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James Freas
Acting Director

PUBLIC HEARING/WORKING SESSION MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 4, 2015
MEETING DATE April 7, 2015
TO: Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen
FROM: James Freas, Acting Director of Planning and Development
Alexandra Ananth, Chief Planner for Current Planning
Stephen Pantalone, Senior Planner
CC: Petitioner

In response to questions raised at the Land Use Committee public hearings, and/or staff technical reviews, the Planning Department is providing the following information for the upcoming public hearing/working session. This information is supplemental to staff analysis previously provided at the public hearing.

PETITION #18-15

17 Cushing Street

Request for Special Permit/Site Plan Approval to extend a nonconforming structure, and to exceed the maximum allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

The Land Use Committee (Committee) held a public hearing on February 10, 2015, and a public hearing/working session on March 3, 2015 where the Land Use Committee voted to recommend approval of the project. However, the full Board of Alderman voted to recommit the project to the Committee for further discussion.

The petitioner submitted revised plans on April 1, 2015, which reduces the square footage of the proposed project by 580 square feet. As described in more detail in the petitioner's letter, the proposed FAR was reduced from .57 in the prior submission to .50, where .40 is the maximum allowed by right. In terms of the square footage, the project was reduced from 4,899 square feet in the prior submission to 4,319 square feet, where 3,456 square feet is the maximum allowed by right.

The revised plans reduce the garage by 400 square feet, mainly through the elimination of the half-story, and the main house by 180 square feet. Overall, there were minor changes to the footprint of the structures, with the most significant being the reduction in the depth of the garage by three feet (from 26 feet to 23 feet).

The changes from the existing conditions to the original proposal and the two subsequent revisions are provided in the following table:

	House (sq ft)	Garage (sq ft)	Total (sq ft)	FAR
By Right	N/A	N/A	3,456	.40
Existing	2,481	261	2,742	.31
Original Proposal	3,942	1,060	5,002	.57
Revision #1	3,901	998	4,899	.57
Revision #2	3,721	598	4,319	.50

As described in previous memos, based on data from the accessors database, which should only be used as a rough estimate, the proposed structure will be larger than many of the structures in the immediate neighborhood in regards to square footage, while also being located on one of the smaller lots. The result is an FAR that appears to be greater than most of the surrounding structures. However, the addition to the house will be located towards the rear of the site and mostly hidden from the public view, and will be subordinate to the existing house. The petitioner will also be rehabbing and thereby improving the exterior of the existing house. The design in the original proposal was reviewed and approved by the Newton Historical Commission.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Letter from the Petitioner and Revised Plans

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Harriet Christina Chu, AIA
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17 Cushing Street Revisions 3/31/15

Garage - Reduction of 400 Square Feet

The garage footprint has been reduced by 78 square feet as a result of decreasing the depth of the garage by 3 feet. Additionally, the habitable space over the garage has been eliminated, with a new ceiling height of less than 7 feet, resulting in a reduction 322 square feet.

First Floor - Reduction of 132 Square Feet

The bathroom/mudroom located at the new side entry on the rear east side of the house has been reconfigured into a more compact shape. At the same time, the exterior wall has been moved in towards the body of the house by 2 feet, resulting in a reduction of 122 square feet.

The stair enclosure on the rear west side of the house has been reduced to a bump out of 6 feet 6 inches instead of 7 feet, and the offset from the rear corner has been increased to 1 foot (instead of 6 inches), resulting in a reduction of 10 square feet.

Second Floor - Reduction of 48 Square Feet

The exterior wall on the rear east side of the master bedroom has been brought in towards the body of the house by 2 feet, resulting in a reduction of 38 square feet.

The stair enclosure on the rear west side has been reduced in a similar fashion as the first floor. The bump out is now 6 feet 6 inches instead of 7 feet, and the offset from the rear corner has been increased to 1 foot (instead of 6 inches), resulting in a reduction of 10 square feet.

