

Second Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	19 Philadelphia Ave., Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	10/14/2020
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	10/7/2020
Applicant:	Danielle and Beau Willis (Eric Saul, Architect)	Public Notice:	9/30/2020
Review:	2 nd Preliminary Consultation	Tax Credit:	N/A
Case Number:	N/A	Staff:	Michael Kyne
PROPOSAL:	Dormer and rear 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: Bungalow
DATE: c. 1915-25

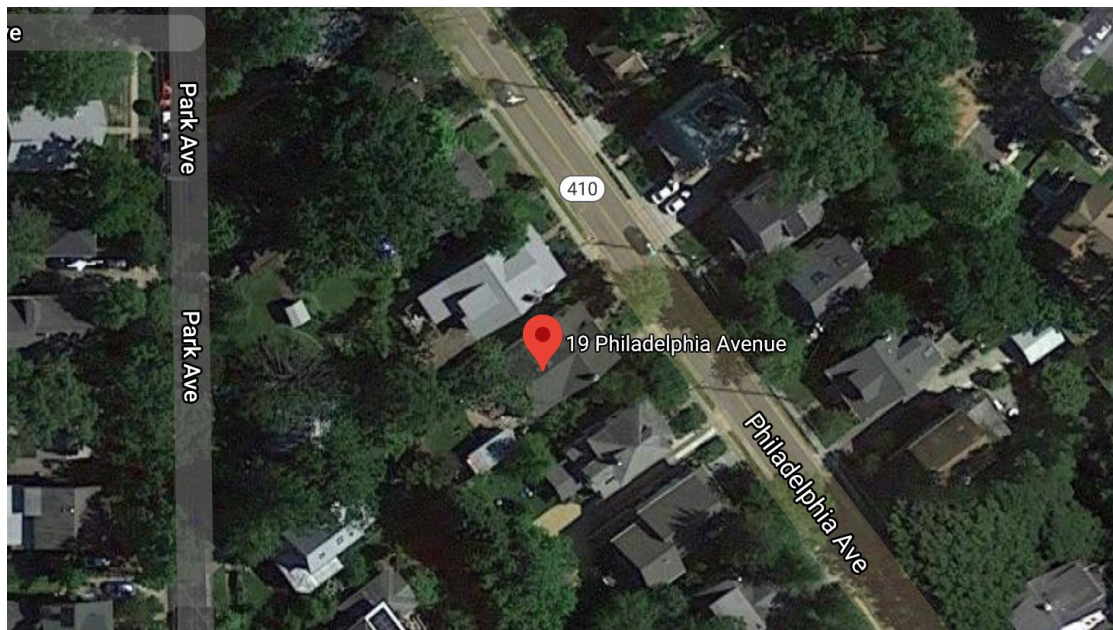


Fig. 1: Subject property.

BACKGROUND

The applicants previously appeared before the Commission at the September 9, 2020 HPC meeting for a preliminary consultation.¹

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to construct a new dormer and rear addition at the subject property.

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

¹ Link to September 9, 2020 HPC meeting audio/video transcript:

http://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=e4693bc3-f463-11ea-b6a9-0050569183fa

Link to September 9, 2020 preliminary consultation staff report: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/III.D-19-Philadelphia-Avenue-Takoma-Park.pdf>

the predominant architectural features of the resource; exact replication of existing details and features is, however, not required.

- Major additions should, where feasible, be placed to the rear of existing structures so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way; additions and alterations to the first floor at the front of a structure are discouraged but not automatically prohibited.
- While additions should be compatible, they are not required to be replicative of earlier architectural styles.
- Second story additions or expansions should be generally consistent with the predominant architectural style and period of the resource (although structures that have been historically single story can be expanded) and should be appropriate to the surrounding streetscape in terms of scale and massing.
- 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.

