

Second Preliminary Consultation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	23200 Stringtown Road, Clarksburg	Meeting Date:	9/17/2025
Resource:	Contributing Resource (Clarksburg Historic District)	Report Date:	9/10/2025
Applicant:	Montgomery County (John Chow, Agent)	Public Notice:	9/4/2025
Review:	HAWP	Staff:	Dan Bruechert
Proposal:	Clarksburg Library		

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make any revisions to the proposal based on the HPC's feedback and return for a third Preliminary Consultation.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Day House/Contributing Resource (*Clarksburg Historic District*)
DATE: c.1925
STYLE: Colonial Revival



Figure 1: The subject property is located at the intersection of Stringtown Rd. and Frederick Road (MD 355).

BACKGROUND

On August 13, 2025, the HPC held a Preliminary Consultation to consider the proposed placement of the Clarksburg Library.¹ The HPC was supportive of constructing a library at the subject property and determined that the applicant's proposed location was appropriate under the requisite guidance.

The HPC had additional questions regarding the proposal rehabilitation and future use for the historic Day House. Commissioners encouraged the applicant to consider improving the interior lot circulation between the library and the Day House. The synthesized comments are appended to this Staff Report.

The applicant has made revisions based on the HPC's feedback and returns for additional review of the size, and massing of the proposed library.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to develop the subject property by constructing a county library on the site, constructing a new extension of Clarksridge Road connecting to Stringtown Road, and construction of other site improvements including parking, and rehabilitating the historic Day House.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

The Historic Preservation Office and HPC consult several documents when reviewing alterations and new construction within the Clarksburg Historic District. These documents include the historic preservation review guidelines in the approved and adopted amendment for the [*Vision of Clarksburg: A Long-Range Preservation Plan*](#) (Vision), Montgomery County Code Chapter 24A (Chapter 24A), and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards). The pertinent information is outlined below.

Vision of Clarksburg

The document, published in 1992, provides guidance in evaluating proposals in the historic district by identifying character-defining features of the historic district. The *Vision* notes that Clarksburg is an important and historic crossroads in northern Montgomery County. Defined by the linear passage of Frederick Road, Clarksburg boasts an important collection of early 19th century residential and commercial architecture. Clarksburg evolved from its early settlement into a prosperous town: an important trade and transport hub as well as a thriving residential community.

¹ The recording of the August 13, 2025 HPC Preliminary Consultation for 23200 Stringtown Rd. is available here: https://mncppc.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=e05b4f14-791a-11f0-a766-005056a89546.

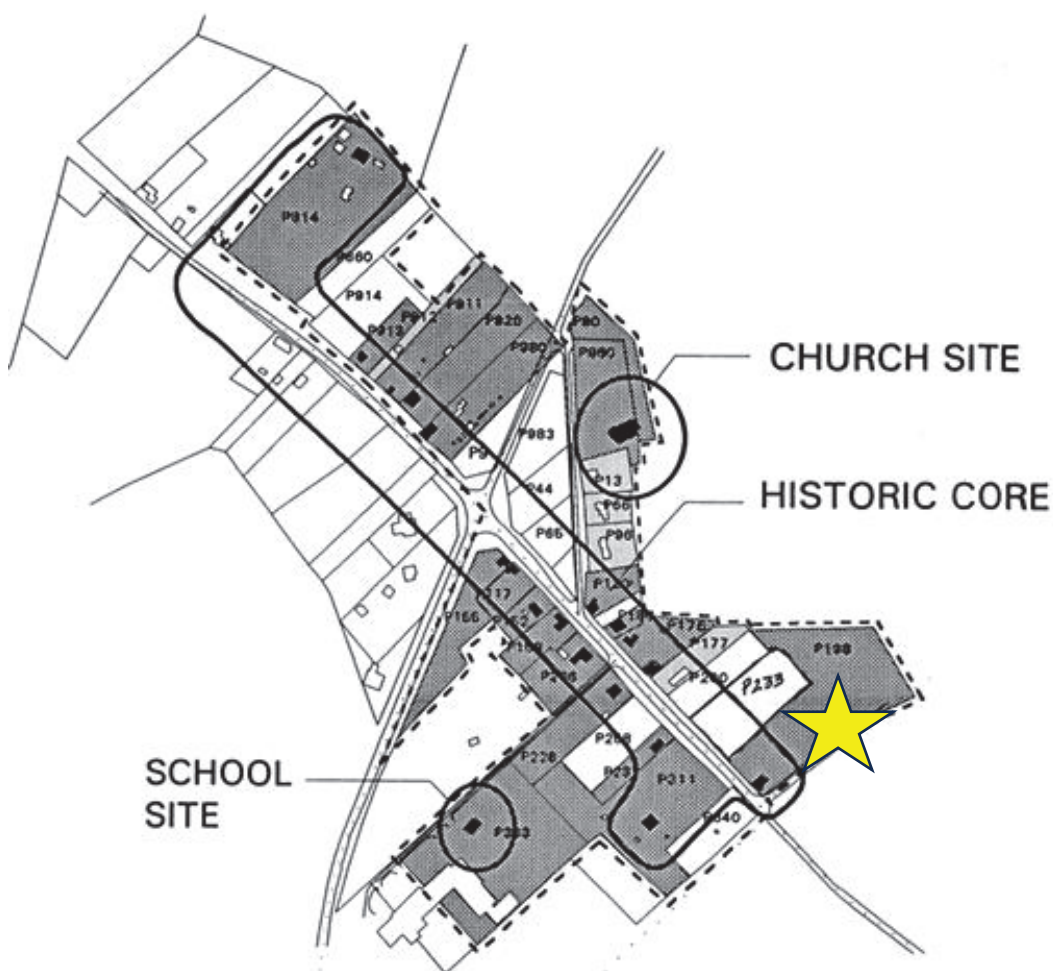


Figure 2: Map from the 1992 Vision of Clarksburg delineating the "Historic Core."

13/10 Clarksburg Historic District (Platted Early 1790s) – excerpted from *Places from the Past*

John Clark, who Clarksburg is named after, surveyed the land and subdivided lots along Frederick Road in the early 1790s, yet the town's origins extend back to the mid-1700s. Michael Dowden built a hotel and tavern around 1754 along the well-traveled 'Greate Road' between Georgetown and Frederick, MD. In 1800 John Clark built a general store and became the community's first postmaster. The Clark-Waters House, located at 23346 Frederick Rd., is believed to be the oldest house in Clarksburg. According to tradition, the rear section of the house was constructed in 1797 and was later enlarged and updated in the 1840s resulting in its current Italianate appearance. One of the few remaining log buildings in the community is found at 23415 Frederick Rd. Thomas Kirk probably built the John Leaman House, now covered with clapboard siding, in 1801. John Leaman, a carpenter, purchased the house in 1871 and built the substantial rear addition around 1890.

By 1850, Clarksburg was the third most populous town in the county and by 1879 Clarksburg had 250 residents. By the mid-1800s, the town included general stores, a tannery and blacksmith, wheelwrights, and inns and taverns along Frederick Rd.

One of the County's last and most elaborate remaining examples of a two-room schoolhouse is the Clarksburg School, 13530 Redgrave Place, built in 1909. One of the County's last and most elaborate remaining examples of the two-room schoolhouse, the Clarksburg School was in continuous use from 1909 to 1972. The cruciform-shaped building has a Colonial Revival-influenced design with pedimented

and pilastered doorframe, oversize cornice returns, and gable overhang. Near the school are the sites of the earlier Clarksburg Academy (1833) and a one-room school.

Growth in Clarksburg declined in the late 19th century, when the B & O Railroad bypassed the town for nearby Boyds. The advent of the automobile and improved roads brought something of an economic revival beginning in the 1920s. New boarding houses opened in town to accommodate the new auto tourism.

Strategies for Maintaining Historic Character

Behind the strategies presented here is the idea that the Clarksburg Historic District will become the “Historic Core” of the new town center expected to be developed adjacent to the historic district. The area adjacent to the historic district is proposed to become a ‘Buffer Area’ to allow for a more graceful transition between the historic fabric and the new town...

Building Setbacks

Clarksburg is a linear district with residential, religious, education, and commercial structures predominately fronting on Frederick Road. The majority of these structures sited along Frederick Road are set-back from the street at an average distance of 40 feet. The perception and historic character within the Clarksburg Historic District is that the house are set close to the road with regular intervals between them. This characteristic is one of the most important elements that unifies the streetscape.

Scale and Height

The historic house in Clarksburg are similar in height, ranging only from two-stories to two-and-one-half stories. Nineteen percent of the historic houses in Clarksburg are two stories in height and 38% are two-and-one-half stories. This uniform scale contributes and is critical to the reading of the streetscape.

Directional Expression of Building

The facades of the historic houses in Clarksburg tend to be horizontally emphasized in composition. This reflects the changing styles of the early 19th century and early 20th century that generally tended to be more horizontal than the vertically oriented styles associated with the Victorian era in the Late 19th century. Symmetrical and asymmetrical compositions are employed almost equally.

