



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

PLANNING BOARD

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Linda Hamlin, Chairman
Steven Heikin, Clerk
Robert Cook
Blair Hines
Sergio Modigliani
Mathew Oudens
Mark J. Zarrillo

To: Brookline Board of Appeals
From: Brookline Planning Board
Date: January 7, 2016
Subject: Relocate and reconfigure basement living space
Location: 25 Alton Court

Atlas Sheet:	32	Case #:	2015-0056
Block:	155	Zoning:	M-1.0
Lot:	41-01	Lot Area (s.f.):	±6,104

Board of Appeals Hearing: January 14, 2015, at 7:05 p.m.

BACKGROUND

March 2015 – A building permit was issued to renovate interior and exterior portions of the three-family structure located at 25 Alton Court. Exterior renovations include masonry repair (brick façade, mortar, chimneys, stone trim), window repair, and the installation of a 525 square foot roof deck.

SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

25 Alton Court is a three-family apartment building located at the end of a private way. This three-story row house was constructed of brick and stone in 1910. The rear yard presents a significant grade change that slopes down from the rear of the structure toward Aspinwall Avenue. The subject property is also part of a larger apartment/condominium complex comprised of similar attached row houses along Alton Court (4-26). The surrounding neighborhood includes comparable dense residential development along Alton Place, St. Paul Street, and Stearns Road. The subject property is located approximately 1 block to the east of Harvard Street, directly to the rear of Stop and Shop supermarket. The property is minimally visible from Harvard Street but is located beyond 100 feet from this primary thoroughfare.

APPLICANT’S PROPOSAL

The Applicant, James Keliher, is proposing to reconfigure residential unit #1, located at the first floor and basement level, in order to improve natural light and resident privacy. Existing finished basement space at the front of the structure will be converted to a storage area while currently unfinished space at the rear will be converted to a game room. The “decommissioned” storage space is still included in gross floor area calculations for the structure, requiring zoning relief for the resulting floor area ratio (FAR). This basement reconfiguration results in a gross floor area increase of 199 square feet and requires no significant exterior modification.

The Applicant is also proposing to install a 529 square foot roof deck that will be accessed exclusively from residential unit #3. This roof deck satisfies the dimensional requirements for usable open space (15’ x 15’) and does not require zoning relief.

FINDINGS

Section 5.22.3.b.2 – Exceptions to Maximum Floor Area Ratio for Residential Units

Section 5.90 – Minimum Landscaped Open Space

Section 5.91 – Minimum Usable Open Space

Dimensional Requirements	Required	Existing	Proposed	Relief Required
Floor Area Ratio	6,104 s.f. 1.0	6,875 s.f. 1.13	7,074 s.f. 1.15	Special Permit*
Minimum Landscaped Open Space (10% of GFA)	707.4 s.f. 10%	4,136 s.f. 60%	4,136 s.f. 58.5%	Complies**
Minimum Usable Open Space (20% of new floor area)	39.8 s.f. 20%	0 s.f. 0%	19.9 s.f. 10%	Variance**

** Under By-Law Section 5.22.3.b.2, in the M-1.0 district, a special permit may be granted for an increase in floor area that is less than or equal to 20% of the permitted gross floor area, whether it be for an exterior addition, interior conversion, or a combination of the two.*

***Under By-Law Section 5.91, at least 75% of the area to be considered as usable open space must have a grade of less than eight percent. Additionally, usable open space located at the roof level may only be counted up to 50% of the usable open space requirement.*

Section 8.02.2 – Alteration or Extension

A special permit is required to alter a pre-existing non-conforming structure.

PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS

The Planning Board supports this floor area increase at 25 Alton Court. The proposed relocation of living space at the basement level will not alter the footprint of the structure and is intended to enhance natural light provided to the basement level residential unit. The resulting floor area increase is minimal and permitted by special permit. Additionally, the applicant continues to improve the overall condition of the property through both exterior and interior renovation.

The Planning Board acknowledges that the creation of new usable open space in the rear yard is challenging due to the topography of the lot. Open space at the roof level is provided in an effort to alleviate this non-compliant condition but does not fully satisfy usable open space requirements pursuant to By-Law Section 5.91.

