

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 418 S First Street, Application Number HDC11-091

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: August 5, for the August 11, 2011 HDC Meeting

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, July 11, 2011

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Margaret Wong	Same
Address:	418 S First Street Ann Arbor, MI 48103	
Phone:	(734) 998-2546	

BACKGROUND: This simple single-story cottage first appears in the 1928 Polk City Directory as the home of Gottlieb Weltz, a mason. It features a partial-width front porch and one-over-one double hung windows. The house has had at least two rear additions since 1965. The garage does not appear on the 1965 Sanborn map, and was either constructed after that date or moved to its current site.

At the July 14, 2011 HDC meeting, a different version of this application was denied.

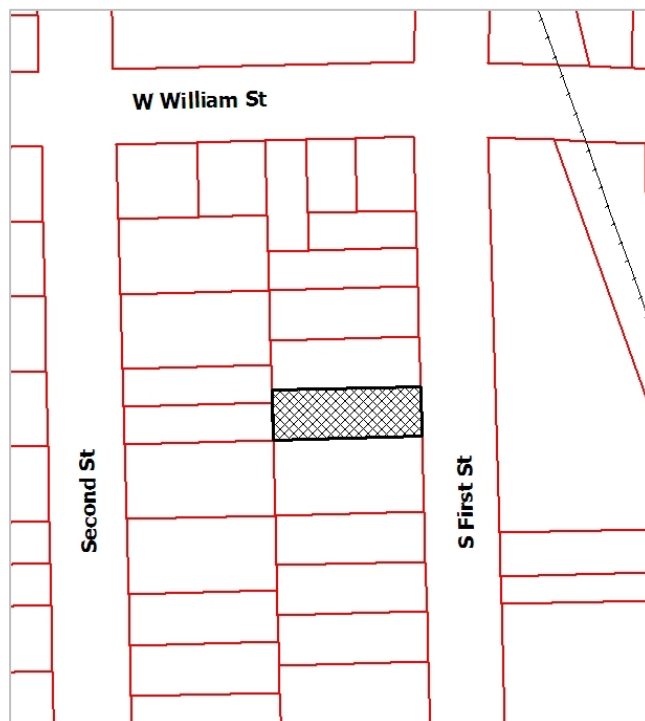
LOCATION: The site is located on the west side of South First Street, south of West William and north of West Jefferson.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to demolish a one-story garage and construct a two story tandem garage with a studio above.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

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

- (2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will 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 will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property will be unimpaired.

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

Building Site

Recommended: Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserve the historic relationship between a building or buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction onto the building site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color and texture or which destroys historic relationships on the site.

Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building site so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

District or Neighborhood Setting

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. Changes to this application from the one denied last month include (see application for additional explanation from applicant):
 - a. Dormers now have a traditional shed roof to address concerns of commissioners.
 - b. The trellis structure has been expanded to define a rear courtyard area in the backyard. This particular yard is already substantially walled off by fences and buildings located on neighboring properties, thus the trellis will have no negative impact on the neighborhood or district. It is also designed to be reversible.
 - c. A site section drawing comparing this building to neighboring ones is now included on the top of the Area Plan sheet.

The following comments are repeated from the previous application's staff report. The comments remain valid for this application.

2. This house is situated in a low spot on this block. The houses behind it on Second Street are on ground 8' higher at their front elevations (see topo at end of this report). Surrounding buildings of interest include a large modern apartment building to the south with an entirely paved backyard, a 1 ½ story building near the west (rear) property line that is similar in height to the one proposed in this application, and a large one-story cinderblock building in the backyard two lots to the north that is home to a plumbing and heating company (see area plan submitted with application and aerial photo). Another site consideration is that there are no houses across First Street, only a large lumberyard building that presents a blank wall parallel to the street.
3. It would be difficult to add additional living space onto the existing house without compromising its historic form. The proposed garage/studio is, in staff's opinion, large for an outbuilding. The view from the street is minimized by the narrow, deep design of the structure. The brunt of the height and length of the building would be felt by the occupants of 414 South First, the lot immediately to the north. That house's backyard is mostly open, with only a garden shed in the rear corner and privacy fencing running along the interior side of the driveway. Staff is less concerned about the impacts to the non-contributing apartment building to the south, and to the Second Street lots to the rear because of their existing outbuildings and higher elevation. The proposed garage/studio will be taller than the single-story house at 418 S First. That is not historically unprecedented on the OWS since barns and outbuildings were often taller than a single story. The location of the garage/studio, farther back than the rear wall of the house's rear additions, adequately separates the historic main block of the house from the taller new structure.
4. The garage/studio's design is modern and would not confuse the historic record, yet retains a traditional gable front and cementitious clapboard siding. The proposed materials are appropriate and compatible with surrounding buildings. The wood or metal trellis structure circling the building is simple and designed to support plant materials.
5. This lot and its First Street neighbors are zoned C2B, which means there are no setback requirements or height limitations on accessory buildings under Chapter 55 Zoning of city code. The applicant has elected to follow most of the zoning requirements for the R4C residential zoning district which abuts this property to the rear, out of deference to the residential character of the block.
6. Staff recommends approval of the application and finds it is generally compatible in design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the site and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10, and the guidelines for building site and district or neighborhood setting.

MOTION

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 418 South First Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to demolish a single-car garage and construct a two-car tandem garage with studio space above, as documented in the owner's submittal. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house 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 building site and district or neighborhood setting.

MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 418 S First Street in the Old West Side Historic District

_____ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

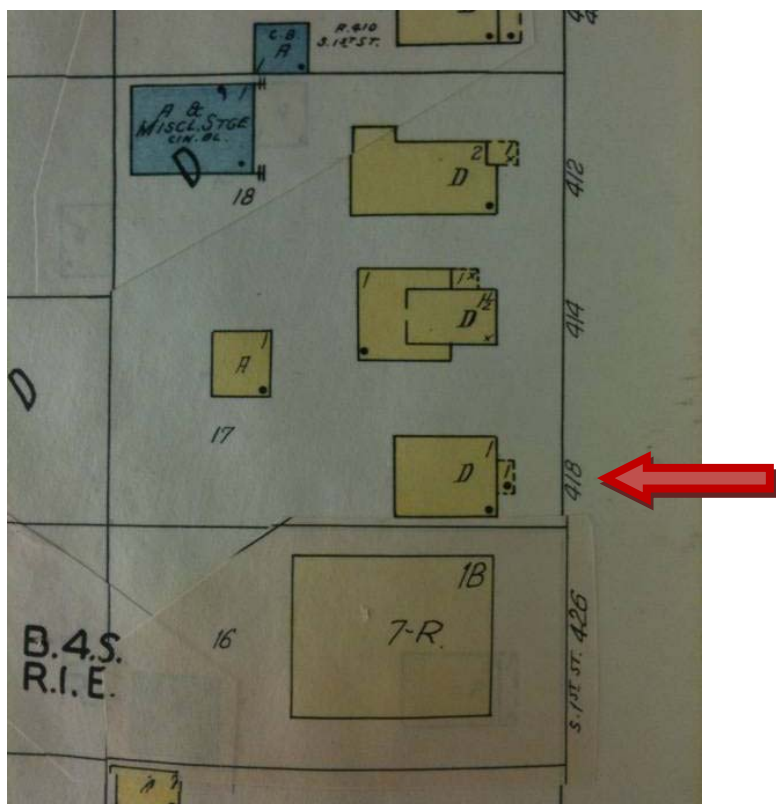
The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: application, drawings, photos.

418 S First (2007)



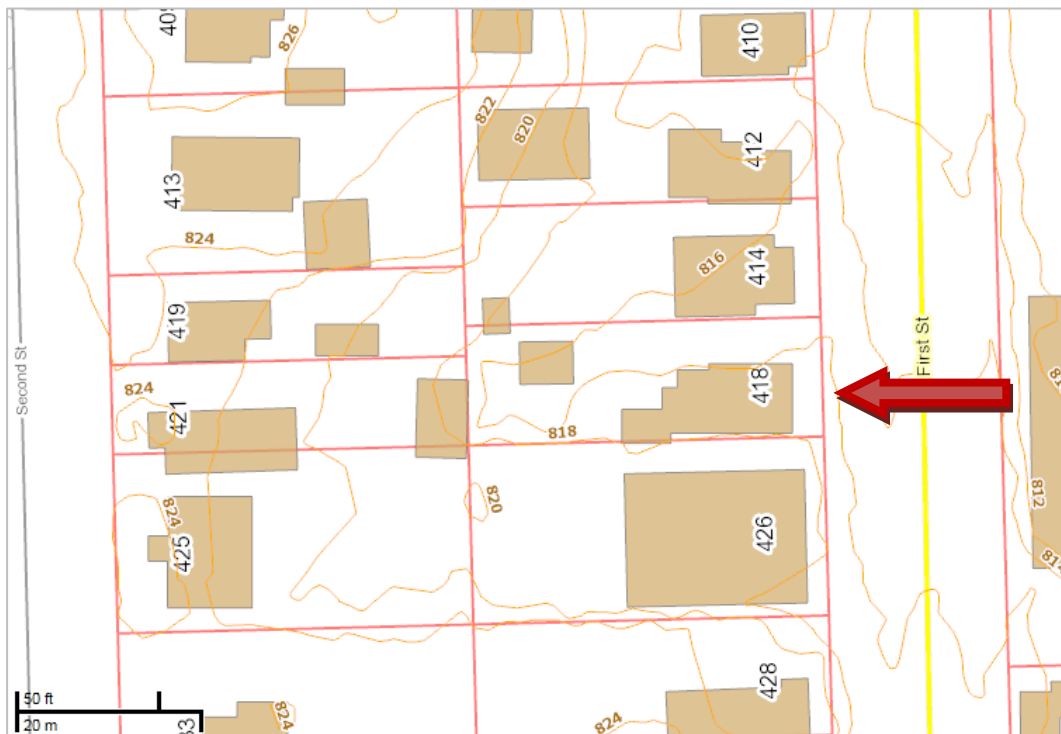
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1931 updated to 1965



2010 Aerial Photo



Topographic map with building footprints (footprints are taken from aerials and are not necessarily to scale)





City of Ann Arbor
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ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

Section 1: Property Being Reviewed and Ownership Information
Section 2: Applicant Information
Section 3: Building Use (check all that apply)
Section 4: Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act

418 S. 1st is a single family residential property zoned C2B Proposed garage/studio will not be for residential use

Home office for architect in proposed studio space

(734) 998-2546
margaretlwong@earthlink.net

Handwritten signature of Margaret Wong

Handwritten signature of Margaret Wong

MLW

Section 5: Description of Proposed Changes (attach additional sheets as necessary)

1. Provide a brief summary of proposed changes.

PLEASE SEE
ATTACHED SHEETS

2. Provide a description of existing conditions.

11

3. What are the reasons for the proposed changes?

11

4. Attach any additional information that will further explain or clarify the proposal, and indicate these attachments here.

11 1/2 PLEASE SEE CD

5. Attach photographs of the existing property, including at least one general photo and detailed photos of proposed work area.

PLEASE SEE CD

STAFF USE ONLY

Date Submitted: 7/21-2011 Application to _____ Staff or _____ HDC

Project No.: HDC 11-103 Fee Paid: 100⁰⁰

Pre-filing Staff Reviewer & Date: _____ Date of Public Hearing: 8/11-2011

Application Filing Date: 7/21-2011 Action: _____ HDC COA _____ HDC Denial

Staff signature: _____ _____ HDC NTP _____ Staff COA

Comments:

Ann Arbor Historic District Commission Application

Applicant: Margaret Wong (property owner)

Address: 418 S. 1st St., Ann Arbor; Old West Side Historic District

Project: Proposed Garage / Studio

Submittal Date: July 21, 2011

Section 5: Description of Proposed Changes (3 pages)

This July 21, 2011 application incorporates revisions in response to the July 14, 2011 Historic District Commission (HDC) denial of a certificate of appropriateness.