Roof form and Materials

Seventy-three percent of Clarksburg’s historic residences have gable roof forms, there are numerous variations including end gables, cross gables and elongated gables. Six hipped roofs are located in the district (26%). Replacement roofing materials are found throughout the historic district, particularly asphalt shingles. Standing seam metal roofs remain on several buildings in the district. [One flat roof was recorded as of the 1992 survey of the Clarksburg Historic District.]

Relationships of Front Yard Setback and Building Spacing

The front yard setback is the distance a building is set away or back from the property line on the street or road which it fronts. The front yard setback determines how prominent a building is in the streetscape of the district. When many buildings are involved, a pattern can be established which helps to define the character of the streetscape through the width of sidewalks, the amount of green space (lawn or vegetation area) between the street and building, the apparent scale of the building in relation to pedestrians, and other subtle qualities of the community. In combination with the setbacks, building separation distances establish the openness or visual porosity of the streetscape. Buildings which are separated allow for view and landscape elements in the interstitial space.

American Four-Square (architecture)

“...Constructed in the 1920s, the Day House is influenced by bungalow styled details, but maintains the propositions and symmetry associated with the American Four-Square style. Square in Plan and two-and-one-half stories in height the house has a hipped roof with a central hipped roof dormer. The wrap-around

porch with squat columns set upon concrete piers is characteristic of bungalow styled architecture.”

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 insure 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
- (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.” Because the property is a Master Plan Site, the Commission’s focus in reviewing the proposal should be the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. The applicable *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 will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical 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 will 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 large parcel located on the eastern side at the entrance to the Clarksburg Historic District, at the intersection of Frederick Road (MD 355) and Stringtown Road (see *Figs. 1 and 2*, above). The prominent intersection includes Dowden’s Ordinary Park in the southwest corner, Hammer Hill (a historic house within the Clarksburg Historic District) in the northwest corner of the intersection, a contemporary commercial strip (constructed in 2007) in the southeast corner, and the historic Day House on the subject property. The Day House is identified as a Contributing Resource to the Clarksburg Historic

District.² The historic district terminates at the subject property's eastern property line. To the east of the subject property is the identified Clarksburg Town Center.

The proposed library building will be constructed facing Stringtown Rd., with the majority of parking under the building. Vehicular access to the site will be from the unbuilt Clarksridge Rd. A plan of the below grade parking was included in the current submission and the number of surface and parallel parking spaces were identified, but more detailed plans for the proposed paving and hardscaping were not provided. Based on Staff's previous experience with this site, the construction of Clarksridge Rd. may substantially impact the grading requirements on-site which could have a substantial impact on the character of the site. Details for the hardscaping and road construction should be the subject of a future Preliminary Consultation.

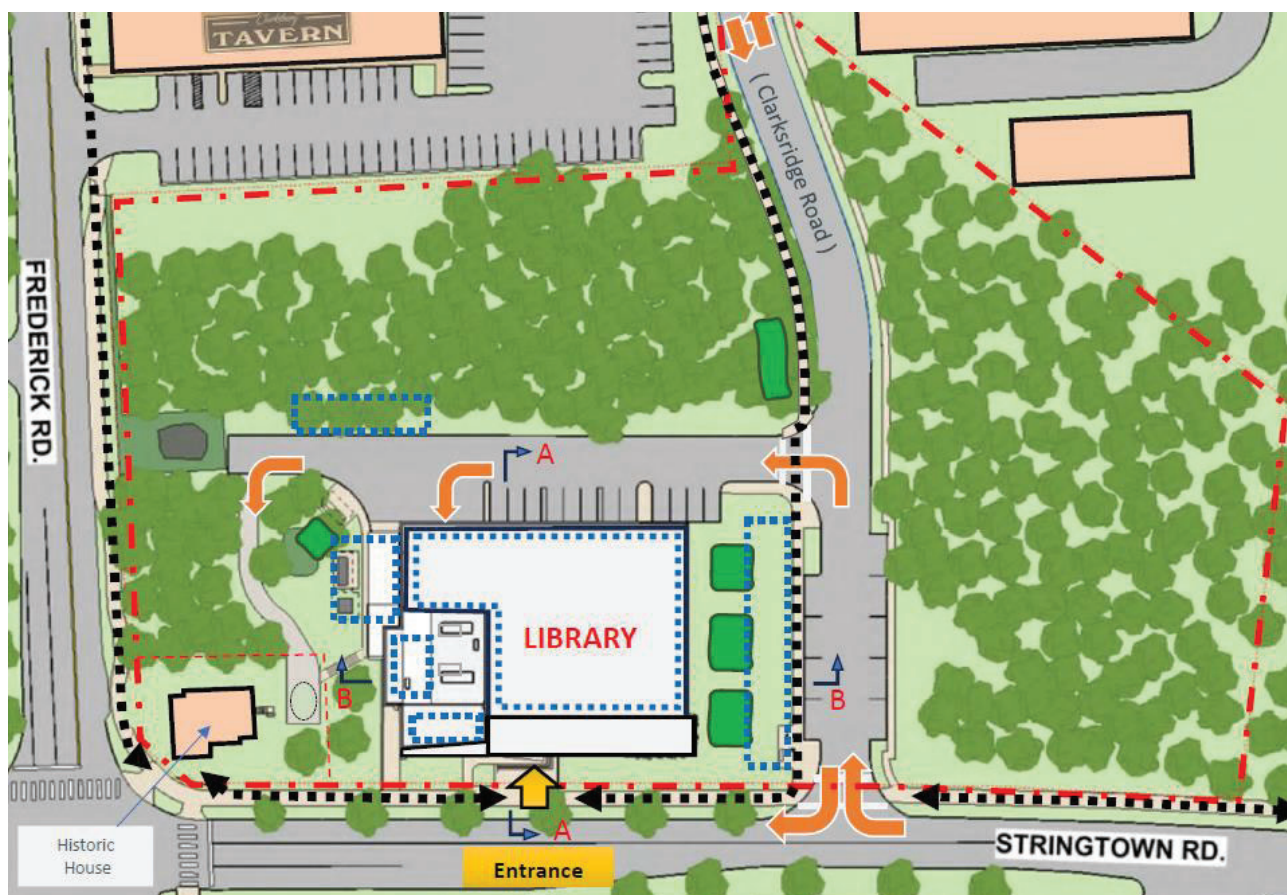


Figure 3: Proposed site plan.

The objective of this Preliminary Consultation is to evaluate the proposed size and massing of the proposed library to ensure that the building will not loom over the district and the design is compatible with the historic character of the historic district. The applicant also provided additional details regarding site circulation. A subsequent Preliminary Consultation will evaluate building design including materials and other alterations to the site.

The previous Staff Report included discussions of the existing conditions, previous proposals for the subject property, and the location and orientation of the proposed library.

The proposed library will have a rectangular plan with a flat roof. Based on Staff's rough calculations, the

² The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) evaluated the Day House for listing on the National Register of Historic Places: <https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/Montgomery/M;%2013-10-14.pdf>. MHT did not find the Day House was eligible for individual listing, but the house contributes to the county-designated Master Plan district.

proposed building will be approximately 20,000 gross square feet, measuring approximately 170' × 115' (one hundred seventy feet wide by one hundred fifteen feet deep). The height of the building was not provided, but the entrance of the library will be a two-story volume, and the submitted drawings show the top of the proposed parapet aligning with the mid-point of the Day House's pyramidal roof. As presented, the Clarksburg Library will be the largest building, in width and depth, in the historic district.

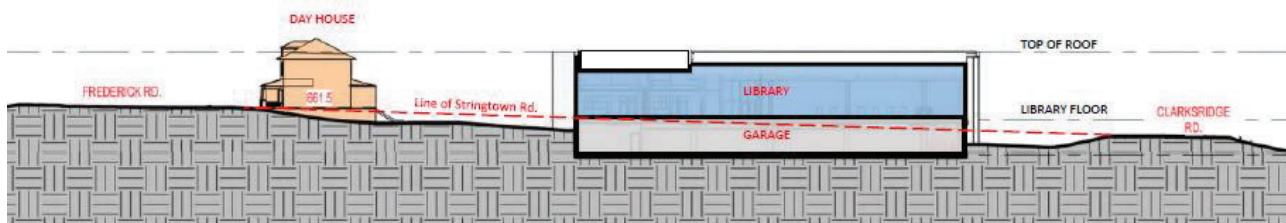


Figure 4: Proposed site section.

The applicant included an evaluation of several potential roof forms, many of which replicated forms identified in the *Vision* as representative of the district. These forms were rejected for a variety of reasons outlined in the submitted materials.

Precedent Infill Construction

Staff identified two previous HAWPS for large buildings constructed in the Clarksburg Historic District. The first was approved in 2011 at 23315 Frederick Rd. (the property to the north of the subject property).³ The approved design was broken up into two primary masses which helped to reduce the apparent size of the 14,284 ft² (fourteen thousand two hundred eighty-two square foot) commercial building. Additionally, the design and form of the building utilized a residential building vocabulary, resulting in an appearance that was compatible with the largely residential historic district.

