

**ADDRESS: 1601 MT VERNON ST**

Proposal: Rehabilitate building; construct addition

Review Requested: Review In Concept

Owner: Miguel Santiago, owner; Spring Garden Community Development Corp., conservator

Applicant: Plato Marinakos, Plato Studio

History: 1859, Robert Purvis House

Individual Designation: None

District Designation: Spring Garden Historic District, Significant, 10/11/2000

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

**OVERVIEW:** The property at 1601 Mount Vernon Street is significant in the Spring Garden Historic District, owing to its association with Robert Purvis, a Black anti-slavery activist, writer, and lecturer who resided at the property from c. 1875 to 1898. Over the last few decades, the property has languished and has been subject to multiple violations, Historical Commission reviews, and court hearings, culminating in the current conservatorship by the Spring Garden Community Development Corporation. A brief timeline follows:

10/11/2000	PHC designated the Spring Garden Historic District and classified 1601 Mt. Vernon Street as significant.
12/12/2003	PHC approved application for complete rehabilitation of building (main block and ell) and construction of rear addition with garage.
2006	The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) issued multiple violations for deteriorated, bulged, and fractured walls.
2/1/2007	PHC approved application for complete rehabilitation.
4/6/2009	PHC approved application for wall shoring and reconstruction.
6/24/2010	PHC approved application for new roof and windows, and to stabilize walls.
2/3/2011	PHC approved application for masonry repair and new windows.
2/24/2011	Court order to repair roof, windows, walls, and floors.
3/14/2012	PHC approved application for new windows.
11/2/2012	Court order to demolish rear ell and reconstruct it within one year.
12/2012	City demolished rear ell; rear wall of main block remained temporarily sealed for several years; owner did not reconstruct ell.
1/7/2013	PHC approved rebuilding of cornice and gable wall.
4/13/2017	Court order to make building safe by sufficiently sealing rear wall of main block.
7/14/2017	PHC approved plans to stabilize building and rebuild rear wall.
11/19/2018	Court appointed Spring Garden CDC as conservator.
5/22/2019	PHC approved application for structural and masonry repair.
3/6/2020	PHC approved application to install star bolts to stabilize main block.

Despite numerous approvals of building permit applications by the Historical Commission and its staff since 2003, the property was never restored, and the City abated an imminently dangerous condition by demolishing the rear ell in 2012. The main block was stabilized and its masonry repaired under the conservatorship. This in-concept application, submitted by a developer seeking to purchase the property, proposes to rehabilitate the main block and to construct a rear addition. Two schemes for the rear have been submitted.

Work to the main block would include removing the existing storefront, which post-dates Purvis's ownership, and restoring the building's residential appearance. A new marble base, stoop, door surround, and lintels would be installed on the front façade. A new door, windows, and a cornice would be fabricated in wood to match the historic features.

At the rear, the application proposes to construct a new ell to replace the ell that was demolished a decade ago. Scheme A proposes a two-story ell with a garage that would connect

the main block to a three-story addition at the rear of the lot. The rear portion of the addition would have a garage, roof deck, and pilot house. Scheme A is similar in massing, size, and scale to plans that were approved by the Historical Commission on 12 December 2003. At the time, the historic ell remained and those plans proposed to retain and rehabilitate the ell's masonry. Scheme B proposes the same two-story rear ell with a garage but does not include the additional three-story building at the rear of the lot.

**SCOPE OF WORK:**

- Rehabilitate main block; and
- Construct rear addition.

**STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:**

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

- *Standard 6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*
  - The only remaining portion of the building, the main block, had a storefront installed c. 1920. That intervention removed the original entryway and marble base. Two large openings for storefront windows were cut into the masonry on the front façade and side wall at the first story, and a new corner entrance was constructed. Decades of neglect have also led to the loss of the cornice and have caused the masonry to deteriorate.
  - The application proposes to rehabilitate the main block by replicating the lost features in their original materials. A marble base, stoop, door surround, and lintels would be installed to reverse the storefront alteration. A wood cornice, door, and windows would also be installed. The work complies with Standard 6.
- *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.*
  - While neither scheme proposes to reconstruct the rear ell to its historic appearance, the construction of an addition would allow for the main block to be rehabilitated and permanently sealed, avoiding further deterioration. Both proposed additions are compatible in massing, size, and scale and comply with Standard 9.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval, with the staff to review details, pursuant to Standards 6 and 9.

