

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

October 18, 2017

HDRC CASE NO: 2017-522
ADDRESS: 401 E LOCUST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1737 BLK 6 LOT 7 (CARLA HILLS)
ZONING: MF-33,H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Tobin Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Varco Builder of Texas LLC
OWNER: Brian Correa
TYPE OF WORK: Install river rock in front yard; Front Yard Fence; Carport
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install a front yard fence.
2. Replace natural grass lawn with river rock in the front yard and planting strips.
3. Install drivable grass in the front and side driveways.
4. Expand the rear deck to feature approximately 224 additional square feet.
5. Install a metal-frame car port with a wood siding and cedar-wrapped columns

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

5. Guidelines for Site Elements

1. Topography

A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- i. Historic topography—Avoid significantly altering the topography of a property (i.e., extensive grading). Do not alter character-defining features such as berms or sloped front lawns that help define the character of the public right-of-way. Maintain the established lawn to help prevent erosion. If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.
- ii. New construction—Match the historic topography of adjacent lots prevalent along the block face for new construction. Do not excavate raised lots to accommodate additional building height or an additional story for new construction.
- iii. New elements—Minimize changes in topography resulting from new elements, like driveways and walkways, through appropriate siting and design. New site elements should work with, rather than change, character-defining topography when possible.

2. Fences and Walls

A. HISTORIC FENCES AND WALLS

- i. Preserve—Retain historic fences and walls.
- ii. Repair and replacement—Replace only deteriorated sections that are beyond repair. Match replacement materials (including mortar) to the color, texture, size, profile, and finish of the original.
- iii. Application of paint and cementitious coatings—Do not paint historic masonry walls or cover them with stone facing or stucco or other cementitious coatings.

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.

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.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

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.

2. Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations

7. Architectural Features: Porches, Balconies, and Porte-Cocheres

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- ii. Side and rear porches—Refrain from enclosing side and rear porches, particularly when connected to the main porch or balcony. Original architectural details should not be obscured by any screening or enclosure materials. Alterations to side and rear porches should result in a space that functions, and is visually interpreted as, a porch.
- iv. Adding elements—Design replacement elements, such as stairs, to be simple so as to not distract from the historic character of the building. Do not add new elements and details that create a false historic appearance.

11. Canopies and Awnings

A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. Existing canopies and awnings—Preserve existing historic awnings and canopies through regular cleaning and periodic inspections of the support system to ensure they are secure.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. Replacement canopies and awnings—Replace canopies and awnings in-kind whenever possible.
- ii. New canopies and awnings—Add canopies and awnings based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. If no such evidence exists, the design of new canopies and awnings should be based on the architectural style of the building and be proportionate in shape and size to the scale of the building façade to which they will be attached. See UDC Section 35-609(j).
- iii. Lighting—Do not internally illuminate awnings; however, lighting may be concealed in an awning to provide illumination to sidewalks or storefronts.
- iv. Awning materials—Use fire-resistant canvas awnings that are striped or solid in a color that is appropriate to the period of the building.
- v. Building features—Avoid obscuring building features such as arched transom windows with new canopies or awnings.
- vi. Support structure—Support awnings with metal or wood frames, matching the historic support system whenever

possible. Minimize damage to historic materials when anchoring the support system. For example, anchors should be inserted into mortar rather than brick. Ensure that the support structure is integrated into the structure of the building as to avoid stress on the structural stability of the façade.

FINDINGS:

- a. The structure located at 401 E Locust is a two-story single family structure and features Neoclassical architectural elements including full-height Corinthian columns in the front porch.
- b. NEW FENCE – The applicant has proposed to install cattle panel fencing along the north and east facing property lines as well as the front façade. This block of E Locust currently features 12 parcels, 2 of which feature non-original fences. Staff finds that the installation of fencing at this location is not consistent with the Guidelines.
- c. FENCE DESIGN - The Guidelines for Site Elements: Fences 2.B.i notes that new fences should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character – and that design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure. The structure at 401 E Locust features neoclassical elements. The proposed cattle panel fence is not found historically in the Tobin Hill Historic District and is not architecturally appropriate for the historic structure.
- d. HARDESCAPING - The front yard features a natural grass lawn with a few trees scattered on the lot. The planting strips along the sidewalk, that once featured natural grass, currently features river rock that was installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The applicant has proposed to replace the natural grass lawn with river rock and a tree centerpiece surrounded by black mulch – to match the current planting strips. The Guidelines for Site Elements 5.3.A.ii. limits 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. The Guideline also notes that low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas and that historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%. Guidelines 5.3.A.iii notes that native and xeric plants should be used in landscape modifications. Staff does not find the proposed replacement of natural grass with river appropriate for either the front yard nor the planting strips.
- e. DRIVEWAYS – The applicant has proposed to replace the existing concrete driveway at rear and the gravel driveway at front of the structure, both to feature “drive-able grass” ribbons and river rock. Guidelines 5.B.i. notes that changes to driveways should incorporate similar configuration – material, width, and design – to that which is historically found on the site, and that pervious paving may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration. Staff finds the proposal for driveway replacement appropriate.
- f. REAR DECK – The applicant has proposed to expand the existing covered 15-foot by 16-foot deck with an uncovered 14-foot by 16-foot deck. The proposed deck will match the existing deck in height, railing detail, and material. The wood steps will be relocated accordingly. The proposed deck expansion will not be seen from Locust Street since it is hidden behind an existing privacy fence. Guidelines 2.7.B.iv notes that alterations to side and rear porches should result in a space that functions and is visually interpreted as porch. Staff finds the proposed deck expansion appropriate.
- g. CARPORT - The structure currently features an awning functioning as a carport with exposed metal framing. The structure was installed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. The applicant has acknowledged this violation and has proposed to install wood siding over the exposed metal framing to match the existing primary structure. The applicant has also proposed to install cedar-wrapped 4” by 4” metal posts to reinforce the existing awning. Guidelines 11.B.ii notes that the design of new canopies and awnings should be based on the architectural style of the building and be proportionate in shape and size to the scale of the building façade to which they will be attached. Staff does not find the installation of an attached carport awning appropriate. An more traditional carport that is completely detached from the historic home would be more appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

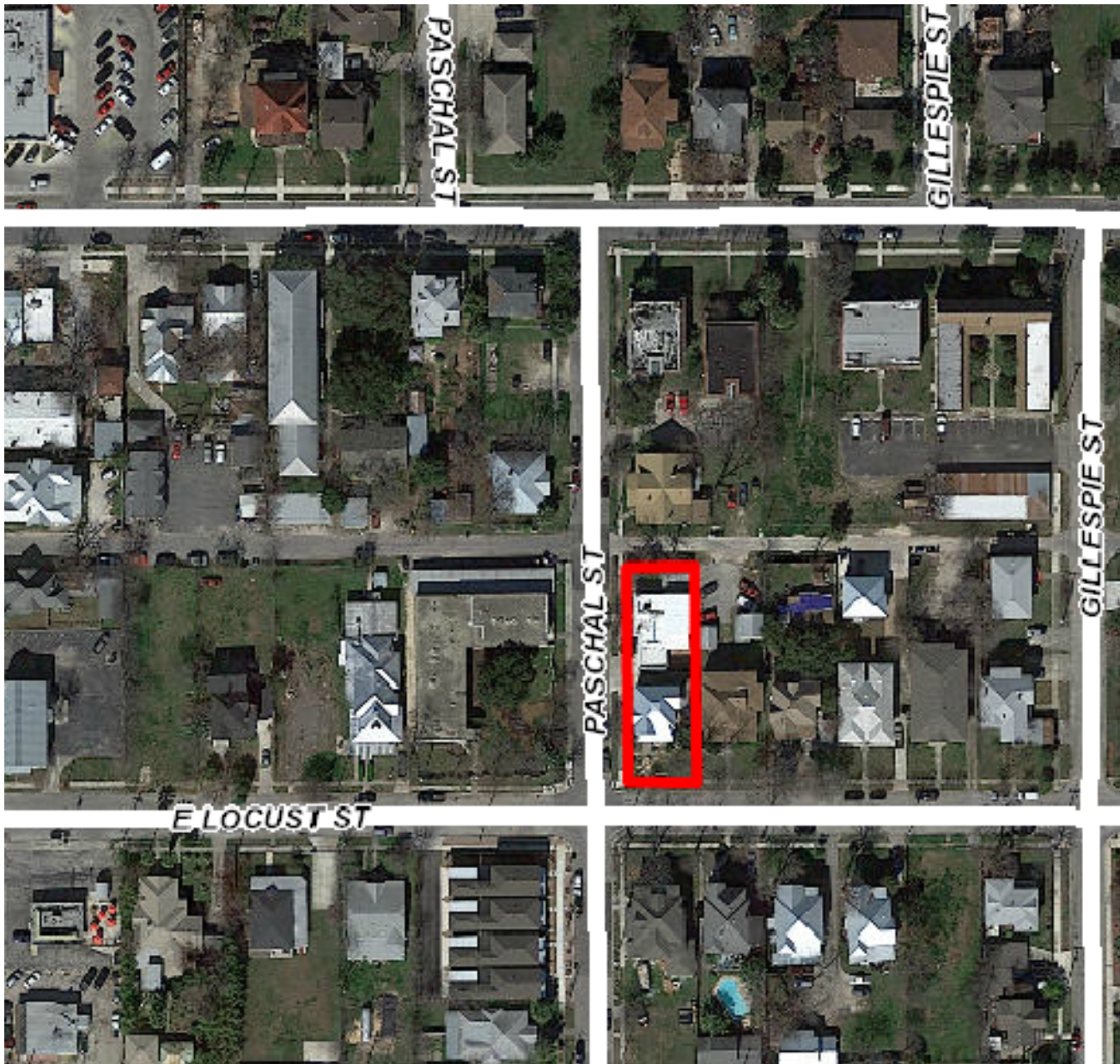
1. Staff does not recommend approval of the front yard fence based on findings b and c.
2. Staff does not recommend approval of installing river rock in the front yard based on findings d.
3. Staff recommends approval to install drive-able grass in the front and side driveways.
4. Staff recommends approval to expand the existing rear deck.
5. Staff does not recommend approval of the carport awning as proposed. An updated proposal featuring a traditional carport completely detached from the historic home would need to be submitted to staff for final approval.

