

Docket Item # 7
BAR CASE #2009-0237

BAR Meeting
November 4, 2009

ISSUE: Additions and alterations

APPLICANT: Robert Bentley Adams & Assoc. (Scot McBroom) for Jesus Medrano and Bonnie Rideout

LOCATION: 5 Potomac Court

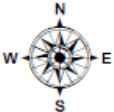
ZONE: RM/Residential

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The brick garden wall proposed to be installed near the property line adjacent to Windmill Hill Park is to be a maximum of six feet in height on the side facing Windmill Hill Park from the existing lowest topographic grade. The applicant shall also provide final design details and specifications for the brick wall and iron fencing to Staff for final approval prior to building permit submission.
2. That the front door be composed entirely wood and not be a synthetic or composite material, subject to final approval by Staff.
3. If the applicant chooses to use a composite material for trim, railings, and shutters, that the material be solid-through-the-core and paintable, with final approval made by Staff.
4. *The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
5. *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.
6. *The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.
7. 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 Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements. Additional statements to be included on the Final Site Plan will be determined in consultation with 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 issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period. In the case for a certificate or permit for a project that requires a development special use permit or site plan under section 11-400 of the zoning ordinance, the period of validity shall be coincident with the validity of the development special use permit or site plan as determined pursuant to section 11-418 of the ordinance.

**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 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.



NOTE: BAR Case # 2009-0236 must be approved before this docket item may be considered.

I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting reapproval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of a front porch, side screened porch and deck, rear dormer and rear three-story bay. In addition, the applicant is requesting a number of alterations to the house and site. The additions and alterations are discussed in detail below.

This application was originally considered and approved with conditions by the Board last year (BAR Case #2006-00124, 1/3/2007) but construction was not undertaken within the required 12 month period. The applicant applied for reapproval of previously approved plans in 2008 (BAR Case #2008-0007, 2/6/2008). Again, construction was not undertaken within the required 12 month period. The applicant is returning to request approval of many of the same items as well as an expanded scope of work.

North (front) elevation:

- All windows are proposed to be replaced with double-glazed, simulated divided light wood windows.
- All windows on the front elevation are proposed to have new wood louvered shutters. The shutters will be sized to fit the openings and will be operable. The easternmost shutters will not open fully due to the lack of space between 5 Potomac Court and its neighbor. These shutters will rest against the west wall of the adjacent house. The shutters are proposed to be a composite material.
- A new painted wood or composite material door surround and with a dentiled cornice is proposed. A new wood six panel door (with four lights) is proposed.
- A new painted wood or composite moldings and modillions at cornice is proposed.
- The existing straight-run stoop and iron railing is proposed to be realigned to incorporate a landing and 90 degree turn in the lower portion of the stoop.
- A new post and lantern is proposed at the base of the stoop.

The north elevation of the proposed new screened porch and deck addition will be largely blocked from view by an existing frame shed and a 13 foot high retaining wall belonging to the adjacent property. The porch will have brick walls. There will be a large arched opening with screened panels on the north elevation. The porch will have a painted wood or composite cornice. The deck will have a painted wood or composite railing consisting of paneled piers and straight pickets.

West (side) elevation:

- A new ocular window is proposed for the first story. It will be a double-glazed, simulated divided light wood window with nine lights.
- Two new windows are proposed at the second story. The northernmost will be a six-over-six, double-hung simulated divided light wood window and will match the one

below at the first story. The second proposed window will be an oriel window at the center of this elevation directly above the proposed ocular window. This window will also have a six-over-six configuration and will have painted wood trim and a copper roof. The oriel window will project approximately one foot.

- Two doors are proposed to be added at the south end of the elevation on the first floor and ground floor levels. Both will be multi-light, simulated divided light wood doors. The upper door will lead to the deck and will have a copper clad hood. The lower door will lead to the screened porch.
- The proposed screened porch will be three bays on this elevation, extending approximately 23.5 feet. The corners will have brick piers and the interior columns and cornice will be painted wood.

South (rear) elevation:

- The south elevation of the new porch and deck will match the north elevation. There will be a screened opening and door within a brick arch. The deck will have a painted wood railing between two wood paneled piers.
- A new three-story bay addition is proposed for this elevation. The projecting bay will measure approximately 13 feet four inches by thirty feet in height. Each story will have five six-over-nine, double-glazed, simulated divided light wood windows (three in the center portion with each side flanked by an angled one). The wall area between the floors will be clad in stucco. The shed roof of the bay will be an extension of the existing composition shingle.
- A shed roof dormer is proposed on this elevation. The dormer will have two multi-light windows. The trim will be painted wood to match the existing. The roof of the dormer will have composition shingle to match the existing. The width of the proposed dormer is six feet eight inches.

