

# Request for Variance

January 26, 2021

Dear Members of the Board

Petition on behalf of Melissa Williamson for property located at 295 Thornton Street, Tax Map 162, Lot #4, wherein relief is requested from the Zoning Ordinance for a proposed 2-story addition on the east side of the residence, and a proposed 1-story addition at the rear of the residence. The request includes a variance from Section 10.521 to allow for a 5'-4" front yard where a 15' setback is required, as well as a variance from Section 10.321 to allow the enlargement of a non-conforming structure.

The existing residence consists of an original 2-story house built in 1870 and a 2-story addition dating back to the 1930's. The residence has all the charms and quirks you might expect from a structure of its age. It is however not very well adapted to today's standards of usage, livability and safety, and woefully inadequate for an owner wishing to age in place.

The existing stairs to the second floor are narrow, winding and steep. The existing stairs to the basement are even narrower and steeper. The proposed 2-story addition with full basement would house new code compliant stairways to the basement and second floor, as well as a new powder room, laundry closet and pantry.

The existing Master Bedroom, located on the second floor of the 1930's addition, is reached via two steep steps down. Part of the renovations is to create a new Master Suite with bath and walk-in closet on the first floor where the current stairway and living room are located now. This creates the need for the proposed 1-story addition at the rear, as it would house a new living room.

The applicant believes their request is reasonable as they wish to transform the house in order to allow them to gracefully and safely age in place.

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Responding to the Variance Requirement

- **The variance will not be contrary to the public interest.**

The proposed additions will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The additions are in keeping with the existing aesthetics and scale of the residence, as well as those of adjacent properties.

- **The spirit of the ordinance will be observed.**

The proposed additions will improve the performance and look of the property.

- **Substantial Justice will be done.**

In its current configuration, the residence is not suitable for aging in place. Creating 2) new stairways in the east side addition will remedy this. The living room addition allows for the creation of a new master suite on the first floor, which will allow the owner to live on a single floor.

- **The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished.**

The proposed additions will add value to the property and thereby increase the value of the surrounding homes.

- **Literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship.**

Literal enforcement would prevent the owners from gracefully aging in place.

Sincerely yours

Hubert Krahl

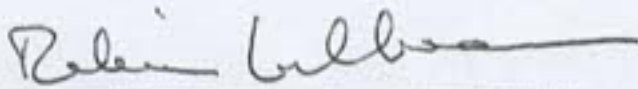
## Letter of Authorization

January 26, 2021

Melissa Williamson  
295 Thornton Street  
Portsmouth NH 03801

I authorize Hubert Krah Designs, LLC to execute the Application for Variances and to take any and all actions necessary throughout the Variance application and permitting process, including but not limited to attendance and presentation at public hearings regarding the property at 295 Thornton Street, Tax Map 162, Lot 4

Melissa Williamson

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## Application for a Variance to permit the following:

The construction a 2-story addition on the east side of the residence, to house 2) new stairways to sevice basement and second floors and the construction of a living room addition to allow the creation of a first floor master suite.

Relief is requested from

- **section 10.521**, to allow for an existing 5'-4"+/- front yard where 15'-0" would be required
- **section 10.321**, to allow for the enlargement of a non-conforming structure

- **The variance will not be contrary to the public interest.**

The proposed additions will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.

- **The spirit of the ordinance will be observed.**

The proposed additions will improve the performance and look of the property.

- **Substantial Justice will be done.**

In its current configuration, the residence is not suitable for aging in place. The existing stairs are very narrow and steep, and thus difficult to navigate. Creating 2) new stairways in the east side addition will remedy this. The living room addition allows for the creation of a new master suite on the first floor, which will allow the owner to age in place.

- **The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished.**

The proposed additions will add value to the property and thereby increase the value of the surrounding homes.

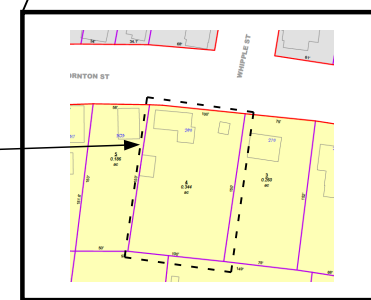
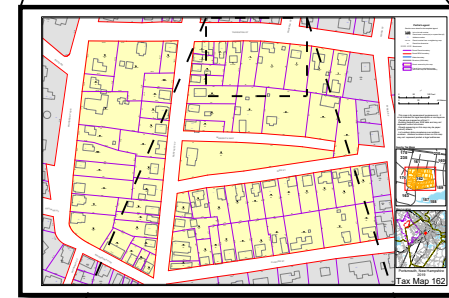
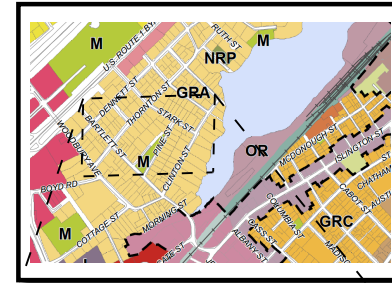
- **Literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship.**

Literal enforcement would prevent the owners from gracefully aging in place.

