

Docket Item # 11  
BAR CASE # 2011-00127

BAR Meeting  
June 15, 2011

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate  
**APPLICANT:** Kevin and Lisa Connell by Benjamin Ames (architect)  
**LOCATION:** 416 Wolfe Street  
**ZONE:** RM / Residential

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the application with the following condition:

1. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:
  - a. The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
  - b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

**\*\*EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of final approval if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.

**\*\*BUILDING PERMIT NOTE:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by Building and Fire Code Administration (including siding or roofing over 100 square feet, windows and signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.



BAR CASE #2011-0127



## **I. ISSUE**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate to demolish the existing rear (south) elevation to construct an addition. The rear alley is private and due to the size of the adjacent townhouse's addition, the proposed addition will not be visible from the public right-of-way and therefore does not, itself, require BAR review.

## **II. HISTORY**

The row of seven brick porch-front rowhouses at 416-428 Wolfe Street were designed by George T. Santmyers in 1928 (Building Permit #745, 3/12/28). Santmyers was one of the most important architects of residential buildings in the metropolitan areas during the 1920s, 30s and 40s. He designed literally thousands of individual rowhouses in Washington, DC and hundreds of apartment buildings in Washington, Montgomery and Prince Georges County. He was one of the principal architects for Harry Wardman as he developed residential complexes in numerous areas of the District of Columbia. In addition, Santmyers designed a number of shopping centers in an Art Deco style on Georgia Avenue as well as in southeast Washington. (For a discussion of Santmyers and his work, see, for example, Hans Wirz and Richard Striner, Washington Deco: Art Deco Design in the Nation's Capital, (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1984); James M. Goode, Best Addresses, A Century of Washington's Distinguished Apartment Houses, (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1988) the Staff Report]; and, Peter H. Smith, The Montgomery Arms Apartment Complex, Silver Spring, Maryland, (Unpublished mss., 1989). Santmyers' residential buildings often display a veritable signature - a brick soldier course separating the ground level from the first story. Such is the case with this rowhouse at 416 Wolfe Street.

The front facades of a number of the townhouses in the row have been altered in a variety of ways. Some have had their porches removed. Others have had the brick porch columns replaced with wood. Others have added wood railings and two others metal railings at the front steps. BAR Staff has administratively approved an in-kind replacement of the porch floor and a new railing at 416 Wolfe Street.

## **III. ANALYSIS**

The proposed addition complies with open space and FAR zoning requirements.

### **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 should be granted. Staff finds that the proposed demolition and encapsulation do not compromise the integrity of this townhouse as the areas of demolition and encapsulation are located on a secondary elevation and modest in scope.

**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:

- C-1 A building permit will be required prior to the door and window replacement
- C-2 Specifications submitted with the BAR request are not approved for construction
- C-3 All exterior walls shall comply with Table R302.1 of the 2009 USBC (2009 IRC as amended). See section R302.2 for *Townhouse* exception.
- C-4 All exterior walls within 5 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides of the wall. Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line
- C-5 Basements shall comply with section R310 of the 2009 Va. Residential Code (2009 IRC as amended)

Transportation & Environmental Services

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any permit for demolition. (T&ES)

**CITY CODE REQUIREMENTS:**

- C-1 Any work within or from the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61) (T&ES)

Alexandria Archaeology

1. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:

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- b. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

Archaeology Findings

F-1 The G.M. Hopkins Insurance Atlas indicates that a house was present on this lot by 1877. There is the potential for archaeological resources to be present that could provide insight into residential life in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Alexandria.

Archaeology Recommendations

1. The statements in archaeology conditions below shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Basement/Foundation Plans, Demolition, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, Landscaping, Utilities, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements:

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Zoning:

C-1 Proposed addition complies with zoning and does not further reduce the open space on the lot because it is to be constructed in an area less than 8'X8' which does not count towards the required open space.

