



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

PLANNING BOARD

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To: Brookline Board of Appeals
From: Brookline Planning Board
Date: February 12, 2015
Subject: Construct a five-car parking area to the rear of the building (**revised to four-car garage**)
Location: 1471 Beacon Street

Atlas Sheet:	42	Case #:	2014-0070
Block:	214	Zoning:	M-2.5
Lot:	26	Lot Area (s.f.):	±7,613

Board of Appeals Hearing: February 26, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

BACKGROUND

September 8, 1994, and October 27, 1994 – The Planning Board recommended denial, and the Board of Appeals allowed the withdrawal, of an application for zoning relief to construct a retaining wall and five parking spaces at the rear of the subject property.

February 2012 – 1471 Beacon Street was severely damaged by fire. A permit was issued February 13, 2012, to install plywood over all windows and doors and make the needed repairs to secure the building.

December 14, 2012, Board of Appeals Case #2012-0059 – The Board of Appeals granted approval for the applicant to convert the 10 unit building to 11 units and construct new decks. The original proposal included a garage to the rear of the property. The applicant revised the proposal not to include the garage. The applicant is now requesting permission to construct the previously proposed garage.

November 13, 2014 – The Planning Board requested that the applicant submit better plans illustrating the access from Beacon Street and the alleyway and have more discussions with the Griggs Terrace neighbors.

SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

1471 Beacon Street is the end building in a series of attached multi-family buildings on the south side of Beacon Street between Coolidge Corner and Washington Square. The four-story building's front façade is finished with pre-cast concrete, while the sides and rear are brick. The front façade has a large center entrance with a large bay on both sides. Two smaller entrance ways at the basement level exist on either side of the center entrance. The immediate abutter to the west is a small one-story commercial building, currently used as a daycare center. Other buildings along Beacon Street are large multi-family buildings similar in size and style to the subject property.

Despite appearing to have four levels when viewed from Beacon Street, the lot also has a basement, referred to as the garden level, and a sub-basement. The lot has a dramatic grade difference, approximately 30 feet, between the Beacon Street front lot line and the rear lot line. The rear yard is sloped and vegetated, and pedestrian access is possible up an existing flight of stairs from a rear alleyway on the abutting property. The rear alleyway is approximately 10 feet wide. Surrounding properties at the rear are residential, including a garage used by a nearby condominium building.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant, Brookline Development Corp., is proposing to construct a parking garage to the rear of the subject property, for a total of five parking spaces. The garage would be accessed from an alley off of Beacon Street and through an existing passageway abutting the rear of the property. The applicant will excavate the hillside for the proposed garage and will landscape the roof of the garage.

2/4/15 - The applicant revised the proposal to an open parking area with sides, rather than a garage. The proposed open parking area would have a wood ivy trellis at the rear wall beginning from 9' above the parking area slab to the top of the wall at 17'10". The parking area would be asphalt and the walls would be concrete. The parking area would have parking spaces for five vehicles. By eliminating the landscaped garage roof, variance relief was triggered for landscaped open space.

2/12/15 – The applicant revised the proposal from a five-car parking area to a four car parking garage with a landscaped roof.

FINDINGS

Section 5.01, Footnote 1, Table of Dimensional Requirements: Garage entrances that face the street must be set back at least 20 feet from the street. The alleyway is considered a street under the Zoning By-Law.

Section 5.09.2.a – Design Review: Any exterior alteration or addition to a building with frontage on Beacon Street, or to a multiple dwelling with four or more units, requires a special permit subject to the design review standards listed under *Section 5.09.4(a-l)*, Community and Environmental Impact and Design Standards. The most relevant sections of these standards are described below:

- a. Preservation of Trees and Landscape – Most of the landscaping at the rear of the building will be removed during construction. The applicant has indicated new

landscaping will be planted on the rear terrace and the top of the garage.

b. Relation of Buildings to Environment – The proposed garage will require the removal of several trees at the rear slope of the site.

c. Relation of Buildings to the Form of the Streetscape and Neighborhood – The proposed garage will not be visible from Beacon Street. There is not a similar parking area along this portion of the alley, though the rest of the alley area is used for parking.

d. Open Space – The proposal creates a new landscaped terrace on top of the roof. The proposal, as revised, would remove nearly all landscaped area at the rear of the building.

e. Circulation – The proposed garage will use a 10'-wide easement at the back for access. The garage entrance will be setback from the property line (easement center line) by 5'. The Planning Board is not convinced there will be enough space to back out of the garage without crossing the easement and infringing on the property to the rear.

Section 5.43 – Exceptions to Yard and Setback Regulations

Section 5.50 – Front Yard Requirements

Section 5.53 – Accessory Buildings in the Front Yard

Section 5.60 – Side Yard Requirements

Dimensional Requirements	Required	Existing	Proposed	Relief
Front Yard Setback	20'	N/A	5'	Special Permit*
Side Yard Setback	16'	N/A	2'	Special Permit*
Side Yard Setback	16'	N/A	7'3"	Special Permit*
Landscaped Open Space	2,478 s.f. 10% of g.f.a.	2,788 s.f.**	1,800 s.f.†	Variance

* Under **Section 5.43**, the Board of Appeals may waive yard and setback requirements if a counterbalancing amenity is provided.

** When BOA Case #2012-0059 was approved by the Board of Appeals in 2012, that proposal indicated compliance with landscaped open space, and this calculation (2,788 s.f.) is from those plans. Plans submitted for the current proposal indicate only 2,276 s.f. of existing landscaped open space; the applicant has not indicated the reason for this difference and new deficiency.

† No more than 30% of required landscaped open space may be hardscape, and it is not clear whether the landscaped space over the garage is "ground level," as required by **Section 2.15.3**.

Section 5.90 – Minimum Landscaped Open Space

Section 6.04.12 – Design of All Off-Street Parking Facilities

This section allows for the Board of Appeals to grant a special permit to waive dimensional requirements for the construction of a garage structure serving an existing residential structure.

