

URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

The Urban Design Committee will hold a meeting on **Tuesday, February 06, 2024**, at **3:00 p.m.** in the County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska in **City Council Chambers** on the 1st floor. For more information, contact the Planning Department at 402-441-7491.

AGENDA

1. Approval of UDC meeting record of [January 09, 2024](#).

ADVISE

2. Gruenemeyer House on [4207 Pioneers Blvd](#) – *UDR24002* – *Final Action*
3. [Pioneers Mixed-Income Row Housing](#) - *UDR24010* – *Final Action*

Urban Design Committee's agendas may be accessed on the Internet at
<https://www.lincoln.ne.gov/City/Departments/Planning-Department/Boards-and-Commissions/Urban-Design-Committee>

ACCOMMODATION NOTICE

The City of Lincoln complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 guidelines. Ensuring the public's access to and participating in public meetings is a priority for the City of Lincoln. In the event you are in need of a reasonable accommodation in order to attend or participate in a public meeting conducted by the City of Lincoln, please contact the Director of Equity and Diversity, Lincoln Commission on Human Rights, at 402 441-7624 as soon as possible before the scheduled meeting date in order to make your request.

MEETING RECORD

Advanced public notice of the Urban Design Committee meeting was posted on the County-City bulletin board and the Planning Department's website.

NAME OF GROUP: URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 3:00 p.m., County-City Building, City Council Chambers, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, NE.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Emily Deeker, Jill Grasso, Tom Huston, Frank Ordia and Michelle Penn; Mary Canney and Gil Peace absent.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Arvind Gopalakrishnan, Paul Barnes, Collin Christopher and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Peter Hind and Ernie Castillo of Urban Development Department; Jordan Reed with Aragon Tavern; Brayden McLaughlin with Bridgewater Consulting; Glenn Kitto and Jeff Strong with Reserve Development; Mark Palmer with Olsson; Kent Seacrest with Seacrest & Kalkowski; Matt Olberding with Lincoln Journal Star; and other interested parties.

Chair Penn called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Penn then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meetings held December 5, 2023. Motion for approval made by Huston, seconded by Grasso and carried 5-0: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney and Peace absent.

ARAGON TAVERN SIDEWALK CAFE:

January 9, 2024

Members present: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn; Canney and Peace absent.

Arvind Gopalakrishnan stated this is on the first floor of 1125 'Q' Street. They are asking for a sidewalk café. The applicant is proposing a sidewalk café measuring 47' 2" x 9' 10" that would be attached to the building. This would be the only sidewalk café that fronts 'Q' Street. It would be located just north of the line from the barriers for the drop-off for the building. With the café, 6 feet would be available for the pedestrian passageway. This would meet the standards. The applicant is proposing 24 inch tempered glass on top of movable planters surrounding the space. They plan to serve alcohol, so there would be only one entrance. The overall plans are in conformance with the design standards.

Huston knows that this property was always envisioned as having a sidewalk café.

Grasso likes the idea of planters instead of a permanent fence. She thinks it looks great.

Penn asked if any thought was given to heating the space. She understands that this location will always be in the shade. Gopalakrishnan replied he was not aware of any heating plans.

Jordan Reed is the manager of Aragon Tavern. He didn't know if they were allowed to add heaters. If they did, they would be mobile. Nothing is attached to the building with this proposal. He believes the sidewalks are already ground heated.

Grasso inquired if the applicant is planning on leaving the planters outside year around. Reed replied yes.

Ordia wondered how they stay fixed. Reed stated they have a heavy weighted bottom.

ACTION:

Deeker moved approval, as recommended by staff, seconded by Ordia and carried 5-0: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney and Peace absent.

Penn thanked the applicant for doing a nice design. She voiced her appreciation.

GRUENEMEYER HOUSE ON 4207 PIONEERS BOULEVARD:

January 9, 2024

Members present: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn; Canney and Peace absent.

Gopalakrishnan stated this proposal is for single family underground residence. This was informally reviewed at the December meeting. For this proposal, the design has gone through considerable change. They are asking for advice before they come back for a vote in February. The design standards are now met, with the design they are proposing. The applicant is proposing windows and shutters on the garage door. Staff wondered about maintenance. Landscaping is shown, along with a tree along the sidewalk for a contiguous look with the neighborhood. One issue was the setback. The structure is setback 25 feet. Staff would like advice from the committee on the appearance of the structure, specifically the garage door, the pedestrian door and landscaping.

Penn questioned if notices were sent to neighbors within 200 feet of the property. She would like staff to elaborate on how that process works. Gopalakrishnan stated that any project that doesn't meet design standards, gives staff a chance to review it. Staff would deny the application. It is then taken to the Planning Director. He can waive standards or deny the application. In between the Planning Director action, notifications will be sent to the neighbors within 200 feet. This would happen even if the Planning Director approves the waiver. Penn understood that for the next meeting in February, the neighbors will have seen the application and can give feedback if desired. Gopalakrishnan agreed with her assessment.

Grasso asked if any emails and letters sent by neighbors would be seen by the Urban Design Committee. Gopalakrishnan replied yes.

Huston inquired what specific design standards the design doesn't comply with. Gopalakrishnan stated that one big factor if there is not a pattern of garages on the block followed by 50 percent of the houses, the garage must be setback 5 feet from the house. In this case, the house is underground. Huston understood that the design standards didn't envision an underground house. Gopalakrishnan noted that another issue is not having any front steps or a porch.

Grasso believes if she read correctly, the precedent on this street is not necessarily front porches. She believes the applicant doesn't need to comply with that. Gopalakrishnan agreed. Most houses on this street don't have a porch. The main concern here is the garage being the primary structure. At the last meeting of this committee, the direction was to bring this as close as possible to houses on the street.

Penn believes this has come far. Perhaps we take these concerns one at a time. The garage door is one. One concern was this group didn't feel this was going to be a very welcoming building. She appreciates it was put in context. That is very helpful. Her thought is that the garage door should just be a garage door. She was curious to hear other committee member opinions. She would make it aesthetically more pleasing. She doesn't think we have that precedent here. She isn't sure two fake windows make a lot of sense to her.

Deeker agreed with Penn. She thinks that the faux windows take away from what is trying to be achieved. Just a garage door would fit better, in her opinion. The door should look like a regular door. It should be something that lets sunlight in.

Brayden McLaughlin pointed out the two plexiglass panels on top of the garage door. He noted that the actual shutters on the windows are real.

Grasso stated at the last meeting of this committee, members gave recommendations and discussed perhaps the garage could look like a house. She believes there is more to talk about than that. She feels like she has so many questions on the design intent of the entire site. She wondered about putting up a Menards garage and making it look like a house. She isn't opposed to an underground or berm house, if it is done well and looks like it is part of the neighborhood. She still has a lot of questions. How tall are the retaining walls? Are they brick forms? It feels like there wasn't any thought given to the nature of the underground house. She understands they are trying to create a place of sense and a typical entry. She isn't saying the applicant can't do this. She is just asking for something a little more thoughtful.

McLaughlin stated that most retaining walls are concrete with block. They are trying to be practical. He asked the committee what their ideal underground house would look like.

Grasso stated this doesn't look very inviting to her. It looks like a garage door down a ramp. She inquired if the above ground structure is a built garage. McLaughlin replied it would be a stick frame, with a single gable east/west. Grasso asked if they are planning on slab on-grade. McLaughlin responded there will be four footings around the garage per frost depth.

Grasso asked if anyone has looked at a landscape plan. McLaughlin stated that landscaping was discussed at the last meeting. It was noted that the biggest thing defining the homes on this street was a large

defining tree. They can't do that here. They shrank the driveway down to ten feet wide. We can place a medium size there. It would be a little closer to the street than the rest of the properties, but there was no choice. As far as landscaping, they don't have any set idea of plants yet. He noted if the committee has something specific in mind, they can address that.

Deeker noted that the committee doesn't give specifics on plantings, just suggestions.

McLaughlin stated that this committee asked for landscaping. He questioned if this isn't satisfactory, what is? Deeker would like to see species called out. The applicant is showing a tree. Huston added that he doesn't believe Neighborhood Design Standards ask for trees.

Grasso stated that the Urban Design Committee is an advisory committee. Members are giving their opinion on how they believe this fits into the neighborhood.

Huston would like to see the Director Letter from the Planning Dept. first. He wants to see from city staff perspective what the issues are. He believes there are two methods of appeal, one to Urban Design Committee and one to City Council.

Grasso believes it will be interesting to see what the neighbors say.

Penn asked if the setback issue has been taken care of. It is now at 28 feet. Gopalakrishnan stated yes, the setback has been taken care of. McLaughlin noted the trick is to see what is going on with Pioneers Blvd. There are varying setbacks.

Penn wondered about the glass insert of the pedestrian door and asked if other committee members had any thoughts. McLaughlin has no problem with adding some glass to the front door. Penn has no strong opinion about a window in the door.

Deeker would rather see a real window as opposed to a faux window. Penn agreed. It starts to look like a little house that looks similar to the other little houses on the street.

Deeker would look at ways to soften the edge. There is a lot of space in the back. Perhaps part of the site plan could show opportunities for landscaping in the rear. That might help the conversation with the neighborhood. It looks like you will want some shade. McLaughlin can add some landscaping. Deeker can see where the neighborhood might want some more trees.

Grasso would look for ways to make it visually more appealing. Limestone planters or benches could be used.

McLaughlin stated there will be a fence along the edge of the ground above the garage so no one falls in.

Penn noted the applicant proposed a shared driveway between the two lots. She inquired if there was any change or what the owner intent is. McLaughlin stated from the owner's perspective, they are assuming

there will be a single family home on the other lot. The easement is to come in and turn around for both lots to use the circle drive.

SHOPS AT LINCOLN:

January 9, 2024

Members present: Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn; Deeker declared a conflict of interest; Canney and Peace absent.

Gopalakrishnan stated this is a redevelopment of the 130,000 square foot former Sears building that is part of the Gateway Shopping Center. The applicant proposes to convert the Sears building into an upscale, quality smaller tenant space with three new to Lincoln retailers, which include a multi-national, high end green electric vehicle service facility and a Lincoln hospital based urgent care and outpatient medical office facility. The development team is working with City staff through the substandard and blighted process. The former Sears building renovation will be using many design choices that will provide additional energy efficiencies and savings during the construction, use and operation phases. Sustainability advantages include a lower carbon footprint, no additional materials will be sent to the landfill, improved glazing, and updated HVAC.

Huston is concerned with the location. We get one chance to do this. This has to qualify for blighted and substandard. He recognized there is a study.

Ernie Castillo understood that Huston was talking about the entirety of Gateway. They looked at a 2019 blight study. They went as far as getting a blight study that never went to Planning Commission or City Council. He just heard yesterday from the Gateway folks. A change may come to the plan area. Huston would make sure a conscious decision is made regarding the boundaries.

