

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 539 South First Street, Application HDC17-002

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** January 12, 2017

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, January 9, 2017

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Sonia Schmerl	Michael K. Bruner
<b>Address:</b>	539 S. First Street Ann Arbor, MI 48103	Same
<b>Phone:</b>		(734) 223-3431

**BACKGROUND:** This two-story brick vernacular house features a front porch with a spindled frieze, a cut stone foundation, stone window sills, and circular window in the attic. The house was built in 1890 and until 1898 the address of the house was 95 First Street. From 1903 to 1914 the house was owned by Barbara Groesslein and was used as a boarding house. In 1916 the house was purchased by Louis Becker, a jeweler, who lived there with his wife Mary until 1940. The house remained in the family until 1958.

In May of 2012 a rear addition with a different design was approved by the HDC (HDC12-059), but never constructed. That Certificate of Appropriateness has expired.

In June of 2016, a rear addition was approved by the HDC (HDC16-090).

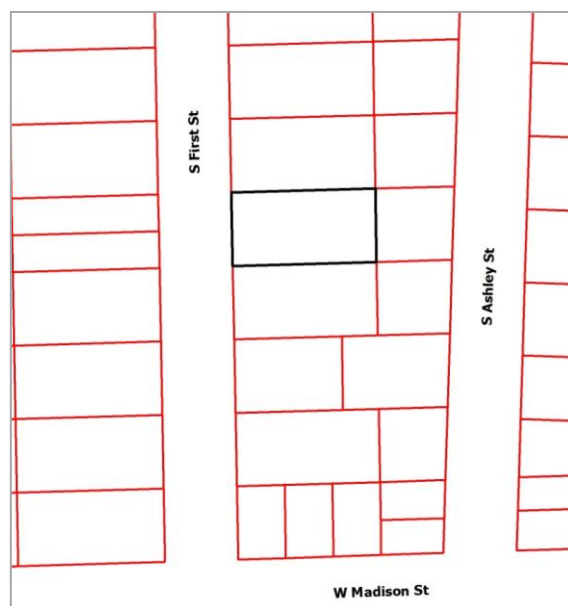
**LOCATION:** The site is located on the east side of South First Street between West Jefferson Street and West Madison Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to revise the design of an addition that was approved last June. The revisions lower the roofline and create a dormer on the north elevation.

### APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

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

- (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.



- (5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
- (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):**

**Additions**

*Recommended:* Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

*Not Recommended:* Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

**Building Site**

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

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

*Not Recommended:* Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

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

## Guidelines for All Additions

Appropriate: Placing a new addition on a non-character-defining or inconspicuous elevation and limiting the size and scale in relationship to the historic property.

Placing new walls in a different plane from the historic structure in a subordinate position to the historic fabric.

Designing a new addition in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Limiting the size and scale of the addition in relationship to the historic building so that it does not diminish or visually overpower the building or the district. The addition's footprint should exceed neither half of the original building's footprint nor half of the original building's total floor area.

Not Appropriate: Designing an addition that overpowers or dramatically alters the original building through size or height.

## STAFF FINDINGS:

1. This application proposes changes to the design of a rear addition that received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HDC in June of 2016. The changes drop the ridge height of the addition by several feet, and incorporates a dormer on the north side to eliminate unnecessary attic space above the addition. As a result of the new roofline, an existing roof vent and skylight are shifted to the south a few feet on the roof of the main house. Canopies over the rear and north doors are a similar bracketed design to what was approved, but are now integral with the roof eaves and shingled instead of metal.
2. The changes proposed to the addition are very appropriate and reduce its overall mass. If approved, this application will supersede the June 2016 certificate of appropriateness. Staff recommends approval and feels that the revised design meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines*, and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*.

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motion 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 approve the application at 539 South First Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a new rear addition, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of 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, 5, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for additions and building site; and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for additions.

## MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 539 South 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, photos, drawings.

539 S First (2008 Survey Photo)



HDC17-0002  
01/04/17



**City of Ann Arbor**  
**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — PLANNING SERVICES**

301 E. Huron Street | P.O. Box 8647 | Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8647  
p. 734.794.6265 | f. 734.994.8312 | planning@a2gov.org

**ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION**

**Section 1: Property Being Reviewed and Ownership Information**

Address of Property: 539 S. 1ST ST.

