

BZA-149063

BZA APPLICATION FORM

GENERAL INFORMATION

2021 NOV -2 PM 12: 17

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

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

Special Permit: \_\_\_\_\_ Variance:   x   Appeal: \_\_\_\_\_

PETITIONER: Just A Start Corporation for JAS Consolidated Properties LLC

PETITIONER'S ADDRESS: 1035 Cambridge St. #12, Cambridge, MA 02141

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: 55 Norfolk Street

TYPE OF OCCUPANCY: Office ZONING DISTRICT: Bus. A [other portion of lot is Res. B]

REASON FOR PETITION:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| <u>  x  </u> Additions                     | _____ New Structure |
| _____ Change in Use/Occupancy              | _____ Parking       |
| _____ Conversion to Addi'l Dwelling Unit's | _____ Sign          |
| _____ Dormer                               | _____ Subdivision   |
| _____ Other: _____                         |                     |

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONER'S PROPOSAL:

This proposal is to add an approximately 385 sq. ft. addition to a small office building on the site of affordable rental housing, to provide office space for delivering services and informational programs to residents and Just A Start clients and community members. This addition will be to the back of the current office space, and will comply with all applicable site, building, and program accessibility requirements.

SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE CITED:

- Article   5   Section   5.13, (Distance between buildings)
- Article   5   Section   5.27.2, (Maximum GFA), 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements), 5.33
- Article  10   Section  10.30 (Variance)

Applicants for a Variance must complete Pages 1-5  
Applicants for a Special Permit must complete Pages 1-4 and 6  
Applicants for an Appeal to the BZA of a Zoning determination by the Inspectional Services Department must attach a statement concerning the reasons for the appeal

Original Signature(s):

*Noah Sawyer*  
(Petitioner(s)/Owner)  
Noah Sawyer, Authorized Agent  
(Print Name)

Address: c/o Just A Start

1035 Cambridge St. #12, Cambridge, MA 02141

Tel. No.: 617-918-7516

E-Mail Address: noahsawyer@justastart.org

Date: 10/28/21

**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 JAS Consolidated Properties LLC, by its managing member, JAS Consolidated MM LLC  
(OWNER)

Address: c/o Just A Start Corporation, 1035 Cambridge Street #12 Cambridge, MA 02141

State that I/We own the property located at 55-59 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, MA,  
which is the subject of this zoning application.

The record title of this property is in the name of \_\_\_\_\_  
JAS Consolidated Properties LLC

\*Pursuant to a deed of duly recorded in the date Nov. 30, 2017, Middlesex South  
County Registry of Deeds at Book 70317, Page 369; or  
Middlesex Registry District of Land Court, Certificate No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Book \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
SIGNATURE BY LAND OWNER OR  
AUTHORIZED TRUSTEE, OFFICER OR AGENT\*


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

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Middlesex

The above-name Carl Nagy-Koehler personally appeared before me,  
this 30<sup>th</sup> of September, 2021, and made oath that the above statement is true.

[Signature] Notary

My commission expires 11/16/23 (Notary Seal).

 **GERALDINE M. ZIPSER**  
Notary Public  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
My Commission Expires  
November 16, 2023

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

**BZA APPLICATION FORM**

**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:**

A literal enforcement of the ordinance provisions would make it impossible for Just A Start to utilize this building effectively for delivery of needed services for its residents and other program participants.

JAS acquired this building as part of its acquisition and redevelopment of 59 Norfolk Street as affordable housing. Although the building is centrally located to a number of JAS rental properties, it's small size and lack of accessible entry and bathroom have made it impossible to use it consistently for training and meeting or office space for JAS training or resident services programs. Having this building largely vacant over most of our ownership has been a hardship.

Relief allowing more space, private offices, and handicap accessibility to the whole building would eliminate that hardship, and create space for services for low and moderate income people in this centrally located structure.

- 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 but not affecting generally the zoning district in which it is located for the following reasons:**

This site is unique in being within two different zoning districts and having two existing building with different uses, built very close to each other, in those separate zoning districts before current zoning requirements came into effect. 59 Norfolk Street was built in 1886, as a number of residence hotels were built in that area of Central Square.

The 55 Norfolk structure was built in 1928. It has seen a variety of uses, and also spent periods vacant. To make effective use of it as office and/or program space requires expansion of the space and HC accessibility.

Those changes would be allowed if it were on a lot solely within the Bus. A area. The hardship is in not being able to make changes that would be appropriate and allowable in the Bus. A area, if it were not a divided lot.

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

- 1) Substantial detriment to the public good for the following reasons:**

The changes to this office are away from the street behind the existing structure, and will have minimal visual impact.

The active use of this building that would be possible with its expansion would serve both residents of property and many other local residents participating in the Just A Start programs which would have offices there.

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

This small addition will allow more active pedestrian-friendly use, and greater accessibility for people with disabilities, and will meet the specific goal of the Central Square Action plan, for active street front uses in the Square's Business districts.

- \* If You have any questions as to whether you can establish all of the applicable legal requirements, you should consult with your own attorney.**

BZA APPLICATION FORM  
DIMENSIONAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Just A Start Corporation PRESENT USE/OCCUPANCY: Office

LOCATION: 55 Norfolk Street ZONE: Bus. A [another part of lot is Res. B]

PHONE: 617-918-7516 Noah Sawyer REQUESTED USE/OCCUPANCY: Office

	<u>EXISTING CONDITIONS</u>	<u>REQUESTED CONDITIONS</u>	<u>ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS<sup>2</sup></u>
TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA:	11,525 res. + 535 office	11,525 res. + 920 office	4,593 sq.ft. (max.)
LOT AREA:	8,196 sq. ft.		5000 sq. ft. (min.)
RATIO OF GROSS FLOOR AREA TO LOT AREA: <sup>2</sup>	1.47	1.51	0.56 (max.)
LOT AREA FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT:	1,025 sq.ft.	unchanged	approx. 1,650 (min.)
SIZE OF LOT:			
WIDTH	83.2 ft		50 ft. (min.)
DEPTH	93 ft. in Bus A; 121 ft. in Res. B		
Setbacks in Feet:			
FRONT	0 ft. [Bus. A]	0 ft.	0 ft. [Bus. A] (min.)
REAR	52.5 ft. [Bus A]	26 ft.	20 ft. (min.)
LEFT SIDE	0.8 ft. [Bus. A]	0.8 ft.	0 ft. [Bus. A] (min.)
RIGHT SIDE	9.8 ft. [Res. B]	unchanged	(min.)
SIZE OF BLDG.:			
HEIGHT	14 ft. [Bus. A]	20 ft.	35 ft. (max.)
LENGTH	38.0 ft.	64.1 ft.	n/a
WIDTH	15.1 ft.	15.1 ft.	n/a
RATIO OF USABLE OPEN SPACE in Bus. A TO LOT AREA: <sup>3</sup>	approx. 918 sq.ft./1503	approx. 533 sq.ft./1503	0 sq. ft./ 0%
in Res. B	1,380 sq. ft./ none 15x15	unchanged	2,678 sq. ft./ 40% (min.)
NO. OF DWELLING UNITS: in Res. B	8	8	existing/no change (max.)
NO. OF PARKING SPACES: for Bus. A	0	0	0* (min./max)
NO. OF LOADING AREAS: for Bus. A	0	0	0** (min.)
DISTANCE TO NEAREST BLDG. ON SAME LOT:	±7 ft.	±7 ft.	11.3 ft. (min.)

\* exempt from parking - Art. 6.32.1, \*\* exempt from loading - Art. 6.83, also exempt from bicycle parking - Art. 6.103.2(b)

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

The office bldg. for which this approximately 385 sq. ft. addition is planned is on the same lot as an 8 unit brick masonry building, with a 2,440 sq. ft. footprint, which is in the Res. B district. Parking on the site is in the Res. B area and is for residential use.

A shared walkway serves the two buildings. The addition will be one story, wood-frame construction, with a partially pitched roof, on a concrete slab.

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'.



2023 JAN 30 PM 12: 19  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

January 30, 2023

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal Chair and Members,

I write to request an extension of the Special Permit for BZA case number 149063 for Just A Start's 55 Norfolk Street project stamped on February 10, 2022. The renovation 55 Norfolk building will allow Just A Start to better serve Cambridge through our Economic Opportunity Programs by expanding and upgrading the space.

Just A Start has assembled all the project financing, and has a contractor selected. We are prepared to begin the work in Spring, 2023. Due to unforeseen delays in financing and contractor selection, we were not able to request a permit prior to the expiration.

Please reach out if you have any questions about this project and our timeline.

Thank you for your consideration,

Noah Sawyer  
Director of Real Estate

# 55 NORFOLK STREET

# PROPOSED RENOVATION/ADDITION

## CAMBRIDGE, MA

**OWNER / DEVELOPER**  
JUST-A-START CORPORATION  
1035 Cambridge Street #12  
Cambridge, MA 02141

**ARCHITECT**  
WINSLOW ARCHITECTS, INC.  
Arlington, MA

**CIVIL ENGINEER**  
CAMERON & ASSOCIATES  
Norwood, MA

**MEP ENGINEER**  
NORIAN SIANI ENGINEERING  
43 Bradford Street  
W. Concord, MA 01742

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
DM BERG CONSULTANTS  
100 Crescent Road  
Needham, MA 02494



### DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

### ZONING REVIEW / GENERAL NOTES

### SCHEDULE OF DRAWINGS

- G-0.01 : TITLE SHEET
- C-1.01 : SITE + DEMOLITION PLAN
- A-1.01 : PLANS
- A-2.01 : ELEVATIONS
- A-3.01 : SECTIONS

Date issued:  
05.11.20



89 MASSACHUSETTS AVE.  
ARLINGTON, MA 02474  
P: 781 648.6600  
F: 781 648.6601  
www.winslowarchitects.com

Owner/Developer:  
JUST-A-START CORPORATION



Project:  
55 NORFOLK ST  
Cambridge MA

Drawing:  
TITLE SHEET

Revisions:		
No.	Description	Date
1	DRAFT PLANS	12.13.19
2	PERMIT DRAFT PLANS	3.27.20

Stamp:

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Project number:  
19570

Sheet:  
G-0.01



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P: 781 648.6600  
F: 781 648.6601  
www.winslowarchitects.com

Owner/Developer:

JUST-A-START CORPORATION



Project:

55 NORFOLK ST  
Cambridge MA

Drawing:

SITE +  
DEMOLITION  
PLAN

Revisions:

No.	Description	Date
1	DRAFT PLANS	12.13.19

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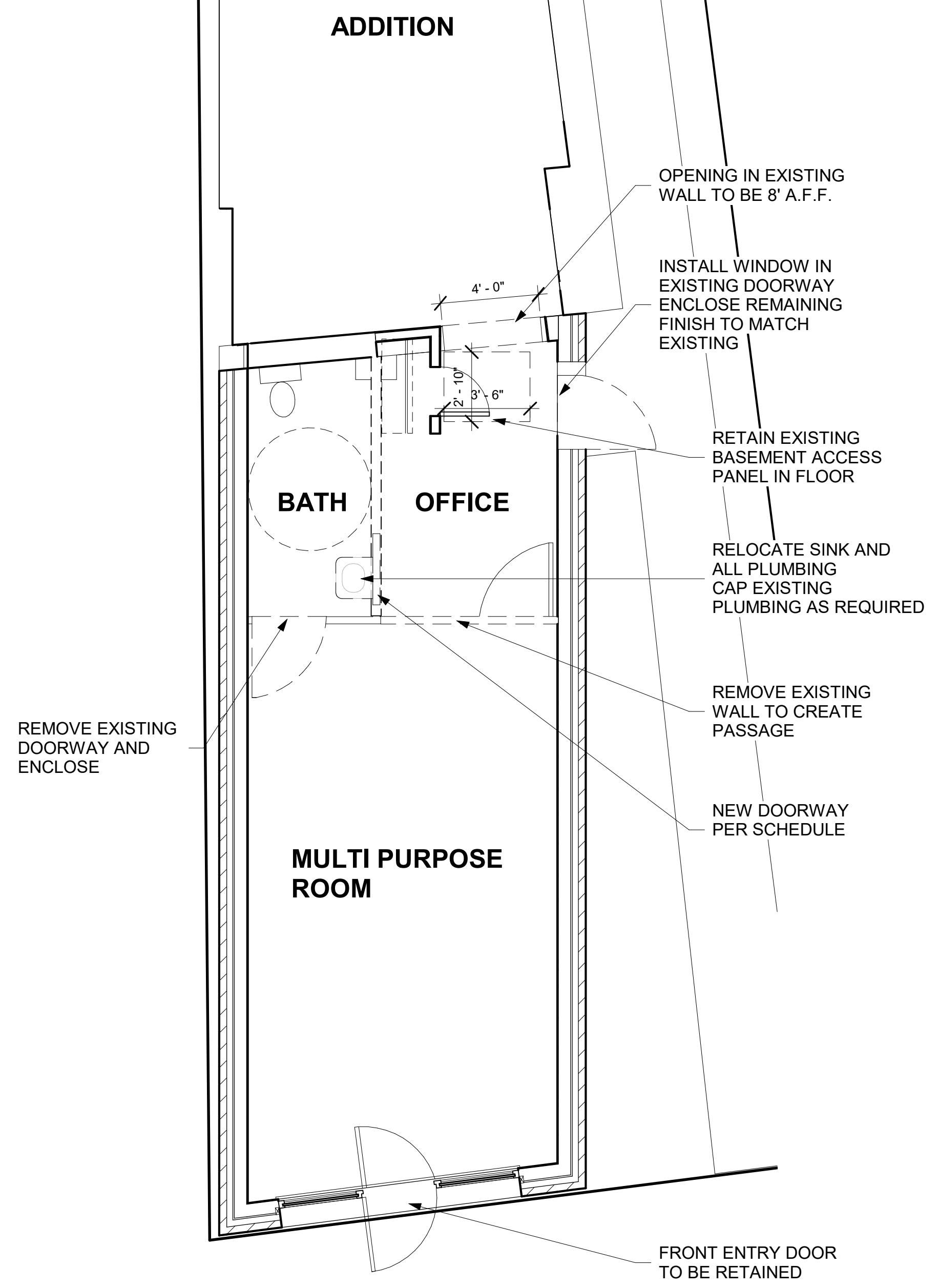
C-1.01

### GENERAL NOTES



### 1 DEMOLITION PLAN 1/4" = 1'-0"

- LEGEND**
- DEMOLISHED
  - EXISTING



REMOVE EXISTING DOORWAY AND ENCLOSE

BATH

OFFICE

MULTI PURPOSE ROOM

FRONT ENTRY DOOR TO BE RETAINED

NEW DOORWAY PER SCHEDULE

REMOVE EXISTING WALL TO CREATE PASSAGE

RELOCATE SINK AND ALL PLUMBING CAP EXISTING PLUMBING AS REQUIRED

RETAIN EXISTING BASEMENT ACCESS PANEL IN FLOOR

INSTALL WINDOW IN EXISTING DOORWAY ENCLOSE REMAINING FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING

OPENING IN EXISTING WALL TO BE 8' A.F.F.

NORFOLK STREET

BUS. A (1,503 SF)

RES. B (6,694 SF)

ADDITION

TOTAL LOT AREA = 8,197 SF

EXISTING

EXISTING

59

55

FRONT ENTRY

BUSINESS A  
RESIDENTIAL B

BUSINESS A  
RESIDENTIAL B

TRASH ENCLOSURE

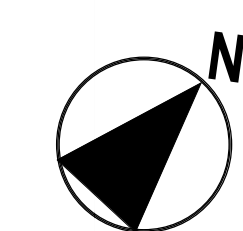
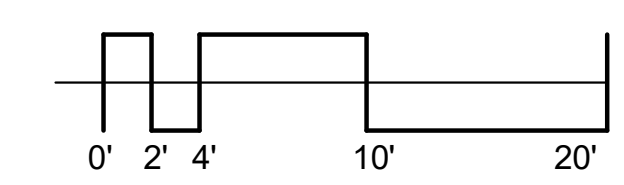
TRASH ENCLOSURE

RETAIN EXISTING WALKWAY

RETAIN EXISTING WALKWAY

NEW HC ACCESSIBLE ENTRY

BIKE RACKS





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Project:

55 NORFOLK ST  
Cambridge MA

Drawing:

PLANS

Revisions:

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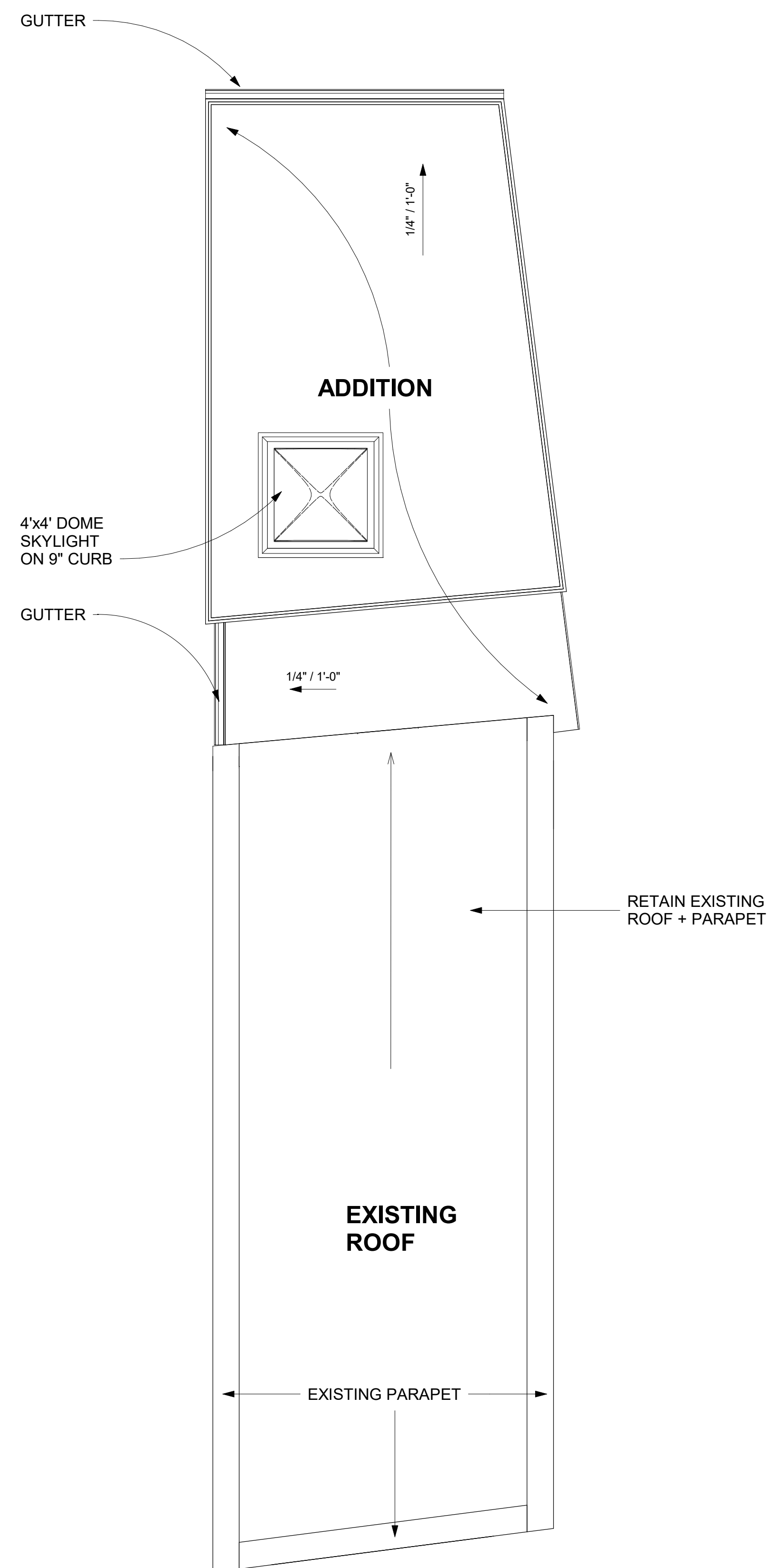
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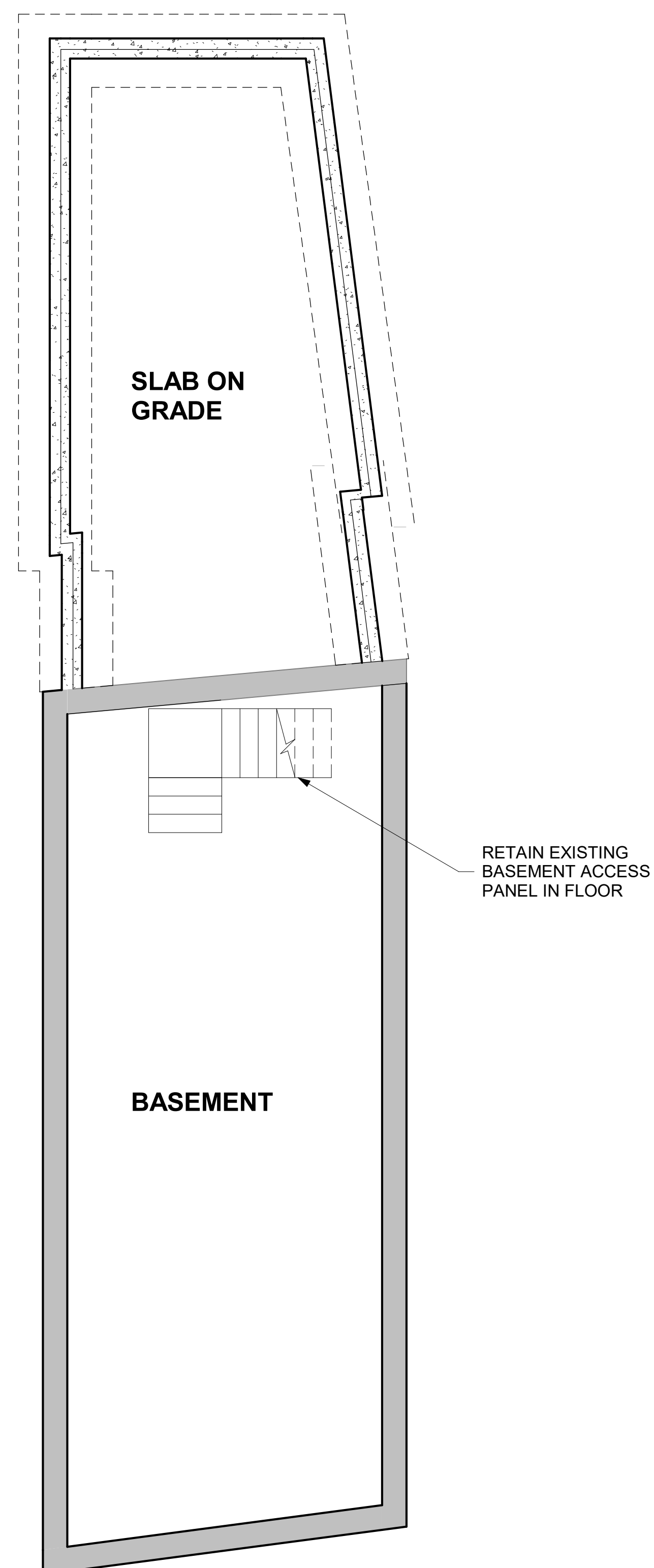
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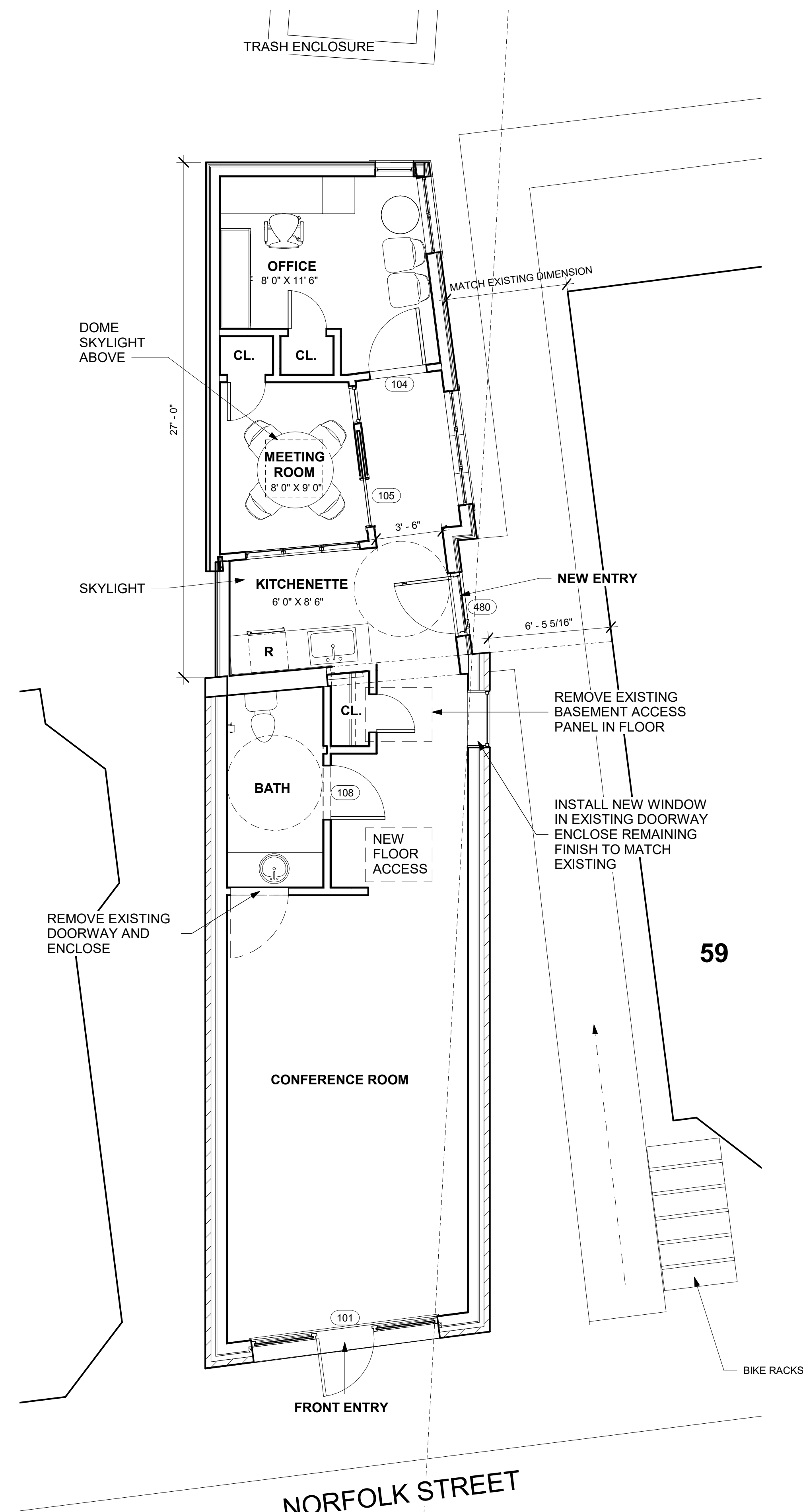