## List of Drawings

- AD-01 COVER SHEET & LOCATION MAP
- AD-02 EXISTING & PROPOSED PLOT PLANS
- AD-03 EXISTING & PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS - 1ST FL
- AD-04 EXISTING & PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS - 2ND FL
- AD-05 EXISTING & PROPOSED EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS - NORTH & WEST
- AD-06 EXISTING & PROPOSED EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS - SOUTH & EAST
- AD-07 LOT COMPARISONS

## Location Map



Location of property  
295 Thornton Street,  
Portsmouth NH 03801,  
Tax Map 162, Lot 4.



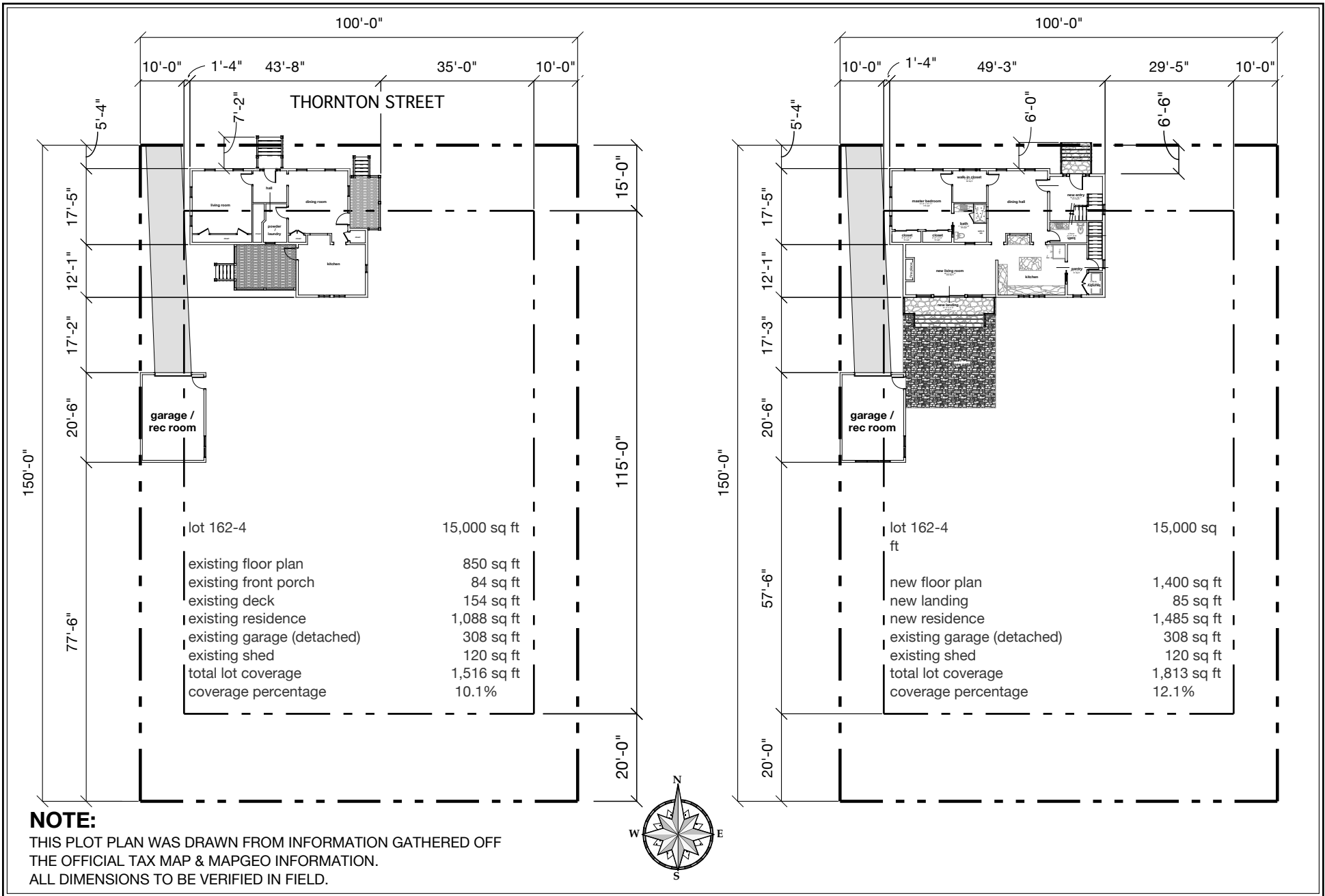
Variance Submittal for Additions to  
**The Williamson Residence**  
295 Thornton Street, Portsmouth NH 03801