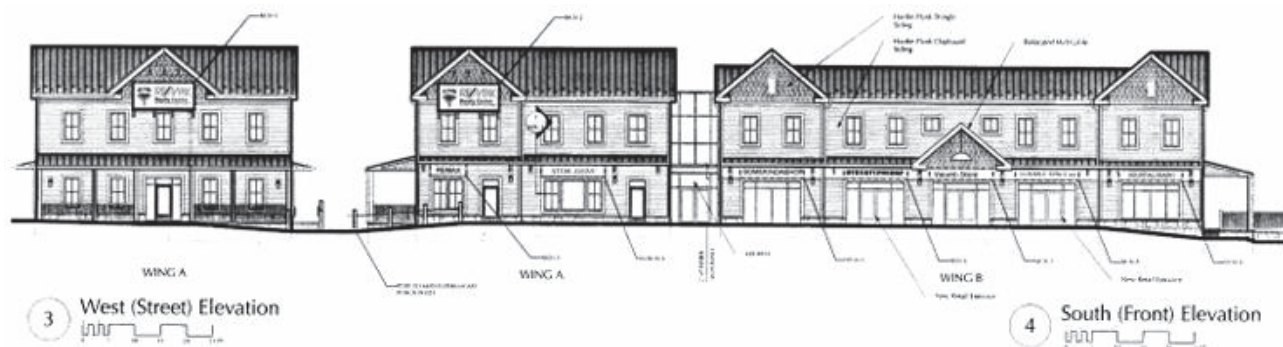


Figure 5: Approved design of 23315 Frederick Rd.

The second large building constructed in the Clarksburg Historic District is across Frederick Rd. from the subject property at Hammer Hill.⁴ The HPC approved a one-story, 13,500 ft² (thirteen thousand five hundred square foot) preschool/daycare building, located approximately 60' (sixty feet) behind the historic house (see *Figure 6*, below). The Staff Report for the HAWP notes the massing of the new building is broken into three parts to frame the historic building. Staff notes the roof ridge of the new building was proposed to be slightly below the historic house's roof midpoint. Another factor limiting the new construction from the right-of-way is the rise in grade from Frederick Rd. The new building will be most visible from Stringtown Rd. to the

³ The Staff Report and HAWP application for the HAWP approval at 23315 Frederick Rd. is available here: https://mcatlas.org/tiles6/06_HistoricPreservation_PhotoArchives/HAWP/HPC%202025-09-17/II.J%20-%2023315%20Frederick%20Road,%20Clarksburg.PDF.

⁴ Approval documents for the new construction at Hammer Hill is available here: https://mcatlas.org/tiles6/06_HistoricPreservation_PhotoArchives/HAWP/12-20-2023/23312%20Frederick%20Road,%20Clarksburg%20-%201048193%20-%20Approval.pdf.

south.

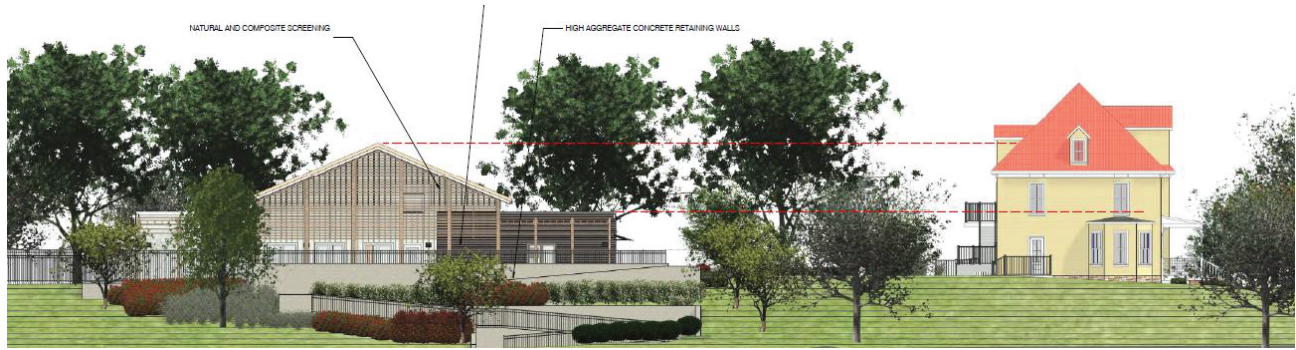


Figure 6: Elevation drawings of the south side of the Hammer Hill project.

Proposed Building Size and Massing

Staff finds the proposed large building form is incompatible with the overall character of the largely 19th century architecture that is characteristic of the Clarksburg Historic District. The proposed library building is largely monolithic, with only the western stair breaking up the overall massing (see *Figure 7*, below).

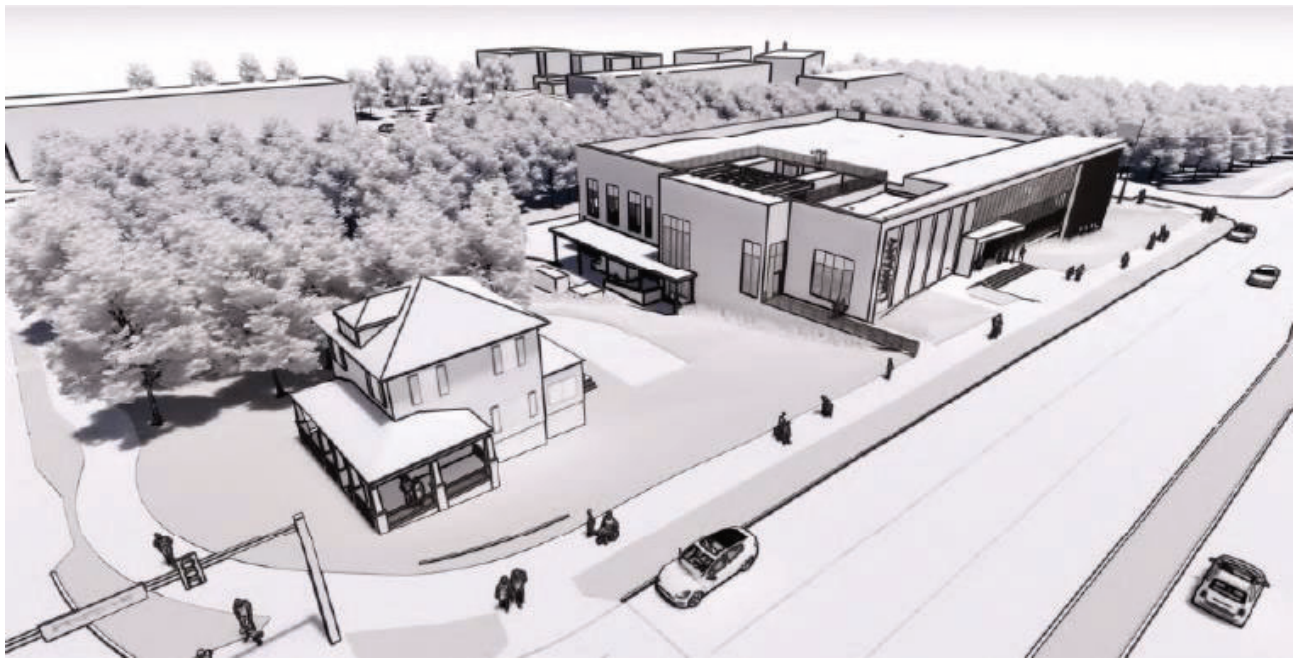


Figure 7: Proposed view from the intersection of Stringtown Rd. and Frederick Rd.

In considering the massing studies, Staff finds the roofs that attempt to replicate forms commonly found in this historic district are incompatible due to the building's proportions. Instead of creating an architecturally compatible form, Staff finds these roofs are so out of scale the resulting massing substantially competes with the Day House and the district as a whole. While these alternative massing studies are still in a preliminary stage, Staff does find the fact that the flat roof allows the proposed library to be lower than the ridge height of the Day House roof to be a positive factor (see *Figure 4*, above). However alternative form and massing strategies could achieve the same result, in particular when there is a substantial grade change on the site that could be used to the new building's advantage.

Staff returns to a point raised in the previous Preliminary Consultation Staff Report: the proposed civic use of the library will become a focal point within the community. Libraries and other civic buildings, are typically larger than most of their residential and commercial neighbors and are intended to be 'monumental' by their nature. These buildings are intended to serve the entire community and need to have the space to do that.

With that in mind, Staff still finds the new building's presence needs to be designed in such a way that it is architecturally compatible with the historic character of the district while also expressing its prominence as a center of the larger Clarksburg community. Some of that compatibility can be expressed in the building design (which will be discussed at the next Preliminary Consultation), in addition to its form.

Staff also finds that the application currently lacks information that would be useful for the discussion including massing studies at grade from the street level and from the proposed finished grade of the new parking lot and from Clarksridge Road. The proposal also lacks information about approximate building heights from the proposed four corners of the building. Future submissions should include this information in order to have a more substantive discussion on the proposed massing and form of the structure.

Even with the inclusion of the additional materials requested above, Staff finds more needs to be done to break up the building's massing so that it better fits the scale of the surrounding district. Staff finds taking advantage of the grade change on site to locate the majority of the parking spaces below the proposed construction is a positive aspect of the proposal. This utilization of the site will have a lower percentage of paving than either of the precedent developments discussed above which will allow for more open space to the north and east of the proposed library. These open spaces will help to reinforce the substantial setbacks identified as character defining in the *Vision*.