2 EXISTING ROOF  
1/4" = 1'-0"



3 BASEMENT / FOUNDATION PLAN  
1/4" = 1'-0"

**LEGEND**  
 - - - - FOOTING  
 \_\_\_\_\_ WALL



1 FIRST FLOOR  
1/4" = 1'-0"





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Owner/Developer:

JUST-A-START CORPORATION



Project:

55 NORFOLK ST  
Cambridge MA

Drawing:

BUILDING ELEVATIONS

Revisions:

No.	Description	Date
1	DRAFT PLANS	12.13.19

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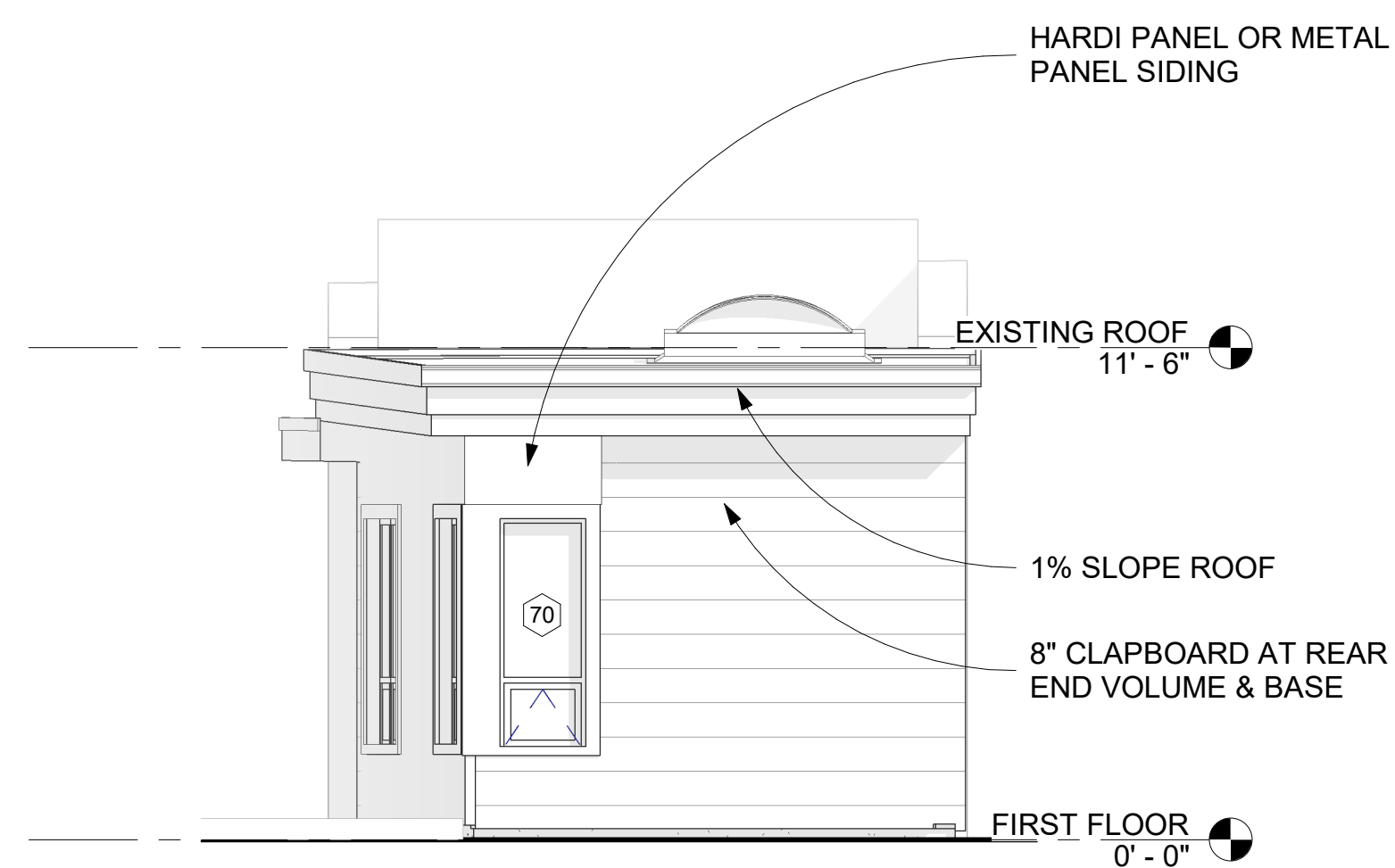
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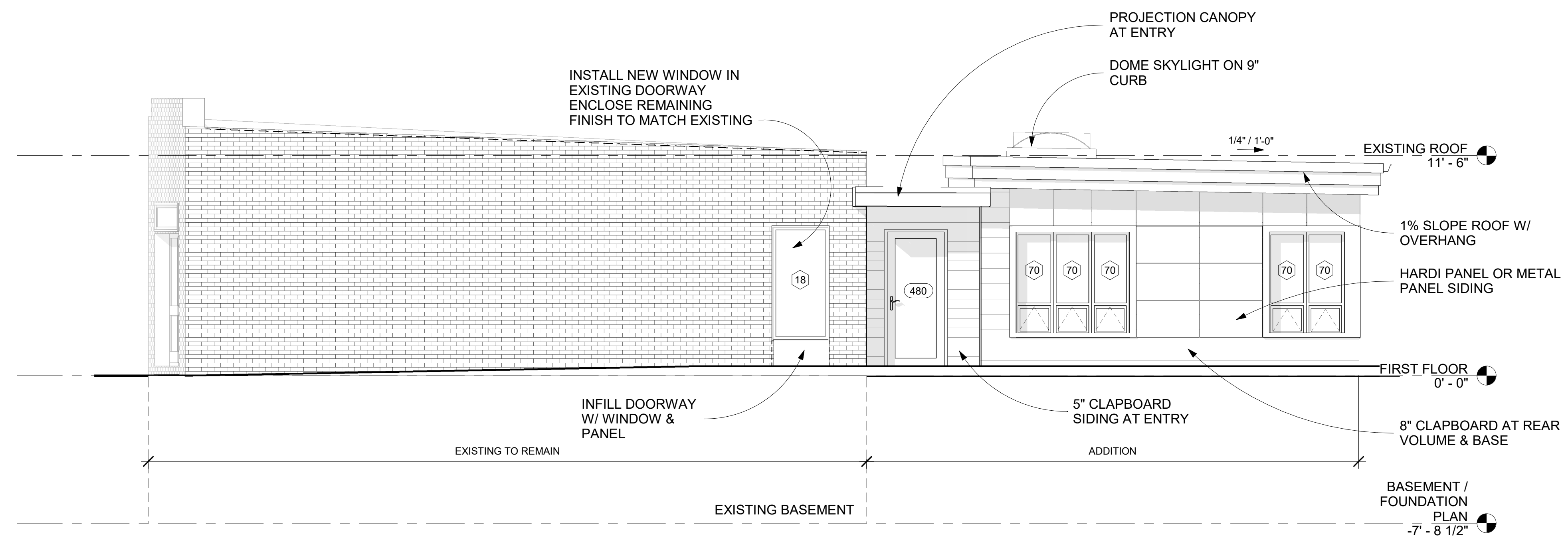
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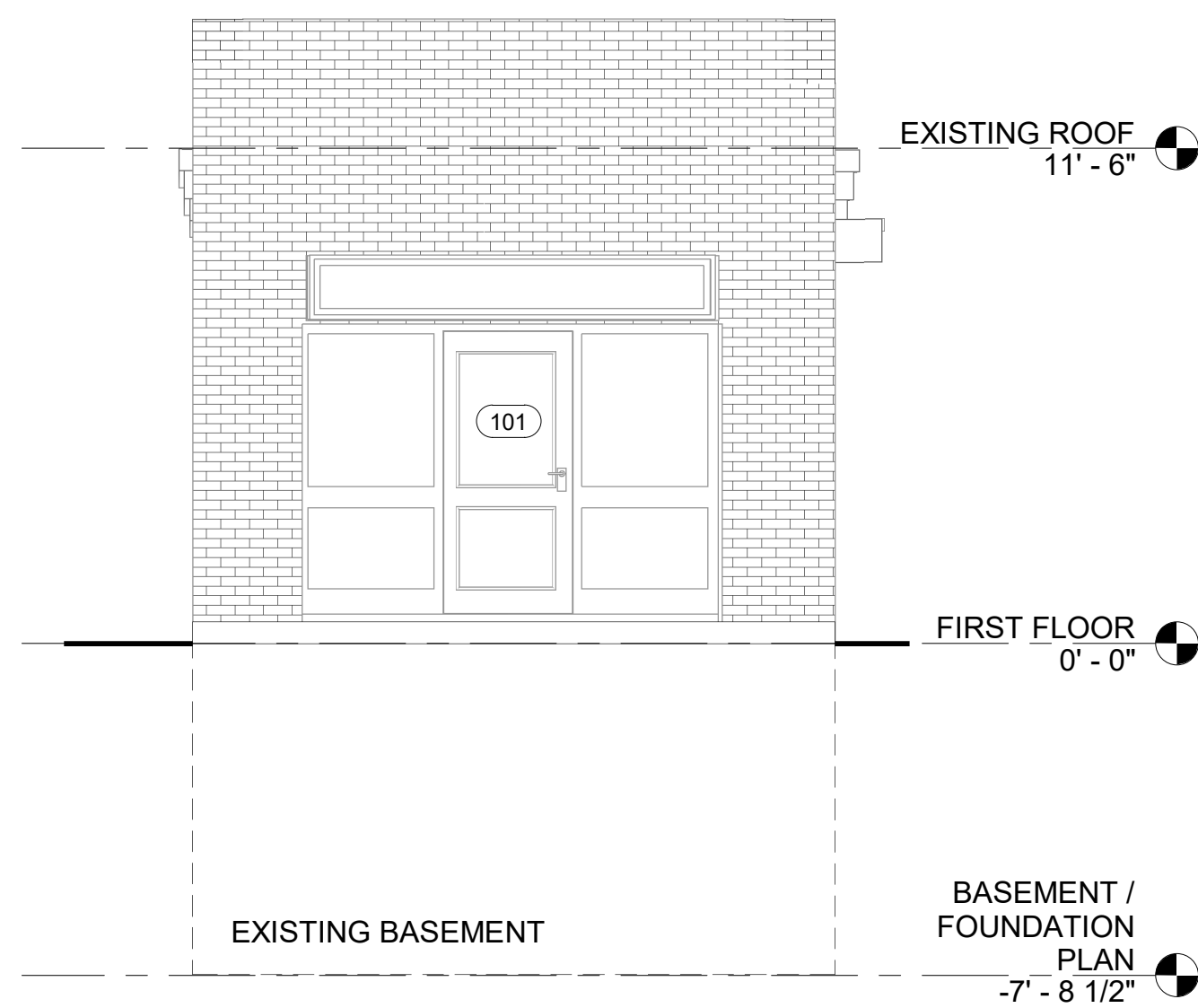
A-2.01



