

BAR Meeting  
January 5, 2011

**ISSUE:** Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate & Certificate of Appropriateness  
(Addition and Alterations)

**APPLICANT:** Robert and Meredith Macnab

**LOCATION:** 408 South Royal Street

**ZONE:** RM / Residential

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

1. That the trim utilized on the addition will be solid through the core, paintable PVC trim.
2. That the fiber cement siding be smooth (rather than with a simulated woodgrain) and the nails are installed recessed.

\*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 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 #2010-0364**  
**#2010-0365**



**Note:** Staff coupled the reports for BAR #2010-0364 (Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate) and BAR #2010-0365 (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 a rear addition and alterations at 408 South Royal Street.

Permit to Demolish/Encapsulation

East (Rear) Elevation:

- Demolish 56 square feet of the brick wall on the first and second floors (112 sq. ft total) and reconstruct 14 square feet of the first floor and 21 square feet of the second floor wall utilizing the historic brick. After reconstruction, there will only be approximately 77 square feet of wall surface demolished.
- 237.5 square feet to be encapsulated on the first and second floors of the rear elevation

Addition

The proposed two-story shed roof frame addition will be located on the rear of the existing house and will measure approximately 12.5' square. The south wall of the addition will be a party wall with the neighbors at 410 South Royal Street, while the north wall will be visible from the neighbor's garden at 406 South Royal Street. The rear (east) elevation will be detailed with a paired 1/1 window on the second story and a single-light door flanked by single-light, full height casement windows. The addition will have a factory-finished standing seam metal roof.

The proposed materials on the addition include: painted fiber-cement lap siding, simulated divided light double-glazed aluminum-clad wood windows and doors, paintable, PVC trim, simulated stucco exterior finish on the chimney and painted aluminum gutter and downspouts.

The chimney cap will be the only portion of the new addition minimally visible from the public rights-of-way.

Alterations

The applicant proposes to remove the existing brick planter which abuts the house's front foundation wall and located within the right-of-way.

Also on the front elevation, the applicant proposes to remove the non-historic wood shutters, 6/6 wood windows, and six panel door and replacing these materials with historically appropriate detailing such as painted 2/2 wood windows, painted, four panel doors, and the re-installation of a single light transom.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Primary source documents from Alexandria Archaeology illustrate that this building and the building at 406 South Royal Street were constructed between 1870-1877.

Finally, the HVAC condenser, currently located in the rear yard, will be relocated to the roof structure of the new rear addition. This unit will not be visible from the public right-of-way.

## **II. HISTORY:**

The pair of townhouses at 406 and 408 South Royal Street was constructed between 1870 and 1877. Based on research from Alexandria Archaeology, these two-bay, two-story brick townhouses replaced earlier frame structures. The front elevations of these buildings are simple in form and detailing with only jack arches and a sawtooth cornice ornamenting the front façade. The applied shutters, six panel doors and 6/6 windows are not original to the period of construction. The location of the jack arch over the existing door at 408 South Royal Street provides the physical evidence that the entry at 408 originally was capped with a single light transom window; replicating the doorway configuration at 406 South Royal.

### *Previous Approvals:*

Staff has not found any previous BAR approvals for this property.

BAR staff has recently administratively approved window replacement, door replacement, shutter removal and demolition of the brick planter in the ROW for the adjacent property at 406 South Royal Street (BAR 2010-00363).

## **III. ANALYSIS:**

Staff has no objection to the proposed demolition of portions of the existing rear walls for new openings, and finds that the proposed addition and minor alterations are compatible with the existing building and surrounding area. The addition in the rear yard is not visible from a public way and is before the Board only to assess the extent of the demolition/encapsulation. Based on information requested by zoning and provided by the applicant it appears this project complies with zoning ordinance regulations.

### Permit to Demolish/Encapsulation

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Encapsulation 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, this late-19<sup>th</sup> century townhouse is architecturally significant to the overall historic district and compatible with nearby historic structures. The proposed encapsulation is at the rear of the building, minimal in scope and not visible from the public right-of-way. Additionally, the elevation to be demolished/encapsulated is simple in detailing and without unusual or character defining elements or unique architectural features. As such, the demolition/encapsulation will not have an adverse effect on the historic resource or a negative impact on the district as a whole. It is for these reasons Staff believes none of the criteria for demolition and encapsulation are met and the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulation should be granted.

