

BAR Meeting  
July 7, 2010

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and Addition/Alterations  
**APPLICANT:** Bruce & Donna Henry by Dimond Adams Design Architecture  
**LOCATION:** 803 Cameron Street  
**ZONE:** CD / Commercial

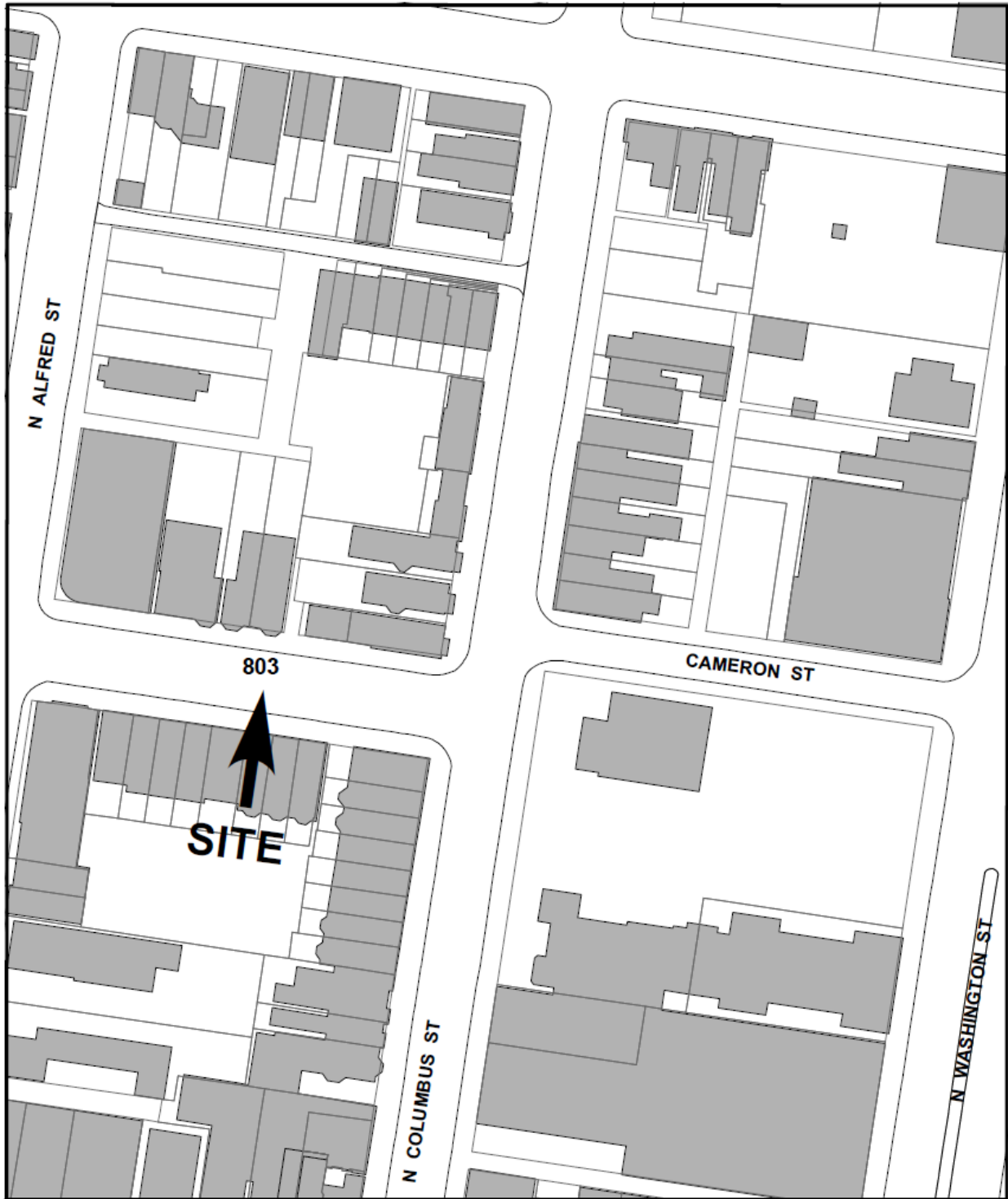
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations with the following conditions:

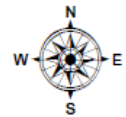
1. That the applicant work with Staff to visually strengthen the second floor entablature on the proposed rear addition.
2. That the proposed fence be painted or stained.
3. That the skylight have an integral shade to reduce light seepage at night.
4. \*The applicant/developer shall call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that a monitoring and 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 or artifact collection 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 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.