East (side) elevation:

- The east side of the porch will have brick piers at the corners and a painted wood columns between the screens. As on the other elevations, the porch will have a painted wood cornice and the deck will have painted wood railing consisting of paneled piers and straight pickets.
- The existing windows on the east elevation will be replaced with double-glazed, simulated divided light wood windows with a 7/8 inch muntin to match the existing light configuration.

Windows and Door:

The applicant is proposing to replace all of the existing single-glazed true divided light wood windows. The proposed replacement windows are Jeld-Wen Auralast wood windows and will be double-glazed, simulated divided light, with interior spacer bar and exterior applied wood muntins. The muntin profile will be 7/8 inch. The replacement windows will match the existing light configuration.

The applicant is also proposing a front door constructed of either wood or a composite material.

Fence/Garden Wall:

A combination of brick and iron fence, a brick wall, and an iron fence are proposed to replace an existing stockade fence on the east, west and south portions of the property. On the west property line the applicant is proposing a six foot iron fence. Along the southern area of the property is proposed a three foot retaining wall topped with an approximately three foot brick and iron fence.

The house at 5 Potomac Court is visible from Potomac Court, Windmill Hill Park and Union Street. A “private alley” or access easement runs across the property.

II. HISTORY:

5 Potomac Court is a two story brick end unit townhouse dating from 1967. The Board approved the development of six attached and semi-attached townhouses on Potomac Court on June 8, 1966. Staff could not locate any subsequent reviews for 5 Potomac Court prior to this series of requests for the current proposed addition and alterations. In 1986, building permit #25382 allowed a replacement shed to be constructed on the west side of the house (11/12/1986).

The Board previously has approved similar alterations and additions for a number of properties on Potomac Court. In 2004, the Board approved a demolition permit and certificate of appropriateness for an addition at the ground level and a new screened porch at the first floor at the rear of 6 Potomac Court (BAR Case #s 2004-0232 & 0233, 11/3/2004). In the same year, the Board also approved a demolition permit and certificate of appropriateness for a front dormer and three story bay on the south side of 8 Potomac Court (BAR Case #'s 2004-0011 & 0012, 2/18/2004). In 2002, the Board approved permit to demolish and certificate of appropriateness for a dormer on the rear of 9 Potomac Court (BAR Case #'s 2002-0222 & 0223, 9/4/2002).

The Board has twice approved a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness at 5 Potomac Court, first in 2006 (BAR Case #2006-00123, 1/3/2007) and then in 2008 (BAR Case #2008-0007, 2/6/2008). Both times the approval expired before work was initiated.

III. ANALYSIS:

The proposed dormer, screened porch, projecting bay, retaining wall, fence and alterations comply with the zoning ordinance requirements. Fences and retaining walls must be located completely on the subject property for final approval.

Addition and Alterations:

Staff believes the proposed alterations and additions are generally appropriate and comply with the *Design Guidelines*. At the public hearing in 2007 regarding this project, the Board approved a number of conditions regarding the project. The original conditions included elimination of the

proposed shutters on the façade, elimination of the projecting bay on the west elevation and the height of the brick wall. The conditions from the 2007 approval were as follows:

1. The stucco color should be tan and submitted for review and approval by staff;
2. The following statements must be included in the General Notes of all site plans, as well as on all site plan sheets that include ground disturbing actions:

Contact Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks prior to any ground disturbing activity (such as coring, grading, filling, vegetation removal, undergrounding utilities, pile driving, landscaping and other excavations as defined in Section 2-151 of The Zoning Ordinance) on this property. City archaeologists will provide on-site inspections to record significant finds;

Call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) immediately if any buried historic structural remains (wall foundations, cisterns, wells, privies, 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 to record the finds.

3. The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology;
4. Shutters are not to be installed on the north or south elevations;
5. The brick garden wall proposed to be installed near the property line adjacent to Windmill Hill Park is to be a maximum of 6' in height on the side facing Windmill Hill Park from the existing topographic grade; and,
6. The proposed bay window on the west side is to be replaced with a simple recessed window without any projecting surround.

The applicant chose not to comply with any of the previously imposed conditions for the second submission in 2008. The Board generally did not impose the previous conditions for the second approval. The conditions from the 2008 approval were as follows:

1. The brick garden wall proposed to be installed near the property line adjacent to Windmill Hill Park is to be a maximum of 6' in height on the side facing Windmill Hill Park from the existing lowest topographic grade;
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discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of discovery until a City Archaeologist comes to the site to record the finds.