### Addition

Additions to historic structures must be evaluated not only for their potential impact on the building to which it is being attached, but also for their potential effect on the overall historic district. 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.” The Board, by practice and where feasible, encourages additions and alterations to be placed to the rear of the existing structure so that they are either not visible or minimally visible from the public right-of-way. In this case, the proposed addition, excluding the chimney cap, will be completely contained to the rear of the existing structure and will not be visible from the public right-of-way. The addition’s design utilizes a shed roof with a low slope, enabling the majority of the existing side gable roof structure’s form to remain exposed and not encapsulated by the proposed addition. Additionally, by utilizing the simple vernacular shed roof form, the addition successfully functions as a secondary element to the existing structure.

Regarding materials, the proposed simple 1/1 window and single light doors and windows complement the Victorian fenestrations on the main massing without being replicative. The new frame addition will be clad in horizontal cement fiber siding with a paintable PVC trim. The Board’s generally approve modern materials, such as fiber cement siding and paintable PVC trim on new construction and additions. Staff finds that a paintable cellular PVC product is an appropriate material for this new, modern addition. It is the opinion of Staff, that the proposed addition’s use of the traditional shed form, simple architectural detailing and modern materials enables it to be compatible yet differentiated from the historic massing.

### Alterations

The applicant’s proposal to remove the existing 6/6 windows, the six panel door, the applied shutters and re-install a transom above the entry will be a great improvement, as these details are not original to the first period of construction. Based on research performed by Alexandria Archaeology, this house along with its pair at 406 was constructed in the mid-1870s, to replace a pair of frame structures. The utilization of Victorian detailing such as 2/2 painted wood windows and four-panel wood doors are more appropriate material selection for this date of construction. The planter to be removed from the ROW is currently abutting the historic

masonry facade, which can cause deterioration of the historic wall and floor joists behind. Staff supports the removal of this planter.

Staff recommends approval of the Permit to Demolish/Encapsulate and the Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and alterations, as submitted.

**STAFF:**

Michele Oaks, 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

Zoning:

C-1 Proposed windows, door, transom, exterior light fixture and address numbers comply with zoning. The proposed removal of the existing shutters and brick planter also comply with zoning.

C-2 Prior to BAR hearing submit, floor plans that indicate the 361 square feet of FAR deductions and a house location survey with the proposed addition and the required open space shown to ensure zoning compliance.

C-3 Applicant to submit one set of drawings to scale to ensure zoning compliance.

Code Administration:

C-1 A demolition permit is required for the proposed project (USBC 108.1).

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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers. ‘

C-3 A building permit will be required prior to start of alterations/addition.

C-4 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-5 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

C-6 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

- C-7 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-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.
- C-9 At least one window in the bedroom area will need to meet the requirements for emergency egress, sill height, openable area, etc.
- C-10 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received.

Alexandria Archaeology:

**Findings:**

This property is located in an early nineteenth-century African American neighborhood known as Hayti. Ted McCord's publication on the block bounded by S. Royal, Wilkes, Wolfe and S. Fairfax streets, *Across the Fence, but a World Apart, The Coleman Site, 1796-1907*, documents that this property was owned by Quaker Mordecai Miller in 1815. Miller and his son Robert rented and sold homes to African Americans and were instrumental in the establishment of Hayti. Hannah Jackson, an African American washerwoman, bought the lot that includes the development property in 1820, and African Americans continued to occupy the lot into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The property therefore has high potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into domestic activities in this nineteenth-century African American community.

**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:

- C-1 A demolition permit is required for the proposed project (USBC 108.1).
- 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 be taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers. ‘
- C-3 A building permit will be required prior to start of alterations/addition.
- C-4 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-5 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.
- C-6 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-7 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-8 A wall location plat prepared by a land surveyor is required to be submitted to this office prior to requesting any framing inspection.
- C-9 At least one window in the bedroom area will need to meet the requirements for emergency egress, sill height, openable area, etc.
- C-10 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.



