

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 321 E Ann Street, Application Number HDC24-0078

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward Historic District

REPORT DATE: June 13, 2024

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, June 10, 2024

OWNER

Name: Robert Rubin
Address: PO Box 7967
 Ann Arbor, MI 48107
Phone:

APPLICANT

Thomas Basinger
 479 Courtland St
 Ypsilanti, MI 48197
 (734) 545-1077

BACKGROUND: This two-story Italianate was first occupied by Sylvina Cowles, the widow of alderman Martin Cowles, in 1878 per City directories. It features two-over-two windows, bracketed eaves, and a cut stone foundation. The west elevation has a two-story side gable, and the east elevation features a first-floor boxed-bay window.

From 1892 until the mid-1920s the house was used as the parsonage for the First Baptist Church. Next, blacksmith Fred Colvin and family lived in the house until the late 1930s, when it was converted to apartments.

LOCATION: The site is located on the north side of East Ann Street between North Fifth Avenue and North Division Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace a non-original front stoop with a new roofed entry porch.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- (2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the

old and shall be compatible with the massing size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

- (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

District or Neighborhood Setting – Design for Missing Features

Recommended:

Designing and constructing a new feature of the building or landscape when the historic feature is completely missing, such as row house steps, a porch, a streetlight, or a terrace. It may be a restoration based on documentary or physical evidence; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the setting.

Entrances and Porches – Design for Missing Features

Recommended: Designing and constructing a new entrance or porch when the historic entrance or porch is completely missing. It may be a restoration based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.

Not Recommended: Creating a false historical appearance because the replaced entrance or porch is based on insufficient historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.

Introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material and color.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other Ann Arbor guidelines may also apply):

Residential Porches

Appropriate: Using replacement features that match the documented historic design. If no documentation exists, using a simple, plain design.

Not Appropriate: Using decking as a flooring material that does not have a closed butt joint.

Using pressure treated wood except where structural members are hidden and come in contact with the ground.

Creating a false historical appearance by adding a porch, entrance, feature, or detail that is conjectural or comes from other properties.

All New Construction

Appropriate: Designing new sidewalks, entrances, steps, porches and canopies to be consistent with the historic rhythm established in the district.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The house currently has an approximately 7' square concrete stoop with four east-side-entry concrete stairs and a metal guardrail. Per the 1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the house had a full-width front porch. That porch is present on 1947 aerial photos but was removed by 1960.
2. The proposed front porch is wood with a 6'9" wide by 5'5" deep deck, front facing stairs, two 5" square posts and a hip roof. Guardrails meet the HDC Design Guidelines, with a traditional design and height but extensions on top to meet Building Code height requirements. Skirting is painted wood lattice, moldings and trim are simple and traditional, and small brackets at the post tops give the porch some visual interest.
3. There are no changes to the existing concrete walk.
4. The porch was originally the full width of the house. This would be a more historically accurate reconstruction, but we don't know what that original porch looked like so at this time historic replication isn't an option. Replacing the existing concrete stoop with a covered wood porch is appropriate and will be visually compatible with the house. The design uses elements like straight porch posts and parallel (to the house) deck boards that won't be mistaken for historic but presents them in a way that is stylish and consistent with the historic rhythm of the block. Staff recommends approval.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion supports staff findings and is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

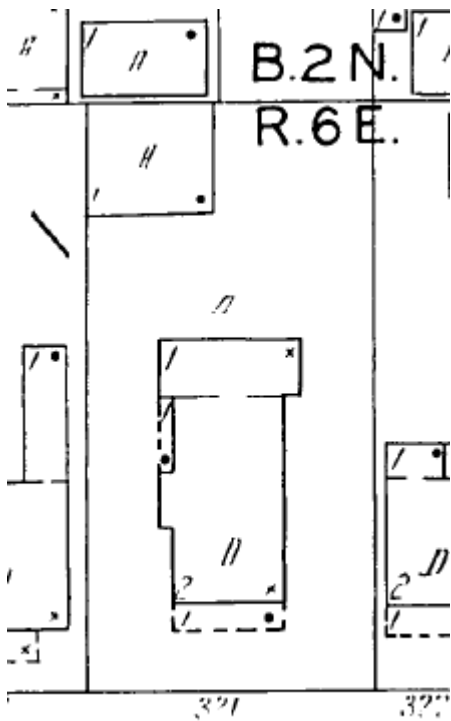
I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 321 East Ann Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace a non-historic front stoop with a new covered porch, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, and material to the building and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for neighborhood setting and entrances and porches and the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*