Montgomery County Code; Chapter 24A-8

- (a) The commission shall instruct the director to deny a permit if it finds, based on the evidence and information presented to or before the commission that the alteration for which the permit is sought would be inappropriate, inconsistent with or detrimental to the preservation, enhancement or ultimate protection of the historic site or historic resource within an historic district, and to the purposes of this chapter.
- (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:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
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.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
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.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
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

At the September 9, 2020 preliminary consultation, the Commission recommended the following:

- As proposed, the northwest (rear/right) dormer and rear second-story expansion/addition are incompatible with subject property and surrounding streetscape. Suggested revisions included:
 - Consider pulling the proposed northwest (rear/right) dormer wall in, preserving the outline of the original building and eliminating the massive vertical wall that the proposed dormer would create.
 - Consider separating the rear second-story expansion/addition from the house to preserve the rear corners and create a true “tower” addition.
 - One Commissioner suggested matching dormers (pulled in, as noted above) on both sides of the house to create the desired second-floor space without the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition.
 - The majority stated that they were not overly concerned about height of the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition, due to its location and degree of visibility.
 - One Commissioner recommended exploring reorientation of the interior stairs, which may reduce the needed height for the rear second-story expansion/addition.
 - There were some concerns regarding the proposed rear covered porch and how its roof engages with the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition, as this could result in drainage issues.
 - In lieu of the northwest (rear/right) dormer, one Commissioner suggested exploring the extension of the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition over the proposed rear porch to gain the desired second-floor space.

The applicants have responded with the following revisions:

- The proposed northwest (rear/right) dormer wall has been pulled in, preserving the outline of the historic house’s roof.
- The proposed rear second-story expansion/addition has been reoriented, going from side-gabled to rear-gabled.
- The previously proposed shed dormer has been removed from the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition.

- Two 3D model options have been provided for the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition. Per the Commission's recommendation, Option A (see Fig. 2 below) is separates the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition from the house, with a hyphen connecting it to the proposed northwest (rear/right) dormer. Staff notes, however, that the applicants prefer Option B, and plans and elevations have only been provided for the preferred option.



Fig. 2: Option A, showing the hyphen connecting the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition to the proposed northwest (rear/right) dormer.

- The height of the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition has increased, going from 2'-7" above the existing ridgeline to 2'-10" above the existing ridgeline.

Staff finds that the applicants have responded to Commission's recommendations. However, staff seeks further guidance from the Commission regarding the appropriateness of the proposed revisions. Specific questions include:

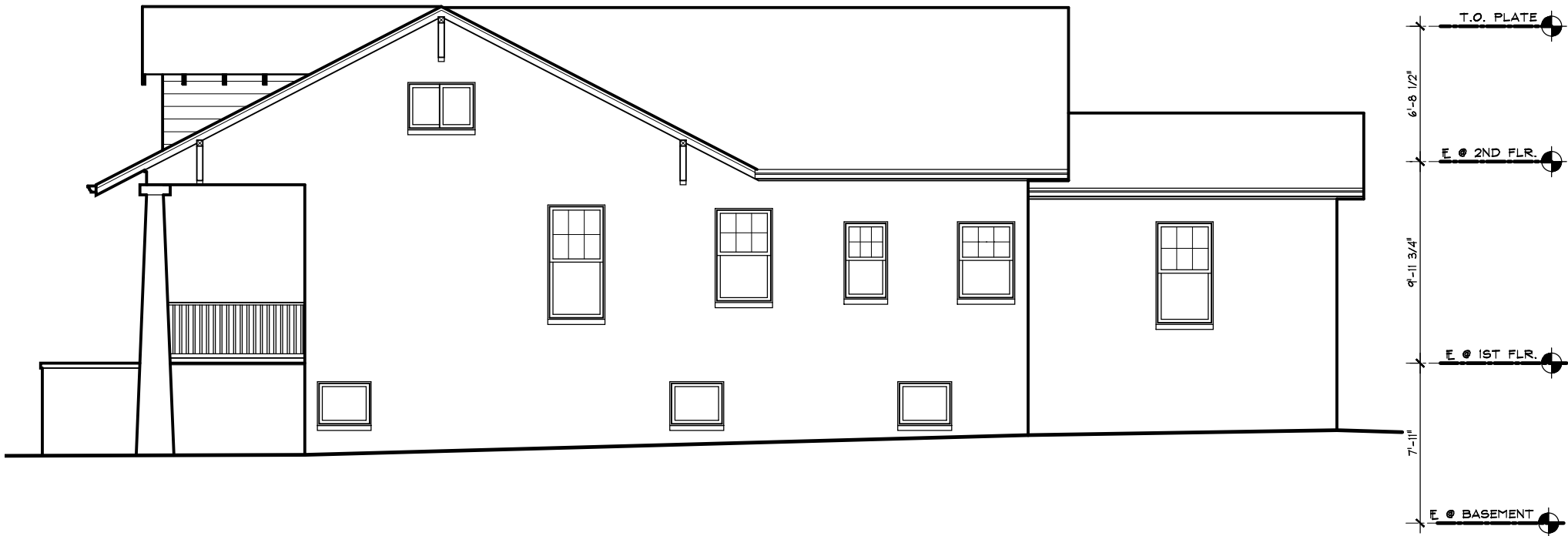
- Have all of the Commission's previous concerns been successfully addressed?
- Does the Commission prefer 3D model Option A or Option B?
- Is the 3" height increase for the proposed rear second-story expansion/addition appropriate?

