

Docket Item # 6
BAR CASE # 2009-0027

BAR Meeting
March 18, 2009

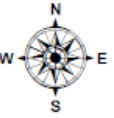
ISSUE: Addition and Alterations
APPLICANT: Stephanie Dimond for James McCall
LOCATION: 1110 Prince Street
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the addition and alterations with the following conditions:

1. That the following statements 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.



BAR CASE #2009-0026, 0027 3/18/2009



Note: BAR Case #2009-0026 for Demolition/Capsulation must be approved before this item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a basement level one story rear addition and alterations to the first floor rear elevation at 1110 Prince Street.

Addition

The proposed one story basement addition will span the width of the house, including the space below the existing rear ell, which is open on the basement level. The 233 square foot addition will measure roughly 15.6 feet wide and 12.1 feet deep, with an additional 3 foot bump out on the eastern half of the addition beyond the existing rear wall of the ell.

Because the existing basement has a ceiling height of just 6.2 feet, the basement will be dug out an additional 2.5 feet for an overall height of over 9 feet. As a result, the rear yard will be lower than the adjacent neighbors' yards and a low brick wall measuring approximately 2.5 feet will be constructed, with a 6 foot wood fence above. The bottom 5 feet of the fence will have flush vertical boards, with a 1 foot section of horizontal lattice above. The applicant has indicated that the fence will be stained.

The east elevation of the new addition will be constructed on the shared property line and will measure 15.1 feet in total length, although only 9 feet will be exposed. This section of wall, as well as the entire addition, is proposed to be clad with flat panels made of a smooth PVC/wood material. To provide visual interest, trim will be added to create three panels along this section. The applicant has submitted a sample of the PVC/wood material and it will be available at the public hearing.

On the south elevation the one story addition will have three equally spaced Doric style pilasters and a multi-light single wood door flanking the center pilaster. The Kolbe & Kolbe doors will be double-glazed with simulated divided lights, 5/8 inch muntins and an interior spacer bar. The south facing elevation behind the proposed circular stair, which is currently open below the existing ell, will be infilled with a new multi-light fixed wood door by Kolbe & Kolbe and brick to match the existing townhouse. All of the doors and the PVC/wood material on the addition will be painted an off white color.

The west elevation of the addition, behind the circular stair, will be constructed of the same PVC/wood material and will have a pilaster at either end of the small 3 foot section.

A new wood deck with an iron railing will be installed over the flat roof of the addition. Access to the yard from the deck will be from an iron circular stair. The ironwork will be painted a black or dark green color.

A new HVAC condenser will be located in the rear yard.

Alterations

The applicant proposes to lengthen the existing window opening on the south elevation of the first floor rear elevation of the historic main block and convert it into a door. In order to maintain the narrow width of the opening, the new door will be created by using two narrow french doors, with a new multi-light transom above. The doors will be manufactured by Kolbe & Kolbe and will be double-glazed with simulated divided lights and 5/8 inch muntins. On the east elevation of the ell, the existing door will be replaced with a six-over-six, double-glazed, double-hung wood window with simulated divided lights, an interior spacer bar and 5/8 inch muntins. The space below the window is proposed to be infilled with brick to match the existing ell. The wood window and new door will be painted off-white.

II. HISTORY:

According to Ethelyn Cox in Historic Alexandria, Street by Street, the townhouse at 1110 Prince Street was constructed in 1818 by Alexander Veitch, part of a row of four townhouses (1108 - 1114 Prince Street.) According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, sometime between 1921 and 1941 a two story rear ell with an open basement level was added to each townhouse. The front façade of each two bay, two-and-one-half-story brick townhouse retains a high degree of historic integrity and all have been identified with plaques from the Historic Alexandria Foundation.

Staff was unable to locate any BAR approvals for this property or the other three townhouses in the row. In 1996, Staff approved a building permit to reroof the historic townhouse with a painted metal roof (BLD96-00906).

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed addition and alterations comply with zoning ordinance requirements.