3. The applicant must not allow metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

The proposed addition and alterations will substantially alter the appearance of what is now a simple Colonial Revival style townhouse dating to the third quarter of the twentieth century. However, Staff believes most of the proposed alterations are generally compatible with the Colonial Revival style of the development on Potomac Court and the more eclectic styles of the district as a whole. In addition, the size and footprint of the proposed additions are at an appropriate scale to the size of the existing house.

Staff notes that adding conjectural details and more ornamentation than original to the house is generally discouraged by the *Guidelines* and preservation practice. However, in this circumstance the subject property is not historic and the proposed ornamentation is in keeping with the Colonial Revival style of this development.

The most radical alterations will be at the rear of the building with the proposed new screened porch/deck and three-story projecting bay. Staff believes these additions, which are more elaborate in character and grand in scale than the original house, will be acceptable as they will not be readily visible with the more modest front of the house. In addition, the proposed screened porch and deck is a one-story element and will not be prominently visible. The projecting three-story bay element will be highly visible from Windmill Hill Park. However, any addition to the rear of this house would be highly visible from Windmill Hill Park. Staff previously recommended that the color of the stucco on the bay should be darker color close to the brick color to minimize its visibility and that the stucco color should be submitted to Staff for review and approval. The Board disagreed and found that not to be of concern.

Use of Composite Materials:

One change from the previous submission is the proposed use of a composite material in place of painted wood. The composite material is proposed for trimwork, the door, the door surround, the shutters and the deck railing. The Board has approved the use of synthetic or composite materials, such as Azek, for trimwork, cornices, surrounds, and shutters on non-historic existing buildings and new construction. Staff recommends that if the Board again finds it acceptable in this circumstance, that the material be solid-through-the-core and paintable, with final approval to be made by Staff. However, Staff notes that a composite or synthetic material is not appropriate for the front entry door and recommends that the door be wood, subject to final approval by Staff.

Replacement Windows:

The *Design Guidelines* recommend that: "...replacement windows should be appropriate to the historic period of the architectural style of the building". The *Guidelines* also state that single-glazed, true divided light windows with interior storm sash are the preferred replacement

window type. The *Guidelines* continue by saying other acceptable window types are “double-glazed true divided light wood windows...Windows with fixed or applied muntins have been approved for the rear elevation of a structure which has minimal visibility from a public right of way.” In this particular case, given the age of the townhouse and the fact that the existing light configuration and muntin profile and size will be retained, Staff does not object to the installation of double-insulated windows, with simulated divided lights, and interior spacer bars.

Fences and Garden Walls:

The *Design Guidelines* note that “fences, garden walls and gates should be appropriate in materials, design and scale to the period and character of the structure they surround.” Furthermore, the *Guidelines* state that “masonry fences and walls of brick are generally appropriate throughout the historic districts.” Staff finds that the design of the proposed brick wall and iron fencing is compatible with the surrounding area.

Staff also notes the comments and of Alexandria Archeology and recommends that they be included as part of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. The brick garden wall proposed to be installed near the property line adjacent to Windmill Hill Park is to be a maximum of six feet in height on the side facing Windmill Hill Park from the existing lowest topographic grade. The applicant shall also provide final design details and specifications for the brick wall and iron fencing to Staff for final approval prior to building permit submission.
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STAFF:

Catherine Miliaras, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Stephen Milone, Division Chief, Land Use Services

V. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 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-2 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 taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-3 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-4 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-5 Additions and Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 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-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.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

Archaeology

F-1 This property has potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in the early 19th century. The 1810 tax records indicate that houses were present on a lot that stretched from Union to Lee Street, parallel to Wilkes on this block. The 1877 G.M. Hopkins atlas shows several structures on the property. There may also be some potential for archaeological evidence of waterfront/industrial activities of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The east side of Union Street across from this block was the site of Roberdeau's wharf in the 18th century, and Roberdeau's distillery was located on the block at the corner of Union and Wolfe streets.

F-2 If this project is a federal undertaking or involves the use of any federal funding, the applicant shall comply with federal preservation laws, in particular Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The applicant will coordinate with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the federal agency involved in the project, as well as with Alexandria Archaeology.

Conditons

R-1 *The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.

R-2 *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-3 *The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

R-4 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 Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, and Sheeting and Shoring) so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirements. Additional statements to be included on the Final Site Plan will be determined in consultation with Alexandria Archaeology.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

VI. IMAGES:



Figure 1. Existing north (front) elevation.



Figure 2. Existing west (side) elevation.



Figure 3. Existing south (rear) elevation.



Figure 4. View from Windmill Hill Park.