Staff requests feedback from the HPC on:

- Additional information required including all proposed elevations at scale, proposed building heights, and any other additional information.
- The appropriateness of the size of the proposed library.
- The appropriateness and compatibility of the proposed flat roof.
- Recommended revisions to the library's proposed massing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the applicant make the revisions recommended by the HPC and returns for a third Preliminary Consultation.



FOR STAFF ONLY:

HAWP# 1121699

DATE ASSIGNED

**APPLICATION FOR
HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT**
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
301.563.3400

APPLICANT:

Name: Montgomery County Gov.

Address: 101 Monroe Street

Daytime Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

City: Rockville Zip: 20850

Tax Account No.: _____

AGENT/CONTACT (if applicable):

Name: John Chow

Address: 101 Monroe Street, 11th Floor

Daytime Phone: 2407776009

E-mail: John.Chow@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov

City: Rockville Zip: 20850

Contractor Registration No.: _____

LOCATION OF BUILDING/PREMISE: MIHP # of Historic Property #13/10

Is the Property Located within an Historic District? X Yes/District Name Clarksburg HD
____ No/Individual Site Name _____

Is there an Historic Preservation/Land Trust/Environmental Easement on the Property? If YES, include a map of the easement, and documentation from the Easement Holder supporting this application.

Are other Planning and/or Hearing Examiner Approvals /Reviews Required as part of this Application? (Conditional Use, Variance, Record Plat, etc.?) If YES, include information on these reviews as supplemental information.

Building Number: 23200 Street: Stringtown Road

Town/City: Clarksburg Nearest Cross Street: _____

Lot: _____ Block: _____ Subdivision: _____ Parcel: _____

TYPE OF WORK PROPOSED: See the checklist on Page 4 to verify that all supporting items for proposed work are submitted with this application. Incomplete Applications will not be accepted for review. Check all that apply:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction | <input type="checkbox"/> Deck/Porch | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed/Garage/Accessory Structure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addition | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardscape/Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Tree removal/planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grading/Excavation | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Window/Door |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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

Signature of owner or authorized agent

Date

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

Owner's mailing address	Owner's Agent's mailing address
Adjacent and confronting Property Owners mailing addresses	

CLARKSBURG LIBRARY

Capital Improvement Project No. 710500

Historic Preservation Commission Presentation

Meeting No.2
Design Concept – Consultation Session

September 17, 2025



2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – Capital Improvement Project Descriptions by MC-DGS

Montgomery County Department of General Services

Hamid Omidvar, AIA

Chief, Division of Building Design + Construction

Randall Hawkins, RA, LEED AP

Section Chief, Division of Building Design + Construction

John Chow

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Montgomery County Public Libraries

Darcell Graham

Director - Montgomery County Public Libraries

Angelisa Hawes

Assistant Director - Montgomery County Public Libraries

Elizabeth Lang

Assistant Facilities + Accessibility Program Manager – M.C. Public Libraries

Grimm + Parker Architects

Antonio Rebelo, AIA, IIDA, NCARB

Lead Designer, G+P Co-President and Director of Design

Sue Hains, AIA, LEED AP, FITWELL

Senior Project Manager, G+P Partner

Kari Mackey, AIA, LEED AP BD+C

Project Architect, G+P Senior Associate



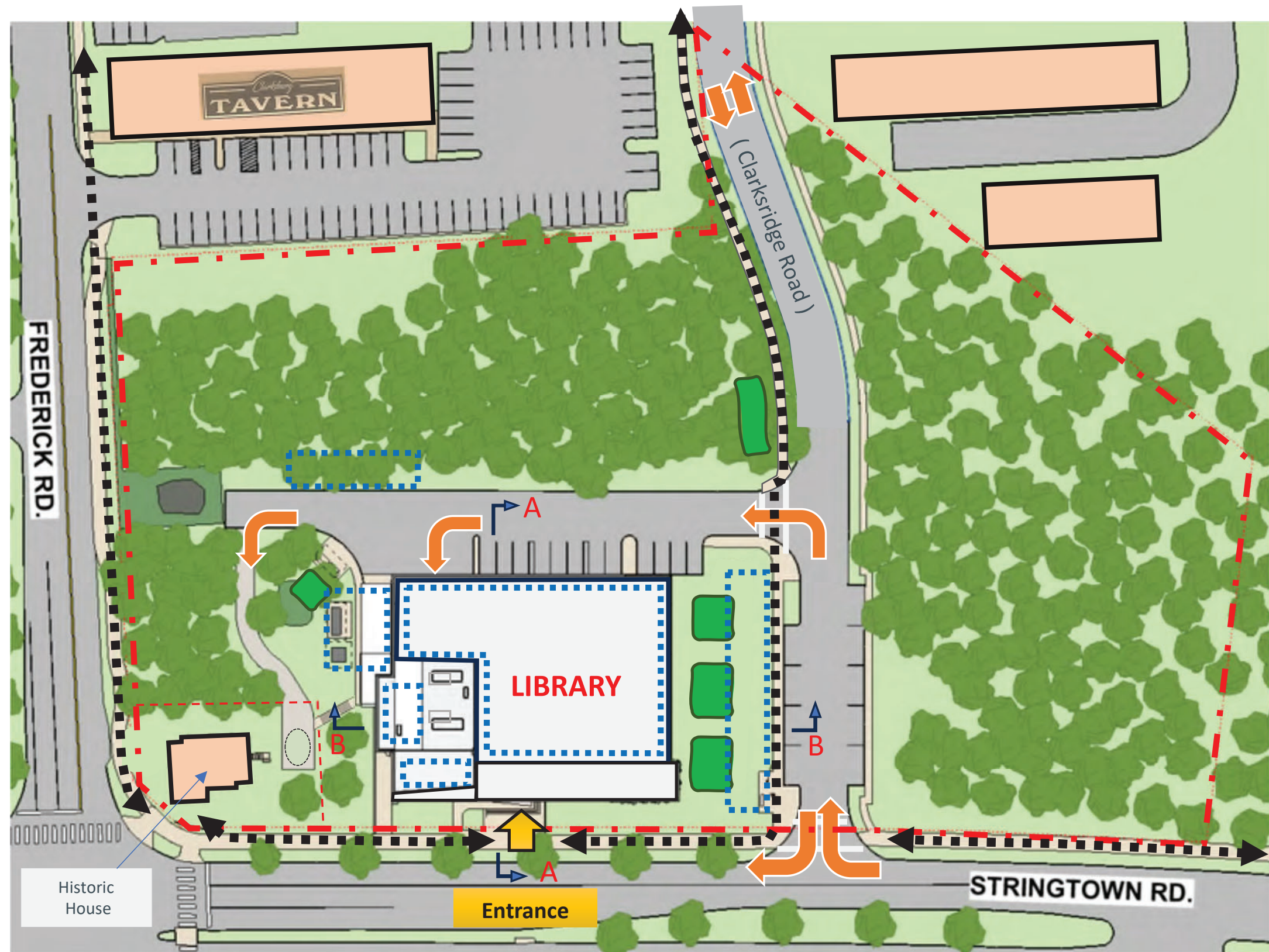
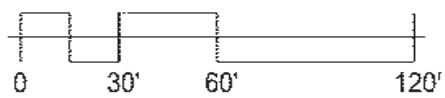
3. Key Historic Preservation Considerations in this Project

“Woven in Time”: The New Clarksburg Library

- **Compatible Use:** Library can make Education and History of Clarksville more available to the Community like no other building type currently in Clarksburg.
- **Location** within the Historic District boundary, but outside of the Historic Core – Architectural Transition Zone/Buffer.
- **Massing Compatible with the scale and proportions** desired for the Historic District: simple rectangular form, one story, but with a two-story, low height appearance.
- **Adequate distance from adjacent historic building** preserves desired openness / visual porosity of the streetscape for views and preservation of landscape elements in the interstitial space.
- **Building located as close as possible to the street** as desired by the short front yard setbacks present in the historic district and hides parking from view by parking cars under the building with access from the rear.
- **Traffic.** Building positioned along Stringtown Rd. helps divert traffic from Frederick Road and helps reduce the ill effects of traffic on an already congested Road (Rt. 355). Clarksridge Road extension
- **The building architectural character** is of the present but respects and nods to the historic past with its calm elegant proportions and fenestration rhythm, as well as the use of few exterior materials that represent wood and panels of similar white color as the adjacent historic predominant building context.
- **Project respects, retains and gives prominence to a significant historic structure** within its property boundary line, encouraging the preservation and future use of that historic building.

