

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 29, 2020

HDRC CASE NO: 2020-197
ADDRESS: 515 N PALMETTO
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1371 BLK 3 LOT 33 34 & 35
ZONING: RM-4, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
DISTRICT: Dignowity Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Ricardo McCullough
OWNER: ONLY BRI INC
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of six, 2-story single-family residences
APPLICATION RECEIVED: April 16, 2020
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval of a site plan for the construction of six, 2-story residential structures on the vacant lot at 515 N Palmetto, located within the Dignowity Hill Historic District. The applicant has noted that each structure is to feature a footprint of approximately 840 square feet.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

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. *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

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.

Standard Specifications for Windows in Additions and New Construction

- **GENERAL:** New windows on additions should relate to the windows of the primary historic structure in terms of materiality and overall appearance. Windows used in new construction should be similar in appearance to those commonly found within the district in terms of size, profile, and configuration. While no material is expressly prohibited by the Historic Design Guidelines, a high-quality wood or aluminum-clad wood window product often meets the Guidelines with the stipulations listed below. Whole window systems should match the size of historic windows on property unless otherwise approved.
- **SIZE:** Windows should feature traditional dimensions and proportions as found within the district.
- **SASH:** Meeting rails must be no taller than 1.25". Stiles must be no wider than 2.25". Top and bottom sashes must be equal in size unless otherwise approved.
- **DEPTH:** There should be a minimum of 2" in depth between the front face of the window trim and the front face of the top window sash. This must be accomplished by recessing the window sufficiently within the opening or with the installation of additional window trim to add thickness.
- **TRIM:** Window trim must feature traditional dimensions and architecturally appropriate casing and sloped sill detail. Window track components such as jamb liners must be painted to match the window trim or concealed by a wood window screen set within the opening.
- **GLAZING:** Windows should feature clear glass. Low-e or reflective coatings are not recommended for replacements. The glazing should not feature faux divided lights with an interior grille. If approved to match a historic window configuration, the window should feature real exterior muntins.
- **COLOR:** Wood windows should feature a painted finished. If a clad product is approved, white or metallic manufacturer's color is not allowed, and color selection must be presented to staff.
- **INSTALLATION:** Wood windows should be supplied in a block frame and exclude nailing fins. Window opening sizes should not be altered to accommodate stock sizes prior to approval.
- **FINAL APPROVAL:** If the proposed window does not meet the aforementioned stipulations, then the applicant must submit updated window specifications to staff for review, prior to purchase and installation. For more assistance, the applicant may request the window supplier to coordinate with staff directly for verification.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting conceptual approval of a site plan for the construction of six, 2-story residential structures on the vacant lot at 515 N Palmetto, located within the Dignowity Hill Historic District. The applicant has noted that each structure is to feature a footprint of approximately 840 square feet.
- b. **CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL** – 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.
- c. **CONTEXT & DEVELOPMENT PATTERN** – As noted in finding a, the existing site is currently void of any structures and is bounded by N Palmetto to the east and Florence/Dawson Alley to the west (rear). The lot is approximately 120 feet wide and 130 feet deep for a total size of 15,600 square feet. The applicant intends to sub divide the property into three lots.
- d. **DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE** – This request was reviewed by the Design Review Committee on April 22, 2020. At that meeting, the committee noted that front yard parking pads should be removed, commented on driveway configuration and noted that three new structures rather than six would be most appropriate for the district.
- e. **SETBACKS & ORIENTATION** – Regarding setbacks, the applicant has proposed setbacks for the structures fronting N Palmetto feature setbacks that are less than those found historically on the block. This is not consistent with the Guidelines. According to the Guidelines for New Construction, the front facades of new buildings are to align with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established

along the street frontage. Additionally, the orientation of new construction should be consistent with the historic examples found on the block. Staff finds that the applicant should incorporate setbacks for each structure that are equal to or greater than those found historically on the block. Regarding orientation, the applicant has proposed an orientation that is appropriate for structure oriented towards both N Palmetto, and the alley to the immediate west.

