

Hi Ara,

We are emailing to schedule the next hearing for the 25 Hawthorne St application, following the last hearing held on June 11.

Regarding the feedback about the size and architectural design concerns, we have created several more exterior design alternatives to better fit the context. We are still trying our best to maintain the size of the original proposed plan. The attached document, "25 Hawthorne St Size Comparison" and "Abutters of 25 Hawthorne Size Comparison" shows that our proposed plan is definitely not the largest and is very similar to other homes in our neighborhood, as referenced in the attached "Comparison."

We were surprised by the objections raised at the hearing and the rejection letters received from neighbors, as we had not encountered such strong negative feedback during our direct communications with them. However, we appreciate knowing their true feedback and concerns. This provides us with the opportunity to address the issues and respond officially to all objection letters. These response letters are attached to this email.

Please also help to post/publish these letters on our application profile. Our intention is not to create further conflicts or arguments with our neighbors; rather, we aim to provide a statement to inform the neighbors and the entire community about the complete situation and the ideas behind our project application. Our main philosophy is a problem-solving approach, and we are committed to maintaining communication with neighbors who have objections to address their concerns.

Importantly, we've received two support letters about our project, which are attached to this email as well. We are actively discussing our project within the community and seeking more understanding and support. If you need the original support letters, we can drop them off at the office.

Please help confirm the schedule for the next hearing. Additionally, it would be very helpful to arrange a meeting with you to get your guidance for the next hearing. Please let us know your availability if you would like to meet with us to discuss further actions.

We really appreciate your help and time and look forward to meeting with you soon.

Best regards,
Owners of 25 Hawthorne St

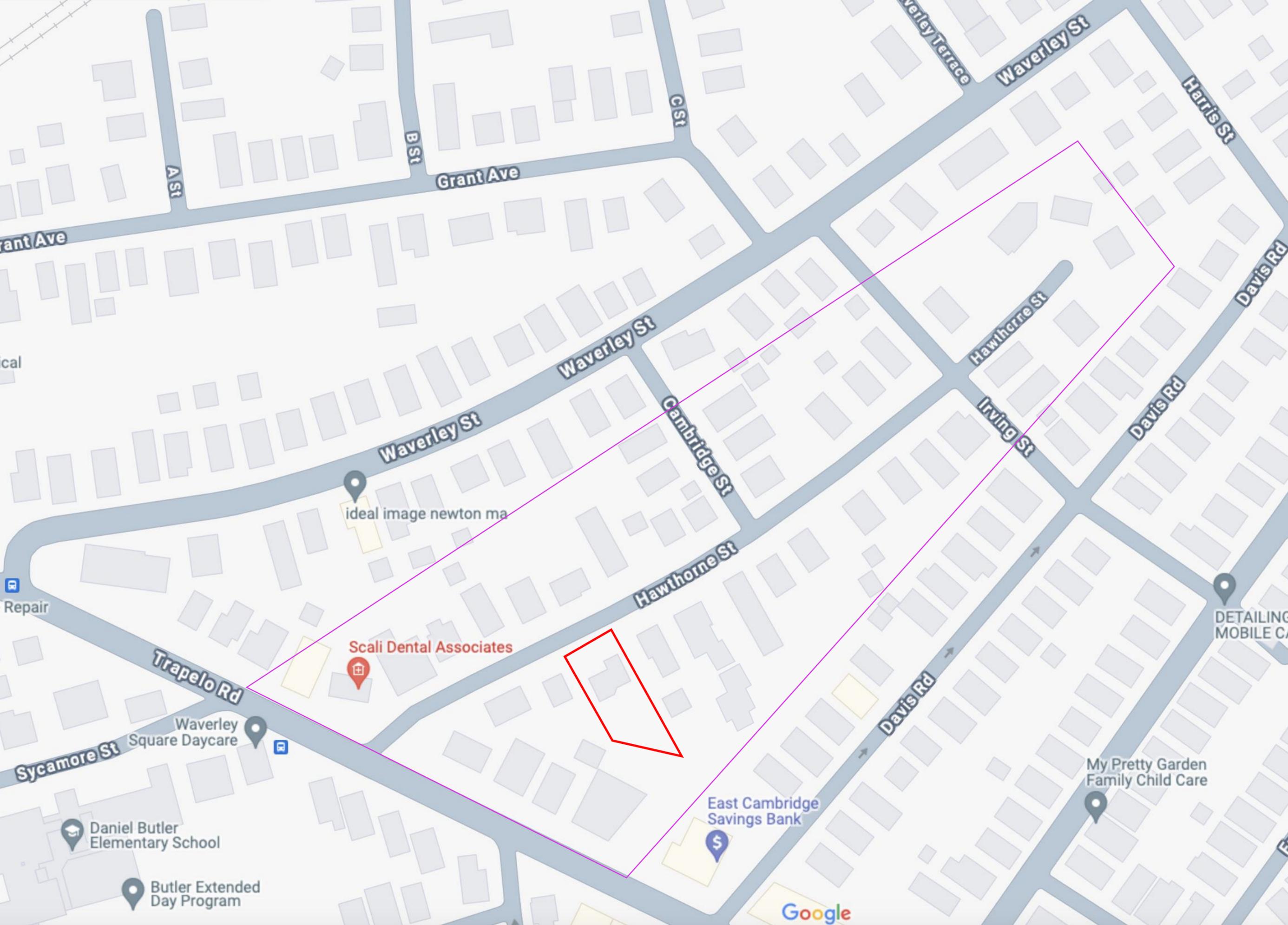




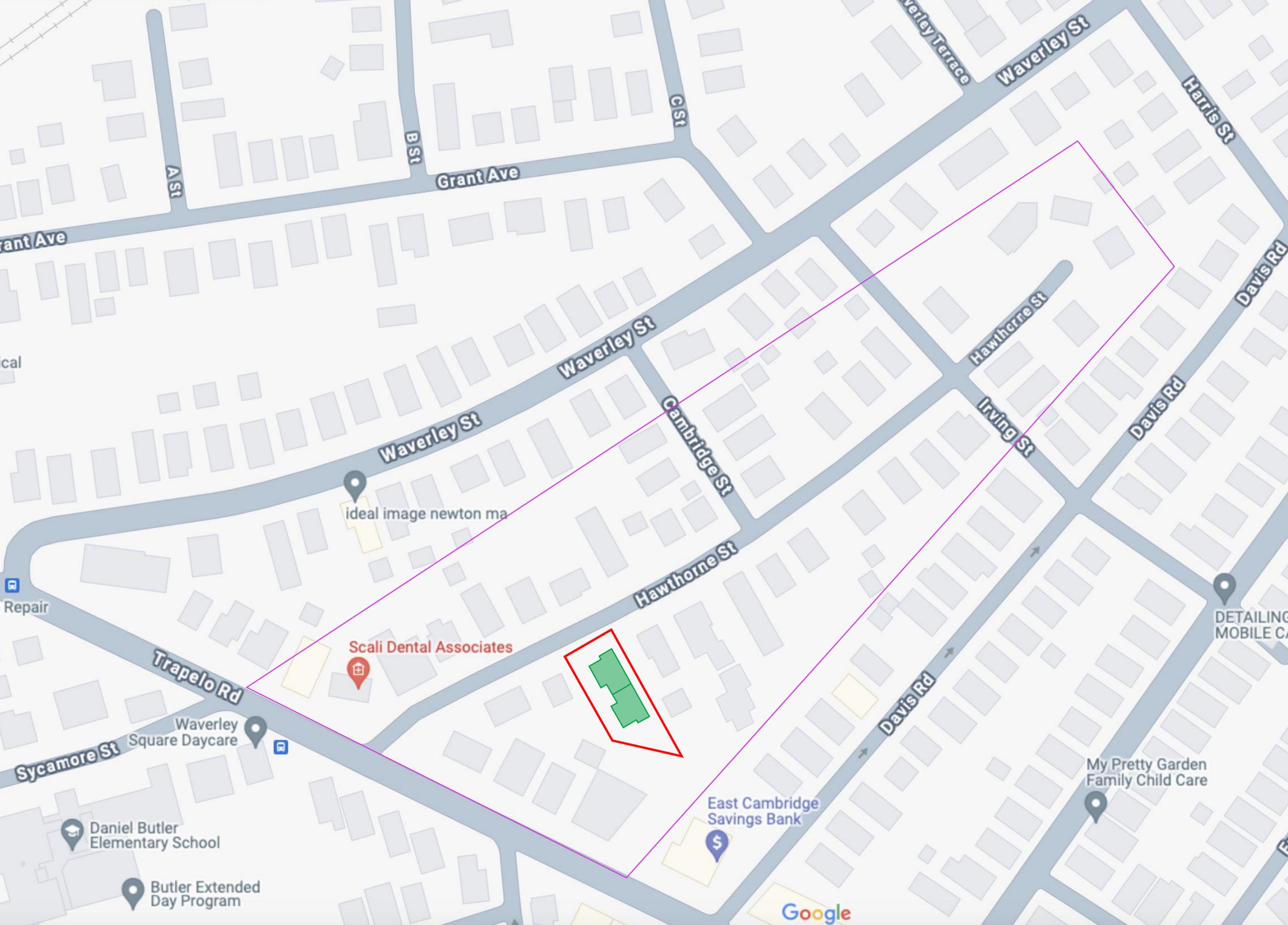
MapsOnline Abutters Export

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27-32	30 DAVIS RD	0	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-81-A	425R TRAPELO RD	0	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-30-1	22 DAVIS RD, UNIT 1	1059	condo	BELMONT	MA
14-115	406 TRAPELO RD	1206	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-46-2	29 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 2	1211	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-47	25 HAWTHORNE ST	1234	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-21	17 DAVIS RD	1248	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-46-1	29 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 1	1267	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-50-1	5-7 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 1	1344	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-50-2	5-7 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 2	1372	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-74	37 WAVERLEY ST	1469	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-86	24 HAWTHORNE ST	1515	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-88	36 HAWTHORNE ST	1564	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-30-2	22 DAVIS RD, UNIT 2	1569	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-48	19 HAWTHORNE ST	1680	residential	BELMONT	MA
14-116	12 MAPLE ST	1716	residential	WATERTOWN	MA
27-81	425 TRAPELO RD	1790	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-90	40 HAWTHORNE ST	1804	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-165	9 MAPLE ST	1938	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-71	49-51 WAVERLEY ST	1950	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-69	57-59 WAVERLEY ST	1984	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-62	10 CAMBRIDGE ST	2025	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-64	13 CAMBRIDGE ST	2080	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-87-30	30 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 30	2101	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-63-A	16 CAMBRIDGE ST, UNIT A	2104	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-63-B	16 CAMBRIDGE ST, UNIT B	2122	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-83	10-12 HAWTHORNE ST	2130	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-148	9-11 MAPLE TERR	2189	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-87-28	28 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 28	2206	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-61	4 CAMBRIDGE ST	2220	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-43	43 HAWTHORNE ST	2242	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-44-1	39 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 1	2247	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-66	69 WAVERLEY ST	2292	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-149	408 TRAPELO RD	2364	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-29	18-20 DAVIS RD	2372	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-44-2	41 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 2	2390	condo	BELMONT	MA
27-65	9-11 CAMBRIDGE ST	2402	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-73	41 WAVERLEY ST	2439	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-19	27-29 DAVIS RD	2444	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-24	5-7 DAVIS RD	2490	residential	BELMONT	MA