The Board recommends that the Applicant consider the installation of a ground level patio at the rear of the structure to provide additional open space if approved by the condominium association. Additionally, The Board recommends the submission of a certified site plan that includes topography to ensure that the grade change of the rear yard does not disqualify this area from usable open space calculation.

Therefore, the Planning Board recommends approval of plans submitted by Guy N. Grassi, dated 3/6/2015, and the site plan submitted by Guy N. Grassi, dated 11/30/2014. Should the Board of Appeals find that the statutory requirements for a variance are met, the Planning Board recommends the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit final floor plans including gross floor area calculations and roof deck dimensions, and a surveyed final site plan including lot topography, subject to review and approval by the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning.**
- 2. 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 including lot topography stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; 2) final floor plans stamped and signed by a registered architect; and 3) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

jr



25 Alton Court – Front Façade

25 Alton Court – Rear Yard Grade Change



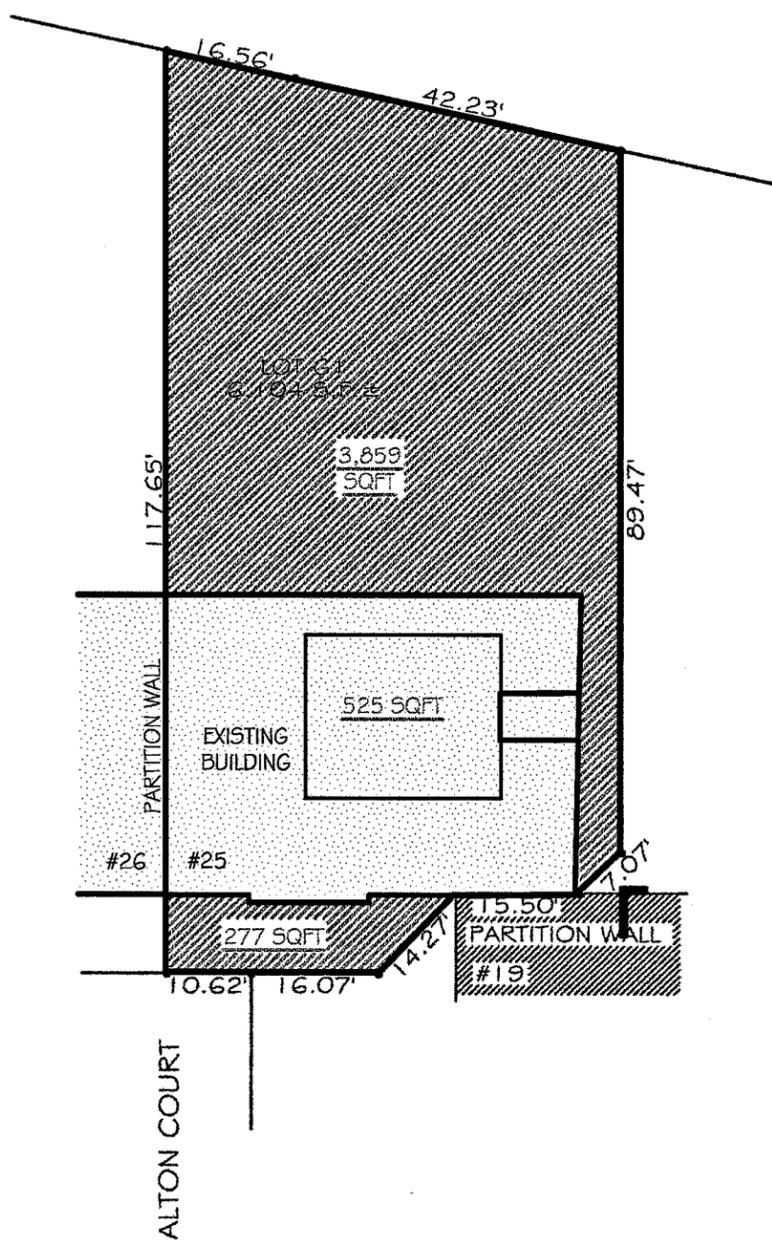
MORTGAGE INSPECTION PLAN

NORTHERN ASSOCIATES, INC.

