

Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	40 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	3/11/2020
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	3/4/2020
Applicant:	Diana Bradley (Brian McCarthy, Architect)	Public Notice:	2/26/2020
Review:	Preliminary Consultation	Tax Credit:	No
		Staff:	Dan Bruechert
PROPOSAL:	Accessory Building Demolition and Accessory Structure Construction		

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: 40 Columbia Avenue.

PROPOSAL

The applicants proposes to demolish the existing garage and construct a new accessory building in its place.

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.

- 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 is necessary in order that unsafe conditions or health hazards be remedied; or
- (c) 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.
- 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
- 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 two-story shingle sided cottage with a detached garage. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing garage and construct a new, larger accessory building based on the design of the historic garage in approximately the same location. The two primary questions for this Preliminary Consultation are:

- Can the garage be demolished?
- Is the proposed accessory structure compatible with the historic resource and surrounding district?

Accessory Building Demolition

The existing garage is a one-bay shingle sided garage built on a concrete block foundation. The garage is constructed into the grade as it rises to the rear. The index of historic properties in Takoma Park identifies this as the “original garage.” The applicant proposes to demolish this structure. In evaluating a proposal the burden of proof is on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed work complies with the requisite guidance; in the case of demolishing a historic building, it means that the building has deteriorated beyond repair (Standard 6).



Figure: 1927 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map showing the subject property and the accessory building to the rear.

The applicant contends that the existing garage has degraded to the point where it may no longer be repaired reasonably. The damage to the garage includes significant failure of the foundation and rotted roof members. The applicant further notes that much of the structure was replaced approximately 20 years ago after a tree fell on the garage. Staff conducted a site visit in August 2019 while the applicant was developing preliminary plans and can confirm that the garage is in a severely damaged state. While the walls appear to be structurally sound, the larger issue is that the foundation has failed due to water

infiltration and the weight of the hillside to the north. In proposing to demolish this structure the applicant further argues that because this building is a ‘Contributing Resource’ to the Takoma Park Historic District larger consideration should be given to the effect on the surrounding streetscape rather than particular architectural features (per the *Guidelines*).

Staff finds that the only way to repair this structure would be to remove or lift the wood structure and remove, excavate, and reconstruct the foundation. This would preserve the appearance of the accessory structure but would introduce new materials. However, this work would also be eligible for historic preservation tax credits.

Staff generally concurs with the applicant's position that the garage has deteriorated beyond repair and that demolition is appropriate. Staff requests guidance from the HPC as to whether or not the applicant has met the burden of proof demonstrating that the building has degraded beyond repair and if not, what additional materials are required to approve a HAWP?

New Accessory Structure Construction

In place of the existing garage, the applicant proposes to construct a one-story building that is approximately twice the size of the existing garage. The structure will have a parged stucco foundation with fiber cement siding and asphalt shingles. The windows will be a mix of wood casement and sashes and the door will be wood. The existing garage doors will be rehabilitated and reinstalled to maintain the appearance of the historic garage. The applicant notes that this solution is similar to projects reviewed and approved by the HPC at 7309 Willow Ave. (approved in 2010) and 7309 Willow Ave. (approved in 2017).¹

Ordinarily, the preferred location for an expanded accessory structure would be to the rear to lessen the visual impact on the streetscape. Staff finds that in this instance, that is not feasible for two primary reasons. First, because of the change in grade an expanded accessory structure would be enveloped by the rising back yard, potentially changing the character of the back yard. The second reason that extending the accessory structure to the rear is not feasible is that there are two mature trees in the rear, and the excavation would damage the root zone of these trees.

Staff finds that the design of the accessory structure is compatible with the historic resource and surrounding streetscape. When viewed in elevation, the front gable and preserved garage doors will match the style of the historic house and existing garage. Staff additionally finds that the proposed parged foundation, wood windows and doors, and asphalt shingles are compatible with the historic resource and surrounding district. Staff finds that more information is required regarding the proposed fiber cement shingle siding. After significant evaluation, Staff finds that certain fiber cement shingles, like those produced by James Hardie, create an appearance that is too flat to be compatible in a historic setting. Other manufactures produce a more realistic shingle siding and Staff recommends that the applicant present specifications and/or samples for Staff and HPC examination with the HAWP application.

Staff finds that much of the proposed structure would not be visible from the public right-of-way because it will be hidden by the house; and that the new portion of the accessory structure that is visible from the right-of-way will not have a significant impact on the surrounding district.

Staff requests that, if the HPC concurs that this structure could be demolished, that the HPC comment on the appropriateness of:

- The placement of the proposed accessory structure;

¹ The Staff Report for the approved HAWP at 7304 Willow Ave. can be found here: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/LP-7304-Willow-Avenue-Takoma-Park.pdf>. Note: the HAWP for 7309 Willow Ave. was not digitized.