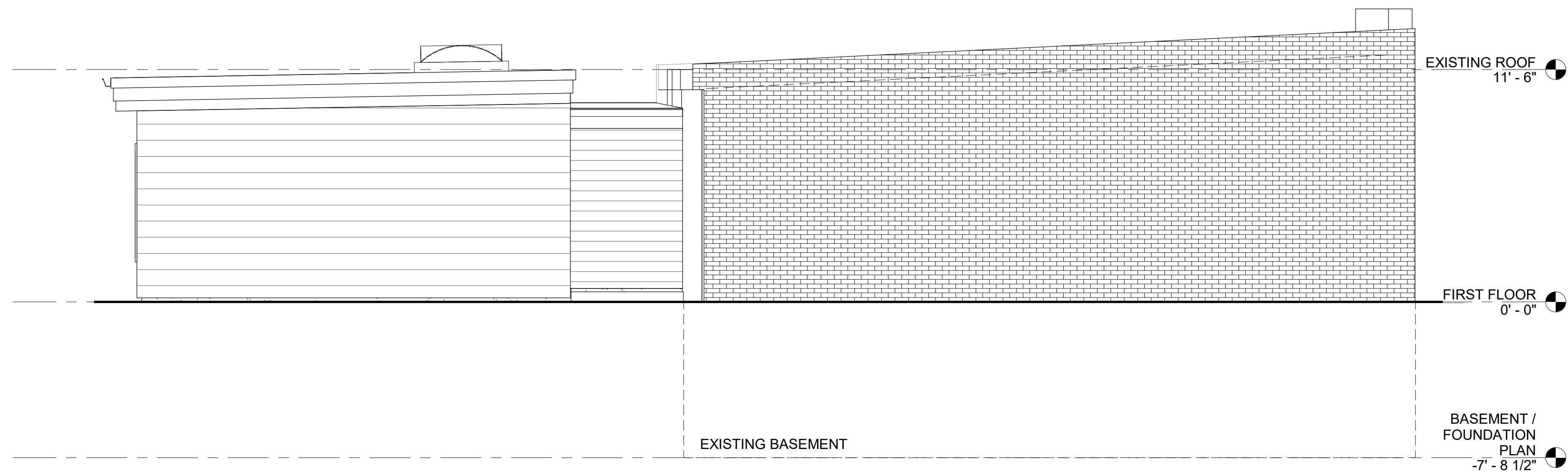
2 WEST  
1/4" = 1'-0"



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



3 EAST  
1/4" = 1'-0"



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



WINSLOW ARCHITECTS INC

89 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. ARLINGTON, MA 02474

P: 781 648.6600 F: 781 648.6601

www.winslowarchitects.com

Owner/Developer:

JUST-A-START CORPORATION



Project:

55 NORFOLK ST Cambridge MA

Drawing:

SECTIONS

Revisions:

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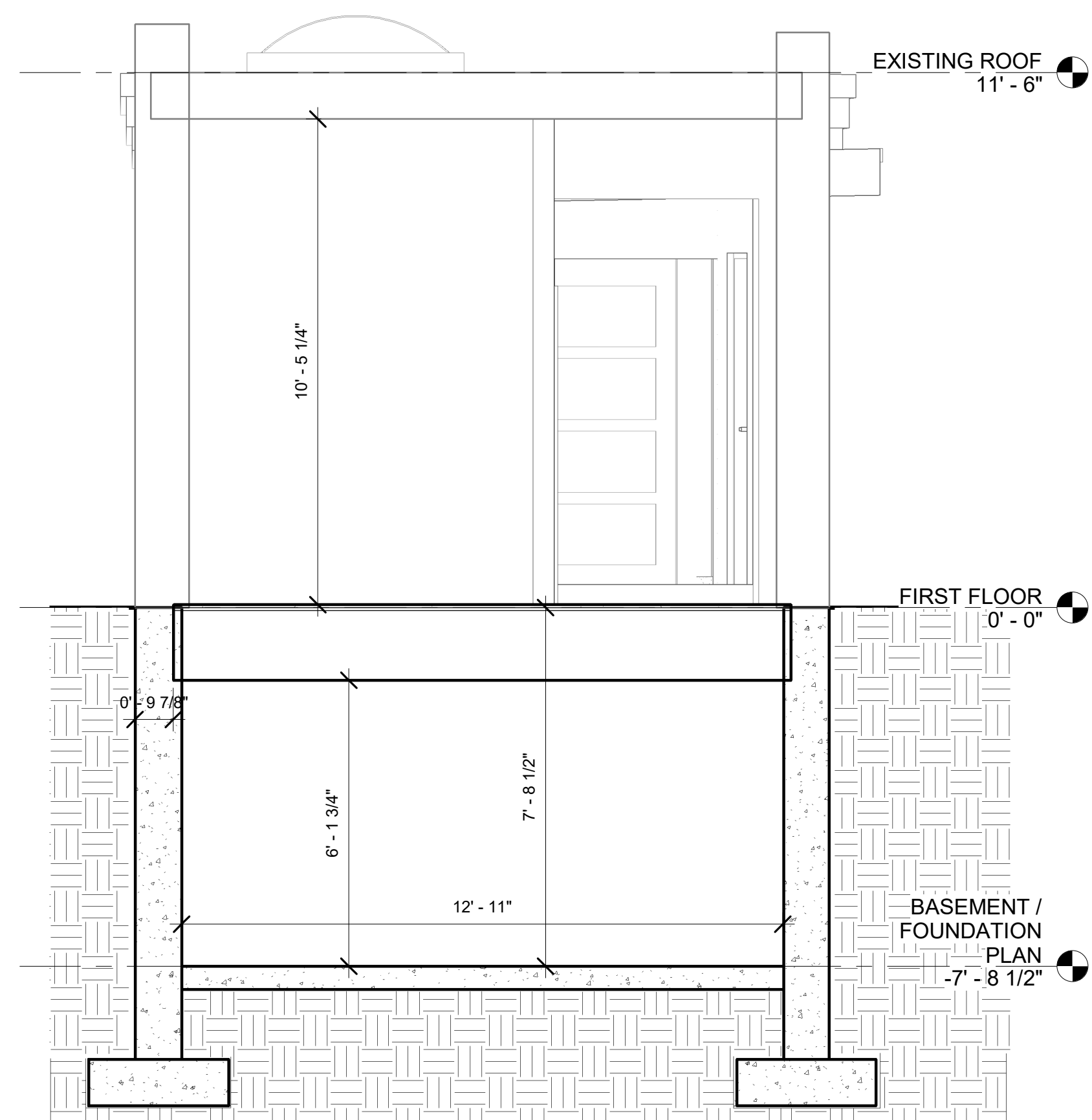
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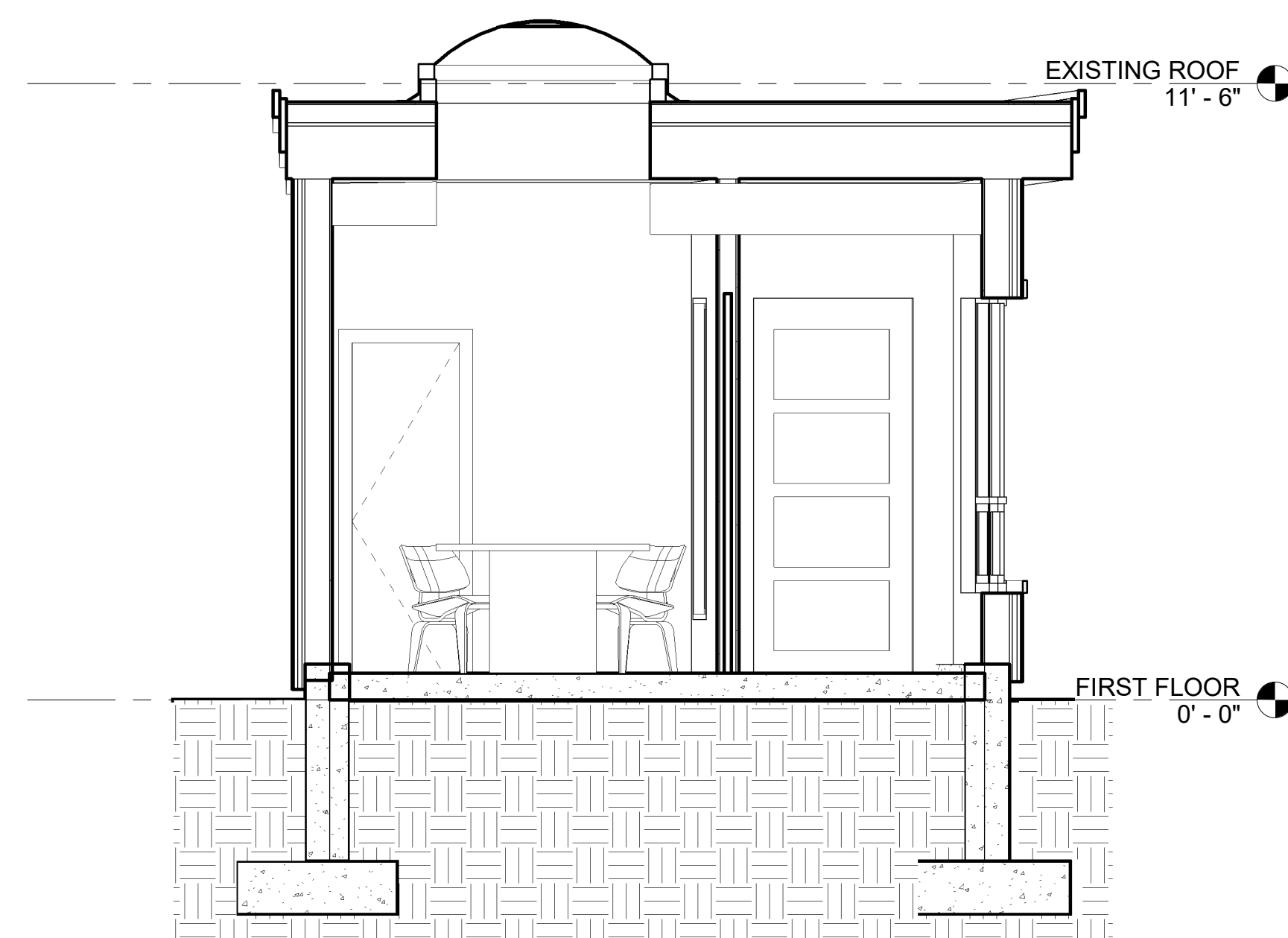
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A-3.01

