



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge MA 02139

617-349-6100

BZA Application Form

BZA Number: 127832

General Information

The undersigned hereby petitions the Board of Zoning Appeal for the following:

Special Permit: _____

Variance: X

Appeal: _____

PETITIONER: Allison Cook C/O Maggie Booz, SmartArchitecture

PETITIONER'S ADDRESS: 33 Lawn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: 2 Mercer Cir, Cambridge, MA

TYPE OF OCCUPANCY: Single-family

ZONING DISTRICT: Residence A-2 Zone

REASON FOR PETITION:

/Additions/

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONER'S PROPOSAL:

The Owner proposes to build two sections of one-story additions to the right and left of an existing non-conforming one-story addition on the rear of the house.

SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE CITED:

Article: 5.000 Section: 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements)

Article: 8.000 Section: 8.22.3 (Non-Conforming Structure)

Original
Signature(s):

(Petitioner (s) / Owner)

Maggie Booz

(Print Name)

Address:

Tel. No. 617-576-2720

E-Mail Address: maggie@smartarchitecture.net

Date: 7.26.21

BZA APPLICATION FORM - OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

To be completed by OWNER, signed before a notary and returned to
The Secretary of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

I/We Allison Cook
(OWNER)

Address: 2 Mercer Circle, Cambridge, MA 02138

State that I/We own the property located at 2 Mercer Circle, Cambridge, MA 02138
which is the subject of this zoning application.

The record title of this property is in the name of Allison Cook

*Pursuant to a deed of duly recorded in the date 12-31-2012, Middlesex South
County Registry of Deeds at Book 60865, Page 537; or
Middlesex Registry District of Land Court, Certificate No. _____
Book 72 Page 228.

Allison Cook
SIGNATURE BY LAND OWNER OR
AUTHORIZED TRUSTEE, OFFICER OR AGENT*

*Written evidence of Agent's standing to represent petitioner may be requested.

STATE OF NEW YORK
~~Commonwealth of Massachusetts~~, County of CHAUTAQUA

The above-name ALLISON COOK personally appeared before me,
this 12th of JULY, 2021, and made oath that the above statement is true.

Frank W. Finnerty Notary

My commission expires 05/09/2023 (Notary Seal)
FRANK W FINNERTY
NOTARY PUBLIC-STATE OF NEW YORK
No. 01F16240728

Qualified in Chautauqua County

My Commission Expires 05/09/2023

- If ownership is not shown in recorded deed, e.g. if by court order, recent deed, or inheritance, please include documentation.

NEW APPLICATION FORM - COMPLETION INFORMATION

To be completed by OWNER, signed before a notary and returned to the Secretary of the Board of Land Surveying.

NAME _____ (OWNER)

Address: _____

State that I own the property located at _____ which is the subject of this zoning application.

The record title of this property is in the name of _____

Reference to a deed of gift, recorded in the date _____ Middlesex County

County Registry of Deeds at Book _____ Page _____ of _____

Middlesex Registry District of Land County, Certificate No. _____

Book _____ Page _____

EXAMINED BY LAND SURVEYOR
AUTHORISED PERSONNEL. OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT

Witness evidence of Agent's identity to relevant jurisdiction may be requested.

STATE OF NEW YORK
County of _____

The above-named _____ personally appeared before me _____ and made oath that the above statement is true.
this _____ day of _____ 20____

Notary _____

My commission expires _____

NOTARY PUBLIC STATE OF NEW YORK

Notary Public No. _____

Qualified in _____ County

My Commission Expires _____

My Commission Expires _____

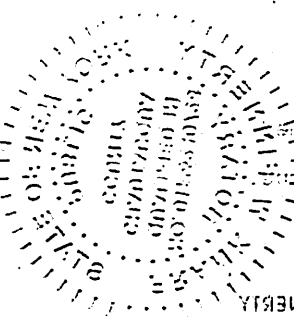
My Commission Expires _____

My Commission Expires _____

My Commission Expires _____

My Commission Expires _____

My Commission Expires _____



SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR A VARIANCE

EACH OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS FOR A VARIANCE MUST BE ESTABLISHED AND SET FORTH IN COMPLETE DETAIL BY THE APPLICANT IN ACCORDANCE WITH MGL 40A, SECTION 10.

- A)** A literal enforcement of the provisions of this Ordinance would involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the petitioner or appellant for the following reasons:

The Owners of 2 Mercer Circle have a breakfast room contiguous with their kitchen that, unfortunately, has a half-bathroom awkwardly situated within it. Not only does this half-bath cramp the space of the family's daily dinner space and hinder southern light from coming into the kitchen, it also causes an inherently unhygienic combination of eating and "using the facilities" within the same 80 SF. Additionally, the rear of the house has a 33 SF bump-out on it that is a portion of the existing condition, with exterior storage rooms below it. It is a flimsy, uninsulated structure that is literally freezing cold in the winter. The owners are seeking permission to solve both problems at once by adding 53 SF to the bump-out and re-building it properly so that walls, floor, and roof are sufficiently insulated and plumbing can be put into the space. While the house is otherwise spacious, the architecture of its first floor is rigid and doesn't allow for a powder room to be tucked discreetly away somewhere. The small ask for zoning relief would provide a non-invasive solution to the problem.