ATTACHMENTS: application, photos, drawings

321 E Ann (April 2024 Google Street View)



321 E Ann Street (1931 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map)



Proposed Porch Replacement

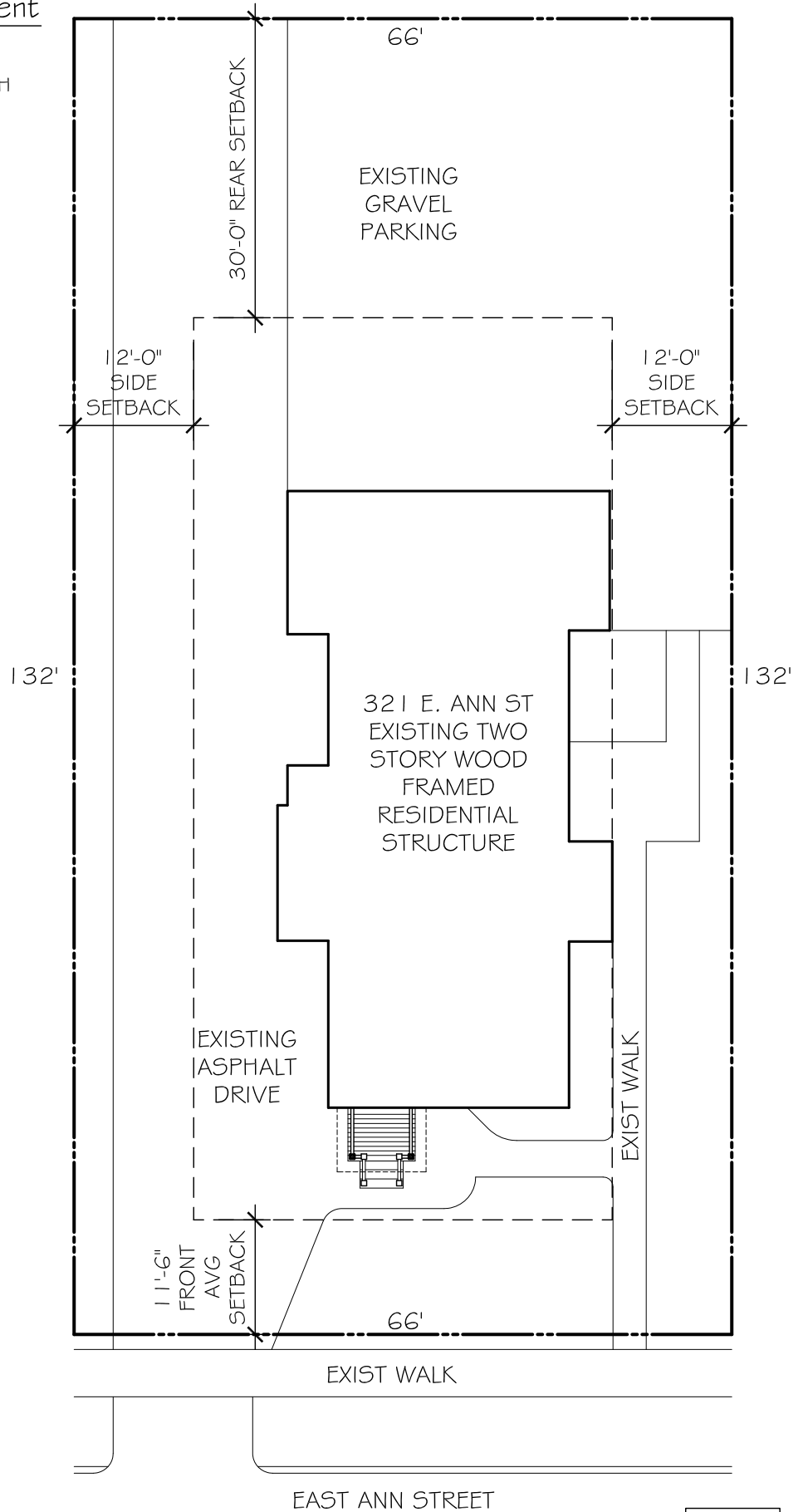
PROPOSED SITE DIAGRAM
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

