

Docket Item # 2
BAR CASE # 2010-00012

BAR Meeting
February 24, 2010

ISSUE: New Construction
APPLICANT: Alabama Avenue LC (Stephen Kulinski AIA, Agent)
LOCATION: 423 North West Street
ZONE: RB/Townhouse Zone

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

1. That the Board finds a curb cut is inappropriate and infeasible for this lot and recommends that the Planning Director waive the subject lot's parking requirement.
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.

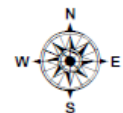
****EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B) and 10-206(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any official Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 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 the Code Enforcement Bureau (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Enforcement, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-838-4360 for further information.



BAR CASE #2010-0012

2/24/2010



I. ISSUE:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new, two-story, detached row house with crawlspace on a vacant lot at 423 North West Street.

The new building will be set back approximately seven feet (7') from the front property line, aligning with the adjacent houses to the north and south at 427 and 419 North West Street. The side yard setbacks will be one foot (1'). The rear of the house will be set back approximately fifty-six (56') from the rear (east) property line. The lot itself has street frontage only on West Street; it is not served by an alley or court and will not have on-site parking. The house will measure fourteen-feet (14') wide by sixty-feet (60'3") deep, and approximately 25'6" high as measured to the peak of the front roof slope.

Front (west) Elevation – The front elevation of the building will be two bays wide with a front standing-seam metal mansard roof and a sloping EPDM membrane roof behind detailed with four flat skylights. The first floor of the front elevation will have a four-panel wood door with a single-light transom and a 2/2 simulated divided light wood window flanked with operable, two-paneled wood shutters. The two, wood windows on the second floor will also have a 2/2 light pattern. The building cornice will be detailed with a decorative wood crown, a 12" wide frieze board and brackets. The front elevation of the house will be clad with 2.5" exposure Hardi-plank lap siding. The mansard roof will be sheathed with standing seam metal and the trim throughout will be paintable, wood composite. The house will sit on a parged concrete foundation detailed with a 1' high projected sill. The front yard is landscaped with grass bisected with a concrete walk leading to the home's entrance which is adorned with a precast concrete step.

Side (south) Elevation – The south elevation will not have any fenestration. This elevation will be minimally visible, as there is about a three foot (3') gap separating the subject property from the adjacent building. This elevation will be clad in 5" Hardiplank lap siding and detailed with a ten inch fascia board.

Rear (north) Elevation – The rear elevation will have single-light wood doors centered on the first floor with a full-width, single light-transom, while the second story will be detailed with a set of two-over-two coupled windows. The first floor step will be constructed of wood.

The applicant proposes to install a six foot high, stained wood, solid board fence in the rear yard. The fence will utilize the rear elevation as its western boundary and follow the rear property lines completely enclose the entire backyard.

Materials

Windows/Doors:

Windows: Double insulated, 2/2 simulated divided light with 7/8" muntin bars.

Skylights to be installed on the EPDM roof: Vinyl, fixed curb mounted

Front Door: Four panel, wood door

Rear Door: Single light, wood door

Cladding and Trim:

Cladding: 2.5” reveal Hardiplank Lap siding on Front Elevation, 5” reveal Hardiplank Lap Siding on remaining elevations
Trim: Hardi Trim on all elevations

Roof Sheathing:

Front Elevation: Pre-finished, standing seam metal
Rear Elevations: EPDM roofing membrane

II. HISTORY:

According to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the subject lot was formally established between 1921 and 1941. Prior to 1921, it was associated with a larger tract of land to the south. There has never been a dwelling unit built on the subject property to date. The lot currently contains a dilapidated shed, which received a demolition permit by the BAR in conjunction with their approval for the certificate of appropriateness granted for alterations and an addition for 427 North West Street, the adjacent dwelling to the north (BAR Case #2009-0141/142.)

