

# Bethesda Downtown Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

## Submission Form (Revised March 2020)

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	The Avondale
File Number(s)	320200050, 120200220
Project Address	4526-4530 Avondale Street

Plan Type    ☐ Concept Plan    ☒ Sketch Plan    ☐ Site Plan    ☐ Consultation w/o Plan

### APPLICANT TEAM

	Name	Phone	Email
Primary Contact	Kevin Park, SJI	(703) 901-5370	kevin@sjinvestmentcorp.com
Architect	Perkins Eastman Architects, Brett R. Swiatocha, AIA, (202) 384-1898, b.swiatocha@perkinseastman.com		
Landscape Architect	MHG, David Post, ASLA, PLA, ISA, (301) 670-0840, dpost@mhgpa.com		

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

	Zone	Proposed Height	Proposed Density (SF/FAR)	Requested BOZ Density (SF/FAR)	MPDU %
Project Data	CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70	70'	3.77	33,121 SF	15
Proposed Land Uses	Multi-unit Residential				

### DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Schedule a Design Advisory Panel review date with the Design Advisory Panel Liaison.
2. At least two weeks prior to the scheduled Panel meeting, provide via email to the Design Advisory Panel Liaison the completed Submission Form and required drawings in PDF format. Incomplete applications will be returned for revision. **Applications deemed incomplete by the Liaison may result in the loss of the scheduled meeting date if not returned complete within the above time frame.**
3. Concept Plan and Sketch Plan applications must include the following, at a minimum:
  - Property location plan showing three-block context radius
  - Illustrative site plan showing two-block context radius
  - Perspective images of all building faces from a 3-D model that show the proposal in the built context, as well as with nearby buildings approved by the Planning Board. (Bring the 3-D model to the Panel review.)
  - 3-D building massing diagrams illustrating:
    - both strict conformance with the design guidelines and the proposed design, indicating where the proposal does not conform and how the alternative treatments meet the intent of the guidelines
    - the maximum standard method of development density on site
    - the maximum mapped density on site
  - Precedent images showing scale, architectural character, materiality, etc. (Concept & Sketch Plans only).

Except as noted, Site Plan applications must include all of the above, as well as, at a minimum:

- Floor plans for parking level(s), ground floor, typical floor, roof, and unique conditions
- Building/site sections showing full adjacent street sections with opposite building face
- Elevations for each façade
- Key perspective views expressing character of the building elevations and streetscape.



## DESIGN GUIDELINES CONFORMANCE

The primary goal of the DAP is to provide advice and recommendations that will heighten design excellence and improve the quality of architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture in Downtown Bethesda. Simple compliance with the numerical standards in the Design Guidelines does not in itself achieve Design Excellence.

STREET TYPE(S): Neighborhood Residential

	Recommended	Provided	Alternative Compliance?
Sidewalk Zone			
Planting/Furnishing Zone	6 - 8 ft.	6 ft.	No
Pedestrian Thorough Zone	6 - 10 ft.	6 ft.	No
Frontage Zone	5 - 8 ft.	8 ft.	No
Building Placement			
Build-to Line (from street curb)	20 - 25 ft.	20 ft.	See Statement
Building Form			
Base Height	2 - 3 stories	2 stories	No
Step-Back	15 - 20 ft.	varies: 8 - 11 ft.	See Statement

### DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTION OR TRAIL?

☐ Yes ☒ No

- If yes, please provide sectional diagrams demonstrating conformance with Section 2.1.9 of the Guidelines

### DOES THE PROJECT INCLUDE A SECTOR-PLAN RECOMMENDED PARK OR OPEN SPACE?

☐ Yes ☒ No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with Section 2.2 of the Guidelines

## BUILDING FORM

	Recommended	Provided	Alternative Compliance?
Tower			
Separation Distance	45-60'	N/A	See Statement
Step-Back	Per Street Type	8 - 11 ft.	See Statement
Bulk Reduction Methods	Step-back, modulated and articulated facade, changes in plane, varied frame and mullions		

### IS THE PROJECT LOCATED IN A DISTRICT IDENTIFIED IN CHAPTER 3 OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

☒ Yes ☐ No

- If yes, please provide diagrams demonstrating conformance with the District-Specific Guidelines

EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN POINTS REQUESTED (MIN: 10, MAX: 30): 20

- 10 Points: Generally consistent with the Design Guidelines and meets four of the CR Guideline Criteria
- 20 Points: Superlative design that in a uniquely compelling way meets the Design Guidelines or overcomes a significant site or similar constraint; a top example of design within Montgomery County
- 30 Points: Singular design that exemplifies the highest intent of the Design Guidelines and may be considered a top example of design within the Mid-Atlantic region



4546-4530 Avondale Street

Design Advisory Panel Sketch Plan Submission

Project Description

### **Introduction**

SJ Investment Corporation (the “Applicant”) is submitting this application to the Design Advisory Panel (“DAP”) to receive feedback on the Sketch Plan for the two properties, commonly known as 4526 and 4530 Avondale Street (collectively, the “Property”) located on the south side of Avondale Street, east of the intersection with Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda. The Property is comprised of 14,586 square feet of gross tract area, which is the basis for density calculation attributable to the Property as described in the application, and is zoned CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70. The Property is located in the area described as “Wisconsin Avenue Corridor” in the Bethesda Downtown Plan, as adopted by the Montgomery County Council on May 25, 2017 (the “Plan”).

The Applicant proposes to redevelop the existing low-rise multi-family residential use of the Property with a mid-rise 7-story multi-family residential building that will provide approximately 55,000 square feet of density and approximately 60 units (including 15% moderately priced dwelling units, or “MPDUs”), as well as underground parking and penthouse amenity space (the “Project”). The Project is the first redevelopment within the block to move forward based on the guidelines set forth in the 2017 Bethesda Downtown Plan (“Plan”) and the proposed development supports the vision for a sustainable downtown outlined in the Plan by adding to the density and mix of housing options available in walkable proximity to transit, jobs, shopping, and recreation of downtown Bethesda.

## **Design Narrative**

As outlined in the Plan, Avondale Street is envisioned as a transition zone between the existing and allowable higher density development to the south and the lower density and lower height development to the north. The existing condition of development transitions abruptly from the approximately 240 ft tall towers south of the Property to the two-story garden-style apartments on Avondale Street. A mid-rise development as proposed creates a more appropriate transition down in height to the generally low-rise structures existing north of Avondale Street.

The project massing and density reflect the principals of the Plan and the Bethesda Downtown Plan Design Guidelines (the “Guidelines”) with the height of the building stepping down on the north side of the project, creating a scale that is compatible with the existing lower density multifamily buildings on Avondale Street which will remain part of the street character for the foreseeable future. As the first infill site on the block to redevelop, the design of the project must be sensitive to the scale and character of the existing context while anticipating the relationship to future redevelopment of adjacent properties to the east and west.

### **Streetscape Character**

Avondale Street is characterized in the Bethesda Downtown Plan and Design Guidelines as a Bike Priority Street and Canopy Corridor. The redevelopment that is anticipated along this section of street will provide opportunities to enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience through improvements to the streetscape. Improvements proposed in the redevelopment of the Property include widening the right-of-way along the length of the property, widening the sidewalk, and providing soil volumes of no less than 600 cubic as recommended in the Plan to support the growth of canopy trees that will enhance the character of the street and encourage walking and biking. Planting along the frontage zone and throughout the project will prioritize the use of native and adaptive species that will reduce the

demand for irrigation. As part of prioritizing the pedestrian and canopy tree facilities of the streetscape, the project is proposing an on-street loading zone along the building frontage to eliminate the need for an additional curb cut to access off-street loading. With the increased frequency of small deliveries to properties and continued increase in rideshare pick-up / drop-off, this zone in front of the building provides a location for those activities to occur without inhibiting the flow of traffic on the narrow street.

### **Base Expression**

The building frontage on Avondale Street is split by a recess in the façade to articulate the building as two linked masses of smaller scale as opposed to one continuous building face. The resulting articulation of two-story “pavilions” that makeup the base of the building responds to the widths and heights of the existing context to the east, west, and north. Transparency created by large openings activates the base of the building and encourages visual connectivity between the ground floor of the private development and the public sidewalk. Fine grain articulation of planes, textured materials, and landscape elements will be developed to create a visually engaging interface between the building and the ground plane. Per the Guidelines, the base of the building is located at the Build-to Line approximately 23ft from the existing curb line (approximately 20ft from the proposed revised curb). Within the exceptions to building placement allowable for entrances and for architectural interest, the entrance lobby of the building projects approximately 5ft beyond the Build-to line as a crisply detailed “glass box” that distinguishes the entrance to the building as a special architectural element and adds visual interest at the pedestrian scale.

### **Tower Expression**

The form of the building steps back between 8ft and 11ft above the 2-story base to reinforce the relationship to the existing 2-story context. The step-back is less than the 15ft-20ft dimension

recommended in the guidelines due to the limited size and depth of the Property. The proposed design utilizes alternative compliance methods of reducing tower bulk as outlined in the Guidelines for buildings less than 90'-120' or for sites with limited size or property depth. Similar to the expression of the base, the scale and proportion of the tower is modulated by a change in plane that creates a reading of the massing as two linked towers as opposed to a continuous broad-faced tower. A change in plane and material at the third floor reinforces the expression of the smaller scale base and limits the apparent faces of the tower above. Projecting window surrounds for the larger openings at the corners of each of the tower faces will create additional depth and shadow on the façade. Articulating the window surrounds with a material that contrasts with the primary façade materiality will add to the visual interest of the project.

