

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

October 7, 2015

Agenda Item No: 19

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2015-342  
**ADDRESS:** 914 N MESQUITE ST  
916 N MESQUITE ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 520 BLK 24 LOT W 156.25 FT OF 9  
NCB 520 BLK 24 LOT E AT 914 MESQUITE ST N  
**ZONING:** R5 H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 2  
**DISTRICT:** Dignowity Hill Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Michael Britt  
**OWNER:** Michael Britt  
**TYPE OF WORK:** New construction  
**REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to:

1. Construct a new single family residence on the vacant lot at 916 N Mesquite, near the Lamar / Mesquite intersection. The applicant has proposed materials to include cedar lapped siding, corten corrugated metal, wood windows and a corrugated galvalume metal roof.
2. Construct an accessory structure on the vacant lot at 914 N Mesquite, south of the primary lot. The accessory structure is to feature materials consistent with that of the primary structure.

### 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. *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.

## 5. Garages and Outbuildings

### A. DESIGN AND CHARACTER

- i. Massing and form*—Design new garages and outbuildings to be visually subordinate to the principal historic structure in terms of their height, massing, and form.
- ii. Building size* – New outbuildings should be no larger in plan than 40 percent of the principal historic structure footprint.
- iii. Character*—Relate new garages and outbuildings to the period of construction of the principal building on the lot through the use of complementary materials and simplified architectural details.
- iv. Windows and doors*—Design window and door openings to be similar to those found on historic garages or outbuildings in the district or on the principle historic structure in terms of their spacing and proportions.
- v. Garage doors*—Incorporate garage doors with similar proportions and materials as those traditionally found in the district.

### B. SETBACKS AND ORIENTATION

- i. Orientation*—Match the predominant garage orientation found along the block. Do not introduce front-loaded garages or garages attached to the primary structure on blocks where rear or alley-loaded garages were historically used.
- ii. Setbacks*—Follow historic setback pattern of similar structures along the streetscape or district for new garages and outbuildings. Historic garages and outbuildings are most typically located at the rear of the lot, behind the principal building. In some instances, historic setbacks are not consistent with UDC requirements and a variance may be required.

## 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. Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles (such as scale and setback). Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval.
- b. This case was heard by the Historic and Design Review Commission on September 2, 2015, where it was referred to the Design Review Committee. This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on September 16, 2015, where committee members noted that the location of the accessory structure was appropriate, metal siding in this location is appropriate, that the applicant needed to address issues regarding window fenestration and incorporate traditional window heights into the design.
- c. The Dignowity Hill Historic District was originally developed between 1877 and 1940 and features a number of traditional architectural styles including Folk Victorian, Queen Anne and Craftsman among others. Each of these architectural styles feature character defining elements that are both unique to Dignowity Hill and San Antonio. Size, scale and form, along with materials contribute to the consistency and appropriateness of a design when considering its construction in one of San Antonio's Historic Districts.
- d. The applicant has proposed to construct two structures on the vacant lots at 914 and 916 N Mesquite. The applicant has proposed for the primary structure, a single family home to feature a setback and orientation that is consistent with those of the structures to both the north and south. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.
- e. Regarding the accessory structure at 914 N Mesquite, given its location on a lot individual to itself, the design of the accessory structure should be approached as one of a primary structure. Setbacks should be consistent with of primary structures found throughout the district as noted in the Guidelines for New Construction 1.A.
- f. The primary entrance for historic structures should be oriented toward the primary street. The applicant has taken a contemporary approach to the primary building entrance, however, has oriented it toward N Mesquite. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 1.B.i.
- g. Regarding height, the Guidelines for New Construction, new construction in historic districts should feature a height and scale similar to those found throughout the district. The applicant has proposed a structure with a height that is generally consistent with the predominant building height in the vicinity. This is consistent with the Guidelines.
- h. The applicant has proposed a foundation height that is consistent with the precedent set throughout the district. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.iii.
- i. 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, a side gable roof and a contemporary flat roof between the two traditional roof forms. While there is no precedent for a flat roof in the district, staff finds that this contemporary interpretation on a traditional house form is appropriate.
- j. Regarding the proposed roof form of the accessory structure, the applicant has proposed a sloped roof, which is not appropriate given the precedent set for primary roof forms of historic houses throughout the neighborhood. Staff finds that a front gable roof would be more appropriate given the similarity between the proposed structure at 914 N

Mesquite and shotgun homes found throughout the district.