Modification, as necessary, of BOA Case #2012-0059 December 14, 2012.

If application is approved, a new landscaping plan would need to be submitted.

PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS

The Planning Board was mostly supportive of the proposed four-car parking area at the rear of this multi-family dwelling. A majority of the board members felt that the parking plan had been improved with a reduction in the number of parking spaces from five to four, and this proposal would be a reasonable improvement to the property.

A minority of the Board felt that though the revised proposal with four parking spaces was an improvement from the initial proposal, it still did not meet the standards for special permit relief; the location is not appropriate for a four-car garage, which would adversely impact pedestrians and vehicle movement. Since the right of way is only 10 feet wide, there is not enough space for vehicles to pass each other as well as maneuver and park. The landscaped area at the rear is the only buffer between the smaller scale residential dwellings on Griggs Terrace and the larger multi-family development along Beacon Street, and it is not clear what the counterbalancing amenity for this proposal would be.

Therefore, the Planning Board voted (3-2) to recommend approval of the parking facility plans by O’Sullivan Architects, Inc., dated 2/10/15, subject to the following conditions:

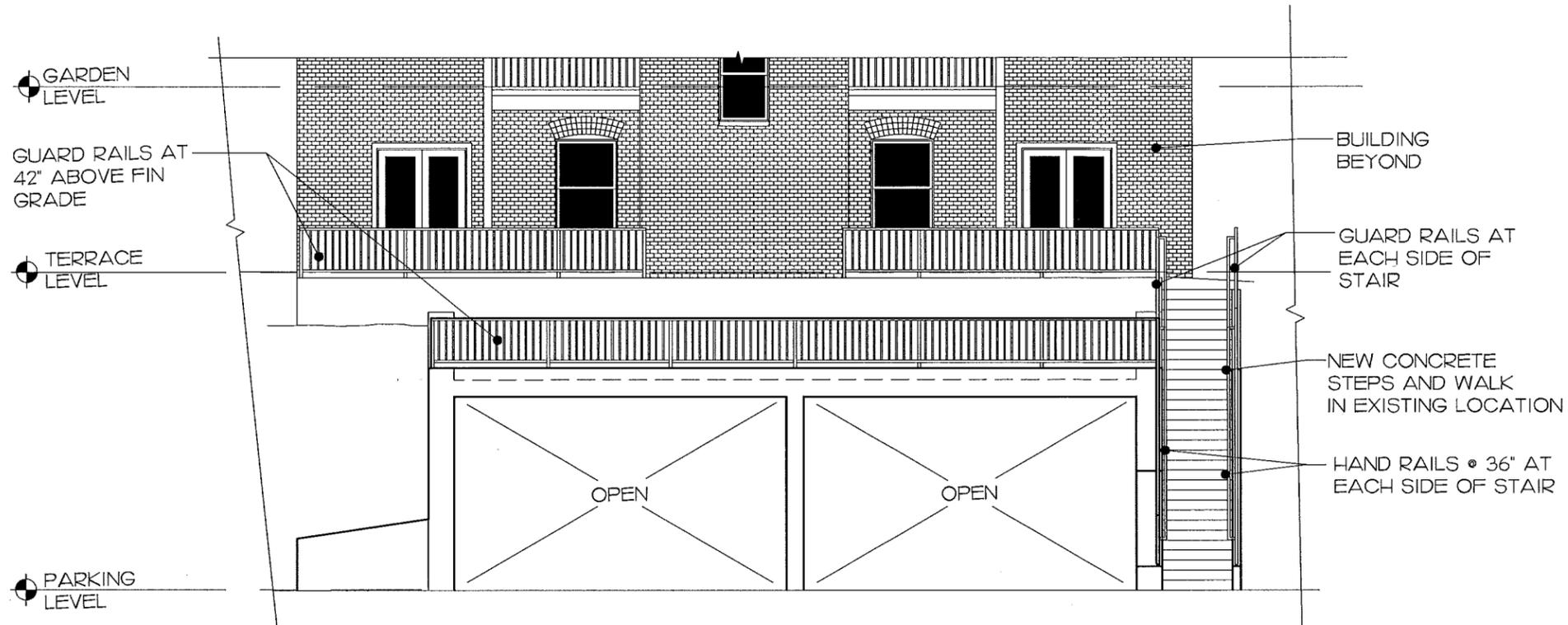
1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit final plans and elevations, indicating all dimensions and materials, including an exterior treatment for the walls other than blank concrete, subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.
2. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a circulation plan for the parking area, subject to the review and approval of the Director of Transportation and Engineering.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final landscape plan, stamped and signed by a registered landscape architect, indicating substantial counterbalancing amenities, subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.
4. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a construction management plan for the garage, subject to the review and approval of the Building Commissioner.
5. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval for conformance to the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; 2) final elevations stamped and signed by a registered architect; and 3) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Pss/tcr/lkch

