



CORDTSEN DESIGN ARCHITECTURE, INC
42 West Main Rd ♦ Middletown ♦ RI
CordtsenDesign.com ♦ 401.619.4689

November 25, 2025

Dennis Haggerty
Coventry Town Planning Department
1675 Flat River Rd
Coventry, RI 02816

RE: Planning Application Submission

Dear Dennis,

Thank you for reviewing our planning application for the Accessory Dwelling Unit at 33 Brian Hollow Rd, Coventry RI. Attached is the application for the dimensional variance from the town ordinance. Stated below are the areas of requested relief:

1. Relief from Section (255-920A(1)(a)): asking for the ADU to be placed in the front yard. The ADU is not placed in the rear yard due to the undersized lot and steep hill limiting buildable area.
2. Relief from Section (255-920A(1)(c)): asking for the ADU to be within the primary structure side yard setback. The structure is built into the hill, minimizing visual impact and not taking away from the main residence.
3. Relief from Section (255-920A(1)(f)): asking for the ADU to exceed 900 square foot minimum. The client desires a 3-car garage. The resulting space above would include a home office and the ADU.

Please let me know if you have any questions or other needs from us at this time.

Sincerely,

Spencer Cordtsen McCombe, AIA, LEED AP
Principal Architect

Application for a Dimensional Variance from the Zoning Code

Rhode Island General Law §45-24-41 states that “An application for relief from the literal requirements of a zoning ordinance because of hardship may be made by any person, group, agency, or corporation by filing with the zoning enforcement officer or agency an application describing the request and supported by any data and evidence as may be required by the zoning board of review or by the terms of the ordinance.”

There are four criteria that the Zoning Board of Review will take into consideration when reviewing an application for a Dimensional Variance. Please note that all four criteria must be answered. Failure to do so may result in an application being deemed incomplete.

§45-24-41(d)(1): “That the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land or structure and not to the general characteristics of the surrounding area; and is not due to a physical or economic disability of the applicant, excepting those physical disabilities addressed in § 45-24-30(a)(16)”:

The property is undersized and bordered by a steep hill, limiting buildable area and preventing rear placement of the proposed garage and ADU. The requested relief for placement in the rear yard (255-920A(1)(a)) is necessary to accommodate the ADU. The requested relief for the ADU to be within the primary structure side yard setback yard (255-920A(1)(c)) is necessary due to the rear yard restrictions. The structure is located to the side of the lot in the hill, complying within the accessory dwelling setbacks and does not take away from the main residence. The requested relief for the ADU to exceed the 900 square foot minimum (255-920A(1)(f)) is necessary due to the desired 3-car garage request. The area is the resulting space above the garage, which includes a home office in addition to the ADU. The placement of the structure is a direct response to the unique characteristics of the land and structure.

§45-24-41(d)(2): “That the hardship is not the result of any prior action of the applicant”:

The hardship is not the result of any prior action by the applicant but rather stems from the inherent physical limitations of the property. The lot is undersized and bordered by a steep hill, which restricts buildable space and prevents rear placement of the proposed garage and ADU. The applicant has worked within the zoning ordinance by applying the deficiency factor to allow the ADU and has located the structure within the accessory setbacks and buildable height. The need for alternate placement is a direct response to the site’s natural constraints—not a consequence of previous development decisions or modifications. The applicant is seeking reasonable relief to accommodate a functional and compliant design that respects both the property’s limitations and the surrounding context.

§45-24-41(d)(3): “That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.”:

Granting the requested variance will not alter the character of the surrounding area or undermine the zoning ordinance’s intent. The proposed garage and ADU are located within the accessory structure setbacks and designed to complement the existing home. Complying with the height requirements, the structure remains seven feet lower than the main residence and is built into a steep hill, minimizing its visual impact. The ADU is permitted by right through the deficiency factor, aligning with the comprehensive plan’s goals of increasing housing options. The placement in front and to the side is a necessity due to the lot’s constraints and does not disrupt neighborhood aesthetics or obstruct the view of the primary structure. The design respects the scale and style of nearby properties and maintains the residential character of the area. This relief supports thoughtful development while honoring the spirit of

§45-24-41(e)(2): “In granting a dimensional variance, that the hardship suffered by the owner of the subject property if the dimensional variance is not granted amounts to more than a mere inconvenience, meaning that relief sought is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use to which the property is proposed to be devoted. The fact that a use may be more profitable or that a structure may be more valuable after the relief is granted is not grounds for relief.”