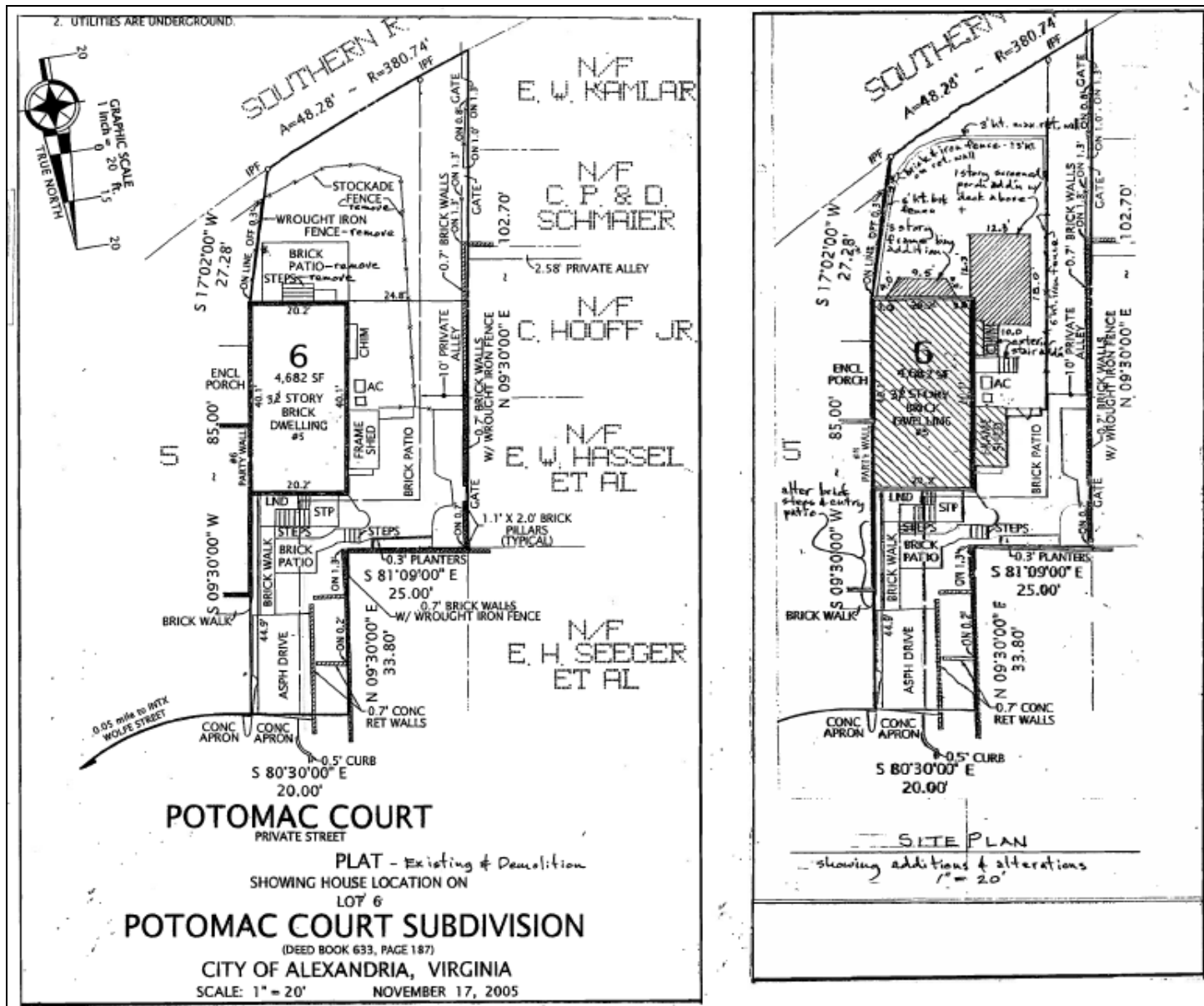


Figure 5. Existing and proposed site plan.

