

Raleigh Historic Development Commission  
Certificate of Appropriateness Application

Construction of a new home at **516 Euclid Street**

Submitted by Louis Cherry and Marsha Gordon  
August 23, 2013



## Project Description

The RHDC Guidelines begin, in section 1.1, with an acknowledgment “that change is an important element in the city’s evolution, indicating a healthy, vital neighborhood and reflecting the pride of residents in their community.” Section 4.3 further states that, “The success of new construction within a historic district does not depend on direct duplication of existing building forms, features, materials, and details. Rather, it relies on understanding what the distinctive architectural character of the district is. Infill buildings must be compatible with that character. Contemporary design generated from such understanding can enrich the architectural continuity of a historic district.”

To that end, we propose building a modern single family home that embraces the eclecticism and historic character of Oakwood, and is compatible with the architectural diversity and neighborly focus of the community, in which we currently live as renters (at 421 N. Bloodworth St.).

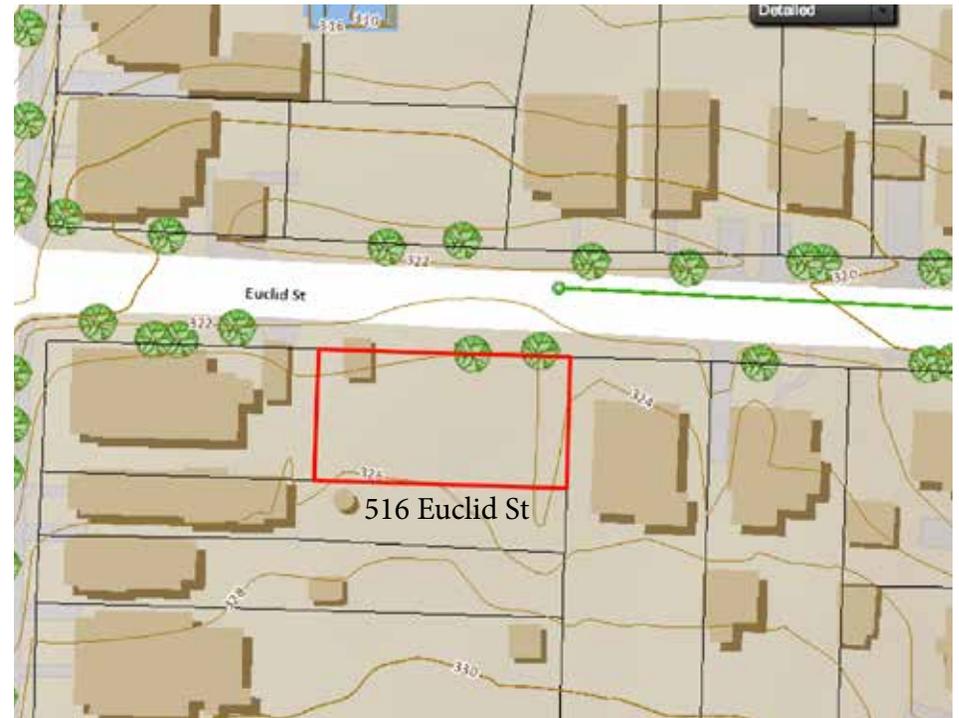
The home we propose building is a single family home at 516 Euclid Street. The main part of the house will be two stories (24’ to the ridge) and yield 2,100 square feet of heated space. It will be connected by generous front and screened-in porches to a small two story (20’ to the ridge) building that will house a ground floor garage (480 square feet) and a second story conditioned guest room/studio space (480 square feet). Total conditioned space, then, will be 2,580 when you combine the main structure and the attached guest room/studio.

The overall height of the house and garage is compatible with the surrounding structures. The height of 530 N East St is 25’ to the ridge, the height of 515 Euclid St is 26’ to the ridge, and 523 Euclid St is 22’ to the ridge. The two adjacent structures on East St, 528 N East St and 526 N East St are equal or greater than the proposed height of 516 Euclid St.

The lot is unusual in dimension and location in the context of historic Oakwood. Where Oakwood lots tend to be deep and narrow, this lot is wide (ca. 100 feet) and shallow (ca. 50 feet). The lot itself is quite small (.12 acres), but similar to the lot directly across the street at 515 Euclid.