If the dimensional variance is not granted, the property owner will face more than a mere inconvenience. The undersized lot and steep hill severely limit buildable area, making it impossible to place the garage and ADU at the rear of the home. Without the requested setback relief, the ADU above the garage cannot be reasonably accommodated, restricting the permitted residential use. The relief sought is minimal and essential to achieve functional living space while respecting site constraints. This request is not driven by profit or added value, but by the need for reasonable enjoyment of the property under existing zoning allowances.

COVENTRY ZONING:

MAP 323, LOT 120
ZONING DISTRICT: RR-3
ZONING USE: RURAL RESIDENTIAL

EXISTING LOT FRONTAGE: 229'-11"
EXISTING LOT DEPTH: 368'-0"

BUILDING SETBACKS, MINIMUM REQUIRED:

45'-0" FRONT
50'-0" SIDE
90'-0" REAR

ACCESSORY BUILDING SETBACKS, MINIMUM REQUIRED:

10'-0" FRONT
10'-0" SIDE
10'-0" REAR

ACCESSORY BUILDING SETBACK IN FRONT YARD, MINIMUM REQUIRED:

45'-0" FRONT
50'-0" SIDE
90'-0" REAR

ACCESSORY BUILDING HEIGHT, MAXIMUM ALLOWED: 25'-0"
BUILDING HEIGHT, PROPOSED: 25'-0"±: CONFORMING

MINIMUM LOT AREA PER ZONE: 130,680 SF/ 3 ACRES
EXISTING LOT AREA: 72,344 SF/ 1.66 ACRES: NON-CONFORMING UNDER-SIZED LOT

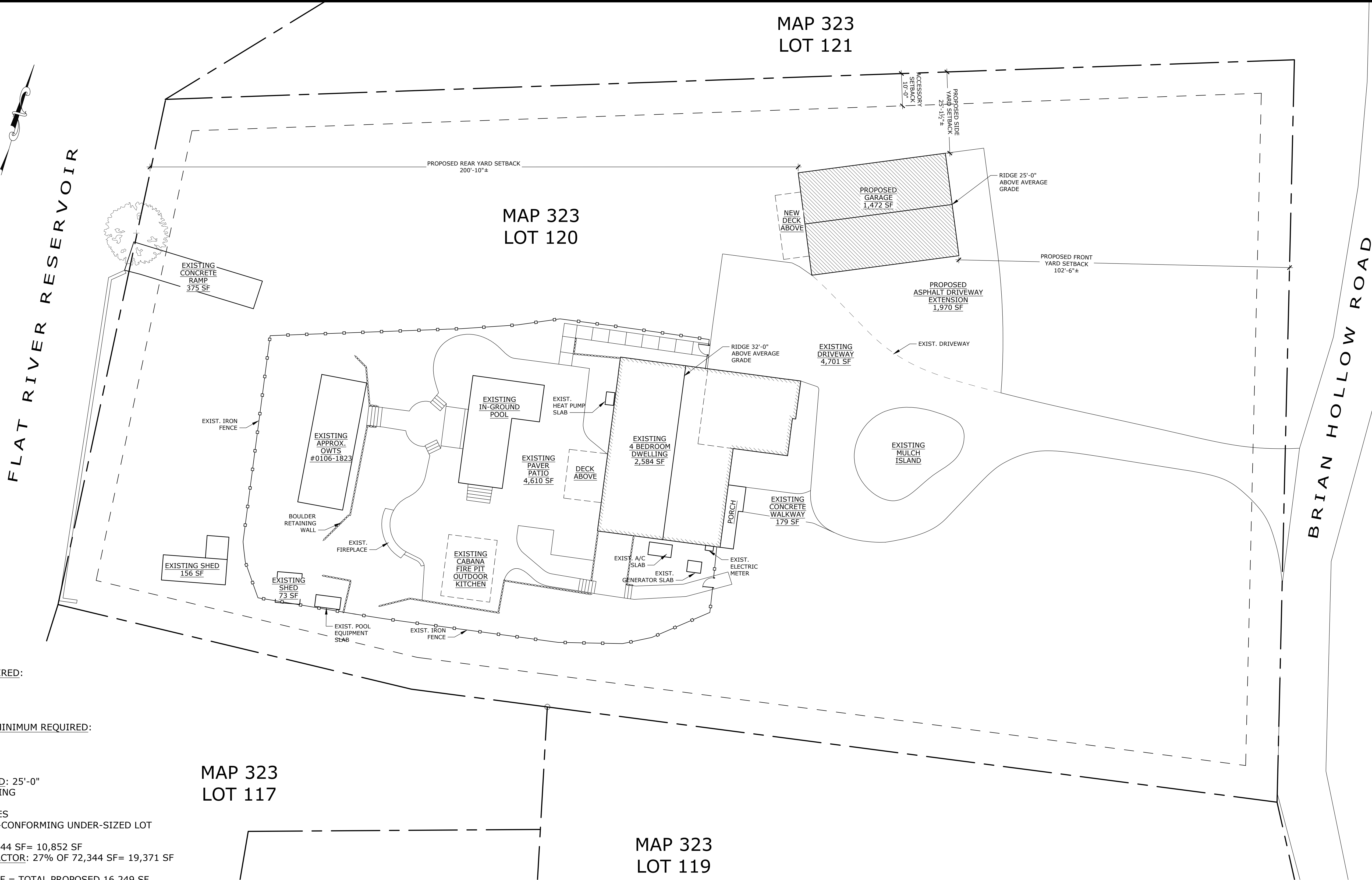
LOT COVERAGE, ALLOWED PER ZONE: 15% OF 72,344 SF= 10,852 SF
LOT COVERAGE, NON-CONFORMING DEFICIENCY FACTOR: 27% OF 72,344 SF= 19,371 SF
LOT COVERAGE, EXISTING: 12,807± SF
LOT COVERAGE, PROPOSED: TOTAL ADDED 3,442 SF = TOTAL PROPOSED 16,249 SF
PROPOSED ACCESSORY BUILDING= 1,472 SF
ADDED ASPHALT DRIVEWAY AREA= 1,970 SF