68 PARK STREET 2ND FLOOR ANDOVER, MA. 01810 TEL:(978) 837-3335 FAX:(978) 837-3336

MORTGAGOR: JAMES E. KELIHER
 LOCATION: 25 ALTON COURT
 CITY, STATE: BROOKLINE, MA
 DATE: 11/30/2014

DEED REF: 5419/433
 PLAN REF: 2276/624
 SCALE: 1"=20'
 JOB #: 214.03499



FOR LANDSCAPE AREAS

CERTIFIED TO:

Flood hazard zone has been determined by scale and is not necessarily accurate. Until definitive plans are issued by HUD and/or a vertical control survey is performed, precise elevations cannot be determined.

NOTE: This mortgage inspection was prepared specifically for mortgage purpose only and is not to be relied upon as a land or property line survey, used for recording, preparing deed descriptions, or construction. No corners were set. Building location and offsets are approximately located on ground and are shown specifically for zoning determination only and are not to be used to establish property lines. The matters shown hereon are based on client-furnished information and may be subject to further out-sales, takings, easements and rights of way, and other matters of record and prescriptive or other rights. Northern Associates, Inc. assumes no responsibility herein to land owner or occupant, accepts no responsibility for damages resulting from said reliance by anyone other than the said mortgagee and its assigns in connection with its proposed mortgage financing to said mortgagor.

This mortgage inspection was prepared in accordance with the Technical Standards for Mortgage Loan Inspections as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors 250 CMR 605. I further state that in my professional opinion that the structures shown conform with the local zoning horizontal dimensional setback requirements at the time of construction or are exempt under provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40-A Sec. 7.

- 1. Property/House is not in Flood Hazard.
- 2. Property/House is in a Flood Hazard Area.
- 3. Information is insufficient to determine Flood Hazard.

Flood Hazard determined from latest Federal Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 25021C 0053E
 Date 07/17/2012 Zone X-UNSHADED

