

File Number: 9-C-25-IH

Meeting: 10/14/2025
Applicant: Tae Cho New Season Properties LLC
Owner: Tae Cho New Season Properties LLC
District: Oakwood/Lincoln Park Infill Housing Overlay District

Property Information

Location: 225 E. Oldham Ave. **Parcel ID:** 81 K H 020
Zoning: RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood)
Description: After-the-fact revisions to 11-H-24-IH

Description of Work

Level II Driveway, Parking Pad, Access Point, Garage, Similar Facility, Change to Porch Visible from the Primary Street

After-the-fact revisions to COA 11-H-24-IH. Revisions include:

Increased foundation height to approximately 7' measured at the façade (left side) that exceeds the 3.5' administratively approved during permitting. Modifications to approved front porches that include the addition of handrailings, raising the porch to approximately 8' tall (left side, top of floor) instead of on grade, and the addition of separate staircases. Revised concrete patio on rear elevation to a raised wooden deck with a wood dividing wall. Proposed addition of 36' wide by 32'-6" deep gravel parking pad at the rear of the lot accessed via the alley.

The applicant has proposed the following revisions to the design of the as-built front porches and staircases: Proposal includes centralizing the height in a singular staircase that projects from a landing between the separate porches. Wood decking screening will be replaced with lattice to screen the underside of the staircase and porches. Addition of newel caps to the end of the porch handrailing. They are proposing to add two approximately 3' tall planter boxes in front of the front porches and two shorter planter boxes on either side of the porches. Proposed material options include brick, stuccoed and painted block, or landscaping/gravity block, and the proposed landscaping options are boxwoods for the front porch and either sky pencil hollies or green giant arborvitae for the sides.

Applicable Design Guidelines

Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines

3. Alleys, Parking, and Services

- Parking should not be in front yards.
- Alley access should be used for garage or parking pad locations. On level ground, pea gravel or similar material may be used as a parking pad off alleys.
- On streets without alleys, garages or parking pads should be at least 20 feet behind the front façade of the infill house with access limited to one lane between the street and the front façade.
- Garages which are perpendicular to the alley should be about 18 feet from the center line of the alley pavement,

allowing a comfortable turning radius for a driver to enter a garage.

- Alley-oriented parking pads, garbage collection points, and utility boxes should be screened with a combination of landscaping and fencing.
- On those streets which have alleys, driveways should not be permitted from the front of the house.
- On corner lots, a driveway to the garage may be provided off the side street.

4. Scale, Mass, and Foundation Height

- The front elevation should be designed to be similar in scale to other houses along the street.
- The front façade of new houses should be about the same width as original houses on the block.
- New foundations should be about the same height as the original houses in the neighborhood.
- If greater height is to be created (with new construction or an addition), that portion of the house should be located toward the side or rear of the property.

5. Porches and Stoops

- Porches should be part of the housing design in those neighborhoods where porches were commonplace.
- Porches should be proportional to original porches on the block, extending about 8-12 feet toward the street from the habitable portion of the house.
- Porches should extend into the front yard setback, if necessary, to maintain consistency with similarly sited porches along the street.
- Porch posts and railings should be like those used in the historic era of the neighborhood's development. Wrought iron columns and other materials that were not used in the early 1900's should not be used.
- Small stoops centered on entry and no more than 5 feet deep are appropriate on blocks where porches were not traditional.

10. Multi-Unit Housing

- Multi-unit housing (where permitted by zoning) should have similar front yard space to that of the traditional single-family houses along the street.
- In zoning districts where multi-unit housing is permitted, the height of the new housing should be similar to the original houses along the street.
- Multi-unit housing should be designed to continue the architectural rhythm of the block. In addition to the same build-to line, porches, bays and breaks in the front façade should be created to mimic the look of older homes when looking down the block. This should be done by dividing the building into separate sections that are proportionally similar to original houses on the block.
- Parking should be provided behind apartments with access from the alley

Comments

1. The duplex design is being sent back to the Board for review after the building inspector identified major deviations from the approved plans during final inspection. The case was postponed at the September meeting to allow the applicant to submit an alternative design for the front porches and the parking pad, which were provided.

2. The case, 11-H-24-IH, was approved with conditions by the Board in November 2024, and the relevant conditions included "2) porch supports to be revised in size and/or design to better align with neighborhood context" and "5) elevating the front porch on a foundation/porch flooring instead of the proposed posts extending to the ground level with steps as depicted." To meet these conditions, the porch supports were revised from 4" to 6" columns and wood decking was added to the underside of the porches during permitting, which was approved by staff.

2. This is a Middle Housing project, and the approved plans did not include parking, as it is not required under Article 4.6.D. The applicant coordinated with City Engineering to determine the minimum size for four parking spaces, as requested by the Board, and has revised the parking size accordingly from the previous submission. The proposed 36' wide by 32'-6" deep gravel parking pad at the rear of the lot accessed via the alley meets the Infill

3. The modifications to the rear patio meet the design guidelines.

4. Design guidelines recommend that foundation heights “be comparable to historic houses in the neighborhood,” and most of the houses on this side of East Oldham Avenue feature raised foundations to account for the slope. The permit-approved plans included a 1’-8” tall foundation measured at the façade. The applicant reached out to staff in February soon after the permit was issued to request approval to increase the foundation to approximately 3.5’, which staff approved since the height was comparable to the other houses on the block. However, the building was constructed with a 7’ tall foundation at the façade, making the structure significantly tall in scale with the block that only features one-story houses. The Board should discuss whether shrubs (such as hydrangea, azaleas, rhododendron, or boxwood) should be planted at the sides of the foundation near the corners of the façade to screen the foundation, in addition to the proposed planter boxes.

5. The design guidelines state that “porch posts and railings should be like those used in the historic era of the neighborhood’s development” and that “porches should be proportional to original porches on the block.” The guidelines for multi-unit housing emphasize that buildings “be designed in scale and context with the early architectural features of the neighborhood.” The height, form, and detail of the constructed front porches is incompatible with the historic houses on the block and significantly increases the visual scale of the structure.

