

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE # 2009-0010

BAR Meeting
February 25, 2009

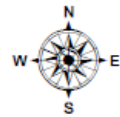
ISSUE: New residential townhouse
APPLICANT: James A. Merklinger
LOCATION: 630 North Columbus Street
ZONE: RB/residential

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

1. That the aluminum shed in the rear yard be demolished; and,
2. That the following statements shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Demolition, Basement/Foundation Plans, Landscaping, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, 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 call Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection/monitoring schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - c. 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 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.



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting reapproval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new residential townhouse constructed at the south end of the existing row of three, two story brick townhouses at 632-636 North Columbus Street. The applicant's original BAR approval expired in October 2007. In addition to the proposed new construction, the existing mid-to-late 20th century aluminum shed at the rear of the property will be demolished. The exterior appearance of the new townhouse will be similar to the three townhouses to the north in its siting, massing, size, height, roof type, materials and architectural character.

Siting and Materials

The new house at 630 North Columbus Street will share a party wall with 632 North Columbus Street, and like the adjacent townhouses will be setback 8' from the front property line and approximately 34' from the rear property line. The end unit townhouse will encompass the full width of the 17' wide lot, and will be located roughly 5'9" from the side porch of the house at 628 North Columbus Street. The rear yard will include a single compact parking space measuring 8' by 16'. The gravel parking space will be accessed from the public alley behind the house. The two story house will measure 38'7" long, 17' wide, and 24'8 1/2" high from grade to the top of the roof at the front.

The windows installed throughout the house will be Pella Architect Series double insulated wood windows; the front windows will be double-hung in a one-over-one pattern and the rear windows will be full light casement windows. The front and rear two panel doors will be constructed of wood and will be stained. Most exterior trim will be of Azek, a cellular PVC material that has a similar appearance to wood when painted. Other materials will be metal railings and precast sills. The windows and trim will be painted cream and the metal railings will be dark green. The applicant will have samples of the proposed Azek trim at the Board hearing.

Front (East) Elevation

The new brick clad townhouse at 630 North Columbus Street will have a front porch like that of the neighboring houses. The one story flat roofed porch will be the same height as the neighboring porch, inset from the edge of the front of the house by 8" on each side, for a total width of 16'8". The 6'5" deep porch will rest on brick piers and will have three 8" by 8" square columns across the front. The columns will be trimmed in Azek synthetic trim boards and will have a somewhat Craftsman style appearance. The simple cornice will match that of the neighboring porch and will also be trimmed in Azek. Like the rest of the house, the steps will be clad in brick to match the adjacent townhouses. The porch railing and handrails on the steps will be steel railings with straight pickets and a single cross member near the top rail. There will be painted lattice board between the brick piers at the base of the porch. The door will be a two panel wood door with a natural finish. There will be a transom above the door and a Craftsman style lamp beside the door. On the right side of the elevation, there will be a pair of ganged one-over-one windows. The second story will have three one-over-one wood windows – a single window above the door and a pair of windows to the north above the paired windows on the first story. The window openings will have a soldier course above and stone/precast sills. There will be a panel of basket weave patterned brickwork above the second story and a metal cap at the top of the brick clad masonry wall at the front.

Side (South) Elevation

This wall will be on the property line and will have no penetrations. The coping on the south side will step down slightly, approximately half-way toward the rear of the house.

Rear (West) Elevation

The rear elevation will have an areaway with the same railings as the front porch leading to the below grade basement entrance. The rear door will be the same two panel wood door as at the front and will be located on the right side of the rear elevation. It will be accessed by wide wooden steps with metal railings. Two HVAC condenser units will be located adjacent to the areaway railing in a niche created by the steps leading to the basement and to the rear door. There will be a gable roofed, standing seam metal clad hood supported on curved wood brackets above the rear door, which will have Azek board and trim on the exterior. A Craftsman style light fixture will be located on the underside of the hood. There will be a pair of full-light casement windows on the first story and a group of three casements on the second story. As on the front, the window openings will have a soldier course above and stone/precast sills. A gutter will run across the rear roof edge and a gutter will be located at the left side corner.

The east and south elevation of the new house will be visible from North Columbus Street, and the rear and a portion of the south side of the house will be visible from the public alley at the back. The existing chain link fence at the front and south side of the property, where the building wall will be, are to be removed. The applicant does not currently plan to install any replacement fencing. The applicant will also demolish the aluminum shed at the rear of the property.

II. HISTORY:

As noted, the subject property has been vacant for a number of years and Staff could not find evidence that there was ever a structure on this property. The row of three townhouses at 632-636 North Columbus Street was constructed between 1921 and 1941, based on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. Staff believes that the City's real estate records incorrectly date the townhouses to 1918.

Although the doors, porch railings and windows have been changed on the existing row of three townhouses, there has been relatively little alteration of the adjacent properties over the years. In recent years, the Board approved a front fence at 636 North Columbus Street in 2004 (BAR Case #2004-0081, 5/26/2004) and alterations to the existing enclosed rear two story porch at 634 North Columbus Street (BAR Case #2006-0264, 12/20/2006). In 1992, the Board approved a new enclosed side porch at 628 North Columbus Street, the townhouse to the south (BAR Case #1992-0013, 5/27/1992 and #1992-0023, 8/26/1992).

Because the proposed townhouse will be constructed on a substandard lot, the applicant has had to obtain a number of other approvals from the City prior to submitting for BAR approval. The original approvals for a variance and an open space reduction (BZA Case #2006-0042), and a parking reduction (SUP #2006-0063) granted in fall 2006 have expired. The BAR approval for the townhouse has also expired (BAR Case #2006-0209, 10/25/2006).

III. ANALYSIS:

On September 4, 2008, the Planning Commission granted an extension of a Special Use Permit (SUP Case #2006-0063) to allow for a new house with a reduction of the required parking from two spaces to one compact space. On December 11, 2008, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a variance to allow for the construction of the new single family dwelling with a reduction in the required open space from 800 square feet to 404 square feet (BZA Case #2008-0032).

The design of the proposed new townhouse has not changed since the Board first approved the project in October 2006. Staff believes that the proposed new townhouse complies with the *Design Guidelines* for new residential construction and is appropriate in terms of size, massing, materials and architectural character. It is respectful of the early twentieth century porch front houses that compose the blockface yet has a number of features which help distinguish the new house from the adjacent historic townhouse, such as the different but related window patterns, the Craftsman-like posts and metal porch railings, and the basket weave panel above the second story.

While the *Design Guidelines* specifically discourage the use of new materials on historic properties, the Boards have been more open to using newer materials on new construction. As a result, Staff does not object to the use of Azek trim in this case.