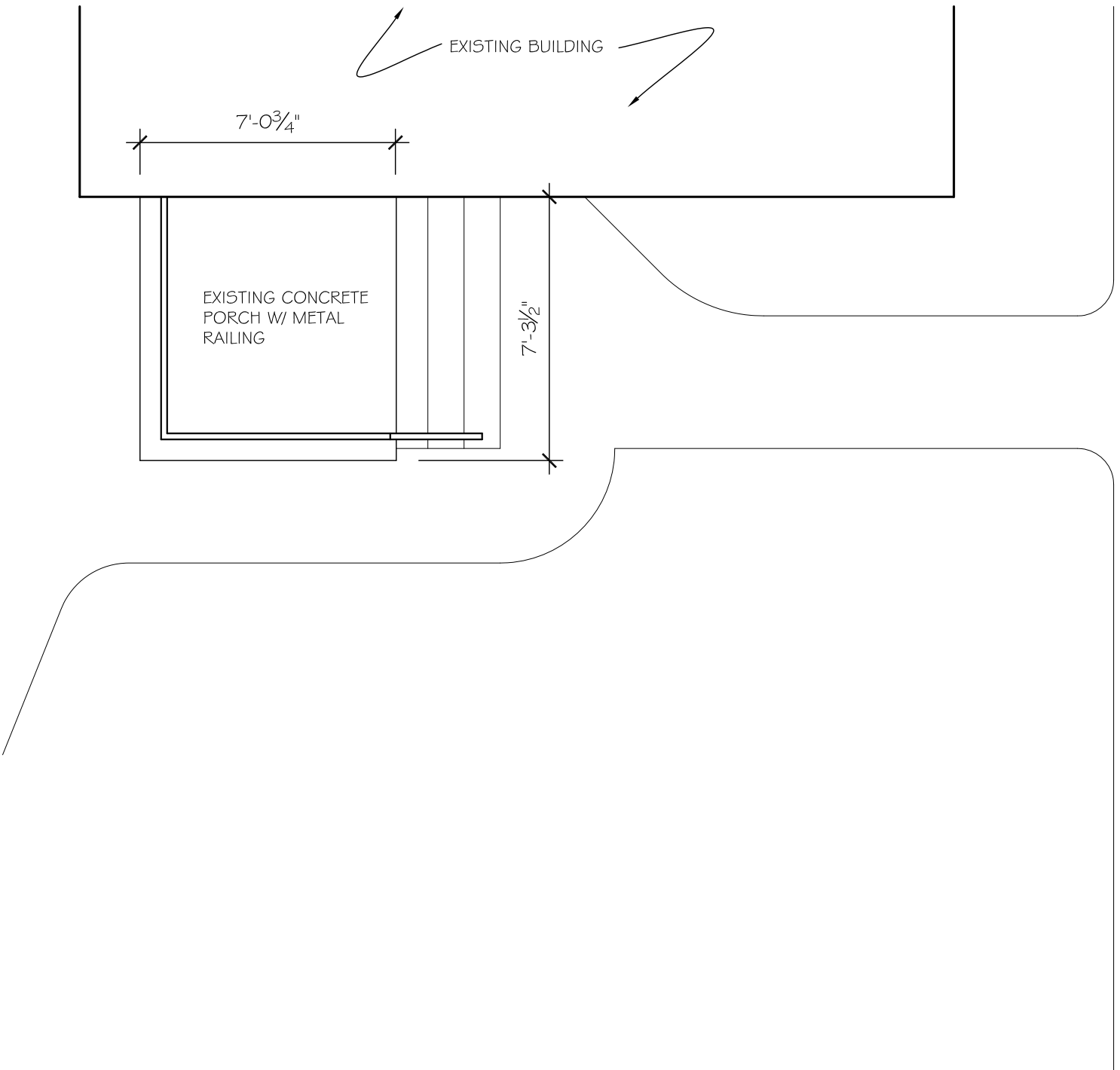
EXISTING PORCH PLAN

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

