

Staff Report to the Zoning Administrator

Applicant: Devlin Jones Owner: Bruce Werder APN: 039-501-10 Site Address: 7350 Viewpoint Road, Aptos Agenda Date: April 5, 2024 Agenda Item #: 2 Time: After 9:00 a.m.

Project Description: Proposal to recognize an existing approximately 102 square foot rear addition and recognize an existing conversion of an understory to a habitable story below the existing home for an approximately 699 square foot ADU. Requires a Variance to exceed the 28-foot height limit to 39 feet three inches to rectify the existing rear addition, and a Variance to exceed the two-story limitation to recognize a third story due to conversion of the understory below the home to a habitable story.

Location: The property is located on the south side of Viewpoint Road at 7350 Viewpoint Road in Aptos.

Permits Required: Variance

Supervisorial District: 2nd District (District Supervisor: Zach Friend)

Staff Recommendation:

- Determine that the proposal is exempt from further Environmental Review under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- Approval of Application 231477, based on the attached findings and conditions.

Project Description & Setting

The subject parcel is approximately 10,759 square feet in size and is developed with an existing single-family dwelling. The parcel is situated in a setting with moderate to severe slopes containing large parcels with low density residential development. The subject parcel is steeply sloped, containing an average slope of approximately 35 percent, sloping down from Viewpoint Road. This is a proposal to recognize existing portions of the home that were constructed without permits. At the top story, an approximately 102 square foot rear addition was constructed under the rear roof overhang without permits and has been in place for many years. Similarly, an approximately 699 square foot portion of the understory was converted to habitable floor area below the existing home without permits, and the proposal seeks to establish this area as a permitted Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).

Variance

The project proposes to rectify both long-standing existing conditions, and to accomplish this, two Variances are sought. To rectify the 102 square foot addition at the rear of the upper story of the home, approval of a Variance is required to exceed the 28-foot height limit to 39 feet three inches. Per SCCC 13.10.700-H, two sets of measurements are needed to determine the height of a structure, these are (1) within the footprint of the structure, inside the perimeter of the foundation, measurements are taken from the original (natural) grade to the highest points of the structure above, and (2) at the perimeter of the foundation, measurements are taken from original (natural) grade or finished grade, whichever is lower, to the highest points of the structure above. For the reason the residence is located on a steeply sloped lot, the height of the existing home measures 39 feet three inches as measured at the rear of the building and is a legal nonconforming structure in regard to height. The existing rear addition of 102 square feet proposed to be rectified is located under the existing roofline of the home, and matches the existing height of the existing roofline, the addition itself did not result in any increase in height of the roofline or building itself. The existing addition matches the design and height of the rest of the home and does not result in any undue impacts pertaining to light, air, or privacy of adjacent properties.

Secondly, approval of a Variance is required to exceed the two-story maximum limit to recognize a third story due to conversion of the understory below the home to a habitable story. Again, no increase in vertical height of the building is proposed as part of this project proposal, rather, by adding habitable floor area where it was previously the understory area of the home, a third story was effectively added to the home where the applicable zone district only allows for a maximum of two stories. The subject habitable story is proposed to be rectified as an approximately 699 square foot ADU.

In order for these Variances to be granted pursuant to SCCC 13.10.230, specific findings must be met. These findings can be met in that the subject parcel has topographic constraints that restrict development of the proposed building site relative to the severely sloped conditions of the property. Due to parcel constraints, variances to height and the story limitation are in harmony with the general intent and purpose of zoning objectives and will not be materially detrimental to public health, safety or welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity and would be compatible with the type of development found on other parcels in the vicinity, many of which also contain steeply sloped conditions.

Project Background

On October 13, 2022, Building Permit Application No. APP-221078 was submitted by the Applicant to rectify the as-built rear addition at the main upper floor (third story) and convert habitable space at the first story to a 699 square foot ADU. As part of the review of said Building Permit Application, County staff issued review comments informing the Applicant that approval of a Variance would be necessary in order to proceed with the proposed scope of work.

Zoning & General Plan Consistency

The subject property is an approximately 10,759 square foot lot, located in the R-1-10 (Residential Single Family Zone District - 10,000 square feet parcel minimum) zone district, a designation which allows residential uses. The existing residential use and proposed ADU is a principal

permitted use within the zone district and the zoning is consistent with the site's R-UL (Urban Low Density Residential) General Plan designation.

The project proposes to exceed the height and story limitations due to the steep topography of the site. The project would comply with all other applicable codes and policies. The existing additions to be rectified are compatible with the design of the building and site, and of negligible impact to neighboring properties.

Conclusion

As proposed and conditioned, the project is consistent with all applicable codes and policies of the Zoning Ordinance and General Plan/LCP. Please see Exhibit "B" ("Findings") for a complete listing of findings and evidence related to the above discussion.

Staff Recommendation

- Determine that the proposal is exempt from further Environmental Review under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- **APPROVAL** of Application Number **231477**, based on the attached findings and conditions.

Supplementary reports and information referred to in this report are on file and available for viewing at the Santa Cruz County Planning Division, and are hereby made a part of the administrative record for the proposed project.

The County Code and General Plan, as well as hearing agendas and additional information are available online at: www.sccoplanning.com

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Exhibits

- A. Categorical Exemption (CEQA determination)
- B. Findings
- C. Conditions
- D. Project plans
- E. Assessor's, Location, Zoning and General Plan Maps
- F. Parcel Information

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

The Santa Cruz County Planning Division has reviewed the project described below and has determined that it is exempt from the provisions of CEQA as specified in Sections 15061 - 15332 of CEQA for the reason(s) which have been specified in this document.

Application Number: 231477 Assessor Parcel Number: 039-501-10 Project Location: 7350 Viewpoint Road, Aptos, CA

Project Description: Proposal to recognize an existing approximately 102 square foot rear addition and conversion of an understory to a habitable story below the existing home for an approximately 699 square foot ADU.

Person or Agency Proposing Project: Devlin Jones

Contact Phone Number: (831) 476-5829

- A. _____ The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.
- **B.** _____ The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).
- C. <u>Ministerial Project</u> involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.
- **D.** _____ Statutory Exemption other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285).

E. X Categorical Exemption

Specify type: Class 1 - Existing Facilities (Section 15301)

F. Reasons why the project is exempt:

Interior and exterior alterations and additions to an existing single family dwelling in an area designated for residential uses.

In addition, none of the conditions described in Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Jonathan DiSalvo, Project Planner

Date:_____

Development Permit Findings

1. That the proposed location of the project and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood or the general public, and will not result in inefficient or wasteful use of energy, and will not be materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity.

This finding can be made, in that the project is located in an area designated for residential uses. Construction will comply with prevailing building technology, the California Building Code, and the County Building ordinance to ensure the optimum in safety and the conservation of energy and resources.

2. That the proposed location of the project and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will be consistent with all pertinent County ordinances and the purpose of the zone district in which the site is located.

This finding can be made, in that the proposed location of the existing additions to the residence and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will be consistent with all pertinent County ordinances and the purpose of the R-1-10 (Residential Single Family Zone District - 10,000 square feet parcel minimum) zone district as the primary use of the property will continue to be one residence that meets all current site standards for the zone district with the exception of the height and story requirements for which findings for a Variance can be made. Additionally, a 699 square foot ADU is a permitted use in the applicable zone district.

3. That the proposed use is consistent with all elements of the County General Plan and with any specific plan which has been adopted for the area.

This finding can be made, in that the proposed residential use is consistent with the use and density requirements specified for the R-UL (Urban Low Density Residential) land use designation in the County General Plan.