In the opinion of Staff, the proposed basement addition is modest in size and scale and does not overwhelm the existing historic house at 1110 Prince Street, as recommended in the *Design Guidelines* for residential additions. Although the addition will project farther than the basement level rear elevations of the adjacent houses, its basement location and 44 foot setback from the public alley will limit its visibility. Furthermore, there are significant grade changes in and around the site, along with substantial vegetation, which will make it a subtle addition to the neighborhood. The other three houses in the original 1818 row of townhouses have had much more significant alterations to the rear elevations at both the first and second floors. Unlike the other townhouses, the proposed one story addition will still maintain the relationship between the 1930s or 1940s ell and the historic house at the first and second floors.

The *Design Guidelines* generally recommend that the materials used for residential additions reflect the traditional material – brick and wood – found throughout the historic districts. Although the proposed PVC/wood material is entirely different than fiber cement, Staff used the Boards adopted policy on fiber cement as a guide to determine if this non-traditional material would be appropriate. Staff found this description of PVC/wood material which may be helpful: A recycled wood/plastic composite lumber typically consists of a 50/50 mix of wood fibers from recovered saw dust and waste plastics that include high-density polyethylene, PVC, and others.

An example of this material is AZEK, which the Board may be familiar with because they have approved its use in limited locations.

The Board's fiber cement policy is included here for reference:

1. That fiber cement siding not be installed on an historic structure;
2. That historic materials should not be removed to install fiber cement siding;
3. That fiber cement siding replace other artificial or composite siding;
4. That the nails not show in the installation of the siding; and
5. That smooth (non-simulated wood grain) siding be installed; and
6. That BAR staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on non-historic buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

While the main block of the building retains a high degree of historic integrity, Staff supports the use of this non-traditional material on the new addition only for several reasons. First, it is being used on new construction on a basement level addition. Second, the windows and doors proposed for the addition and on the first floor will be constructed of wood. Third, Staff is cognizant of the applicant's desire to limit the amount of maintenance, especially on the east elevation where the addition will be constructed on the shared property line.

While single-glazed, true-divided-light wood windows are preferable, the *Design Guidelines* and the Board generally allow for double-insulated, simulated-divided-light wood windows and doors on new construction or in areas with limited visibility, both of which apply in this case. Therefore, Staff finds that the proposed windows and doors are appropriate. Furthermore, after discussions with Staff, the applicant agreed to use an even smaller and more historically appropriate muntin width of 5/8 inch, rather than the originally proposed 7/8 inch muntin.

The *Design Guidelines* generally discourage the use of circular metal stairs on buildings constructed prior to the late-20th century. However, Staff supports the use of a circular stair in this instance because it is being installed as part of a new addition, is compatible with the proposed iron deck railing, and will help to limit the footprint of the stairs and maintain the open space in the rear yard.

Staff noted the conditions of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the addition and alterations with the following conditions:

1. That the following statements 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.

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Administration:

- F-1 Please be advised that the following comments are preliminary and may change upon departmental plan review.
- C-1 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-3 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure and/or installation and/or altering of equipment therein requires a building permit. Five sets of plans, bearing the signature and seal of a design professional registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must accompany the written application. The plans must include all dimensions, construction alterations details, kitchen equipment, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical layouts and schematics.
- 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. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided. This condition is also applicable to skylights within setback distance. Openings in exterior walls between 3 and 5 feet shall not exceed 25% of the area of the entire wall surface (This shall include bay windows). Openings shall not be permitted in exterior walls within 3 feet of an interior lot line.
- C-5 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-6 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-7 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully details the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.
- C-8 Permission from adjacent property owners is required if access to the adjacent properties is required to complete the proposed construction. Otherwise, a plan shall be submitted to demonstrate the construction techniques utilized to keep construction solely on the referenced property.
- C-9 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

R1. The building permit must be approved and issued prior to the issuance of any demolition permit.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

F-1 According to Ethelyn Cox's *Historic Alexandria, Virginia, Street by Street*, the house on this lot was constructed around 1818 by Alexander Veitch. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in 19th-century Alexandria.

R-1 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.

R-2 The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

R-3 The statements in archaeology conditions above marked with an asterisk "*" 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.