1. Provide a brief summary of proposed changes.

Applicant proposes to demolish an existing one-story wood framed 14.3' x 20.3' one-car garage and replace it with a two-level wood framed two-car tandem garage with a studio space above. Proposed footprint of garage level is 13.5' x 42'; proposed footprint of upper studio level is 18.6' x 42', with a 10.3' long x 2.0' deep south deck cantilever and a 16.0' long x 2.0' deep north window bay cantilever. The height of the proposed garage / studio's main roof will not exceed 21.0' as measured between average grade within 20 ft. of the building and the midpoint elevation between the building's eaves and ridge. The roof ridge is 25.0' above adjacent grade. See Building Section drawing. See the Site Section on the Area Plan for a height comparison between the proposed garage / studio, the 418 S. 1st St. house and the adjacent existing outbuilding to the west at 421 S. 2nd St.

The 418 S. 1st St. property is zoned C2B as shown on zoning map 0929SW (dated 10/17/08). Per City of Ann Arbor planner Matt Kowalski it does not have any required setbacks. The existing garage is located 4 ft. south of the north property line and 13.4 ft. from the west property line. Despite the absence of required setbacks, the proposed garage level footprint will be located 3 ft. from the north and west property lines as is typically required by zoning for an accessory building. Applicant proposes that the north window bay is considered a comparable "architectural feature" under zoning ordinance section exception 5:54(2)(c) (per 7/2007 edition of Chapter 55).

In response to concerns raised by some of the HDC commissioners resulting in a denial of certificate of appropriateness on July 14, 2011, both the dormers now have a conventional shed roof with a 3:12 pitch. The main gable roof slope remains 11:12, and directly acknowledges the neighboring house at 414 S. 1st St. and also the dominant house roof form up and down the block. The design does not copy 418 S. 1st St.'s 5.5:12 gable roof slope in order to set the top of knee wall elevation at the Code-compliant minimum of 5.0' and thereby reduce the garage / studio's overall volume. A main gable roof combined with shed dormers of a shallower pitch is a familiar sight in the Old West Side. The applicant proposes that the design complies with Item #9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation regarding the relationship of "new work" with existing architectural fabric.

The trellis encircling the backyard has essentially the same visibility from the street as the more limited scheme shown at the July 14, 2011 presentation. The trellis will not be attached to the existing house. However, the height of the trellis matches the primary trim board on 418 S 1st St.'s existing screened-in porch, creating a relationship with the existing building. It provides an element of human scale on the garage / studio's east face, visible from S. 1st St., and on the north face adjacent to 414 S. 1st St.'s parking area. The simple design remains the same with a clarification regarding the post installation. Trellis posts will be mounted on stand-off bases, thus facilitating their removal if needed. The Old West Side is a dense residential neighborhood with lot sizes smaller than current standards. Backyards separated from adjoining properties by fences and / or significant landscaping are very common. The use of trellises and arbors to mark the threshold between a more public or shared-use area and a private zone, like a backyard, is also visible throughout the Old West Side.

2. Provide a description of existing conditions.

Applicant spoke with City of Ann Arbor Historic Preservation Coordinator Jill Thacher in early April 2011 to ask if the existing garage has the status of a contributing resource in the Old West Side. Coordinator Thacher determined that the garage does not appear on the 1965 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, suggesting that it was either constructed after that date or moved to the current site. Based on this and its physical characteristics, her feedback was that the garage is not a contributing resource. On the strength of that response, the applicant presents this proposal.

The existing one-story wood framed 14.3' x 20.3' one-car garage has standard 2x4 wood wall and roof framing. There is 7.5' from the slab to the top of the wall top plate. The roof was replaced by a previous owner; modern plywood sheathing is clearly visible. The roofing is conventional asphalt shingle. The previous owner also installed a low-clearance storage area on dropped collar ties at the rear of the garage. The garage's steel garage door and a steel side door were installed previously. The two existing windows are fixed "barn sash" type units, and appear to be of contemporary construction (i.e. no wavy glass). The expectation is that there is only a shallow perimeter foundation. The existing slab shows significant cracks. Overall, the existing garage is lightly built and does not offer any viable expansion options.

3. What are the reasons for the proposed changes?

In May 2011 the 418 S. 1st St. household size doubled, triggering a reconsideration of all the living spaces. The main level area of the existing one-story house is 797 sq. ft. (including interior walls and circulation space). This main level consists of: living room; home office (former small bedroom); bedroom; kitchen; bathroom; dining room; rear entry vestibule. The partially finished basement is not suitable for conversion to living space due to poor humidity control (and existing mold growth), low ceiling height and lack of legal egress. The existing attic space is too low for conversion. The owner's current home office for her architectural practice in an 80 sq. ft. former bedroom is not large enough to accommodate a second user. Converting the existing 11.9' x 15.3' liv-

ing room or the 11.0' x 16.9' dining room (added in 2002) would have a major negative impact of the livability of this small house.

The proposed two-level two-car garage / studio will significantly enhance the livability of the 418 S. 1st St. property, without making any changes to the 1928 house. The north-west corner location is the farthest away from all the neighboring primary structures. The existing grade is lower than the three adjoining neighbors and mitigates impact of the proposed two-level building. The Old West Side has a tradition of attractive and useful two-level accessory outbuildings. The proposed S. 1st St. street view image shows the new building in a sympathetic architectural and spatial relationship to the existing houses at 418 S. 1st St. and 414 S. 1st St.

4. Attach any additional information that will further explain or clarify this proposal, and indicate these attachments here.

Please see CD for supporting photos, drawings and other documents:

- 1) Views of Existing Garage (4 exterior elevations)
- 2) Current South 1st Street View of Existing Garage
- 3) Proposed South 1st Street View of Garage / Studio
- 4) Area Plan and Site Section
- 5) Site Plan
- 6) Garage Level Plan
- 7) Studio Level Plan
- 8) Building Section (transverse at north window bay)
- 9) East Elevation
- 10) South Elevation
- 11) West Elevation
- 12) North Elevation
- 13) Existing 1.5 & 2-Story Old West Side Outbuildings, Located Between S. 1st St., W. Madison, S. 6th St. & W. William
- 14) 7/11/11 letter of support from Susan Dentel and Larry Maciag, owners & occupants at 414 S. 1st St.
- 15) 7/13/11 letter of support from Bob Kuehne, owner & occupant at 445 S. 2nd St.

