# Hoefle, Phoenix, Gormley & Roberts, Pllc

## ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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December 24, 2024

#### HAND DELIVERED

Stephanie Casella, Planner Portsmouth City Hall 1 Junkins Avenue Portsmouth, NH 03801

Re: Martin Husslage

48 Langdon Street, Tax Map 138, Lot 47

General Residence C Zone

Dear Ms. Casella & Zoning Board Members:

On behalf of Chinburg Development, LLC ("Chinburg" or "Applicant"), enclosed please find the following in support of an application for zoning relief.

- Digital application package uploaded to Viewpoint.
- Owner's Authorization.
- 12/24/24 Memorandum and exhibits in support of Variance Application.

We look forward to presenting this application to the Zoning Board at its January 22, 2025 meeting.

Very truly yours,

R. Timothy Phoenix Monica F. Kieser

Enclosure

cc: Martin Husslage

TF Moran (email)

Custom Building Systems, LLC (email)

DANIEL C. HOEFLE
R. TIMOTHY PHOENIX
LAWRENCE B. GORMLEY
R. PETER TAYLOR

ALEC L. MCEACHERN

KEVIN M. BAUM

JACOB J.B. MARVELLEY
GREGORY D. ROBBINS

PETER V. DOYLE MONICA F. KIESER

STEPHANIE J. JOHNSON KAREN W. OLIVER STEPHEN H. ROBERTS 2007-2023

SAMUEL R. REID JOHN AHLGREN

OF COUNSEL:

## **OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION**

I, Martin Husslage, Owner/Applicant of 48 Langdon Street, #50, Tax Map 138/Lot 47, hereby authorize law firm Hoefle, Phoenix, Gormley & Roberts, PLLC to represent me before any and all City of Portsmouth Representatives, Boards and Commissions for permitting the project.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

1artin Husslage

#### **MEMORANDUM**

TO:

Portsmouth Zoning Board of Adjustment ("ZBA")

FROM:

R. Timothy Phoenix, Esquire

Monica F. Kieser, Esquire

DATE:

December 24, 2024

RE:

Martin Husslage

48 Langdon Street, Tax Map 138, Lot 47

General Residence C Zone

Dear Chair Eldredge and Zoning Board Members:

On behalf of Martin Husslage ("Husslage"), we are pleased to submit this memorandum and attached exhibits in support of Ginsberg's request for zoning relief to be considered by the Zoning Board of Adjustment ("ZBA") at its January 22, 2025 meeting, in anticipation of Hussalage's subdivision application.

## I. EXHIBITS

- 1. Plan Set issued by TF Moran.
- 2. Architectural Plan Set Custom Building Systems, LLC.
  - Lot A Duplex
- 3. <u>Architectural Plan Set</u> Home Designer Pro.
  - Lot B Single-family home & Accessory Dwelling Unit
- 4. Site Photographs.
  - Satellite View
  - Street View
- 5. Tax Map 138.

#### II. PROPERTY/PROJECT

48 Langdon Street is a 9,927 s.f. corner lot with 78.5 feet of frontage on McDonough Street and 124.65 feet of frontage on Langdon Street ("the Property"). The Property contains a two-family home and shed. There are two curb cuts on either side of the existing duplex. The existing duplex is in the front yard setback and the shed is located within the left-side yard setback. Husslage plans to remove the existing home, subdivide the lot and construct a duplex on one lot and a single-family home with an accessory dwelling unit ("ADU") on the other lot ("the Project"). Husslage proposes the duplex on the 5,664 s.f. lot ("Lot A") and the single-family home with ADU on the 4,264 s.f. lot ("Lot B). As proposed, each lot complies with lot area and frontage requirements and the proposed structures meet yard setback and building coverage requirements. The Project requires relief from the lot area per dwelling unit requirements for the duplex on Lot A.

## III. RELIEF REQUIRED:

| Variance Section/Requirement   | <b>Existing</b>          | <u>Proposed</u>   |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| PZO Table §10.521: Dimensional Standards 3,500 s.f. Lot Area/Dwelling Unit | 4,963 s.f./dwelling unit | Lot A duplex on 5,664 s.f. lot 2,832 s.f./dwelling unit |

#### IV. OTHER PEMITS REQUIRED

- Planning Board Subdivision/Lot Line Adjustment
- Building Permit

## V. <u>VARIANCE REQUIREMENTS</u>

- 1. The variances will not be contrary to the public interest.
- 2. The spirit of the ordinance is observed.

The first step in the ZBA's analysis is to determine whether granting a variance is not contrary to the public interest and is consistent with the spirit and intent of the ordinance, considered together pursuant to Malachy Glen Associates, Inc. v. Town of Chichester, 155 N.H. 102 (2007) and its progeny. Upon examination, it must be determined whether granting a variance "would unduly and to a marked degree conflict with the ordinance such that it violates the ordinance's basic zoning objectives." Id. "Mere conflict with the zoning ordinance is not enough." Id.

The Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance (PZO§10.121) was enacted for the general purpose of promoting the health, safety, and welfare in accordance with the Master plan by regulating:

- 1. The use of land, buildings and structures for business, industrial, residential and other purposes The Project takes an oversized lot and creates two lots which conform to the lot area requirements of the GRC zone and establishes permitted uses on each lot in structures that comply with yard setback requirements and building coverage. Use of this relatively large lot to accommodate two permitted uses with density compatible with the surrounding area is a reasonable use of the land.
- 2. The intensity of land use, including lot sizes, building coverage, building height and bulk, yards and open space Both proposed structures conform with the height requirement, yard setbacks, coverage, and open space requirements. The variance required to accommodate a permitted use with density compatible with the surrounding area will not undermine these purposes of the Ordinance.
- 3. The design of facilities for vehicular access, circulation, parking and loading The required parking exists inside the garages and outside on the lot.
- 4. The impacts on properties of outdoor lighting, noise, vibration, stormwater runoff and flooding The uses proposed are permitted and compatible with the neighborhood. The Project does not undermine these purposes.

- 5. <u>The preservation and enhancement of the visual environment</u> The Project proposes two brand new homes with sufficient parking and will preserve the visual environment.
- 6. The preservation of historic districts buildings and structures of historic or architectural interest The Property and the existing structure to be removed is not in the historic district and is of no known historic or architectural interest.
- 7. The protection of natural resources, including groundwater, surface water, wetlands, wildlife habitat and air quality The property will be served by municipal water and sewer. There are no wetlands in the area, accordingly these purposes are served by granting the variances.

