

Docket Item # 7 & 8
BAR CASE # 2011-0275 & 0276

BAR Meeting
October 19, 2011

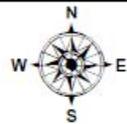
ISSUE: Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate, Dormer Additions and Alterations
APPLICANT: Mark Eisenhower and Amy Fries by Dimond Adams Design Architecture
LOCATION: 101 Franklin Street
ZONE: RM / Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. That the new and replacement windows be in conformance with the Window Policy; and,
2. That the columns and roof for the covered portion of the rear (north) dormer be removed to reduce the bulk and mass of the dormer.



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Note: Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2011-0275 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2011-0276 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a number of changes to the property including the following:

Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate:

- Demolish portions of the north and south elevations to accommodate dormer additions.
- Demolish portions of the east (side) elevation for two new window openings.
- Demolish majority of second floor on south (front) elevation for new bay window.
- Demolish existing rear deck.
- Demolish portion of first story wall on north (rear) elevation for new French doors.

Addition/Alterations:

- Replace first story garage door on south (front) elevation with two single nine-over-nine windows.
- Install projecting bay window at second story on south (front) elevation.
- Install two single hipped dormers on south (front) elevation.
- Install single oculus window at third story on east (side) elevation and one Palladian-style window at fourth story.
- Install hipped roof dormer with French doors and porch on north (rear) elevation. The porch roof will be supported by pilasters.
- Construct new wood deck at second story of north (rear) elevation with pilasters below deck at first story.
- Install three new French doors at first story north (rear) elevation.

The proposed materials include painted wood windows, PVC trim, wood columns, a painted iron railing and standing seam metal for the bay window and dormer roofs.

II. HISTORY:

The three-story, two-bay brick townhouse at 101 Franklin Street that was constructed in **1971** as part of the Pommander Square subdivision. The project was approved in concept by the Board on March 31, 1971 and final details were approved on May 21, 1971. The architect for the subdivision was Henry S. Sliwka, AIA of Springfield, Virginia.

Staff did not locate any previous BAR approvals for the subject property.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposal is in compliance with Zoning Ordinance requirements. While the applicant is removing an existing parking space at the front of the house, the subject property has a second parking space at the rear of the house that will continue to meet the one parking space required by the original development approval for this house. Prior to 1992, the zoning regulations required only one parking space for each townhouse dwelling. They remain in compliance with open space requirements because only 300 square feet of open space was required when the

townhouse development was constructed. The proposed height is 39.5 feet to the eave of the proposed dormers. The maximum permitted height in the RM zone is 35 feet. However the maximum height can be increased to 45 feet if the ridge is parallel to the street and the slope of the roof is compatible with the neighboring buildings.

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition and encapsulation of portion of the existing roof and walls. Furthermore, Staff conceptually supports the alterations and additions, acknowledging that the townhouse is highly visible both from public streets as well as a public park though there are no historic buildings in the immediate vicinity. Although the applicant is proposing substantial alterations to this townhouse, Staff does not find the cumulative effect of the changes, with one exception, to overwhelm or compromise the existing late 20th century townhouse in this location.

Permit to Demolish

In considering a Permit to Demolish, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B):

- (1) Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?
- (2) Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic house?
- (3) Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?
- (4) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?
- (5) Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?
- (6) Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?

In the opinion of Staff, none of the criteria for demolition and encapsulation are met and the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate should be granted. Staff finds that the proposed demolition and encapsulation do not compromise the integrity of this 1970s townhouse.

Alterations/Addition

On the whole, Staff supports the proposed alterations and dormer additions finding them to be a substantial improvement on the existing, very simple 1970s townhouse. In particular, Staff finds the elimination of the garage door and driveway to be a commendable streetscape improvement.