- k. 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 noted a number of window openings, however, many feature locations and dimensions that are not consistent with those found throughout the district. Staff recommends the applicant revisit the proposed window configuration to incorporate more traditionally sized and placed windows.
- l. According to the Guidelines for New Construction 3.D.i., new construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. The applicant's proposal is consistent with the Guidelines.
- m. The applicant has proposed materials which include cedar lapped siding, corten corrugated metal, wood windows and a corrugated galvalume metal roof. According to the Guidelines for New Construction 3.A.i., materials that are complementary to those of the district should be used in new construction. Staff finds that the proposed cedar siding is appropriate, however there is no precedent for corten corrugated metal siding nor perforated corrugated metal. Regarding the proposed corrugated galvalume roof, new metal roof s should be constructed in a similar fashion to metal roofs containing use panels that are 18 to 21 inches in width, ensure that seams are an appropriate height (1 to 2 inches), use a crimped ridge seam that is consistent with the historic application, use a low profile ridge cap and use a galvalume finish.
- n. New construction in historic districts should be designed to reflect their time while representing the historic context of the neighborhood. The applicant has presented a contemporary interpretation of many traditional architectural elements that while might not be currently found in the Dignowity Hill Historic District, are of high quality. Staff finds that through the incorporation of traditionally scaled window openings as well as materials that are appropriate for a historic district, the applicant will have presented a successful project.
- o. The applicant has noted rainwater cisterns that are to be located at the rear of both the primary and accessory structure. This is consistent with the Guidelines for New Construction 6.A. Staff recommends that the applicant provide additional information regarding the location and screening of other mechanical equipment per the Guidelines for New Construction 6.B.
- p. The applicant has proposed to mount solar collectors on the south slope of the accessory structure's roof. The proposed panels will be mounted flush to the roof as well as visible from the public right of way. Given this structure's contemporary design, staff finds this location appropriate.
- q. The applicant has provided a site plan noting the preservation of numerous existing trees and the installation of a decomposed granite walk way. Staff recommends the applicant provide a detailed landscaping plan prior to retuning to the HDRC.
- r. Staff finds that the applicant's request for the construction of two dwelling units on two lots is appropriate, however, both units should contain setbacks and architectural elements that are consistent with the neighborhood and Historic Design Guidelines.
- s. At this time, the applicant has not been able to meet with the Design Review Committee, however, the applicant has provided information regarding existing materials throughout the Dignowity Hill Historic District as well as existing setbacks of primary and accessory structures.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

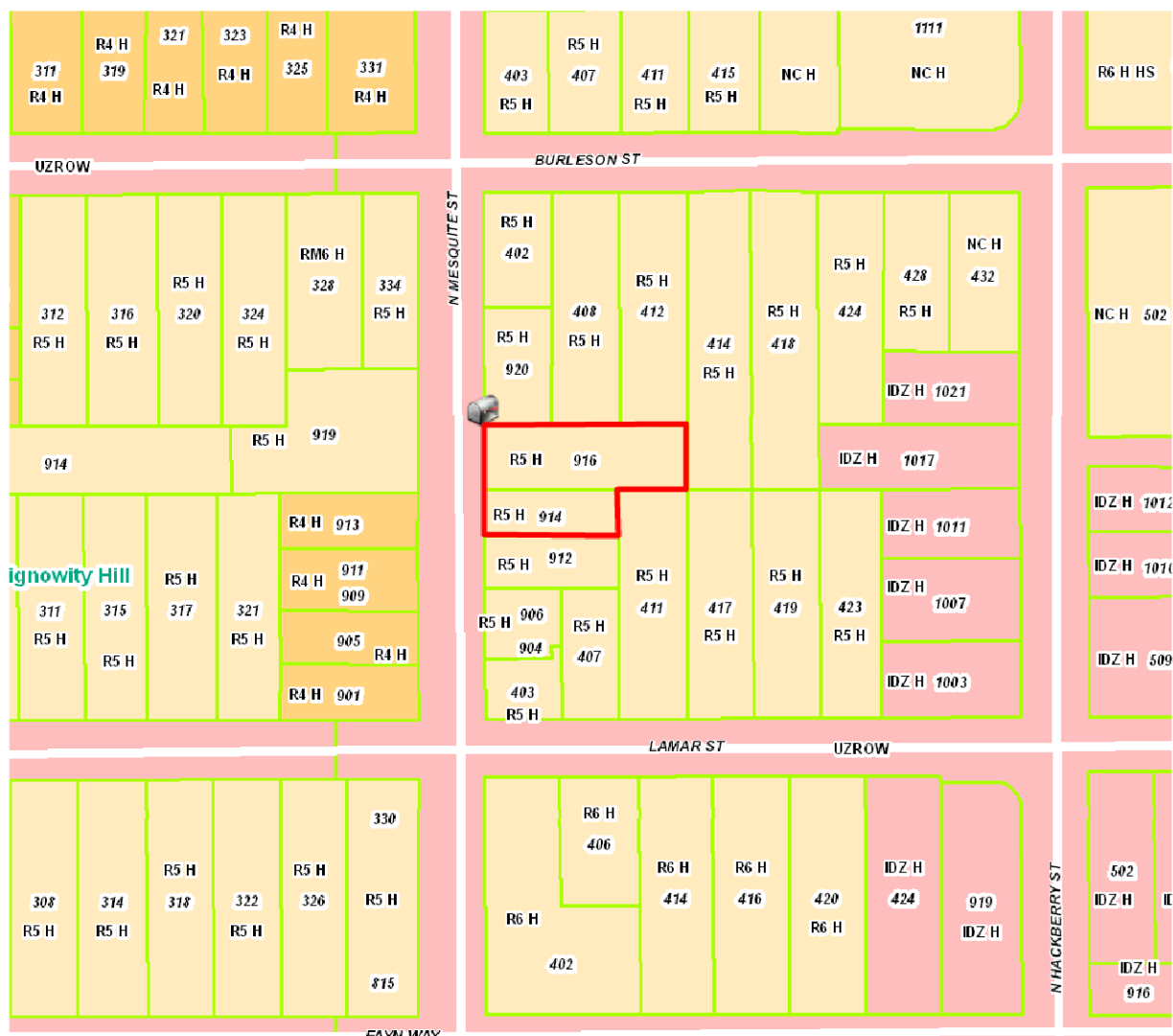
Staff does not recommend final approval at this time.

Staff recommends conceptual approval of the site design, massing, form, contemporary interpretations on a traditional architectural style and the proposed roof form of the primary structure proposed at 916 N Mesquite.

Staff does not recommend conceptual approval of the accessory structure proposed at 914 N Mesquite. Staff recommends that the applicant address inconsistencies with the Historic Design Guidelines, primarily setbacks and roof form.

