

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT

Address:	17 Pine Avenue, Takoma Park	Meeting Date:	1/21/2026
Resource:	Contributing Resource Takoma Park Historic District	Report Date:	1/14/2026
Applicant:	Linda Shaw (Craig Moloney, Agent)	Public Notice:	1/7/2026
Review:	HAWP	Tax Credit:	No
Permit No.:	1143102	Staff:	Laura DiPasquale
Proposal:	Handrail installation		

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the HPC **approve** the HAWP application.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SIGNIFICANCE: Contributing Resource to the Takoma Park Historic District
STYLE: Craftsman Four Square
DATE: c. 1910s

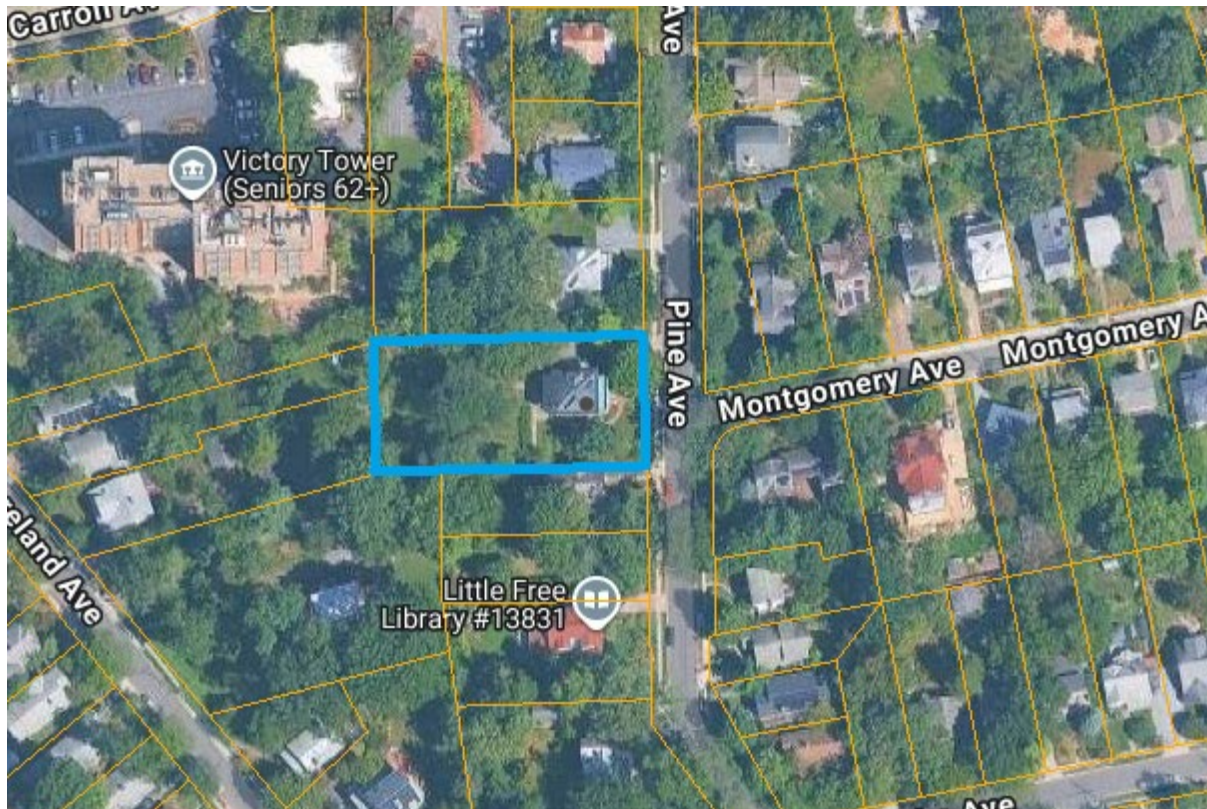


Figure 1: The location of the subject property, outlined in blue.