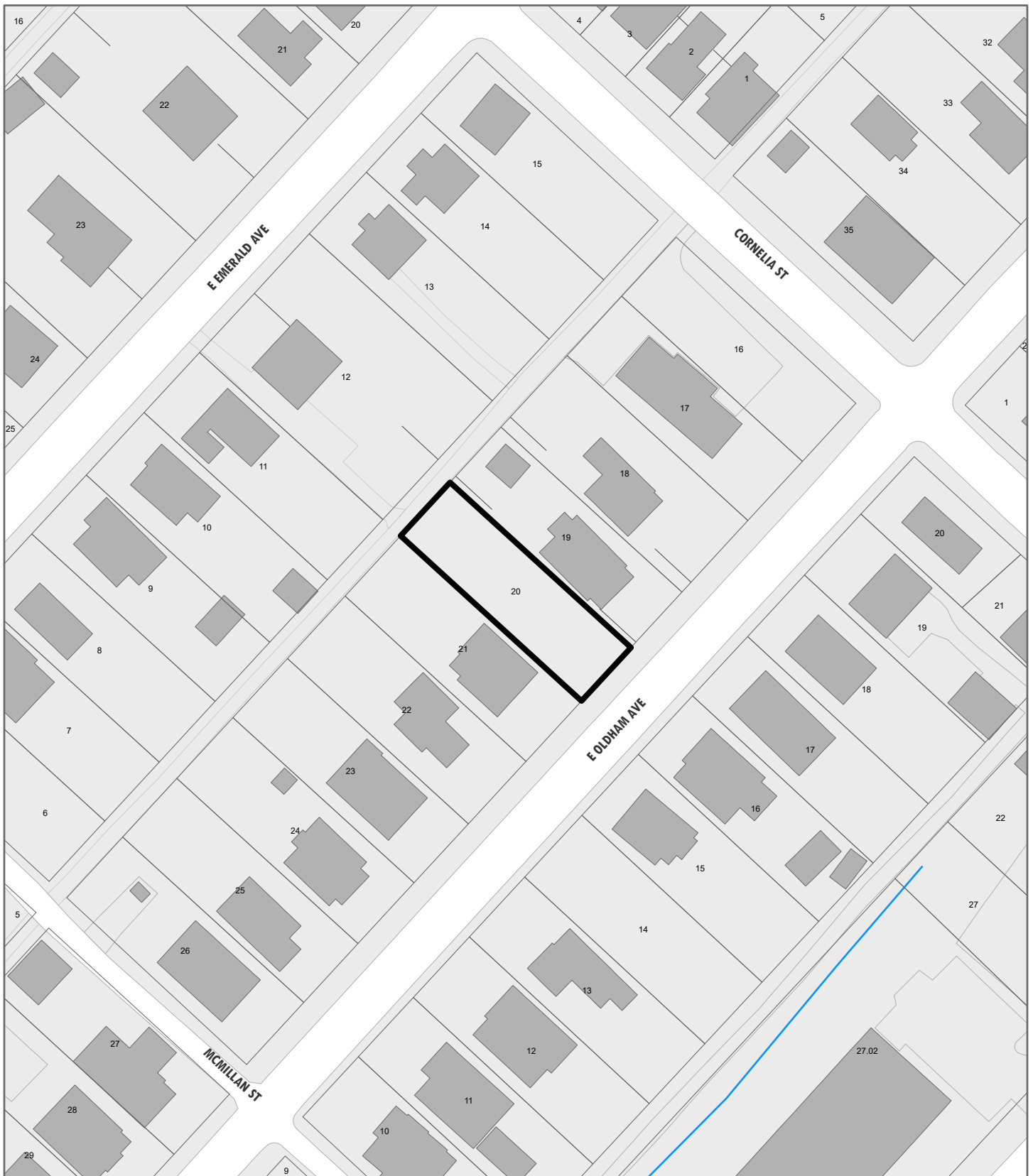
6. The proposed central staircase massing reflects the form of historic houses on the block and within the neighborhood with raised foundations to account for grade and is smaller in scale than what was constructed. Alternative staircase options are limited due to the height of the building and the shallow depth of the front yard. The lattice screening is more compatible with the building and other houses on the block than the installed wood decking, and it benefits from the screening of the planter boxes. The addition of newel caps on the staircase contributes architectural detail that reflects the historic context. These revisions meet the design guidelines and are informed by the context.

7. The proposed planter boxes screen the height of the porches and foundation, and they introduce a horizontal break that minimizes the visual scale. They also reflect other efforts to mitigate the effect of tall foundation heights in the neighborhood through the use of masonry, such as planter boxes and brick wing walls. In the opinion of staff, any of the proposed materials for the planter boxes can be appropriate, although landscaping/gravity blocks would be less preferable due to the exposed concrete. The design guidelines recommend that native or naturalized shade trees be used, so the sky pencil holly (*Ilex crenata*), which is classified as invasive by the Tennessee Invasive Plants Council, is not an appropriate option. Boxwood is a native species, and green giant arborvitae is neither native nor invasive. These options are appropriate, as are other native or naturalized shrubs. Final landscaping selections should be approved by staff.

Recommendation

The Board should discuss whether shrubs should be planted along the side elevations near the façade corners to screen the foundation (in addition to the proposed planter boxes) and whether additional design interventions are necessary to reduce the visual scale of the front porches.

Along with any necessary revisions or conditions, staff recommends approval of Certificate 9-C-25-IH, subject to the following conditions: 1) final landscaping selection to not include invasive species and to be approved by staff; and 2) final site plan to meet City Engineering standards.



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD	9-C-25-IH	Petitioner: Tae Cho New Season Properties LLC
	APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS	
	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div> 225 E. Oldham Ave. Oakwood/Lincoln Park Infill Housing Overlay District </div> </div>	
Original Print Date: 9/8/2025 Knoxville - Knox County Planning - Design Review Board		<div style="text-align: center;">  <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <div style="width: 100px; height: 10px; background: black; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="margin: 0 10px;">0</div> <div style="width: 100px; height: 10px; background: black; border: 1px solid black;"></div> <div style="margin: 0 10px;">160</div> </div> Feet </div>



DESIGN REVIEW REQUEST

- ☐ DOWNTOWN DESIGN (DK)
- ☐ HISTORIC ZONING (H)
- ☐ INFILL HOUSING (IH)

Applicant		
		9-C-25-IH
Date Filed	Meeting Date (if applicable)	File Number(s)

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence related to this application should be directed to the approved contact listed below.

- ☐ Owner ☐ Contractor ☐ Engineer ☐ Architect/Landscape Architect

Name		Company	
Address		City	State Zip
Phone	Email		

CURRENT PROPERTY INFO

Owner Name (if different from applicant)	Owner Address	Owner Phone
Property Address		Parcel ID
Neighborhood	Zoning	

AUTHORIZATION

<i>Malynda Wollert</i>		
Staff Signature	Please Print	Date
<i>Tae Cho</i>		
Applicant Signature	Please Print	Date

REQUEST

DOWNTOWN DESIGN

Level 1:

- ☐ Signs ☐ Alteration of an existing building/structure

Level 2:

- ☐ Addition to an existing building/structure

Level 3:

- ☐ Construction of new building/structure ☐ Site design, parking, plazas, landscape

See required Downtown Design attachment for more details.