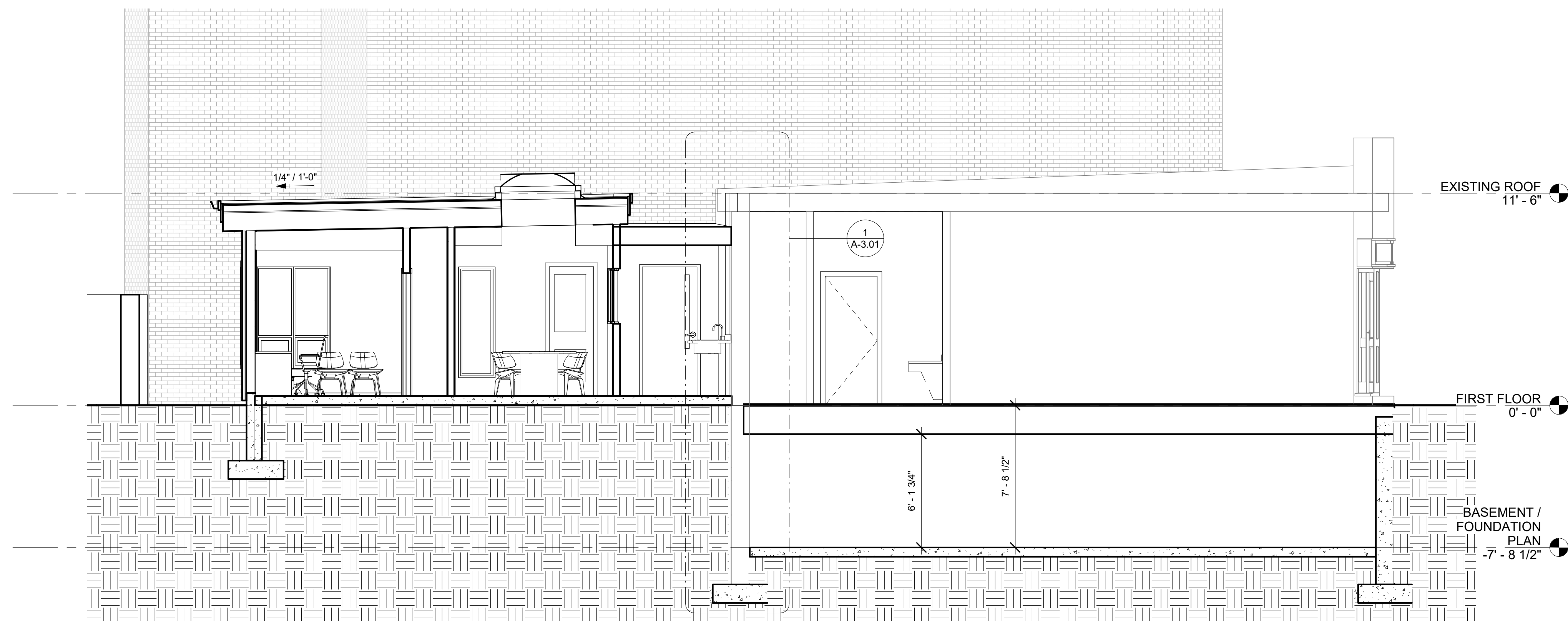
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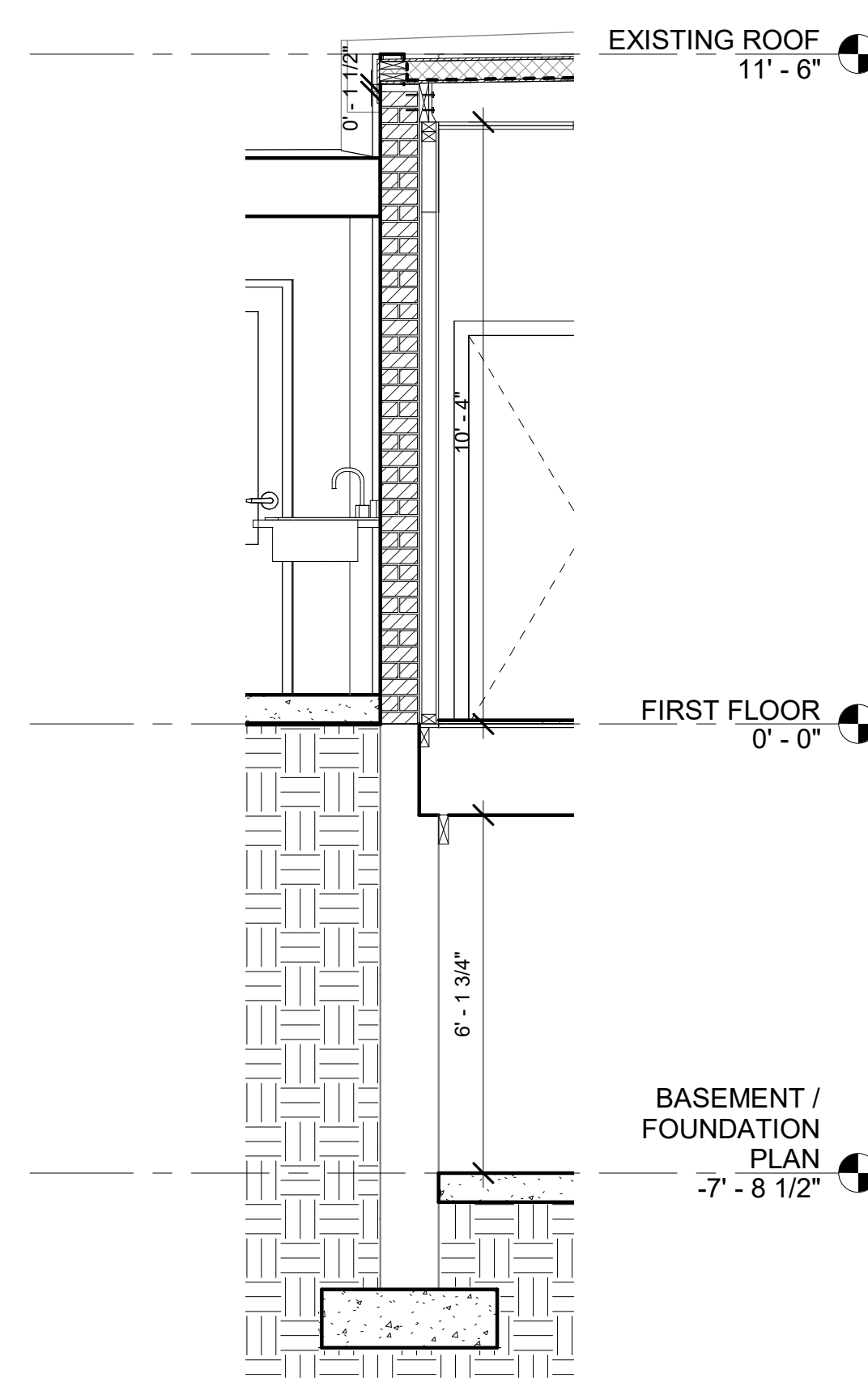
3 Section 1  
3/8" = 1'-0"



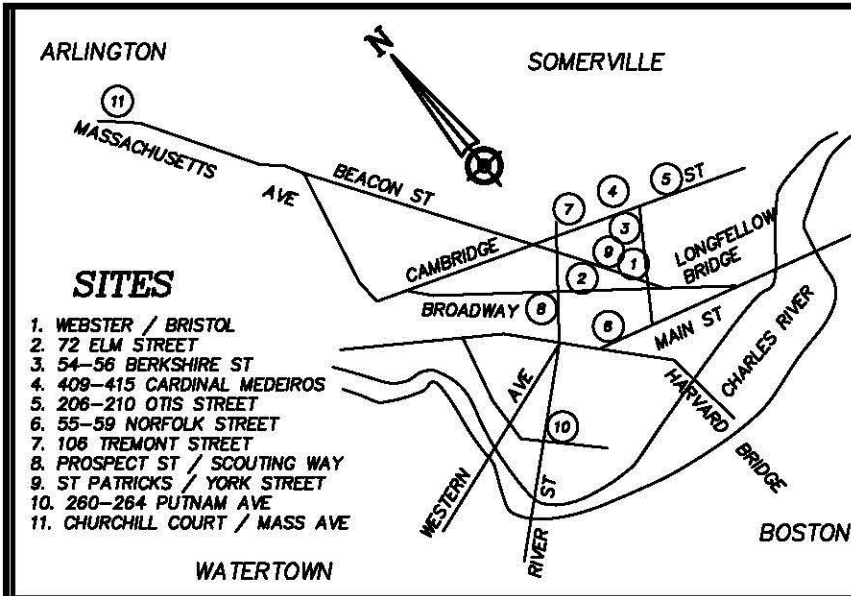
2 Section 2  
3/8" = 1'-0"