**MAPS & IMAGES:**



Figure 1: 2020 aerial showing 1601 Mt. Vernon Street. Source: Atlas.



Figure 2: Elevations fronting Mt. Vernon and 16th Streets, 2021. Source: Cyclomedia.



Figure 3: Photo showing the demolished rear ell of 1601 Mt. Vernon Street, 2021. Source: Cyclomedia.





Figure 4: The dilapidated rear ell of 1601 Mt. Vernon Street just prior to demolition, 2012. Source: Google StreetView.

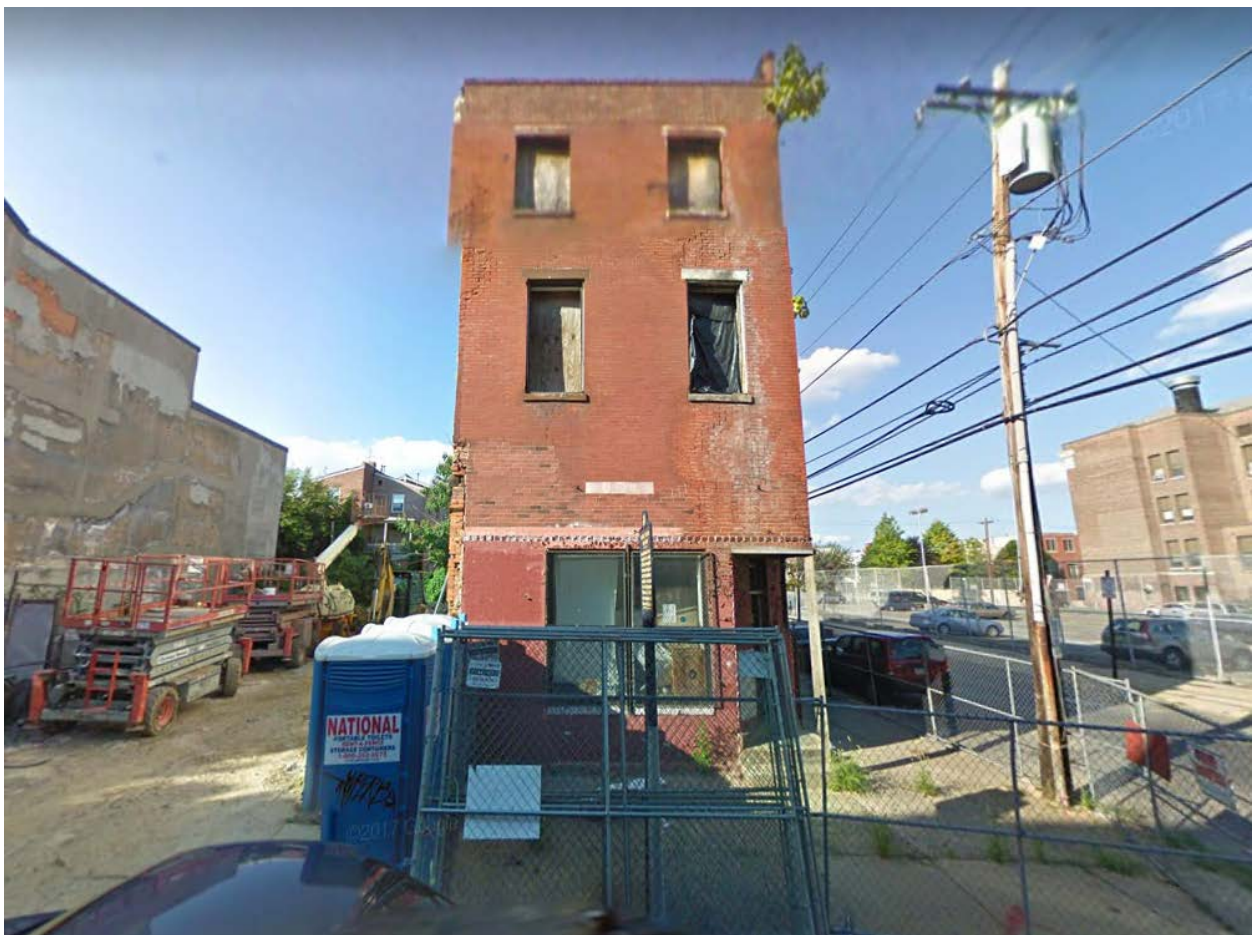


Figure 5: The front facade of 1601 Mt. Vernon Street in 2009. Source: Google StreetView.