Variances are required because the compliant lot area of the two lots does not support the uses permitted by right. The proposed structures comply with yard setback and height restrictions. Relief is only required to accommodate the lot area/dwelling unit on an otherwise dimensionally compliant duplex. Clearly, granting the variances does not "in a marked degree conflict with the ordinance such that it violates the ordinance's basic zoning objectives." Malachy Glen, supra, which also held:

One way to ascertain whether granting the variance would violate basic zoning objectives is to examine whether it would <u>alter the essential character of the locality</u>..... Another approach to [determine] whether granting the variance violates basic zoning objectives is to examine whether granting the variance would threaten the public health, safety or welfare. (emphasis added)

The Project is compatible with the density of the other six lots in its immediate area on Langdon Street, which includes two single family lots and four lots developed with condominium/multi-units. Only one single family home complies with the lot area/dwelling unit requirement. The other parcels do not conform with the lot area/dwelling unit requirement as indicated below.

| Map/Lot        | Address               | Units/Lot Area (s.f.) = Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      |
|----------------|-----------------------|---|
|                |                       |   |
| Map 138/Lot 46 | 28 Langdon St. Condos | 5 units/6,098.4 s.f. = 1,219.68 s.f./per dwelling unit. |
| Map 138/Lot 32 | 21-23 Langdon St.     | 2 units/3659.04 s.f. = 1,829.52 s.f./dwelling unit      |
| Map 138/Lot 30 | 37 Langdon St.        | 2 units/ 4007.52 s.f. = 2,003.76 s.f./dwelling unit     |
| Map 138/Lot 28 | 28 McDonough St.      | 4 units/ 2700.72 s.f. = 675.18 s.f./dwelling unit       |
| Map 138/Lot 29 | 47 Langdon Street     | 1 unit/3,920.40 s.f.                                    |
| Map 138/Lot 31 | 25 Langdon Street     | 1 unit/1,742.40 s.f.                                    |

Here, the existing lot is nearly three times that required in the zone. The Project creates two lots supporting permitted uses on each lot in structures that comply with all other dimensional requirements. Accordingly, granting the addition will neither "alter the essential character of the locality nor threaten the public health, safety or welfare."

#### 3. Substantial justice will be done by granting the variance.

If "there is no benefit to the public that would outweigh the hardship to the applicant" this factor is satisfied. Harborside Associates, L.P. v. Parade Residence Hotel, L.L.C, 162 N.H. 508 (2011). That is, "any loss to the [applicant] that is not outweighed by a gain to the general public is an injustice." Malachy Glen, supra at 109. Husslage is constitutionally entitled to the use of the lot as he sees fit; including subdivision and redevelopment of the Property for permitted single-family home and duplexes, each with an incorporated garage. Both proposed lots meet lot area and frontage requirements and each are developed with structures that conform with all other dimensional regulations. The variances are required due to the existing lot size, which cannot be changed. "The right to use and enjoy one's property is a fundamental right protected by both the State and Federal Constitutions." N.H. CONST. pt. I, arts. 2, 12; U.S. CONST. amends. V, XIV; Town of Chesterfield v. Brooks, 126 N.H. 64 (1985) at 68. Part I, Article 12 of the New Hampshire Constitution provides in part that "no part of a man's property shall be taken from him, or applied to public uses, without his own consent, or that of the representative body of the people." Thus, our State Constitutional protections limit the police power of the State and its municipalities in their regulation of the use of property. L. Grossman & Sons, Inc. v. Town of Gilford, 118 N.H. 480, 482 (1978). "Property" in the constitutional sense has been interpreted to mean not the tangible property itself, but rather the right to possess, use, enjoy and dispose of it. Burrows v. City of Keene, 121 N.H. 590, 597 (1981). (emphasis added).

The Supreme Court has held that zoning ordinances must be reasonable, not arbitrary and must rest upon some ground of difference having fair and substantial relation to the object of the regulation. Simplex Technologies, Inc. v. Town of Newington, 145 N.H. 727, 731 (2001); Chesterfield at 69.

Because the proposed uses are permitted, all other dimensional requirements are met, and redevelopment will enhance the appearance of the Property in a manner consistent with the area and increase housing stock, there is no benefit to the public from denying the variances. In comparison, Husslage will suffer great harm because he will be unable to improve the lot and the

public will suffer from a lost opportunity for more housing. Clearly, there is no benefit to the public outweighing the hardship to the applicant if the variances are denied.

## 4. Granting the variance will not diminish surrounding property values.

The Project improves Property with two new structures, each of which meets all other dimensional requirements. The redevelopment with a single-family home on one lot and a duplex on the other is consistent with the density of the surrounding area. Under these circumstances, granting a variance from the lot area/dwelling requirement to establish a permitted use on one of the lots will not diminish surrounding property values.

## 5. Denial of the variances results in an unnecessary hardship.

a. Special conditions distinguish the property from others in the area.

At 9.927 s.f., the Property is significantly larger than the required lot size and subdivided into two lots, still well exceeds the lot area requirements of the zone. Subdivision of the lots and establishment of the permitted duplex use on one of them is consistent with the area, but still fails to comply with the lot area/dwelling requirement. Clearly, the subject parcel size, shape, and location near other densely developed residential parcels combine to create special conditions.

b. No fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance and its specific application in this instance.

Density requirements exist to prevent overcrowding and to ensure adequate air, light, space, and separation between neighbors. The Project proposes two permitted uses in structures which meet all other dimensional requirements and accommodates required off street parking. The density relief required is consistent with the surrounding area. Accordingly, the purposes of these regulations are met and there is no reason to apply the strict density requirements of the zoning ordinance.

## c. <u>The proposed use is reasonable.</u>

If the use is permitted, it is deemed reasonable. <u>Vigeant v. Hudson</u>, 151 N.H. 747 (2005). The Project proposes two compliant sized lots supporting permitted uses in structures which comply with all other dimensional requirements and accommodates the required parking on each lot. Accordingly, the use is reasonable.

A municipality's ordinance must reflect the current character of the neighborhood, See Belanger v. City of Nashua, 121 N.H. 389, 393 (1981) upholding reversal of use variance denial where current character of neighborhood had evolved since its original classification as single-family residential). Here, the Project proposes a single-family home with ADU on one lot and a duplex on the other lot. The proposed density is consistent with the surrounding area which includes several lots which do not conform to the Ordinance's density requirement.

The New Hampshire Supreme Court case <u>Walker v. City of Manchester</u>, 107 NH 382 (1966) held that a hardship may be found where similar nonconforming uses exist within the neighborhood and the proposed use will have no adverse effect upon the neighborhood. Consider also <u>Rancourt v. City of Manchester</u>, 149 N.H. 51 (2003) (Hardship also exists if special conditions of the land render the use for which the variance is sought is reasonable and special conditions include the property's unique setting in its environment). Given the Property's setting in its environment and the proposed establishment of permitted uses consistent with the surrounding density, in structures meeting all other dimensional requirements, denial of the variance will result in an unnecessary hardship to Husslage.