5. Attach photographs of the existing property, including at least one general photo and detailed photos of proposed work area.

Please see photos of existing garage and Site Plan submitted on the CD. Site Plan shows footprints of both existing garage and proposed garage / studio.



VIEWS OF EXISTING GARAGE

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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CURRENT SOUTH 1ST STREET VIEW OF EXISTING GARAGE

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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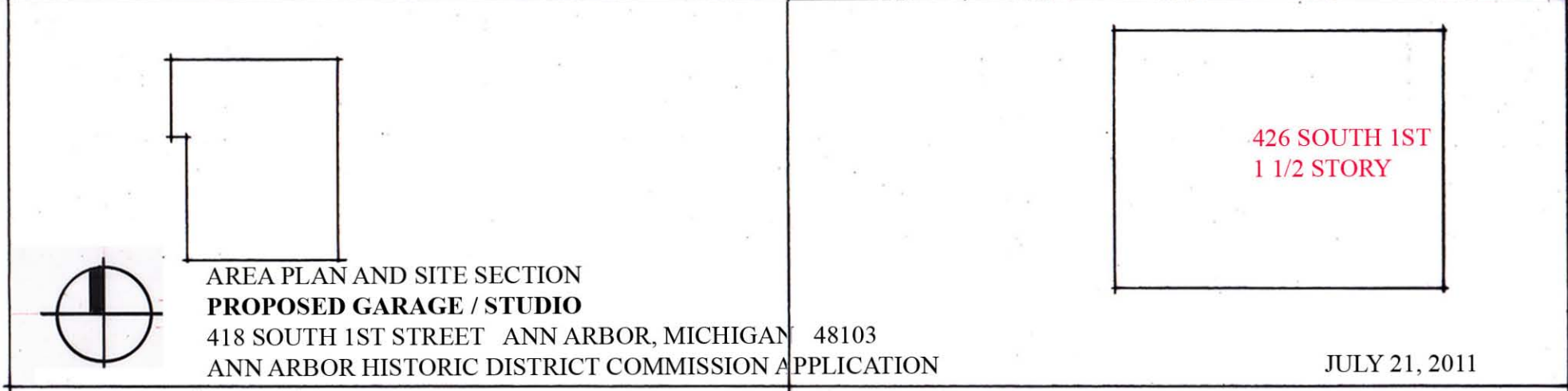
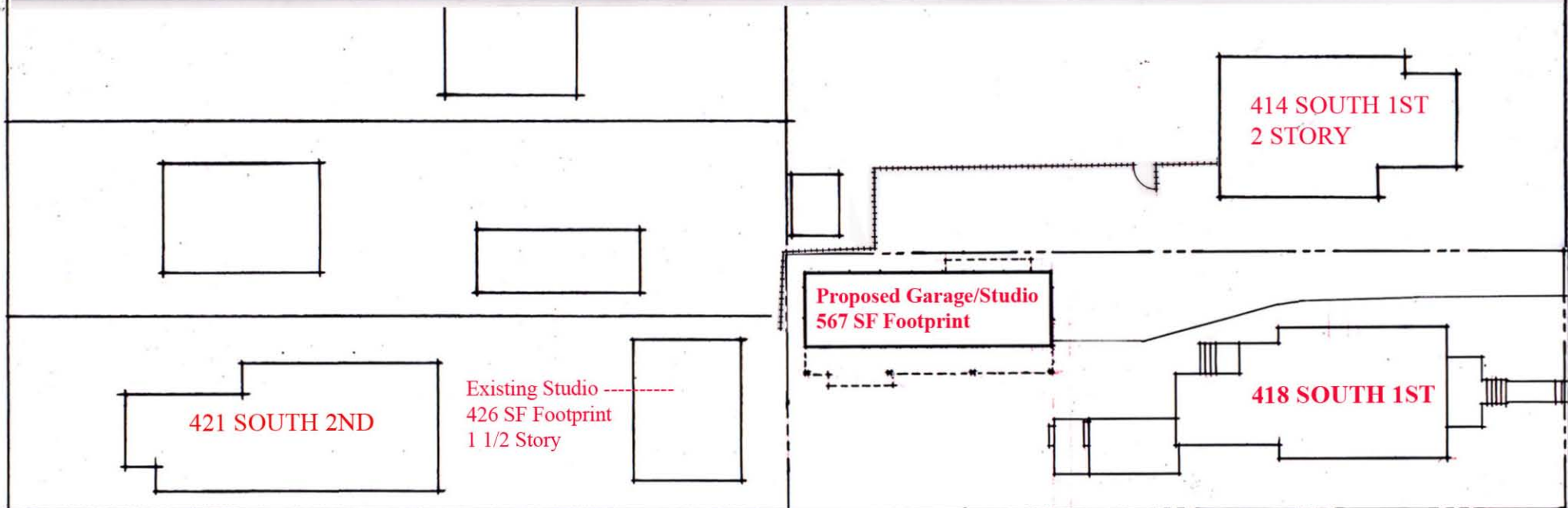
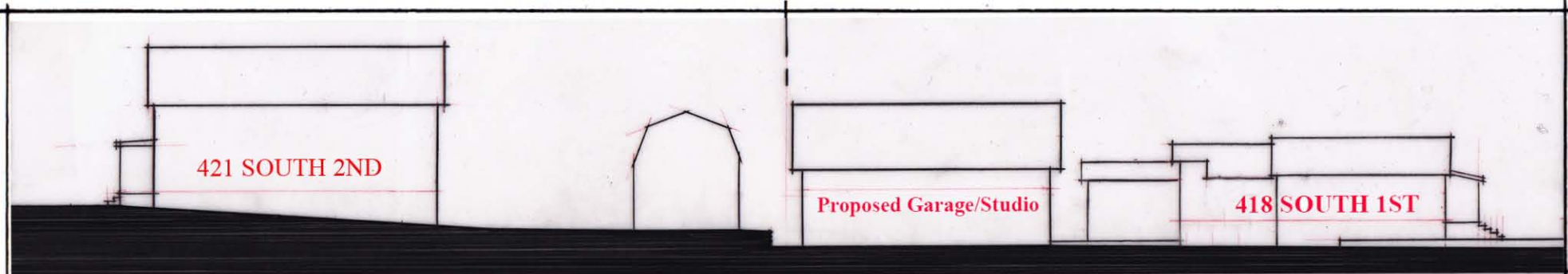