March 10, 2022

**Applicant:**

Plato Marinakos  
PLATO STUDIO  
[plato@plato-studio.com](mailto:plato@plato-studio.com)

**Client:**

Jafar Maleki (on behalf of the conservatorship)  
INSIGHT PROPERTY ADVISORS  
[info@insightpropertyadvisors.com](mailto:info@insightpropertyadvisors.com)

**SUBMITTED TO:**

Philadelphia Historical Commission

The area of intervention of this project is located at 1601 Mount Vernon Street. It is a corner lot with an existing 3-story building on the Southern side. The empty portion of the lot, at N 16<sup>th</sup> Street, once had a construction that has been demolished.

The proposed building would have 2 attached houses with a garage for each. The house with frontage at Mount Vernon Street is proposed in the existing building with an addition of a 2-story volume in the back. The house with the frontage in N 16<sup>th</sup> Street is a new 3-story volume attached to the previously mentioned house.

There is a previously approved project for this location: a 4-unit multifamily building with a garage. Given the current needs of the area the new proposal takes some of the core intentions of the previously approved project: the reconfiguration of the property frontage of N 16<sup>th</sup> Street, similar footprint and materials and reconstruction of the Mount Vernon Street façade, but with a less dense approach.

Should you require more information about this concept project, do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you,

Plato Marinakos  
**PLATO STUDIO**  
[plato@plato-studio.com](mailto:plato@plato-studio.com)



### General Notes

1. Remove existing storefront including non-original brick, storefront windows, steel support structure, corner entrance and steps
2. Install new first floor façade at former first floor storefront location to match that at 1603 Mt Vernon, including new brick masonry and pointing to match existing, new first floor window openings, new marble door surround and door opening, new marble base with basement window openings, new marble steps and railing, and new marble window heads and sills as required to match the original.
3. Provide new historically appropriate wood windows at first floor to match upper floor windows. Provide new historically appropriate wood basement windows and new wood front double doors and glazed transom to match 1603 Mt Vernon.
4. Remove non- original brick parapet at 16<sup>th</sup> Street façade.
5. Provide new painted wood cornice to match that at 1603 Mt Vernon Street. Provide cornice transition at party wall to match that at 1605-7 Mt Vernon Street.

### 1601 Mt Vernon Street Façade Repair Part 2: Mt. Vernon Street Facade

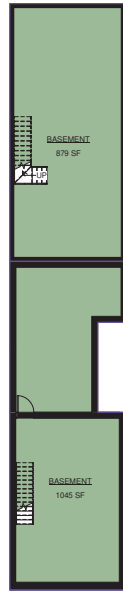


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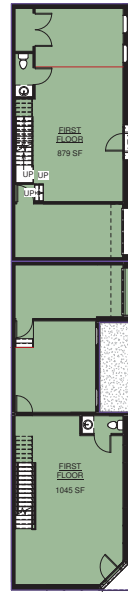
PROPOSED INTERIOR ALTERATIONS TO AN EXISTING 3-STORY DWELLING (SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE) AND PROPOSED ADDITION OF A 3 STORY SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING W/ ROOF DECK, PILOT HOUSE AND BASEMENT.



