

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

April 01, 2015

Agenda Item No: 11

HDRC CASE NO: 2015-119
ADDRESS: 310 REFUGIO ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 714 BLK 11 LOT N 77.05 FT OF 3
ZONING: RM4 H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Lavaca Historic District
APPLICANT: Robert Lee/LindLee, LLC
OWNER: Robert Lee/LindLee, LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of two attached, two story units
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval to:

Construct two attached, two-story units which will share a common demising wall on a currently vacant lot at 310 Refugio. Each unit is to have a street-fronting entry with a walkway from a new sidewalk and off street parking for two vehicles. One parking location is covered simultaneously providing an outdoor space on the second level. At the rear, each unit is to have a private outdoor space.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

1. Building and Entrance Orientation

A. FAÇADE ORIENTATION

- i. *Setbacks*—Align front facades of new buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements.
- ii. *Orientation*—Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

B. ENTRANCES

- i. *Orientation*—Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage. Typically, historic building entrances are oriented towards the primary street.

2. Building Massing and Form

A. SCALE AND MASS

- i. *Similar height and scale*—Design new construction so that its height and overall scale are consistent with nearby historic buildings. In residential districts, the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. In commercial districts, building height shall conform to the established pattern. If there is no more than a 50% variation in the scale of buildings on the adjacent block faces, then the height of the new building shall not exceed the tallest building on the adjacent block face by more than 10%.
- ii. *Transitions*—Utilize step-downs in building height, wall-plane offsets, and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent historic buildings by more than one-half story.
- iii. *Foundation and floor heights*—Align foundation and floor-to-floor heights (including porches and balconies) within one foot of floor-to-floor heights on adjacent historic structures.

B. ROOF FORM

i. *Similar roof forms*—Incorporate roof forms—pitch, overhangs, and orientation—that are consistent with those predominantly found on the block. Roof forms on residential building types are typically sloped, while roof forms on non-residential building types are more typically flat and screened by an ornamental parapet wall.

C. RELATIONSHIP OF SOLIDS TO VOIDS

i. *Window and door openings*—Incorporate window and door openings with a similar proportion of wall to window space as typical with nearby historic facades. Windows, doors, porches, entryways, dormers, bays, and pediments shall be considered similar if they are no larger than 25% in size and vary no more than 10% in height to width ratio from adjacent historic facades.

ii. *Facade configuration*—The primary façade of new commercial buildings should be in keeping with established patterns. Maintaining horizontal elements within adjacent cap, middle, and base precedents will establish a consistent street wall through the alignment of horizontal parts. Avoid blank walls, particularly on elevations visible from the street. No new façade should exceed 40 linear feet without being penetrated by windows, entryways, or other defined bays.

D. LOT COVERAGE

i. *Building to lot ratio*—New construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. Limit the building footprint for new construction to no more than 50 percent of the total lot area, unless adjacent historic buildings establish a precedent with a greater building to lot ratio.

3. Materials and Textures

A. NEW MATERIALS

i. *Complementary materials*—Use materials that complement the type, color, and texture of materials traditionally found in the district. Materials should not be so dissimilar as to distract from the historic interpretation of the district. For example, corrugated metal siding would not be appropriate for a new structure in a district comprised of homes with wood siding.

ii. *Alternative use of traditional materials*—Consider using traditional materials, such as wood siding, in a new way to provide visual interest in new construction while still ensuring compatibility.

iii. *Roof materials*—Select roof materials that are similar in terms of form, color, and texture to traditionally used in the district.

iv. *Metal roofs*—Construct new metal roofs in a similar fashion as historic metal roofs. Refer to the Guidelines for Alterations and Maintenance section for additional specifications regarding metal roofs.

v. *Imitation or synthetic materials*—Do not use vinyl siding, plastic, or corrugated metal sheeting. Contemporary materials not traditionally used in the district, such as brick or simulated stone veneer and Hardie Board or other fiberboard siding, may be appropriate for new construction in some locations as long as new materials are visually similar to the traditional material in dimension, finish, and texture. EIFS is not recommended as a substitute for actual stucco.