4. Site Plan (Includes impact of Solar Panels for Net Zero Energy Requirement)

Legend



5. Proposed Concept: Building Plans

PARKING COUNTS:

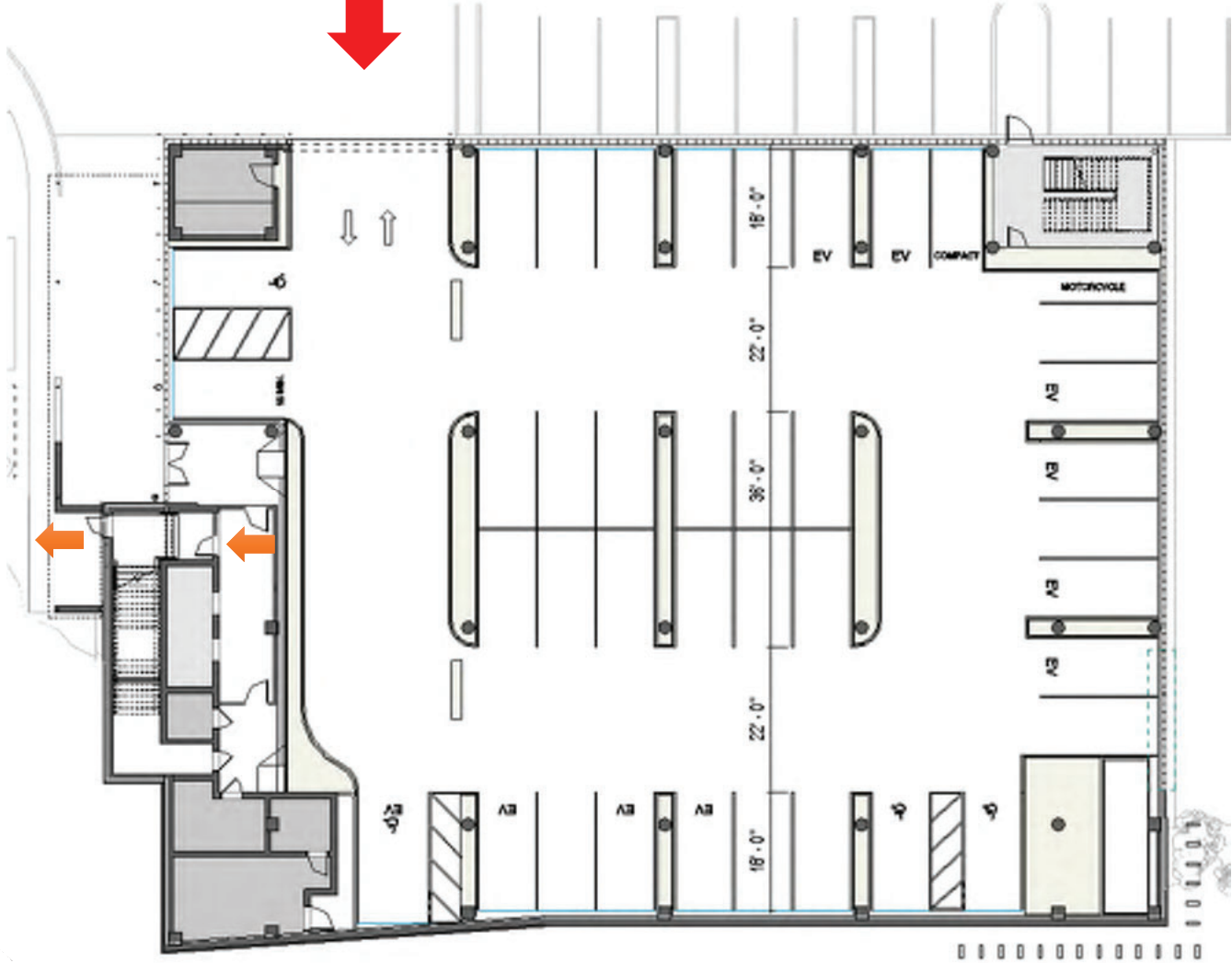
38 Garage Spots

13 Surface Spots

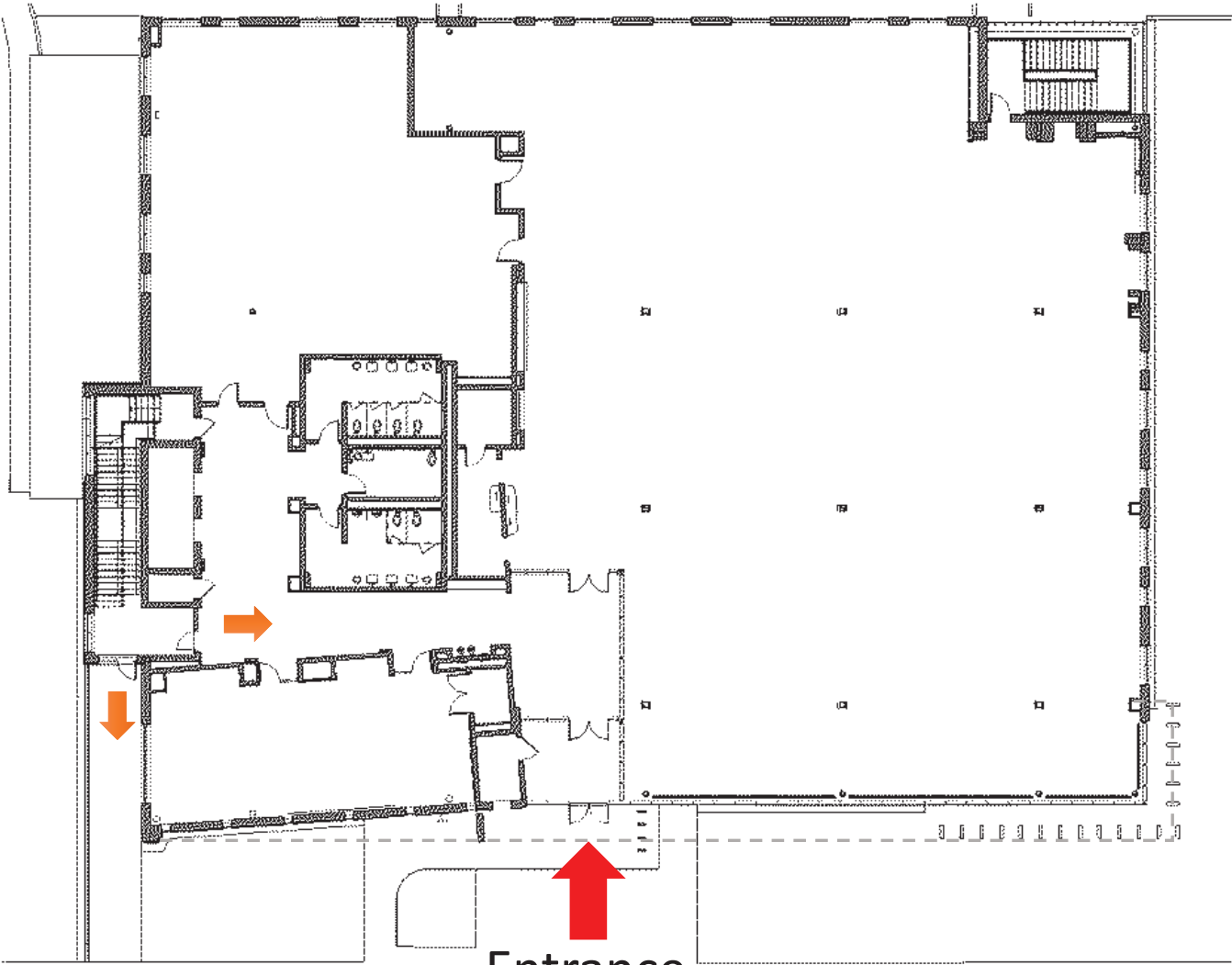
9 Parallel Spots

TOTAL: 60 PARKING SPACES

Drive in



Ground-Level Parking



Entrance

Library Floor Plan

(STRINGTOWN ROAD)