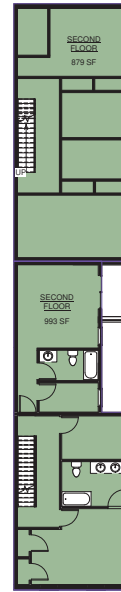
11 PHASE A 3D VIEW  
A00 SCALE:



3 BASEMENT AREA PLAN  
A00 SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"



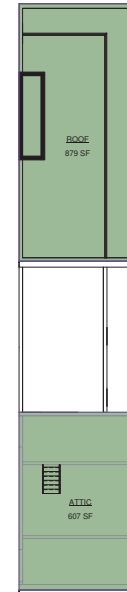
7 FIRST FLOOR AREA PLAN  
A00 SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"



8 SECOND FLOOR AREA PLAN  
A00 SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"



9 THIRD FLOOR AREA PLAN  
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10 ROOF AREA PLAN  
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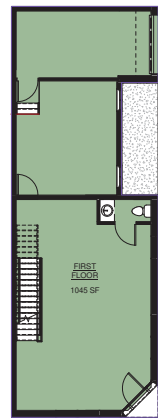
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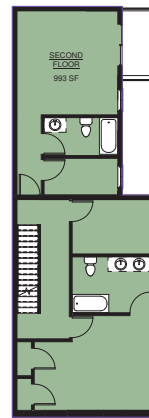
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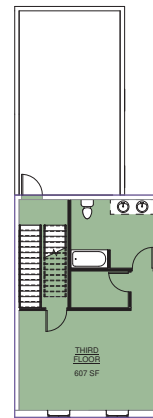
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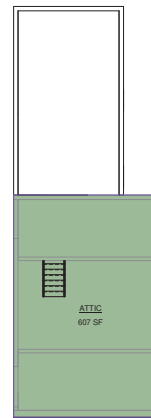
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4 SECOND FLOOR AREA PLAN  
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5 THIRD FLOOR AREA PLAN  
A00 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



6 ROOF AREA PLAN  
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SHEET	SHEET NAME	Sheet Issue Date
A00	COVER SHEET	03-08-22
A100	EXISTING CONDITIONS	03-08-22
A100.1	SITE PLAN FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS	03-08-22
A100.2	FLOOR PLANS FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS	03-08-22
A100.3	ELEVATIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS	03-08-22
A100.4	ELEVATION FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLANS	03-08-22
A100.5	SECTION FROM PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PLAN	03-08-22
A100.A.1	SECTION PLANS CONCEPT A	03-08-22
A100.A.2	ELEVATIONS CONCEPT A	03-08-22
A100.A.3	SECTIONS CONCEPT A	03-08-22
A100.B.1	FLOOR PLANS CONCEPT B	03-08-22
A100.B.2	ELEVATIONS CONCEPT B	03-08-22
A100.B.3	SECTIONS CONCEPT B	03-08-22

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1601 MOUNT VERMON  
STREET

COVER SHEET

Project number	N/A
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Date	03-08-22
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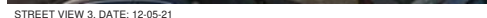
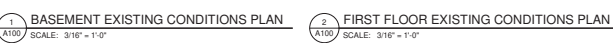
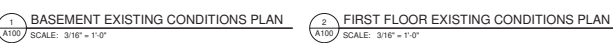
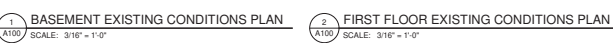
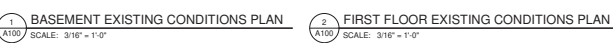
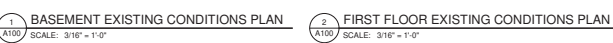
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1601 MOUNT VERMON  
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## EXISTING CONDITIONS

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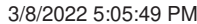
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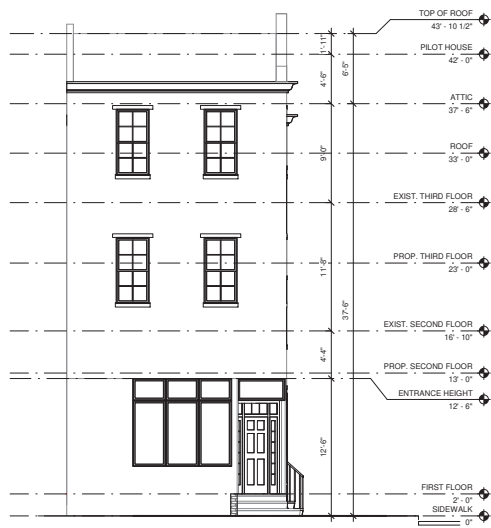
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1 CONCEPT A SIDE ELEVATION  
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SYMBOL LEGEND	
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CONCEPT A AREA SCHEDULE	
Abbreviation	Area