Historic District: OLD WEST SIDE

Name of Property Owner (If different than the applicant):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address of Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone and E-mail of Property Owner: 734.223.3431

Signature of Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2: Applicant Information**

Name of Applicant: MICHAEL K. BRUNER

Address of Applicant: 539 S. 1ST ST.

Daytime Phone: (734) 223.3431 Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: mkbruner@comcast.net

Applicant's Relationship to Property:  owner  architect  contractor  other

Signature of applicant: Michael Bruner Date: 1.4.2017

**Section 3: Building Use (check all that apply)**

Residential  Single Family  Multiple Family  Rental  
 Commercial  Institutional

**Section 4: Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act**  
(This item **MUST BE INITIALED** for your application to be **PROCESSED**)

Public Act 169, Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act, was amended April 2004 to include the following language: " the applicant has certified in the application that the property where the work will be undertaken has, or will have before the proposed completion date, a a fire alarm or smoke alarm complying with the requirements of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale Single State Construction Code Act, 1972 PA 230, MCL 125.1501 to 125.1531."

Please initial here: MKB

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

1. Provide a brief summary of proposed changes. REVISIONS TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED HDC APPLICATION INCLUDE: REDUCTION OF OVERALL ROOF HEIGHT AND VOLUME OF PROPOSED ADDITION

2. Provide a description of existing conditions. ONE STORY REAR WING CONSISTING OF SEVERAL ADDITIONS MADE OVER TIME TO ORIGINAL 2 STORY BRICK RESIDENCE, EXTERIOR BASEMENT ACCESS HATCH / BULKHEAD

3. What are the reasons for the proposed changes? REDUCE OVERALL COST OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SCHEME, WHICH INCLUDED ① IMPROVED ACCESS TO BASEMENT,

② IMPROVED ACCESS TO REAR GARDEN ③ ACCESS FROM DRIVE ④ MODERNIZE KITCHEN AND MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

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

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

**STAFF USE ONLY**

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Application to \_\_\_\_\_ Staff or \_\_\_\_\_ HDC

Project No.: HDC Fee Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-filing Staff Reviewer & Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Public Hearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Application Filing Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Action: \_\_\_\_\_ HDC COA \_\_\_\_\_ HDC Denial

Staff signature: \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ HDC NTP \_\_\_\_\_ Staff COA

Comments:



DO NOT SCALE  
DRAWINGS. USE ONLY  
GIVEN DIMENSIONS

ISSUED:

11-14-16 OWNER REVIEW  
12-16-16 HDC REVIEW  
12-28-16 HDC REVIEW  
00-00-00 BID AND PERMIT

MICHAEL BRUNER  
ARCHITECT

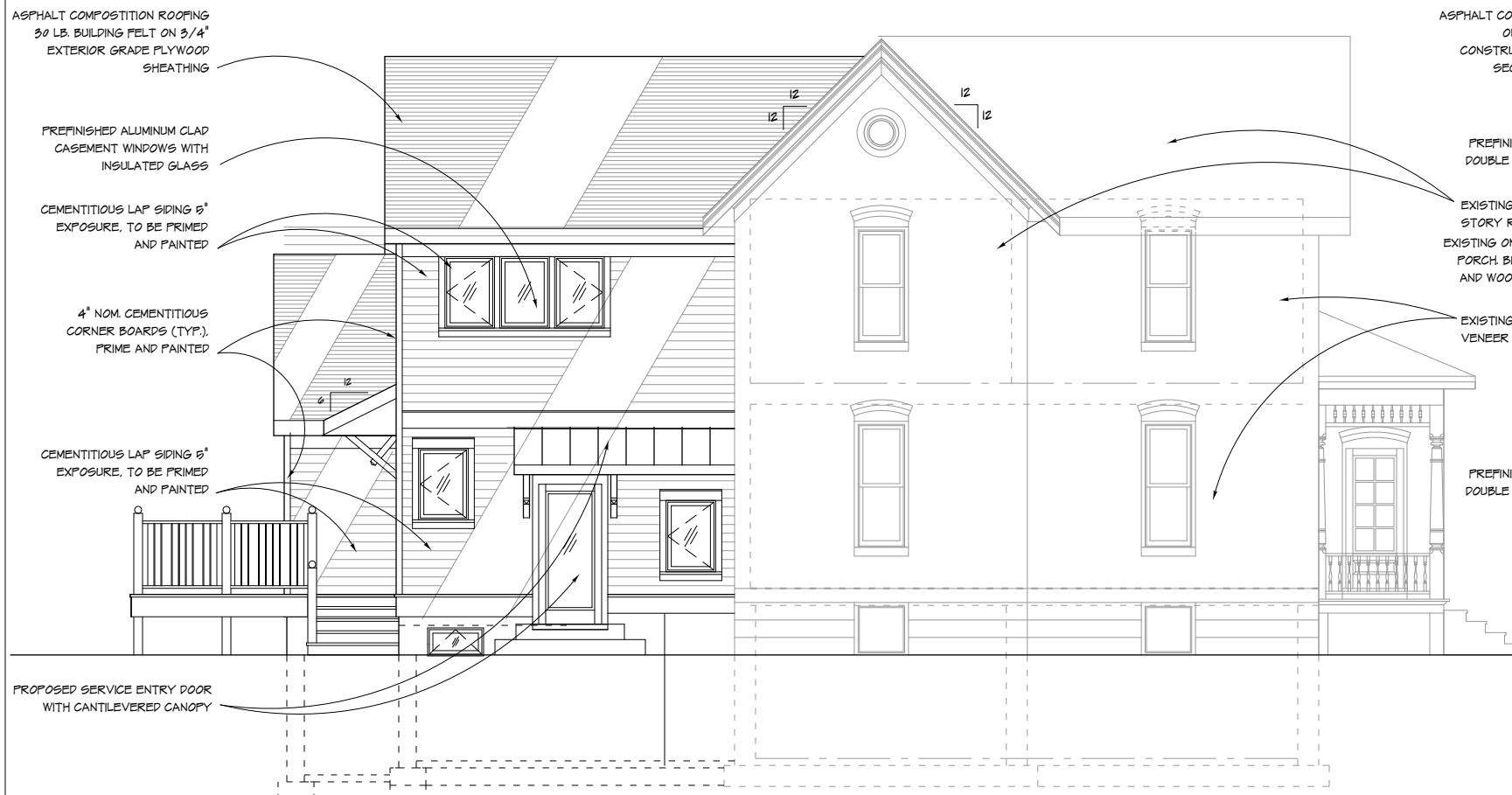
530 FIRST ST. #3  
ANN ARBOR, MI 48103  
734-623-6480

PROJECT:  
ADDITION TO PRIVATE  
RESIDENCE  
EXISTING CONDITIONS  
XXX MAIN ST.  
ANN ARBOR, MI  
PROJECT XXXXX

PROPOSED  
NORTH ELEVS. &  
EAST ELEVATIONS  
(1 & 2)