- The proposed materials; and
- Any other concerns.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301/563-3400

DPS - #8

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT

Contact Email: brian@bfmarch.com Contact Person: Brian McCarthy
Tax Account No.: 13-01059088 Daytime Phone No.: 301-585-2222
Name of Property Owner: Diana M. Bradley Daytime Phone No.: 301-775-9201
Address: 40 Columbia Ave. Takoma Park MD 20912
Street Number City State Zip Code
Contractor: TBD Phone No.: _____
Contractor Registration No.: _____
Agent for Owner: Brian McCarthy Daytime Phone No.: 301-585-2222

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE

House Number: 40 Street: Columbia Avenue
Town/City: Takoma Park Nearest Cross Street: Poplar Avenue
Lot: 12 Block: 19 Subdivision: BFG
Liber: _____ Folio: _____ Parcel: _____

PART ONE: TYPE OF PERMIT ACTION AND USE

1A. CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ Construct ☒ Extend ☒ Alter/Renovate
☐ Move ☐ Install ☐ Wreck/Raze
☐ Revision ☐ Repair ☐ Revocable

CHECK ALL APPLICABLE:

- ☐ A/C ☐ Slab ☐ Room Addition ☐ Porch ☐ Deck ☐ Shed
☐ Solar ☐ Fireplace ☐ Woodburning Stove ☐ Single Family
☐ Fence/Wall (complete Section 4) ☒ Other: Studio

1B. Construction cost estimate: \$ 80,000.00

1C. If this is a revision of a previously approved active permit, see Permit # _____

PART TWO: COMPLETE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND EXTEND/ADDITIONS

2A. Type of sewage disposal: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Septic 03 ☐ Other: _____
2B. Type of water supply: 01 ☐ WSSC 02 ☐ Well 03 ☐ Other: _____

PART THREE: COMPLETE ONLY FOR FENCE/RETAINING WALL

3A. Height _____ feet _____ inches

3B. Indicate whether the fence or retaining wall is to be constructed on one of the following locations:

- ☐ On party line/property line ☐ Entirely on land of owner ☐ On public right of way/easement

I hereby certify that I have the authority to make the foregoing application, that the application is correct, and that the construction will comply with plans approved by all agencies listed and I hereby acknowledge and accept this to be a condition for the issuance of this permit.

Brian McCarthy sd
Signature of owner or authorized agent

2-21-20
Date

Approved: _____ For Chairperson, Historic Preservation Commission

Disapproved: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application/Permit No.: _____ Date Filed: _____ Date Issued: _____

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED AND THE
REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION.**

1. WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

- a. Description of existing structure(s) and environmental setting, including their historical features and significance:

See attached memo

- b. General description of project and its effect on the historic resource(s), the environmental setting, and, where applicable, the historic district:

See attached memo

2. SITE PLAN

Site and environmental setting, drawn to scale. You may use your plat. Your site plan must include:

- a. the scale, north arrow, and date;
- b. dimensions of all existing and proposed structures; and
- c. site features such as walkways, driveways, fences, ponds, streams, trash dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and landscaping.

3. PLANS AND ELEVATIONS

You must submit 2 copies of plans and elevations in a format no larger than 11" x 17". Plans on 8 1/2" x 11" paper are preferred.

- a. Schematic construction plans, with marked dimensions, indicating location, size and general type of walls, window and door openings, and other fixed features of both the existing resource(s) and the proposed work.
- b. Elevations (facades), with marked dimensions, clearly indicating proposed work in relation to existing construction and, when appropriate, context. All materials and fixtures proposed for the exterior must be noted on the elevations drawings. An existing and a proposed elevation drawing of each facade affected by the proposed work is required.

4. MATERIALS SPECIFICATIONS

General description of materials and manufactured items proposed for incorporation in the work of the project. This information may be included on your design drawings.

5. PHOTOGRAPHS

- a. Clearly labeled photographic prints of each facade of existing resource, including details of the affected portions. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.
- b. Clearly label photographic prints of the resource as viewed from the public right-of-way and of the adjoining properties. All labels should be placed on the front of photographs.

6. TREE SURVEY

If you are proposing construction adjacent to or within the dripline of any tree 6" or larger in diameter (at approximately 4 feet above the ground), you must file an accurate tree survey identifying the size, location, and species of each tree of at least that dimension.

7. ADDRESSES OF ADJACENT AND CONFRONTING PROPERTY OWNERS

For ALL projects, provide an accurate list of adjacent and confronting property owners (not tenants), including names, addresses, and zip codes. This list should include the owners of all lots or parcels which adjoin the parcel in question, as well as the owner(s) of lot(s) or parcel(s) which lie directly across the street/highway from the parcel in question.

BENNETT FRANK McCARTHY

a r c h i t e c t s , i n c .

1400 Spring Street, Suite 320, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-2755

21 February 2020

To: Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)
Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
c/o Department of Permitting Services, Montgomery County

From: Brian McCarthy

Re: Historic Area Work Permit for the Contributing Resource at 40 Columbia Avenue in the Takoma Park Historic District.
Addenda to HAWP: **Written Description of Project**

Addendum a.

The house is a 2-story wood frame, shingled cottage style in the Takoma Park historic district, sited on a sloping lot on a residential street with mature trees. The house, which includes a detached one-story one-car garage, was built in the 1920s and is registered as a Contributing Resource.

The main residence has a saltbox style massing when viewed from the northern/driveway side, with the main roof slope extending forward to cover a former front porch that was enclosed by a prior owner. The foundation consists of rusticated concrete masonry units, and the wood framed walls above are clad in painted wood shingles. The roofing is composition fiberglass shingles. In a curious departure from the norm of its era the roof has no overhangs.

The garage, accessed from the driveway at the right/northern side of the lot, is set 27 feet behind the house and bermed into the considerable hillside that rises up to the section of Carroll Avenue near the volunteer fire station. The garage walls are a mix of wood framing above grade and rusticated concrete block below grade. The wood walls are clad with non-original, unpainted cedar shingles. The garage entrance consists of a pair of 4 ft wide, side hinged, half-lite doors. The existing garage is 12'-4" wide x 18'-4" deep and sits 5 feet off the side property line.