Phase A	
BASEMENT	1045 SF
FIRST FLOOR	1045 SF
SECOND FLOOR	993 SF
THIRD FLOOR	607 SF
ATTIC	607 SF
Phase A	4295 SF

Phase B	
BASEMENT	879 SF
FIRST FLOOR	879 SF
SECOND FLOOR	879 SF
THIRD FLOOR	879 SF
ROOF	879 SF
Phase B	4393 SF
TOTAL PHASE A AND B	8688 SF



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REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
03	08-22	Concept Review

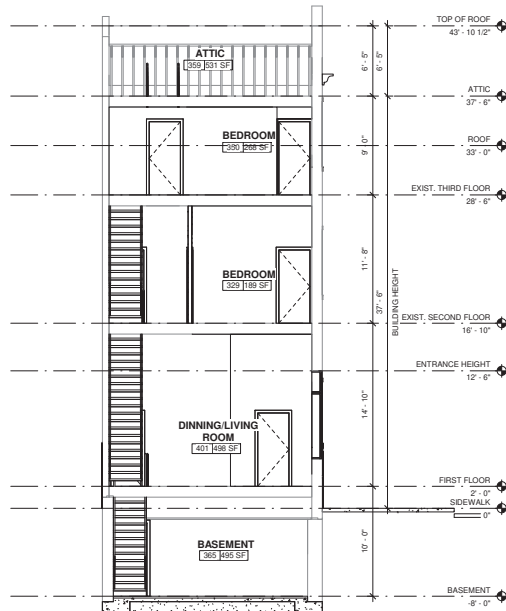
1601 MOUNT VERNON  
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**ELEVATIONS CONCEPT**  
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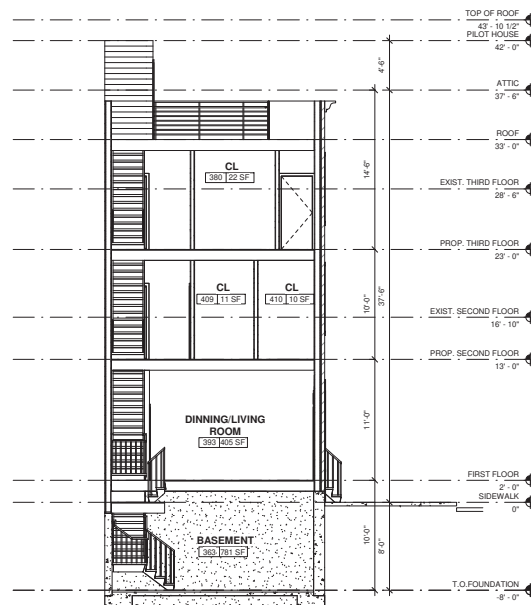
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Date 03-08-22  
Drawn by Justine Velasquez  
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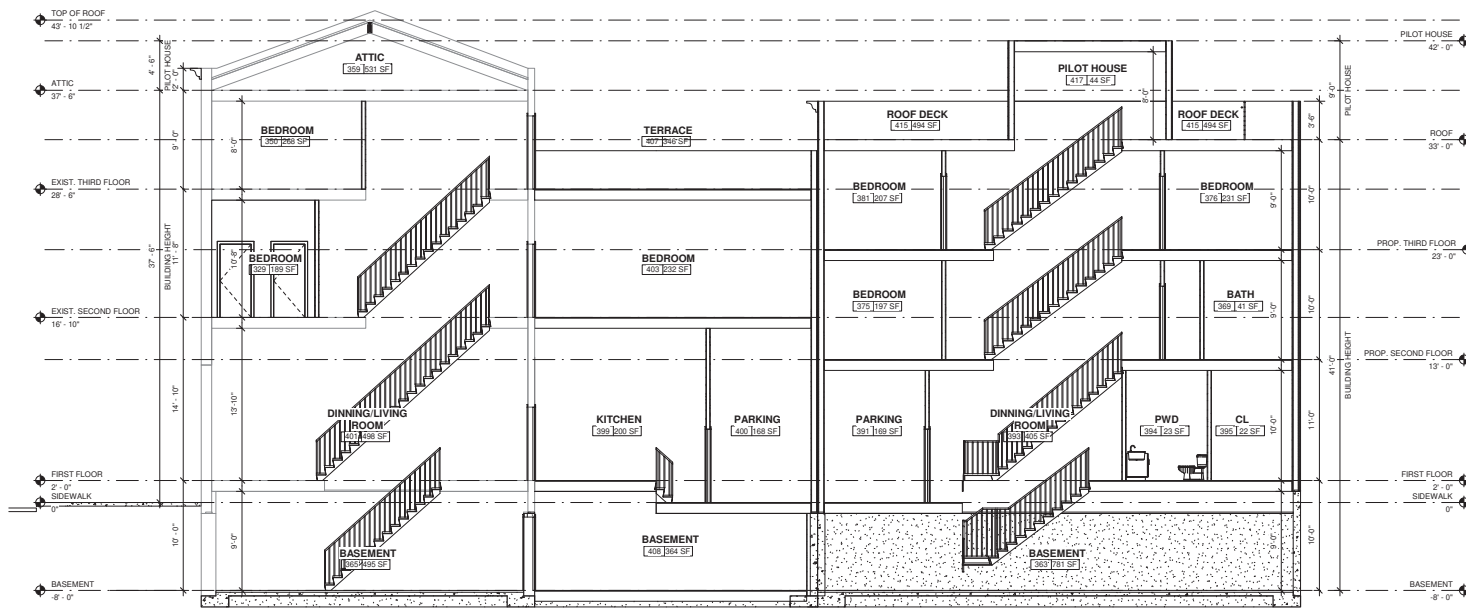
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3 CONCEPT A LONGITUDINAL SECTION  
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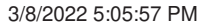
SECTIONS CONCEPT A

