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June 8, 2020

By Electronic Mail

Glenn Richards, Chair  
Historical Commission  
City of Newburyport  
City Hall  
60 Pleasant Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950

Re: Request for Determination of Historic Significance and Demolition  
342 Merrimac Street, Newburyport, MA (the "Property")  
Assessor's Map: 65 Lot: 10A/B

Dear Chair and Members of the Commission:

Reference is made to the above-captioned matter. In that connection, this firm represents Dan and Judy Lynch, the owners of the Property, relative to restoration of the residence on the Property. The Commission reviewed the proposed plans at its May 28<sup>th</sup> hearing and raised questions regarding the front portico and the age of various windows at the residence. Dan and Judy seek to clarify information on both points with this letter.

The Front Portico

The front portico on the southern elevation of the residence is not original to the structure. The Form B recorded December 12, 1980, addresses the portico stating, "[t]he projecting second story bay over the front entrance was added early in this century." See **Exhibit A**. The updated Form B, prepared in October 2017, and received by the Massachusetts Historical Commission in December, 2019, likewise reflects the addition of this second story bay in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. See **Exhibit B**. Finally, while the footprint of the front portico appears on the 1924 Assessor's Map, it is not shown on an 1884 Map obtained from History Newburyport, providing further evidence both that the front portico is not original to the house and that it was added after 1900. See **Exhibit C**.

The Windows

Regarding the windows, the attached **Exhibit D** indicates with the number "1" the Brosco windows with spring balance installed circa 1980. Two of these windows, on the first floor of the west elevation, have older sashes which Dan and Judy are willing to restore. The revised proposed elevation sheet submitted to the Commission June 4<sup>th</sup>, and reattached here as **Exhibit E**, designates with a circle enclosed by a hexagon the windows with older sashes Dan and Judy are willing to restore.

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*Millis Office*

730 Main Street, Suite 1F  
Millis, MA 02054  
Phone 508.376.8400

We look forward to presenting the revised proposal at the Commission's next meeting.

Sincerely,  
Dan and Judy Lynch  
By their attorney



Lisa L. Mead

Attachment  
cc: Client

# **EXHIBIT A**

## FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Area

I

Form no

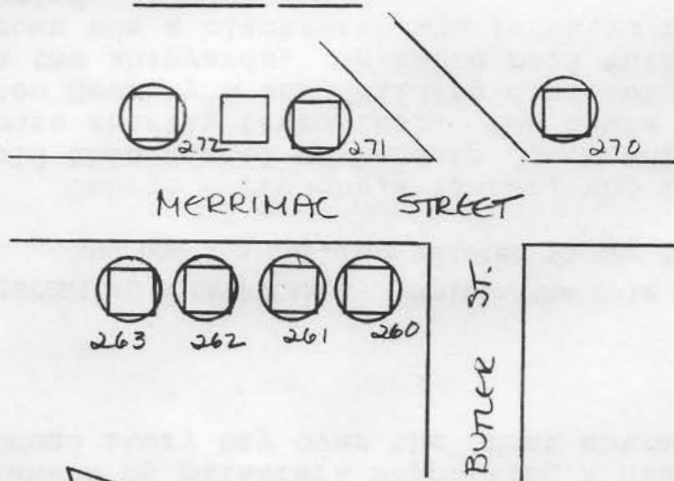
272

n Newburyportress 342 Merrimac Streettoric Name Whitmore/Currier Hou: Original ResidencePresent Residence
 ership: ☒ Private individual  
☐ Private organization

Public

Original owner Jacob Whitmore

Draw map showing property's  
 location in relation to nearest  
 cross streets and other buildings  
 or geographical features.  
Indicate north.



## DESCRIPTION:

Date c. 1790Source Essex County Registry ofStyle Federal/Greek RevivalArchitect UnknownExterior wall fabric ClapboardsOutbuildings Shed

Major alterations (with dates) Buildin  
updated (mid-nineteenth century)

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Approx. acreage 8,916 sq. ft.

