

ADDRESS: 6901 GERMANTOWN AVE

Proposal: Construct three-story building in side yard

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Dennis M. McCarthy and John V. Miglionico

Applicant: Lea Litvin, LO Design

History: 1798; Joseph Gorgas House; porch added, 1860

Individual Designation: 5/28/1957

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Meredith Keller, meredith.keller@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: The property at 6901 Germantown Avenue includes a late-eighteenth-century stone structure, the Joseph Gorgas House, located at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane, and a large parking lot at the side and rear. The property's large open space historically functioned as a side and rear yard. Aside from a wood-frame shed or stable building at the rear of the stone house, historic maps show that no other structures existed on the site. This application proposes to construct a three-story, multi-unit building on the site of the parking lot. The new building would have frontages on Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane, would be clad in stone and blackened cedar siding, and would feature large dormers with terraces and a standing seam metal roof.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct three-story, multi-unit building in location of existing parking lot.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The proposed three-story building would be differentiated from the historic building, though it would not be compatible. While the standing seam metal roof and stone cladding reflect the materials of the historic building and surrounding context, the blackened cedar siding, the dominant material of the new construction, would not be compatible. The proposed building is too large in massing, size, and scale and should be reduced to more closely match the massing of the historic building.
- Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction:
 - *Recommended: Designing new construction on a historic site or in a historic setting that it is compatible but differentiated from the historic building or buildings.*
 - *Recommended: Considering the design for related new construction in terms of its relationship to the historic building as well as the historic district and setting.*
 - *Not Recommended: Adding new construction that results in the diminution or loss of the historic character of the building, including its design, materials, location, or setting.*
 - The first-story wall fronting Germantown Avenue, the primary façade of the building, would be clad in stone with one door centered on the elevation. It would include no other fenestration. The lack of fenestration at this façade would adversely impact the historic streetscape, a main commercial corridor through

Northwest Philadelphia, and should be modified to include punched window openings.

- Owing to the massing, size, and scale of the new construction and its siting around the building, the new construction would result in the diminution of the historic character of the building.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Denial, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction.

MAPS & IMAGES:



Figure 1: 2020 aerial showing 6901 Germantown Avenue. Source: Atlas.



Figure 2: The front façade and adjacent parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.



Figure 3: View from Gorgas Lane of the rear yard and parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.



Figure 4: Historic photo of the property at the time of designation, June 1957. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 5: Historic photo of the front façade of 6901 Germantown Avenue, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 6: Historic photo of the north elevation, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 7: Historic photo of the rear of the property taken from Gorgas Lane, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 8: The 1910 G. W. Bromley Atlas illustrates that a wood-frame structure historically existed at the rear, with no other structures on the site. Source: PhilaGeoHistory.



July 13, 2021

Property Address: 6901 Germantown Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19119

Applicant: Lea Litvin / LO DESIGN

Applicant Email: info@lodesignco.com

Applicant Phone #: 954-559-3549

Applicant Address: 2116 Locust Street Philadelphia, PA 19103

Property Owners: Adam Deeves / Time Keene

Project Description:

The project includes the subdivision of the parcel located at 6901-13 Germantown Avenue into two parcels. The size of the existing parcel is 12,333.65 SF. Currently on this property, there is the existing historic structure, which is used as a commercial space as well as a large surface parking lot.

As part of this project, the current surface parking lot will be redeveloped to include a multifamily structure consisting of 5 residential units and 8 parking spaces.

The new construction is intended to reference the historic structure and immediate context through the use of similar massing strategies including gabled roofs, dormers, and punched opening windows. The new construction will also complement the historic structure by finely calibrating the alignments between the two structures.

While the historic building is predominantly clad in Wissihickon Schist with a standing seam metal roof, the new construction will use similar complementary stone in several key areas, while introducing dark stained cedar tongue and groove siding as well as a grey standing seam metal roof. The use of a darker color palette is intended to create visual separation between the new and old buildings, allowing the old building to be in the foreground, with the new building as a complementary structure in the background.

Further, the siting of the new structure will be such that it preserves the mature Sycamore tree fronting Germantown Avenue. The siting is oriented so that it also provides frontage on Gorgas Ave. The parking spaces will be concealed from pedestrian view through the use of stone site walls and landscape elements.

Sincerely,

Lea Litvin

Principal, LO Design Company LLC

6901 Germantown Avenue

Historical Commission Review

July 13, 2021

2116 Locust Street // Philadelphia, PA 19103

www.lodesignco.com // [215] 606-4896

info@lodesignco.com

LO DESIGN



Site Plan: Existing

Existing surface parking lot and
2 ½ story historical building on
lot



Site Plan: Lot Subdivision

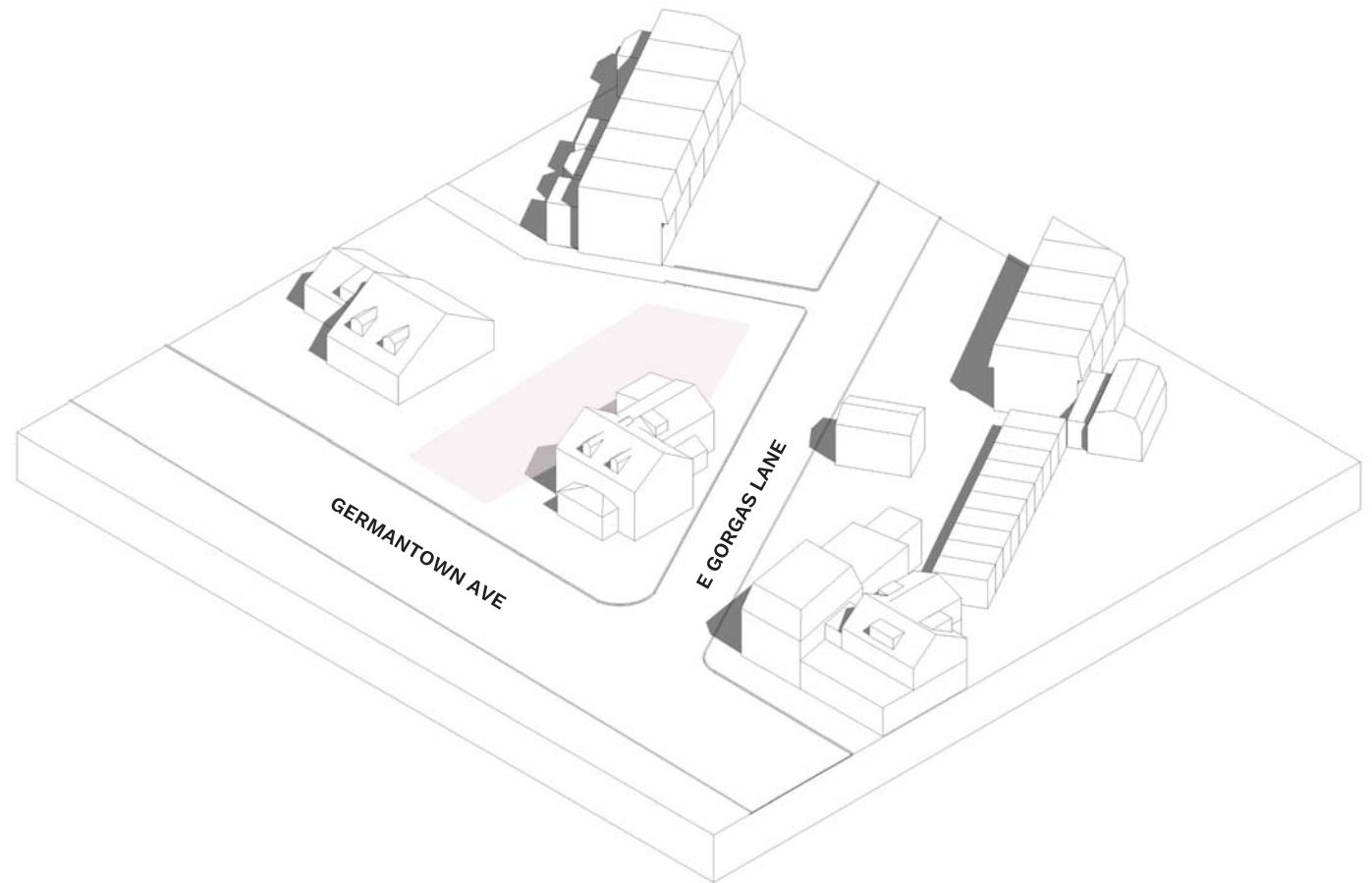
Parcel "A"
3365 SF per 50'-0" Gorgas
Lane Measurement