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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



3 EXISTING FRONT (EAST) ELEVATION
A2.1 NTS



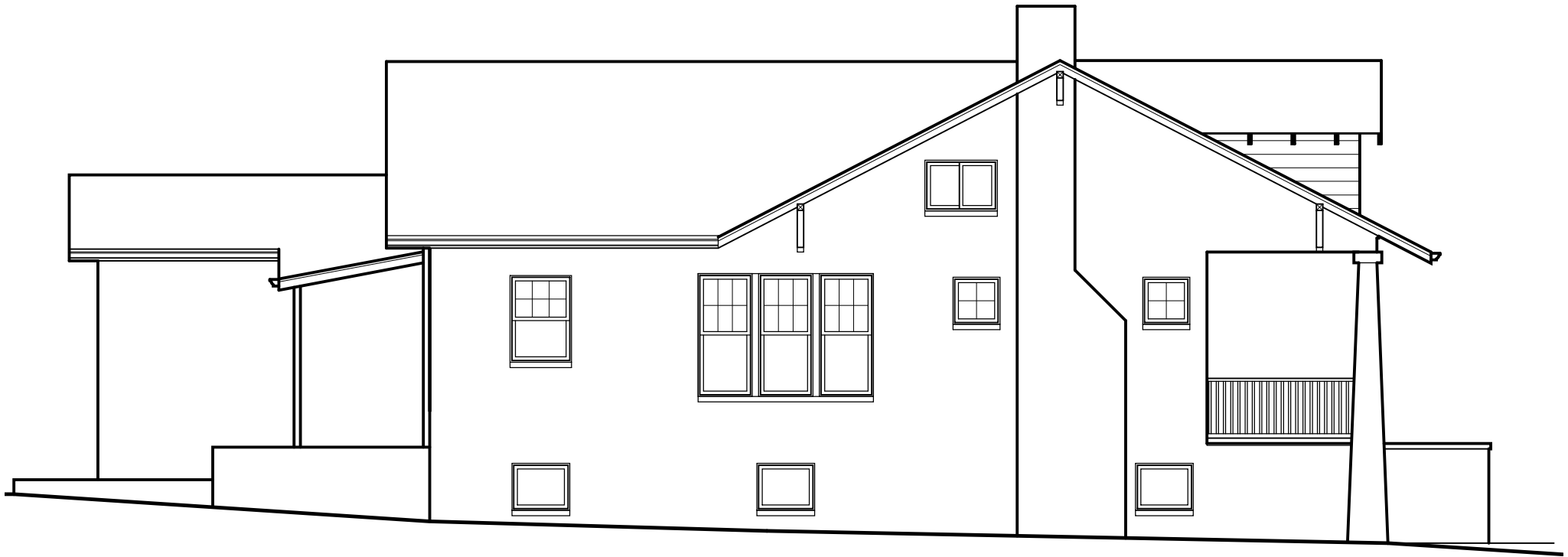
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 A2.1
 EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION
 NTS



