

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 512 West Liberty Street, Application Number HDC26-0027

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**STATUS:** Contributing

**REPORT DATE:** April 9, 2026

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Mariana Melin-Corcoran, City Planner

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, April 6, 2026

### OWNER/ APPLICANT:

**Name:** Nicole Ridenour

**Address:** 6793 Carpenter Rd, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

**Phone:** (937) 474-2598

**BACKGROUND:** This two-and-a-half-story gable frontier first appears on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, when it was the house of Louis W Schnierle. Schnierle owned and operated Schnierle Bros meat market on Main Street with his brother Charles. On the 1908 map, the house is shown as a two-story dwelling unit with a covered full-width front porch. There was a one-story bumpout on the east elevation and a small rear covered porch at the northwest corner of the house. On the 1948 Sanborn map, a one story accessory building had been constructed behind the house.

By 1982, the house was clad in aluminum siding, the porch posts were removed and replaced, and the porch stairs were moved to the side of the porch. At some point, the rear porch was altered and enclosed into a three seasons room.

**LOCATION:** The property is located on the north side of West Liberty Street, between Third Street and Murray Avenue.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove a non-original rear porch and construct a two-story rear addition. The applicant also seeks HDC approval to remove non-original steps at the front porch and install new concrete stairs and to remove and replace the non-original porch posts and railings.



*Image 1: Location map with 512 W Liberty outlined blue*

## 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 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):

#### New 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.
- *Recommended*: Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.
- *Recommended*: 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.
- *Recommended*: 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. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.
- *Not Recommended*: Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.
- *Not Recommended*: 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.

## District or Neighborhood Setting

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

## From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:

### Guidelines for All Additions

- *Appropriate:* 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 should exceed neither half of the original building's footprint nor half of the original building's total floor area.

### Additions to Historic Residential Structures

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

### Residential Porches

- *Appropriate:* Using replacement features that match the documented historic design. If no documentation exists, using a simple, plain design.
- *Appropriate:* Painting or staining all exposed wood elements.

## STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The proposed two-story rear addition will add a laundry room and mudroom on the first floor and a bedroom on the second floor. It will be built on a crawlspace. As part of construction, the non-original three seasons room on the rear of the house will be removed.

The peak of the addition's gable will be 30 ft and 9 in high, which is 3 ft and 6 in below the historic gable height. The addition will be inset 2 ft from the rear corners of the house.

The addition will be 5 ft 7 in from the detached garage, which is the same distance as the existing three seasons room.

2. The siding for the proposed addition will be cementboard lap siding with a 6 in exposure, and the roof will be asphalt shingles.

Two original windows (attic and second story) and one non-original window (first story) on the rear of the house will be removed for the addition. The attic window will be reused in the same location on the addition. The rest of the windows on the addition will be either double hung or fixed aluminum clad wood windows. Trim will be cement board and dimensions will be slightly different from the historic trim.

The existing rear door will be reused as the rear door on the addition. It is a wood half-light paneled door and matches the front door on the house. There will be a simple gable covering over the rear door and stairs leading to the backyard. These stairs will be concrete and railings will be wood with spindles sandwiched between the top and bottom rails.

3. The addition will be 9 ft deep (north-south) and 20 ft 1 in wide (east-west) with a proposed footprint of 181 sq ft and a proposed floor area of 361 sq ft. This would be a 25% increase in footprint from the pre-1945 footprint of 715 sq ft. It would be a 25% increase in floor area from the pre-1945 floor area of 1,419 sq ft.
4. The applicant also proposes to remove the non-original metal porch posts and railings and to move the porch stairs to their original location on the front of the porch. The new porch posts will be simple 4x4 wood posts. The railings will be wood, 3 ft high, and with spindles sandwiched between the top and bottom rails. The new stairs will be wood or concrete; either material would be appropriate. The existing porch floor is concrete.
5. Additional minor work is included in this application, including new vents on non-character-defining elevations, the replacement of storm windows, and new mechanical units near the rear of the house. These could be staff approved but are included here so the applicant only has one application.
6. The proposed changes to the front porch are appropriate and would be a great improvement to the front porch. Staff believes that the design, size, and materials of the rear addition are appropriate and compatible with the house and neighboring structures in the historic district, and recommends approval.

## **MOTION**

(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 issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 512 West Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a 361 sq ft, two-story addition on the rear elevation of the house and install new stairs, posts, and railings on the front porch as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the

surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for All Additions, Historic Residential Additions, and Residential Porches and *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 District or Neighborhood Setting and New Additions.

## **MOTION WORKSHEET**

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 512 West Liberty 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:** drawings, photos, materials



*Image 2: 512 West Liberty Street (courtesy Google Maps, 2024)*

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE SURVEY SHEET NUMBER

SURVEY NAME SURVEY DATE *3/1/82* BY *RC/BK*

ADDRESS *512 W Liberty*

HISTORIC NAME CURRENT NAME

LOCATION SECTION BLOCK PARCEL BUILDING

TYPE USE PRIMARY SECONDARY ORIGINAL ZONING

No. of FLOORS *2 1/2* No. OCCUPIED CELLAR OCCUPIED ? ATTIC OCCUPIED ?

FRONT DIRECTION *S* SURFACE MATERIAL *aluminum* ROOF COVERING *asphalt*

ITEMS TO BE GRADED - PUT A CHECK OR "X" IN THE APPROPRIATE SQUARE SPACE

STRUCTURAL CONDITION	GOOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FAIR <input type="checkbox"/>	POOR <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>10</i>
MAINTENANCE QUALITY	GOOD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	FAIR <input type="checkbox"/>	POOR <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>10</i>

ALTERATIONS	NONE or MINOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MODERATE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EXTENSIVE <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>5</i>
	APPROPRIATE <input type="checkbox"/>	INAPPROPRIATE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		



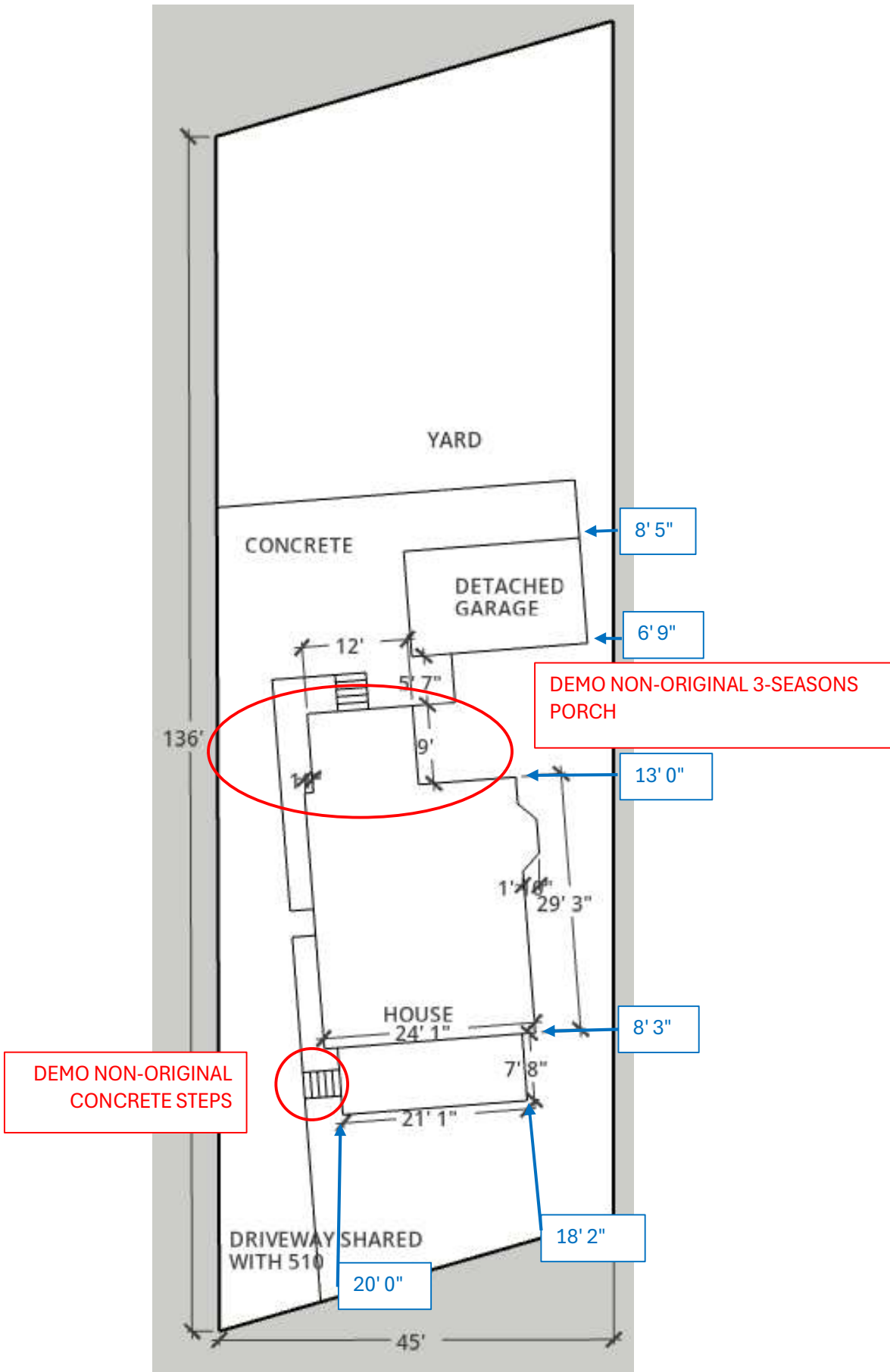
PERIOD or STYLE	<i>Colonial R</i>
DATE	ADD'N
NATIONAL IMPORT.	
LOCAL EXCELLENCE	
NOTABLE	
WORTHY OF MENTION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>15</i>
POOR	