Parcel "B"
6828 SF per 50'-0" Gorgas
Lane Measurement



Massing Diagrams

Existing Structure and Surface Parking Lot



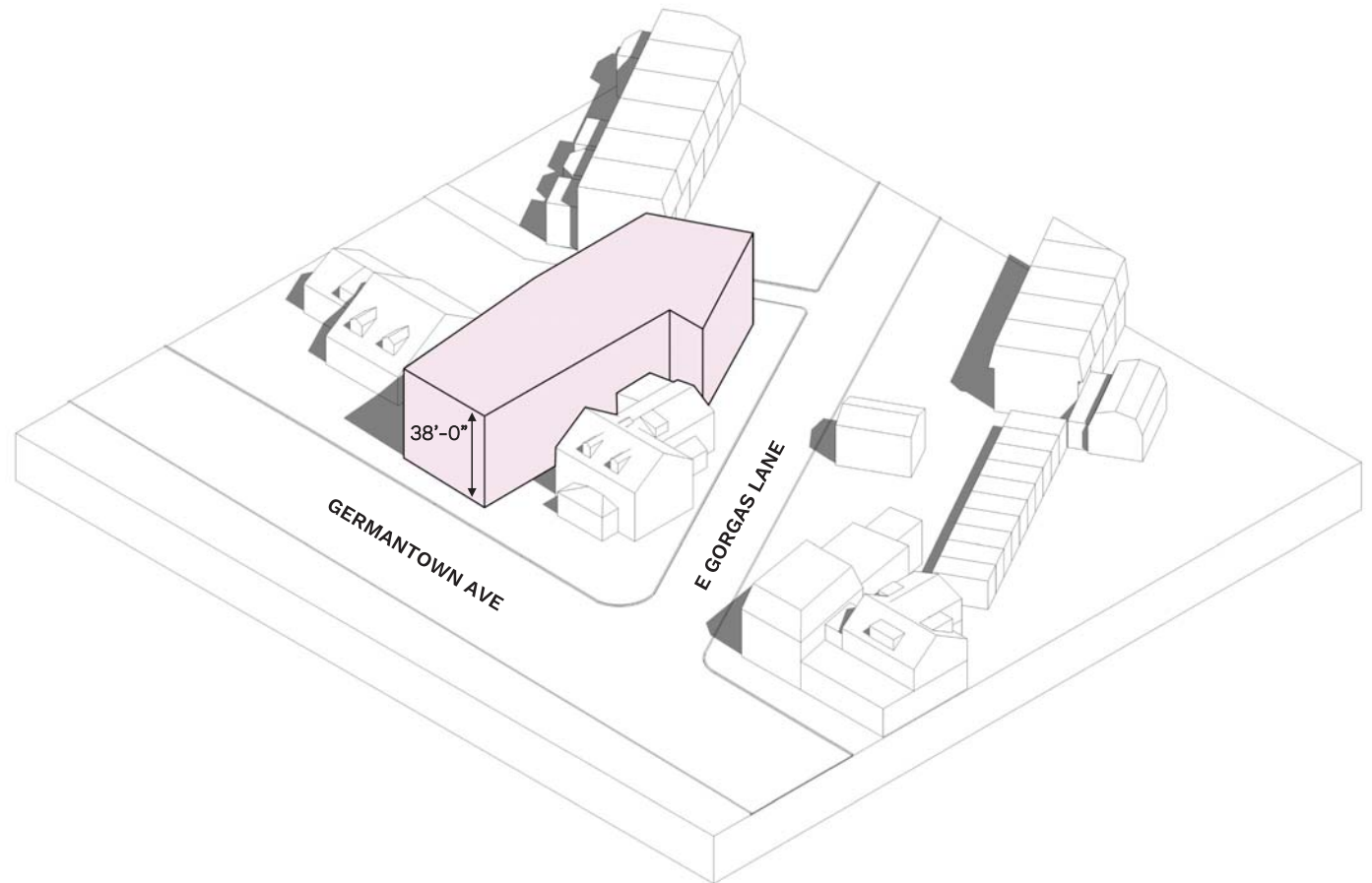
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Massing Diagrams

Zoning Envelope - Maximum Height at 38'-0"