The existing garage structure is in general disrepair. Per the enclosed photos several sections of the foundation are failing, and the framing has been compromised by termites and water damage. A tree fell against the garage about 20 years ago and most of the southern wall framing and sheathing had to be replaced. Many of the original rafter tails have been eaten or rotted back to the point where they no longer sit on the top plate, and had to be sistered with new lumber.

Addendum b.

We are proposing to replace the garage with a modest, 1-story studio to accommodate the owner's home business, which needs roughly twice the area the current garage provides. As the site plan shows, there are mature trees behind the garage that constrain our ability to enlarge the garage to the rear, which would require excavating deeper into the hillside. The zoning setback on the northern side of the garage is already at the minimum allowed. So our only options are to expand the garage footprint forward toward the street, and southward into the center of the property. The proposed studio will mimic the street façade of the garage with comparable massing, height, width, and doors, but 6 feet closer to the street.

The portion of the studio to the left/south side of the driveway will be set back 8 feet, behind a low shed roofed porch, to subordinate that element to the gabled garage façade.

The new structure, like the existing, will have a block foundation wall where needed to retain earth, with wood framing above. Unlike the existing rusticated block, we propose to finish the new foundation with a cementitious parging/stucco. The upper frame walls will be finished with cement fiberboard shingles to acknowledge the painted wood shingle finish on the main house. The garage doors will be restored/rebuilt and reinstalled to retain the appearance of a garage. The roof will be "asphalt" shingles, like the main house.

Lastly, we'd like to mention two similar precedents in the Historic District, both on Willow Avenue:

- 7309 Willow Ave (HPC case #37/03-10JJJ). In this case a detached one-story garage was demolished and replaced with a 1-½ story "writer's studio".
- 7304 Willow Ave (HPC case #37/03-17HHH). In this case an attached one-story garage was demolished and replaced with a 1-½ story in-law suite.

HAWP APPLICATION: MAILING ADDRESSES FOR NOTIFYING
 [Owner, Owner's Agent, Adjacent and Confronting Property Owners]

Owner's mailing address Diana M. Bradley 40 Columbia Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912	Owner's Agent's mailing address Brian McCarthy BFM Architects, Inc. 1400 Spring St. # 320 Silver Spring, MD 20910
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses	
Joan Meier 42 Columbia Ave. Takoma Park MD 20912	Bradley & Stephanie Dickie 38 Columbia Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912
David Pollock & Judy Kipich 7118 Poplar Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912	Danielle Rowan & Jacob McDermott 7131 Carroll Ave. Takoma Park, MD 20912

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue -Front elevation & driveway view from street



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Front elevation, driveway, neighbor - view from street

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Front entry & steps



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Right side elevation

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Rear elevation



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Left side elevation

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40. Columbia Avenue - Left side & partial front elevation



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Garage front elevation

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Garage left side elevation



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Garage rear elevation

Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Garage exterior detail, failing foundation



Detail: 40 Columbia Avenue - Garage interior detail, failed/buckled foundation.

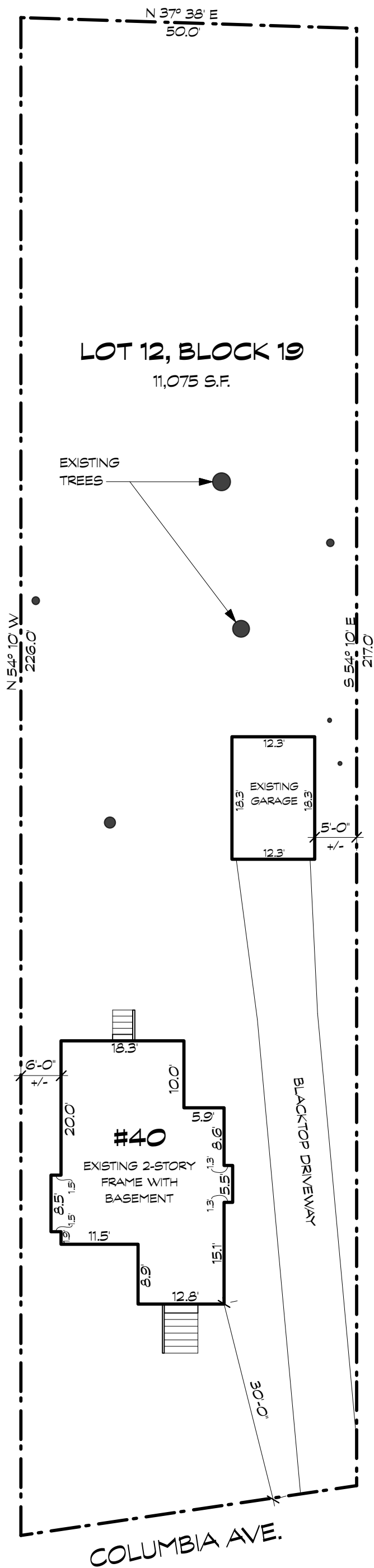
Existing Property Condition Photographs (duplicate as needed)



Detail: 40 Columbia Ave - Garage interior detail, DIY restoration after tree fall



Detail: 40 Columbia Ave. - Garage interior detail, termite damage at rafters.