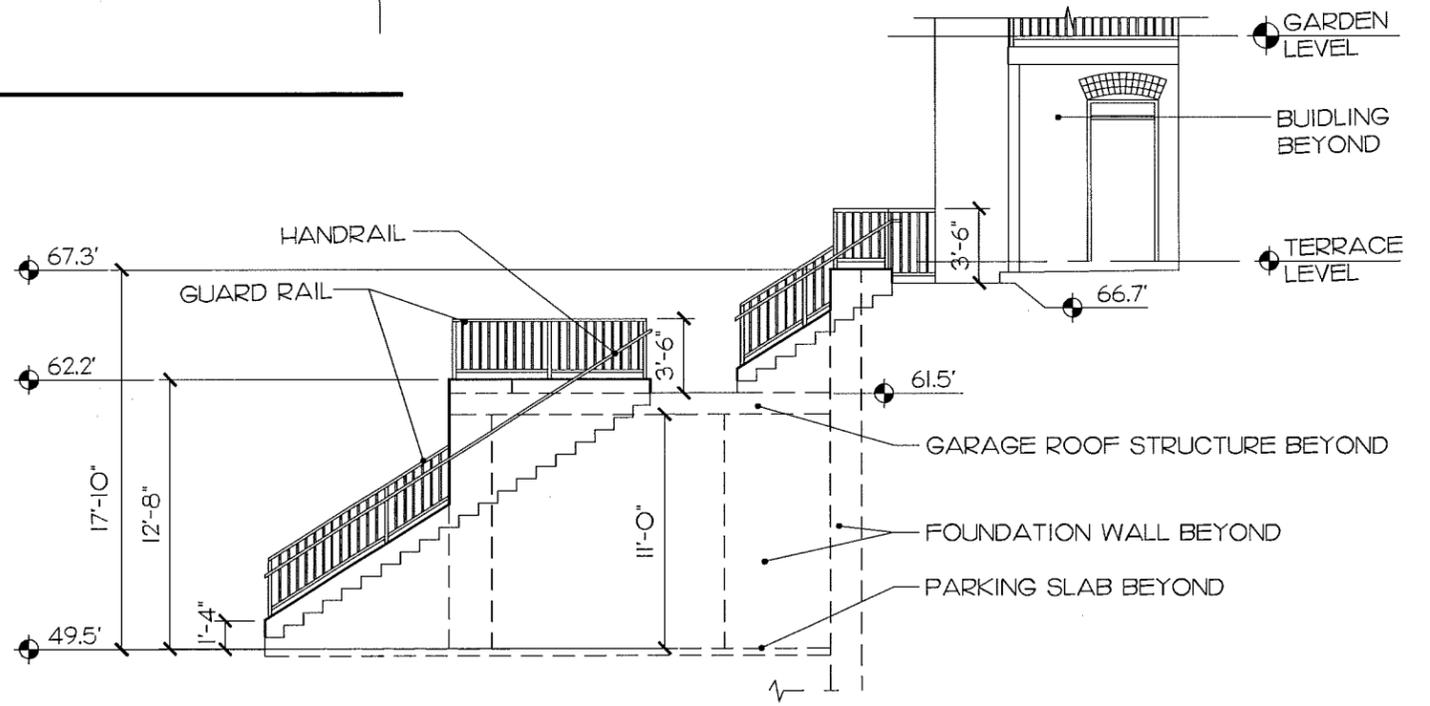
Aerial View of Rear of 1471 Beacon Street



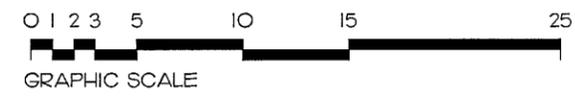




3 Rear Elevation



4 Section



	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
# OF UNITS		10	11
LOT SIZE MINIMUM (SQ. FT.)	NONE	7,613 SQFT	7,613 SQFT
FLOOR AREA RATIO MAXIMUM	2.5	2.8	3.25
LOT WIDTH MINIMUM	NONE	49.2 FT.	49.2 FT.
HEIGHT MAXIMUM	50	+/- 47.6 FT.	+/- 47.6 FT.
FRONT YARD (FEET)	19.76	15 FT.	15 FT.

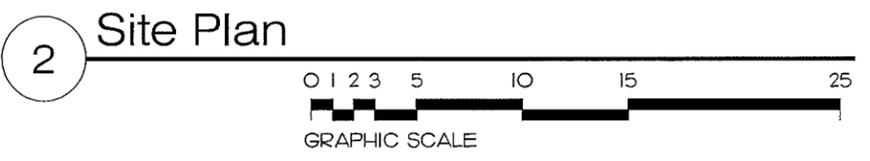
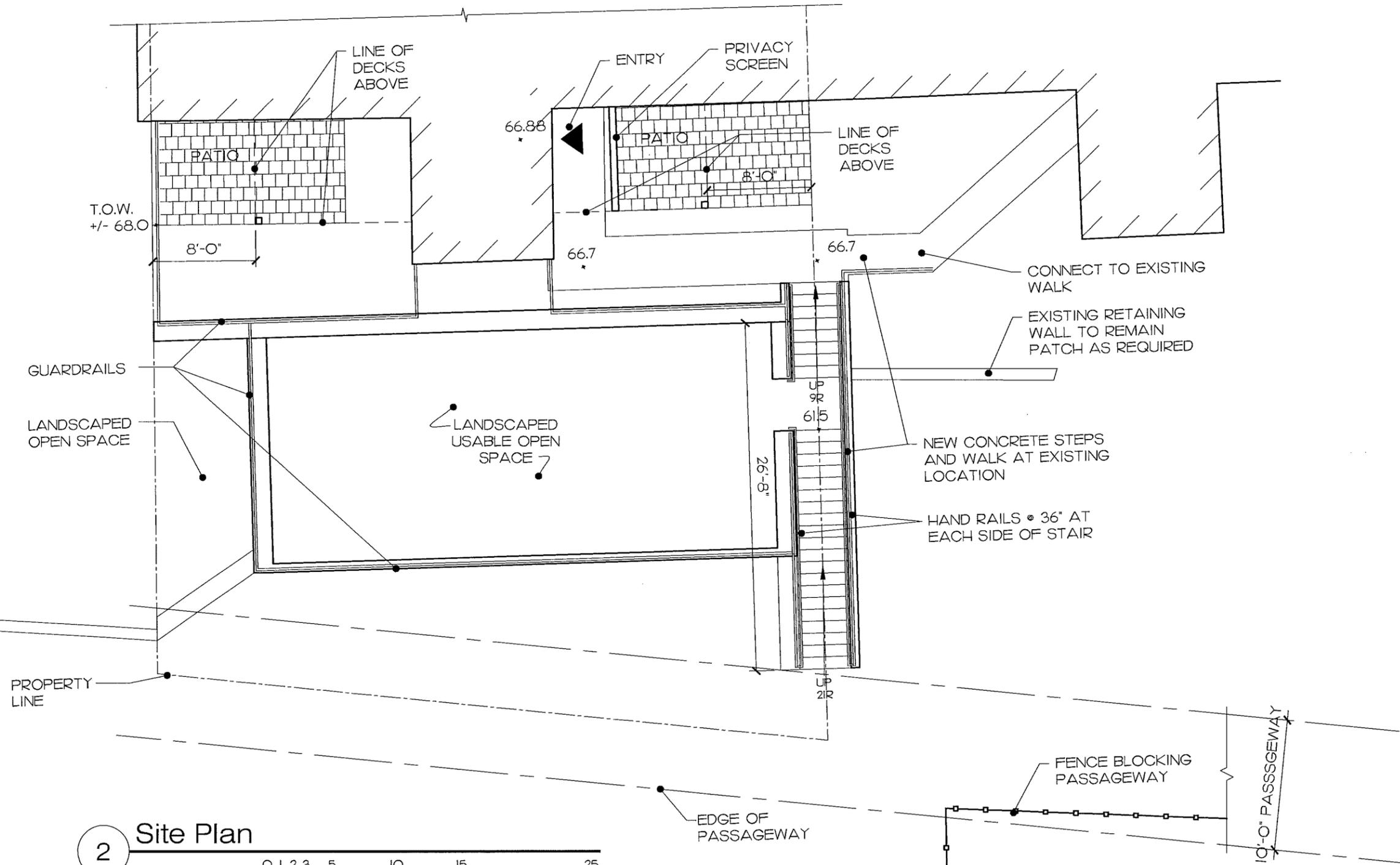
	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
MAIN BUILDING SIDE YARD (FEET)	24.6	0 FT.	8 FT. TO NEW DECKS
MAIN BUILDING REAR YARD (CONSIDERED FRONT)	19.76	33.21 FT.	33.21 FT.
USABLE OPEN SPACE	5% OF G.F.A.		
EXISTING	1,070 SQFT	624 SQFT	-
PROPOSED	1,239 SQFT.	-	1,287 FT
LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE	10% OF GFA		
EXISTING	2,140 SQFT.	2,276 SQFT	-
PROPOSED	2,478 SQFT.	-	1,137 SQFT
OFF STREET PARKING	25 SPACES (FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION)	0	5