## **CASE MANAGER:**

Edward Hall





## Flex Viewer

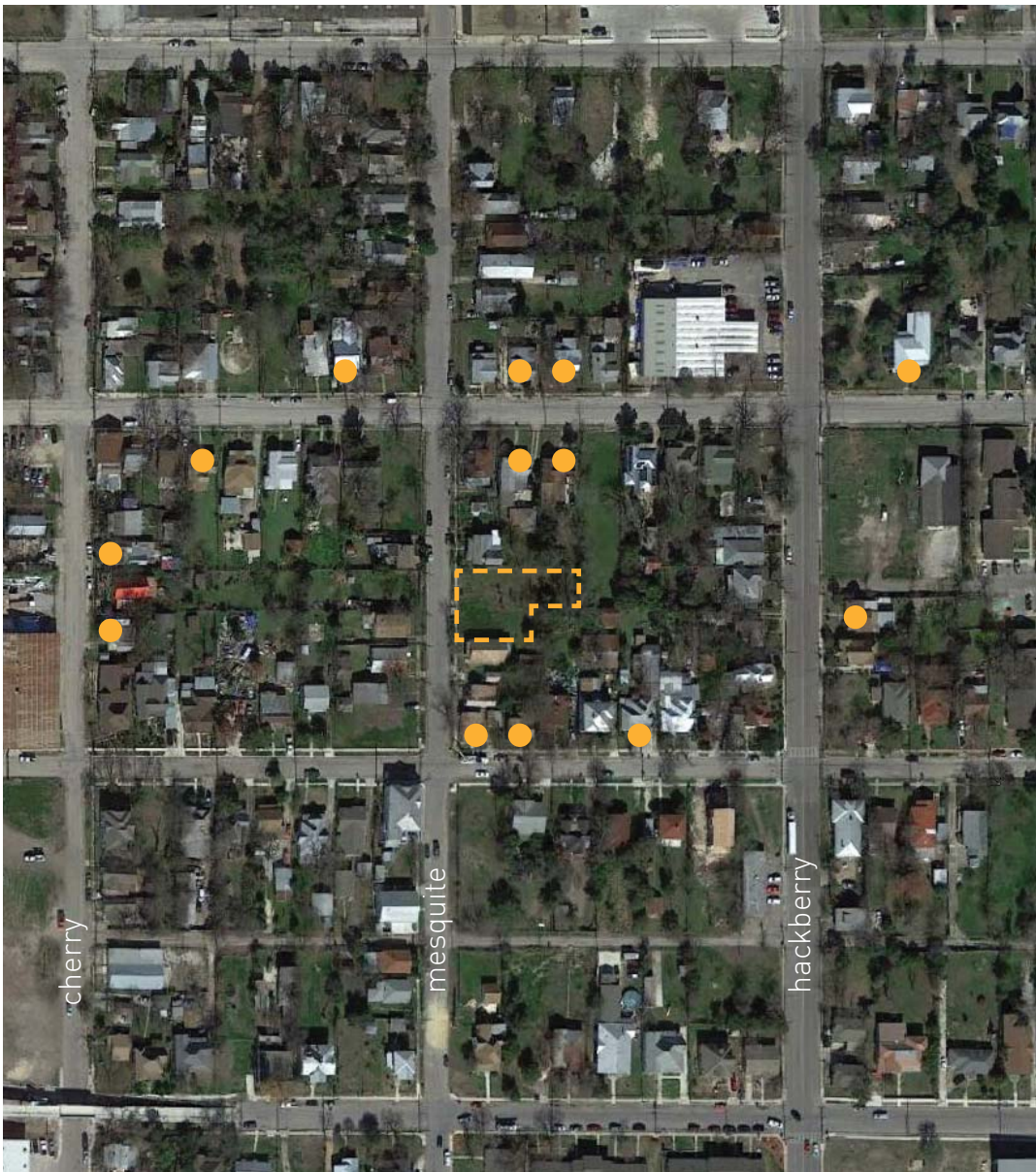
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Printed: Aug 25, 2015

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EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD

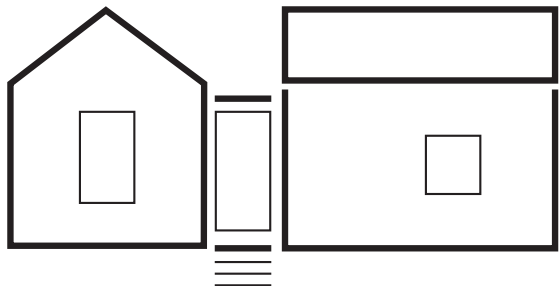
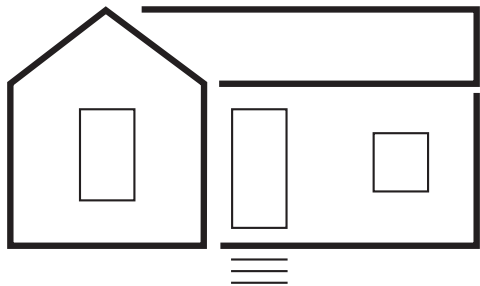