B. REUSE OF HISTORIC MATERIALS

i. *Salvaged materials*—Incorporate salvaged historic materials where possible within the context of the overall design of the new structure.

4. Architectural Details

A. GENERAL

i. *Historic context*—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context. While new construction should not attempt to mirror or replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district.

ii. *Architectural details*—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district. Architectural details that are more ornate or elaborate than those found within the district are inappropriate.

iii. *Contemporary interpretations*—Consider integrating contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details for new construction. Use of contemporary window moldings and door surroundings, for example, can provide visual interest

while helping to convey the fact that the structure is new. Modern materials should be implemented in a way that does not distract from the historic structure.

6. Mechanical Equipment and Roof Appurtenances

A. LOCATION AND SITING

- i. *Visibility*—Do not locate utility boxes, air conditioners, rooftop mechanical equipment, skylights, satellite dishes, and other roof appurtenances on primary facades, front-facing roof slopes, in front yards, or in other locations that are clearly visible from the public right-of-way.
- ii. *Service Areas*—Locate service areas towards the rear of the site to minimize visibility from the public right-of-way.

B. SCREENING

- i. *Building-mounted equipment*—Paint devices mounted on secondary facades and other exposed hardware, frames, and piping to match the color scheme of the primary structure or screen them with landscaping.
- ii. *Freestanding equipment*—Screen service areas, air conditioning units, and other mechanical equipment from public view using a fence, hedge, or other enclosure.
- iii. *Roof-mounted equipment*—Screen and set back devices mounted on the roof to avoid view from public right-of-way.

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

2. Fences and Walls

B. NEW FENCES AND WALLS

- i. *Design*—New fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character. Design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure.
- ii. *Location*—Avoid installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist, particularly within the front yard. The appropriateness of a front yard fence or wall is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences or wall should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them.
- iii. *Height*—Limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. The appropriateness of a front yard fence is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them. If a taller fence or wall existed historically, additional height may be considered. The height of a new retaining wall should not exceed the height of the slope it retains.
- iv. *Prohibited materials*—Do not use exposed concrete masonry units (CMU), Keystone or similar interlocking retaining wall systems, concrete block, vinyl fencing, or chain link fencing.
- v. *Appropriate materials*—Construct new fences or walls of materials similar to fence materials historically used in the district. Select materials that are similar in scale, texture, color, and form as those historically used in the district, and that are compatible with the main structure. Screening incompatible uses—Review alternative fence heights and materials for appropriateness where residential properties are adjacent to commercial or other potentially incompatible uses.

3. Landscape Design

A. PLANTINGS

- i. *Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- ii. *Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.
- iii. *Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.
- iv. *Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be

restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.

v. *Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

i. *Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.

ii. *Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. *Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

4. Residential Streetscapes

A. PLANTING STRIPS

i. *Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.

ii. *Lawns*—Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. *Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

i. *Maintenance*—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.

ii. *Replacement materials*—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.

iii. *Width and alignment*—Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.

iv. *Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.

v. *ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

B. DRIVEWAYS

i. *Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. Incorporate a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.

ii. *Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

C. CURBING

i. *Historic curbing*—Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.

ii. *Replacement curbing*—Replace curbing in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair. Where in-kind replacement is not be feasible, use a comparable substitute that duplicates the color, texture, durability, and profile of the original. Retaining walls and curbing should not be added to the sidewalk design unless absolutely necessary.

FINDINGS:

- a. This request for Conceptual Approval of the construction of two attached, two story units at 310 Refugio was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on March 24, 2015. At that meeting, committee members noted that the front yard should contain turf, that the applicant should resolve design issues regarding the south facing parapet, that window fenestration be carefully addressed and for the applicant to provide a more developed site plan.
- b. General Principle #1 in the Guidelines for New Construction is “ensure that historic buildings remain the central focus of the district.” Staff is concerned in general that the proposed design will become the focus on this block due to its overall height and scale. While the scale overall may not be inappropriate, the way it addresses the street is different than the adjacent properties.
- c. Refugio Street features buildings orientations and setbacks that range from buildings being orientated toward Refugio featuring setbacks that are approximately twelve (12) feet to buildings that feature setbacks of up to approximately twenty-five (25) feet. The proposed new construction is to front Refugio and feature a setback of approximately twelve (12) feet to match the historic setbacks found on Refugio and throughout Lavaca. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.i and ii.
- d. The Guidelines for New Construction state that primary building entrances, porches and landings should be oriented to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage. The applicant has designed two primary entrances for both units, however with the inclusion of the carports with adjacent side doors, staff has concerns that through the use of the carport, the side entrances will be dominant. This is not consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.B.i. Staff recommends that the applicant address the car-focused design in order to emphasize each front entrance.
- e. According to the Guidelines for New Construction, new construction in historic districts should feature a height and scale similar to those found throughout the district. This particular section of Lavaca features homes that are both one, one and one half and two-story homes ranging from those that are modest in size to those that are quite prominent on their respective blocks and are the center pieces of the district. The applicant’s proposal to construct a two-story structure is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.i.
- f. New construction in historic districts should utilize step downs in building height, wall-plane offsets and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent historic buildings by more than one-half story. The applicant has proposed step-downs on both the east and west facades of the house as well as a series of wall plane offsets and changes in materials to further convey building transitions, however, the use of the parapet wall on the front façade is misleading and does not fully convey the use of step downs to convey a visual transition. This is not consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.ii.
- g. The majority of houses in the direct vicinity of 310 Refugio feature either front gable or side gable roofs. The proposed new construction features a front gable roof, however the proposed front gable roof is hidden by the proposed front parapet. Staff recommends that the applicant remove the front gable in order to become consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 2.B.i.
- h. Window and door openings of new construction in historic districts should have a similar proportion to those of other houses located within the historic district. Blank walls should be avoided and each façade should possess elements that separate the façade into three distinct segments. The applicant has provided information regarding window and door openings, however, staff finds that the lack of a base or material change where a traditional foundation skirting would be placed does not provide the separation needed for three distinct façade segments, which is needed to be consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction. The applicant should resolve these issues to receive conceptual approval.
- i. The vacant lot at 310 Refugio features approximately 4,300 square feet. While the applicant has proposed to build up to the side and rear yard setbacks bringing the proposed footprint to more than half of the square footage of the lot, there are instances of historic structures with a similar footprint in Lavaca. While this is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 4.D.i., a stronger attempt should be made to relate the proposed new construction in with the existing, historic structures of the neighborhood rather than potentially distract from the historic structures.
- j. The applicant has proposed a number of exterior materials which include cement board and batten siding, cement board siding, wood clapboard siding, stucco and a standing seam metal roof. According to the Guidelines for New Construction 3.A.i., materials that complement the type, color and texture of materials traditionally found in the district should be used. The proposed materials are consistent with the Guidelines.
- k. The applicant has proposed a standing seam metal roof. This is consistent with the roof materials found throughout Lavaca and is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 3.A.iii.
- l. In regards to architectural details, the applicant has proposed to incorporate various aspects of the neighborhood into the design of the new construction all while not mirroring or replicating them. The applicant has proposed simple

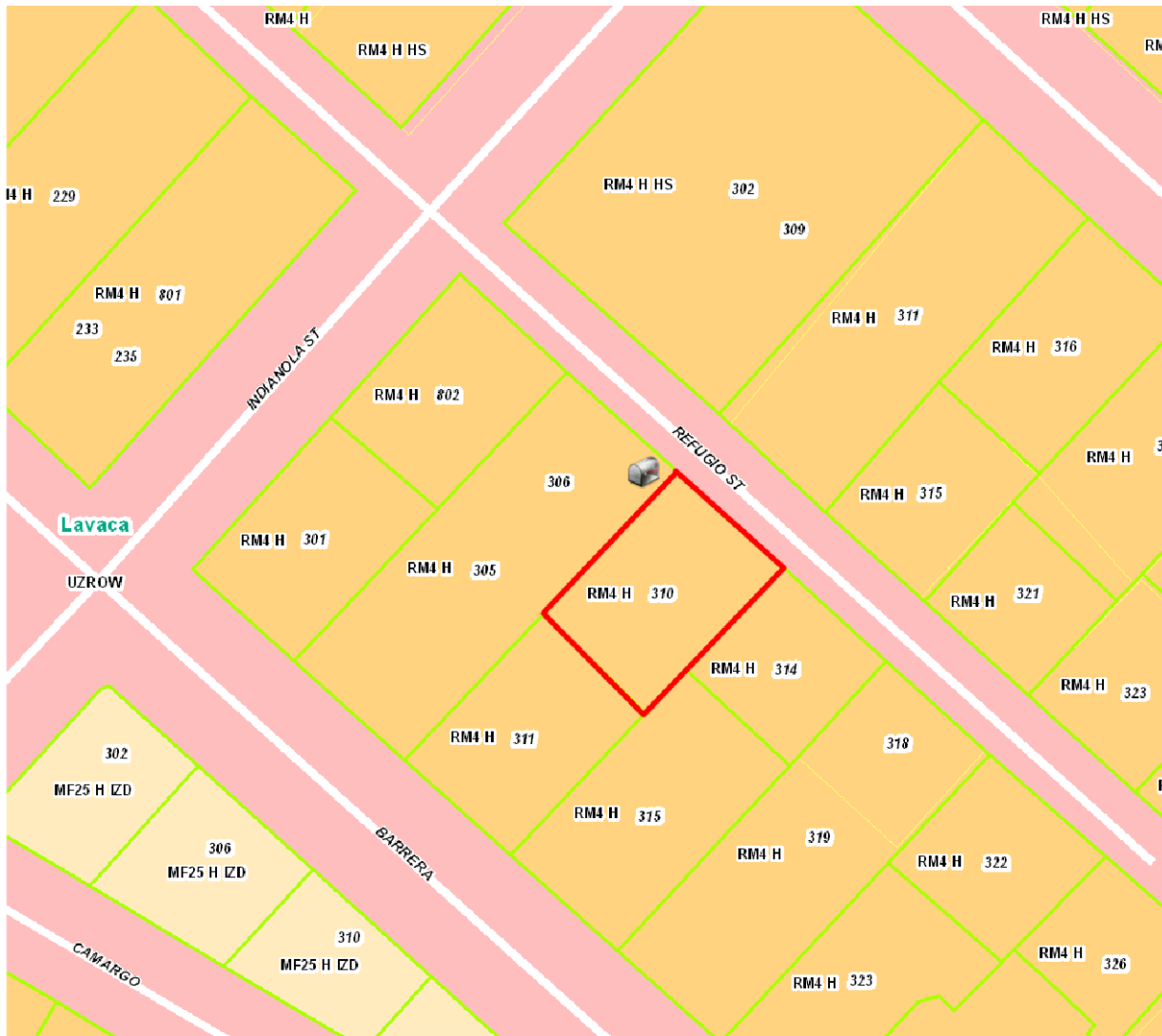
details with complementary and traditional materials that are in kind with those found throughout Lavaca, however staff finds that the contemporary windows, carport and deck structure and cantilevered front porch roof should be redesigned to incorporate more traditional features that are existing to the neighborhood and district.