SITE PLAN NOTES:

- ALL ELEVATIONS SHALL BE MEASURED IN NAVD88 DATUM
- FOOTPRINT DIMENSIONS ON SITE PLAN MAY NOT REFLECT ACTUAL DIMENSIONS OF NEW FOUND. DUE TO THICKNESS OF VARIOUS MATERIALS (IE. SIDING)- SEE FOUND. PLAN
- ALL UTILITY DESIGNATIONS ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.
- THIS IS AN ARCHITECTS SITE PLAN & IS SUBJECT TO VERIFICATION BY A LICENSED SURVEYOR. THE INFORMATION REPRESENTED ON THIS SITE PLAN IS THE ARCHITECTS BEST OF KNOWLEDGE AND WAS OBTAINED FROM A SURVEY PREPARED BY:
SAMUEL R. SUORSO, PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR
COVENTRY SURVEY DESIGN GROUP
46 S MAIN STREET, COVENTRY, RI 02816
DATED: DECEMBER 18, 2024

1 ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

Scale: 1/16"= 1'-0"



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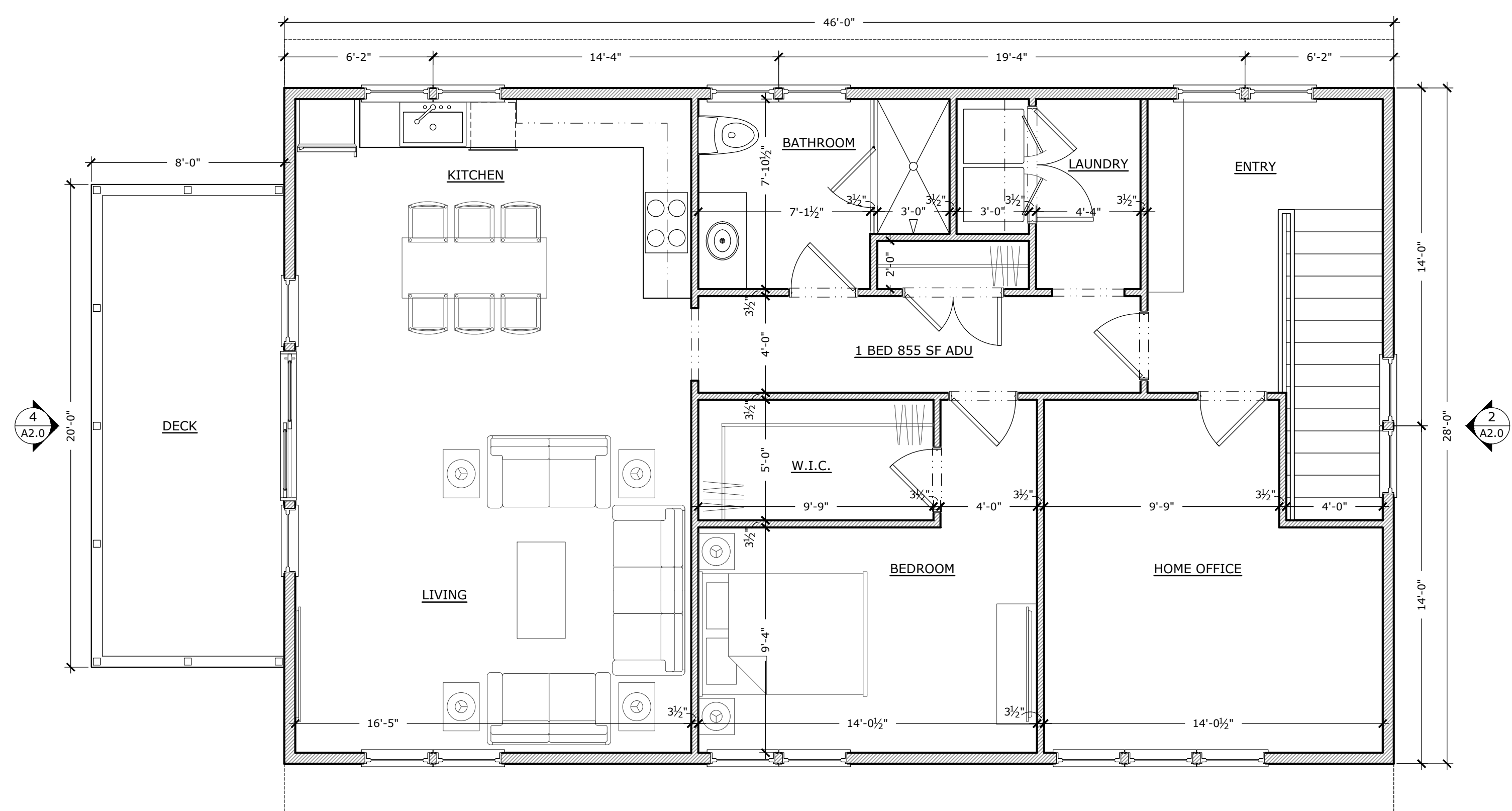
REVISIONS:

DESCRIPTION:
ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

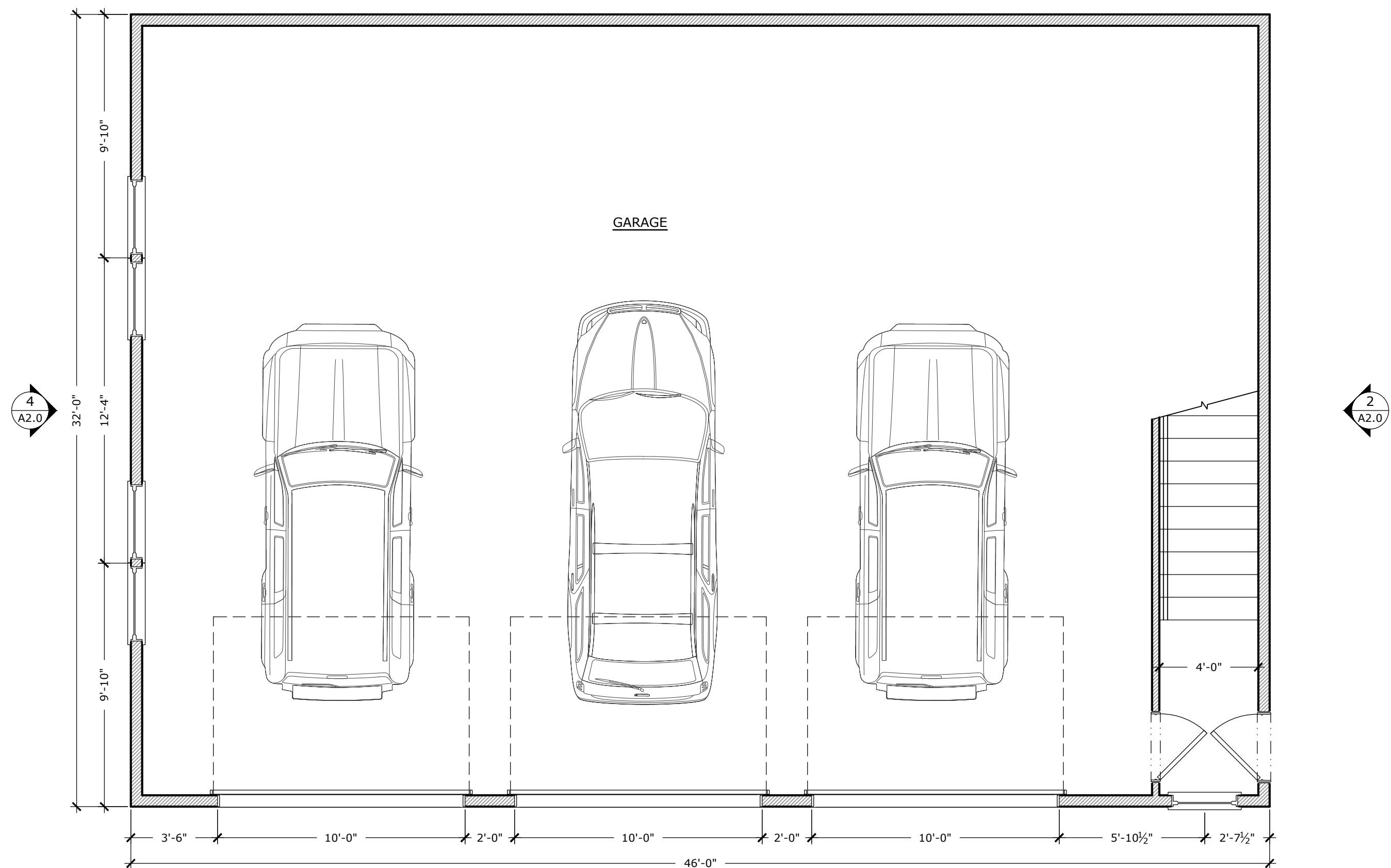
SCALE: 1/16"=1'-0"