PROPOSED SOUTH 1ST STREET VIEW OF GARAGE / STUDIO

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

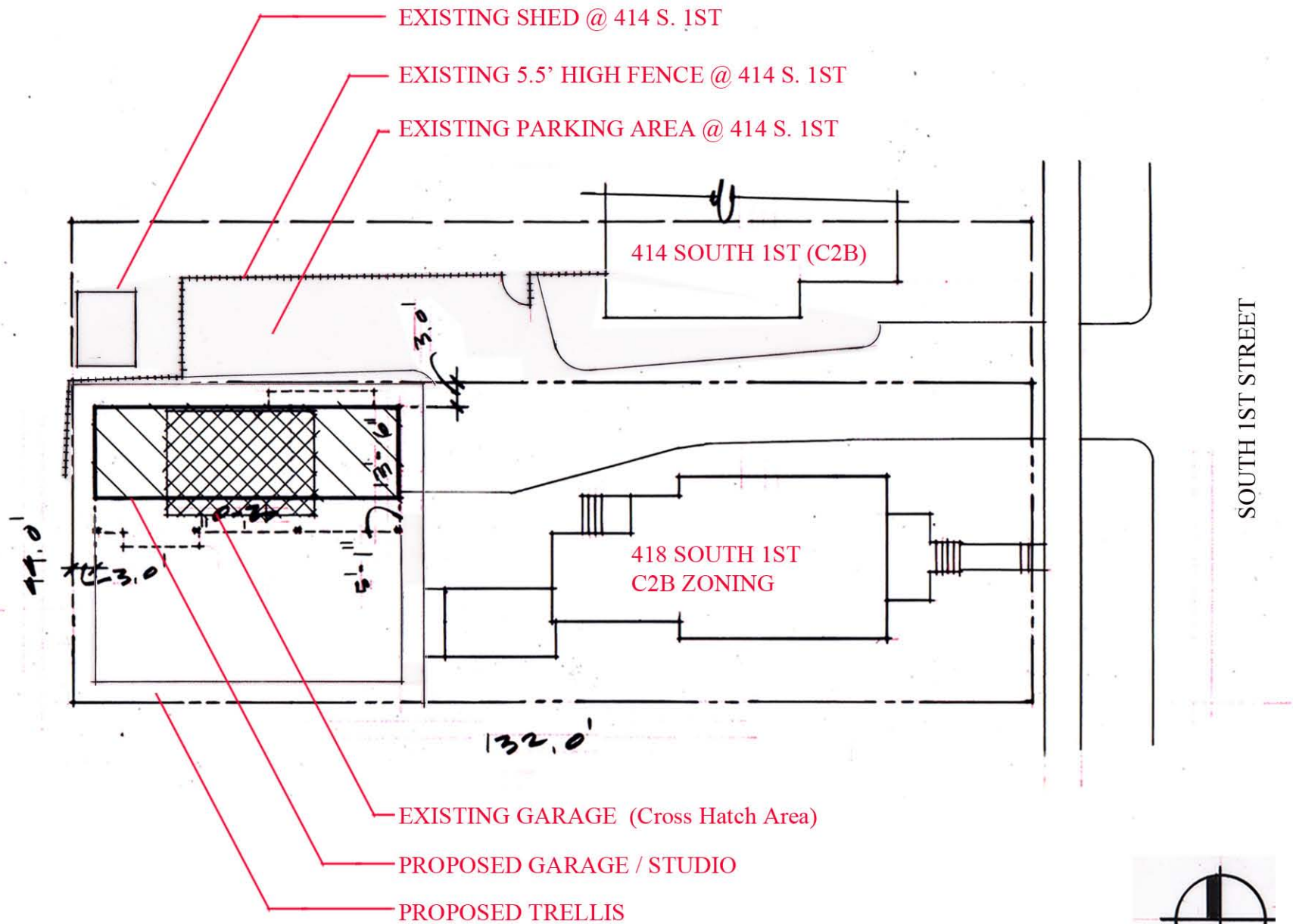
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AREA PLAN AND SITE SECTION
PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO
 418 SOUTH 1ST STREET ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48103
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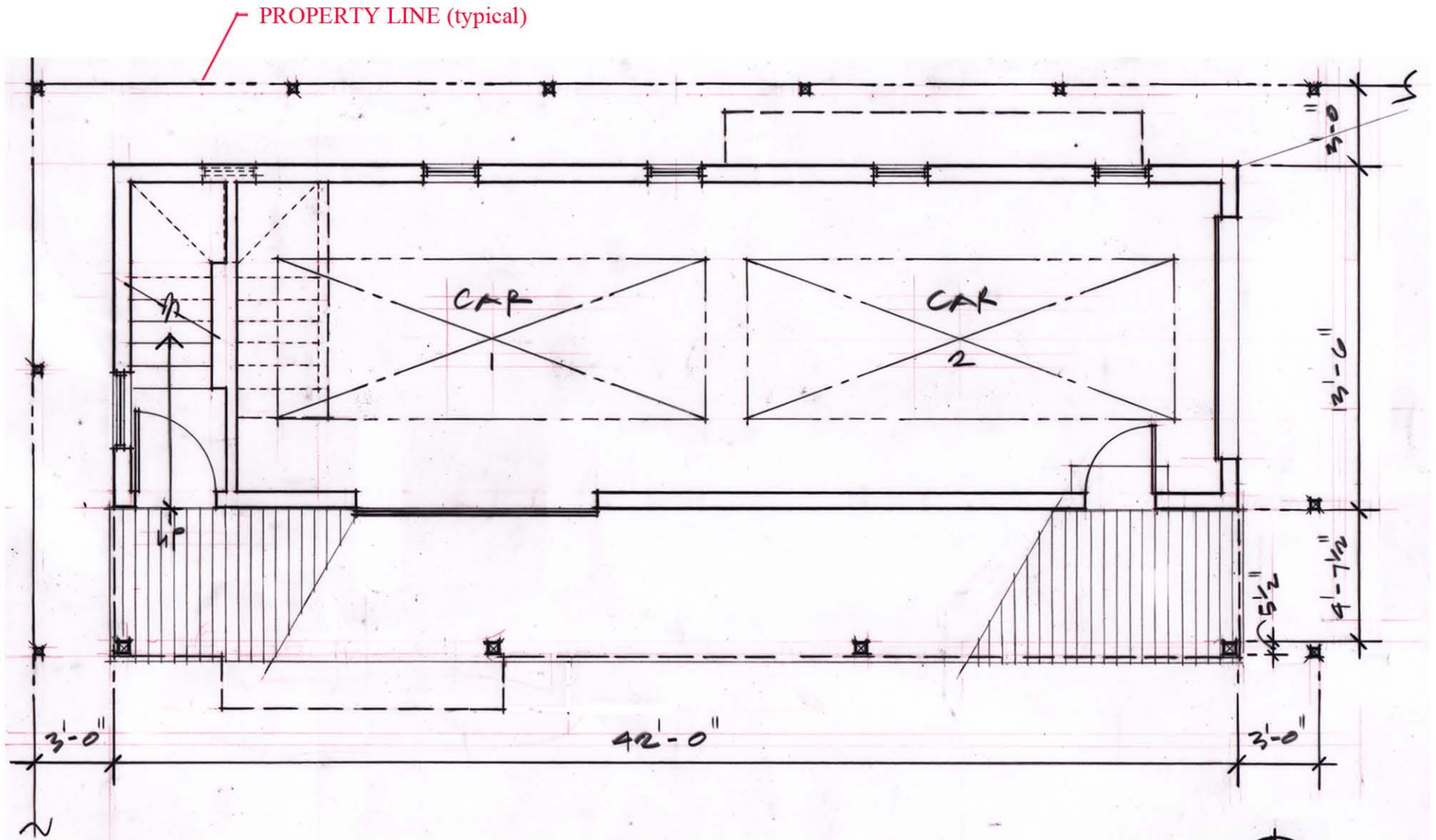