Shed

According to the *Design Guidelines*, "Structures which are non-historic and not compatible with the historic and architectural character of the historic districts do not require a separate application for a Permit to Demolish. Structures falling within this category include inappropriate accessory buildings such as **metal storage sheds** and site improvement such as stockade and chain link fencing and planters." The metal storage shed at 630 North Columbus Street clearly meets this guideline and Staff recommends approval of its demolition.

To conclude, Staff recommends approval of the new townhouse as submitted, including the demolition of the shed, but does note the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they be included as a condition of the approval.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the application with the following conditions:

1. That the aluminum shed in the rear yard be demolished; and,
2. That the following statements shall appear in the General Notes of all site plans and on all site plan sheets that involve demolition or ground disturbance (including Demolition, Basement/Foundation Plans, Landscaping, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, 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 call Alexandria Archaeology (703-838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection/monitoring schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
- c. 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:

- 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 New construction must comply with the 2006 edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 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-7 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-8 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:

- R-1 An approved Grading Plan must be attached to the building permit application. The Grading Plan is required because the submitted documentation indicates the construction of a new home.

In summary, 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) 838-4318. 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 The building permit plans shall comply with requirements of City Code Section 8-1-22 regarding the location of downspouts, foundation drains and sump pumps. Refer to Memorandum to Industry dated June 18, 2004. [Memorandum is available online at the City web site under Transportation\Engineering and Design\Memos to Industry.]. (T&ES)
- R-3 Applicant shall be responsible for repairs to the adjacent city right-of-way if damaged during construction activity. (T&ES)
- R-4 All improvements to the city right-of-way such as curbing, sidewalk, driveway aprons, etc. must be city standard design. (T&ES)
- R-5 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 plan. (T&ES)
- R-6 An erosion and sediment control plan must be approved by T&ES prior to any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)
- R-7 Compliance with the provisions of Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance for stormwater quality control is required for any land disturbing activity greater than 2,500 square feet. (T&ES)

Historic Alexandria:

No comments received. However, in 2006 the Office of Historic Alexandria provided the following comments: "The proposal seems appropriate. The design is compatible with the adjacent residences."

Alexandria Archaeology:

- F-1 Tax records indicate that a house may have been present in 1810 on the block bounded by Columbus, Pendleton, Alfred, and Wythe Streets, but the exact location is not known. However, the tax records from 1830 and 1850 do not show a structure on the square. During the Civil War, the property was the site of a large, two-story structure containing mess rooms, kitchens, and bunk rooms utilized by the Union Army as part of the

Washington Street Corral. After the war, the block was sub-divided, and houses were constructed along Columbus Street during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but it does not appear that a structure was built on this property. The lot therefore has the potential to yield archaeological resources that could provide insight into residential life in 19th-century Alexandria and into military activities during the Civil War.

- R-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 Demolition, Basement/Foundation Plans, Landscaping, Erosion and Sediment Control, Grading, 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 call Alexandria Archaeology (703/838-4399) two weeks before the starting date of any ground disturbance so that an inspection/monitoring schedule for city archaeologists can be arranged.
 - c. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology.