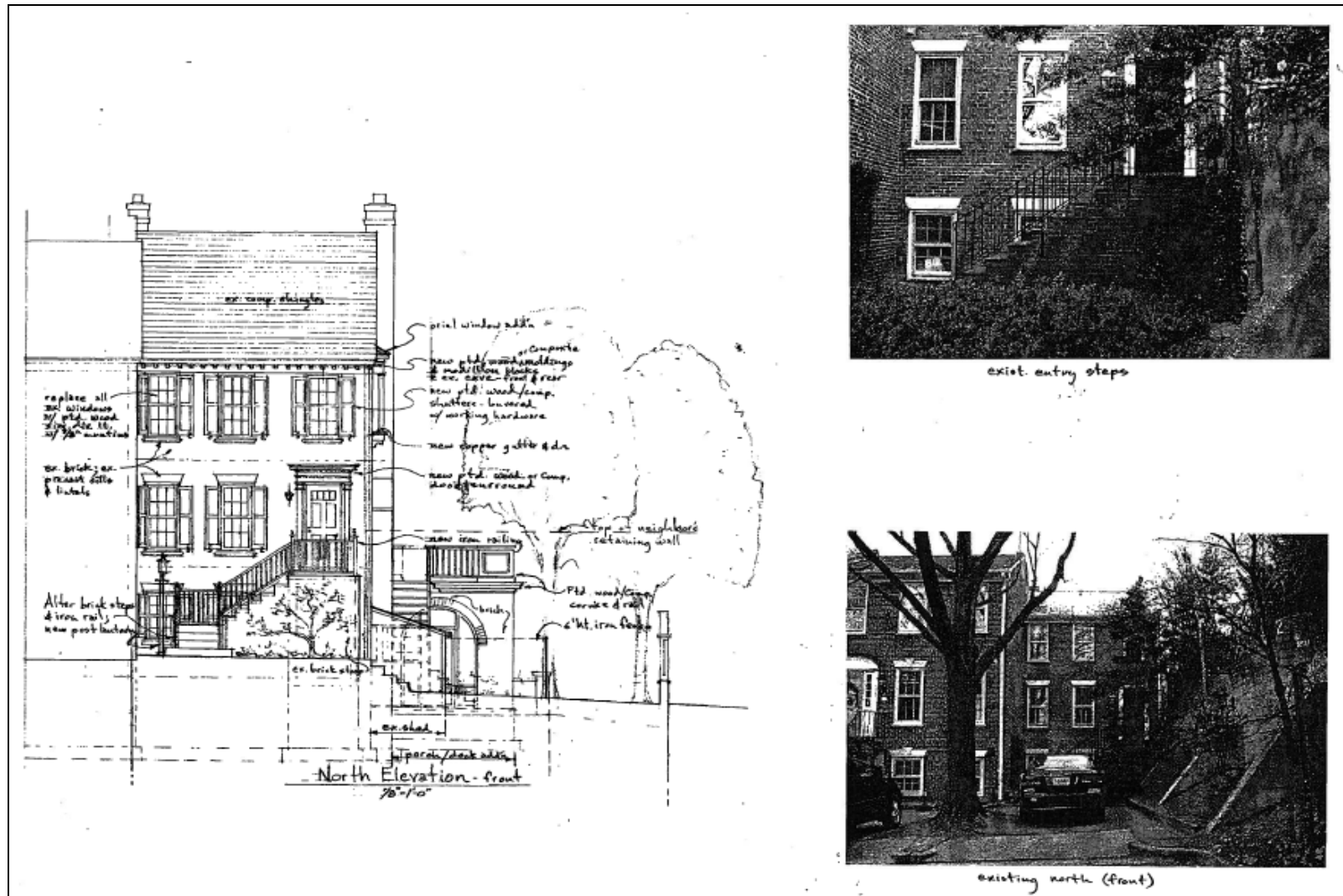


Figure 6. Proposed north (front) elevation.