IV. IMAGES

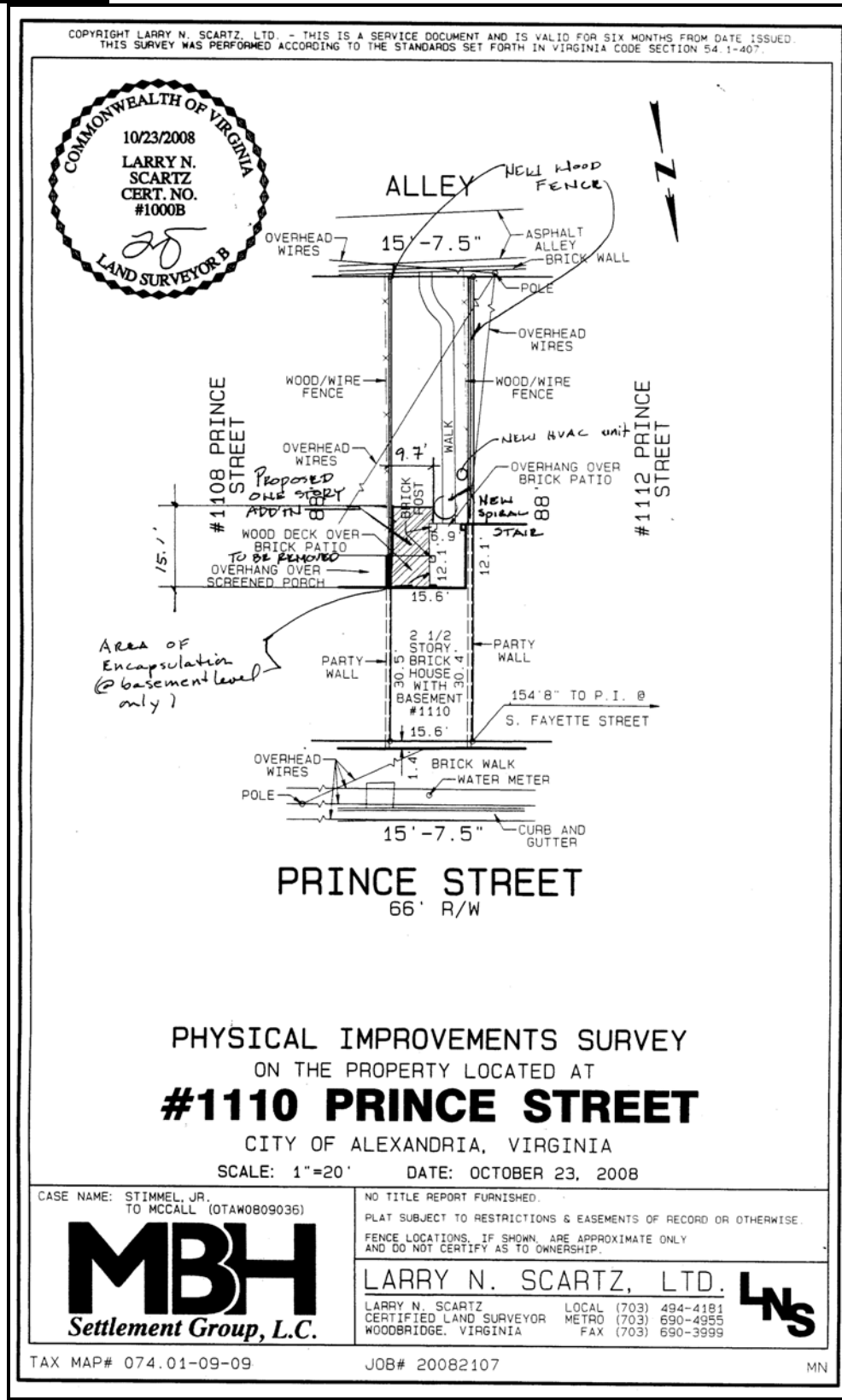


Figure 1: Plat showing proposed addition



Figure 2: Front facade of 1110 Prince Street (2nd from left)