Setting in residential area c  
eighteenth and nineteenth century  
dwellings along the banks of the  
Merrimack River.

Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwort
 Organization Office of Community  
Development
Date 12-12-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

This two story dwelling with pitched roof and symmetrical five bay facade was built in the early Federal period and updated during the Greek Revival period. The overall form of the house is typically Federal. The architectural elements are largely Greek in style. They include the heavy cornerboards, the window lintels and the front entrance. The door is flanked by pilasters supporting a heavy entablature above. The projecting second story bay over the front entrance was added early in this century.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

George Burroughs, a tanner, who invested heavily in land in this area, sold this parcel of land to Jacob Whitmore in 1785. Whitmore built this house shortly thereafter. The house is located in the heart of what was then Newbury's shipbuilding district and Whitmore was probably employed in the shipyards. Whitmore sold this house to Caleb Brown in 1826. Brown was a blacksmith who invested in several nearby homes during that period.

Later this house was sold to John Currier. The Currier Shipyard was located on the banks of the Merrimack adjacent to this home. John Currier built ships in Newburyport's North End until the 1880's. Between 1831 and 1884 Currier built ninety-seven ships and barks and one schooner, one steamer, and one scow of 200 tons, total tonnage 80,869.

Prior to 1872 this house was sold to John Merrill, a shipcarpenter. The house remained in the Merrill family until 1913 when Mary S. Merrill sold the property to Mary C. Sawyer.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Assessor's Records 1890-1980  
1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire  
1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D. G. Beers and Co.  
R. Cheney, History of Merrimac River Shipbuilding, Newburyport 1964

## **EXHIBIT B**

# FORM B – BUILDING

**DRAFT**

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

65-10-173

Newburyport

NWB.1

NWB.272

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING  
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

**Town/City:** NEWBURYPORT

**Place:** (*neighborhood or village*): Merrimack Shipbuilding District

## Photograph



**Address:** 342 Merrimac Street

**Historic Name:** Whitmore, Jacob House

**Uses:** Present: Residential

Original: Residential

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1785

**Source:** Deed research

**Style/Form:** Federal

**Architect/Builder:** Unknown

## Exterior Material:

Foundation: Stone, brick

Wall/Trim: Wood clapboard/ wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

## Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

1½-story outbuilding, possibly 19<sup>th</sup> c. (see Photo 3)

## Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Rear elevation shed dormer (1980)

Extension of rear ell, exterior stairs and deck (dates unknown)

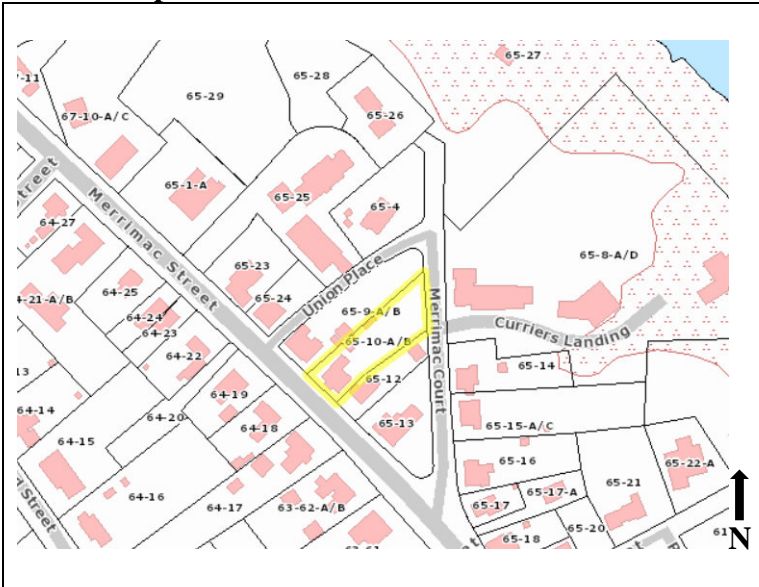
**Condition:** Good

**Moved:** no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

**Acreage:** 13,090 sq. ft.

**Setting:** This house is located on the east side of Merrimac Street near the banks of the Merrimack River. The house is set close to the street within a triangle formed by Merrimac Street, Merrimac Court and Union Place. This section of the street is densely built with 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century houses, all set close to the street. This rectangular parcel extends from Merrimac Street to Merrimac Court. A short driveway is located along the north side of the house and a wood picket fence runs along the sidewalk.

## Locus Map



**Recorded by:** Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant

**Organization:**

**Date** (*month / year*): October, 2017

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

BREWSTER

342 MERRIMAC STREET

Area(s) Form No.

NWB.I

NWB.272

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

*If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

*Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.*

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

This is a two-story, side-gable example of a Federal-style house. As is typical of many Federal houses, the front elevation is five bays wide and symmetrically arrayed with a center entrance. A heavy brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge. It is believed that this house was updated in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, resulting in ornamental details which reflect the later Greek Revival style. The main building block rests on a stone foundation, and the two-story ell rests on a brick foundation. The walls are clad in wood clapboard siding, some of which have been replaced. The building's corners are articulated with broad pilasters with recessed panels and denticulated capitals. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (likely wood shingles originally). The roof has a slightly-projecting molded box cornice. The front entrance has what appears to be a replacement wood six-panel door flanked by partial sidelights and pilasters with recessed panels. The entrance lintel is unadorned, possibly due to the addition of the bay on the second story which is supported by columns that rest on modern stone and concrete piers. According to the 1980 version of this Form B, this bay was added in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Fenestration on the front and side elevations includes wood 6/1 double-hung windows on the first story and wood 6/6 double-hung windows on the second and third story. The house likely originally had wood 6/6 windows throughout. The windows are set in frames that reflect the recessed panel detail of the corner pilasters. The rear elevation has a complicated mix of ells/addition (see Photo 3). An 1880 "bird's eye view" (see attached) suggests that the two-story rear ell may date to at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with the other rear additions dating to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rear shed dormer was added in 1980.

The property includes a 1½-story outbuilding that rests on brick piers and is clad in painted wood shingles. The origins of this building are unknown. The Newburyport National Register District nomination calls it a shed and gives it a date of ca. 1845, but it is not shown on the 1851 Plan of Newburyport (see attached). It may be a remnant of the taller outbuilding with smokestack seen in the 1880 "bird's-eye view" (see attached).

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

*(This Historical Narrative is adapted and expanded from the 1980 version of this Form B and Area Form NWB.I)*

This house is located within the Merrimack Shipbuilding District Area Form (NWB.I). This area was part of the Town of Newbury until 1851. In that year, Newburyport was incorporated and the district north of Oakland Street was annexed to Newburyport. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most of the shipyards in active operation were located within the Merrimack Shipbuilding District. Residential development during the late-18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries along Merrimac Street and the streets running from Merrimac Street toward High Street were closely associated with the shipyards. Shipbuilding remained a prosperous industry until the late-19<sup>th</sup> century.

According to the 1980 Form B, George Burroughs, a tanner, who invested heavily in land in this area, sold this parcel of land to Jacob Whitmore in 1785. Jacob Whitmore built this house shortly thereafter. The house is located in the heart of what was then Newbury's shipbuilding district and Whitmore was likely employed in the shipyards. Whitmore sold this house to Caleb Brown in 1826. Brown was a blacksmith who invested in several nearby homes during that period.

Later this house was sold to John Currier, Jr. who established a shipyard on a large tract of land he owned east of his house. He launched almost one hundred ships between the years of 1831 and 1884. His shipyard included two launching ways, a saw mill, two-story workshop with a mold loft, and a blacksmith shop. Mr. Currier had a reputation as a builder of some of the finest sailing vessels. The *Boston Traveler*, on August 8, 1860, stated, "Among shipbuilders, John Currier, Jr., of Newburyport stands

*Continuation sheet 1*

# INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

BREWSTER

342 MERRIMAC STREET

Area(s) Form No.

NWB.I

NWB.272

conspicuous. His reputation both at home and in Europe as a capable shipbuilder and as an honest man is without rival." Two of Mr. Currier's notable vessels included the 1,847 ton *John Currier*, which was built in 1882 and was the largest sailing ship built on the Merrimack, and the 1,575 ton *Mary L. Cushing*, which was built in 1883 and was the last square-rigged sailing vessel to be built in Massachusetts. Currier retired in 1884 and passed away in 1887. His son, author and historian John J. Currier, worked for many years in the counting room of the Currier shipyard. Prior to 1872 this house was sold to John Merrill, a ship carpenter. The house remained in the Merrill family until 1913 when Mary S. Merrill sold the property to Mary C. Sawyer.

The house and outbuilding are listed as contributing resources in the Newburyport National Register District, established in 1984.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire

1880 Bird's eye view, E. H. Bigelow

Cheney, Robert, *History of Merrimack River Shipbuilding*, Newburyport 1964

[www.clipperheritagetrail.com/tour\\_alongwatersedge.php#09](http://www.clipperheritagetrail.com/tour_alongwatersedge.php#09)



Photo 2. View looking east.



Photo 3. View of rear elevation and outbuilding, looking west.

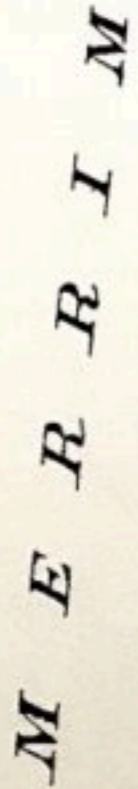


Detail of 1851 Plan of Newburyport.



1880 "Bird's eye view".

## **EXHIBIT C**



1884 Map  
Courtesy of the Newburyport Public Library  
Archival Center



Scale 40 ft. = in.

## **EXHIBIT D**



Existing North Elevation  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Existing East Elevation  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Existing West Elevation  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Existing South Elevation  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

# 1 = Brosco w/spring balance  
# 2 = 6/1 older

# 3 = 6/6 older

Revisions

KEERY  
DESIGN LLC  
837 Main Street  
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950  
978/295-5710

EXISTING  
CONDITIONS

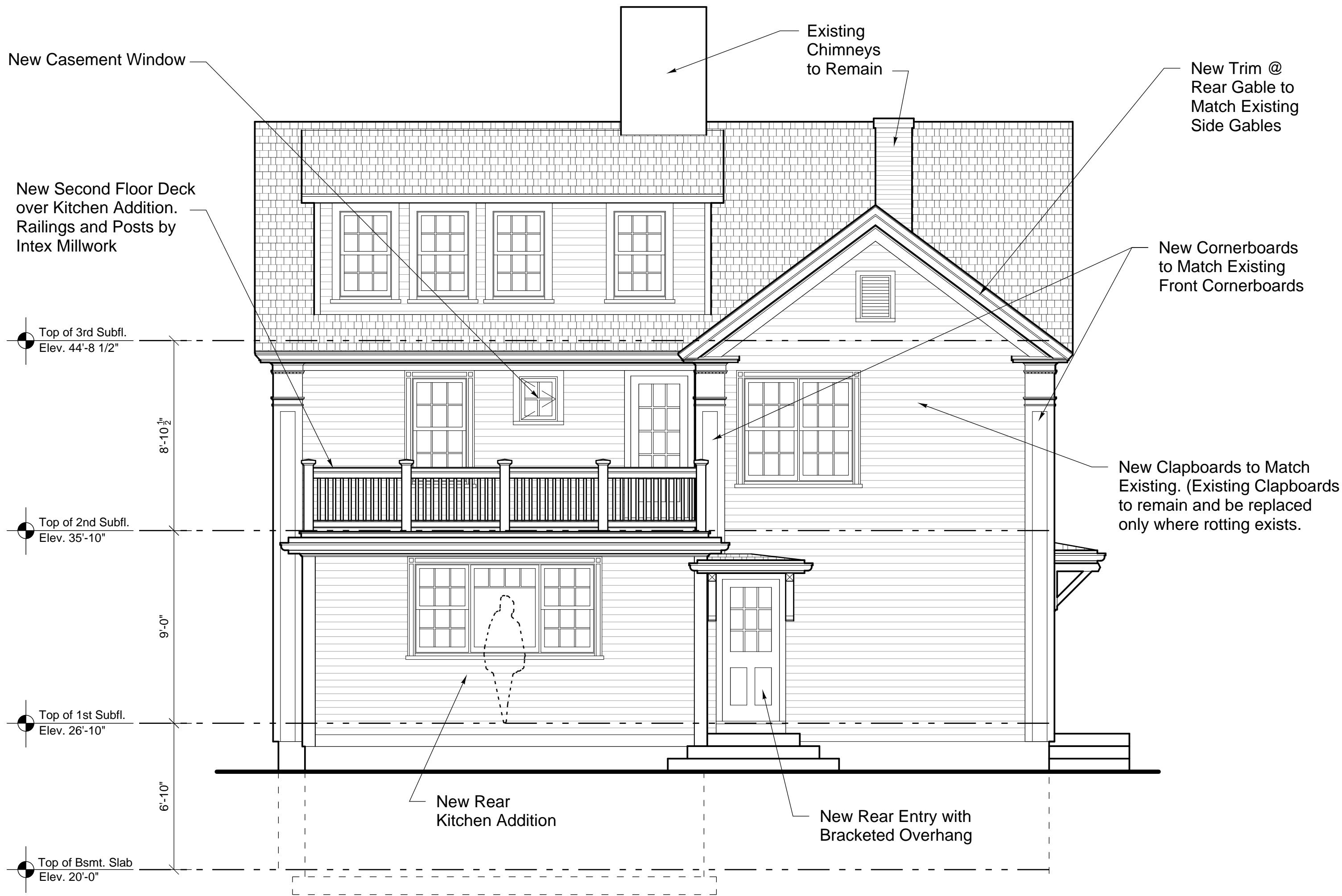
Additional and Renovations to the home of  
Dan and Judy Lynch  
342 Main Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Existing Elevations

Project No. 10013 Date February 13, 2020  
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

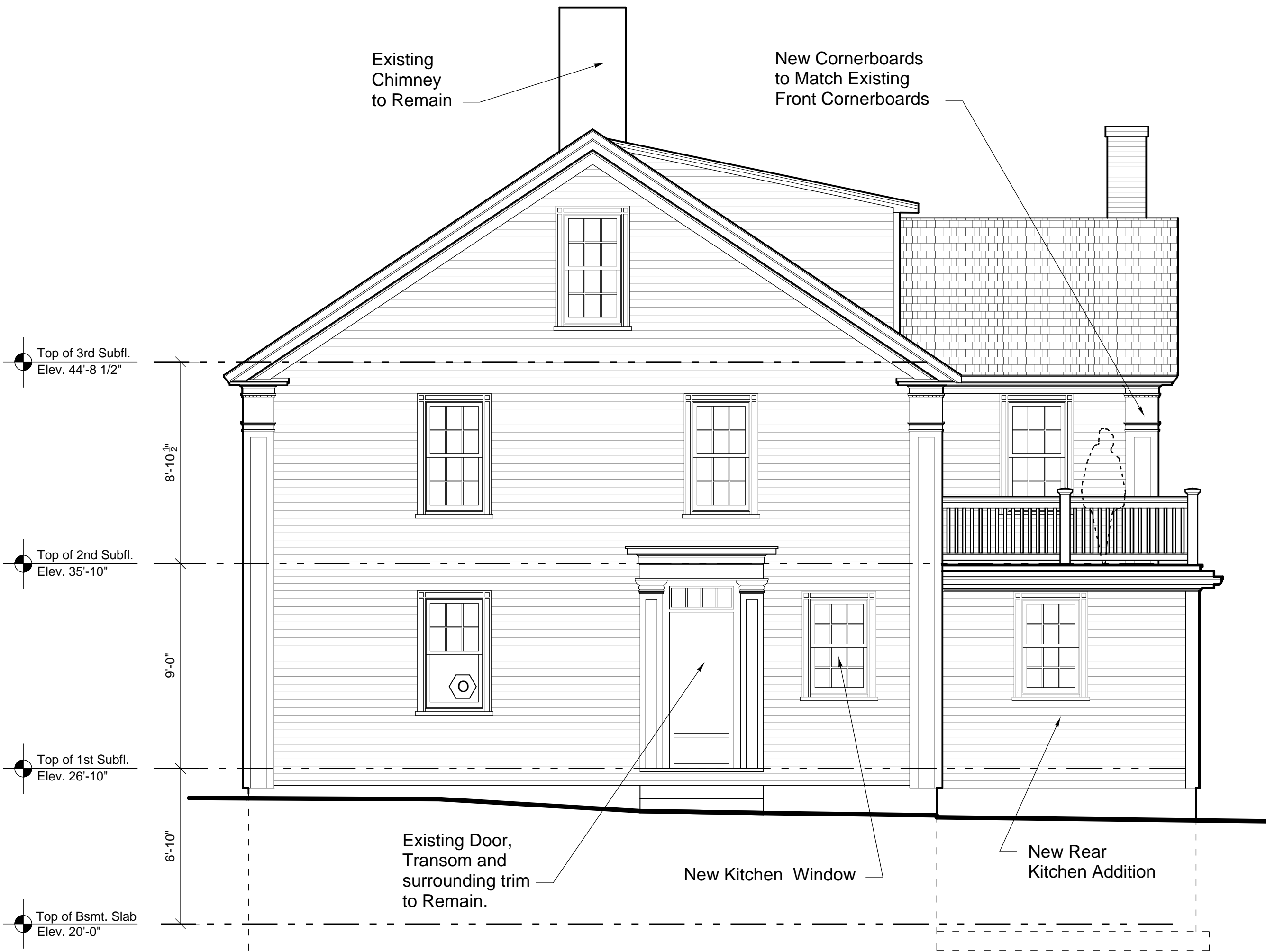
A3

## **EXHIBIT E**



Proposed North Elevation

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

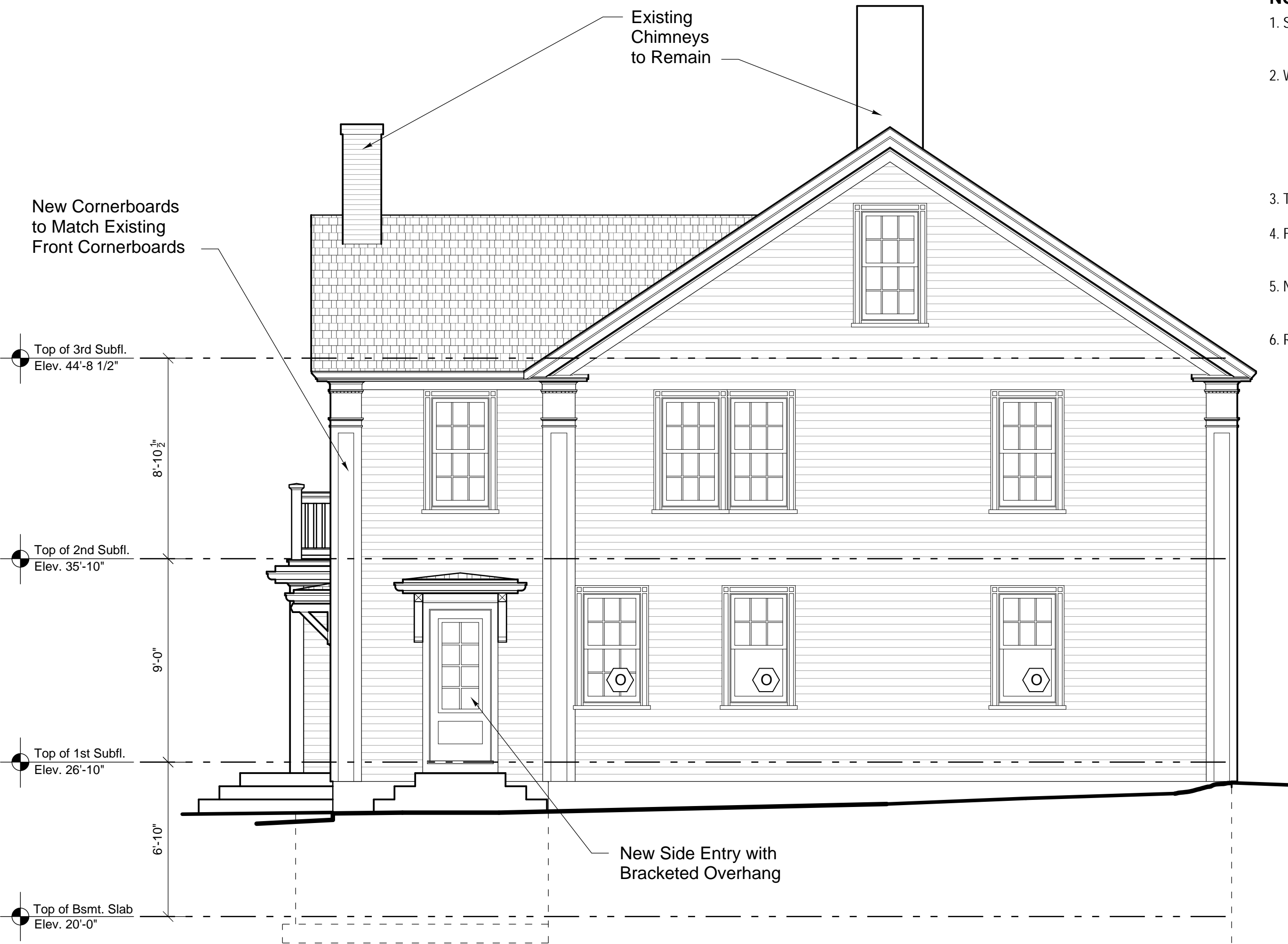


Proposed East Elevation

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

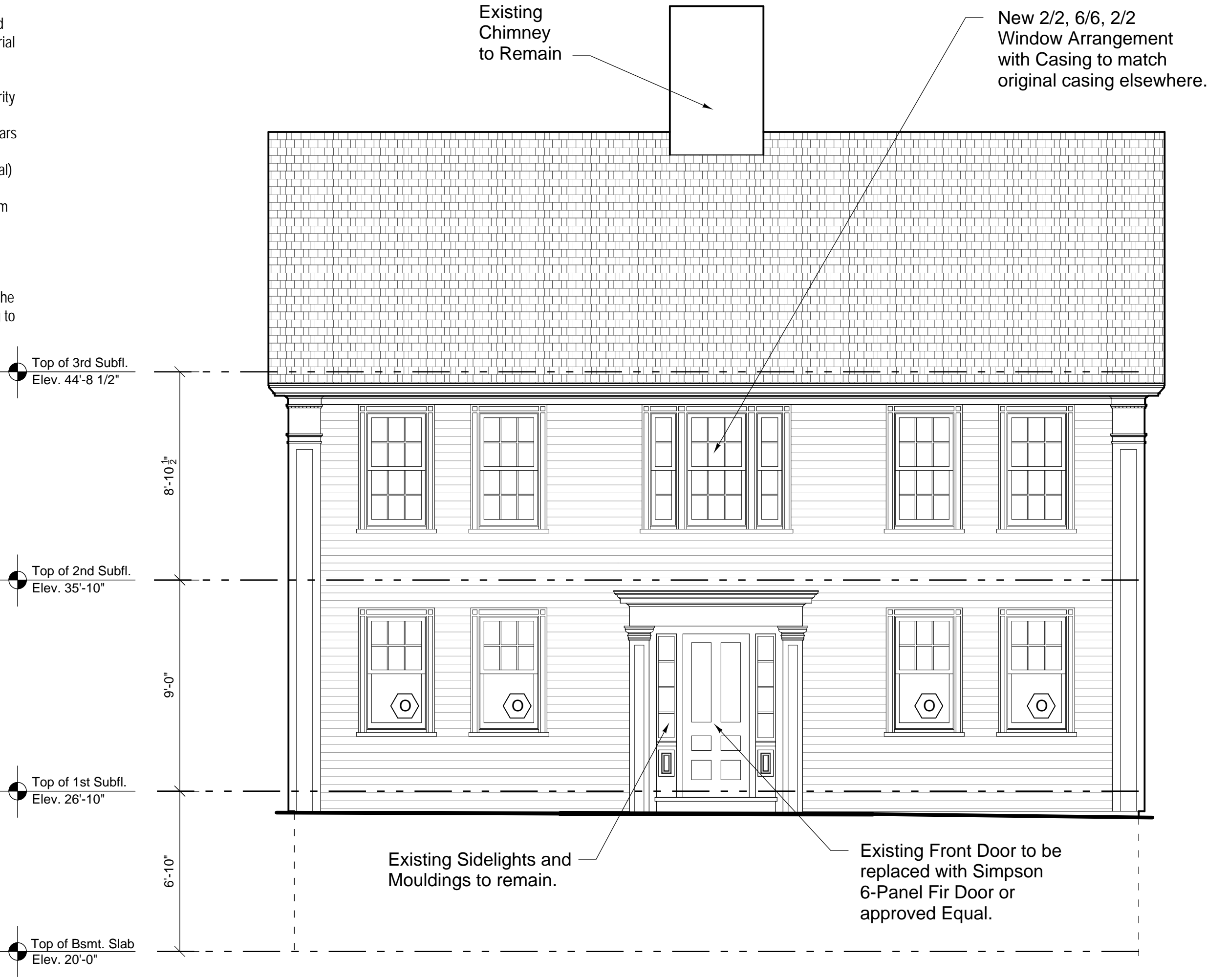
NOTES:

1. Siding: The existing wooden clapboards will remain and be repaired as needed where rot exists, and all new walls will be clad to match the existing material and exposures.
2. Windows: All second and third floor windows are Brosco windows with spring balances installed circa 1980, and they will be replaced with Marvin Integrity Series Simulated Divided Light Windows (fiberglass with wood interior) OR APPROVED EQUAL with 6/6 light patterns and 3/4" applied muntin bars (inside and outside) unless indicated otherwise. Windows indicated with an (O) are older sashes (but perhaps not original) which the Homeowner is willing to restore to working order.
3. Trim: All existing trim shall remain and be repaired/painted as needed. New trim will match the details of the existing trim as indicated in the elevations.
4. Front Entry: The front door will be replaced with a Simpson 7130 Traditional Exterior Door or approved equal. Original Sidelights/Trim at the front door to remain in place.
5. New Second Floor Deck: Posts, Railings and Balusters will be as indicated in the elevations. Material by Intex Millwork - Hampton Extruded System. Decking to be Azek Vintage Collection or approved equal.
6. Roofing: GAF Timberline Fiberglass Shingles or approved equal.



Proposed West Elevation

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Proposed South Elevation

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"

|  |                     |                    |          |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Revisions:   |                     | Added Notes        |          |
| 1  | 05/12/20            | 2                  | 06/04/20 |
| Revised Scope of Demolition  |                     |                    |          |
| <b>KEERY design   LLC</b>  |                     |                    |          |
| 437 Merimac Street<br>Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950<br>978/395-5710 |                     |                    |          |
|  |                     |                    |          |
| <b>PRELIMINARY PRICING SET</b>   |                     |                    |          |
| Additions and Renovations to the home of:                              |                     |                    |          |
| <b>Dan and Judy Lynch</b>  |                     |                    |          |
| 342 Merimac Street<br>Newburyport, MA 01950                            |                     |                    |          |
| <b>Proposed Side Elevations</b>  |                     | Date: June 4, 2020 |          |
| Project No. 19019  | Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" |                    |          |
| <b>A2</b>  |                     |                    |          |