- m. According to the provided floor plans, the applicant has proposed to place mechanical equipment at ground level on the sides at the rear of each unit. The applicant has proposed to screen each unit with wood fencing. The placement as well as screening of each unit is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 6.A.i. and 6.B.ii.
- n. The applicant has not provided a detailed landscaping plan, however the renderings note that at this time the applicant is proposing to xeriscape the front yard. This is not consistent with the Guidelines for Site Elements 3.A.ii and 3.B. The applicant is responsible for complying with the Guidelines in regards to landscape design prior to returning to the HDRC.
- o. The applicant has proposed two driveways on the property, one for each unit. The applicant is responsible for complying with the Guidelines for Site Elements 5.A.iii. in regards to driveway width and alignment. Staff recommends that the applicant use a semi pervious paving material.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff does not recommend conceptual approval at this time based on findings a through o. Staff recommends that the applicant resolve the following prior to returning for conceptual approval:

- i. Address the overall scale as it relates to adjacent historic properties.
- ii. Emphasize the front entrance through the reduction in mass of the carport or through the use of traditional materials and front porch design as mentioned in finding c.
- iii. Address the use of a parapet on the front façade which obscures the front gable as mentioned in findings e and f.
- iv. Resolve the design issues preventing three distinct façade segments as mentioned in finding g.
- v. Provide a detailed landscaping plan identifying each landscaping material that is to be used.
- vi. That the applicant provide an additional site plan annotating the dimensions of the proposed driveways and walkways in relationship to the yard and property lines.
- vii. That the applicant consider pervious paving solutions and place turf in the front yard.





Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

Printed: Mar 24, 2015

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CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF HISTORIC
PRESERVATION

Historic and Design Review Commission
Design Review Committee
Report & Recommendation

DATE: 3/24/2015

HDRC Case# 2015-119

ADDRESS: 310 REFUGIO

Meeting Location: LONE STAR

APPLICANT: ROBERT LEE - LIMLEE, LLC

DRC Members present: MICHAEL GUARINO

Staff present: EDWARD HALL

Others present: BRIAN WRIGHT (SARA)


REQUEST: CONSTRUCTION OF TWO ATTACHED, TWO-STORY UNITS
- CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL.

COMMENTS/CONCERNS: MG: FRONT YARD SHOULD CONTAIN TURF IN
SOME FORM - APPLICANT SHOULD ADHERE TO DESIGN GUIDELINES.
WINDOW PENETRATION SHOULD BE CAREFULLY ADDRESSED. PARAPET
ON SOUTH ELEVATION IS PROBLEMATIC - CONSIDER REMOVING IT.
DRIVEWAY - CONSIDER RIBBON DRIVEWAY, FOR FINAL - MORE
DEVELOPED SITE PLAN, MORE COLOR AND DETAIL.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE [] DISAPPROVE []
APPROVE WITH COMMENTS/STIPULATIONS: ☒

REVISE ELEVATIONS & SITE PLAN

FOR COMMENTS


Committee Chair Signature (or representative)

3/24/15
Date

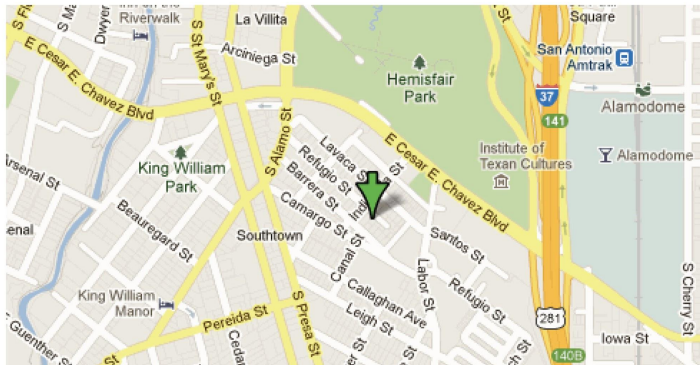
310 Refugio Residences



SCHEMATIC DESIGN 3/12/2015



The proposed project will be built on an empty lot that resides on Refugio. This block of Refugio is a dead end that terminates at the Victoria Plaza Apartments. The project comprises of two attached, two-story units sharing a common demising wall. Each home has a street fronting entry with a walkway from a new sidewalk and off-street parking for two vehicles. The structure sits further back than the required setback providing ample front yard space and additionally does not obscure the view down the street. One parking spot is covered which provides a second-floor outdoor living space to take advantage of the downtown views. Units have bespoke facades incorporating unique materials delineating each as an autonomous home. Private ground-level outdoor space is provided at the rear of the homes. Materials, scale and proportion were chosen to harmonize with the surrounding context.