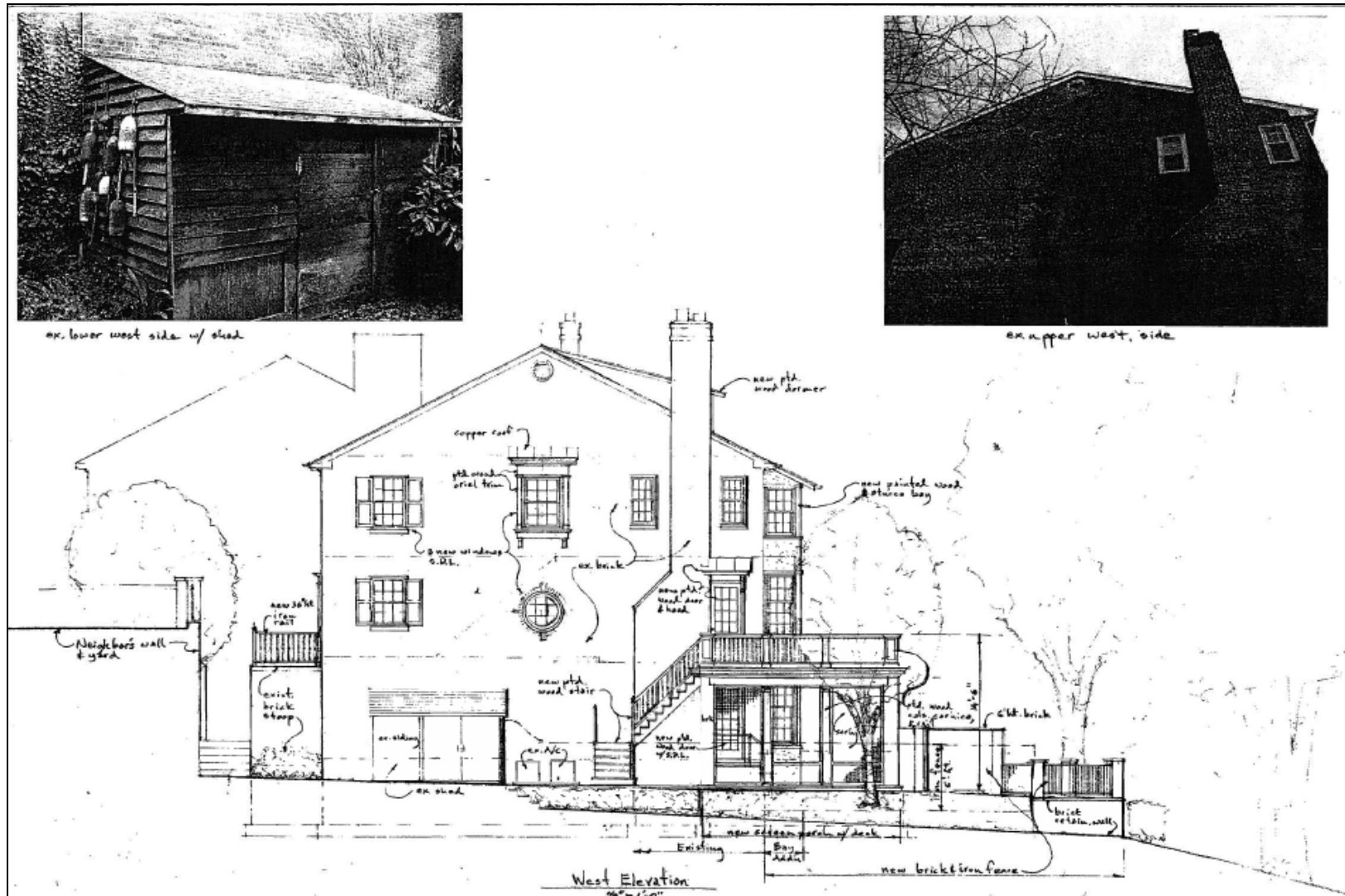


Figure 7. Proposed west (side) elevation.