- B)** The hardship is owing to the following circumstances relating to the soil conditions, shape or topography of such land or structures and especially affecting such land or structures by not affecting generally the zoning district in which it is located for the following reasons:

The lot at 2 Mercer Circle is large, at 9200 SF, and wide, at 110 LF. However, the house was constructed as is typical, before enactment of a zoning ordinance, and its shape is a rectangle with its longer dimension oriented to the shorter dimension of the lot. The house is also situated to the extreme north of the lot and close to the rear property line. It is surmised that the house originally had a back stoop entrance that was converted at some point into needed utility space, but before the expectation that a house would have a first floor bathroom.

- C)** **DESIRABLE RELIEF MAY BE GRANTED WITHOUT EITHER:**

- 1)** Desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good for the following reasons:

Because the requested relief is so small, taking place on the least prominent side of the house, and adjacent to no important or primary spaces of neighbors, and because the proposed addition casts no additional shadow nor hinders views that neighbors now enjoy, the addition will cause no detriment to the public good. On the contrary, it will replace a flimsy shed-like structure with a rear ell as substantially built as the original house.

- 2)** Desirable relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of this Ordinance for the following reasons:

The proposal doesn't nullify or derogate from the intent of the Ordinance, which is meant to protect the citizenry from oppressive intensification of land use, deviations from the character and norms of the zoning district, and congestive densification.

***if you have any questions as to whether you can establish all of the applicable legal requirements, you should consult with an attorney.**

BZA Application Form**DIMENSIONAL INFORMATION****Applicant:** Allison Cook**Present Use/Occupancy:** Single-family**Location:** 33 Lawn Street**Zone:** Residence A-2 Zone**Phone:** 617-576-2720**Requested Use/Occupancy:** Single-family

	<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Requested Conditions</u>	<u>Ordinance Requirements</u>	
<u>TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA:</u>	3809 SF	3979 SF	4600 SF	(max.)
<u>LOT AREA:</u>	9200 SF	9200 SF	6000 SF	(min.)
<u>RATIO OF GROSS FLOOR AREA TO LOT AREA: ²</u>	.41	.43	.5	
<u>LOT AREA OF EACH DWELLING UNIT</u>	9200 SF	9200 SF	4500 SF	
<u>SIZE OF LOT:</u>				
WIDTH	110.56 LF	110.56 LF	65 LF	
DEPTH	85 LF	85 LF	NA	
<u>SETBACKS IN FEET:</u>				
FRONT	19.8 LF	17.1 LF	20 LF	
REAR	7.5 LF	7.5 LF	25 LF	
LEFT SIDE	25.4 LF	11.1 LF	10 LF	
RIGHT SIDE	42.9 LF	41 LF	15 LF min	
<u>SIZE OF BUILDING:</u>				
HEIGHT	34.2 LF	34.2 LF	35 LF	
WIDTH	50.25 LF	50.25 LF	NA	
<u>RATIO OF USABLE OPEN SPACE TO LOT AREA:</u>	70% open	64% open	50% open	
<u>NO. OF DWELLING UNITS:</u>	1	1	2 maximum	
<u>NO. OF PARKING SPACES:</u>	2	3	1 minimum	
<u>NO. OF LOADING AREAS:</u>	NA	NA	NA	
<u>DISTANCE TO NEAREST BLDG. ON SAME LOT</u>	NA	NA	NA	

Describe where applicable, other occupancies on the same lot, the size of adjacent buildings on same lot, and type of construction proposed, e.g; wood frame, concrete, brick, steel, etc.

1. SEE CAMBRIDGE ZONING ORDINANCE ARTICLE 5.000, SECTION 5.30 (DISTRICT OF DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS).
2. TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA (INCLUDING BASEMENT 7'-0" IN HEIGHT AND ATTIC AREAS GREATER THAN 5') DIVIDED BY LOT AREA.
3. OPEN SPACE SHALL NOT INCLUDE PARKING AREAS, WALKWAYS OR DRIVEWAYS AND SHALL HAVE A MINIMUM DIMENSION OF 15'.

