

3. Narrative Statement describing the proposal for 28 Pierce Road

We, Jonathan and Michele Britt, are writing to request that the Belmont Planning Board approve our application for a special permit to increase our non-conforming structure by more than 30% of the gross floor area. Our property, located at 28 Pierce Road, is deemed a non-conforming structure on account of the existing garage wall being 8.1 feet from the property line, which does not meet the current ten-foot side setback zoning requirement.

Michele is a lifelong resident of Belmont. Other than attending college, she has not lived anywhere else. We purchased our home in June 2004 from Frederick Mosteller, the original owner, just eight months after being married. The property is a three bedroom and 2 ½ bath center entrance colonial with 1,788 square foot TLA on a 9,832 square foot lot (Town records). The Walnut Hill neighborhood is special to us because Michele's father and grandfather both grew up here.

Now eighteen years later we are both working from home, as the new post-pandemic normal, and using parts of our home for home offices. Michele's job was full-time remote before the coronavirus pandemic, and Jonathan's employer now has a generous teleworking policy, so office space is now a long-term need for our family.

The house was built in 1949 and since that time there have been no discernable renovations or upgrades. We have been working with a local Cambridge architect to: bring modern technology to our 73 year old home; create a space that will suit our immediate and long-term needs; design a structure that will blend well with the existing conditions; and to provide a home where extended family can gather for memorable get-togethers.

This special permit application is a follow-up to the December 1, 2020 public hearing for 28 Pierce Road. During the 2020 public hearing, Mr. Pinkerton suggested that the applicant should consider redrawing the plans, consider knocking down the garage, and moving over two feet. Mr. Pinkerton also noted that they consider withdrawing the application to redesign the plans and to construct so that they were eliminating the side setback <non-conformity>. Town of Belmont Planning Board meeting minutes from December 1, 2020, are included in Section 10 of this special permit application.

The 2020 special permit application was withdrawn. This re-designed project includes the concerns conveyed by both the Planning Board and our neighbors. The proposed renovations to 28 Pierce Road consist of: razing the existing non-conforming two gar garage; constructing a new two car garage two feet over to conform to side setbacks, constructing a new master bedroom suite over the new garage; and adding a single-story addition to the rear of the house. The idea of an attic dormer, proposed in 2020, has been removed.

New garage -- Based on input from the Planning Board, the existing non-conforming garage will be knocked down, and a new two car garage will be constructed two feet over to conform with linear setback requirements. The proposed new garage will be constructed approximately twelve (12) feet closer to the street, which is roughly the depth of the existing dining room, so that the garage is more in-line with the existing two story structure.

New Master Bedroom Suite -- We are proposing to add a new bedroom to the second floor, above the conforming garage. This will be a new master bedroom suite with a luxury bathroom, generous closet space, and a sitting area. The existing master suite will be made into a smaller bedroom (front of the house) and second floor laundry room (rear of the house), separated by a new hallway.

There were concerns about closeness to the side abutter, shading, views being blocked, and privacy. The location of the proposed conforming garage and second story addition now aligns with the existing two-story structure and is two feet further away from the abutter. With the proposed addition being in-line with the existing house, there is less chance of shading to all three abutters. In addition, being closer to the street helps to preserve the side abutter's view of Belmont Hill. Smaller bedroom windows facing the abutter, located above the bed, were chosen to preserve privacy. An artist rendition comparing the existing left side view with proposed left side view is shown in Section 9, page 3, of this special permit application.

Single story addition -- There exists a 9' x 12.5' covered porch on the back of our existing house. We would like to enclose this as living area and expand this space across the back of the house as an open floor plan concept.

This added space on the rear of the house will: expand our current 10' x 10' family room (at the top of the cellar stairs) so that guests can gather in one space; expand our 11' x 14' kitchen to include an island and eating area; and include a mud room with direct access to the garage. We currently step outside to access the garage.

With the proposed garage being closer to the street, the proposed single-story addition behind the garage will be used as an office, with the option of becoming a first-floor bedroom if needed.

This single-story addition will have negligible effects on the rear abutter. Not only does the existing covered porch have a similar footprint as the proposed addition, but there is also mature landscaping along the rear property line, including fifteen-foot-tall hemlocks, that hamper the rear abutter from seeing our house. See attached backyard photos in Section 9, pages 5-7, of this special permit application.