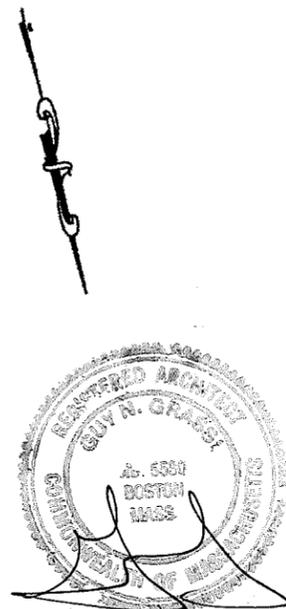
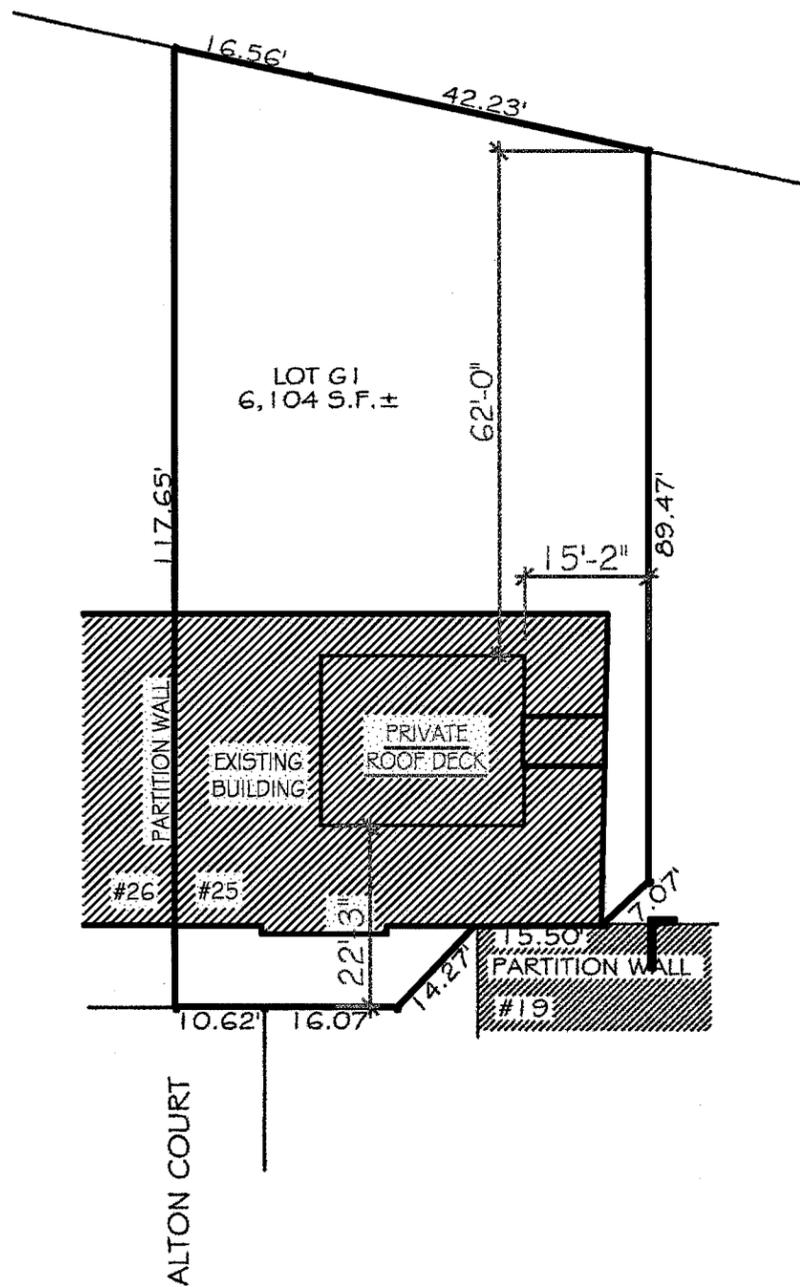
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 PLAN REF: 2276/624
 SCALE: 1"=20'
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FOR DECK SETBACK DIMENSIONS

CERTIFIED TO:

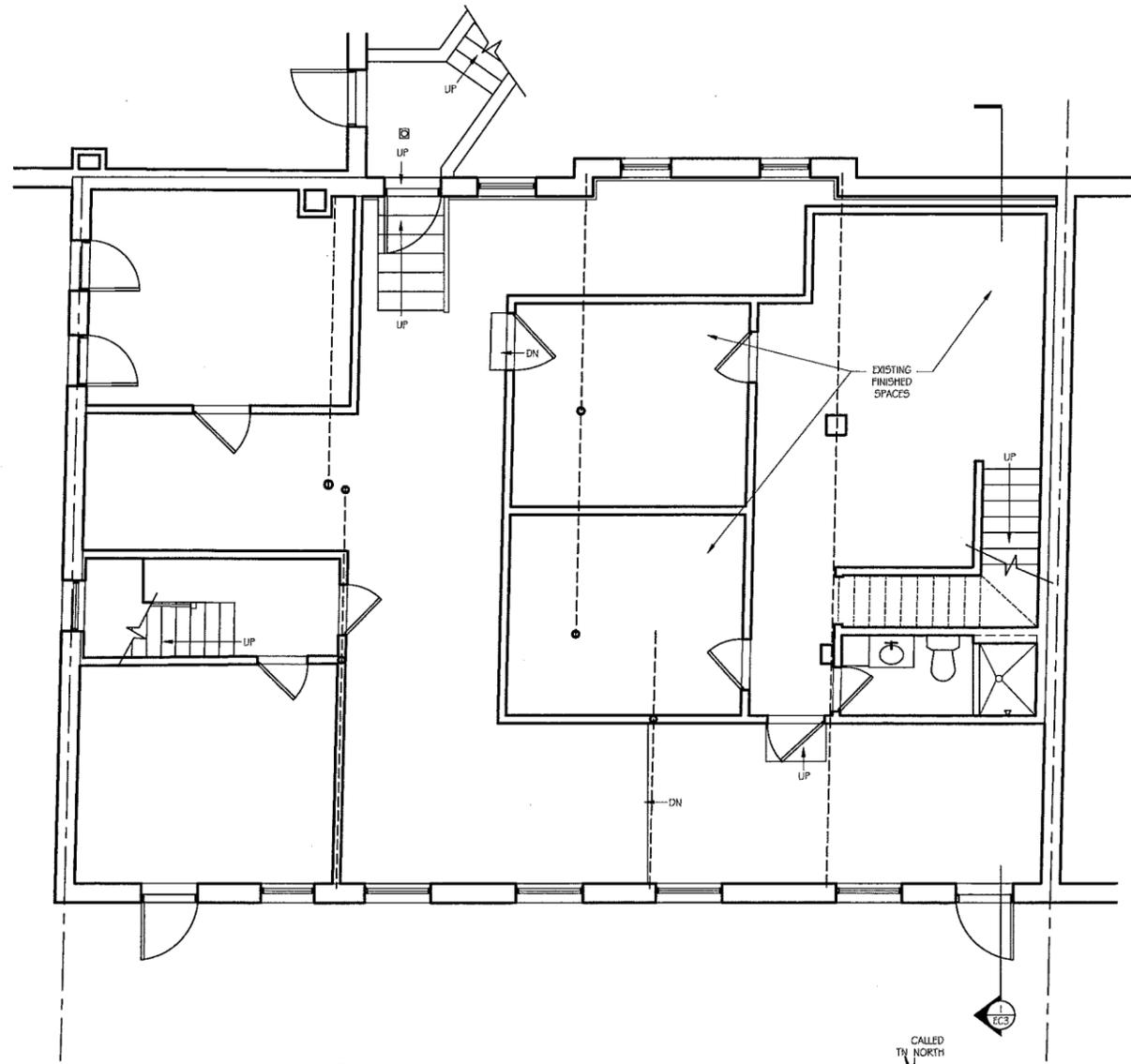
Flood hazard zone has been determined by scale and is not necessarily accurate. Until definitive plans are issued by HUD and/or a vertical control survey is performed, precise elevations cannot be determined.