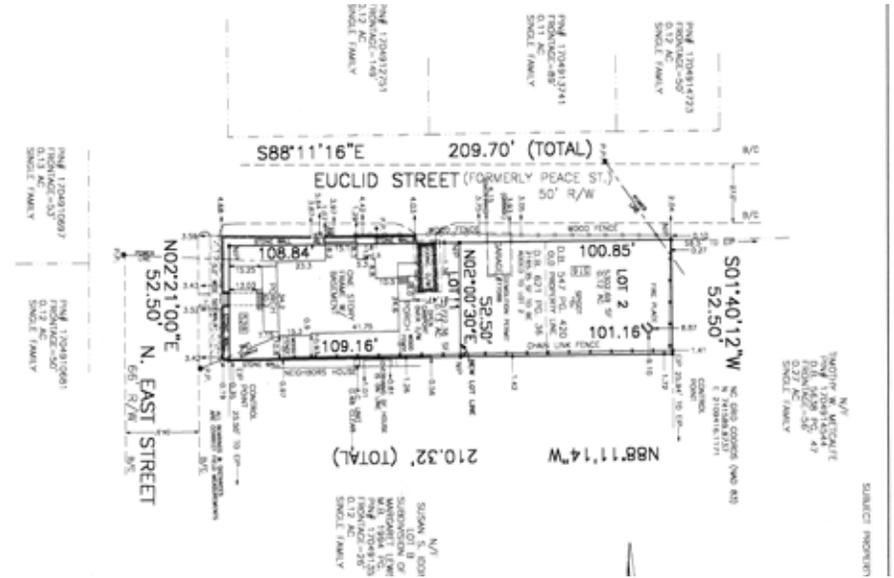
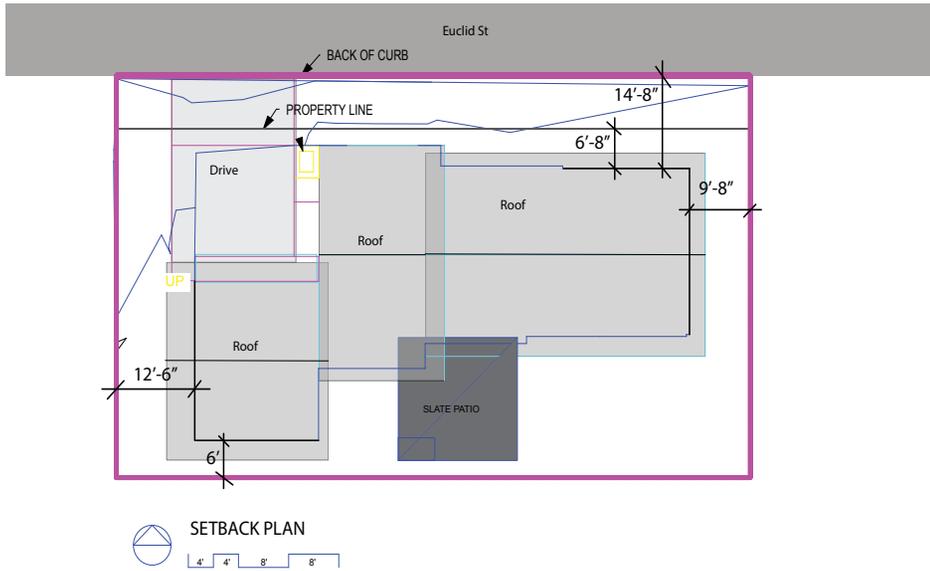


View of lot from Euclid St



Map of 516 Euclid St

Euclid is a one block long street bordered by N. East and Elm Streets. It is a very narrow street (27 feet from curb to curb) without sidewalks, and it gets next to no thru traffic. Euclid is not one of the grand avenues of Oakwood, and the houses that are within a block or two of it are very eclectic in terms of their size and style—ranging from small one story homes to large two and two-and-a-half story homes, built in the early twentieth century through the twenty-first century. There are only eight houses that bear a Euclid Street address, built primarily in the 1922-1935 period; the most recently built home is directly opposite our lot and was constructed in 2008 (515 Euclid).



View along Euclid St facing north



View along Euclid St facing south



515 Euclid St., then, is the most directly comparable home, since it was recently built on a similar lot. Its orientation, massing and lot coverage is compatible with what we propose. That home is on a .11-acre lot (ours is .12) with a total heated square footage of 2439 (according to Wake County Real Estate tax records). From the curb of 515 Euclid, it is 10 feet to the front steps and 13 feet to the front of the porch.

In response to the unusual lot geometry, our solution is to build with the long face of the home fronting on Euclid St, which was the same strategy used at 515 Euclid St. The main portion of the house is setback 14'8" from back of curb (6.5' from the property line), and parallel to Euclid St. Side setbacks are 12.5' on the west and 10'2" on the east. The garage is set back 6' on the rear. We use the length of the site to create open space for a generous front porch and screened porch between the main house and the garage.



515 Euclid Street , immediately across the street. 12 Feet from curb to front of porch; 10 feet from curb to steps. 2439 heated s.f., with garage facing street.



View of 516 Euclid from East St



Front view of 516 Euclid St

The garage is located as far to the back of the lot as possible, minimizing its mass and impact on the neighbors. The proposed garage and guest suite at 516 Euclid Street are compatible with the history and evolution of the Oakwood community. It is appropriately deferential to the main house and the street by being set back to the rear of the lot and its lower height and simpler version of the architectural detailing of the main house. The open stair access to the guest quarters affords private access and, by being exterior to the main form of the building, lessens the mass of the accessory structure. The stair is designed as an open air element with a crisp modern accent to the structure. The house maintains the “intimate rhythm” of Euclid St. while adding appropriately to the density and diversity of scales and infilling a blank spot on the street.

A driveway will be created with a new curb cut on Euclid as shown in the drawings. A concrete driveway wide enough for two cars will lead to the garage. Because we are striving for universal design and access for the first floor of the house, we include the concrete driveway not only for wheelchair access but also for those who cannot easily walk up a grade from the street. The driveway will connect to a wheelchair friendly ramp and onto the front porch, with easy access to the grade-level door. Additional examples of concrete drives are provided at the end of this document.

The side-facing orientation of the front door (for which there is a precedent on Latham St. in the attached photographic documentation) is a direct response to the site geometry. The desire for a generous entry porch cannot be accommodated on the front of the house with the tight setback from Euclid which is a result of the very wide and shallow lot shape. The porch faces Euclid St, signaling entry, with the door positioned to the side. This orientation also is critical to maintaining universal access to the structure.



Across the street (515 Euclid is the light green house; 530 N. East Street is yellow) is a two-car garage fronting on Euclid with a large curb cut in.



408 Lane St. One car garage and concrete driveway behind house



608 Oakwood—recently added two car garage plus concrete and brick parking pad, which fronts on Linden.



414 N. Bloodworth Street—two car garage and concrete drive adjacent to house, facing Bloodworth St.



Side facing entrance on Latham St



Side facing door off front porch



House at Polk & (425) N. Bloodworth: two car garage with concrete driveway facing Polk St., Guest room over garage.