Grasso would like someone to speak to the new materials on the façade.

Glenn Kitto stated they are proposing EIFS for the store fronts. The lower band would be a front natural stone that will be mortared for the first three feet with capstone. They are proposing a metal panel and new paint scheme. They will be putting in a new store front entry where one doesn't currently exist. They will do new mullions and energy efficient upgrades. He pointed out the potential pedestrian access. The City has asked to close one access point and they will continue a sidewalk. There is a current sidewalk next to Krispy Kreme. They will be installing an American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) pathway all the way to the building. The front of the building will have the sidewalk extended out about five feet. They will put in a walkway from this building to Dick's Sporting Goods.

Grasso stated it is her understanding this would be a sort of wainscoting stone. Kitto pointed out the stone on the plan. He showed the location of the glazed brick and stack stone, and location of the EIFS. He showed a tenant space with a Nichiha metal panel. Grasso inquired if they would be adding some canopies. Kitto pointed out the two that will be a façade canopy built specifically for their space. They will use real stacked stone for aesthetic purposes. He noted that the Health facility backed out of this location when the announcement was made in the paper.

Jeff Strong stated the first floor will have an EV green vehicle location. It was the first lease signed. Other tenants are in process or haven't been signed yet. Retailers like to announce their own openings.

Huston wondered if this site will be overparked. Strong replied yes, to a certain degree. This site easily meets the code for parking. The tenant has their own parking standard. They won't sign a lease unless their parking can be provided.

Kitto stated they are 700 parking spots over the requirement for the entire mall. From a design perspective, because we aren't taking this building down, we are saving a lot of building materials. We will adhere to the new energy code. All lighting will be converted to high efficiency LED.

Huston believes this is a great adaptive reuse of a building.

Grasso asked if they will be adding some additional lighting. Kitto replied yes, on the exterior. Grasso wondered if they are maintaining the lighting 'as is' on the north side of the building. Strong replied yes, until they get a tenant.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval with the condition that this is subject to further review when there is a new tenant proposed on the north side, seconded by Ordia.

Huston noted the redevelopment will come back. This is just the first step.

Grasso likes that they are keeping the building and planning to modify it.

Strong likes that it is glazed brick. That has come full circle to the 2020's. It is very popular now.

Gopalakrishnan noted that this project doesn't have to come back before the committee.

Huston pointed out this is blight, not redevelopment.

Paul Barnes stated this committee is not reviewing the blight study. The review is of the building and site design. If there is another tenant and changes to the façade, since this is Tax Increment Financing (TIF), it will come back before this committee.

Grasso thinks it is exciting to see this redevelopment.

Strong stated there will be two tenants who will be new to Lincoln.

Motion for conditional approval carried 4-0: Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn voting 'yes'; Deeker abstaining; Canney and Peace absent.

Members present: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn; Canney and Peace absent.

Gopalakrishnan stated that some highlights of 2023 were the committee reviewed 17 projects. 8 were TIF. One was City led. Five were sidewalk cafes. There was one waiver and two appeals. Membership of the committee changed in July 2023 when Peter Hind resigned and Frank Ordia filled the vacancy. He voiced his thanks to all members who raise the bar for the design standards for the City of Lincoln.

Huston stated it was a nice report, very well done.

Grasso appreciates all the summaries. They are very thorough and thoughtful. She questioned the canopy at Bison Witches. Gopalakrishnan responded that the business was informed that the City expects them to change the existing red enclosure and come up with a new design that the City and Urban Design Committee would have to approve before erection.

ACTION:

Huston moved approval, seconded by Grasso and carried 5-0: Deeker, Grasso, Huston, Ordia and Penn voting 'yes'; Canney and Peace absent.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Huston asked if the amendment to the Community Unit Plan (CUP) of Hawley commons will be back before Urban Design Committee. He believes there was a lot of discussion about the CUP that there was ultimately going to be a redevelopment.

Barnes stated there were a couple of amendments that impacted the neighborhood development. Another one would front Vine Street. He believes the zoning piece was appealed to City Council. Staff is talking with Urban Development staff about the process and coordination.

Huston believes it would be better for the decision makers to have the entire package.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER	Urban Design Record #24002
APPLICATION TYPE	Neighborhood Design Standards Appeal
ADDRESS/LOCATION	4207 Pioneers Boulevard
HEARING DATE	February 06, 2024
ADDITIONAL MEETINGS	-
APPLICANT	Richard Gruenemeyer, rdjhn3vs16g@yahoo.com
STAFF CONTACT	Arvind Gopalakrishnan, 402-441-6361, agopalakrishnan@lincoln.ne.gov

RECOMMENDATION: FINAL ACTION

Summary of Request

Mr. Richard Gruenemeyer is proposing an underground single-family dwelling on 4207 Pioneers Boulevard.

Designs for new homes in the well-established neighborhoods of Lincoln are required to meet Neighborhood Design Standards which encourage construction that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The proposed design is an underground home, with just the garage above the surface, and is incompatible with a few requisites in the Neighborhood Design Standards.

Staff would like the committee to offer design advice on some elements of the proposed structure such as

- Appearance of the structure, and
- Integration with the neighborhood
- Landscaping

Staff Note:

The architect presented before the Committee at the December 5, 2023, and January 09, 2024 meetings and received preliminary design input to make the garage and site blend well with the neighboring houses.

Since then, the design team has made considerable revisions to the designs. However, the Director of Planning has denied the waiver of the Design Standards, and the applicant is appealing the Director's decision. The applicant and their representative will present the schematic drawings to seek the Urban Design Committee's final vote on the project.

A brief description of the project and a summary of the requested waivers have been sent to the neighbors living within 200 feet of the property. We received an email in support of the project (see comments in Attachment F).

Compatibility with the Neighborhood Design Standards (NDS)

Given its location and zoning, the project is subject to the Neighborhood Design Standards. The purpose of the Neighborhood Design Standards is to encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing in certain areas

while allowing necessary new construction that is compatible with the surrounding development. What follows is a summary of the relevant design standards and the staff's analysis of the project's compatibility with said standards.

Chapter 3.75, Neighborhood Design Standards
Section 4.1: Building Elements.

1. New buildings shall utilize a roof type and pitch commonly found within the same and facing block front. Hipped or gable roofs with a pitch of at least 22.5 degrees (6/12 pitch) are acceptable for any project regulated by the Neighborhood Design Standards. Roofs of lower pitch and other types may be compatible in specific districts and can be proposed and approved on an individual basis.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

8/12 Pitch

2. New buildings shall provide at least two openings (combination of windows or door) per story oriented to the street including at least one window and an entrance to a dwelling unit or to a hallway leading to a dwelling unit.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

Garage doors do not count as openings. Apart from the garage door, the structure has a door, and a double-hung window fronting the street.

The top panel of the garage door would have two plexiglass panels, and the rest of the garage door would be painted to look like windows and shutters.

3. Front porches are required when half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts or on adjacent blocks have front porches. Front porches shall be equal in width to at least 50% of the length of the front façade and equal in depth to half the depth of the front yard, or ten feet, whichever is less. Smaller porches may be approved based on evidence that half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts or on the adjacent block faces have smaller porches.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *N/A*

No covered porches were found in the neighboring properties. Most houses on the block just have a stoop (1-2 steps).

4. The elevation of the first-floor level of new dwellings shall generally match the pattern of half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts. In other words, if the first floor of most houses in an area are positioned three or four steps above the prevailing grade, new dwellings should have a similar height of first floor, and if most surrounding houses are one or no steps above grade, new construction should match this characteristic. The Planning Director may approve designs that do not meet this requirement upon receiving information that there are no other practical and reasonable means of providing accessibility to a new dwelling for persons with mobility impairments and provided the design offers other features to enhance the compatibility of the new building with neighboring dwellings.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *N/A*

Most houses on the block just have 1-2 steps above grade, and the proposed house is underground.

5. Garages, if constructed, shall follow the pattern of half or more of the residential properties on the same and facing block front, such as:

- a. if the pattern in an area is that garages are located behind the house, a pattern of rear garages shall be followed.
- b. if the pattern in an area is that garages are attached or that garages are part of the main building with doors facing the street, doors for not more than two stalls are permitted on a portion of the main building facing a front lot line, provided such doors shall not occupy more than 40% of the length of the principal street façade. Garage doors are permitted in the main plane of the façade or forward of the main plane only when documentation is provided that such a feature is the pattern of half or more of the houses in an area (such as post-World War II “ranch” houses).
- c. if there is no garage pattern shared by at least half of the residential properties on the same and facing block front, garages may be attached and face the street provided the garage portion of the building is set back from the main plane of the principal façade at least five feet.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

Garages on this block are found to be attached and detached. The proposed garage would be detached from the underground house and is the only structure above-grade.

6. The height of new buildings should be similar to that of existing residences on the same and facing block fronts. New buildings shall be acceptable that are not taller than the tallest residential structure, nor shorter than the shortest residential structure, built prior to December 31, 1949 on the contiguous block face, provided that:

- a. the maximum allowable height shall not be reduced to less than twenty-eight (28) feet, and
- b. if the height permitted under this section would exceed that permitted in the underlying district, the new building shall be no taller than an existing, adjacent building. Taller structures may be approved on a case-by-case basis, when a steeper roof would increase compatibility between the new building and adjacent older residences.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

Height is similar to the adjacent houses.

7. The rhythm of similar-width houses on similar-width lots does much to establish the character of Lincoln’s established residential areas. Large new buildings disrupt this character unless design measures are employed to reduce their apparent scale. New buildings over fifty feet (50’) in length on the principal street facade should be designed to maintain the rhythm of the existing adjacent buildings. Designs will be bound to meet this standard which offsets the principal street façade and roof at intervals of fifty feet (50’) or less. These offsets shall be at least six feet (6’) in depth, and the portions of the façade offset shall equal at least 10% of the length of the façade. Alternate designs that maintain the rhythm of the blockface by such means

as shifts in materials within the facade, use of multiple porches and/or dormers, and grouping of windows and entrances, may also be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

The structure is designed to look as close as possible to the neighboring houses.