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Date \_\_\_\_\_ 03-08-22  
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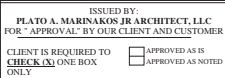
**NOTE:** CONTRACTOR TO VERIFY THE PITCH AND HEIGHT OF THE SURROUNDING PORCHES TO MATCH THE CONTEXT IF POSSIBLE. MINIMUM SLOPE SHOULD BE 1/4" PER 1'-0".



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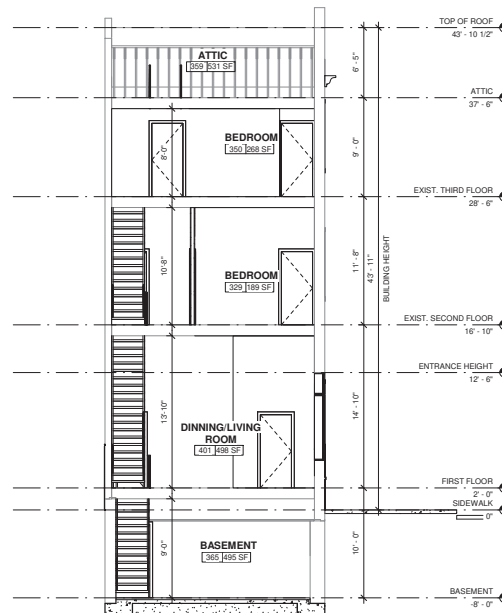
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## SECTIONS CONCEPT B