SITE PLAN

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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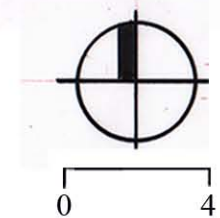
JULY 21, 2011



GARAGE LEVEL PLAN

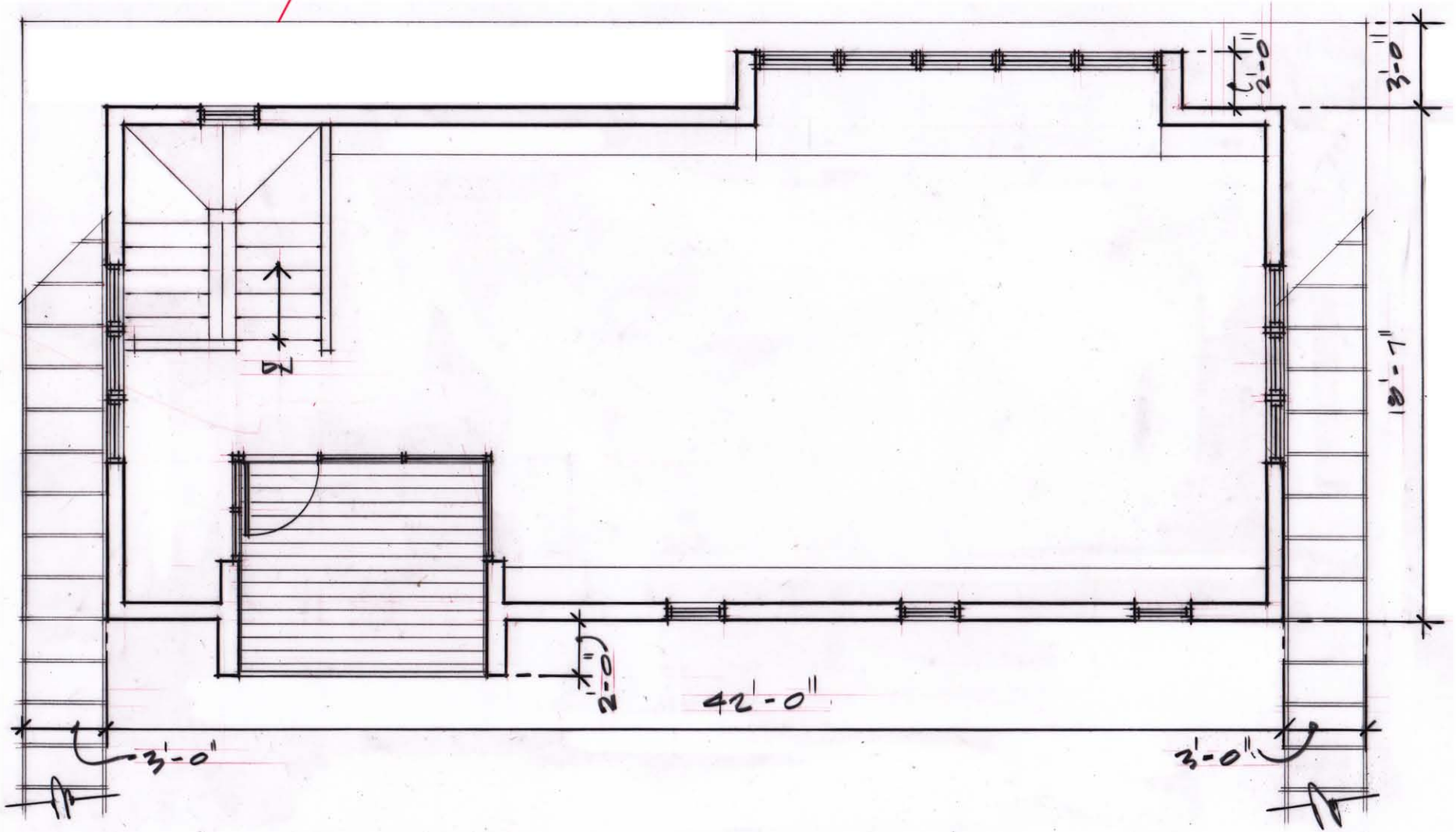
PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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LINE OF TRELLIS