LOCATION MAP



SATELLITE
MAP



VIEW FROM END OF BLOCK
TOWARDS DEAD END



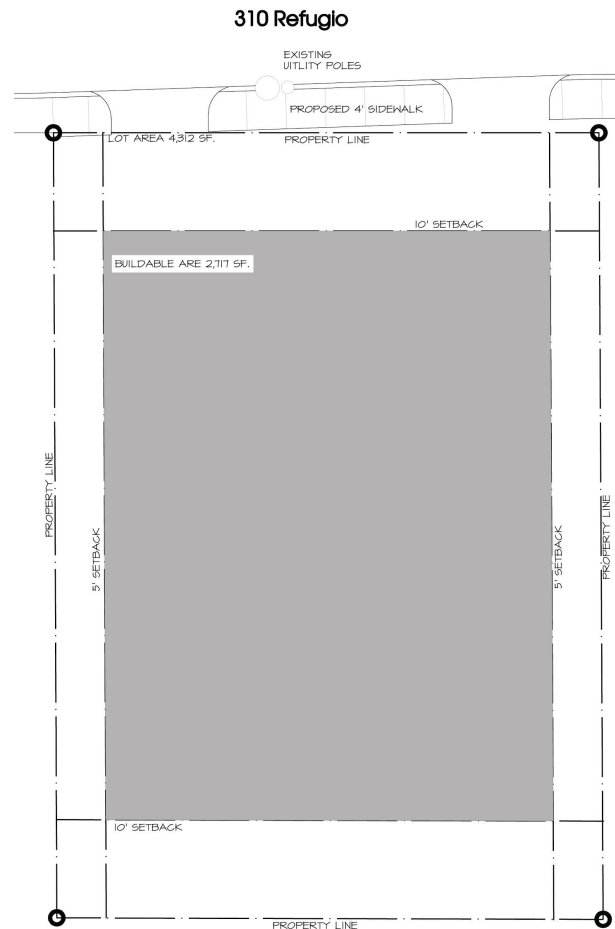
VIEW OF SITE FROM ADJACENT
NEIGHBOR



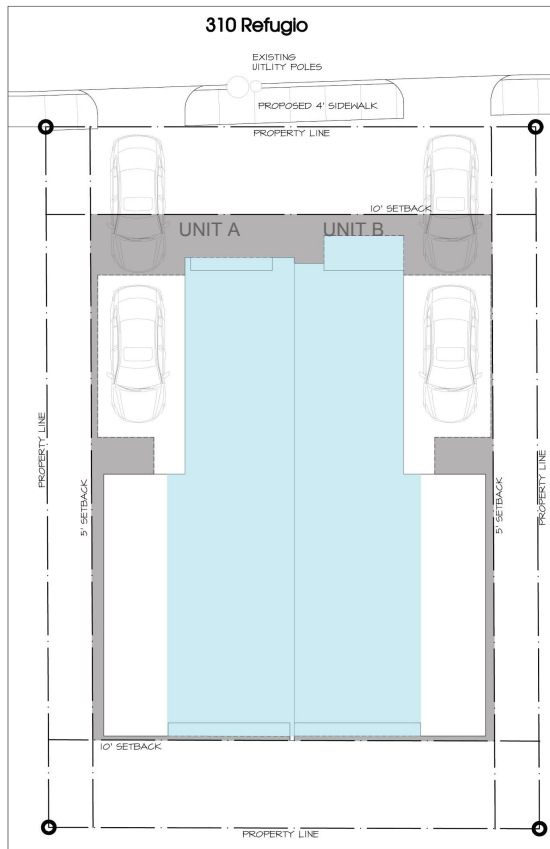
VIEW FROM BACK OF PROPERTY



VIEW INDIANOLA CROSS STREET



SITE PLAN



BUILDING FOOTPRINT

INDICATES 2ND FLOOR ABOVE

SQUARE FOOTAGE CALCULATION

	UNIT A	UNIT B
1ST FLOOR	432	424
2ND FLOOR	803	828
TOTAL	1135	1151



FROM REAR OF SITE

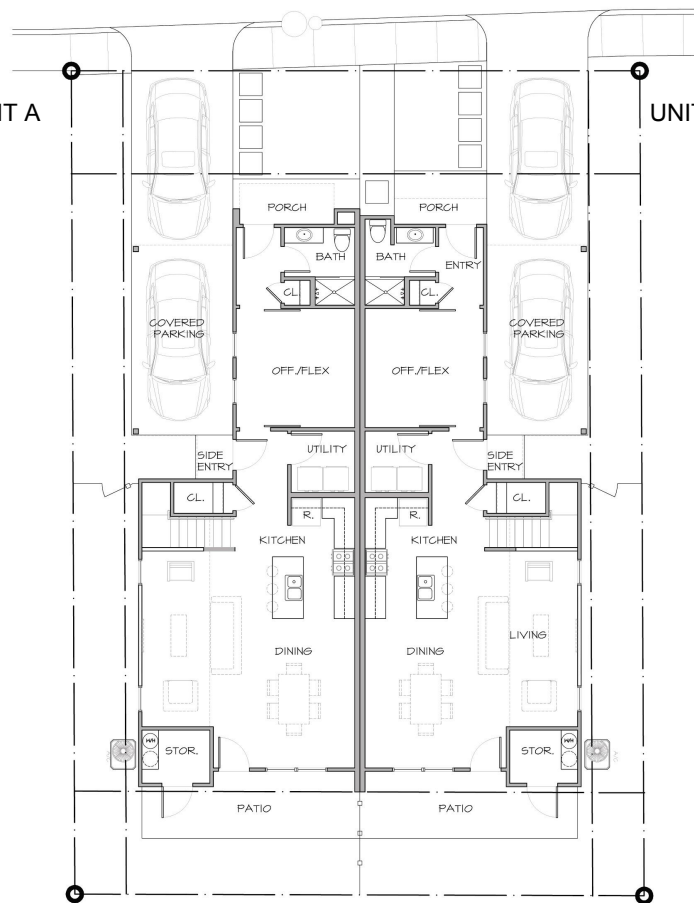


FROM ACROSS THE STREET

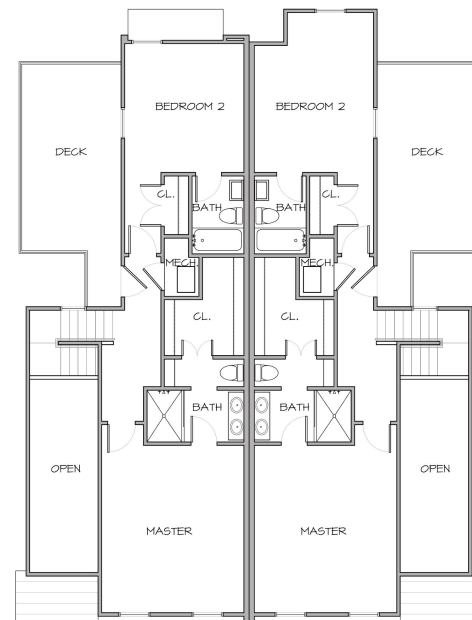
REFUGIO

UNIT A

UNIT B



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

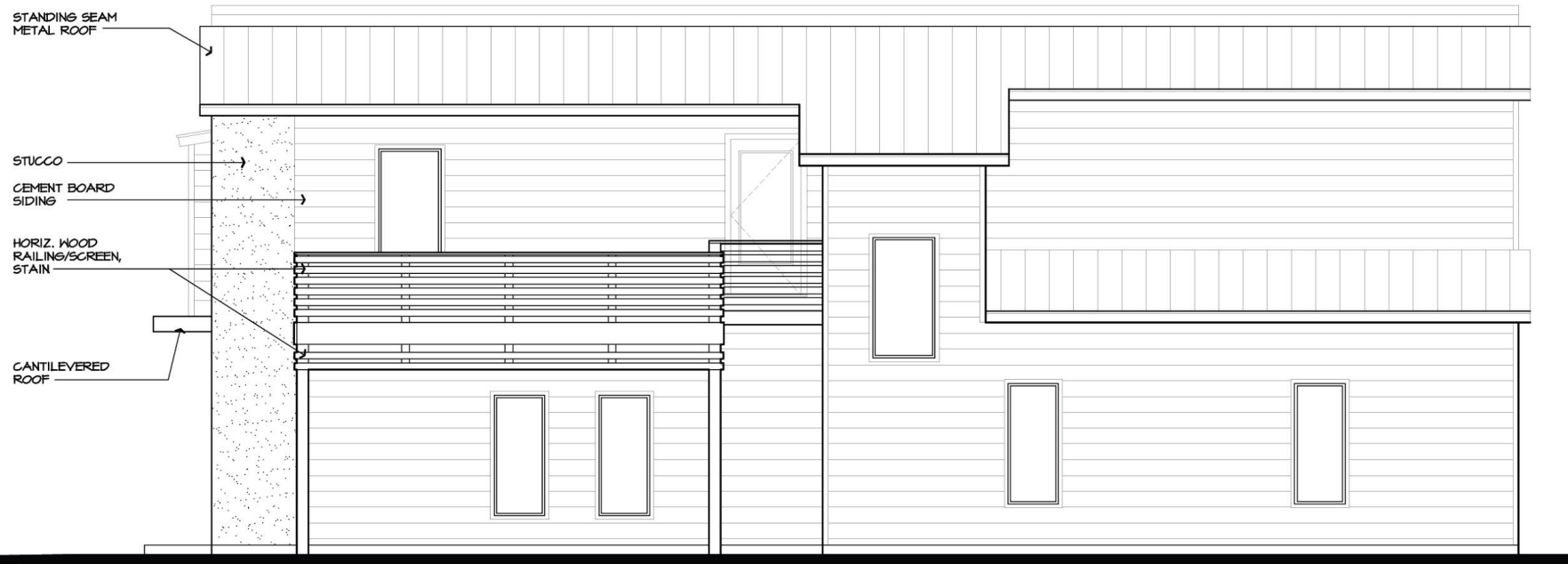


LEFT FRONT



RIGHT FRONT





SIDE ELEVATION

EXTERIOR MATERIALS



CEMENT BOARD AND
BATTEN SIDING



WOOD CLAPBOARD SIDING



STUCCO



CEMENT BOARD SIDING



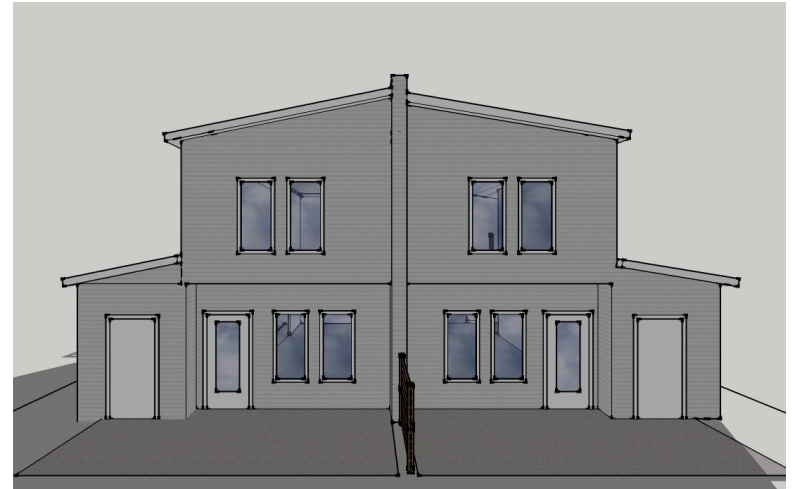
STANDING SEAM METAL ROOF



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

LaVaca-Area Approved Designs



Previously Approved 310 Refugio Conceptual Design