existing project site

existing building forms

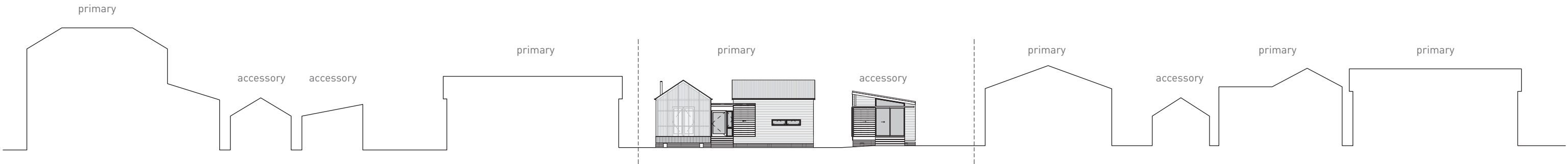


CONCEPT DIAGRAM



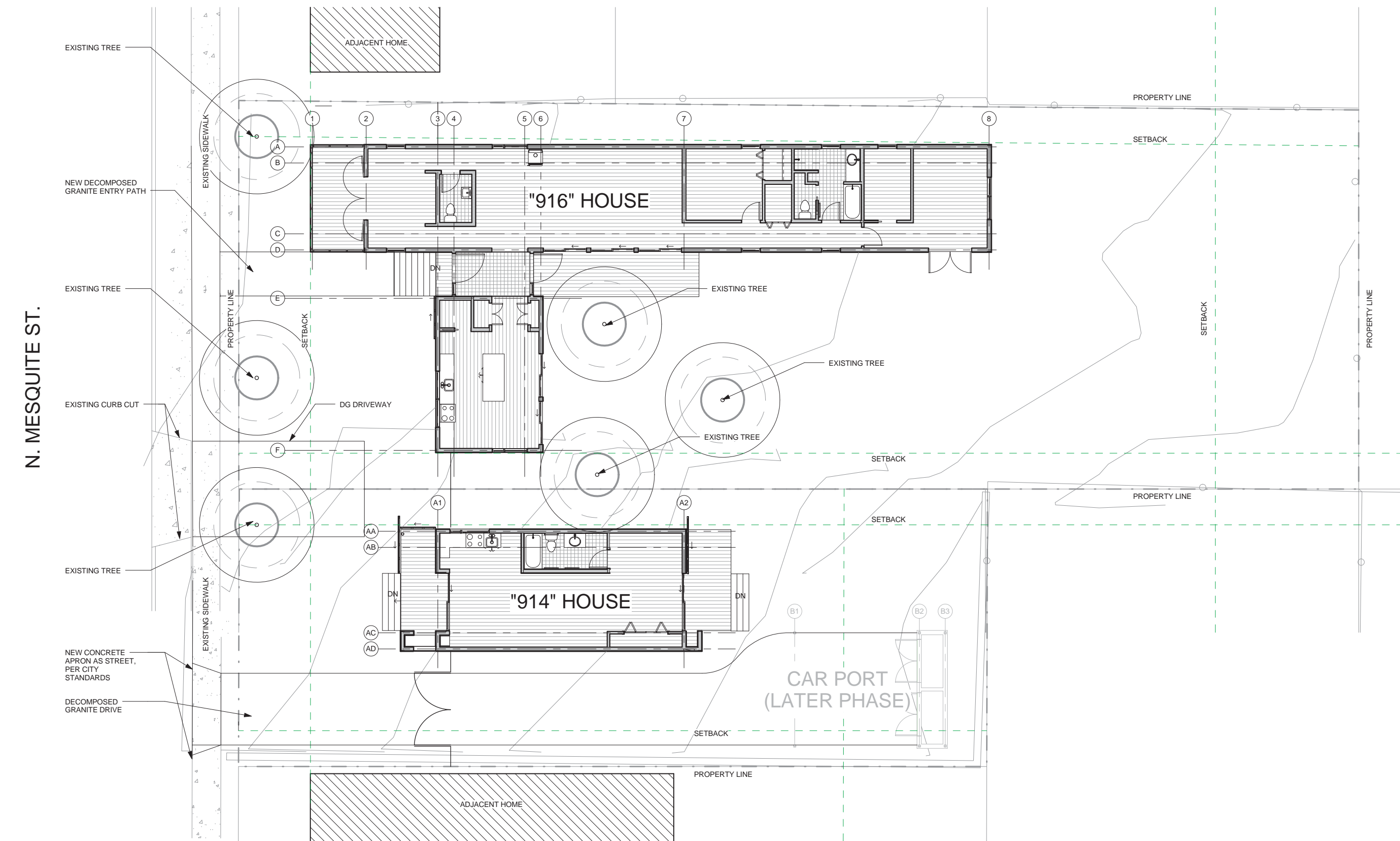