BZA Application Form

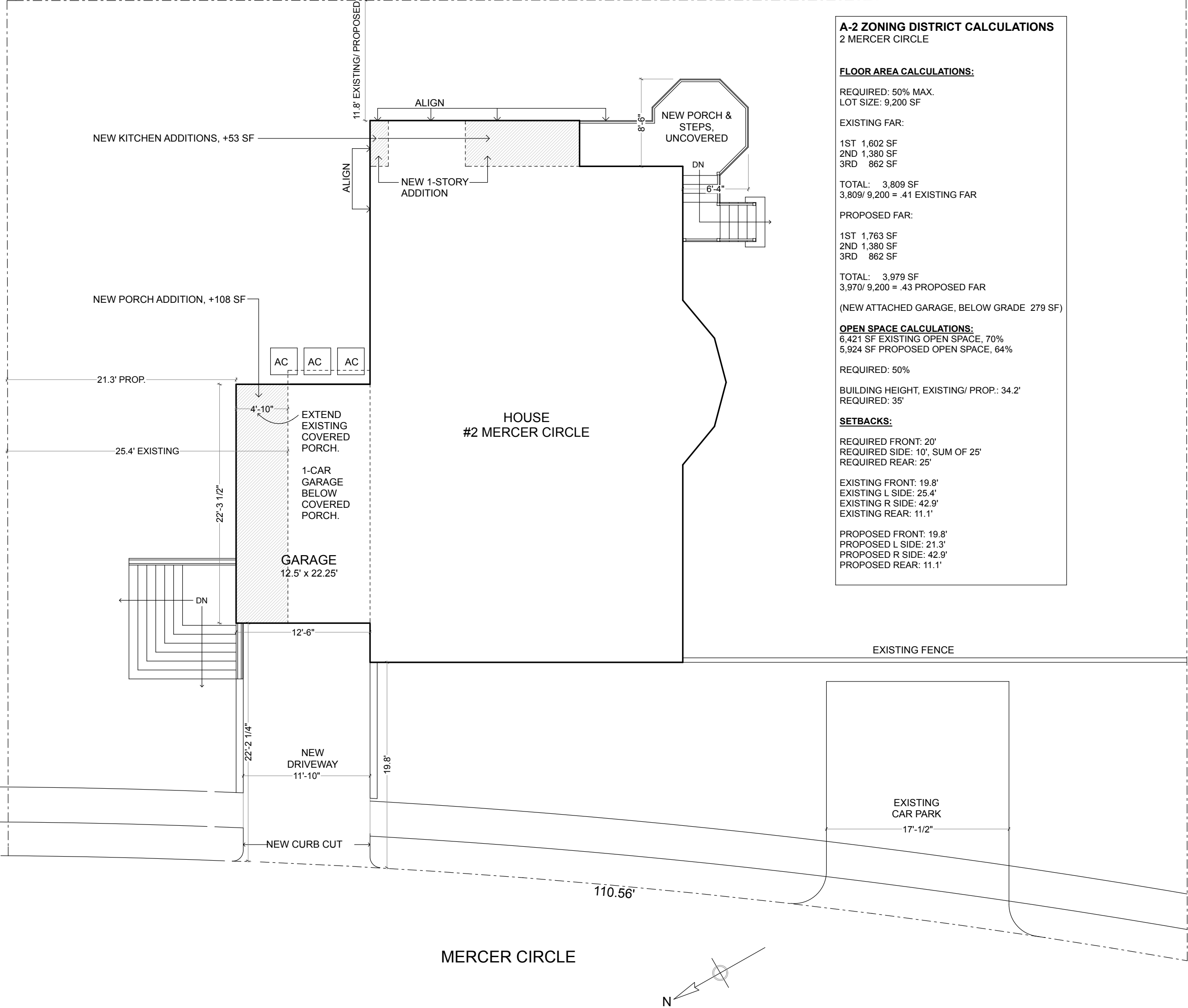
ARCHITECT
SMART ARCHITECTURE
625 MOUNT AUBURN STREET, SUITE 206, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138
T: 617.576.2720 www.smartarchitecture.net

- A-0.0 Cover Sheet w/ Proposed Plot Plan
- A-1.0 Proposed Site Plan w/ Zoning Calculations
- A-2.0 Basement Demolition Plan
- A-2.1 First Floor Demolition Plan
- A-3.0 Proposed Basement Floor Plan
- A-3.1 Proposed First Floor Plan
- A-x.4 Existing West Elevation
- A-x.5 Existing North Elevation
- A-x.6 Existing East Elevation
- A-x.7 Existing South Elevation
- A-7.0 Proposed West Elevation
- A-7.1 Proposed North Elevation
- A-7.2 Proposed East Elevation
- A-7.3 Proposed South Elevation



