

Neighborhood Meeting Report

148 Morrison Ave, Somerville

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Location: Virtual/Zoom
Date: 9/8/25
Time: 6:30pm

Attendees:

Leighton Collis – property owner
Cathy Collis – property owner
Charles Rose – Charles Rose Architects Inc.
Justin Ng – Charles Rose Architects Inc.
Andrea Morelli – MBA Builders
Stephen Cary – Planning, Preservation, Zoning
Carol Powers
Martha Cleveland
Becca Golson
Miriam Bromfield
Daniel Toner
Eilish Brown
Cassie Arnaud

Synopsis:

Presentation:

The meeting began with a brief introduction from the property owners, Leighton and Cathy Collis, who then turned the presentation over to architect Charles Rose. Charles presented a series of slides (Appendix C) that included images of the existing property, renderings of the proposed project, and the corresponding landscape plan.

He explained that the slides were the same materials previously presented to the Historic Commission and emphasized that the project does not require any zoning variances. Charles also reviewed the scope of the proposed plans, noting that the rooftop mechanical units had been relocated at the request of neighbors during the Historic Commission's review. In addition, he highlighted that the project includes a new low perimeter fence and enhanced landscaping, which will improve the property's green score and overall appearance.

Following the presentation, the floor was opened for public questions.

Public Comments and Responses:

- **Martha Cleveland (144 Morrison)** expressed appreciation that the rooftop mechanical units had been relocated in response to neighbors' concerns.
- **Cassie Arnaud (142 Morrison)** asked about the property's east façade, as no image of this elevation was presented. The property owners responded that the east façade materials will match those shown on the west elevation and as approved by the Historic Commission. The new addition and cottage will include cedar shake siding, a roofing material designed to mimic slate, a privacy screen at the terrace level, and a new picket fence.
- Ms. Arnaud also asked whether the new units would be condominiums. The property owners clarified that the project will not include condominiums and that the units cannot legally be converted into condos.
- Ms. Arnaud further raised concerns about the potential impact of lowering the basement level on neighborhood groundwater, citing flooding issues in a nearby property where similar work had been done. The property owners explained that a civil engineer has been engaged on the project and that the plans include an underground stormwater infiltration system.
- Ms. Arnaud additionally requested increased communication from the property owners. While the owners noted they have complied with all required city notifications to abutters, they agreed to establish a neighborhood correspondence channel to provide more ongoing updates.
- **Eilish Brown** asked whether the patio between the main building and the cottage would be permeable. The property owners confirmed that it would. Ms. Brown also suggested incorporating more native shrubs. The architect noted that the city maintains strict requirements regarding plant selection but reviewed the landscape plan in more detail and confirmed that additional native plantings are included. The property owners also confirmed that the existing flagpole will remain.

Conclusion:

All questions and concerns raised by meeting attendees were addressed during the neighborhood meeting. The next step for the property owners is to formally submit the project package to the Zoning Board for review and approval.

Response:

The property owners responded to the neighbors' request for an image of the east façade via email on October 16, 2025. Leighton Collis subsequently sent an email to the neighbors that included an image of the east elevation along with a description of the design. This image is included in Appendix D of this document.

Appendix A – Notice of Neighborhood Meeting

NOTICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

TO: Neighbors of 148 Morrison Avenue
FROM: Leighton & Cathy Collis
RE: Neighborhood Meeting Invitation

Please join homeowners Leighton & Cathy Collis, architects from Charles Rose Architects, the City of Somerville, for a virtual neighborhood meeting.

WHEN Monday, September 8, 2025
TIME 6:30 – 8:00 PM

Meeting Registration Link:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/meeting/register/yRbbEWfvQn6XUgT1WtiBLw>

This link can be found online at the Somerville City Calendar.

In this meeting, the architects will present a residential use plan for 148 Morrison Avenue, Somerville, MA. This plan is same plan that was presented to the Historic Preservation Committee; no zoning variances are sought. This second neighborhood meeting is required because the row house itself is a non-conforming building type (Rowhouse in the NR district), and the Zoning requires an additional meeting. The plan features the exact same conforming building component (Rear Addition) and conforming rear dwelling unit that was presented to the Historic Preservation Committee. A detailed landscaping plan will also be presented. There will be an opportunity to discuss issues and potential impacts from that use. The team will use this feedback when preparing an application for the Special Permits to be heard by the Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals.