6. Exterior Building Character: Historic Context



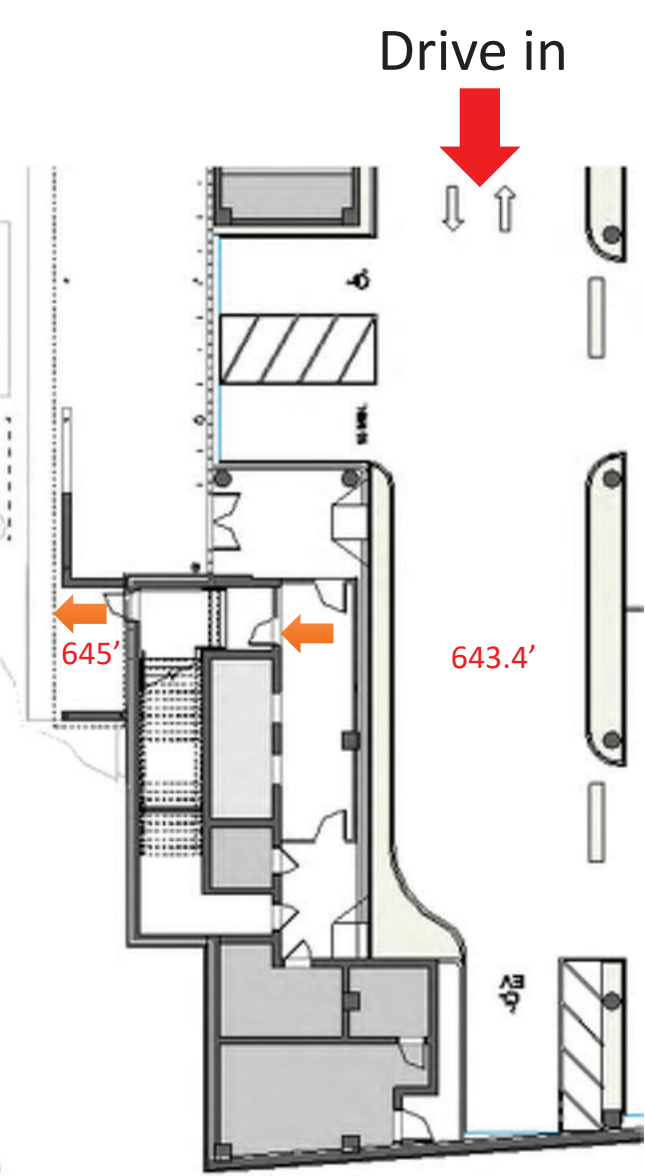
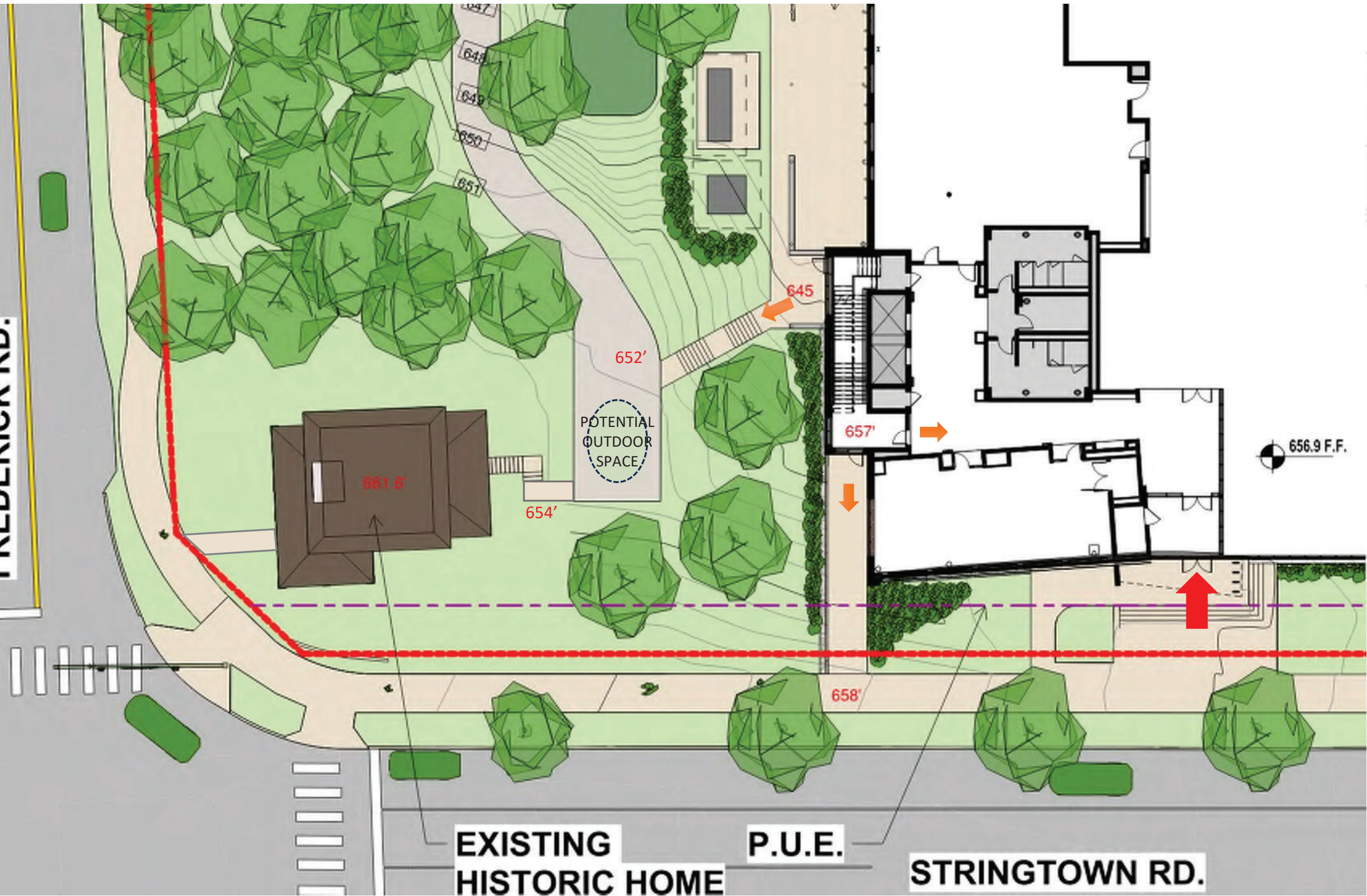
PHOTO FROM *VISION OF CLARKSBURG: A LONG-RANGE PRESERVATION PLAN*, 1992

The American Four-Square style is identified by its square shape and by its hipped roof. It is usually two stories with a full-width, one-story porch. Often, the front of the hipped roof has prominent dormer windows. This type of building was one of America's most popular house forms from the late 1890s through the 1920s. More elaborate examples may have classical details such as columns for porch supports and modillion blocks in the cornice.

A fine example of the American Four-Square in Clarksburg is the Day House located at 23200 Stringtown Road. Constructed in the 1920s, the Day House is influenced by bungalow styled details, but maintains the proportion and symmetry associated with the American Four-Square style. Square in plan and two-and-one-half stories in height the house has a hipped roof with a central hipped roof dormer. The wrap-around porch with squat columns set upon concrete piers is characteristic of bungalow styled architecture.



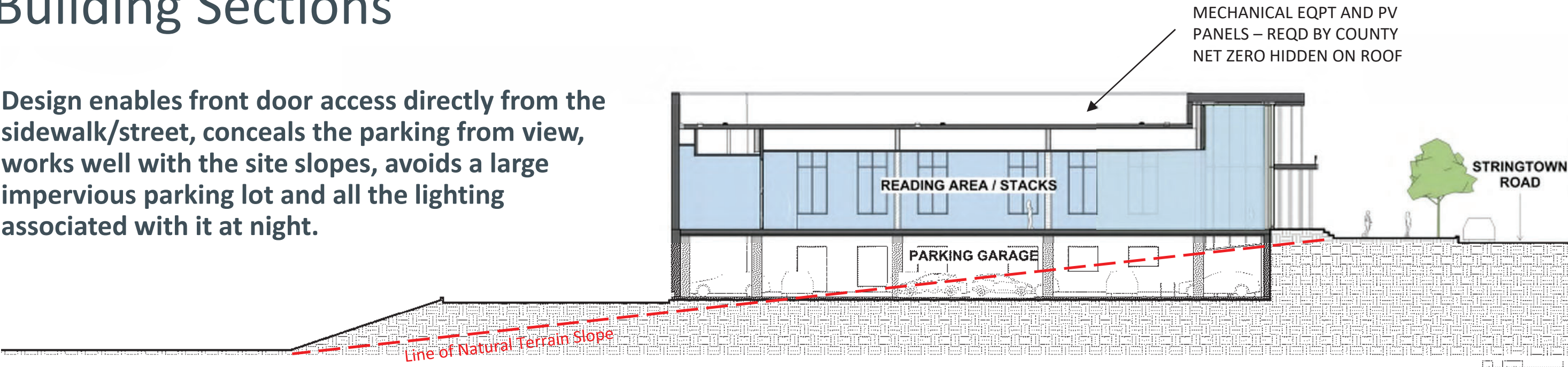
7. Site Plan – Connection to Day House



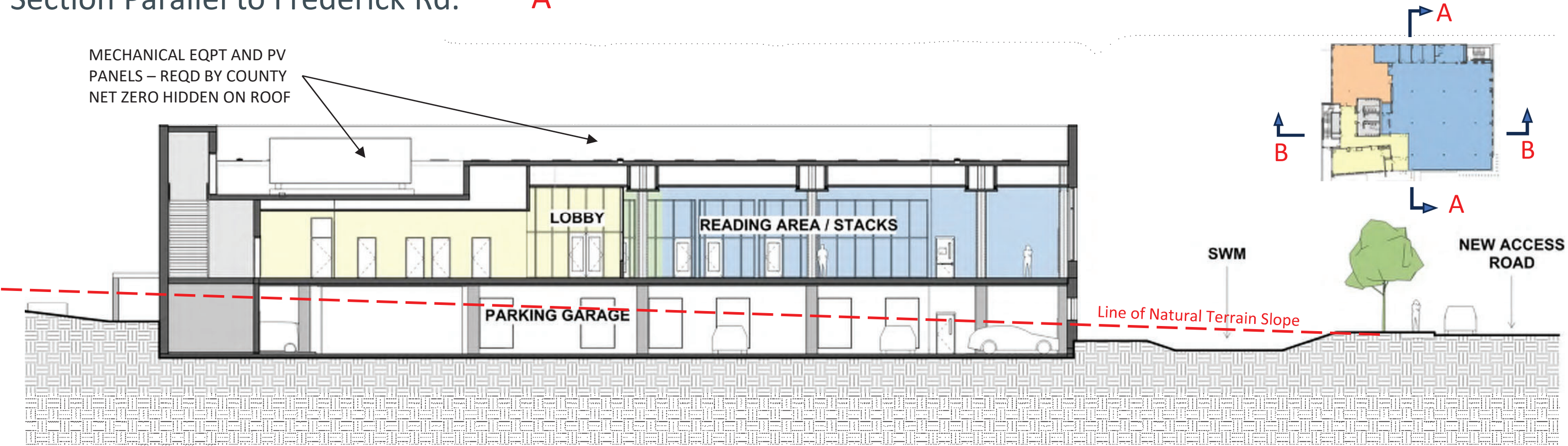
PARTIAL GARAGE PLAN

8. Building Sections

Design enables front door access directly from the sidewalk/street, conceals the parking from view, works well with the site slopes, avoids a large impervious parking lot and all the lighting associated with it at night.