**V. IMAGES**



**Figure 1: Front (West) Elevation**



**Figure 2: Front (West) Elevation**



**Figure 3: Front (West) Elevation**



**Figure 4: Detail of jack arch above entry**



Figure 5: Rear (East) Elevation

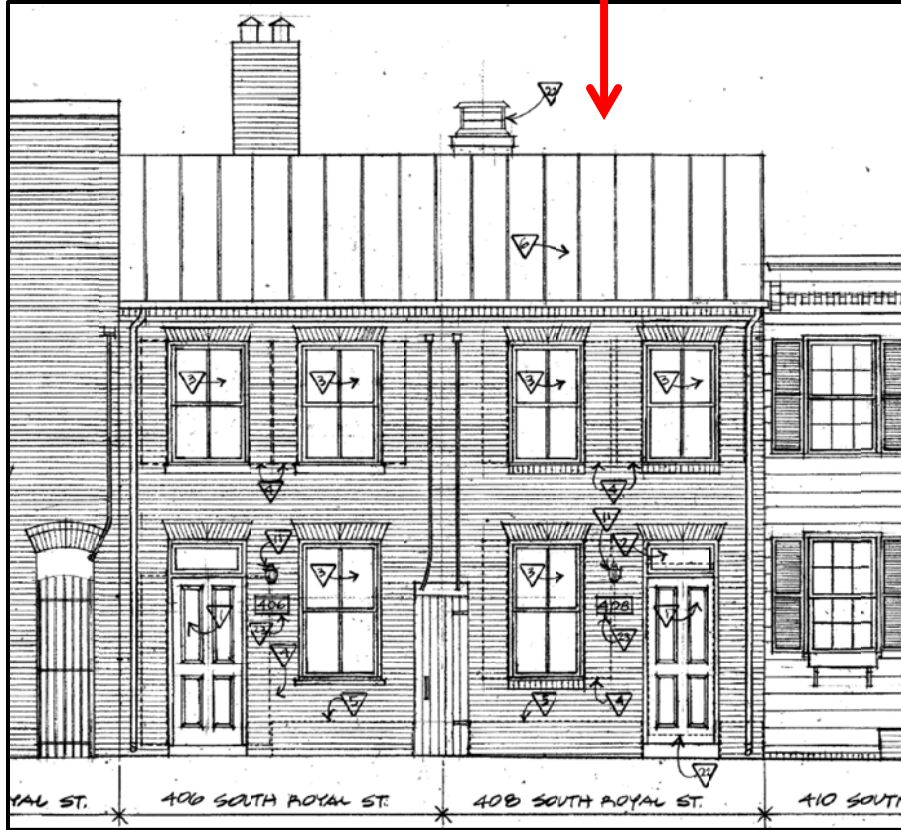


Figure 6: Proposed Front (West) Elevation

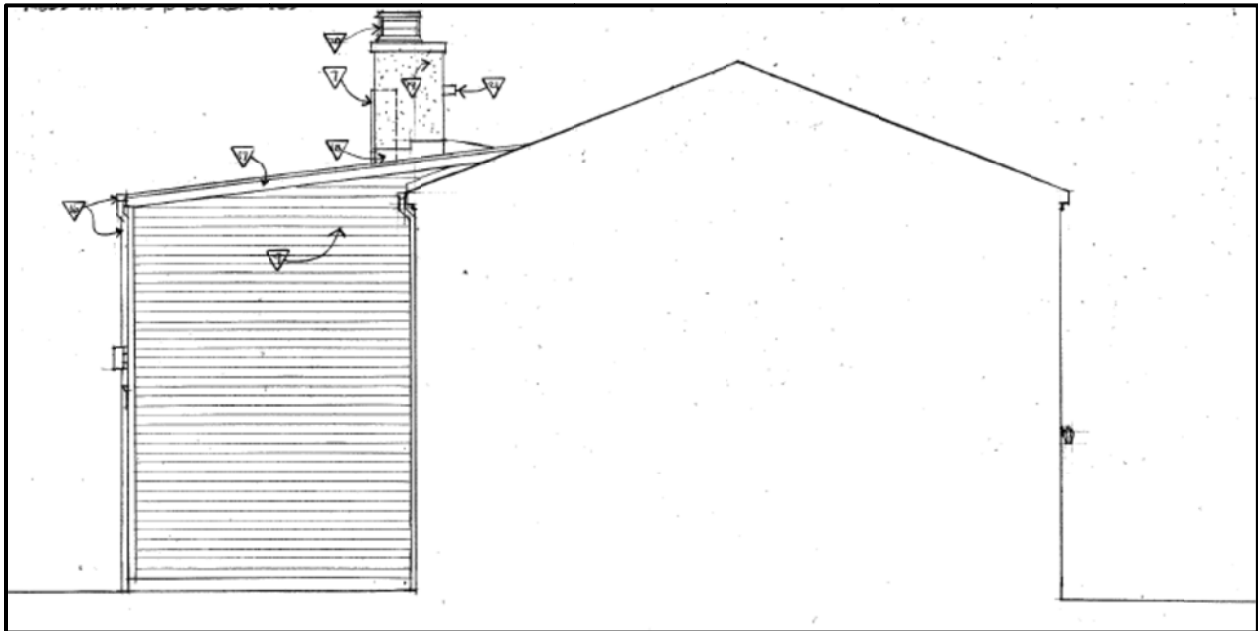


Figure 7: Proposed Side (North) Elevation

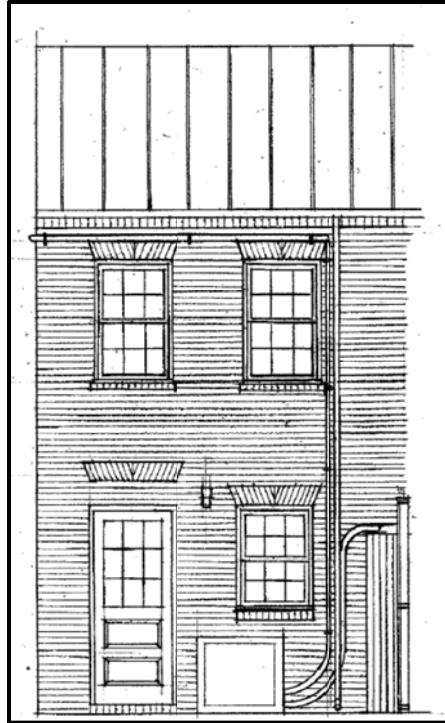