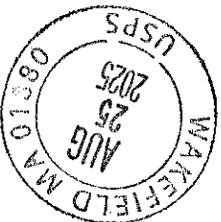
For question, please contact Councilor Lance Davis by phone or email at
(857) 261-1909

ldavis@somervillema.gov

Appendix B – Confirmation of Mailing

BUSEMEYER KATHRYN & HOWELL GARRETT
 JOSEPH AMIE CARROLL & JAMES J DOUGLAS
 COLLIS CATHERINE & MICHAEL L
 22 CLIFTON REAL ESTATE CORP
 MIX-IT STUDIOS COOPERATIVE
 MIX-IT STUDIOS COOPERATIVE
 GOLSON JOHN & REBECCA L
 CLEVELAND MARTHA E
 ARNAUD CASSANDRA A
 GREEN BRIAN J & KATIA V
 C/O CONDO ASSOCIATION FOR 138 MORRISON A
 TAM MATTINATA LISA
 GILBERT KATHERINE M & WHITE STEPHEN D
 REIF RAFAEL L
 SCANNELL FRANCIS J
 MORIARTY JOHN P
 MBTA

131 MORRISON AVE	2	SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
135 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
148 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
28 CLIFTON ST		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
32 CLIFTON ST		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
0 CLIFTON ST		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
146 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
144 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
142 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
140 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
138 MORRISON AVE	M	SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
136 MORRISON AVE	136	SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
138 MORRISON AVE	138	SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
132 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
130 MORRISON AVE		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
27 NEWBERNE ST		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144
0 WEST ST		SOMERVILLE, MA	02144



Appendix C – Meeting Presentation



EXISTING CEILING HEIGHT

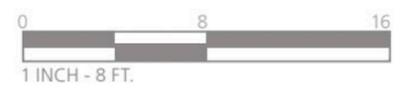
EXISTING SECOND STORY

EXISTING FIRST STORY

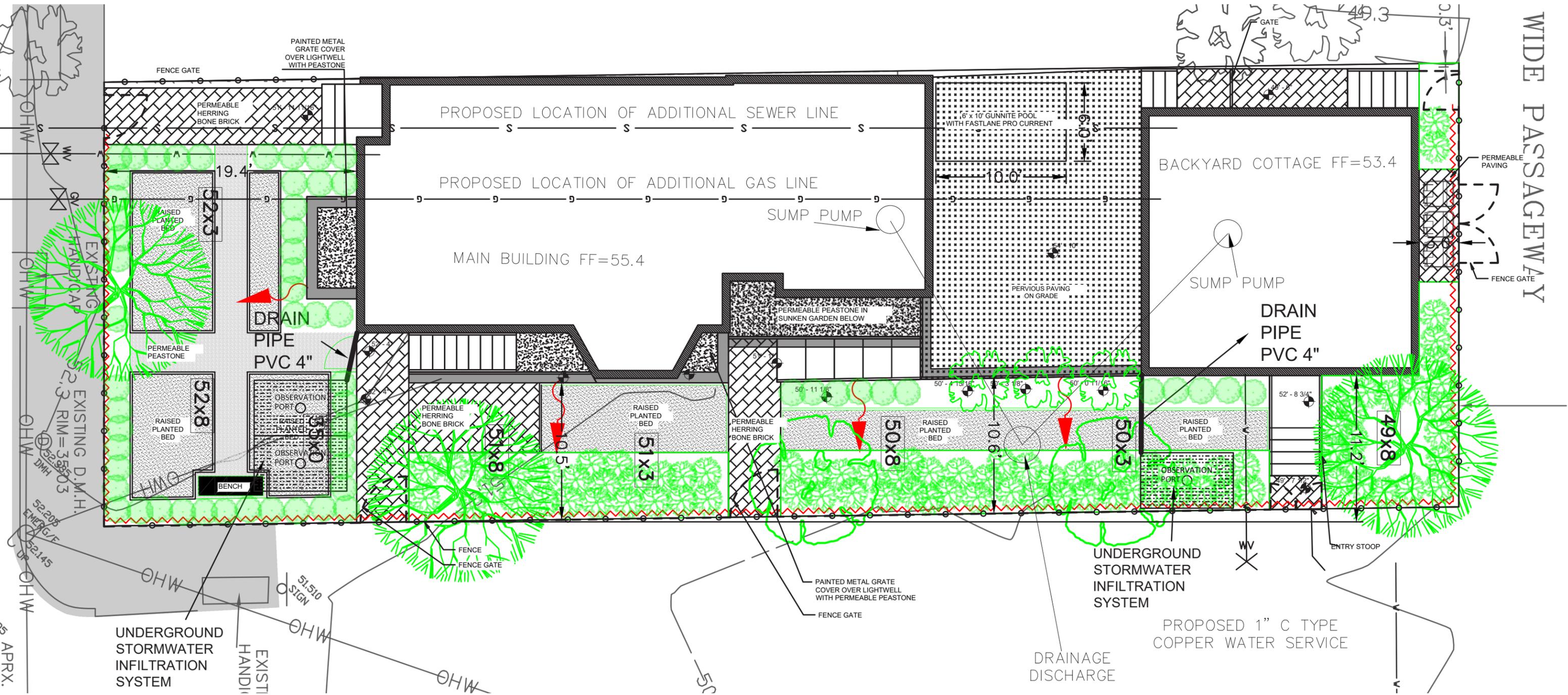
EXISTING BASEMENT

COTTAGE HALF STORY

COTTAGE FIRST STORY







WIDE PASSAGEWAY

BACKYARD COTTAGE FF=53.4

MAIN BUILDING FF=55.4

SUMP PUMP
DRAIN PIPE PVC 4"