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A2.1

EXISTING REAR (WEST) ELEVATION

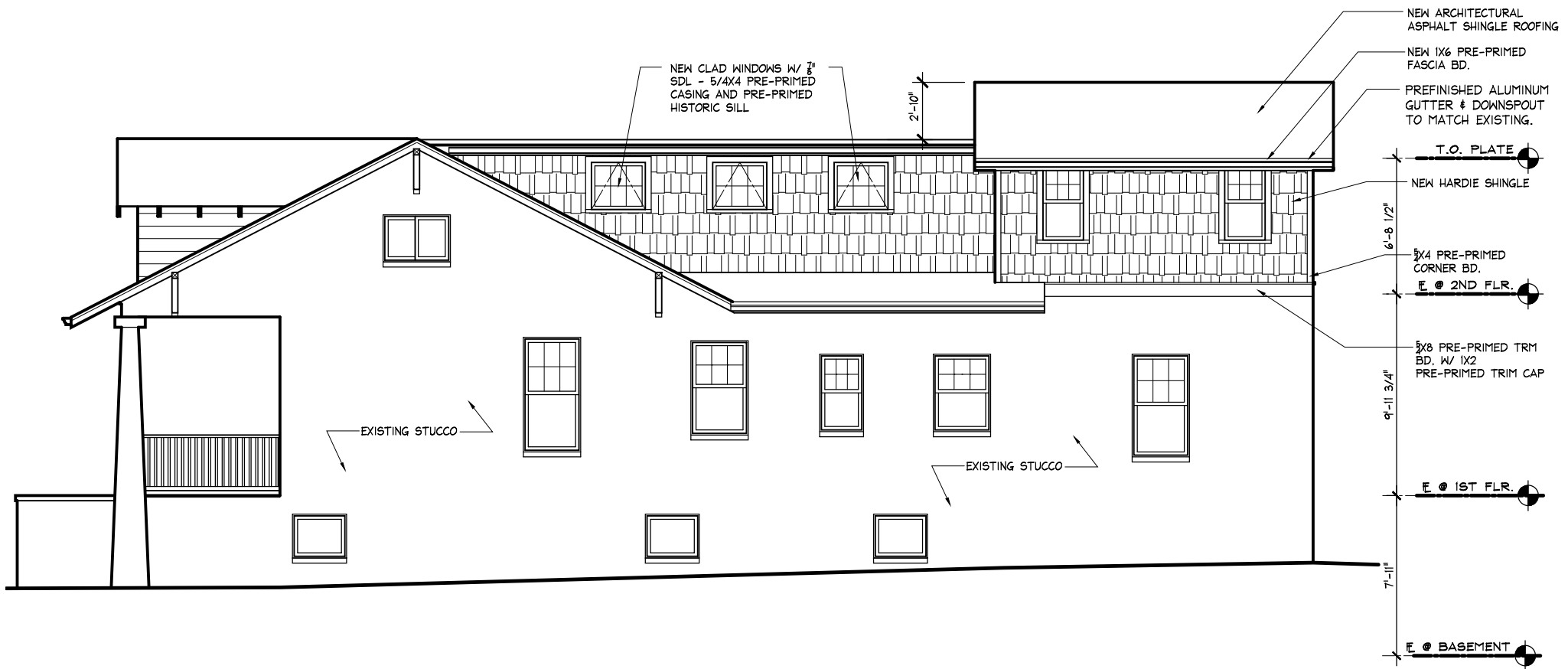
NTS



4 EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION
A2.1 NTS



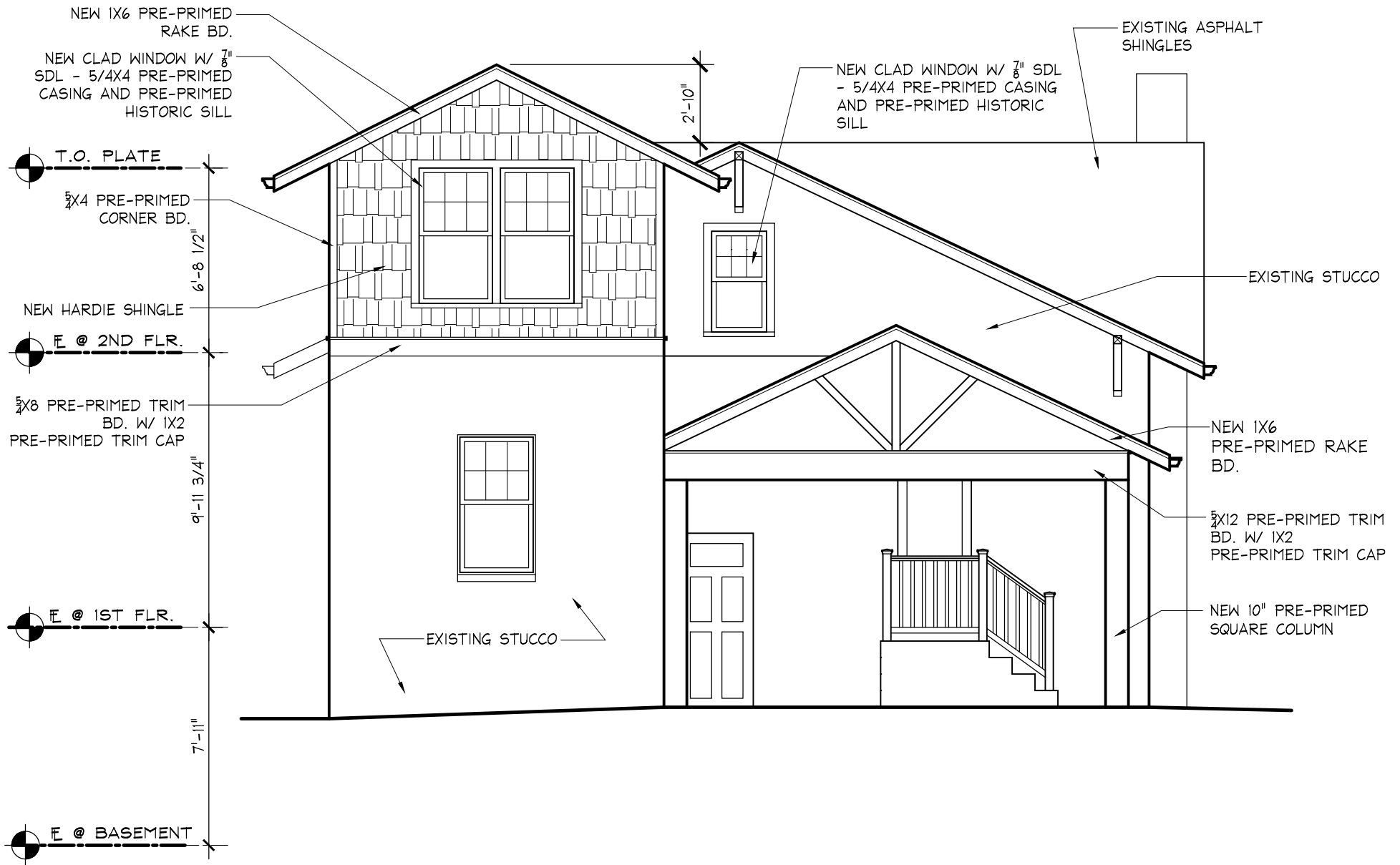
3 PROPOSED FRONT (EAST) ELEVATION
A2 NTS