1 EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

BENNETT FRANK MCCARTHY
architects, inc.

1400 Spring Street, Suite 320, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-2755
(301) 585-2222 www.bfmarch.com fax (301) 585-8917

DATE	ISSUE - REMARKS
9/5/19	EXISTING CONDITIONS

I CERTIFY THAT THESE
CONTRACT DOCUMENTS
WERE PREPARED UNDER
MY SUPERVISION OR
APPROVED BY ME AND I
AM A DULY LICENSED
REGISTERED ARCHITECT
UNDER THE LAWS OF THE
STATE OF MARYLAND.

LICENSE #: _____ EXPIRATION DATE: _____

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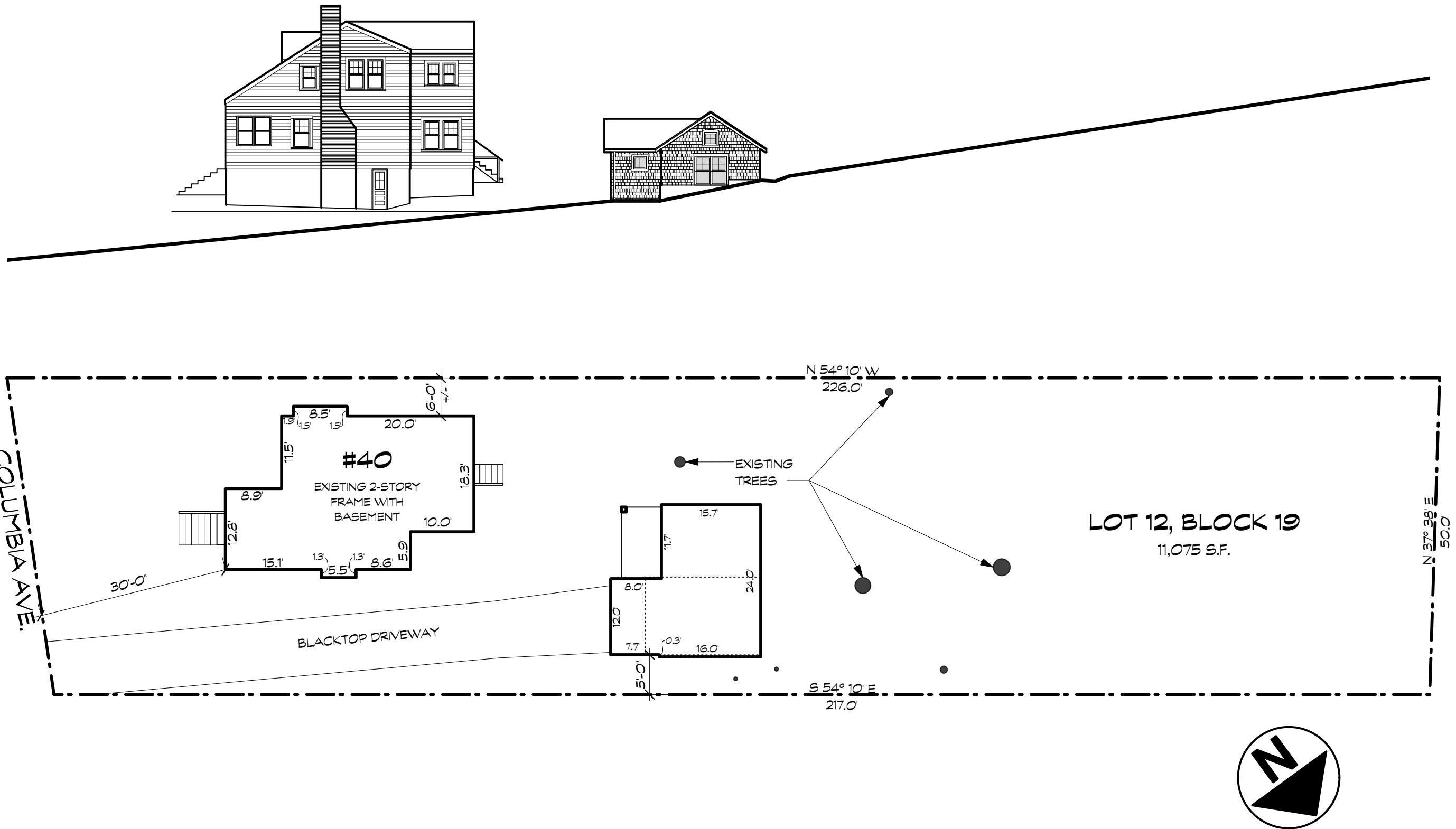
BRADLEY