Attic dormer -- The proposed attic dormer from 2020, with walk up attic stairs, have been removed. Accessing the unfinished attic will be by pull down, accordion attic stairs, like the existing conditions.

Other renovations – The oil furnace will be replaced with a gas furnace. Central air conditioning units will be added. The units' location (under the rear deck) meets the Town guidelines. The chimney in the center of the house will be removed, and replaced with a first-floor half bath, and a second-floor closet. The existing 6' x 9' master bath will become a second-floor laundry room. The existing bulkhead to the cellar will be moved to behind the garage and mudroom.

The property is well landscaped, with a lush, green lawn. We intend to keep as much of the existing landscaping as possible. Plant and shrub descriptions, and location, are identified on the landscaping plan. Bushes that are damaged from construction will be replaced.

The proposed design adds 1,300 square feet of finished living space to the existing home, leading to a 3,088 square foot house that will compliment nicely to the Pierce Road neighborhood. The revised proposed renovations have been carefully designed to reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood and are consistent with renovations to nearby homes.

The Neighborhood Map, provided by the Town of Belmont Office of Community Development (OCD), is included in Section 11 of this special permit application. OCD also provided a Pierce Road Neighborhood Analysis to the applicant, which included TLA, lot size, and FAR values. TLA values, in square footage, were transcribed onto the map to illustrate similar scale dwellings and their location to the proposed project. Based on these findings, the scale of the proposed project is consistent with one third of houses on Pierce Road. We believe that the proposed design is in harmony with nearby homes.

Photos of nearby properties are included in Section 9 of this special permit application, along with similar properties in the neighborhood. The proposed design is in keeping with the intent of Town Meeting and the Planning Board Special permit criteria (Section 1.5.4.B) and is not substantially detrimental to the neighborhood.

We look forward to creating a house and home that is an asset to the Town and that complements the neighborhood. The revised proposed project addresses the concerns from both the Planning board and the neighbors. We ask that the planning board consider our special permit for the proposed renovations. Thank you for consideration on this matter.

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
December 1, 2020

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: January 29, 2021
TIME: 9:06 AM

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Chair; Ed Starzec; Matt Lowrie; Karl Haglund
Absent: Renee Guo; Thayer Donham
Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

Mr. Pinkerton called the meeting to order, introduced Planning Board members, and reviewed a summary of the items that were on the agenda. The meeting was held remotely via video conference webinar.

2. Public Hearing:

a. 28 Pierce Road: Two (2) Special Permits: Construct an addition – SR-C

Mr. Pinkerton read the public notice.

Joe Noone, Attorney, representing the Applicants, Jonathan and Michelle Brit, noted that the Applicants would like to build a second-floor addition over the garage (maintaining the existing nonconforming set back), add an addition to the rear, raise an existing porch and construct an addition on the rear of the house. They would also like to lengthen the garage and keep within the nonconforming setback and to construct a dormer over the rear of the house. The additions would exceed the 30 percent allowed by the Town and this was why they were seeking the special permit. The Applicant's TLA analysis showed the renovations coming in at 20 percent of the size of the surrounding neighborhood. The Applicant's FAR calculations show that the proposed size was consistent with other homes in the neighborhood. Three abutters submitted support and possibly one neighbor was concerned about the dormer. He added that the proposed changes were in general harmony with the neighborhood and not a detriment to the neighborhood. He also noted that over 40 percent of the surrounding properties had a similar dormer to the one being proposed.

Maria Tourreilles, 22 Pierce Road, next door neighbor, noted that the house was too close to her as it was, the second-floor addition would now mean that she would now have her privacy invaded. The second floor would certainly create shadows. The value of her property would go down and the garage was way too close and she could not imagine people living on top of it. She does not want to lose her view of Belmont Hill and the foliage. She was in opposition of the application as the proposed house was too big.

Steve Boyle, 55 Hastings Road, neighbor to the rear. He noted that he thought that the scale of

the addition was too big and he was concerned about the large third-floor dormer. There were no other homes with a third-floor dormer, this was too big for the neighborhood. He would like to maintain home sizes and open spaces in the neighborhood. He was in opposition of the special permits.

Kathrine Whitestone, 49 Hastings Road, noted that the proposed additions were too big for the neighborhood, light-blocking and she was in objection to the special permits.