III. ANALYSIS:

The subject RB/Townhouse zone property is the result of a recent subdivision approved by the Planning Commission on January 5, 2010. The subject property was historically recorded as one lot and associated with the existing two-story dwelling at 427 North West Street. The current proposal to construct a new, single-family detached dwelling on the new lot complies with the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff has been providing feedback on the proposed infill design for several months and would like to thank the architect for his willingness to consider changes which, in staff’s mind, will make this new addition to the neighborhood compatible with its surrounding streetscape. Although it was the architect’s design intent for this new construction to be replicative of an existing architectural style, Staff wanted to ensure that the proposed construction maintain current development patterns as well as achieve historically appropriate scale, massing, and proportions for the style it was replicating, while not becoming a focal point on the street.

The current submittal for this new infill construction has been revised, addressing many of Staff’s comments. These design changes have included: lowering the overall height of the building, revising architectural detailing to be consistent with a historic vocabulary, and addressing the lack of detail along the foundation.



8/21/2009 Submission



Current Submission

Staff supports the design as submitted with a recommendation regarding the standing seam metal roof material specification. A survey of Italianate houses with the mansard roof form in Alexandria indicates that the original roof material would most commonly have been slate or metal shingle. Standing seam metal roofs were a more typical treatment on hipped or gable roof forms. Staff understands that this project is new construction; however, since it is the goal of the applicant to utilize the replicative medium, Staff would encourage the applicant to consider metal shingle or slate for this small roof area as an alternative to the specified standing seam metal.

Staff believes the proposed new dwelling complies with the *Design Guidelines* for new construction and is appropriate in terms of size, massing, materials and architectural character. The *Guidelines* specifically state that "...the Boards seek to promote compatible development that is, at once, both responsive to the needs and tastes of the late 20th century while still being compatible with the historic character of the districts." In the opinion of Staff, the exterior appearance of the proposed building takes its architectural clues from the adjacent buildings on the block and the surrounding Parker-Gray neighborhood. It has Italianate style detailing such as two-over-two windows with wide muntins and a heavy denticulated and bracketed cornice relating to the high style residential houses found in the neighborhood.

While the *Design Guidelines* specifically discourage the use of new materials on historic properties, the Boards have traditionally been more open to using newer materials on additions and new construction. In particular, with respect to fiber cement siding, the Board has adopted the following policy:

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 siding be installed.
6. That BAR Staff may administratively approve the installation of fiber cement siding on *non-historic* buildings (those constructed in 1975 or later).

Thus, the use of fiber cement on this new building is in conformance with the Board's policy, provided that the smooth fiber cement siding be installed so that the nails do not show. Staff also has no objection to the use of wood composite trim because it is painted, cut and comes in traditional wood trim dimensions.

To comply with the *Guidelines* as they relate to skylights, Staff applauds that applicant's specification of a low or flat profile glass skylights which should not be visible to the public.

Finally, Staff notes the comments of Alexandria Archaeology and recommends that they also be included as a condition of the approval.

Parking

This parcel does not have access to an alley or interior court to meet its off street parking requirement from the rear but does have an existing curb cut from North West Street. However, the historic development pattern of this block consists of townhouses sited close to the front lot

line, with no on site parking. Where added, curb cuts are a typically modern mid 20th century additions and not consistent with the District's late 19th- early 20th century period of significance. The Design Guidelines chapter on Parking notes that "...individual driveways in the front of residential properties are not desirable because the automobiles parked in the front yards create a visual intrusion and disrupt the scale, rhythm and unity of the architecture." In order to insure compatibility with the adjacent historic resources and retain the traditional urban character of the existing streetscape, Staff has recommended that the site placement, massing, height and scale of the proposed dwelling be sympathetic with this historic development pattern and that driveways and garage doors not be constructed on this narrow lot. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Board apply Section 8-200(C)(5)(b) of the zoning ordinance to the application, as submitted without parking, thus finding that a curb cut is inappropriate and infeasible for this lot and recommend that the Planning Director waive the subject lot's parking requirement. Staff also recommends that the applicant remove the existing curb cut and restore the sidewalk to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the following conditions:

1. That the Board finds that a curb cut is inappropriate and infeasible for this lot and recommends that the Planning Director waive the subject lot's parking requirement and that the applicant remove the existing curb cut and restore the sidewalk to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES.
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.

STAFF:

Michele Oaks, Urban Planner, Historic Preservation Section
Al Cox, City Architect, Historic Preservation Section

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.

TRANSPORATION 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
- 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)

T&ES City 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)

OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA:

No comments received.

ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY:

Archaeology Finding

1. This property is located in a late 19th-century neighborhood and near a Civil War facility. There is a possibility for archaeological resources to be present that could provide insight into military and African American residential activities.

Archaeology Recommendations

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

VI. IMAGES



Figure 1: Views of Subject Lot



Figure 2: Adjacent Buildings



Figure 3: Confronting Buildings

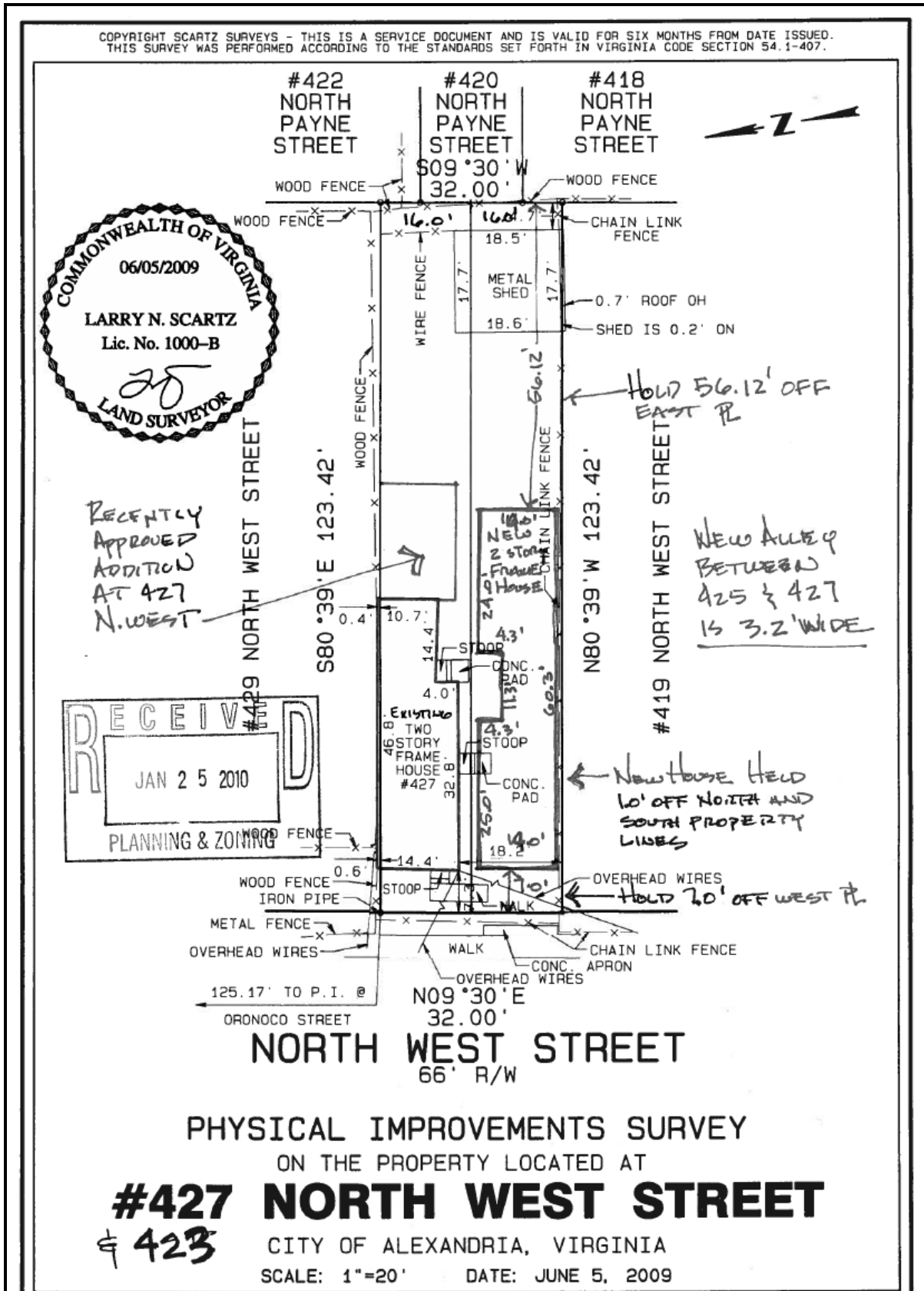


Figure 4: Plat

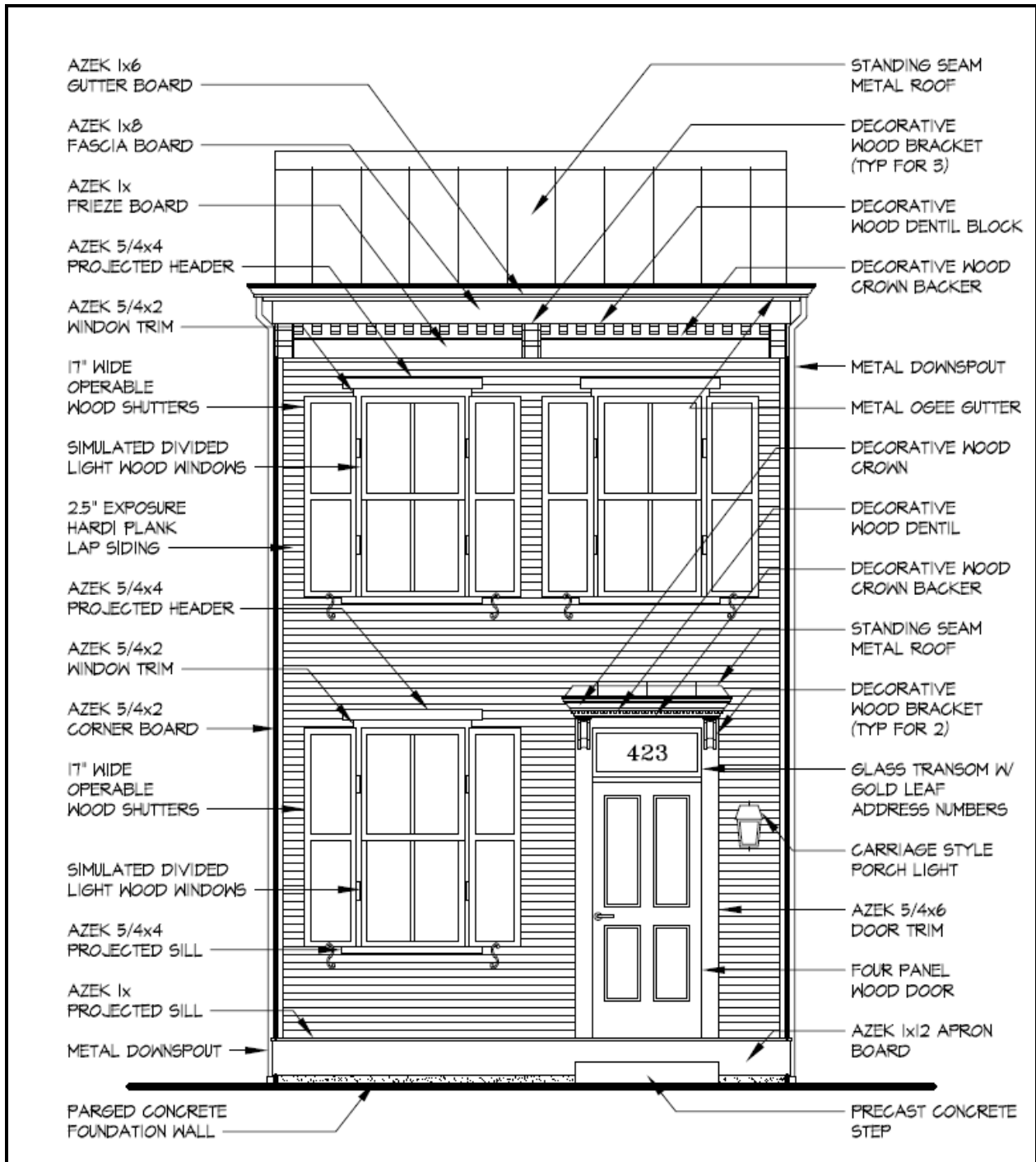