CASE MANAGER:

Huy Pham

CASE COMMENT:

During site visits conducted on October 11, 2017, staff finds that the metal-frame awning and river rock planting strips have been installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness. While efforts have been made by the applicant to rectify the violation regarding the awning per request item 5, staff does not recommend the proposed installation.



401 E Locust

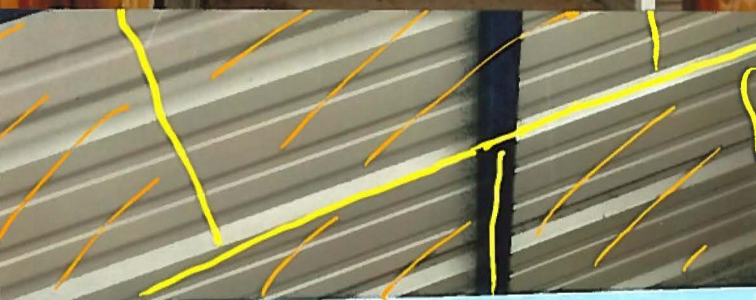
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401 East Locust Street







Huy Pham (OHP)

From: Christopher Hernandez <varcorenovators4u@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 04, 2017 12:35 PM
To: Huy Pham (OHP)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: HDRC 401 E Locust

Good afternoon But!

Here are the answers in writing as per conversation.

1. The metal awning will be covered in shiplap to match existing structure. The awning roof is currently R-panel metal roofing and does match nicely with existing metal roof on structure. So I am not proposing to change the roof on the awning.
2. The 4x4 metal support post will be wrapped in 1x6 Cedar trim to match post at patio cover.
3. Install drivable grass pavers for vehicle tires only the river rock/Texas blend 2-3-1/2 will be set in center and both sides of driver pavers. Small rainbow rock will fill in the driveable grass areas.
4. As far as the center piece of each side of the front lawn. A 5' radius of tree species not determined with black mulch. This will be our center piece landscape.
A site plan can be provided at your request.
5. Cedar Cattle gate to enclose front yard is correct.
6. The tree will not be removed but instead will be incorporated in the deck with a circular bench framing in the tree. The tree will have room to grow so as not to interfere with the deck in the future.

I hope this answers all your questions and please feel free to contact my office with other concerns you may have. Thank you.