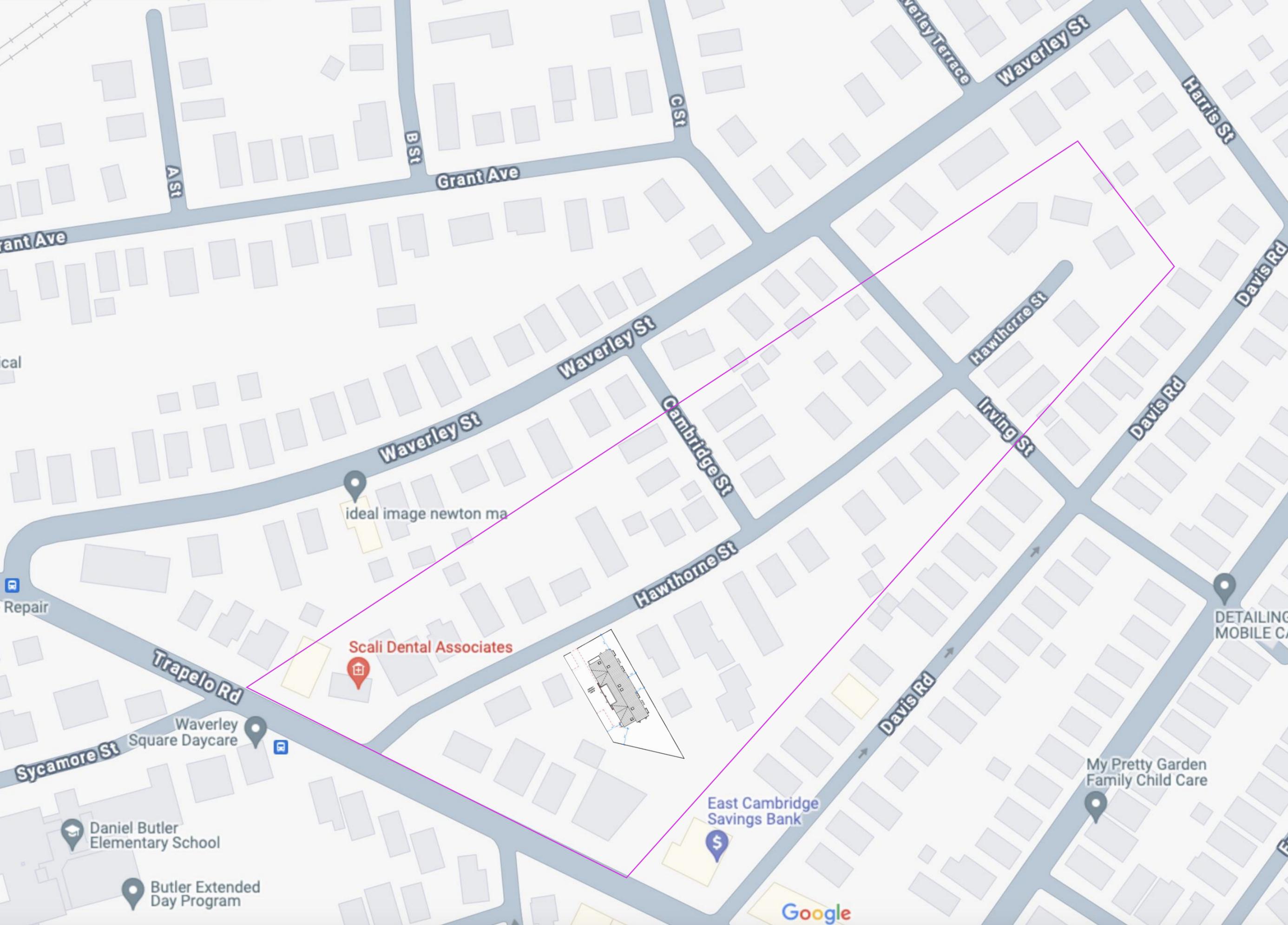
27-28	14-16 DAVIS RD	2524	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-20	19-21 DAVIS RD	2650	residential	WATERTOWN	MA
27-42	47 HAWTHORNE ST	2718	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-84	16-18 HAWTHORNE ST	2744	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-70	55 WAVERLEY ST	2760	residential	WATERTOWN	MA
	25 Hawthorne St Unit A Proposed	2845			
	25 Hawthorne St Unit B Proposed	2870			
27-72	45-47 WAVERLEY ST	2983	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-80	431 TRAPELO RD	3032	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-54	18-20 CAMBRIDGE ST	3088	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-45-2	35 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 2	3092	condo	BELMONT	MA
14-114	400-404 TRAPELO RD	3260	commercial	WATERTOWN	MA
27-45-1	33 HAWTHORNE ST, UNIT 1	3498	condo	BELMONT	MA
14-112	388-394 TRAPELO RD	3520	commercial	WATERTOWN	MA
27-52	403 TRAPELO RD	3636	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-150	410 TRAPELO RD	3834	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-22	13-15 DAVIS RD	3899	residential	BELMONT	MA
27-53	397-399 TRAPELO RD	4312	commercial	WATERTOWN	MA
27-68	61-63 WAVERLEY ST	4452	residential	WATERTOWN	MA
14-109	368-380 TRAPELO RD	7364	commercial	BELMONT	MA



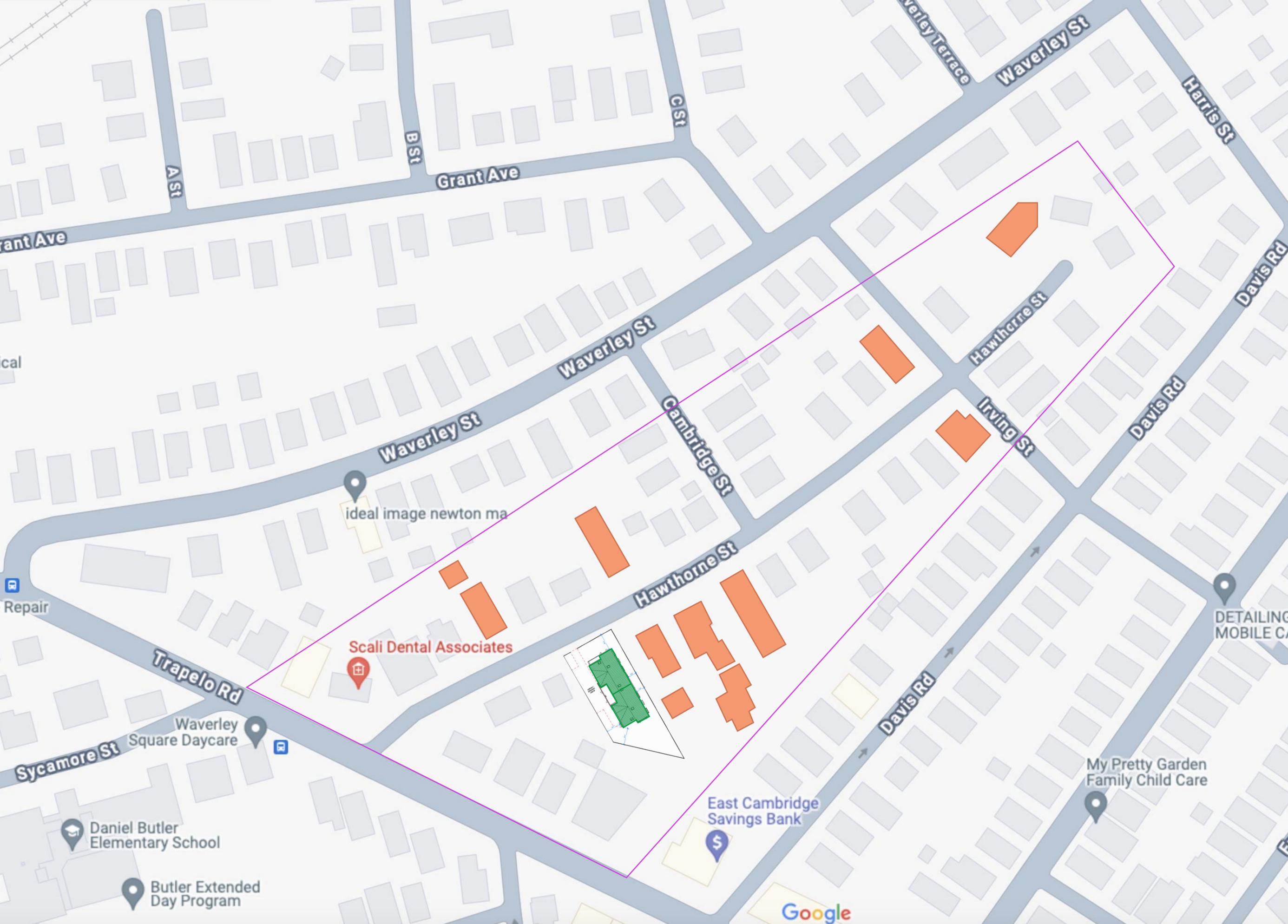
Current 25 Hawthorne St Land and House Size



Proposed 2 Family Construction Size on the Hawthorne St



1:1 Copy of the Site Plan onto Street Map



Residential Buildings on Hawthorne St with Similar Size



39-41



33-35



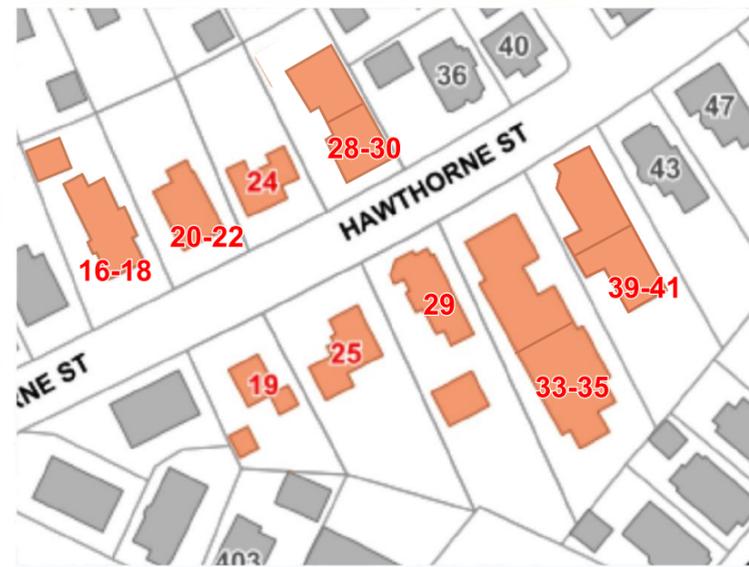
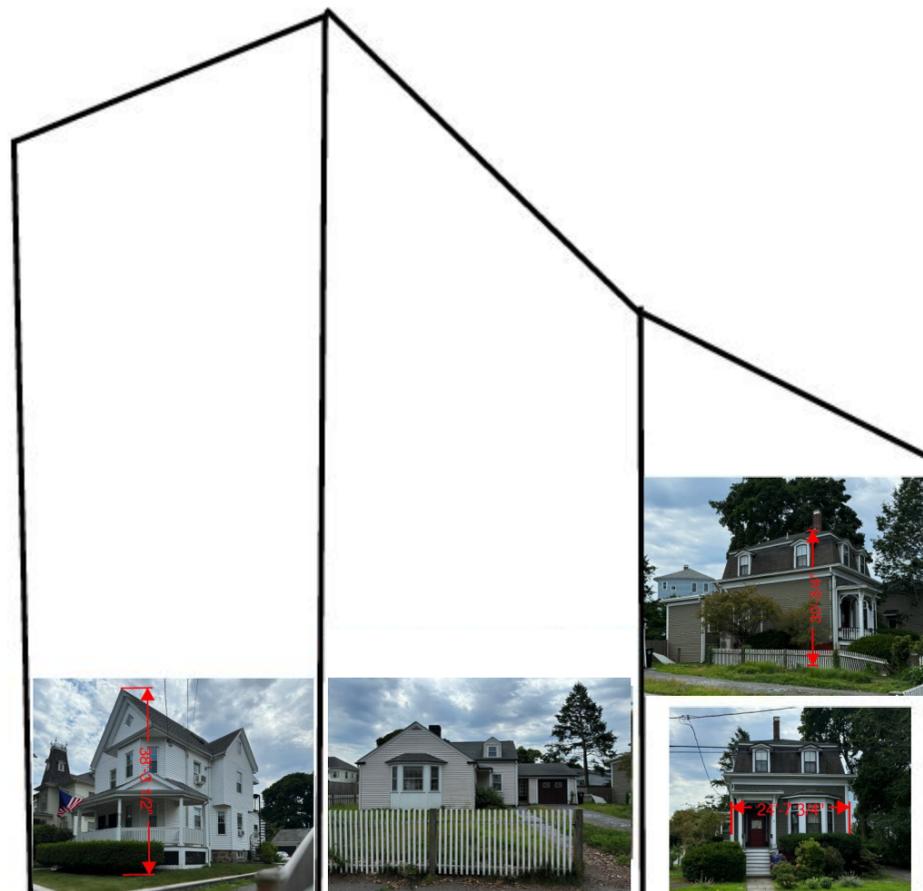
29



25



19



HAWTHORNE ST.

28-30

24

22



Direct Neighbors Building Dimensions vs. Current Building



39-41



33-35



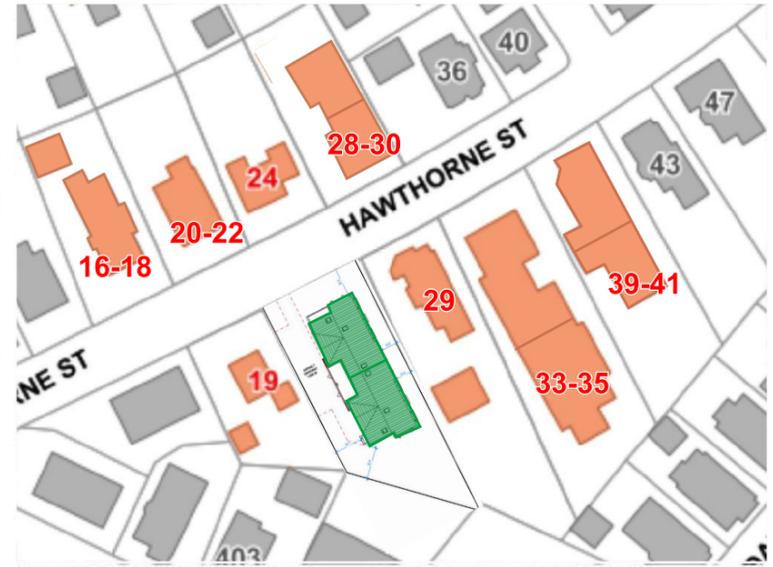
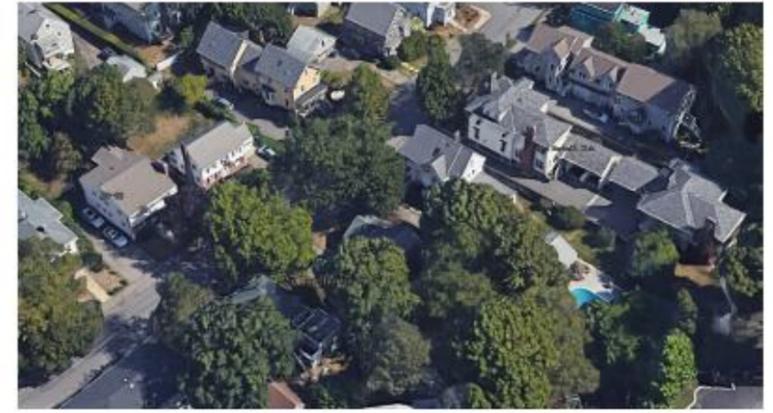
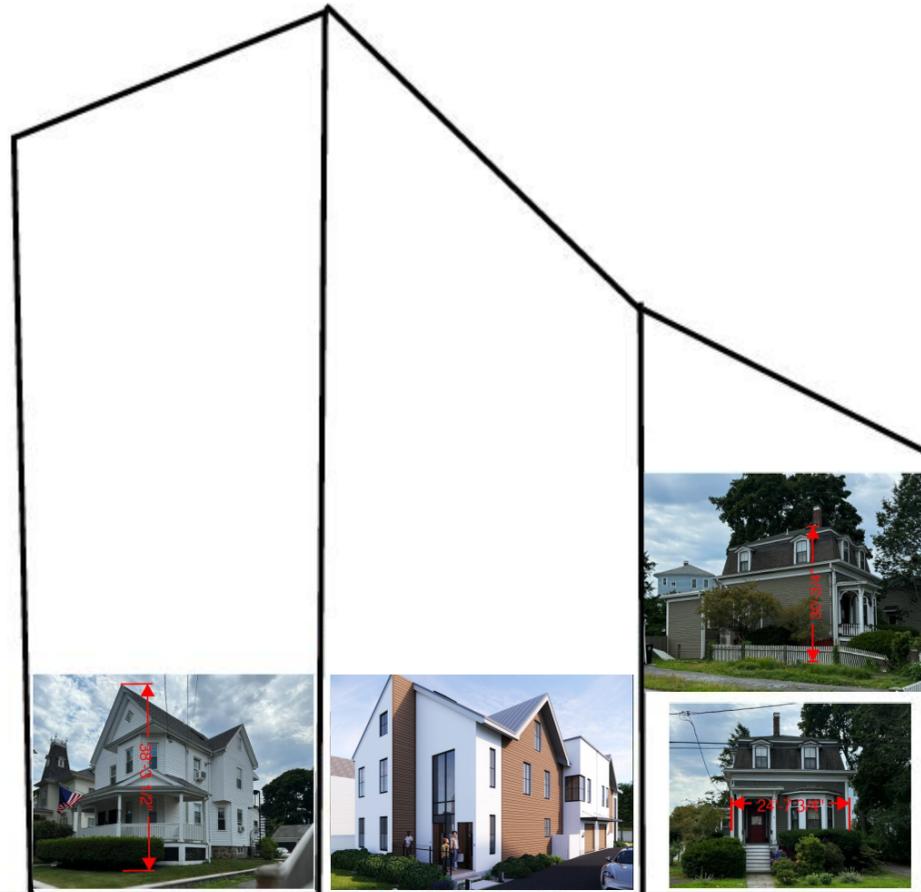
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25 - ##



19



HAWTHORNE ST.

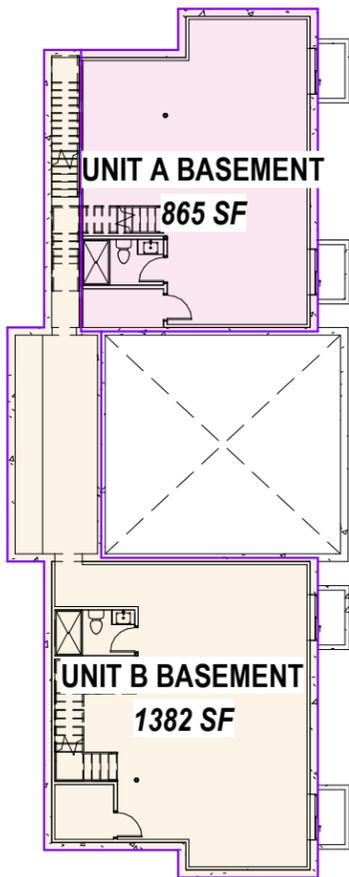
28-30

24

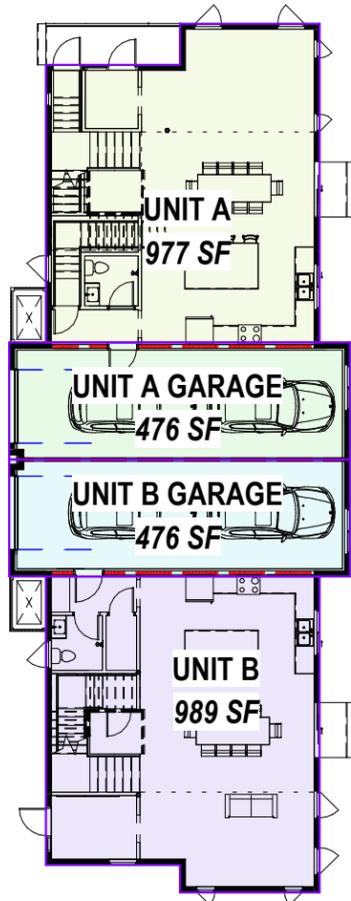
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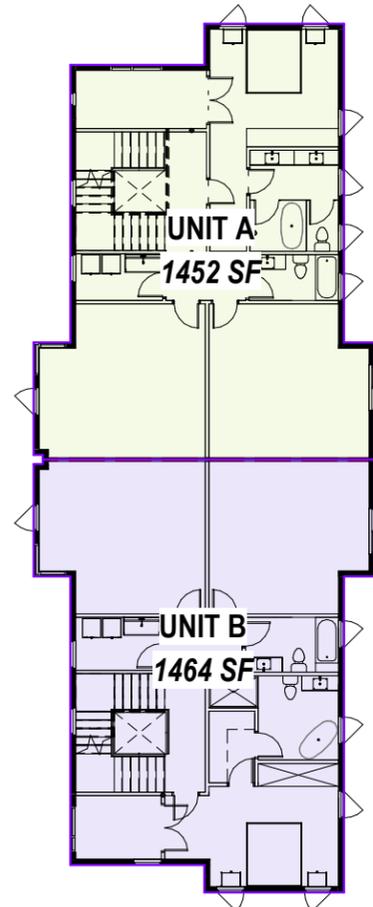
Direct Neighbors Building Dimensions vs. Proposed 2 Family Building



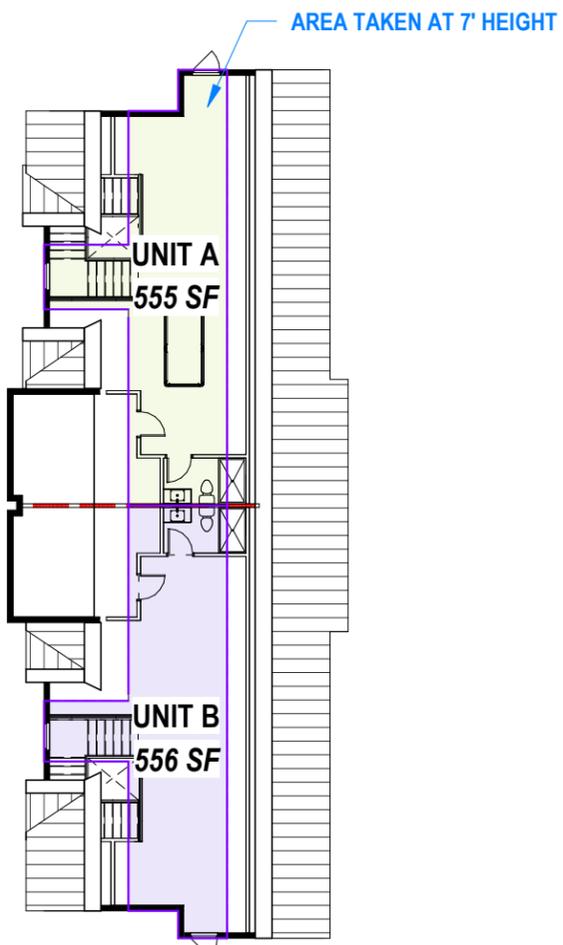
1 LEVEL 0 GROSS FLOOR AREA PROPOSED
1" = 20'-0"



2 LEVEL 1 GROSS FLOOR AREA PROPOSED
1" = 20'-0"



3 LEVEL 2 GROSS FLOOR AREA PROPOSED
1" = 20'-0"



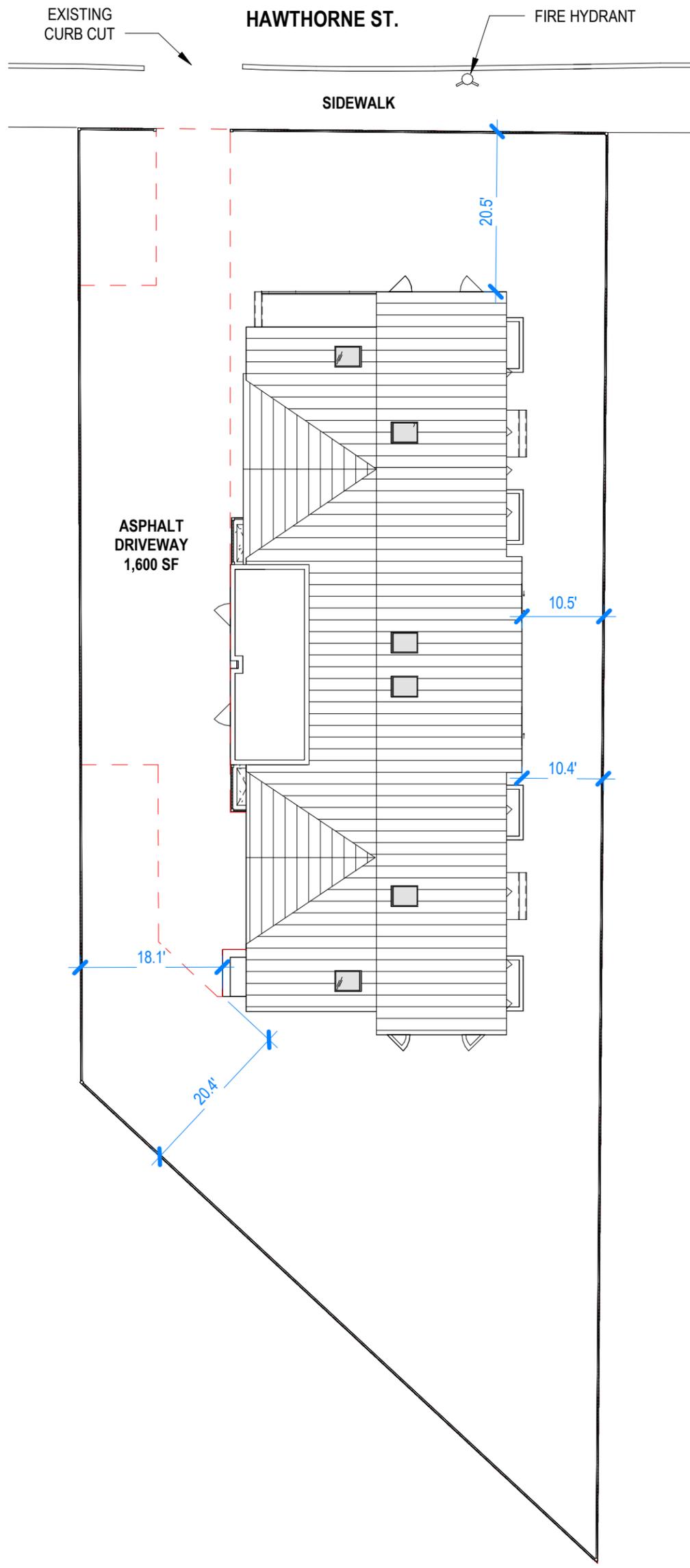
4 LEVEL ATTIC GROSS FLOOR AREA PROPOSED
1" = 20'-0"

UNIT A GROSS FLOOR AREA, PROPOSED

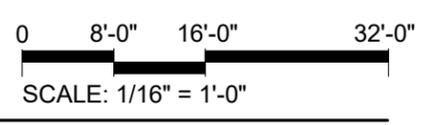
Name	Level	Area
UNIT A	LEVEL 1	977 SF
UNIT A	LEVEL 2	1452 SF
UNIT A	LEVEL ATTIC	555 SF
		2985 SF
UNIT A BASEMENT	LEVEL 0	865 SF
		865 SF
UNIT A GARAGE	LEVEL 1	476 SF
		476 SF

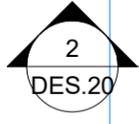
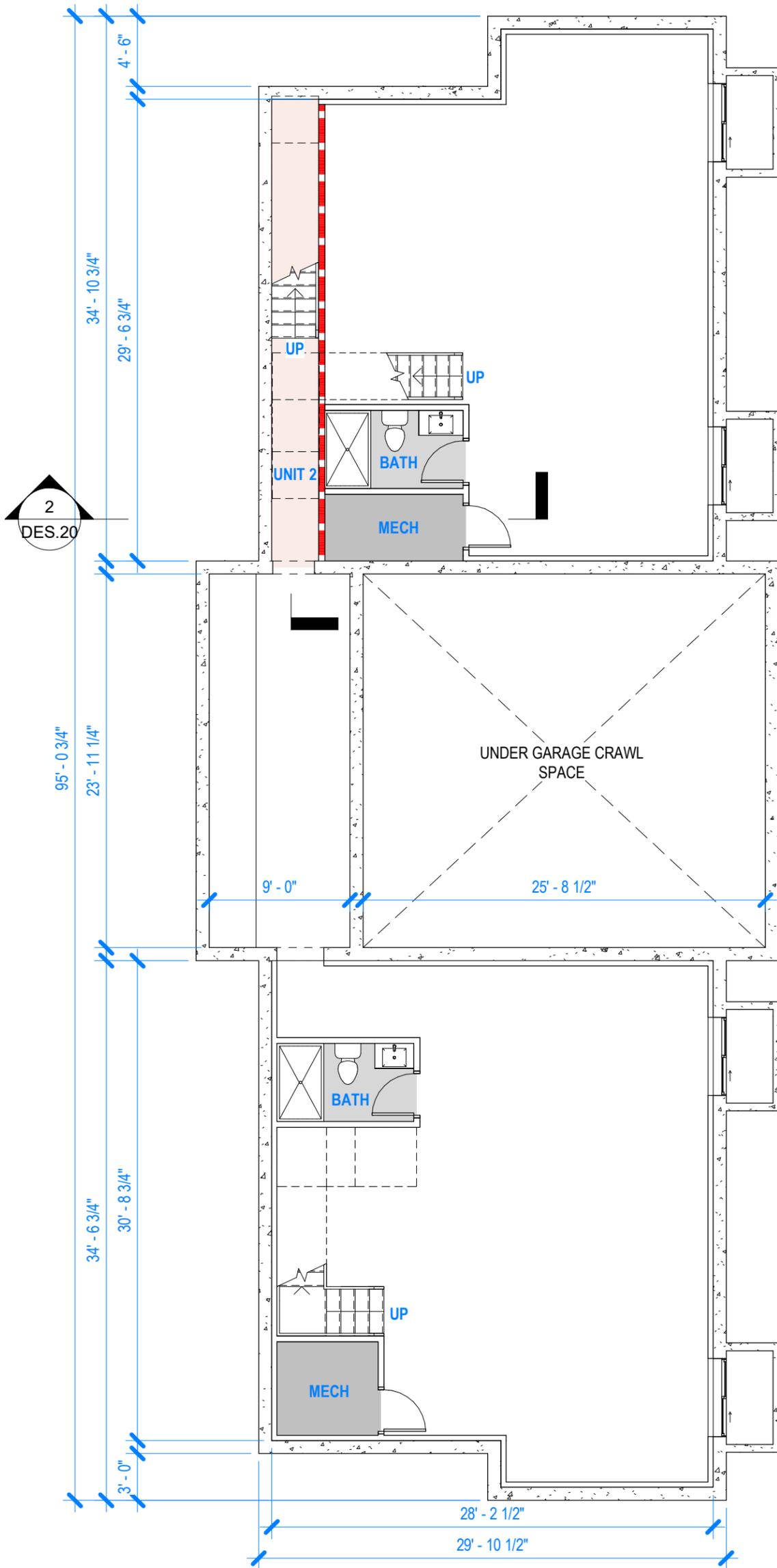
UNIT B GROSS FLOOR AREA, PROPOSED

Name	Level	Area
UNIT B	LEVEL 1	989 SF
UNIT B	LEVEL 2	1464 SF
UNIT B	LEVEL ATTIC	556 SF
		3009 SF
UNIT B BASEMENT	LEVEL 0	1382 SF
		1382 SF
UNIT B GARAGE	LEVEL 1	476 SF
		476 SF

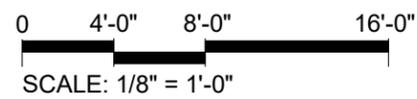


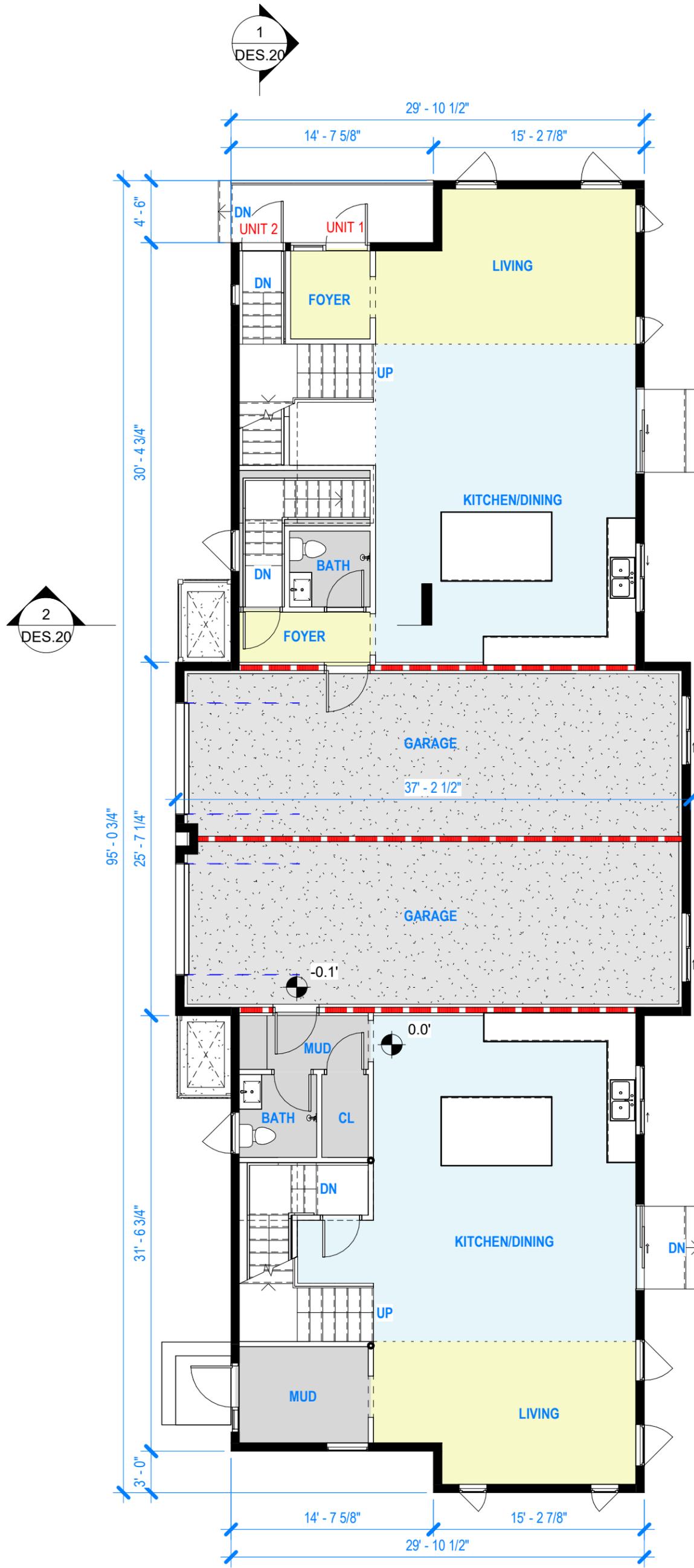
① SITE PLAN, PROPOSED
 1/16" = 1'-0"



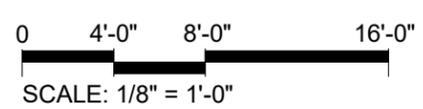


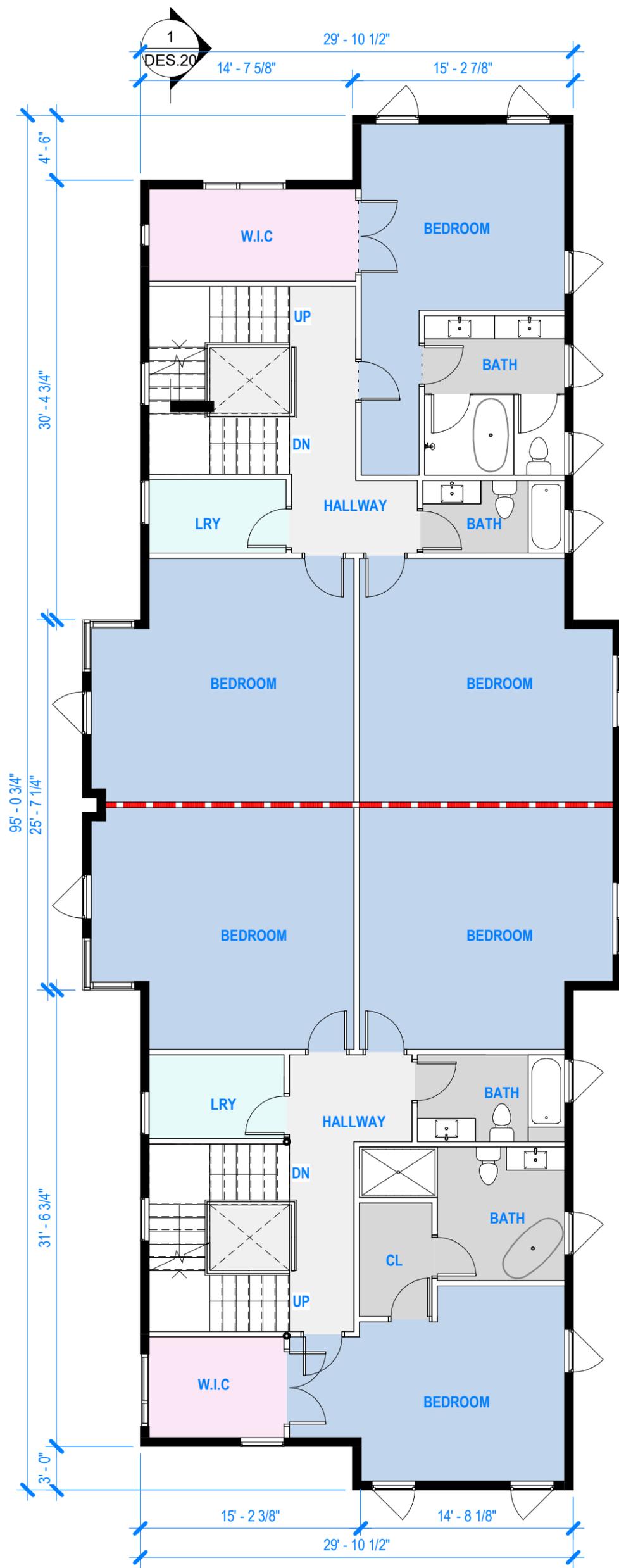
1 LEVEL 0 FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED
1/8" = 1'-0"



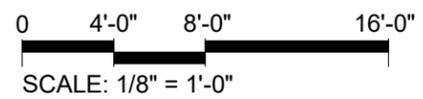


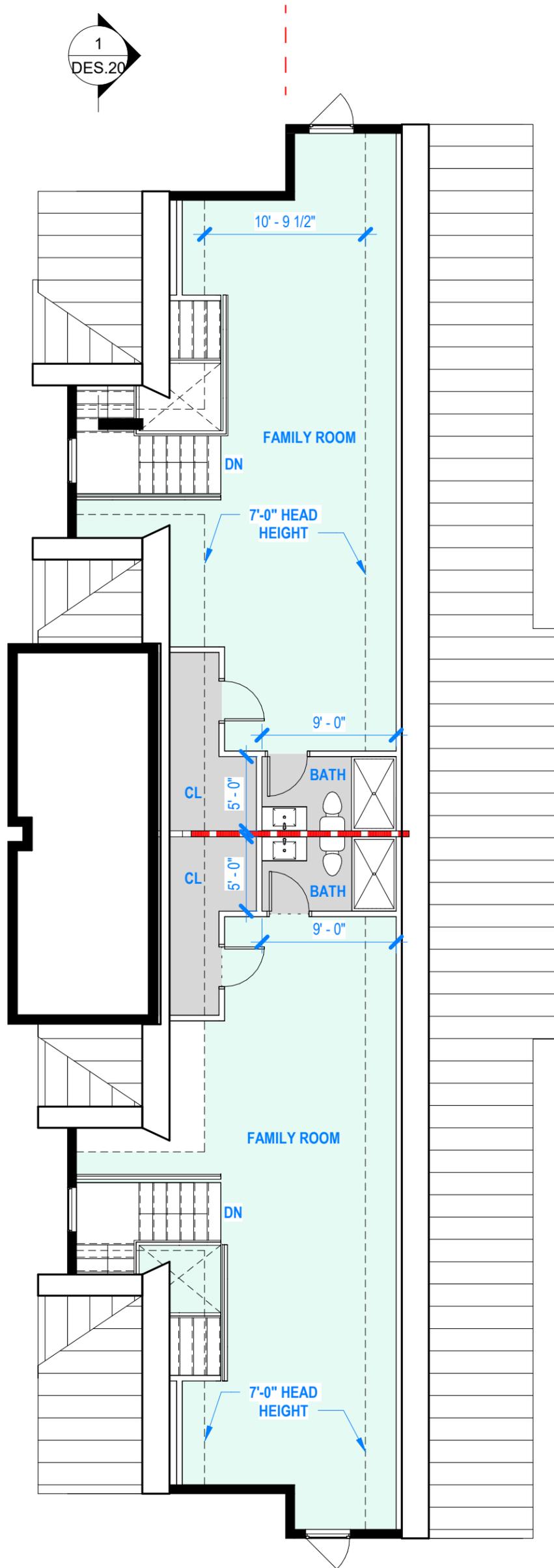
① LEVEL 1 FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED
1/8" = 1'-0"



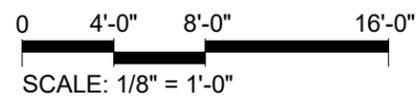


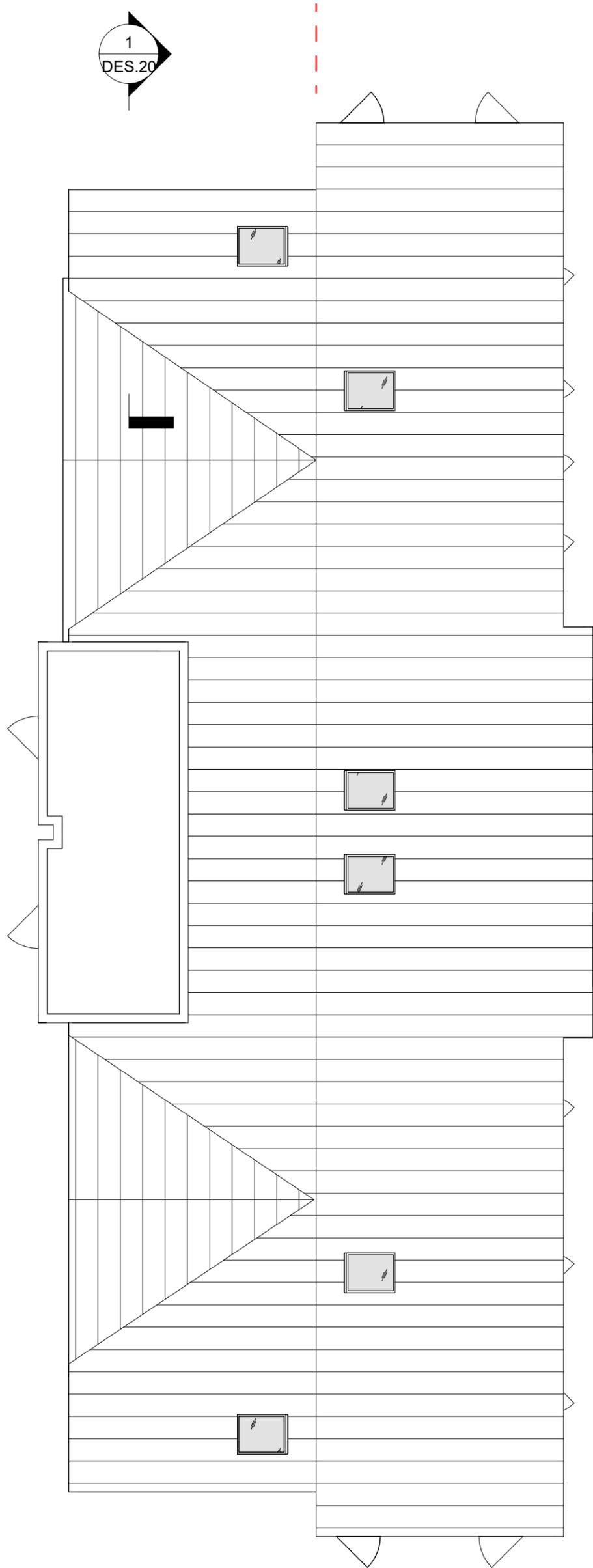
1 LEVEL 2 FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED
1/8" = 1'-0"



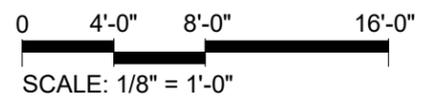


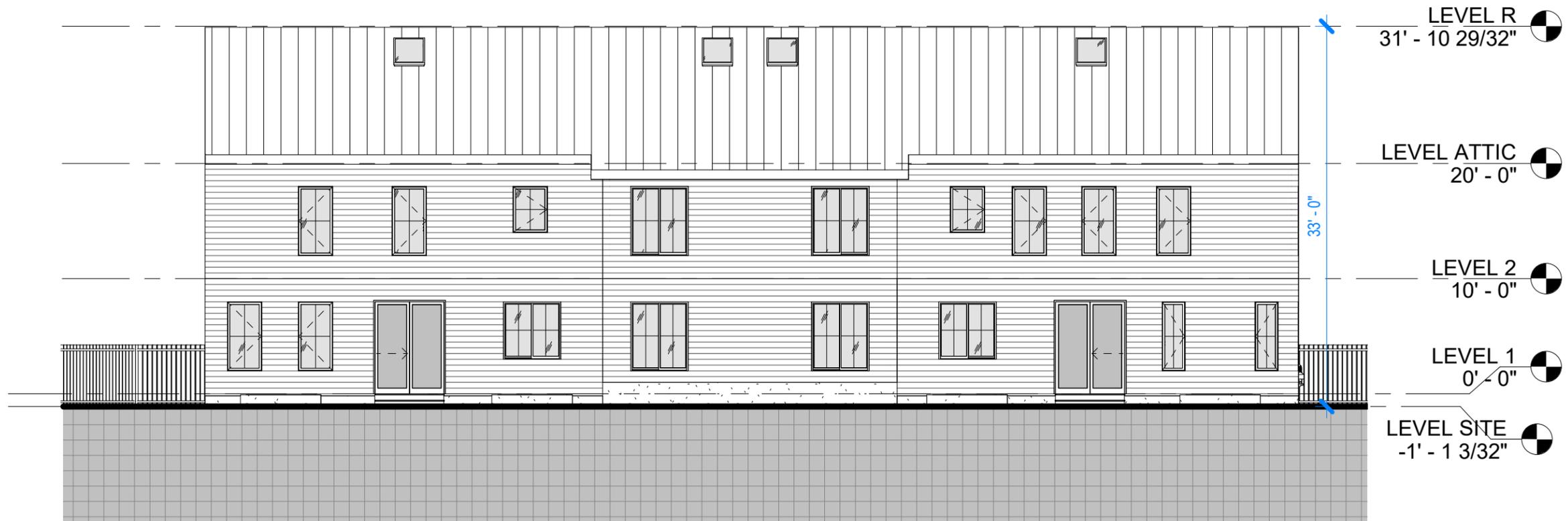
① LEVEL ATTIC FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED
 1/8" = 1'-0"



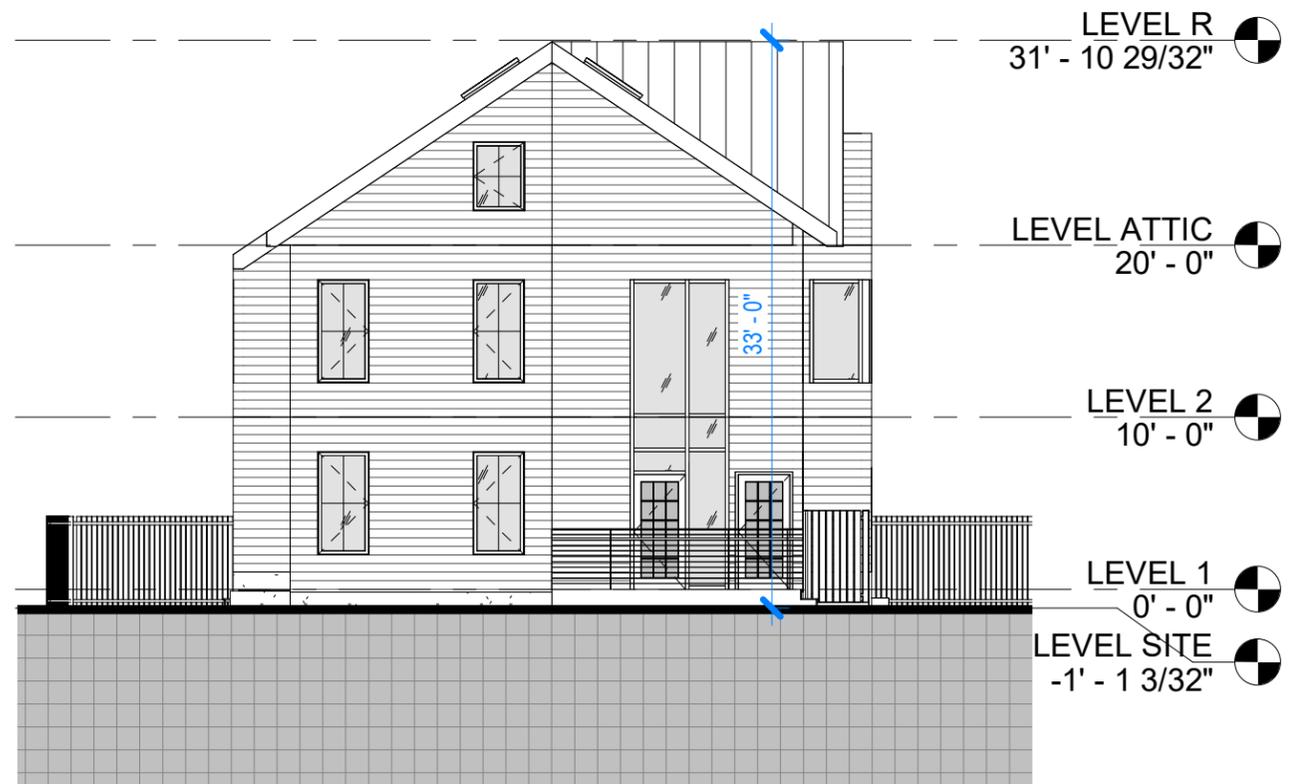


① LEVEL R FLOOR PLAN PROPOSED
1/8" = 1'-0"

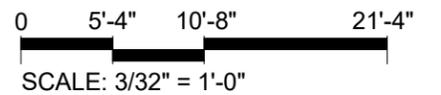




① BUILDING ELEVATION EAST
3/32" = 1'-0"

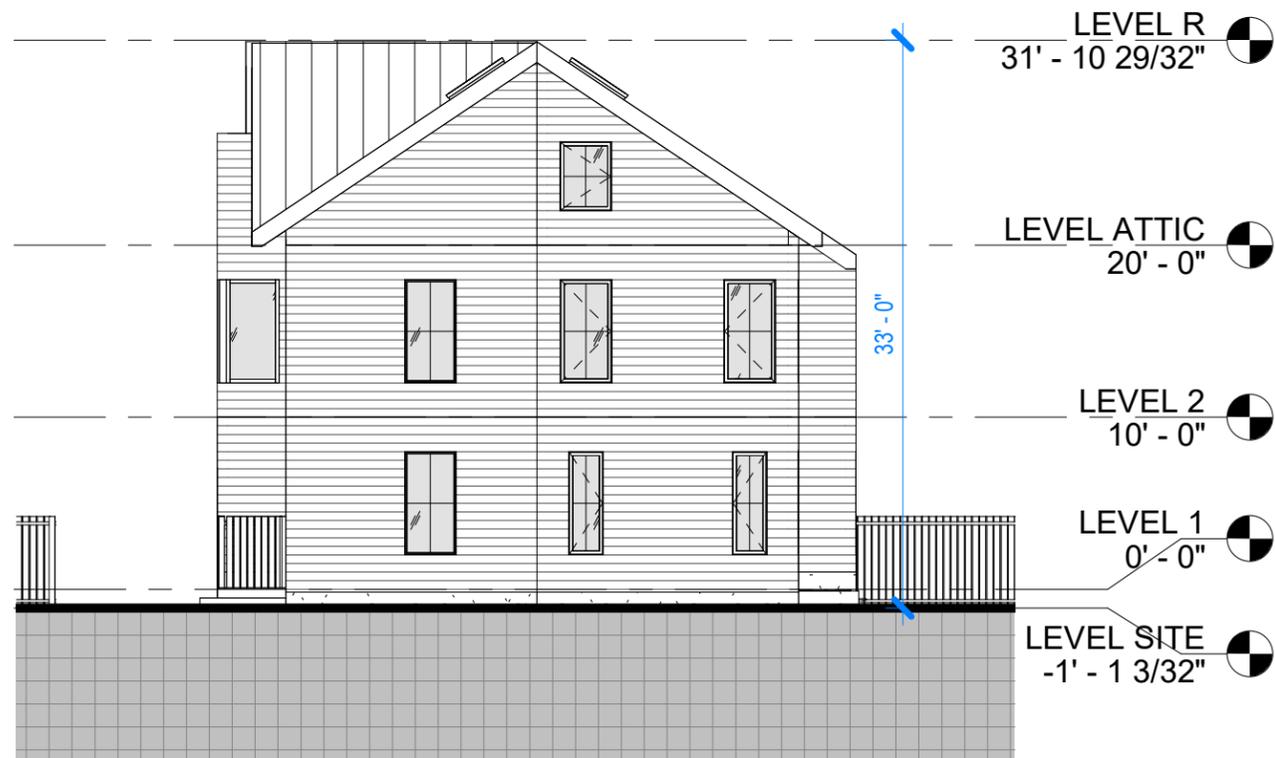


② BUILDING ELEVATION NORTH
3/32" = 1'-0"

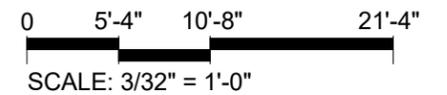


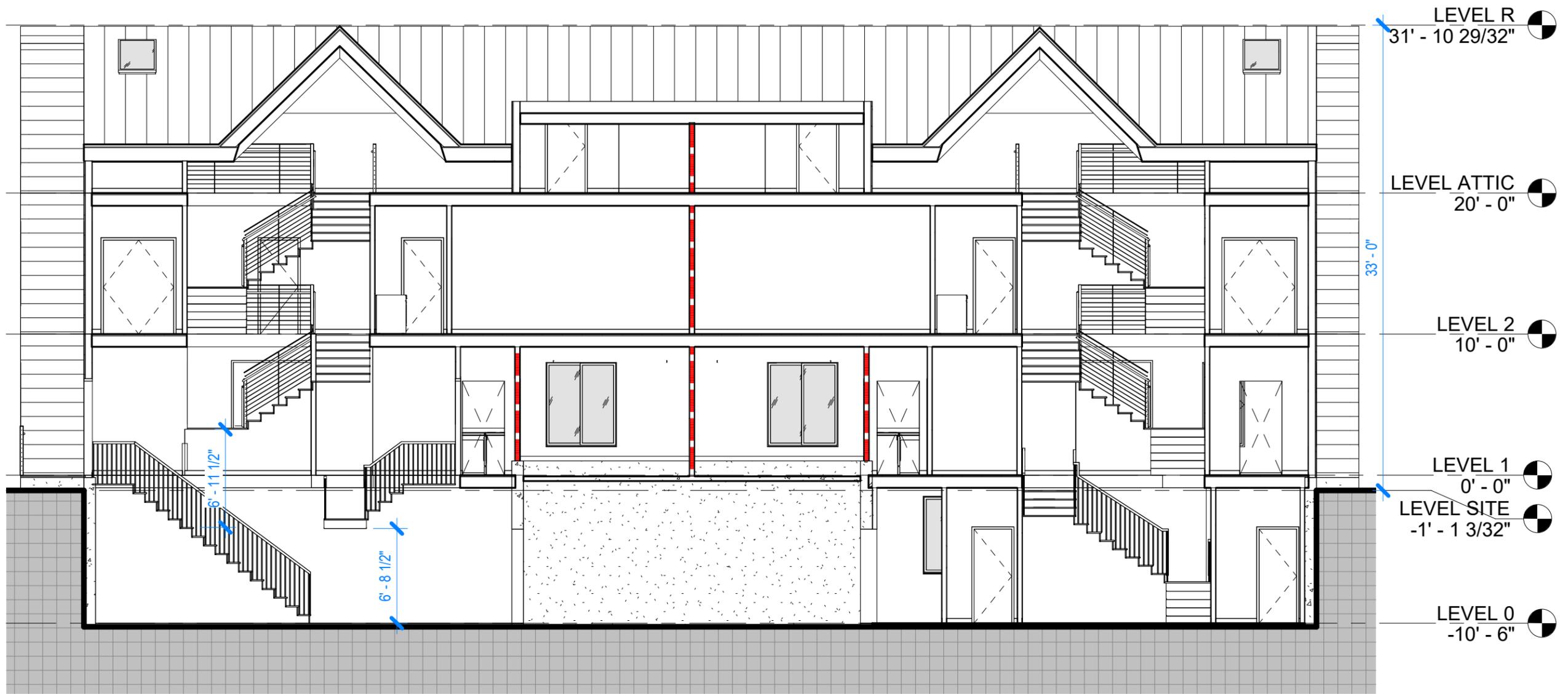


① BUILDING ELEVATION WEST
3/32" = 1'-0"

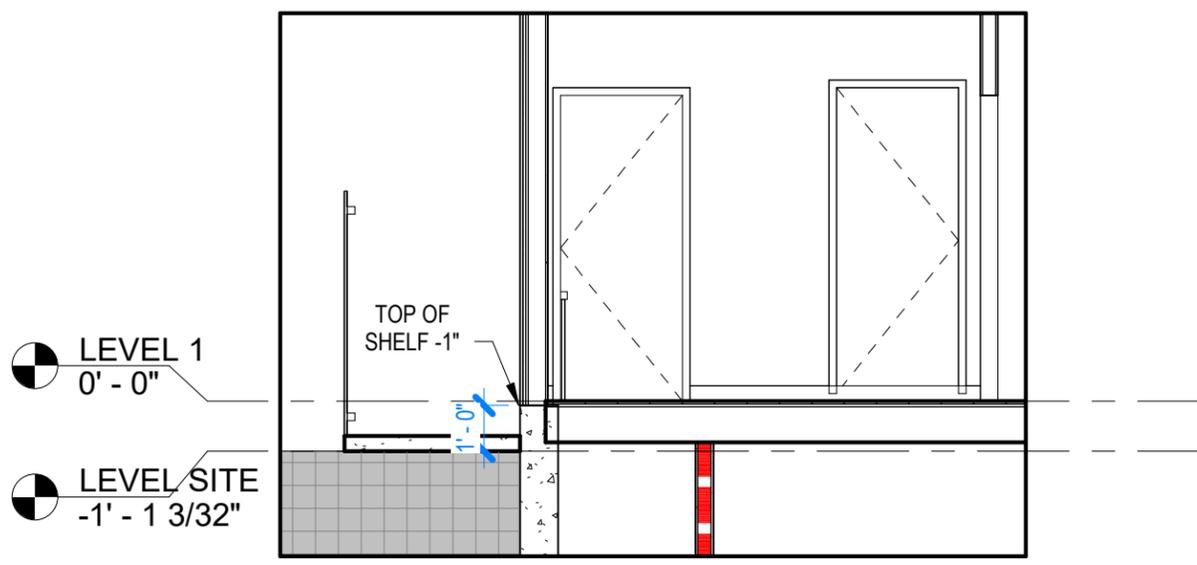


② BUILDING ELEVATION SOUTH
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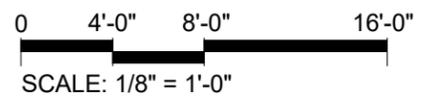
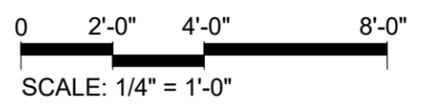


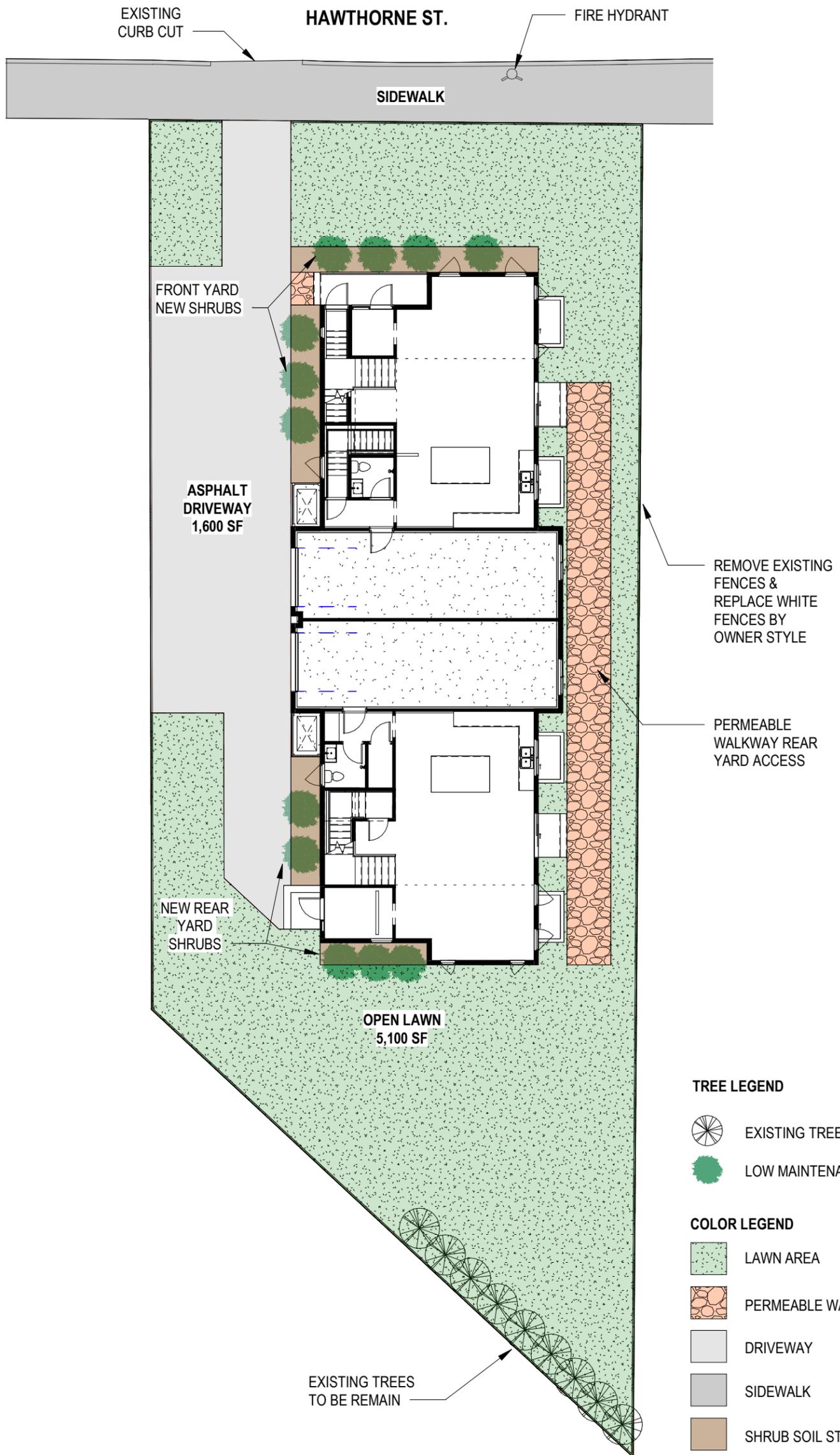


① SECTION N-E PROPOSED
1/8" = 1'-0"

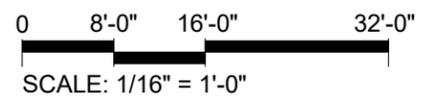


② WALL SECTION W-E PROPOSED
1/4" = 1'-0"





LANDSCAPE PLAN PROPOSED GROUND LEVEL
 1 1/16" = 1'-0"



Letter of Support for the 25 Hawthorne St Construction Project

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the construction project at 25 Hawthorne St in Belmont. As a member of the local community, I understand the importance of responsible development, and I believe this project aligns well with our neighborhood's character and needs.

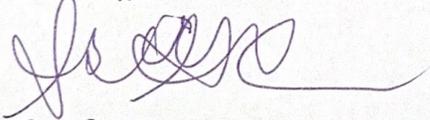
The proposed two-family home will not only provide new housing options but also contribute to the vibrancy and growth of our community. The architectural plans, which include compliance with town regulations, suggest a thoughtful approach that will maintain the aesthetic harmony of our area.

Additionally, the owners' intention to use the property as their primary residence speaks to their commitment to becoming part of our community. Their effort to reach out to neighbors for support further underscores their desire to integrate and contribute positively to the neighborhood.

I support the prompt approval of the construction permit, as it will enable the owners to proceed with their plans and help them reduce the financial burden associated with delays. I believe this project will be a positive addition to our community and look forward to welcoming new neighbors to our town.

Thank you for considering my letter of support. If you have any questions, I would be happy to discuss them.

Sincerely,



Sara Carson

52 Hawthorne St. #2

sgassertcarson@gmail.com

Response to 19 Hawthorne St

Dear Board,

We have carefully and thoroughly read the opposition letter from the neighbors at 19 Hawthorne St. We have been trying to establish direct communication with them and are grateful to understand their concerns, albeit in this manner. We will continue our efforts, and here are our responses to the key points raised.

Key Points:

Size of the New Building

We have been meticulous in planning the size of our new home. We referenced the Total Living Area (TLA) of neighboring properties to ensure our plans were reasonable. Please review the enclosed summary and comparison of community TLA. While our proposed square footage is not the smallest, it is certainly not the largest. Every family has different needs; for us, we require a lifetime home with the potential for family growth. Having lived in a compact condo in Belmont for almost five years, we are seeking a more spacious and comfortable home.

We understand the concern about the neighbor's house being "cast in shadow". Belmont's zoning bylaws on site coverage, side setbacks, and building height ensure that new constructions do not negatively impact neighbors. To comply, we hired a civil engineering company to measure the elevation height. Additionally, our proposed plan includes a sufficiently wide driveway between the two buildings, ensuring adequate separation.

Upon reviewing residential buildings within 300 feet of our property, we found that 25 Hawthorne St is one of the smallest properties, even smaller than 19 Hawthorne St. We are merely seeking to do what other neighbors have done in the past, such as at 29 Hawthorne St and 33-35 Hawthorne St. Our goal is to build a spacious home for both functional space and living comfort, but not one that is abrupt or the largest in the neighborhood.

Tree Removal Concerns

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by the tree removal. We regret learning about the neighbors' feelings through an opposition letter rather than earlier in person. We made several attempts to communicate our tree removal plans:

- On the evening of December 8, 2023, we rang the doorbell at 19 Hawthorne St twice but received no response, despite seeing people inside. Recognizing that our neighbors may be private individuals, we dropped off a letter explaining our plans and provided contact information.
- We left a Christmas gift and another letter confirming the tree removal plan before Christmas.

- Not receiving any feedback, we assumed our plan was acceptable and proceeded in early January.

We hired East Coast Tree Service, a professional company with over 20 years of experience. They assisted in obtaining the necessary permit from the Town of Belmont Department of Public Works and arranged for a police detail to ensure safety. Despite our efforts, we did not realize the neighbors' concerns. We apologize and are willing to grind the stumps near the property line and redo the fence to maintain a good appearance.

Neighbor Relations

We love Belmont, which is why we invested in this property as our lifelong home after living here for almost five years. We care about our neighbors and proactively informed them of our plans, even if it was through mail due to limited in-person access. Building a home is a significant decision, and we wanted to involve our neighbors in the process. When a neighbor inquired about our plans in January, we had not yet finalized our decision. Once we did, we promptly communicated it to our neighbors. We did not intend to hide the plan from our neighbors, as there was no reason to do so.

Regardless of how our construction plans proceed, we are committed to being good neighbors and maintaining harmony in the community. We are open to continued communication to better understand and address any concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,
Owners of 25 Hawthorne St

Letter of Support for the 25 Hawthorne St Construction Project

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my support for the construction project at 25 Hawthorne St in Belmont. As a member of the local community, I understand the importance of responsible development, and I believe this project aligns well with our neighborhood's character and needs.

The proposed two-family home will not only provide new housing options but also contribute to the vibrancy and growth of our community. The architectural plans, which include compliance with town regulations, suggest a thoughtful approach that will maintain the aesthetic harmony of our area.

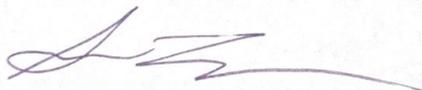
Additionally, the owners' intention to use the property as their primary residence speaks to their commitment to becoming part of our community. Their effort to reach out to neighbors for support further underscores their desire to integrate and contribute positively to the neighborhood.

I support the prompt approval of the construction permit, as it will enable the owners to proceed with their plans and help them reduce the financial burden associated with delays. I believe this project will be a positive addition to our community and look forward to welcoming new neighbors to our town.

Thank you for considering my letter of support. If you have any questions, I would be happy to discuss them.

Sincerely,

Spencer Carson
52 Hawthorne St. #2
sgassertcarson@gmail.com



Response to 29 Hawthorn St Unit 2

Dear Board,

We have carefully reviewed the objection letter from 29 Hawthorn St Unit 2. Below is our friendly response to the main points raised:

High Property Tax Concern

In the letter, we were described as "speculators," with claims that our project will cause higher property taxes. We believe there is a misunderstanding regarding our project's purpose. We are not building a new property to resell it quickly for profit. Our family has lived in Belmont for almost five years. The property at 25 Hawthorn is intended for long-term residence, not for quick resale gains. We currently live in a compact condo in Belmont and are planning to move to a more spacious home to accommodate our growing family. We will live in one unit, and my relative Peishan will live in the other unit. Regarding property tax, it is determined based on the assessed value of the property and the tax rate set by the town. Before initiating this project, we observed and referred to similar projects in Belmont and believe our individual project will not significantly impact property taxes.