Section 4.2: Yards and Open Space

1. No more than one mechanical unit, such as air conditioning units, shall be located within each required front yard and not more than three in any required side yard, provided that multiple units are spaced at least twenty feet apart. Such access will be screened from adjacent properties if located within a required front yard or within ten feet (10') of a side lot line.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *No mechanical units.*

2. Care should be taken to preserve existing street trees. Any trees removed shall be replaced in accord with the City's Master Street Tree Plan, and additional trees shall be planted as necessary to reach a standard of one street tree per fifty feet (50') of street frontage.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *No existing trees are being cut down for this construction. However, the proposal shows a tree that would be planted between the driveway and the sidewalk, to blend with the existing pattern of trees on the block.*

Section 4.3: Parking

1. No required parking space shall be allowed between the building and the front property line. Driveways and parking aprons in the front yard may not measure more than 20 feet wide.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

Staff Comments

Based on the previous meetings, the applicant has incorporated the following design elements into the garage:

1. The size of the structure, the materials, the roof pitch, and the gable orientation are similar to the adjacent house.
2. Garage door with plexiglass panels.
3. An additional pedestrian door with partial glazing and window fronting the street.
4. Landscaping around the garage to improve the property's overall appearance and foster a more cohesive architectural context within the community.
5. A tree between the driveway and the sidewalk to form a contiguous line of trees on the street.
6. Increase the front yard setback to 28' to line up with the adjacent houses.
7. Fencing on the retaining wall around the driveway that leads to the underground garage.

ATTACHMENT A - Location Map



2022 Aerial



UDR24002 - Gruenemeyer House (4207 Pioneers Blvd)

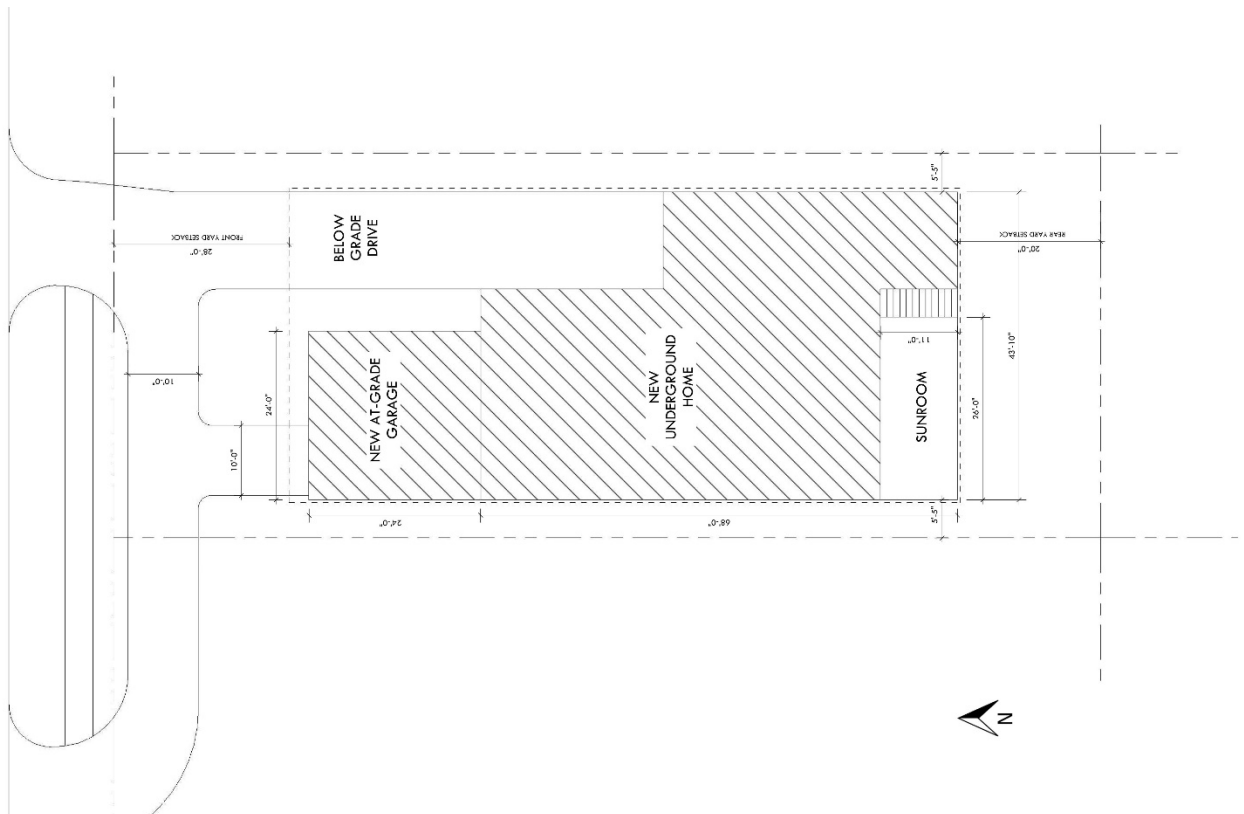
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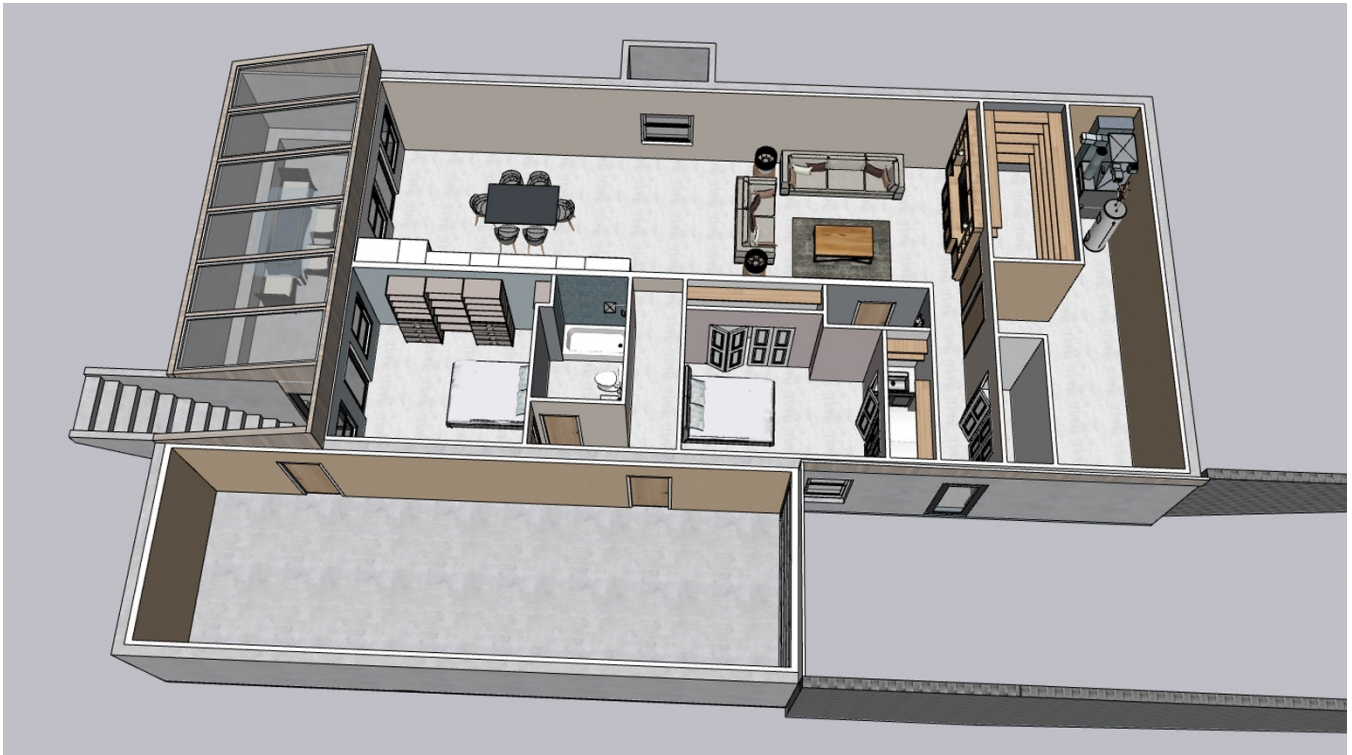
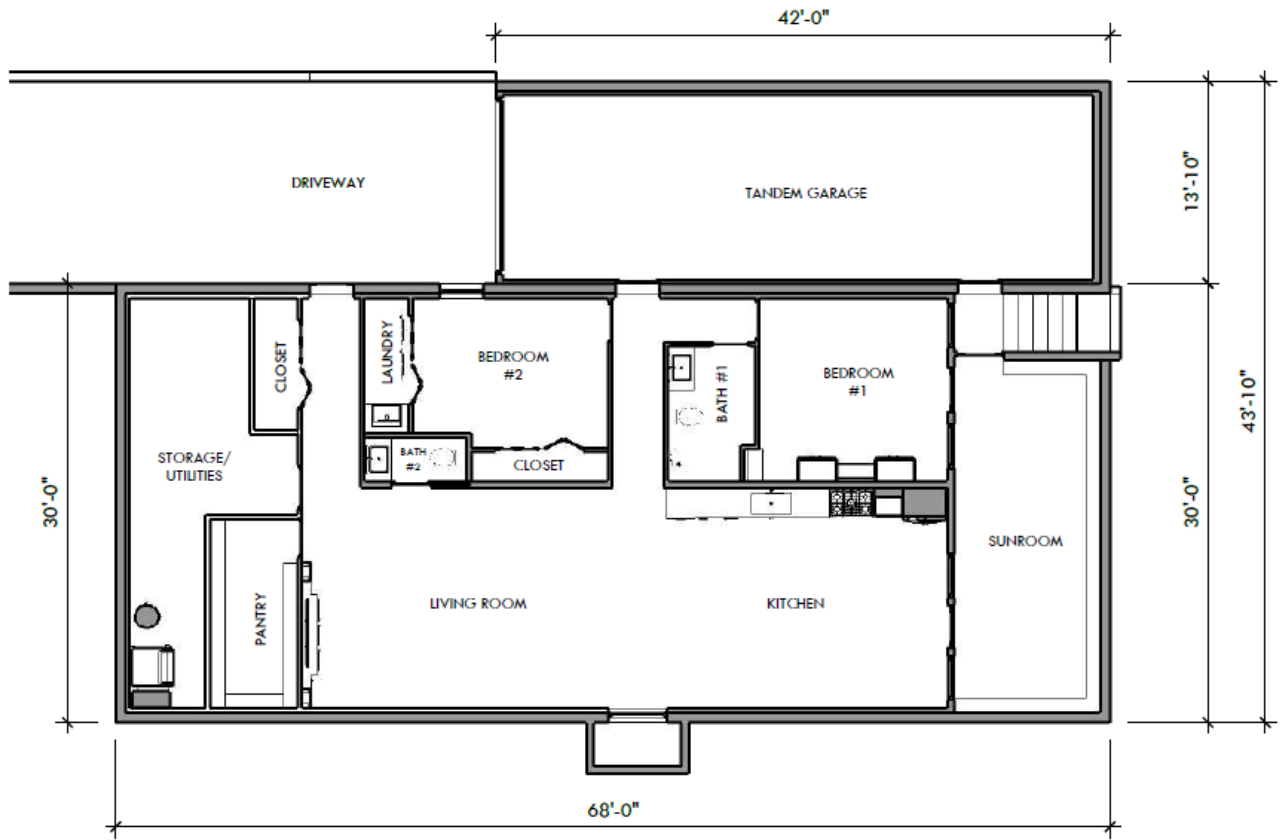
ATTACHMENT B – Site Plan