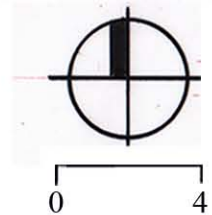


STUDIO LEVEL PLAN

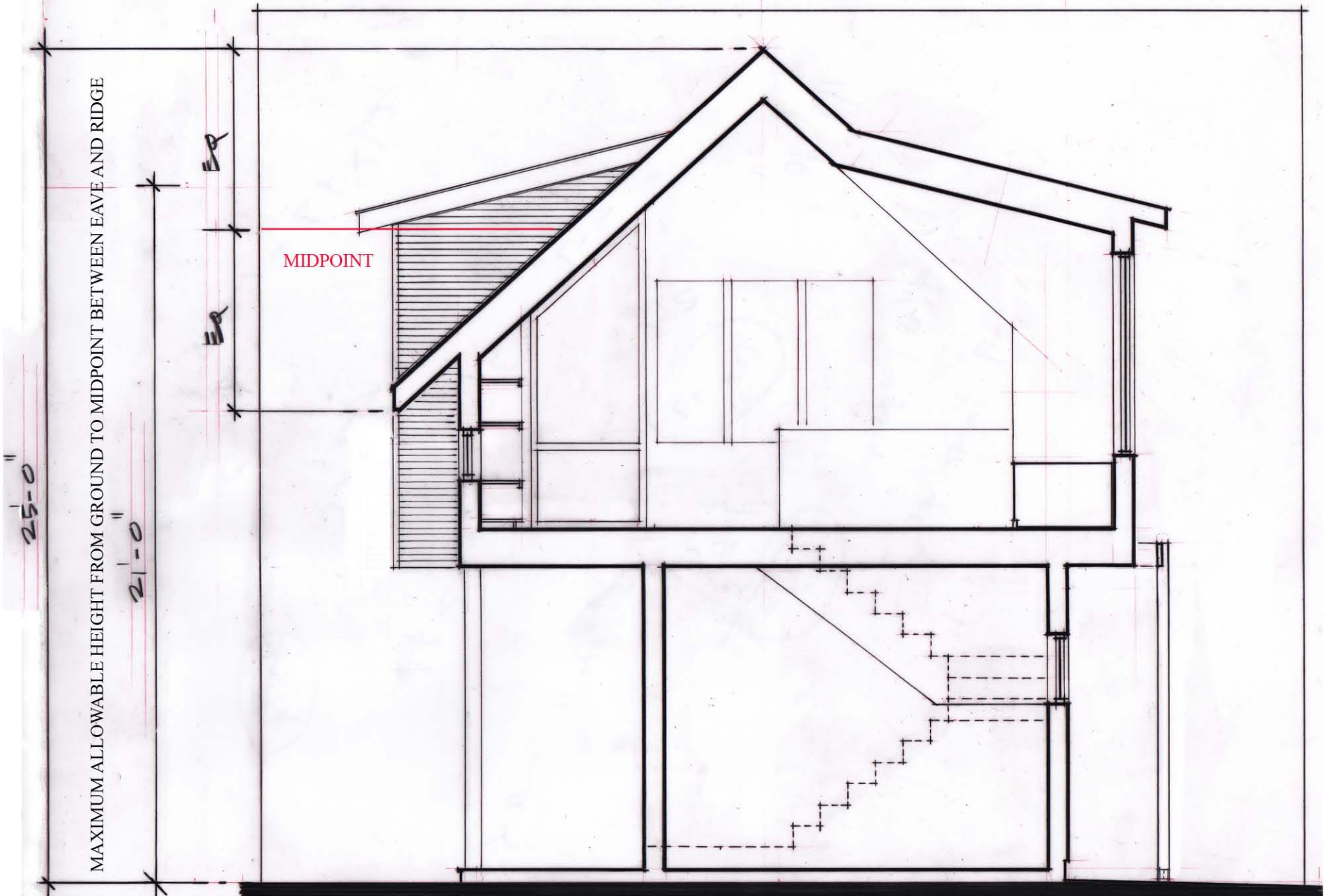
PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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BUILDING SECTION

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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Cement Board Exterior Siding