Figure 2: Front elevations of the subject property (January 2026, Historic Preservation Office).

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to install wrought-iron handrails along the front steps of the house leading to the front porch. The railings would be anchored to the existing stucco porch columns at the top of the stairs and into the bottom stair.



Figure 3: Proposed front elevation detail.

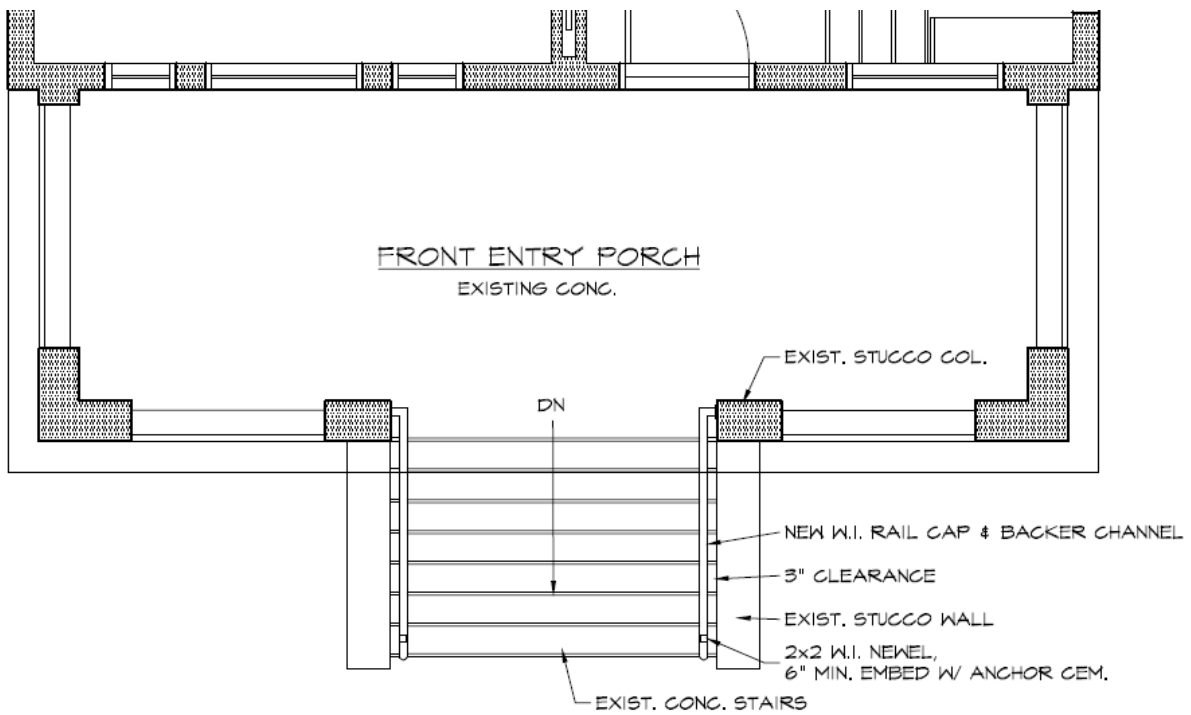


Figure 4: Proposed plan showing the locations of the proposed railings.