Tree Removals Concern

A few letters from neighbors mentioned concerns about tree removal. We would like to restate our original intentions and the communication process with neighbors. After purchasing 25 Hawthorn last December, the insurance company required us to trim the trees around the property to obtain a reasonable insurance rate. We noticed a few trees near the property line that had already crossed over the neighbor's fence and were impacting the driveway (refer to pictures). Given the need to trim the trees and the potential conflicts with neighbors, and importantly, the trees' potential impact on the property's foundation, we thought removal would be the best long-term solution.

We attempted to discuss the tree removal plan with the direct neighbors, including 29 Hawthorn St Unit 2. Unfortunately, they were not home, and we heard from Unit 1 that they might be away for over a month. To meet the property insurance timeline, we asked Unit 1's owner to communicate with Unit 2's owner. We received no negative feedback from 29 Hawthorn Unit 1 and 19 Hawthorn. The neighbor from 29 Hawthorn Unit 2 mentioned mildly that they liked the tree.

Based on all feedback and considerations, we decided to proceed with the tree removals. We communicated this decision to all direct neighbors before Christmas and left small gifts as tokens of appreciation for their understanding. At that time, we did not receive any further feedback. We then scheduled a professional tree service to handle the removals. Up until the new project communication in April, we had not encountered any significant negative feedback from direct neighbors. The concern we heard was from 29 Hawthorn Unit 1 regarding the stumps left by the tree removals. We have actively engaged the tree service company to address the stumps. Currently, we are trying to agree on the best method to handle the stumps: the tree service

company prefers grinding, while the neighbor strongly prefers excavation. We are concerned about the potential impact of excavation on underground utilities.

Addressing and resolving issues is our top priority, even though we were genuinely surprised to hear about strong objections about the whole project. We appreciate the feedback and will continue to proactively communicate with neighbors to address and alleviate their concerns regarding the trees. Since receiving the clear feedback from the objection letters, we are committed to doing our utmost to resolve the issue. The tree removal is unrelated to the new project, but we hope resolving it will positively impact the project's perception.

Architectural Design

29 Hawthorn Unit 2 questioned why we didn't buy a multifamily home if we wanted a two-family setup. Honestly, we did not confirm the two-family plan when purchasing the property. The cost of buying 25 Hawthorn was supported by our entire family. When we noticed the zoning allowed for a two-family home, we saw it as a way to significantly reduce the financial burden. Zoning laws not only restrict what residents cannot do but also grant rights as long as regulations are followed. Owning a home is a significant decision for us, like for all average people. We love the Belmont community and have lived here for almost five years. Having an ideal home in Belmont is one of our biggest pursuits. We hope to achieve this with a welcoming community. The charm of Belmont lies not only in its beautiful trees but also in its welcoming, open, friendly, and supportive neighborhood.

Self-contained Living Concerns: Parking, Run-off Water, Height and Span

29 Hawthorn Unit 2 also raised concerns about parking for the new project. As Belmont residents, we know overnight parking is not allowed. The proposed plan includes two garage parking spots for each unit on the first floor, explaining why the project appears large. The new project's span looks large because it merges the garage with the living building. Regarding "run-off water," "snow piles," height, and span, zoning laws provide clear codes on building height, setbacks, and other requirements. A professional civil engineer is involved to ensure compliance, proper function, and avoidance of future problems mentioned in the letter.

In summary, as the current owners of 25 Hawthorn, regardless of the new project application, we are already part of the community. We aim to be good neighbors and will continue to communicate with our neighborhood to foster good relationships. Thank you for your time and consideration of our application.

Best regards,
Owners of 25 Hawthorn St

Response to 29 Hawthorne Unit 1

Dear Board,

We have thoroughly reviewed the letter from the neighbors of 29 Hawthorne St Unit 1 and would like to address the main points with a problem-solving approach.

Tree Removal Concern:

Several letters from neighbors mentioned concerns about tree removal. We would like to restate our original intentions and the communication process with our neighbors. After purchasing 25 Hawthorne last December, the insurance company required us to trim the trees around the property to obtain a reasonable insurance rate. We noticed a few trees near the property line that had crossed over the neighbor's fence and were impacting the driveway. Given the need to trim the trees, potential conflicts with neighbors, and the trees' potential impact on the property's foundation, we believed removal would be the best long-term solution.

We attempted to discuss the tree removal plan with the direct neighbors, including 29 Hawthorne St Unit 1. Additionally, the neighbors from 29 Hawthorne Unit 1 helped convey our plan to their co-proprietor at 29 Hawthorne Unit 2. We received no negative feedback from 29 Hawthorne Unit 1 and 19 Hawthorne St. The neighbor from 29 Hawthorne Unit 2 mentioned mildly that they liked the tree. Based on all feedback and comprehensive considerations, we decided to proceed with the tree removals. We communicated this decision to all direct neighbors before Christmas and left small gifts as tokens of appreciation for their understanding. At that time, we did not receive any further feedback. We then scheduled a professional tree service to handle the removals.

Up until the new project communication in April, we had not encountered any significant negative feedback from direct neighbors. Then, we received a concern from 29 Hawthorne Unit 1 regarding the stumps left by the tree removals and some indirect feedback from their co-proprietor at Unit 2. Following this, we actively engaged the tree service company to address the stumps. Currently, we are trying to agree on the best method to handle the stumps: the tree service company prefers grinding, while the neighbor strongly prefers excavation. We are concerned about the potential impact of excavation on underground utilities.

Regarding the tree removal permit mentioned, like most average people, we didn't know all the details about the process. That is why we hired a professional and experienced tree service company – East Coast Tree Service – which helped obtain the permit and police detail. Based on this, we didn't see any violations related to the tree removals. We hope this process description helps the neighbors and the community understand the whole story.

Addressing and resolving issues is our top priority, even though we were genuinely surprised to hear about strong objections to the whole project. We appreciate the feedback and will

continue to proactively communicate with neighbors to address and alleviate their concerns regarding the trees. Since receiving clear feedback from the objection letters, we are committed to doing our utmost to resolve the issue. The tree removal is unrelated to the new project, but we hope resolving it will positively impact the project's perception.

Design Style:

Two-family buildings are very common and popular in our surrounding neighborhood. Most existing two-family buildings have an up/down unit layout, with one unit on the first floor and another unit occupying the second and third floors. Our proposed plan remains a two-family home just features a different layout: instead of a vertical arrangement, our units are side by side. The planned new two-family building also integrates the garages into the main residential structure, unlike the typical layout where garages are separate from the living areas, making the overall building appear larger. From our perspective, our proposed plan is not very unique as it follows the traditional two-family model, and similar layouts can be found among our neighbors. We believe the side-by-side layout will provide greater convenience and comfort and aligns more with current trends, as more similar structural projects are being seen in the Belmont community.

Concerns on Neighbor's Sunlight, Front Door, Front Porch:

We understand the worries that the new project may potentially impact their lives, such as blocking sunlight. One of the purposes of zoning bylaws is to regulate the height, setbacks, and lot coverage of projects. This ensures that new developments do not negatively impact the comfort and quality of life of neighbors and maintain the overall harmony of the community. We have consulted the planning board to ensure our project properly follows all regulations. The existing 25 Hawthorne is one of the smallest buildings; what we are applying for is just what most neighbors have done in recent years, such as at 29 and 33 Hawthorne St. Regarding the shape and coverage, we also take reference from these neighbors; please refer to the comparison map.

The neighbors at 29 Hawthorne St Unit 1 mentioned that they searched my LinkedIn profile, saying I run a realty brokerage business and partner with some investment businesses in real estate development and management. In terms of professionalism, I am indeed involved in some real estate business, which is a way of my surviving. However, I don't think it is a fault to propose a home plan in Belmont. Again, our family has lived in Belmont in a compact condo for almost five years, and my kid, like the neighbor's son, is a student at Butler School. With the potential family growth and need for comfort, we would like to get a more spacious home as our lifelong residence. We believe owning a property is a significant decision for any average family. To get some financial relief, a two-family home is more suitable for our lives. Our family will live in one unit, and my relative Peishan will live in the other unit, allowing us to share the cost of owning a property in Belmont. There is no intention to resell the property for a quick gain. I don't believe my personal occupation, which involves the real estate industry, should be

a negative reason to object to our project. It is just a way to work and make a living, like all average people in the community, just with different jobs.

We are committed to maintaining active communication with our neighbors to solve or mitigate issues and integrate into the community. As the current owners of 25 Hawthorne, we are already part of the community regardless of the new project application. We aim to be good neighbors and will continue to engage with our neighborhood to foster good relationships. We take our neighbors' feedback seriously.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our application.

Best regards,
Owners of 25 Hawthorne St

Response to 33 Hawthorne St

Dear Board,

We have carefully reviewed the objection letter from the neighbor at 33 Hawthorne St. Below are our responses to the key points raised.

“Negative Impact on Neighboring Properties”

We are not professional economists, so we cannot definitively say how our home project will impact neighboring property values. However, based on our research, tearing down an old structure to build a new one generally increases property values. Here are some reasons why:

- New buildings typically adhere to updated building codes and standards, improving the overall quality of housing in the area.
- Buyers may find the area more desirable with new and modern homes, leading to increased demand and higher property values.
- A new, well-designed building can enhance the visual appeal of the neighborhood, potentially increasing property values.

Concerns on Architectural Style and Exterior Appeal

Our original architectural plan is based on a traditional American style with some modern elements, such as a stucco exterior and casement windows. We believe this will add a refreshing new look to the community. However, we are open to adjustments. If there are concerns about harmony with the existing neighborhood, we are willing to use traditional board siding and double-hung windows to better match the surrounding homes.

“Large Structure” on “a Small Lot”

After reviewing all abutter properties within 300 feet, we found that ours is not the largest. In fact, the total living area (TLA) of 33 Hawthorne St is larger than our proposed structure. Our site coverage ratio is within the by-law limits, and our lot size is 10,151 sqft, which is not considered small compared to other two-family lots in Belmont.

“Population Density”

Our community is in the General Residence (GR) zoning district, which permits two-family buildings. We are not seeking to exceed the restrictions of the Single Residence District. If two-family applications are not allowed in the GR zoning district, it would undermine the purpose of this zoning classification. In fact, based on my observations, almost half of the buildings on Hawthorne St. are two-family homes. We do not believe our project will significantly increase population density. On the contrary, it might help address the housing shortage in Belmont.

Concerns about “Reselling” and “Reaping Benefits”

As stated in the original owner’s statement, the new building will be our primary residence. Our family has been living in a compact condo in Belmont almost five years, and we are seeking a more spacious home for our potential growing family. My relative Peishan will live in the other unit as their family primary residence. My kid just finished kindergarten this summer and will

start first grade this fall. We have no plans to resell the new building for short-term gain; this will be our long-term home.

Like all average families, we hope the new building will hold its value. This decision to buy or build a house is not taken lightly and involves the support of our entire family. As the neighbors mentioned, we will also continue to pay property taxes on our new home, just as we have been doing since moving to Belmont in 2020.

Communication

We are open to communicating with all abutting neighbors regarding their feedback. We have made efforts to reach out to our direct neighbors through various means, such as stopping by, mailing, and dropping off gifts. While we may not have covered all abutting neighbors, we are open to further communication.

We appreciate the time and effort the planning board has dedicated to our case. We hope the board and the neighborhood can see our efforts to be considerate and harmonious with the community as we build our home in Belmont.

Best regards,
Owners of 25 Hawthorne St