**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Existing conditions, front and rear elevations.**

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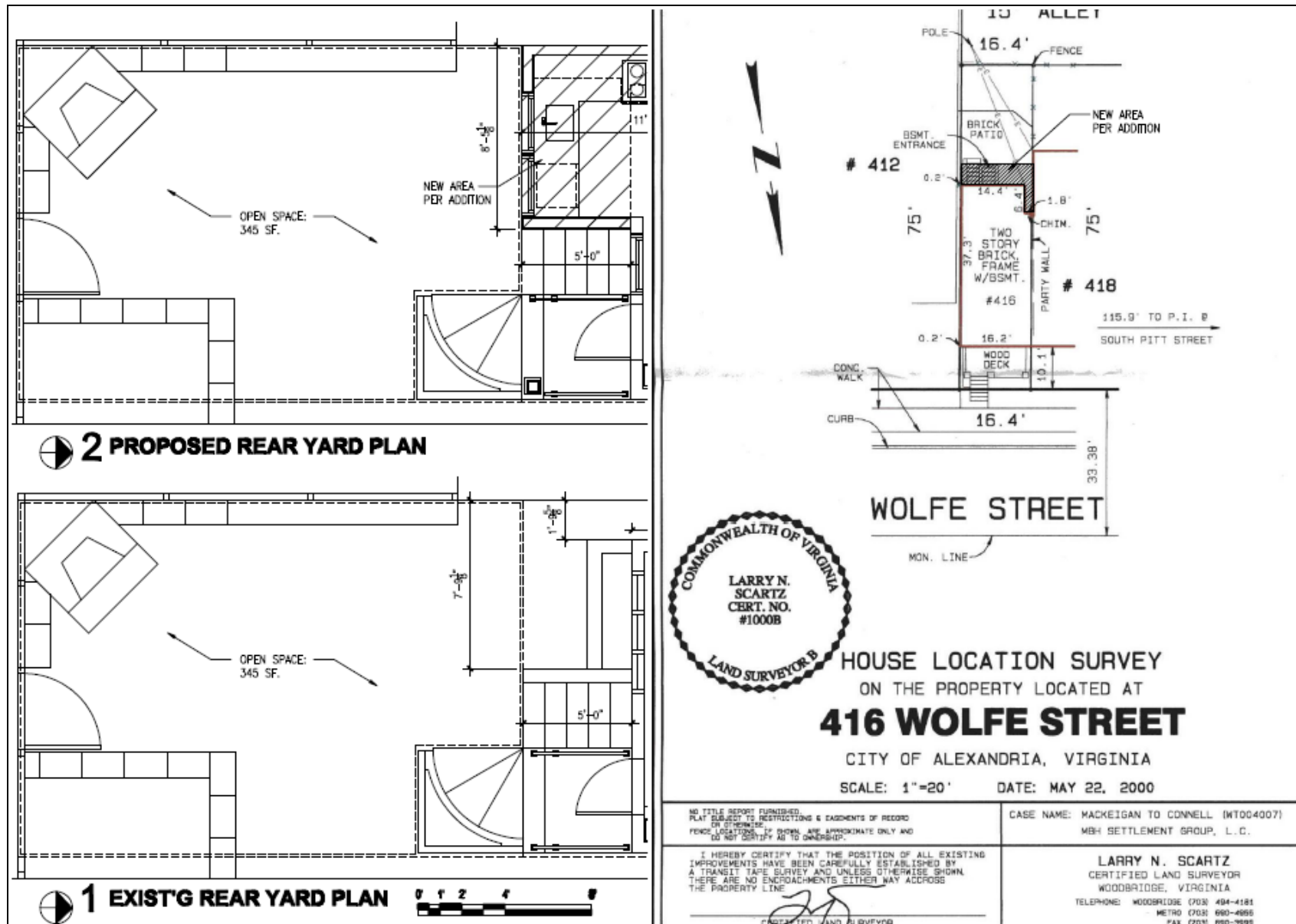


Figure 2. Existing and proposed site plans, plat.