PROPOSED 1" C TYPE COPPER WATER SERVICE

DRAINAGE DISCHARGE

UNDERGROUND STORMWATER INFILTRATION SYSTEM

PAINTED METAL GRATE COVER OVER LIGHTWELL WITH PERMEABLE PEASTONE

FENCE GATE

EXISTI HANDLI

UNDERGROUND STORMWATER INFILTRATION SYSTEM

PROPOSED LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL SEWER LINE

PROPOSED LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL GAS LINE

SUMP PUMP

DRAIN PIPE PVC 4"

OBSERVATION PORT

BENCH

52'-8 3/4"

49x8

50x5

50x8

51x3

51x8

52x8

52x3

19.4'

6.0'

10.0'

49.3

0.3'

EXISTING D.M.H.
RIM = 355.03

52.205
ENERG./F

52.145

51.510
SIGN

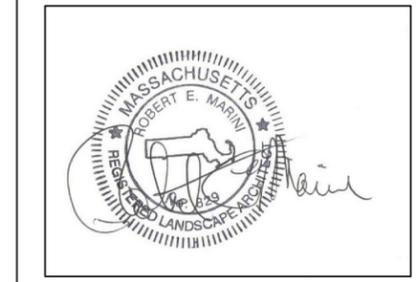
APPR.

OHW

LANDSCAPE PLAN
148 MORRISON AVE,
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
PARCEL ID:24_L_1

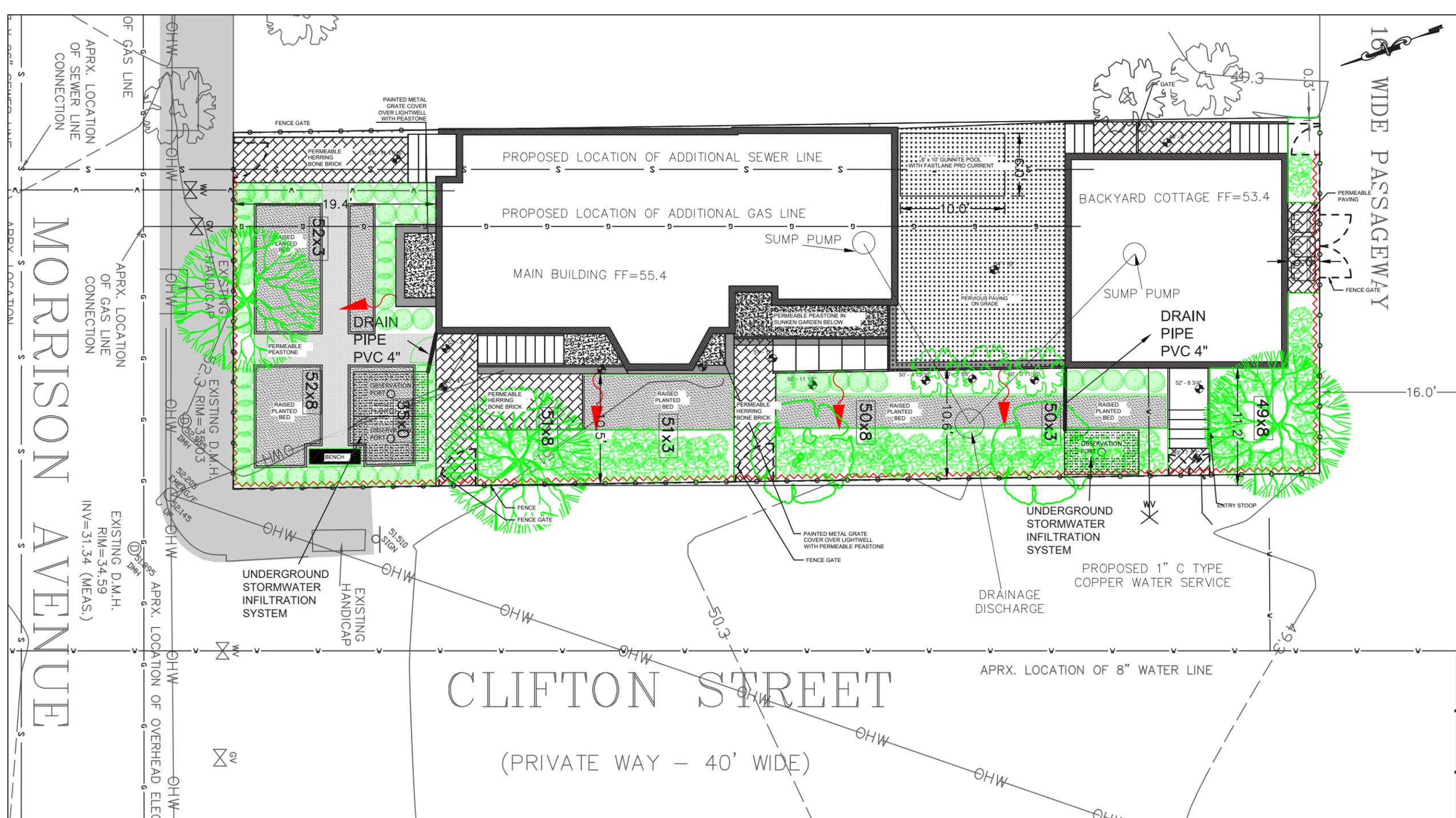
DRAWN BY:
CHECKED BY:
DRAWING NO.:
DATE: 07/29/2025