INCIDENCE	
RARE	
MODERATE	
COMMON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

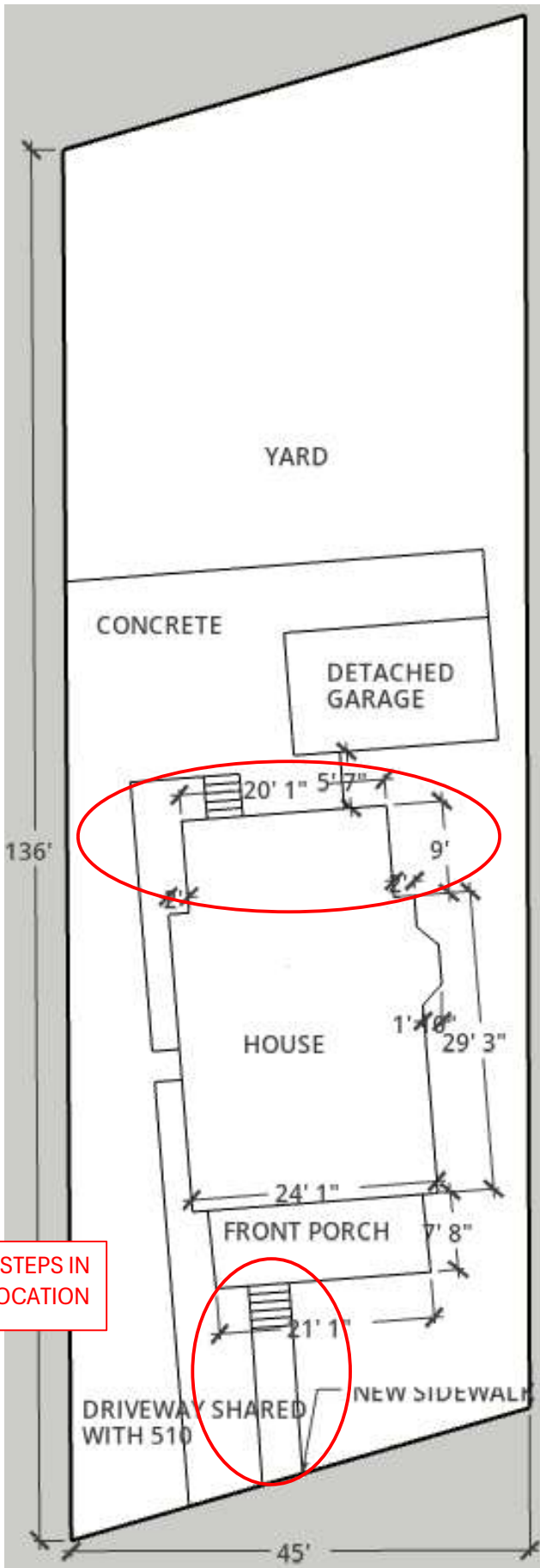
TOTAL	<i>40</i>
CATEGORY	<i>71</i>

PHOTO DATE	
BY	<i>BK</i>
ROLL	<i>21</i>
FRAME	<i>13/4</i>

Image 3: 512 W Liberty St Old West Side Survey Card (1982)



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
 512 W. Liberty  
 Plot Plan - existing  
 3.19.26



NEW 2-STORY ADDITION; SAME DEPTH; INSET 2' FROM HOUSE

NEW FRONT PORCH STEPS IN ORIGINAL LOCATION

Front (south) Elevation



Rear (north) & west side of house



West Elevation



ADDITION HERE

East Elevation



MIMIC THIS PORTICO  
OVER NEW REAR STEPS

Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
East & West Elevations  
3.19.26

Existing Front Door



Existing Rear Door

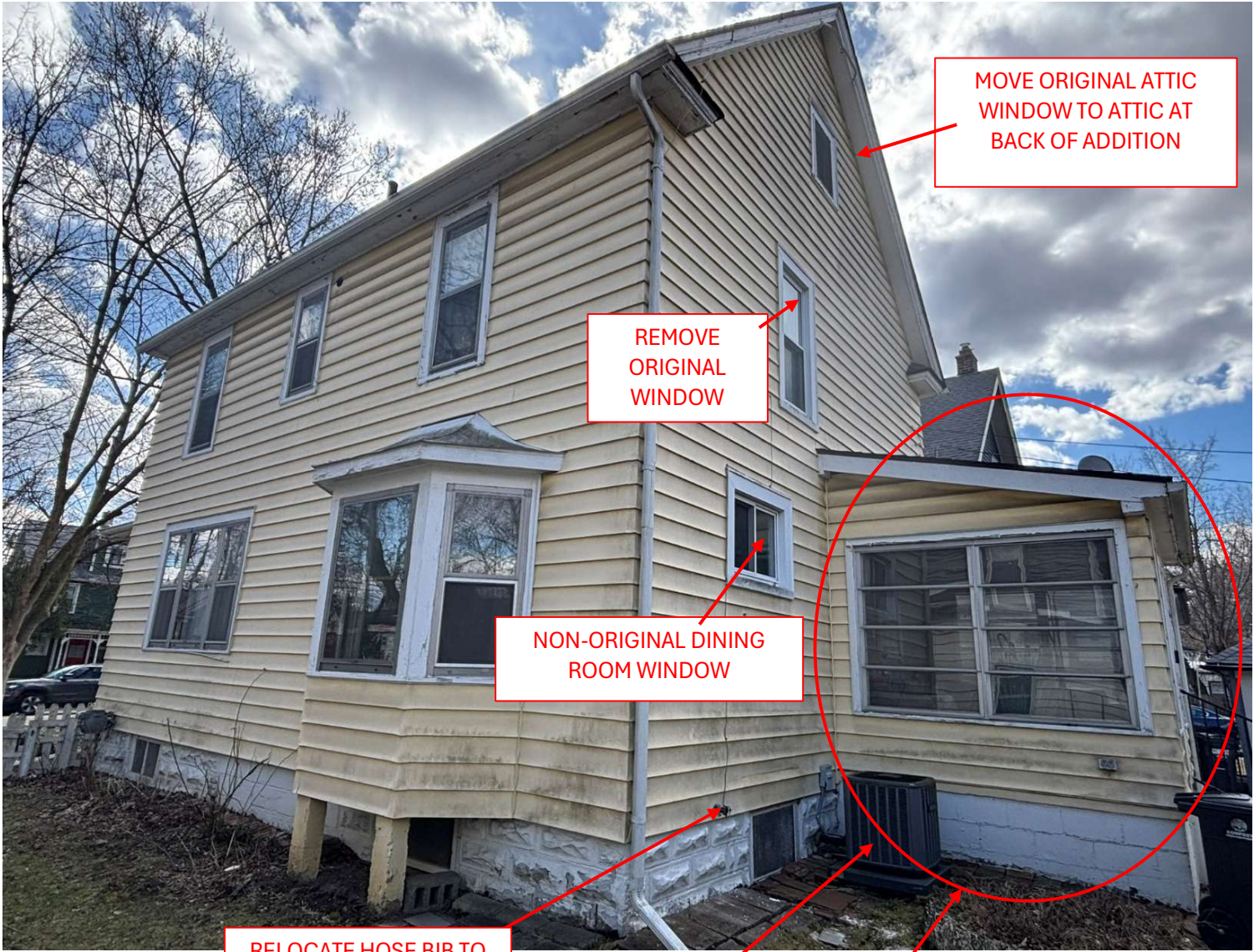


RE-USE THIS BACK DOOR AS ADDITION BACK  
DOOR;  
MATCHES FRONT DOOR

Original rear door: wood and glass; 3 raised-panels; 32" x 6'-8"

Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Front & Rear Doors  
3.19.26

East Elevation



MOVE ORIGINAL ATTIC WINDOW TO ATTIC AT BACK OF ADDITION

REMOVE ORIGINAL WINDOW

NON-ORIGINAL DINING ROOM WINDOW

RELOCATE HOSE BIB TO SIDE OF ADDITION

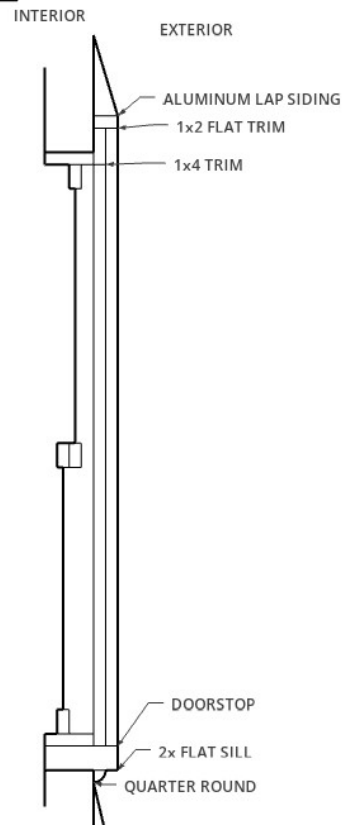
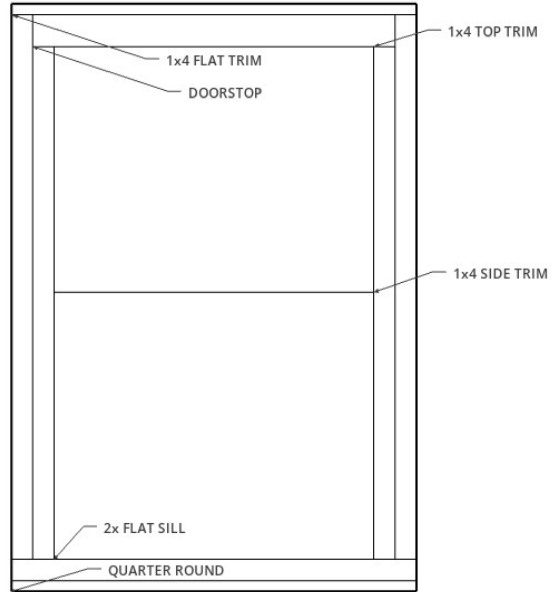
RELOCATE A/C TO SIDE OF ADDITION

REMOVE NON-ORIGINAL 3-SEASONS ROOM; ADDITION TO BE SAME DEPTH, BUT WIDER AND INCLUDING A SECOND FLOOR (ON CRAWL)

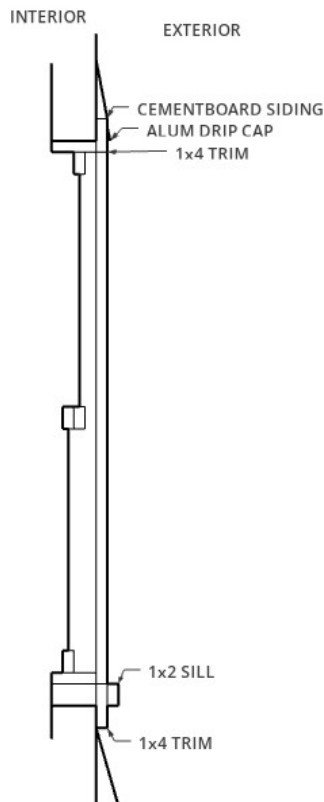
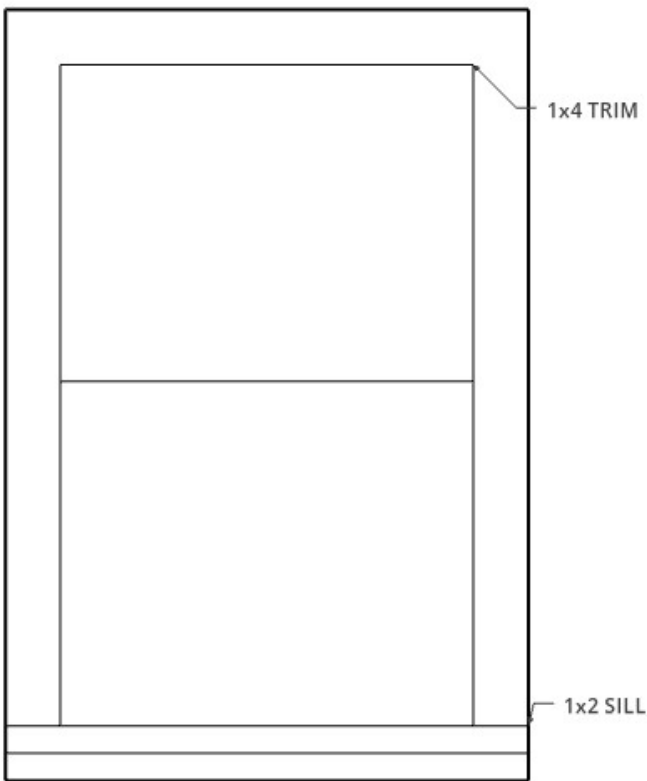
Existing window trim



1-1/2"x 1" sill with 3/4" quarter round underneath  
 1x3-3/4" top trim with 1x3/4" flat trim at top edge  
 1x3-3/4" side trim with doorstop at edge



New window trim

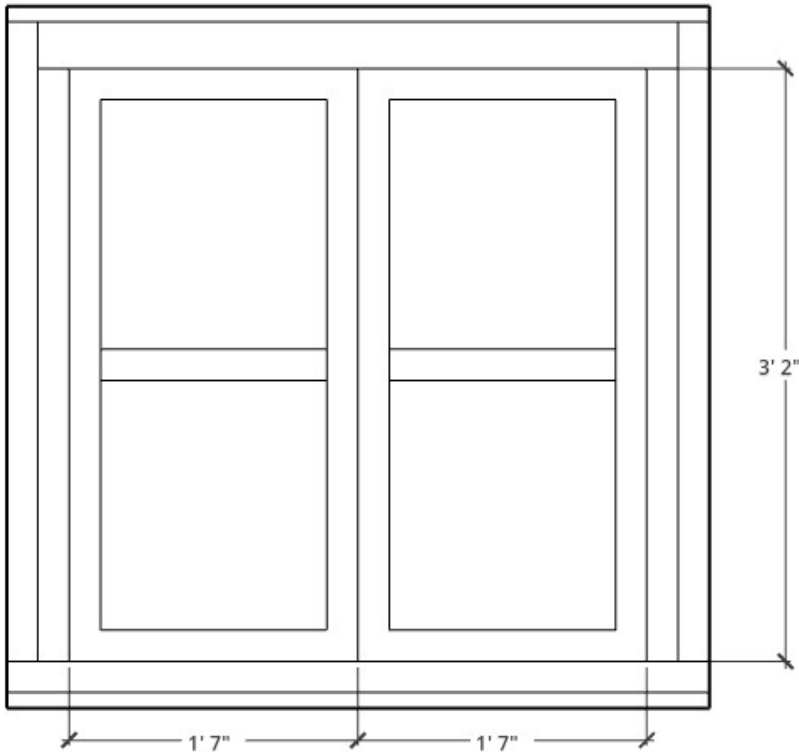


Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
 512 W. Liberty  
 Window details  
 3.19.26