The existing residence does not adversely impact the light, solar opportunities, air, and/or open space available to other structures or properties, and meets all current site and development standards for the zone district as specified in Policy 8.1.3 (Residential Site and Development Standards Ordinance), in that the residence will not adversely shade adjacent properties, and will meet current setbacks for the zone district and findings for a Variance can be made for exceptions of the height and story requirements.

The existing residence is properly proportioned to the parcel size and the character of the neighborhood as specified in General Plan Policy 8.6.1 (Maintaining a Relationship Between Structure and Parcel Sizes), in that the proposed residence will comply with the site standards for the R-1-10 zone district with the exception of the height and story requirements for which findings for a Variance can be made and will result in a structure consistent with a design that could be approved on any similarly sized and sloped lot in the vicinity.

A specific plan has not been adopted for this portion of the County.

4. That the proposed use will not overload utilities, and will not generate more than the acceptable level of traffic on the streets in the vicinity.

This finding can be made, in that the expected level of traffic generated by the proposed project is anticipated to be only two peak trips per day (one peak trip per dwelling unit inclusive of the existing single-family dwelling and the proposed ADU), such an increase will not adversely impact existing roads or intersections in the surrounding area.

5. That the proposed project will complement and harmonize with the existing and proposed land uses in the vicinity and will be compatible with the physical design aspects, land use intensities, and dwelling unit densities of the neighborhood.

This finding can be made, in that the existing structure is located in a mixed neighborhood containing a variety of architectural styles, and the existing residence inclusive of the minor additions to be rectified is consistent with the land use intensity and density of the neighborhood.

6. The proposed development project is consistent with the Design Standards and Guidelines (sections 13.11.070 through 13.11.076), and any other applicable requirements of this chapter.

This finding can be made, in that the proposed additions to be rectified are both located at the rear of the home, are not visible from Viewpoint Road, and are consistent with the architecture of the existing home. The project is of an appropriate scale and type of design that is in conformance with the aesthetic qualities of the surrounding properties and will not reduce or visually impact available open space in the surrounding area.

Variance Findings

1. That because of special circumstances applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location, and surrounding existing structures, the strict application of the Zoning Ordinance deprives such property of privileges enjoyed by other property in the vicinity and under identical zoning classification.

This finding can be made, in that the steep topography of the parcel creates a special circumstance which supports the granting of a Variance to exceed the 28-foot height limit to 39 feet three inches to rectify an existing 102 square foot rear addition, and a Variance to exceed the two-story limitation to allow for a third story due to conversion of the understory below the home to a habitable story to be converted to an ADU. The subject parcel contains an average slope of approximately 35 percent and the existing home which was constructed in 1966 is non-conforming in regard to the height limit. Due to topography and configuration of the subject parcel, the proposal to rectify the additions is appropriate as it allows for a minor increase in floor area at the upper floor, consistent with the design and architecture of the home, while having a negligible impact on any adjacent properties and allowing for space for a future ADU.

2. That the granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of zoning objectives and will not be materially detrimental to public health, safety, or welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity.

This finding can be made, in that the proposed additions to be rectified are existing conditions and do not adversely impact the light, solar opportunities, air, and/or open space available to other structures or properties, and meet all current site and development standards for the zone district other than the height and story limitations. Though the project proposes to exceed the height and story limitations, the structure is not expected to be materially detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, or injurious to property or improvements in the vicinity.

3. That the granting of such variances shall not constitute a grant of special privileges inconsistent with the limitations upon other properties in the vicinity and zone in which such is situated.

This finding can be made. The granting of a variance will not constitute a granting of special privileges in that many properties in the vicinity contain steep slopes and would be eligible for granting of such variances. The location of the existing home is the only relatively buildable area on the site in terms of topography and near the traveled roadway. Consequently, the location of the existing additions proposed to be rectified are appropriate as it minimizes grading and fill activities elsewhere on the site and provides a location for an ADU which is a use enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity.

Conditions of Approval

Exhibit D: Project plans, prepared by Delvin Jones, dated January 25, 2024.

- I. This permit authorizes the recognition of an existing approximately 102 square foot addition at the rear of the third story and an existing conversion of an understory to a habitable story (first story) below the home for an approximately 699 square foot ADU as indicated on the approved Exhibit "D" for this permit. This approval does not confer legal status on any existing structure(s) or existing use(s) on the subject property that are not specifically authorized by this permit. Prior to exercising any rights granted by this permit including, without limitation, any construction or site disturbance, the applicant/owner shall:
 - A. Sign, date, and return to Santa Cruz County Planning one copy of the approval to indicate acceptance and agreement with the conditions thereof.
 - B. Obtain a Building Permit from the Santa Cruz County Building Official.
 - 1. Any outstanding balance due to Santa Cruz County Planning must be paid prior to making a Building Permit application. Applications for Building Permits will not be accepted or processed while there is an outstanding balance due.
- II. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit the applicant/owner shall:
 - A. Submit final architectural plans for review and approval by Santa Cruz County Planning. The final plans shall be in substantial compliance with the plans marked Exhibit "D" on file with Santa Cruz County Planning. Any changes from the approved Exhibit "D" for this development permit on the plans submitted for the Building Permit must be clearly called out and labeled by standard architectural methods to indicate such changes. Any changes that are not properly called out and labeled will not be authorized by any Building Permit that is issued for the proposed development. The final plans shall include the following additional information:
 - 1. A copy of the text of these conditions of approval incorporated into the full size sheets of the architectural plan set.
 - 2. One elevation shall indicate materials and colors as they were approved by this Discretionary Application. If specific materials and colors have not been approved with this Discretionary Application, in addition to showing the materials and colors on the elevation, the applicant shall supply a color and material sheet in 8 1/2" x 11" format for Santa Cruz County Planning review and approval.
 - 3. Details showing compliance with fire department requirements. If the proposed structure(s) are located within the State Responsibility Area (SRA) the requirements of the Wildland-Urban Interface code (WUI), California Building Code Chapter 7A, shall apply.

- B. Meet all requirements of the Soquel Creek Water District.
- C. Meet all requirements of the Santa Cruz County Sanitation District.
- D. Meet all requirements of the Environmental Planning section of Santa Cruz County Planning.
- E. Meet all requirements and pay any applicable plan check fee of the Central Fire Protection District.
- F. Pay the current fees for Parks mitigation. Currently, these fees are \$4.51 per square foot for single family dwellings.
- G. Pay the current Affordable Housing Impact Fee. The fees are based on unit size and the current fee for an accessory dwelling unit is \$2 per square foot.
- H. Provide required off-street parking for four cars. Parking spaces must be 8.5 feet wide by 18 feet long and must be located entirely outside vehicular rights-of way. Parking must be clearly designated on the plot plan.
- I. Submit a written statement signed by an authorized representative of the school district in which the project is located confirming payment in full of all applicable developer fees and other requirements lawfully imposed by the school district.
- III. All construction shall be performed according to the approved plans for the Building Permit. Prior to final building inspection, the applicant/owner must meet the following conditions:
 - A. All site improvements shown on the final approved Building Permit plans shall be installed.
 - B. All inspections required by the building permit shall be completed to the satisfaction of the County Building Official.
 - C. Pursuant to Sections 16.40.040 and 16.42.080 of the County Code, if at any time during site preparation, excavation, or other ground disturbance associated with this development, any artifact or other evidence of an historic archaeological resource or a Native American cultural site is discovered, the responsible persons shall immediately cease and desist from all further site excavation and notify the Sheriff-Coroner if the discovery contains human remains, or the Planning Director if the discovery contains no human remains. The procedures established in Sections 16.40.040 and 16.42.080, shall be observed.