Mr. Pinkerton explained the PB's concerns of expansions on nonconforming setbacks, the PB has not allowed them unless it was a special circumstance. He added the neighbors were not happy. The PB has not been allowing full third story dormers on top of second stories, the dormer was called out as an attic but this doesn't mean it couldn't be used as an office or a fifth bedroom, it should be counted in the TLA as it was approximately 400 square feet. He suggested that the Applicant should consider redrawing the plans, consider knocking down the garage and moving over two feet.

Mr. Noone asked to have a working group set up and Mr. Pinkerton noted that they should rework the plans first before going in for a working group.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the dormer would create a huge bump in the height of the building. It would be better to see a new effort rather than a working group.

Mr. Starzec agreed that the third-floor dormer was too big and it created a tall wall effect and the windows were the same size as the rest of the house.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that they consider withdrawing the application to redesign the plans and to construct so that they were eliminating the side setback.

Mr. Haglund, also noted that they need to see a different proposal before a working group would be organized.

MOTION to continue to December 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

3. Continued Public Hearings:

a. 30 Newcastle Road: Special Permit: Construct a new single-family home – SR-C

MOTION to continue to December 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

b. 30 Horne Road: Special Permit: Construct an addition – SR-C

Michael Logan, Applicant, noted that he has made some changes to the original plans. Changes were made to the elevations and the TLA was reduced. The PB reviewed the changes in the

plans.

Mr. Pinkerton reviewed TLA relative to the rest of the neighborhood. He noted that the single-family house being proposed was as big as many of the two-family houses in the neighborhood. It was an extraordinarily large structure that was being proposed, it was one of the largest homes in the neighborhood.

Mr. Logan noted that he thought that the problem was the mass and the TLA and the ridge height, and he came back with smaller home and now the TLA was a big concern.

Mr. Starzec and Mr. Lowrie agreed with Mr. Pinkerton's concerned about the TLA. If it were allowed here it would be allowed on that whole street and it would be a completely different neighborhood.

The PB concurred that they need to come down on the size and then come back and maybe then a working group later.

MOTION to continue to December 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Haglund. Motion passed.

c. 1 Broad Street: Two Special Permits to construct an addition – SR-C

Paul Riegle and Laura Miyakawa, Applicants, reviewed the changes that were previously made to the plans. Since the last meeting the TLA was reduced by 143 square feet down to 2,379 square feet and the new FAR was .33. They squared off the back of the addition, pulled it back from the setback lines from the rear and Sherman Street sides.

Mr. Lowrie noted that he would vote no because he felt that the addition was too large and out of character with the neighborhood. He thought that the one-foot reduction of the roof and making the basement lower was an issue because it was still really a three-story building. There was a lot of TLA that wasn't TLA because the basement was made bigger.

The PB discussed the difference between a "basement" and the "cellar" and the height of the addition.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the PB had previously allowed raising the landscape or they moved the back of the house in until it was no longer an issue.

Mr. Wheeler noted that the PB has typically not really looked at basements or cellars. As long as the appearance was a two and a half story the PB hasn't taken into account the basement/cellar.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the one-foot height reduction was taken from the attic and the right and left sides do not look a whole lot different from the outside, the lower side was only one foot lower. The height of the addition was as high as the three-story.

Rayhaneh Ramezany, Project Manager, Architect, Maryann Thompson Architects, described the new side view and the changes since the last meeting.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that there was a distinct request from the abutter to add drainage and appropriate flood mitigation. Mr. Riegle noted that he agreed and that this was reasonable.

The PB will continue to the next meeting when more PB members will be present and the Applicant may have a better chance at approval of the special permit.

MOTION to continue to December 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Starzec. Motion passed.

d. 24 Grant Avenue: Two (2) Special Permits to construct a two-family home – GR

Mr. Cusano, Applicant, noted that he would like to withdraw the application and make a new proposal for a single-family home. He asked to see the neighborhood TLA and FAR numbers. Mr. Pinkerton shared his screen showing the existing and proposed TLA and FAR compared to other neighborhood dwellings.

The PB reviewed the graph with Mr. Cusano and reviewed what size may be acceptable to build the new single-family home.

MOTION to approve request to withdraw the pending application without prejudice for a new application to be filed was made by Mr. Lowrie and seconded by Mr. Pinkerton. Motion passed.

MOTION to close the public hearing was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

e. 40 Walnut Street: Two (2) Special Permits: Construct a two-family home – GR

MOTION to continue to December 15, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

4. Updates on Cases and Planning Board Projects, and Committee Reports

No new cases or updates were reviewed.

5. Adjourn 8:52 PM

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BRITT
Residence
28 PIERCE RD.
BELMONT, MA

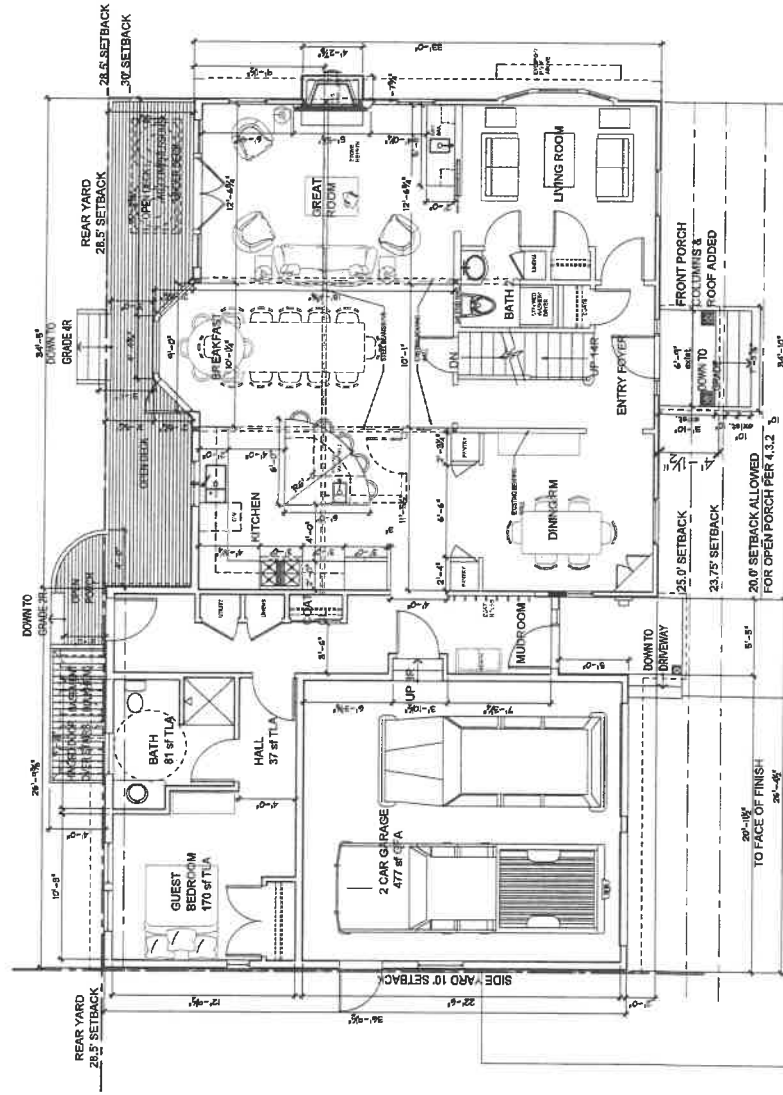
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 Drawn By: KQ
 Checked By: KBO
 Drawing Title:

**PROPOSED
FLOOR
PLANS**

and

Sheet No. 1

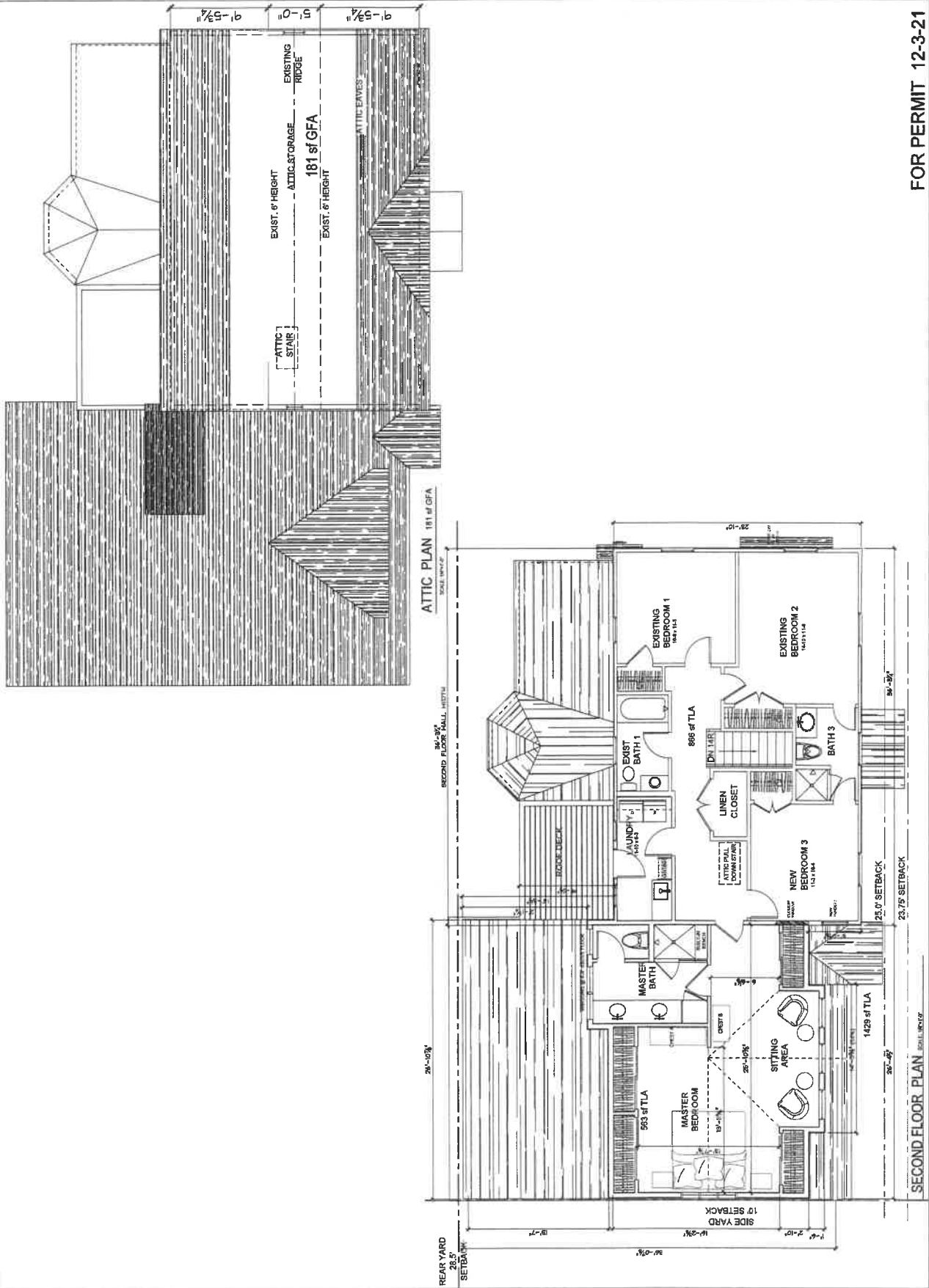
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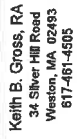


FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

FOR PERMIT 12-3-21





BRITT
Residence
28 PIERCE RD.
BELMONT, MA

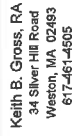
**PROPOSED
BASEMENT
PLAN**

Sheet No. 11

A1.2



FOR PERMIT 12-3-21

[illegible]

Date:	DEC. 3, 2021
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Project Number:	
Drawn By:	KG
Checked By:	KBG
Drawing Title:	

End:

Sheet No. :

A2.0



FOR PERMIT 12-3-21

[illegible]

BRITT
Residence
28 PIERCE RD.
BELMONT, MA

Date :	DEC. 3, 2021
Scale :	1/2" = 1'-0"
Project Number :	
Drawn By :	MG
Checked By :	KBO
Issued on Title :	

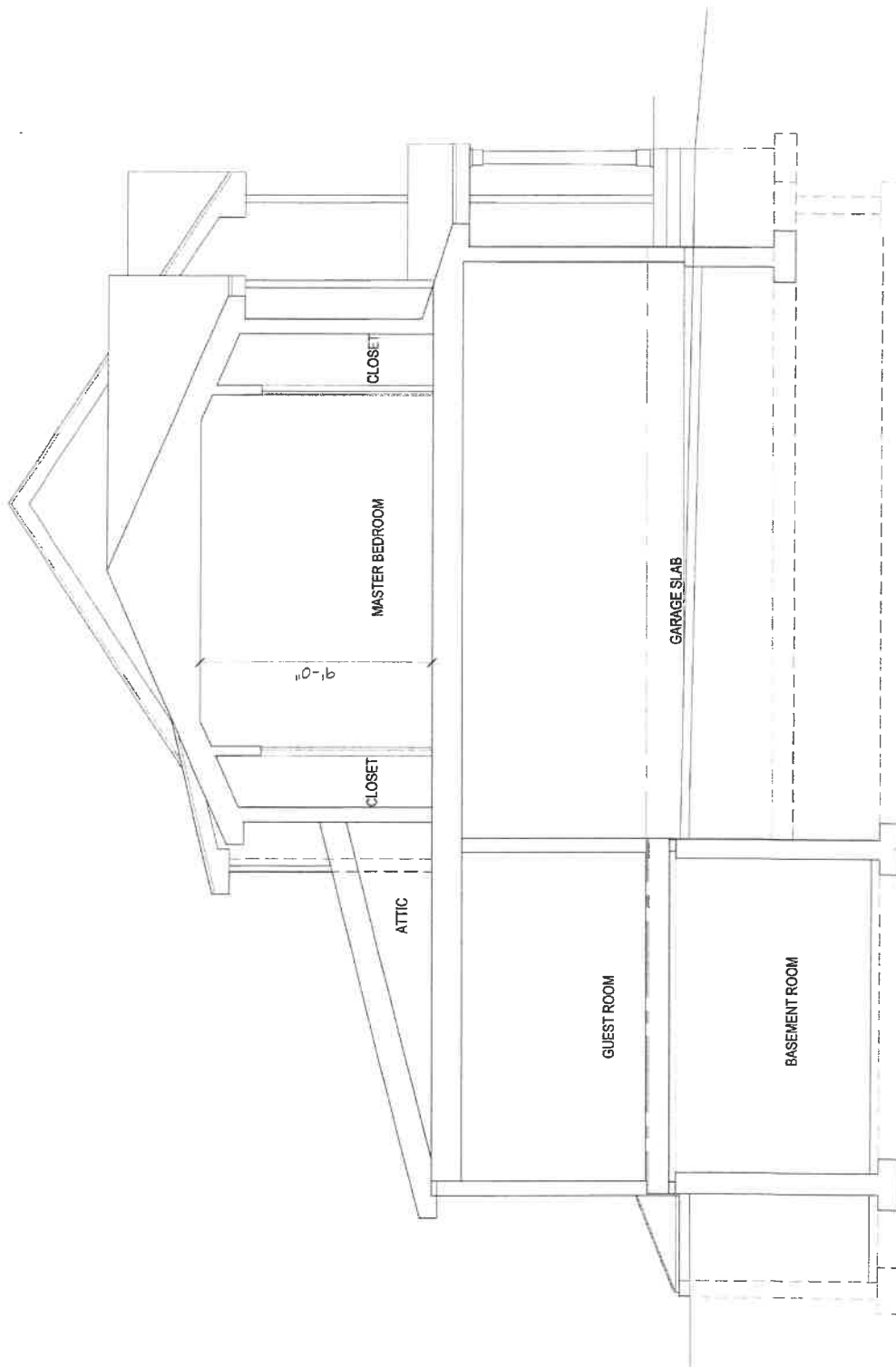
**PROPOSED
GARAGE
SECTION**

Seed:

Test No. : _____

A3.0

FOR PERMIT 12-3-21



SECTION AT GARAGE

SCALE: $\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'-0''$

Zoning Compliance Check List

Properties Located within the SR-C Districts
(To be Completed by a Registered Land Surveyor)