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



1 Section 3  
3/8" = 1'-0"



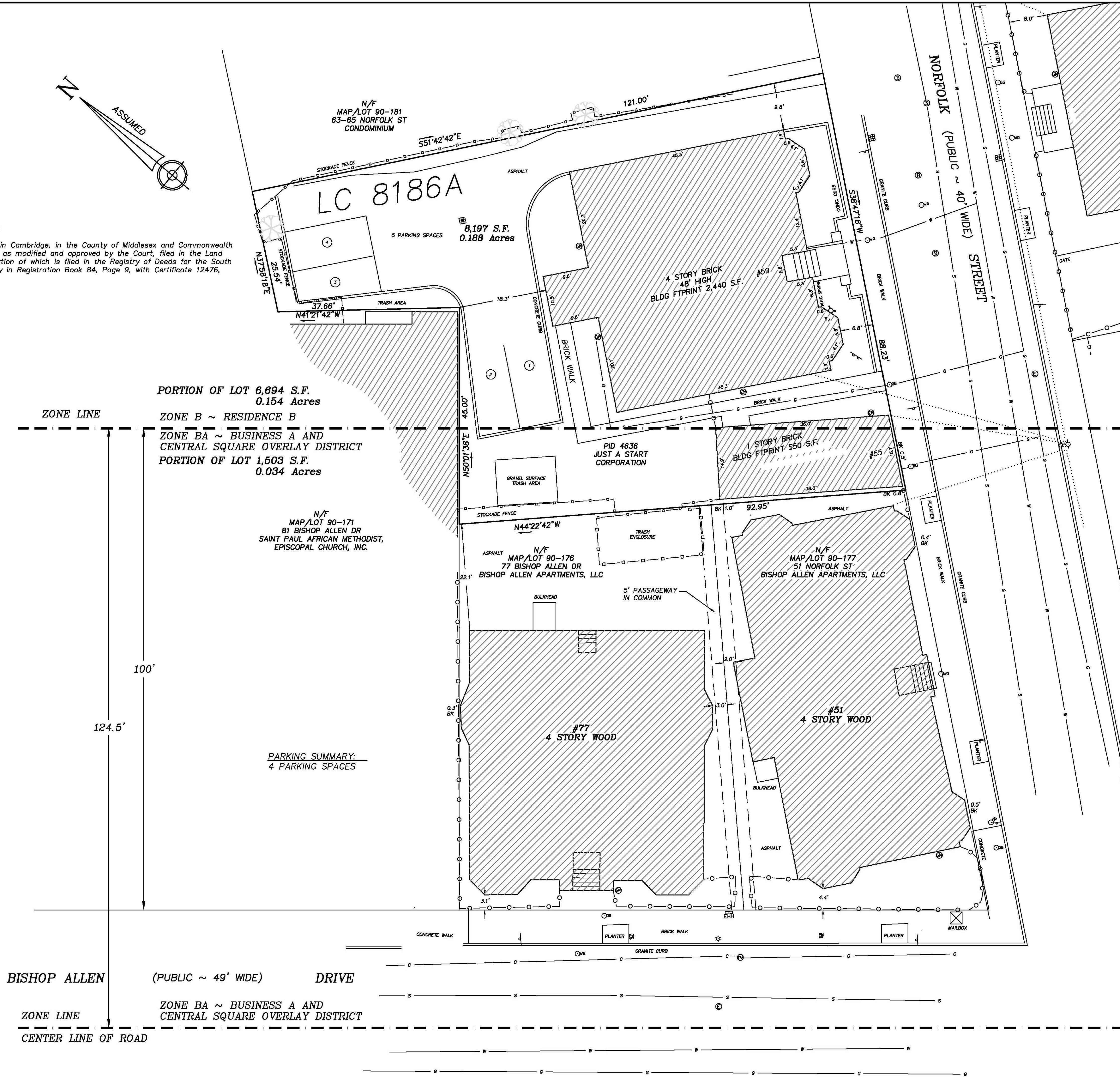
VICINITY MAP ~ NTS

LEGEND

- AREA DRAIN
- ⊕ BOLLARD
- ⊖ CATCH BASIN
- ⊖ CHAIN LINK FENCE
- ⊖ DRAIN MANHOLE
- ⊖ ELECTRIC HANDHOLE
- ⊖ ELECTRIC MANHOLE
- ⊖ ELECTRIC METER
- ⊖ ELECTRIC TRANSFORMER
- ⊖ GAS GATE
- ⊖ GAS METER
- ⊖ HYDRANT
- ⊖ METAL LIGHT POLE
- ⊖ OVERHEAD WIRES
- ⊖ PARKING METERS
- ⊖ PEDESTRIAN LIGHT POLE
- ⊖ SEWER MANHOLE
- ⊖ SIGNS
- ⊖ STOCKADE FENCE
- ⊖ STONE WALL
- ⊖ TELEPHONE MANHOLE
- ⊖ TRAFFIC LIGHT POLE
- ⊖ TRAFFIC CONTROL BOX
- ⊖ UNDERGROUND UTILITIES
- D — DRAIN
- E — ELECTRIC
- G — GAS
- S — SEWER
- W — WATER
- T — TELEPHONE
- TV — TELEVISION
- C — COMMUNICATION
- ⊖ WATER CONTROL VALVE
- ⊖ WATER GATE
- ⊖ WOOD UTILITY POLE
- ⊖ WOOD UTILITY POLE W/LIGHT
- x — WROUGHT IRON FENCE

59 Norfolk Street (Registered Land)

That certain parcel of land situate in Cambridge, in the County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts shown on a plan, as modified and approved by the Court, filed in the Land Registration Office, a copy of a portion of which is filed in the Registry of Deeds for the South Registry District of Middlesex County in Registration Book 84, Page 9, with Certificate 12476, (Plan No. 8186A).



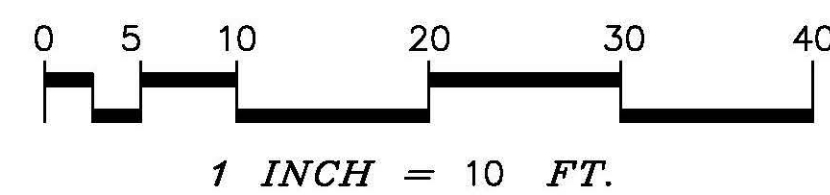
ZONE CLASSIFICATION ~ B ~ RESIDENCE B

- MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA RATIO = 0.5(j)
- MINIMUM LOT SIZE = 5,000 S.F.
- MINIMUM LOT AREA FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT = 2,500 S.F.(j)
- MINIMUM LOT WIDTH = 50'
- MINIMUM FRONT YARD SETBACK = 15'
- MINIMUM SIDE YARD SETBACK = 7'6" (sum of 20')
- MINIMUM REAR YARD SETBACK = 25'(c)
- MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT = 35'
- MINIMUM USABLE OPEN SPACE = 40%

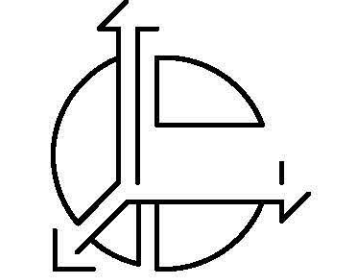
ZONE CLASSIFICATION ~ BA ~ BUSINESS

- MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA RATIO = 1.0/1.75
- MINIMUM LOT SIZE = NONE
- MINIMUM LOT AREA FOR EACH DWELLING UNIT = 600 S.F.
- MINIMUM LOT WIDTH = NONE
- MINIMUM FRONT YARD SETBACK = NONE
- MINIMUM SIDE YARD SETBACK = NONE
- MINIMUM REAR YARD SETBACK = H+L(a)/5
- MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT = 35'/45' to 65'(b)
- MINIMUM USABLE OPEN SPACE = NONE

PARKING SUMMARY:  
4 PARKING SPACES



R.E. Cameron & Associates, Inc.  
LAND SURVEYORS - CIVIL ENGINEERS  
681 WASHINGTON STREET  
NORWOOD, MA 02062  
(781) 769-1777 Fax (781) 769-8644



SCALE: 1"=10' DATE: 11/20/19

DRAWN BY: SLS MATH:

JOB NUMBER: 4168 CHECKED BY:

COUNTY: MIDDLESEX

TITLE:

ZONING PLAN  
55-59 NORFOLK STREET  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

4168Z01

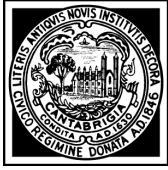
Revisions		
No.	Date	Description
1	5/8/20	UPDATE

SHEET NUMBER:





55



---

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

---

**IRAM FAROOQ**  
Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development

**SANDRA CLARKE**  
Deputy Director  
Chief of Administration

**KHALIL MOGASSABI**  
Deputy Director  
Chief of Planning

**To:** City of Cambridge Planning Board  
City of Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeals  
**From:** Central Square Advisory Committee  
**Date:** 7/24/20  
**Re:** 55 Norfolk St.

---

The Central Square Advisory Committee (the "Committee") met on Wednesday, July 22, 2020 to review and comment on the following project.

- **55 Norfolk St:** Seeking a zoning variance for a small rear commercial addition (385sf) to their current offices.

This meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of Section 20.300 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. The Committee is appointed by the City Manager to undertake all large project reviews of variances and special permits for activities within the Central Square Overlay District (the "District"), and to monitor the progress of the Central Square Non-Zoning Recommendations of the 2013 K2C2 Study (the "Study").

\* \* \*

The meeting minutes from the Committee meeting are summarized below. The applicant presented their project and took questions and comments from the committee members. Public comment was taken after the presentation and its subsequent committee discussion.

**55 Norfolk St**  
Presentation

- Lauren Curry, Just-a-Start
- John Winslow, project architect
- Noah Sawyer, Just-a-Start

The applicant seeks to add a small addition to the rear of the existing structure on site. It is a single-story extension of only 385 square feet. The committee members were supportive of the project, in general. The project would provide universal access to their building by putting in a small sidewalk to the back of the building. It currently does not have appropriate universal access. The small addition provides additional office and meeting space for Just-a-Start

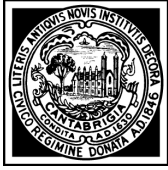
Committee Questions and Comments

- Q1: Both of these units are in the BA district, so are there not lot line requirements?
  - A1: There is zero set back in this district.
- Q2: Are there any overlapping services with the MIT job connector, what are your hours of operation, and how long will construction last?
  - A2: At present there are not any overlapping services. The office will be open from 9-5 on weekends and 5-8 during the week. Construction is scheduled to last 4-6 months.
- Q3: Is it possible to join deeds from the two properties owned by Just-a-Start so there is no concern about compliance with setbacks.
  - A3: There is no reason to do so because the relief being asked is distance to adjacent building, not proximity to the lot line.
- Q4: Is it possible to have windows along the side of the rear addition? It would nice to get natural light.

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344 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Voice: 617 349-4600  
Fax: 617 349-4669  
TTY: 617 349-4621  
www.cambridgema.gov

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**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

---

**IRAM FAROOQ**  
*Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development*

**SANDRA CLARKE**  
*Deputy Director  
Chief of Administration*

**KHALIL MOGASSABI**  
*Deputy Director  
Chief of Planning*

- A4: It is not possible due to state building code, but there is the possibility to look into an opaque window or glass block that wouldn't have to do with fire code ratings the way an operable window would.
- Q6: Who has access to the building and its services?
  - A6: Only Just-a-Start employees and visitors have access.

**Public Questions/Comment**

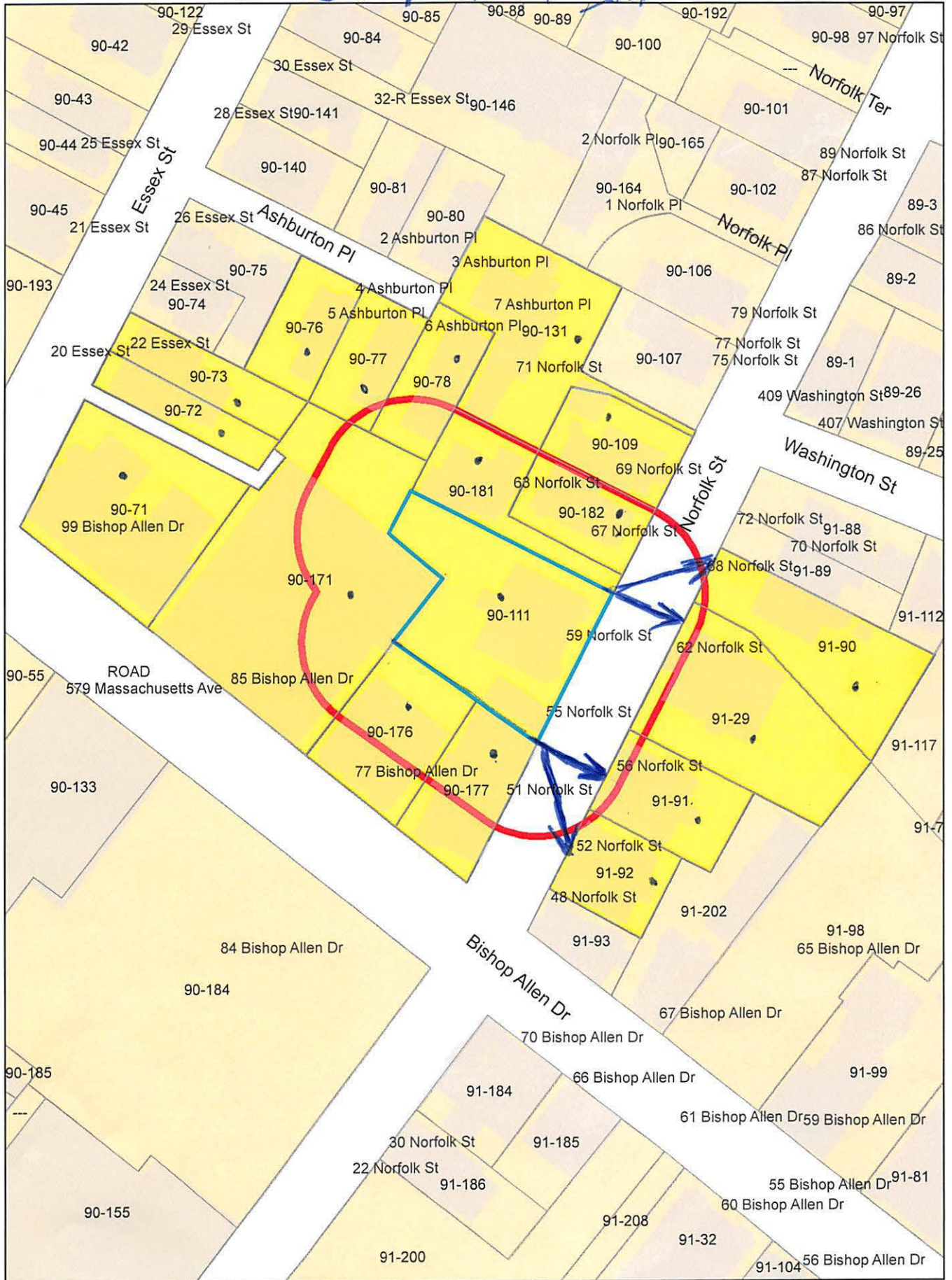
Public questions for this project were relatively few and questioned who had access to the building from the public, for example, is it available to meet with tenants. The building addition is not for management, but for programmatic services, so tenants may attend financial training classes, for instance.

**Committee Members Present**

- Melissa Greene
- Esther Hanig
- Tahir Kapoor
- Robert Winters
- Joel Altstein
- Christopher Sol Gully
- Michael Monestime

Submitted on behalf of the Committee,  
**Drew Kane, Land Use Planner**  
Community Development Department

# 55 Norfolk St.





55 Norfolk St.

Petitioner

90-73  
RUBIN, NORMAN & PAMELA J. MATZ  
22 ESSEX ST  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-77  
JARCHO, JOHN A., JEAN L. CUMMING  
5 ASHBURTON PL  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

JUST-A-START CONSOLIDATED LLC  
C/O NOAH SAWYER  
1035 CAMBRIDGE STREET – SUITE 12  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

90-109  
INCE, REGINALD M, RUFUS BOWEN,  
FITZ A SPRINGER, TRS  
THE BRETHEN OF THE GOSPEL ROOM  
69 NORFOLK  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-111  
JAS CONSOLIDATED PROPERTIES LLC  
C/O JAS CORPORATION  
1035 CAMBRIDGE ST., #12  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

90-131  
KENDALL, OLIVER O.& JAMES W. MCKOWEN  
71 NORFOLK ST., #1  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-181  
KELLEHER, HUGH  
63-65 NORFOLK ST., #2  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-72  
VANBEUZEKOM, YASEMIN P.  
20 ESSEX ST  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-76  
PHILLIPS, BARRY & NANCY MARGARET RYAN  
4 ASHBURTON PL  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139-2610

90-131  
PITE, ERIC & NDEYE O. DIOP  
71-73 NORFOLK ST. #2  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-176  
BISHOP ALLEN APARTMENTS, LLC  
C/O JUST A START CORP  
243 BROADWAY  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
LIU, ALICE & ERICA LIU  
67 NORFOLK ST., #4  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

91-92  
NORFOLK PROPERTIES CORP  
907 MASSACHUSETTS AVE  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-171  
SAINT PAUL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH, INC. &  
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE TAX TITLE  
39 BISHOP R.E ALLEN DR.  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139-3498

90-181  
MOTT, R. ADRIAN & AIMEE S. MOTT  
63-65 NORFOLK ST., #1  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
FORDE, IAN C.  
67 NORFOLK ST., UNIT #2  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
CHIODO, AMY L.  
45 HINKLEY ST., #2  
SOMERVILLE, MA 02145

90-131  
SMITH, JACQUELYN A., TRUSTEE THE  
JACQUELYN A. SMITH 2015 LIV TRUST  
7 ASHBURTON PL., #3  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-177 /91-29  
BISHOP ALLEN APARTMENTS, LLC  
C/O JUST A START CORP  
243 BROADWAY  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
BERBECO, STEVEN MICAH &  
DAISEY MAY BERBECO TRUSTEES  
SGH PROPERTY MANAGEMENT  
715 BOYLSTON ST  
BOSTON, MA 02116

90-78  
AIMES, NOEL & RICHLÉNE AIMES  
6 ASHBURTON PL.  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139-2610

91-90  
DUBOULOZ, STEPHAN, ANNE-FLORENCE  
DUBOULOZ & DAN BENJAKUL  
105 CHESTNUT ST.  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

91-91  
NORFOLK PROPERTIES CORP  
907 MASS AVE  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
RAYO, AMY  
67 NORFOLK ST UNIT 6  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-182  
BERBECO, STEVEN &  
DAISY MAY BERBECO, TRUSTEES  
SGH PROPERTY MANAGEMENT  
715 BOYLSTON ST  
BOSTON, MA 02116

90-71  
THE CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
255 MAIN ST  
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02142



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
 Massachusetts  
**BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL**  
 831 Mass Avenue, Cambridge, MA.  
 617) 349-6100

2023 00009963  
 Bk: 81202 Pg: 105 Doc: DECIS  
 Page: 1 of 3 01/27/2023 12:18 PM

RECEIVED 01/27/23  
 10317-369

CASE NO: BZA-149063

LOCATION: 55 Norfolk Street Business A/Residence B Zone  
 Cambridge, MA

10317-369

PETITIONER: Just-A-Start Corporation for JAS Consolidated Properties LLC  
 C/o Noah Sawyer, Agent RECORD OWNER

PETITION: Variance: To add an approximately 385 sq. ft. addition to a small office building on the site of affordable rental housing, to provide office space for delivering services and informational programs to residents and Just A Start clients and community members. This addition will be to the back of the current office space, and will comply with all applicable site, building and program accessibility requirements.

VIOLATIONS: Art. 5.000, Sec. 5.31 (Table of Dimensional Requirements).  
 Sec. 5.13 (Distance Between Buildings). Sec. 5.27.2 (Maximum GFA). &  
 Sec. 5.33 (Office Use). Art. 10.000, Sec. 10.30 (Variance).

DATE OF PUBLIC NOTICE: December 2 & December 9, 2021

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: December 16, 2021

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD:

CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER – CHAIR ✓  
 BRENDAN SULLIVAN – VICE-CHAIR ✓  
 ANDREA A. HICKEY ✓  
 JIM MONTEVERDE ✓  
 LAURA WERNICK \_\_\_\_\_

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

SLATER W. ANDERSON \_\_\_\_\_  
 ALISON HAMMER \_\_\_\_\_  
 JASON MARSHALL \_\_\_\_\_  
 MATINA WILLIAMS \_\_\_\_\_  
 WENDY LEISERSON ✓

Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal heard testimony and viewed materials submitted regarding the above request for relief from the requirements of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. The Board is familiar with the location of the petitioner's property, the layout, and other characteristics as well as the surrounding district.

*Just a Start  
 1035 Cambridge Street #12  
 Cambridge MA 02141*

Case No: BZA-149063  
Location: 55 Norfolk Street  
Petitioner: Just A Start Corporation for JAS Consolidated Properties LLC  
– c/o Noah Sawyer, Agent

On December 16, 2021, Petitioner's agent Noah Sawyer appeared before the Board of Zoning Appeal along with architect Tej Vashee requesting a variance in order to add an approximately 385 sq. ft. addition to a small office building on the site of affordable rental housing, to provide office space for delivering services and informational programs to residents and Just A Start clients and community members. This addition will be to the back of the current office space, and will comply with all applicable site, building and program accessibility requirements. The Petitioner requested relief from Article 5, Sections 5.31, 5.13, 5.27.2, and 5.33 and Article 10 Section 10.30 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance ("Ordinance"). The Petitioner submitted materials in support of the application including information about the project, plans, and photographs.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the property was a small commercial building on the lot with one of the Petitioner's affordable housing developments. He stated that the proposal was to build a small addition to the commercial building in order to house the Petitioner's Economic Opportunity Programs providing services to the community. He stated that the work would also allow for an accessible entrance to the building. He stated that current entrance is not accessible due to a step and the building was built in 1928. He stated that without relief, the Petitioner would not be able to offer these needed programs. Mr. Vashee stated that variances were needed for separation of buildings, FAR, open space, and office use. He stated the site is unique and in two zoning districts.

The Chair asked if anyone wished to be heard on the matter and no one indicated such. the Chair noted a letter of support from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority.

After discussion, the Chair moved that the Board make the following findings based upon the application materials submitted and all evidence before the Board and that based upon the findings the Board grant the requested relief as described in the Petitioner's submitted materials and the evidence before the Board: that the Board find that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would involve a substantial hardship; that the Board find that the hardship was to the Petitioner and any other person who would use the property; that the Board find that the structure was somewhat out of sync with the rest of the neighborhood, and would not have a future if not for the improvements proposed by the Petitioner; that the Board find that the hardship owed to the shape of the structure and especially affected the structure but not other residential properties in the neighborhood; that the Board find that desirable relief could be granted without substantial detriment to the public good, or nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of the Ordinance; that the Board find that granting relief would create a substantial benefit to the public good.

The Chair further moved that the Board specifically find that based upon all the information presented, there are circumstances involving a substantial hardship relating to this property

within the meaning of M.G.L. c. 40A § 10 and that the Board grant the variance for the requested relief on the condition that the work proceed in accordance with the plans prepared by Winslow Architects, dated May 11, 2020, as initialed by the Chair at the December 16, 2021 hearing,

The five-member Board voted unanimously in favor of the findings and of granting the variance as conditioned (Alexander, Sullivan, Hickey, Monteverde, and Leiserson). Therefore, the variance is granted as conditioned.

The Board of Zoning Appeal is empowered to waive local zoning regulations only. This decision therefore does not relieve the petitioner in any way from the duty to comply with local ordinances and regulations of the other local agencies, including, but not limited to the Historical Commission, License Commission and/or compliance with requirements pursuant to the Building Code and other applicable codes.



Constantine Alexander, Chair

Attest: A true and correct copy of decision filed with the offices of the City Clerk and Planning Board on 2-10-22 by Maria Pacheco, Clerk.

Twenty days have elapsed since the filing of this decision.

No appeal has been filed ✓.

Appeal has been filed and dismissed or denied.

Date: January 20, 2023 Dino G. Hill City Clerk.



# 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: Molly Kaviar Date: 11/30/21  
(Print)

Address: 55 Norfolk st.

Case No. BZA-149063

Hearing Date: 12/16/21

Thank you,  
Bza Members

1 \* \* \* \* \*

2 (7:05 p.m.)

3 Sitting Members: Constantine Alexander, Brendan Sullivan,  
4 Andrea Hickey, Wendy Leiserson, Jim  
5 Monteverde

6 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: The Chair will now  
7 call Case Number 149063, 55 Norfolk Street. Anyone here  
8 wishing to be heard on this matter?

9 NOAH SAWYER: Mr. Chair and members of the Board,  
10 my name is Noah Sawyer. I am the Director of Real Estate  
11 for Just-A-Start Corporation. I'm joined by Tej Vashee from  
12 Winslow Architects. So we're here to be heard on the  
13 matter. So thank you for your time this evening.

14 We are here to talk about 55 Norfolk Street. It  
15 is a small commercial building just outside of Central  
16 Square built in 1928. It lies on the same parcel as one of  
17 Just-A-Start's affordable housing developments.

18 And we're really here -- we're really excited to  
19 discuss a request for relief to add an addition onto this  
20 small commercial building to create a new community benefit  
21 for the neighborhood for the clients that we serve, and I  
22 think for Cambridge as a whole.

1           So I think there is a presentation? Aha, here we  
2 go. So you can go to the next slide, slide 2, please.

3           So Just-A-Start is a 52-year-old non-profit  
4 organization based here in Cambridge. Our mission is  
5 promoting equity by creating stable housing and building  
6 pathways to economic opportunity.

7           As the Director of real estate, most of our work  
8 that comes in front of the Zoning Board really is about our  
9 housing work. We're really excited to be talking about real  
10 estate to support our economic opportunity programs. And  
11 that's really what this facility is about. It's about  
12 finding a new home and enhancing the effectiveness of the  
13 Economic Opportunity programs that Just-A-Start manages.

14           Next slide, please?

15           So in particular, this 55 Norfolk and the addition  
16 enables this property to -- you know, to house two of Just-  
17 A-Start's programs that we're really proud of.

18           The first is our Financial Opportunity program.  
19 As you can see, it serves over 370 households each year,  
20 from free tax filing assistance, one on one financial  
21 coaching, including emergency counseling about financial  
22 issues and financial literacy, and also, our Families Moving

1 Forward program, which is a three-year coaching program  
2 where we are partnering with the City of Cambridge.

3 And it's a model that's been used by mPath and  
4 other non-profit organizations to do -- you know, intense  
5 interventions to improve financial stability, housing  
6 stability, and then improve behavioral and mental health for  
7 the families that participate.

8 These programs, you know, are -- have been really  
9 effective in their current environment, but we think by  
10 building this facility even as small as they do makes a big  
11 difference.

12 Next slide, please?

13 So right now these programs are run out of our  
14 headquarters, which is at 1035 Cambridge Street here in  
15 Cambridge. Our offices are nice, but are in a multi-user  
16 office building. Our doors lock at 5:00. The signage is  
17 unclear. And many of the households that we serve, you  
18 know, have jobs and lives that don't allow them to attend  
19 between 9:00 and 5:00.

20 So what we are looking to do is to build a  
21 facility that can meet them where they are in their lives.  
22 And that allows us to have drop-in hours that can be in the



1 evening, to have hours of operation in the evenings for when  
2 many of our clients need our services.

3 In addition, you know, we don't really have a  
4 public face for these walk-in opportunities. You know, a  
5 particular piece, and one of the reasons we're seeking this  
6 extension, the current historic building built in 1928 has a  
7 charming step at the front door.

8 That step is nice, but is also an issue for our  
9 clients and families, where some of them have mobility  
10 impairments.

11 So this extension, in addition to adding new  
12 facilities and new space, does allow us to have a mobility  
13 accessible entrance to the property.

14 Next slide, please?

15 So I'll hand it over to Tej Vashee at this point  
16 from Winslow Architects to walk through some of the  
17 technical aspects of our request.

18 TEJ VASHEE: Hi. My name is Tej Vashee. I work  
19 for Winslow Architects, and we're working with Just-A-Start  
20 on this 55 Norfolk Street project. This map just is showing  
21 contextually where 55 Norfolk Street is located. It's in  
22 the Port neighborhood of Cambridge, one block away from

1 Central Square.

2 Next slide, please?

3 Here are some contextual site photos. On the  
4 bottom left, you can see the one-story brick building in the  
5 foreground. That is 55 Milford Street. It's an existing  
6 office building, currently unoccupied. And in the  
7 background is 59 Norfolk Street, a Just-A-Start owned  
8 apartment building.

9 On the top right, you can see the office building  
10 with the apartment building in much better view. The  
11 building on the left is also a Just-A-Start owned apartment  
12 building, 51 Bishop Allen Drive.

13 And on the bottom right again showing the  
14 proximity to the office building, 59 Norfolk Street and 51  
15 Bishop Allen Drive.

16 Next slide, please?

17 Here we have a locus plan showing the transit and  
18 accessibility to the site, the red store presenting 55  
19 Norfolk Street. As you can see, the site is one block away  
20 from Massachusetts Avenue and the Main Central Square area  
21 with easy access to the T, multiple bus stops and various  
22 parking spots for easy access to the site.

1           Next slide, please?

2           Here we have the proposed additional floor plan.  
3 To give you context, to the right is Norfolk Street, right  
4 of the slide. To the top is 59 Norfolk Street, and on the  
5 bottom is 51 Bishop Allen Drive. The existing 55 Norfolk  
6 Street building is represented in gray -- the office  
7 building -- and the addition is represented in the color  
8 scheme.

9           The addition consists of an office space, a  
10 meeting room, Staff area and a circulation space. The  
11 addition will hold the new main entrance to the building,  
12 fully accessible off of Norfolk Street, and the approximate  
13 length of the addition is 27 feet.

14          Next slide, please?

15          Here we have various elevation views of the  
16 existing building with the proposed addition. As you can  
17 see, the addition is going to be clapboard with panels, and  
18 maintains the roofline of the existing building.

19          And if you take a look at the bottom left  
20 elevation view, you can see that the angle -- the wall of  
21 the proposed addition doesn't -- hides the view off of the  
22 street, doesn't create a precedent to the street. So it's a

1 relatively small addition.

2 Next slide, please?

3 The zoning districts -- zoning variances will be  
4 needed for the creation of this building addition. Certain  
5 variances will be required because the property is within  
6 two different zoning districts.

7 I'll bring the attention to the site plan on the  
8 right of the slide, the red dashed line representing the  
9 zoning line. The site is split into two zoning districts --  
10 a Business A to the left and Residential B to the right.

11 59 Norfolk Street is located on the Residential B  
12 side, and the existing 55 Norfolk Street has a portion of  
13 the building hugging the Residential B side, while the  
14 majority of the building is in the Business A side. The  
15 addition will be all on the Business A side of the site.

16 Next slide, please?

17 The variances requested: The first one we're  
18 asking for relief is 5.13 distance between buildings. The  
19 proposed addition does not change the distance between 59  
20 Norfolk Street, and so the relief requested is to allow for  
21 existing nonconformity.

22 Next slide, please?

1           The second -- I think it's one slide above.  Yep.

2           The next item is 5.27.2 maximum gross floor area.

3   Relief is requested to allow for the addition of 385 square  
4   feet, resulting in a small FAR increase.

5           Next slide, please?

6           And the third item is 5.31 Table Dimensional  
7   Requirements Open space.  The addition will result in  
8   approximately 385 square feet reduction of private open  
9   space, but it is entirely in the Business A district.

10          Next slide, please?

11          In other respects, the addition is in compliance  
12   with the Table of Dimensional Requirements.

13          Next slide?

14          The final one is 5.33 Office Use.  Office use  
15   allowable in the Business A District, within which the  
16   planned addition will be located, and where virtually the  
17   entire existing building lies.  The existing building has  
18   been used as an office space previously, but is currently  
19   unoccupied.

20          We request that if a use variance is needed for  
21   continued office use of the existing building, that the  
22   variance be granted.

1           Next slide, please?

2           I'll turn it back over to Noah for the variance.

3           NOAH SAWYER: Sure. So our reason for requesting  
4 these variances -- the first is that, you know, a literal  
5 enforcement of these provisions would make it so that we  
6 could not utilize this facility for the services and program  
7 participants -- that the extra space we have tried to keep  
8 to the minimum needed for our programs to function property  
9 line, and that cannot do so with a literal enforcement.

10           You know, on the site this is a unique site in  
11 that it falls within two different zoning districts. There  
12 are two different buildings with different uses on this  
13 parcel, and that both of these buildings, including the 55  
14 Norfolk structure predate the Zoning Ordinance.

15           You know, I think that on top of that, you know,  
16 the changes are away from the street will be largely  
17 invisible to most pedestrians into the civic realm. And  
18 also, this addition will allow for enhanced accessibility.

19           So from everyone for mothers with kids in  
20 strollers to some of our residents and participants with  
21 mobility impairments, that they will have easier access to  
22 the space as a result of this addition.

1                   Next slide, please?

2                   The project presented to the Central Square  
3 Advisory Committee last year: We have aligned the project  
4 to be consistent with the goals of the Central Square  
5 Overlay District, you know, encouraging active uses at  
6 street edge, taking a vacant space and turning it into a  
7 community asset, enhancing eligibility -- you know,  
8 providing space for Committee meetings, education, economic  
9 development.

10                   You know, we've also done some considerable  
11 outreach. You know, as we presented in front of the  
12 Advisory Committee, there has been a notice in the window of  
13 this building for about a year now since November of 2020.

14                   We have noted -- notified all abutting owners and  
15 all of the tenants of our buildings in the abutting  
16 properties of this upcoming work.

17                   In the case of the residents who live immediately  
18 next door, we've notified them twice over the past year, to  
19 make sure that they were reached out to specifically and  
20 know the project is going on.

21                   Next slide, please?

22                   That's all of our presentation. We're happy to

1 take any questions the Board may have for us.

2 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: I want to make an  
3 observation that it's a complicated case from the zoning  
4 point of view. And ordinarily, I would be scratching my  
5 head, and I'm sure the Board Members as well, as to whether  
6 we should grant the relief being sought.

7 But Just-A-Start is an organization well-known in  
8 the city. It provides very valuable services to the city,  
9 and the relief you're seeking will enable the organization  
10 to increase its outreach and to do a better job with regard  
11 to its mission.

12 So I would -- I think that's important to cite,  
13 with regard to this case. It's just not a numbers case, it  
14 seems to me. It's the numbers that support a very  
15 beneficial service that's provided to the city.

16 Brendan, any comments, questions?

17 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: [Brendan Sullivan,] no I would  
18 second your comments.

19 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Jim?

20 JIM MONTEVERDE: Jim Monteverde no comments, thank  
21 you.

22 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Andrea?



1           ANDREA HICKEY: No comments, Mr. Chair. Thank  
2 you.

3           CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Wendy?

4           WENDY LEISERSON: Wendy Leiserson no comments.

5           CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Okay. With that, we have  
6 -- the only thing we have in our files is a letter of  
7 support from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, which is  
8 noteworthy, I think, and the no neighborhood or commentary  
9 one way or another.

10           With this, I'll open the matter up to public  
11 testimony, in case there are persons who want to -- who have  
12 not written in but wish to speak. Any members of the public  
13 who wish to speak should now click the icon at the bottom of  
14 your Zoom screen that says, "Raise hand."

15           If you're calling in by phone, you can raise your  
16 hand by pressing \*9 and unmute or mute by pressing \*6.  
17 We'll I'll wait a few moments to see if anyone wishes to  
18 speak.

19           [Pause]

20           CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: No. No one does, so we'll  
21 close public testimony. And as the usual procedure, I'll  
22 make a motion to grant the variance being sought, and then

1 we can debate that -- whether we should do that or not, or  
2 whether we should modify.

3 So the Chair moves that we make the following  
4 findings, with regard to the variance being sought:

5 That a literal enforcement of the provisions of  
6 the ordinance would involve a substantial hardship, and the  
7 hardship is not just to the current petitioner, but anyone  
8 who would use or utilize the property.

9 And in this case, we have a structure somewhat out  
10 of sync with the rest of the neighborhood, and does not have  
11 a future, unless we improve the nature of the property, as  
12 the petitioner is proposing to do.

13 That the hardship is owing to the shape of the  
14 structure, the current structure, and it especially affects  
15 that, and not the other residential properties in the  
16 neighborhood.

17 And that desirable relief may be granted without  
18 substantial detriment to the public good, or nullifying or  
19 substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of this  
20 ordinance.

21 As I've indicated earlier, if anything, granting  
22 the relief would improve -- would not have a substantial

1 detriment to the public good, but a substantial benefit to  
2 the public good.

3 So on the basis of all of these findings, the  
4 Chair moves that we grant the variance requested on the  
5 condition that the work proceed in accordance with plans  
6 dated May 11, 2020, prepared by Winslow Architects.

7 Brendan?

8 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes to  
9 granting the variance.

10 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Jim?

11 JIM MONTEVERDE: Jim Monteverde voting in favor of  
12 the variance.

13 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Andrea?

14 ANDREA HICKEY: [Andrea Hickey,] yes vote in favor  
15 of granting the variance.

16 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Wendy?

17 WENDY LEISERSON: [Wendy Leiserson,] yes, vote in  
18 favor of granting the variance.

19 CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Okay. And the Chair votes  
20 yes as well, which makes it unanimous.

21 [All vote YES]

22 Variance granted.

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CONSTANTINE ALEXANDER: Thank you.

NOAH SAWYER: Thank you very much for your time.

Have a great night.