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

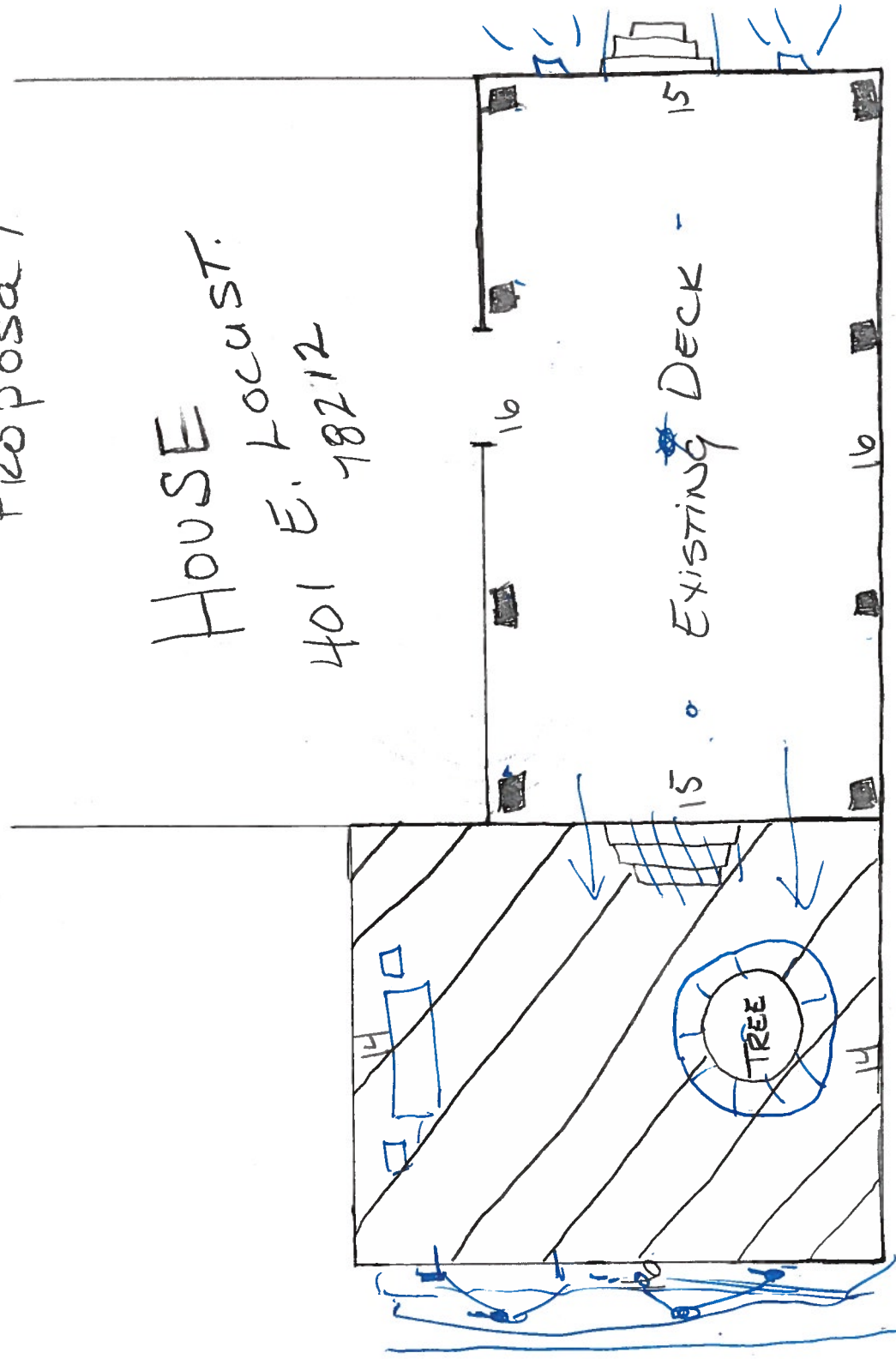
On Wed, Oct 4, 2017 at 11:46 AM, Huy Pham (OHP)
<Huy.Pham@sanantonio.gov> wrote:

Good afternoon Varco Builders of Texas,

Thank you for submitting an HDRC application on behalf of property owner Brian Correa at 401 E Locust. My name is Huy Pham, and I will be your case manager for your request to perform alterations to this historic structure. I wanted to touch base with you to make sure I am understanding all of the request items for this case. I have listed them below with my inquiries highlighted in yellow.