**\*\*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.

**\*\*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, 703-838-4360 for further information.



**BAR CASE #2010-0155 & 0156 7/7/2010**



**Note:** Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2010-0155 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2010-0156 (Certificate of Appropriateness) for clarity and brevity. This item requires a roll call vote.

## **I. ISSUE**

The applicant is requesting approval of a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of an addition and alterations at 803 Cameron Street.

### Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate

- Demolition/encapsulation of approximately 250 square feet of a brick wall on the north elevation to accommodate a new addition
- Enlargement of two existing paired window openings on the east elevation and two existing single window openings on the north elevation

### Alterations

- A new front entry to match the entry at 805 Cameron
- A new jack arch over the existing enlarged center window in the bay, to match existing jack arches on the façade
- A new skylight on the existing rear addition
- A new bay window in place of an existing paired window on the east elevation
- Two-over-two simulated divided light, double-hung wood windows to replace all existing vinyl windows on existing rear addition
- New HVAC units on the roof of the existing rear addition that will not be visible from the public right-of-way
- A new fence and gate measuring seven feet in height (six feet of solid board with a one foot lattice topper) at the rear yard

### Addition

The proposed addition will read as an enclosed porch in a classical vocabulary, with the first story a screened porch and the second story having windows and closed shutters. The addition will measure approximately 13.25 feet by 9.5 feet. The first story will have screened panels and wood panels. The second story will have shutters fixed in the closed position on the east and west elevations, with closed shutters and two windows on the north elevation. The addition will have a flat roof. There will also be painted wood columns and simple trim details. On the west elevation, on the property line, the applicant proposes to use PVC trim and panels. Wood trim, panels and windows are proposed on the east and north elevations.

## **II. HISTORY**

803 Cameron Street is one of a semi-detached pair of two-story brick Italianate townhouses with projecting front bays. An identical structure was constructed immediately to the west, though it has been significantly altered.

The pair of townhouses appears on the earliest Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (1885), each with a two-story rear ell. By 1921, there was a one-story frame addition attached to the rear ell of 803 Cameron Street. By 1958, the rear ell had been expanded to be in line with the east wall of the main block and the entire building was noted as “office” on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from this year. BAR records note the approval of an addition at the rear of this building in 1948

(3/16/48). In 1994 the Board approved vinyl windows to replace steel casement windows on the rear addition (BAR 94-143, 9/21/94) and a building permit was issued for replacement windows on the rear addition (BLD94-07254).

### **III. ANALYSIS**

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition and encapsulation of portions of the east and north walls and finds the proposed addition and alterations to be compatible with the existing building and surrounding area.

#### **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. While a portion of the original rear ell is proposed for encapsulation/demolition, Staff notes that the 1948 addition, approved by the Board, encapsulated/demolished the majority of the original rear ell. The applicant provided Staff with images from a previous fire (no date specified) Very little of the original rear ell remains intact. The area proposed for demolition/encapsulation is minimal in scope, located on a secondary elevation, does not remove any portion of the building containing character defining features of uncommon design or historic merit, and does not compromise the integrity of the building as a whole.

#### **Addition and Alterations**

The construction of an addition to any building within a historic district must be evaluated not only for its impact on the building to which it is being attached, but also for its impact on the district as a whole. The *Design Guidelines* encourage “designs that are respectful of the existing structure and which seek to be background statements or which echo the design elements of the existing structure.” As the attached drawings illustrate, the proposed addition does not overwhelm the existing building yet will clearly read as an addition. This modest addition is appropriate in respect to massing, scale and form. The use of a classical post and lintel

vocabulary is common for porches and the proposal recalls the typical evolution of late 19<sup>th</sup> century sleeping porches as they were enclosed over time. However, Staff believes that a taller and more complete, but vernacular, entablature (architrave, frieze and cornice) on the second floor would improve the neoclassical proportions. Staff will continue to work with the applicant to refine the architectural details at the intersection where the new porch roof meets the existing shed roof of the ell and to insure that it can be properly drained.

The proposed bay window on the east elevation is a modest alteration to an existing mid-20<sup>th</sup> century addition. The new bay window will be somewhat visible from Cameron Street, but will not diminish the primary importance of the historic main block of this building. The alterations on the north elevation of the existing rear addition (a new door in place of an existing window opening at the first story and an enlarged window at the second story) are appropriate and more visually compatible with the historic main block than what currently exists.