SEAL:



LEGEND

- BOUND
- IRON PIN/PIPE
- TREE
- SIGN
- SEWER MANHOLE
- DRAIN MANHOLE
- CATCH BASIN
- WATER VALVE
- HYDRANT
- GAS VALVE
- UTILITY POLE
- MANHOLE
- LANDSCAPED AREA 1127.93 SF
- SEWER LINE
- DRAIN LINE
- WATER LINE
- GAS LINE
- OVERHEAD WIRES
- EXISTING CONTOUR LINES
- PROPERTY LINE
- PROPOSED BUILT AREA 1279.77SF
- NEW FENCE WITH GATES 191.7'
- PROPOSED SPOT ELEVATION 33x0
- PERMEABLE WALKWAYS
- PATIO (PERVIOUS 379.14SF)
- SUNKEN GARDENS
- RETAINING WALLS
- SILT SOCK



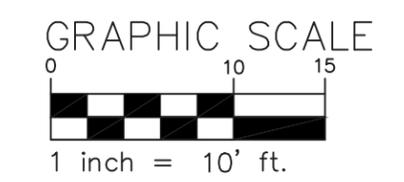
SYMBOL	SPECIES	QUANT.	SIZE
	<i>Acer saccharum</i> Maple Tree	3	60'-75' HT
	<i>Alnus incana subsp. rugosa</i> Speckled alder	2	10'-20' HT
	<i>Buxus spp.</i> Boxwood	60	2'-6' HT
	MIX OF: <i>Kalmia angustifolia</i> Sheep Laurel and <i>Viburnum dentatum</i> Arrowwood Viburnum	60	1.5'-3' 6'-10' HT
	<i>Malus domestica(espalier trained)</i> Espalier Apple Tree	3	6'-10' HT

SITE COVERAGE TABLE (PER SOMERVILLE ENGINEERING SITE PERMIT RULES & REGS)

Area Type	Existing Area (SF)	Lot Coverage (%)	Proposed Area (SF)	Lot Coverage (%)
Total Lot Area	3,535.63	—	3,535.63	—
Roof (Building Footprint)	1,827.31	51.68%	1,279.77	36.21%
Pavement & Impervious Surfaces	617.50	17.47%	204.23	5.78%
Pervious Pavement & Surfaces*	0	0%	804.81 x 0.33 = 265.59	7.51%
Landscaped Areas**	1,089.96	30.83%	1,127.93	31.90%
Total Lot Coverage	—	69.15%	—	49.50%

* Pervious pavement & surfaces are included at 33% of their actual area toward lot coverage.
** Landscaped areas are listed for transparency but are exempt from lot coverage per Site Permit Regulations §5.

NOTE: Table format and calculations comply with the Somerville Engineering Site Permit Rules & Regulations (Rev. March 2023). This table must appear on the submitted site plan for Engineering review and permitting.



NOTES:

- EXISTING IMPERVIOUS ARREST AREA ABOUT TO PROPOSED IMPERVIOUS SURFACES
- DETAILS ARE PROVIDED ON A SEPARATE SHEET
- The original topographic data, including CAD drawings and elevation information, was provided by Spruhan Engineering, P.C., based on a survey conducted within the City of Somerville. In accordance with Spruhan Engineering's terms of use, the CAD documents were used solely for informational and internal project purposes. All existing conditions were verified in the field where applicable.
- The provided elevation data appeared to be based on an assumed datum or a local benchmark not aligned with the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88). To align with NAVD88, a vertical adjustment of +17.3 feet was applied to the "x-points" elevations from the original CAD files. This conversion factor was determined based on local geodetic information and/or field verification.

Appendix D – East Elevation