IV. Operational Conditions

- A. In the event that future County inspections of the subject property disclose noncompliance with any Conditions of this approval or any violation of the County Code, the owner shall pay to the County the full cost of such County inspections, including any follow-up inspections and/or necessary enforcement actions, up to and including permit revocation.
- V. Indemnification
 - The applicant/owner shall indemnify, defend with counsel approved by the A. COUNTY, and hold harmless the COUNTY, its officers, employees, and agents from and against any claim (including reasonable attorney's fees, expert fees, and all other costs and fees of litigation), against the COUNTY, its officers, employees, and agents arising out of or in connection to this development approval or any subsequent amendment of this development approval which is requested by the applicant/owner, regardless of the COUNTY's passive negligence, but excepting such loss or damage which is caused by the sole active negligence or willful misconduct of the COUNTY. Should the COUNTY in its sole discretion find the applicant's/owner's legal counsel unacceptable, then the applicant/owner shall reimburse the COUNTY its costs of defense, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees, expert fees, and all other costs and fees of litigation. The applicant/owner shall promptly pay any final judgment rendered against the COUNTY (and its officers, employees, and agents) covered by this indemnity obligation. It is expressly understood and agreed that the foregoing provisions are intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the State of California and will survive termination of this development approval.
 - B. The COUNTY shall promptly notify the applicant/owner of any claim, action, or proceeding against which the COUNTY seeks to be defended, indemnified, or held harmless. The COUNTY shall cooperate fully in such defense.
 - C. Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the COUNTY from participating in the defense of any claim, action, or proceeding if both of the following occur:
 - 1. COUNTY bears its own attorney's fees and costs; and
 - 2. COUNTY defends the action in good faith.
 - D. <u>Settlement</u>. The applicant/owner shall not be required to pay or perform any settlement unless such applicant/owner has approved the settlement. When representing the COUNTY, the applicant/owner shall not enter into any stipulation or settlement modifying or affecting the interpretation or validity of any of the terms or conditions of the development approval without the prior written consent of the COUNTY.

E. <u>Successors Bound</u>. The "applicant/owner" shall include the applicant and/or the owner and the successor'(s) in interest, transferee(s), and assign(s) of the applicant and/or the owner.

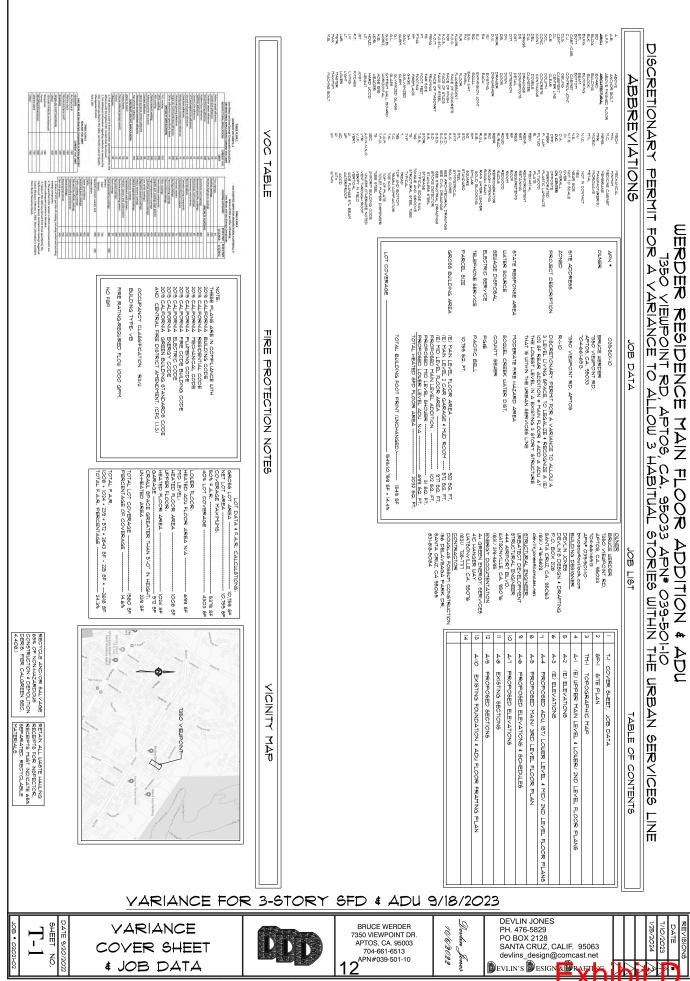
Minor variations to this permit which do not affect the overall concept or density may be approved by the Planning Director at the request of the applicant or staff in accordance with Chapter 18.10 of the County Code.

Please note: This permit expires three years from the effective date listed below unless a building permit (or permits) is obtained for the primary structure described in the development permit (does not include demolition, temporary power pole or other site preparation permits, or accessory structures unless these are the primary subject of the development permit). Failure to exercise the building permit and to complete all of the construction under the building permit, resulting in the expiration of the building permit, will void the development permit, unless there are special circumstances as determined by the Planning Director.

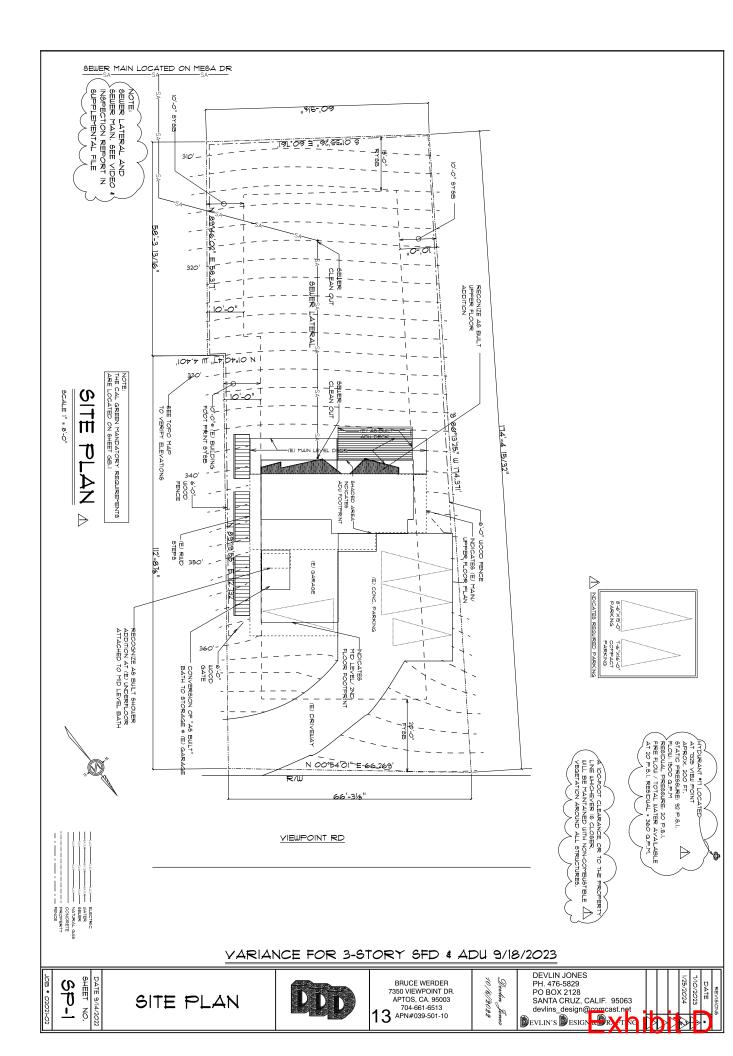
Approval Date:	
Effective Date:	
Expiration Date:	