VI. IMAGES

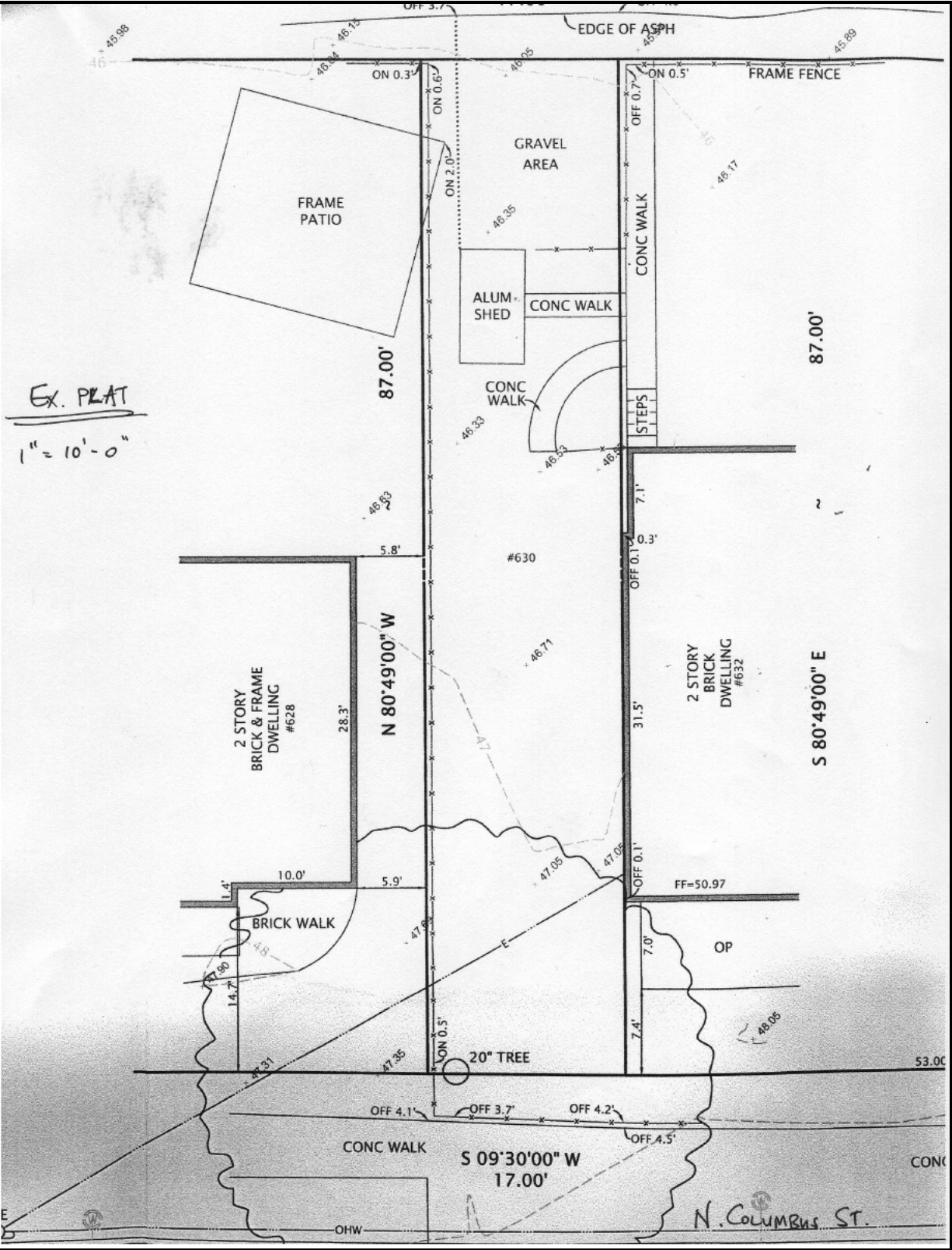


Figure 1: Plat

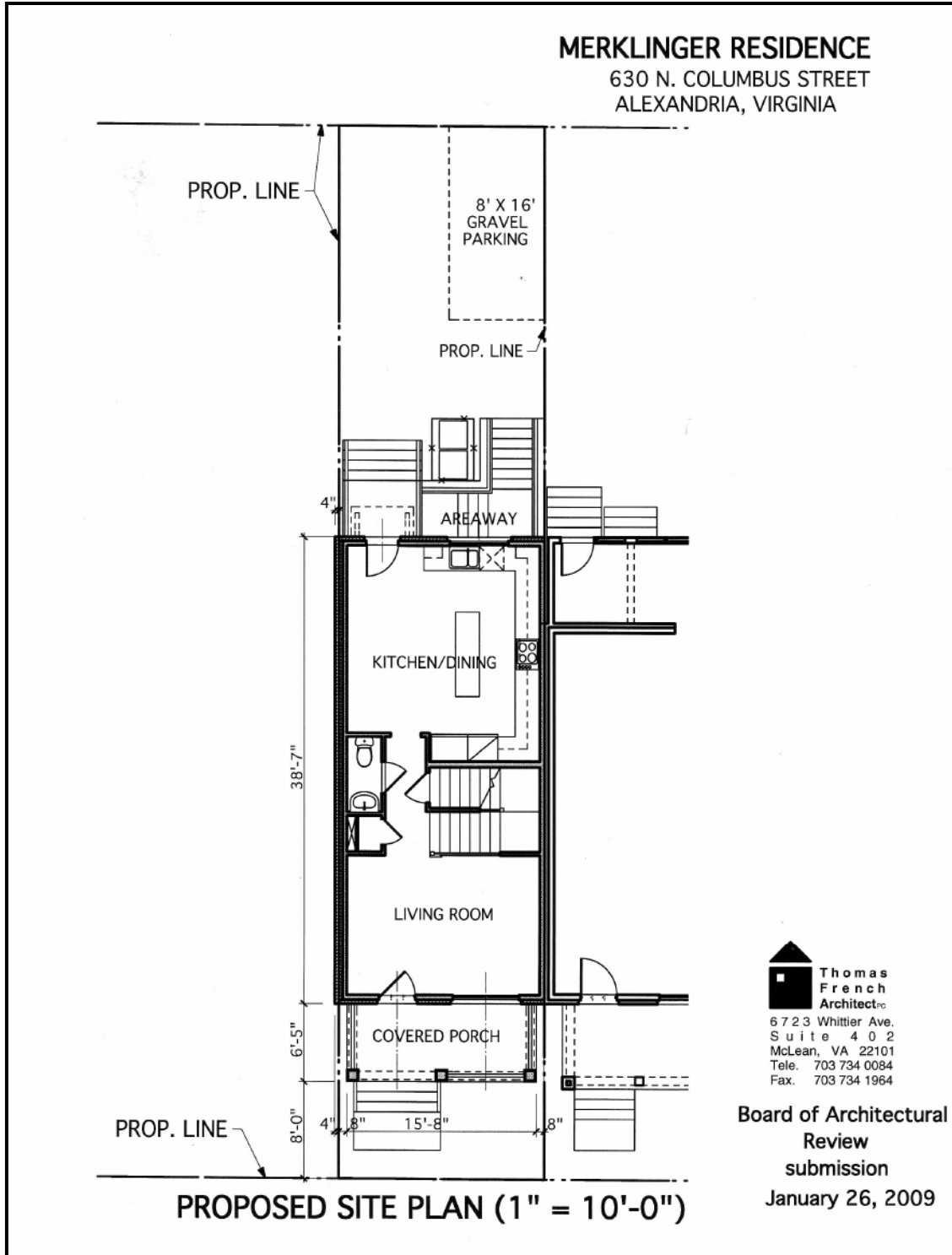


Figure 2: Proposed site



ADJACENT PROPERTY

Figure 3: Existing photos



EXISTING SHED

Figure 4: Shed photos



Figure 5: Proposed front elevation of 630 North Columbus Street with adjacent townhouses