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A2

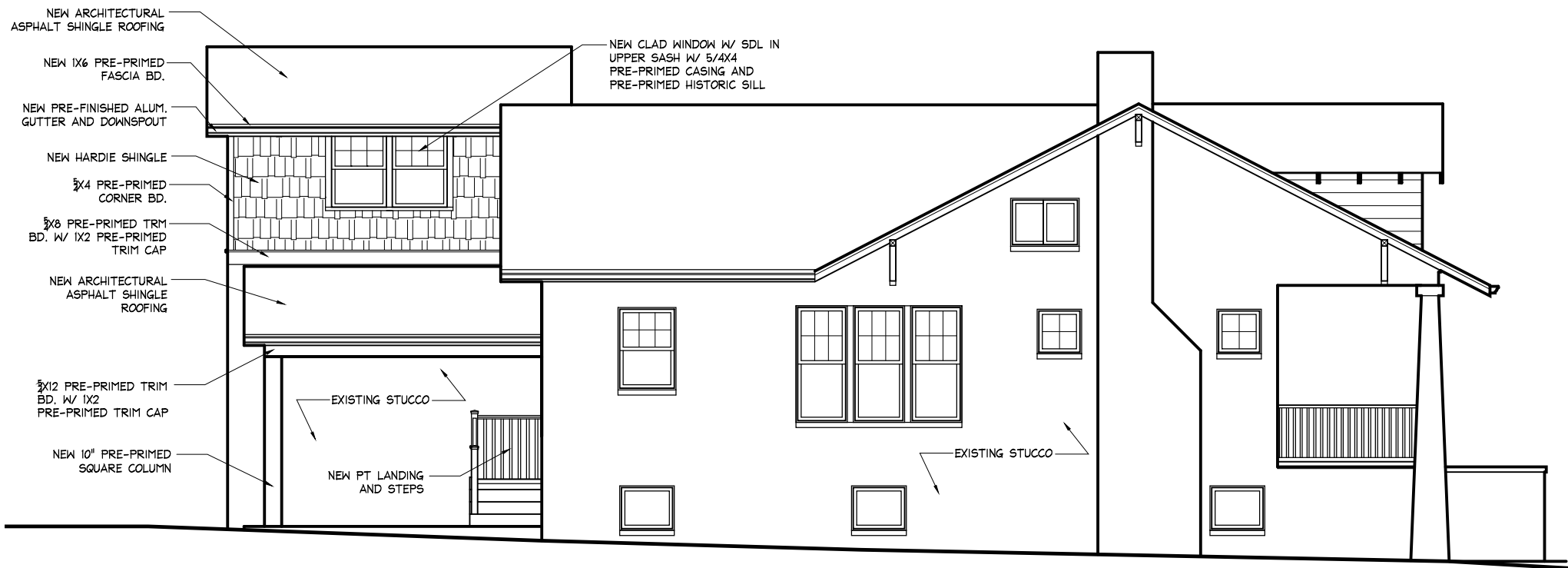
PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION

NTS

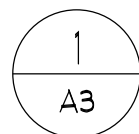
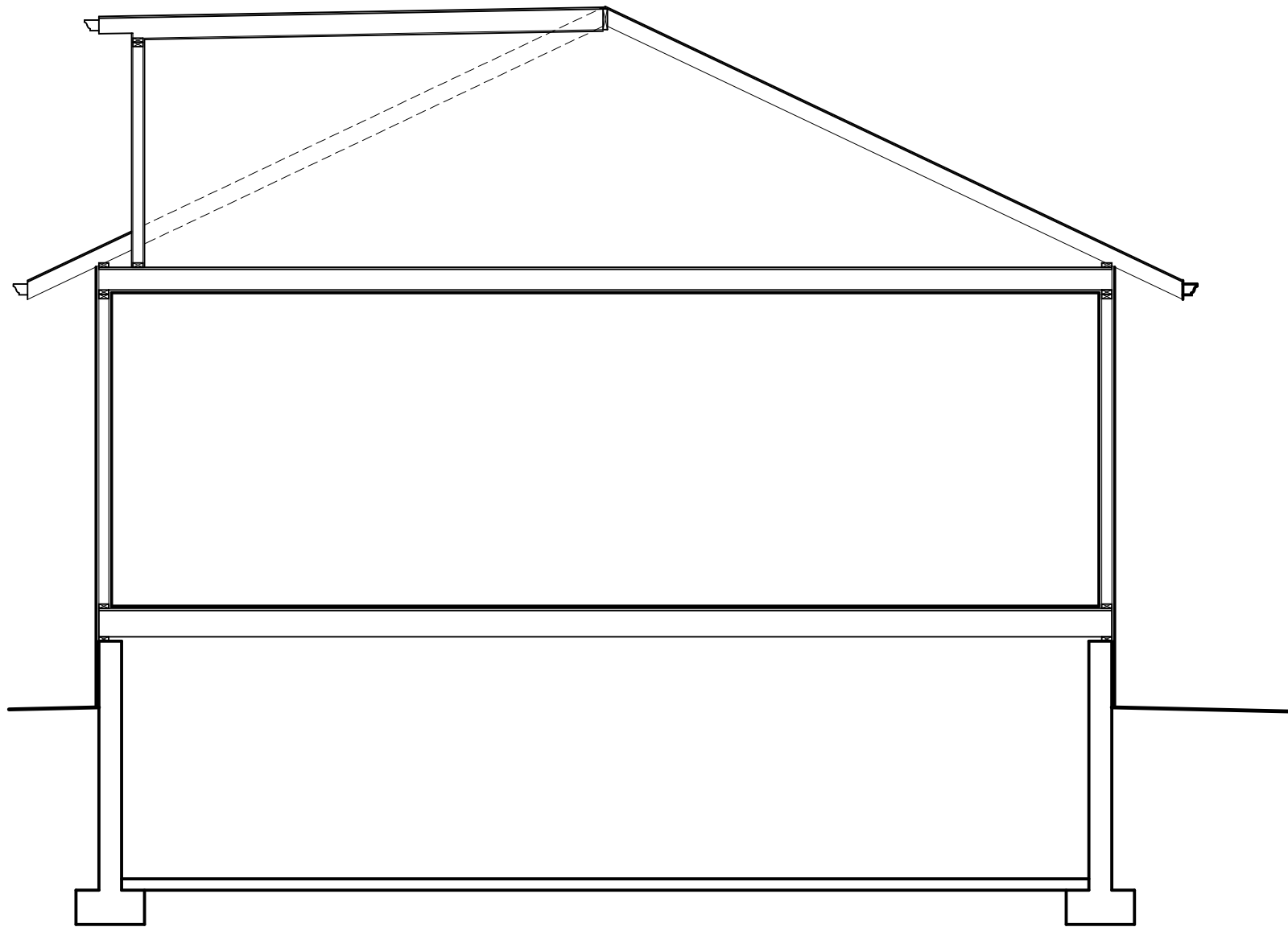
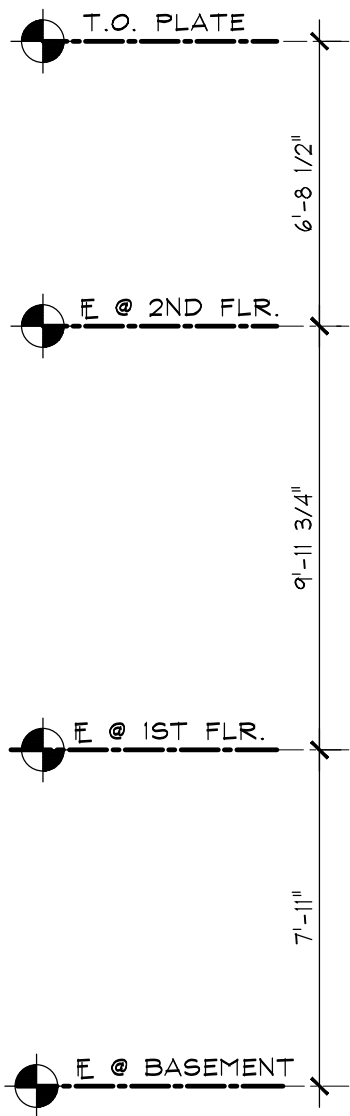


