

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	46 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	2/26/2020
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	2/19/2020
Applicant:	David Bates and Mary Anne Leveque (Dana Haden, Architect)	Public Notice:	2/12/2020
Review:	Preliminary Consultation	Tax Credit:	No
Case Number:	N/A	Staff:	Michael Kyne
PROPOSAL:	Building addition		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based upon the HPC's comments and return with a HAWP application.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman
DATE: c. 1915-25

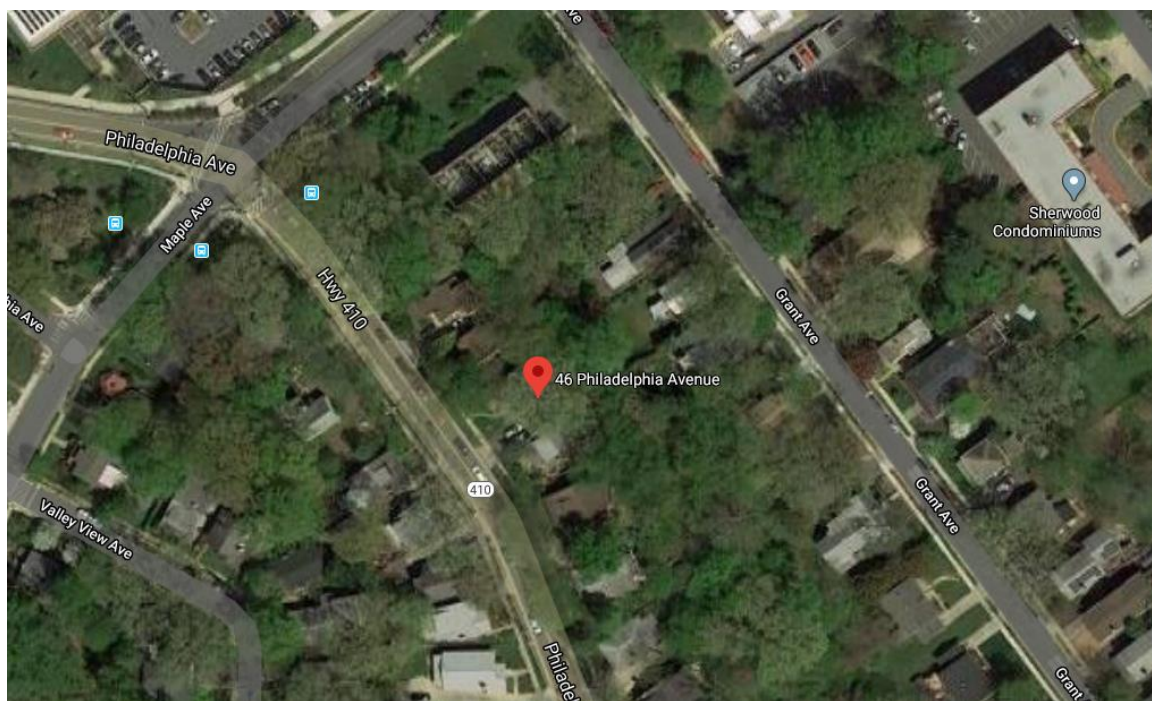


Fig. 1: Subject property.

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose the following work items at the subject property:

- Remove an existing one-story rear structure.
- Construct a new two-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.

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.
- 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.

- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.
- 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 a structure are discouraged but not automatically prohibited.
- While additions should be compatible, they are not required to be replicative of earlier architectural styles.

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 ensure 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.
- (d) In the case of an application for work on an historic resource located within an historic district, the commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. (Ord. No. 9-4, § 1; Ord. No. 11-59.)

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as “the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.” The *Standards* are as follows:

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall 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

The subject property is a one-story stucco-clad c. 1915-25 Craftsman-style Contributing Resource within the Takoma Park Historic District. The grade of the property slopes steeply to the rear, and there is an existing one-story structure on stilts at the rear of the historic house. The 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (see below) depicts a one-story open porch in this location. It is unclear whether the porch was completely replaced or enclosed and extensively altered.