GRUENEMEYER HOME - SITE PLAN VIEW

**4207 PIONEERS BLVD
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA**





GRUENEMEYER HOME - FLOOR PLAN OVERVIEW
 4207 PIONEERS BLVD
 LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

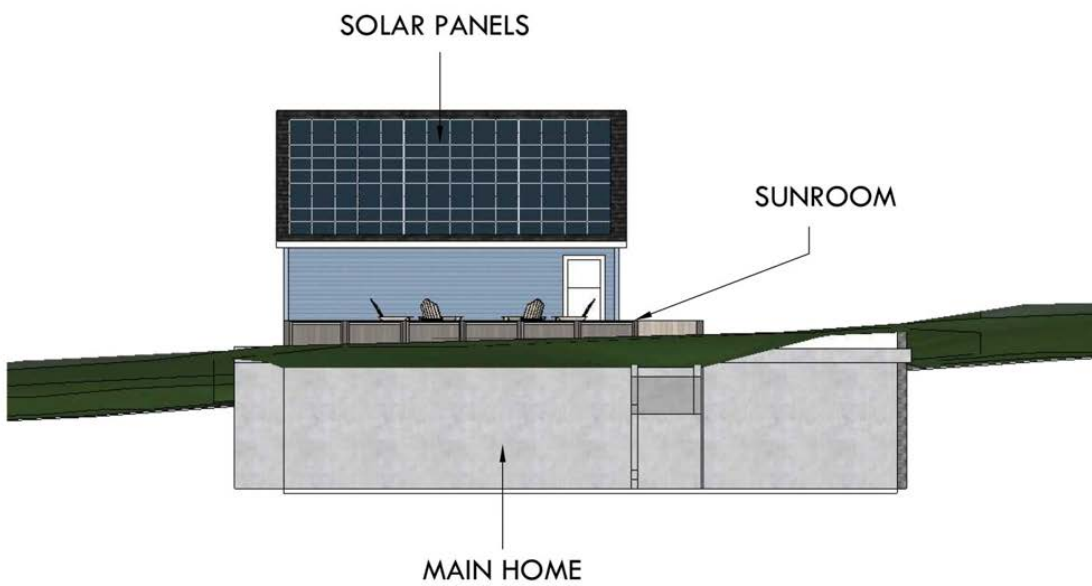


ATTACHMENT B – Elevations

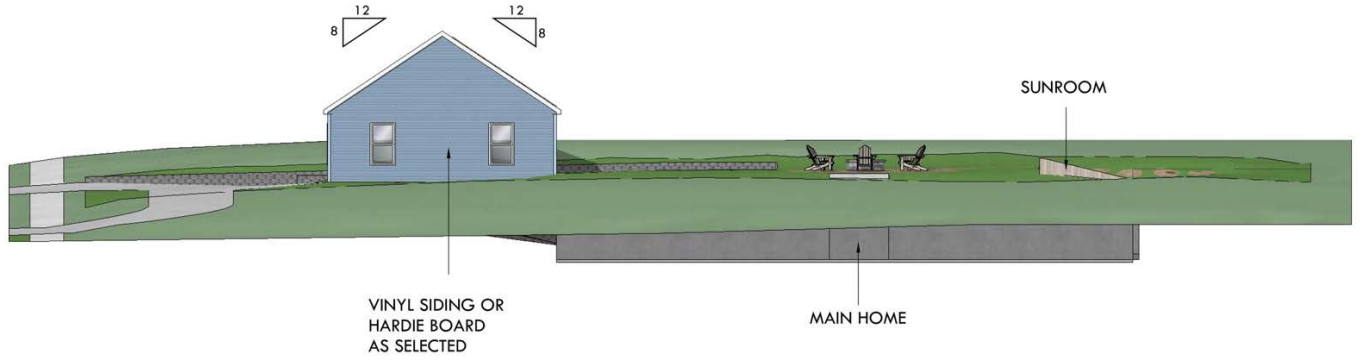
NORTH ELEVATION



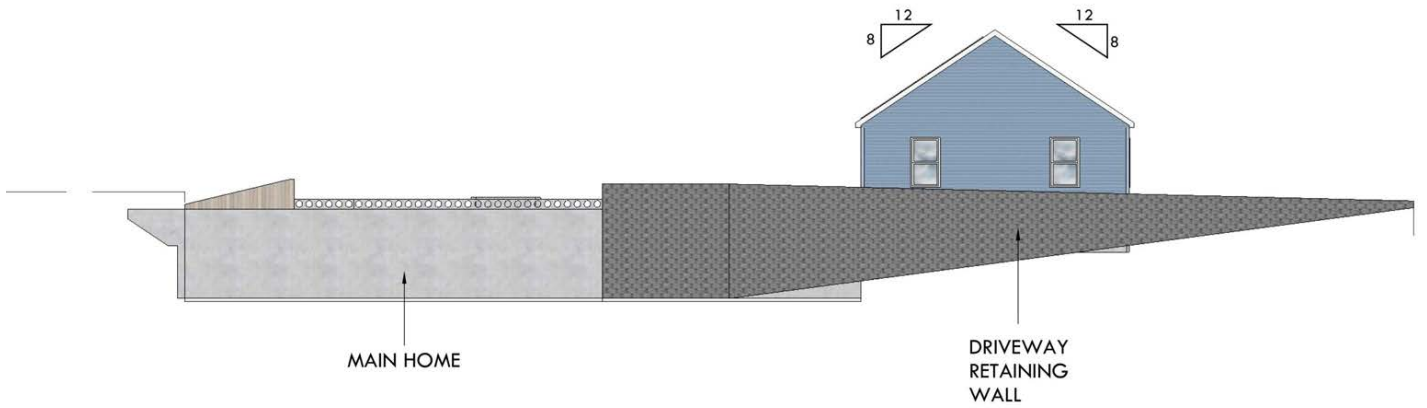
SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



ATTACHMENT C – Perspective Images



GRUENEMEYER HOME - STREET VIEW II
4207 PIONEERS BLVD
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA



GRUENEMEYER HOME - STREET VIEW
4207 PIONEERS BLVD
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA





GRUENEMEYER HOME - REAR YARD VIEW
4207 PIONEERS BLVD
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA



ATTACHMENT D- PLANNING DIRECTOR'S DENIAL LETTER



PLANNING
555 South 10th Street, Suite 213 | Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-7491 | F: 402-441-6377 | plan@lincoln.ne.gov



January 10, 2024

Dear Mr. Gruenemeyer,

You are receiving this notice regarding the requested waiver to the Neighborhood Design Standards for the construction of a new single-family home at 4207 Pioneers Boulevard. Designs for new homes in the well-established neighborhoods of Lincoln are required to meet Neighborhood Design Standards which encourage construction that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The Standards focus on a limited number of basic design elements that have a significant effect on compatibility, such as the orientation of windows and entrances toward the street, height and massing, and location of parking.

The proposed design is an underground home with just the garage above the surface and is incompatible with a few requisites in the Neighborhood Design Standards.

The analysis is below:

The entire proposed house is underground, with the car garage being the only structure above ground. The designers have attempted to make the house appear like its neighboring properties, but some design elements that are found in the adjacent properties cannot be incorporated into the project due to its function as a car garage.

The building design has similar materials, height, roof pitch, setbacks, and the required openings fronting the street to appear like the adjacent homes. However, the proposed structure is atypical in Lincoln and fails to meet the design standards concerning garage patterns, porches, and steps above grade,

"If there is no garage pattern shared by at least half of the residential properties on the same and facing block front, garages may be attached and face the street provided the garage portion of the building is set back from the main plane of the principal facade at least five feet." In this case, the garage is the only structure above ground.

When a design does not meet the Neighborhood Design Standards, the Planning Director has the authority to approve or deny a waiver based on his decision as to whether the proposed design meets the intent and spirit of the Standards. The Planning Director has reviewed the materials and denied the requested waiver.

You may appeal the Planning Director's decision denying the requested waiver. The required Notice of Appeal shall be filed with the Planning Director within 14 days of the mailing (postmark) date of this letter. Upon receipt of the appeal, a public hearing will be scheduled within 45 days with the Urban Design Committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office at 402-441-6361 or agopalakrishnan@lincoln.ne.gov if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Cary".

David Cary, Director
Lincoln-Lancaster County Planning Department

ATTACHMENT E- CORRESPONDENCE WITH NEIGHBOURS



PLANNING
555 South 10th Street, Suite 213 | Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-7491 | F: 402-441-6377 | plan@lincoln.ne.gov



January 16, 2024

To: The property owners in the vicinity of 4207 Pioneers Boulevard

You are receiving this notice because you are the listed owner of a property within 200 feet of 4207 Pioneers Boulevard. Richard Gruenemeyer's architect has submitted drawings for an underground home with a garage above the surface fronting the street on 4207 Pioneers Boulevard.

Designs for new homes in the established areas of Lincoln are required to meet Neighborhood Design Standards. Upon review by the Planning Department, the proposed design was found to meet many but not all of the Standards.

The entire proposed house is underground, with the car garage being the only structure above ground. The designers have attempted to make the garage structure appear like its neighboring properties by incorporating similar materials, height, roof pitch, setbacks, and the required openings fronting the street to appear like the adjacent homes. The design also incorporates landscaping around the structure. However, the proposed structure is atypical in Lincoln and fails to meet the design standards.

When a design does not meet the Neighborhood Design Standards, the Planning Director has the authority to approve or deny a waiver based on his decision as to whether the proposed design meets the intent and spirit of the Standards. The Planning Director has reviewed the materials and denied the requested waiver.

As provided under city ordinances, the applicant is appealing this decision to the Urban Design Committee.

The Urban Design Committee will hold a hearing and make a decision on this appeal at a meeting scheduled for 3:00 PM, Tuesday, February 06, 2024. The meeting will be held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of the County/City Building at 555 S. 10th Street and is open to the public.

You are being informed of this matter because you are the owner of record of property near 4207 Pioneers Boulevard. Your input is welcome by letter, phone call to 402-441-7491, email to plan@lincoln.ne.gov, or at the meeting. **You are not required to take any action regarding this appeal.**

Note: The legal description of the property is DD 1ST ADDITION, Lot 2, Lincoln, Lancaster County, Nebraska.

Please let us know if you require any additional information or have any questions about this process.

Sincerely,

Arvind Gopalakrishnan,
Urban Designer & Planner
(402) 441-6361
agopalakrishnan@lincoln.ne.gov

CC:
Mayor Gaylor Baird
City Council Members
South 48th Street
Geater South
Prescott Area
College View

ATTACHMENT F- LETTER FROM NEIGHBOURS

Hello,

My name is Jeffrey Wood and I live at 4200 Locust Street in Lincoln. I am writing in response to a notice I received about a submitted design for a house at 4207 Pioneers Boulevard by Richard Gruenemeyer. I found the drawings which were submitted to the Urban Design Committee on January 9, 2024. I believe these are the most recent plans but if more recent plans exist, please let me know.