Figure 8: Existing Rear (East) Elevation

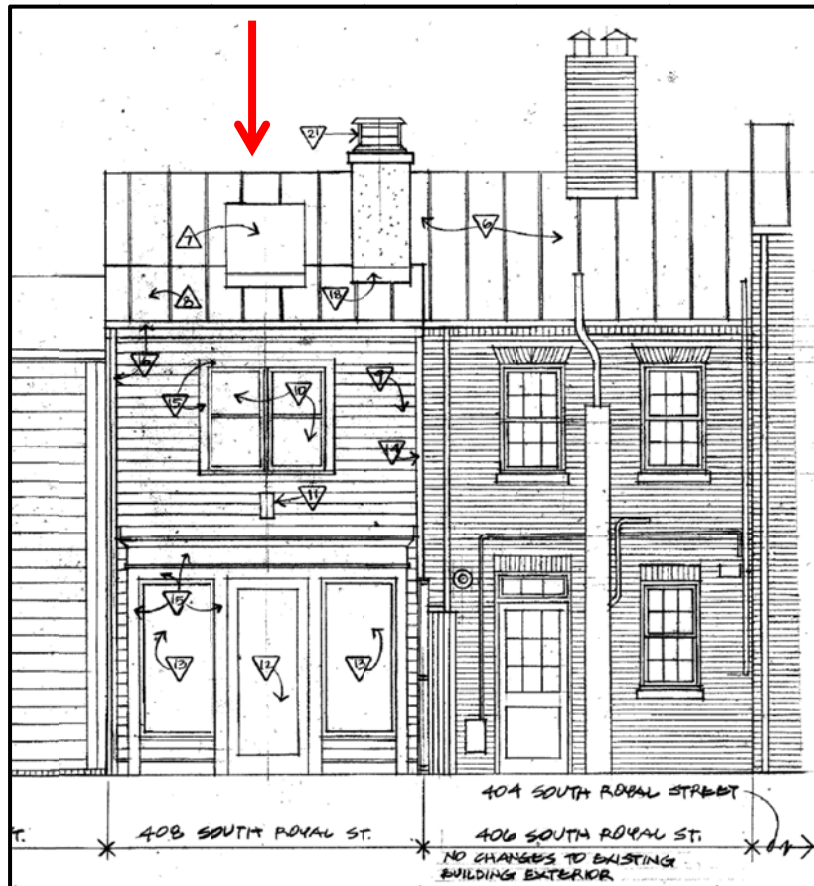


Figure 9: Proposed Rear (East) Elevation

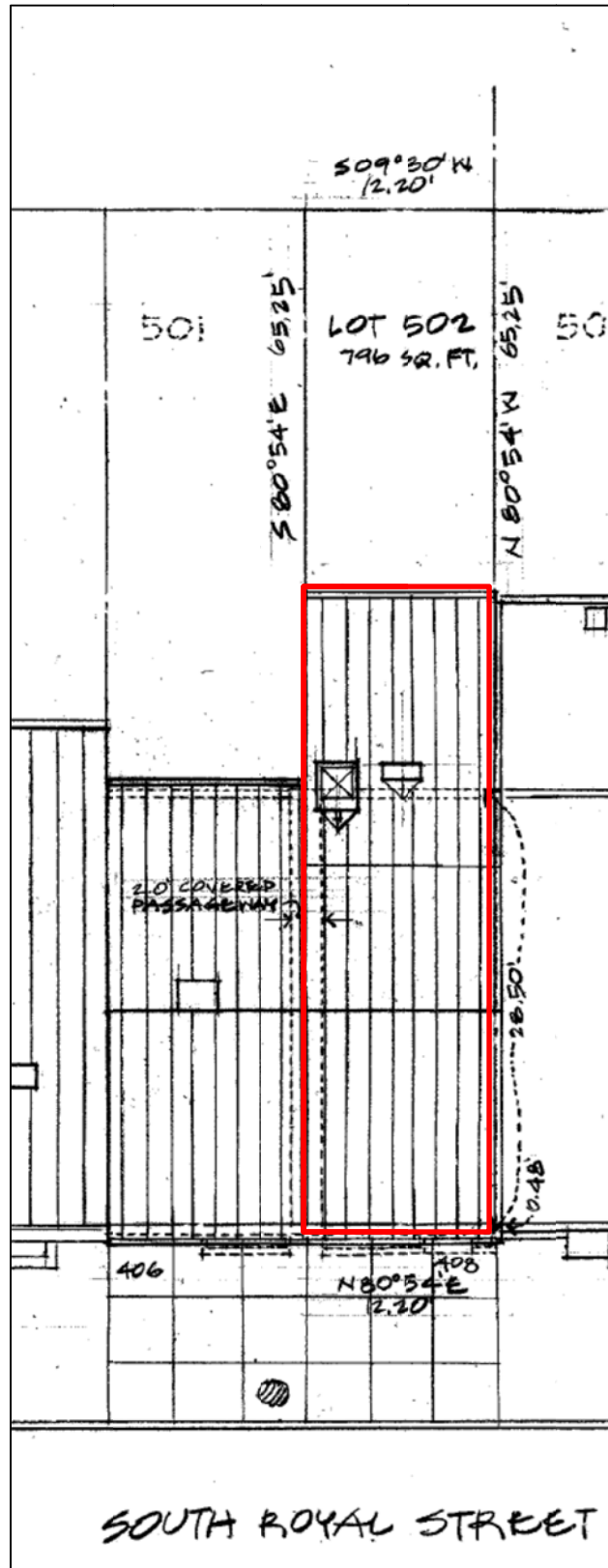


Figure 10: Proposed Plat