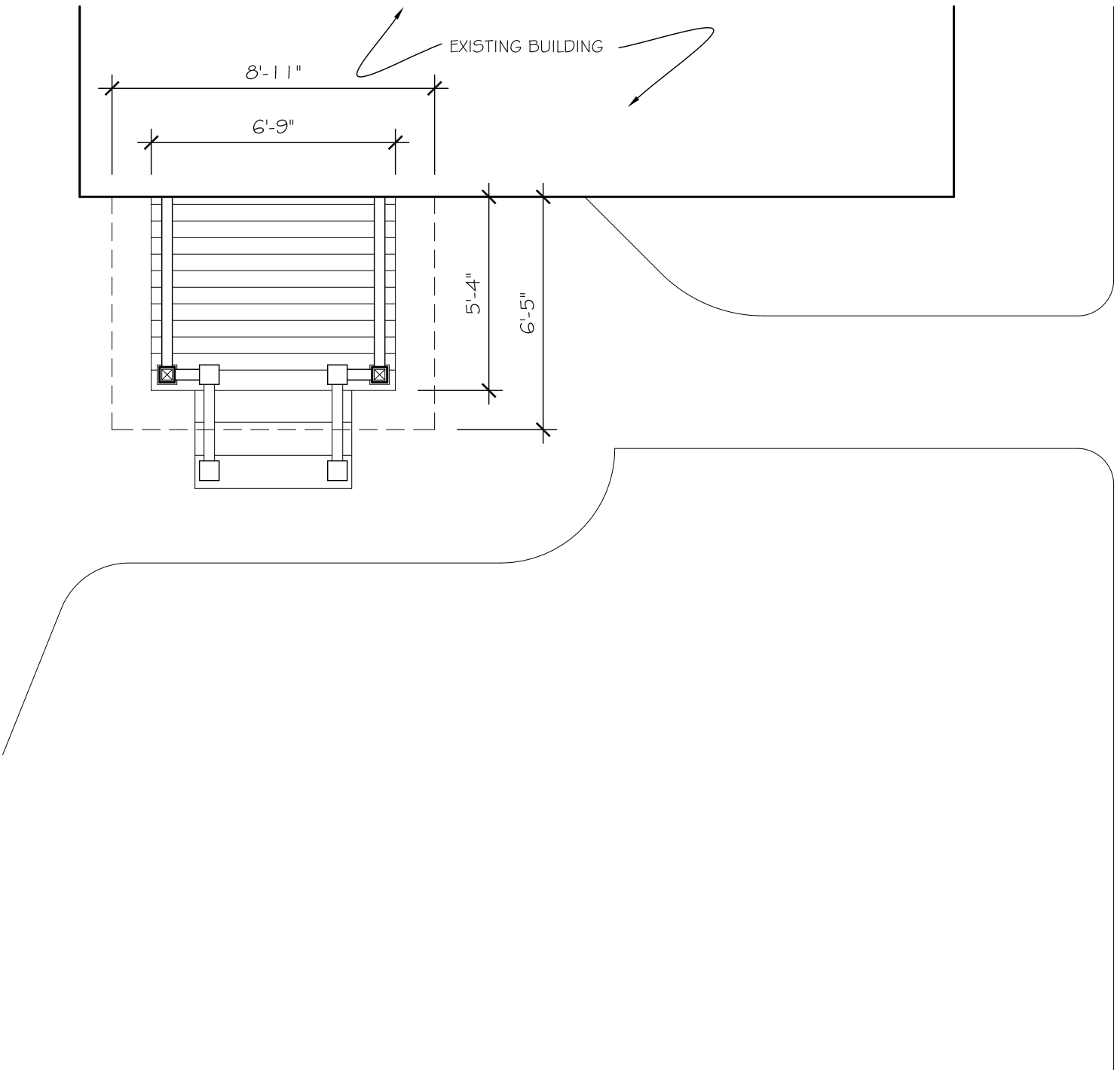
PROPOSED PORCH PLAN

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

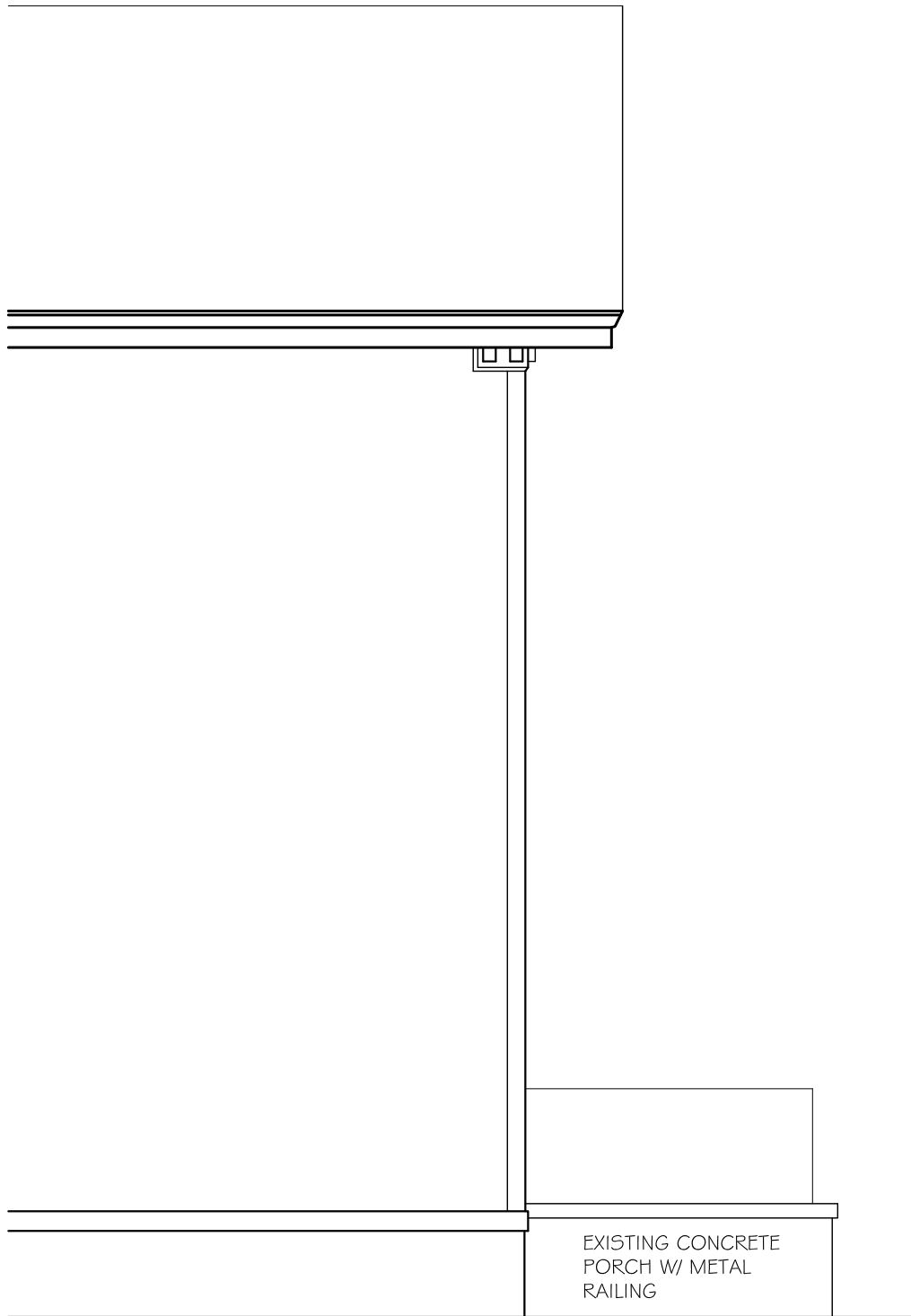
EXISTING WEST ELEVATION

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad| ROOM architecture + design