Property Address: 28 Pierce Road

Surveyor Signature and Stamp: Scott C. Lynch



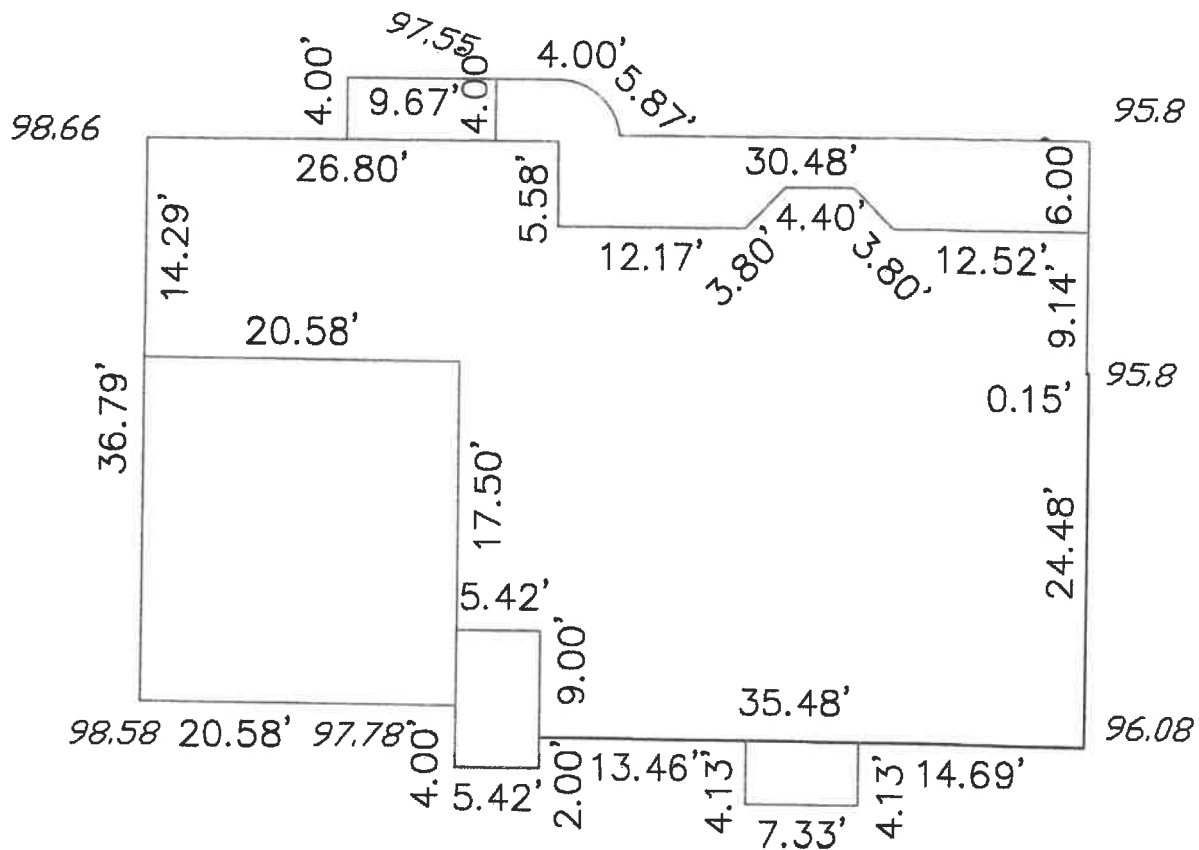
Date: 5/20/2022

Per §4.2 of the Zoning By-Law

Per §4.2 of the Zoning By-Law							
		REQUIRED		EXISTING		PROPOSED	
Lot Area (sq. ft.)		9,000		9836		-	
Lot Frontage (feet)		75		88.65		-	
Lot Coverage (% of lot)		25%		15.2%		24.8%	
Open Space (% of lot)		50%		75.3%		68.1%	
Setbacks: (feet)	➤ Front (a)	25 / 22.7		27.2 / 26.2		25.2 / 31.4	
	➤ Side/Side	10	10	8.1	-	10'	-
	➤ Rear	28.5		34.9'		28.8	
Building Height:	➤ Midpoint (feet)	30		23.5		-	
	➤ Ridge (feet)						
	➤ Stories	2 1/2		2		-	
1/2 Story (feet) (Per §1.4)	➤ Perimeter (50%)						
	➤ Area (60%)						
	➤ Length (75%)						
HVAC:		Prohibited in Front Yard and Side and Rear Setbacks					

(a) Front setback is equal to the average front setbacks of the abutting properties on either side.