## Architectural Philosophy

The key to building a successful new home in Oakwood, as stated in the RHDC Design Guidelines, is to maintain and develop the “spirit and character” of historic Oakwood. The design guidelines are clear that contemporary new homes should not imitate the style and details of the contributing structures within the historic periods but should find ways to create and further the character of the neighborhood through the language of contemporary design.

Section 4.3 of the guidelines states that “the introduction of a compatible but contemporary new construction project can add depth and contribute interest to the district,” and this is precisely the goal for 516 Euclid St. “The success of new construction within a historic district . . . relies on understanding what the distinctive architectural character of the district is.” There are several key factors that must be successfully accomplished in the new home design in order to create a compatible new house, based on the architectural character of Oakwood—characterized primarily by the neighborhood’s diversity, density, and the relationship between houses and the street. Following are some of the themes that make Oakwood the place that it is and create that special character:

**Diversity:** Oakwood, more than most historic neighborhoods, is made up of many scales, styles, time periods, colors, and materials. This diversity allows a new home to be smaller or larger within limits and still fit nicely into the community. Oakwood boasts an eclectic mix of homes, and new construction needs good quality design first and foremost. The architectural history of the neighborhood has always accommodated a range of stylistic preferences, colors and materials.

For example, at right are examples of some of the architectural diversity of Oakwood homes built between 1872 and 1946, all of which were “new,” “original,” and “modern” at the time they were constructed. The 516 Euclid proposal will contribute positively to the range of Oakwood structures.

**Density:** The tight side yards and close front setbacks help to create the urban density that gives Oakwood its feel of community. The density, in conjunction with the other characteristics, allows and encourages neighborly relationships between buildings and their occupants. The 516 Euclid Street house participates



415 Lane St. Built 1915. Neoclassical home



511 E. Jones St. Heck-Wynne house, built 1872.



534 E Jones St., 1915



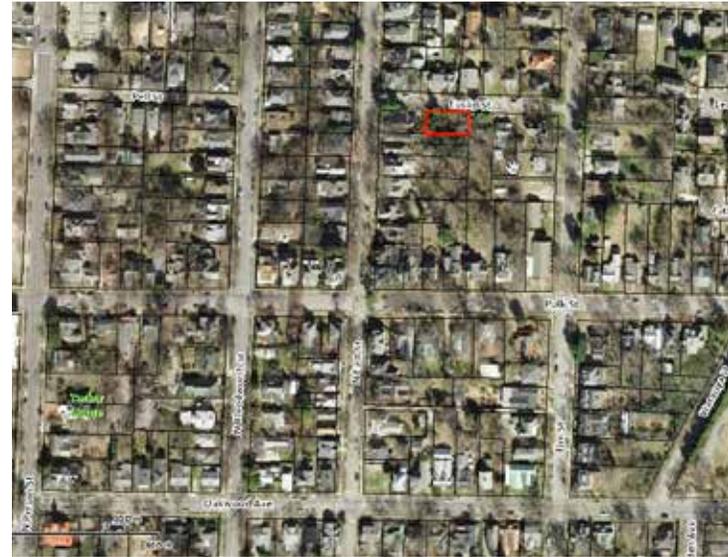
603 N. Boundary St. Built 1927



523 Lane St. Craftsman style home, 1946

in this tradition with its tiny lot and appropriately scaled home. The key to successful dense residential environments is the openness to the street and the way that each home contributes to the shared public space. The rhythm of the drives, porches and walkways give life to the dense residential neighborhood.

***Relationship to the Street:*** Similar to the issue of density is the specific character of the streetscapes in Oakwood. The setback from the street creates an outdoor space at the street edge that shapes a public realm. Having active porches that open onto this public realm starts to create a vital community where people interact in the normal course of their day. Unlike most streets in Oakwood, Euclid Street has no sidewalks. Because it is a one-block street there is no real through traffic and the entire street functions as a public place for cars and pedestrians alike. The 516 Euclid Street design has a well-defined street edge that contributes to the shaping of the public life of Euclid Street. The front porch welcomes visitors to the home and affords an outdoor living room onto the street.



The dense grain of Oakwood neighborhood



An Oakwood example of the street as public space



View down Euclid St, 516 lot is on the right side

**Windows and Doors:** The design of the windows and doors of a building, especially a residence, are key elements in establishing the character and personality of the house. The design of windows is also one of the most important pieces in the style of a building and an indicator of its time frame in history. Thus Victorian Era windows are more vertical than the classical proportions of Greek Revival style. The Victorian house may have fanciful window shapes with bay windows, turrets and roundels that contrast markedly with the fan windows and disciplined symmetry of a Neoclassical design. The modern era has seen the advent of larger panes of glass (now available through technological advances), and a variety of shapes and proportions that speak the language of modern architectural design. The 516 Euclid St design includes windows that relate to the historic rhythms with groupings of vertically proportioned windows. These are arranged with the clearly modern window elements of the glass corner stair element and some of the horizontal window elements. The result is a design that is modern and compatible with the diverse styles of Oakwood.

**Roof Shape:** Like windows, the shapes of roofs are diverse in Oakwood homes. The pitch, complexity and height of the roof forms vary with the architectural style and historical era. The simple low slope forms of the Federal style contrast with the wild fantasies of Victorian roofs. The range varies from sober, simple gables to the dramatic flights of fancy. The Euclid Street design proposes simple low slope gable forms with deep overhangs, minimizing overall building height. These roofs suggest mid-century modern homes (now historic in their way) as well as Craftsman style homes of the early 20th century. Furthermore, the low sloped roof and three foot overhangs have important shading functions in the sustainable design strategies. The Euclid St design is a bridging design, referring to these proto-modern movements of the early 20th century as historical precedents, while creating a house that speaks clearly about the place for a modern, environmentally sustainable home in historic Oakwood.