- f. **SCALE & MASS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.i., a height and massing similar to historic structures in the vicinity of the proposed new construction should be used. 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. This block of N Palmetto features five historic structures, only one of which features more than one story in height. While the proposed height of the new construction may be consistent with the Guidelines given the existence of a two-story historic structure on the block, staff is concerned regarding the proposed proportions of the new construction, which would feature two stories in height, plus roof massing, but only twenty-two (22) feet in width. Generally, staff finds that massing that is consistent with the massing of historic structures in the district should be proposed.
- g. **SCALE & MASS** – As noted in finding e, staff finds the proposed width to height ratio of the proposed new construction to be atypical with examples found historically within the district. In regards to the structures addressing the rear alley, historically, rear accessory structures that feature alley access in historic district feature a scale that is subordinate to that of the primary historic structure. Staff finds the massing of the three structures addressing the alley to be inappropriate and inconsistent with the Guidelines. Structures with reduced massing, as well as varied architectural elements would be more appropriate.
- h. **MASSING TRANSITIONS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.ii., applicants 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. Staff finds that no transitions in building massing have been incorporated into the design.
- i. **ENTRANCES** – According to the Guidelines for New Construction 1.B.i., primary building entrances should be oriented towards the primary street. The applicant's proposed entrance orientation is consistent with the Guidelines.
- j. **FOUNDATION & FLOOR HEIGHTS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.iii., applicants should align foundation and floor-to-floor heights within one foot of floor-to-floor heights on adjacent historic structures. At this time the applicant has not provided information regarding foundation heights. Staff finds that the applicant should utilize foundation heights that are consistent with the Guidelines.
- k. **ROOF FORMS** – The applicant has proposed for each structure to feature both front and side gabled roofs. While these forms are found historically within the Dignowity Hill Historic District, staff finds that the proposed proportions and lack of a uniform gable height for both are inconsistent with historic examples found in the district. Staff finds that ridge lines of both the front and side gabled roofs should be uniform, as found on the historic structure at the corner of N Palmetto and Dawson.
- l. **WINDOW & DOOR OPENINGS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.C.i., window and door openings with similar proportions of wall to window space as typical with nearby historic facades should be incorporated into new construction. Per the elevation that the applicant has submitted, staff finds the proposed windows to be inconsistent with the Guidelines, as there are windows located on both the first and second floors on the primary façade that feature sizes that are not found historically within the district.
- m. **PORCH MASSING** – The applicant has proposed a front porch that consists of a stoop and roof element that is attached to the front façade of the historic structure. Porches found historically within the district feature massing that is incorporated into the massing of the structure, rather than simply attaching to the front façade, particularly in the case of two story structures. Staff finds that the proposed porch massing should be incorporated into the massing of the structure, as found on the historic structure at the corner of N Palmetto and Dawson.
- n. **LOT COVERAGE** – The applicant has proposed to subdivide the 15,600 square feet property into three equal-size 5,200 square feet lots. On each of the lots, the applicant has proposed to construct two structures featuring approximately 836 square feet each. Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.D.i., applicants should 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. While the proposed lot coverage may be consistent with the Guidelines, six, primary residential structures are not found in this context historically within the district.

- o. MATERIALS – At this time the applicant has not submitted information regarding materials. Staff finds that all siding should feature a four (4) inch exposure, a thickness of $\frac{3}{4}$ ", mitered corners and a smooth finish. Columns should be six inches square, and window materials should meet staff's standards for windows in new construction.
- p. WINDOW MATERIALS – At this time, the applicant has not provided information regarding window materials. Staff finds that a wood, or aluminum clad wood window should be installed that is consistent with staff's specifications for windows, which are noted in the applicable citations.
- q. ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS – As noted in the previous findings, staff finds that many of the proposed architectural details, including porch massing, roof massing, and window proportions are inconsistent with the Guidelines. Staff finds that these elements should be modified. Additionally, staff finds that six, repetitive designs are inappropriate for a historic district, and that each structure should feature unique massing and architectural details.
- r. SITE ELEMENTS – The applicant has provided the location of walkways and driveways. Generally, the location of driveways and walkways is appropriate; however, staff finds that the proposed driveway lengths should be extended to the rear of each lot.

