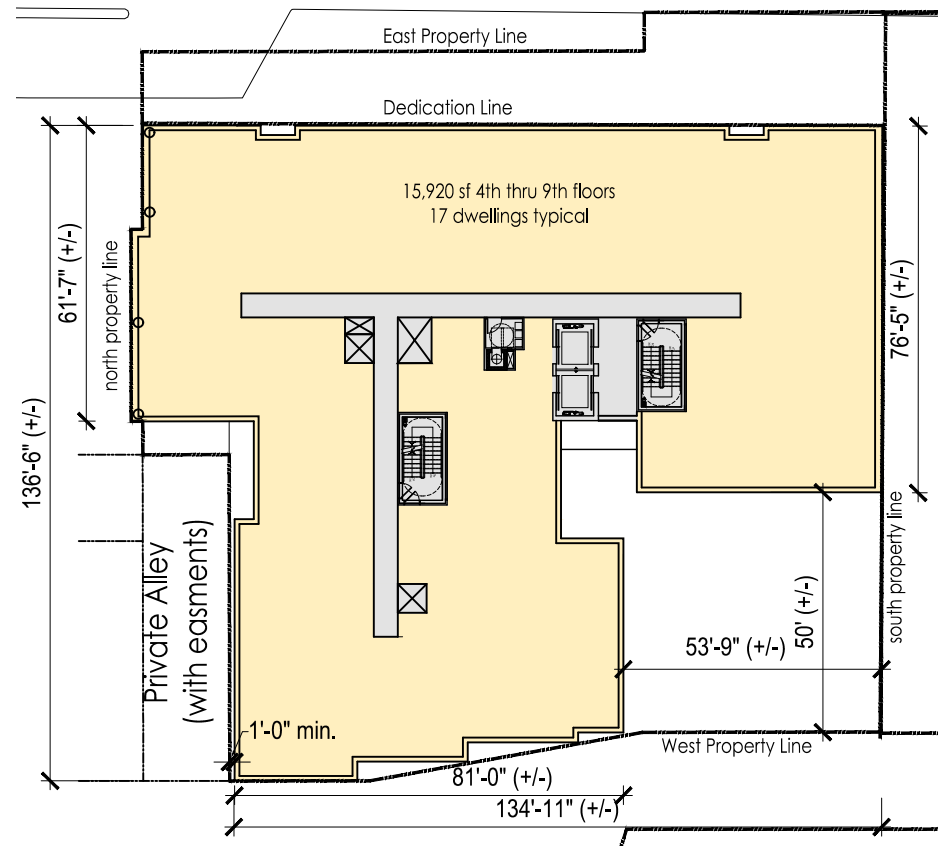
2 Typical Garage Plan (below grade)
SCALE: 1" = 40'