Staff believes the proposed replacement window materials are appropriate for the 1948 addition and new addition. Although the *Design Guidelines* state that “single glazed true divided light wood windows” are the preferred window type, Staff notes that the Board has regularly approved simulated divided light, double-glazed windows on new construction and mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings.

Although the Board has not formally adopted a policy on synthetic/composite materials for new construction, the Board has often approved the use of such materials for new construction and additions when the materials are high-quality. The Board generally considers high-quality synthetic/composite trim materials to be solid-through-the-core, paintable, milled similarly to wood, and to have a similar texture and feel to wood. Staff finds the proposed use of a high-quality PVC trim and panels to be appropriate on the new addition. The use of wood windows and trim and a standing seam metal shed roof over the bay are appropriate selections for alterations to the existing rear addition.

Staff has no objection to the proposed skylight or the placement of HVAC units on the roof of the existing rear addition. The applicant has provided sight lines indicating that the rooftop HVAC units will not be visible from the public right-of-way and therefore will not require a waiver of the screening requirement.

The proposed wood fence and gates in the rear yard are appropriate. The zoning ordinance requires that no fence be higher than six feet, however the Board has the ability to waive this requirement. Sec. 7-202(C) states that such a height limit “may be waived or modified by the board of architectural review where the board finds that a proposed fence would be architecturally appropriate and consistent with the character of the district.” In this circumstance, Staff supports the use of a seven foot fence, noting that the rear yards of adjacent properties are essentially parking lots that serve commercial buildings. In order to lessen the impact of the fence, the applicant has proposed a six-foot board fence topped with one-foot of lattice.

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations with the conditions noted above.

**STAFF**

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

#### **IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS**

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

##### Code Administration:

- 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.
- C-10 A Certificate of occupancy shall be obtained prior to any occupancy of the building or portion thereof, in accordance with USBC 116.1.

C-11 A building permit is required for fences over 6' in height.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

**Archaeology Finding**

1. Tax records from 1850 indicate that there were two free African American households on this street face, but the exact addresses are unknown. During the Civil War, Odd Fellows Hall on the 200 block of North Columbus Street was used as a prison, and the prison yard extended into the rear section of this lot. The property therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into military activities during the Civil War and possibly into domestic activities of free African Americans prior to the war.

**Archaeology Recommendations**

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

\*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.

\*3. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

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 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.

Transportation and Environmental Services:

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

R-1 An approved GRADING PLAN must be attached to the building permit application. City Code Section 8-1-22(d) requires that a grading plan be submitted to and approved by T&ES prior to the issuance of building permits for improvements involving:

- the construction of a new home;
- construction of an addition to an existing home where either
- the addition exceeds the area of the existing building footprint by 100% or more;
- or, the construction of the addition results in less than 50% of the existing first floor exterior walls, in their entirety, remaining;
- changes to existing grade elevation of 1-foot or greater;
- changes to existing drainage patterns;
- land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or greater.



Questions regarding the processing of grading plans should be directed to the T&ES Site Plan Coordinator at (703) 746-4064. Memorandum to Industry No. 02-08 was issued on April 28, 2008 and can be viewed online via the following link.