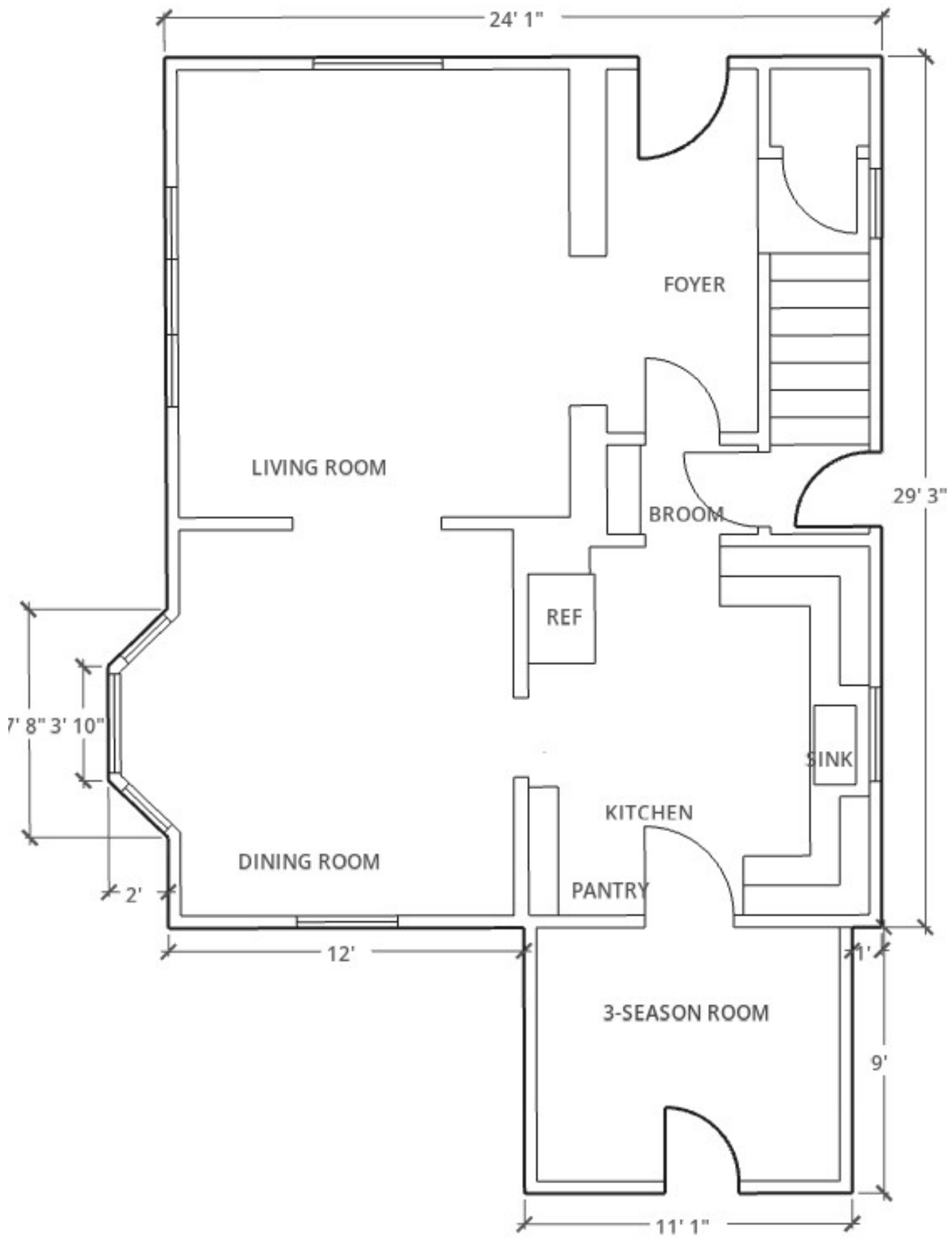
Kitchen Window



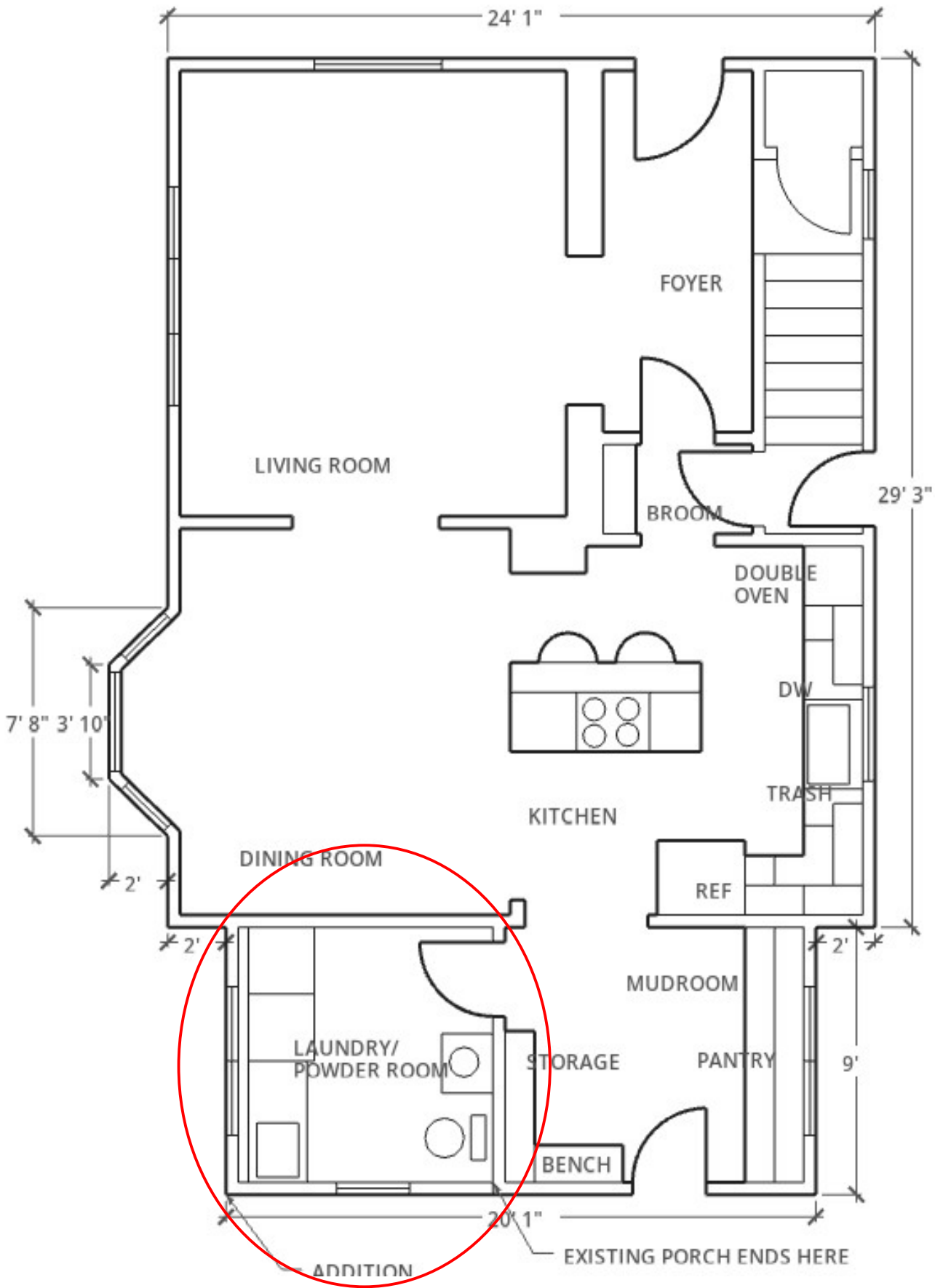
This window is not original  
Will be replaced with 2 double hung windows  
of same size to match those on addition  
Maintain trim