Figure 5: Front (West) Elevation

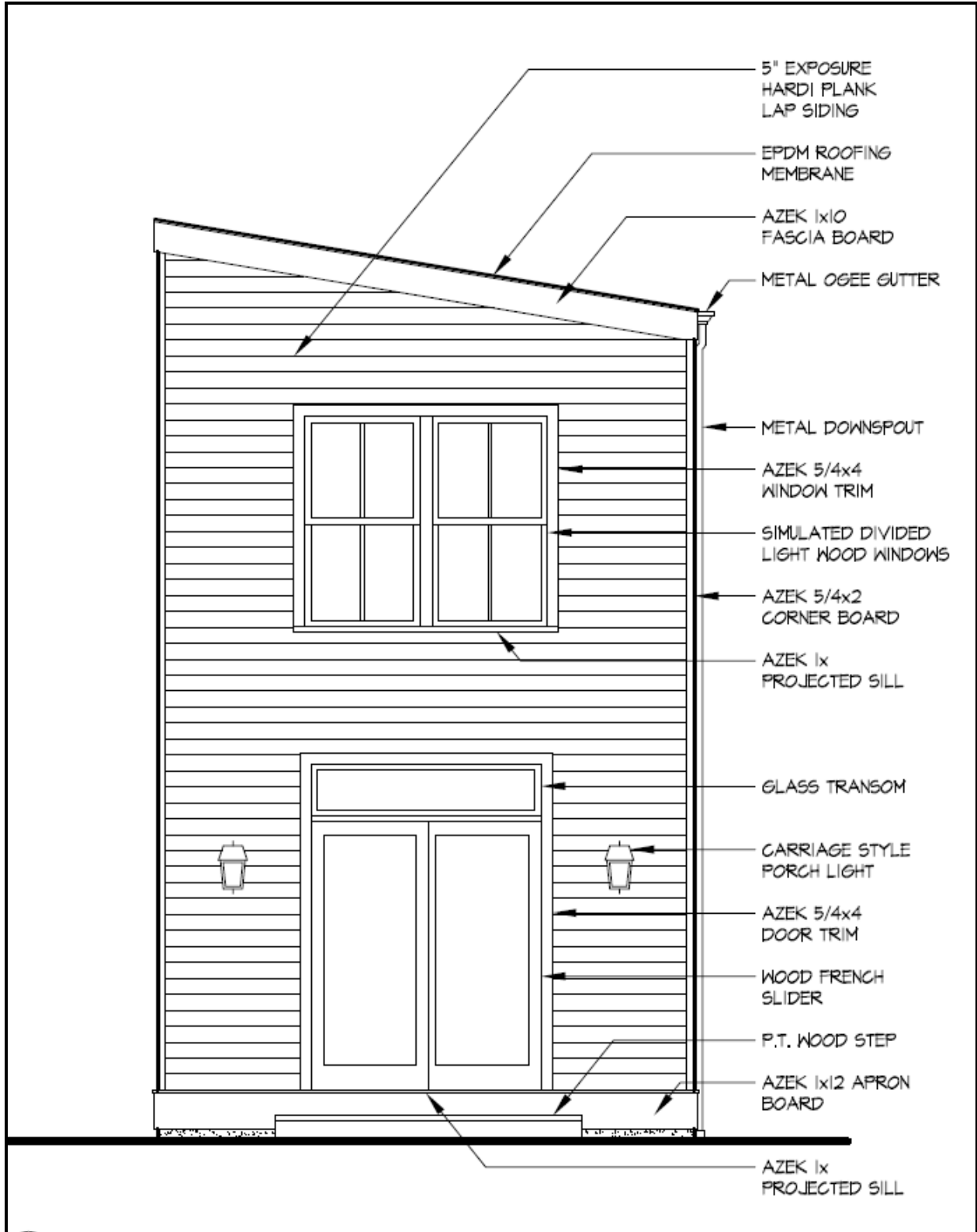


Figure 6: Rear (East) Elevation

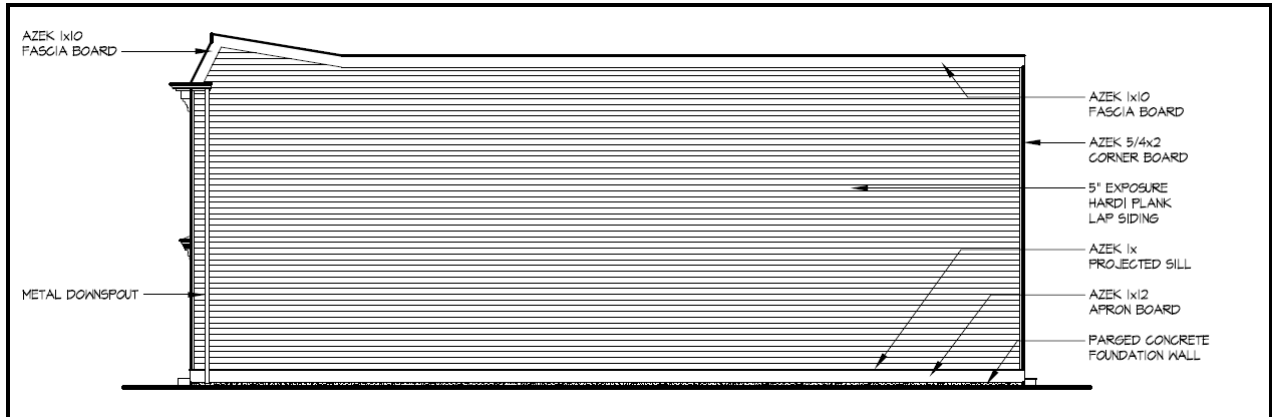


Figure 7: Side (South) Elevation