530 Elm St has casements and corner windows



226 Elm St has modern casement windows



601 Leonidas has a variety of modern window types

## ***Green and Universal Design***

According to section 4.3 of the guidelines, “the incorporation of contemporary sustainability principles in new construction and related landscaping is encouraged within the historic districts.” The design for 516 Euclid St will have a high standard for environmental sustainability. Some of the key features will include:

- Solar photovoltaic panels on the south side (not the street side) of the roof
- Geothermal heat pumps for heating and cooling
- Water conserving plumbing fixtures
- Roof water catchment for irrigation
- Very high levels of insulation with conditioned crawl space and attic
- Windows facing north and south with minimum east and west glass

The guidelines for Accessibility (3.11) in Oakwood include a photograph caption--“A universal design residence in the Oakwood district provides access to the front porch both by steps and by ramp”—for a home that appends said ramp in a very visible fashion. The design of the ramp at 516 Euclid with the front porch and a planter featuring a Japanese maple, integrates the practicalities of universal access with the aesthetics of the larger design of the home.

## ***Materials Description***

The house will be constructed over a crawl space and partial basement. The foundation walls will be parged concrete block. Foundation and basement structural walls will be constructed of cast in place concrete.

***Natural Wood siding.*** We propose to use 8” horizontal, stained cypress siding for the primary exterior wall material. While there are not other prominent examples of unpainted wood siding in Oakwood (see photograph of the natural wood used in the addition to the back of the home at 208 Linden Ave., which is visible from the street), the material is in the spirit and character of Oakwood with honesty of material expression, horizontal wood siding and the natural feel of wood that is similar to the common use of natural stone in Oakwood.



208 Linden St



Accessible entrance at 516 Euclid St



208 Linden St has a new addition that employs natural wood siding.

**Cement reinforced panels** will provide accents and counterpoint to the wood siding. The areas that will be defined with smooth painted panels help to create architectural composition for the facades and to organize window groups. The panels will be applied flush without battens or trim.

**Standing seam metal roof.** Metal and slate are the most common roof materials for the historic period of significance for Oakwood and continue to be great choices for high quality contemporary construction. The color will be a light gray. Gutters will be a matching color half round gutter with round downspouts.

**Aluminum-clad wood windows.** The windows that we propose are a combination of fixed panels, casement and awning windows. The window construction is wood with off white painted aluminum cladding. Most of the windows are vertically proportioned with accents of horizontal windows. The groups of windows are framed with dark gray panels of painted cement boards. Casement windows have been utilized prominently on the front of the homes at 226 Elm St. and 530 Elm St. (see earlier images for examples). The simple window openings are characteristic of many of the homes of Oakwood from all eras of construction.

The garage door is a custom wood pair of hinged out swinging doors with window panels and wood panels to complement the building façade proportions.

**Slate tile** is used on the front porch floor, walls and columns. The slate is similar in color to the painted panels and similar in texture to the natural wood siding. Slate is commonly used as a flooring and paving material. We are extending the material's use to vertical surfaces of the porch walls and the column facing. This use is comparable to the commonplace use of stone facing in Oakwood.



426 N Person street is an example of stone wall construction

### Trees & Landscaping

Tree removal will be required prior to starting construction. We propose removing 9 small (but larger than 8" trunks or clusters) trees (largely volunteer trees, with the exception of a redbud) that remain on the main part of the lot, and four additional trees either on or just on the other side of the back fence to the property (our property extends one foot on the other side of this fence).

The Bradford pear tree near the curb on the street will be retained.

We also propose removing three larger trees from the property:

1) the large but not very robust Walnut tree near the front of the lot, which is in the way of the right side of our driveway. Our plan is to mill the wood from this tree and use it for built-ins for the home.

in the drip zone by the construction of the drive and house. Additionally the scale of the tree as it matures would impinge on the house requiring undesirable pruning for the tree and lack of sunlight for the front of the house.

3) the large Chinese Elm tree on the front left corner of the lot, which our certified arborist characterized as having a "bad lean." This tree is in the way of the main left side of the house and needs to be removed. The remaining large trees on the left side of the lot would have minor trimming work to remove the limbs that would hang over the main house.

Please see the arborist report attached to this document for more on tree removal.

Because the yard for this home will be very small, we propose planting two long-lived hardwood trees—dogwoods—to replace what we have taken down ["Long-lived hardwoods are excellent replacement choices for street canopies," according to the guidelines, section 2.3]. One specimen ginkgo tree, which will reach a mature height of around 60' will be added to the northwest corner of the site.