It is clear that the architect has made attempts to design the above-ground garage structure in a way that blends into the surrounding neighborhood. I have no concerns about the actual subterranean house portion of the project. Based on the January 9th drawings, I would broadly support the proposed design with the following thoughts regarding the above-ground garage structure.

- The inclusion of faux windows and shutters on the garage door is unnecessary and detracts from the overall appearance. As the staff comments say, the faux shutters could be painted over so they are not a permanent design feature. Further, it appears that the only requirement is that there be at least one window and one door facing the street which would be met without the faux windows. There is a paved driveway running up to the garage door so the faux windows are not particularly effective at tricking the eye. I would recommend the garage door be opaque instead.
- In my opinion, the garage structure could be removed and replaced by a hedge or similar screening which may actually look better if an above-ground structure is not necessary or wanted.
- I appreciate the inclusion of a tree and other landscaping in the plan. They help the structure look more settled in the larger landscape. I encourage the new owners to plant even more after they have finished the project to enhance the overall appearance.

I hope these comments have been helpful in your decision to either accept or deny Mr. Gruenemeyer's proposal. I admire the creativity of the design and appreciate the obvious effort of the designer to fit this unique house into our neighborhood.

Thank you,
Jeffrey Wood

URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER	Urban Design Record #24010
APPLICATION TYPE	Advisory Review and Final Action
ADDRESS/LOCATION	South 46 th St and Pioneers Boulevard
HEARING DATE	February 06, 2024
ADDITIONAL MEETINGS	February 12, 2024 (Blight Study at City Council)
APPLICANT	Wayne Mortensen, wayne.mortensen@nwlincoln.org
STAFF CONTACT	Arvind Gopalakrishnan, 402-441-6361, agopalakrishnan@lincoln.ne.gov

RECOMMENDATION: FINAL ACTION

Summary of Request

The Pioneers Mixed-Income Row House Redevelopment Project (“Redevelopment Project”) is in the proposed College View Redevelopment Area (“Redevelopment Area”). The City Council public hearing and vote to establish the Redevelopment Area is scheduled for February 12, 2024.

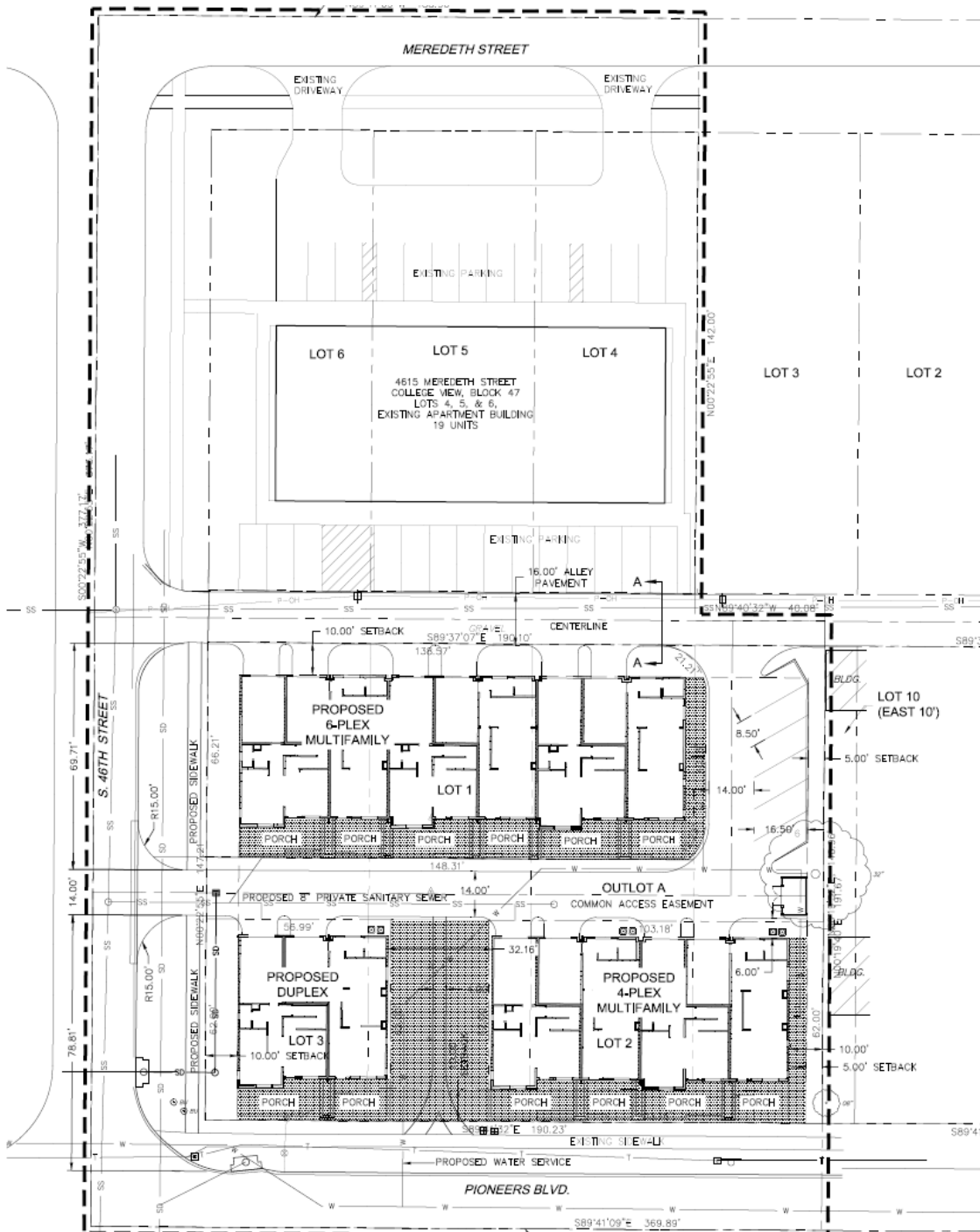
The site is in the “NeighborWorks College View Block 47” CUP which includes lots 4618 and 4615. NeighborWorks Lincoln (NWL) brought this project to the Urban Development Department seeking tax increment financing (“TIF”). The project contemplates the redevelopment of a vacant lot on the northeast corner of South 46th Street and Pioneers Boulevard into a 17,000-square-foot mixed-income residential development, including three- and four-bedroom interlocking row houses. The project includes 12 dwelling units in three separate buildings; one 6-plex multifamily building, one 4-plex multifamily building, and one duplex. Seven of these units will be made permanently affordable and reserved for buyers earning 65% of Area Median Income (“AMI”).

The vacant lot was formally a community garden. The community garden was relocated in 2023 to a greenspace adjacent to Gere Branch Library. It is important to note that the Redevelopment Project did not displace the community garden. The community garden was relocated prior to NWL bringing the Redevelopment Project to the Urban Development Department.

The Redevelopment Project also includes a new midblock multimodal court to provide vehicular and pedestrian access to all units, new sidewalks, and street trees along South 46th Street and along Pioneers Boulevard. The project meets the goals of PlanForward, Lincoln’s Comprehensive Plan, the Affordable Housing Coordinated Action Plan, and the Climate Action Plan by providing affordable infill housing that provides higher density living along an existing neighborhood edge.

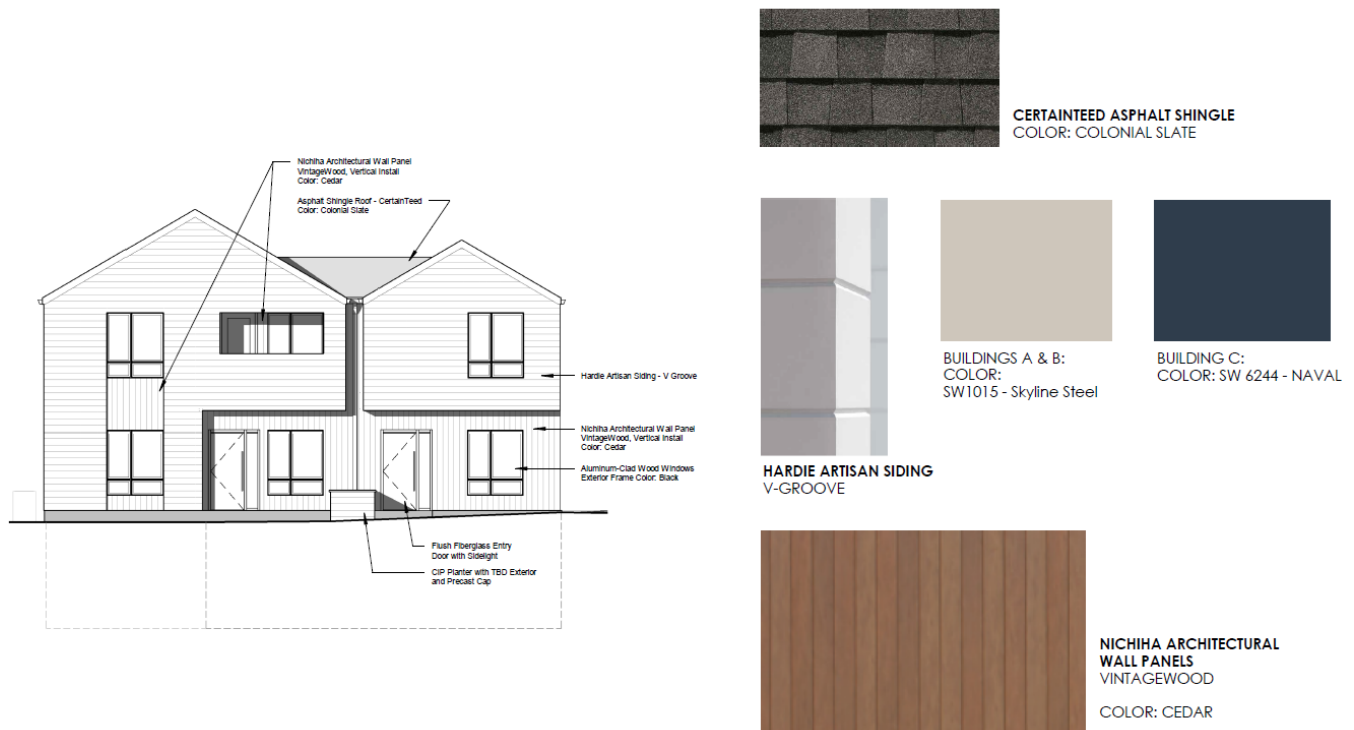
The Urban Design Committee is being asked to review and offer advice on the

1. **Building Design:** Architectural design and aesthetics,
2. **Landscaping:** Outdoor elements including porches, and landscaped areas of the proposed residential development,
3. **Neighborhood Integration:** Compatibility of the design with the existing houses in the neighborhood, and
4. **Blight and substandard conditions:** Evaluate whether the proposed development contributes positively to the neighborhood's character and contributes to mitigating blight and substandard conditions.