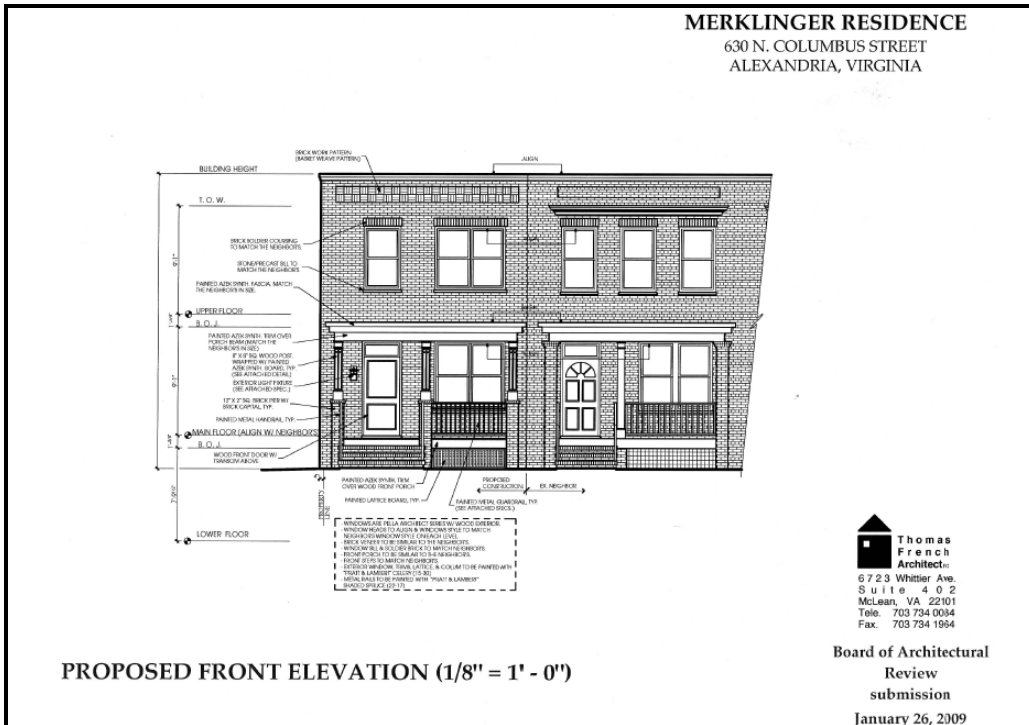


Figure 6: Proposed front (east) elevation

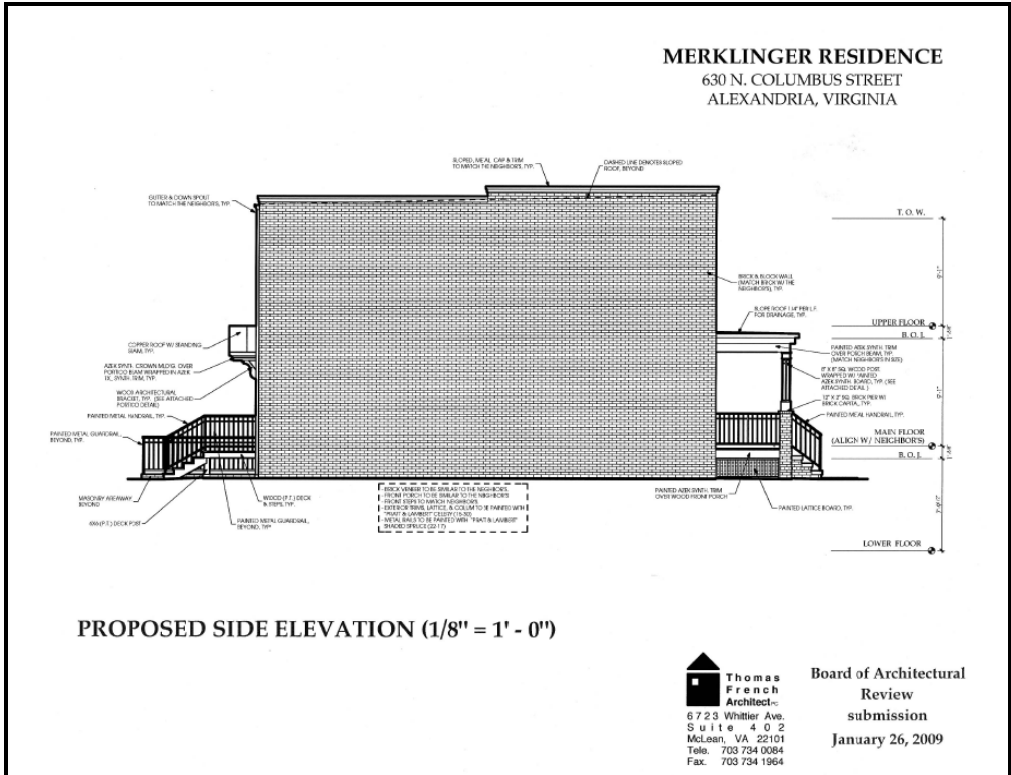