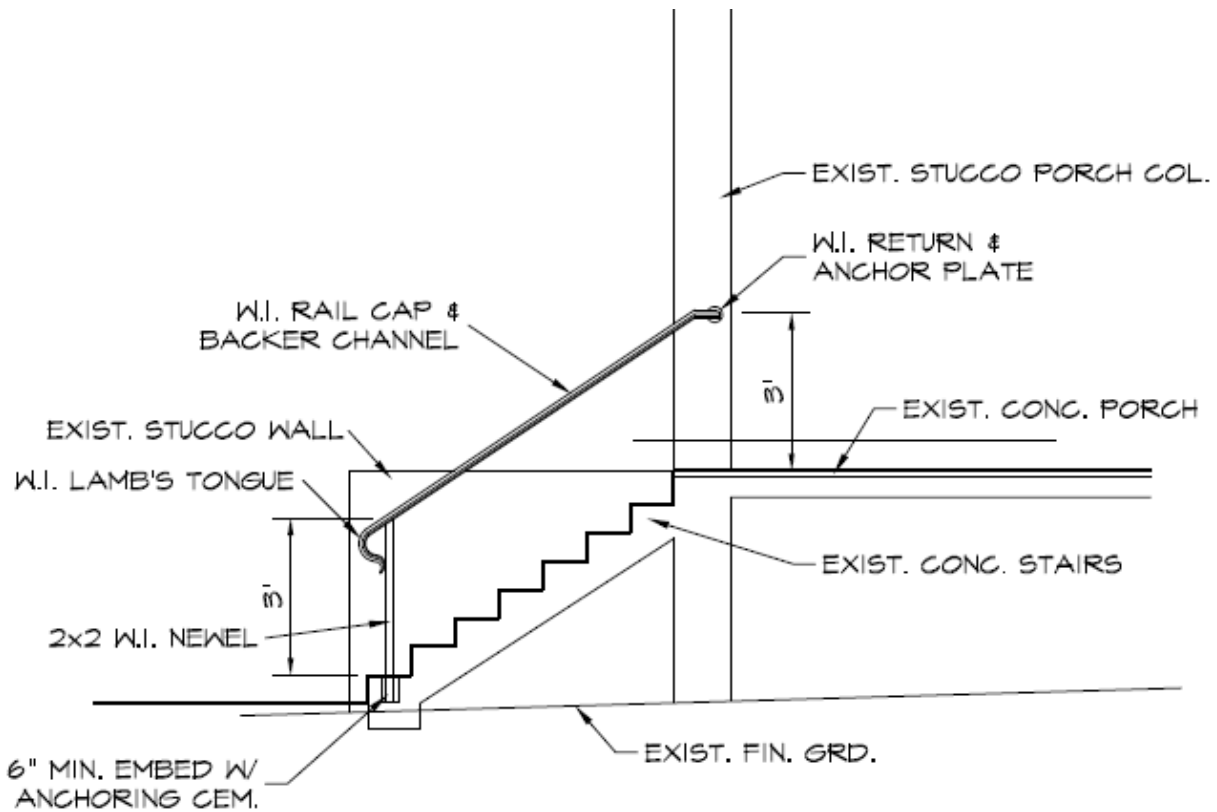


Figure 5: Side elevation detail of the proposed railings.

APPLICABLE GUIDELINES

The Historic Preservation Office and Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consult several documents when reviewing alterations and new construction within the Takoma Park Historic District. 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 four documents is outlined below.

Takoma Park Historic District Guidelines

There are two 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 the buildings in the Takoma Park Historic District have been assessed as being “Contributing Resources.” While these buildings 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. They are important to the overall character of the district and the streetscape due to their size, scale, and architectural qualities, 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.

Residential Areas

In Takoma Park, there are a number of elements which define the streetscape and building patterns.

- Use of decorative stone retaining walls (where required by topographic changes) and occasionally fences to define a sidewalk line and separate yards from street.
- Sidewalks and planting strips along the street.
- Orientation of driveways and parking areas to the rear and side of buildings.
- Extensive landscaping, including mature trees and flowering plants (e.g. azaleas).

The following guidance which pertains 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.
- All changes and additions should respect existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space.

Montgomery County Code, Chapter 24A-8

The following guidance which pertains to this project are as follows:

- (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;
 - (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;
- (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 applicable *Standards* are as follows:

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.