## Cover Sheet

Issue date: January 26, 2021 | Scale: n/a  
Revision dates:

# AD-01





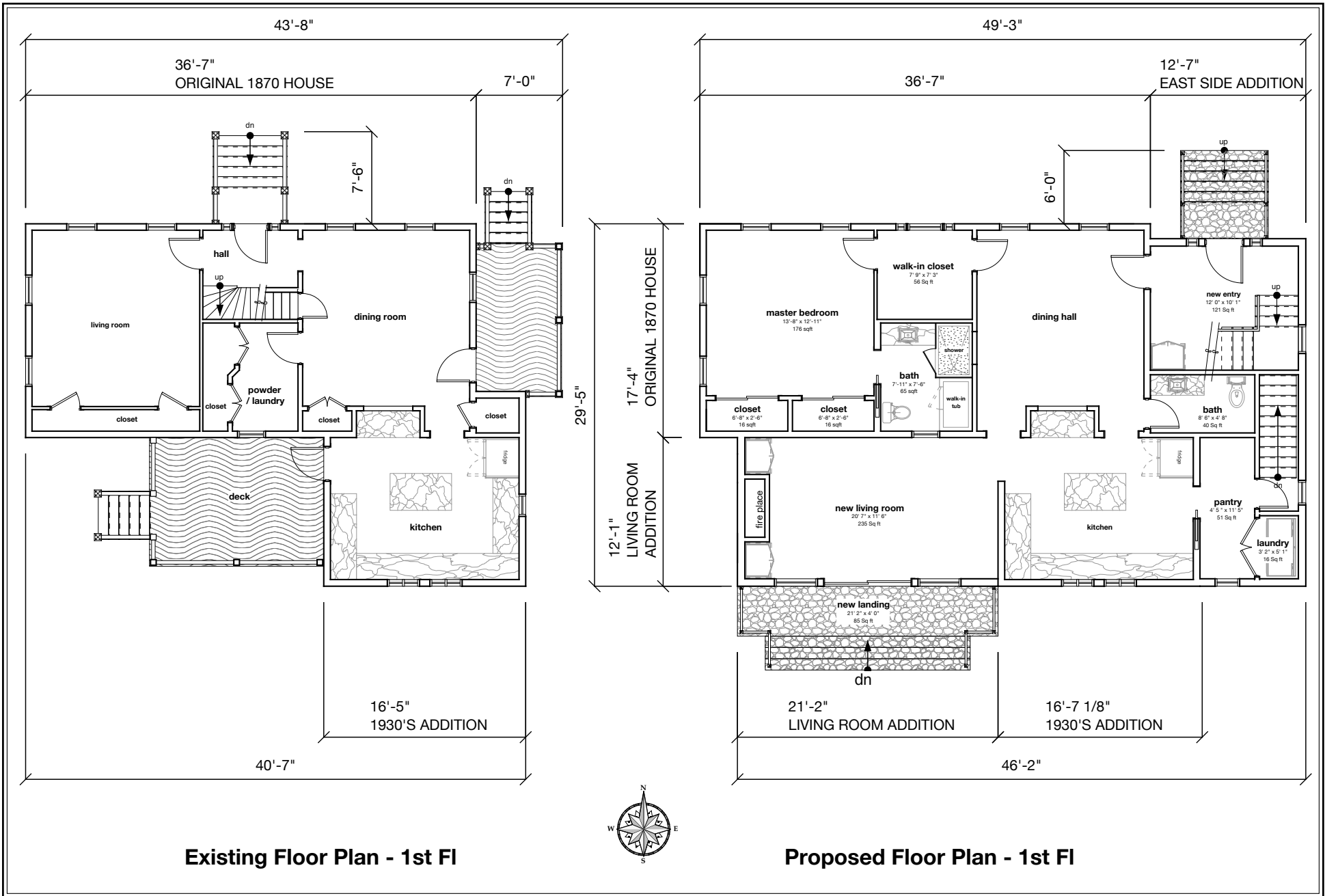
Variance Submittal for Additions to  
**The Williamson Residence**  
 295 Thornton Street, Portsmouth NH 03801

