

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 20, 2015

Agenda Item No: 2

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. Each unit's 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 nonresidential 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. *Façade 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 application should resolve design issues regarding the south facing parapet, that window fenestration be carefully addresses and for the applicant to provide a more developed site plan.

- b. This request was heard by the Historic and Design Review Commission on April 1, 2015. At that hearing, the commission referred this case to the Design Review Committee and for the applicant to further develop the design, addressing both staff's concerns and inconsistencies with the Historic Design Guidelines.
- c. This case was reviewed by the Design Review Committee a second time on April 7, 2015. At that meeting, committee members noted that the newly designed porch was more appropriate, that single hung windows were appropriate, that the overall massing was more consistent with other houses found throughout the Lavaca Historic District and that the new design beginning to resolve many of the noted design flaws.
- d. The applicant has proposed a setback of approximately twelve (12) feet. Existing setbacks along Refugio feature setbacks from approximately twelve (12) feet to approximately twenty-five (25) feet. The applicant's proposed setback is both appropriate for the Lavaca Historic District and consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines, Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.i. and ii.
- e. 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 proposed two primary entrances for both units; both of which include a covered front porch and front porch columns emphasizing a traditional primary entrance that is appropriate and complementary of those of historic integrity found throughout Lavaca. Staff finds that the inclusion of traditional elements introduced through a contemporary form removes emphasis from the two carports located at the front of each unit, which initially deemphasized the primary front door entrances.
- f. 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.
- g. 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 to include step downs in the form of roof slopes, roof decks which divide the two levels of the structure and front porch roofs that read as their own, unique plane. This is consistent with the Guidelines for 2.A.ii.
- h. New construction in historic districts should include a similar roof form to those found historically throughout the district. The applicant has proposed for the new construction to include a front gable roof and a series of roof slopes that complement those found throughout Lavaca. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 2. B.i.
- i. The Guidelines for New Construction 2.C.i. states that window and door openings of new construction should feature a similar proportion to those of historic structures found throughout the district. The applicant has provided information regarding window and door openings and has resolved issues which previously presented blank walls. The applicant's proposal is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction.
- j. Unique to Lavaca, many lots feature a building to lot ratio that is much greater than half of the lot's square footage. The lot at 310 Refugio features approximately 4,300 square feet. 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. Staff finds that this is appropriate given that there are instances of historic structures with similar footprints in Lavaca.
- k. The applicant has proposed a number of exterior materials which include cement board siding, cement board and batten siding, a standing seam metal roof and a cable rail system. 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 cement board siding, cement board and batten siding and the standing seam metal roof are all consistent with the Guidelines. The proposed metal cable rail system will be used on the sides of each balcony, the east and west facades and will be small enough in diameter that the complementary cement board siding will be seen on the structure's façade. Staff finds that this is appropriate in this instance.
- l. The applicant's proposal to use a standing seam metal roof is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 3.A.iii. and is appropriate for Lavaca.
- m. According to the Guidelines for New Construction 4.A., new construction in historic districts should be designed to reflect their time while respecting the historic context of the neighborhood. The applicant has proposed various simple architectural details with complementary materials, complementary windows, a traditionally dimensioned front porch and a complementary roof form. This is consistent with the Guidelines.
- n. 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.
- o. The applicant has provided a detailed landscaping plan that retains much of the existing front yard turf and includes

native xeric plant materials. This is consistent with the Guidelines for Site Elements 3.A.

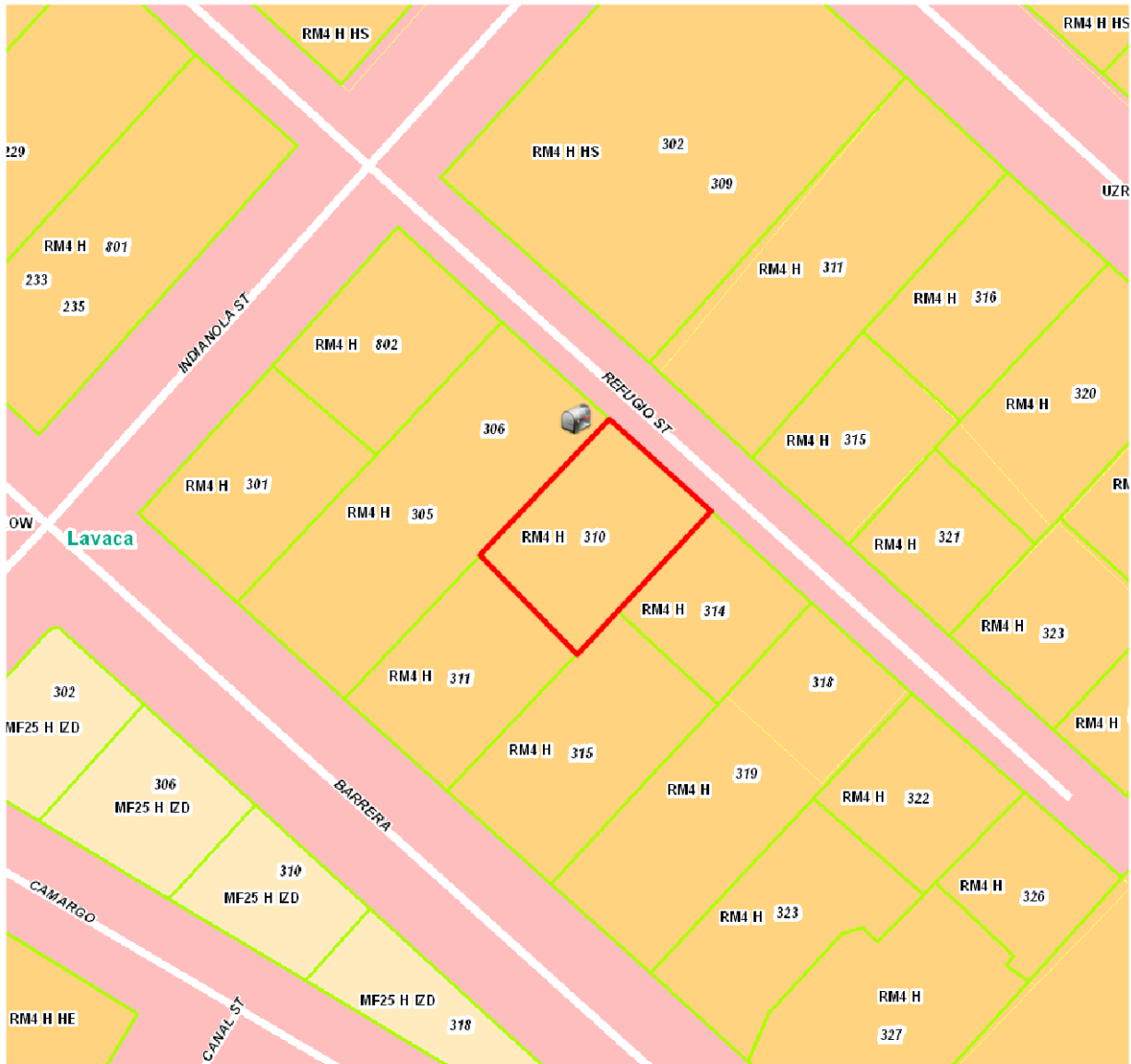
- p. The applicant has proposed two driveways on the property, one for each unit. Each driveway is to be a ribbon driveway and no more than seven (7) feet in width. This is consistent with the Guidelines for Site Elements 5.B.i.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval as submitted based on findings a through p.

CASE MANAGER:

Edward Hall



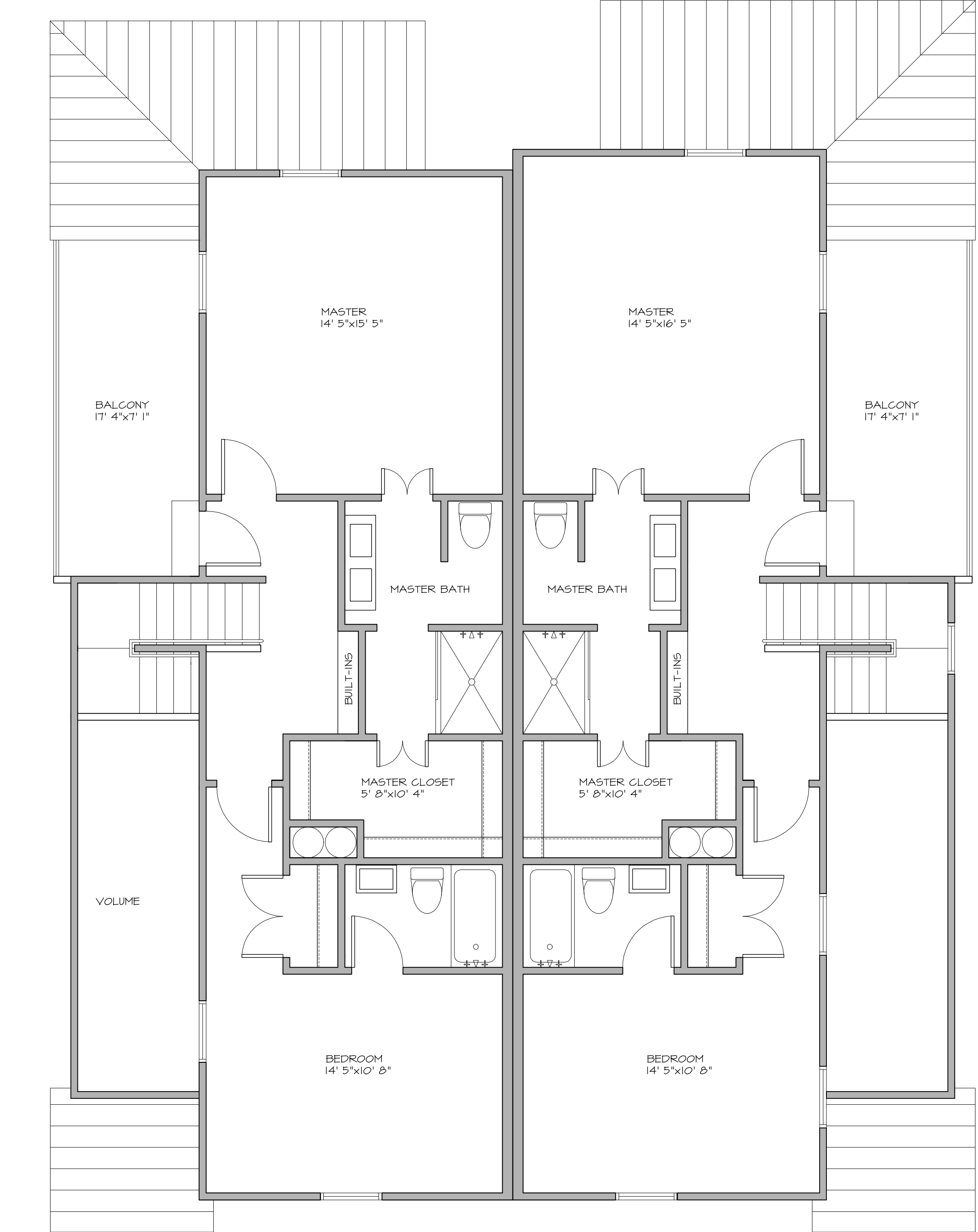
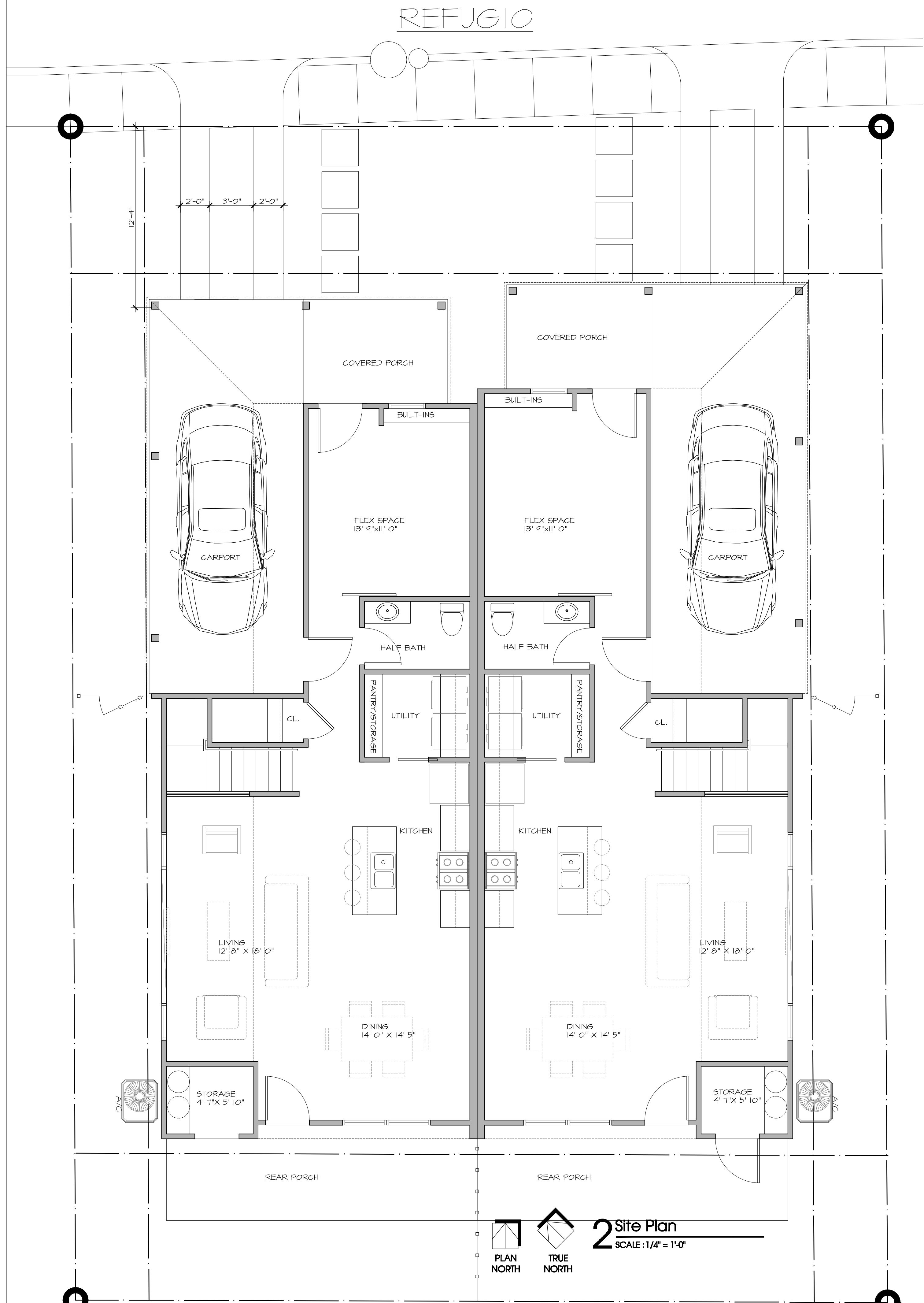


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Printed: May 12, 2015

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PRELIMINARY, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

LINDLEE, LLC
designer
Robert Lee

Refugio
Residences

310 REFUGIO SAN ANTONIO, TX 78210

3/24/15

A-2.1

Floor Plans



1 NORTH/STREET ELEVATION
SCALE : 1/4" = 1'-0"



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

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designer
Robert Lee

Refugio
Residences

310 REFUGIO SAN ANTONIO, TX 78210

3/24/15

A-3.1
Exterior Elevations



1 SOUTH/REAR ELEVATION
SCALE : 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 WEST ELEVATION
SCALE : 1/4" = 1'-0"

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designer
Robert Lee

Refugio
Residences

310 REFUGIO SAN ANTONIO, TX 78210

3/24/15

A-3.2

Exterior Elevations

REFUGIO ST.

EXISTING
UTILITY POLES

NEW 3' SIDEWALK

PROPERTY LINE

MULCH PLANTING BEDS
WITH NATIVE XERIC PLANTS

TURF GRASS

10' SETBACK

COVERED
PORCH

COVERED
PORCH

COVERED
PARKING

COVERED
PARKING

UNIT A

UNIT B

5' SETBACK

5' SETBACK

PROPERTY LINE

PROPERTY LINE

A/C
COMPRESSOR

A/C
COMPRESSOR

PATIO

PATIO

10' SETBACK

SCREEN FENCE

PROPERTY LINE

310 Refugio Residences



SCHEMATIC DESIGN 3/12/2015