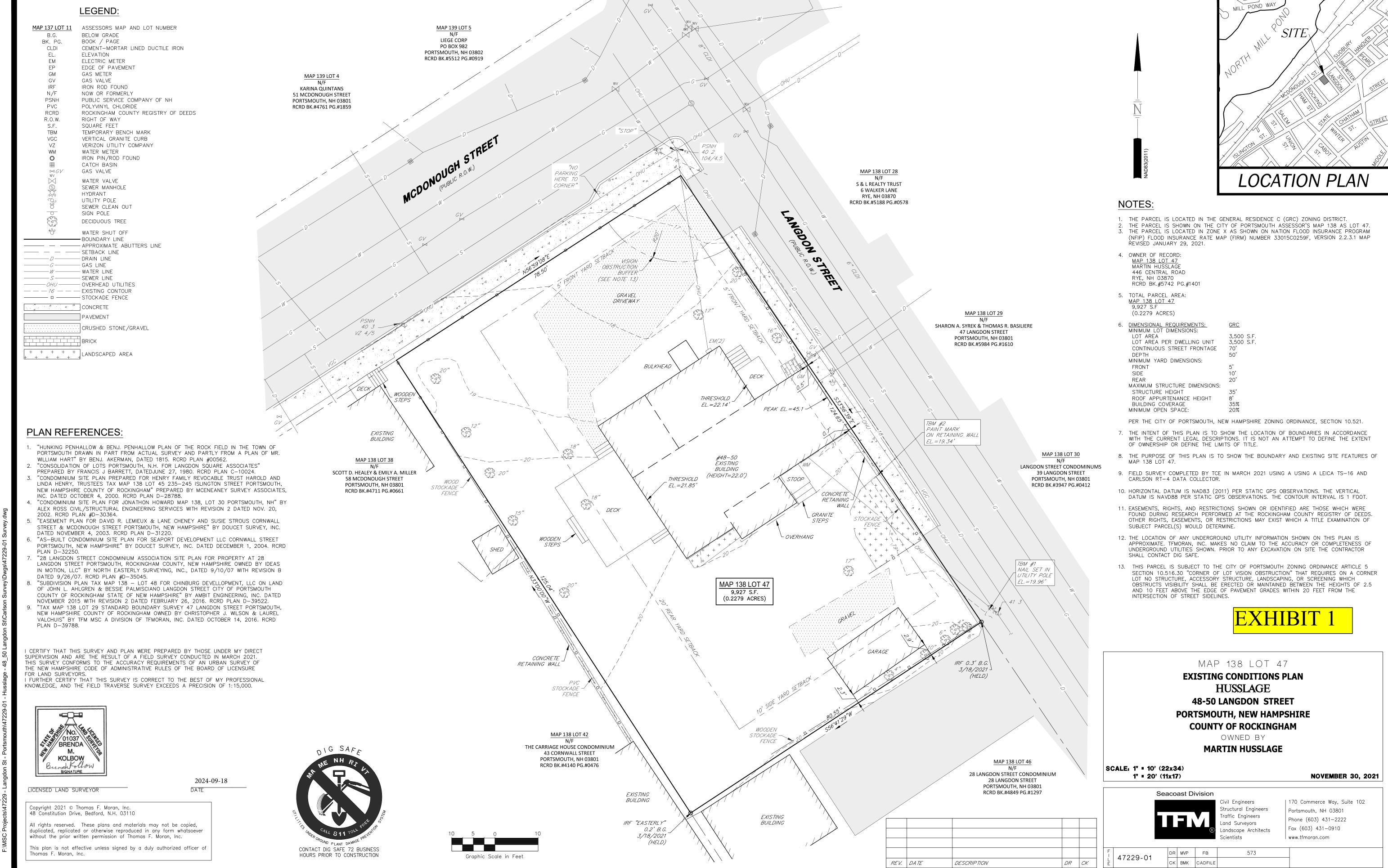
## VI. CONCLUSION

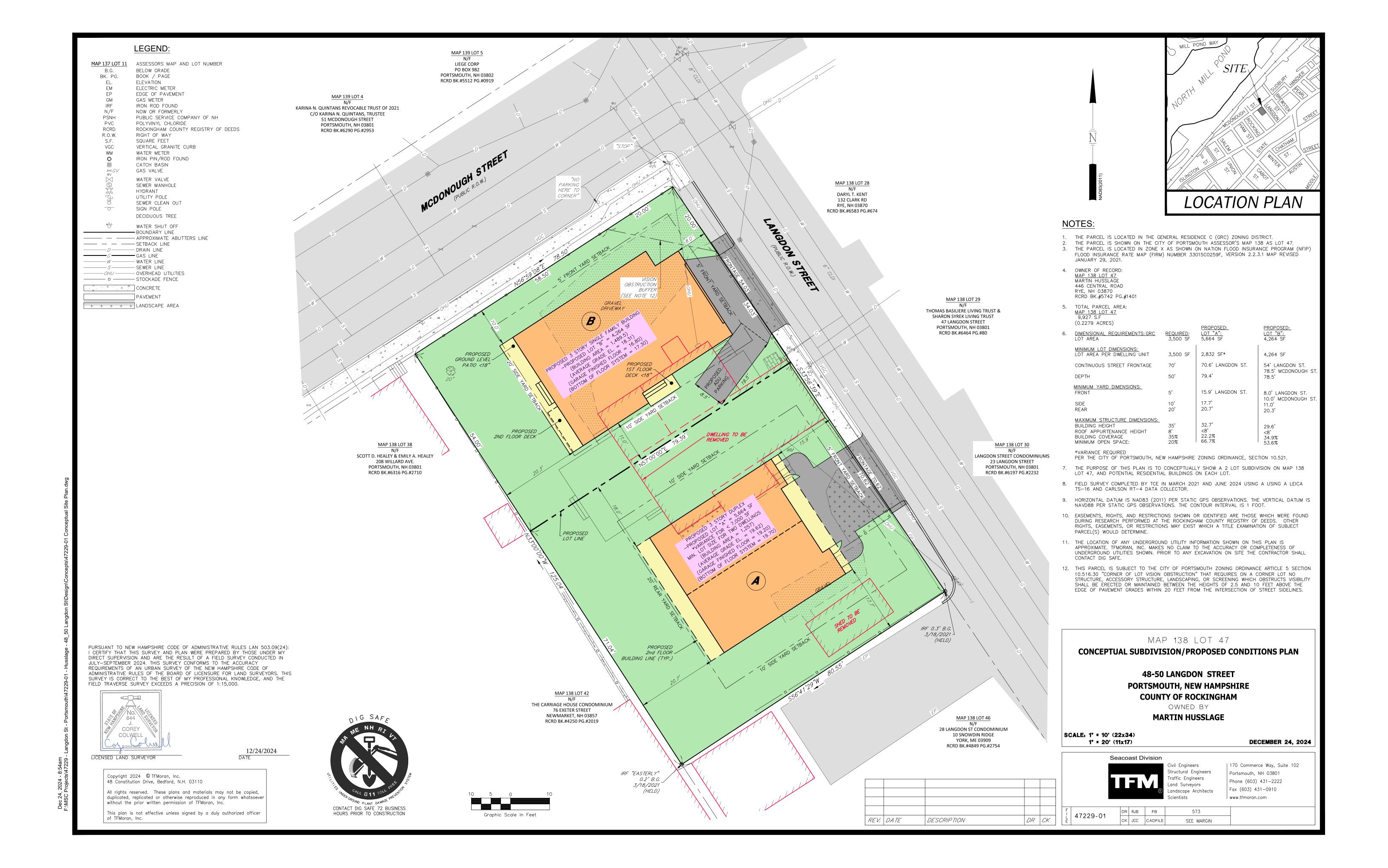
For all of the reasons stated, Husslage respectfully requests that the Portsmouth Zoning Board of Adjustment grant the requested relief and allow this matter to proceed to the Planning Board.