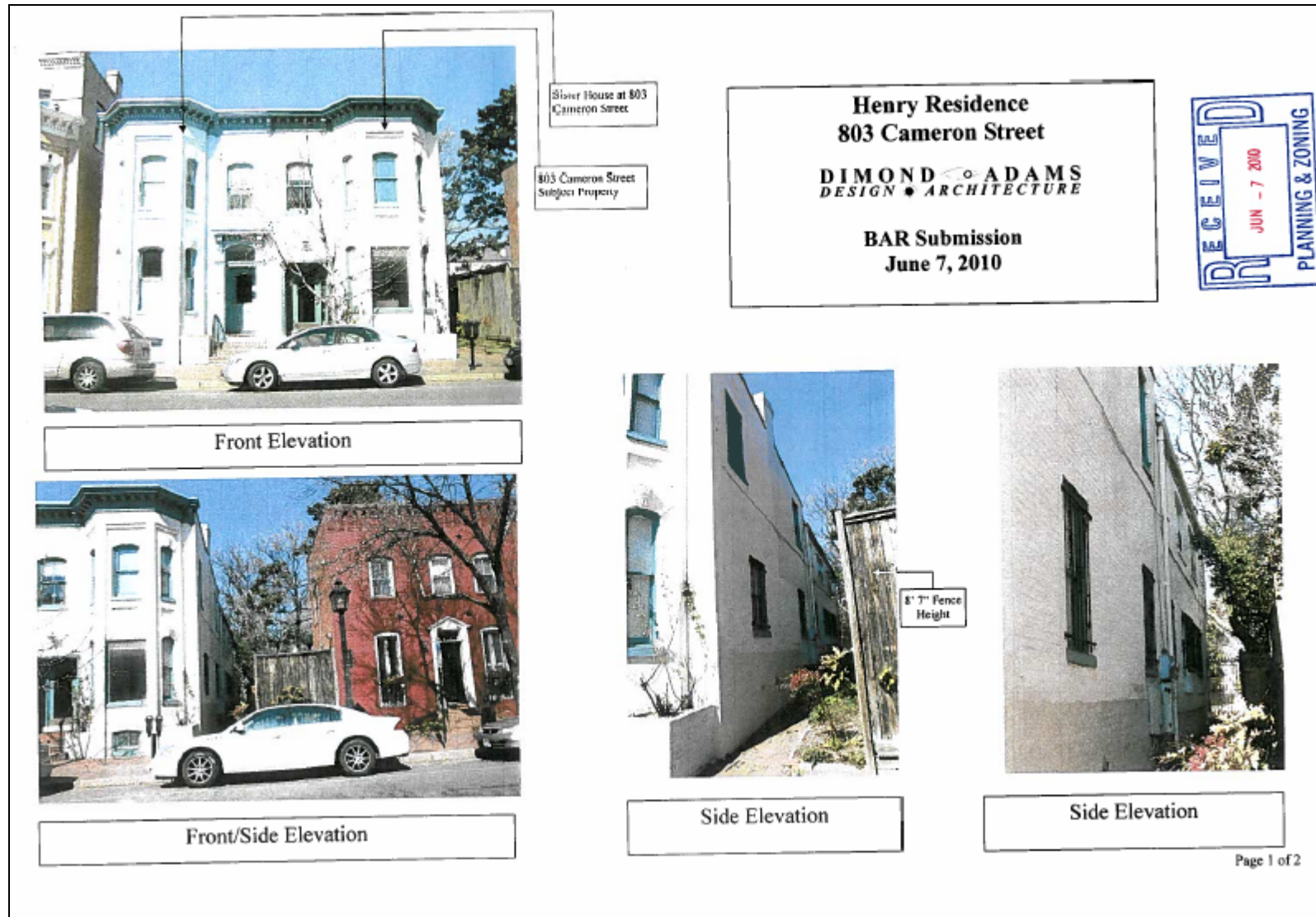
<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/info/gradingPlanRequirements.pdf>

- R-2 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R-3 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R-4 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 grading plan. (T&ES)
- R-5 An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2500 square feet. An erosion and sediment control bond shall be posted prior to release of the grading plan. (T&ES)
- R-6 If construction of the residential unit(s) results in land disturbing activity in excess of 2500 square feet, the applicant is required to comply with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's Zoning Ordinance for stormwater quality control. (T&ES)
- R-7 Upon review, it is recommended that the applicant contact T&ES/Construction & Inspection at (703) 746-4035, in regards to the relocation of the utility connection at the rear of the dwelling.

#### **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).
- 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.
- C-3 Roof, surface and sub-surface drains be connected to the public storm sewer system, if available, by continuous underground pipe. Where storm sewer is not available applicant must provide a design to mitigate impact of stormwater drainage onto adjacent properties and to the satisfaction of the Director of Transportation & Environmental Services. (Sec.8-1-22)
- C-4 All secondary utilities serving this site shall be placed underground. (Sec. 5-3-3)
- C-5 Pay sanitary sewer tap fee prior to release of Grading Plan. (Sec. 5-6-25)
- C-6 Any work within the right-of-way requires a separate permit from T&ES. (Sec. 5-3-61)

**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1. Existing conditions, front (south) and side (east) elevations.**