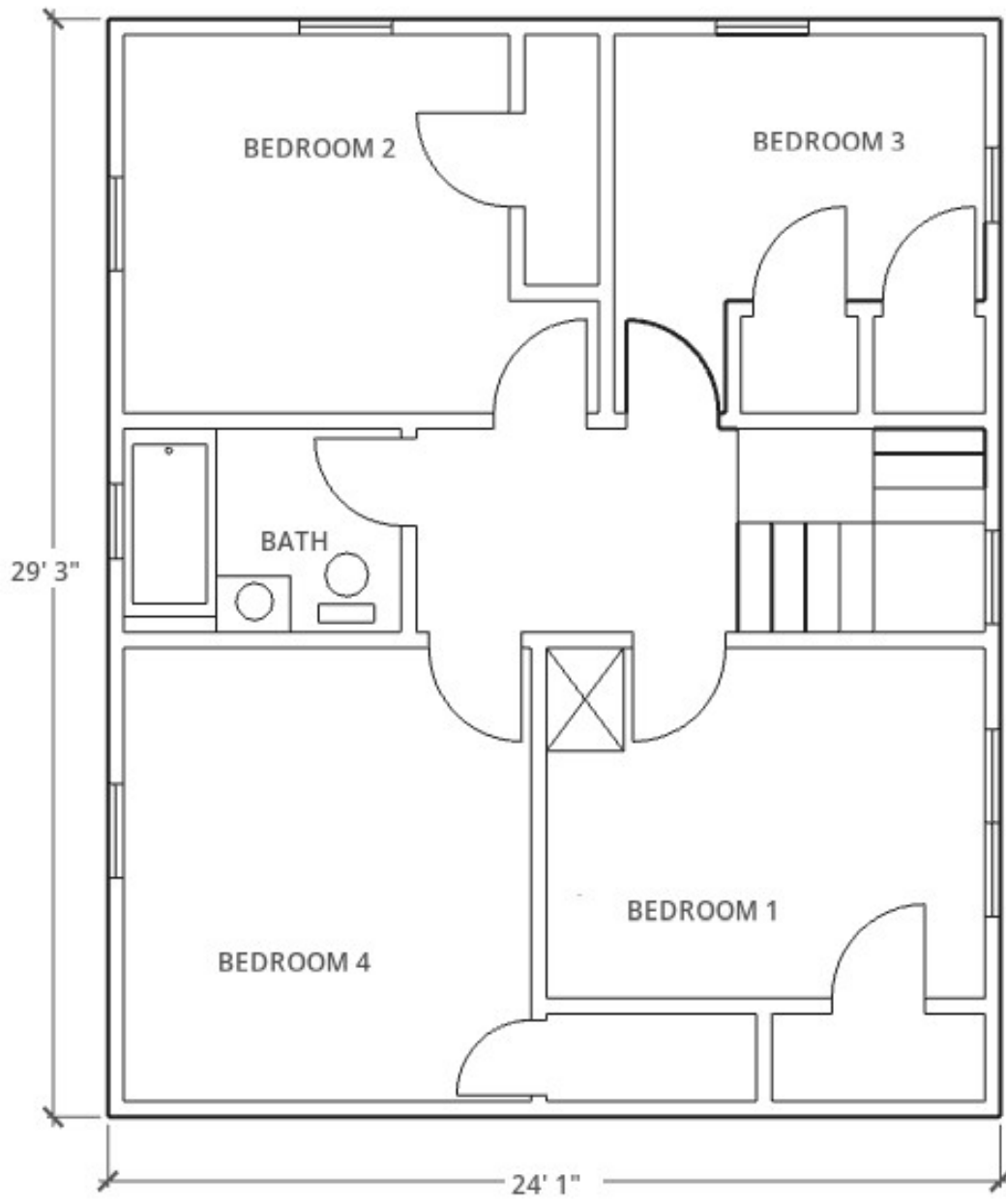
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Kitchen Window  
3.19.26



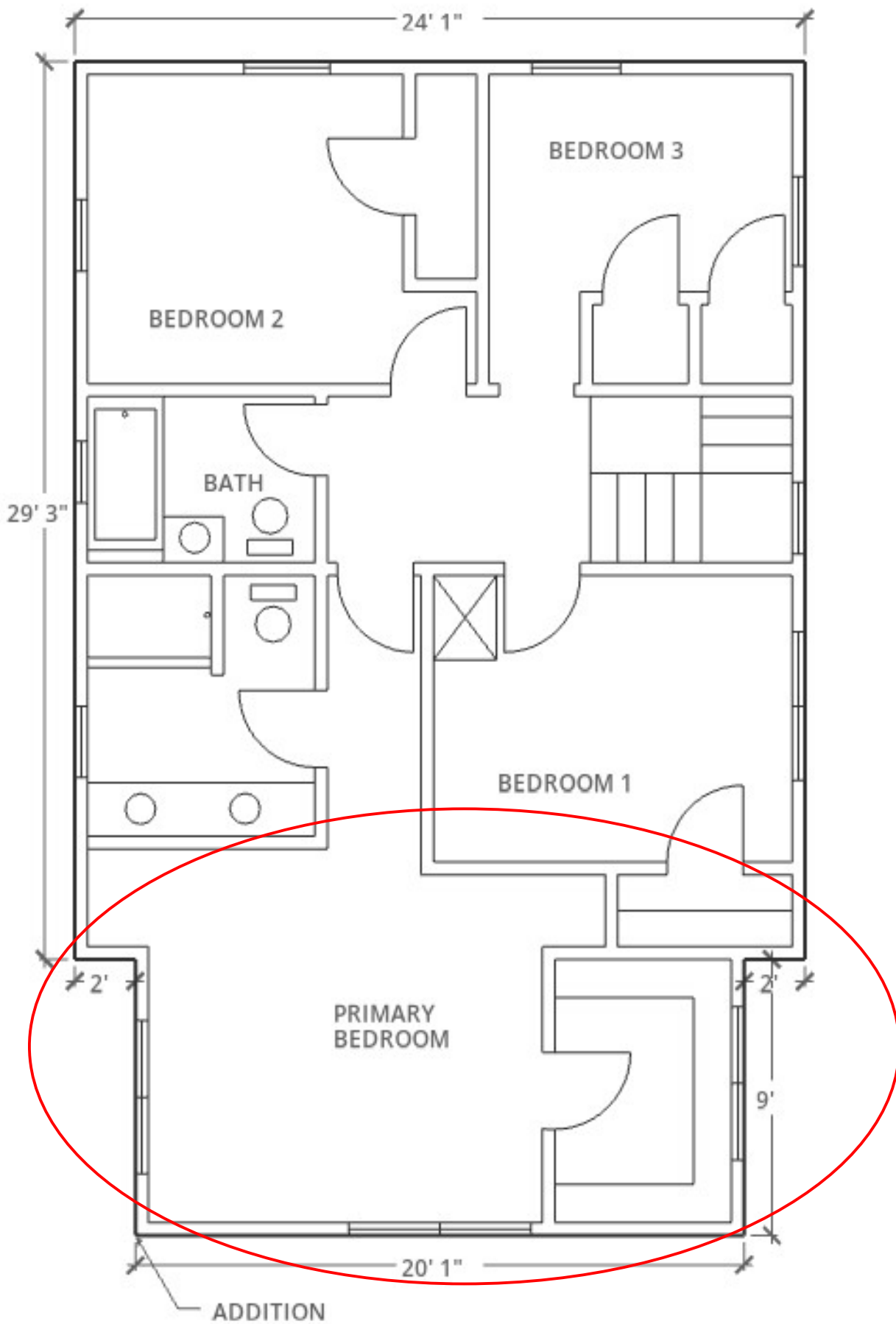
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
 512 W. Liberty  
 Existing First Floor Plan  
 3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
 512 W. Liberty  
 Proposed First Floor Plan  
 3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Existing Second Floor Plan  
3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Proposed Second Floor Plan  
3.19.26