Figure 3: Rear elevation



Figure 4: Close up of rear elevation



Figure 5: View from alley

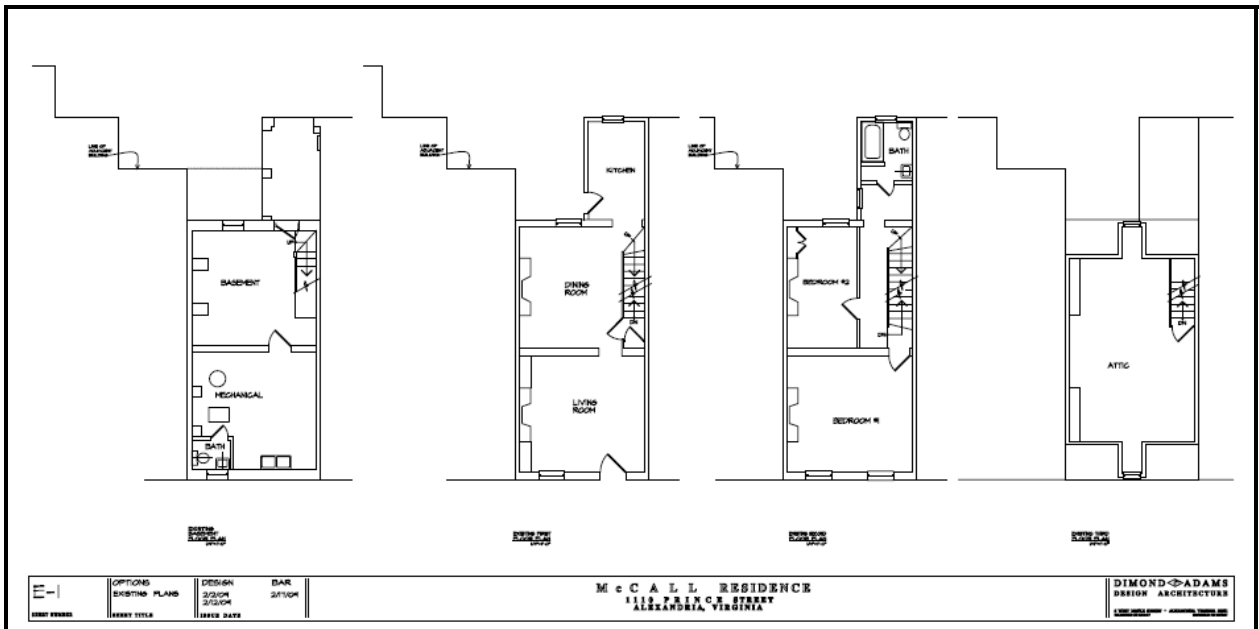