## Existing & Proposed Plot Plans

Issue date: January 26, 2012 | Scale: 1" = 30'-0"

Revision dates:

**AD-02**

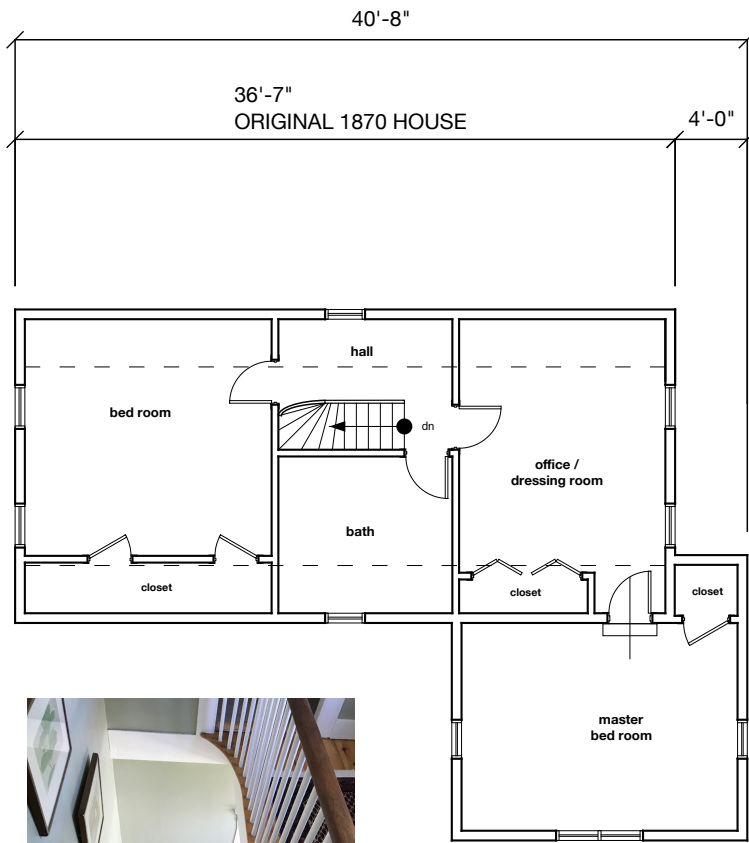


Variance Submittal for Additions to  
**The Williamson Residence**  
 295 Thornton Street, Portsmouth NH 03801

**Existing & Proposed Floor Plans - 1st Fl**

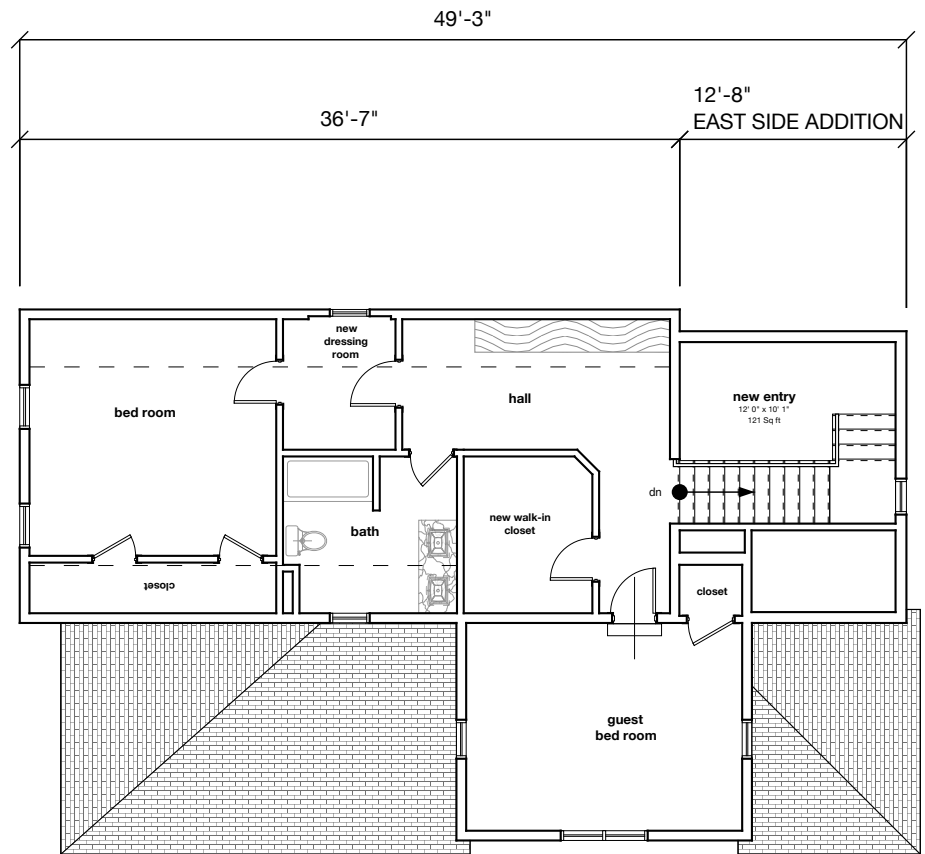
Issue date: January 26, 2021 | Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"  
 Revision dates:

**AD-03**



Existing Stairs

Existing Floor Plan - 2nd Fl



Proposed Floor Plan - 2nd Fl



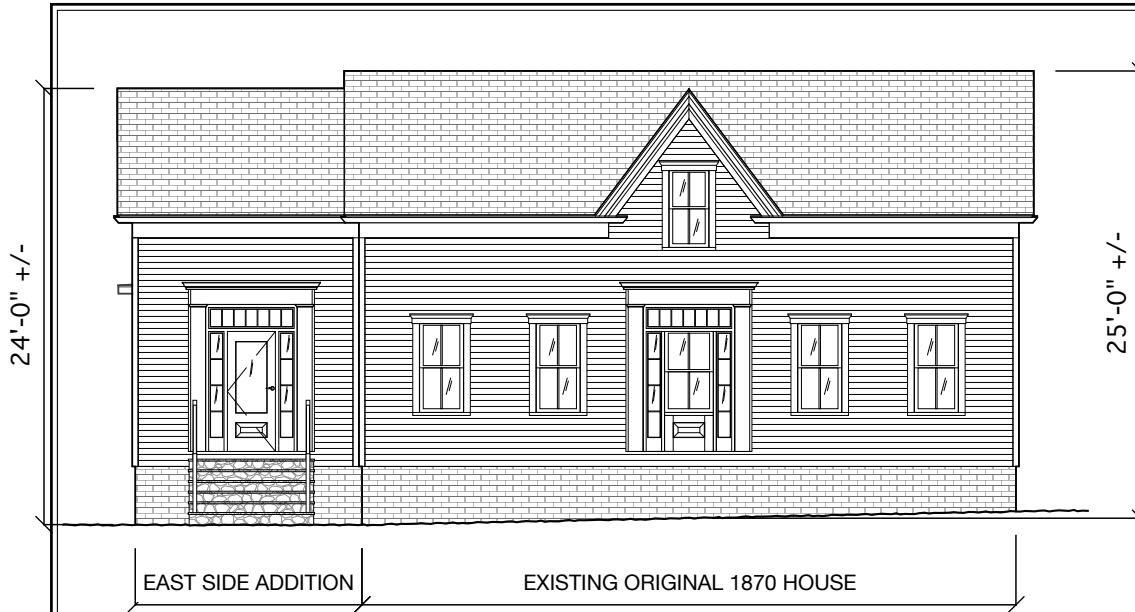
Variance Submittal for Additions to  
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**Existing & Proposed Floor Plans - 2nd Fl**

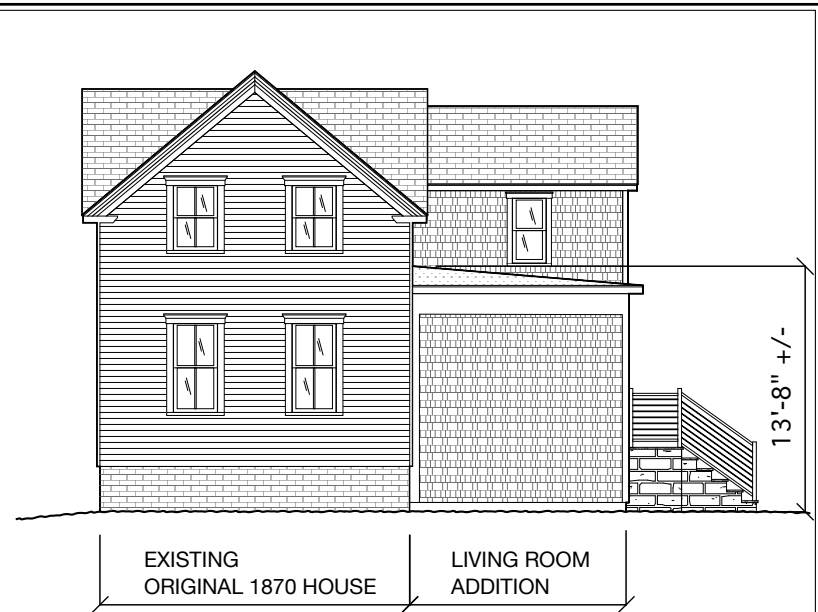
Issue date: January 26, 2021 | Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"