40 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912
Project # 1938

EXISTING
ELEVATIONS

EC200

5 September 2019 - EXISTING CONDITIONS



SP-1

BRADLEY STUDIO
40 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

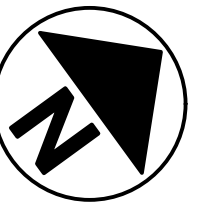
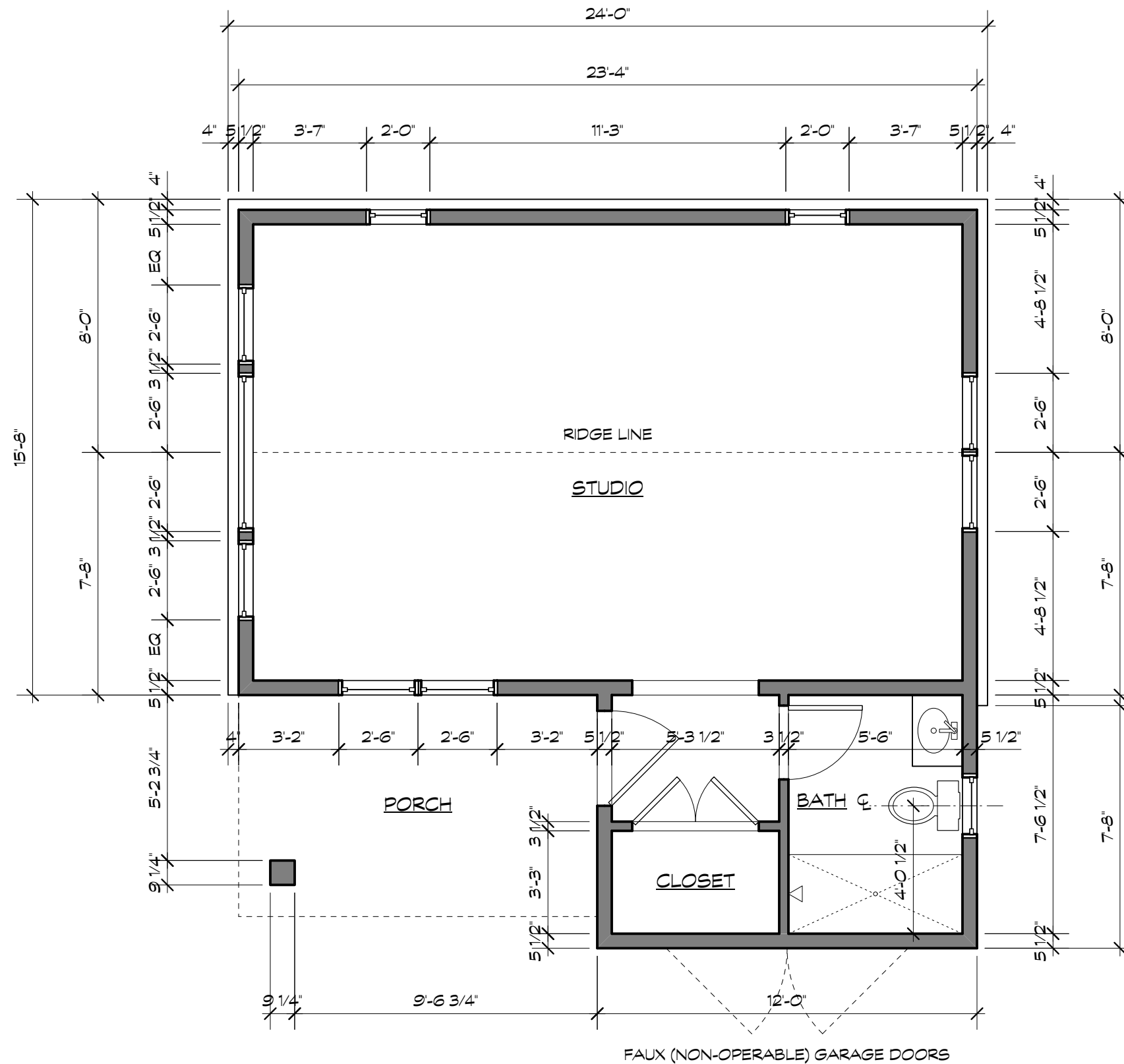
10 Feb. 2020

SITE PLAN
Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"