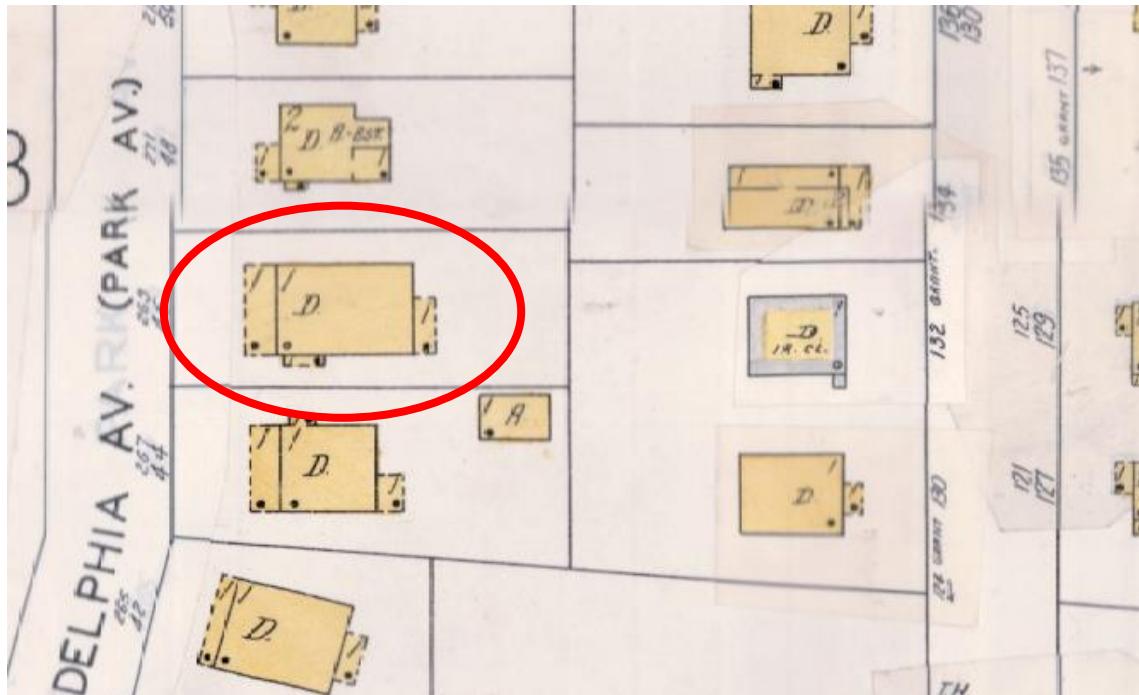


Fig.2: 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, with subject property circled in red.

The applicants propose the following work items at the subject property:

- Remove the existing one-story rear structure.
- Construct a new two-story rear addition.

The existing one-story rear structure is on stilts, allowing it to be level with the historic house, despite the steeply-sloped grade. The proposed new two-story rear addition will utilize the grade to remain below the ridge of the historic house. The proposed new two-story rear addition will also be on piers, in lieu of a traditional foundation. Materials for the proposed addition have not been provided, but the submitted elevations depict some type of clapboard siding.

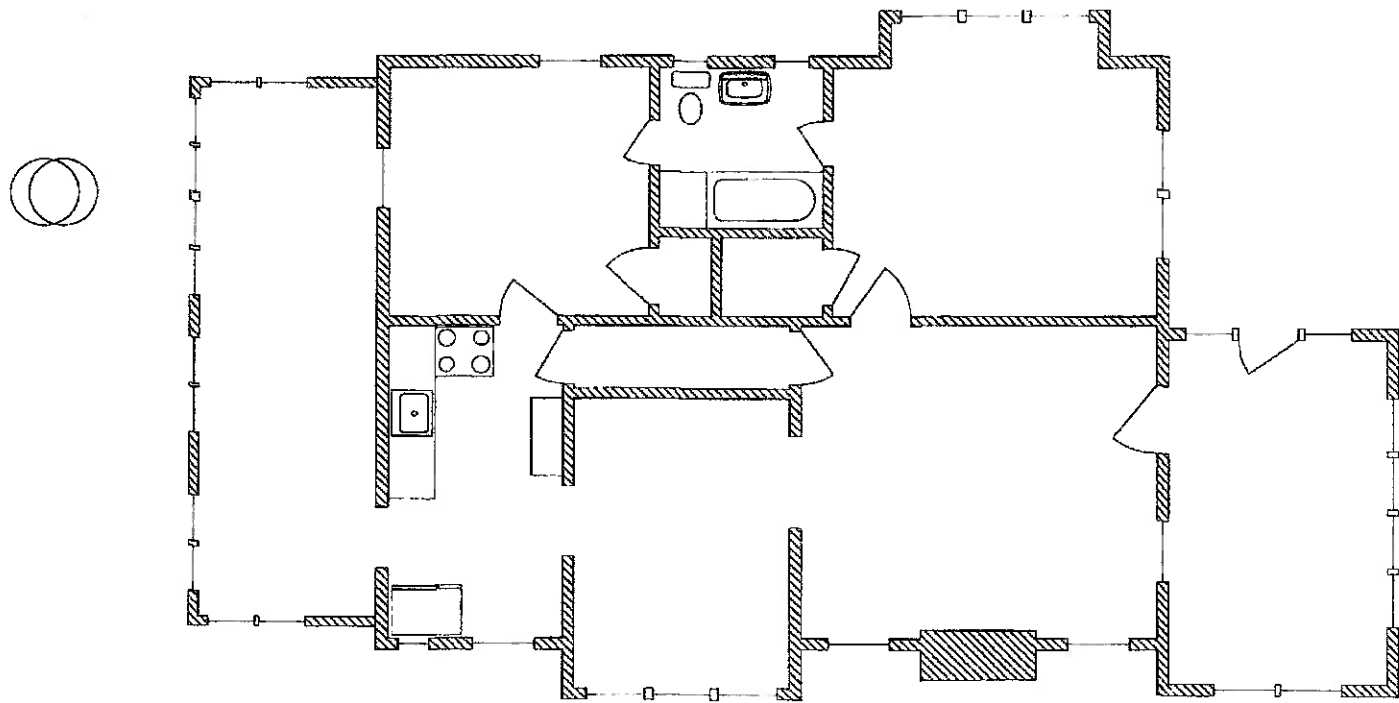
Staff is generally supportive of the proposed addition, finding that the utilization of the steeply-sloped grade to construct a two-story addition to a one-story historic house is consistent with preservation best practices. Staff also finds that the proposed addition is in the appropriate location, in accordance with the *Guidelines*.