☐ Brief description of work: _____

HISTORIC ZONING

Level 1:

- ☐ Signs ☐ Routine repair of siding, windows, roof, or other features, in-kind; Installation of gutters, storm windows/doors

Level 2:

- ☐ Major repair, removal, or replacement of architectural elements or materials ☐ Additions and accessory structures

Level 3:

- ☐ Construction of a new primary building

Level 4:

- ☐ Relocation of a contributing structure ☐ Demolition of a contributing structure

See required Historic Zoning attachment for more details.

☐ Brief description of work: _____

INFILL HOUSING

Level 1:

- ☐ Driveways, parking pads, access point, garages or similar facilities ☐ Subdivisions

Level 2:

- ☐ Additions visible from the primary street ☐ Changes to porches visible from the primary street

Level 3:

- ☐ New primary structure
☐ Site built ☐ Modular ☐ Multi-Sectional

See required Infill Housing attachment for more details.

☐ Brief description of work: _____

STAFF USE ONLY

ATTACHMENTS

- ☐ Downtown Design Checklist
☐ Historic Zoning Design Checklist
☐ Infill Housing Design Checklist

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Property Owners / Option Holders

Level 1: \$50 • Level 2: \$100 • Level 3: \$250 • Level 4: \$500

FEE 1:

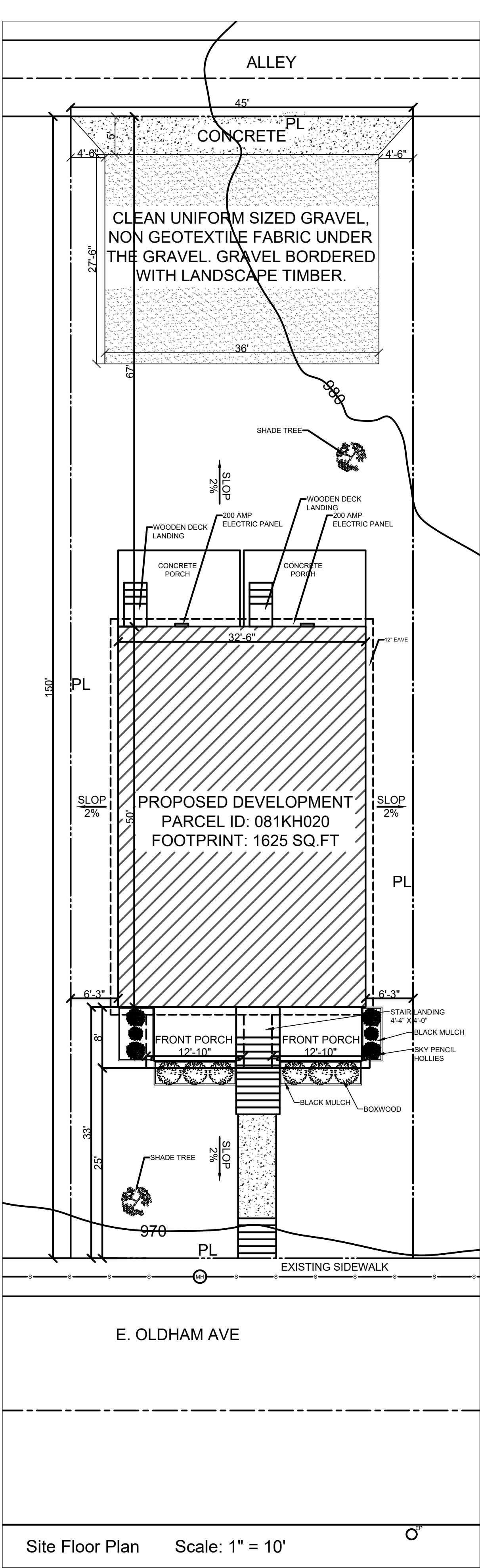
FEE 2:

FEE 3:

TOTAL:

100.00
Paid 8/28/25
DD

Revised Site Plan



Page Index		Project Scope	
A0.0	Site Plan / Project Information	Development and Construction of two unit 3 bedroom 2 bathroom Town Houses at 225 E Oldham Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917.	
A1.0	Main & 2nd Floor Plan		
A1.1	Elevations		
A1.2	Elevations Cont...		
Notes		Project Contacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The height of the finished floor level will be 1'-8" above grade, as shown on the elevations. Subjected to final grade.		<u>Property Address</u> 225 E Oldham Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917 Parcel ID: 081KH020	
		<u>Owner</u> New Season Properties LLC, 915 Hwy 321 N, Lenoir City, TN. 37771 TP: Email:	
		<u>Contractor</u>	
		Area Calculations	
		Building Footprint and Lot Coverage (All Areas Under Roof Canopy, Not Including Eaves) New Total Footprint: 1625 sq.ft. Lot Footprint: 6750 sq.ft. Lot Coverage: 0.2 Liveable Area (For one Unit) Total Living Space: 1286.75 sq.ft	
		Symbol Legend	
		Property Line Existing Sewer Existing Electric Post Existing Manhole	
		Vicinity Map	
		Aerial View	
		A0.0	
		Site Plan / Project Information	
		Scale: 1" = 10'	

New Two Unit Townhouse Design To:
New Season Properties LLC

915 Hwy 321 N, Lenoir City, TN. 37771

PROJECT No.: _____

DRAWN: _____

CHECK: _____

ISSUE: _____

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Renderings of proposed design







As built







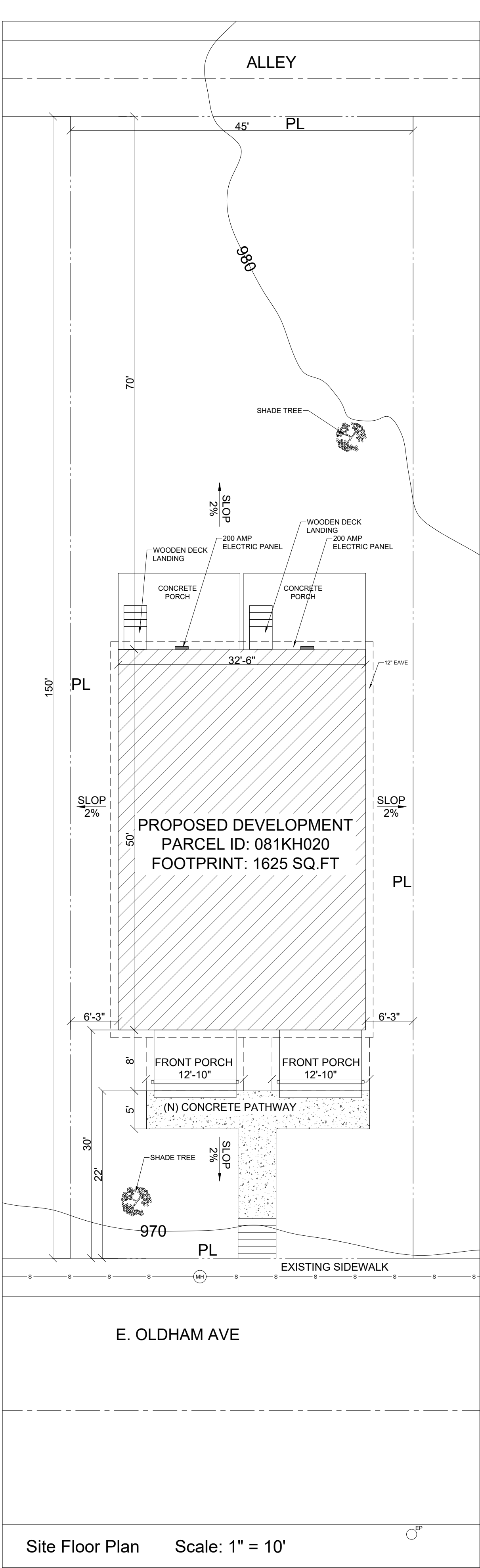








Site plan approved with permit



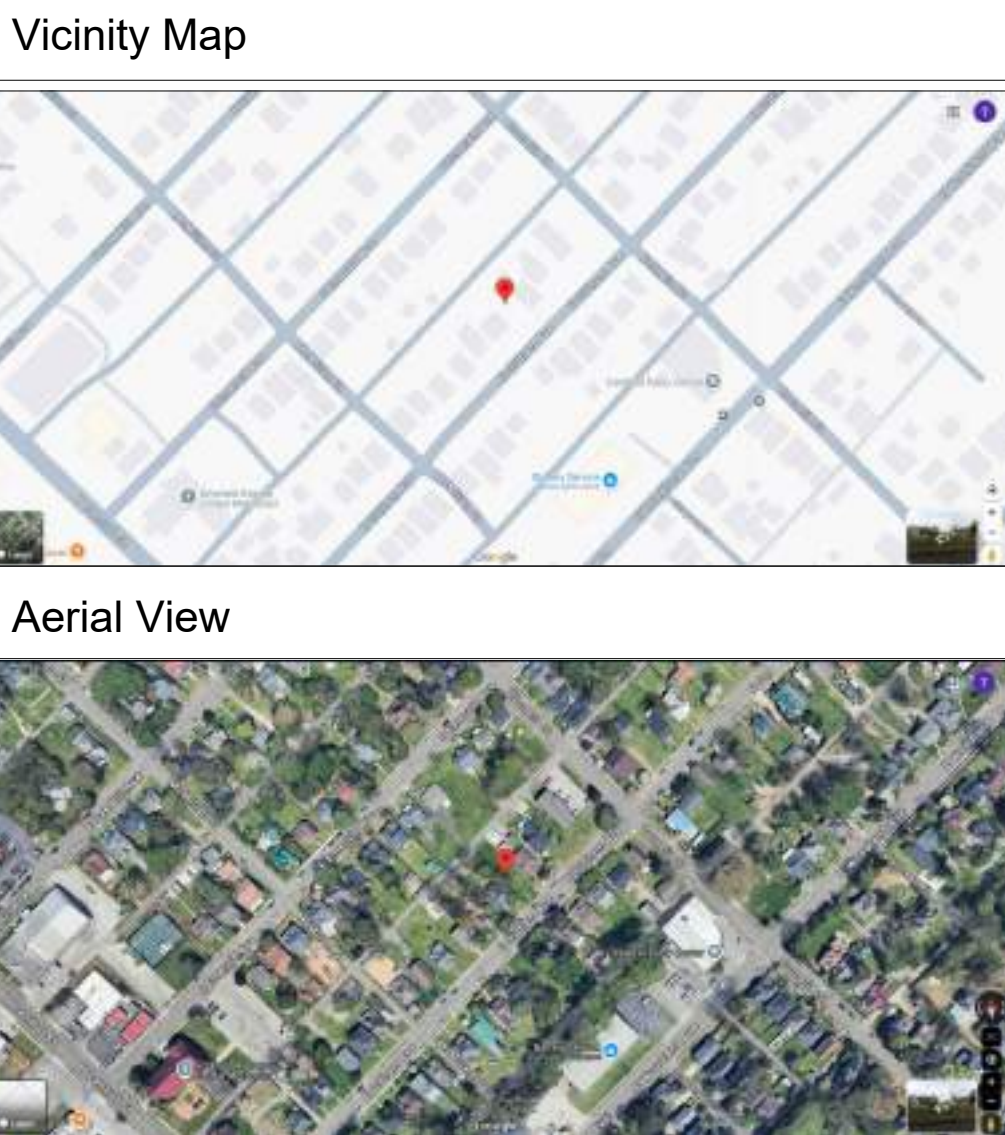
Page Index	
A0.0	Site Plan / Project Information
A1.0	Main & 2nd Floor Plan
A1.1	Elevations
S1.0	Sections
S1.1	Roof Layout
S1.2	Foundation Plan
S1.3	Framing Plan
E1.0	Electrical Layout
P1.0	Plumbing Layout
D1.0	Details
D1.1	UL Assembly Details
D1.2	UL Assembly Details Cont...
D1.3	UL Assembly Details Cont...

- Notes
- The height of the finished floor level will be 1'-8" above grade, as shown on the elevations. Subjected to final grade.

Project Scope	
Development and Construction of two unit 3 bedroom 2 bathroom Town Houses at 225 E Oldham Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917.	
Project Contacts	
Property Address 225 E Oldham Ave, Knoxville, TN 37917	
Parcel ID: 081KH020	Owner
New Season Properties LLC, 915 Hwy 321 N, Lenoir City, TN. 37771	
TP:	Contractor
Email:	

Area Calculations	
Building Footprint and Lot Coverage (All Areas Under Roof Canopy, Not Including Eaves)	
New Total Footprint:	1625 sq.ft.
Lot Footprint:	6750 sq.ft.
Lot Coverage:	0.2
Liveable Area (For one Unit)	
Total Living Space:	1286.75 sq.ft

Symbol Legend	
	Property Line
	Existing Sewer
	Existing Electric Post
	Existing Manhole



New Two Unit Townhouse Design To:
New Season Properties LLC
915 Hwy 321 N, Lenoir City, TN. 37771

PROJECT No.: _____

DRAWN: _____

CHECK: _____

ISSUE: _____

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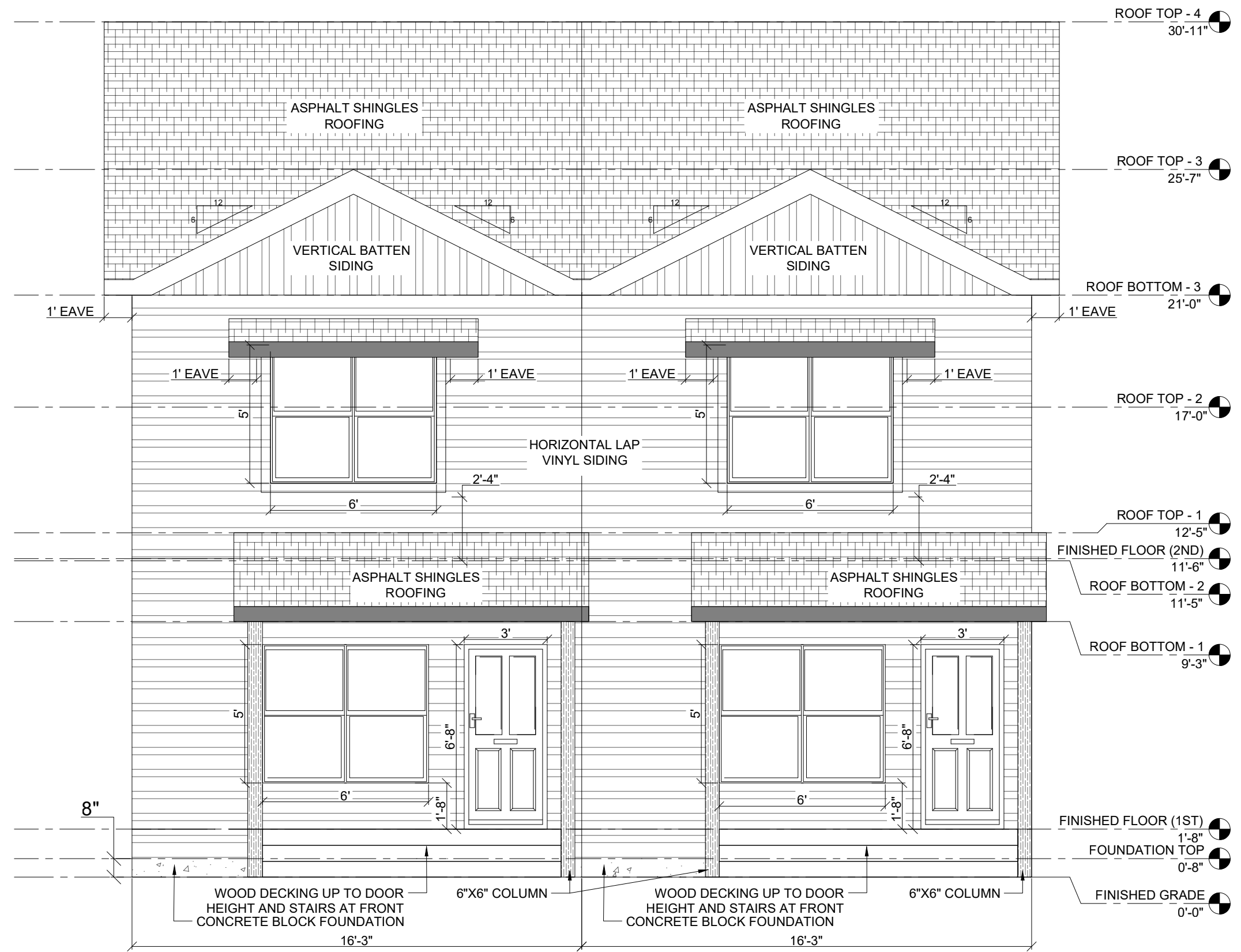
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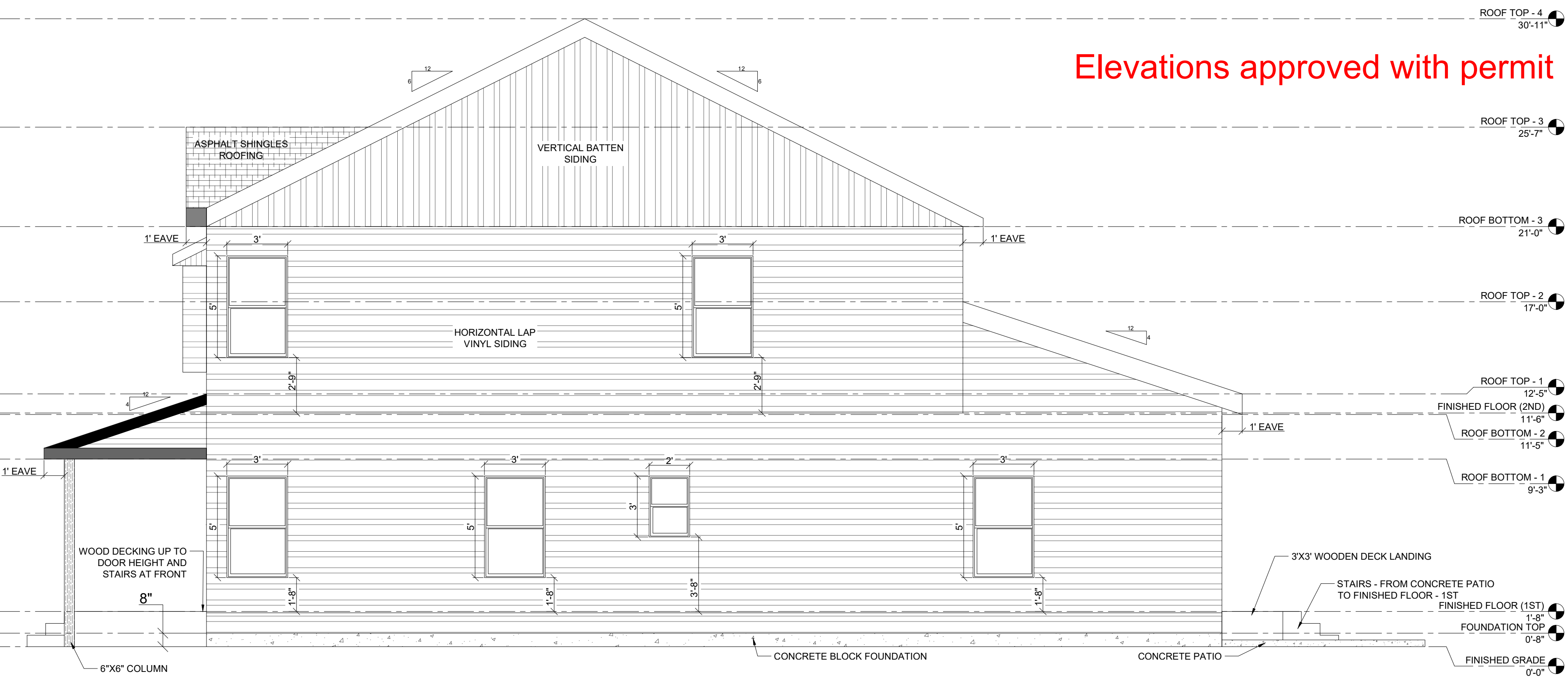
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Site Plan /
Project Information

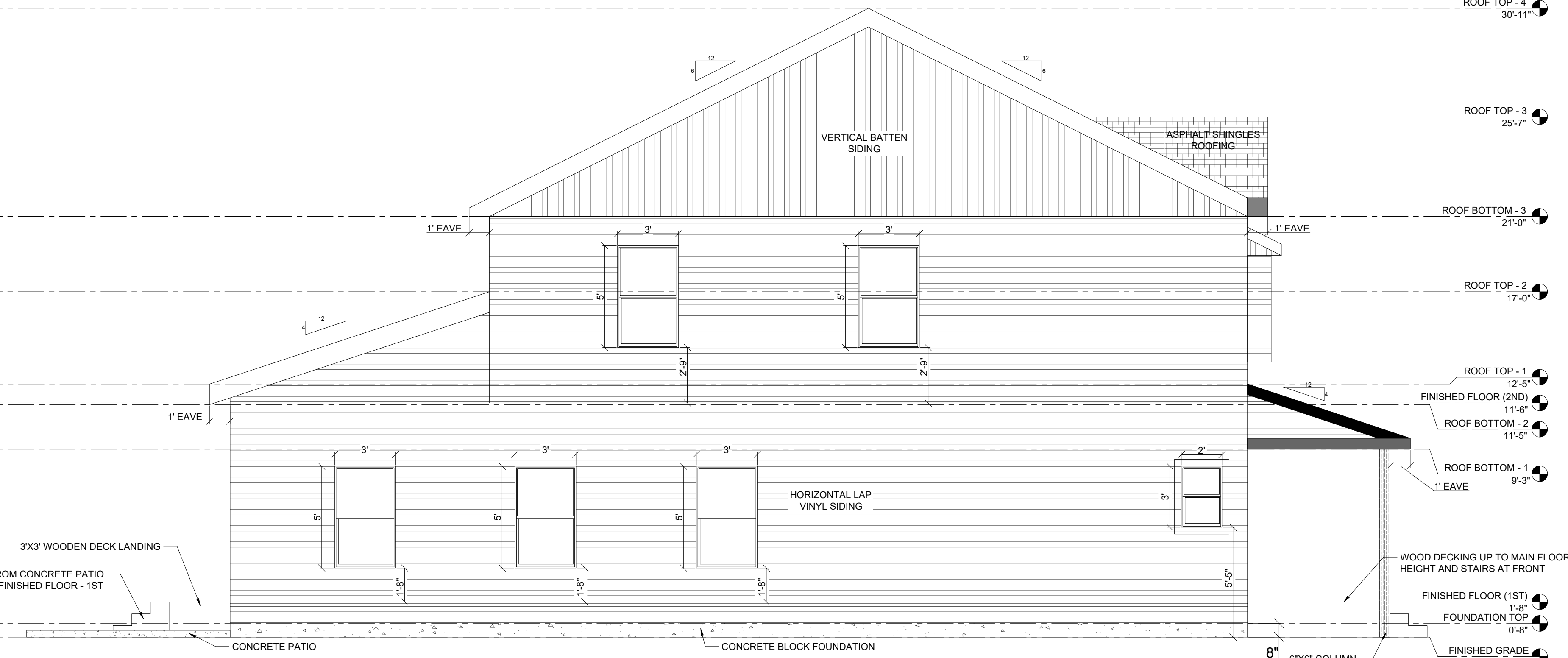
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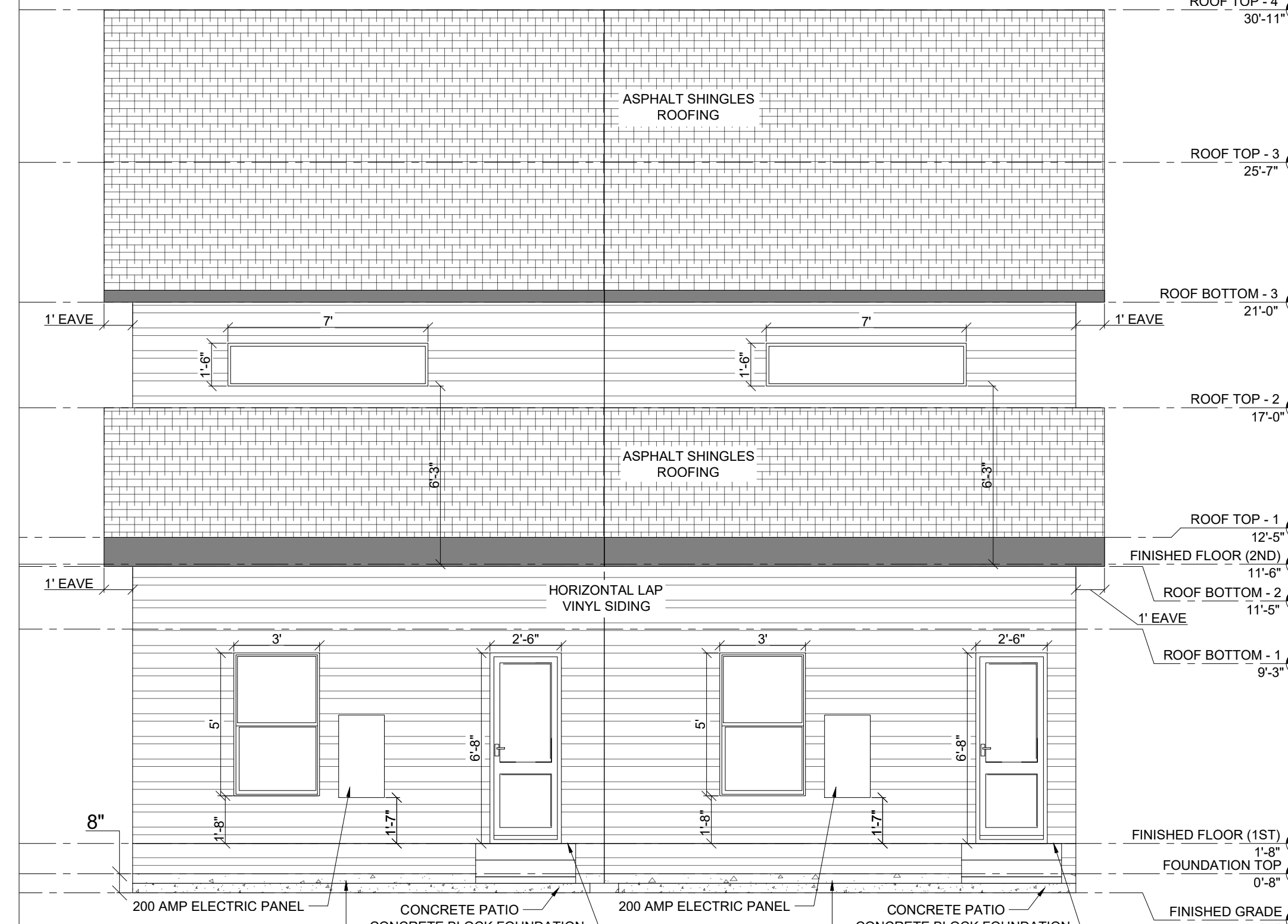
Elevation A - A Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



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



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



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

Window Surface Area Calculation	
Total Area of the Front Facade:	736.14 SF
Total Area Covered by Windows:	120 SF
Ratio:	16.3 %

Door Schedule	
LABEL	SIZE
1	3' - 0" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING
2	2' - 6" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING
3	2' - 6" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING
4	2' - 6" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING
5	2' - 4" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING
6	4' - 8" X 6' - 8" - SLIDING
7	4' - 7" X 6' - 8" - FOLDING

Window Schedule	
LABEL	SIZE
A,B	2X (6' - 0" X 5' - 0")
C	3' - 0" X 5' - 0"
D	2' - 0" X 3' - 0"
E	7' - 0" X 1' - 6"

- Notes:
- Bay window is protruding out 12"
 - Front stairs lower landing would be the concrete pathway and the upper landing would be the porch deck at the finished floor - 1st level

Elevations approved with permit

New Townhouse Design To:
New Season Properties LLC

915 Hwy 321 N, Lenoir City, TN 37771

PROJECT No.:
DRAWN:
CHECK:
ISSUE:
A1.1

A1.1

Elevations

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

Re: September DRB Meeting

From Tae Cho <newseasonpropertiesllc@gmail.com>

Date Tue 9/30/2025 9:43 AM

To Malynda Wollert <malynda.wollert@knoxplanning.org>

 4 attachments (3 MB)

Oldham Site - New 2.pdf; 3.3.png; 3.1.png; 3.2.png;

Hi Malynda,

Please see attached renderings of what we believe is really the best plan after running through several scenarios. It provides a terraced visual that implements contextually appropriate and aesthetically pleasing landscaping, as suggested by one of the board members. This plan draws the eyes away from the overall height of the front foundation/porch and instead breaks it up. Removing the two staircases and installing one new primary staircase, as originally suggested by Staff, also helps significantly in calling attention away from the height as previously structured. We are going to install newel-capped posts at the bottom of the new staircase, and incorporate the lattice screening, to further the contextual appropriateness.

We'd propose three potential options for the planter wall material: brick, stuccoed and painted block, or landscaping/gravity block. For the plants, what we'd propose is: sky pencil hollies for the side plantation (seems to be the most appropriate height) and some variance of boxwoods for the front planter boxes. Alternate options for the sides could be Green Giant Arborvitae which are admittedly larger but may still be a good option.

I am also attaching the new parking area reduction site plan - this was based on input directly from city engineering. Since the request was that we simply adjust to make it as small as possible for four cars, per engineering input, this should more than suffice.

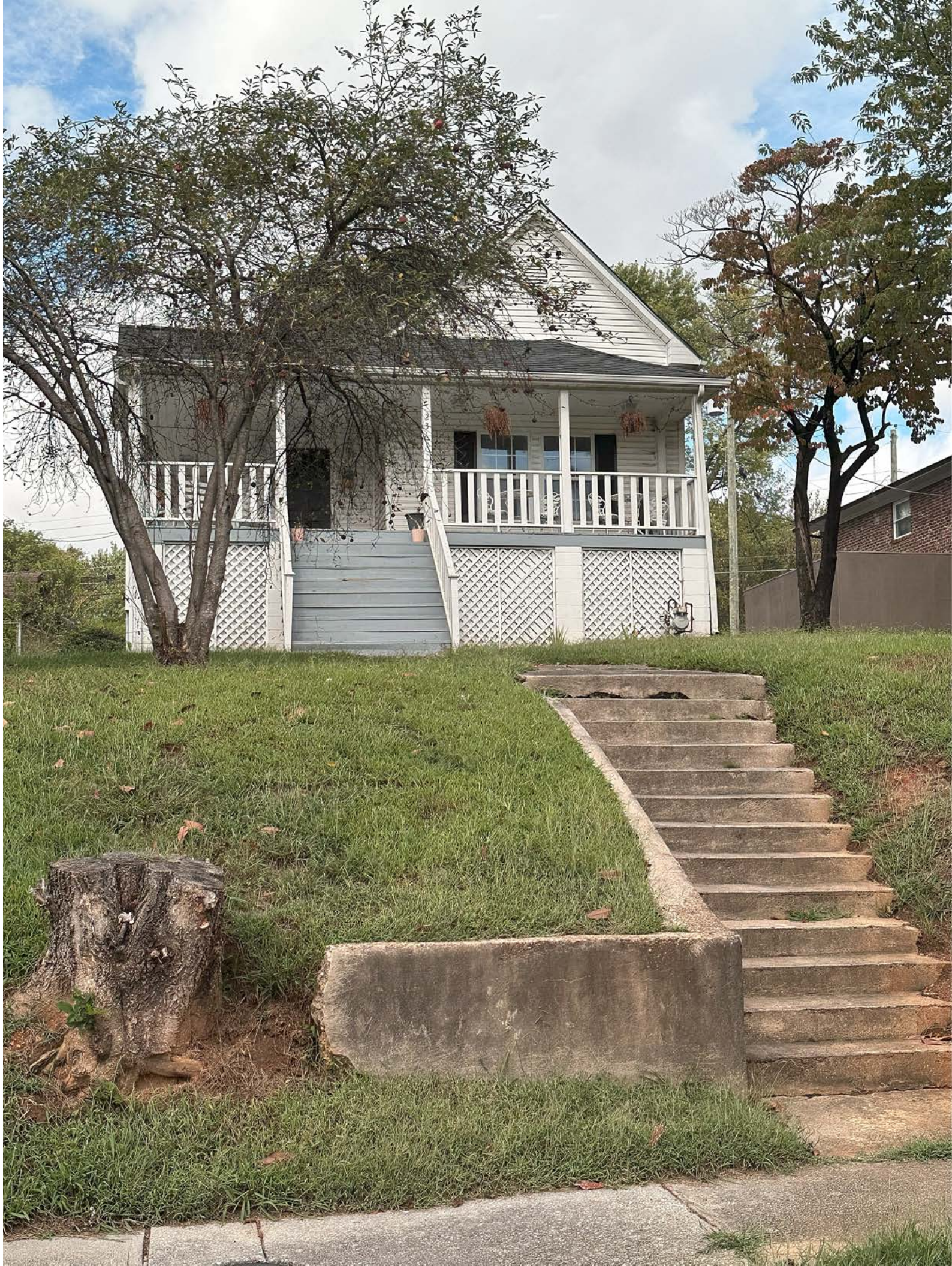
I do hope the DRB can recognize the efforts we are willing to take in finding an aesthetically appropriate solution to the current situation and the limited options we have at this juncture. This would be a pretty significant expense for us between ripping off the front staircases, building a new staircase, and installing the new masonry-based landscaping - but we are really just trying to make this the best looking end result possible so we can move forward from all of this. I believe this proposal accomplishes this.

Thank you,

Tae Cho
New Season Properties, LLC

Photos of the neighborhood context provided by the applicant







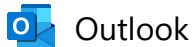






WINDSHIELD
REPAIR
U.S. PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE
YESGOLDEN 113
MADE IN U.S.A.





Foundation correspondence

Re: 225 E Oldham

From Lindsay Lanois <lindsay.lanois@knoxplanning.org>**Date** Wed 2/26/2025 3:46 PM**To** Tae Cho <newseasonpropertiesllc@gmail.com>

Thank you for keeping me in the loop Tae! I think this does realize the guideline of "foundation heights should be comparable to historic houses in the neighborhood," so more review is not necessary. I will put this in the file. Moving forward, yes, we do prefer that the grade profile and foundation heights are as accurate as possible. Thanks!!

From: Tae Cho <newseasonpropertiesllc@gmail.com>**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2025 2:48 PM**To:** Lindsay Lanois <lindsay.lanois@knoxplanning.org>**Subject:** Re: 225 E Oldham

Hi Lindsay,

I was able to talk with the guys, and I have a more informed update. We are looking at around 3.5' +/- foundation height at the front of the house, and ideally we'll be able to add a bit more grade to the front to bring the grade even a bit higher on the back end. Plus we'll have landscaping/mulch in the front as well as the foundation being stuccoed. So it'll be about 2'-2.5' +/- higher front foundation exposure than originally hoped for, but it really shouldn't make a notable aesthetic difference at all from the original plan. It will probably fall more in line with the house on the left is our most educated guess, and definitely lower than the house on the right. The slope of the grade/coverage will rise as you go further back, in a similar manner as the houses on either side. I am attaching photos of all three lots for your reference.

I really don't believe this necessary adjustment to be of much consequence in any negative way, but I always want to be as communicative as possible as you know. In the future, I'll do a better job in trying to take into account potential grade issues the best I can before submitting the plans to have a bit more accurate projections.

Thank you,

Tae Cho

New Season Properties, LLC

On Mon, Feb 24, 2025 at 8:21 AM Lindsay Lanois <lindsay.lanois@knoxplanning.org> wrote:

Hey Tae, I'm just fine - was still out of the office on Friday in hopes of not being contagious to my coworkers. :)
You can give me a call or shoot me an email today. I am in and out of meetings. Thanks!

From: Tae Cho <newseasonpropertiesllc@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 21, 2025 1:18 PM
To: Lindsay Lanois <lindsay.lanois@knoxplanning.org>
Subject: 225 E Oldham

Hi Lindsay,

I just got your voicemail - sorry to hear you're still feeling under the weather. Just trying to touch base real quick, we have run into an issue at 225 E Oldham as we've begun the excavation process and I wanted to discuss with you in further detail what the issue is and the only options we have. Just let me know when you might be available for a call after you're back to health.

Thank you,

Tae

Sent from my iPhone

File 11-H-24-IH

From Tae Cho <newseasonpropertiesllc@gmail.com>

Date Thu 8/28/2025 3:02 PM

To Applications <applications@knoxplanning.org>

Cc Malynda Wollert <malynda.wollert@knoxplanning.org>

 6 attachments (12 MB)

IMG_0257.heic; IMG_0258.heic; 223-225 E oldham re application Final.pdf; IMG_0284.HEIC; IMG_0256.heic; IMG_0259.HEIC;

Hello,

I am attaching the re-application of the 225(223) E Oldham Ave duplex new construction, as instructed. I was asked to provide a description of why we were unable to carry out the original elevation. I have asked my contractor to formulate a more informed explanation below:

"Our original intent was to add a rear wall, lower the high/rear side of the foundation to the original plan level (approximately 1'8"), and install a drainage system with stairs down from the wall. Once excavation began, it became clear that:

1. We needed to dig much deeper than anticipated to reach suitable soil.
2. The rear grade was significantly steeper than expected.
3. We would be too high on the back side of the seat.

Because the lot is too narrow to accommodate an engineered wall near neighboring foundations, we consulted with Planning. We proposed a revised foundation height, noting we would attempt to raise the grade at the front to offset elevation. Planning approved this approach since the height aligned with adjacent neighbors. However, due to deck placement, raising the front grade was less feasible than expected, resulting in a higher elevation than originally communicated in said exchange with Planning.

Throughout construction, we prioritized meeting requirements and tried to communicate regarding the matter at hand. Ultimately, site conditions dictated the finished elevation. We acknowledge the foundation and porch height exceeded our expectations. To accommodate the differential, we reoriented the front stairs horizontally, as extending them straight out would have interfered with the existing retaining wall. The final design mirrors the approved stair configuration at 125 E Oldham."

We want to emphasize our longstanding record of compliance within IH and Historic overlays. This situation arose from an honest miscalculation before construction, which also resulted in higher costs for us, so in no way was this an attempt at skating by or cutting corners etc. We are of course open to working with Planning if adjustments are ultimately deemed necessary, but we just ask that consideration be given to the fact that final inspections were passed on August 12, 2025, and the structure is now complete, limiting the scope of potential modifications.

We have already strengthened our front-end planning process by incorporating topographic modeling into future applications to help avoid or lessen similar issues. Attached are photos of all elevations, along with the front elevation of 125 E Oldham for stair comparison.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tae Cho
New Season Properties, LLC

125 Oldham Ave