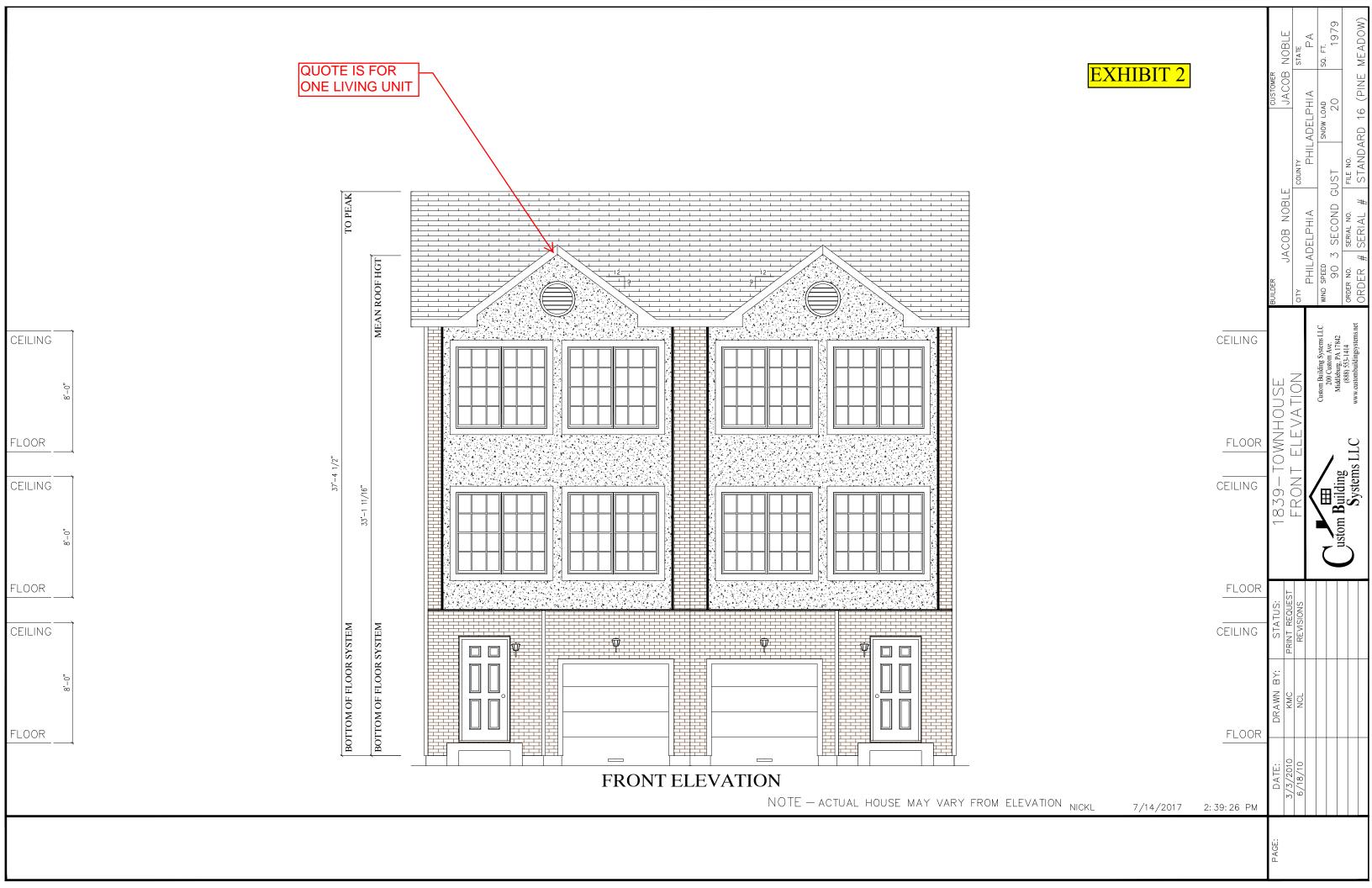
Respectfully submitted,

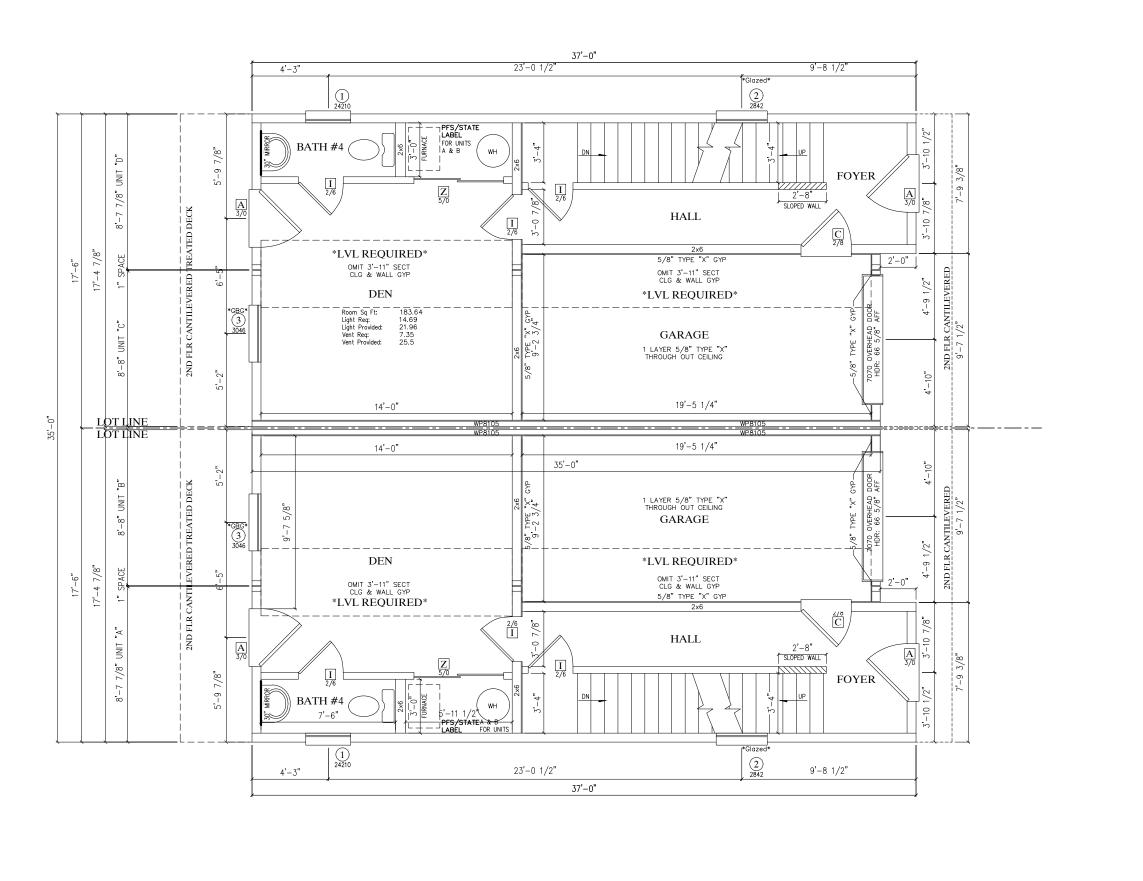
Martin Husslage

By: R. Timothy Phoenix Monica F. Kieser