Staff seeks the Commission's guidance regarding the following:

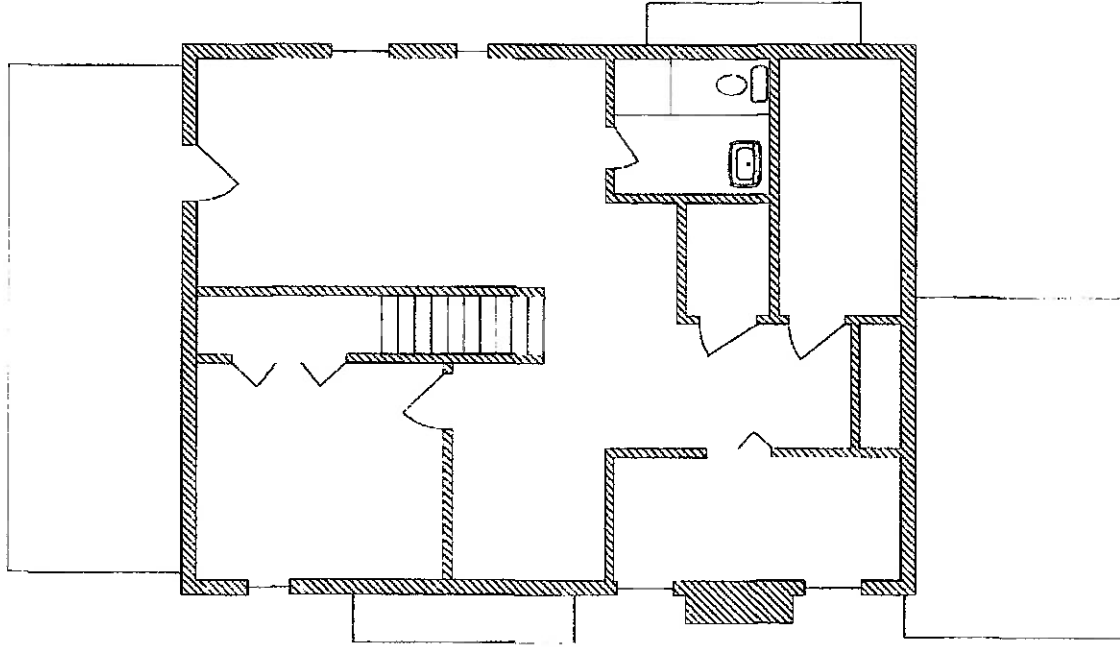
- Staff finds that a traditional foundation would make the proposed addition more compatible with the historic house; however, staff does note that the proposed piers will likely not be visible from the public right-of-way of Philadelphia Avenue, due to the property's grading.
- As depicted in the proposed left side elevation, the second-floor, left elevation of the proposed addition will be a blank wall without fenestration. Staff finds that the proposed blank wall will be visible from an oblique angle within the public right-of-way of Philadelphia Avenue and recommends compatible windows in this location to be consistent with the fenestration pattern of the historic house.
- Material specifications for the proposed addition and its features have not been provided. The applicants should work with staff and/or consider the feedback of the Commission in selecting appropriate materials, prior to submission of a HAWP application.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