Figure 7: Proposed side (south) elevation

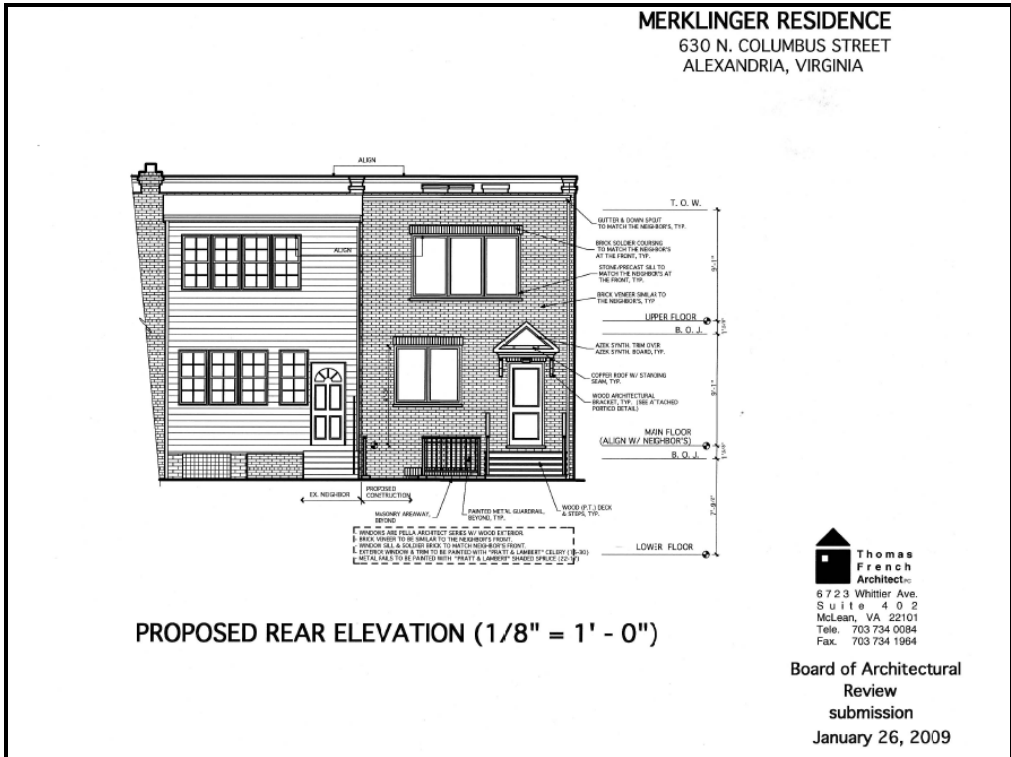


Figure 8: Proposed rear (west) elevation