PERSPECTIVE - STREET SCALE & CONTEXT

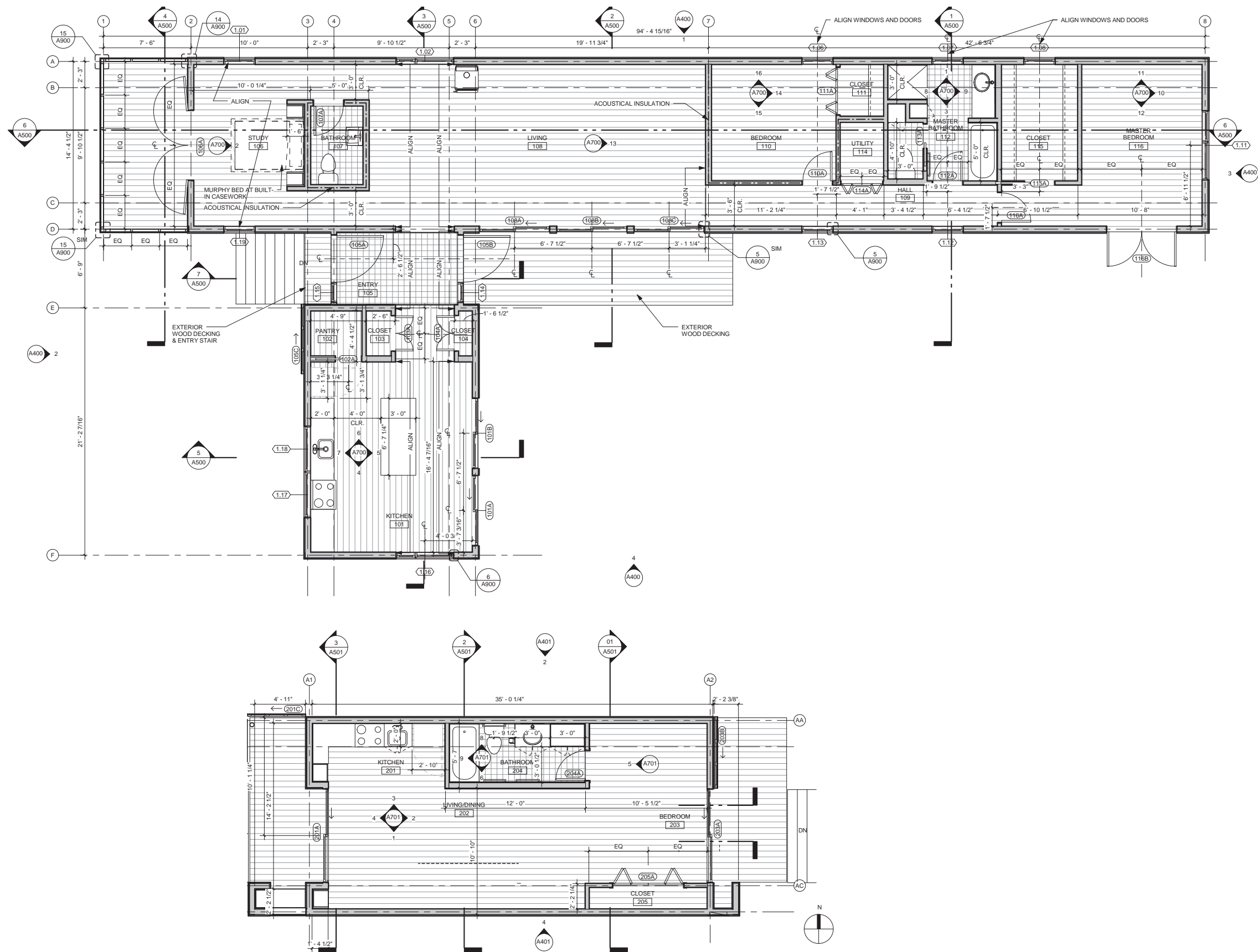




SITE PLAN

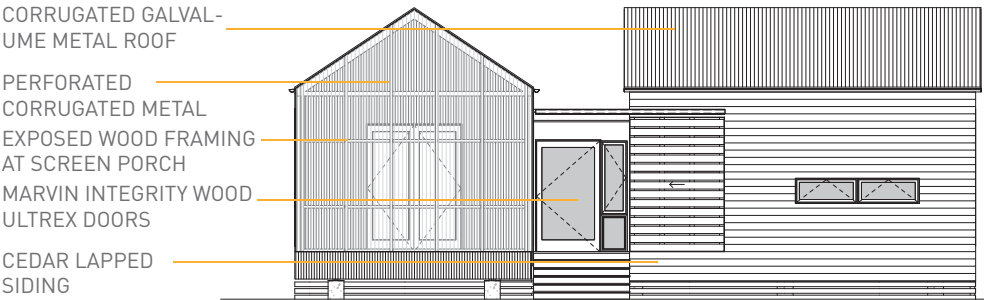
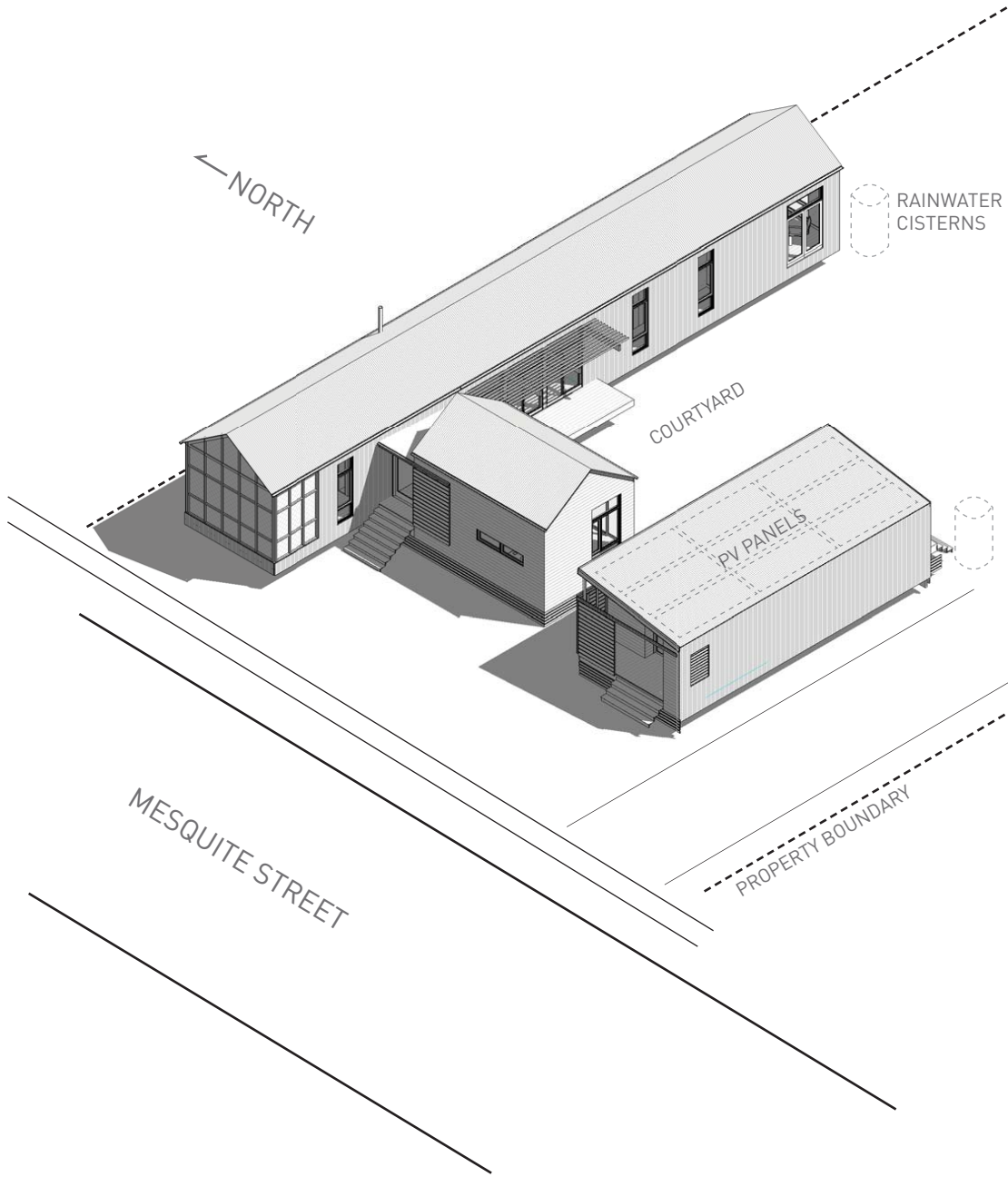