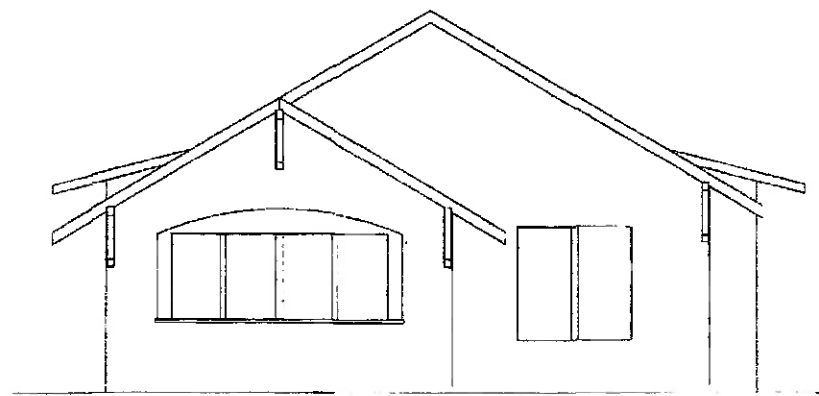
Staff recommends that the applicants make any revisions based upon the HPC's comments and return with a HAWP application.



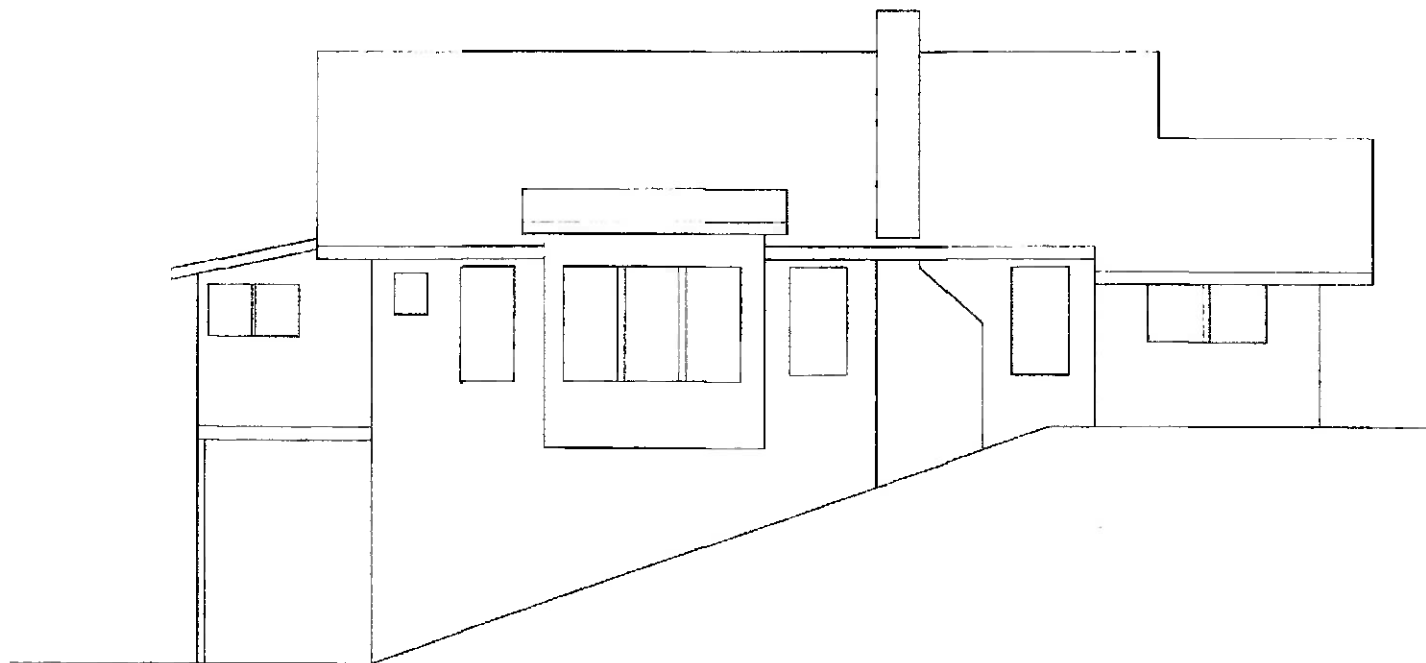
EXIST. FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}" = 1'-0"$