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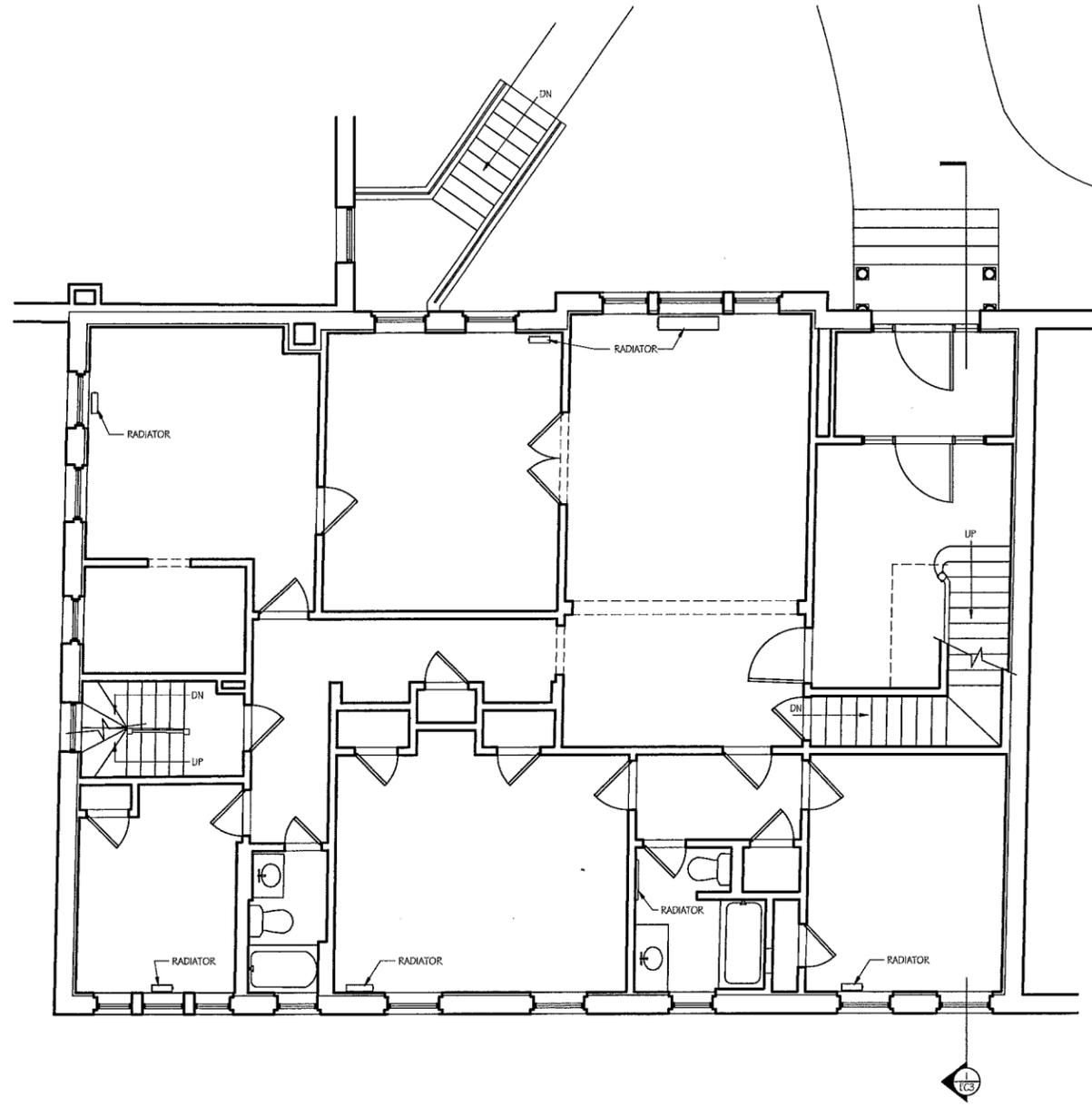
This mortgage inspection was prepared in accordance with the Technical Standards for Mortgage Loan Inspections as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors 250 CMR 8.05. I further state that in my professional opinion that the structures shown conform with the local zoning horizontal dimensional setback requirements at the time of construction or are exempt under provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40-A Sec. 7.

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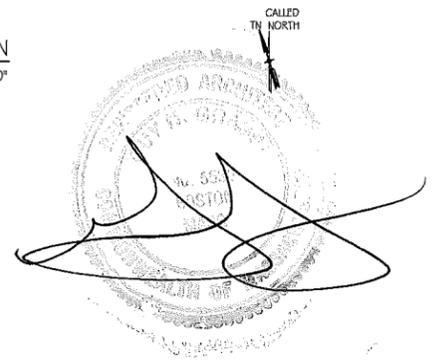
Flood Hazard determined from latest Federal Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 25021C 0053E
 Date 07/17/2012 Zone X-UNSHADED