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

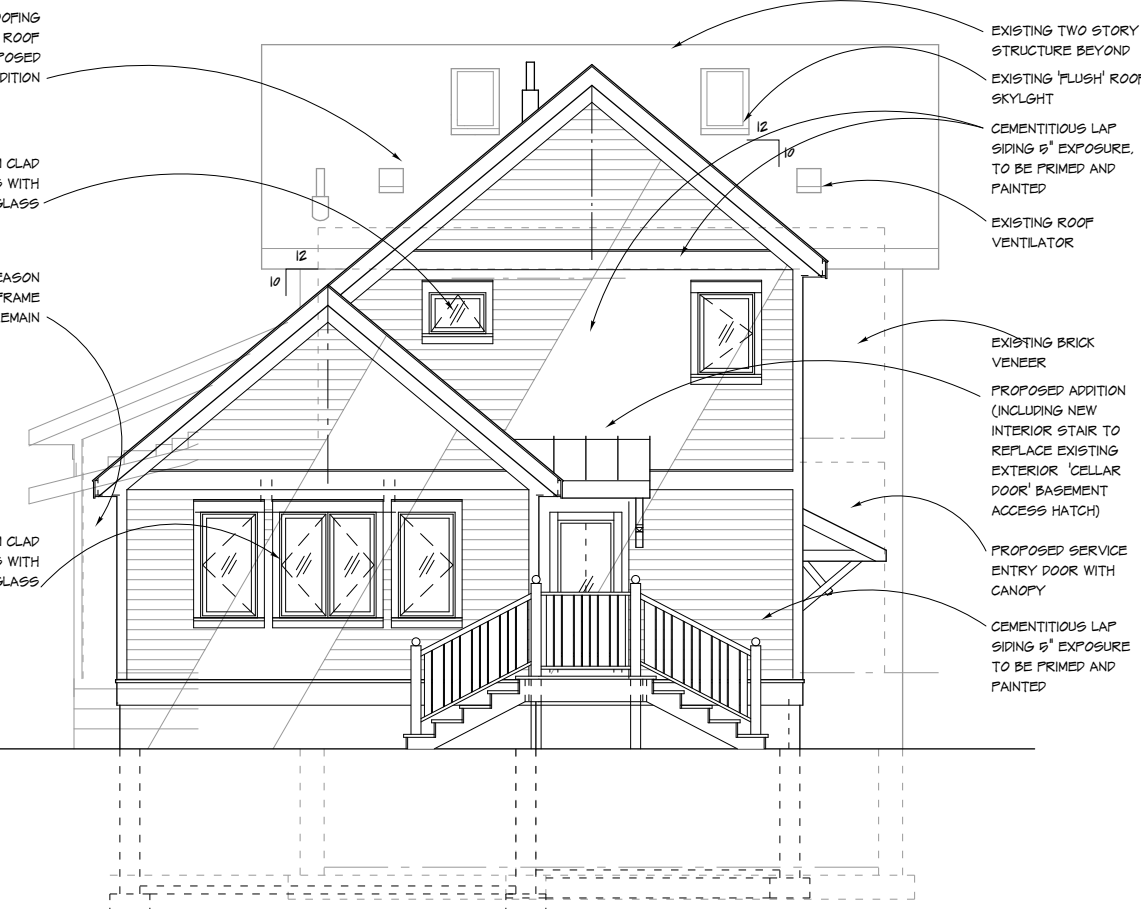
SK-200



NORTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED)

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

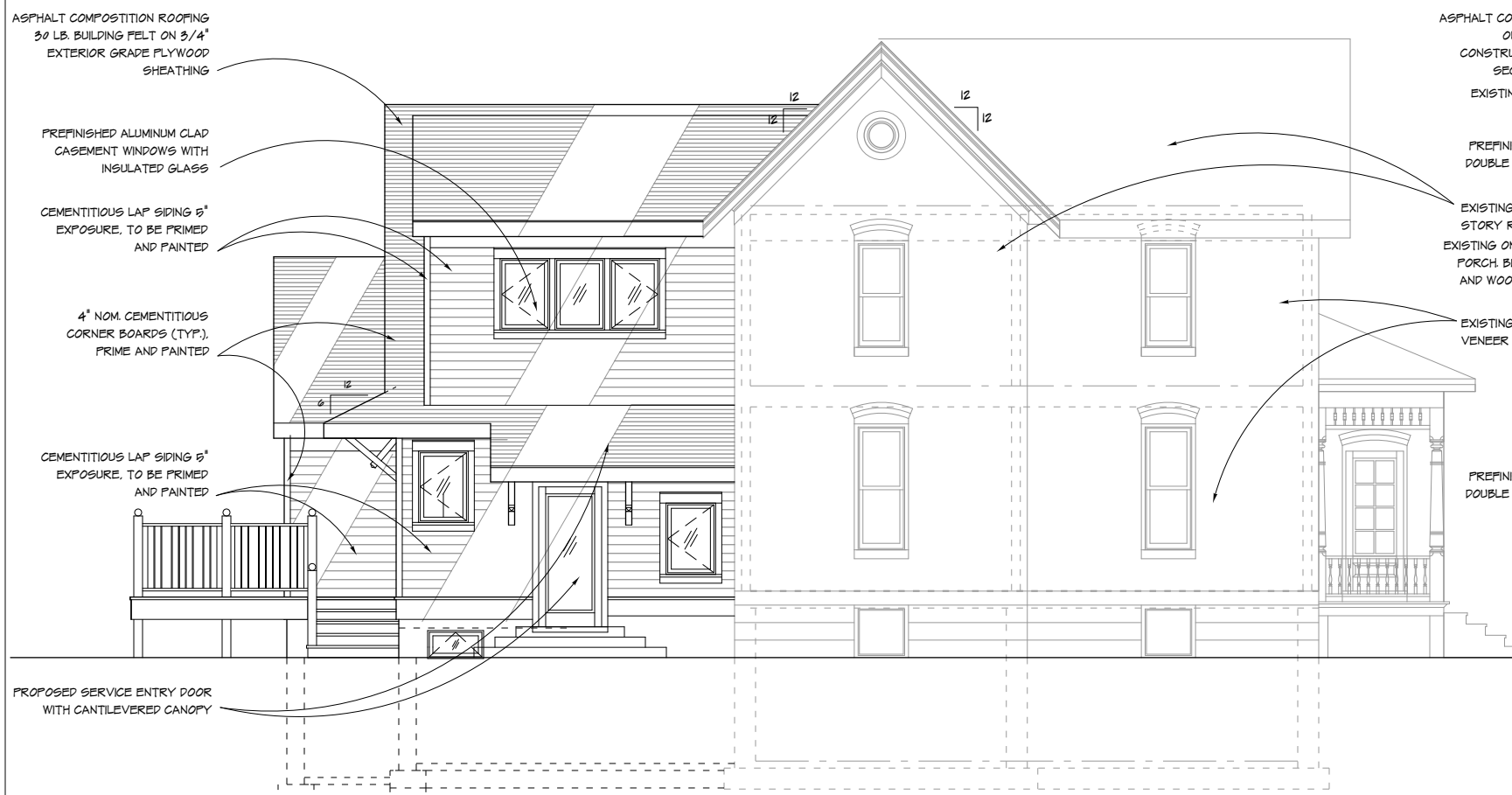
PLAN 1  
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED



EAST ELEVATION (PROPOSED)

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

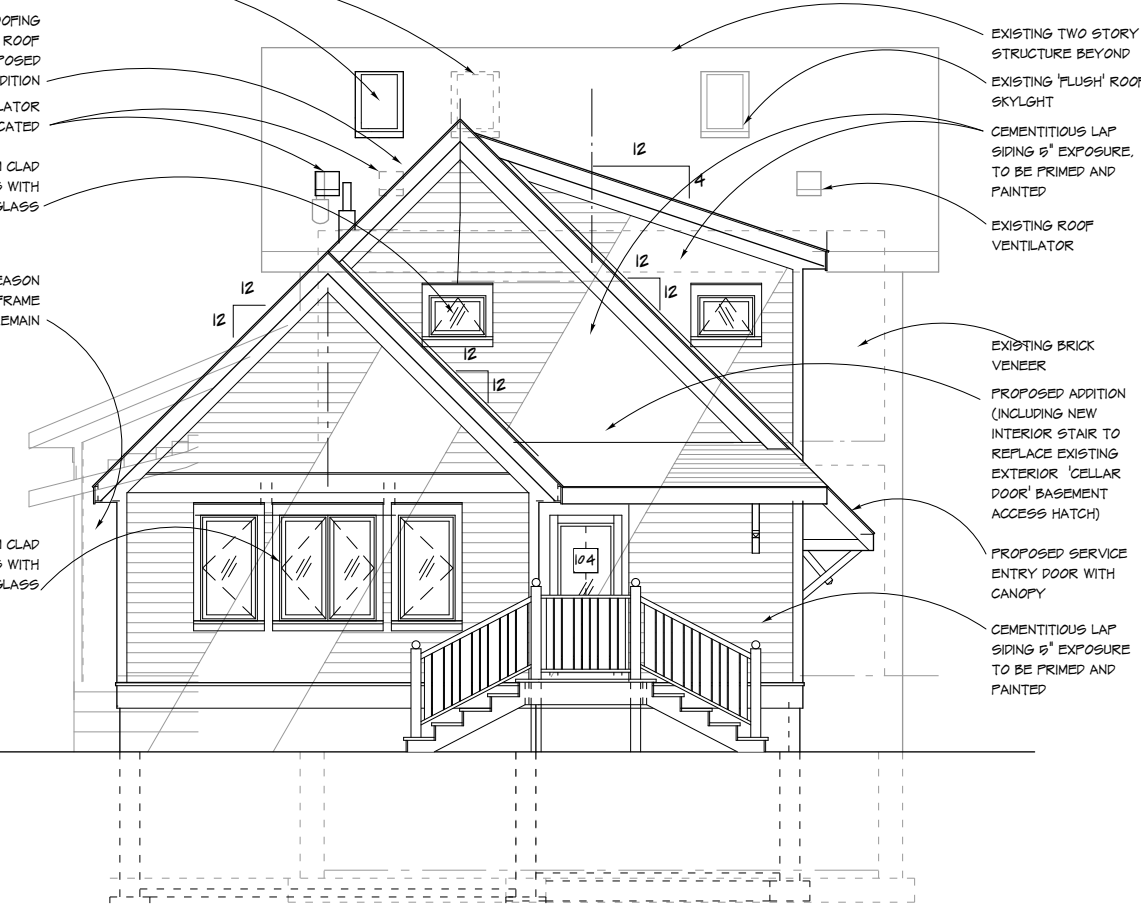
PLAN 1  
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED



NORTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED)

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

PLAN 2  
PROPOSED REVISION



EAST ELEVATION (PROPOSED)

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

PLAN 2  
PROPOSED REVISION

DO NOT SCALE  
DRAWINGS. USE ONLY  
GIVEN DIMENSIONS

ISSUED:

11-14-16 OWNER REVIEW  
12-16-16 HDC REVIEW  
12-28-16 HDC REVIEW  
00-00-00 BID AND PERMIT

MICHAEL BRUNER  
ARCHITECT

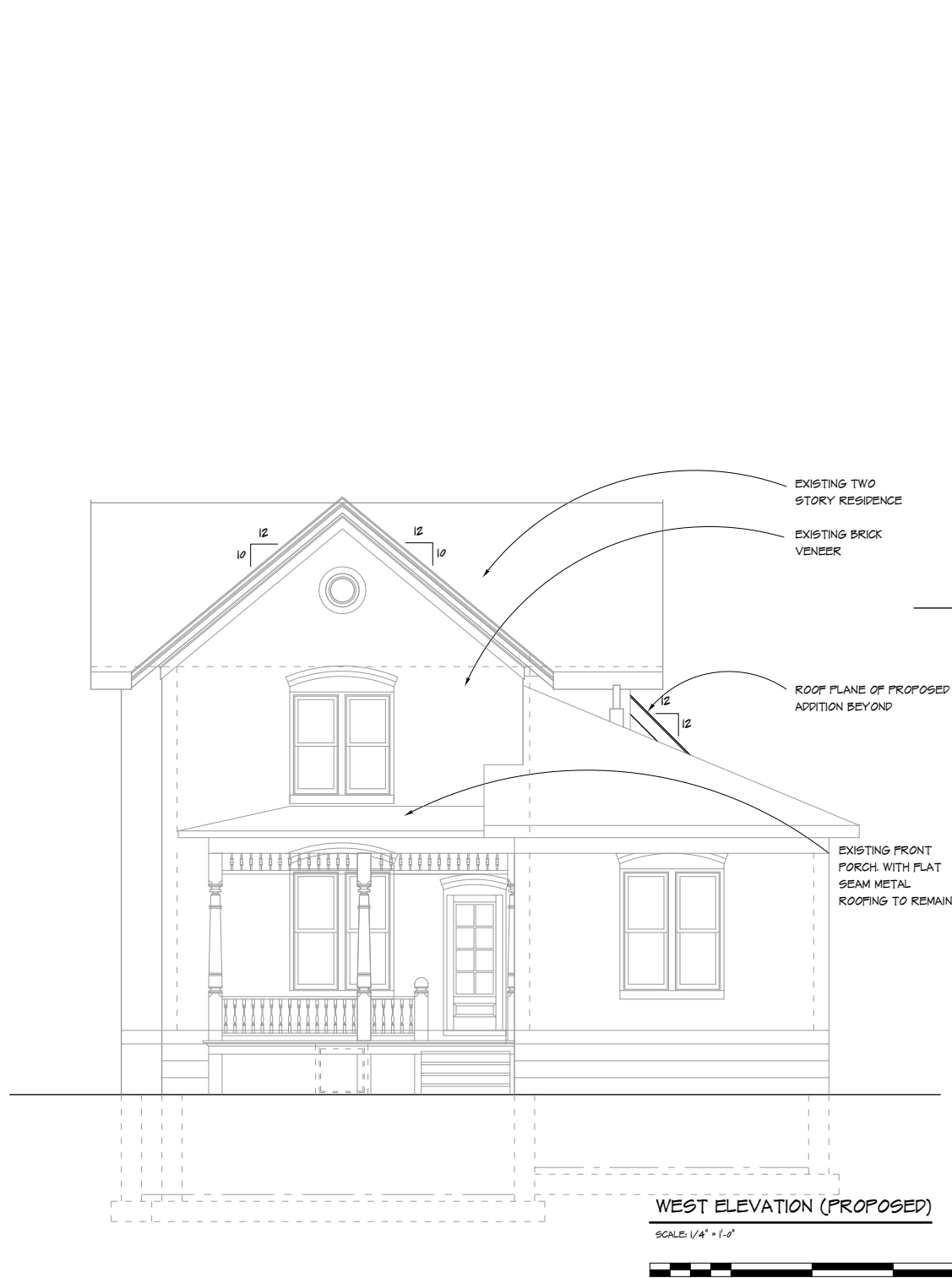
530 FIRST ST. #3  
ANN ARBOR, MI 48103  
734-623-6480