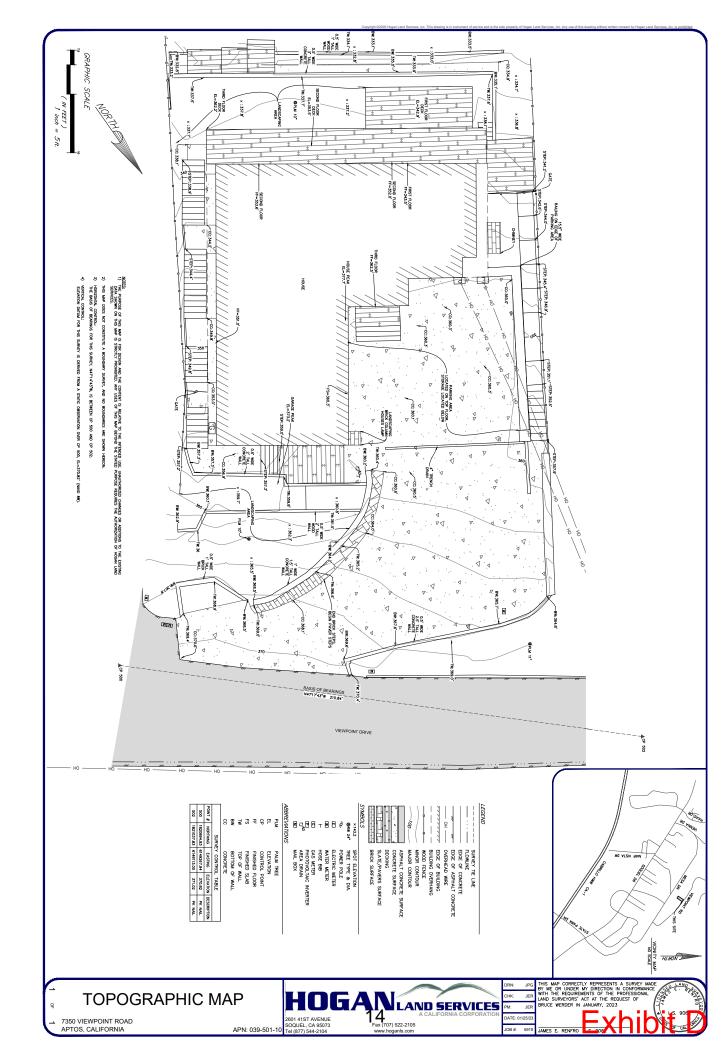
Deputy Zoning Administrator

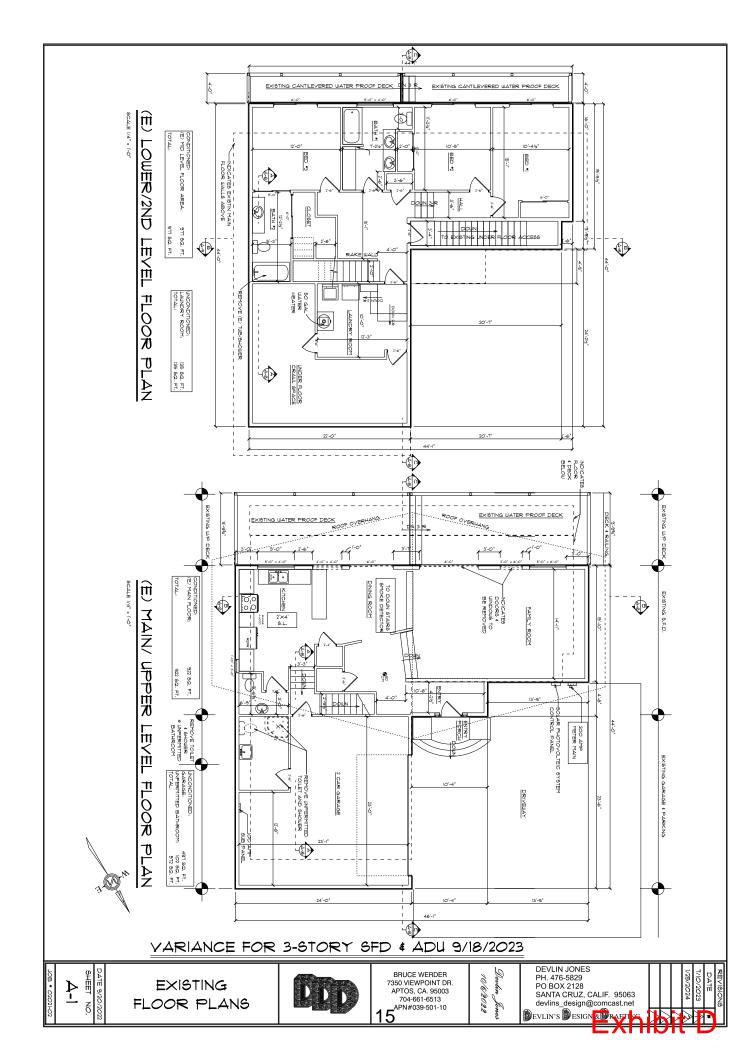
Appeals: Any property owner, or other person aggrieved, or any other person whose interests are adversely affected by any act or determination of the Zoning Administrator, may appeal the act or determination to the Planning Commission in accordance with chapter 18.10 of the Santa Cruz County Code.