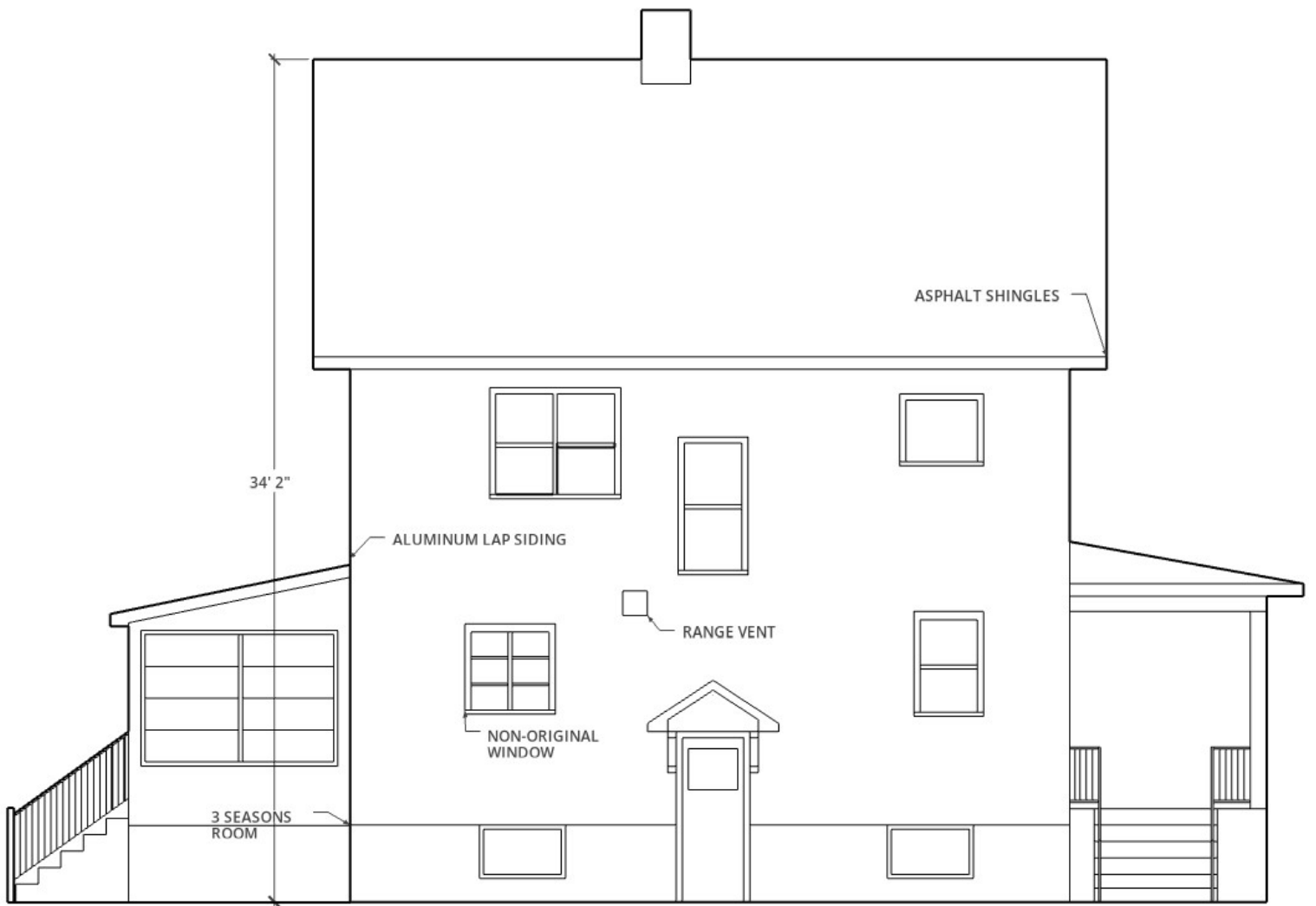


Add 3-track Fox Aluminum Storm Windows to all windows  
Some windows have existing aluminum storms

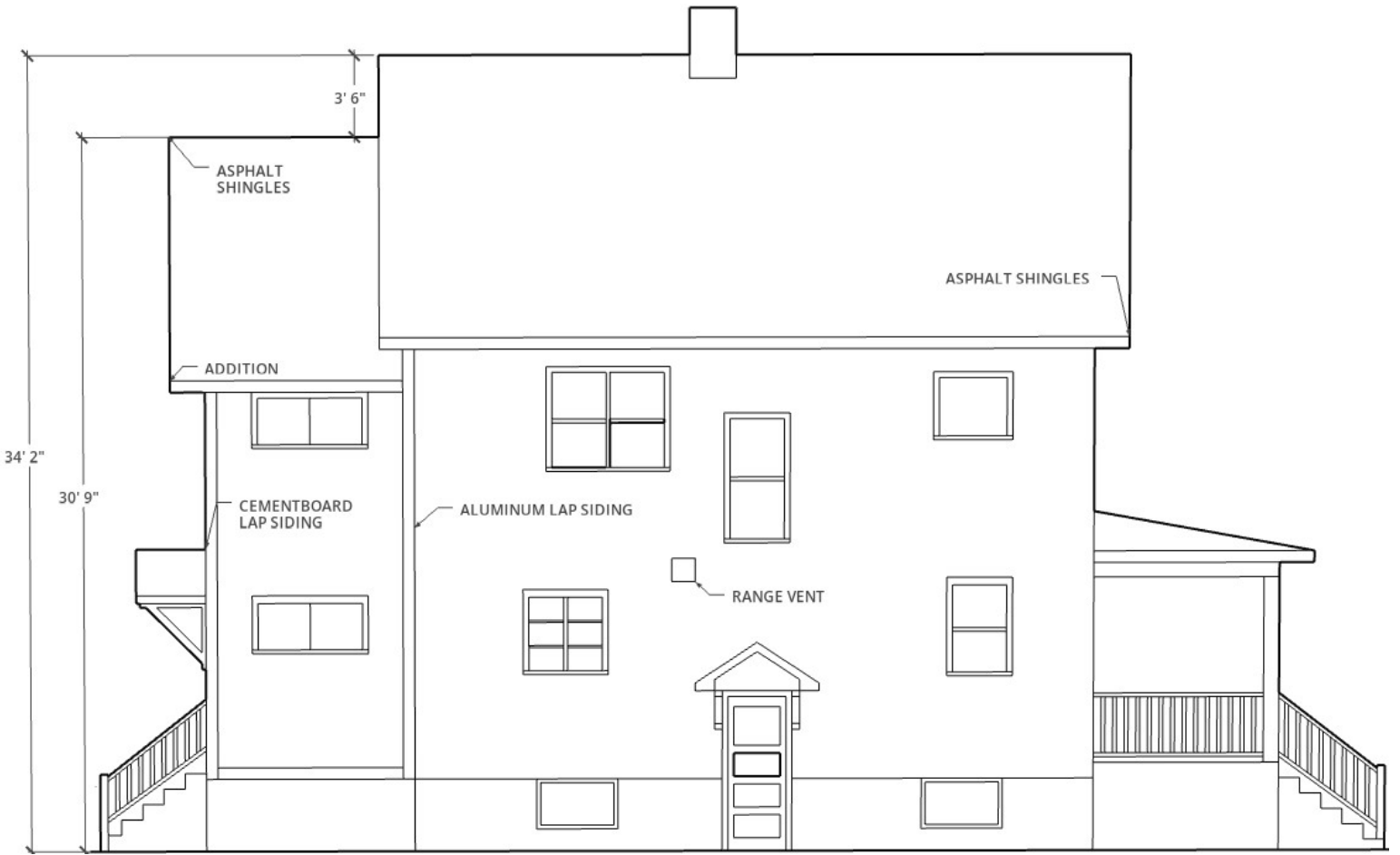
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Existing Front Elevation  
3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Proposed Front Elevation  
3.19.26



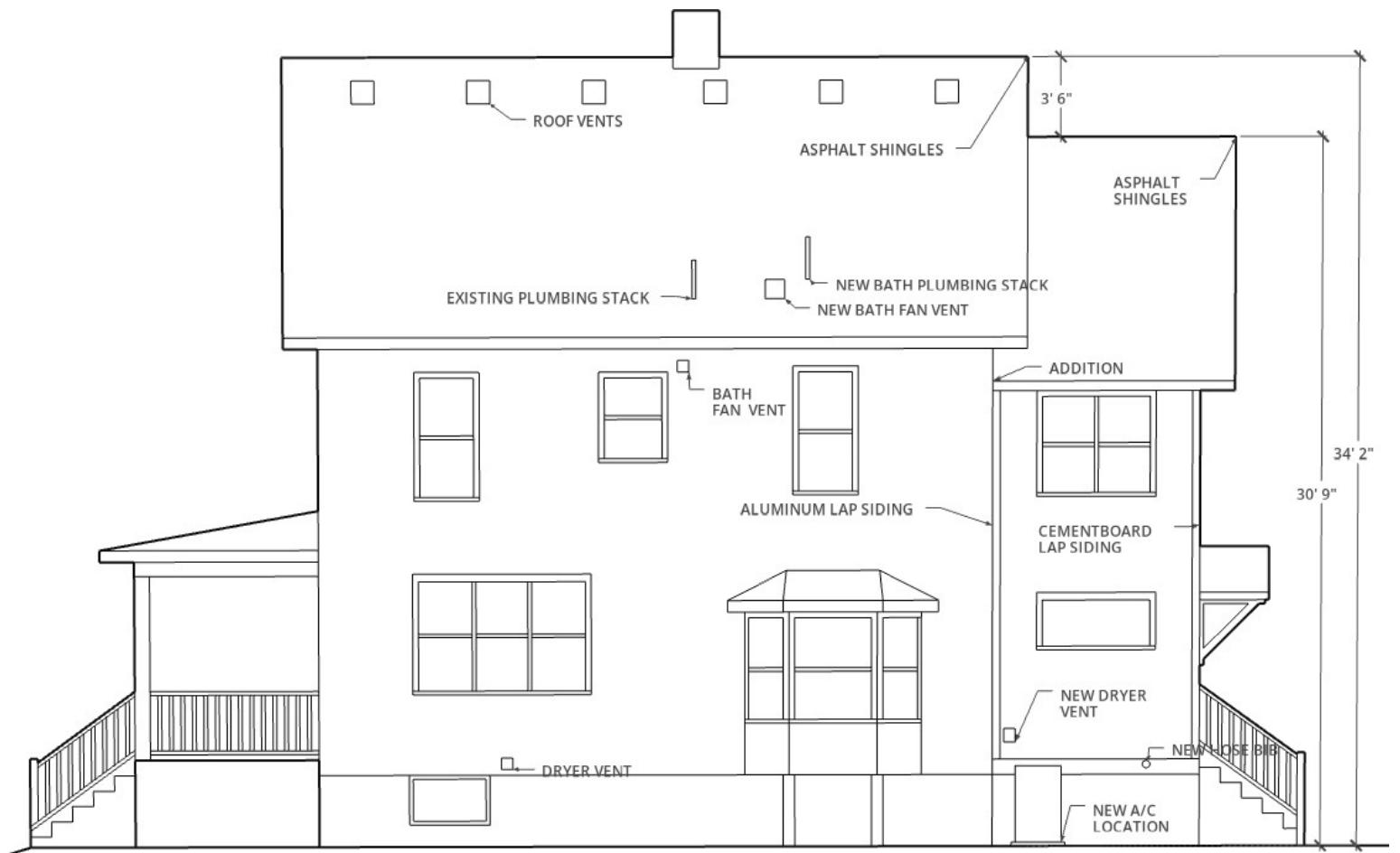
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Existing West Elevation  
3.19.26