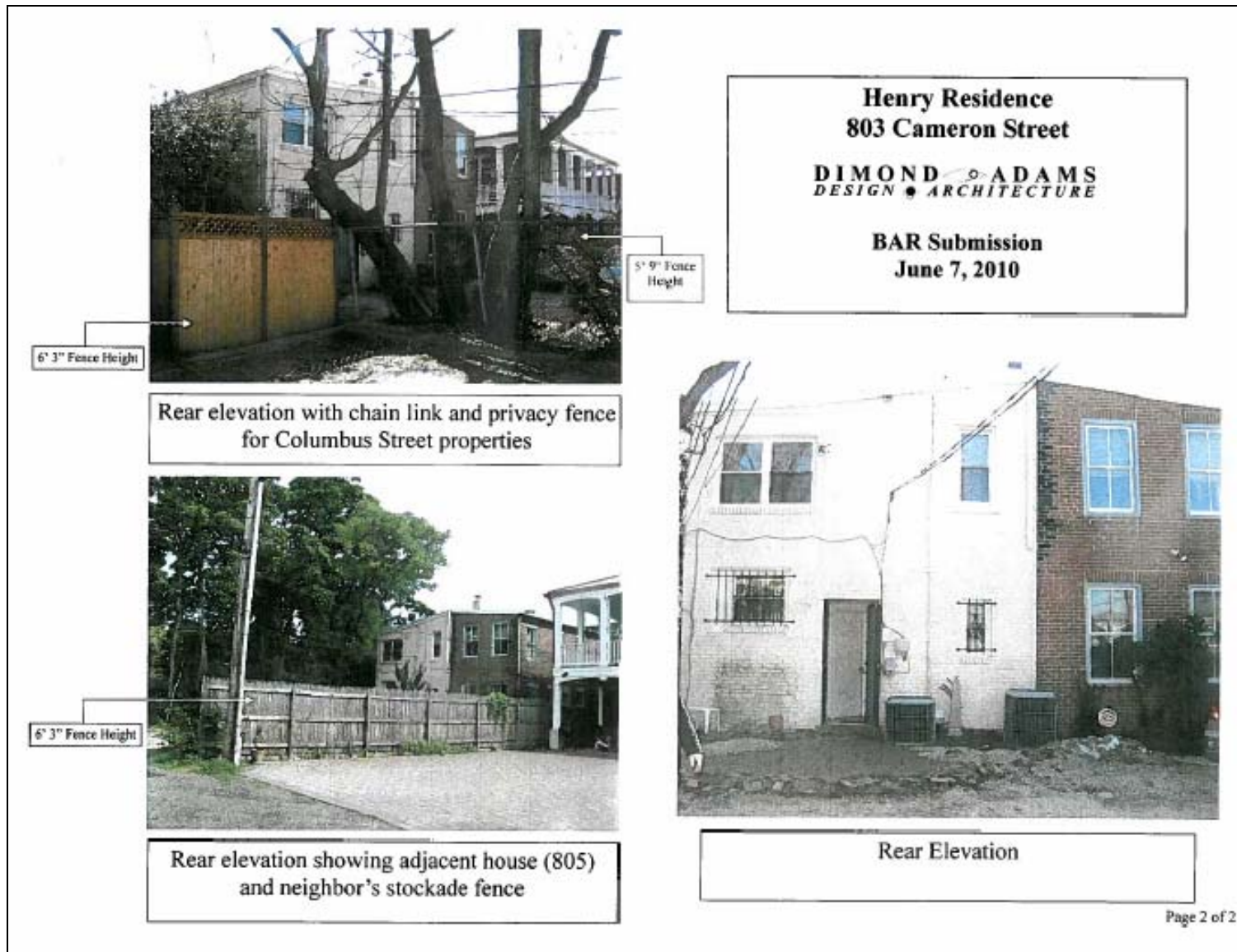


Figure 2. Existing conditions, rear (north) elevation.