Zoning

1471 Beacon Street
New Parking Facility
Brookline, MA

February 10, 2015 Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

O'SULLIVAN ARCHITECTS, INC.
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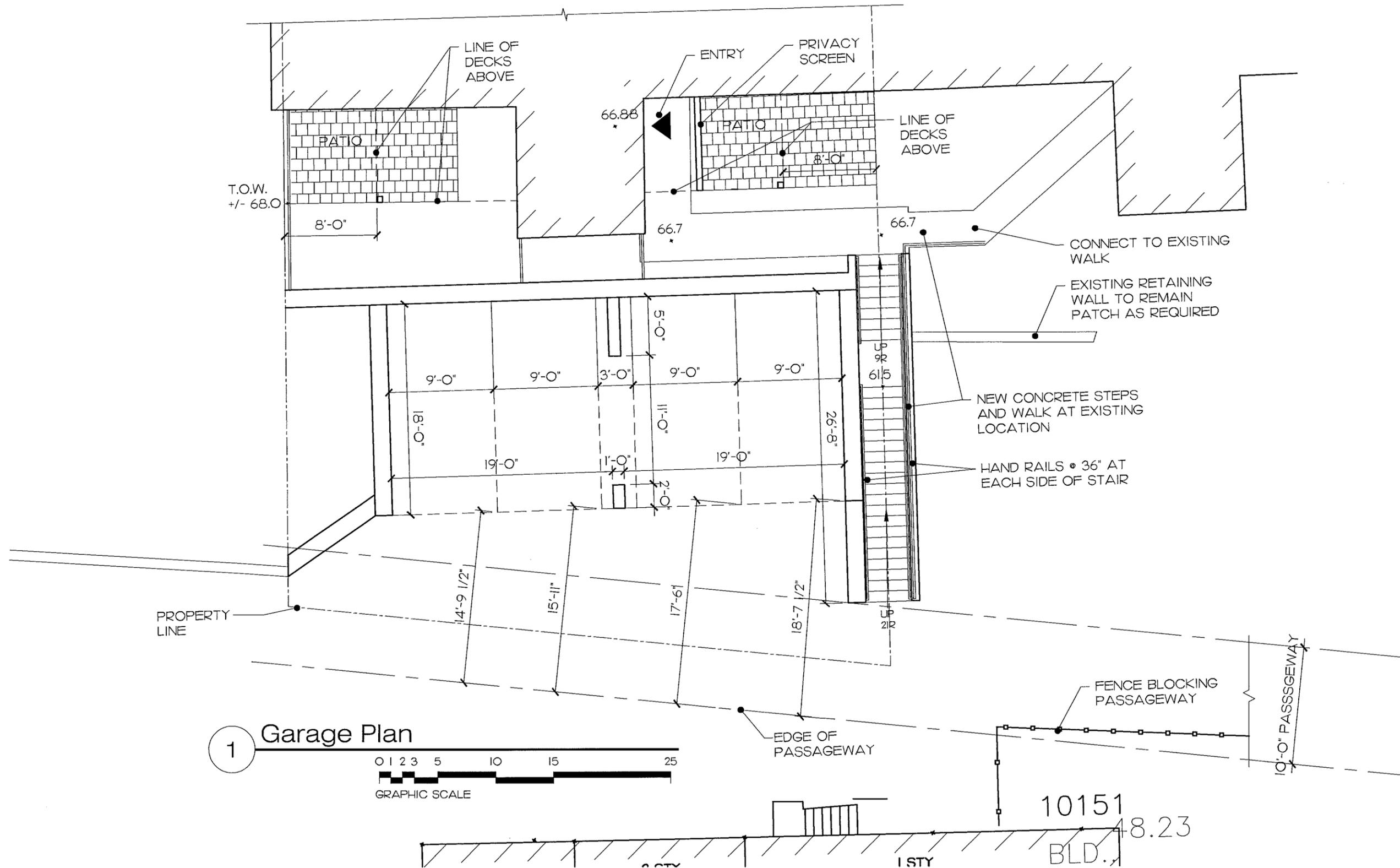