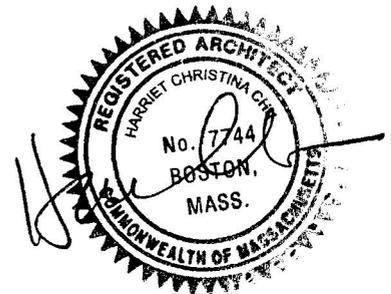
The total reduction is 580 square feet (from 4,899 square feet to 4,319 square feet.)

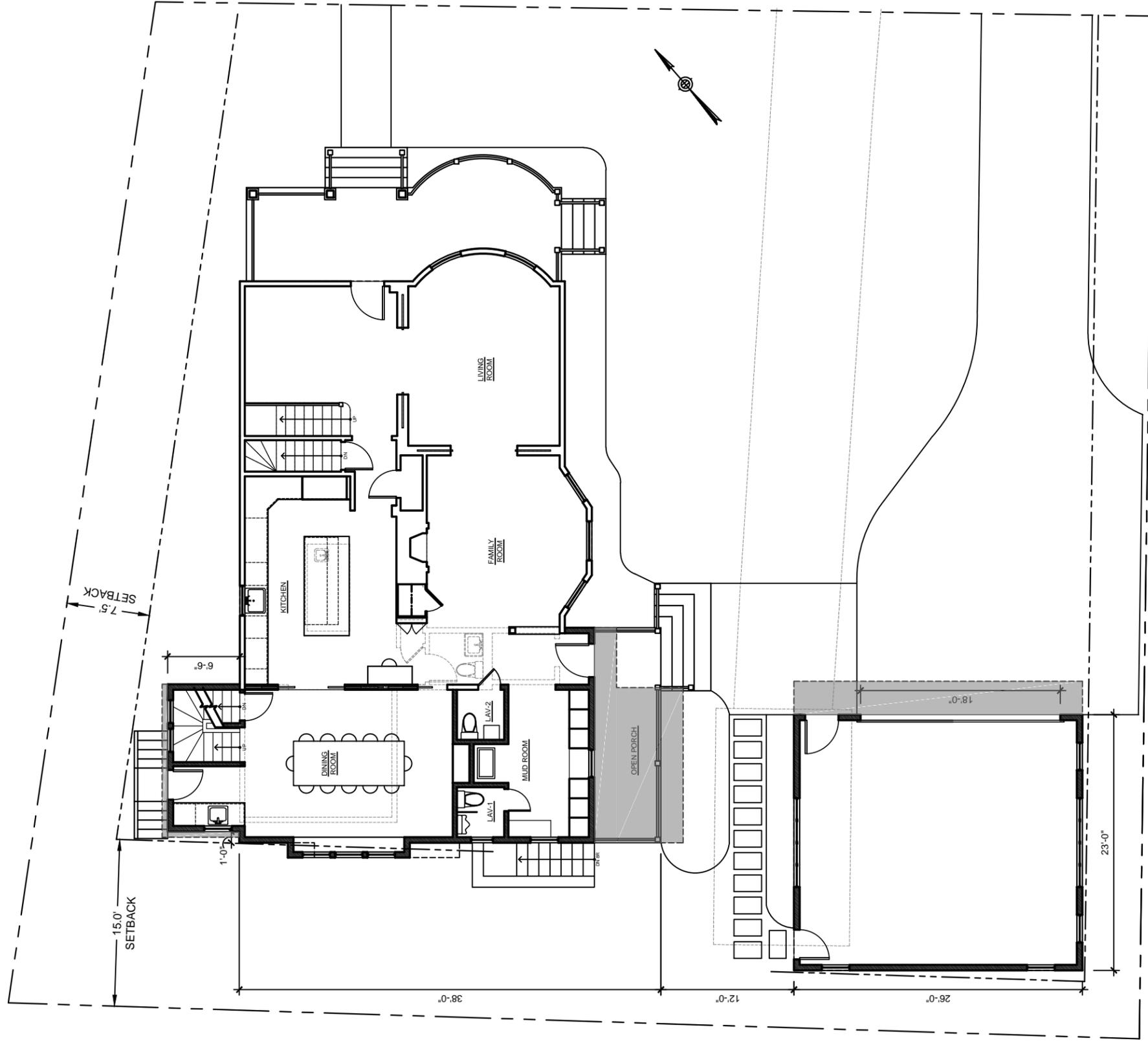
The FAR has been reduced from .567 to .499 (4,319 ÷ 8,640.)