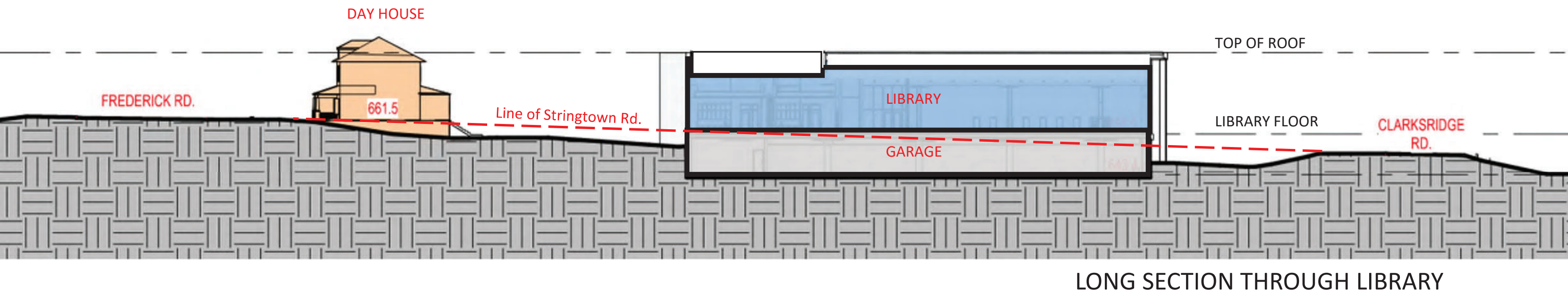


Section Parallel to Frederick Rd. **A**



Section Parallel to Stringtown Rd. **B**

9. Site Section

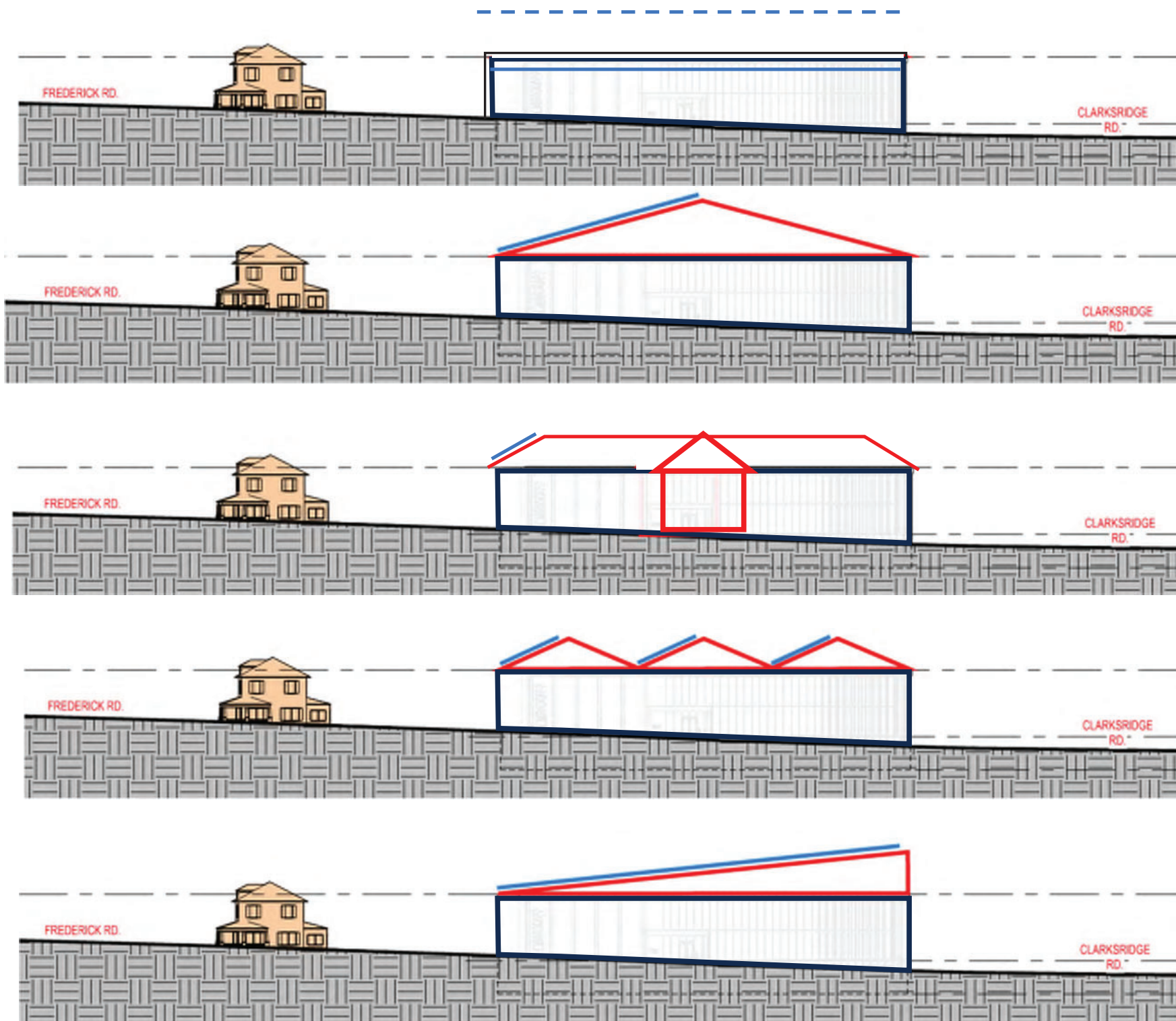


10. Exterior Building Character: Historic Context

Images of Buildings in the Historic District



11. Proposed Concept: Building Massing – Roof Form Studies



- **Any Increased building height with roof forms** overpowers the day house
- **Reduce PV area required** by County for Net Zero
- **Requires mech units at grade**
- **Narrow Definition of Context:** Roof shape alone does not determine compatibility—scale, rhythm, and materials matter more.
- **Residential Expression:** Gabled/hip roofs read as residential, not civic, and risk making a landmark building feel like an oversized house.
- **False Historicism:** Imposing historic roof forms creates imitation rather than authenticity.
- **Redundant Compatibility:** The design already achieves harmony through its **two-story volumes** that match the scale of neighboring house.
- **Loss of Unity:** Adding gables would clutter and weaken the strong civic silhouette.

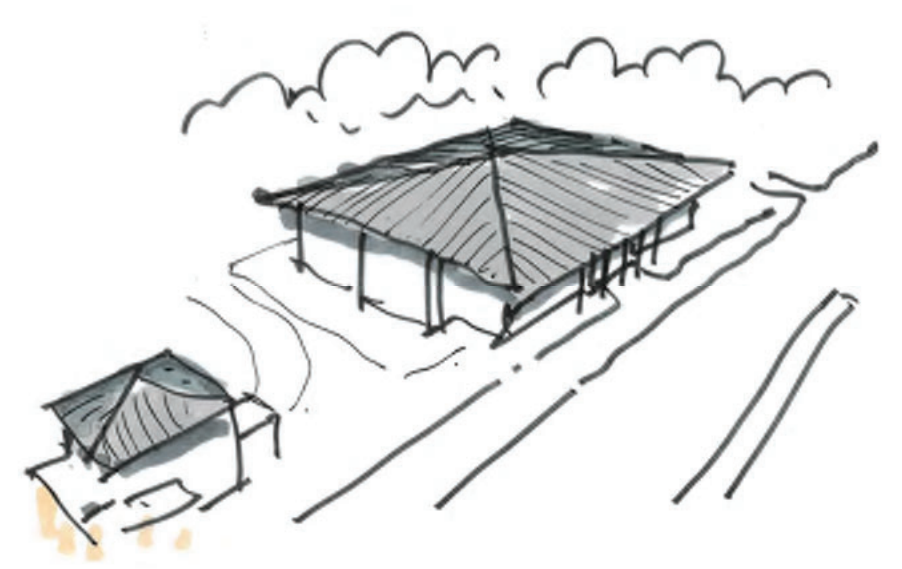
12. Proposed **Concept**: Building Massing – Roof Form Studies