Staff has no objection to the proposed bay window and pair of dormers on the south (front) elevation, finding them both to be appropriately proportioned and detailed and consistent with alterations the Board has approved on similarly styled townhouses. Adding windows to a side elevation, particularly feature windows, such as an oculus or Palladian window, are historically

appropriate architectural techniques for adding light and visual interest to an otherwise unremarkable and utilitarian elevation. Although the preliminary design showed a much larger Palladian window, the applicant responded to Staff's suggestion to make it smaller and in proportion with the other windows on this street facade. As the east (side) elevation is four stories with an asymmetrical fenestration, Staff finds the size, design and location of the two new windows to be appropriate.

Staff supports the removal of the existing suburban-style deck and its replacement with a more refined and architecturally appropriate deck. While the *Design Guidelines* note that decks generally are not appropriate in the districts, the *Guidelines* further state that they are "primarily a late 20th-century occurrence" and are "generally only appropriate on residential structures...at the rear of a property." In this development, all of these garage townhouses were originally constructed with raised decks. The rear deck will be visible from South Union Street and Windmill Hill Park over the existing fence but Staff finds that it will not be a prominent feature.

However, Staff is concerned that the dormer with covered porch on the north (rear) elevation, as proposed, overwhelms the existing building. The dormers on the original proposal had a gable roofed and the applicant made them hip roofed, at Staff's recommendation, to reduce their size but the dormer on the north still appears very large. Staff supports a dormer on this elevation, and even a small outdoor porch element, but finds that the extended roof of the porch to the rear building wall adds too much mass and visual weight when viewed from the street below. Staff believes that this dormer will set an example for BAR applications for other dormers in this development and therefore believes this is an opportunity to create an appropriate dormer with a small deck that is open to the sky.

There are more than a few examples of less-than-successful dormers in the district, some of which were not reviewed by the BAR. Historically, dormers were single features often with windows smaller than those on the floors below. Today, because of the desire to maximize habitable area and views of the Potomac River, the proposals often involve large dormers—shed dormers with triple windows, "Palladian"-style dormers, and the like. Staff does not object to the size nor the use of a pair of French doors on this dormer but finds that the covered porch and columns should be removed. This will still permit a small outdoor area with simple railing and significantly minimize the apparent bulk and mass of this element.

Staff recommends approval of the application with the conditions noted above.

STAFF

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F- finding

Code Administration:

- F-1 The review by Code Administration is a preliminary review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Thomas Sciulli, Plan Review Supervisor at thomas.sciulli@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4190. (Code)
- C-1 Demolition, building and trades permits are required for this project. Five sets of *construction documents* sealed by a *Registered Design Professional* that fully detail the construction as well as layout and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems shall accompany the permit application(s)

Transportation & Environmental Services:

FINDINGS:

- F1. Parcel is tagged as being located within a Resource Protection Area (RPA), however, after review of the GIS maps, this parcel is not within an RPA. (T&ES)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)
- R2. The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 5-6-224 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R3. Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R4. All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R5. No permanent structure may be constructed over any existing private and/or public utility easements. It is the responsibility of the applicant to identify any and all existing easements on the plan. (T&ES)

CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). (T&ES)

- C-2 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- C-3 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3) (T&ES)
- 1. C-4 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61) (T&ES)