The reduction of 580 square feet represents a reduction of 12%.

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Residential Architecture





■ AREA REMOVED

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 ARCHITECT
 113 CHESTNUT ST. W. NEWTON, MA 02465
 (617) 965-8094 / (617) 965-5431 fax
 hchchu@verizon.net
 www.chrischuarchitect.com

PROJECT:
HUGHES RESIDENCE
 17 CUSHING STREET
 NEWTON HIGHLANDS, MA 02461

PROGRESS SET

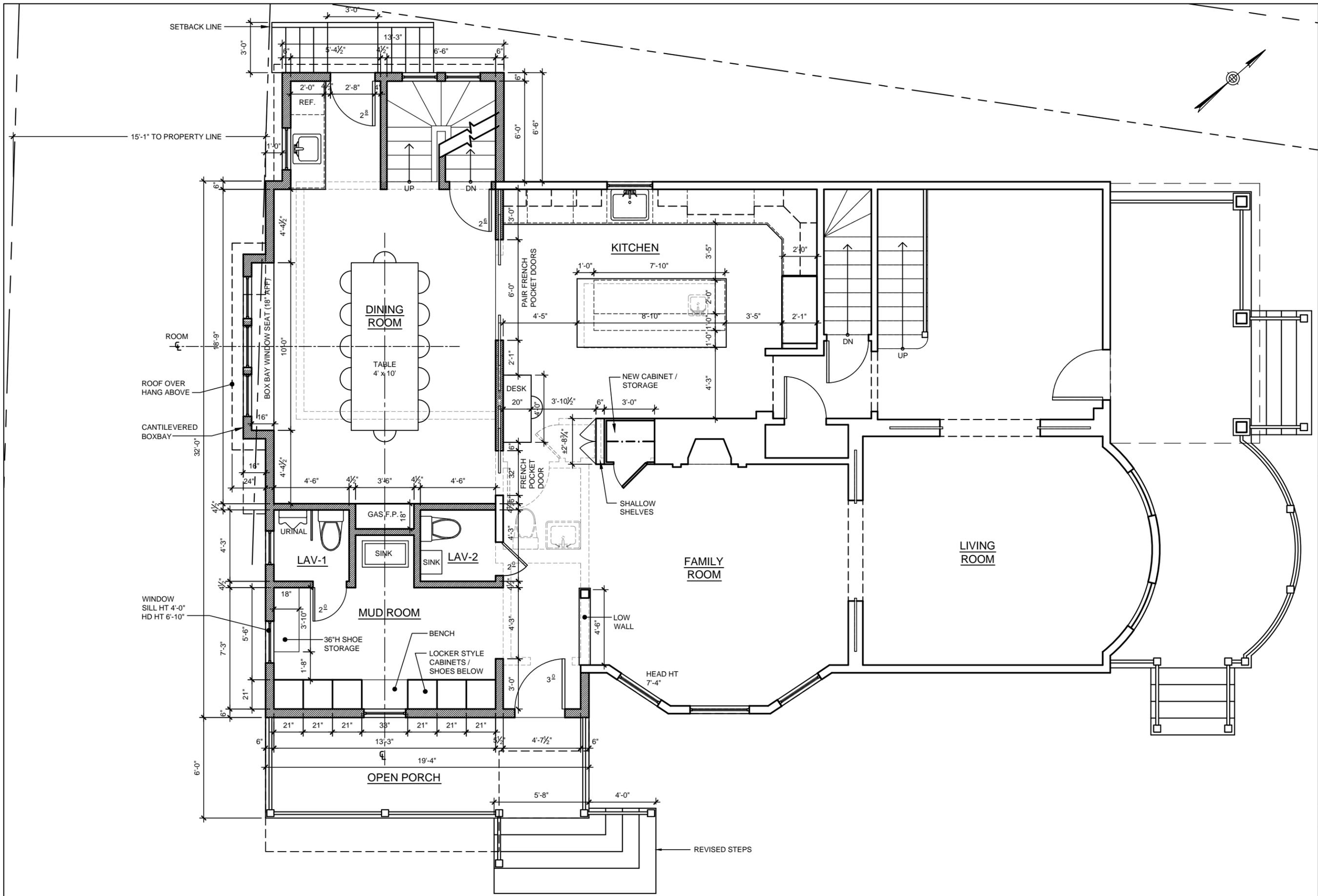
DRAWING TITLE:
 PROPOSED SITE PLAN
 SHOWING AREA REMOVED

SCALE: 3/32"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

SITE-0.1



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 PROJECT: **CHRIS CHU, AIA**
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PROGRESS SET

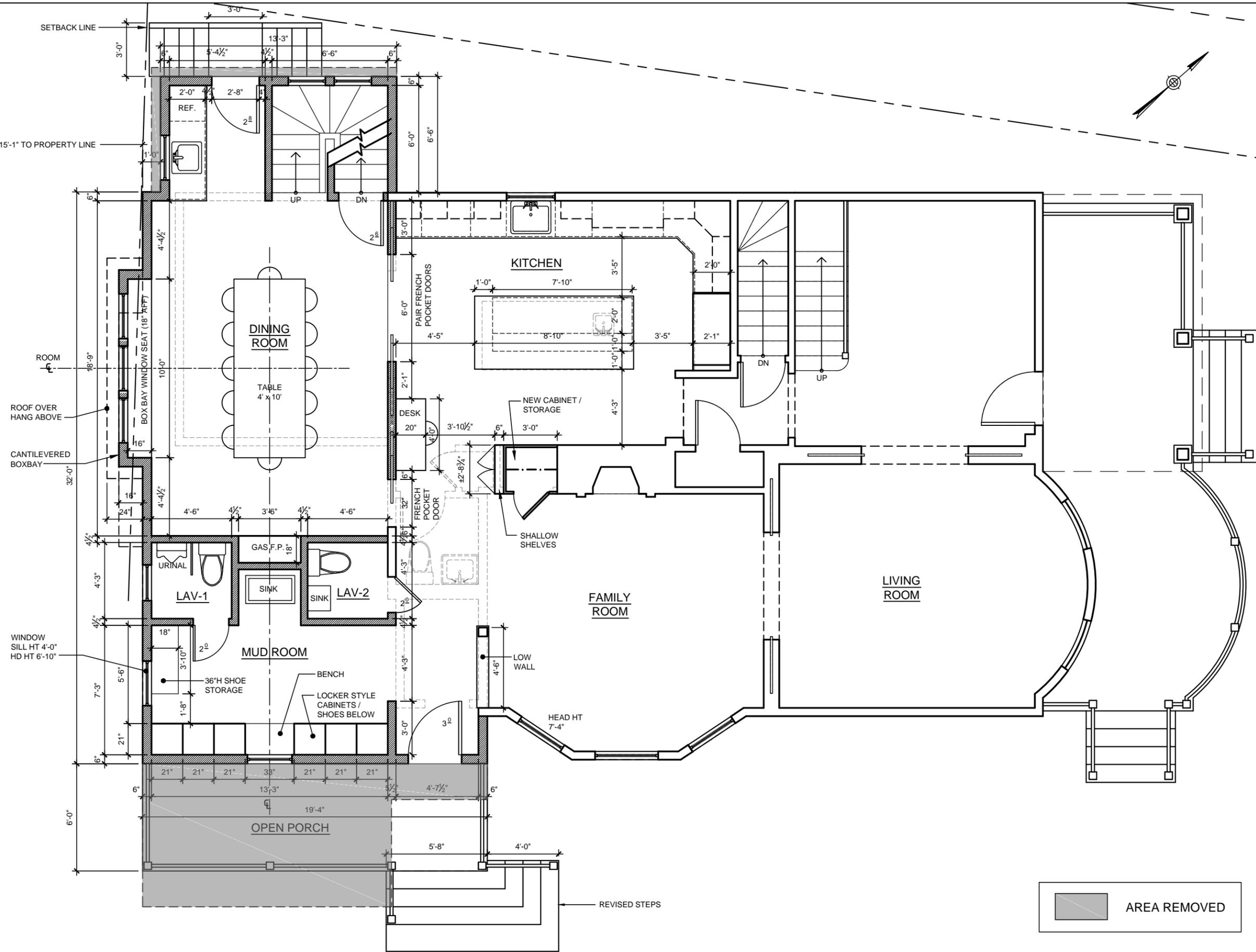
DRAWING TITLE:
PROPOSED 1ST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