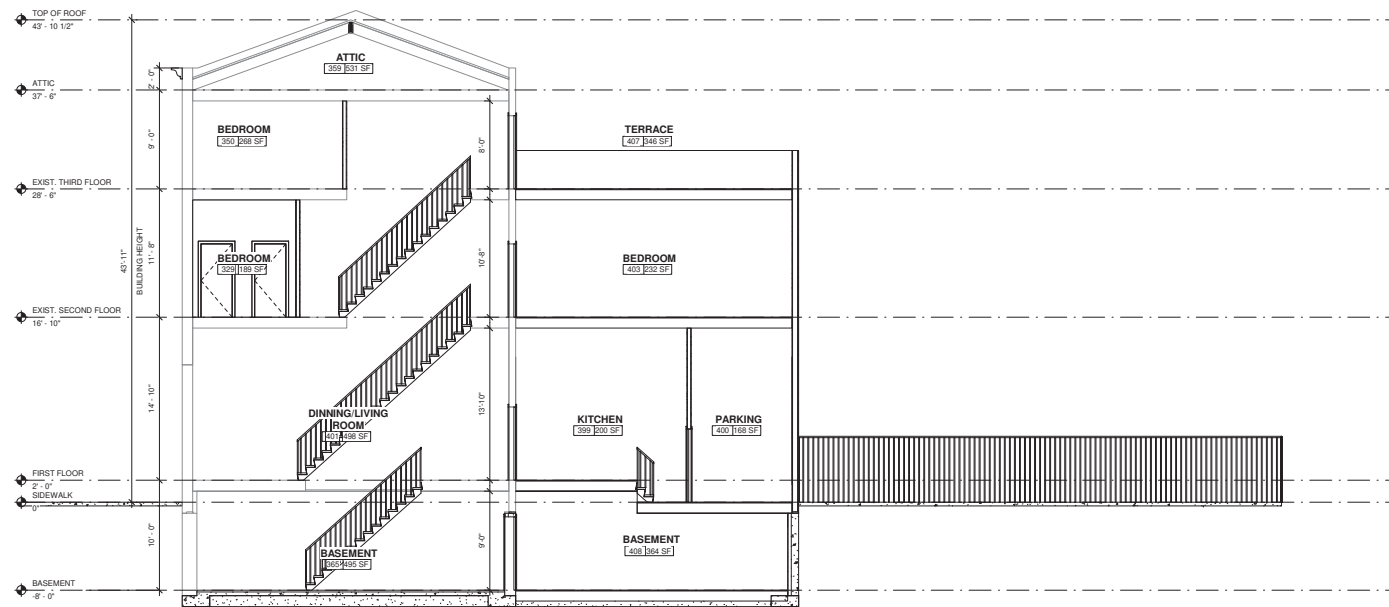
Project number	N/A
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1 CONCEPT B LONGITUDINAL SECTION  
A100.B.3 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"







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REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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FLOOR PLANS FROM  
PREVIOUSLY  
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Date	03-08-22
Drawn by	Justine Velasquez
Checked by	Checke

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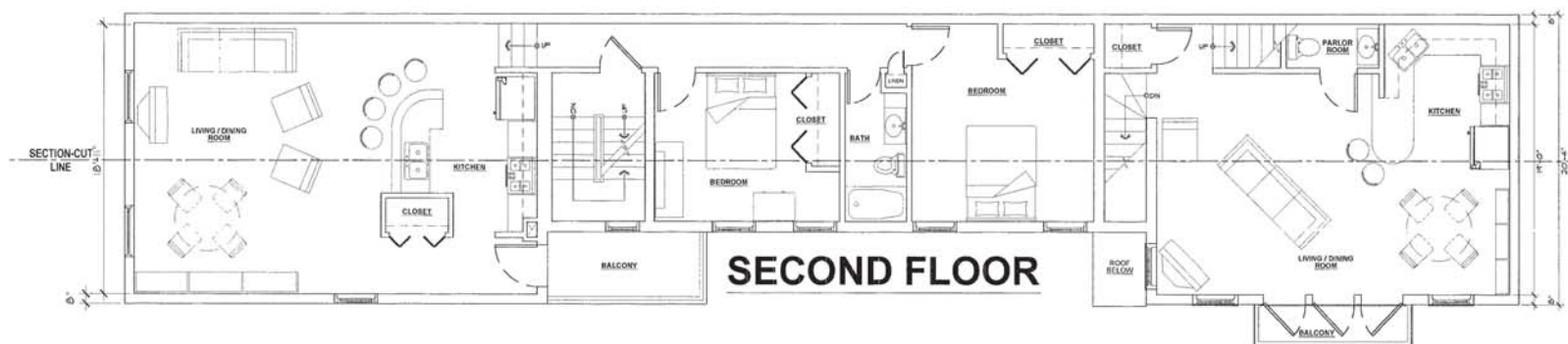
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FLOOR PLANS FROM  
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