#1938

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SK-1

BRADLEY STUDIO

40 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

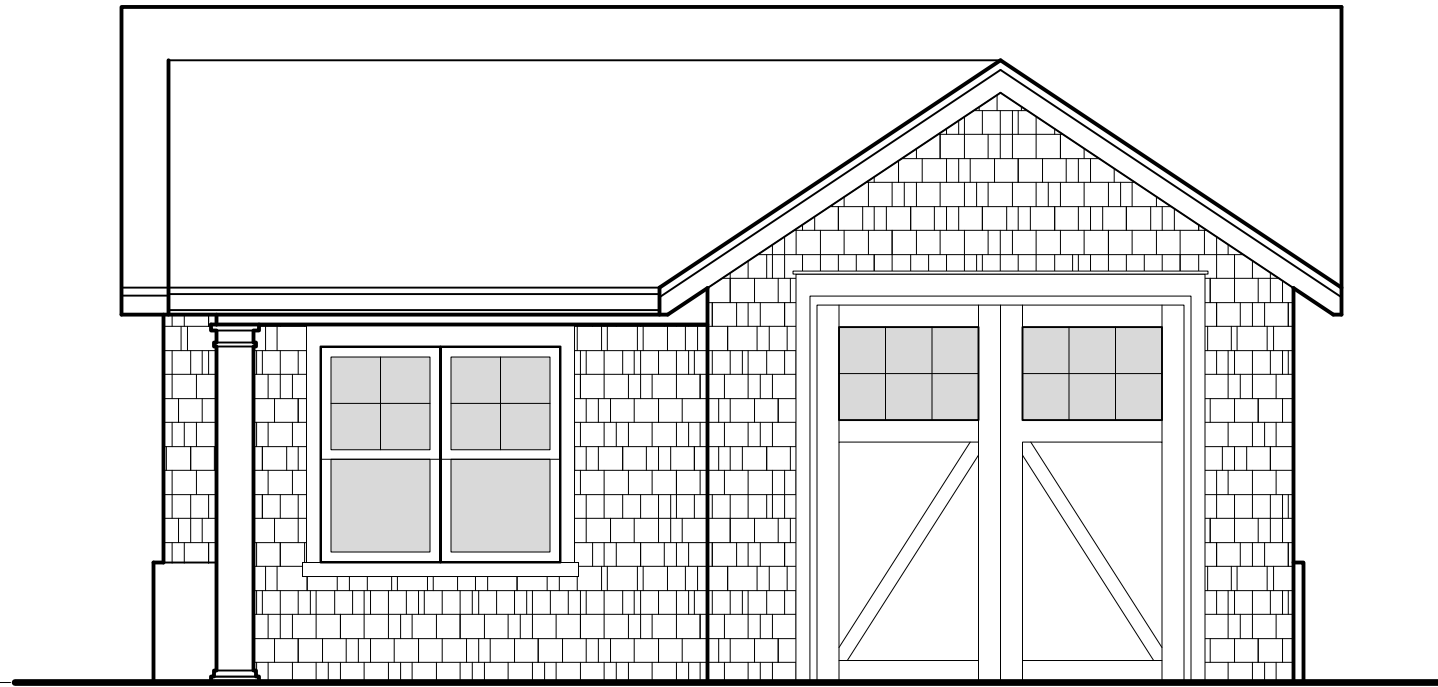
10 Feb. 2020

CONCEPT A FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

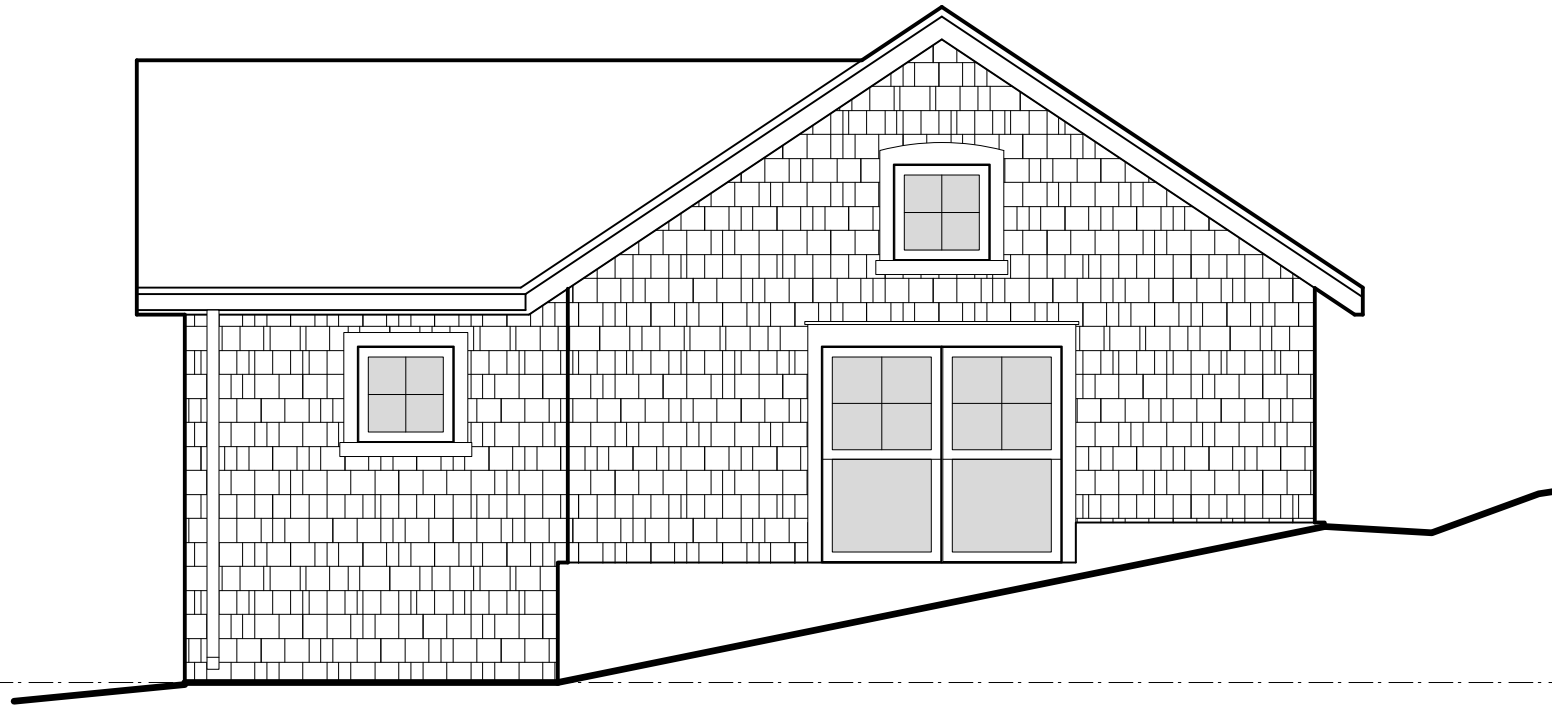
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BENNETT FRANK McCARTHY