V. IMAGES

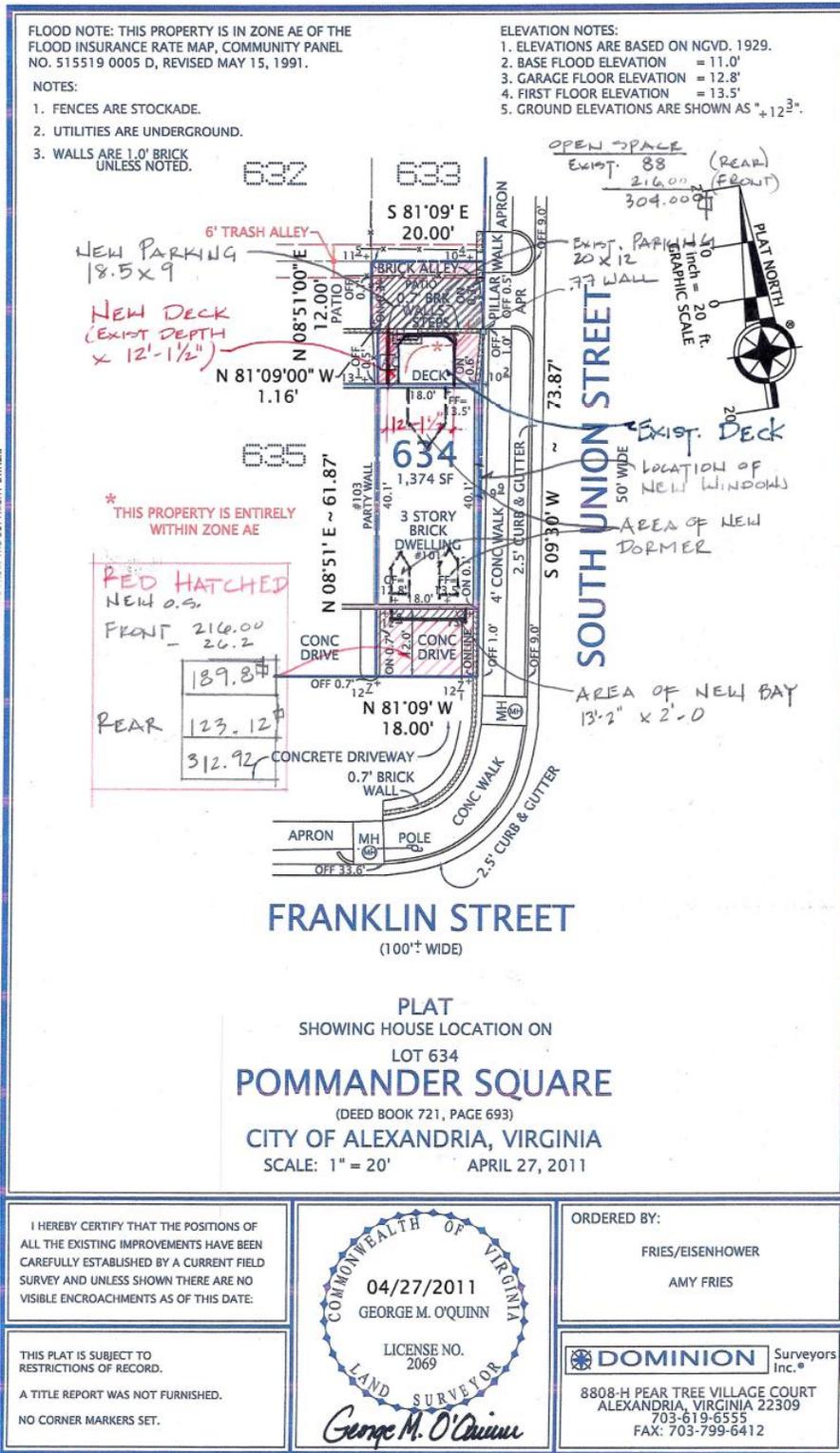


Figure 1: Plat.

Figure 2. (Left) Existing conditions – south (front) elevation; (Top) View of south elevation of townhouses; (Below) Looking to east (side) and north (elevations) from Union Street.





View 1:
Side View: East Elevation



View 2:
Side and Rear View: Facing Northeast



View 3:
Close Side & Rear View: Facing Northeast



View 4:
Close Rear View: Facing North



View 5:
Close Rear View: Facing North

Figure 3. Existing conditions -- side (east) and rear (north) elevations.

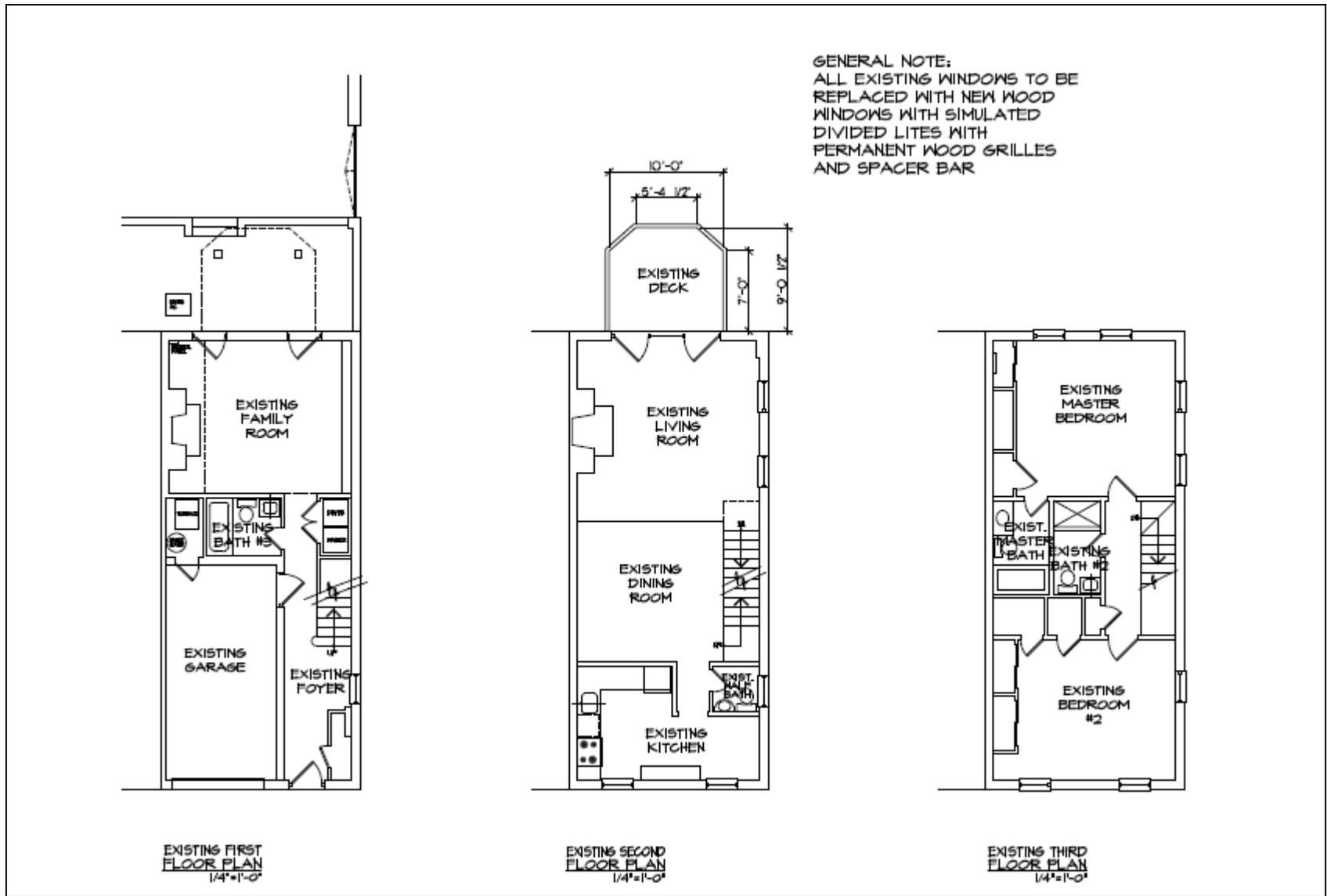


Figure 4. Existing floor plans.



Figure 5. Existing south (front) and east (side) elevations showing proposed areas of demolition.



Figure 6. Existing north (rear) elevation with areas of proposed demolition and existing streetscape along South Union Street.

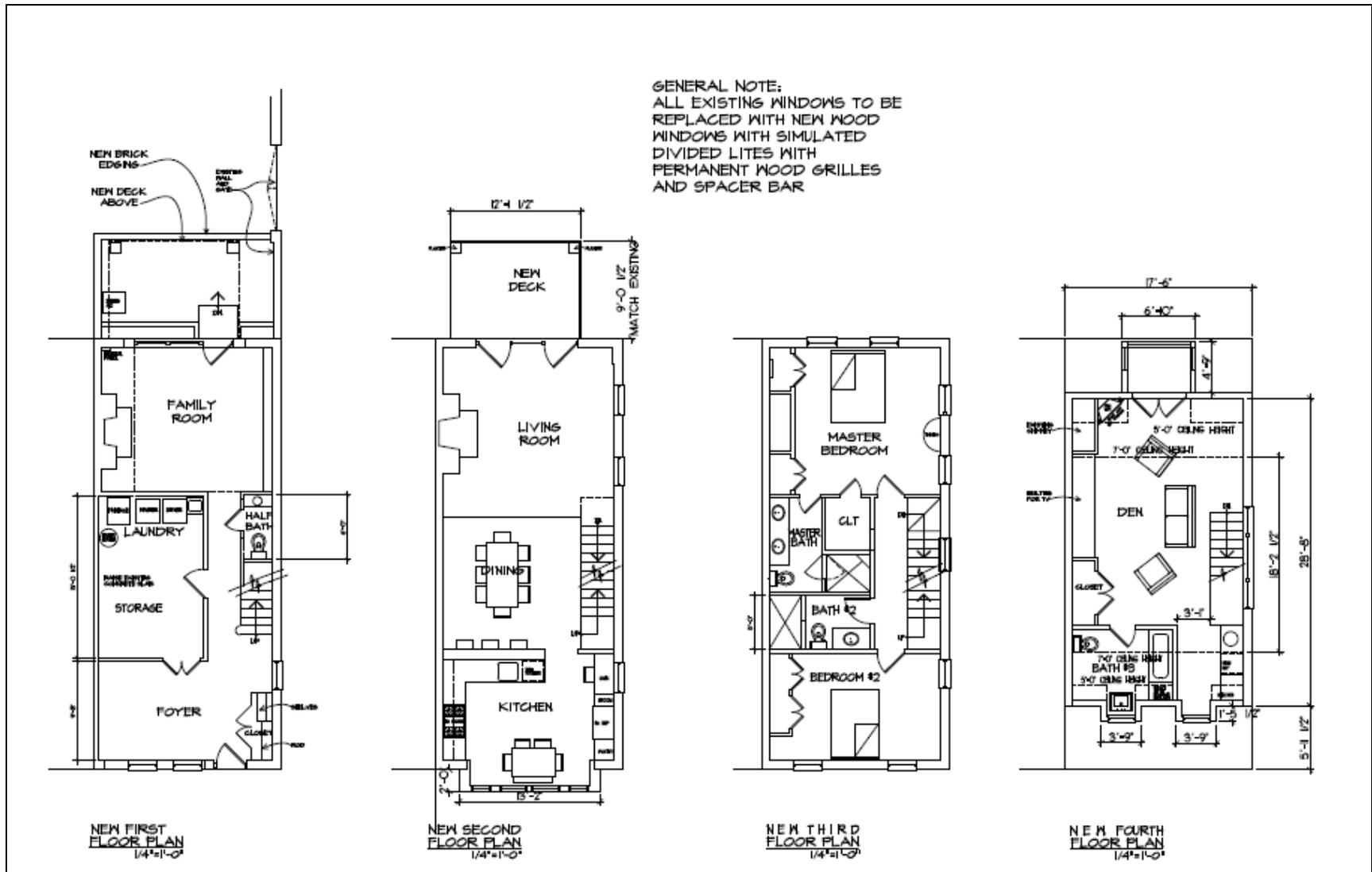


Figure 7. Proposed floor plans.



Figure 8. Proposed south (front) and east (side) elevations.



Figure 9. Proposed north (rear) elevation and proposed streetscape on Union Street.