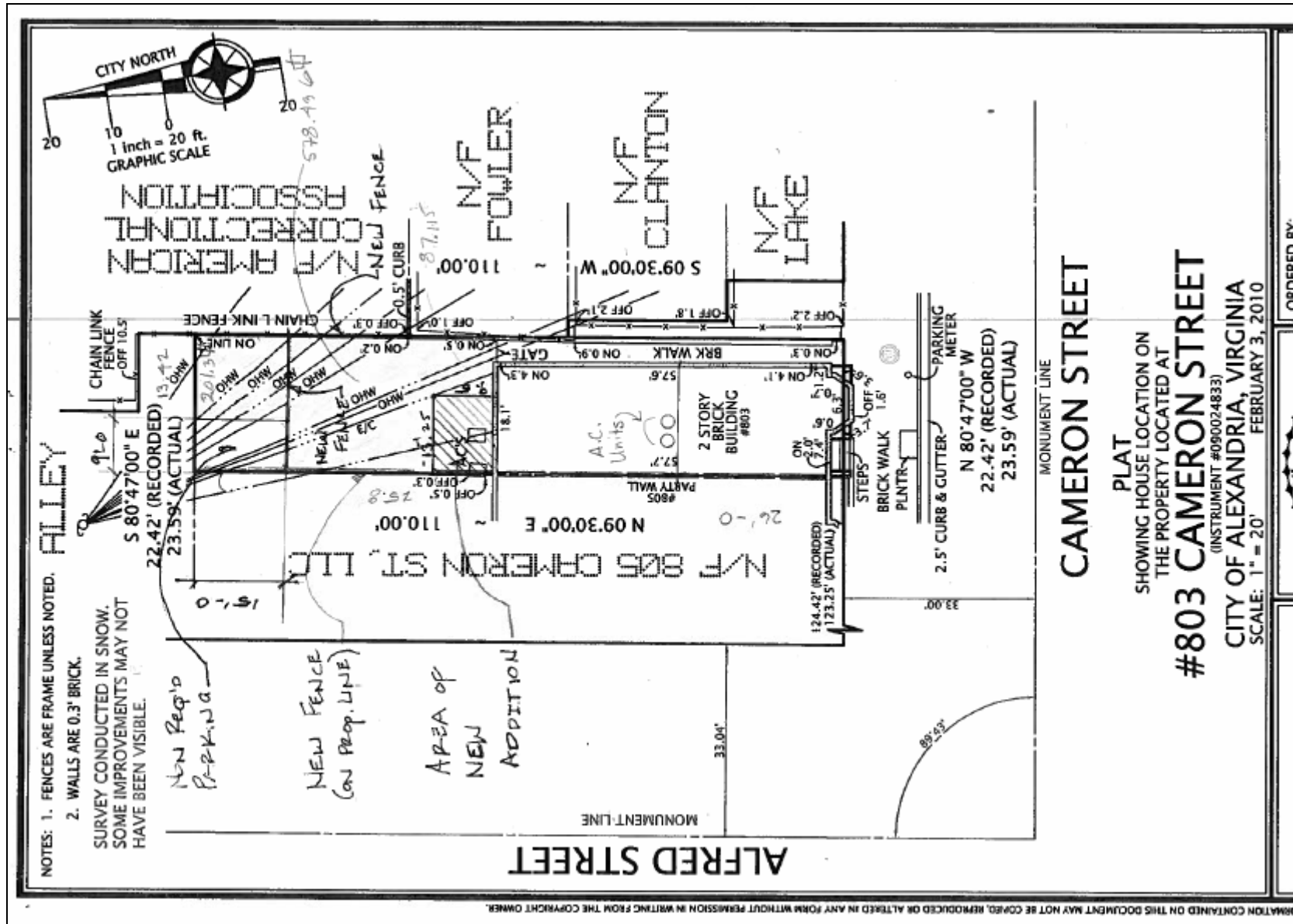


Figure 3. Plat showing proposed addition.