EXISTING GARDEN FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



46 Wilburham Street, Suite 3A
Boston, MA 02118
Phone: 617-954-9993
Fax: 617-956-9993

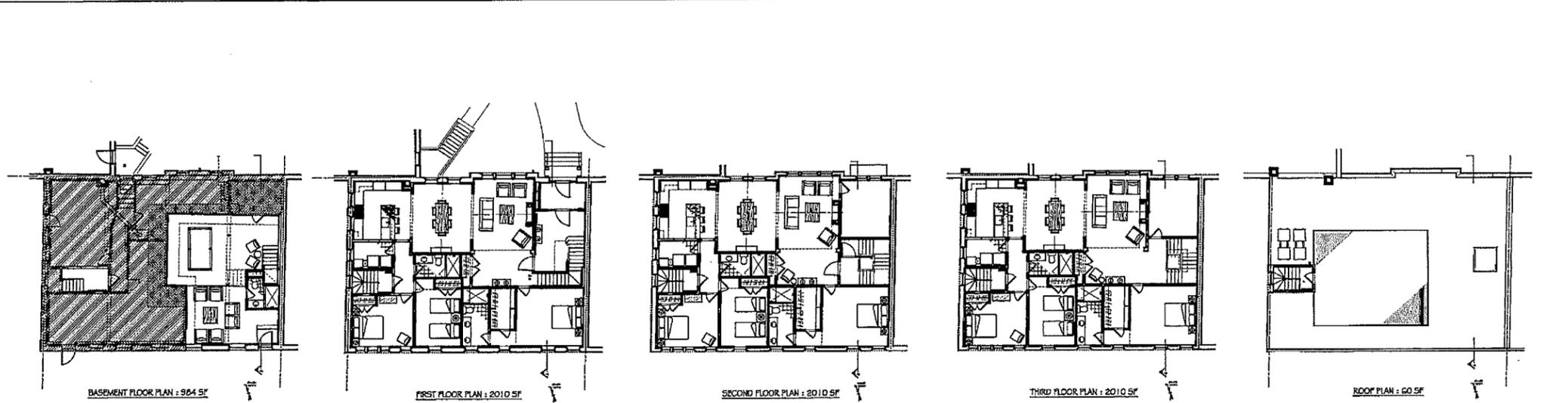
GD GRASSI DESIGN GROUP
BEAUCHEMIN GRASSI INTERIORS

JOB NO: 1431	SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"	DATE: 03.06.15	REVISED
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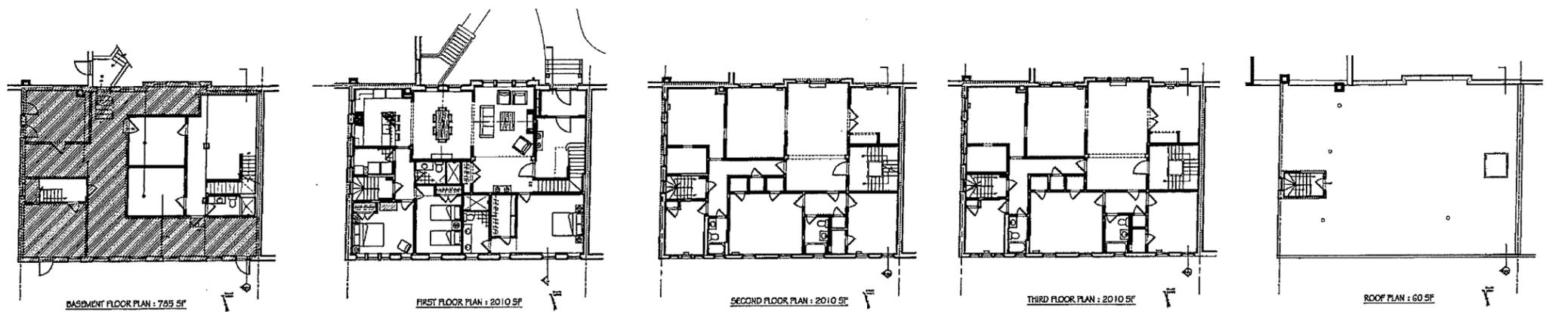
25 ALTON COURT
BROOKLINE, MA

EXISTING GARDEN AND FIRST FLOOR PLANS

EC1



PROPOSED GROSS FLOOR AREA = 7,074 SF
 SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



EXISTING GROSS FLOOR AREA = 6,875 SF
 SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

LOT AREA: 6,104 SF
 TOTAL EXISTING GROSS FLOOR AREA: 6,875 SF
 TOTAL PROPOSED GROSS FLOOR AREA: 7,074 SF
 EXISTING F.A.R.: 1.13
 PROPOSED F.A.R.: 1.15