RECOMMENDATION:

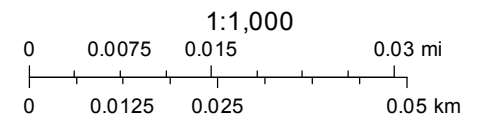
Staff does not recommend approval based on findings a through q. Staff recommends that the applicant address the following items prior to receiving a recommendation for conceptual approval:

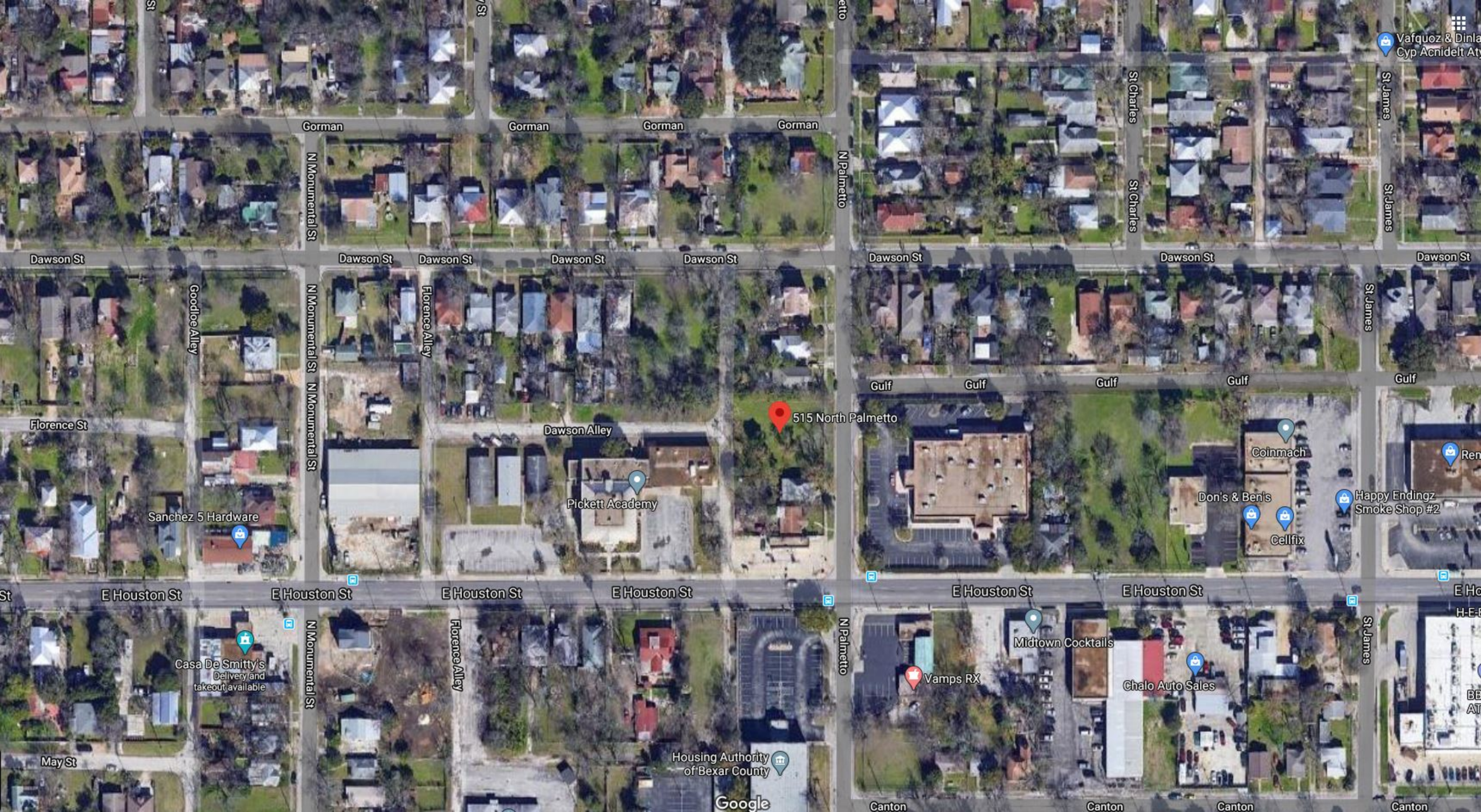
- i. That the applicant incorporate setbacks that are equal to or greater than those found historically on the block as noted in finding e.
- ii. That the applicant propose an overall building massing (width to height ratio) that is consistent with that of two story structures found historically within the district, as noted in finding f.
- iii. That the proposed structures on the rear alley be reduced in height and massing to be consistent with rear accessory structure found historically within the district (subordinate to the primary structure), as noted in finding g.
- iv. That the applicant utilize foundation heights that are consistent with the Guidelines, as noted in finding j.
- v. That the applicant incorporate roof forms that feature matching ridge lines as noted in finding k.
- vi. That the applicant incorporate appropriate window sizes and proportions as noted in finding l.
- vii. That the applicant incorporate appropriate porch massing as noted in finding m.
- viii. That the applicant proposed unique designs for each structure, rather than six, repetitive structures, as noted in finding q.