Figure 6: Existing floor plan

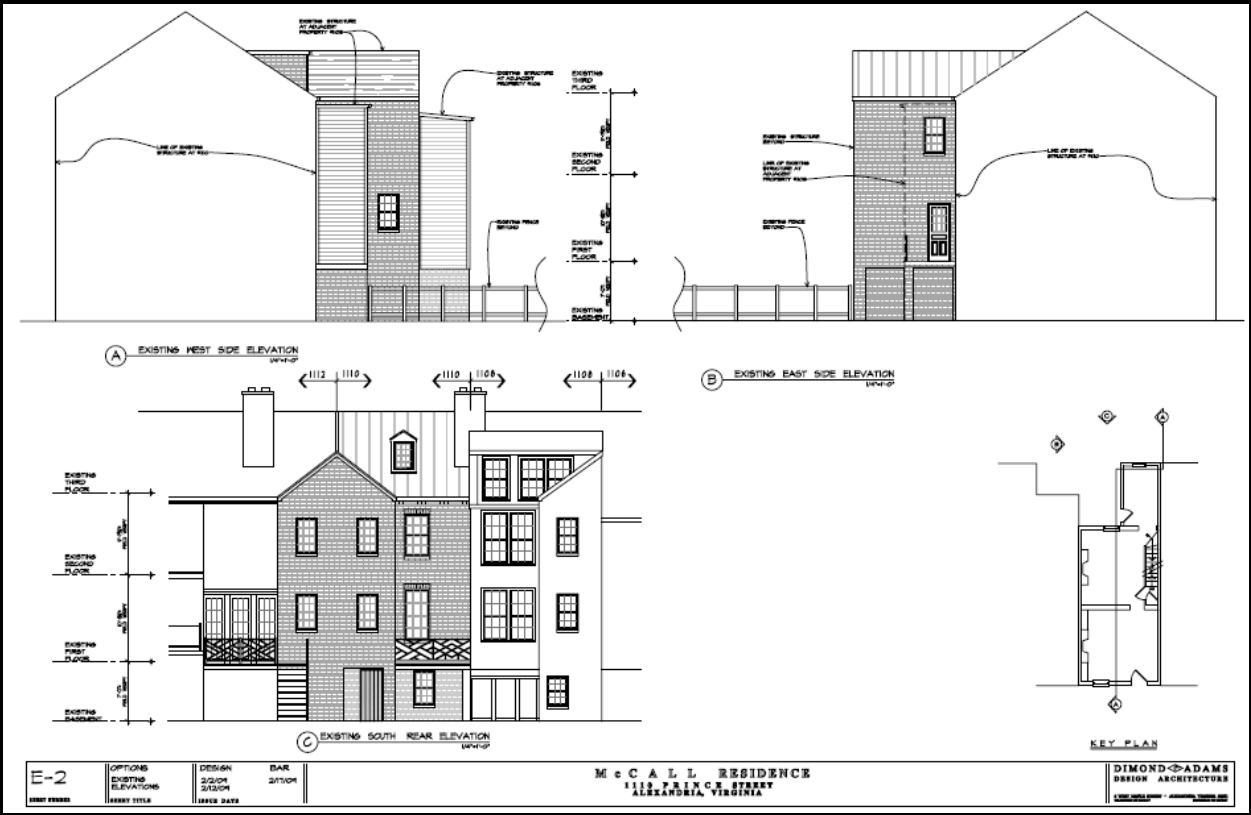


Figure 7: Existing elevations