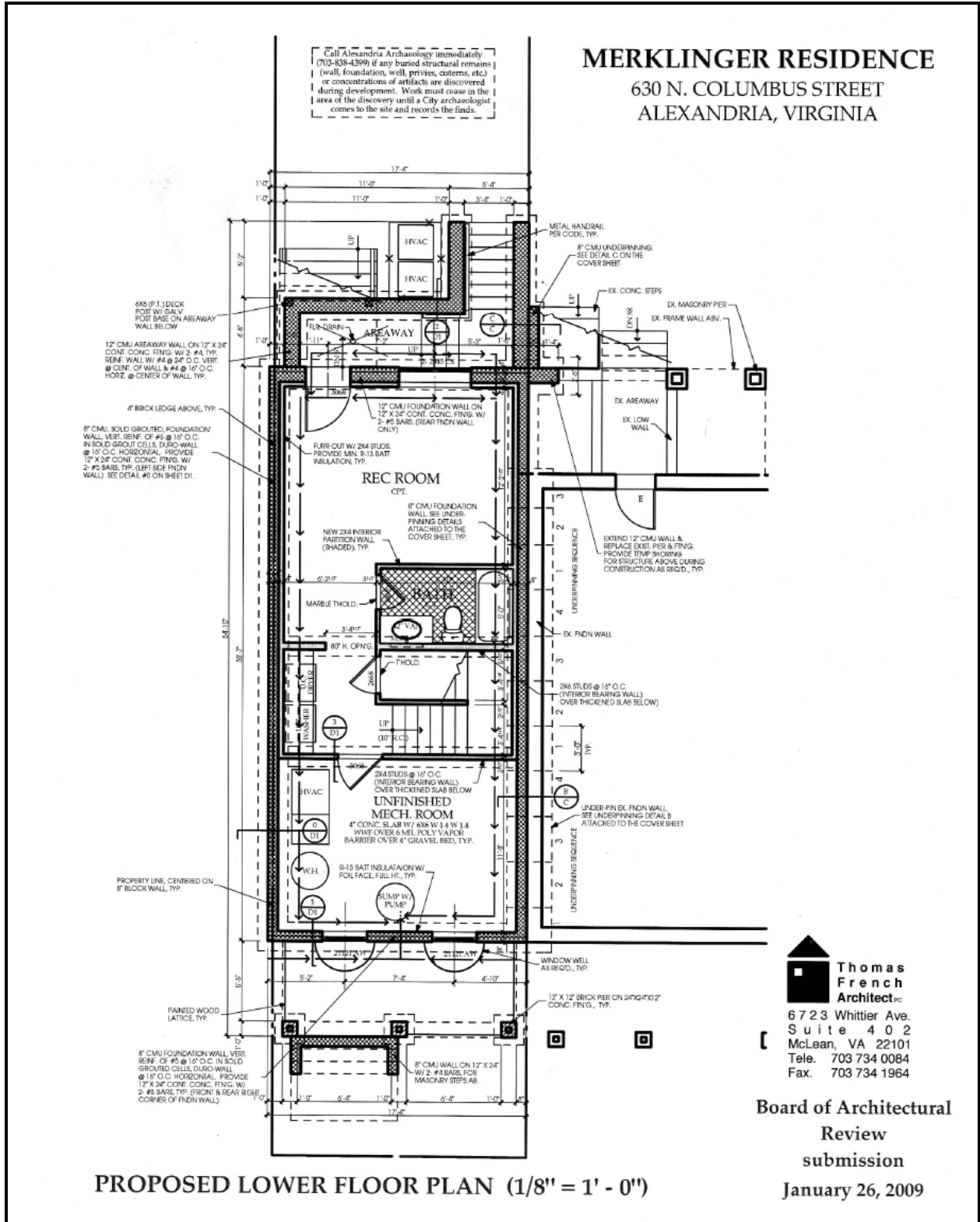
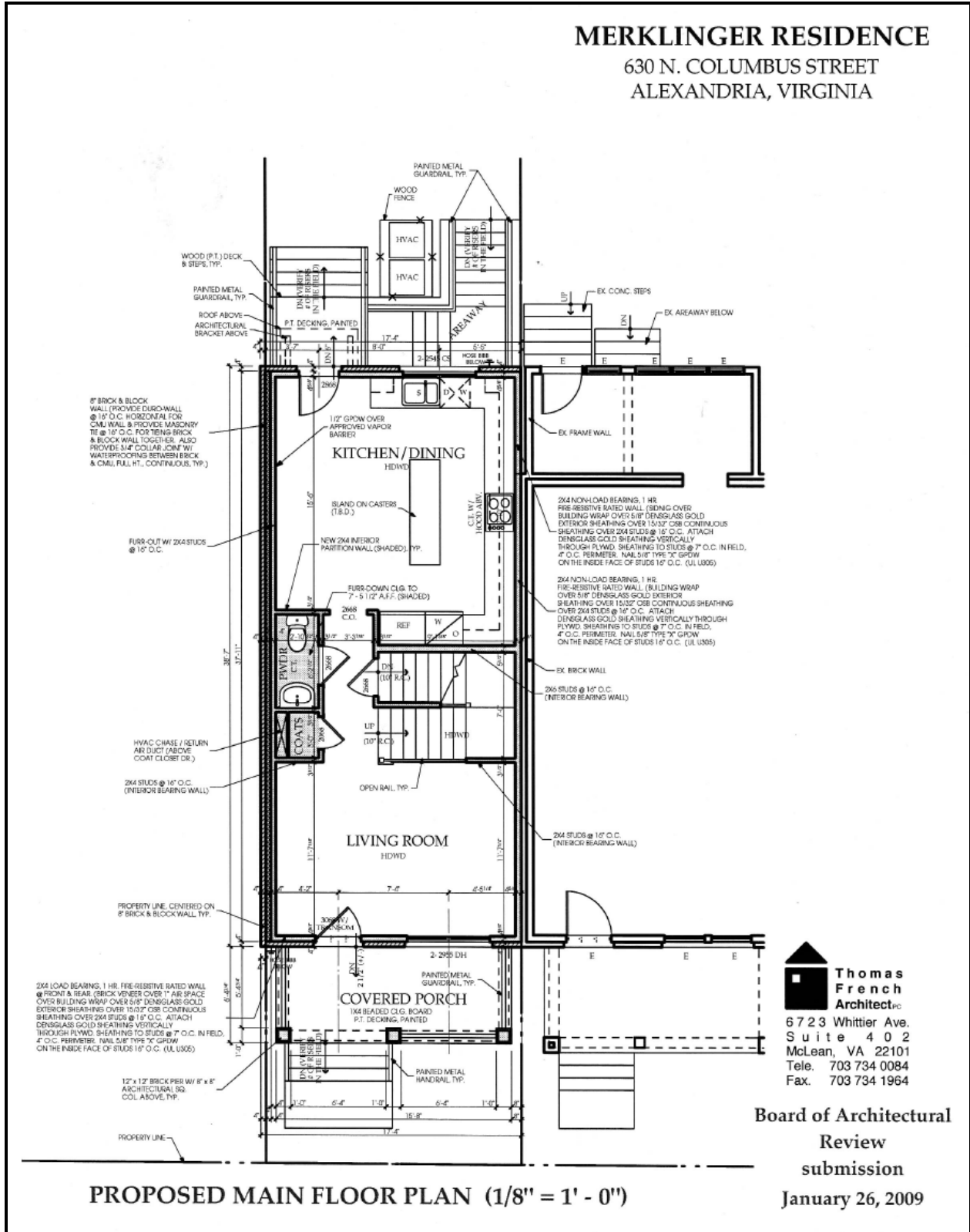
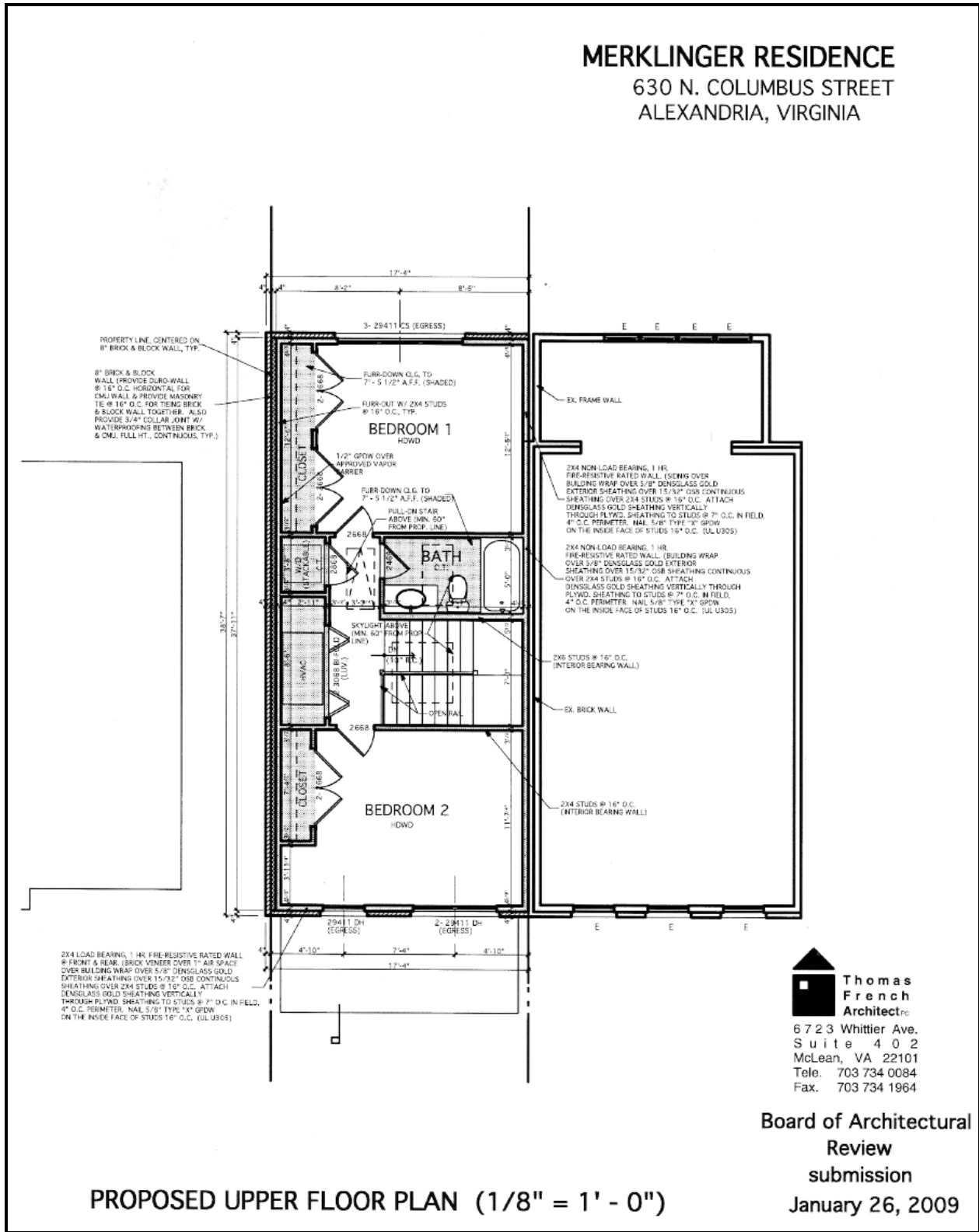