FL-1



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PROGRESS SET

DRAWING TITLE:
**PROPOSED 1ST FLOOR PLAN
 SHOWING AREA REMOVED**

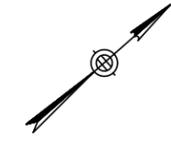
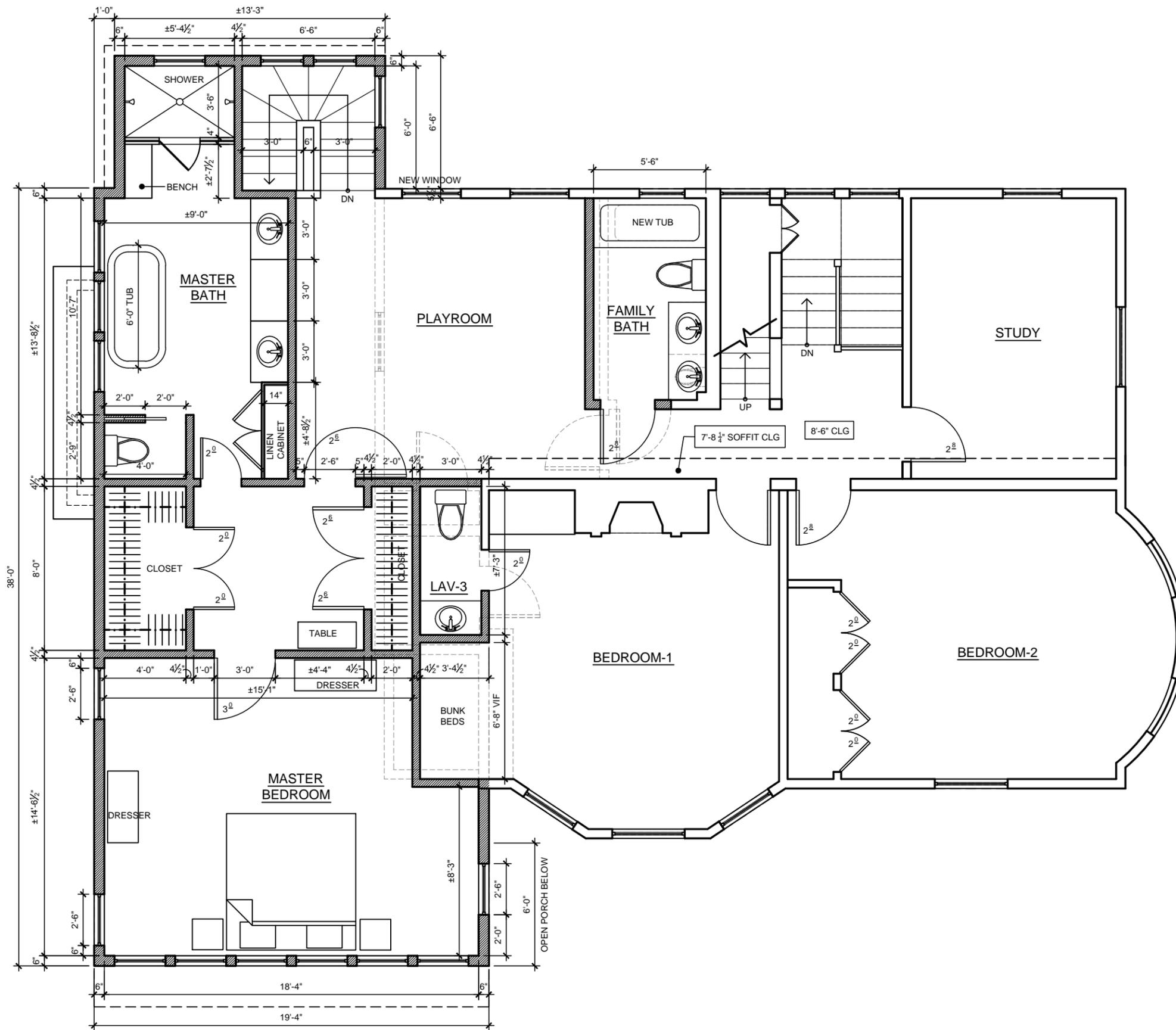
SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