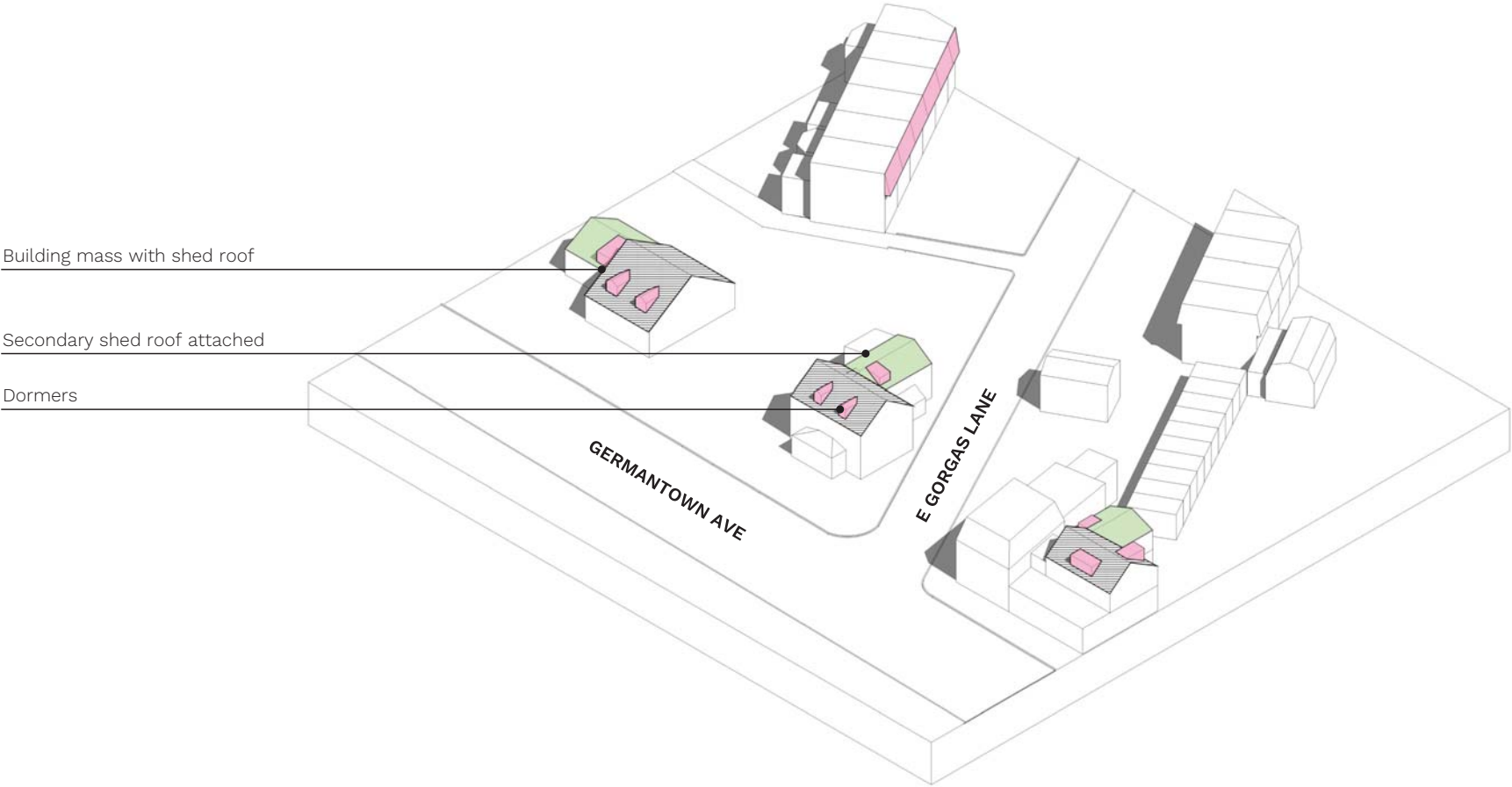
75% Lot Coverage

14'-0" Rear Yard



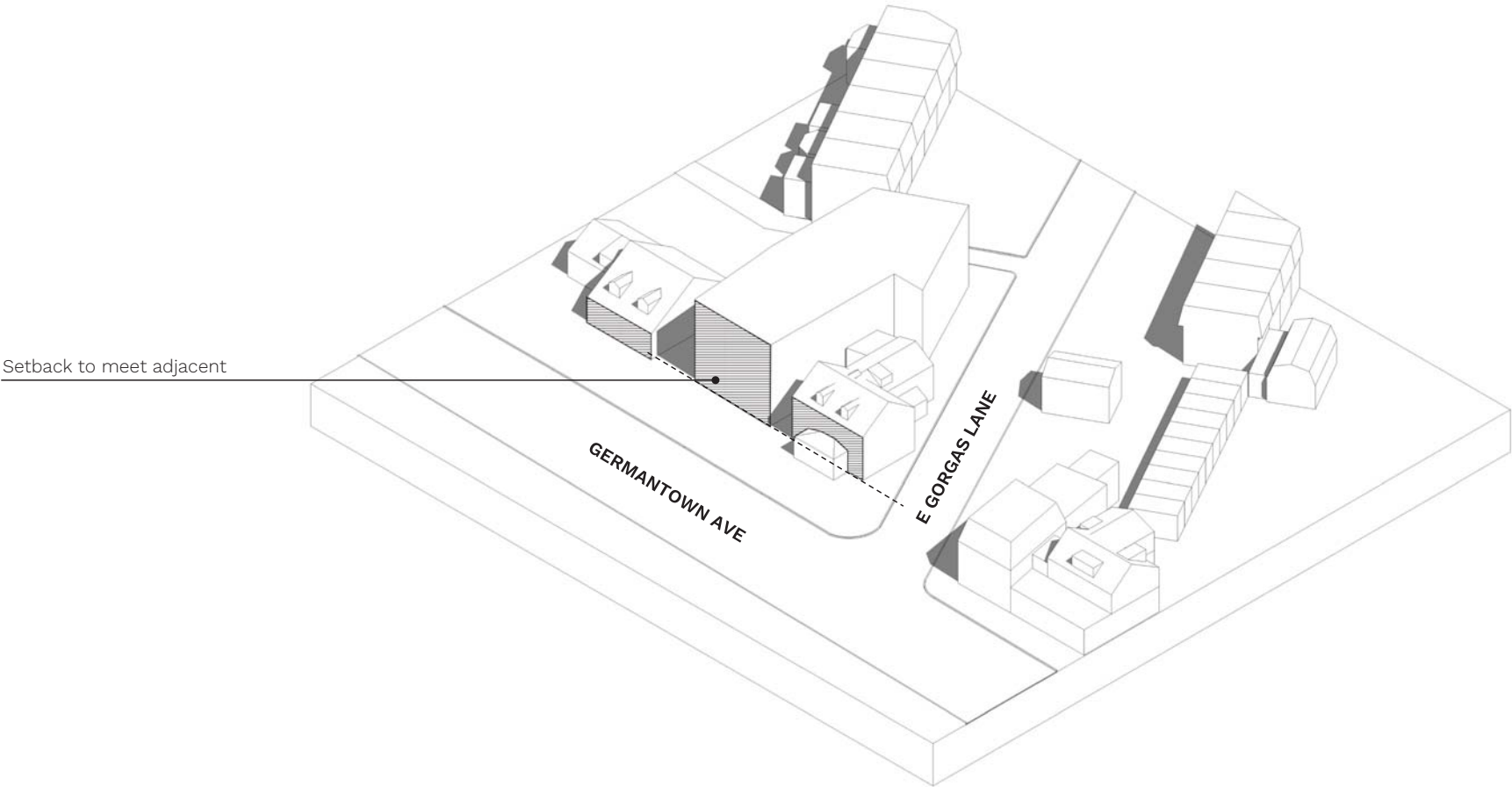
Massing Diagrams

Existing context massing analysis



Massing Diagrams

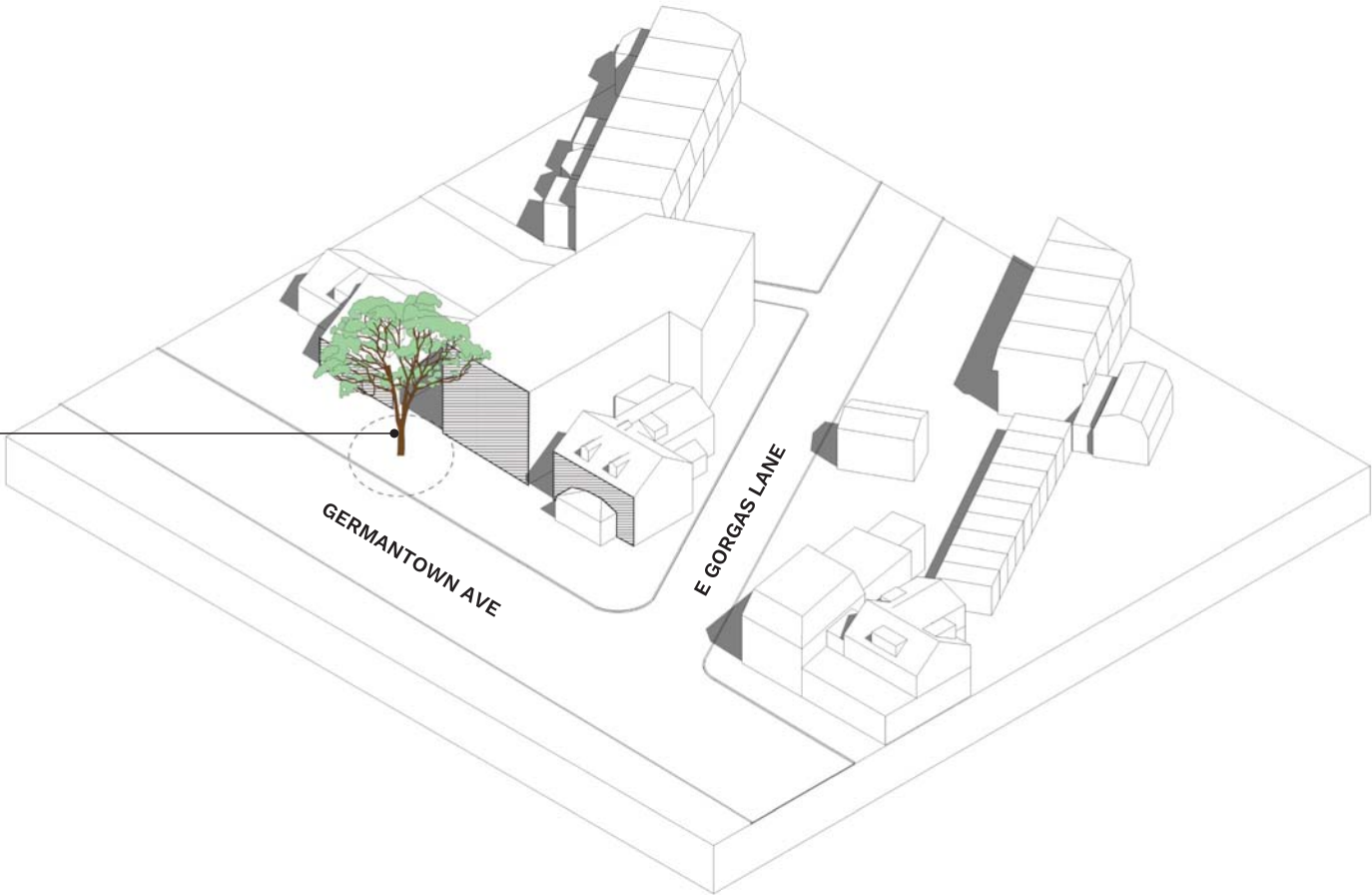