PROJECT:  
ADDITION TO PRIVATE  
RESIDENCE  
EXISTING CONDITIONS  
XXX MAIN ST.  
ANN ARBOR, MI  
PROJECT XXXXX

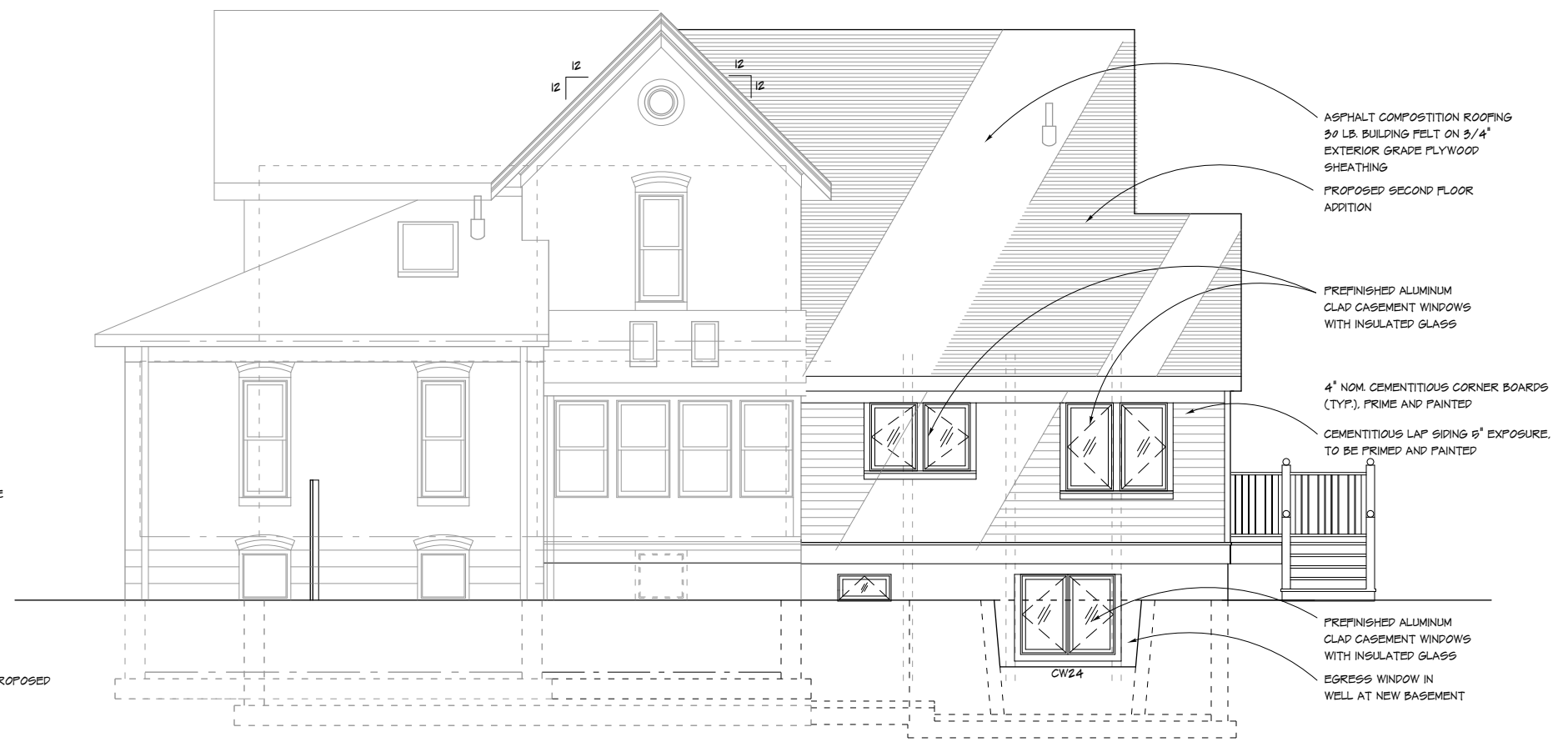
EXISTING  
NORTH ELEVATION

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

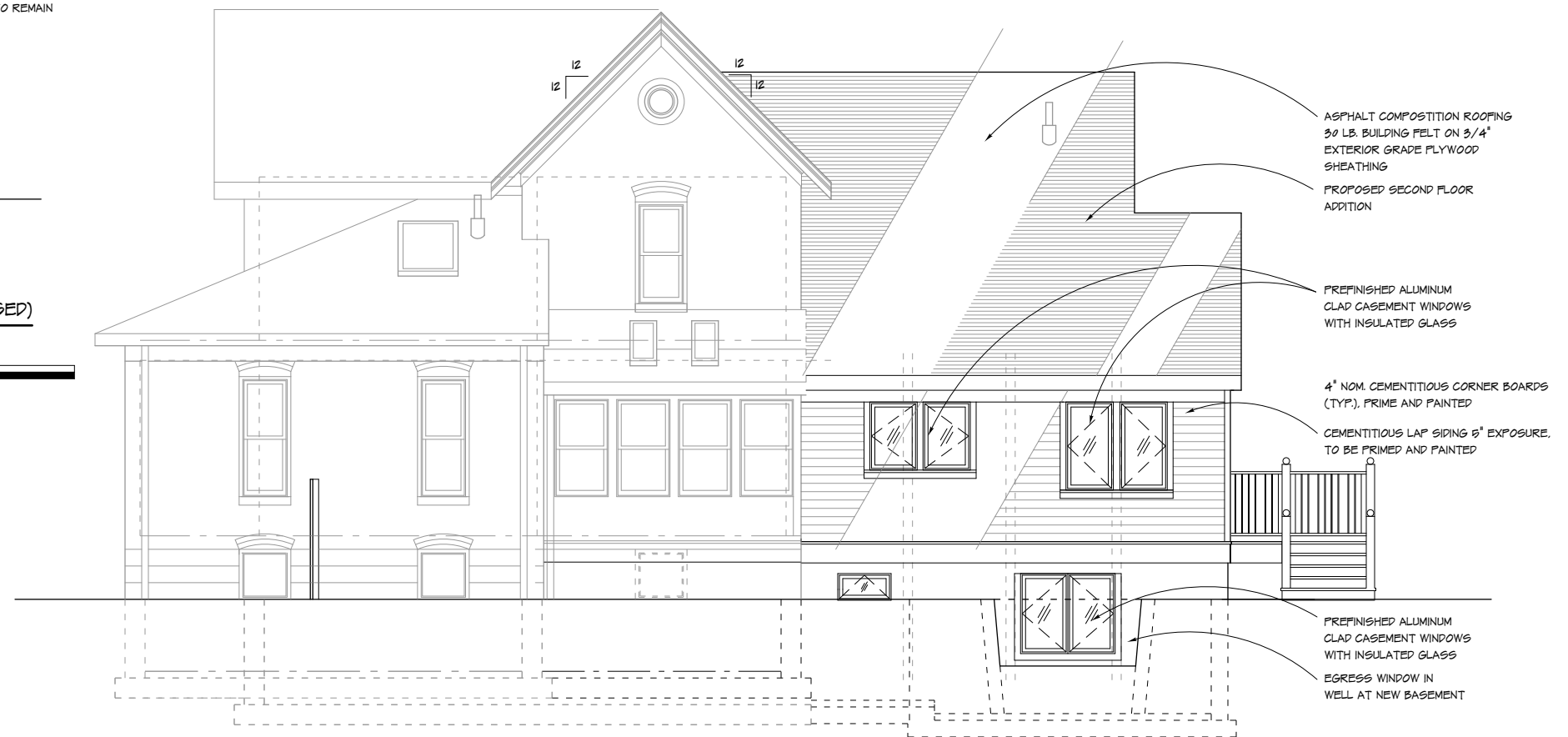
SK-201



NO PROPOSED REVISION TO  
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ELEVATION



PLAN 1 SOUTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED)  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"  
PREVIOUSLY APPROVED



PLAN 2 SOUTH ELEVATION (PROPOSED)  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"  
PROPOSED REVISION