Wood Trim and Doors

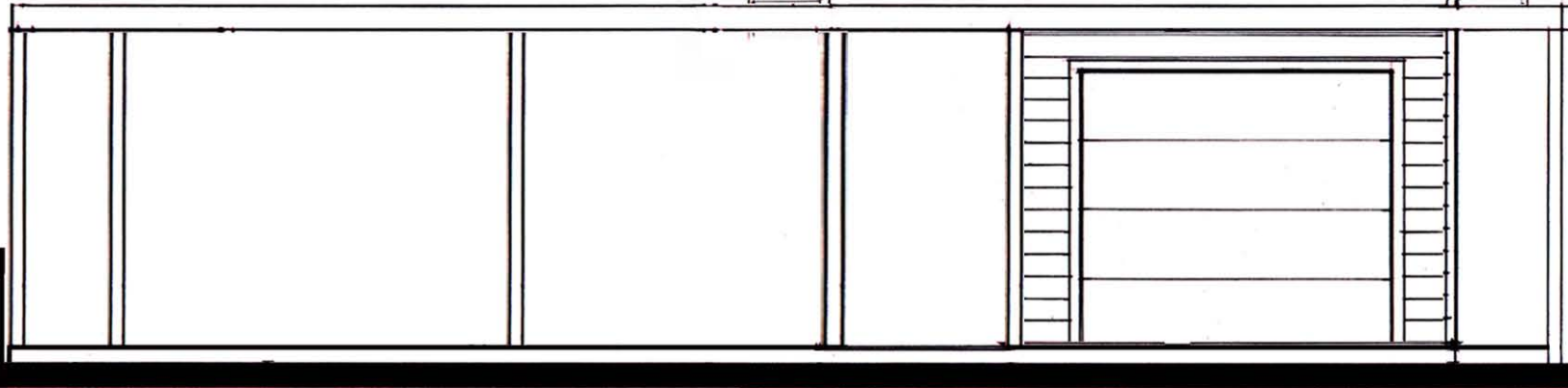
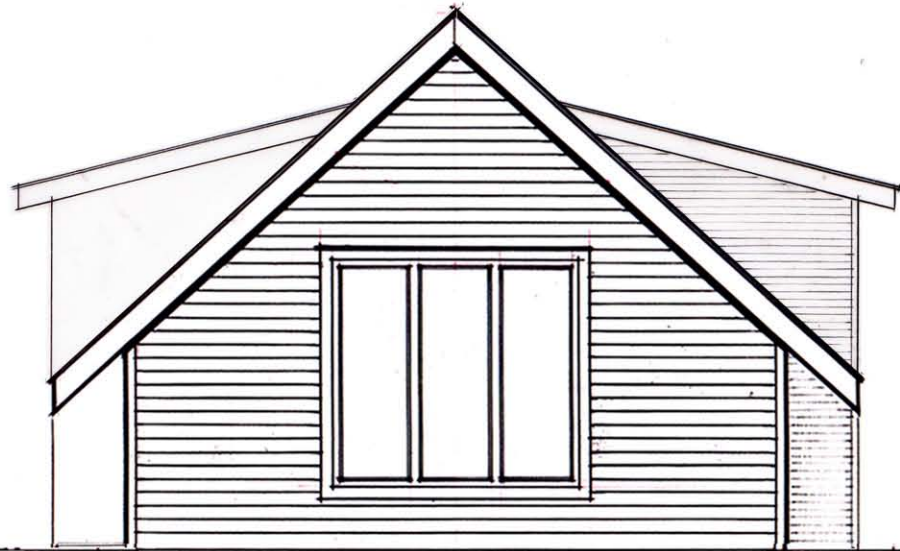
Aluminum Clad Wood Windows

Asphalt Shingle Roofing

Aluminum Clad Eave and Soffit

Composite Exterior Decking

Trellis w/4x4 posts of wood or steel
installed on stand-off mounts,
2x8 wood rails with 2x3 slats



EAST ELEVATION



PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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SOUTH ELEVATION

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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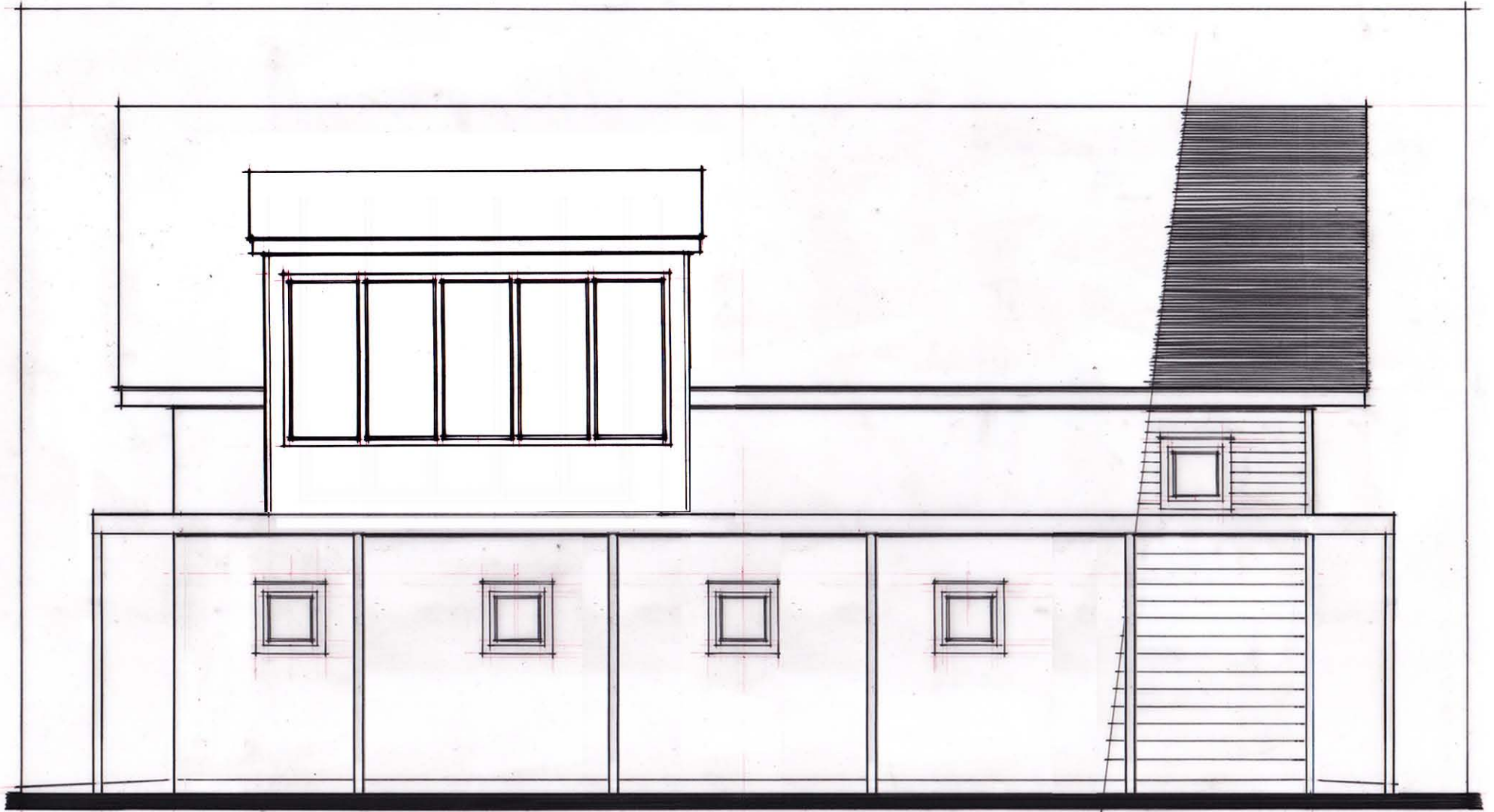
WEST ELEVATION

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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NORTH ELEVATION

PROPOSED GARAGE / STUDIO

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