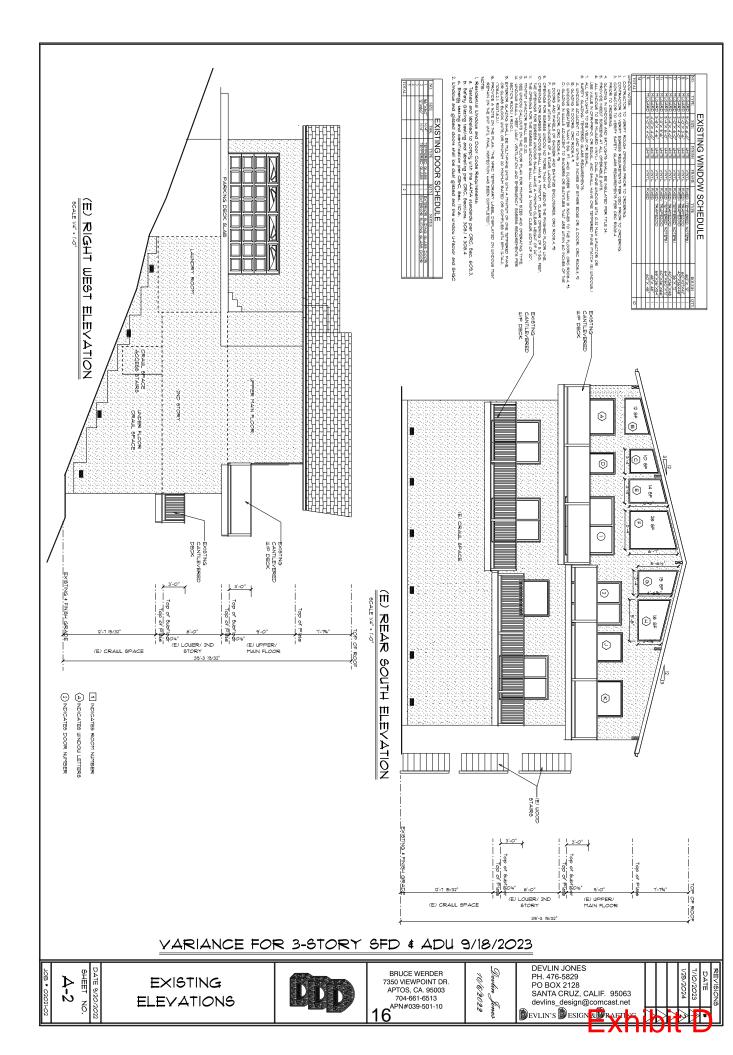


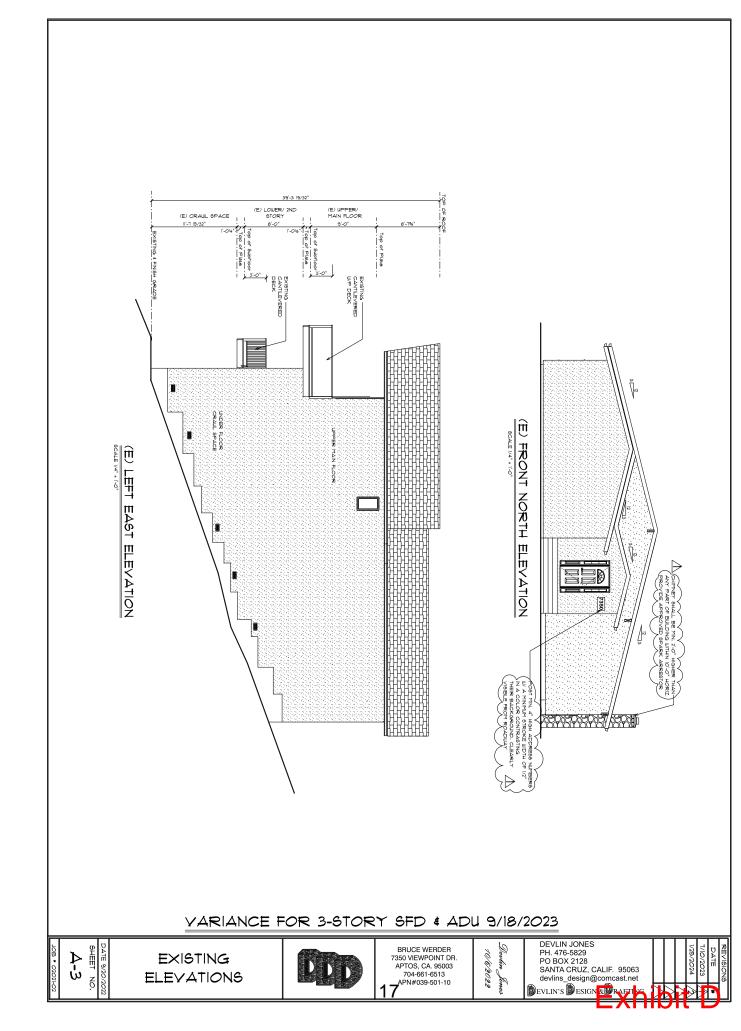
(LIN'S DESIGN EXPRESSLY RESERVES) ITS COMMON L4U COPYRIGHT AND OTHER PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THESE DOCUMENTS. THESE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT TO BE REPRODUCED, CHANGED, O IM OR MANNER UHATSCEVER. NOR ARE THEY TO BE ASSIGNED TO ANY THIRD PARTY UTHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE EXPRESS URITEN PERMISSION AND CONSENT OF DEVLIN'S DESIGN. BRITEN DIRENSIONS ON THESE DOCUMENTATION TO THE PERCENT OF A THE CONTRACTORS SHALL VERFY AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL DIRENSIONS AND CON