Revision dates:

**AD-04**



**Proposed Exterior Elevation - North**



**Proposed Exterior Elevation - West**

1930'S  
ADDITION



**Existing Exterior Elevation - North**

EXISTING  
ORIGINAL 1870  
HOUSE



**Existing Exterior Elevation - West**



Variance Submittal for Additions to  
**The Williamson Residence**  
 295 Thornton Street, Portsmouth NH 03801

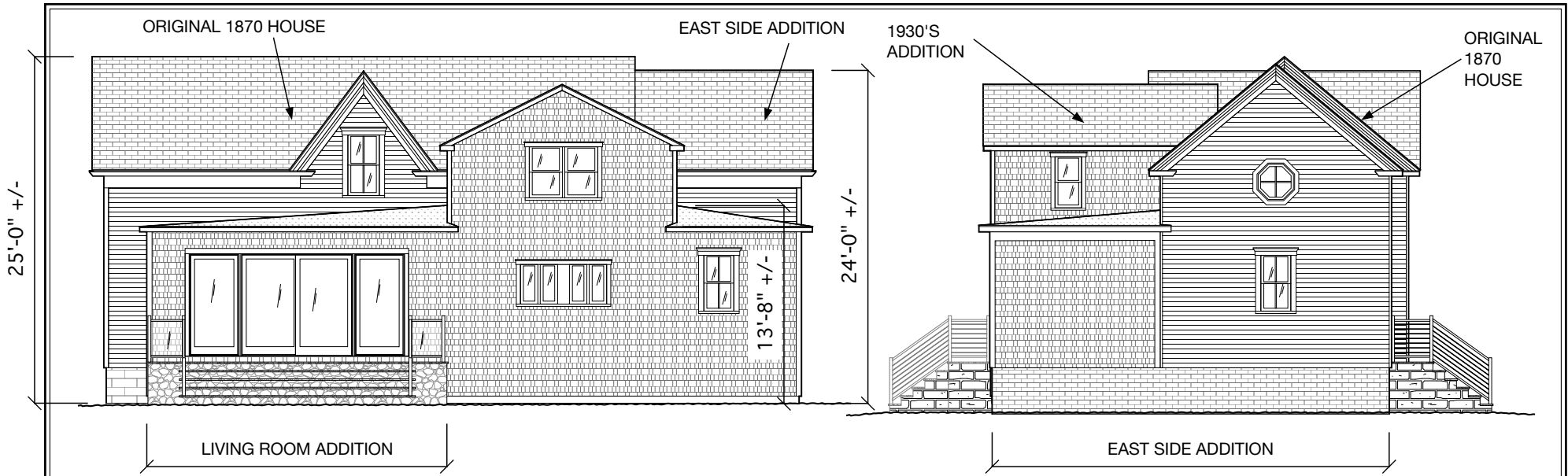
**Proposed Exterior Elevations**

Issue date: January 26, 2021 | Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"

Revision dates:

**AD-05**





**Proposed Exterior Elevation - South**

**Proposed Exterior Elevation - East**



**Existing Exterior Elevation - South**



**Existing Exterior Elevation - East**



Variance Submittal for Additions to  
**The Williamson Residence**  
 295 Thornton Street, Portsmouth NH 03801

**Proposed Exterior Elevations**

Issue date: January 26, 2021 | Scale: 3/32" = 1'-0"

Revision dates:

**AD-06**

## GRA District Dimensional Standards

Lot Area (min):	7,500 sq ft
Continuous Street Frontage (min):	80 ft
Lot Depth (min):	60 ft
Front Yard (min):	15 ft
Side Yard (min):	10 ft
Rear Yard (min):	20 ft