While the Plan supports the development of taller buildings between the project site and Wisconsin Avenue to the west, the existing adjacent low-rise developments are not currently being contemplated for redevelopment. As such, the west façade of the project will be a prominent element of the design for the foreseeable future. The project is set back from the west property boundary to allow for the visible façade to be composed with window openings while fine grain articulation of materials and patterns will add visual interest to limited expanses of un-fenestrated wall surface on this public-facing façade of the building. Avondale Street is a dead-end street to the east off of Wisconsin Avenue. In the absence of thru-traffic from points east, the east elevation of the proposed project will be cumulatively less visible than the west façade. Additionally, with a limited number of properties between the project site and Wisconsin Avenue to the west, the Applicant anticipates most redevelopment of similar scale to the proposed project to occur east of the Property along Avondale Street, likely concealing the east façade of the building in the future. The site dimensions cannot accommodate a setback or step-back on both sides of the Property without severely inhibiting the viability of the project so the west-facing elevation was prioritized because of the factors outlined above.

that make it a highly visible façade that is less likely to be concealed by a future redevelopment of similar scale. Consistent with the Guidelines that open the possibility for party wall conditions as an alternative path for buildings less than 120ft or with limited size, the east elevation of the building is proposed as a party wall located at the property line. The visual impact of the party wall will be mitigated by material texture and patterns to create visual interest.

## **Conclusion**

The design of the building is contemporary in style, reflecting the evolving architectural character of Downtown Bethesda while responding to the scale and character of the existing context on Avondale Street. As a small infill site surrounded by similar sites with redevelopment potential, the proposed design articulates a building of elegantly simple massing strategies to create a project that is compatible with the existing low-rise context while anticipating an evolving character of the fabric that makes up Avondale Street. The proposed project embodies the design excellence expected for a new development in the Bethesda Community.

# The Avondale

Bethesda, Maryland

4526-4530 AVONDALE STREET

CONSOLIDATED SKETCH PLAN & PRELIMINARY PLAN  
DESIGN ADVISORY PANEL SUBMISSION  
JUNE 10, 2020

DEVELOPER

SJ INVESTMENT CORP

LAND USE COUNSEL

MILLER MILLER & CANBY

ARCHITECT

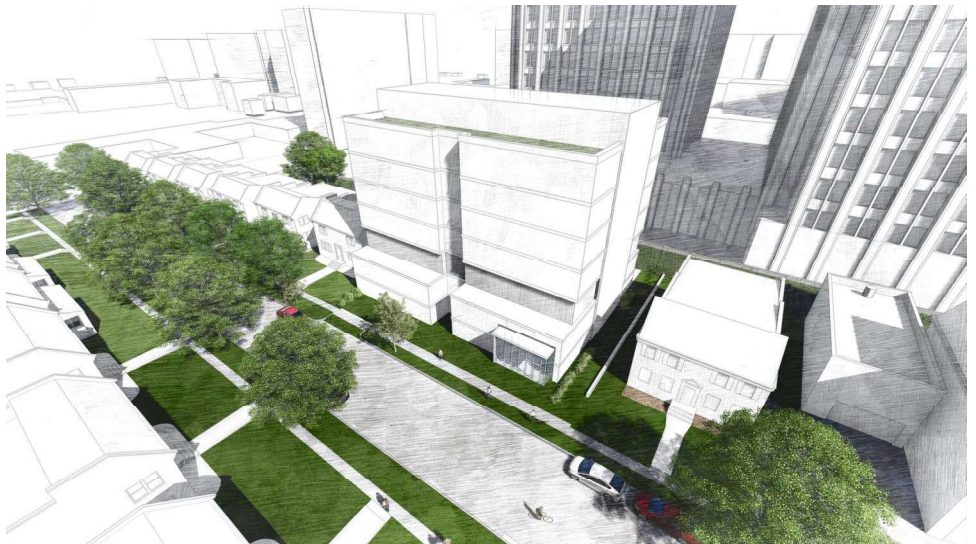
PERKINS EASTMAN ARCHITECTS, DPC

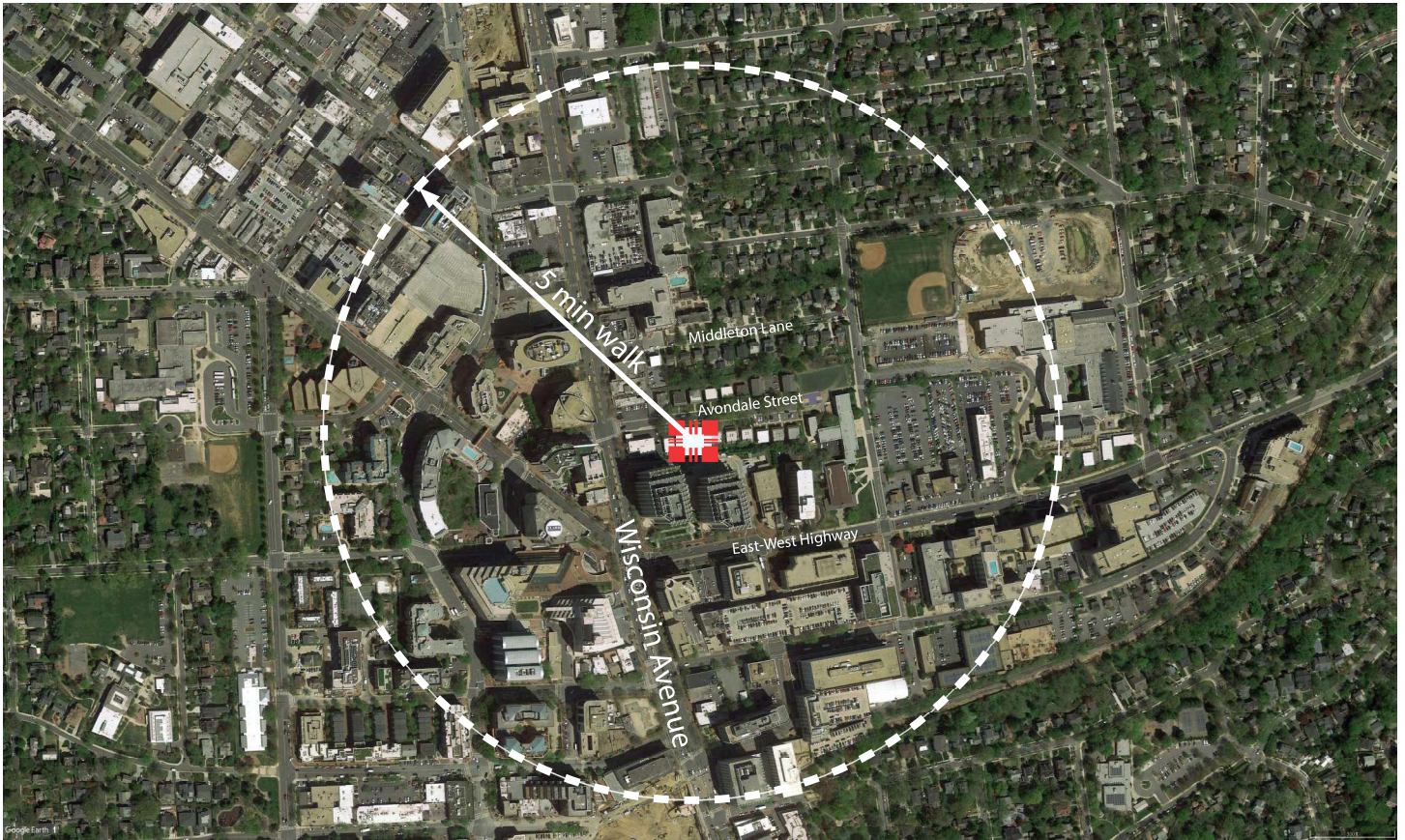
CIVIL ENGINEER / LANDSCAPE DESIGN

MHG

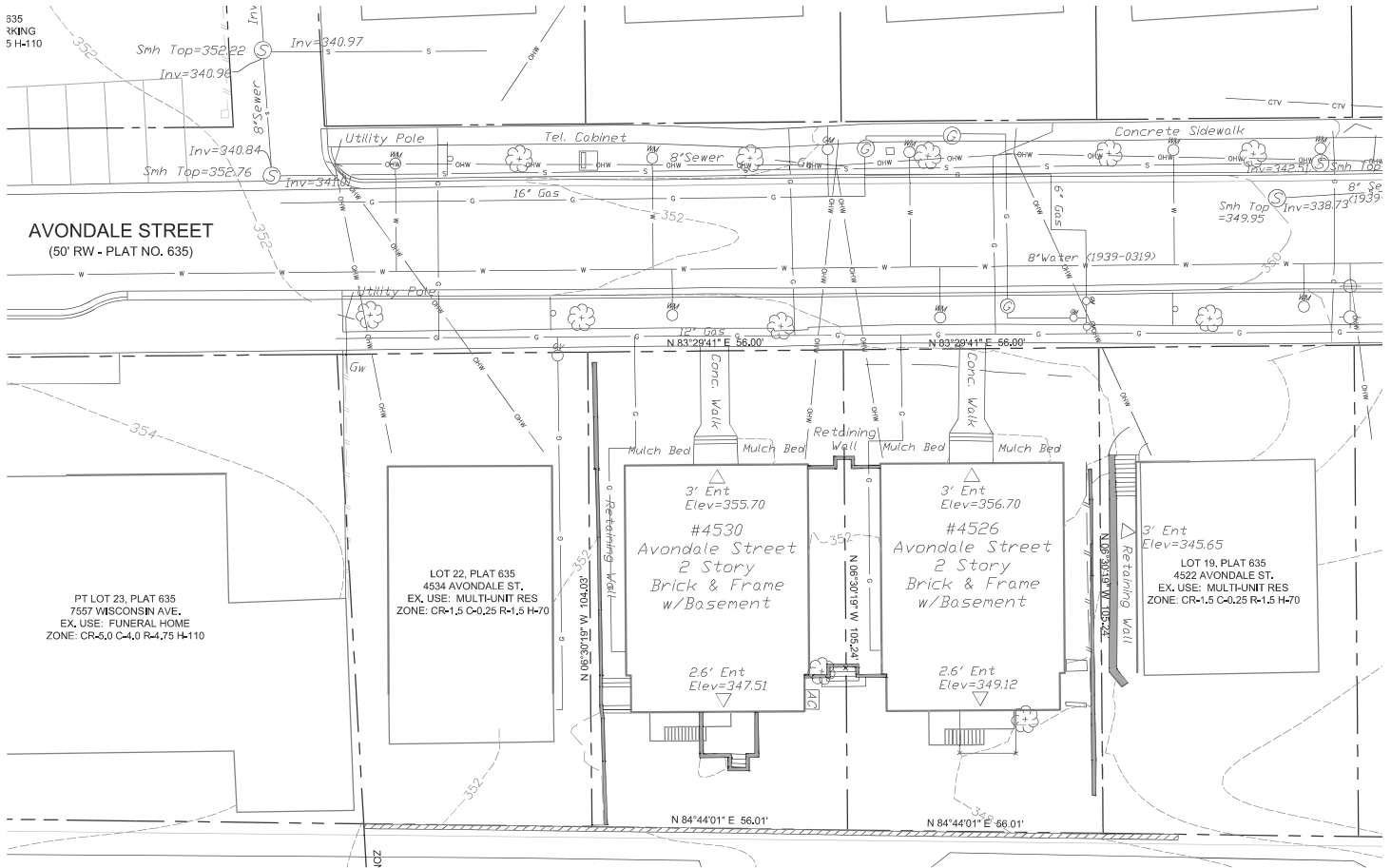
TRAFFIC CONSULTANT

WELLS + ASSOCIATES



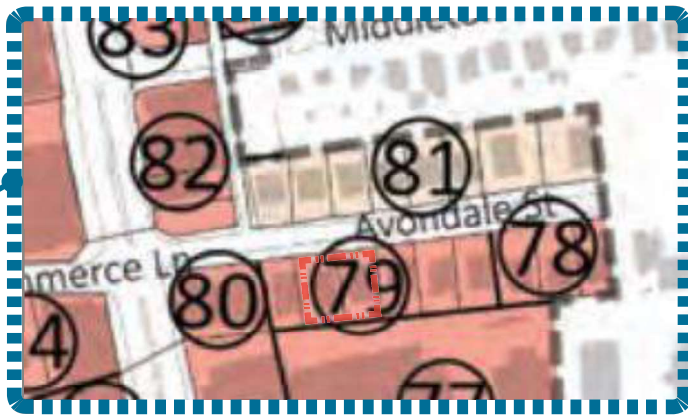












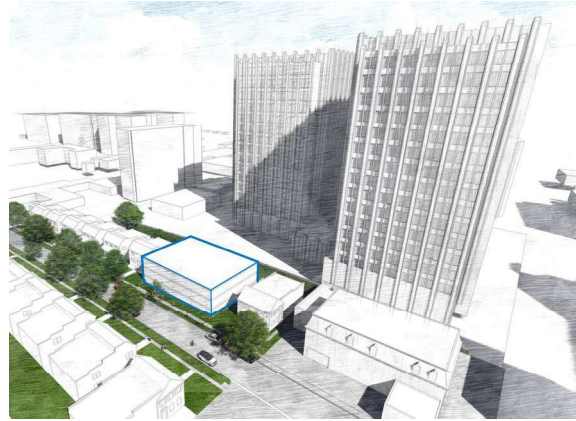
- Rezone Map #78 and #79 from its current R-10 zone to a CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to provide flexible development opportunities near the core of Downtown Bethesda and still maintain compatibility with its surrounding neighborhood.
- Rezone Map #80, #82, #83 and #86 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 90T to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #81 from its current zone of R-10 to a CRN zone to reflect the existing development and ensure compatibility with adjacent single residential detached units. Rezone to CRN 0.75, C-0, R-0.75, H-45.

PUBLIC BENEFIT POINTS SUMMARY (INCENTIVE DENSITY = 33,121 SF)		
PUBLIC BENEFIT (SEE CALCULATIONS)	POINTS POSSIBLE	POINTS ACHIEVED
MAJOR PUBLIC FACILITIES (CR ZONE)	40	9
CONNECTIVITY & MOBILITY MINIMUM PARKING	20	10
QUALITY BUILDING & SITE DESIGN ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATIONS EXCEPTIONAL DESIGN STRUCTURED PARKING TOWER STEP BACK	30 30 20 20	15 15 20 10
PROTECTION & ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BUILDING LOT TERMINATIONS (BLT) ENERGY CONSERVATION & GENERATION RECYCLING FACILITY PLAN	30 25 10	1 15 10
TOTAL POINTS (4 CATEGORIES)	205	105

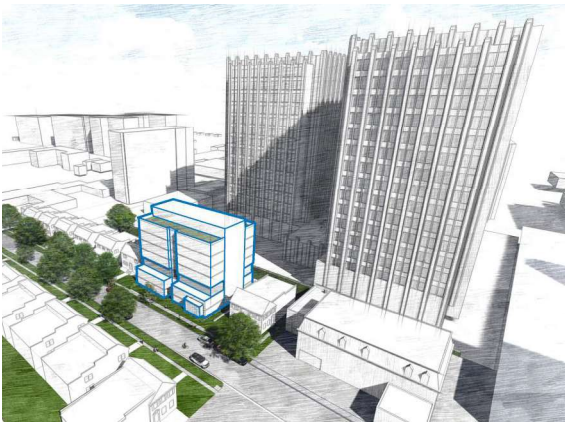
CR-1.5 C-0.25 R-1.5 H-70 ZONE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS OPTIONAL METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT - BETHESDA OVERLAY ZONE ZONING ORDINANCE SECTIONS 59-4.5.4 & 59-4.9.2 & BETHESDA DOWNTOWN PLAN		
TRACT AREA = 14,586 SF PRIOR DEDICATION = 2800 SF (AVONDALE STREET, PLAT NO. 635) PROPOSED DEDICATION = 560 SF NET SITE AREA = 11,226 SF		
DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	PERMITTED/REQUIRED	PROVIDED PER PLAN
PUBLIC BENEFIT POINTS	100 POINTS / 4 CATEGORIES	105 POINTS / 4 CATEGORIES
MINIMUM PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	0%	0%
MINIMUM GREEN COVER	35% (3,929 SF)	41% (4,665 SF)
MAXIMUM TOTAL DENSITY (FAR)	1.50 (21,879 SF)	3.77 (55,000 SF)
BOZ DENSITY	N/A	33,121 SF <sup>3</sup>
MAXIMUM COMMERCIAL DENSITY (FAR)	0.25 (3,646 SF)	0.00 (0 SF)
MAXIMUM RESIDENTIAL DENSITY (FAR)	1.5 (21,879 SF)	3.77 (55,000 SF)
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT	70 FT.	70 FT <sup>2</sup>
MINIMUM FRONT SETBACK (AVONDALE STREET)	0 FT	0 FT
MINIMUM SIDE SETBACK (EAST)	0 FT	TBD
MINIMUM SIDE SETBACK (WEST)	0 FT	0 FT
MINIMUM REAR SETBACK	0 FT	15 FT
MINIMUM VEHICLE PARKING SPACES REQUIRED <sup>1</sup>	24 SPACES <sup>4</sup>	20 SPACES <sup>5</sup>
MAXIMUM VEHICLE PARKING SPACES ALLOWED <sup>1</sup>	75 SPACES <sup>4</sup>	22 SPACES <sup>5</sup>
MINIMUM BICYCLE PARKING SPACES REQUIRED	30 SPACES <sup>4</sup>	30 SPACES <sup>5</sup>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THE PROJECT IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN THE BETHESDA PARKING DISTRICT, BUT IS CONSIDERED A REDUCED PARKING AREA.</li> <li>BUILDING HEIGHT IS MEASURED FROM AVONDALE STREET AT THE MIDDLE OF THE BUILDING FRONTAGE.</li> <li>A PARK IMPACT PAYMENT CONTRIBUTION AT THE APPLICABLE RATE PER SF OF APPROVED BOZ DENSITY GROSS FLOOR AREA IS TO BE MADE PRIOR TO ISSUANCE OF THE BUILDING PERMIT. FINAL AMOUNT TO BE DETERMINED AT SITE PLAN.</li> <li>PARKING REQUIREMENTS ARE BASED ON 60 EFFICIENCY &amp; ONE-BEDROOM UNITS, THE 80% BETHESDA OVERLAY ZONE ADJUSTMENT AND AN UNBUNDLED PARKING LEASE ARRANGEMENT.</li> <li>FINAL NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES PROVIDED TO BE DETERMINED AT SITE PLAN. A PARKING WAIVER WILL BE REQUESTED AT SITE PLAN AS NECESSARY.</li> </ol>		



OPTIONAL METHOD + BOZ DENSITY - 3.77 FAR



MAPPED DENSITY - 1.5 FAR



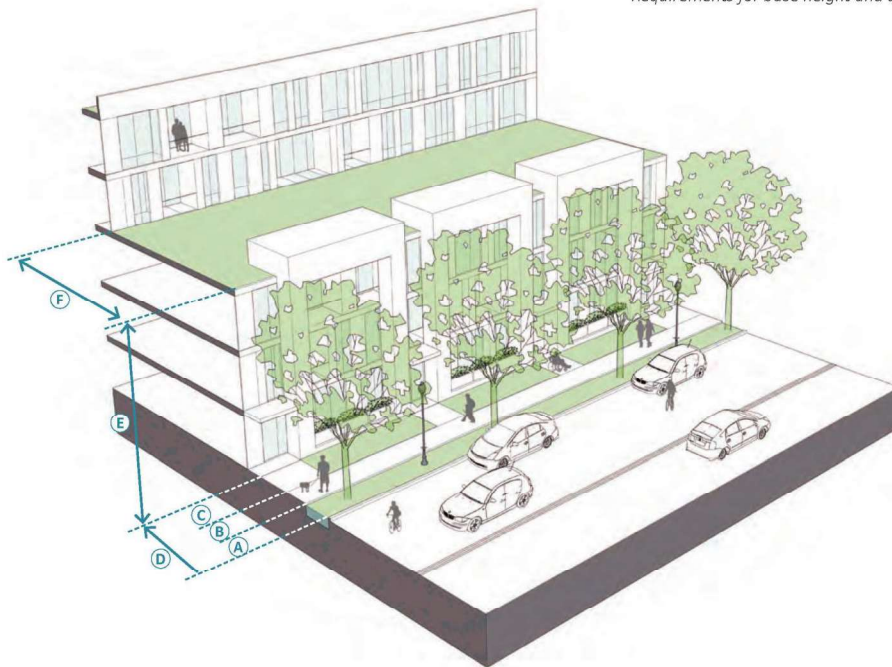
OPTIONAL METHOD + BOZ DENSITY WITH ARTICULATED MASSING - 3.77 FAR



STANDARD METHOD - 0.5 FAR



County Code Chapter 59 Section 4.1.8  
Requirements for base height and up



## 2.1.8 Neighborhood Residential Street

Neighborhood Residential Streets are narrow, low-volume streets that have on-street parking and provide for very slow moving local traffic. They are primarily lined with low-rise residential buildings, townhouses and detached homes.

**Intent:** Building and sidewalk designs along Neighborhood Residential Streets should provide landscaped local access creating a casual walking experience within a garden environment. The height of building frontages should reflect the low-rise scale of surrounding development and include elements such as frequent ground floor residential entries.

**Table 2.07: Neighborhood Residential Street**

### Sidewalk Zones

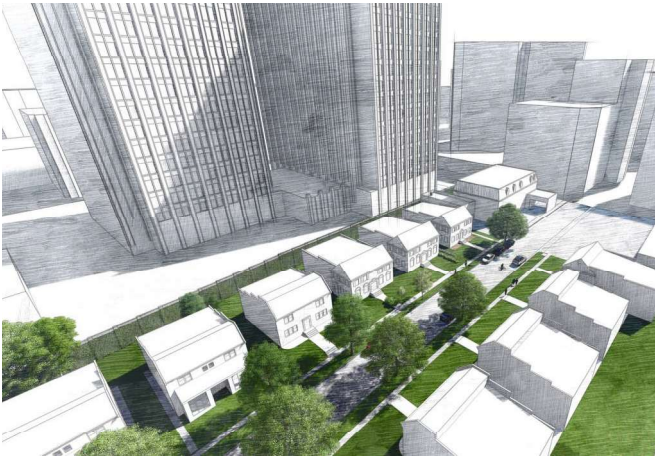
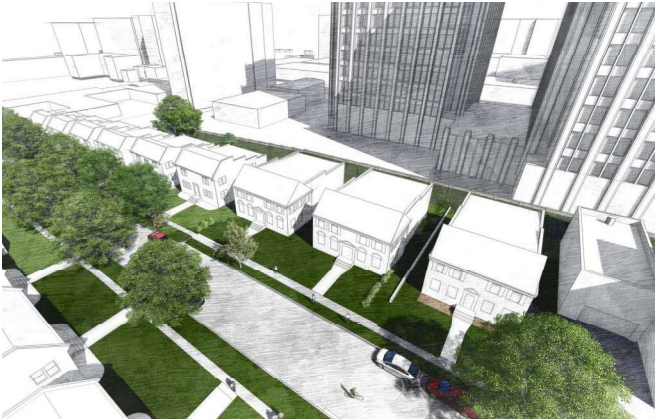
- A. Planting/Furnishing Zone: 6 - 8 ft.
- B. Pedestrian Through Zone: 6 - 10 ft.
- C. Frontage Zone: 5 - 8 ft. min.

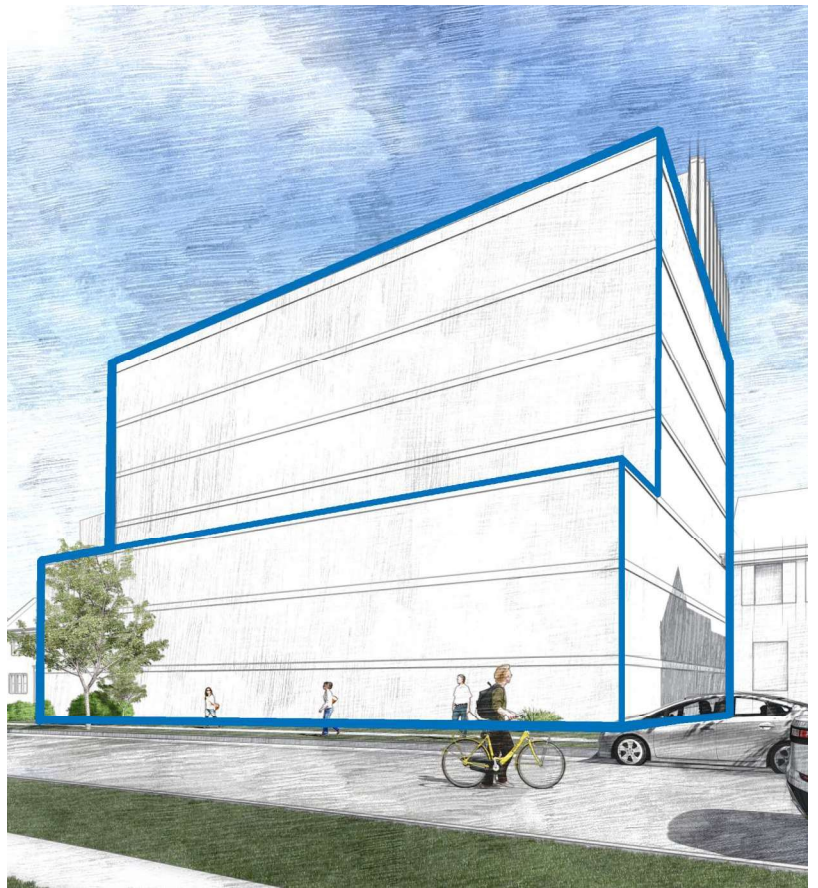
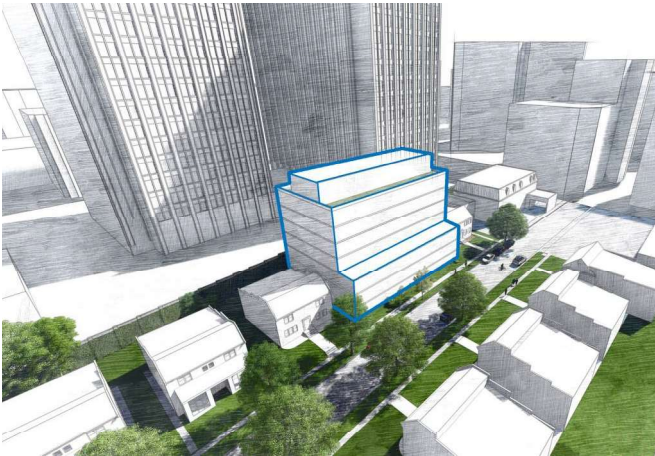
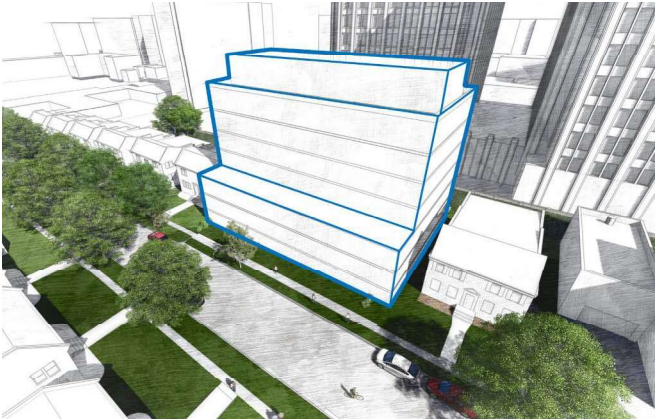
### Building Placement

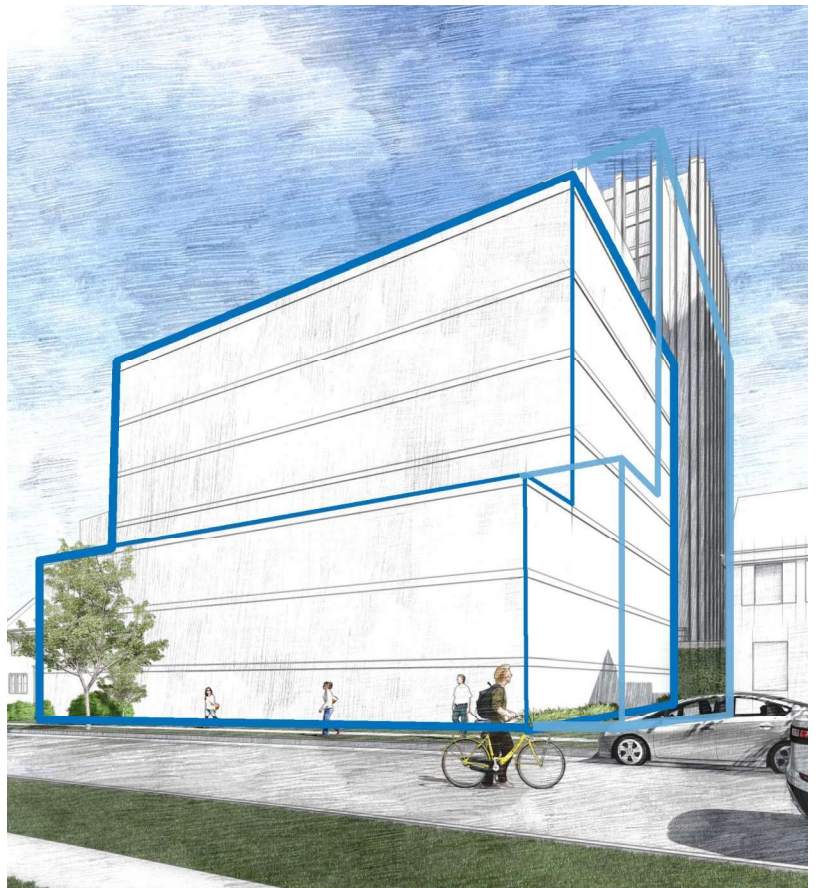
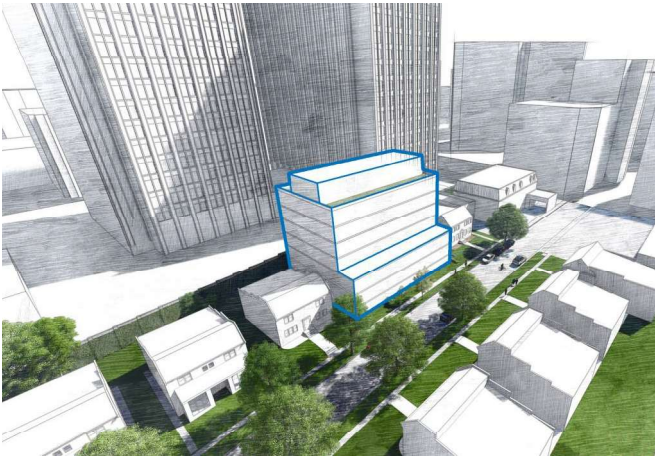
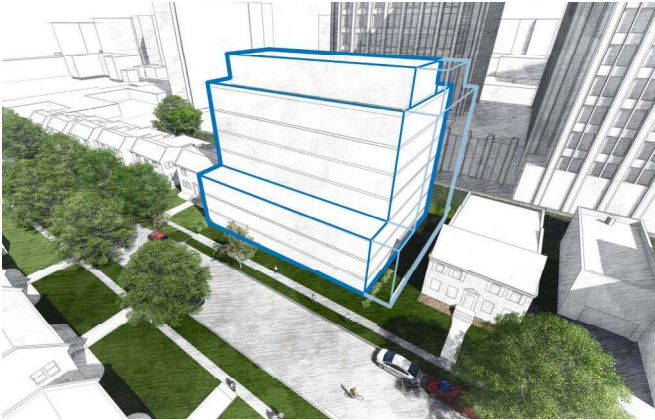
- D. Build-to Line: 20 - 25 ft. from street curb

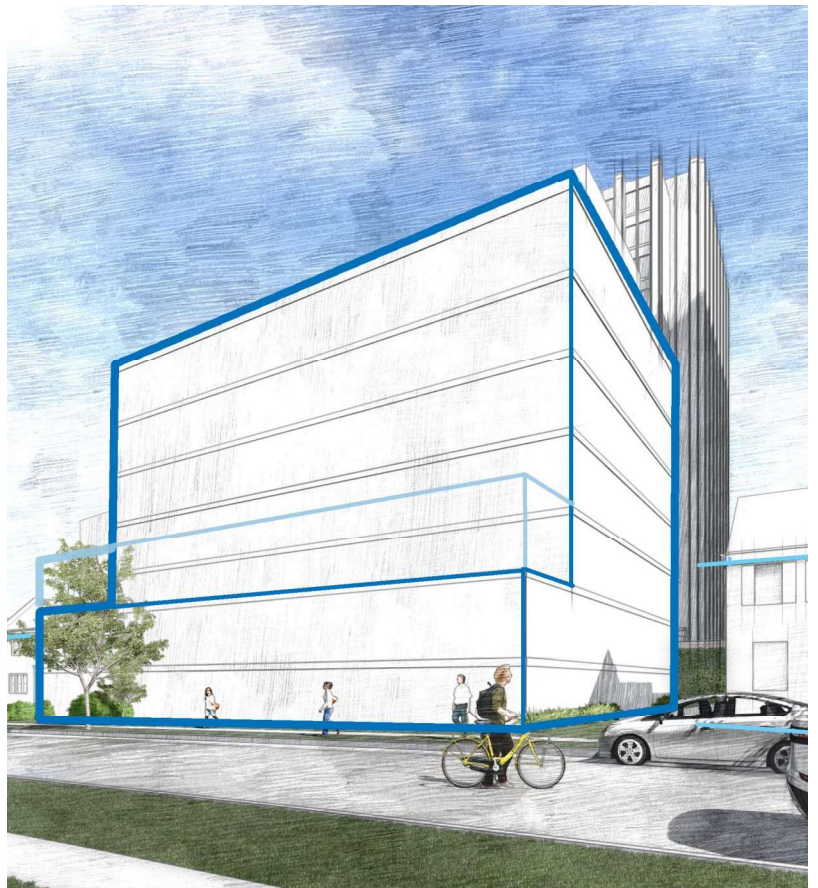
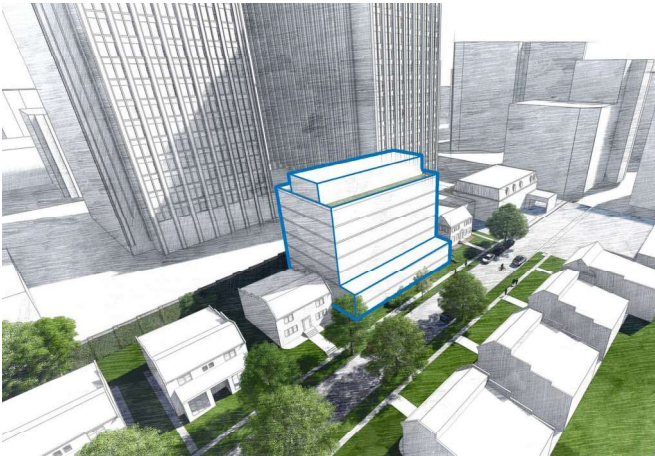
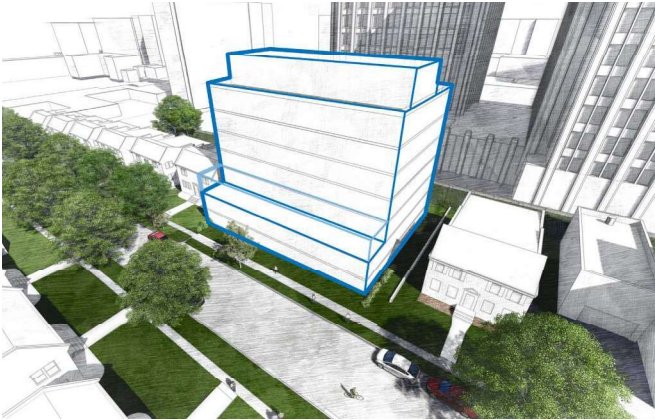
### Building Form

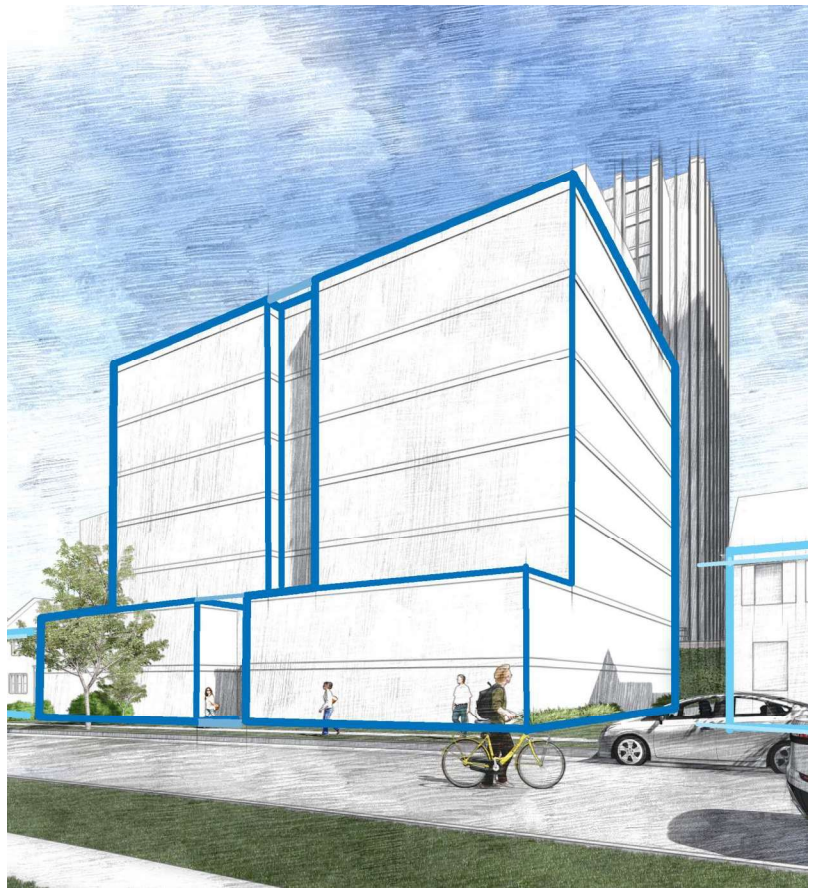
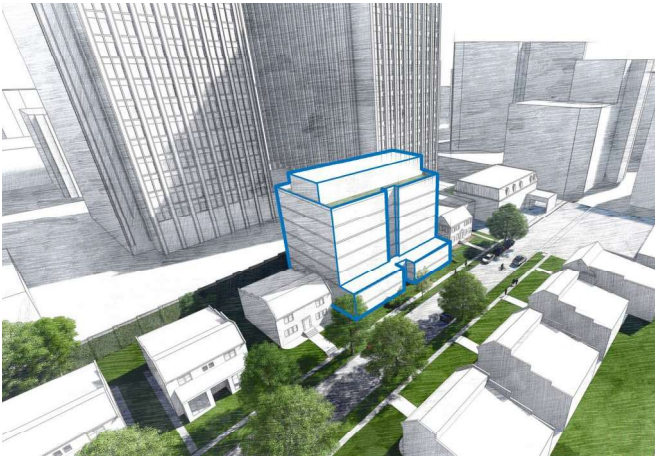
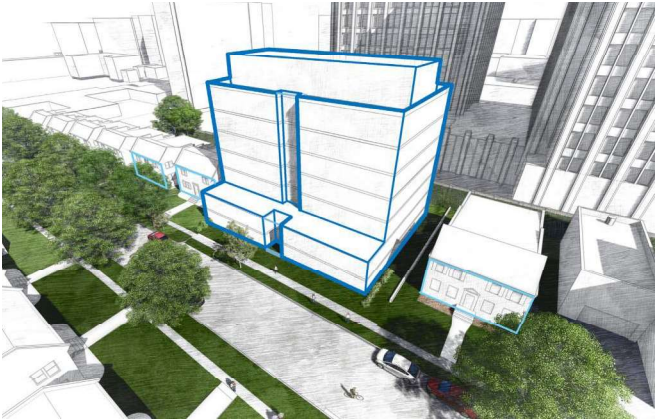
- E. Base Height\*: 2 - 3 stories (25 - 35 ft.)
- F. Step-back\*: 15 - 20 ft.

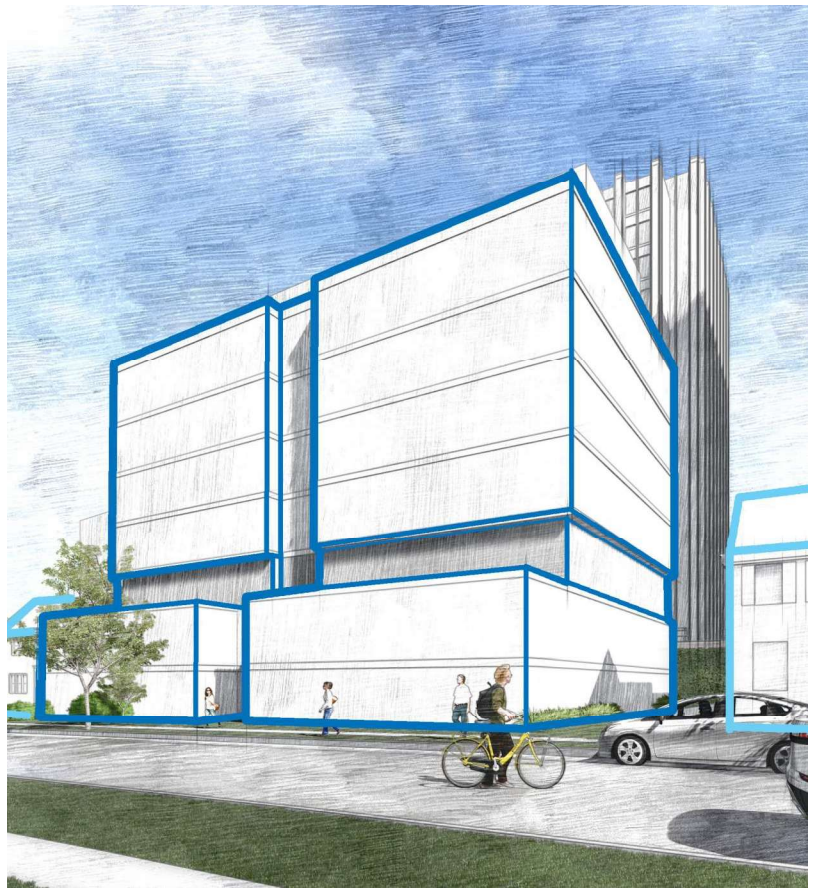
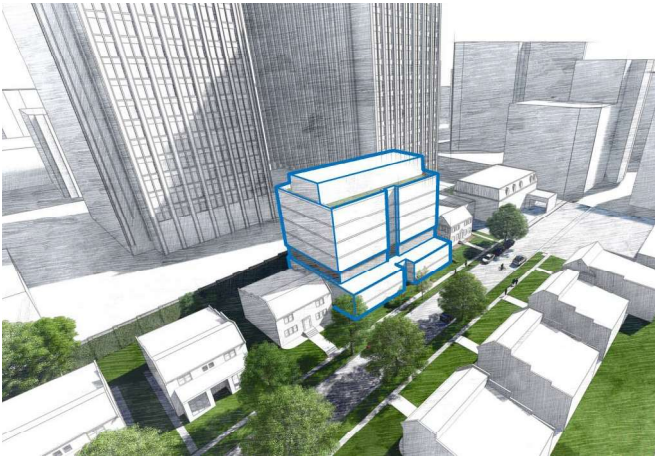
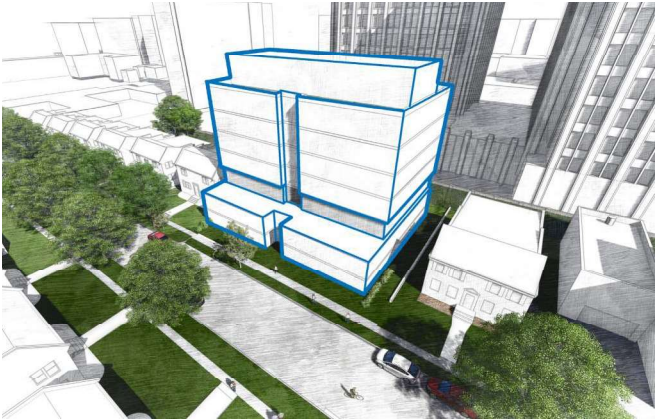








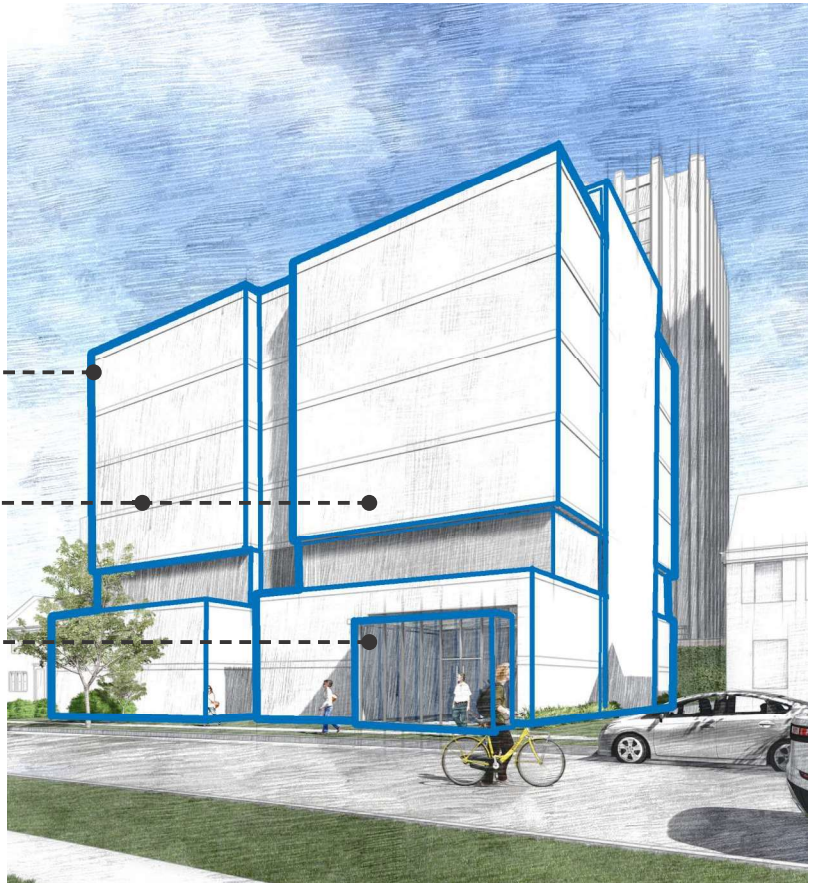




DUE TO THE LIMITED SIZE OF THE PROPERTY, THE EAST WALL OF THE BUILDING IS PROPOSED AS A PARTY WALL. THE VISUAL IMPACT OF THE PARTY WALL WILL BE MITIGATED THROUGH MATERIAL TEXTURE AND PATTERN.

TOWER STEP-BACK ABOVE TWO STORY BASE IS LESS THAN THE 15-20FT STEP-BACK RECOMMENDED IN THE DESIGN GUIDELINES. PROPOSED STEP-BACK VARIES BETWEEN 8FT AT THE PRIMARY BUILDING FACES AND 11FT AT THE SETBACK

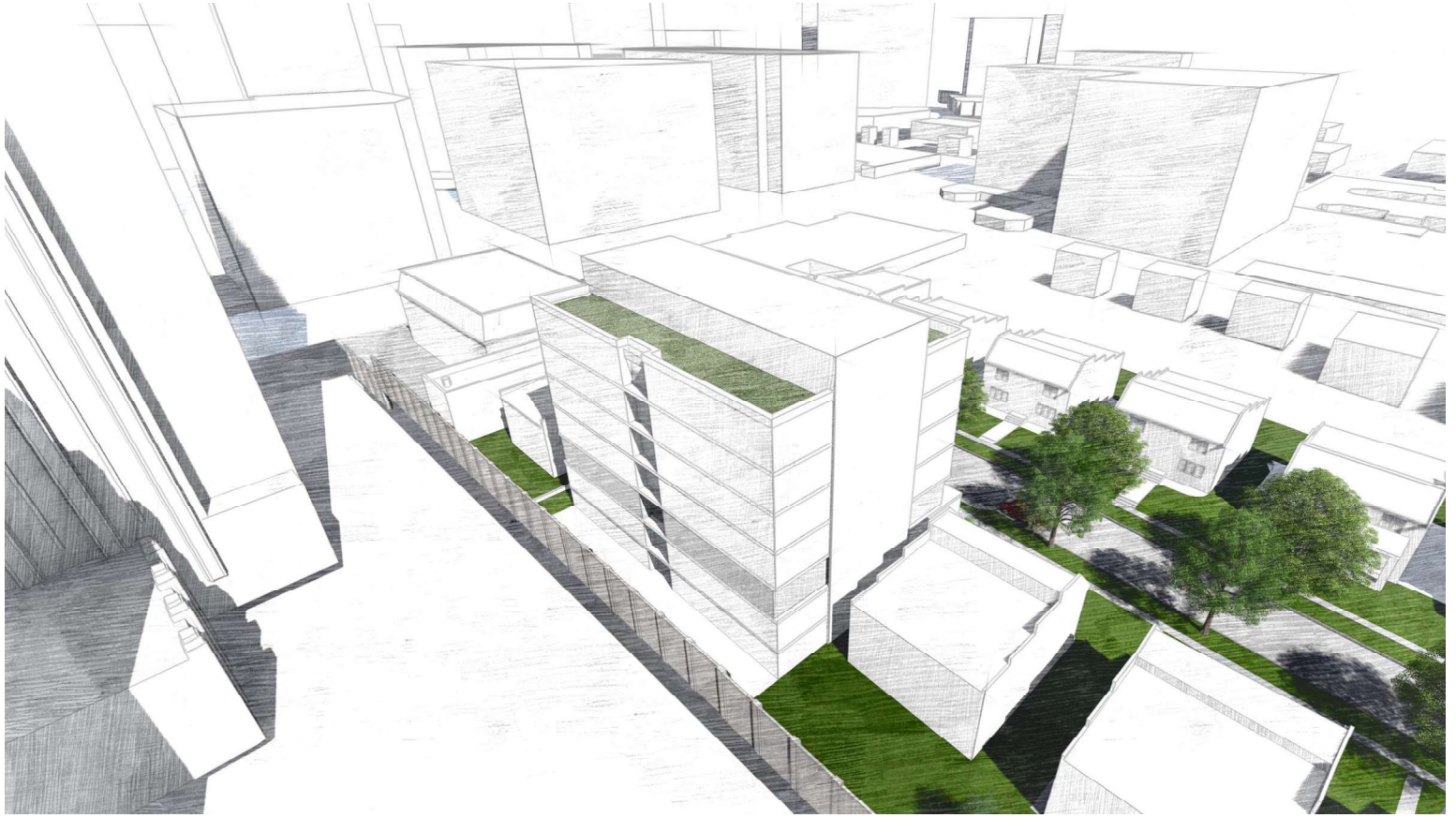
THE ENTRANCE LOBBY OF THE BUILDING PROJECTS APPROXIMATELY 5FT BEYOND THE BUILD-TO LINE AS A CRISPLY DETAILED "GLASS BOX" THAT DISTINGUISHES THE ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING AS A SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENT AND ADDS VISUAL INTEREST AT THE PEDESTRIAN SCALE. THE GUIDELINES ALLOW FOR EXCEPTIONS TO BUILDING PLACEMENT GUIDELINES FOR ENTRANCES AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATING ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST.

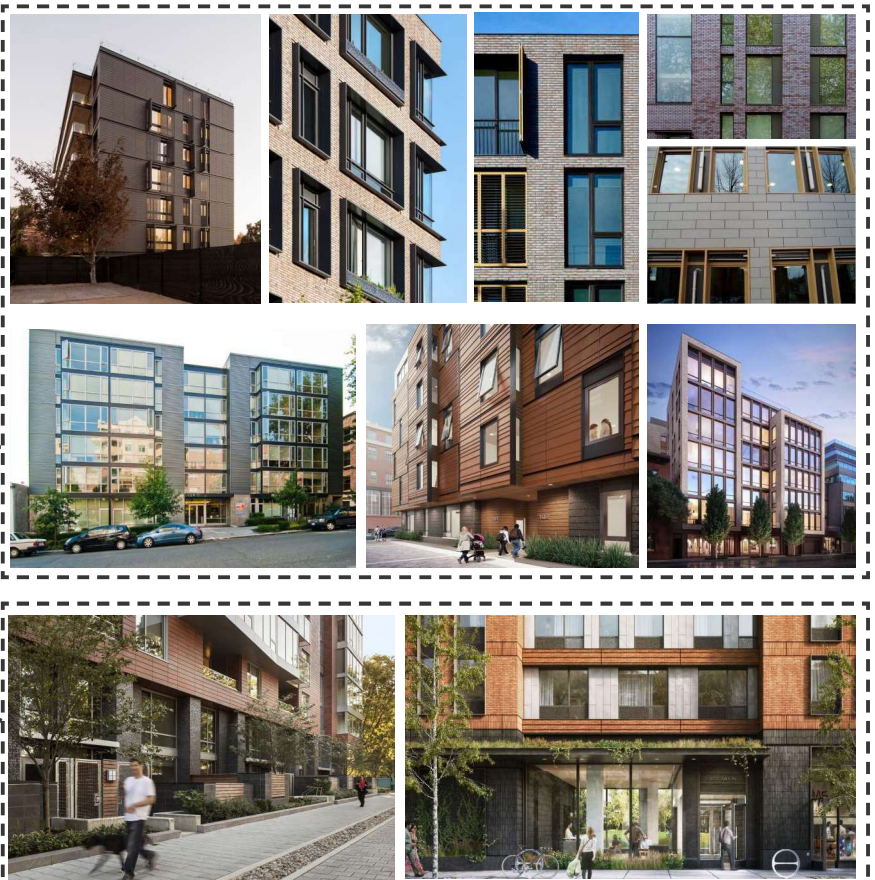
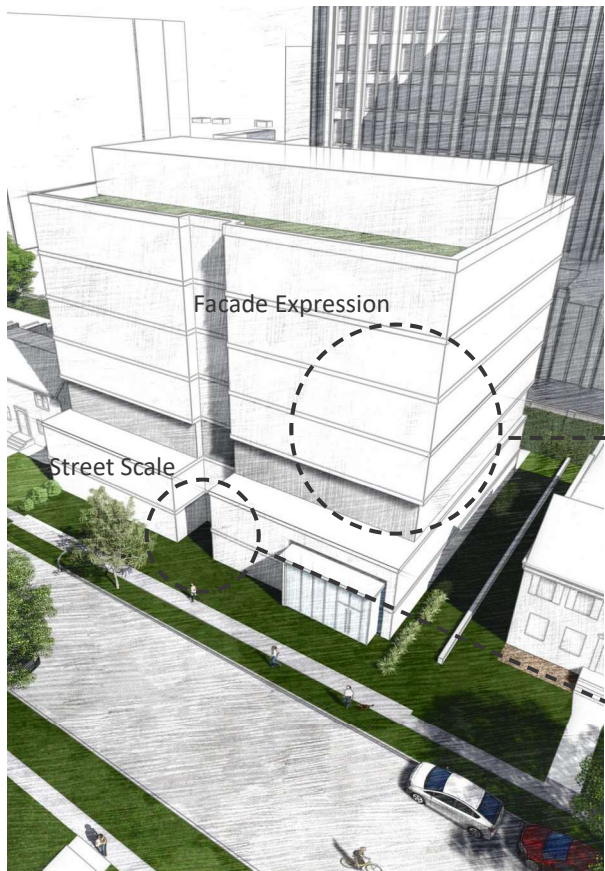


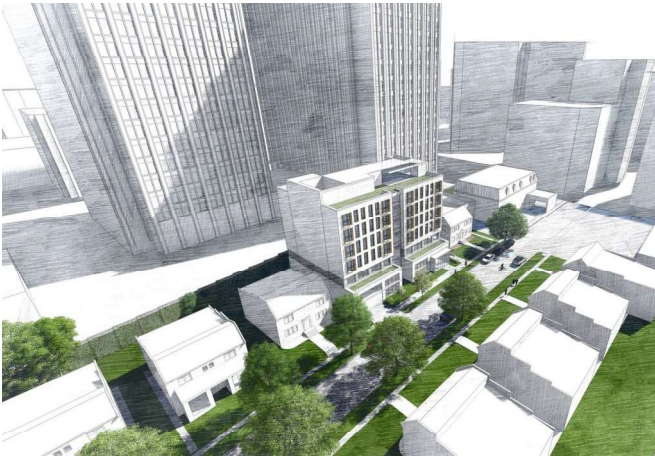










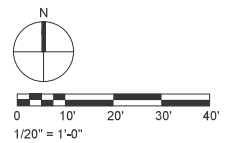
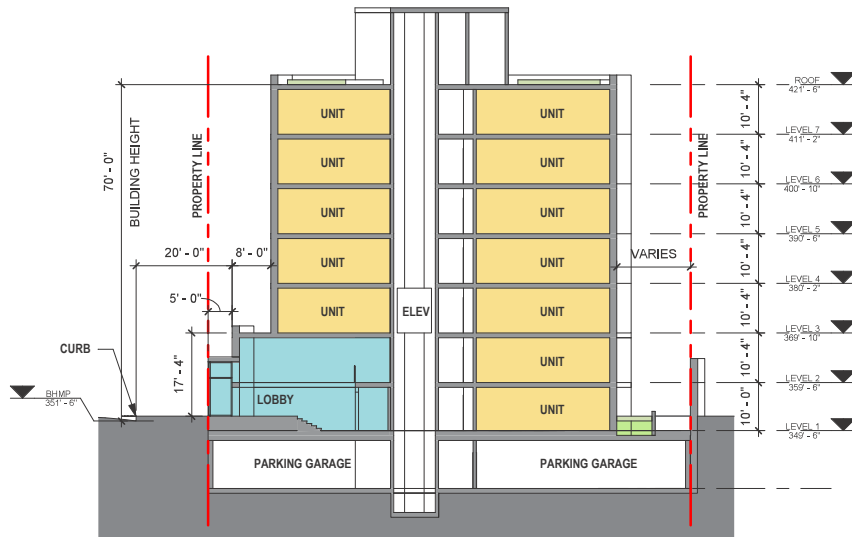




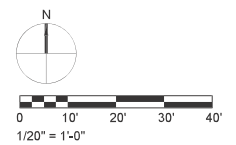
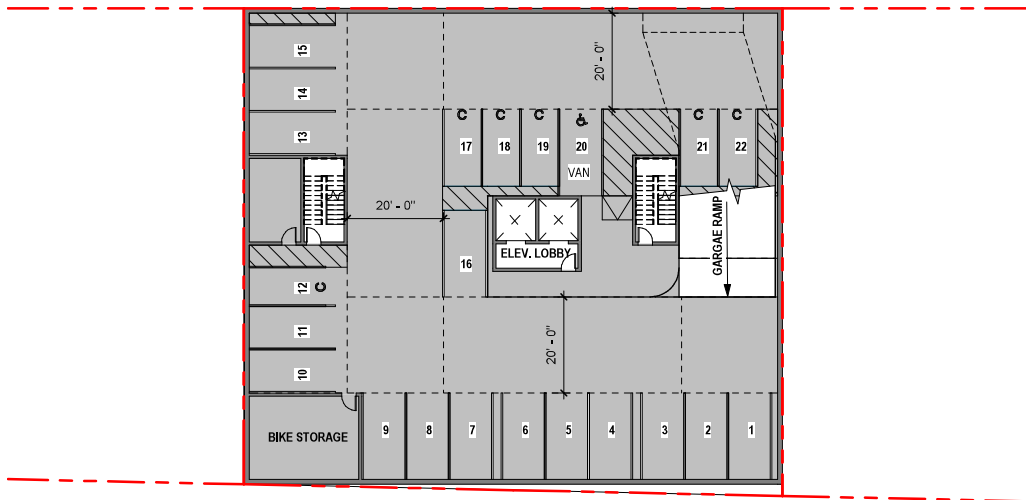