DATE: November 25th, 2025

1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1,170 SF
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



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REVISIONS:

DESCRIPTION: FLOOR PLANS

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"
DATE: November 25th, 2025

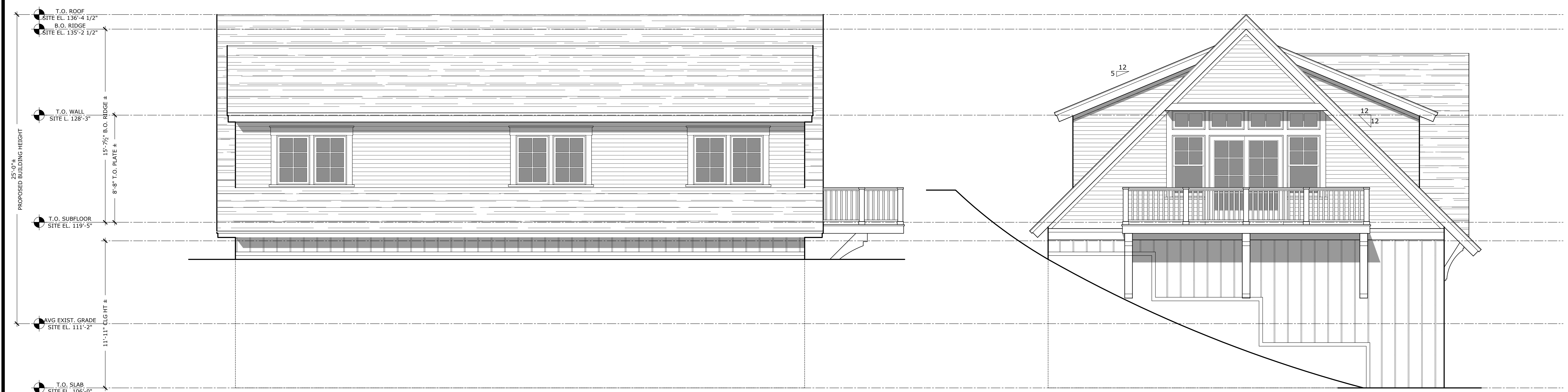
GORMLEY GARAGE
33 BRIAN HOLLOW RD
COVENTRY RI

A1.0



1 SOUTH ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

2 EAST ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



3 NORTH ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

4 WEST ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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A2.0	GORMLEY GARAGE 33 BRIAN HOLLOW RD COVENTRY RI	DESCRIPTION: EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS	REVISIONS:	CORDTSEN DESIGN ARCHITECTURE 42 West Main Road Middletown, RI 02842 CordtsenDesign.com 401.619.4689		
						SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"
						DATE: November 25th, 2025