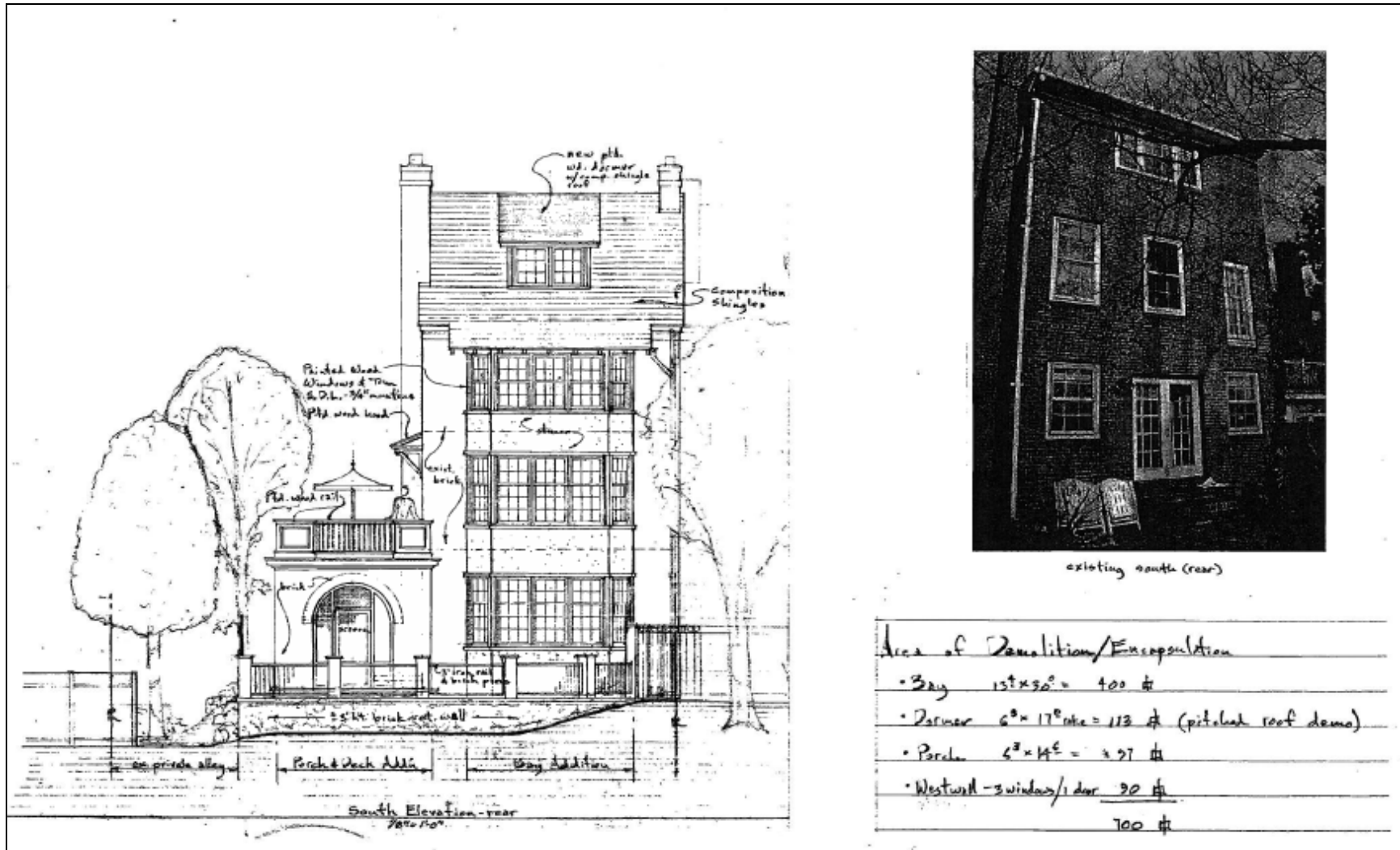


Figure 8. Proposed south (rear) elevation.