STAFF DISCUSSION

Staff supports the proposed work and recommends approval. Staff finds that the installation of a railing along the front steps will not substantially alter the exterior features of the resource, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(1). Staff notes that, while the attachment of metal railings into masonry can cause damage to the surrounding materials—particularly on decorative finishes or horizontal surfaces such as steps where water can infiltrate new penetrations and cause freeze-thaw damage—in this case, the proposal only calls for two penetrations into horizontal surfaces, and that the existing steps, cheek walls, and porch piers appear to have modern coatings and that their smooth, painted finish would be easily repairable. Therefore, staff finds that the proposal will not destroy historic materials, per *Standard 9*. Staff finds that the simple handrail design of the proposed wrought iron railing is compatible in character with the district and resource, per the *Guidelines, Standard 9* and Chapter 24A-8(b)(2). Staff also finds that the installation of a railing is life-safety related and would aid in the private utilization of the resource in a manner compatible with the historical and architectural value of the resource, per Chapter 24A-8(b)(3).



Figure 6: Existing conditions of the front steps.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission **approve** the HAWP application under the Criteria for Issuance in Chapter 24A-8(b)(1) and (2), and (d), having found that the proposal will not substantially alter the exterior features of the historic resource and is compatible in character with the district and the purposes of Chapter 24A;