PROJECT #18

1-800-225-0260 or www.nets.com

**BRAFFORD TREE SERVICE, INC.**  
2505 Kearney Rd  
WAKE FOREST, NC 27587

(919) 556-3512

TO Louis Cheryl Marcha Gordon  
421 N. Bloodworth St.  
Raleigh, NC 27604

**JOB ESTIMATE**

919-971-2299 8/1/13

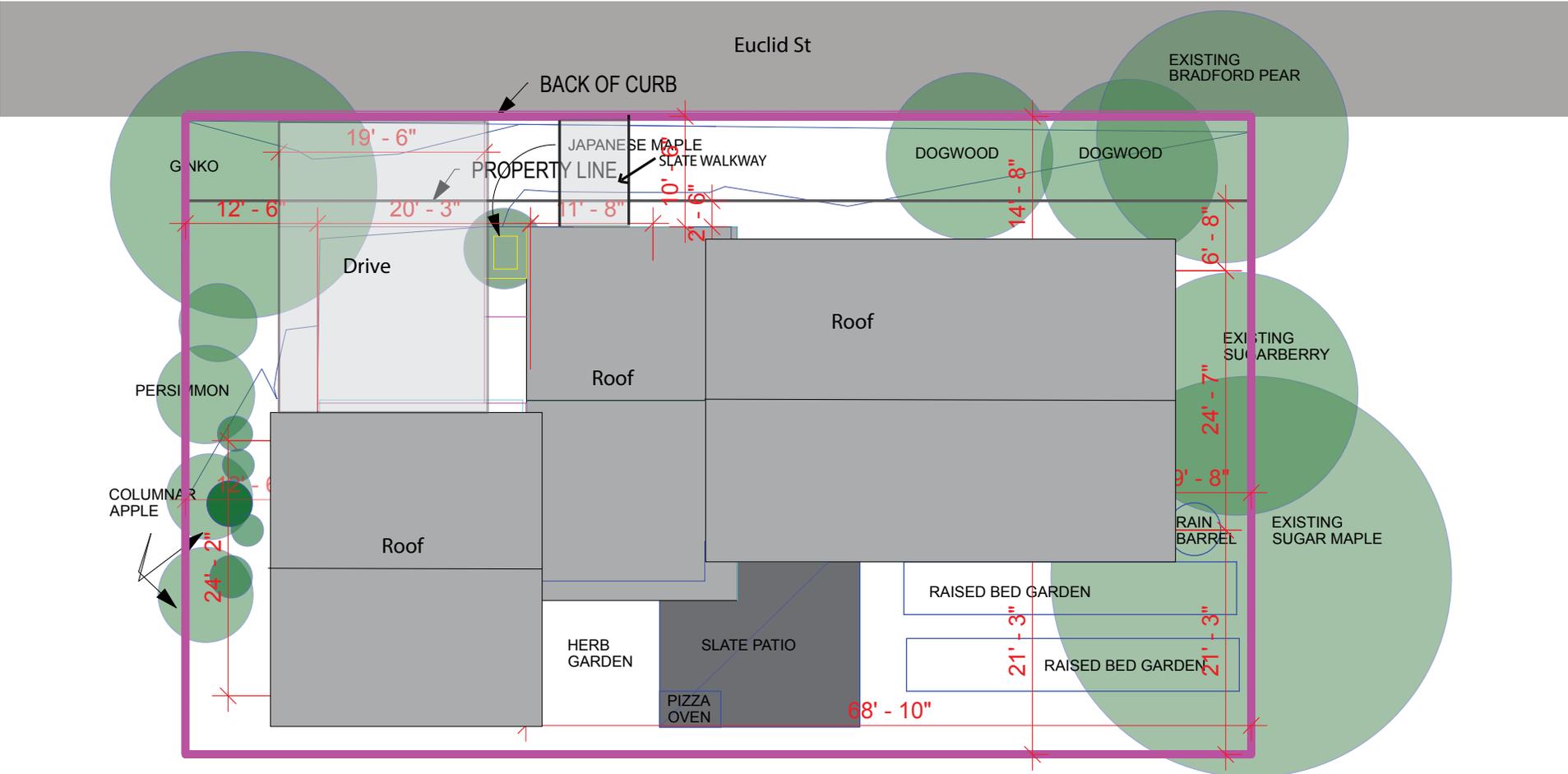
JOB DESCRIPTION:

> For taking down by Chinese Elm tree with bad lean, that will be directly over corner of house, also take down by walnut tree that isn't very healthy, also take down triple forked magnolia that is directly in path of driveway, Magnolia isn't very big.  
Trim sugar cherry + sugar maple of limbs hanging over

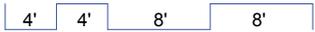
ESTIMATED JOB COST

ESTIMATED BY Doug Brafford

THIS ESTIMATE IS FOR COMPLETING THE JOB AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. IT IS BASED ON OUR EVALUATION AND DOES NOT INCLUDE MATERIAL, PRICE INCREASES OR ADDITIONAL LABOR AND MATERIALS WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED SHOULD UNFORESEEN PROBLEMS OR ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS ARISE AFTER THE WORK HAS STARTED.



**SITE PLAN**





Front view from Euclid St



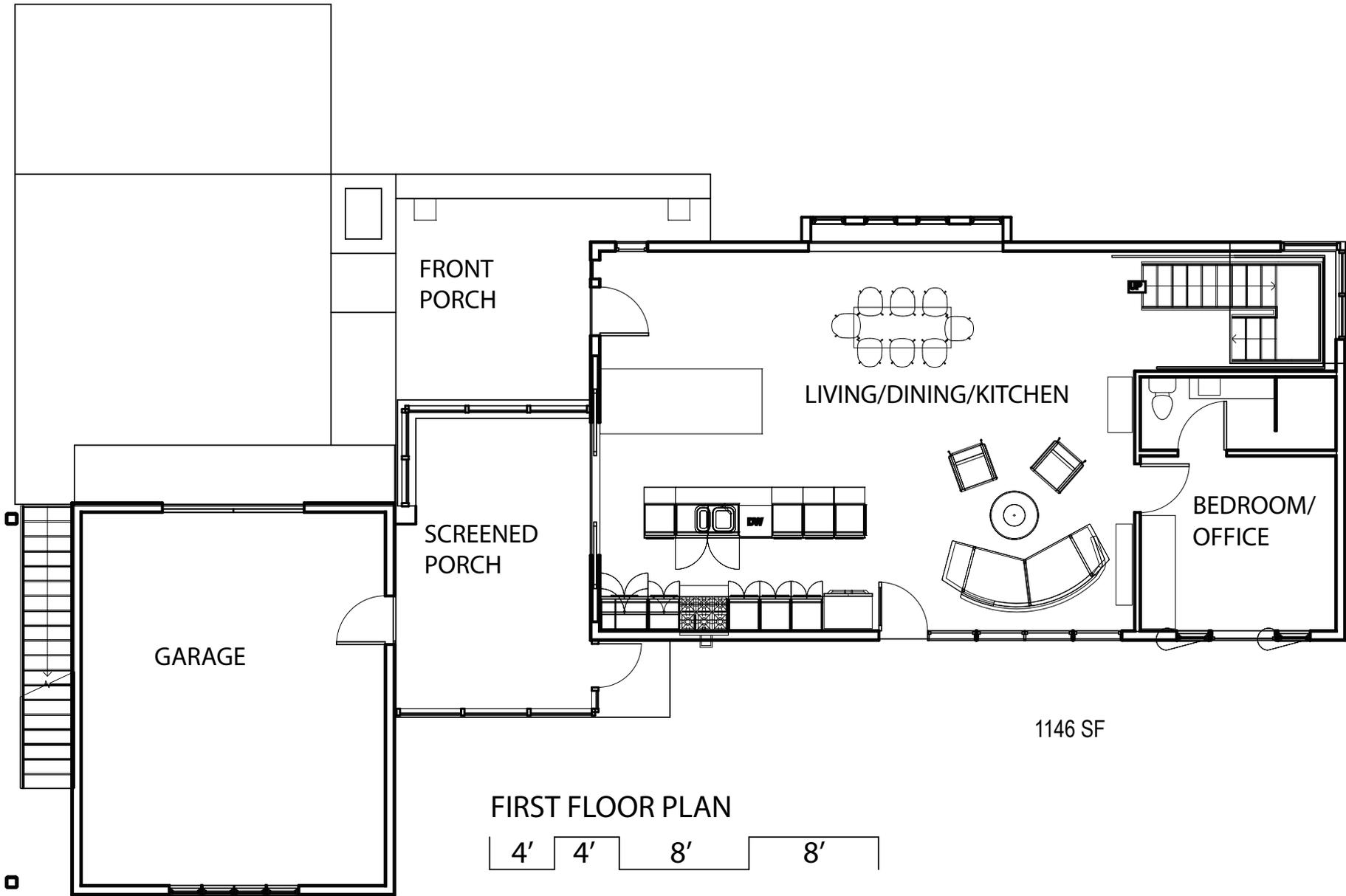
View from rear across Euclid St

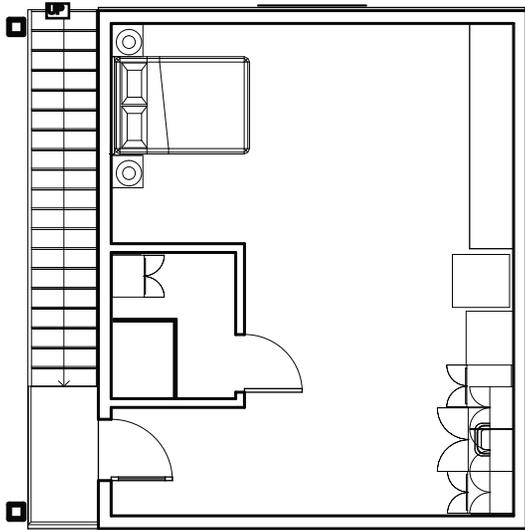


Frontal view from Euclid St

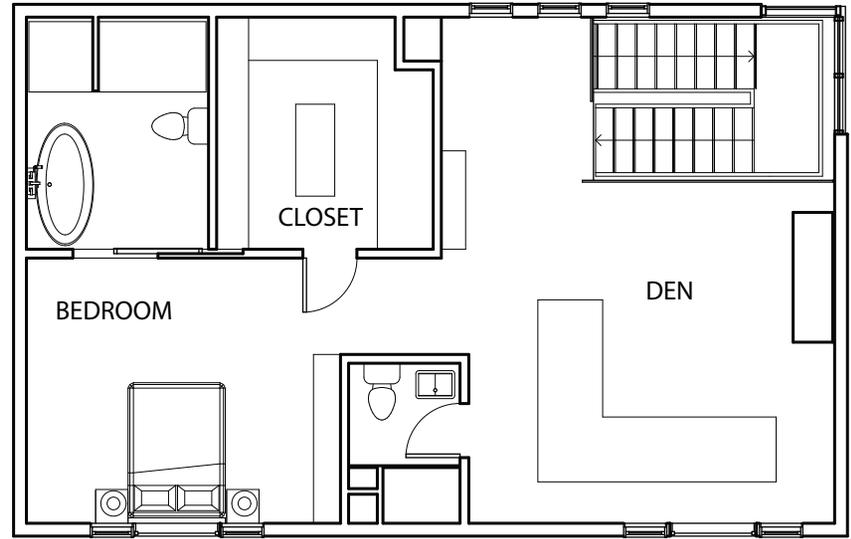


View of rear





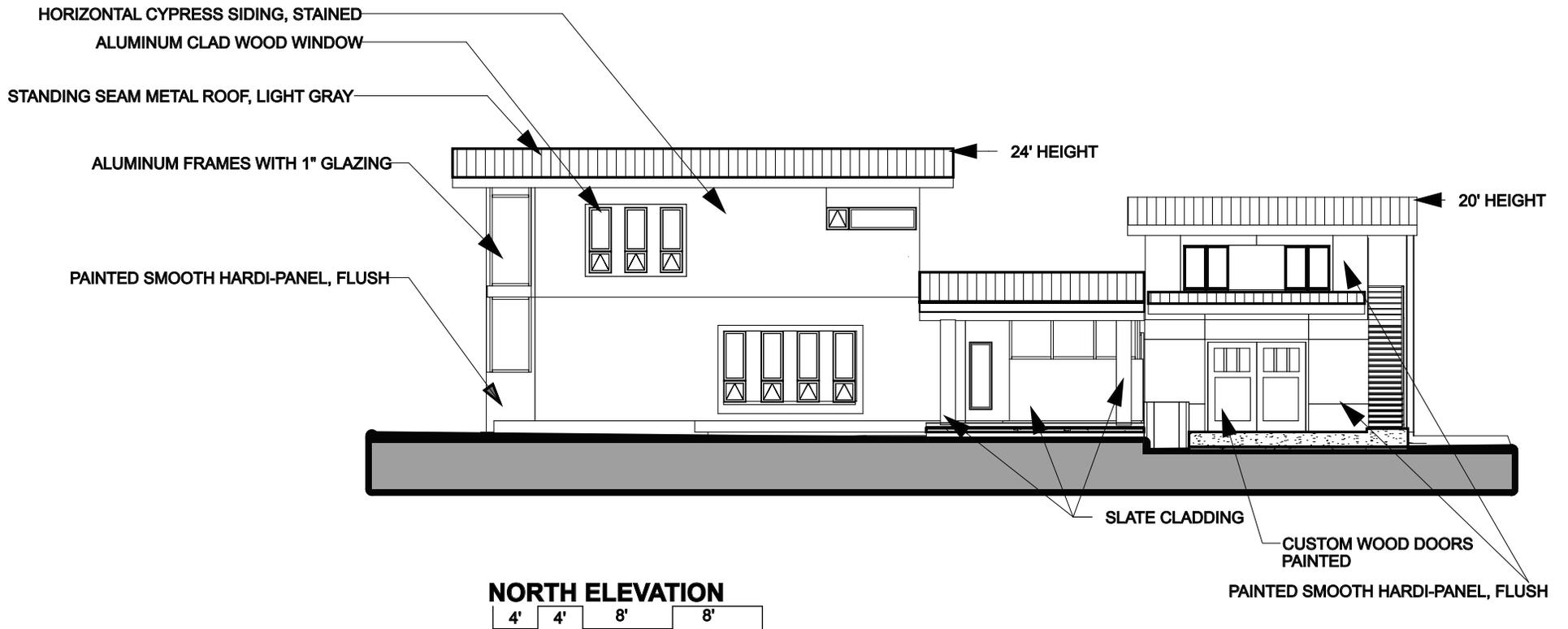
472 SF

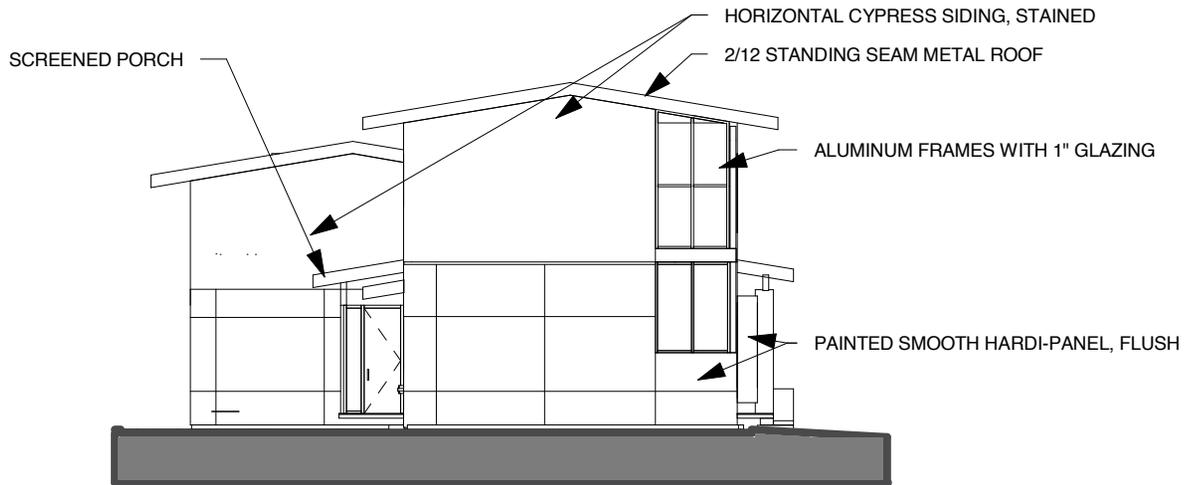


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

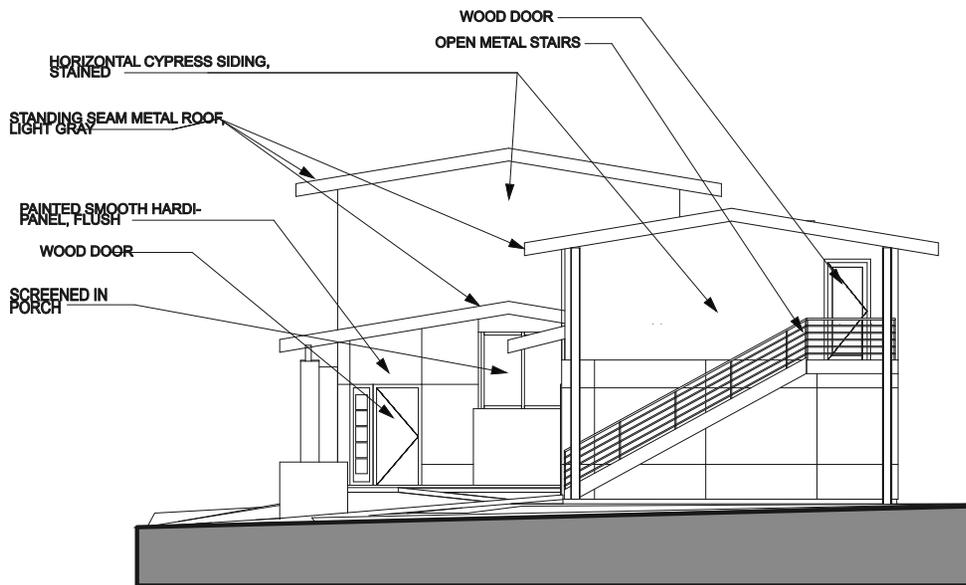
942 SF



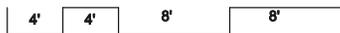


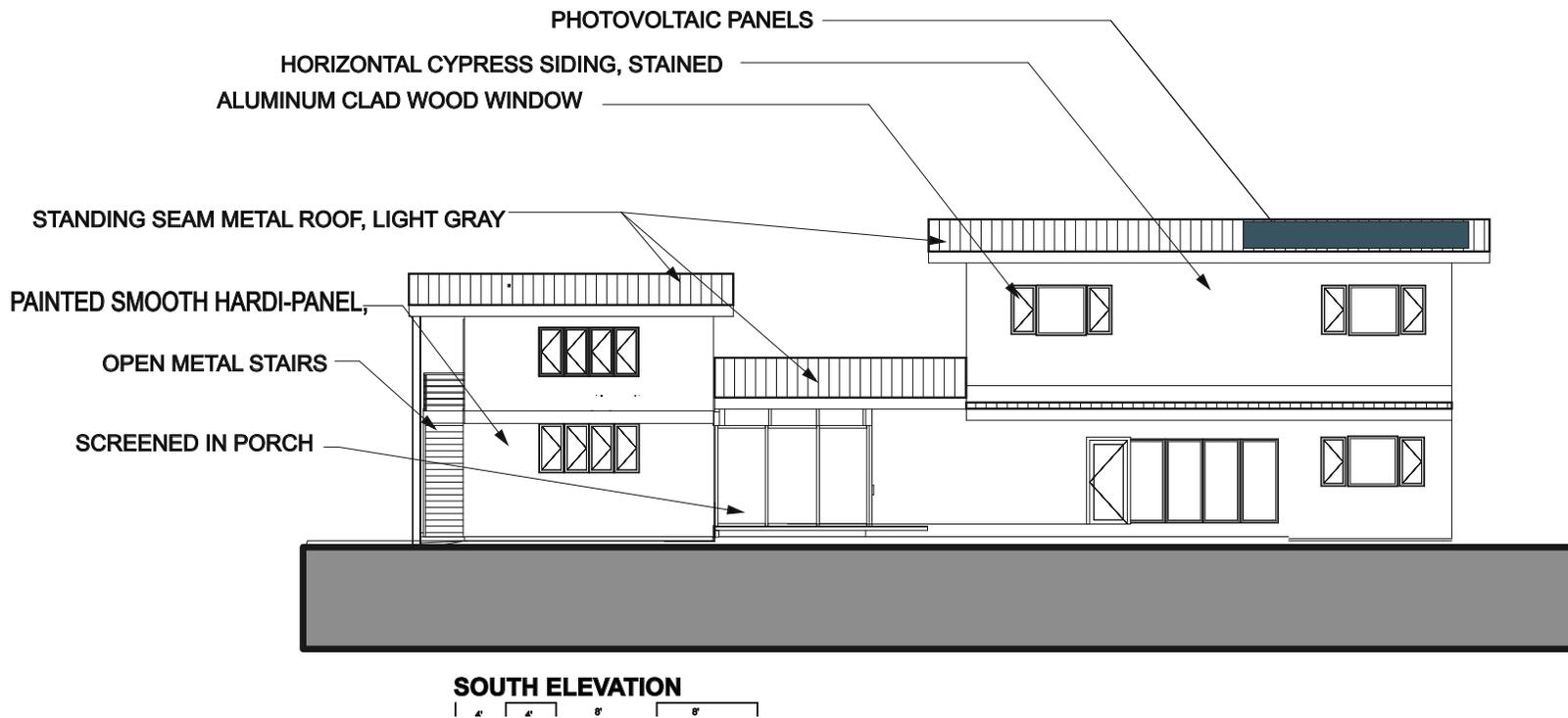


**EAST ELEVATION**



**WEST ELEVATION**





## ***APPENDIX: Concrete Drives/Parking***

There are numerous examples of concrete drives in Oakwood. The examples listed below represent a sampling of instances but there are many more throughout Oakwood. In the new homes of Leonidas and Latham almost every home includes a solid concrete drive. At 516 Euclid St. we are proposing a concrete drive for the purposes of universal accessibility. It is our belief that the irregularity of surfaces in parking strips would limit the accessibility to the front door.



400 Person St



410 East St



418 Person



601 Latham



408 Oakwood Ave



513 Watauga



509 Watagua



327 Oakwood



530 Bloodworth



604 Leonidas



600 Latham



612 Polk



319 Polk



605 Leonidas



612 Polk



609 Leonidas



608 Boundary



533 Watauga



605 Latham



617 Polk



525 Watauga



521 Watauga