CUP Boundary with the Proposed Site Plan.

The exterior elevations of the proposed buildings include a combination of 5/8" thick field painted Fiber-Cement Siding and Fiber Cement Rainscreen Cladding, with aluminum-clad wood windows, fiberglass for the main entry doors, motorized insulated steel doors for the garages, and impact-resistant and laminated-strip asphalt shingles with ridge vents for the rooves.



The landscape plan (**attachment C**) shows 4 Bloodgood London Plane trees along Pioneers Blvd, and 3 Kentucky Coffee trees along S 46th Street. Other shrubs and grasses east of the 6-plex are as shown in the plan and the plant schedule.

Compatibility with the Neighborhood Design Standards (NDS)

Given its location and zoning, the project is subject to the Neighborhood Design Standards. The purpose of the Neighborhood Design Standards is to encourage the rehabilitation of existing housing in certain areas while allowing necessary new construction that is compatible with the surrounding development. What follows is a summary of the relevant design standards and the staff’s analysis of the project’s compatibility with said standards.

**Chapter 3.75, Neighborhood Design Standards
Section 4.1: Building Elements.**

1. New buildings shall utilize a roof type and pitch commonly found within the same and facing block front. Hipped or gable roofs with a pitch of at least 22.5 degrees (6/12 pitch) are acceptable for any project regulated by the Neighborhood Design Standards. Roofs of lower pitch and other types may be compatible in specific districts and can be proposed and approved on an individual basis.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

7/12 Pitch

2. New buildings shall provide at least two openings (combination of windows or door) per story oriented to the street including at least one window and an entrance to a dwelling unit or to a hallway leading to a dwelling unit.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant.*

3. Front porches are required when half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts or on adjacent blocks have front porches. Front porches shall be equal in width to at least 50% of the length of the front façade and equal in depth to half the depth of the front yard, or ten feet, whichever is less. Smaller porches may be approved based on evidence that half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts or on the adjacent block faces have smaller porches.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

The proposed rowhouses have covered porches and extended seating areas fronting Pioneers Boulevard.

4. The elevation of the first-floor level of new dwellings shall generally match the pattern of half or more of the houses on the same and facing block fronts. In other words, if the first floor of most houses in an area are positioned three or four steps above the prevailing grade, new dwellings should have a similar height of first floor, and if most surrounding houses are one or no steps above grade, new construction should match this characteristic. The Planning Director may approve designs that do not meet this requirement upon receiving information that there are no other practical and reasonable means of providing accessibility to a new dwelling for persons with mobility impairments and provided the design offers other features to enhance the compatibility of the new building with neighboring dwellings.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

5. Garages, if constructed, shall follow the pattern of half or more of the residential properties on the same and facing block front, such as:

a. if the pattern in an area is that garages are located behind the house, a pattern of rear garages shall be followed.

b. if the pattern in an area is that garages are attached or that garages are part of the main building with doors facing the street, doors for not more than two stalls are permitted on a portion of the main building facing a front lot line, provided such doors shall not occupy more than 40% of the length of the principal street façade. Garage doors are permitted in the main plane of the façade or forward of the main plane only when documentation is provided that such a feature is the pattern of half or more of the houses in an area (such as post-World War II “ranch” houses).

c. if there is no garage pattern shared by at least half of the residential properties on the same and facing block front, garages may be attached and face the street provided the garage portion of the building is set back from the main plane of the principal façade at least five feet.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

There is no set garage pattern on the same and facing block front. The proposed rowhouses will have attached rear garages.

6. The height of new buildings should be similar to that of existing residences on the same and facing block fronts. New buildings shall be acceptable that are not taller than the tallest residential structure, nor shorter than the shortest residential structure, built prior to December 31, 1949 on the contiguous block face, provided that:

- a. the maximum allowable height shall not be reduced to less than twenty-eight (28) feet, and
- b. if the height permitted under this section would exceed that permitted in the underlying district, the new building shall be no taller than an existing, adjacent building. Taller structures may be approved on a case-by-case basis, when a steeper roof would increase compatibility between the new building and adjacent older residences.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant. The height of the proposed rowhouses is slightly more than some of the adjacent houses but maintains a similar scale and proportion.*

7. The rhythm of similar-width houses on similar-width lots does much to establish the character of Lincoln's established residential areas. Large new buildings disrupt this character unless design measures are employed to reduce their apparent scale. New buildings over fifty feet (50') in length on the principal street facade should be designed to maintain the rhythm of the existing adjacent buildings. Designs will be bound to meet this standard which offsets the principal street facade and roof at intervals of fifty feet (50') or less. These offsets shall be at least six feet (6') in depth, and the portions of the facade offset shall equal at least 10% of the length of the facade. Alternate designs that maintain the rhythm of the blockface by such means as shifts in materials within the facade, use of multiple porches and/or dormers, and grouping of windows and entrances, may also be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant. The structure is designed to fit well within its context. The front facade is split into a duplex and a 4-plex with some green space and a pedestrian pathway separating the two buildings.*

Section 4.2: Yards and Open Space

4. Care should be taken to preserve existing street trees. Any trees removed shall be replaced in accord with the City's Master Street Tree Plan, and additional trees shall be planted as necessary to reach a standard of one street tree per fifty feet (50') of street frontage.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *No street trees are being cut down for this construction. However, the proposal shows 7 trees that would be planted as part of the project: 4 along Pioneers Boulevard, and 3 along 46th St., to blend with the existing pattern of trees on the block.*

Section 4.3: Parking

1. No required parking space shall be allowed between the building and the front property line. Driveways and parking aprons in the front yard may not measure more than 20 feet wide.

Compatibility per Staff Analysis: *Compliant*

Staff Comments.

Overall, the plans are in conformance with the neighborhood design standards. Given the project's request for TIF assistance, the Urban Design Committee is tasked with providing insights and taking final action based on the following parameters showcasing how the project exceeds the expectations set by the Neighborhood design standards.

- 1. Building Design,
- 2. Landscaping
- 3. Neighborhood Integration
- 4. Mitigation of blight and substandard conditions

Neighborhood Context



Current Site conditions



Current Site conditions with houses east of the property



Looking east from Pioneers Blvd.



Looking west from Pioneers Blvd.



Looking South from the property (Facing block-front)

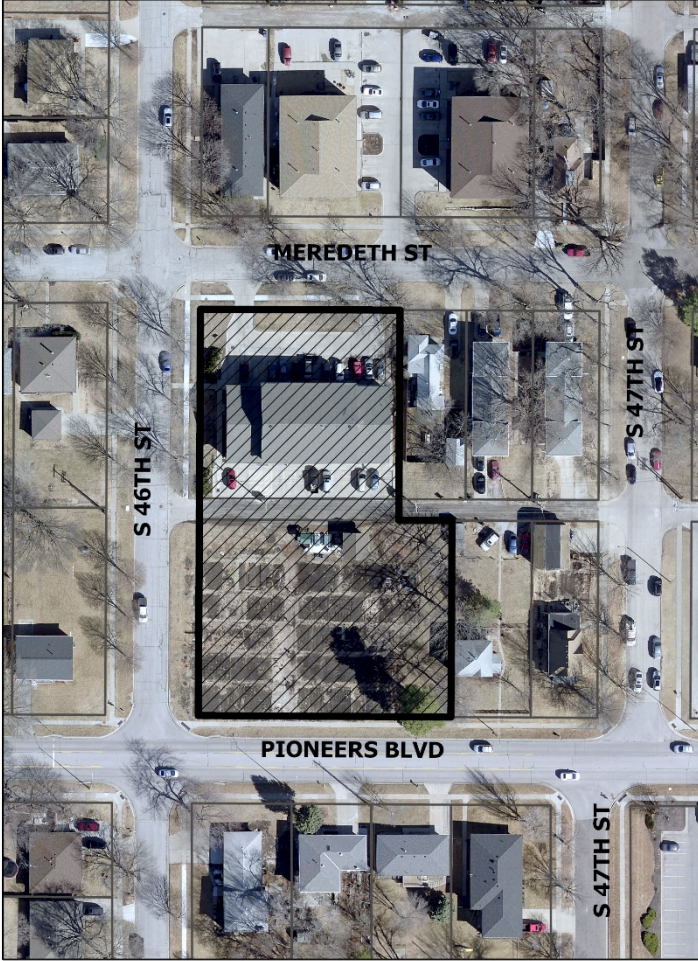


Adjacent block to the west of the property



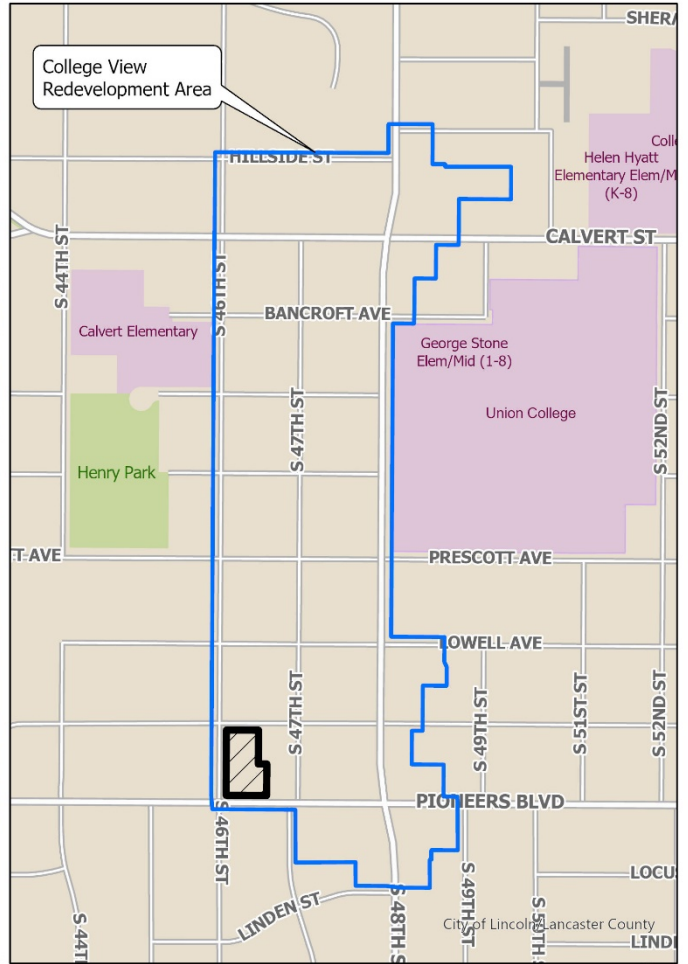
Looking North from the S46th and Pioneers Blvd intersection.