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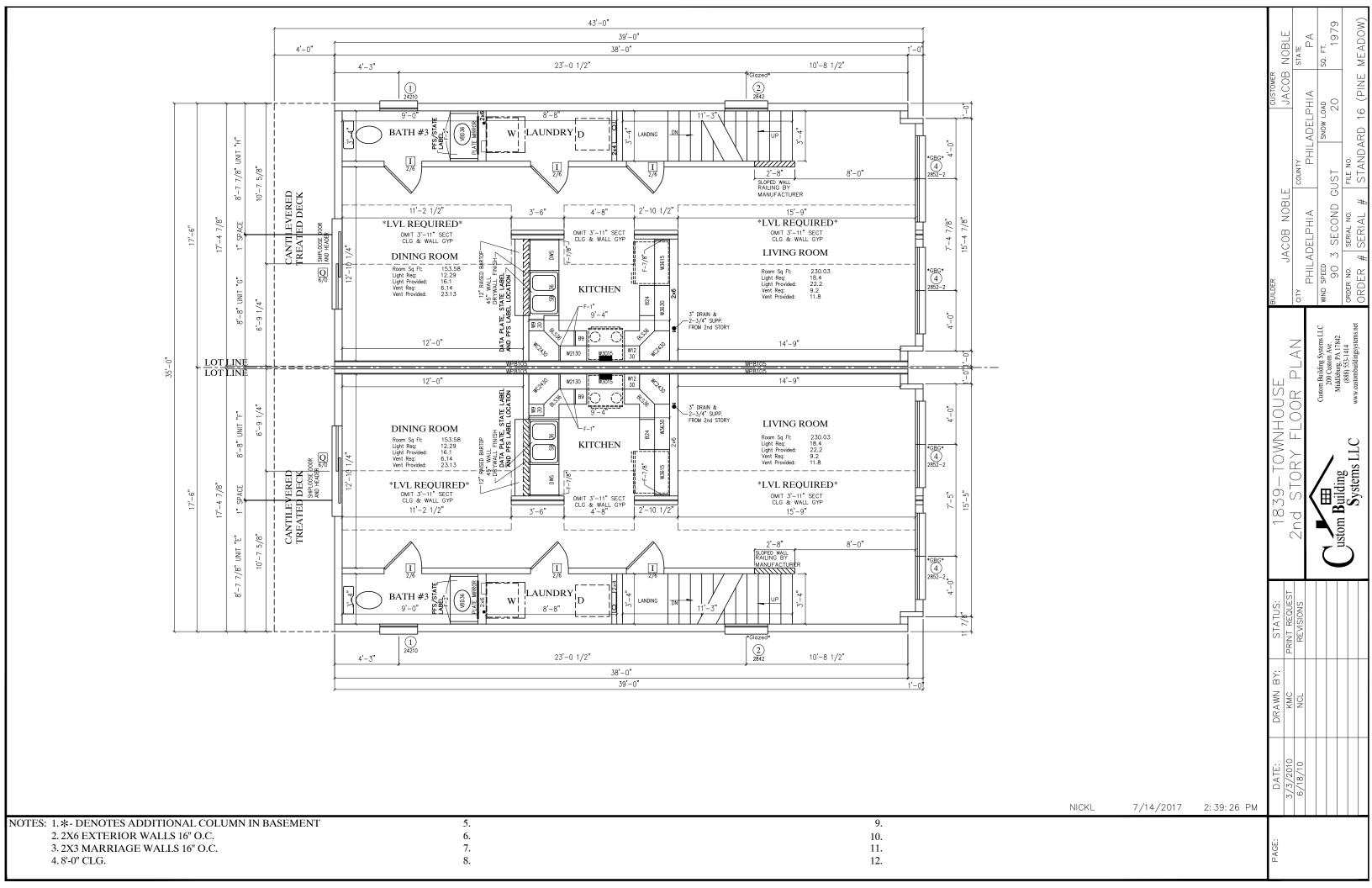
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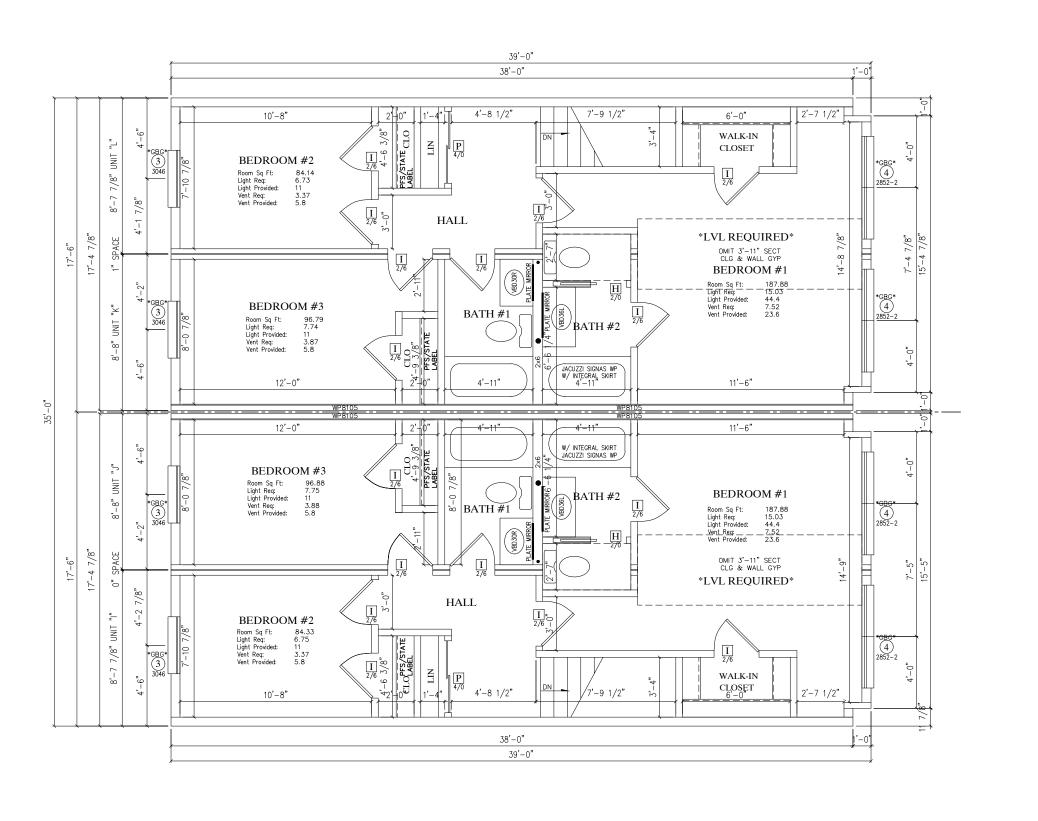
JACOB NOBLE

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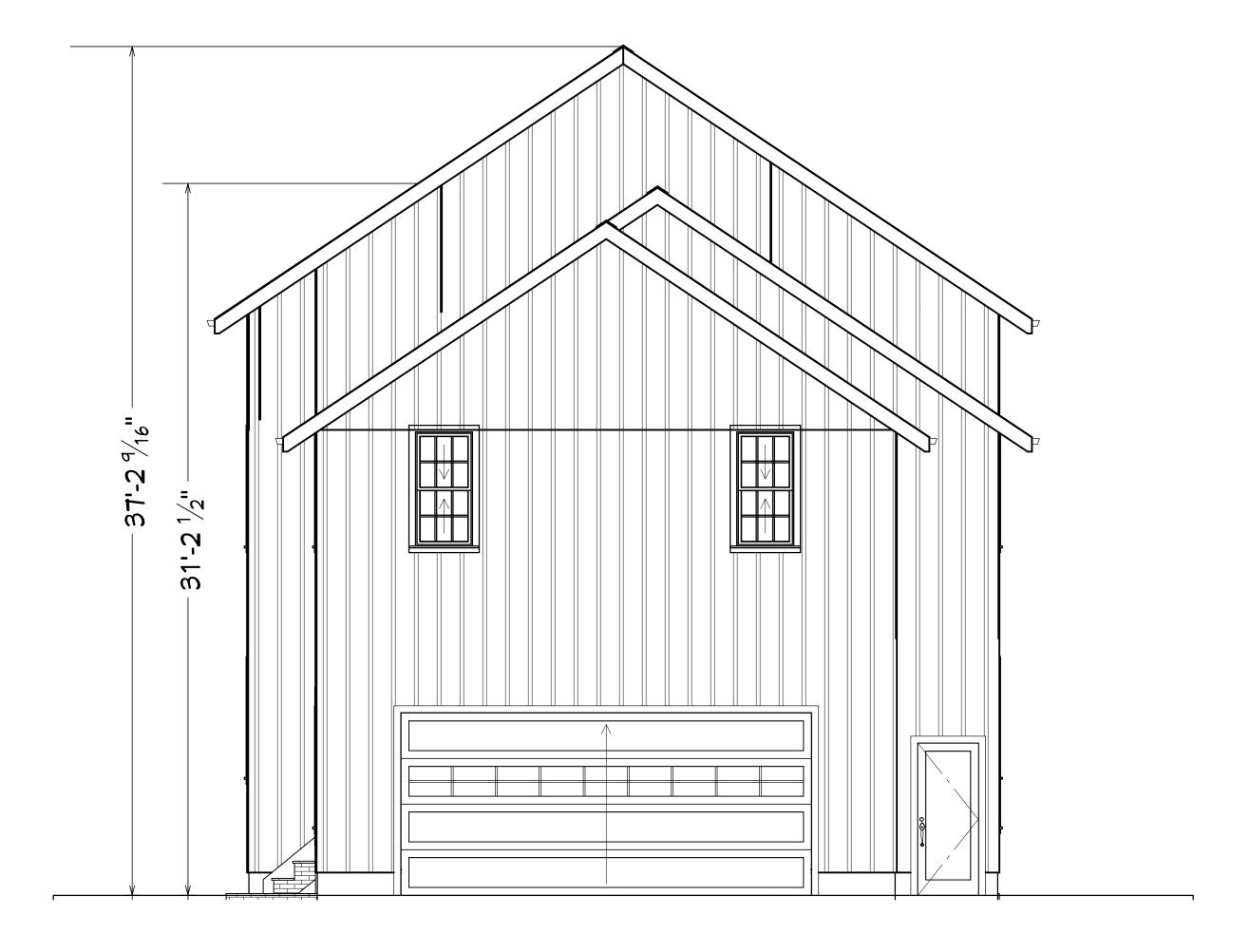
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JACOB NOBLE

1839-TOWNHOUSE a Story Floor Plan

NICKL 7/14/2017 2: 39: 26 PM NOTES: 1.\*- DENOTES ADDITIONAL COLUMN IN BASEMENT 9. 10. 2. 2X6 EXTERIOR WALLS 16" O.C. 6. 11. 3. 2X3 MARRIAGE WALLS 16" O.C. 7. 4.8'-0" CLG. 12.





Front Elevation



|  | DATE      | 8/8/2024    |  |  |
|--|-----------|-------------|--|--|
|  | ВУ        | ΗМ          |  |  |
|  | SCRIPTION | Town Review |  |  |

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Front Elevation

50 Langdon Street Lot B Single Family w ADU

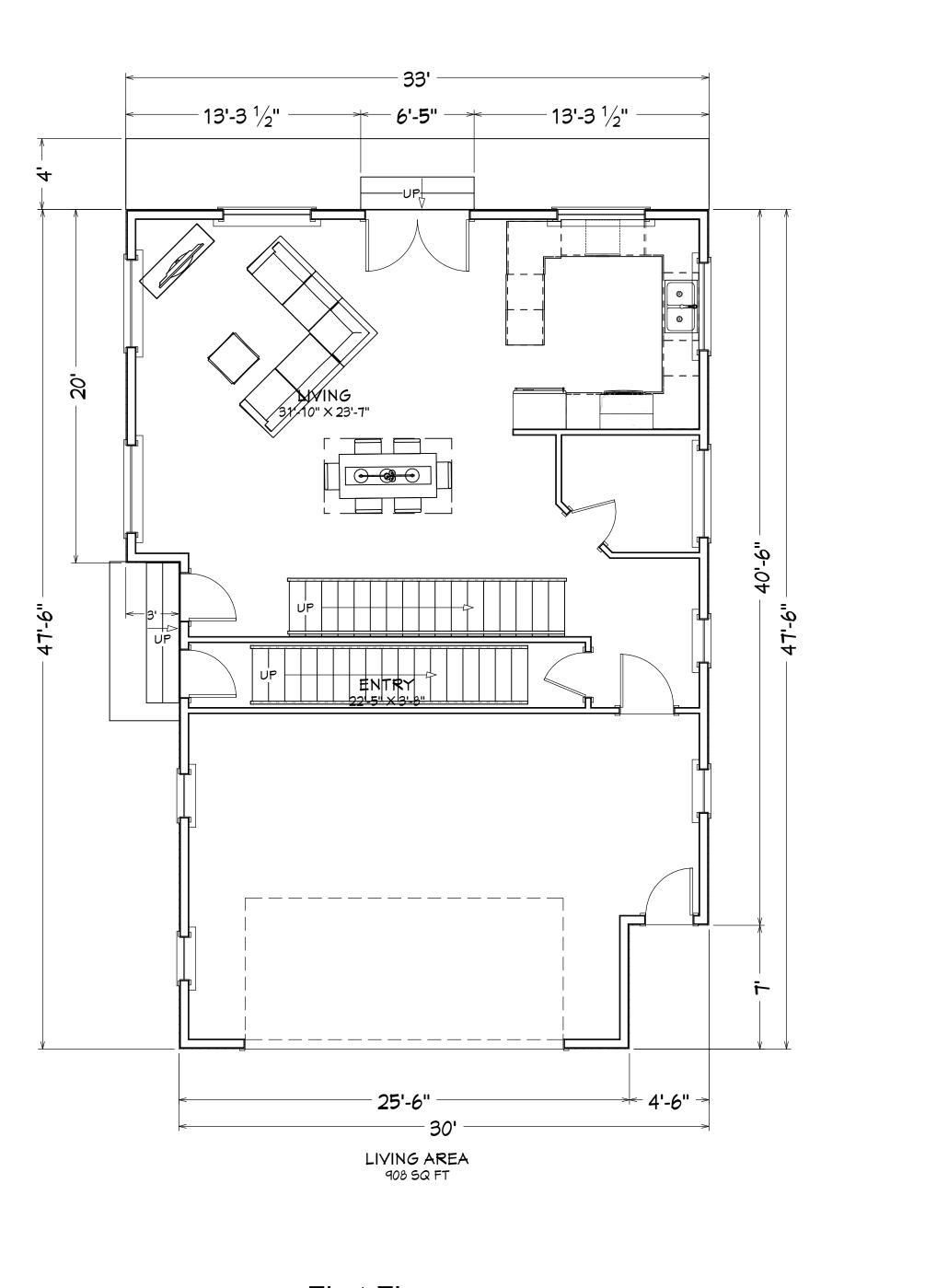
Home Designer Pro

DATE:

12/11/2024

SCALE: 1/4" = 1"

SHEET:



First Floor

HD H

1 Town Review MH 8/8/2024

First Floor

8/50 Langdon Street Lot B Single Family w ADU

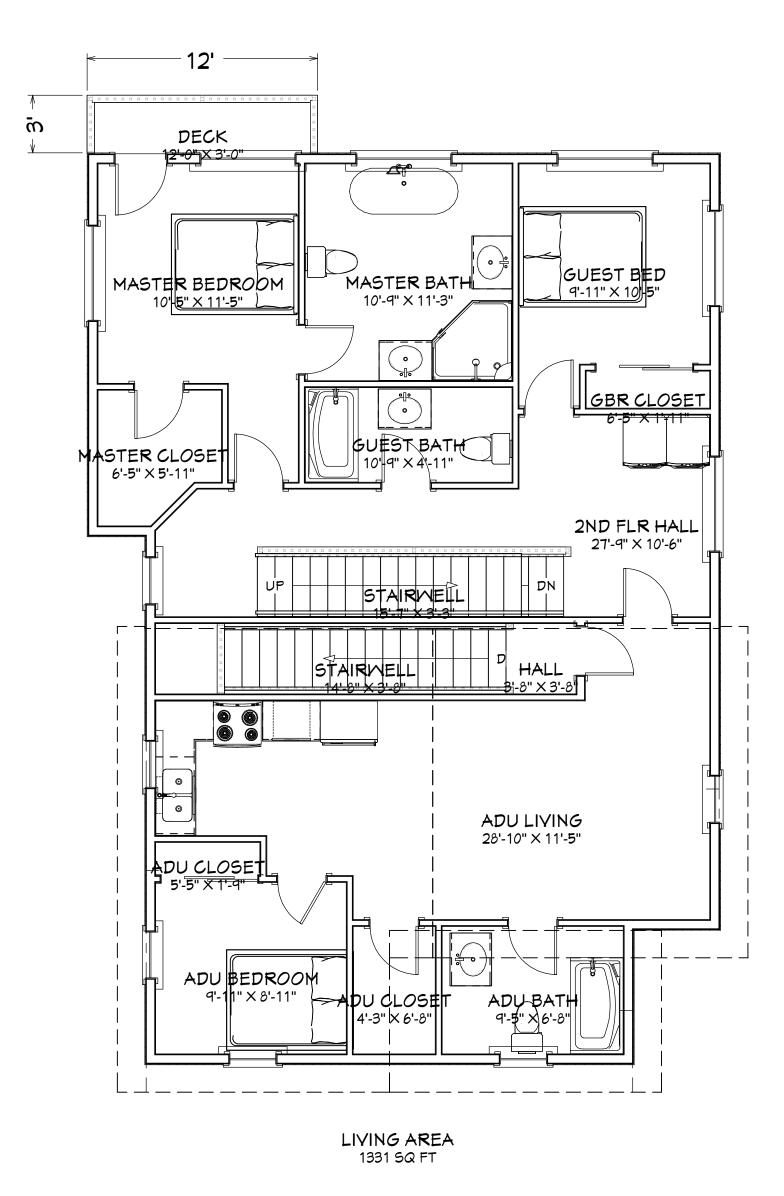
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Home Designer Pro

DATE:

12/11/2024

SCALE: 1/5" = 1"

SHEET:



Second Floor



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Second Floor

8/50 Langdon Street Lot B Single Family w ADU

Home Designer Pro

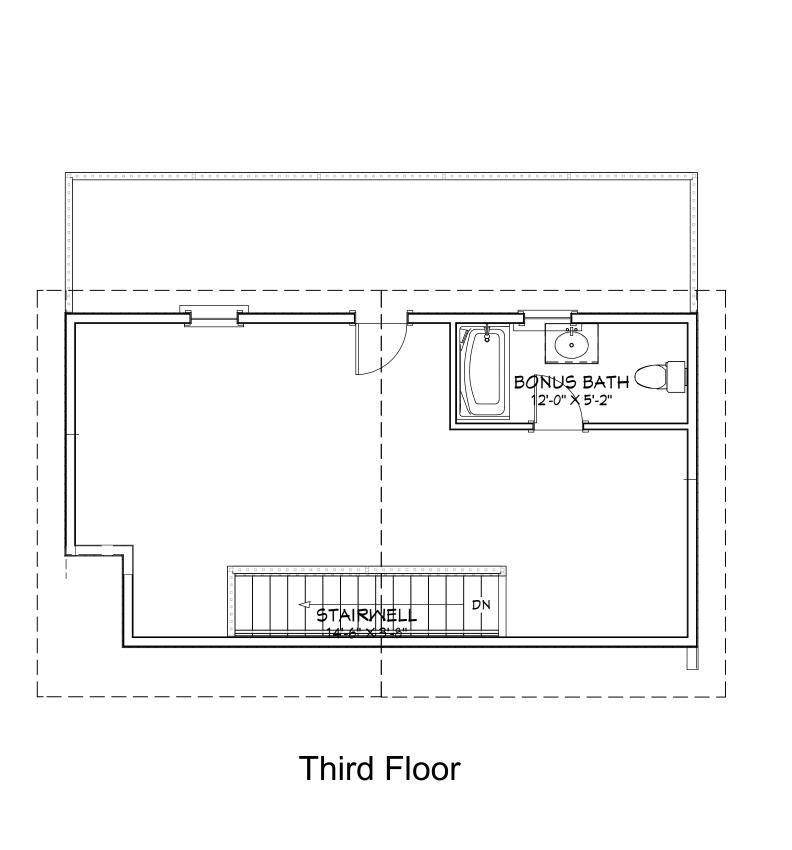
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Third Floor

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
48/50 Langdon Street Lot B
Single Family w ADU

Home Designer Pro

DATE:

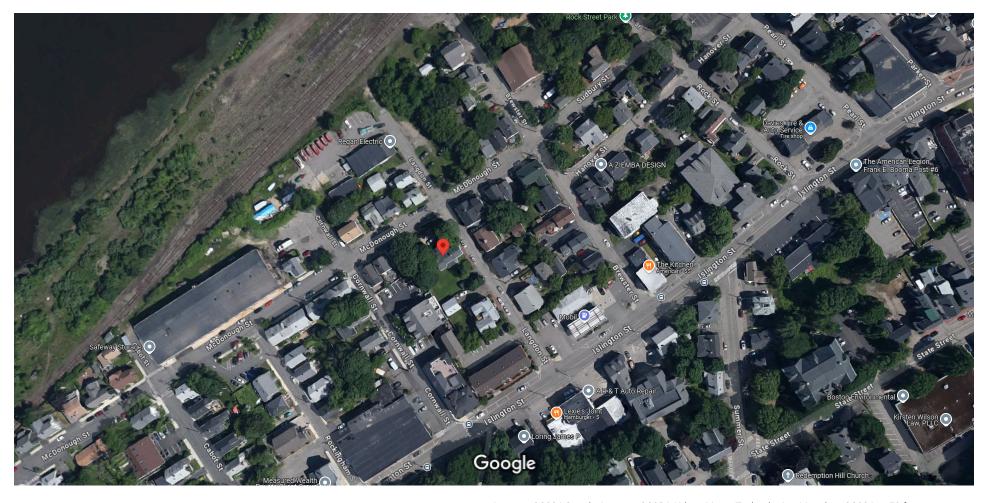
12/11/2024

SCALE: 1/5" = 1"

SHEET:



## Google Maps 48 Langdon St



Imagery ©2024 Google, Imagery ©2024 Airbus, Maxar Technologies, Map data ©2024 50 ft



## Google Maps 50 Langdon St

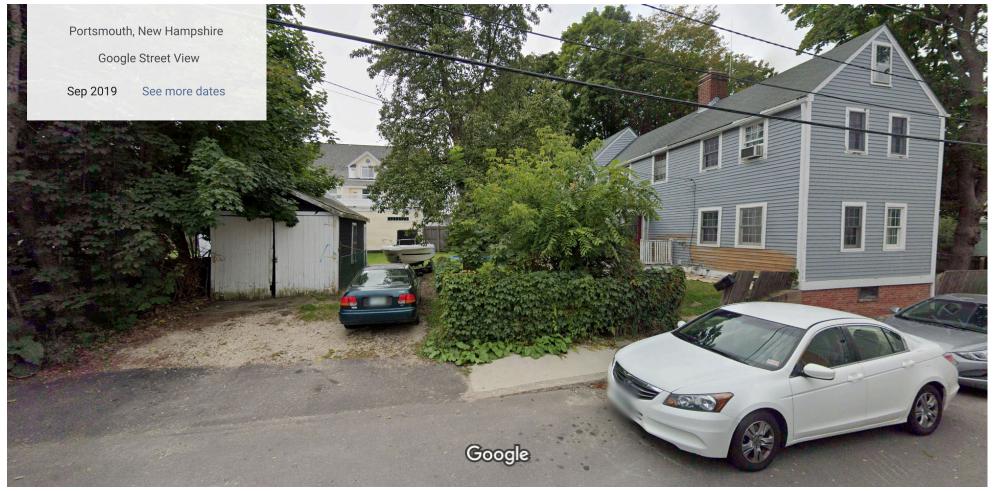


Image capture: Sep 2019 © 2024 Google

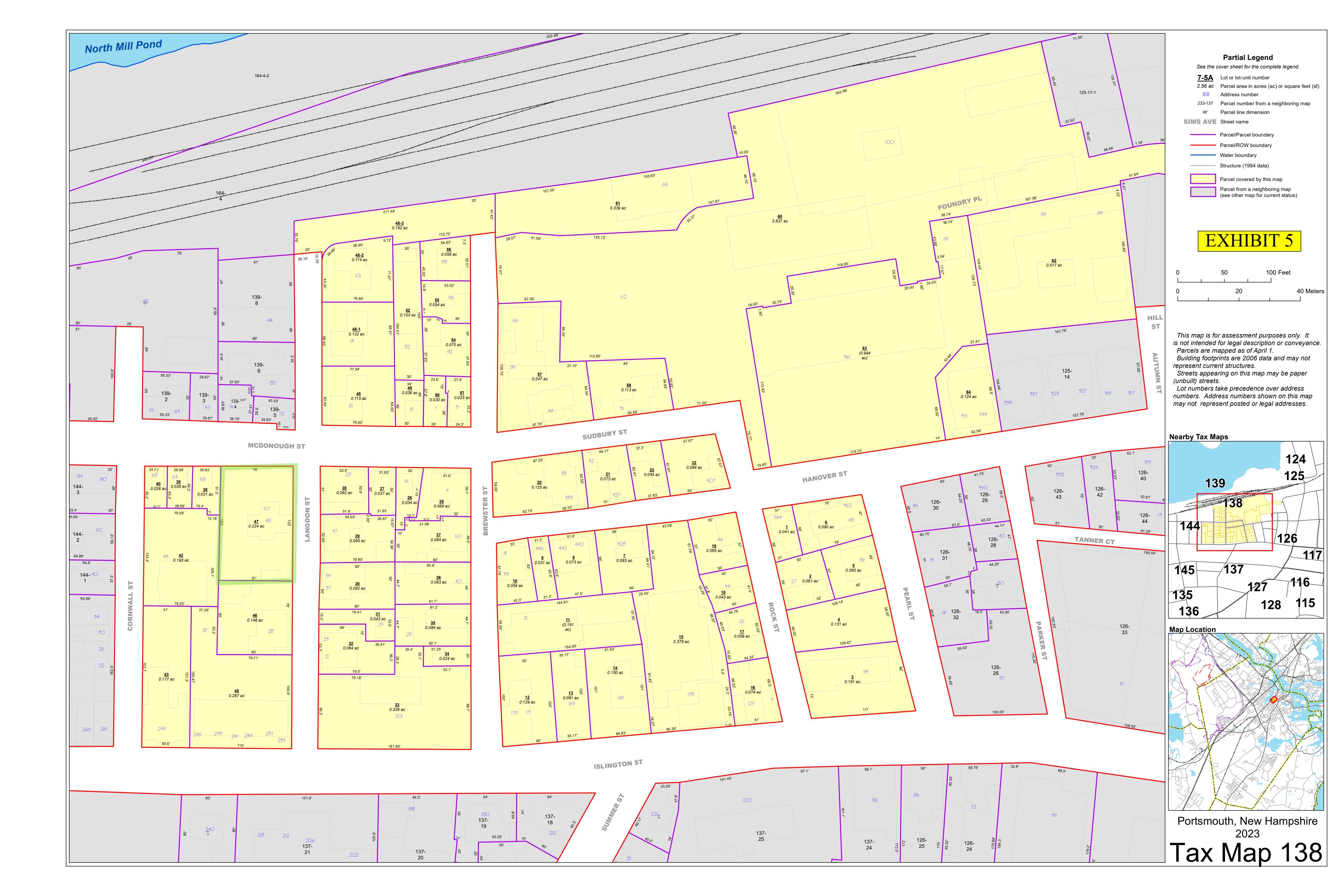


## Google Maps 50 Langdon St



Image capture: Sep 2019 © 2024 Google





2025-01-09 TFMoran Inc.

Project#: 47229-03 Husslage

\*Coverage Calcs

## **BUILDING COVERAGE CALCS.**

- LOT A BUILDING AREA= 1,257
- LOT A SF=5,664
- BUILDING COVERAGE=1,257/5,664=22.2%
- LOT B BUILDING AREA= 1,453
- LOT B BUILDING COVERAGE (2ND STORY DECK+HOUSE)=1489.5
- LOT B SF=4,264
- BUILDING COVERAGE=1,489.5/4,264=34.9%

#### OPEN SPACE BY LOT

- LOT A OPEN SPACE (GREEN AREA)= 3,778.946 SF •• MIN OPEN SPACE= 66.72%
- LOT B OPEN SPACE (GREEN AREA)= 2286.6734 SF •• MIN OPEN SPACE= 53.6%