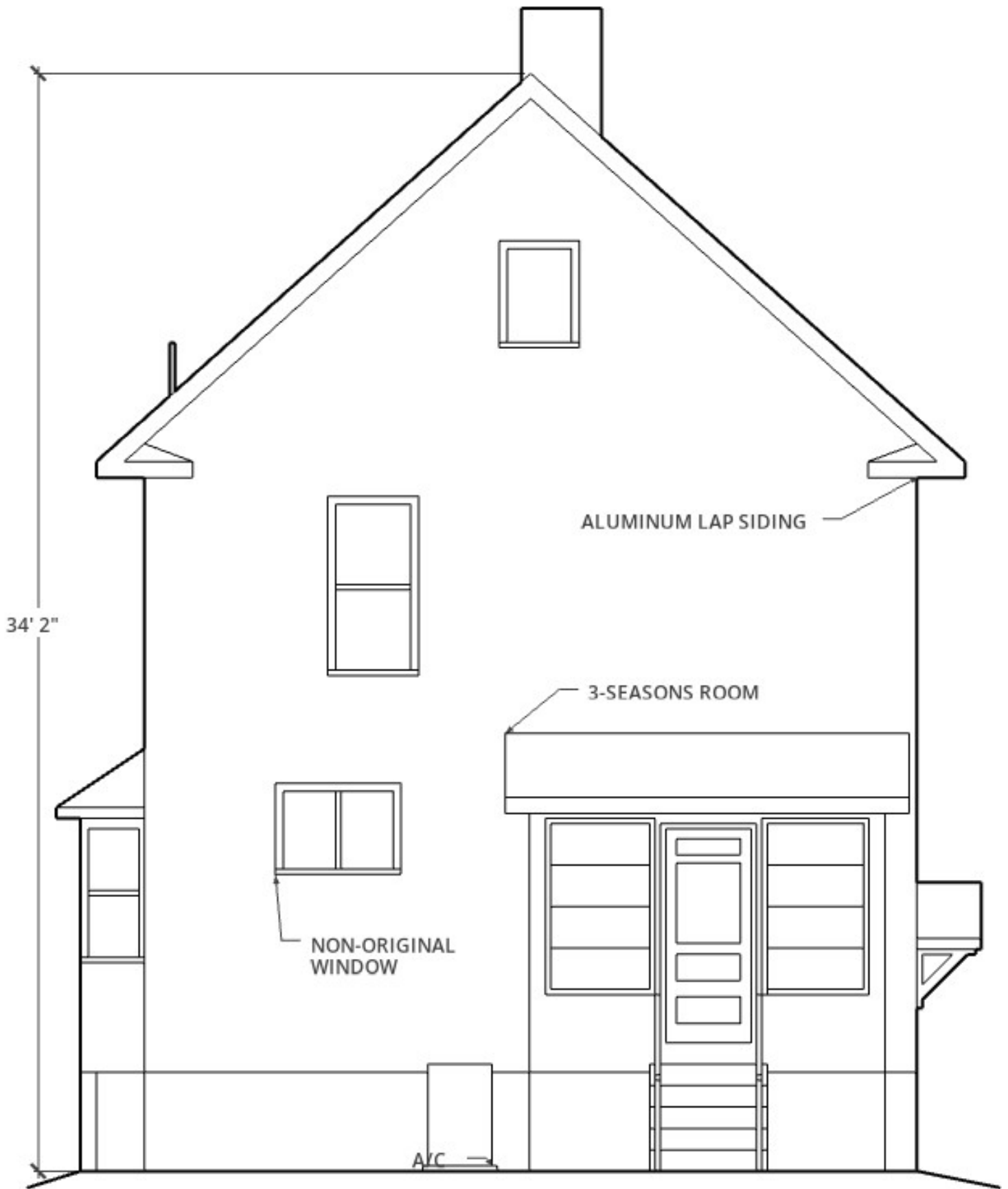
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Proposed West Elevation  
3.25.26



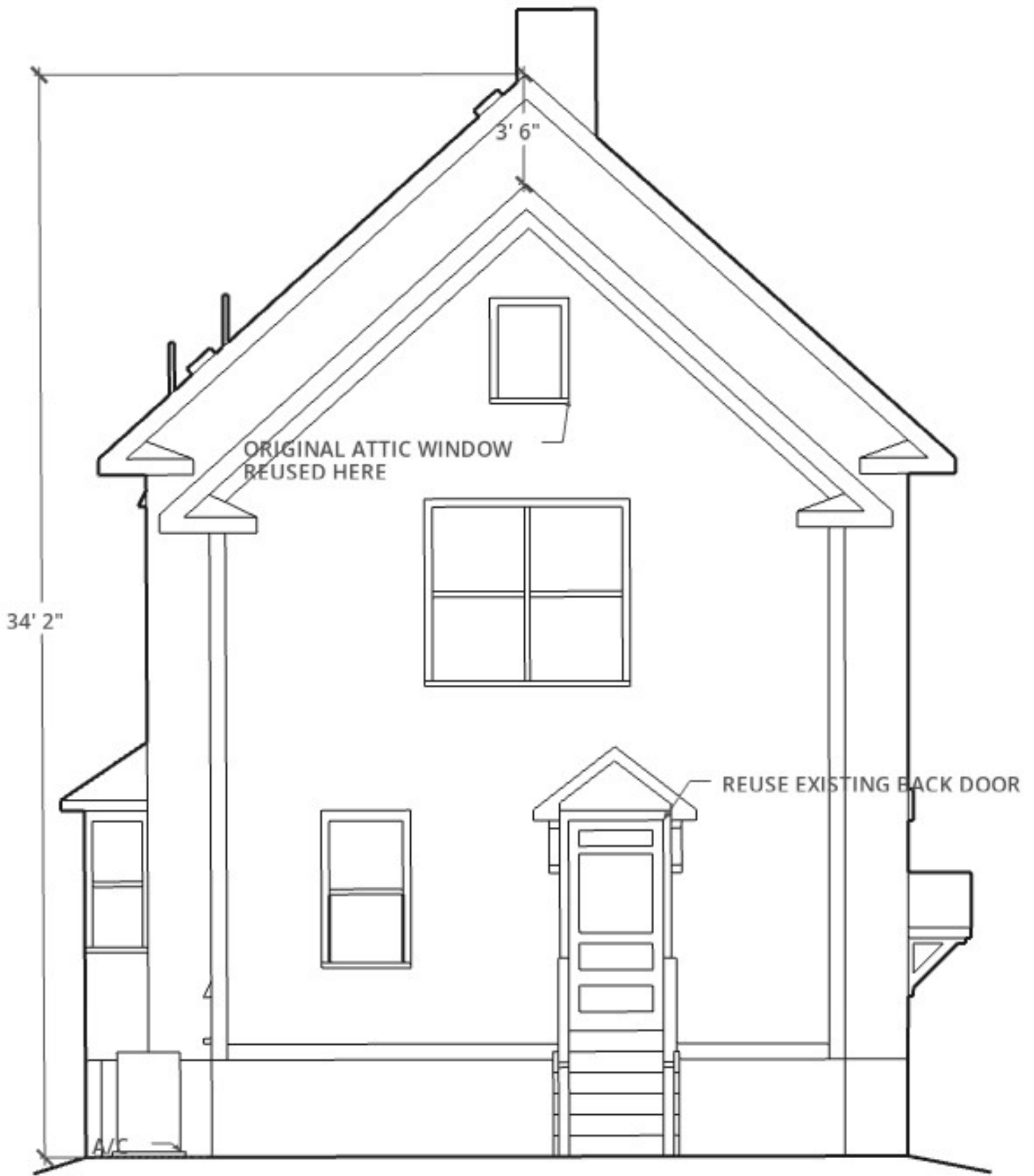
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Existing East Elevation  
3.19.26