Front setback



Massing Diagrams

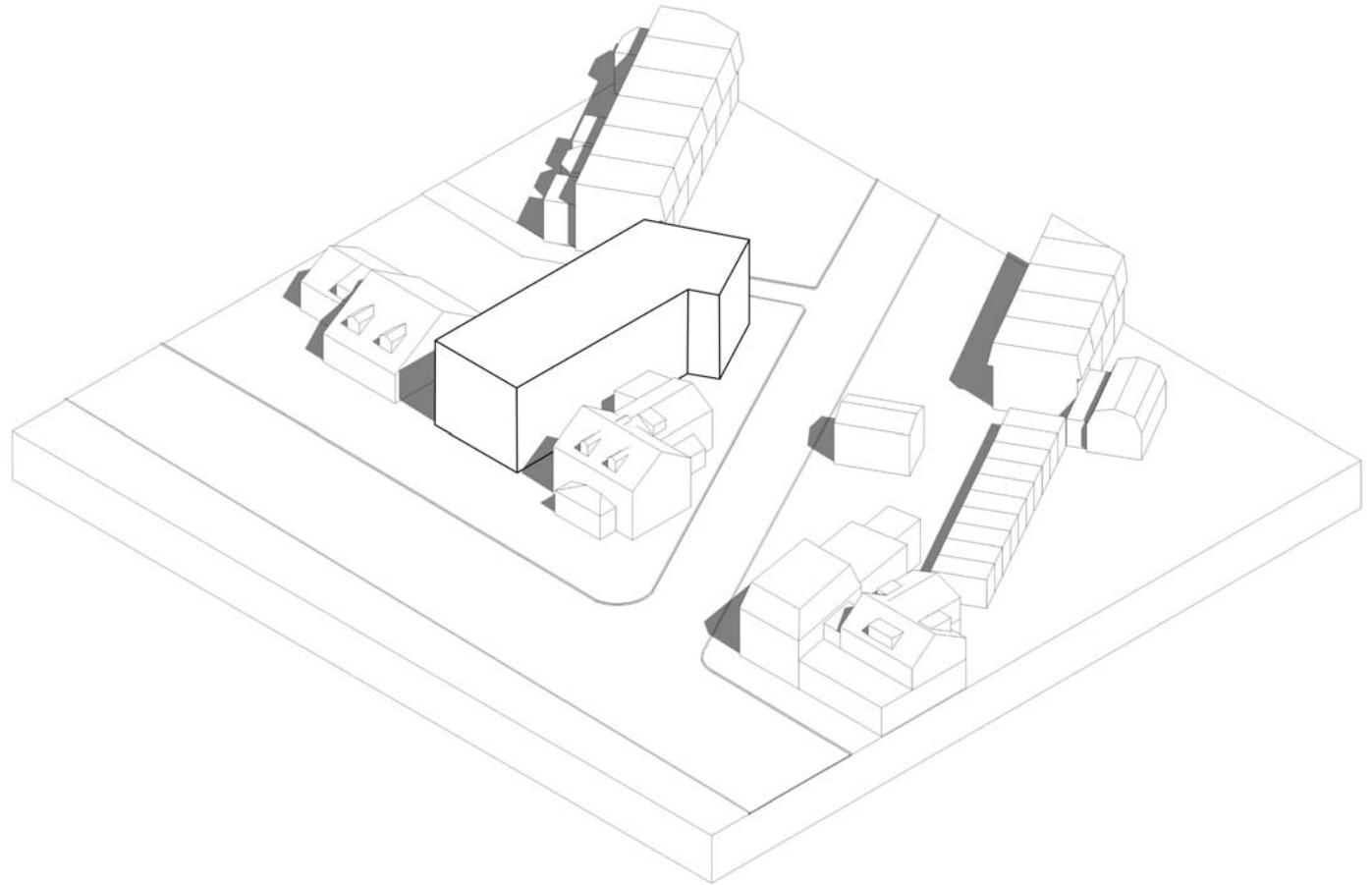
Setback for heritage Sycamore tree along Germantown Ave; will consult with arborists to ensure tree is properly maintained during construction