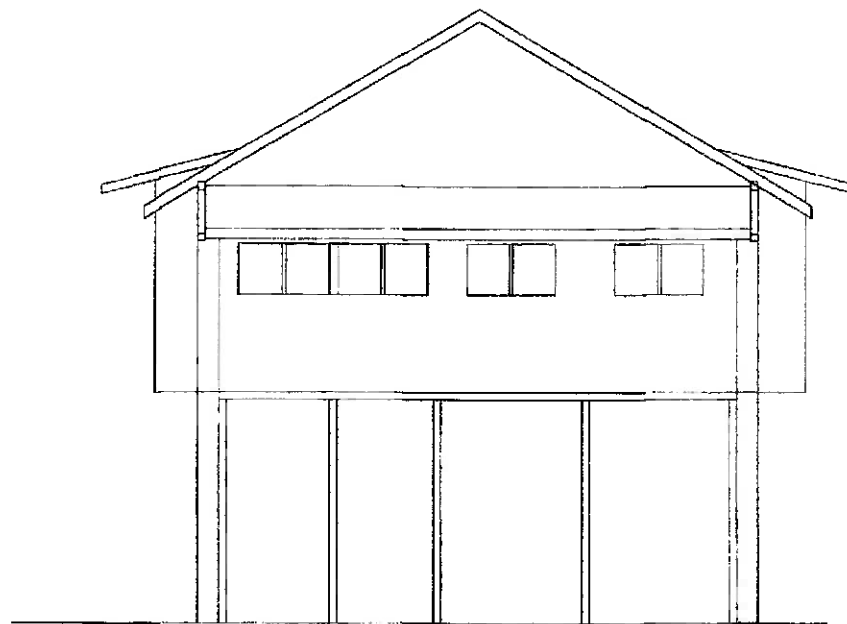
EXTG. BASEMENT PLAN
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



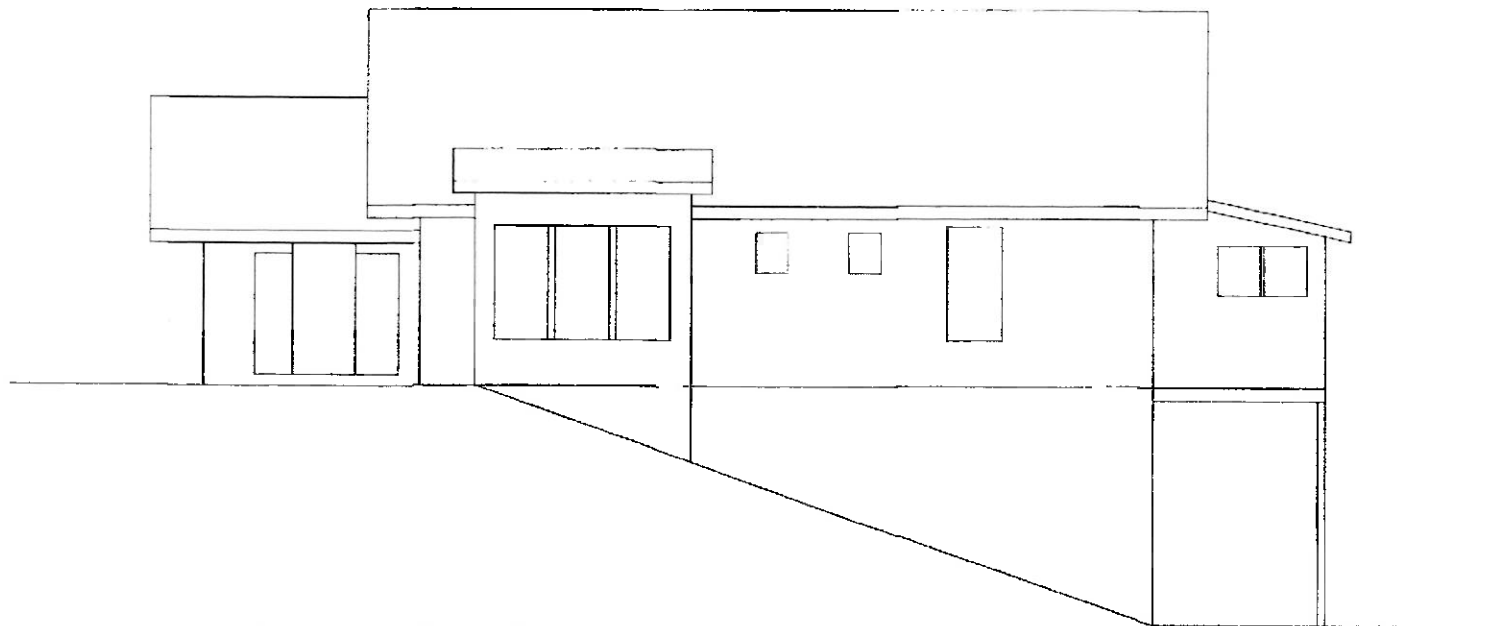
EXTG. FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE: $\frac{1}{4}" = 1'-0"$