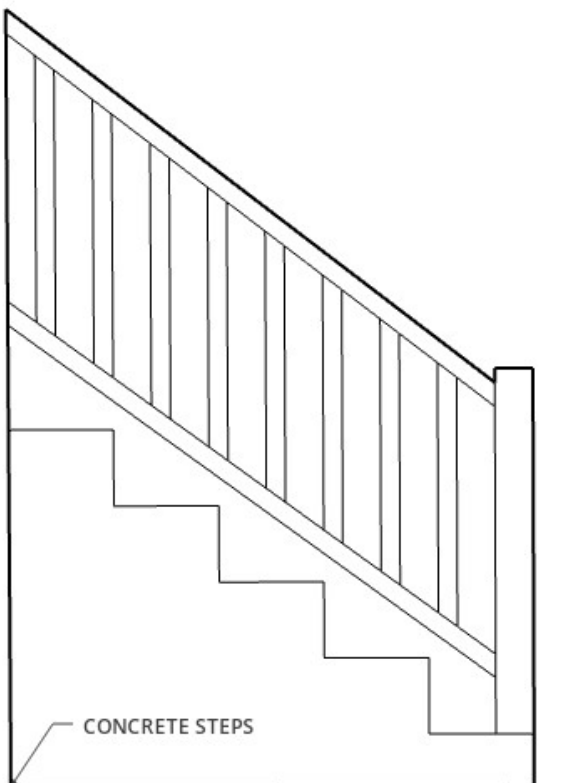
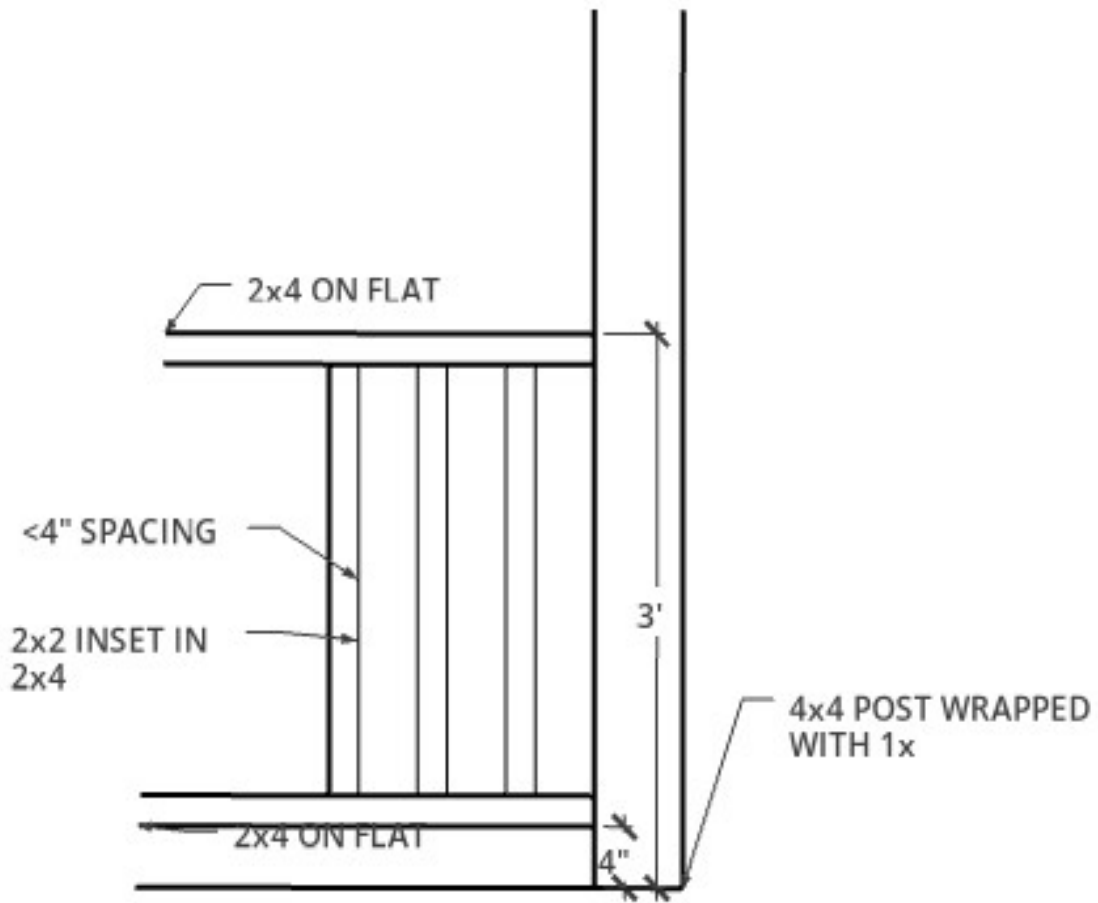
Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Proposed East Elevation  
3.25.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Existing Rear Elevation  
3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Proposed Rear Elevation  
3.19.26



Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
 512 W. Liberty  
 Front/Back Porch Details  
 3.25.26

### **Proposed Addition**

Remove 3-seasons room on back of house

Add 2-story addition on back of house the same depth as old 3-seasons room - width of house inset 2' on each side

Remodel kitchen

Replace storm windows

Remove front porch metal filagree and replace with wood posts and railings

Remove side front porch steps and relocate to their original location on the front of the porch - to stay concrete

### **Addition**

Pre-1945 Footprint	715 square feet	Pre-1945 Floor Area	1419 square feet
Proposed Footprint	181 square feet	Proposed Floor Area	361 square feet
% Increase in Footprint	<b>25%</b>	% Increase in Floor Area	<b>25%</b>

### **Existing Materials**

Roof - dimensional asphalt shingles (maintain)

Siding - aluminum lap siding with 6-3/4" reveal (maintain); no trim boards at bottom, corners, or frieze

Soffit & Fascia - wood (maintain) 1x6 with routed board applied atop fascia

Windows - wood with aluminum storm windows (replace aluminum storm windows with new aluminum storm windows)

Doors - wood with glass (maintain); 3-3/4" side trim, 4" top trim

Window/Door Trim - wood (maintain); 3-3/4" side & top trim with doorstop trim at exterior edge,  
1-1/2" bottom sill extending 1" out; 3/4" quarter round under sill

Front Porch Railing - metal (replace with wood)

Front Porch Stairs - concrete (replace with concrete - porch floor is concrete)

Back Porch Stairs - concrete (replace with concrete)

### **Addition Proposed Materials**

Roof - dimensional asphalt shingles to match existing

Siding - smooth cementboard lap siding with 6" reveal; 1x4 corner boards, 1x8 bottom & frieze boards

Soffit & Fascia - aluminum clad wood fascia- 1x6 with (no overlay trim); aluminum soffit.

Window/Door Trim - 1x4 cementboard on all 4 sides (no overlay trim) with 1" x 1" sill overhang

Windows - Pella Lifestyle 250 series aluminum clad wood windows

Doors - use existing back door in addition; 1x4 cementboard on sides and top

Back Porch Stairs - concrete

A/C - move directly east of existing location

Plumbing vent - add 1 for new primary bath

Bath van vent - add 1 for new primary bath

Matt & Nicole Ridenour  
512 W. Liberty  
Details  
3.19.26

**Window Schedule**

UNIT	QUANTITY	UNIT SIZE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
A	1	52x65	Double Hung	living room S
B	1	28x45	Double Hung	lower stairs
C	2	19x38	<i>Double Hung</i>	kitchen
D	6	27x24	<i>New Fixed Pane</i>	mudroom, laundry, primary
E	1	28x53	<i>New Double Hung</i>	laundry
F	2	24x53	Double Hung	dining
G	1	40x53	Double Hung	dining
H	3	29x57	Double Hung	living room E
I	3	34x62	Double Hung	bedrooms S
J	1	35x30	Double Hung	bedroom 3 E
K	3	28x62	Double Hung	upper stairs, upper baths
L	2		Double Hung	bedroom 1
M	2	36x66	<i>New Double Hung</i>	primary bedroom N
N	2	36x54	<i>New Double Hung</i>	primary bedroom E

**Door Schedule**

UNIT	QUANTITY	UNIT SIZE	DESCRIPTION	
1	1	36x80 RH	Original exterior door with glass	front
2	1	32x80 RH	Original exterior door with glass	basement
3	1	32x80 LH	Original exterior door with glass	back
4	3	30x80 LH	Original solid wood door	foyer, BR3, PBR & closet
5	7	30x80 RH	Original solid wood door	basement, BR3 closets, BR2 & closet, BR1 & closet
6	1	28x80 RH	Original solid wood door	shared bath
7	1	30x80 LH	<i>New solid wood door</i>	PBR closet
8	2	30x80 RH	<i>New solid wood door</i>	laundry, PBR bath

*\*New windows and doors shown in italics*