EXISTING CONCRETE
PORCH W/ METAL
RAILING

Proposed Porch Replacement

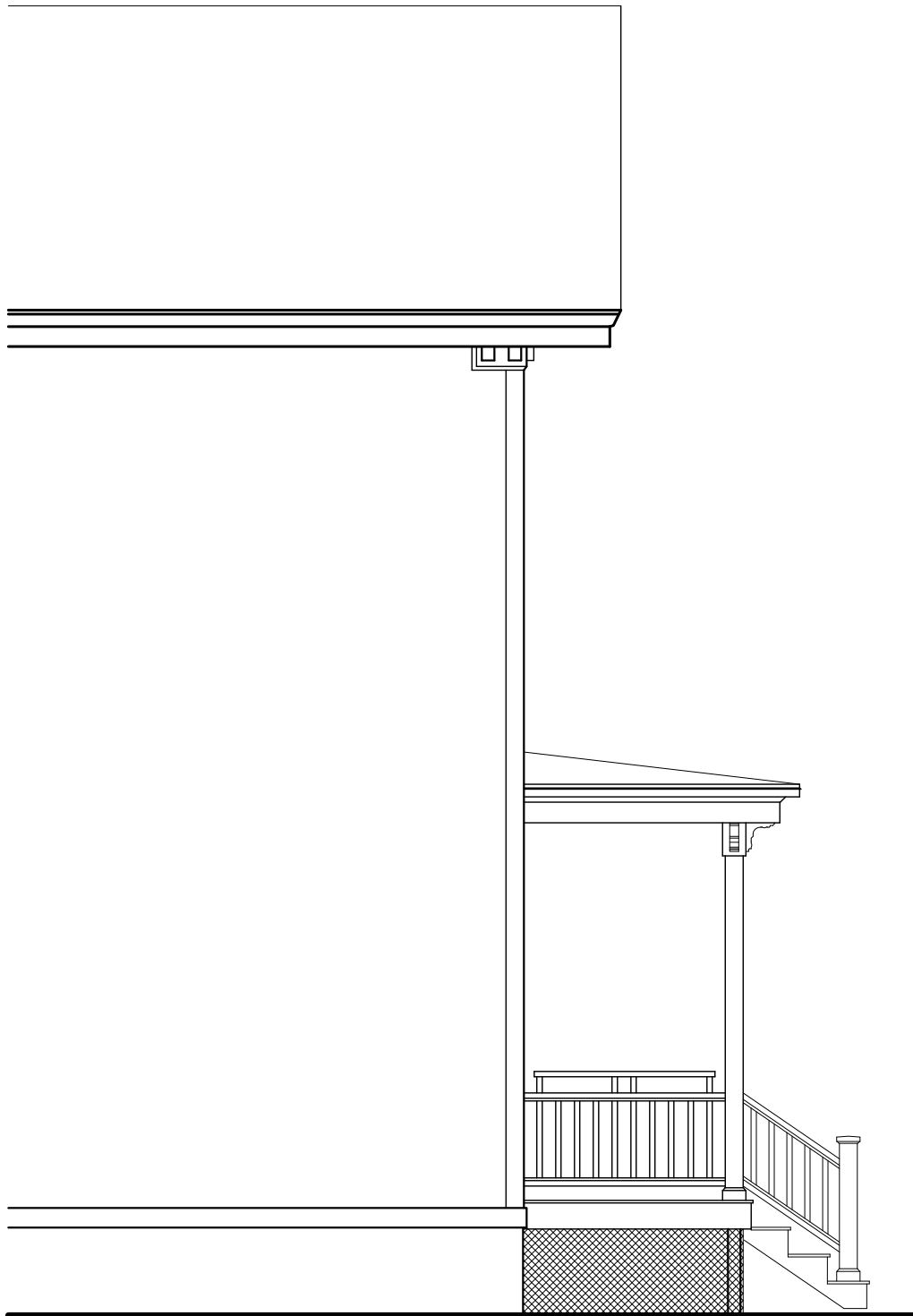
PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad| ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