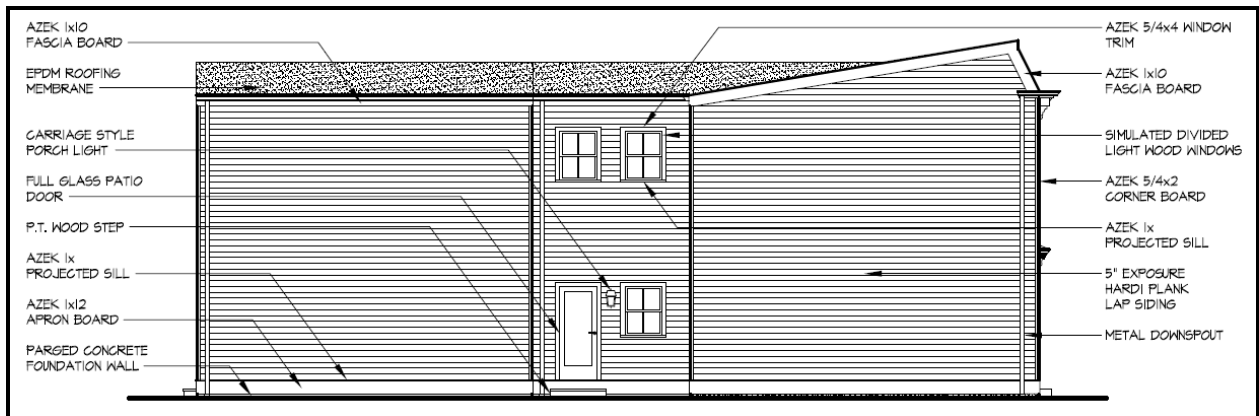


Figure 8: Side (North) Elevation

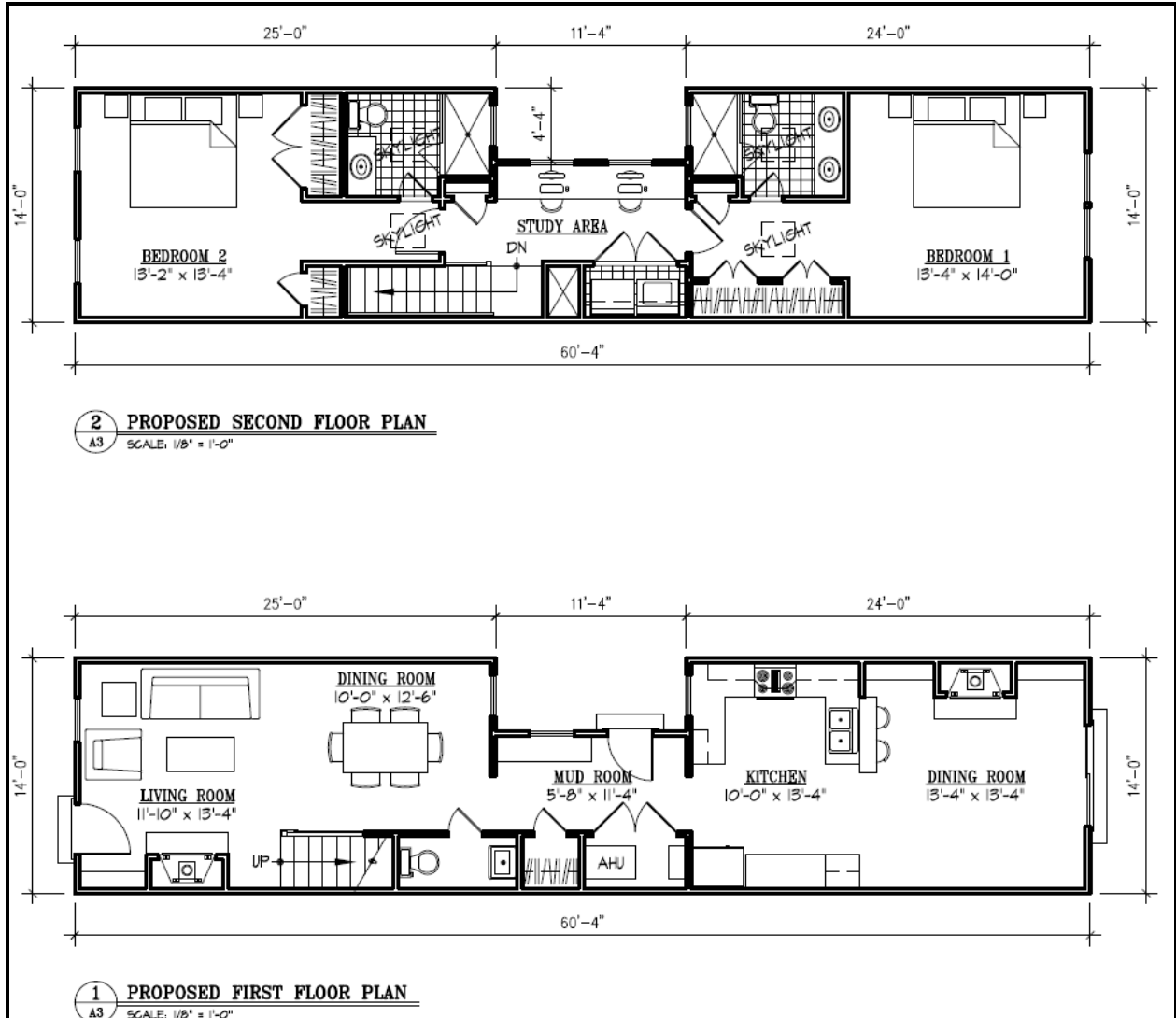


Figure 9: Floor Plans

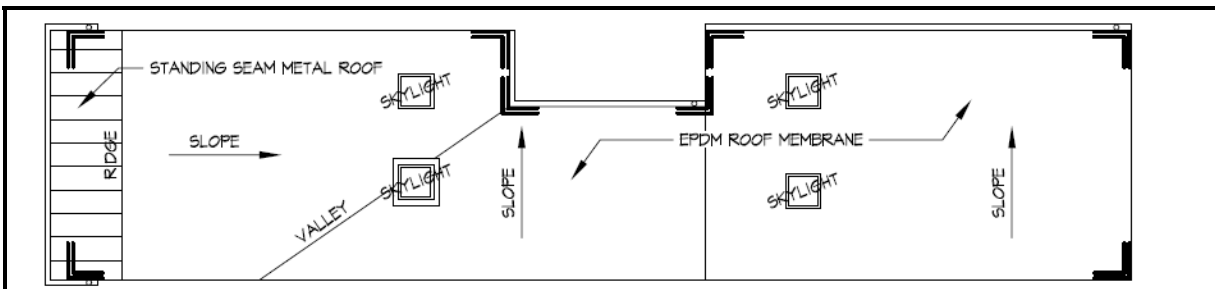


Figure 10: Roof Plan