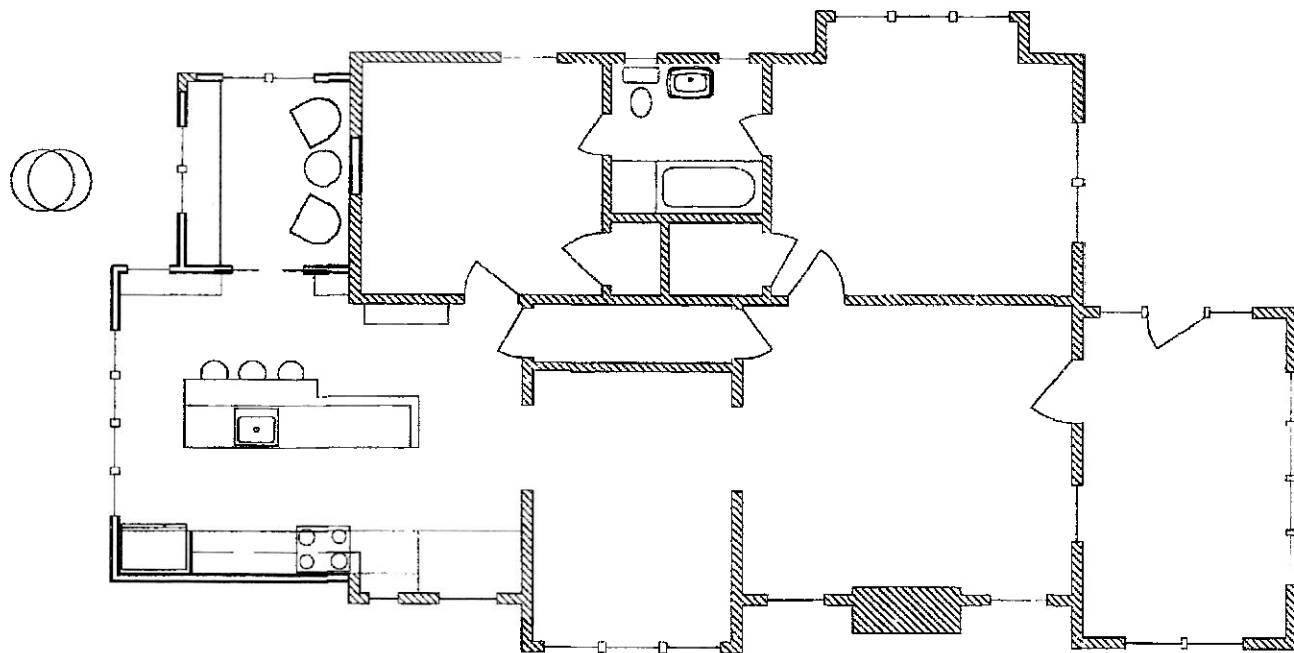
EXTG. LEFT SIDE ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