ATTACHMENT A - Location Map



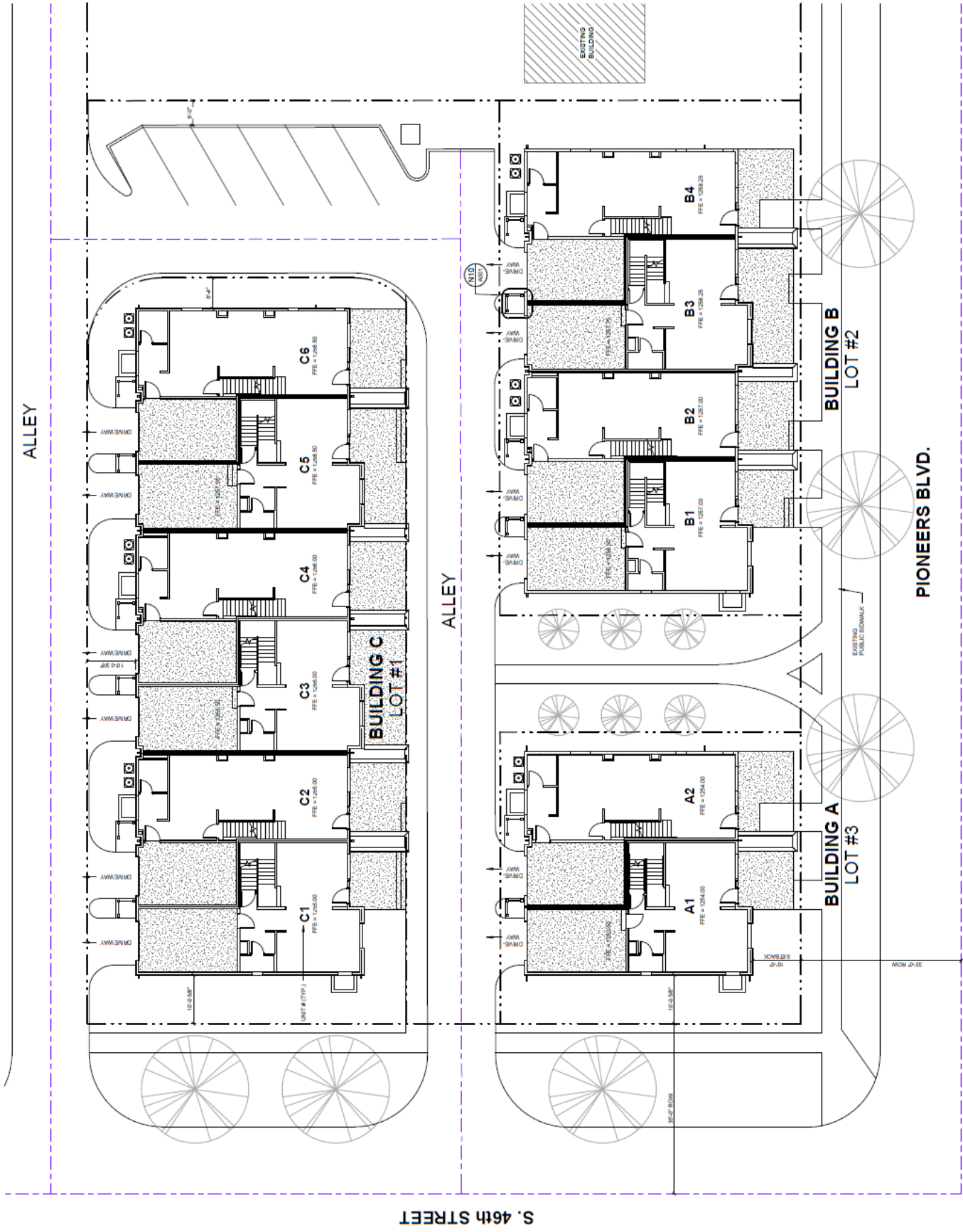
2022 aerial

UDR24010 - Pioneers Mixed-Income Row Housing (S 46th St and Pioneers Blvd)

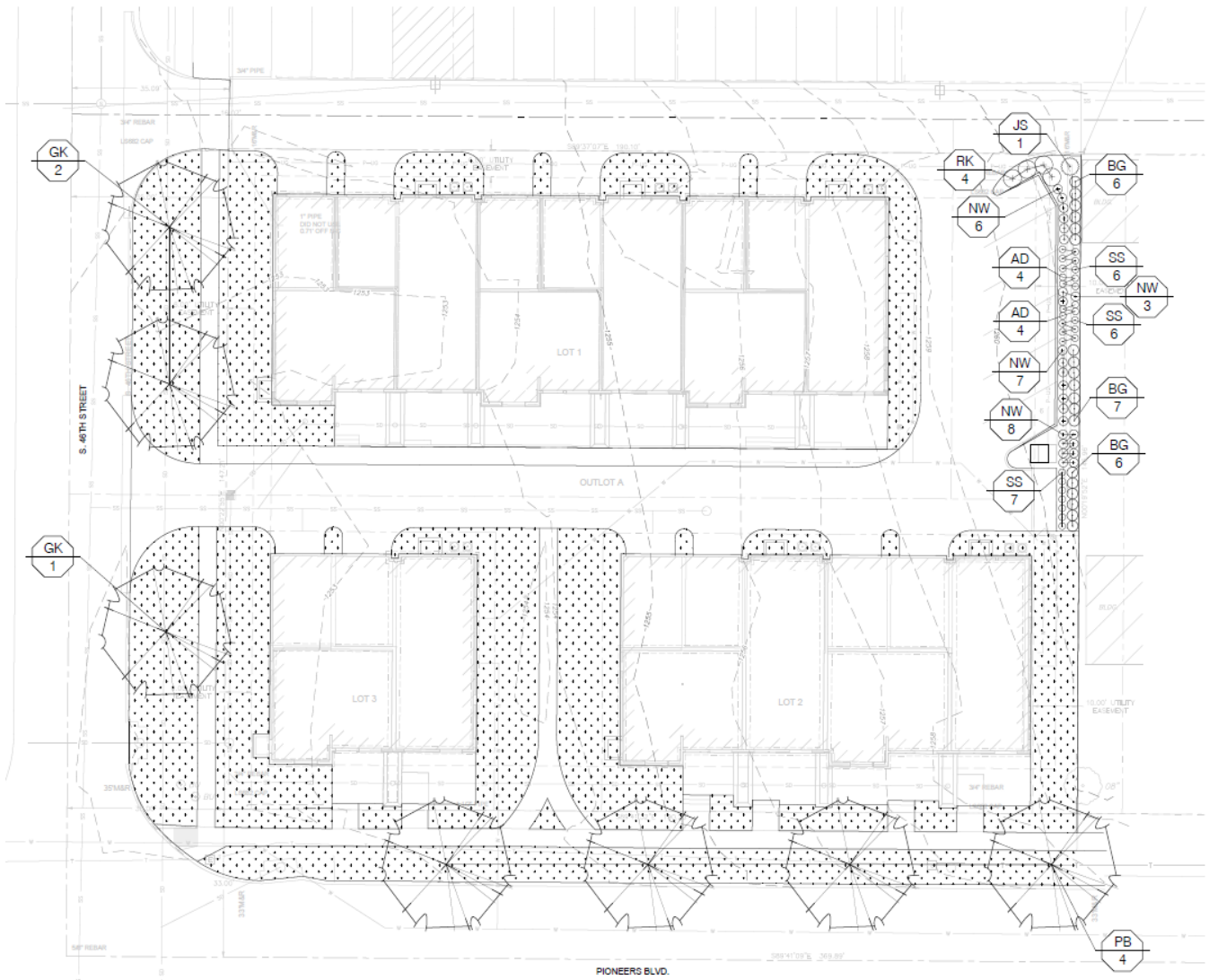


Project: GIS\Projects\Dev\Review\UDC_LocationMap.aprx
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ATTACHMENT B - Site Plan