Retain heritage Sycamore tree



Massing Diagrams

Buildable area after setbacks



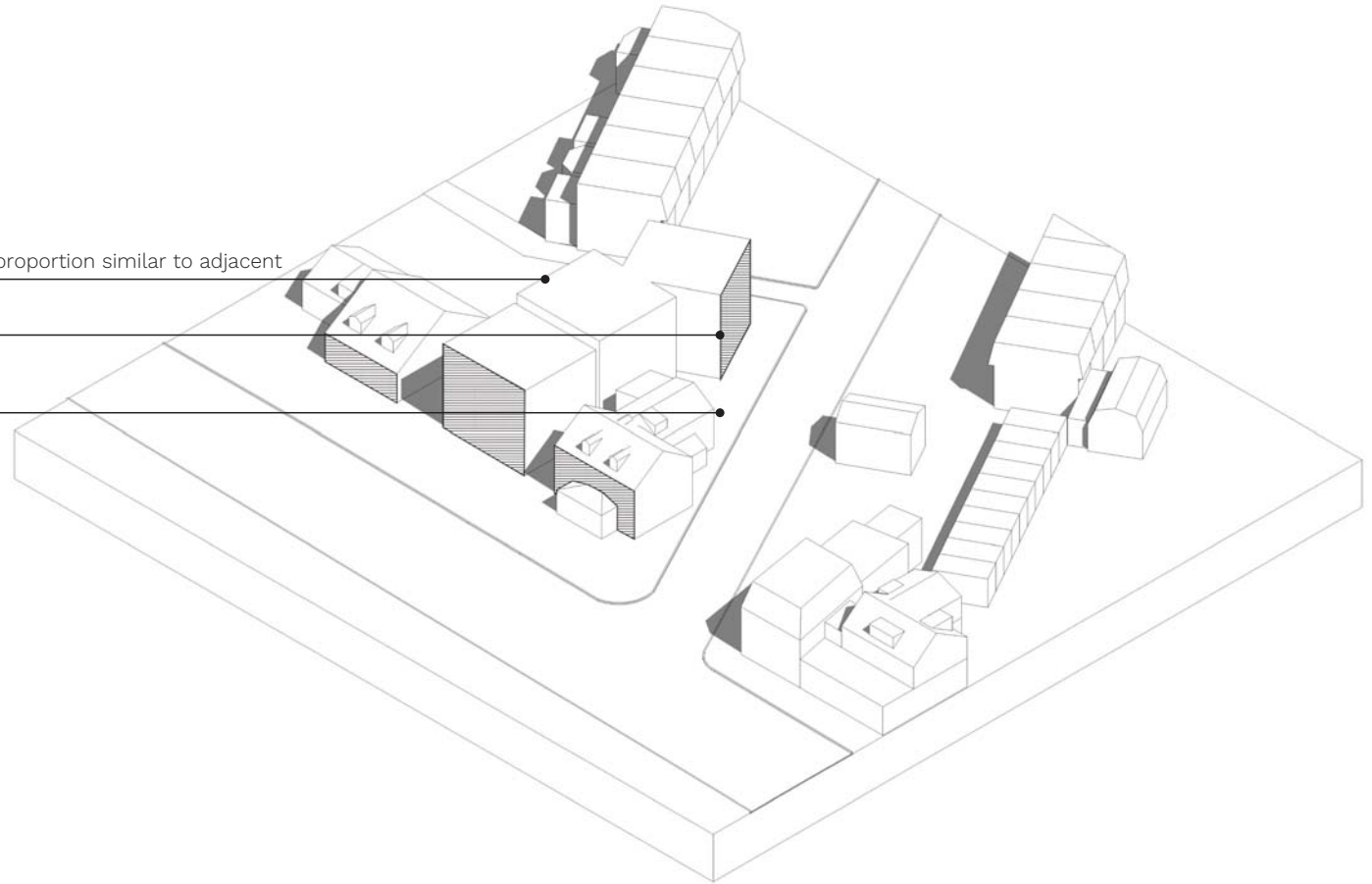
Massing Diagrams

Building footprint – rotation to face
Gorgas Lane

Mass broken down to 3 boxes of proportion similar to adjacent

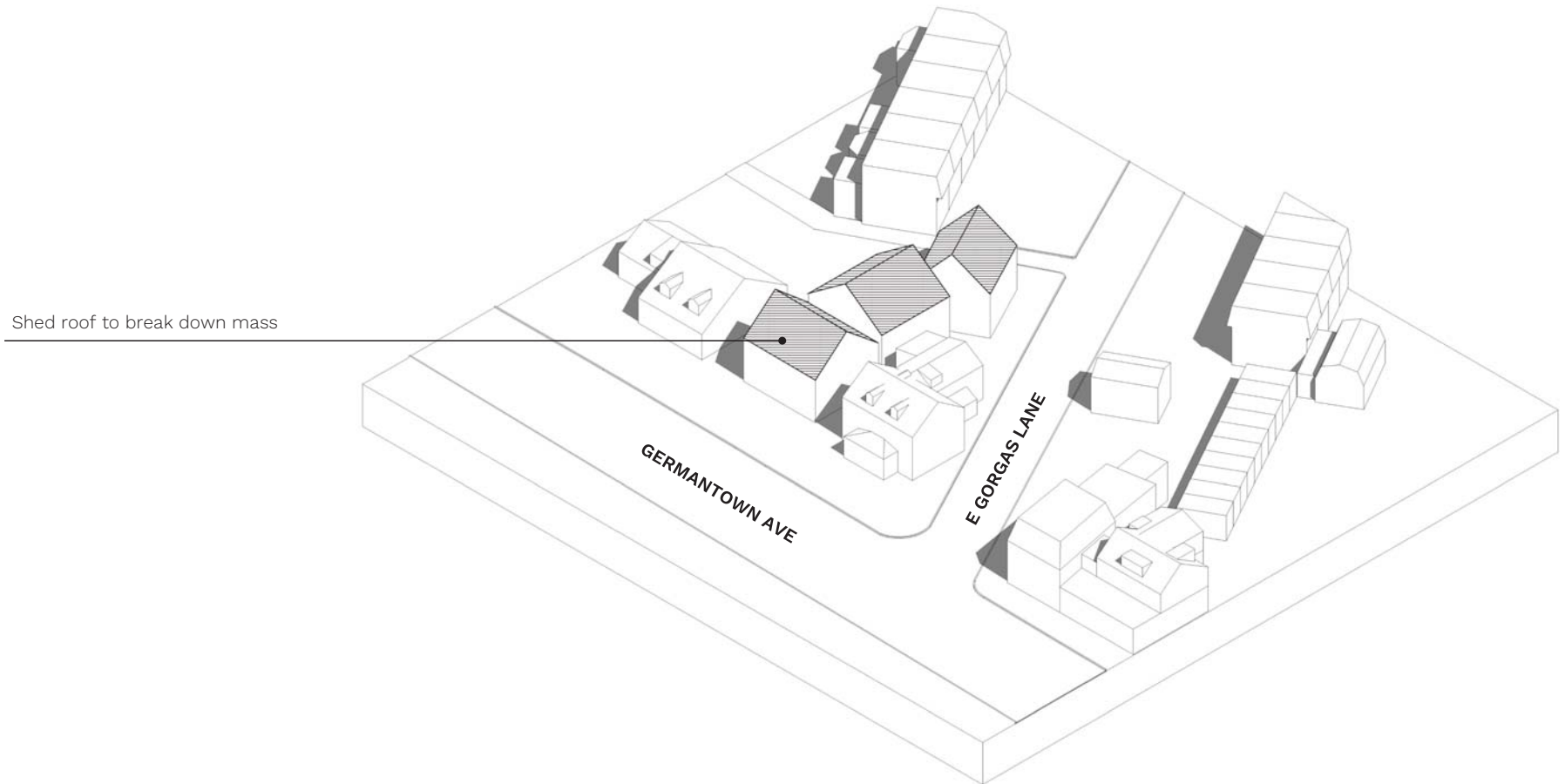
Rotate third box to meet Gorgas

Remove existing shed



Massing Diagrams

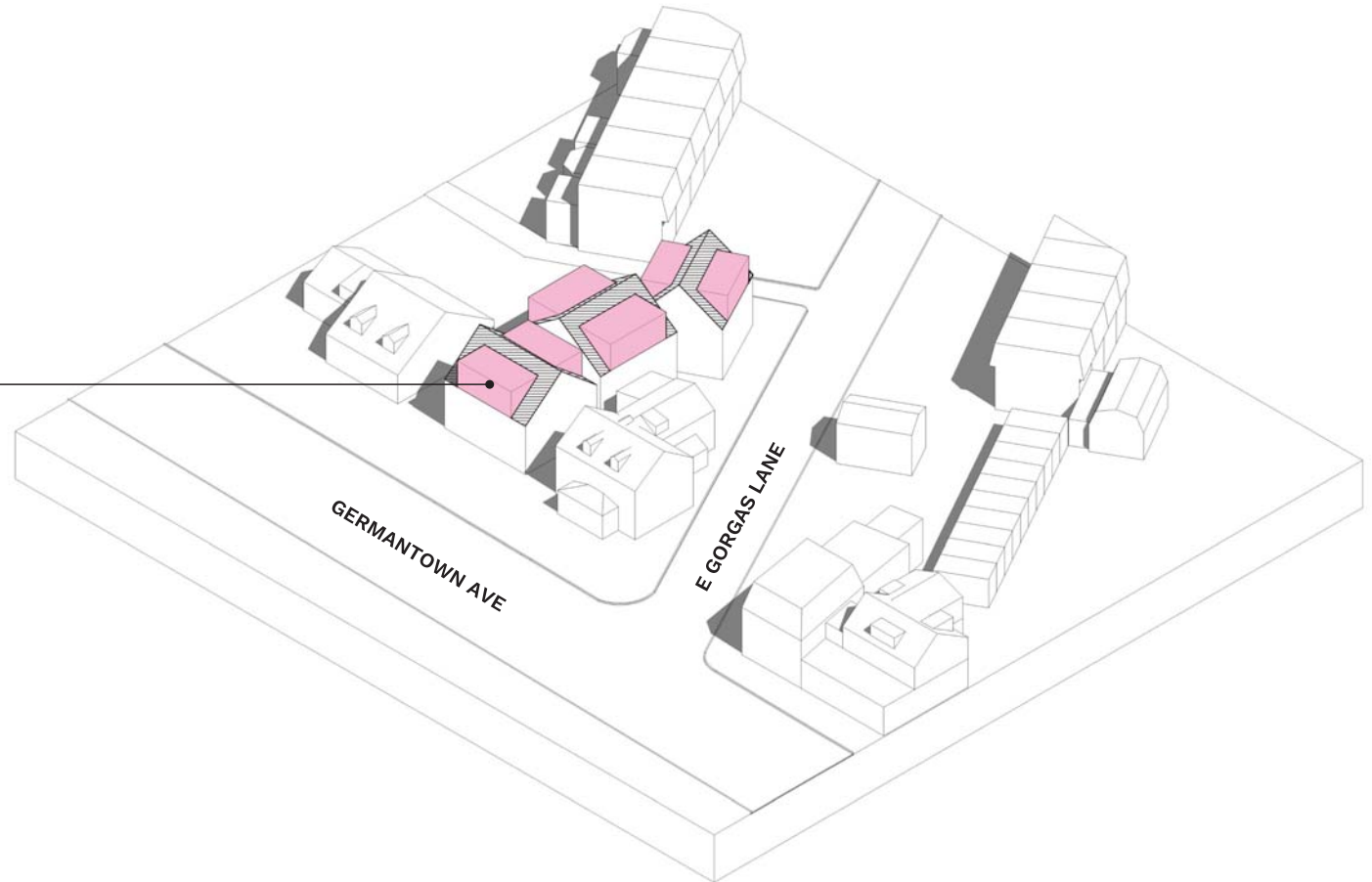
Mass Reduction; Shed Roofs



Massing Diagrams

Dormers

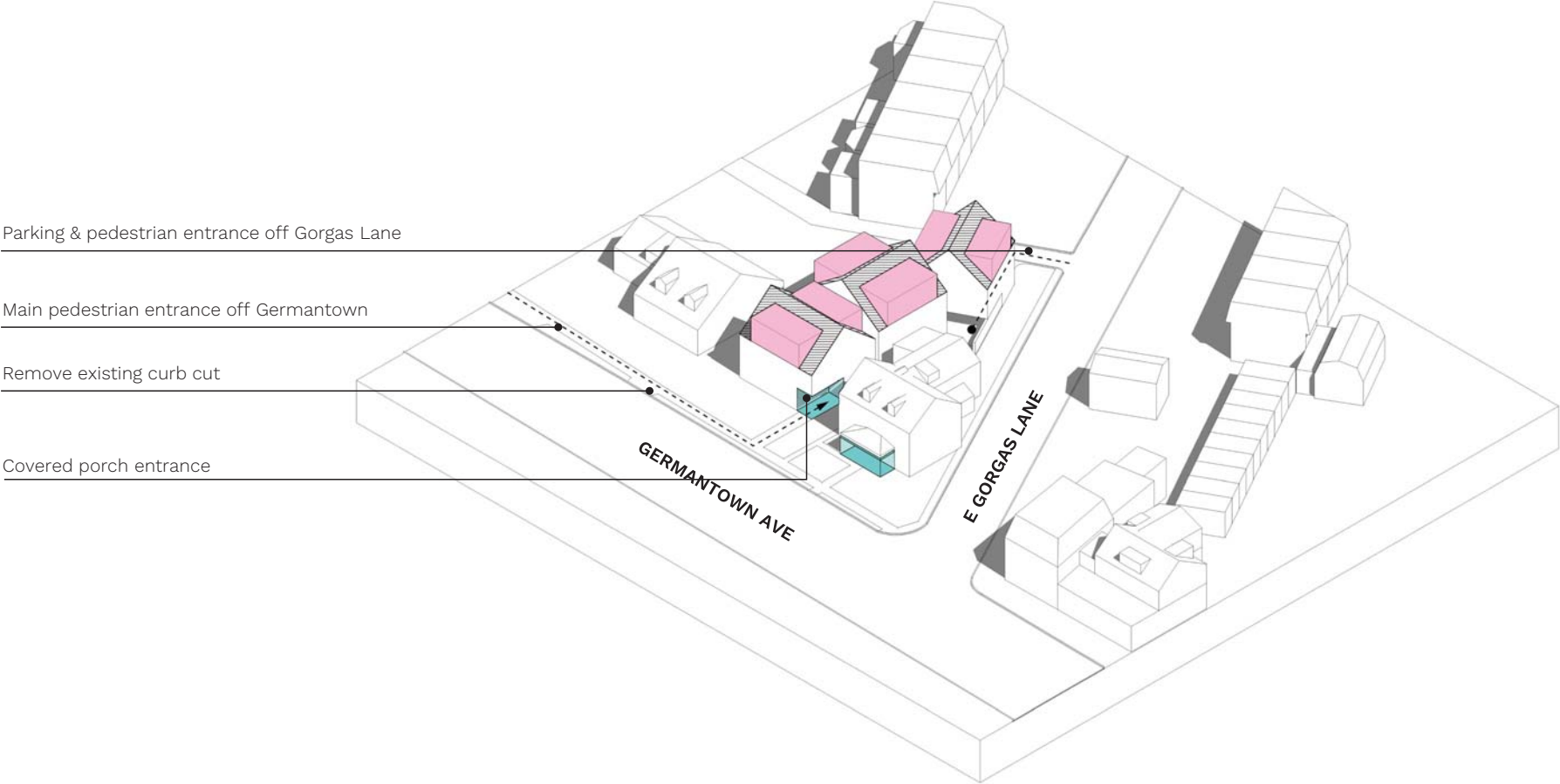
Dormers to match adjacent



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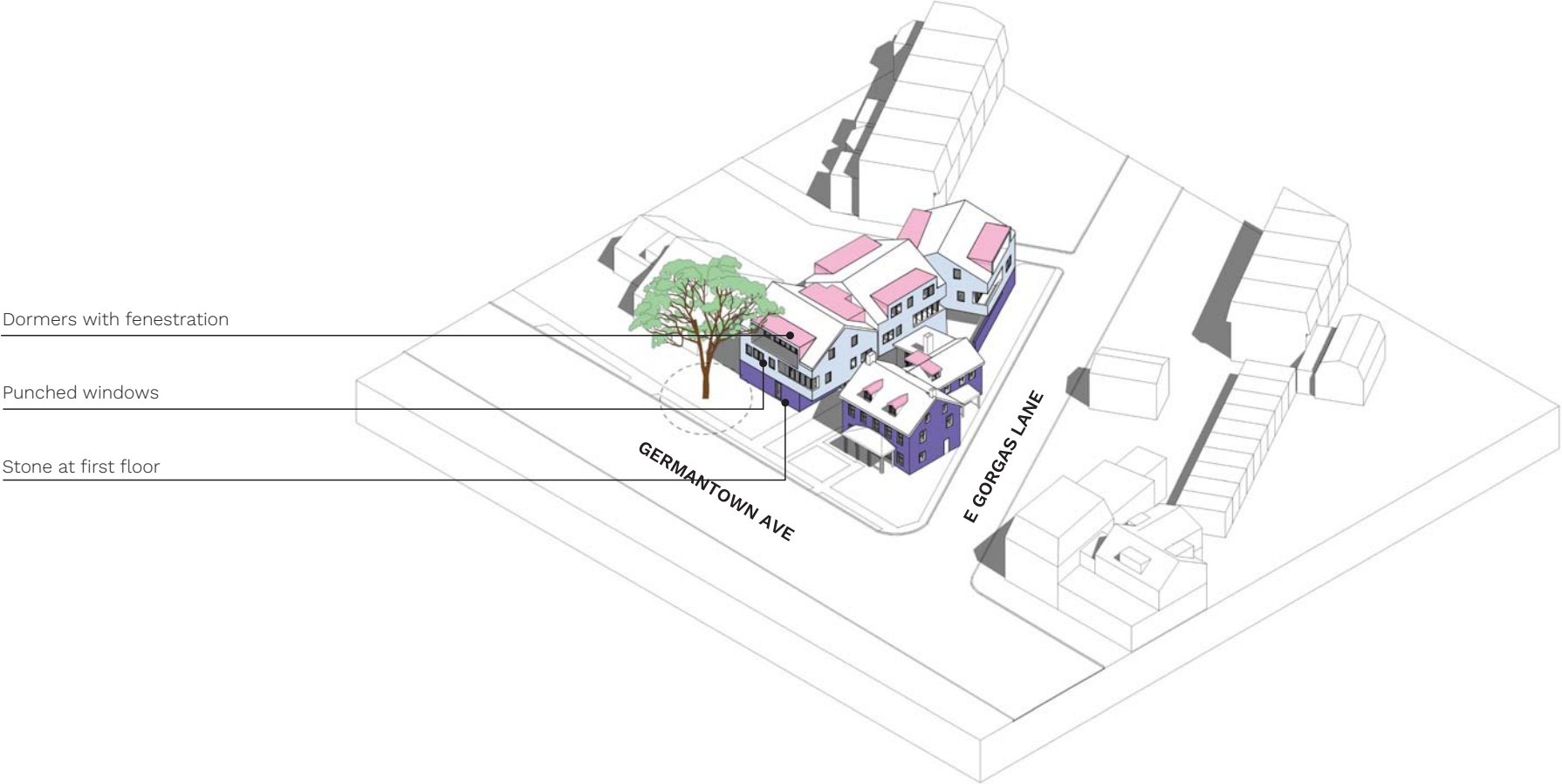
Massing Diagrams