1" = 20' 1

A-0.0



Proposed Site Plan

1/8" = 1'-0" 1

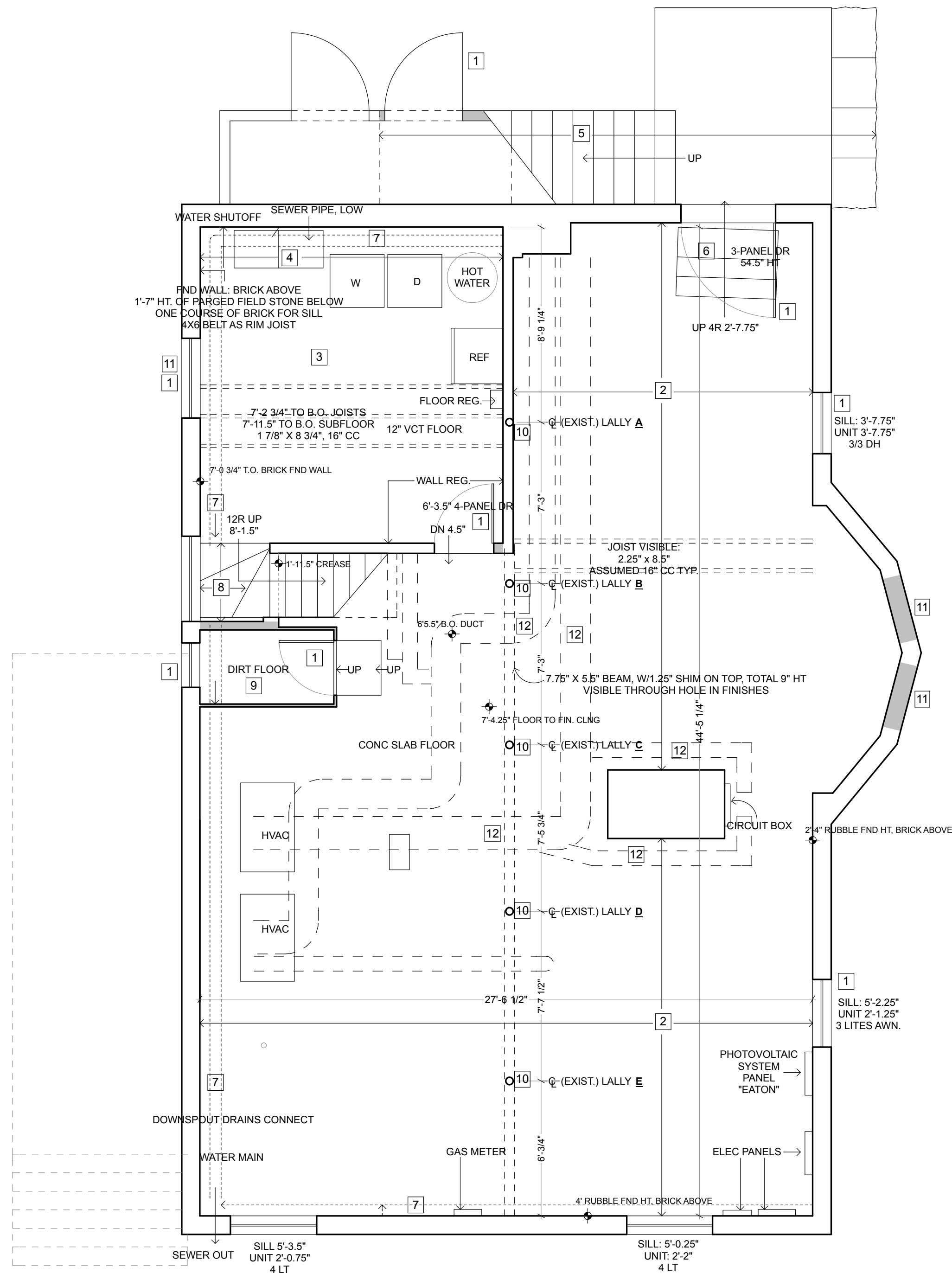
SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed Site Plan

A-1.0

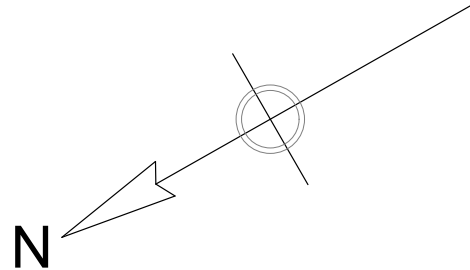


BASEMENT DEMOLITION NOTES:

- 1 REMOVE DOOR OR WINDOW.
- 2 REMOVE FLOOR SLAB THROUGHOUT.
- 3 REMOVE WOOD FLOOR.
- 4 REMOVE LAUNDRY SINK, W/D HOOKUP, HOT WATER HEATER.
- 5 REMOVE STEPS, LANDING, 1/2 OF STORAGE ROOM.
- 6 REMOVE STEPS.
- 7 REMOVE WASTE LINE OR DOWNSPOUT DRAINAGE.
- 8 REMOVE WINDERS.
- 9 REMOVE PLUMBING.
- 10 EVALUATE FOOTINGS @ EXISTING LALLY COLUMNS.
- 11 REMOVE FOUNDATION WALL FOR NEW WINDOW OR DOOR OPENING.
- 12 REMOVE & RE-ROUTE DUCTWORK FOR HEADROOM ACCOMMODATING NEW PROPOSED PLAN.

DRAWING KEY:

- WALLS TO BE DEMOLISHED
- EXISTING WALLS TO REMAIN



Basement Demolition Plan

1/4" = 1'-0" **1**

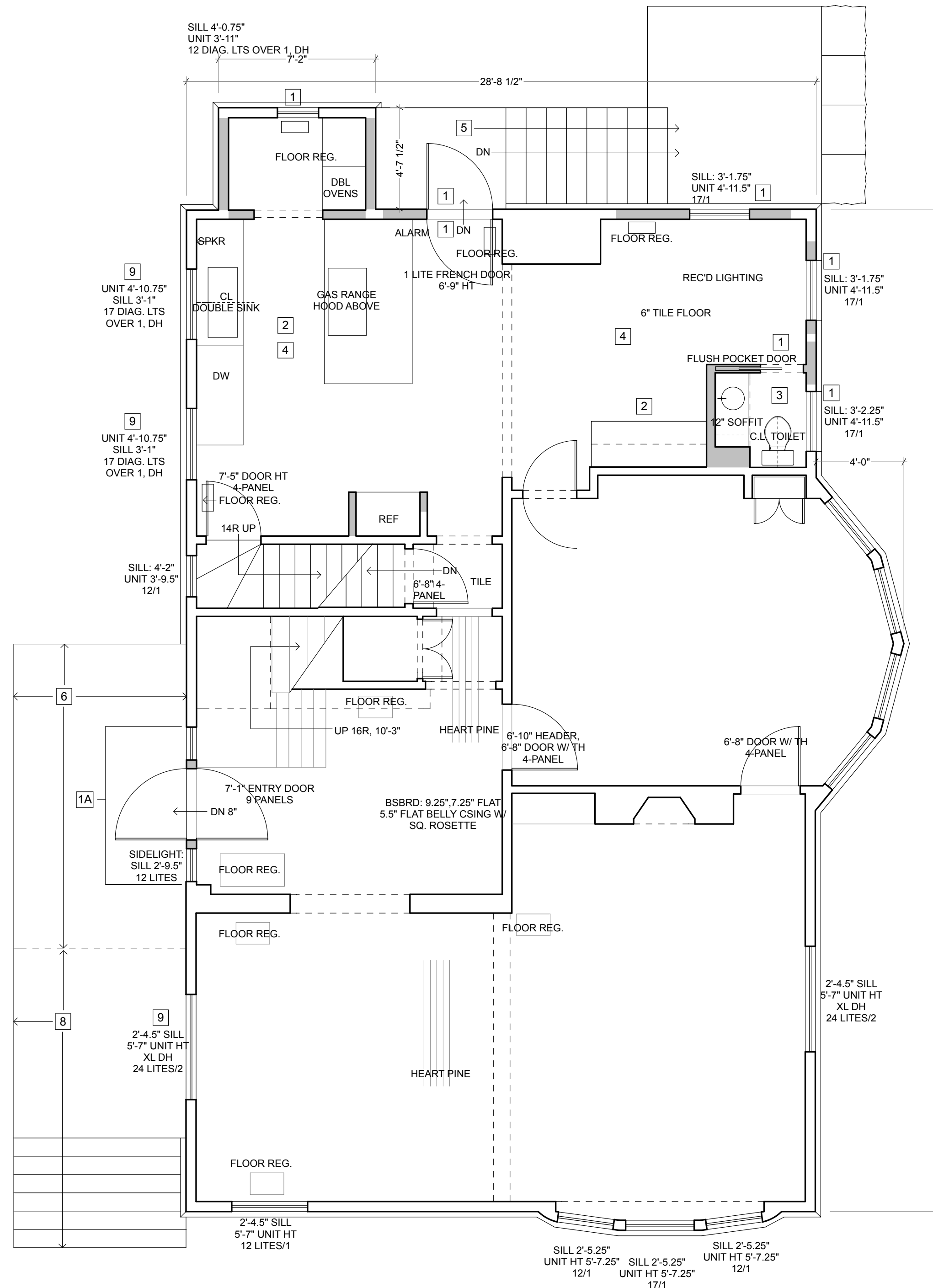
**SMART
ARCHITECTURE**
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
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Job number	Cook 1816
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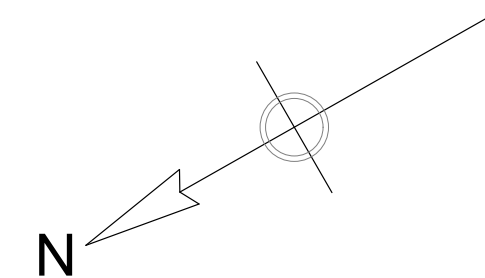
**Basement
Demolition Plan**

A-2.0



- FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION NOTES:**
- 1 REMOVE DOOR OR WINDOW.
 - 1A REMOVE DOOR AND WINDOW ASSEMBLY FOR REINSTALL AT NEW LOCATION.
 - 2 REMOVE CABINETS, COUNTERS, APPLIANCES.
 - 3 REMOVE POWDER ROOM ENTIRELY & CAP PLUMBING.
 - 4 REMOVE ALL WALL, CEILING, FLOOR FINISHES.
 - 5 REMOVE DECK AND STEPS.
 - 6 REMOVE PORTION OF FRONT PORCH TO BE ENCLOSED.
 - 7 EXCAVATE FOR 4'-0" BELOW GRADE FOOTING AND FROST WALL BELOW NEW ENCLOSED PORCH PORTION.
 - 8 PROTECT PRESERVED PORCH PORTION DURING CONSTRUCTION.
 - 9 PROTECT EXISTING WINDOWS DURING CONSTRUCTION

- DRAWING KEY:**
- WALLS TO BE DEMOLISHED
 - EXISTING WALLS TO REMAIN



First Floor Demolition Plan

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

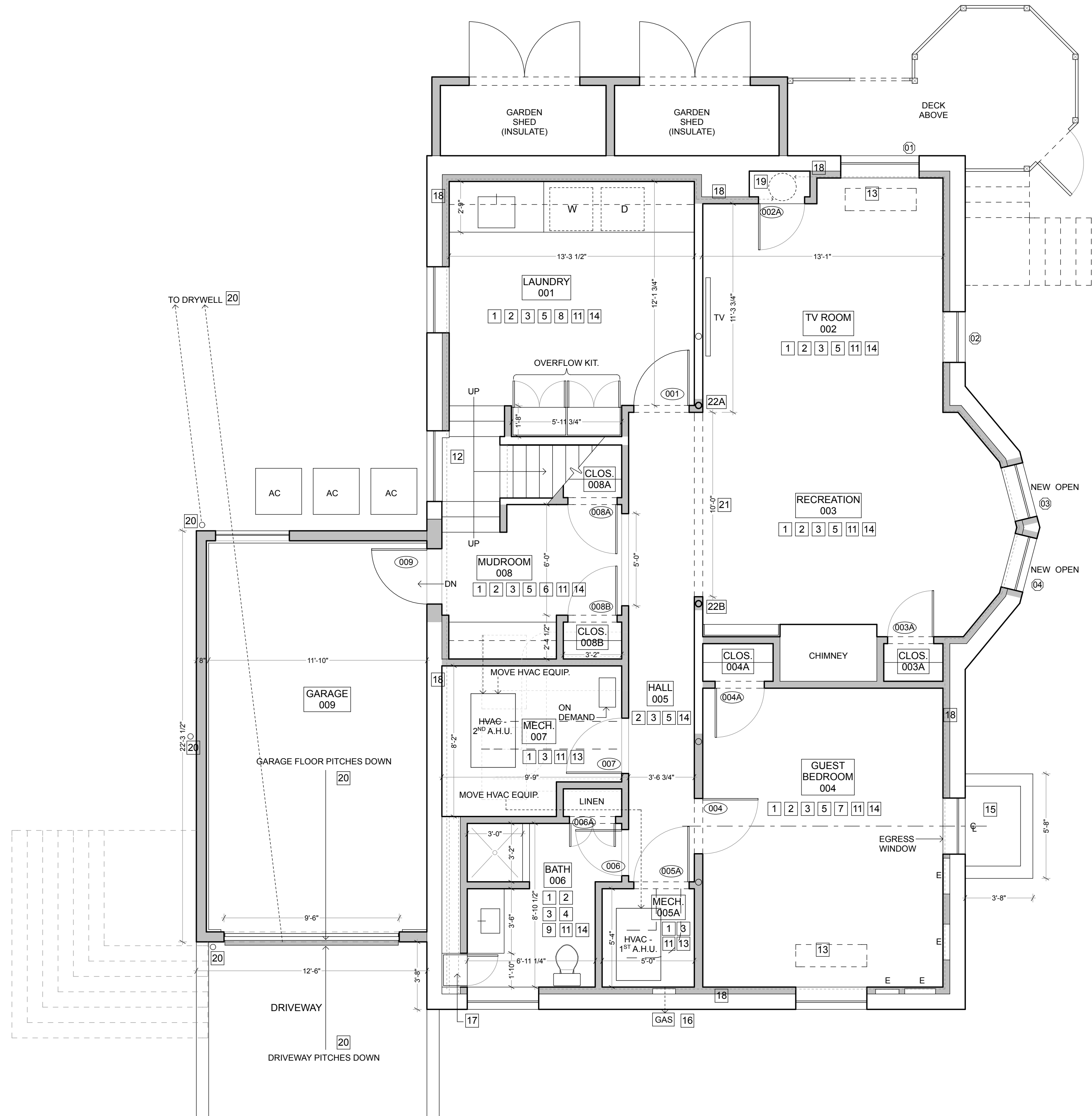
SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

First Floor
Demolition Plan

A-2.1



Proposed Basement Plan

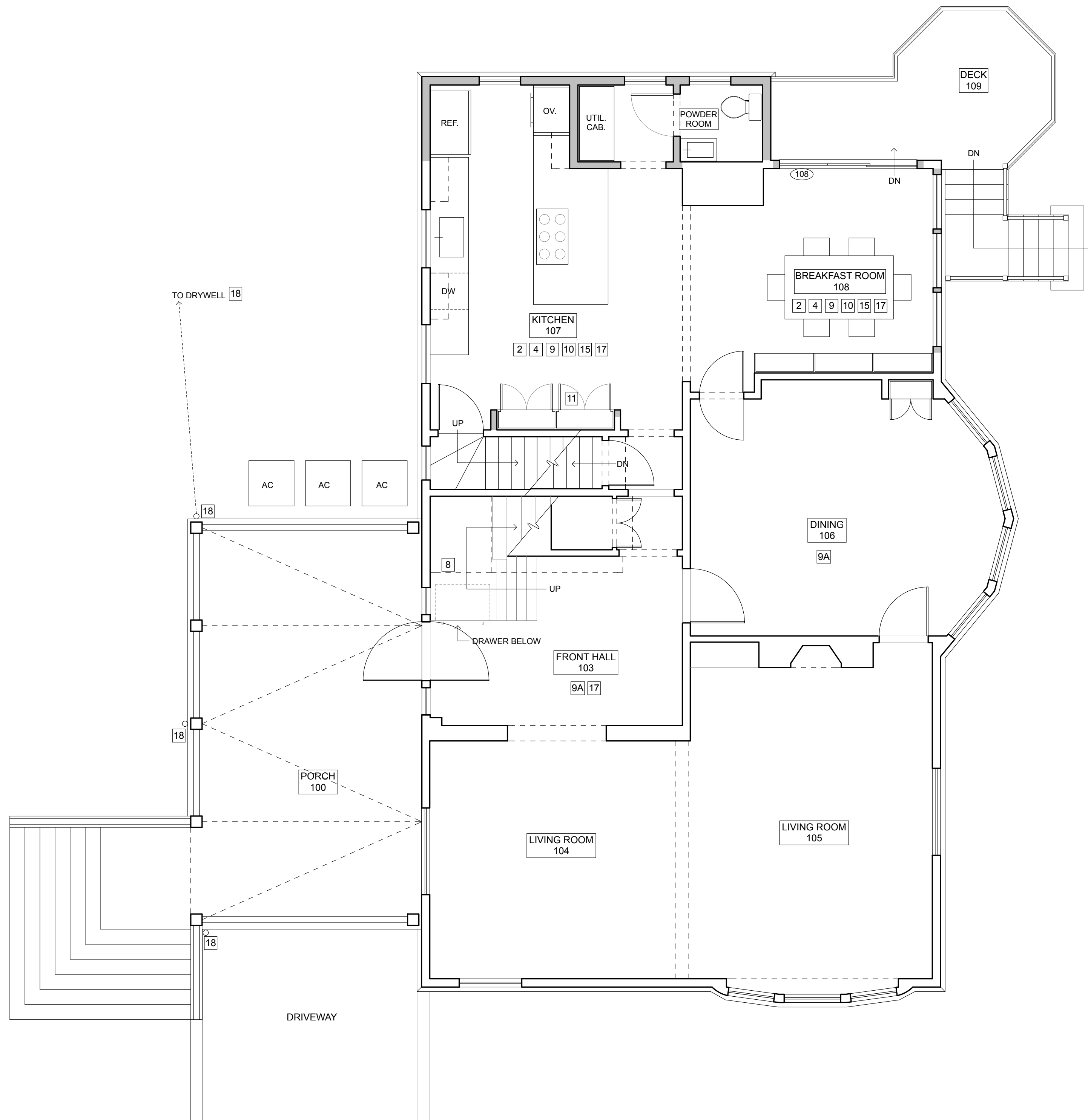
SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed First
Floor Plan

A-3.1



Proposed First Floor Plan

1/4" = 1'-0"

1



Existing Front (West) Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

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ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

	Cook 1816
Job number	as noted
Scale	06.17.21
Date	aj
Drawn by	msb
Checked by	

Existing
Front Elevation

A-x.4



Existing North Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
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Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Existing
North Elevation

A-x.5



Existing Rear (East) Elevation

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ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Existing
Rear Elevation

A-x.6



Existing South Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Existing
South Elevation

A-x.7

SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	4.30.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed
West (Front) Elevation

A-7.0



Proposed West (Front) Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1



SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	4.30.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed
North Elevation

A-7.1



Proposed East (Rear) Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	4.30.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed
East Elevation

A-7.2



Proposed South Side Elevation

1/4" = 1'-0" 1

SMART
ARCHITECTURE
33 LAWN STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Cook Hirsh Residence
2 Mercer Circle
Cambridge, MA 02138

Job number	Cook 1816
Scale	as noted
Date	06.17.21
Drawn by	aj
Checked by	msb

Proposed
South Elevation

A-7.3



[illegible]

2 Mercer Circle *Petitioner*

220-184
PORTER, FRANK B., JR.,
TRUSTEE THE PORTER NOMINEE TR
6 MERCER CIR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-52
DWORSKY, ALAN J.,
TR. OF DWORSKY FAMILY REALTY TRUST
8 MERCER CIRCLE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138-4834

SMART ARCHITECTURE
C/O MAGGIE BOOZ, ARCHITECT
33 LAWN STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-72
LIPSON, PETER B. & DEBRA M. LONGSTREET
4 MERCER CIR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-54
HOLDERNESS, JULIA & DARYOOSH VAKHSHOORI
130 BRATTLE ST. #A
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-54
HALL, E. JACKSON & ROBERTA NIGRO HALL
ONE MERCER CIRCLE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138-3424

220-55
MOULTON, EBEN S. & HEATHER S. MOULTON
128 BRATTLE STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-56
BERGER, ADAM L.
TR. OF THE BROWN AND BRATTLE REALTY TR.
126 BRATTLE ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-74
COOK, ALLISON
2 MERCER CIR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-110
DALEY, GEORGE Q. & AMY C. EDMONDSON
7 BROWN ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-59
VAN SICKLE, JAMES R., & MARY ALICE
TR. OF 15 BROWN STREET REALTY TR.
15 BROWN ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138-4820

220-129
BERMAN, SETH P. & MANDY LEE BERMAN
7 MERCER CIR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-163
PRATT, PATRICIA R. PRATT BERIT.,
CHARLES H. PRATT, KATHERINE PRATT &
KURT F. SOMMERVILLE AS TRST OF
11 BROWN ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-68
O'CONNOR, RORY A. & H. CLAIRE MUHM
9 FOSTER PL
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-164
RODES, THOMAS O. & SACHIKO T. RODES
9 BROWN STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-73
MURRAY-BROWN, LUCY L. &
NIGEL JEREMY MURRAY-BROWN
3 MERCER CIR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

220-67
KAHN, BONNIE MENES
10 FOSTER PL
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

Pacheco, Maria

From: Allison cook <cookallison35@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2021 1:41 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Maggie Booz
Subject: BZA- 127832 Fwd: 2 Mercer Circle

Dear Ms. Pacheco,

We wanted to forward this email from our neighbors, with their permission, in support of our project and zoning variance so that it can be entered into the comments for our case, BZA-127832.

Thank you for your help,

Allison Cook
2 Mercer Circle

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mary Alice Van Sickle <maryalicevansickle@gmail.com>
Subject: 2 Mercer Circle
Date: August 21, 2021 at 1:19:23 PM EDT
To: cookallison35@gmail.com
Cc: James Van Sickle <jamesrvansickle@gmail.com>

Allison,

Thank you so much for sharing the planned renovations to your home at 2 Mercer Circle with Jim and me. We reviewed the proposed elevations and rendering and think you have come up with a very appropriate resolution of your issues. The changes, including the new garage, respect the character of your home and its site quite well.

We wish you the best of luck going forward.

Best,

Mary Alice Van Sickle
15 Brown Street

Sent from my iPad

Pacheco, Maria

From: Debbie Longstreet <debralongstreet@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2021 3:08 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: pertaining to BZA-127832

Hello,

We are abutting neighbors and have no objection to the requested variance.

Sincerely,

Peter Lipson and Debra Longstreet

Pacheco, Maria

From: Seth Berman <sethberman@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 29, 2021 8:57 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Pertaining to case number BZA-127832

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am an abutting neighbor to 2 Mercer Circle, and I have no objection to the requested variance and support the proposed project.

Thank you,

Seth Berman
7 Mercer Circle



City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Mass Avenue, Cambridge, MA.
(617) 349-6100

BZA

POSTING NOTICE – PICK UP SHEET

The undersigned picked up the notice board for the Board of Zoning Appeals Hearing.

Name: Allison Cook Date: 8/16/21
(Print)

Address: 2 Mercer Circle

Case No. BZA-127832

Hearing Date: 9/2/21

Thank you,
Bza Members