Figure 9: Proposed basement floorplan

MERKLINGER RESIDENCE
630 N. COLUMBUS STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA





Thomas French Architect^{PC}
6723 Whittier Ave.
Suite 402
McLean, VA 22101
Tele. 703 734 0084
Fax. 703 734 1964

Board of Architectural
Review
submission
January 26, 2009

Figure 11: Proposed second floor floorplan

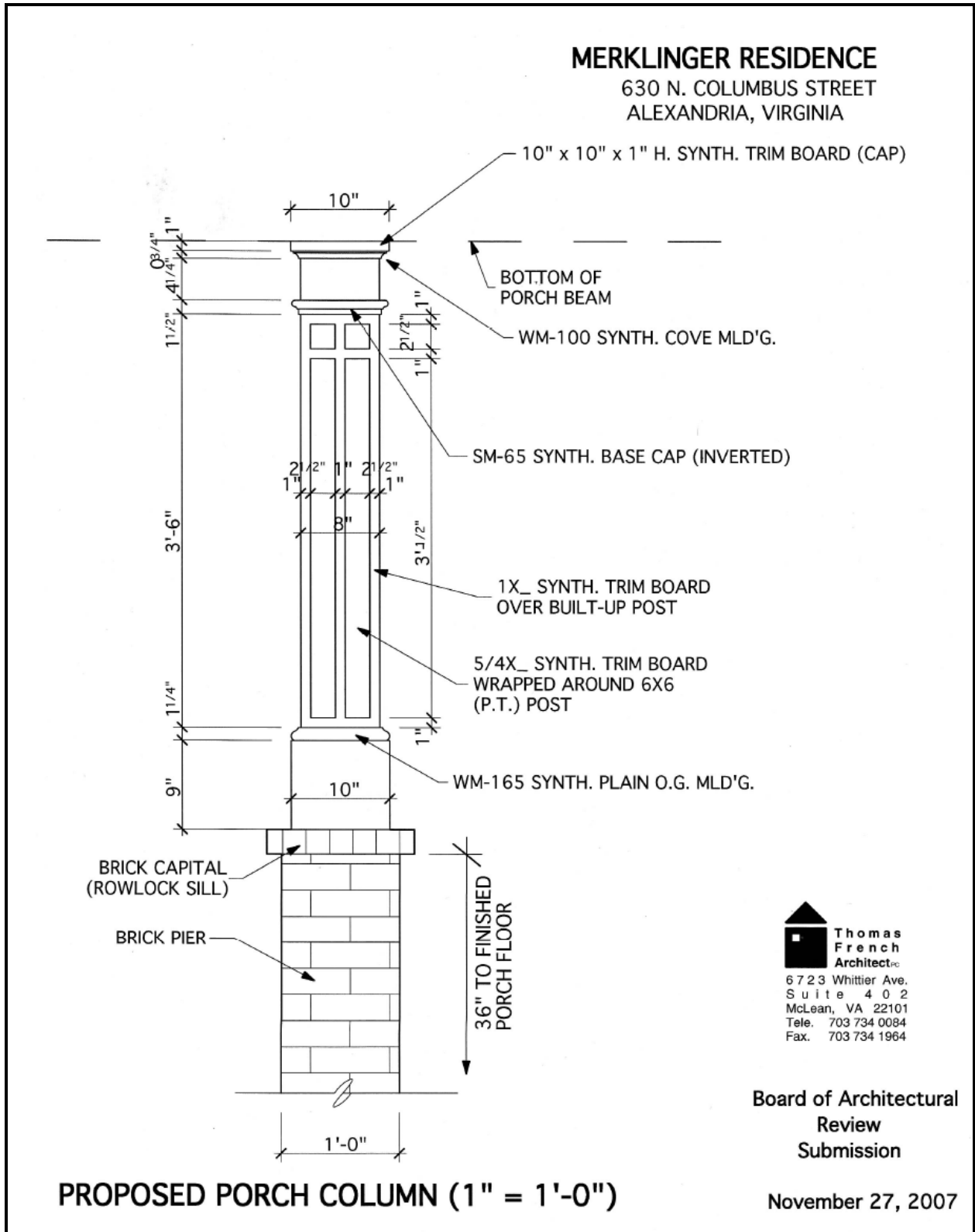


Figure 12: Proposed porch column detail

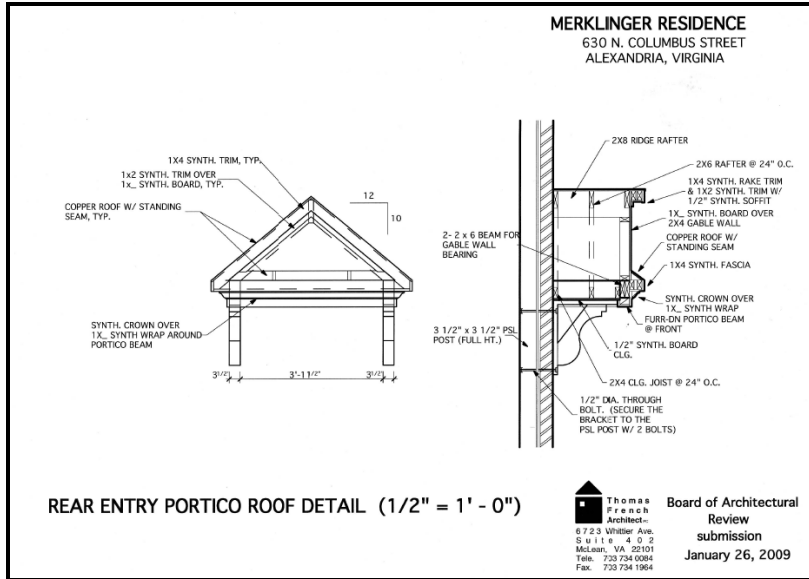


Figure 13: Proposed rear door hood detail

Catalog - find your Simpson Door 09/05/2006 12:45 P

Simpson Home Catalog Products Support Customer Tools About Us

Your Door Specifications

Previous Door

Door Options

Matching Sidelights:

[8851 \(8851\)](#)

[8852 \(8852\)](#)

[8853 \(8853\)](#)

View Other Heights:

[8802 \(8'0"\) \(8802\)](#)

General Information

Door Name: 8802

Door Number: 8802

Door Series: Mahogany

Door Type: Exterior Traditional

Door Species: Mahogany

Standard Features

Panels: 1-5/16" Solid Raised

Moulding: Raised on One Side

Glass: na

Caming: na

Standard Sizes*

Door Widths: 3'0"

Door Heights: **6'8"** 8'0"

*Additional sizes are available. See your Simpson Authorized Dealer for final availability and pricing.