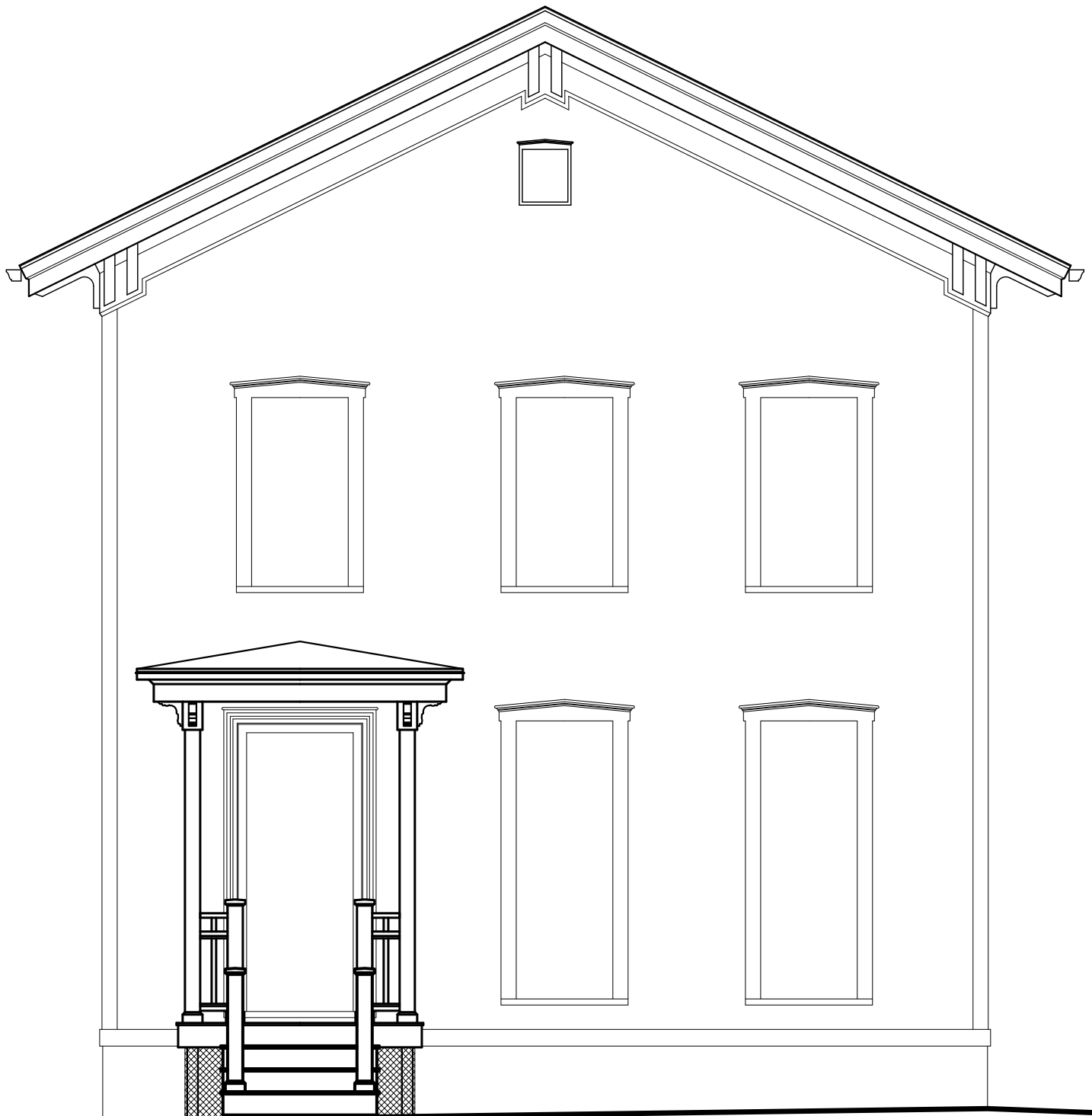
PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION

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

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad| ROOM architecture + design