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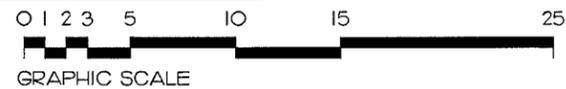
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1 Garage Plan



1471 Beacon Street
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Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

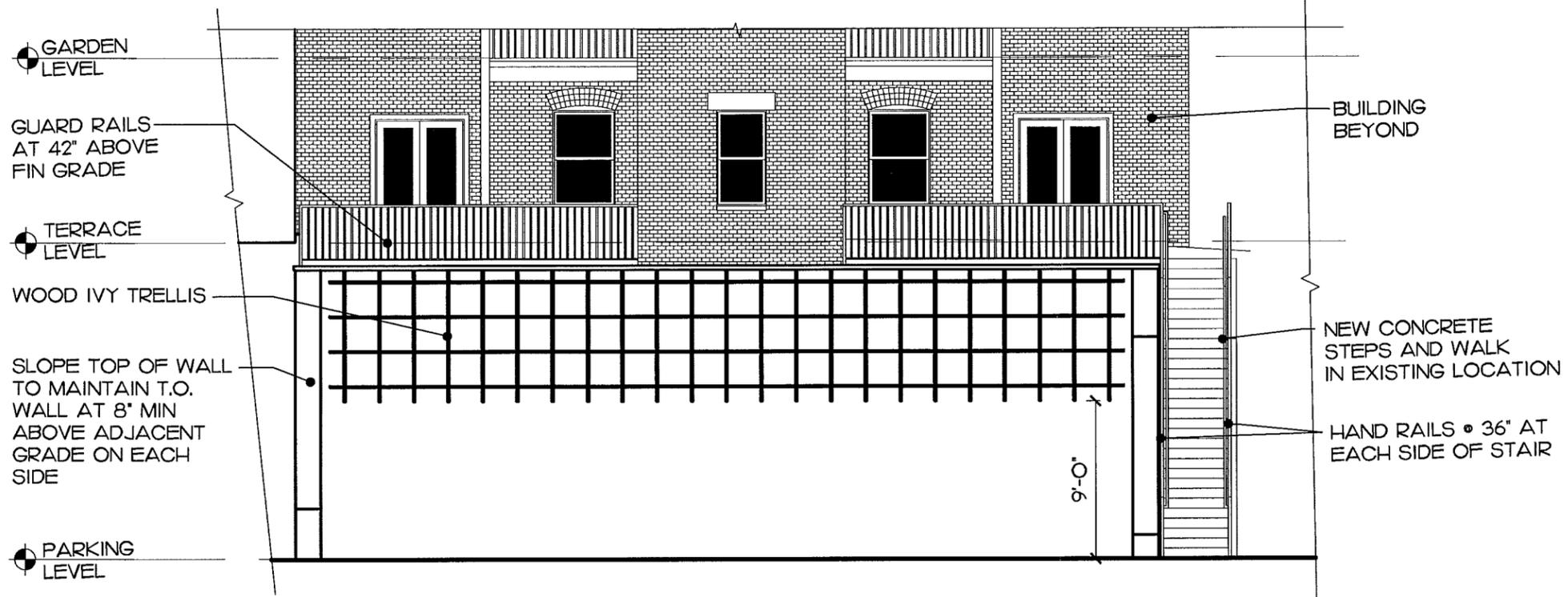


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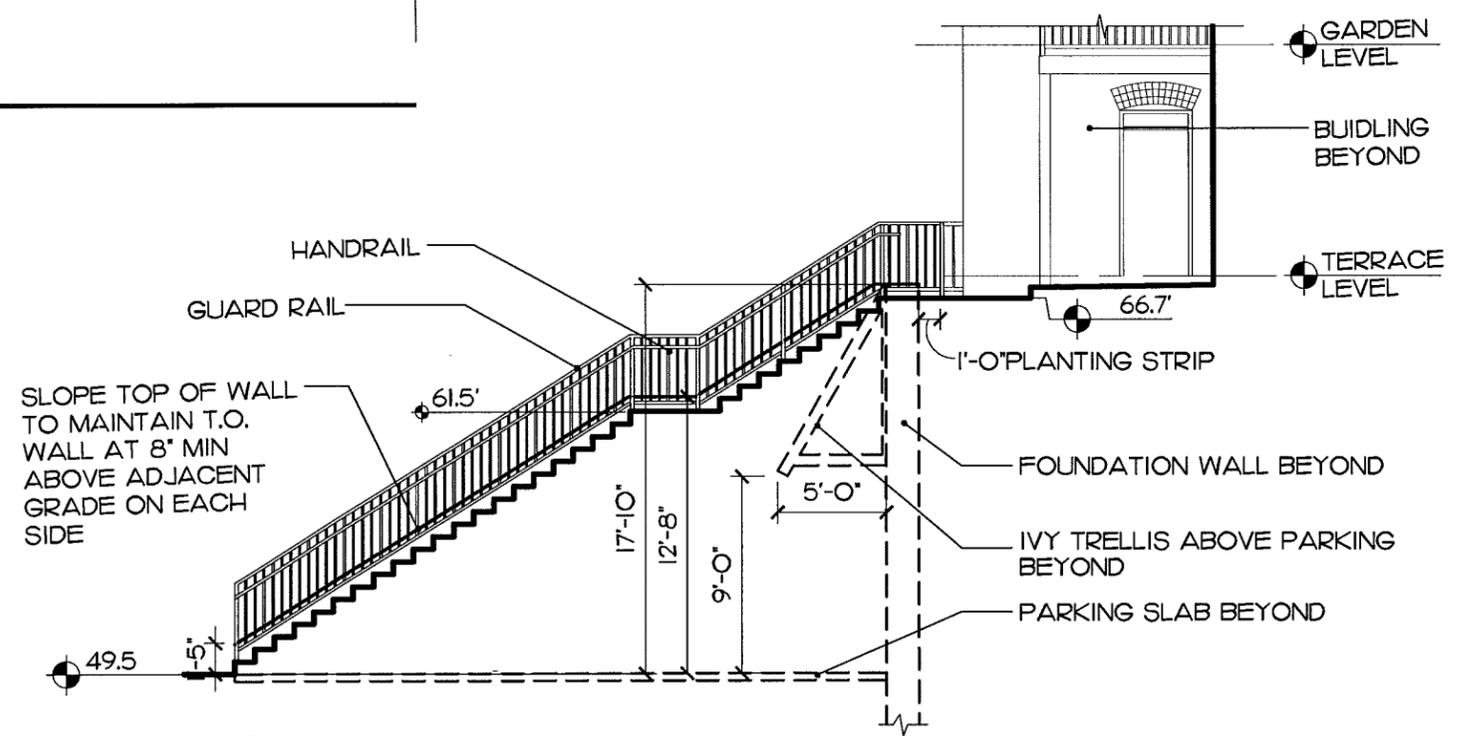
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3 Rear Elevation