515 N Palmetto



April 7, 2020





Gorman

Gorman

Gorman

Gorman

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Dawson St

Goodloe Alley

N Monumental St

Florence Alley

N Palmetto

St Charles

St Charles

St James

St James

Florence St

Dawson Alley

515 North Palmetto

Sanchez 5 Hardware

Pickett Academy

Coinmach

Don's & Ben's

Cellfix

Happy Endingz
Smoke Shop #2

Ren

St

E Houston St

E Houston St

E Houston St

E Houston St

E Houston St

E Houston St

E Houston St

Casa De Smitty's
Delivery and
takeout available

Housing Authority
of Bexar County

Midtown Cocktails

Vamps RX

Chalo Auto Sales

May St

N Monumental St

Florence Alley

N Palmetto

St James

Google

Canton

Canton

Canton

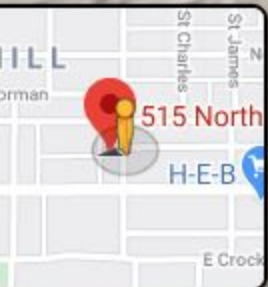
Canton



Pickett Academy

515 North Palmetto

Google



Historic and Design Review Commission

Design Review Committee Report



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**

DATE: April 22, 2020

HDRC Case #: [2020-18315](#) (or resubmit)

New Construction – site plan

Meeting Location: WebEx

APPLICANT: Ricardo McCullough

DRC Members present: Jay Gibbs (JG)

Others present: Staff Huy Pham (HP), Staff Edward Hall (EH)

REQUEST:

Conceptual approval for a 6 residential unit site plan

COMMENTS/CONCERNS:

JG: If the 6-unit plan is to be approved, the driveways should extend all the way through the property from N palmetto to the alley instead of exclusive alley entry, and the 'front' parking pad on alley side should be removed.

JG: If the 6-unit plan is to be approved, there would need to be more appropriate backyard spaces. As proposed, neighbors can look down and into each other's properties from the second floor windows.

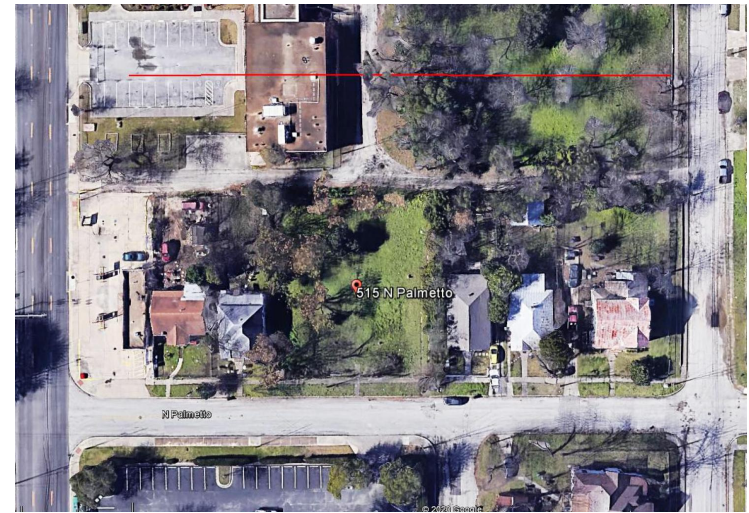
OVERALL COMMENTS:

JG: 6 square units as proposed is too crowded, but one or two story is not a concern.