ENLARGED FLOOR PLANS

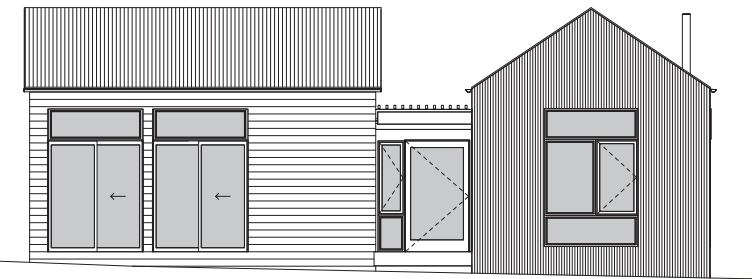




ELEVATIONS



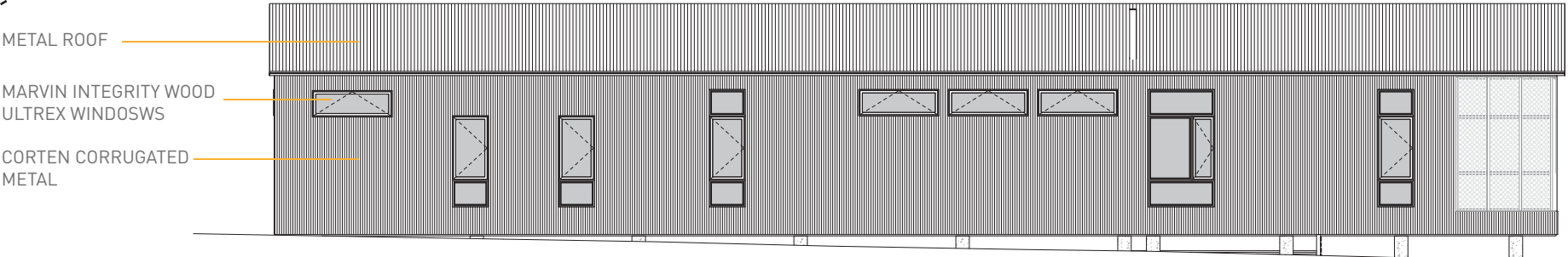
ELEVATION FROM STREET



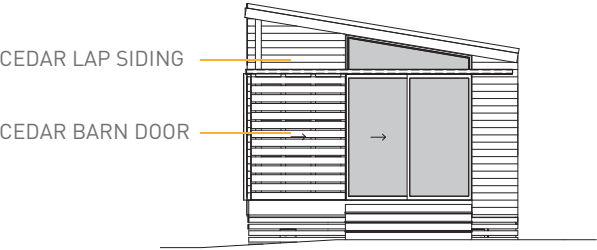
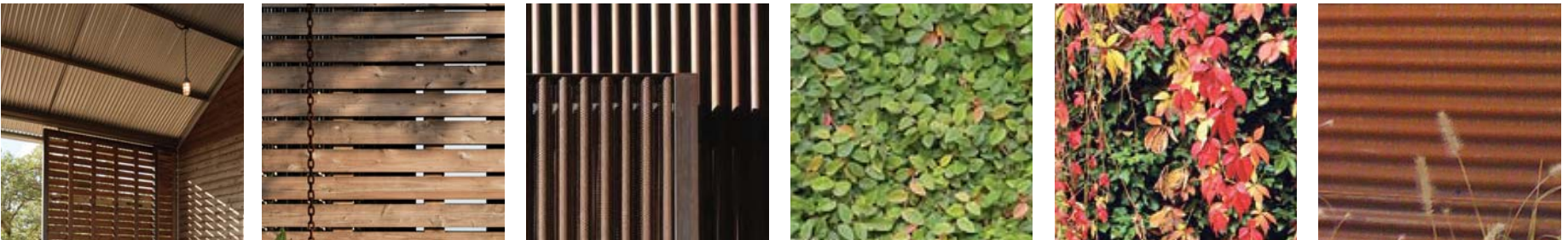
ELEVATION FROM REAR YARD



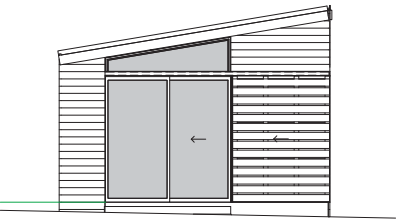
ELEVATION FROM COURTYARD



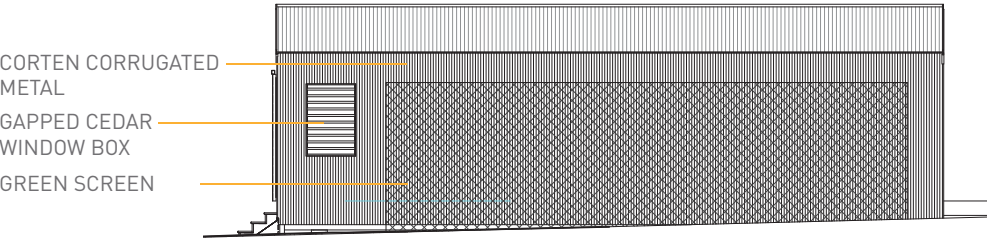
ELEVATION FROM SIDE YARD



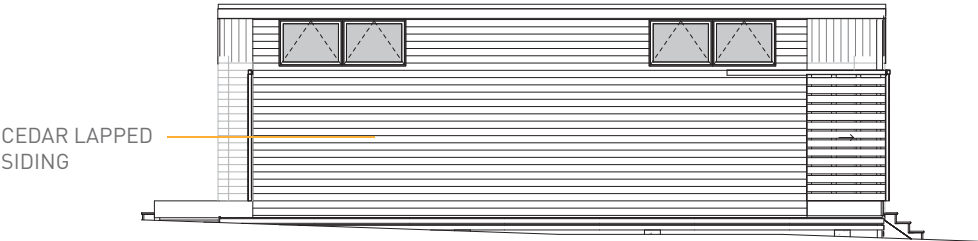
ELEVATION FROM STREET



ELEVATION FROM REAR YARD



ELEVATION FROM SIDE YARD



ELEVATION FROM COURTYARD



MATERIALS



CEDAR LAPPED SIDING, RAIN CHAINS



CEDAR LAPPED SLIDING BARN DOOR



CORTEN PERFORATED CORRUGATED METAL



SLIDING BARN DOOR, CEDAR SIDING



CORTEN CORRUGATED METAL SIDING



CREEPING FIG IVY



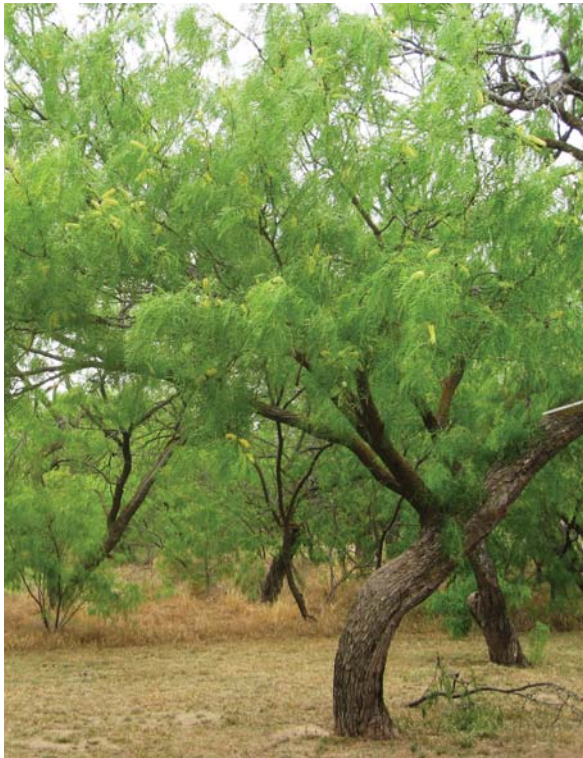
VIRGINIA CREEPER IVY



LBJ WILDFLOWER CENTER - ECOTURF



FLAME LEAF SUMAC



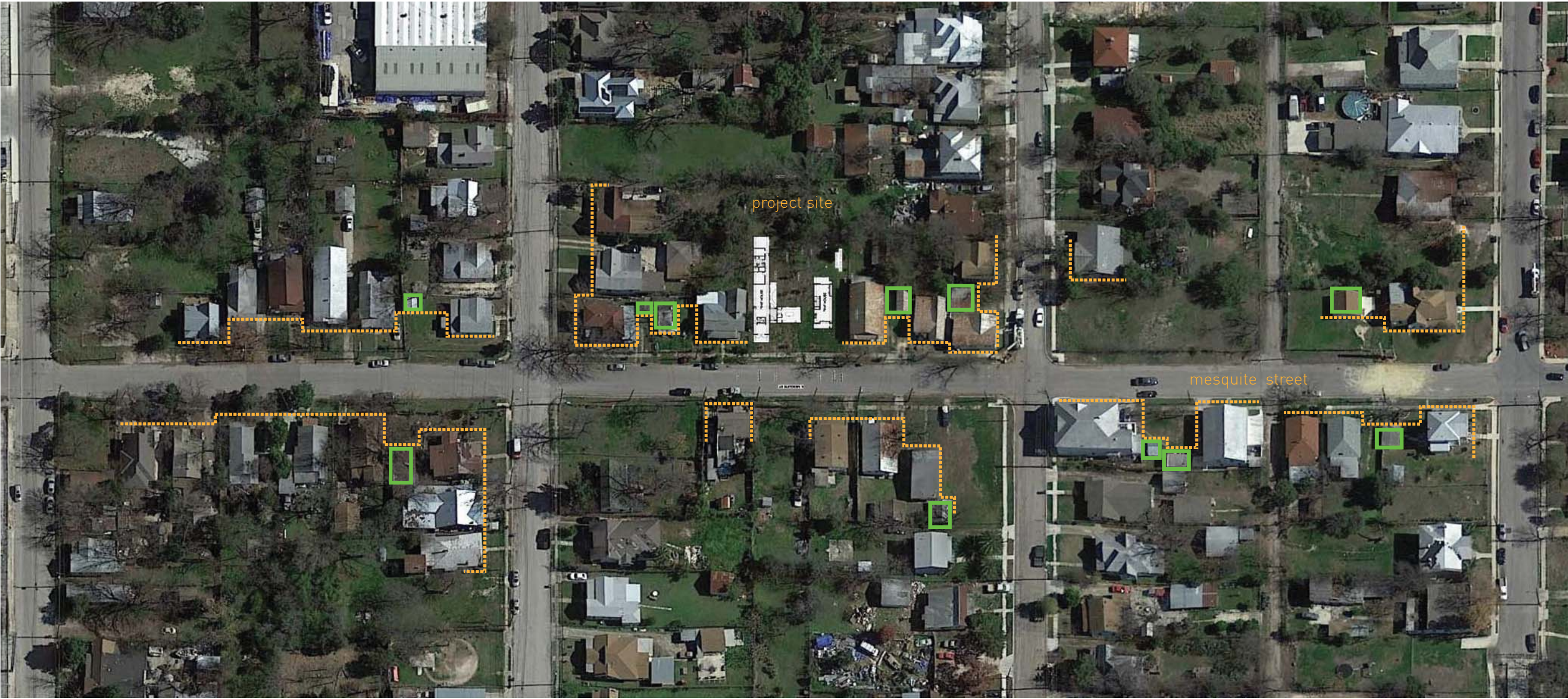
HONEY MESQUITE







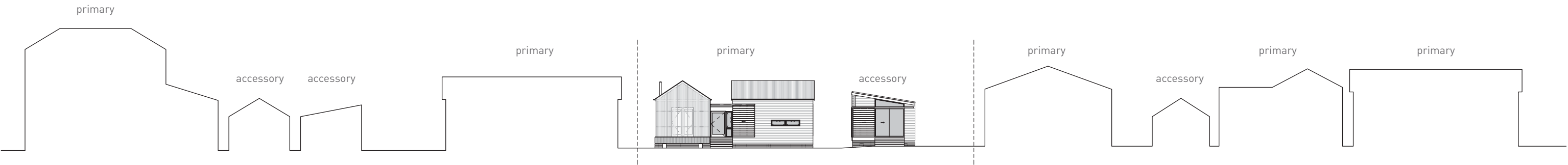
MESQUITE STREET - EXISTING SETBACKS



 = accessory structure       = existing frontage line       north



ACCESSORY STRUCTURE PRECEDENTS - SETBACKS AND FORMS



2-story, hip & shed roof



accessory structures setback



turned gable, hip roof porch



wide gable, accessory setback



2 perpendicular gables & shed



turned gable and shed



ACCESSORY STRUCTURE PRECEDENTS - SETBACKS AND FORMS



918 n. mesquite street accessory structure - metal siding and shed roof



403 lamar accessory structure set back from street - rusted metal roof



912 n. mesquite accessory structure setback from street



402 burleson (view from mesquite) accessory structure setback from



ACCESSORY STRUCTURE - SETBACKS AND FORMS



431 hays accessory structure setback from street - low slope gable metal roof



912 n. mesquite street backyard accessory structures - shed roof and gable rusted gable roof