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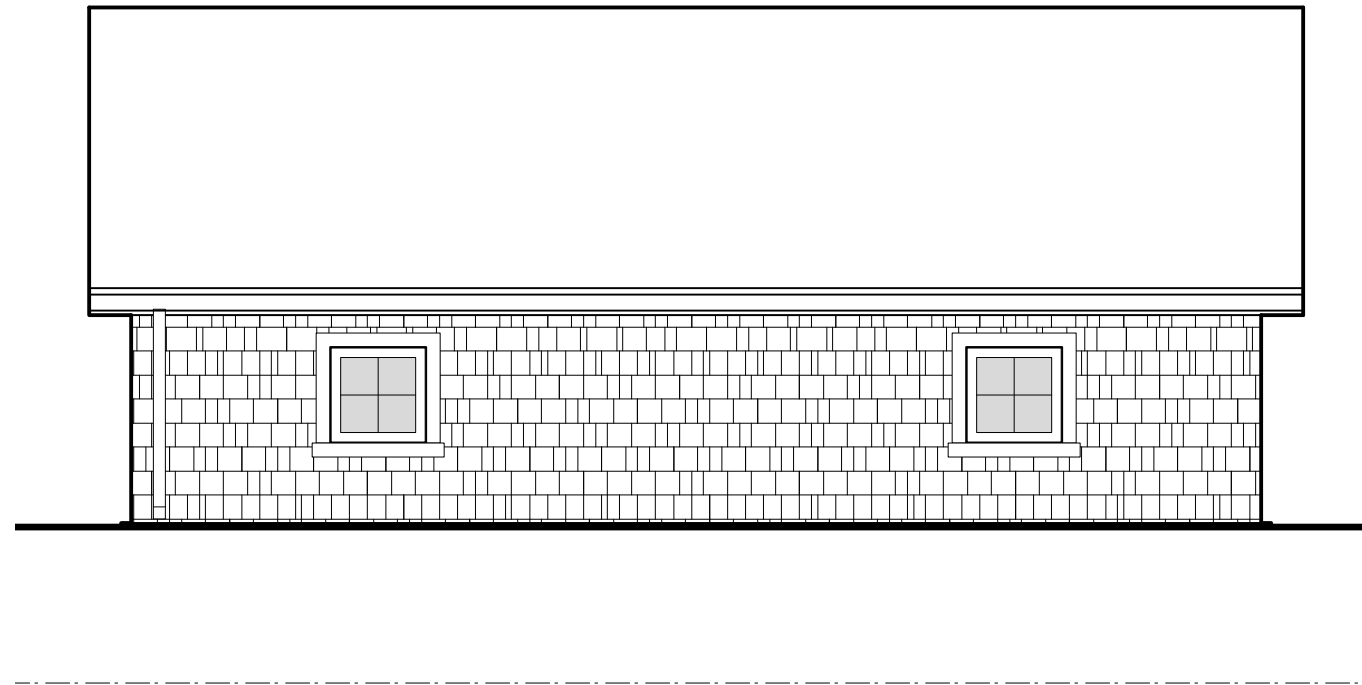
1400 Spring Street, Suite 320, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-2755
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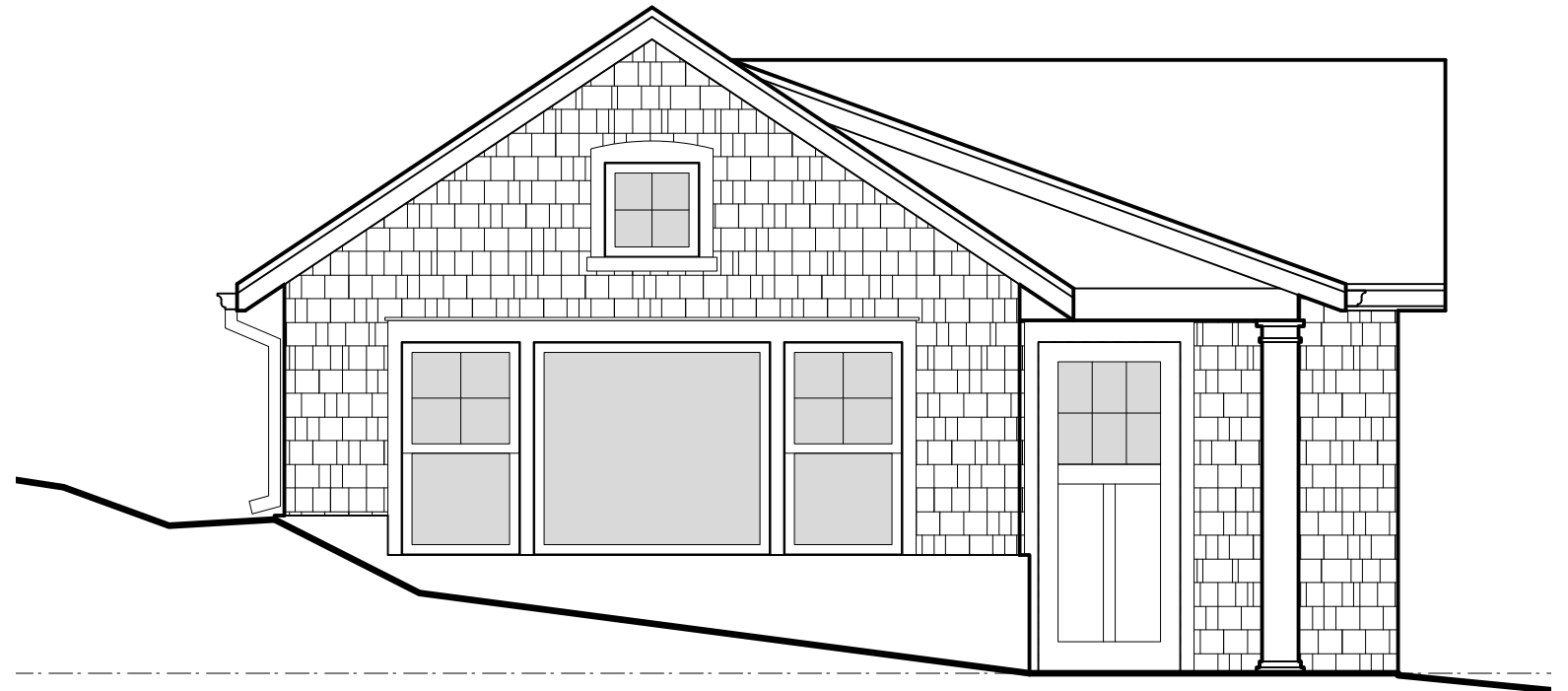
1 FRONT ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 SIDE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 REAR ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