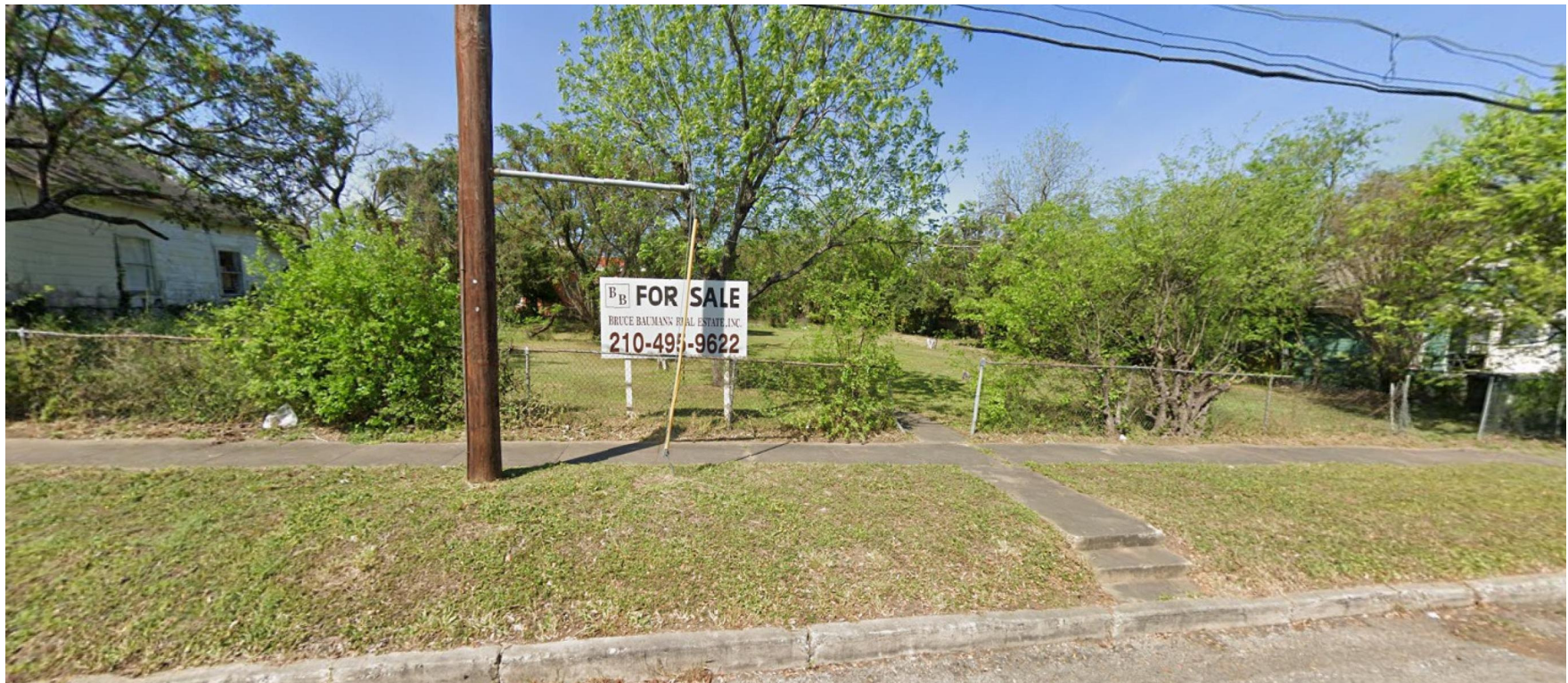
JG: The 3 one-story units plan would be more appropriate than 6 two-story units.