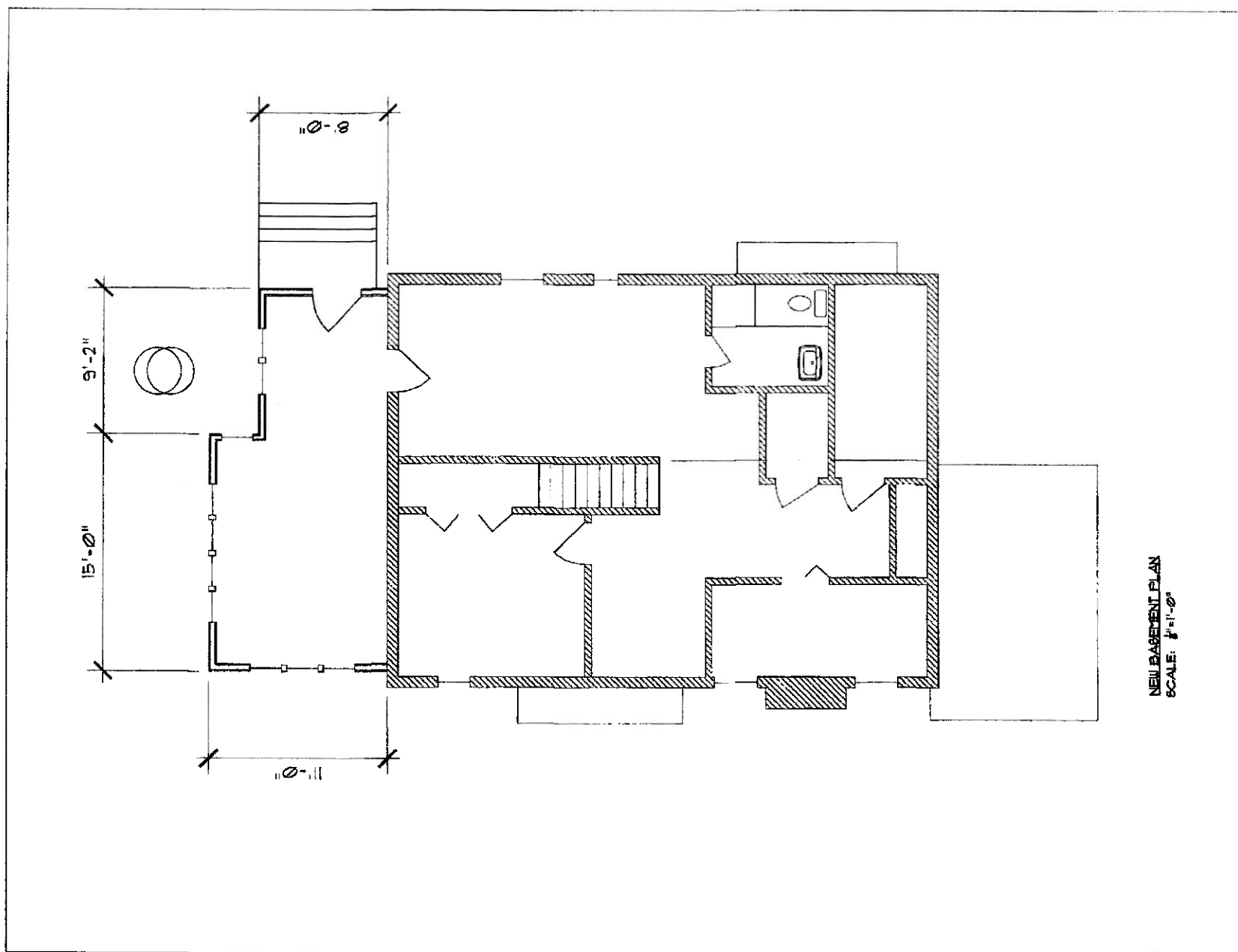
EXTG. REAR ELEVATION
SCALE: $\frac{1}{4}"=1'-0"$