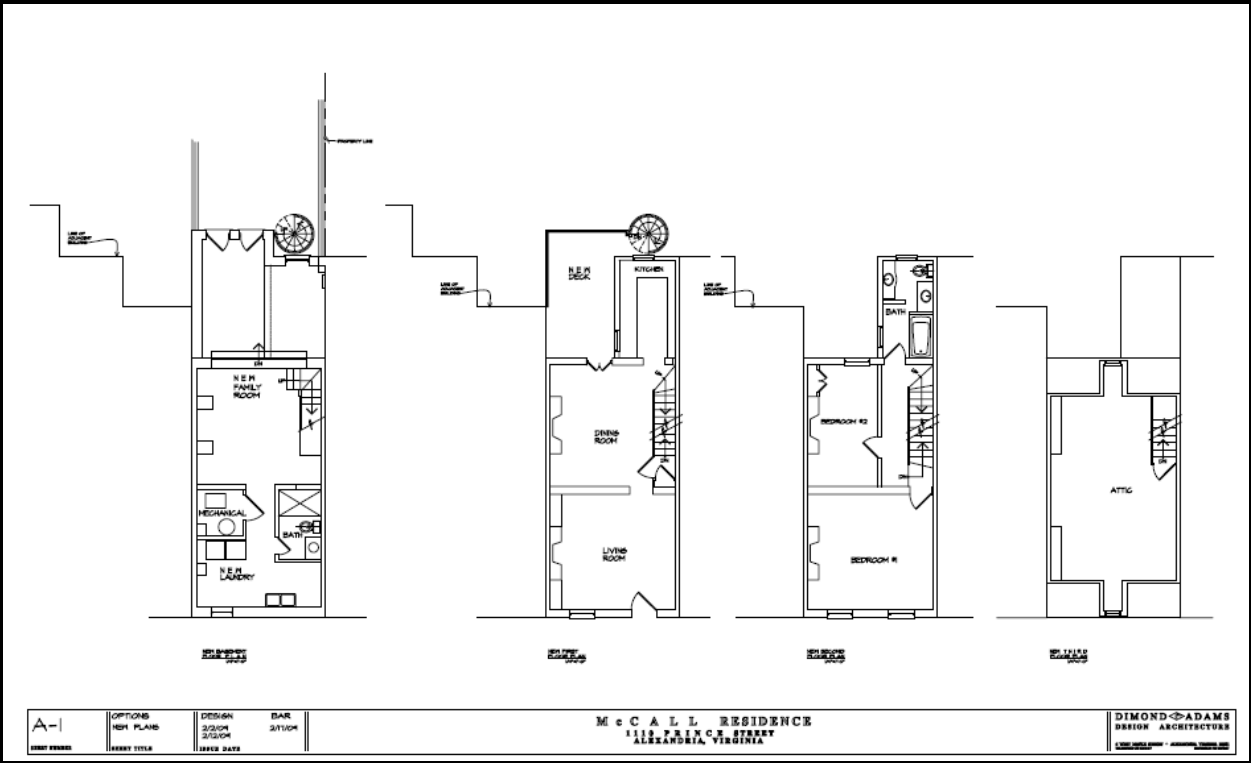


Figure 8: Proposed floor plan

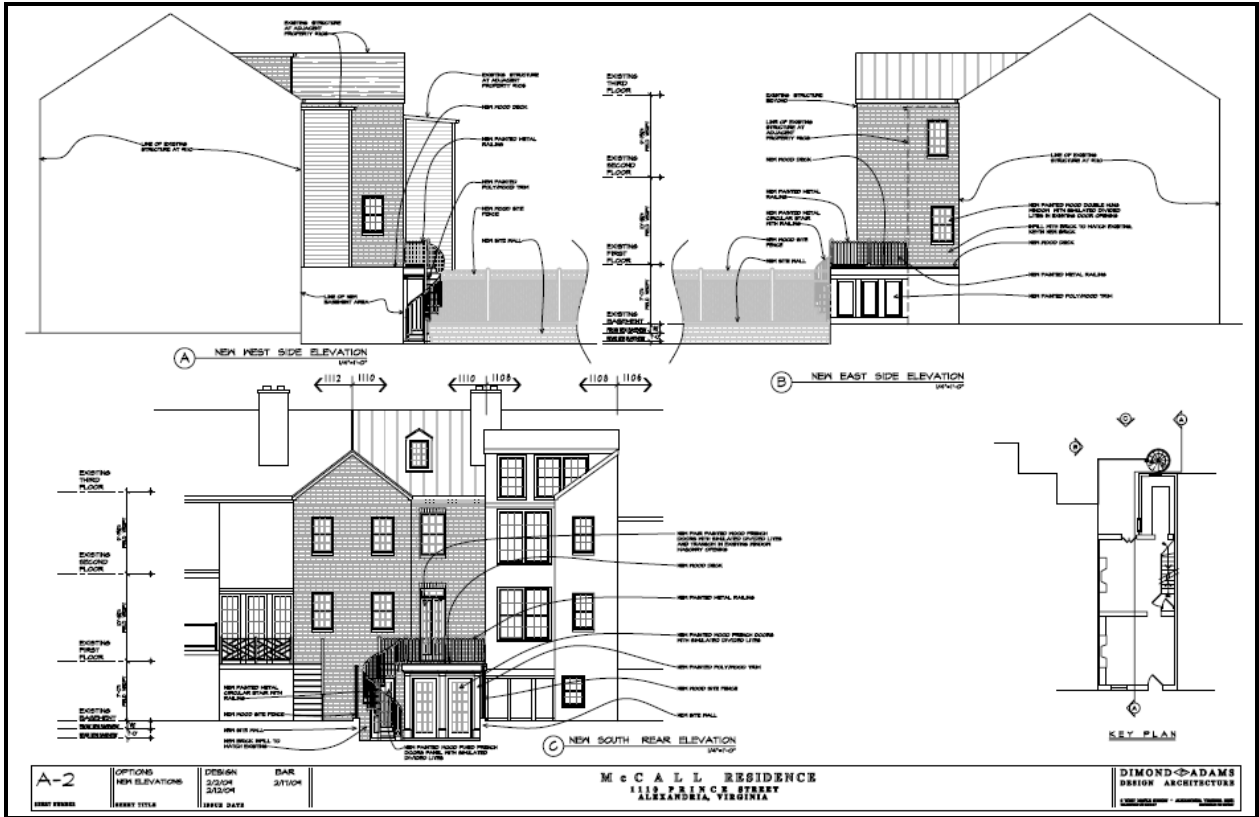


Figure 9: Proposed elevations