## PLANS & SECTIONS

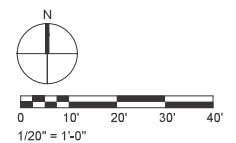


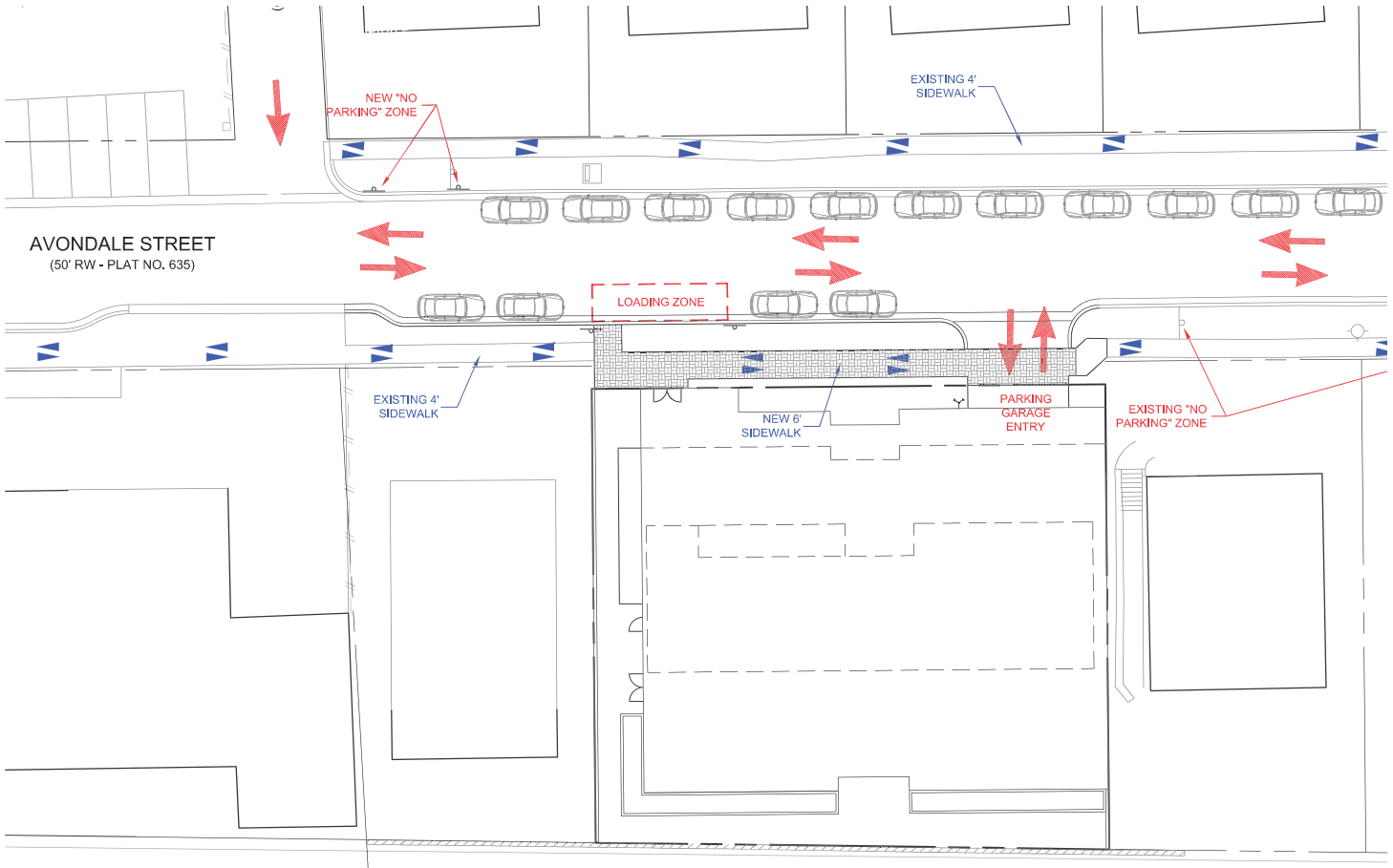
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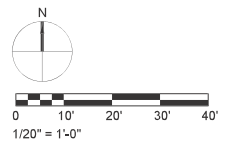
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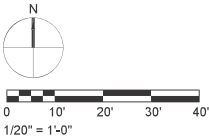
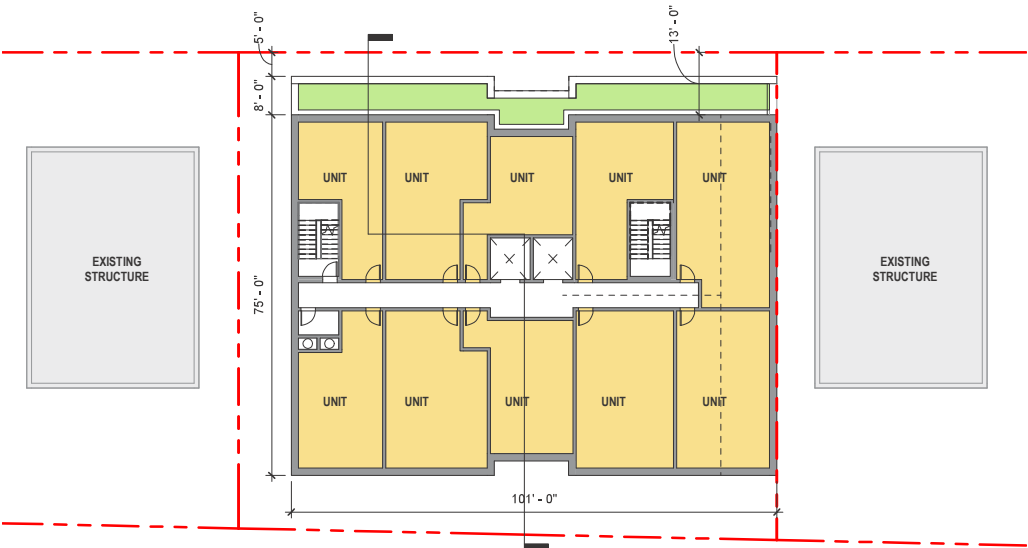
AVONDALE ST

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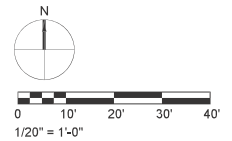
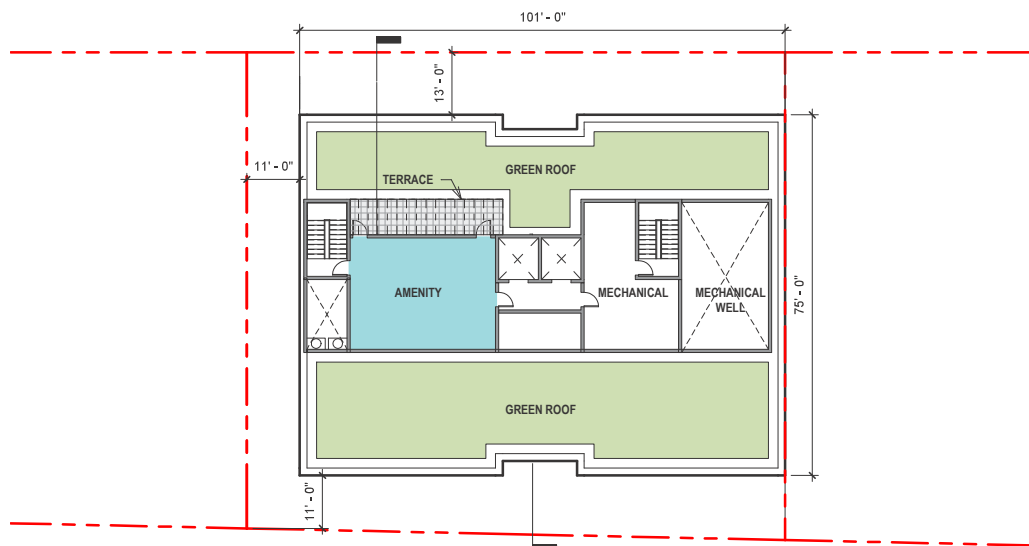


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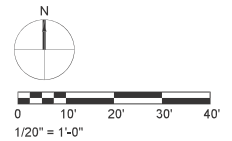
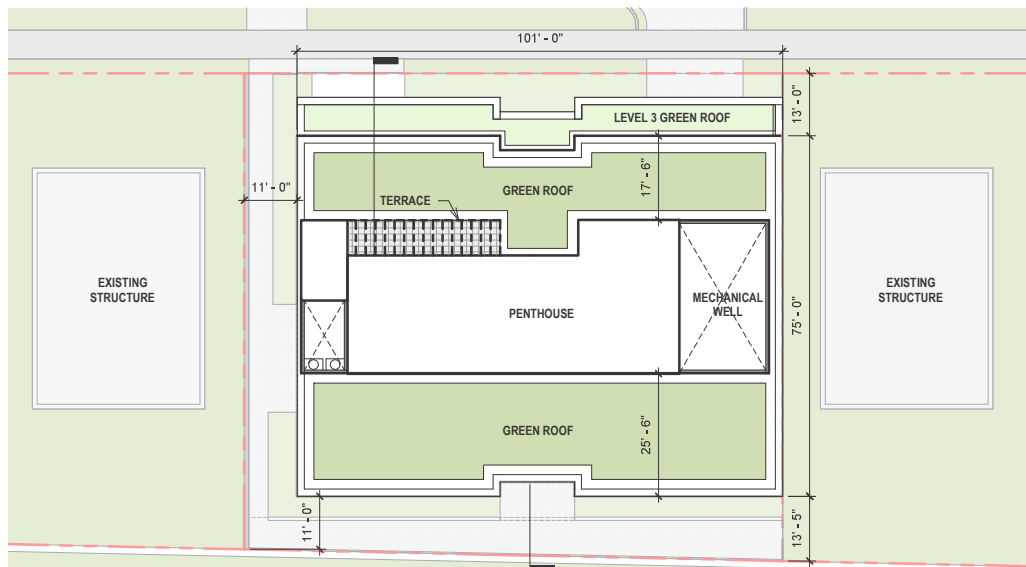
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THE AVONDALE  
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June 10, 2020