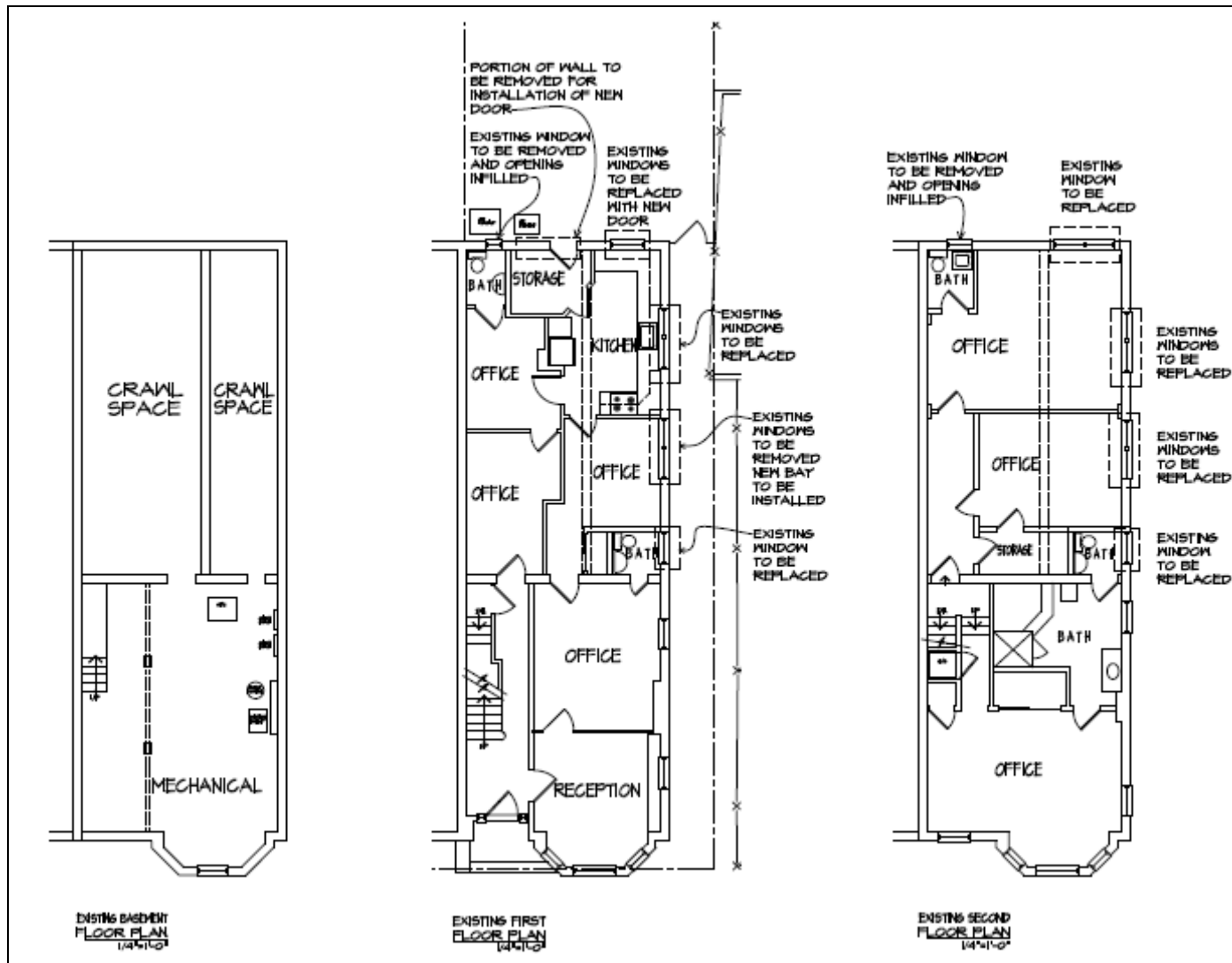


Figure 4. Existing floor plans.



Figure 5. Existing elevations.