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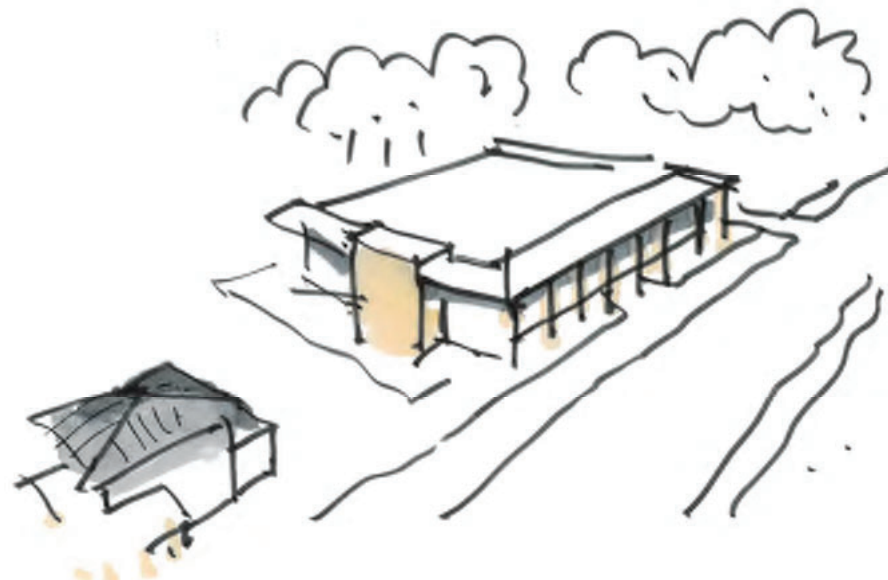
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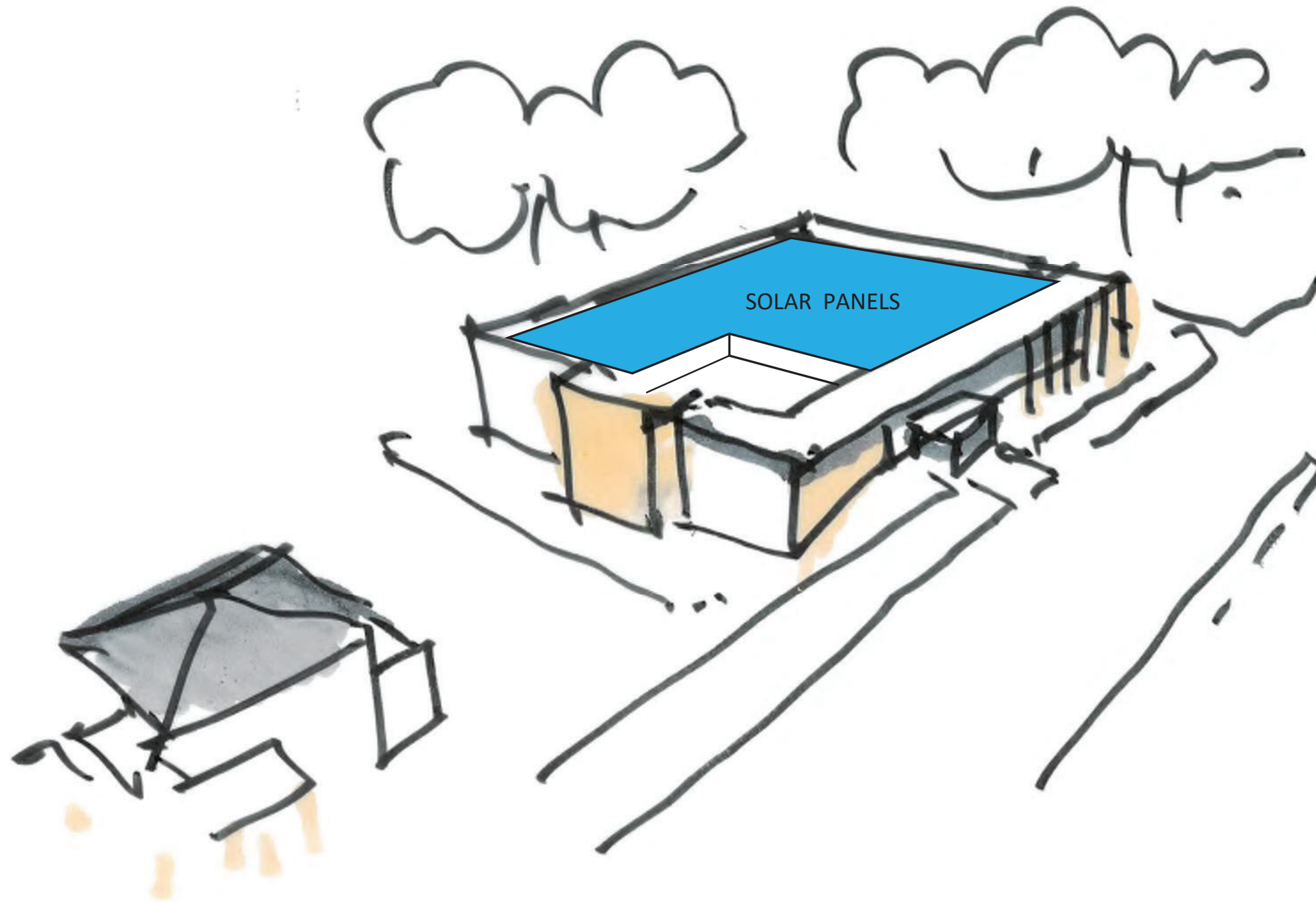


5.



6.

13. Proposed **Concept**: Building Massing – Roof Form Studies



14. Exterior Building Character: Architectural Character Explained



Proposed view from Frederick Road and Stringtown Road intersection

15. Exterior Building Character: Architectural Character Explained



Proposed view from Frederick Road and Stringtown Road intersection

16. Exterior Building Character: Building Character Explained

1. Contextual Materiality Rooted in Local Traditions

The design avoids imposing alien materials and instead embraces **panelized cladding systems** that reflect the **non-masonry character** of most historic buildings in Clarksburg, which are mostly clad with painted wood siding. By using **white finishes**—which are prevalent in the historic houses—and **vertical wood elements** reminiscent of local barns, the building speaks the same material language as the community.



Proposed Exterior Building Panel System and Window Proportions

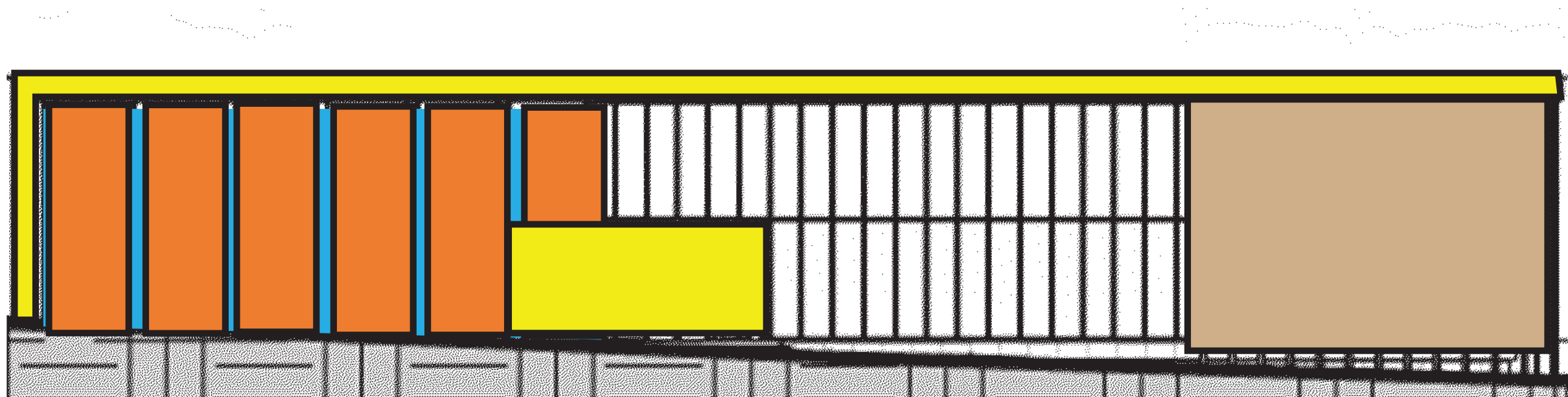


Images From Clarksburg and Immediate Vicinity Area

17. Exterior Building Character: Building Character Explained

2. Respectful Massing and Proportion

- Civic Presence:** The linear shroud gives the building a strong, unified silhouette appropriate for a **public landmark**, distinguishing it from the smaller, residential houses nearby.
- Authenticity of Time:** The design reflects the spirit and clarity of today—a **building of its time**—just as the historic houses were authentic to the period in which they were built.
- Harmony Through Scale:** Inside the frame, **smaller two-story volumes** mirror the scale and proportions of the neighboring houses, creating a familiar and comfortable relationship at street level.
- Visual Rhythm:** The careful use of **vertical articulation** echoes the cadence of porches, windows, and siding patterns in the historic district, reinforcing continuity without imitation.
- Respect Without Mimicry:** By relying on proportion, rhythm, and scale rather than borrowed roof forms, the building achieves compatibility while maintaining an **honest civic character**.
- Balance of Old and New:** The design bridges past and present—**neighborly in scale, contemporary in expression**—ensuring the building both fits in and stands out appropriately as a civic institution.



Proposed West Elevation - Diagram of Volumes

18. Exterior Building Character: Elevations



View from Frederick and Stringtown Road Intersection

For illustration purposes many trees are not shown

Thank You