hackberry accessory structure - shed roof



hackberry accessory structure - corrugated metal shed roof



ACCESSORY STRUCTURE PRECEDENTS - SETBACKS AND FORMS



815 n. mesquite street accessory structures setback - shed roof and open air structure



809 n. mesquite street accessory structure setback from street



905 n. mesquite accessory structure setback from street - low slope gable



416 lamar accessory structure - metal siding and shed roof



DIGNOWITY MATERIAL PRECEDENTS



corrugated metal siding , weathered metal roof - 712 n. mesquite



new corrugated metal window awnings - 403 burleson



## DIGNOWITY MATERIAL PRECEDENTS



new corten corrugated metal roof - pine street



weathered corrugated metal roof - 912 n. mesquite



## DIGNOWITY MATERIAL PRECEDENTS



painted corrugated metal siding - 810 cherry street



corrugated metal foundation skirt, weathered metal roof - lamar street



DIGNOWITY MATERIAL PRECEDENTS



galvanized corrugated metal barn door - 901 n. cherry



wood slat barn door - 712 n. mesquite



## MATERIAL STUDIES - NEIGHBORHOOD EDGES



north edge of neighborhood - railyard buildings - weathered galvanized corrugated siding



north edge of neighborhood - railyard buildings - corrugated metal siding



## MATERIAL STUDIES - NEIGHBORHOOD EDGES



west edge of neighborhood - hays street bridge & alamo brewery - coren siding



south edge of neighborhood - friedrich warehouse - weathered corrugated metal siding



## MATERIAL PRECEDENTS - SCALE & RHYTHM OF METAL & WOOD