WISCONSIN AVE

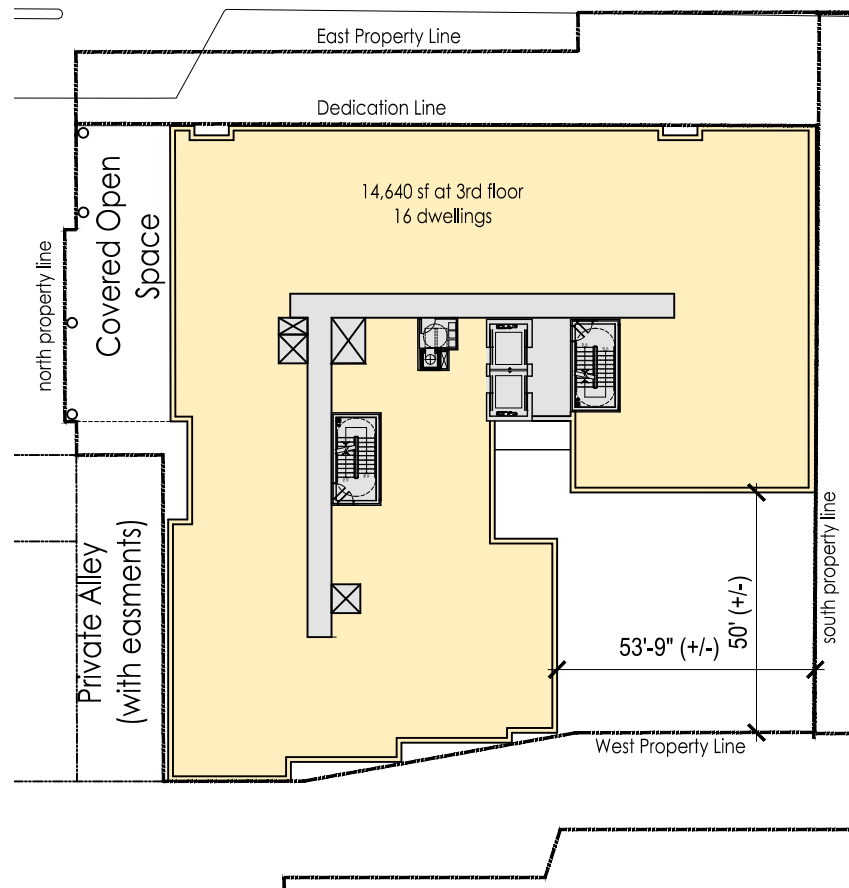


1 Alley Level Plan
SCALE: 1" = 40'

WISCONSIN AVE



3 Typ. Floors 4th thru 9th
SCALE: 1" = 40'



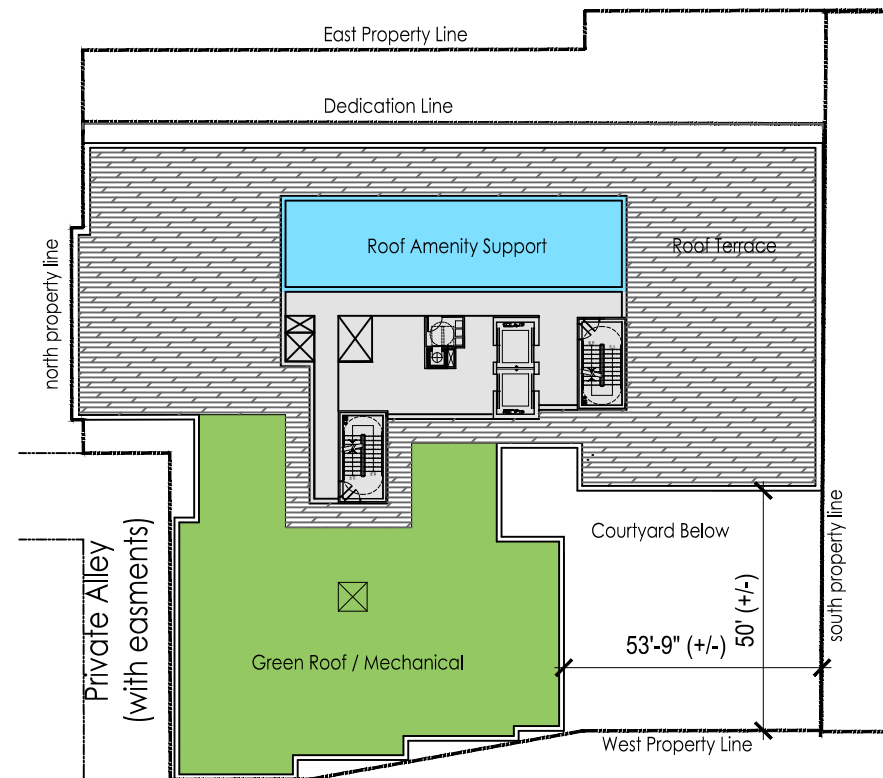
2 3rd Floor Plan
SCALE: 1" = 40'



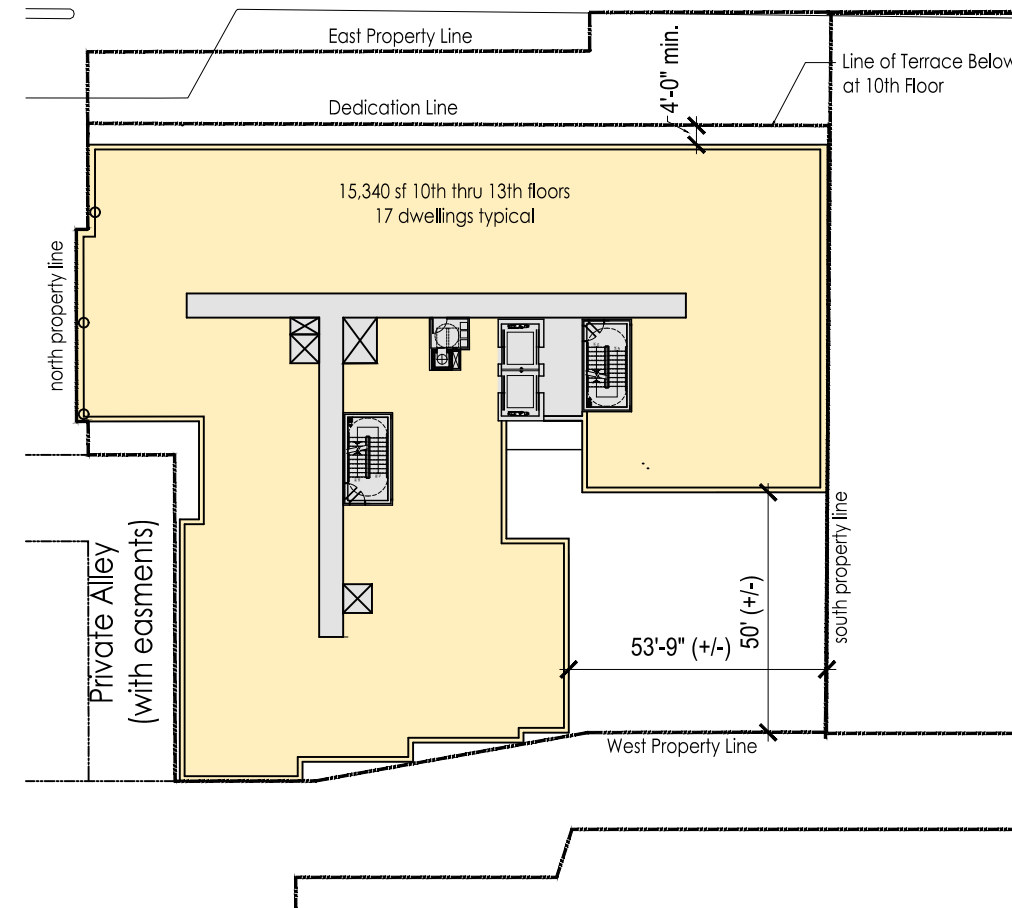
1 Second Floor Plan
SCALE: 1" = 40'

NOTE: For Typical Dimensions See 3/16





2 Roof Plan
SCALE: 1" = 40'



1 Floors 10th thru 13th
SCALE: 1" = 40'