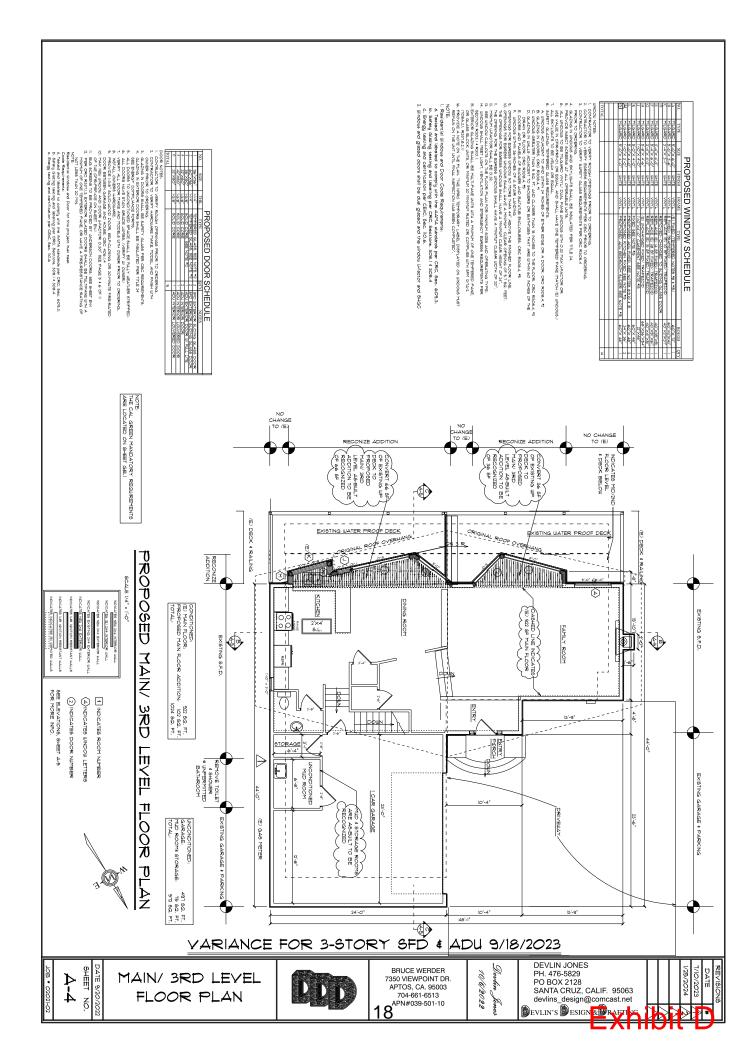


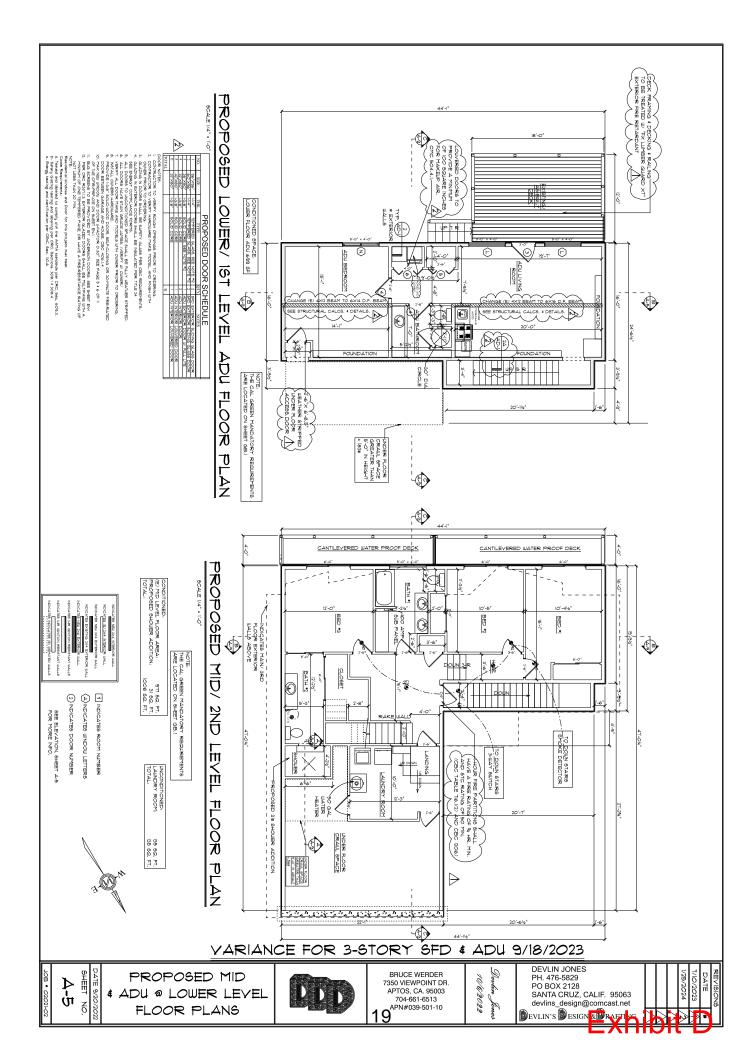


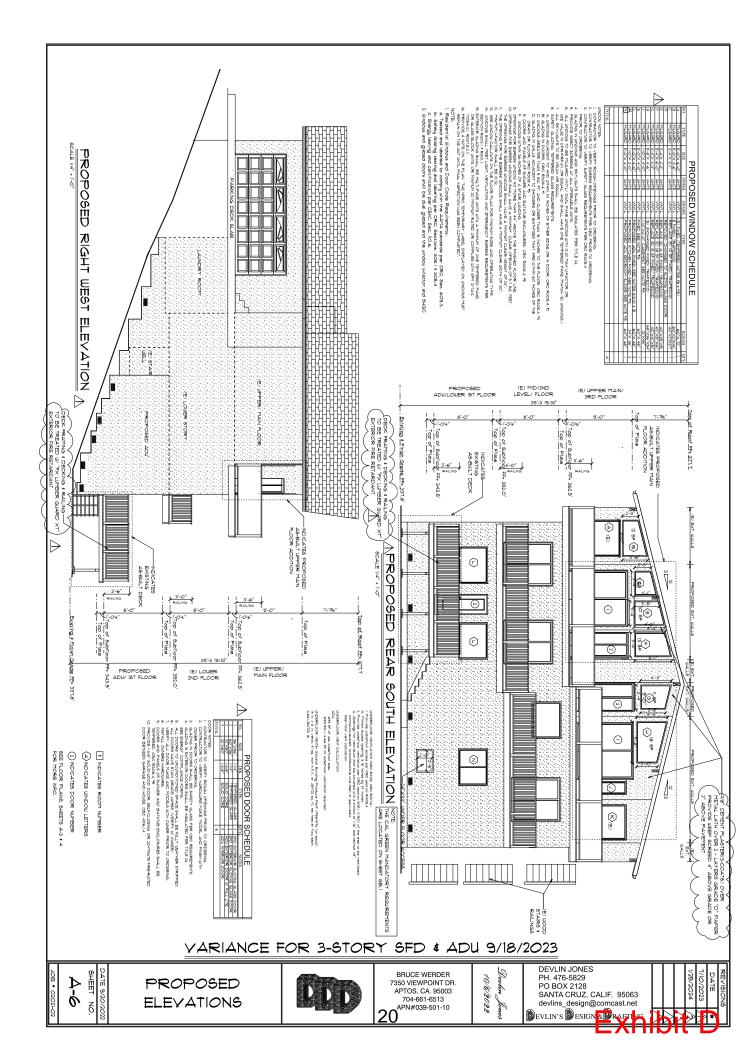


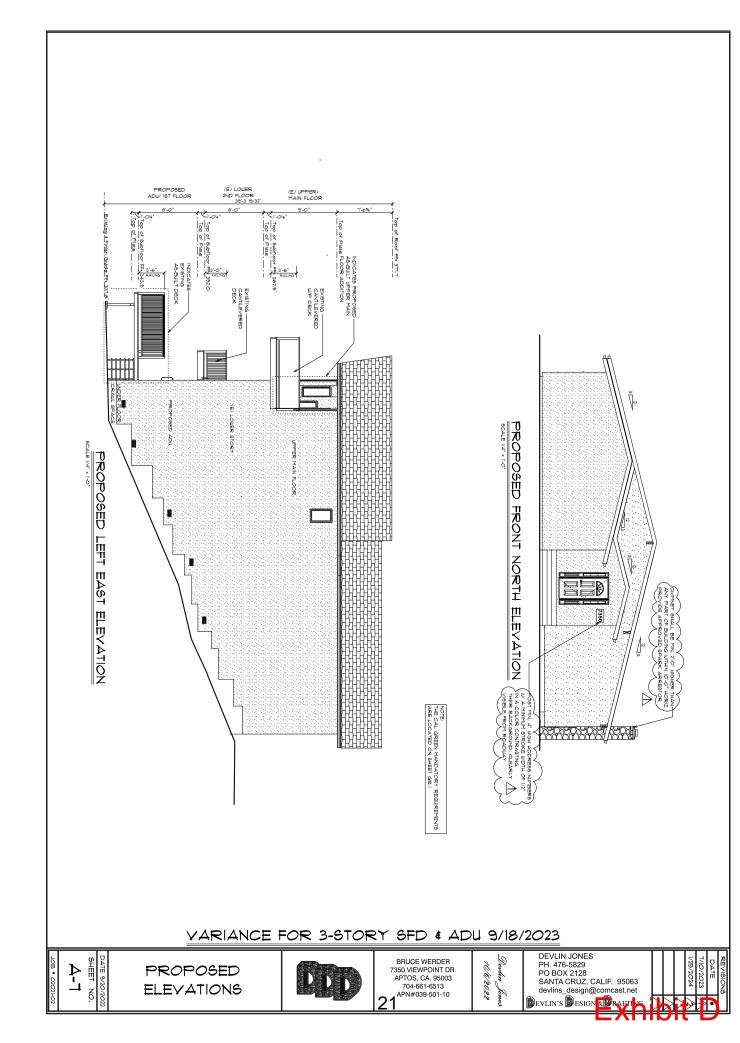


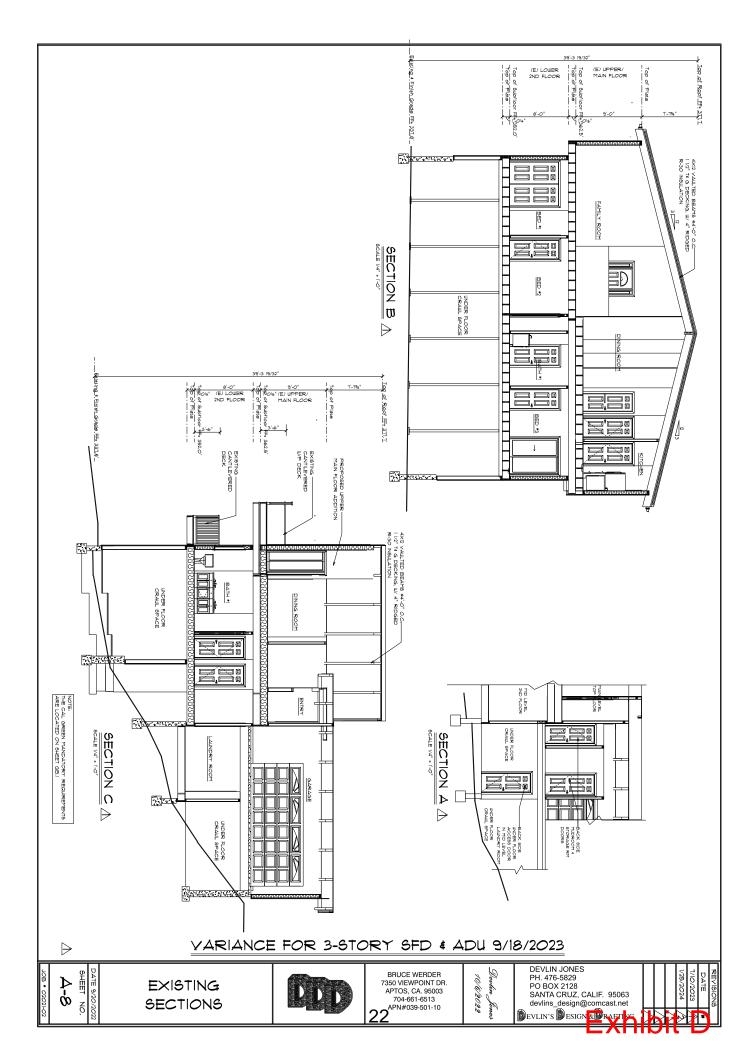


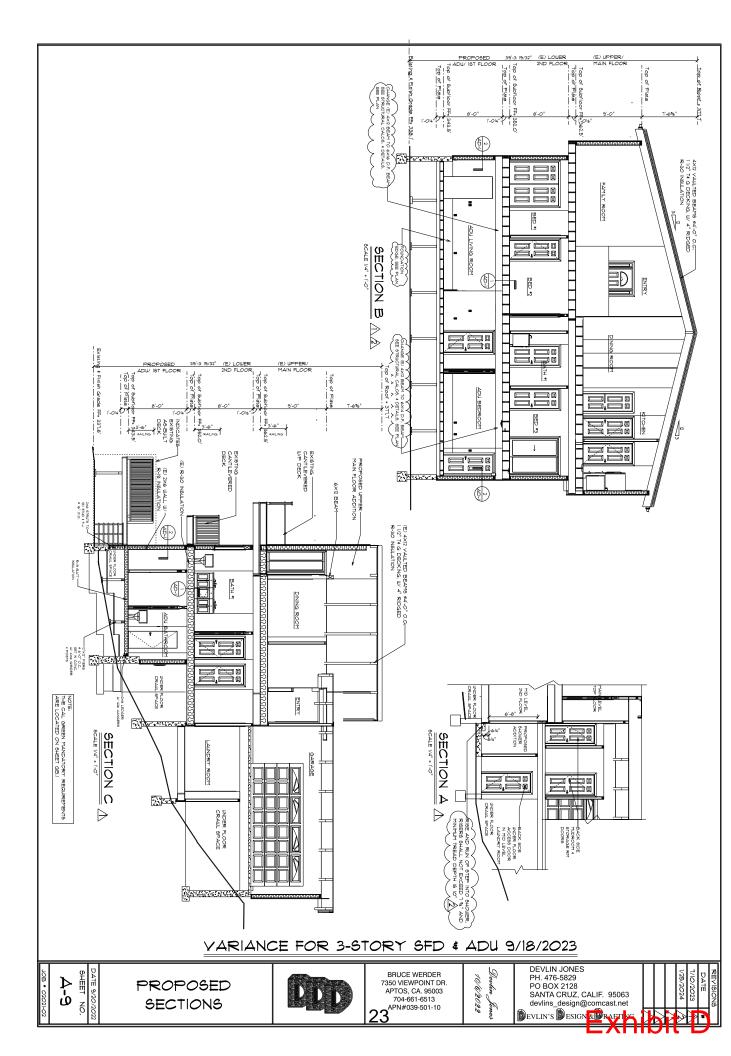


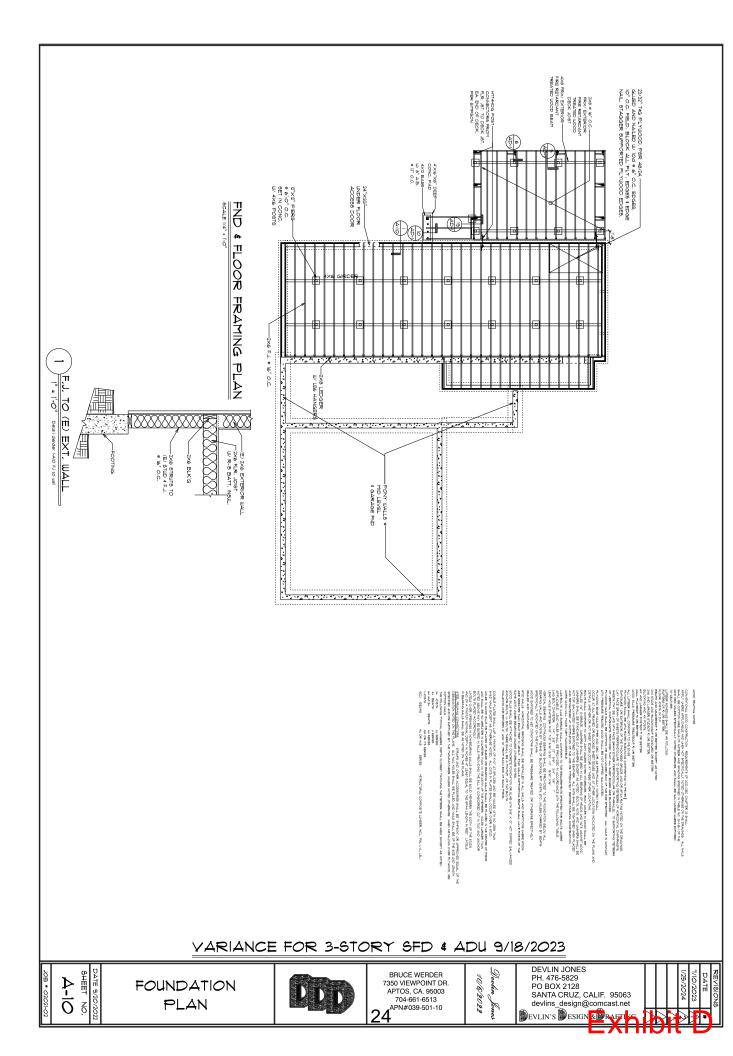












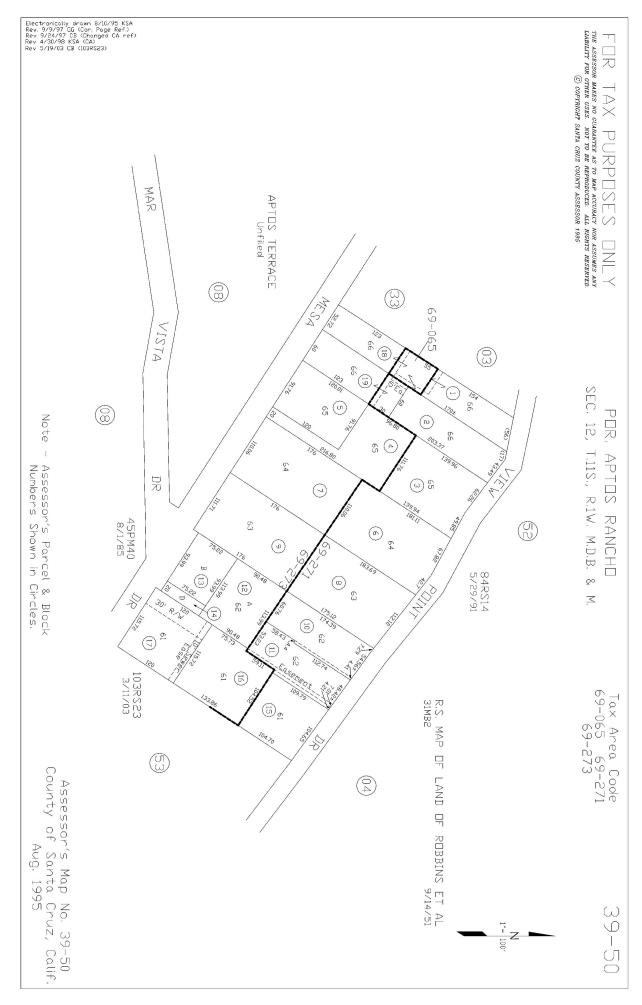


Exhibit E



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Parcel Location Map



Parcel: 03950110
Study Parcel

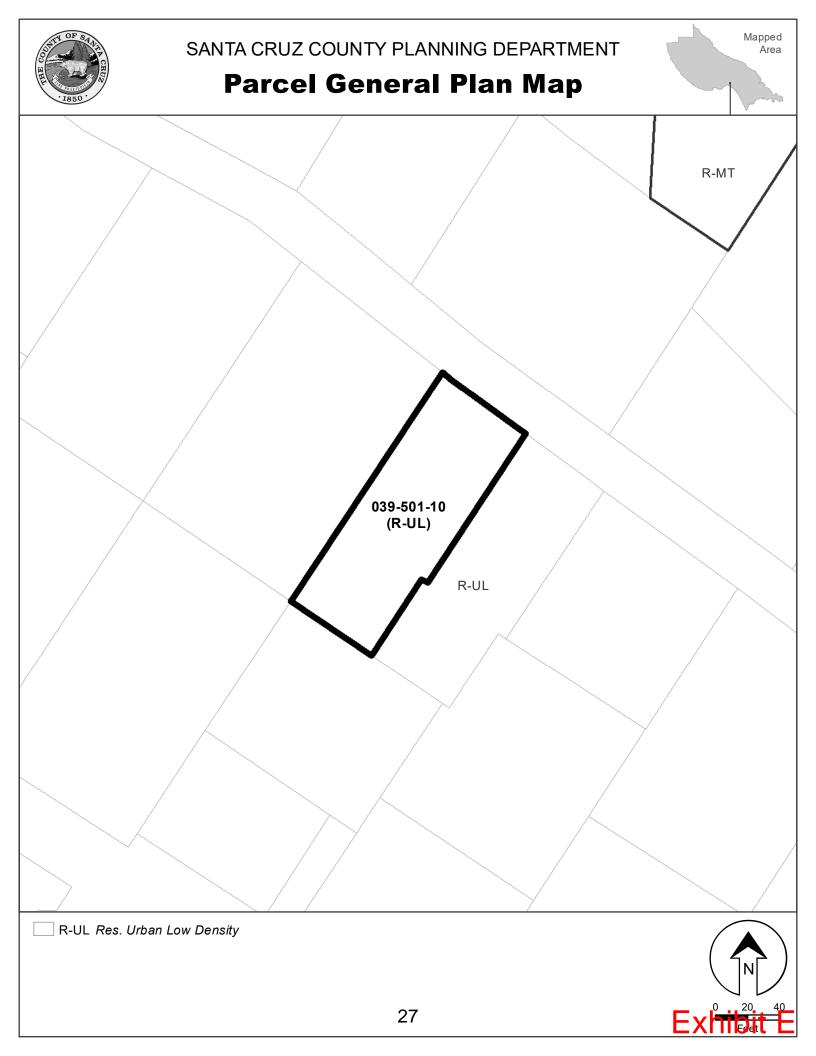
Map printed: 29 Mar. 2024

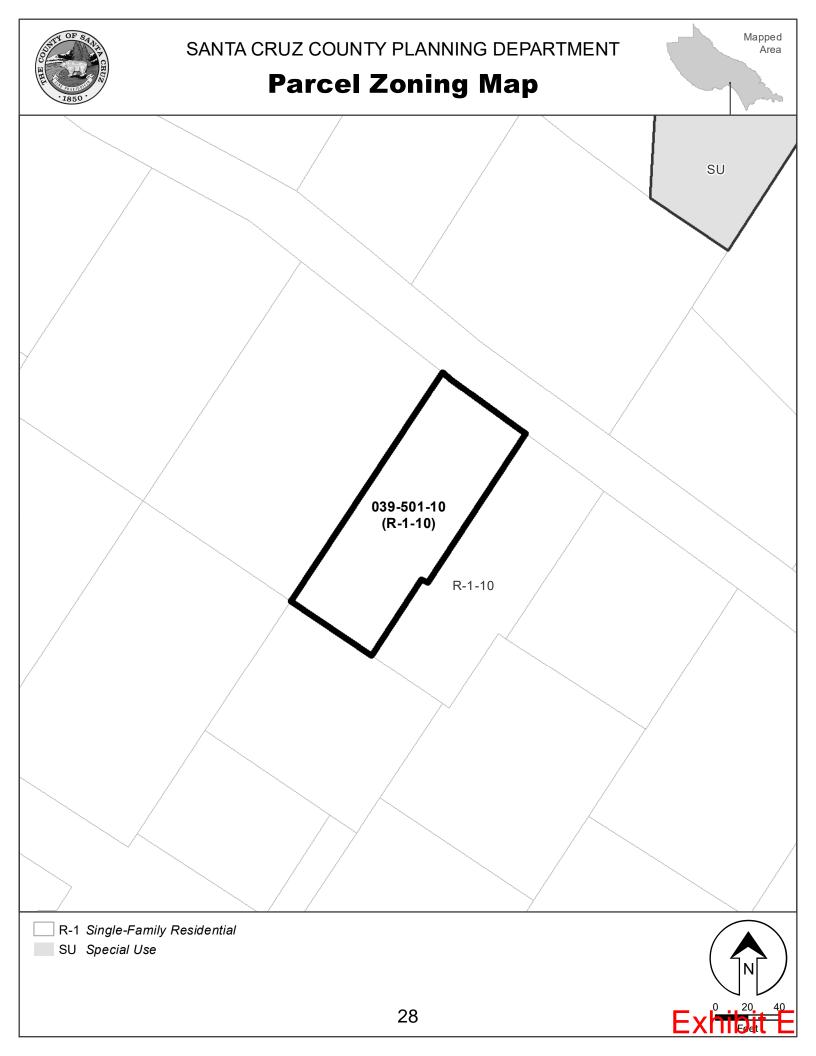
Assessor Parcel Boundary Existing Park



Mapped

Area





Parcel Information

Services Information

Urban/Rural Services Line:	X Inside Outside
Water Supply:	Soquel Creek Water District
Sewage Disposal:	Santa Cruz County Sanitation District
Fire District:	Central Fire
Drainage District:	Zone 6

Parcel Information

Parcel Size:	10,759 square feet, 0.29 Acre
Existing Land Use - Parcel:	Residential
Existing Land Use - Surrounding:	Residential
Project Access:	Viewpoint Road
Planning Area:	Aptos
Land Use Designation:	R-UL (Urban Low Density Residential)
Zone District:	R-1-10 (Single Family Residential Zone District (10,000
	square feet minimum lot size))
Coastal Zone:	Inside <u>X</u> Outside
Appealable to Calif. Coastal	<u>Yes X</u> No

Environmental Information

Comm.

Geologic Hazards:	Not mapped/no physical evidence on site
Fire Hazard:	Not a mapped constraint
Slopes:	About 35 percent average
Env. Sen. Habitat:	Not mapped/no physical evidence on site
Grading:	No grading proposed
Tree Removal:	No trees proposed to be removed
Scenic:	Within Mapped Scenic Area
Archeology:	Not mapped/no physical evidence on site