Figure 14: Proposed door

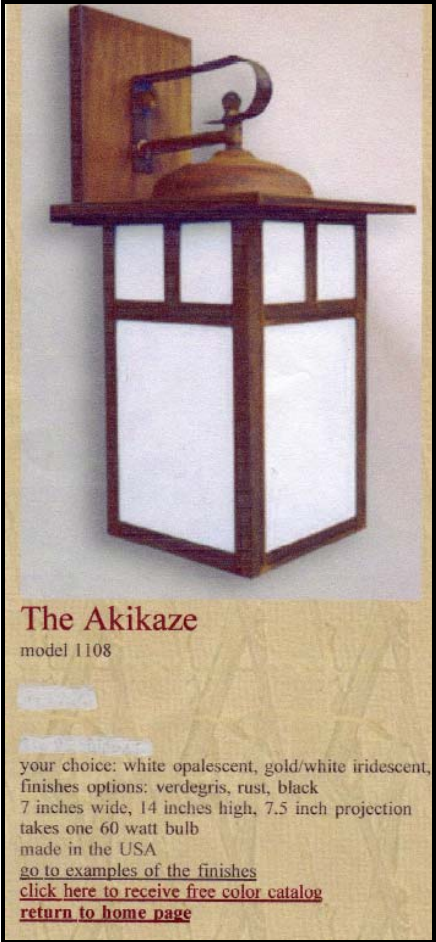


Figure 15: Proposed light fixture

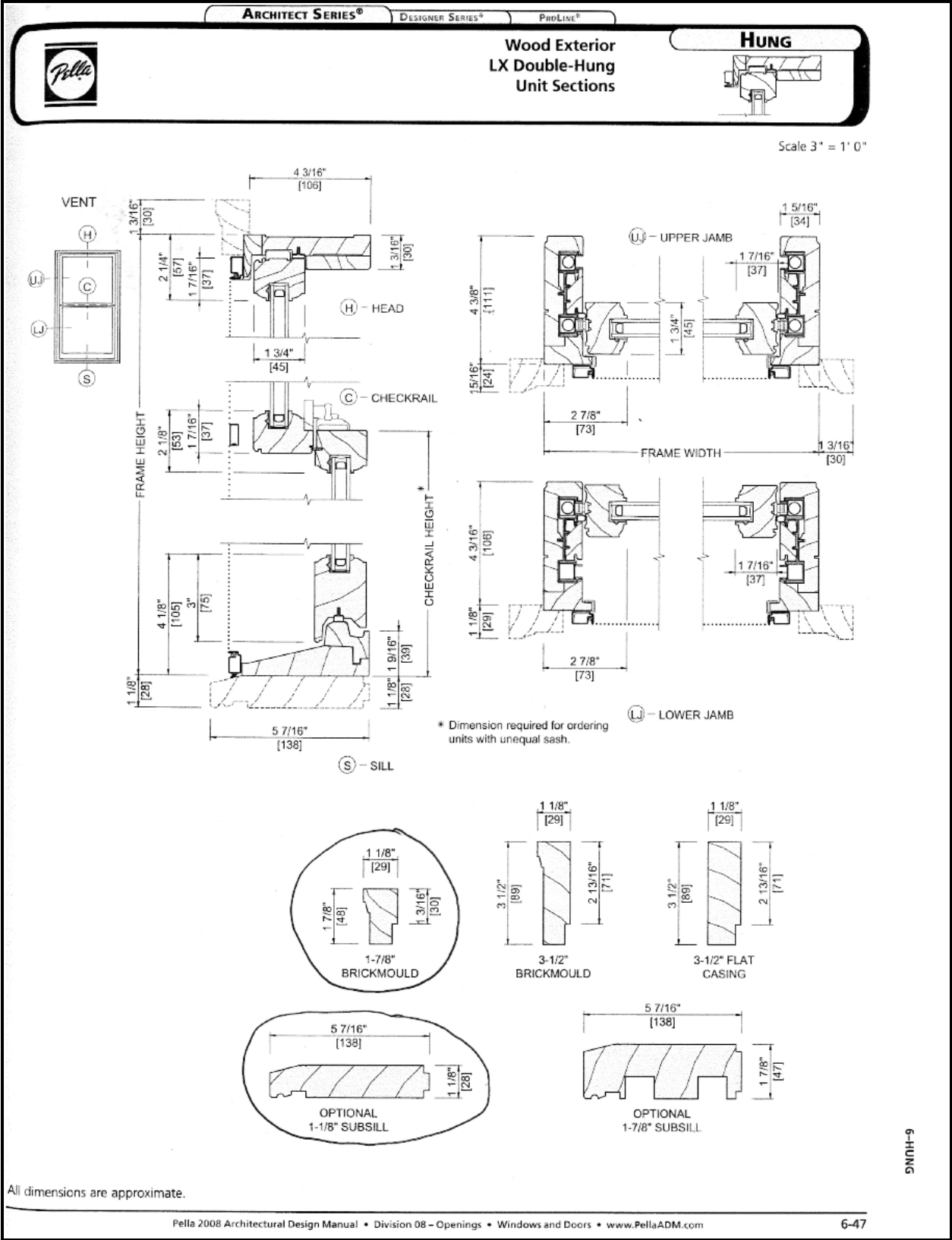


Figure 16: Proposed double-hung window

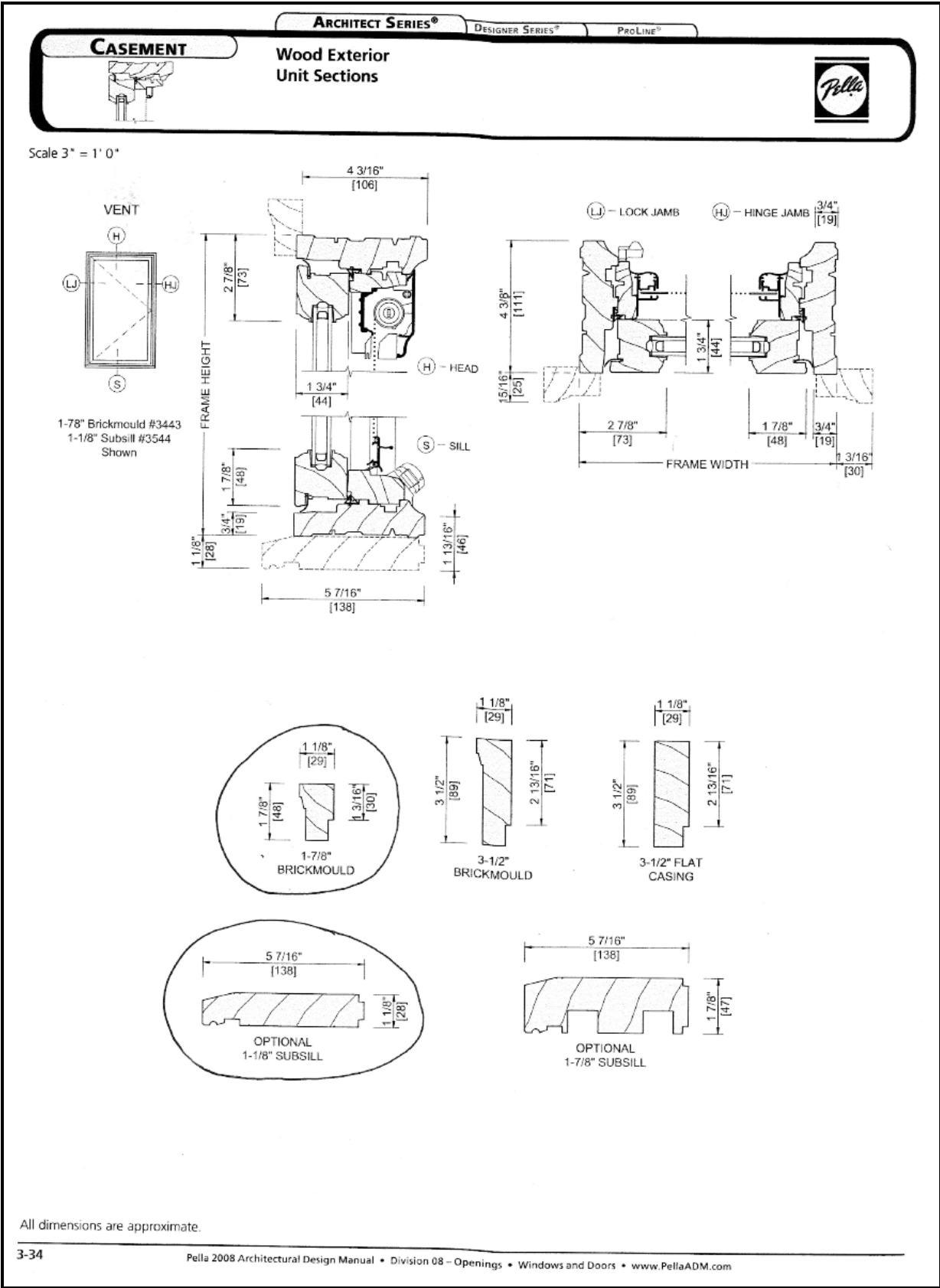


Figure 17: Proposed casement window