	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
# OF UNITS		10	11
LOT SIZE MINIMUM (SQ. FT.)	NONE	7,613 SQFT	7,613 SQFT
FLOOR AREA RATIO MAXIMUM	25	28	3.25
LOT WIDTH MINIMUM	NONE	49.2 FT.	49.2 FT.
HEIGHT MAXIMUM	50	+/- 47.6 FT.	+/- 47.6 FT.
FRONT YARD (FEET)	19.76	15 FT.	15 FT.

	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
MAIN BUILDING SIDE YARD (FEET)	24.6	0 FT.	8 FT. TO NEW DECKS
MAIN BUILDING REAR YARD (CONSIDERED FRONT)	19.76	33.21 FT.	33.21 FT.
USABLE OPEN SPACE	5% OF G.F.A.		
EXISTING	1,070 SQFT	624 SQFT	N/A
PROPOSED	1,239 SQFT.	N/A	0 FT
LANDSCAPED OPEN SPACE	10% OF G.F.A.		
EXISTING	2,140 SQFT.	2,276 SQFT	N/A
PROPOSED	2,478 SQFT.	N/A	1,522 SQFT
OFF STREET PARKING	25 SPACES (FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION)	0	5



4 Section

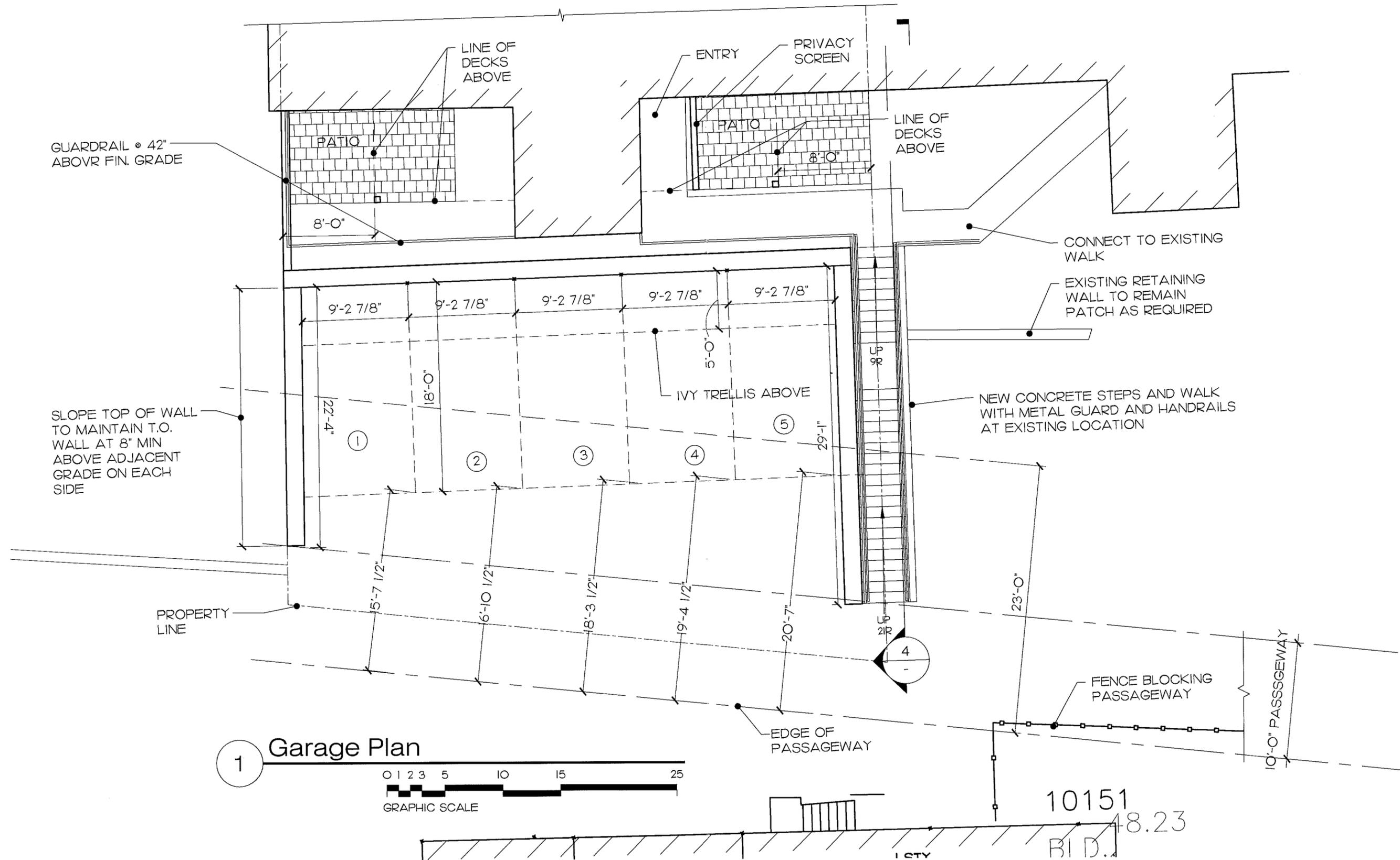


Zoning

1471 Beacon Street
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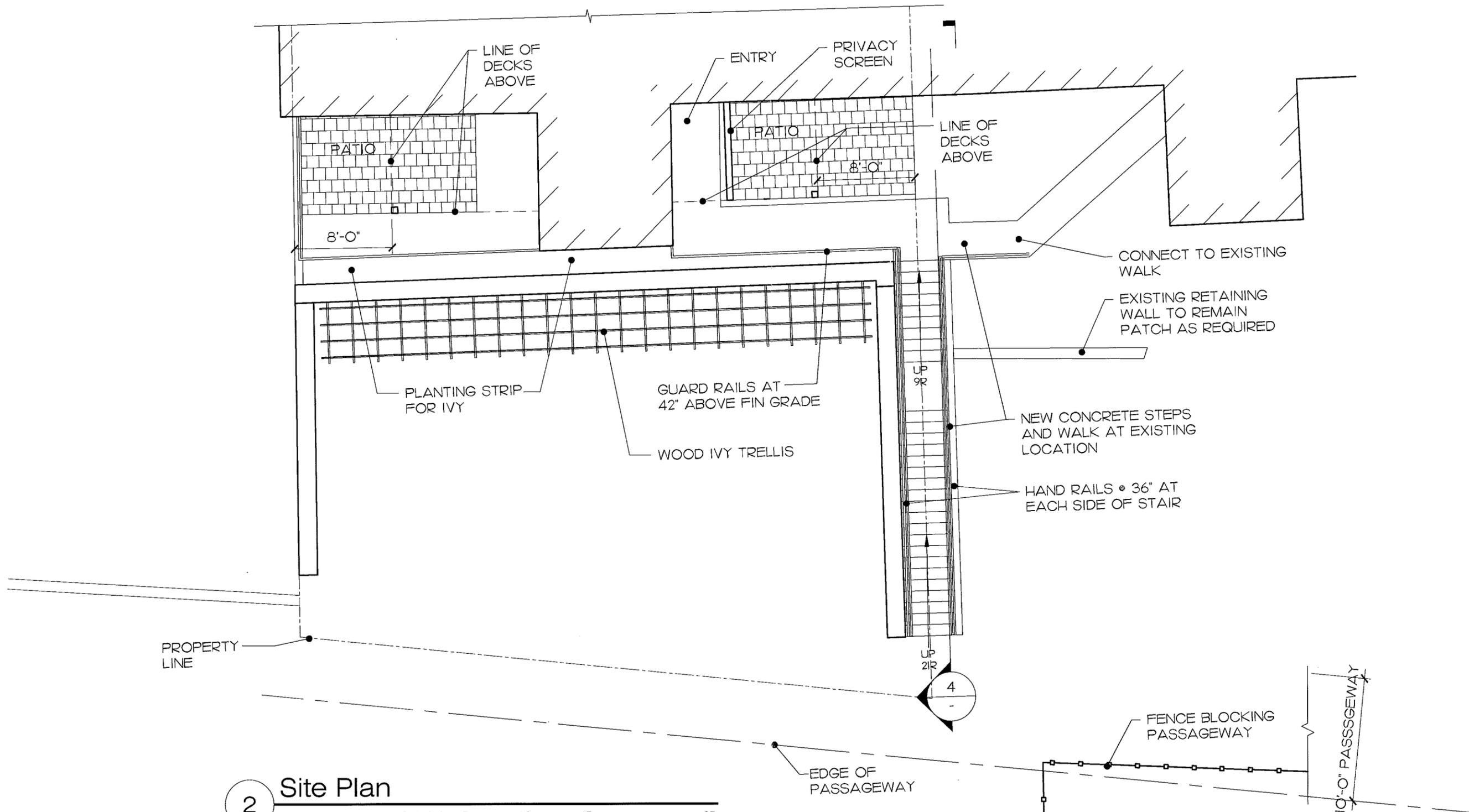
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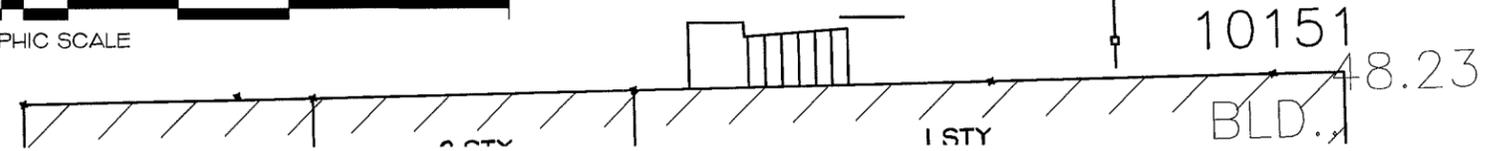
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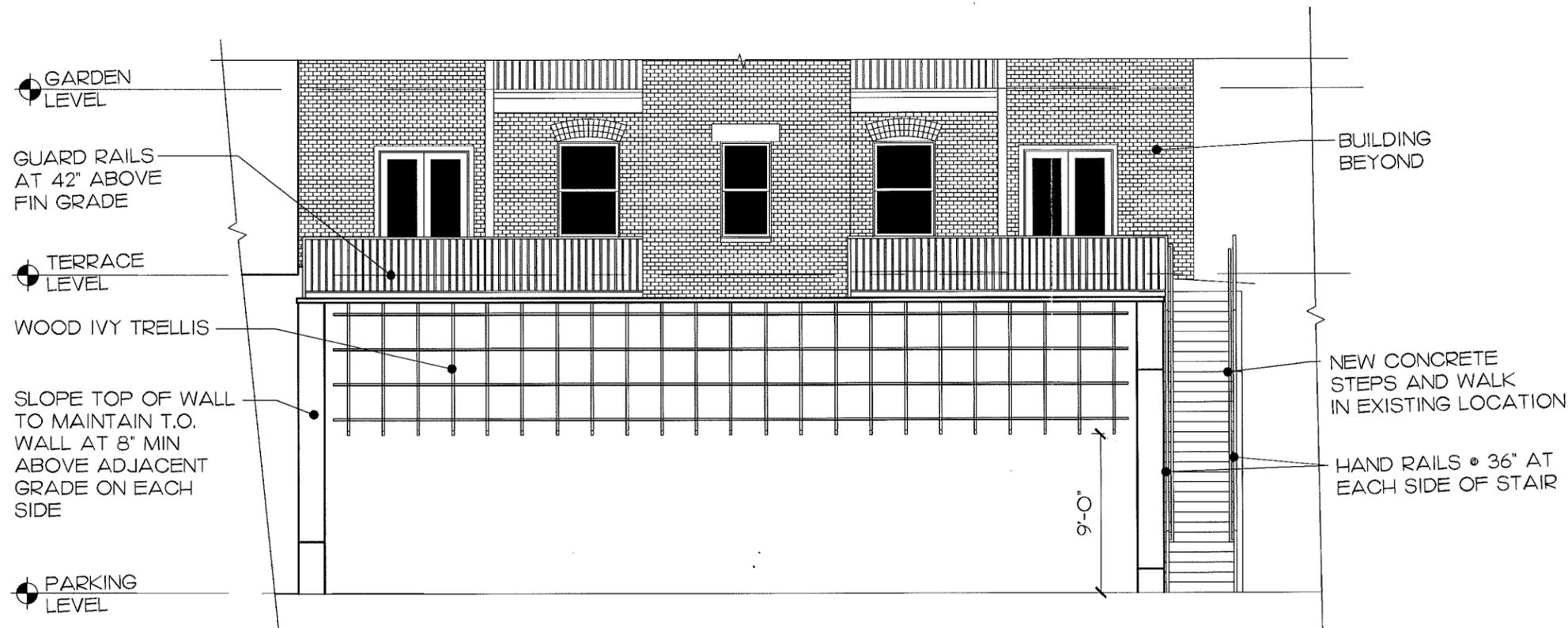
2 Site Plan