Proposed Porch Replacement

PROPOSED SOUTH PORCH ELEVATION

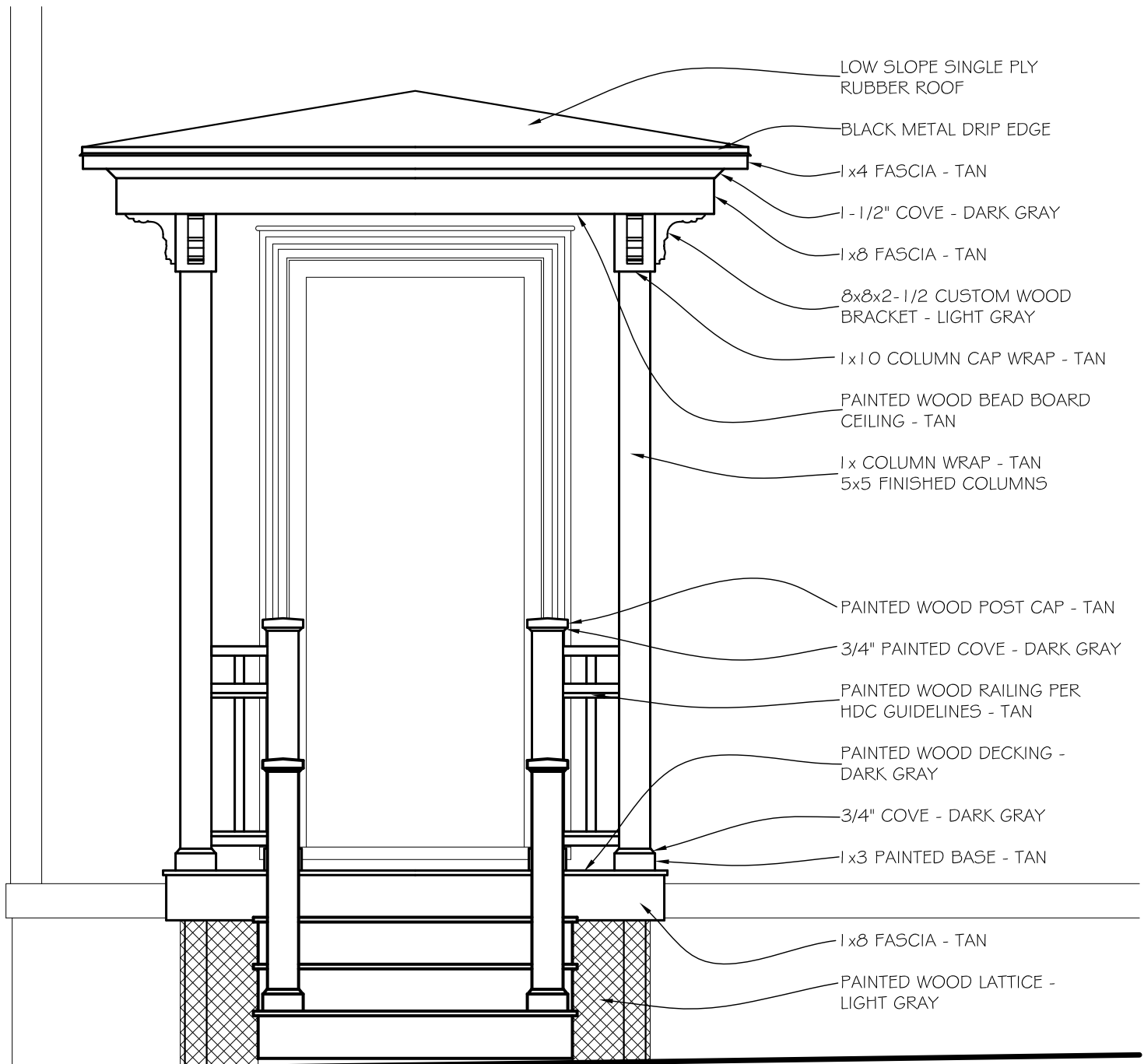
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design

EXISTING PAINT COLORS WERE CUSTOM MIXED BY ANDERSON PAINT COMPANY. NEW PAINT COLORS TO MATCH EXISTING TAN & DARK GRAY TRIM COLORS AND LIGHT GRAY MAIN COLOR



Proposed Porch Replacement

PROPOSED SOUTH PORCH ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

321 E. Ann Street

5/23/24 - HDC

ad | ROOM architecture + design

EXISTING PAINT COLORS WERE CUSTOM MIXED BY ANDERSON PAINT COMPANY. NEW PAINT COLORS TO MATCH EXISTING TAN & DARK GRAY TRIM COLORS AND LIGHT GRAY MAIN COLOR