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A2

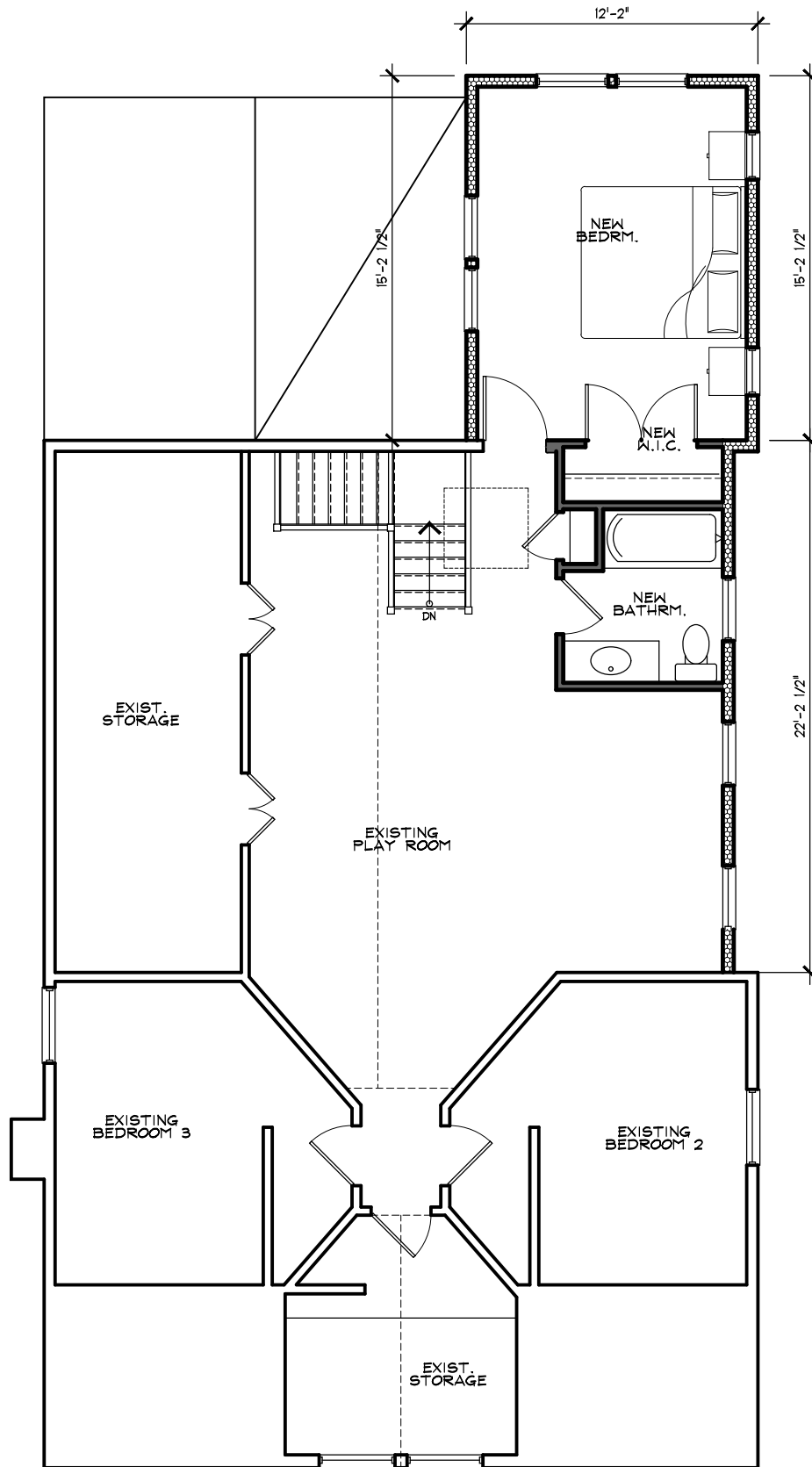
PROPOSED REAR (WEST) ELEVATION NTS



4
A2 PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION
NTS



BUILDING SECTION
NTS



2 PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 A1.1 NTS