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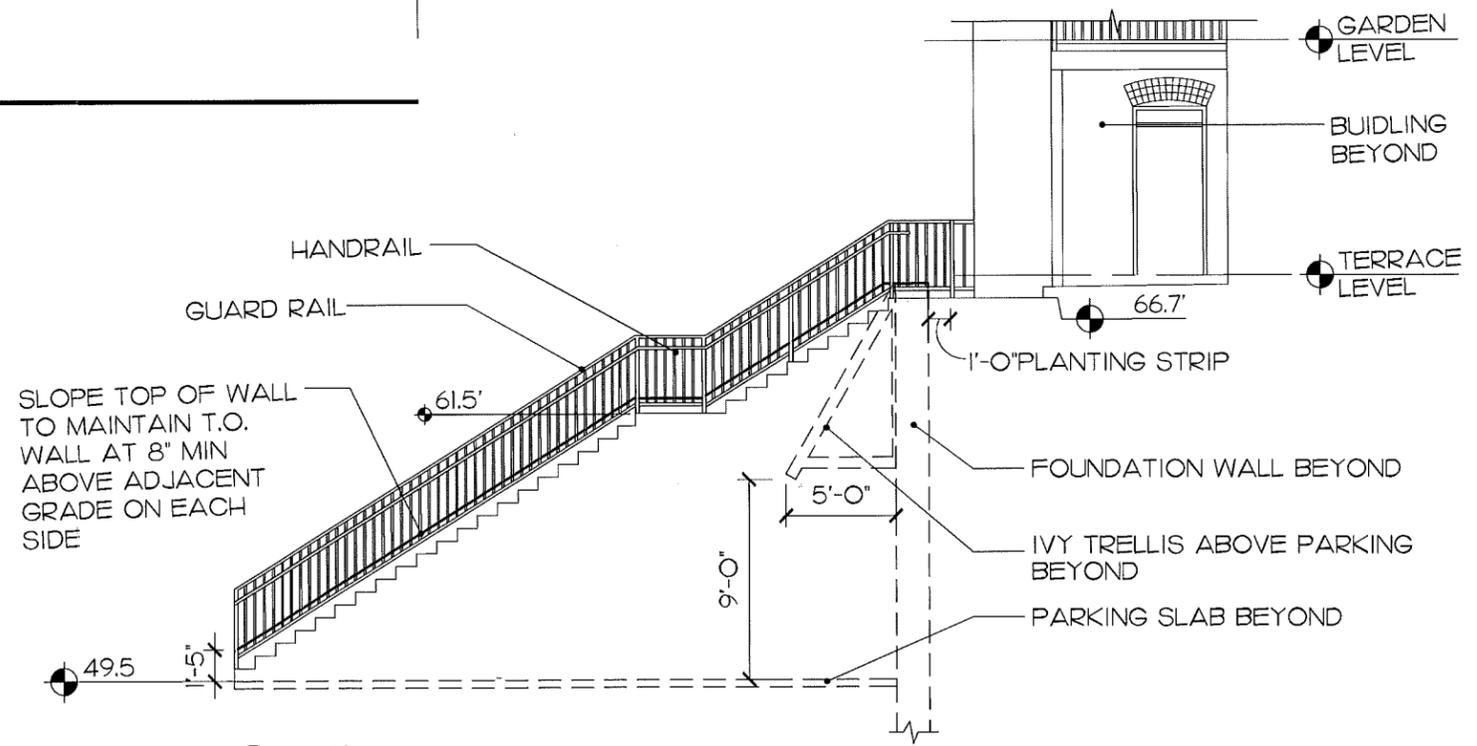


3 Rear Elevation

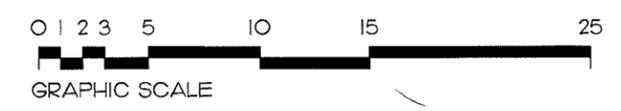
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