

COA # 2010-COA-033 (RP)	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date APRIL 7, 2010
916 N California RANSOM PLACE		New Case
Applicant ROBIN ALTMAYER mailing address: 916 N California St Indianapolis, IN 46202		Center Township Council District:15 Andre Carson
Owner: same		
CASE		
IHPC COA:	2010-COA-033 (RP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolish rear additions • construct new rear addition • replace siding with fiber-cement siding • replace windows with vinyl • replace inappropriate front door with new door
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness		

STAFF COMMENTS

Background of the Property

This 1 ½ story cottage was built in the 1880’s. The house has had alterations including closing in the side porch, construction of a new front porch in the 1930’s and some window and door replacement. A rear addition consists of two sections. The oldest section is wood frame with wood siding and appears on the 1887 Sanborn map. The newer section is concrete block and was built sometime after 1956. Until recently, the house and oldest addition were covered in aluminum siding. The newer, concrete block addition was covered in vinyl siding.

Demolition Rear Addition

The owner wants to remove the rear addition and replace it with a larger, new addition (26x32 feet.) One portion of the rear addition is historic but has been obscured and altered by the newer addition. It adds almost nothing to the historic character of the house and area. The newer portion has no historical significance. Both of them, taken together, add little to the character of the house. Demolition is justified, in order to provide more usable space in the house.

Design of a New Addition

The new addition will be approximately 16 inches wider than the existing addition and therefore project beyond the south side of the house. The new addition is 12 feet longer than the present addition. The side projection is needed avoid the need to completely excavate the existing foundation.

At this point, the plans are inadequate, but given the simple nature of this addition, we believe we can work with the owner to get final plans with adequate detail.

This request is appropriate for several reasons:

- It is consistent with the following guideline in the Ransom Place Conservation Plan: *“Additions to historic buildings should not obscure or overpower the basic form and style of the building as perceived from the street.”*
- Although there will be a 16 inch projection on the south side, that detail will not overpower or obscure the main body of the structure.

- The design of the addition is not inappropriate for the structure. It is a one-story addition just like the house and will have the same siding and windows as proposed for the rest of the house.

New Windows

The applicant received approval in 2005 to replace five wood windows (two of which were not original) with vinyl windows. Only three of the windows were installed. The applicant now wants to replace all the remaining wood windows on the house with new vinyl windows. Since the windows in the house vary in configuration and size, it is critically important that staff approve the specific windows prior to installation so each new window is as similar as possible to the one it replaces. Therefore, staff is including a stipulation that specifications be submitted for the new windows prior to installation.

With regard to windows, the Conservation District Guidelines say:

“If replacing original historic windows, replacements should be as close as possible to the size of the original opening and should be a style as similar as possible to the original. True divided lites are encouraged, but snap-on or glue-on muntins are not precluded. It is encouraged for replacement windows to be the same material as original windows. However, other materials may be considered if they fit the opening properly and have similar appearance to the original.”

New Front Door

The applicant received a violation notice that a new front door was installed without a COA. Replacing the inappropriate door is a part of this application. The door that was removed without a COA was not original. However, the new door has an inappropriate design and size for this house. The applicant has not submitted a new door design, however, staff has included a stipulation that the final door selection must be approved by IHPC staff prior to installation and must be installed no later than June 1, 2010.

New Siding with Fiber-Cement Boards

Mr. Altmeyer is requesting to replace the wood siding with new, smooth-finished cement board siding because he believes the maintenance of the fiber-cement will be easier and more appealing to potential buyers when he lists the house for sale in the next few months. His request to use smooth cement board with the same dimensions as the original is not inconsistent with the guidelines in the Ransom Place Plan.

In traditional historic districts, guidelines recommend:

- 1) only replacing original wood when deteriorated beyond repair, and
- 2) only using real wood siding to match the original. This usually results in only partial replacement, since most historic houses have a mix of deteriorated siding and still-good siding.

Conservation District Guidelines, like Ransom Place, take a different approach. They:

- 1) encourage repair and restoration of original siding, but
- 2) allow the owner more latitude in deciding whether or not to replace it, and
- 3) if the owner wants to replace the siding, recommends it be done with matching wood siding, but
- 4) (unlike historic district guidelines) permits the consideration of *“a hardboard material... if it is similar in dimension and surface texture to the original.”*

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

COA #2010-COA-033 (RP):

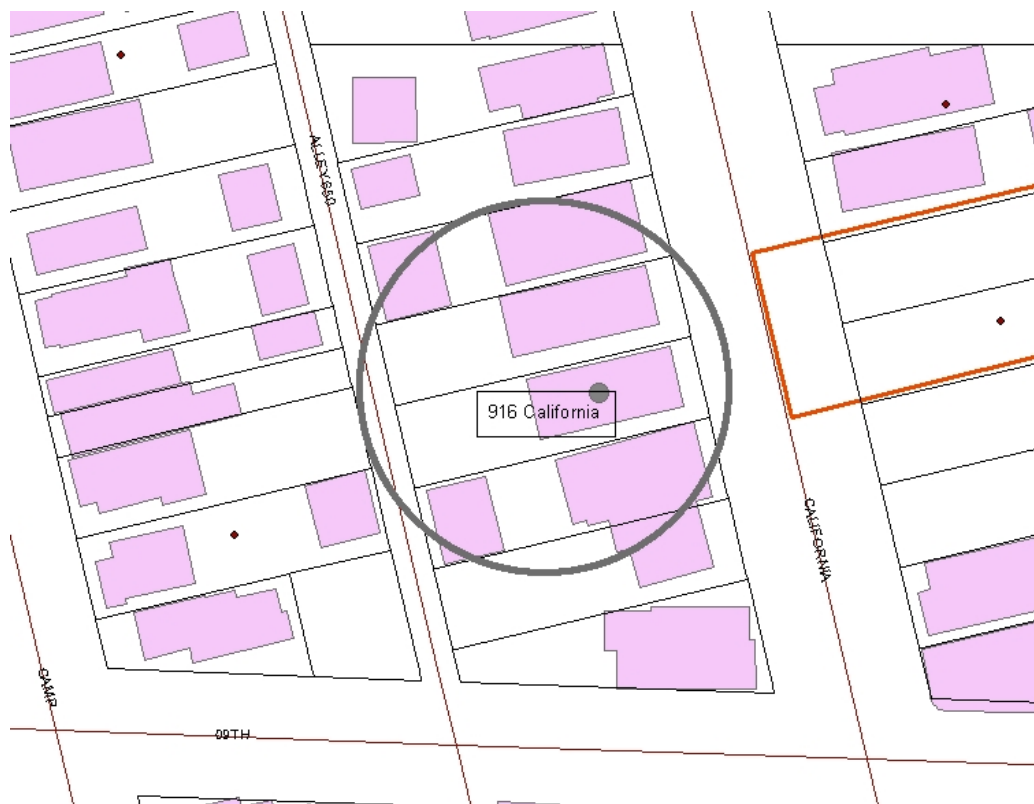
To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the rear additions, build a new rear addition, replace windows, replace front door and install fiber-cement board siding on all four elevations per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:

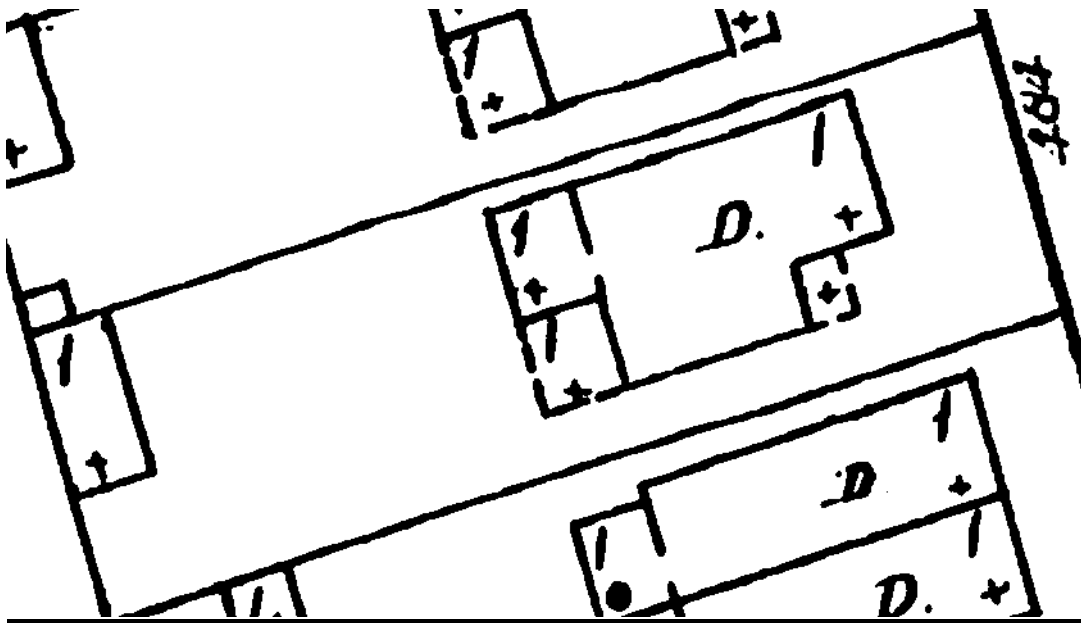
- 1) Construction must not commence prior to approval by IHPC staff of final construction drawings. *Approved: _____ Date: _____*
- 2) A pre-construction meeting between IHPC staff, the designer, the owner, and the contractor/construction manager must be held prior to commencement of construction. *Approved: _____ Date: _____*
- 3) The construction site must be field-staked with no offsets and reviewed by IHPC staff prior to commencement of construction. *Approved: _____ Date: _____*
- 4) Siding and trim materials must be solid wood or cement fiber and must have a smooth texture, free of major imperfections. No rough-sawn finishes are permitted. Siding exposure and pattern shall match the historic house (4.5 inches).
- 5) All utility wires and cables must be relocated underground. No installation of utilities, meters or mechanical equipment shall commence prior to IHPC staff approval.
- 6) Work on exterior details must not commence prior to the approval by IHPC staff of each element. These may include, but are not limited to: doors, windows, railings, foundations, exterior light fixtures, colors, roofing, fencing, landscaping, etc.
- 7) A cut sheet of the new vinyl windows must be approved by IHPC staff prior to installation. *Approved _____ Date _____*
- 8) A cut sheet of the new front door must be approved by IHPC staff prior to installation. *Approved _____ Date _____*
- 9) New front door must be installed no later than June 1, 2010.
- 10) Any changes or unforeseen repairs shall be approved by IHPC staff prior to starting work.

Note 1: Stipulations 1, 2, and 3 must be completed prior to the issuance of any building permits.

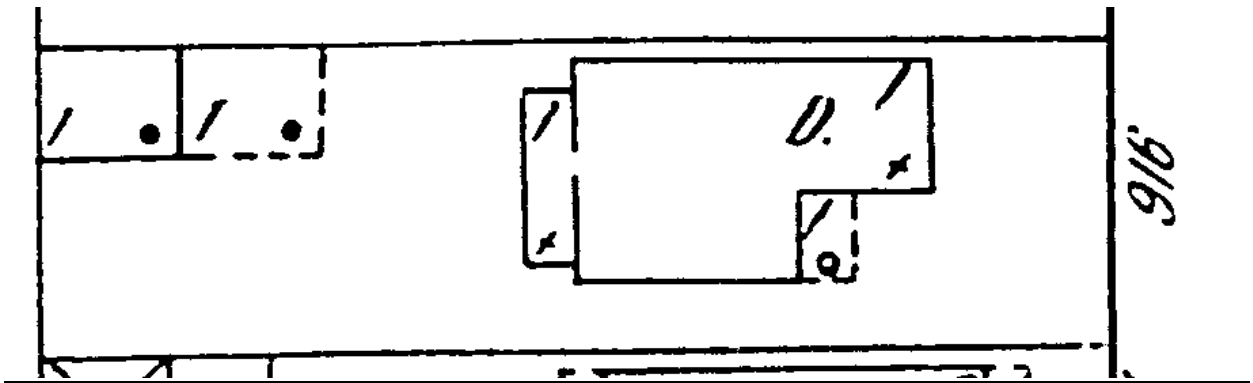
Note 2: If the windows are installed without first being approved by staff, they may have to be removed and different windows installed if staff does not find them appropriate.

Staff Reviewer: Meg Purnsley





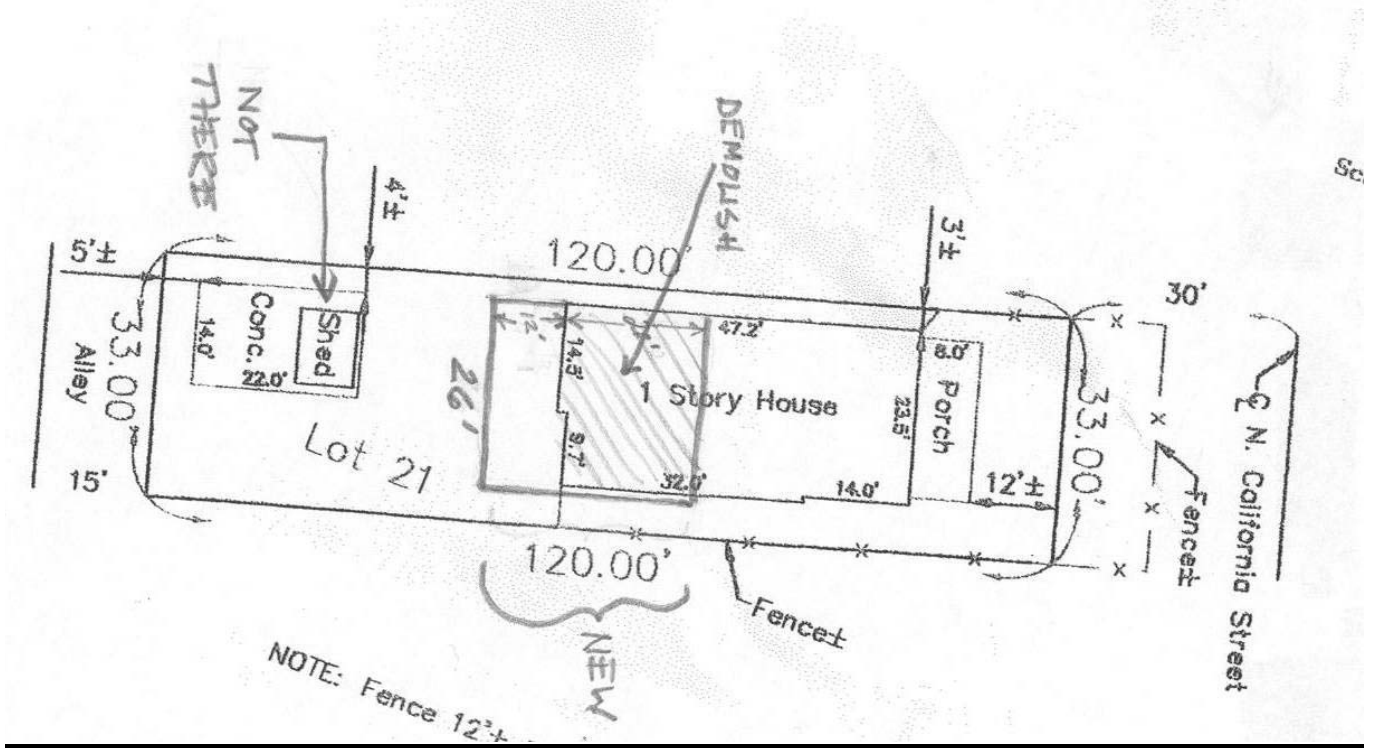
1887 Sanborn Map of Site Above
1915 Sanborn Map of Site Below (this map is the same as the 1956 Map)



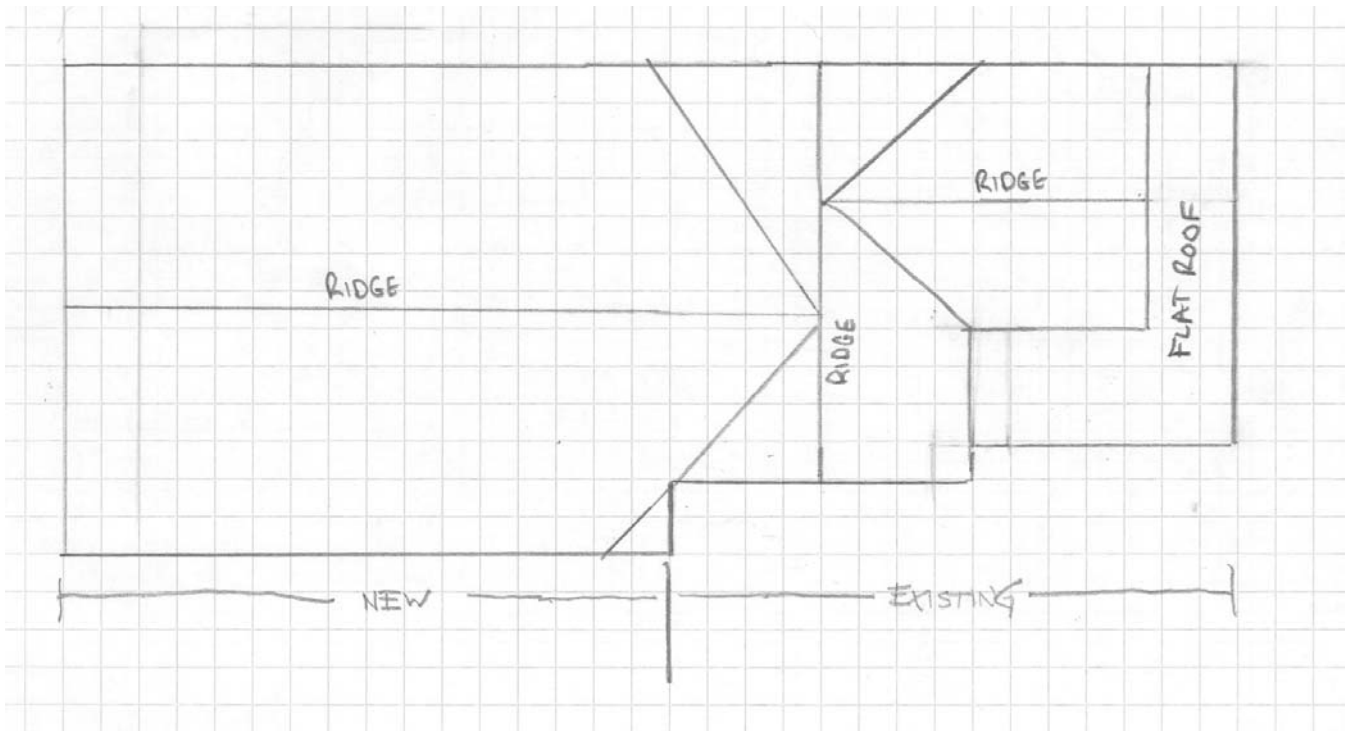


Above: Front of house (East Elevation)
Below: View of roof and south elevation of house

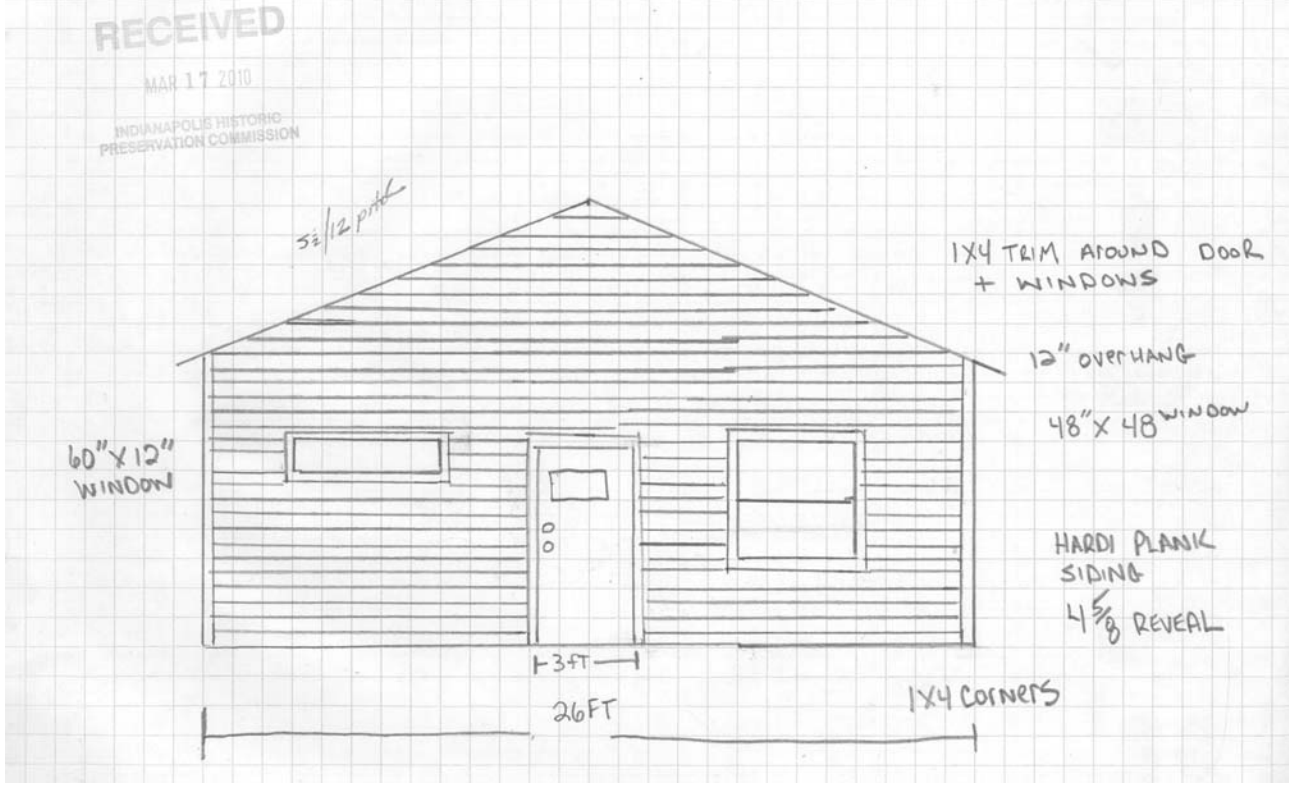




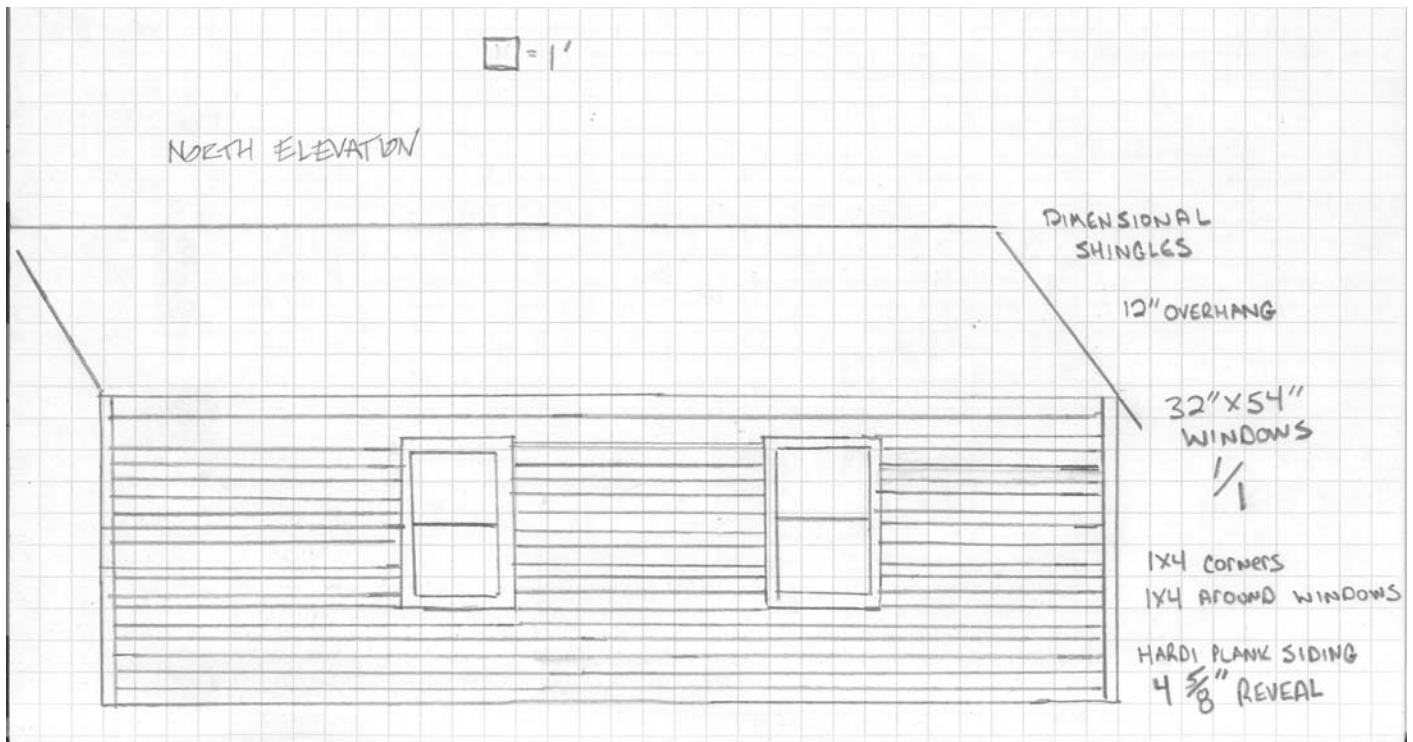
Site Plan (Above)
Roof Plan (Below)

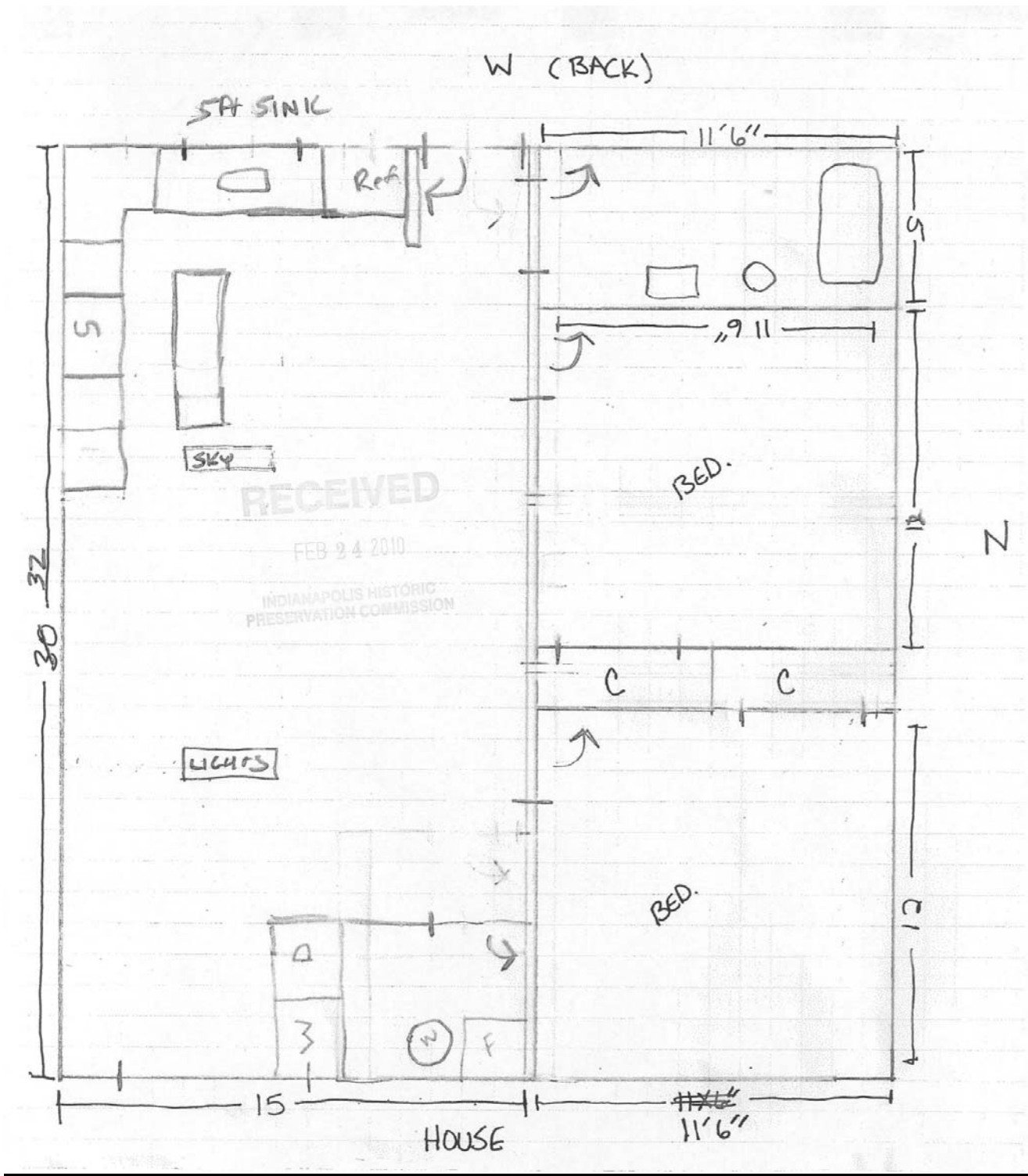


white trim
clay colored siding (terra cotta)



Above: Rear Elevation (Proposed)
Below: North Elevation (South Elevation will be mirrored)





Above: Proposed Floor Plan



Front of house (showing door that was removed- below is picture of door and sidelites that were removed, which were not original).





Rear of house today



Example of divided lite window on house



Example of casement window on house



View of south side of house (and front porch in foreground)