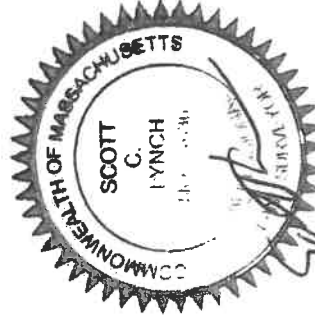
SUBMIT CALCULATIONS for all of the requirements listed above on a separate piece of paper(s) to verify how they were calculated



Segment	Coiling Elevation	Elevation From	Elevation To	Length	Height	Coiling Square Footage	Exposed Square Footage	% Covered
A	99.2	97.78	97.78	5.42	7.7	41.73	7.70	81.56%
B	99.2	97.78	97.78	9.00	7.7	69.30	12.78	81.56%
C	99.2	97.78	96.08	35.48	7.7	273.20	80.54	70.52%
D	99.2	96.08	95.8	24.48	7.7	188.50	79.80	57.66%
E	99.2	95.8	95.8	0.15	7.7	1.16	0.51	55.84%
F	99.2	95.8	95.8	9.14	7.7	70.378	31.076	55.84%
G	99.2	95.8	95.8	12.52	7.7	96.404	42.568	55.84%
H	99.2	95.8	97.55	3.8	7.7	29.26	9.595	67.21%
I	99.2	97.55	97.55	4.4	7.7	33.88	7.26	78.57%
J	99.2	97.55	97.55	3.8	7.7	29.26	6.27	78.57%
K	99.2	97.55	97.55	12.17	7.7	93.709	20.0805	78.57%
L	99.2	97.55	97.55	5.58	7.7	42.966	9.207	78.57%
M	99.2	97.55	97.75	26.8	7.7	206.36	41.54	79.87%
N	99.2	98.66	98.66	14.29	7.7	110.033	7.7166	92.99%
O	99.2	99.2	99.2	20.58	7.7	158.47	0.00	100.00%
P	99.2	99.2	99.2	17.5	7.7	134.75	0	100.00%
				205.11	7.7	1579.35	356.64	77.42%

Ceiling Height:	7.7	<- enter
Basement Floor Elevation	91.5	<- enter
Ceiling Elevation	99.2	
Perimeter Total Length	205.11	
Total Perimeter Square Foot	1579.35	
Exposed Square Footage	356.64	
% Covered	77.42%	<- result

North	South	East	West
#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!
#REF!	#REF!	#REF!	#REF!
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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Segment	Segment From Existing Grade	Segment From New Grade	Segment To Existing Grade	Segment To New Grade	Segment Length	Avg Existing	Avg New	Difference
A	98.58	98.58	97.78	97.78	20.58	2020.544	2020.544	0.00
B	97.78	97.78	97.78	97.78	4	391.12	391.12	0.00
B	97.78	97.78	97.78	97.78	5.42	529.9676	529.9676	0.00
B	97.78	97.78	97.78	97.78	2	195.56	195.56	0.00
C	97.78	97.78	97.78	97.78	13.46	1316.119	1316.119	0.00
D	97.78	97.78	97.78	97.78	4.13	403.8314	403.8314	0.00
C	97.78	97.78	96.08	96.08	7.33	710.4969	710.4969	0.00
D	96.08	96.08	96.08	96.08	4.13	396.8104	396.8104	0.00
D	96.08	96.08	96.08	96.08	14.69	1411.415	1411.415	0.00
E	96.08	96.08	95.8	95.8	24.48	2348.611	2348.611	0.00
E	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.8	0.15	14.37	14.37	0.00
F	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.8	9.14	875.612	875.612	0.00
G	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.8	6	574.8	574.8	0.00
H	95.8	95.8	97.55	97.55	30.48	2946.654	2946.654	0.00
I	97.55	97.55	97.55	97.55	5.87	572.6185	572.6185	0.00
M	97.55	97.55	97.55	97.55	4	390.2	390.2	0.00
N	97.55	97.55	97.55	97.55	9.67	943.3085	943.3085	0.00
O	97.55	97.55	97.55	97.55	4	390.2	390.2	0
P	97.55	97.55	98.66	98.66	13.13	1288.119	1288.119	0
Q	98.66	98.66	98.58	98.58	36.79	3628.23	3628.23	0
					219.45	21348.59	21348.59	0

Ceiling Height: 7.7
 Basement Floor Elevation 91.5
 Ceiling Elevation 99.2
 Perimeter Total Length 219.45
 Total Perimeter Square Foot 1689.77
 Average Existing Grade 97.28
 New Average Grade 97.28
 Difference in Grade in feet 0.00

% Covered using Avg Grade 75.09%