 AREA REMOVED

FL-1.1



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PROGRESS SET

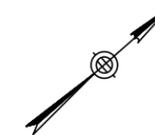
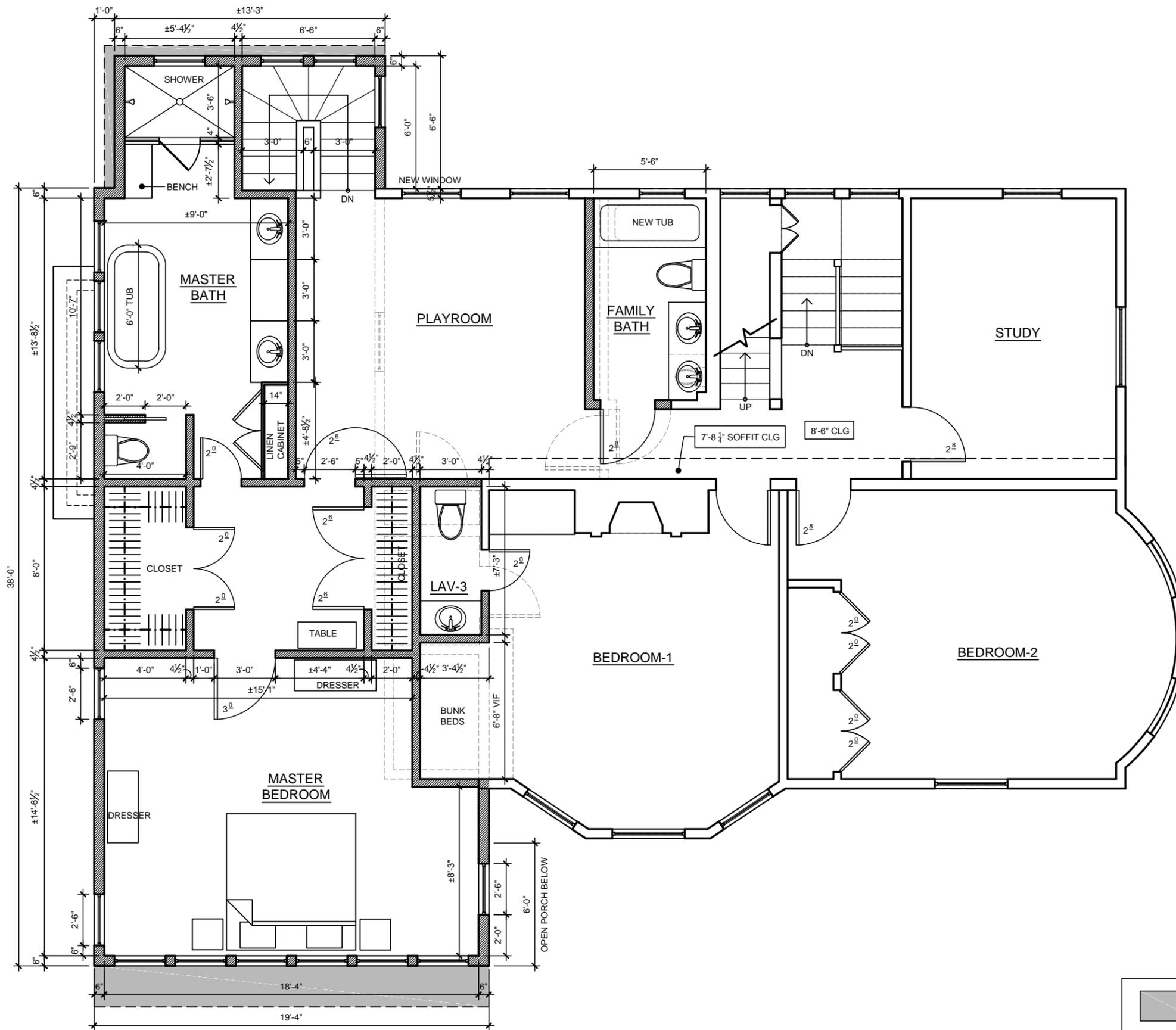
DRAWING TITLE:
PROPOSED 2ND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