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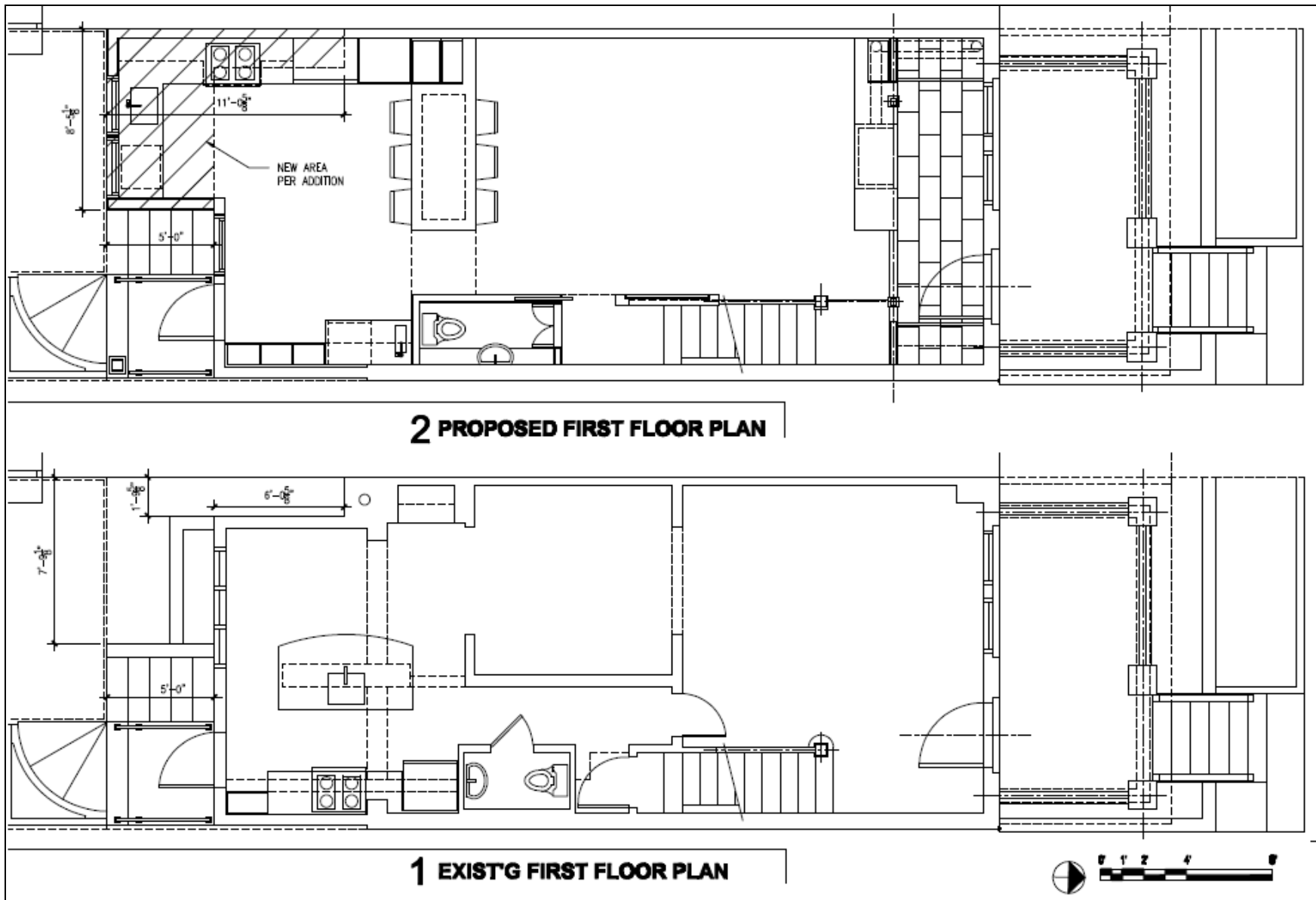


Figure 3. Existing and proposed first floor plans.