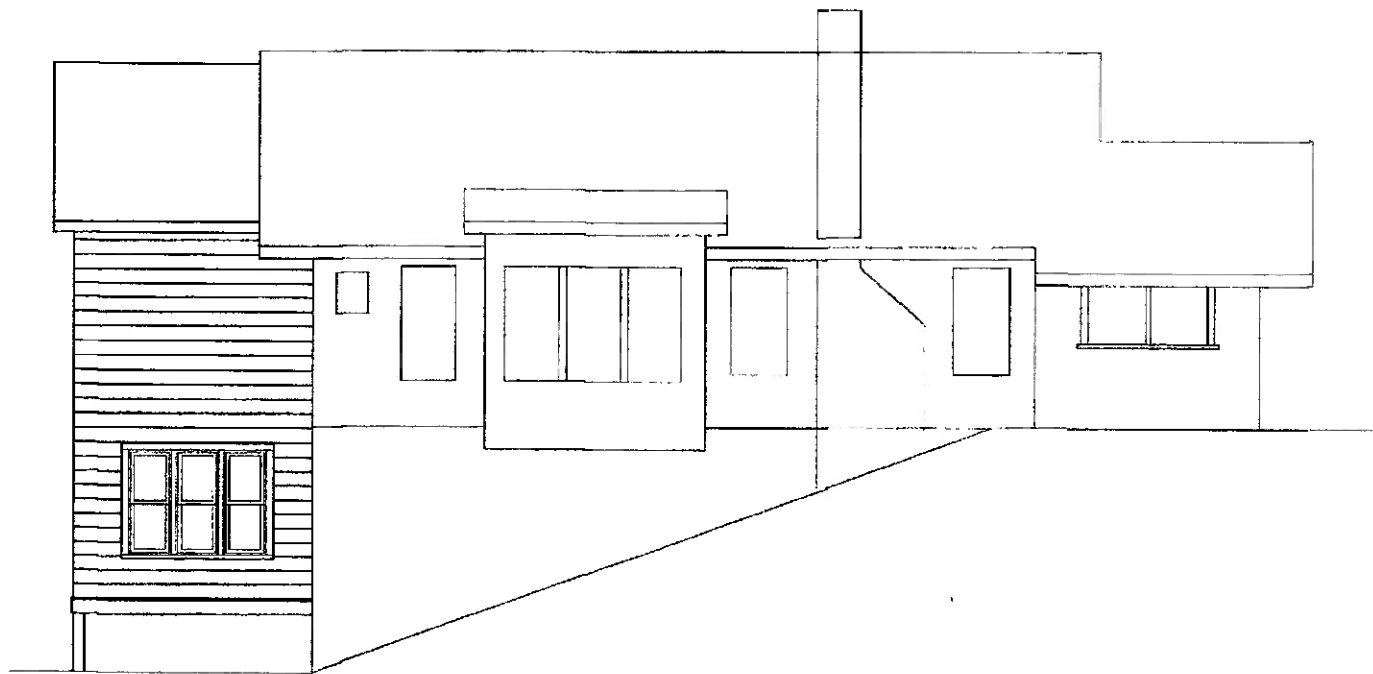


EXTG. RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}"=1'-0"$



NEW FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

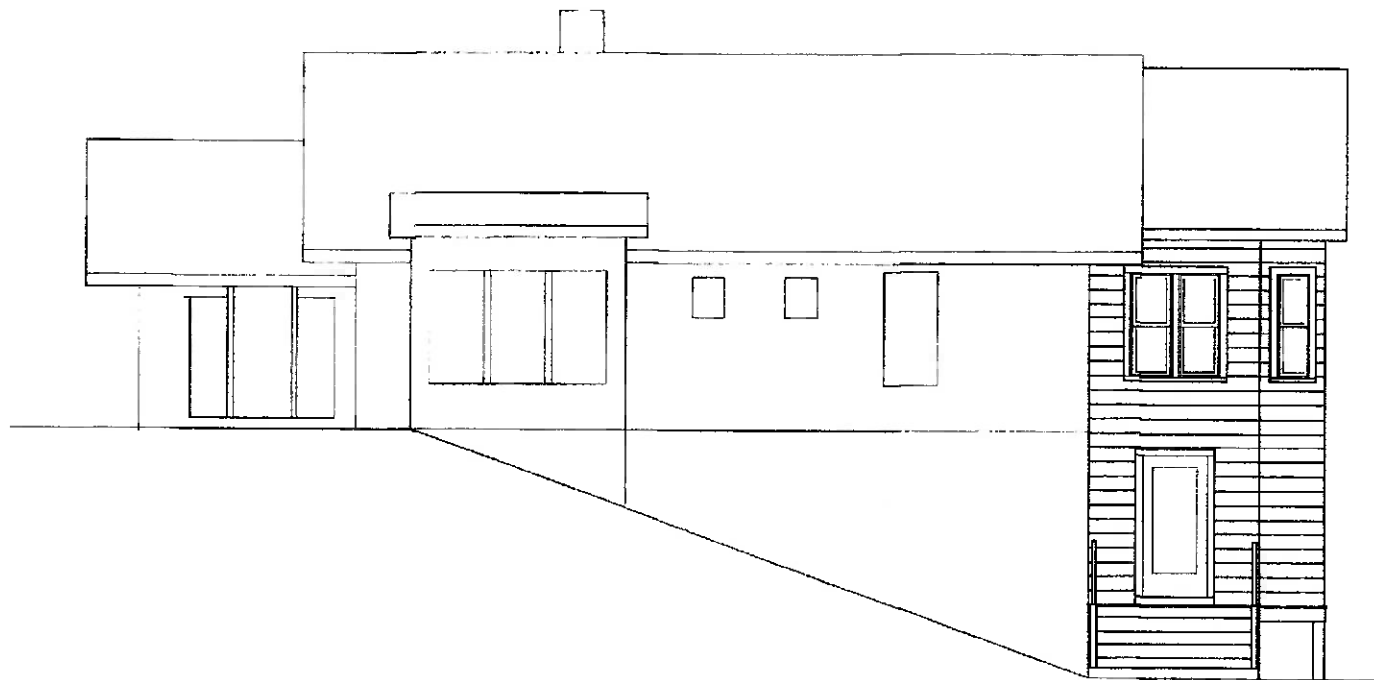




NEW LEFT SIDE ELEVATION
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}"=1'-0"$



NEW REAR ELEVATION
SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}" = 1'-0"$



NEW RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

SCALE: $\frac{1}{8}"=1'-0"$