4 SIDE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

SK-2

BRADLEY STUDIO

40 Columbia Avenue, Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

10 Feb. 2020

CONCEPT A ELEVATIONS

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

#1938

BENNETT FRANK MCCARTHY

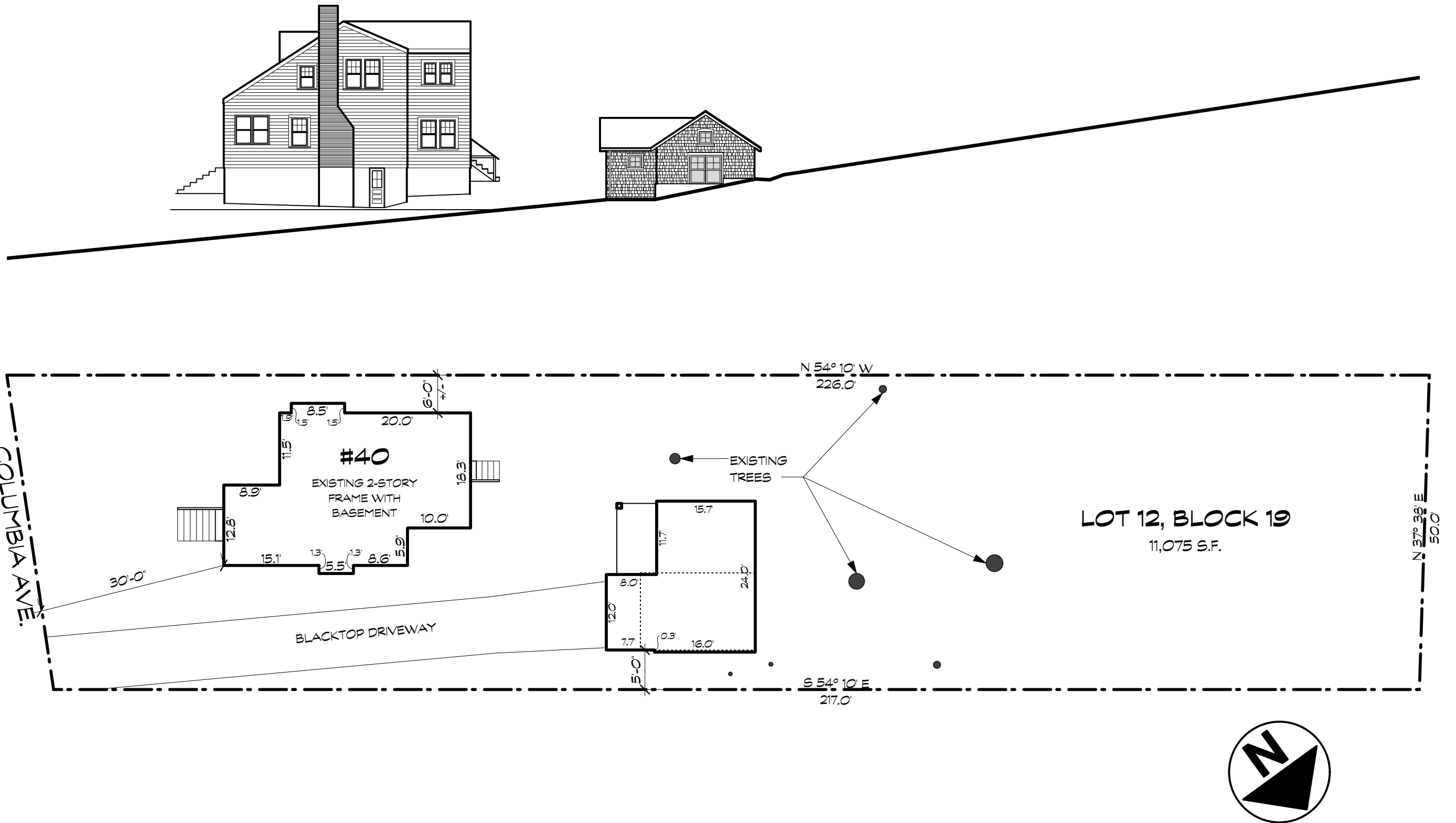
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SP-1

BRADLEY STUDIO
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10 Feb. 2020

SITE PLAN
Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"

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