Pedestrian Circulation and Parking



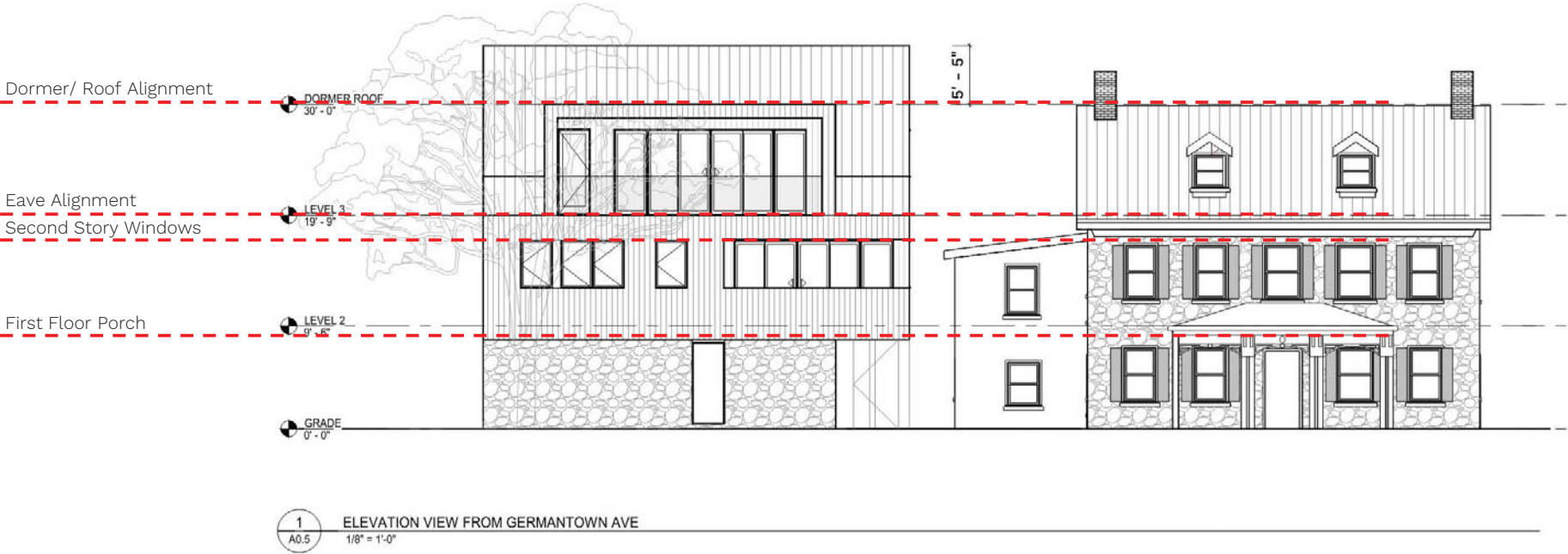
Massing Diagrams

Details from Context Building



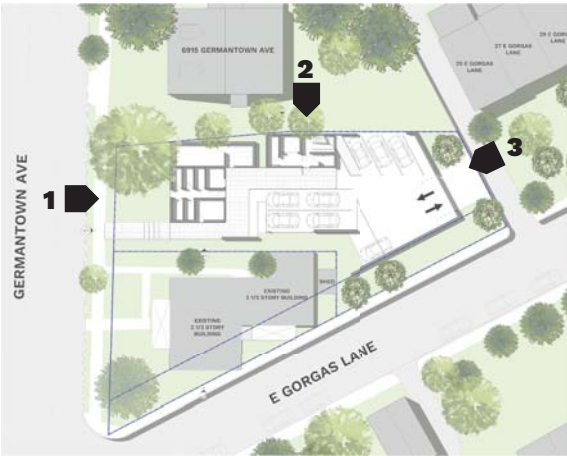
6901 Germantown

Elevation along Germantown Ave, showing alignments with existing historic building façade



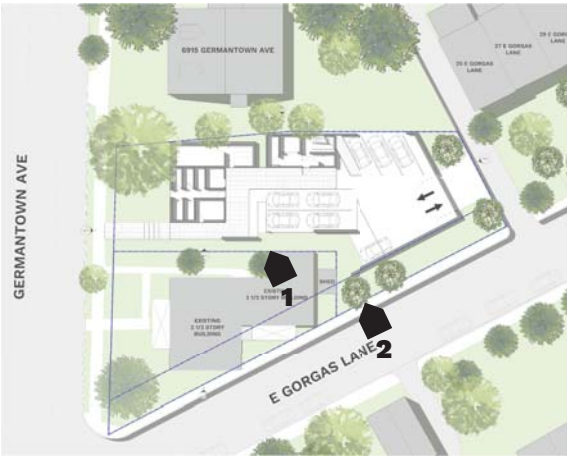
6901 Germantown

Building Elevations



6901 Germantown

Building Elevations



1
A1.1
ELEVATION VIEW FROM GORGAS (EXG BLDG NOT SHOWN)
1/8" = 1'-0"



2
A1.2
ELEVATION VIEW FROM GORGAS STREET
1/8" = 1'-0"

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6901 Germantown Avenue

Materials



Blackened cedar vertical tongue & groove siding



Stone to match historic building



Standing seam metal



Clear-stained White Cedar

Key Plan



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- Clear stained white cedar
- Standing seam metal
- Heritage sycamore tree
- Blackened cedar vertical tongue & groove siding
- Stone to match historic building facade
- Landscaped elements
- Landscape lighting



6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

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Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



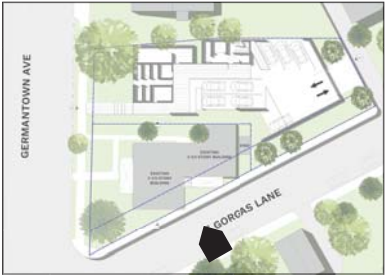
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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings

Key Plan



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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings – Close Up 1

Key Plan



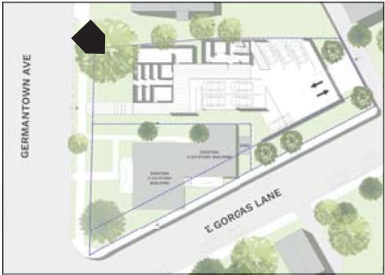
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6901 Germantown Avenue

Renderings – Close Up 2

Key Plan



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Existing Site Photos

Aerial site photos of 6901 Germantown Avenue



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Existing Site Photos

Site photos of 6901 Germantown Avenue



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A View looking south on Germantown Avenue



B View looking north on Germantown Avenue



C View looking northeast on Gorgas Lane



D View looking southwest on Gorgas Lane

Site Plan: Proposed

GROSS BUILDING AREA

L1	1260 SF
L2	3423 SF
L3	4059 SF
8742 SF	

UNIT MIX

L2	UNIT 1	1388 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 2	1013 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 3	1376 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 4	1578 SF	3 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 5	1529 SF	3 BD/2 BA