+199 SF

LEGEND	
	AREA INCLUDED
	AREA EXCLUDED
	DECOMMISSIONED SPACE INCLUDED

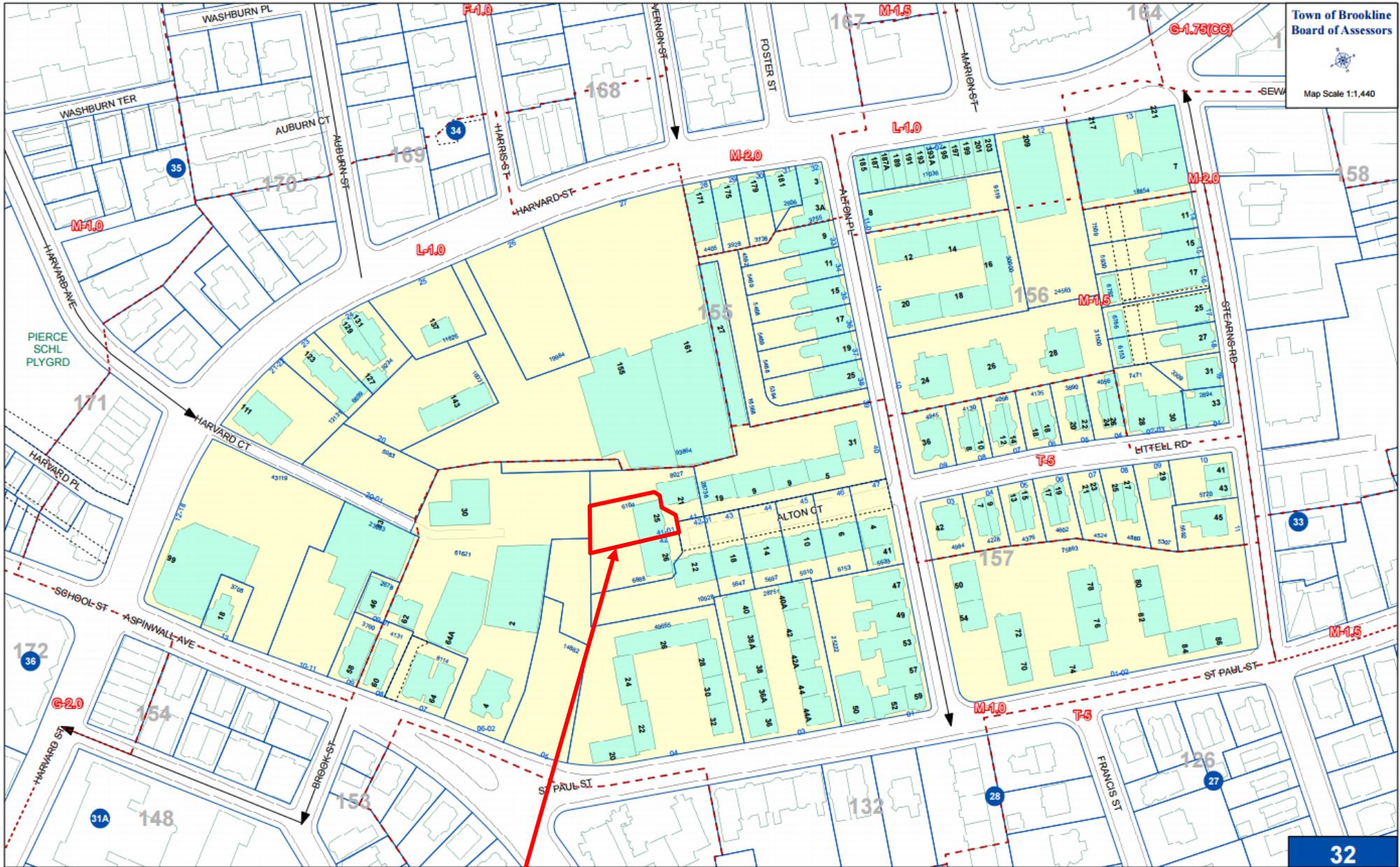
16 Walnut Street, Suite 2A
 Boston, MA 02118
 Phone 617-556-9972
 Fax 617-556-9973



JOB NO: 1431	REVISIONS
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"	
DATE: 06/17/15	

25 ALTON COURT
 BOSTON, MA

GROSS FLOOR AREA



25 Alton Court

Map data updated Feb 2010 by Town of Brookline GIS and printed on 04/08/2010