Patio EXPANSION & COVER
Proposal 1

HOUSE
401 E. Locust.
18212

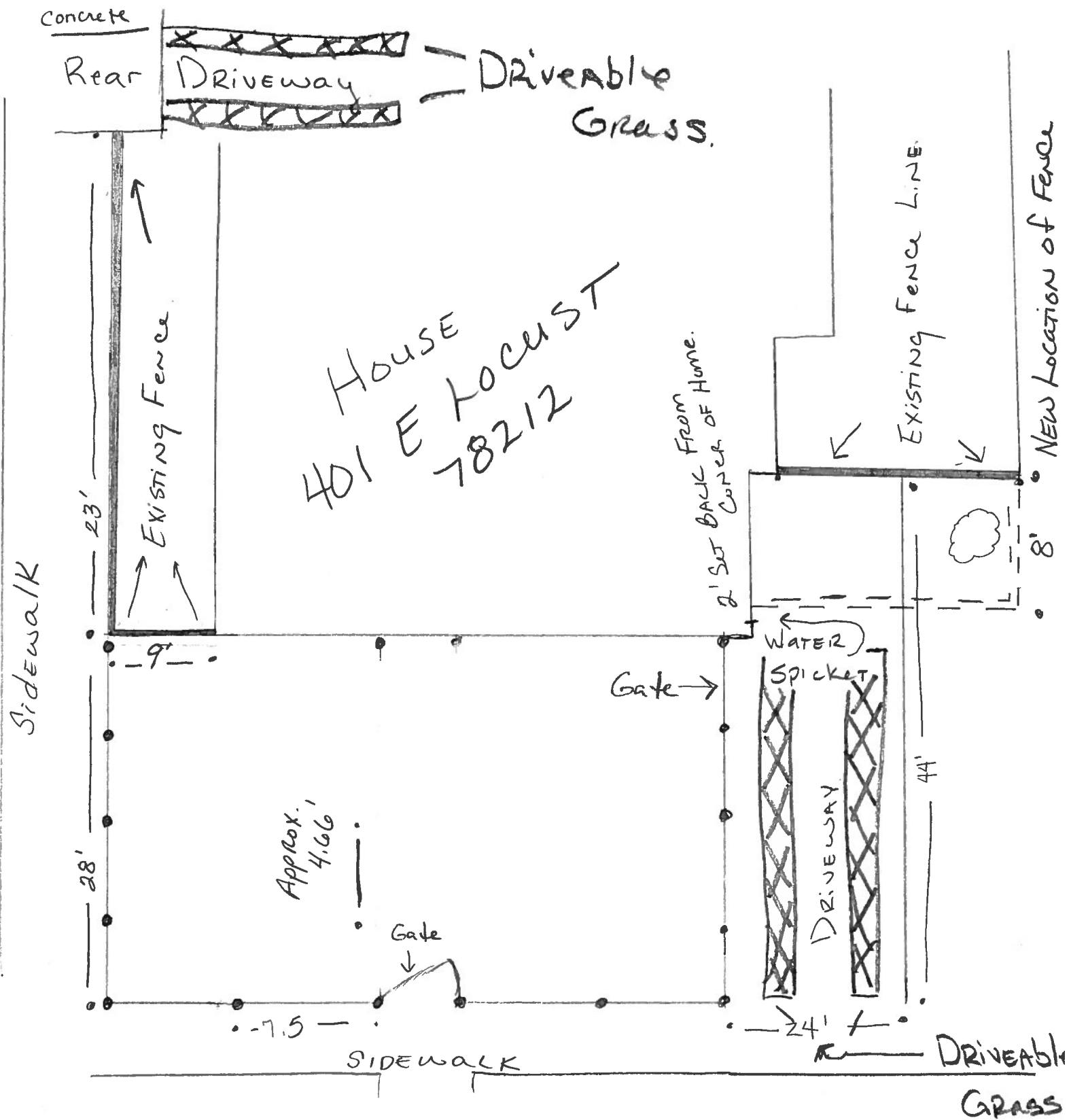


* 5' Set Back PROPERTY LINE.

[Hatched Box] - Proposed New Deck Area.

[Small Square] - Post For Covered Patio [Detached] Same R-Panel as Driveway

NOTE: Existing Porch will be the only portion covered.



1. --- CATTLE GATE BIRDEYE VIEW
2. --- Relocate Right Side Fence 8' Forward
3. XXX DRIVEABLE GRASS

2'x2'

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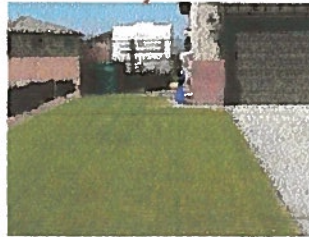
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