SITE MAP



AERIAL VIEW



EXISTING PROJECT SITE

515, 517, 519 NORTH PALMETTO, DIGNOWITY HILL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



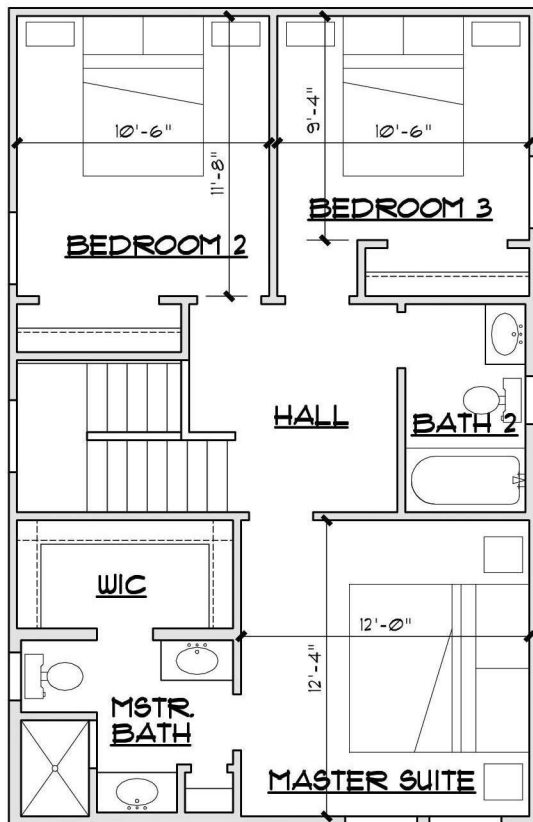
EXISTING ADJACENT STRUCTURES

515, 517, 519 NORTH PALMETTO, DIGNOWITY HILL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

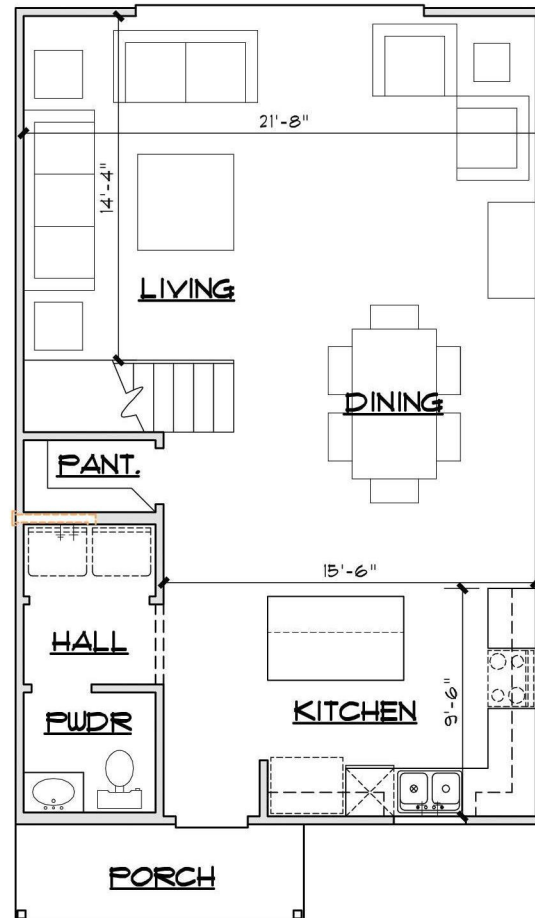


CONCEPTUAL FRONT ELEVATION

515, 517, 519 NORTH PALMETTO, DIGNOWITY HILL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