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Building Floor Plans

Ground Floor

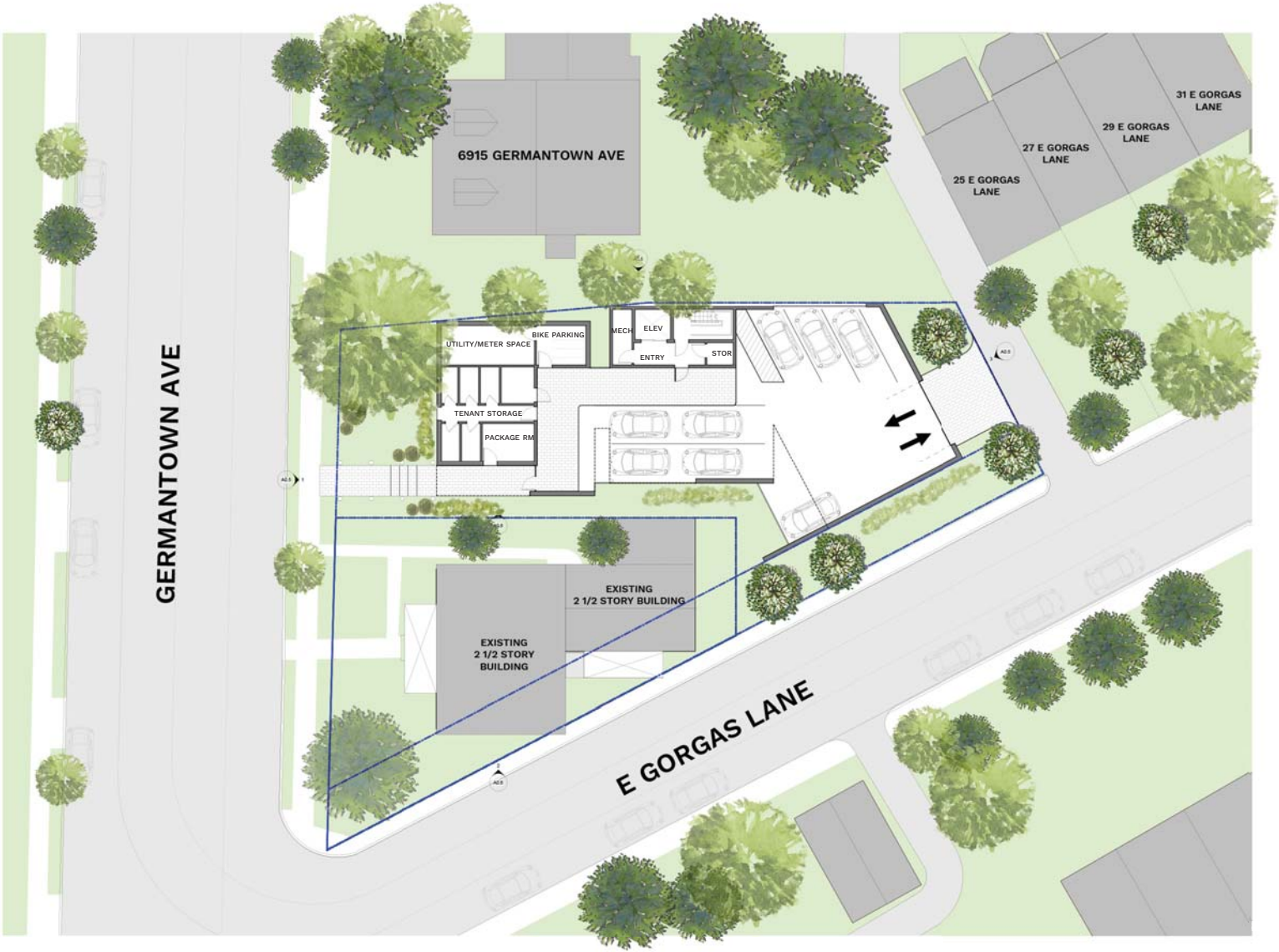
GROSS BUILDING AREA

L1	1260 SF
L2	3423 SF
L3	4059 SF
	8742 SF

UNIT MIX

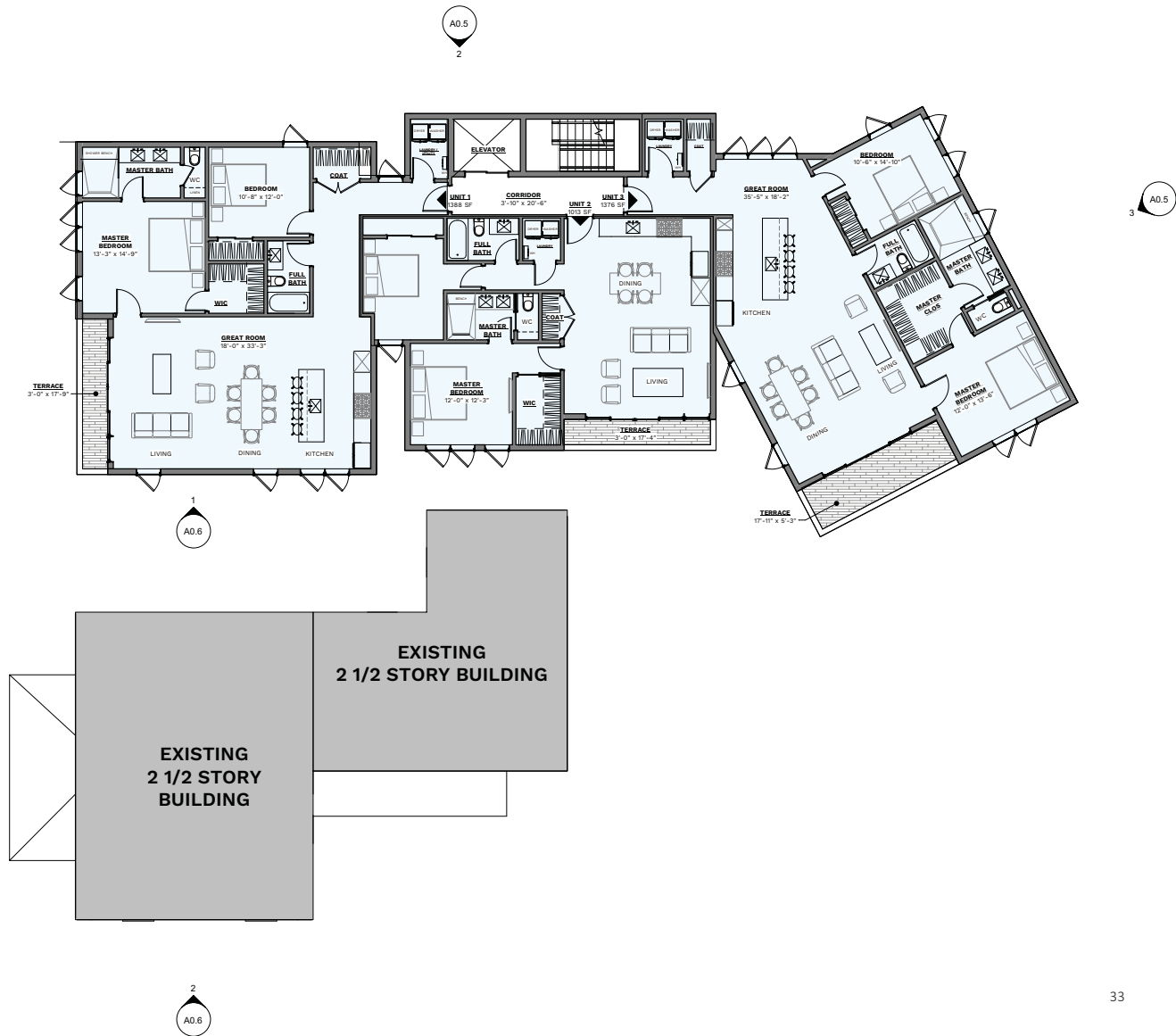
L2	UNIT 1	1388 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 2	1013 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 3	1376 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 4	1578 SF	3 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 5	1529 SF	3 BD/2 BA

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Building Floor Plans

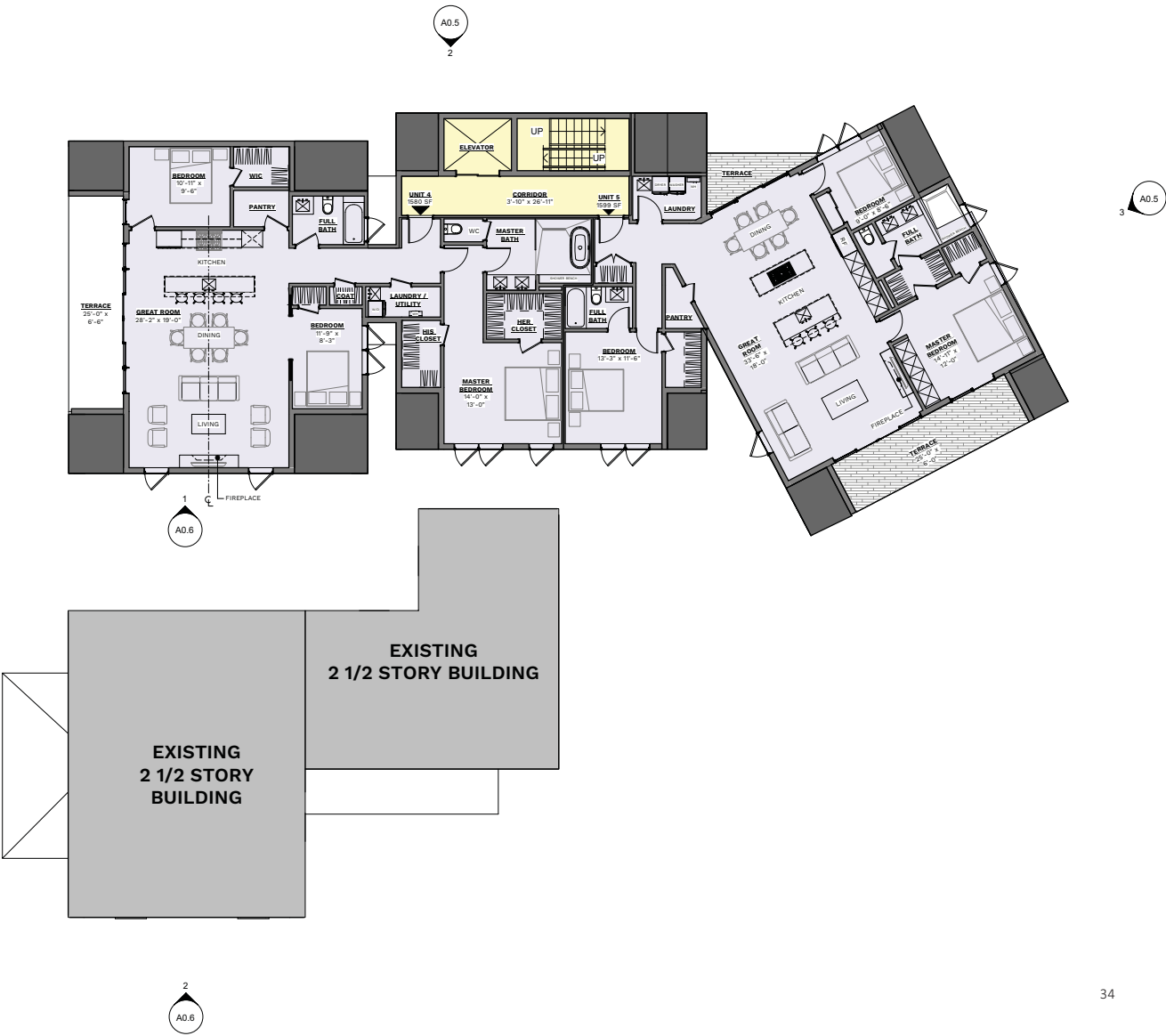
Second Floor



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Building Floor Plans

Third Floor



GROSS BUILDING AREA

L1	1260 SF
L2	3423 SF
L3	4059 SF
8742 SF	

UNIT MIX

L2	UNIT 1	1388 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 2	1013 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L2	UNIT 3	1376 SF	2 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 4	1578 SF	3 BD/2 BA
L3	UNIT 5	1529 SF	3 BD/2 BA

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Appendix

Site Subdivision Submission