FL-2



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PROGRESS SET

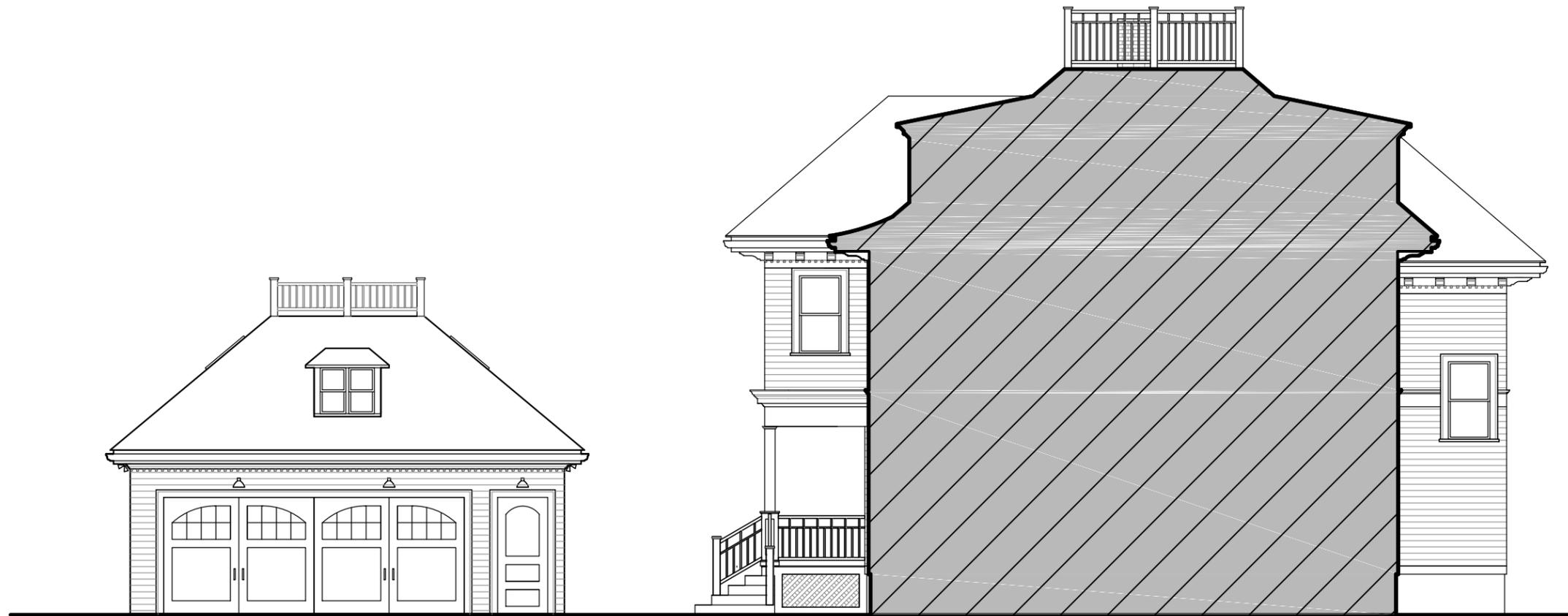
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PROPOSED 2ND FLOOR PLAN
SHOWING AREA REMOVED

SCALE: 3/16"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

FL-2.1



PROPOSED GARAGE
AT REAR

PROPOSED
AT REAR

SECTION THROUGH
EXISTING HOUSE

PROPOSED
AT REAR

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PROGRESS
SET

DRAWING TITLE:
PROPOSED
FRONT ELEVATION / SECTION

SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

DATE: 04/01/2015

SHEET:

FRONT