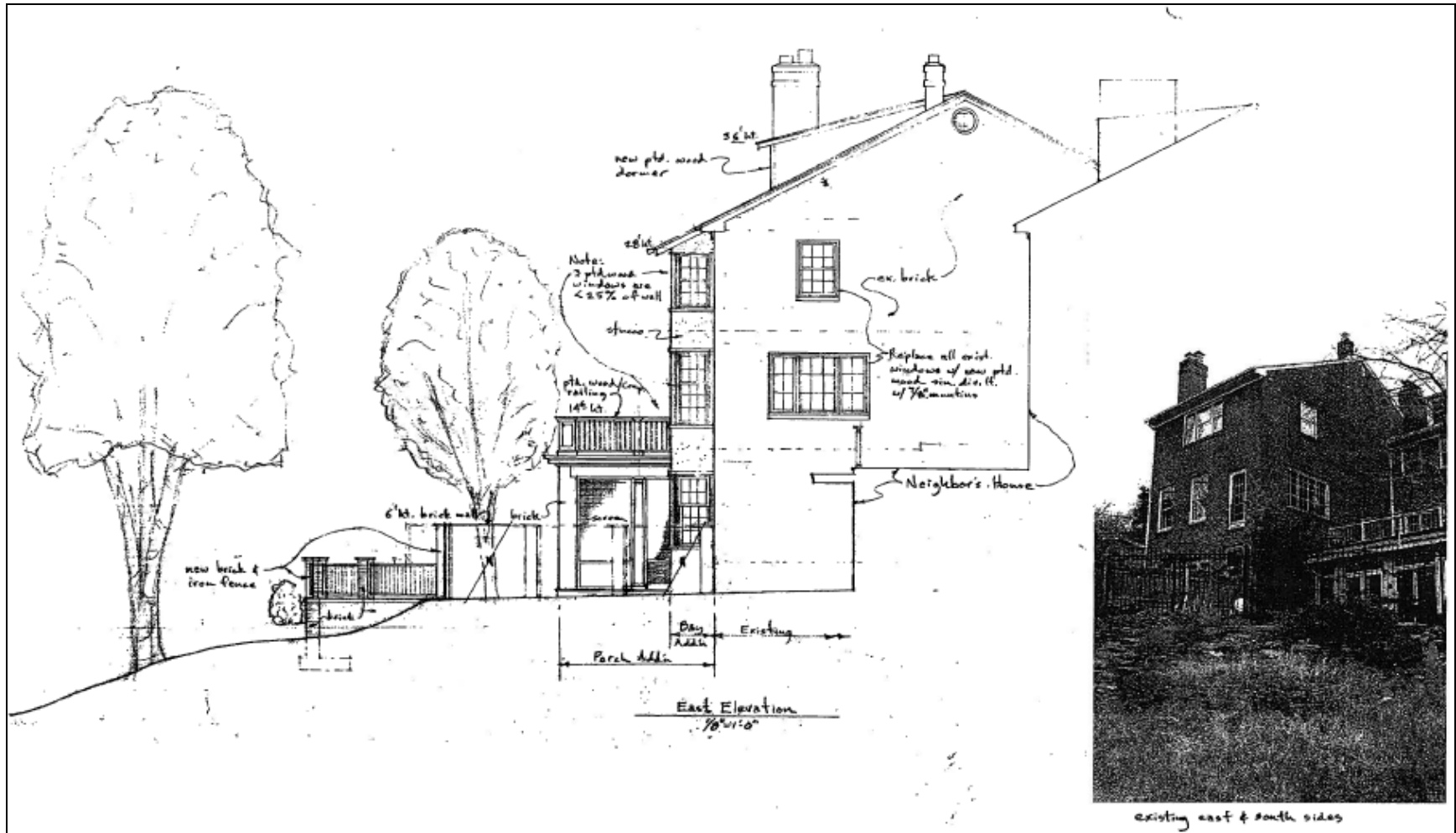


Figure 9. Proposed east (side) elevation.

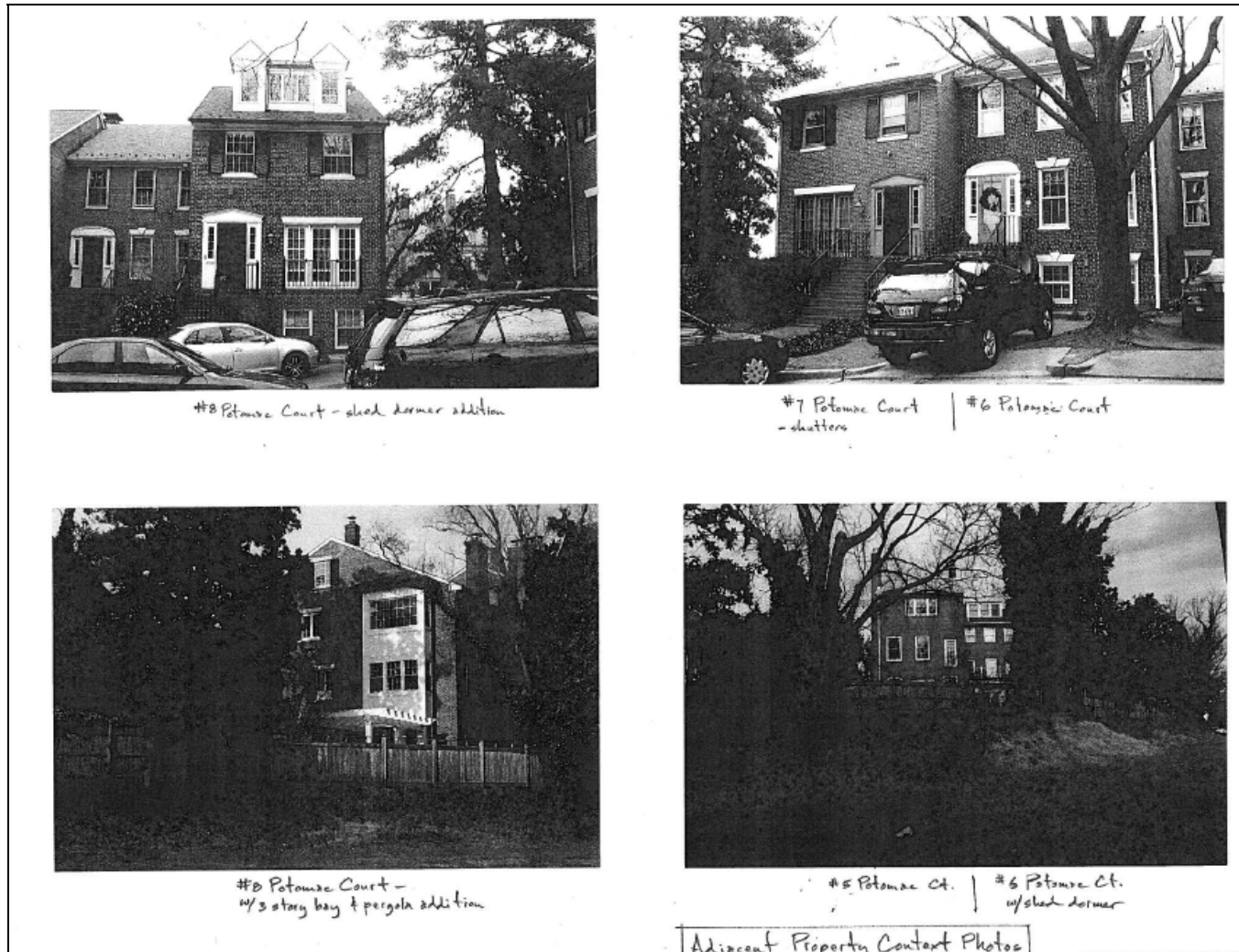


Figure 10. Adjacent property context photos.