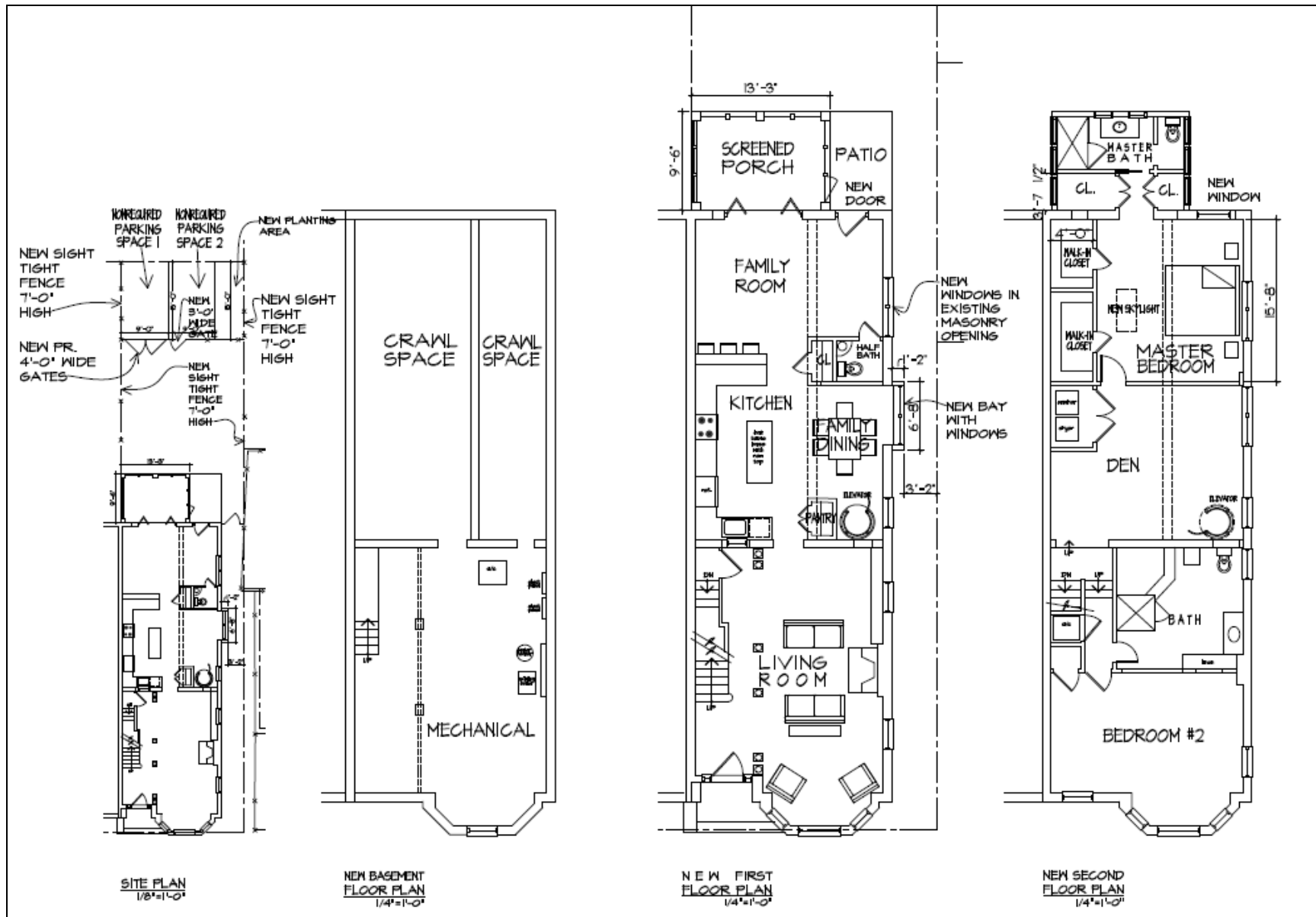


Figure 6. Proposed site plan and floor plans.



Figure 7. Proposed elevations.



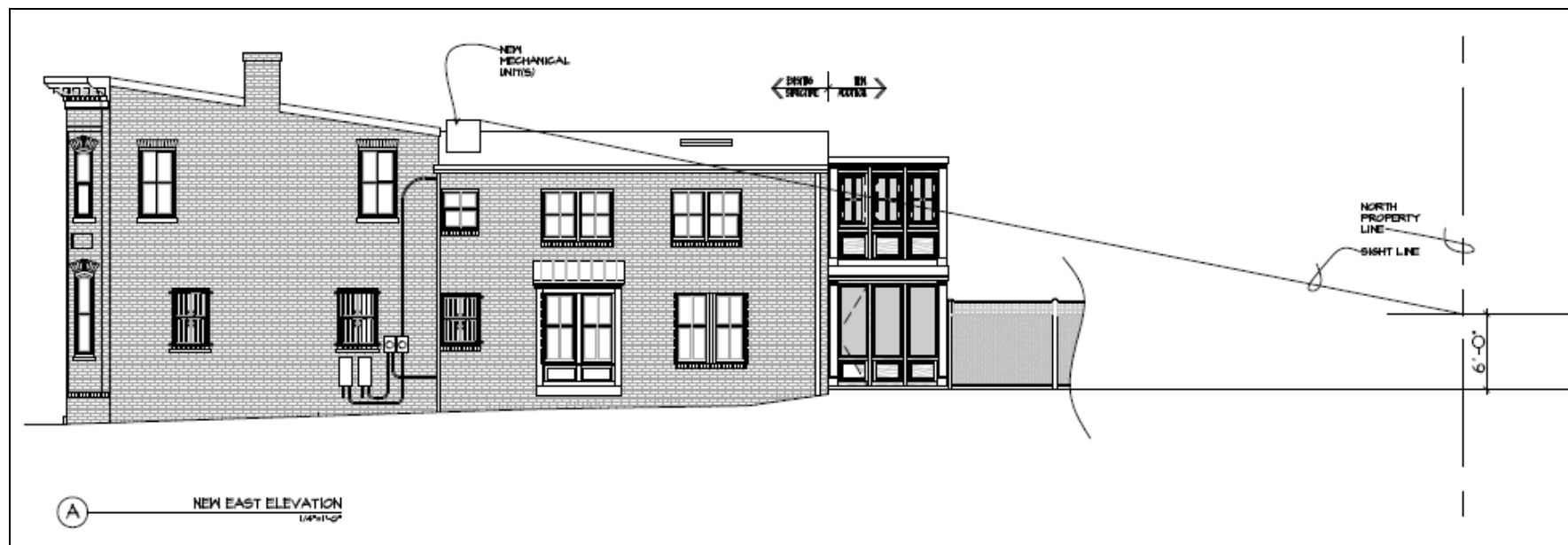


Figure 8. Sight lines showing rooftop HVAC units.