and with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9*;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall present an electronic set of drawings, if applicable, to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) staff for review and stamping prior to submission for the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) building permits;

and with the general condition that final project design details, not specifically delineated by the Commission, shall be approved by HPC staff or brought back to the Commission as a revised HAWP application at staff's discretion;

and with the general condition that the applicant shall notify the Historic Preservation Staff if they propose to make **any alterations** to the approved plans. Once the work is completed the applicant will contact the staff person assigned to this application at 301-495-2167 or laura.dipasquale@montgomeryplanning.org to schedule a follow-up site visit.

Description of Property: Please describe the building and surrounding environment. Include information on significant structures, landscape features, or other significant features of the property:

Description of Work Proposed: Please give an overview of the work to be undertaken:

Work Item 1: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

Work Item 2: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

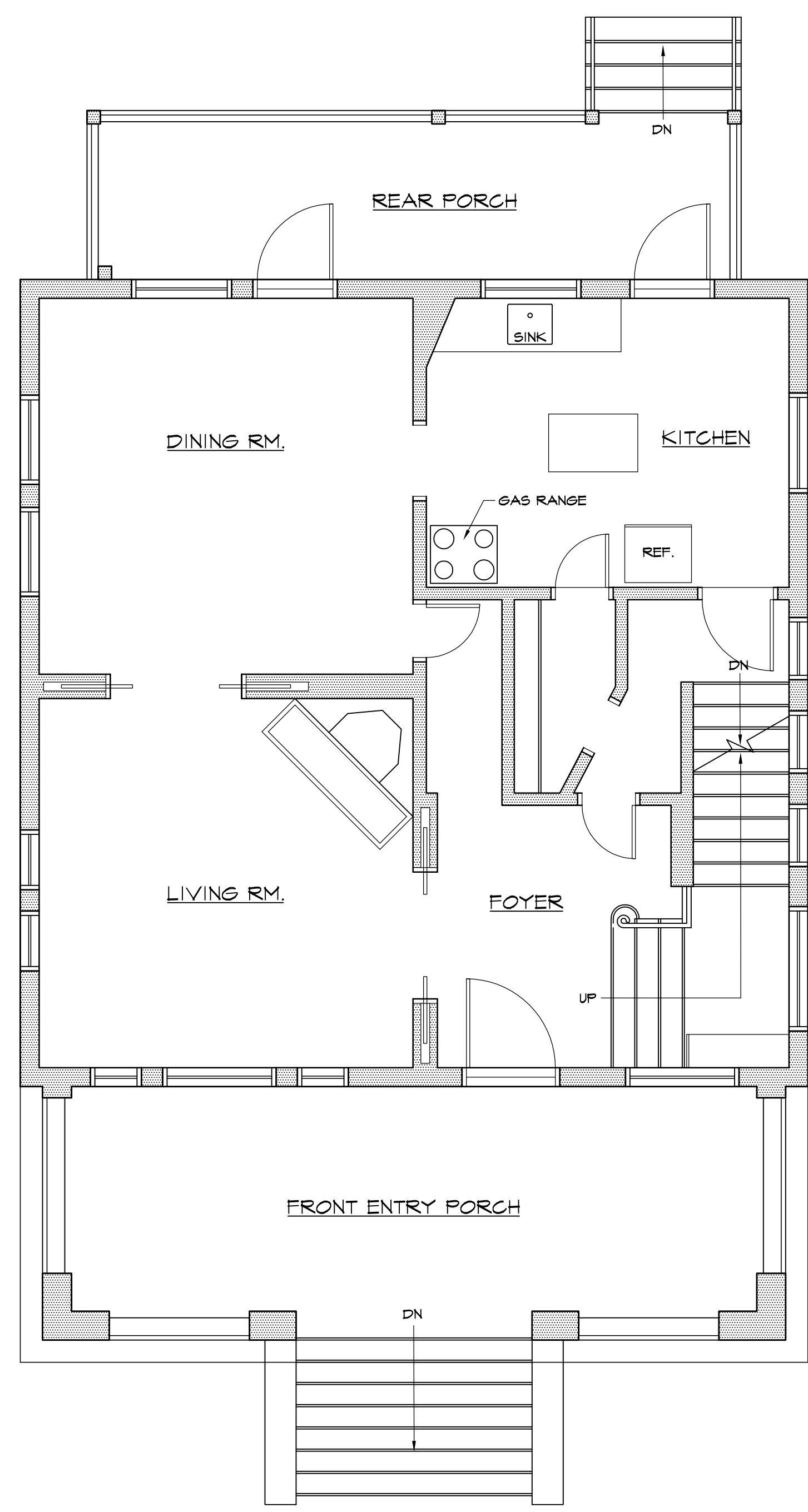
Work Item 3: _____	
Description of Current Condition:	Proposed Work:

**HISTORIC AREA WORK PERMIT
CHECKLIST OF
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

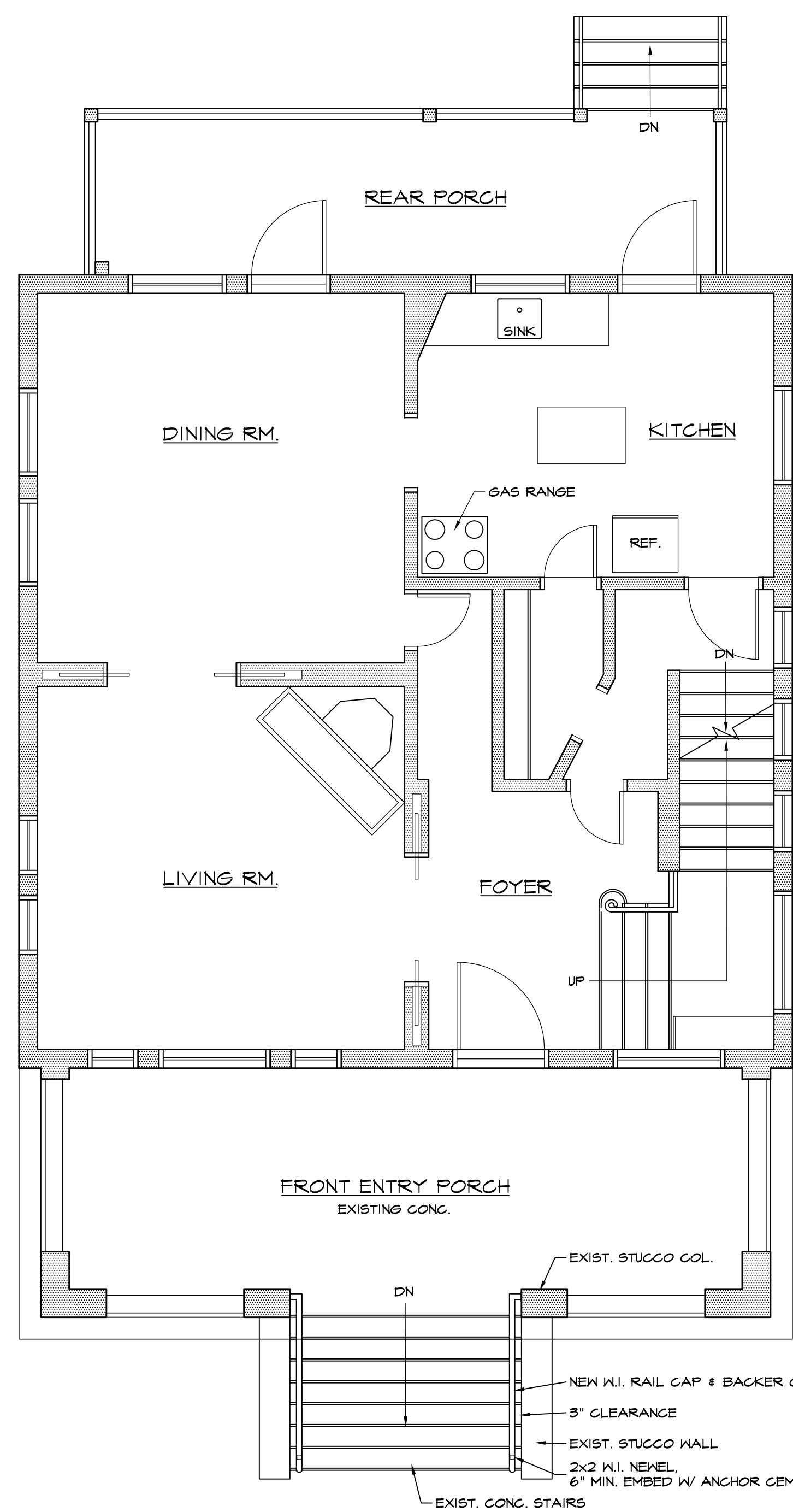
	Required Attachments						
Proposed Work	I. Written Description	2. Site Plan	3. Plans/ Elevations	4. Material Specifications	5. Photographs	6. Tree Survey	7. Property Owner Addresses
New Construction	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Additions/ Alterations	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Demolition	*	*	*		*		*
Deck/Porch	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fence/Wall	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Driveway/ Parking Area	*	*		*	*	*	*
Grading/Excavation/ Landscaping	*	*		*	*	*	*
Tree Removal	*	*		*	*	*	*
Siding/ Roof Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Window/ Door Changes	*	*	*	*	*		*
Masonry Repair/ Repoint	*	*	*	*	*		*
Signs	*	*	*	*	*		*



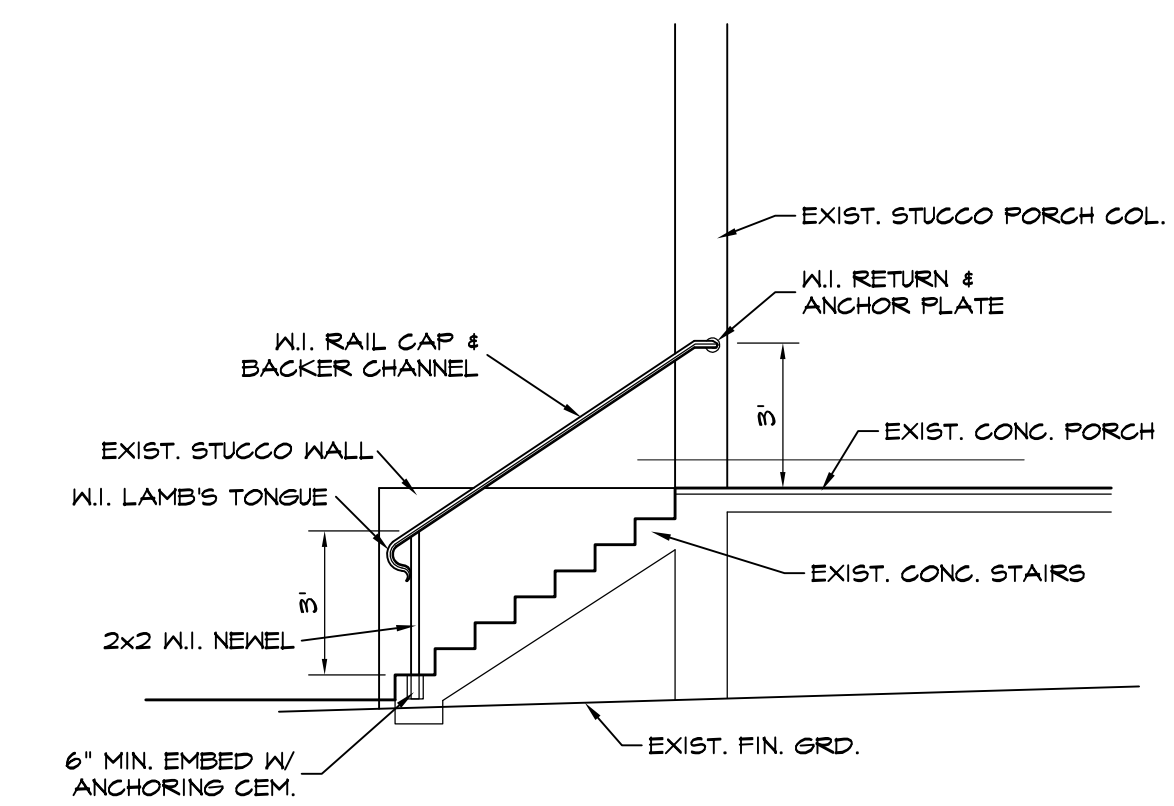
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION:
 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THESE
 DOCUMENTS WERE PREPARED OR
 APPROVED BY ME, AND THAT I
 AM A DULY LICENSED ARCHITECT
 UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE
 OF MARYLAND, LICENSE NO. 6059
 EXPIRATION DATE: 6/30/2026



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



2 **PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN**
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

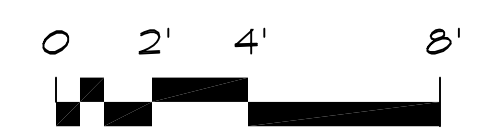


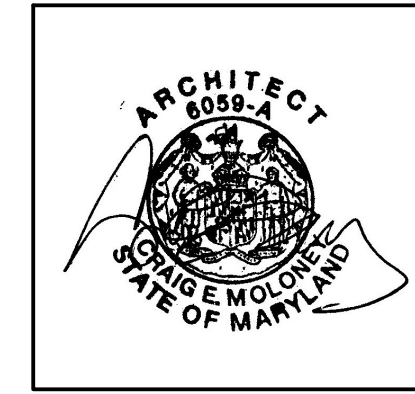
3 **HANDRAIL DETAIL ELEVATION**
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

NEW HANDRAILS FOR THE SHAW RESIDENCE
 17 PINE AVENUE, TAKOMA PARK, MD

Issue Date			
9/16/2025			
Revisions			
Rev.	Date	Description	By
Δ			
Δ			
Δ			
Δ			
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Sheet Title
PLANS, DETAIL





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 EXPIRATION DATE: 6/30/2026

**NEW HANDRAILS FOR THE
 SHAW RESIDENCE**
 17 PINE AVENUE, TAKOMA PARK, MD



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



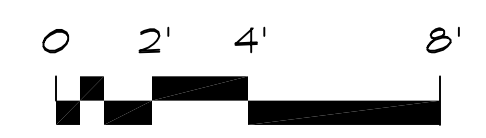
3 **EXISTING
 RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION**
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 **PROPOSED
 FRONT ELEVATION**
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



4 **PROPOSED
 RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION**
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0" (OPPOSITE SIDE SIMILAR)



Issue Date			
9/16/2025			
Revisions			
Rev.	Date	Description	By

Sheet Title
ELEVATIONS





17