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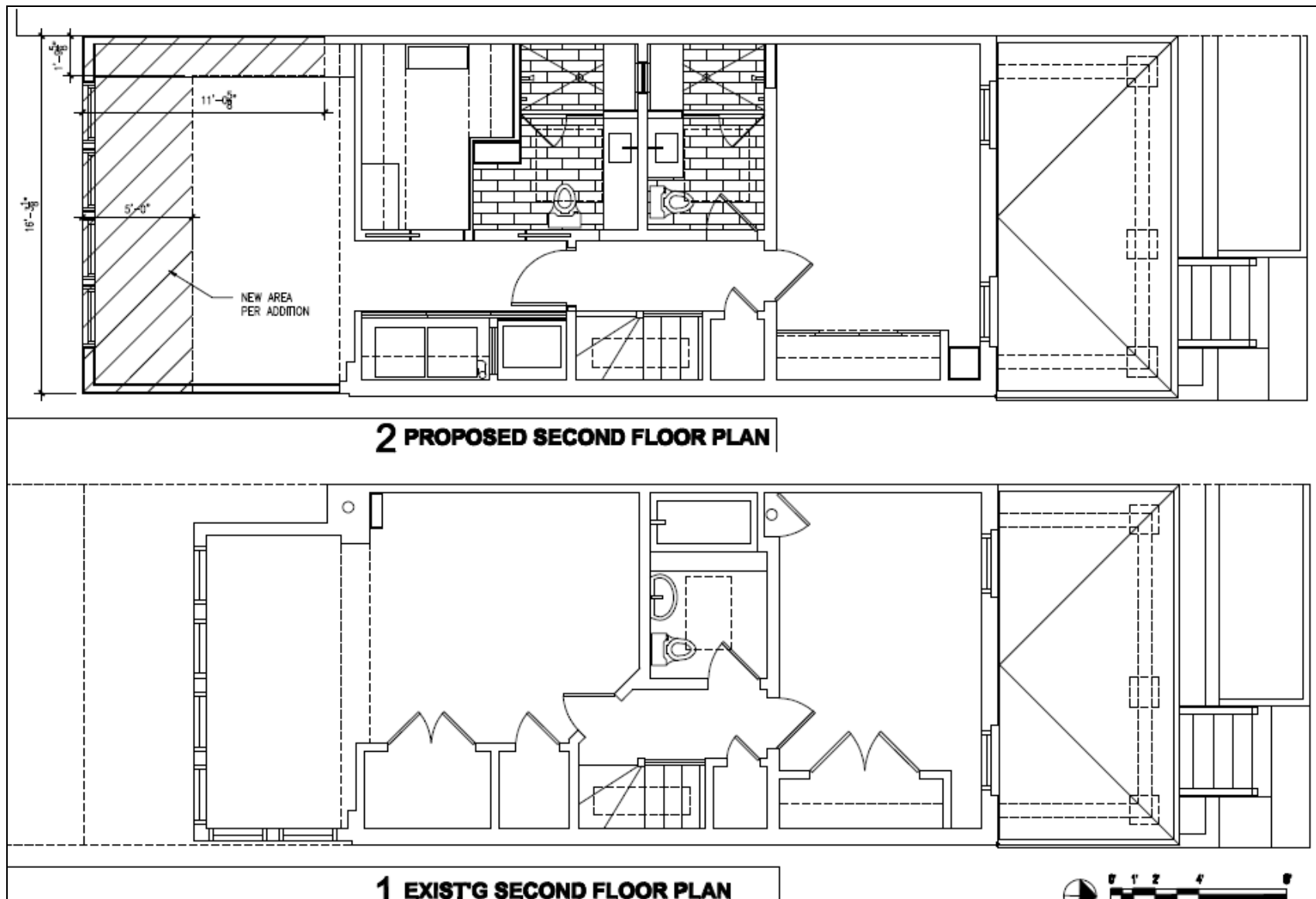


Figure 4. Existing and proposed second floor.

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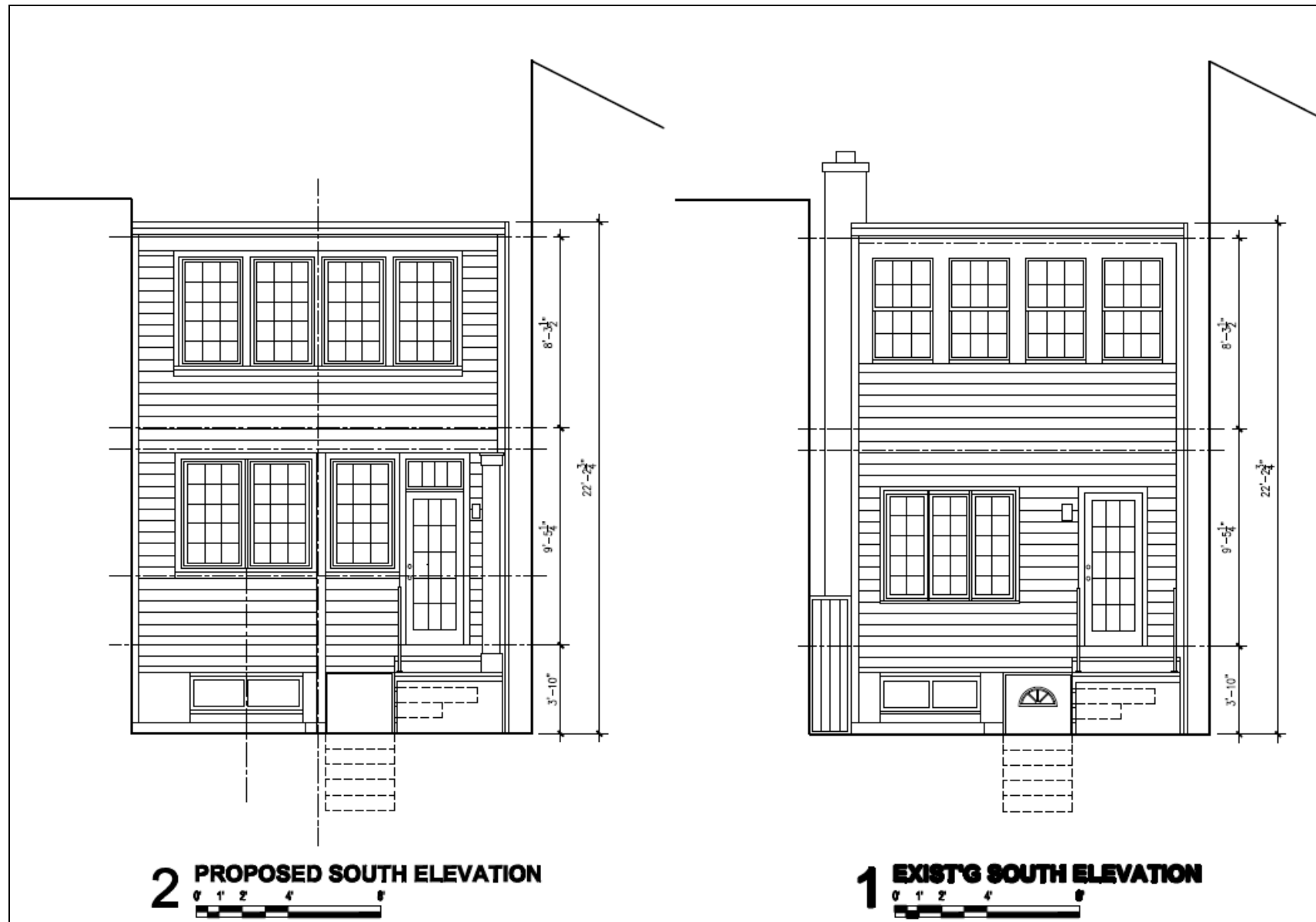


Figure 5. Existing and proposed south (rear) elevations.