ATTACHMENT C – Landscape Plan



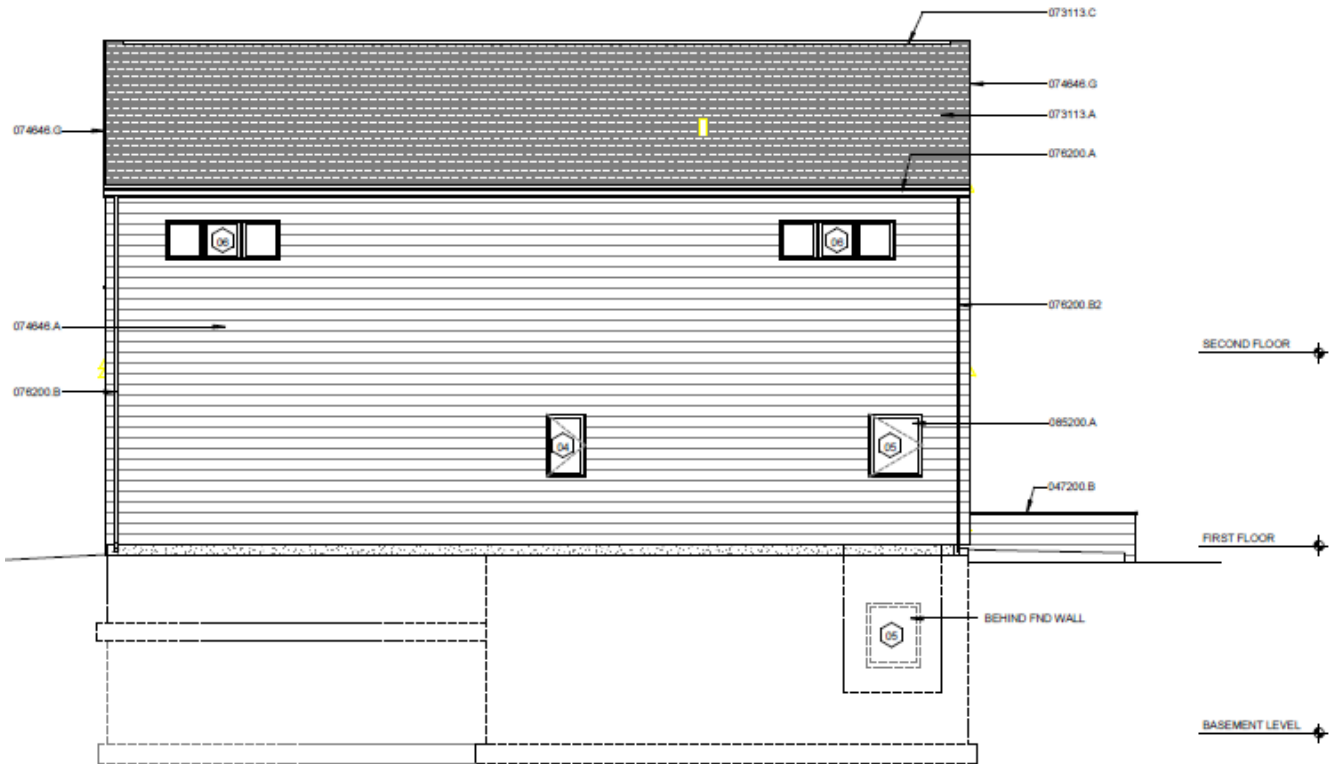
PLANT SCHEDULE

CODE	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	M. HT.	M. SPR.
TREES					
GK	GYMNOCLADUS DIOICA	KENTUCKY COFFEETREE	2" CAL	60'	40'
PB	PLATANUS X ACERIFOLIA 'BLOODGOOD'	BLOODGOOD LONDON PLANE TREE	2" CAL	50'	40'
SHRUBS / GRASSES / PERENNIALS					
AD	ACHILLEA MILLEFOLIUM 'DESERT EVE TERRACOTTA'	DESERT EVE™ TERRACOTTA YARROW	1 GAL	2'	1.5'
BG	BUXUS X 'GREEN MOUND'	GREEN MOUND BOXWOOD	1 GAL	3'	3'
JS	JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS 'SPARTAN'	SPARTAN JUNIPER	3 GAL	12'	5'
NW	NEPETA X 'WALKER'S LOW'	WALKER'S LOW CATMINT	1 GAL	2'	2'
RK	RHUS AROMATICA 'KONZA'	KONZA FRAGRANT SUMAC	1 GAL	2'	6'
SS	SCHIZACHYRIUM SCOPARIUM 'STANDING OVATION'	STANDING OVATION LITTLE BLUESTEM	1 GAL	3'	1.5'

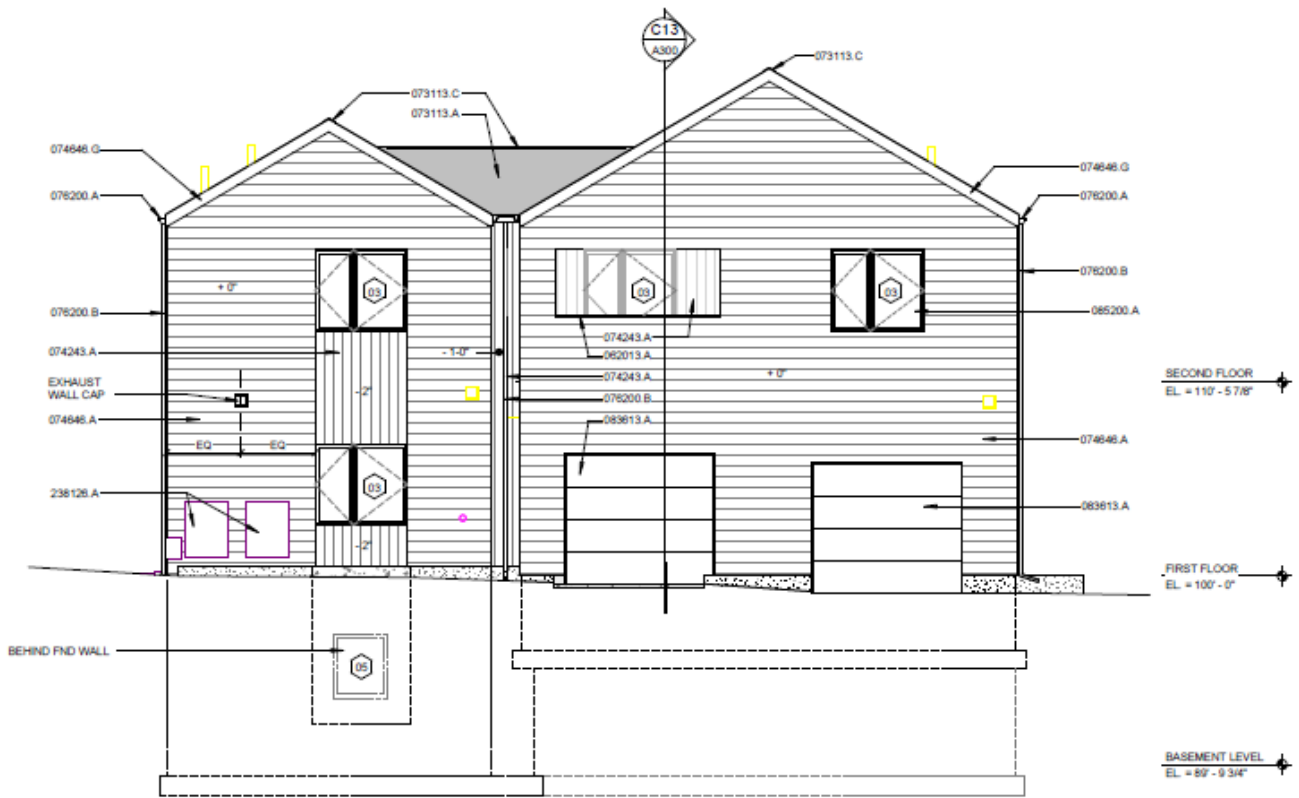
ATTACHMENT D- ELEVATIONS - DUPLEX



South Elevation (View from Pioneers Blvd)

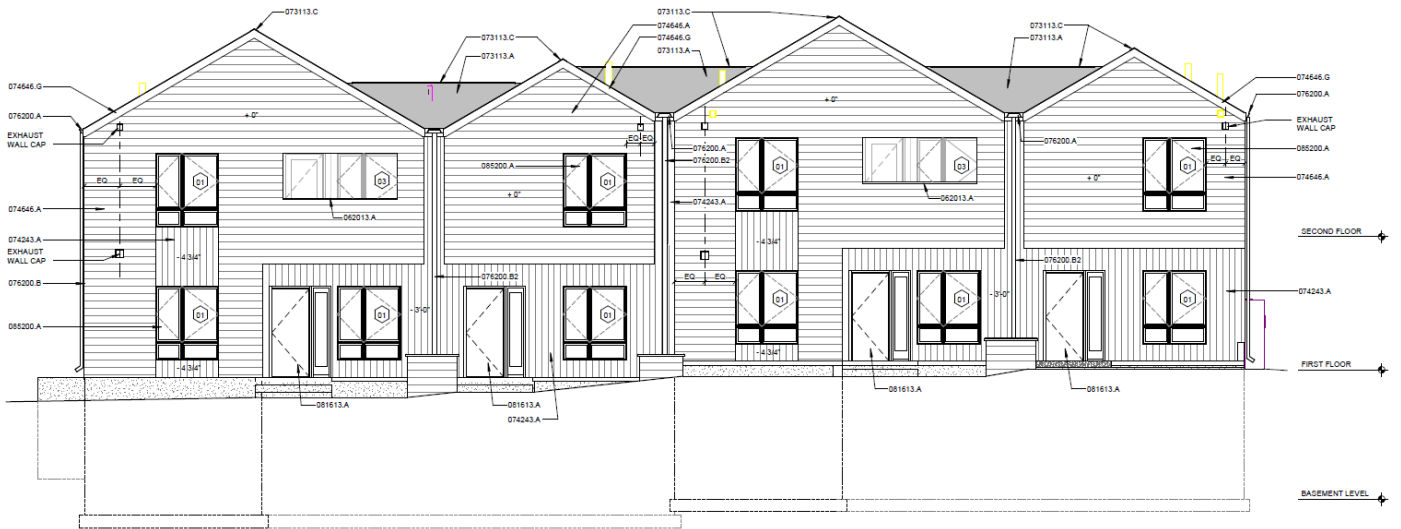


West Elevation (View from S 46th St.)

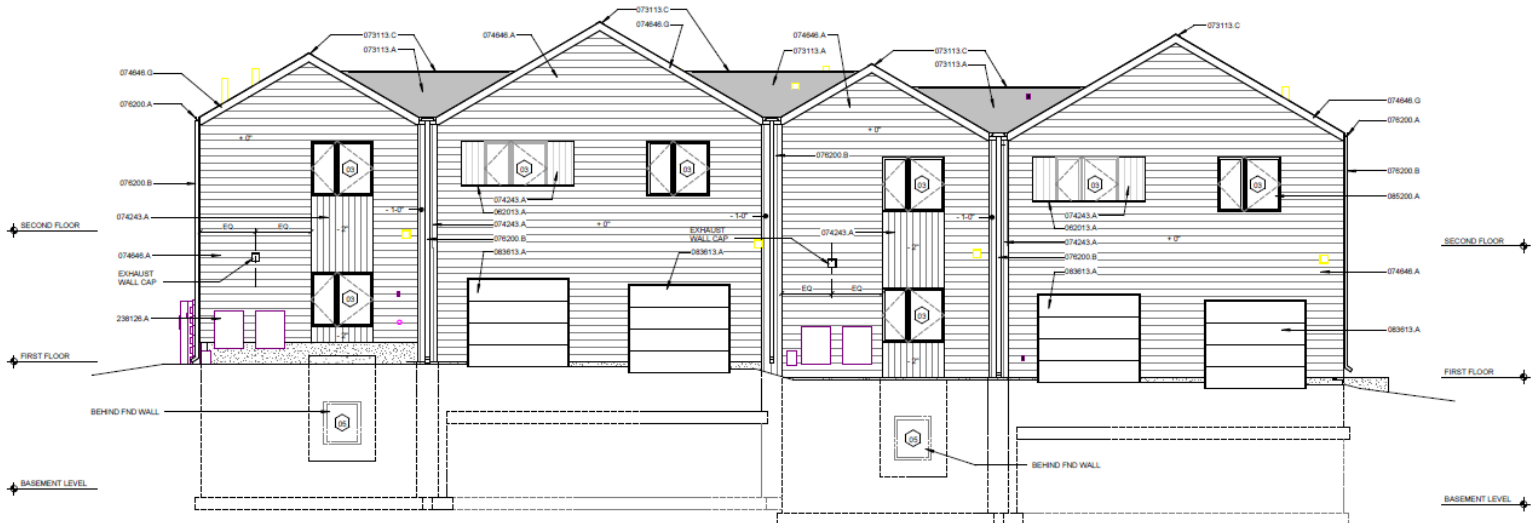


North Elevation (View from the south alley)

ATTACHMENT E- ELEVATIONS - 4-Plex



South Elevation (View from the Pioneers Blvd)



North Elevation (View from the south alley)

ATTACHMENT F- ELEVATIONS – 6-Plex



South Elevation (View from the South Alley)



North Elevation (View from the North Alley)

ATTACHMENT G- PERSPECTIVE IMAGES



View of the duplex and 4-plex building from Pioneer Blvd.



View of the 6-plex building from the South Alley



View of the duplex from Pioneers Blvd.