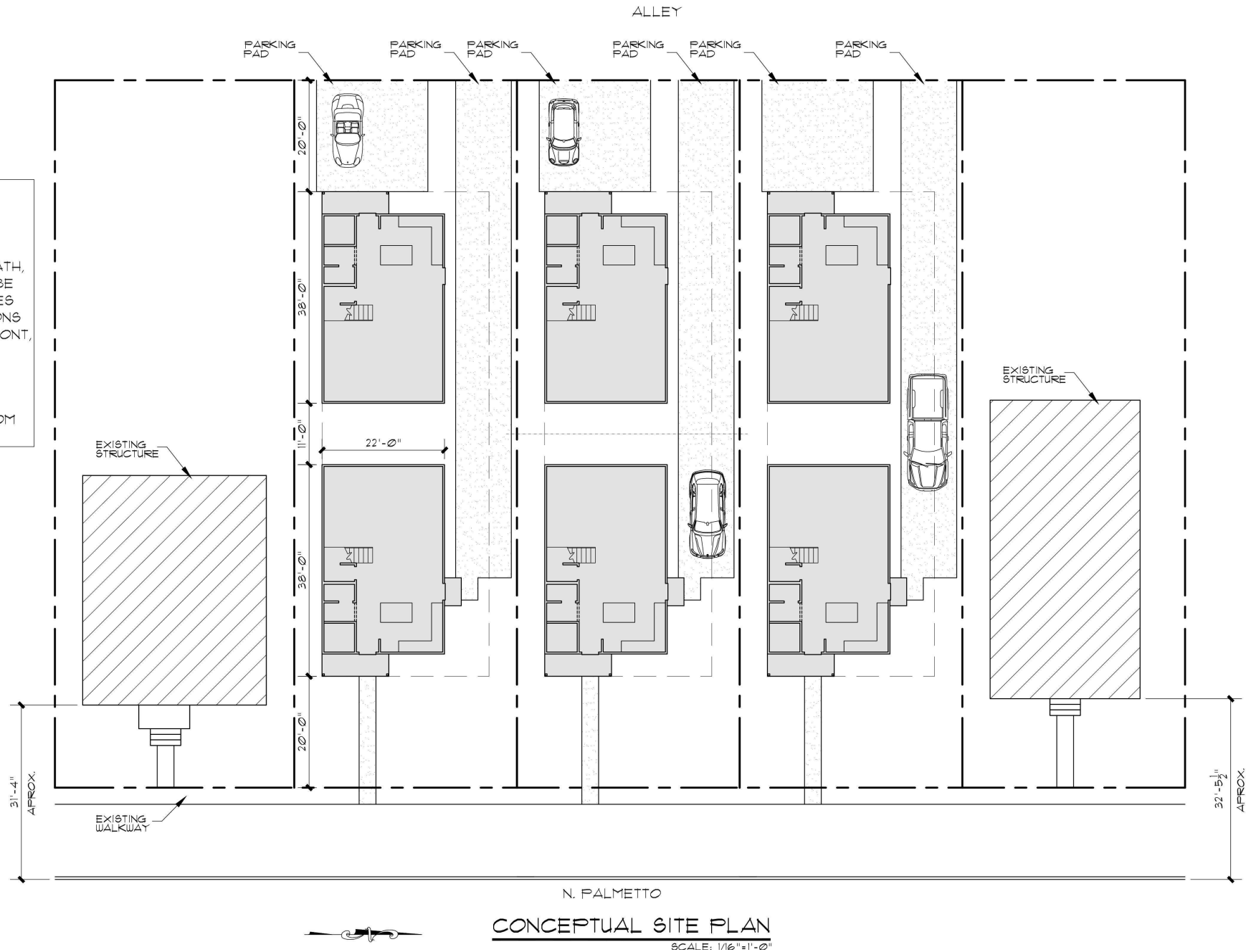
2nd FLOOR PLAN



1st FLOOR PLAN

BEFORE DRC 4/22/2020, withdrawn

PROJECT
SCOPE:
2 STORY, 3
BEDROOM, 2.5 BATH,
1,100# HOME TO BE
REPEATED 3 TIMES
WITH MODIFICATIONS
ON ROOF AND FRONT,
MAINTAINING
ARCHITECTURAL
CONSISTENCY OF
NEIGHBORHOOD.
CAR ACCESS FROM
ALLEY.



CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

515, 517, 519 NORTH PALMETTO, DIGNOWITY HILL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

PROJECT
SCOPE:
2 STORY, 3
BEDROOM, 2.5 BATH,
1,700# HOME TO BE
REPEATED 6 TIMES
WITH MODIFICATIONS
ON ROOF AND FRONT
MAINTAINING
ARCHITECTURAL
CONSISTENCY OF
NEIGHBORHOOD.





CONCEPTUAL AERIAL VIEW

515, 517, 519 NORTH PALMETTO, DIGNOWITY HILL, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS