

**ROCKY RIVER BOARD OF ZONING & BUILDING APPEALS**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS**

**MEETINGS:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in Council Chambers of Rocky River City Hall.

**DUE DATE FOR SUBMITTALS:** 2 weeks (14 days) prior to the scheduled BZA meeting. Late or incomplete submittals will not be forwarded to the Board for inclusion on the upcoming agenda.

**WHO MUST ATTEND:** A representative, including the property owner, must be present at the BZA meeting for all variance requests.

**APPLICATION FEE:** Residential Variance - \$100.00 first variance + \$35.00 each additional variance  
Commercial Variance - \$150.00 first variance + \$35.00 each additional variance request.

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:** Please provide **11 stapled sets** of the following:

- 1) **Appropriate Building Permit Application** for your project. (i.e., Building Permit Application, Fence Permit Application, Accessory Permit Application, etc.); **Check representing Application Fee.**
- 2) **Fully completed Variance Application.** Begin with a written narrative describing exactly what project you would like to do and why it is necessary to do so. Please refer to the Typical Variance Sheet for guidance on which standard (Practical Difficulty **OR** Unnecessary Hardship) applies to your request – only complete questions under the appropriate heading.
- 3) **Detailed site drawing** – see attached example, showing all existing structures on the subject property, as well as structures on properties directly adjacent to the location of the subject of your variance request (i.e., line of neighbor’s house, driveway and garage closest to the addition you are proposing). Proposed structures must also be shown on the site drawing, with dimensions and distances from property lines clearly labeled. **PLEASE STAKE THE PROPERTY TO SHOW FOOTPRINT OF ADDITIONS, SHEDS OR LOCATIONS OF A/C CONDENSERS, etc.** Site plan should show lot coverage by building calculation (existing and proposed).
- 4) **Elevation drawings** (for pergola, garage, addition or any exterior alteration). Show what all sides of the finished project will look like. Submit a photo example of proposed fences and sheds. Show height of structure on the elevations. Additions will require existing and proposed interior floor plans for the floors that are affected.
- 5) **Photographs** of your property and adjacent properties. Label each photo for clarity.
- 6) **Support letters** from surrounding property owners, if available.
- 7) **Any other information as may be requested** by the Building Department or Board Members.

All documentation or other information shall be delivered to:

**Rocky River Board of Zoning & Building Appeals, City of Rocky River Building Department, 21012 Hilliard Blvd., Rocky River, Ohio 44116. Call 440-331-0600 ext. 2037 with questions.**

*(Applicants may not communicate with or present information relating to their variance request to any Board member directly. Communications must be submitted to the Building Department for delivery to the Board.)*

**I, (the owner/applicant) understand that upon the granting of my variance request from the BZA, a separate Permit Application fee will be due prior to the issuance of the Building Permit. I will not begin construction until the Building Permit has been issued.**

<u>MSK</u>	<u>1/26/26</u>	<u>MSK</u>	<u>1/26/26</u>
<b>Property Owner</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Applicant/Representative</b>	<b>Date</b>

## TYPICAL VARIANCE SHEET

Please check appropriate box and answer questions as directed.

	Check as Applicable	VARIANCE STANDARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any functional, land or building <b>USE</b> not specifically permitted in either a particular zoning district, or otherwise not permitted by the Development Code</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Use) Unnecessary Hardship
<b>ADDITIONS &amp; BUILDINGS:</b> <i>(Complete Building Permit Application)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rear, side &amp; front setbacks</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coverage (&gt;28%)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>DRIVEWAYS:</b> <i>(Complete Building Permit Application)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Width</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance from property line</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circular if lot width is &lt;90'</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>SIGNS:</b> <i>(Complete Sign Permit Application)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area allowed (maximum sq. ft.)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front setback</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lot width &lt;100'</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of items of information</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On side of building</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>FENCES:</b> <i>(Complete Fence Permit Application)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height or Openness</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front Yard (in setback)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>ACCESSORY BUILDINGS (Play Structures, Storage Sheds:</b> <i>(Complete Accessory Structure Permit Application); Detached Garages:</i> <i>(Complete Building Permit Application)</i>		
<b>Note:</b> <i>Total square footage of all accessory buildings, including detached garages, is not to exceed 600 square feet.)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setback from property line</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Square footage</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>Air Conditioners and Generators:</b> <i>(Complete HVAC Permit for A/C or Electrical Permit for Generators)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In side or rear yard &lt;10' from property line or in front yard</li> </ul>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<b>Parking:</b> <i>(Complete Building Permit Application)</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt; the number of spaces required</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setback from property line</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Area) Practical Difficulties

## PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES

### ALL QUESTIONS REQUIRE A COMPLETE RESPONSE

**R.R.C.O. 1133.17(c)(1).** In order to grant an area variance, the following factors shall be considered and weighted by the Board of Appeals to determine practical difficulty:

- A.) Describe what special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land or structure involved and which are not applicable generally to other land or structures in the same zoning district (i.e., exceptional irregularity, narrowness, shallowness or steepness of the lot; or proximity to non-conforming and inharmonious uses, structures or conditions).

This home is over 110 years old on a corner lot. There is no feasible location for a two-car garage that would not require a variance of some kind. Due to the geographic orientation of the lot (along Wooster) plus location & relative proximity of the existing structures on the neighboring properties, situating a garage where proposed maximizes the use of the home and yard while minimizing the impingement onto neighbors' enjoyment of their own space. Locating the AC on the north side of the home keeps it in an area that is unused for recreation (those neighbors only use that alley to walk back and forth from car to door). Placing the AC on the west of the home is more likely to affect neighbors who regularly recreate in their backyard.

- B.) Explain whether the property in question will yield a reasonable return or whether there can be any beneficial use of the property without the variance (discuss use limitations without the variance).

Any homeowner who seeks to improve the existing garage or create an addition will face the same challenges. The prior homeowners moved out when their kids were about the same ages as our children are now. We respectfully submit to the Board that, without these improvements, most families will face the same difficulties regarding the functionality of the home.

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- C.) Explain whether the variance is substantial and is the minimum necessary to make possible the reasonable use of the land or structures (demonstrate how much the variance request deviates from Code requirements, i.e., coverage is 1 or 2% above Code, or setback is 1 or 2 feet less than Code requirement).

The rear (west) setback is essentially a side yard for the neighbor to the west, so the 8' requested 'rear' setback would be within the setback limits for side setbacks, other than the fact that this is a corner lot. The AC setback is the minimum required to keep the AC on the least disruptive side of the house for neighbors or pedestrians on the sidewalk. Based on our last meeting, we pushed the side (north) setback South.

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- D.) Explain whether the essential character of the neighborhood would be substantially altered and whether adjoining properties would suffer substantial detriment as a result of the variance (discuss the increase of value, use, and aesthetic appeal for both your property and adjoining properties, together with any negative impact to adjoining properties).

This would be a substantial improvement to the home and will match the character of the historic home. Immediate neighbors to the north, south, and west are in support. Neighbors on Malvern who can view our home from their home and backyard have also expressed support. Notably, no neighbors have expressed any concerns about the planned addition. Because the proposed addition does not change existing setbacks from the historic structures on the north property line, the neighbor's enjoyment of their property will not be changed. The most impacted neighbor is to the west and they have written a letter of support. After the last variance meeting resulted in a tabling, the west neighbors expressed concern that they thought we would give up and move to a new home instead. They want this addition to happen and have seen and approve the revised plans attached here. The addition will make the home more functional for any future homeowners because it allows potential conversion to first floor living for aging in place, as well as much better functionality for a family with children.

E.) Explain whether the variance would adversely affect the delivery of governmental services, such as water, sewer, or trash pickup.

No  
\_\_\_\_\_

F.) Explain whether the property owner purchased the property with knowledge of the zoning restrictions.

No.  
\_\_\_\_\_

G.) Explain whether special conditions or circumstances exist as a result of actions of the owner.

No.  
\_\_\_\_\_

H.) Explain whether the property owner’s predicament feasibly can be obviated through some method other than a variance (why other means and methods of property improvements or enhancements would not suffice).

The goals of this project include modernizing a historic home to include conveniences for homeowners with families or who want to age in place. Features such as a first floor bathroom, plus storage and a mudroom on the mainfloor, address those goals and are appealing to any homeowner. For the primary suite, we have consulted with multiple contractors on ways to renovate the attic instead, but there was no feasible solution. Furthermore, an attic renovation would not provide the much-needed improvements to the first floor. While we could omit them, that defeats the purpose of this project.

I.) Explain whether the spirit and intent behind the zoning requirement would be observed and substantial justice done by granting a variance (discuss the positive impact of your improvement on your property and on the surrounding neighborhood).

Given that this is a corner lot with existing structures, the variance requests are minimal and reasonable. The proposed design is of similar size of many typical homes in Rocky River & in this neighborhood. The detail of this new home maintains the historic character of the house, is an improvement over the existing garage + shed, and will add value to the neighborhood.

J.) Explain whether the granting of the variance requested will confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this regulation to other lands, structures, or buildings in the same district.

No, granting the variances will allow homeowners on this site to have the same ability to develop their property as other properties in the neighborhood have.  
\_\_\_\_\_

K.) Explain whether a literal interpretation of the provisions of this Code would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district under the terms of this Code.

As discussed above, because of the corner lot and situation of existing structures, literal interpretation of the code would deprive any property owner of the rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE NOTE: A separate Permit Application and fee will be due prior to issuance of the Building Permit. NO CONSTRUCTION IS TO BEGIN until the Building Permit has been issued.**



WEST LINE ALONG WOOSTER



SOUTH LINE LOOKING WEST FROM WOOSTER DOWN RIVERVIEW



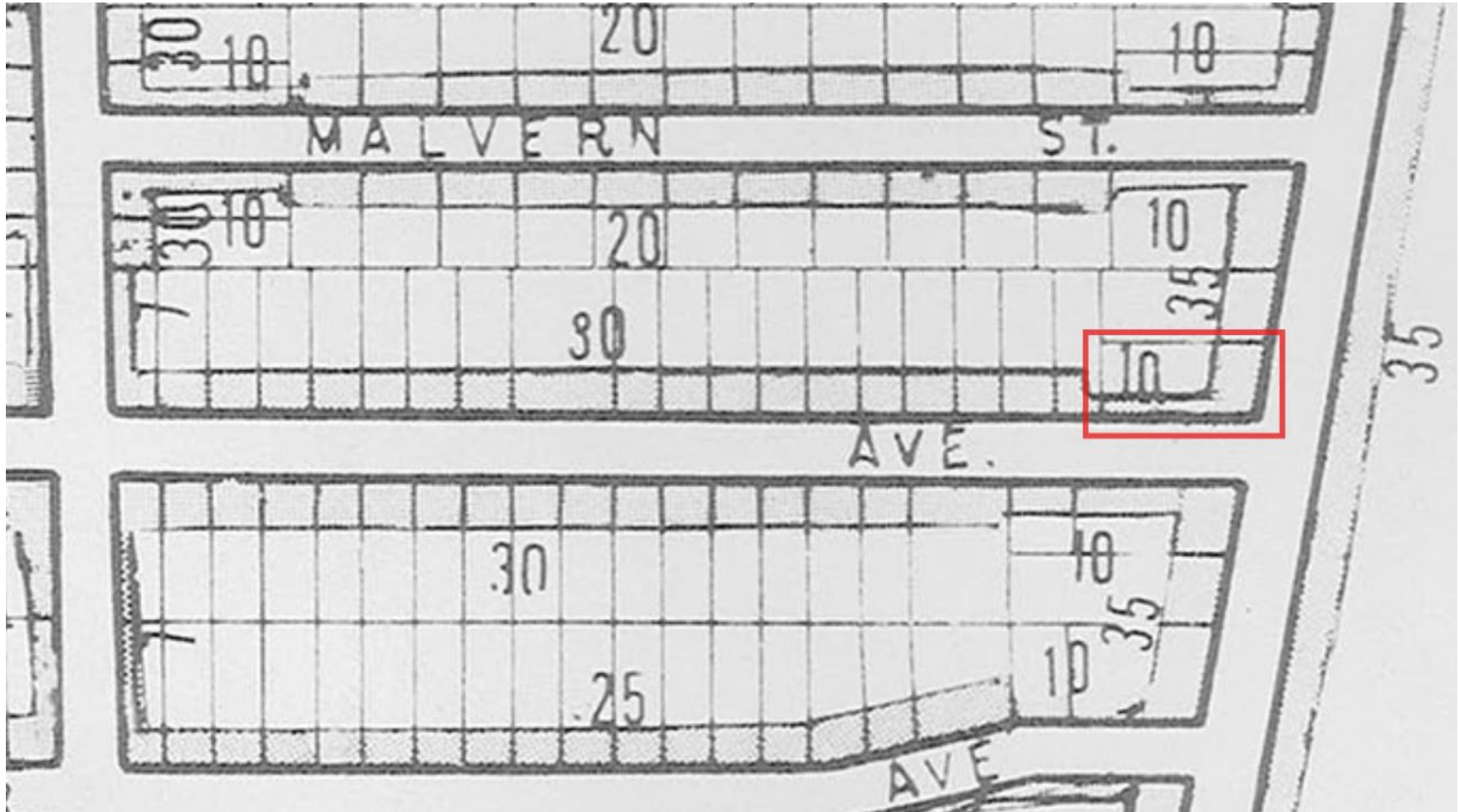
SOUTH LINE STANDING AT SW CORNER



SOUTHLINE ALONG RIVER LOOKING NORTH

VARIANCE SETBACK MAP

Shows that the property has only a small amount of feasible space on which to make improvements:



May 26, 2025

Rocky River Board of Zoning & Building Appeals  
City of Rocky River Building Department  
21012 Hilliard Blvd.  
Rocky River, OH 44116

Re: Zoning Variance application for Matt Knickman and Candice Reder at 1992 Wooster Rd.

Dear Board Members:

We are writing to inform you of our support for the variance application of Matt Knickman and Candice Reder at 1992 Wooster Rd.

We live at 19218 Riverview Ave. and our property directly abuts the area where construction will take place. Matt and Candice have reviewed the plans thoroughly with us and we believe that the new addition will fit right in – making good use of the space and blending well with the existing house and surrounding homes.

On a personal note, Matt and Candice are great neighbors and Rocky River residents, and we are pleased they were able to find a solution that allows them to remain in the neighborhood and still accommodate their need for more space.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



James Brown  
440-503-6333



Stacey Brown  
440-503-3268

PROPOSED ADDITION & RENOVATION FOR:

# KNICKMAN RESIDENCE

1992 WOOSTER ROAD  
ROCKY RIVER, OH 44116

## DRAWING INDEX

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**CONCEPTUAL RENDERING**

SCALE: N.T.S.

ZONING INFORMATION:

ZONING: SINGLE-FAMILY

SETBACKS:

FRONT SETBACK - PER SETBACK MAP  
SIDE SETBACK - MIN. 8' / TOTAL 16'  
REAR SETBACK - 25'-0"

SQUARE FOOT ANALYSIS:

EXISTING LOT - 7,500 S.F.

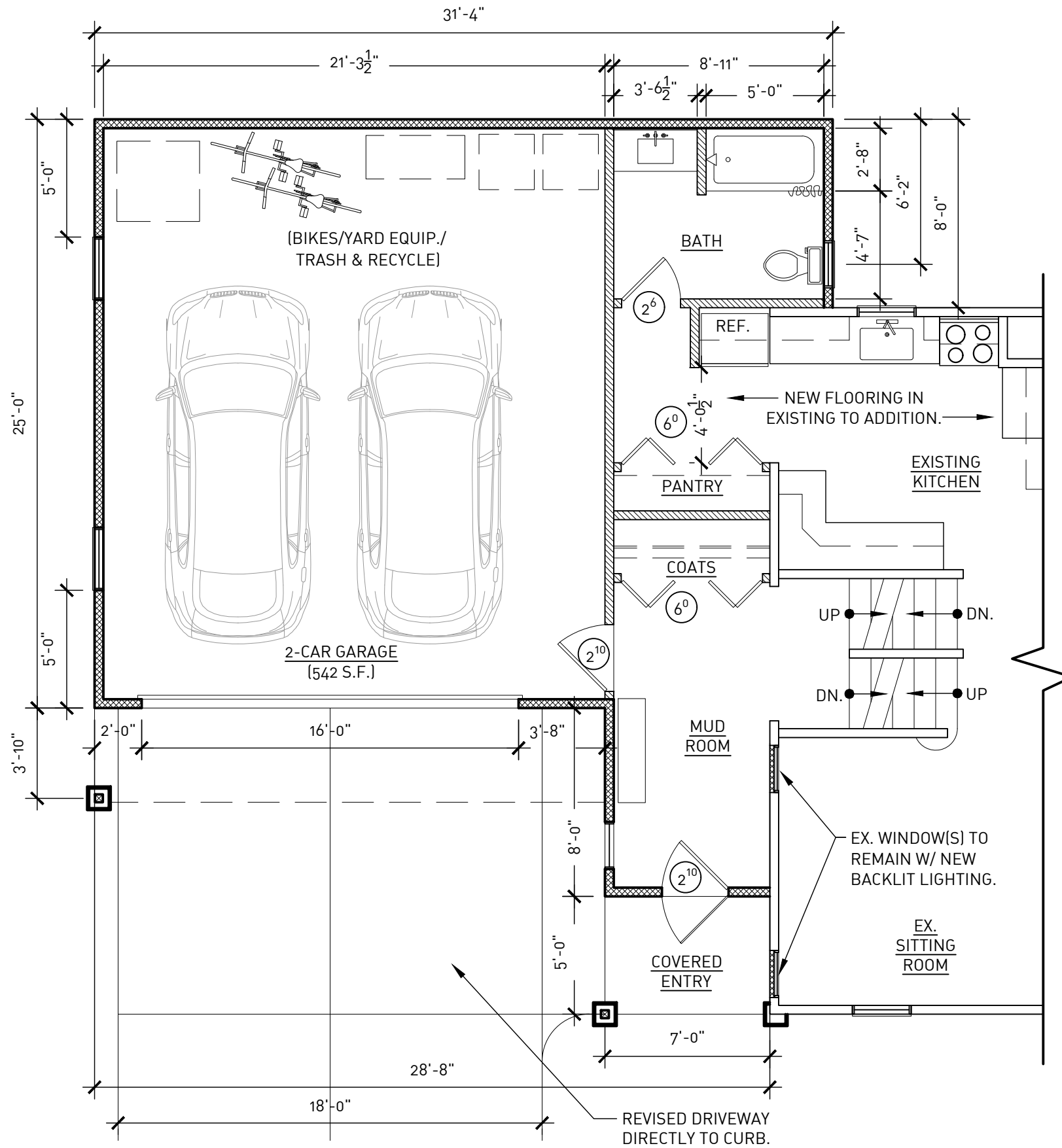
EXISTING STRUCTURE - 1,622 S.F.  
(535 S.F. EX. GARAGE TO BE REMOVED)

PROPOSED ADDITION(S) - 252 S.F. (NEW S.F.)  
542 S.F. NEW GARAGE  
252 S.F. ADDITION ( FIRST FLOOR)

LOT COVERAGE - 1,881 S.F. / 7,500 S.F. = .25  
\* 25% LOT COVERAGE

# A-0

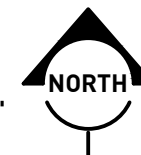




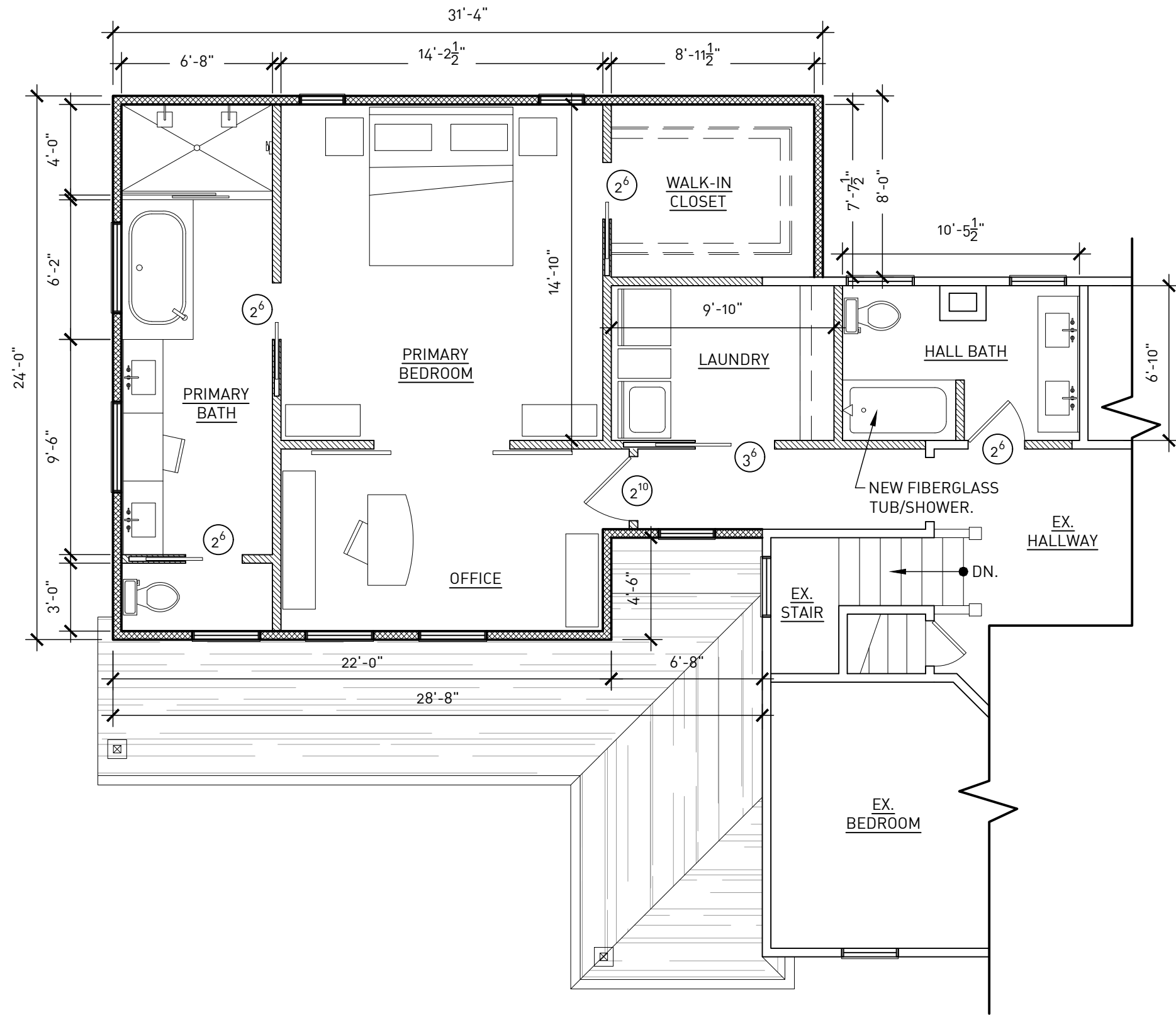
**PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

252 S.F.

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



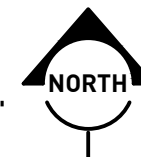
**A-1**



**PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR**

679 S.F.

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"





**CONCEPTUAL RENDERING**

SCALE: N.T.S.

**A-3**



**CONCEPTUAL RENDERING**

SCALE: N.T.S.

**A-4**



**CONCEPTUAL RENDERING**

SCALE: N.T.S.

**A-5**