

D/DRC Case

S/S Longleaf Road

Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn Architectural Conservation District

TMS: 13902-08-12

DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION
DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT
HISTORIC AGENDA
EVALUATION SHEET
Case # 7

ADDRESS: S/S Longleaf Rd., 3000 block

APPLICANT: Joe Hawk, agent

TAX MAP REFERENCE: 13902-08-12, west lot

USE OF PROPERTY: Residential

REVIEW DISTRICT: Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn Architectural Conservation District

NATURE OF REQUEST: Request Certificate of Design Approval for new construction of single-family house

FINDINGS/COMMENTS:

This is one of two, new, adjacent single-family homes proposed by the applicant on the south side of Longleaf Drive. The district boundary stops at these vacant lots and does not include the houses across the street or the houses to the east, which are all duplexes; it does include the vacant lots to the west, houses further west across Shirley Street, and the 1919 Prairie-style Powell House to the south. These lots were originally part of the Powell estate but were subdivided after the creation of the historic district. This subdivision created four vacant lots on the southeast corner of Shirley Street and Longleaf Drive, with two facing each street.

The applicant is part of New Start Homes, LLC, a company that focuses on new home communities located in Sumter, West Columbia and Chapin, according to their website. They have approximately a dozen floor plans that they offer in their new home communities and are presenting one of these plans for consideration today, called the "Julian." They plan to flip the plan of the house they submitted, but did not provide accurate elevations reflecting their project, so staff has flipped most of the submitted plans so that an accurate version is being evaluated. The plans submitted do not reflect the correct foundation heights.

Staff spent time with the applicant going through each guideline for new construction in an attempt to bring the building closer in line with the requirements set forth, and recommended a number of changes. The client made a few changes to the plans, including moving the front garage doors to the side elevations, and flipping the floor plan so that the garages of the two new homes would face inward toward each other instead of out to the street.

This area of the district has a few challenges. There is very little historic context in the immediate vicinity; there is none on this particular block. Staff looked at the closest historic two-story buildings around the corner in the 1400 block of Shirley Street for immediate context, and other more typical two-story American Four Square homes that are common in the district. These

project lots slope from south to north, or down towards the street, and west to east, creating some challenging terrain. From the highest point (southwest corner) to the northeast corner, the lowest point along the street, there is approximately a 12-foot drop. The applicant plans to grade the lot to achieve as flat an area as possible for the house, but has not provided a grading plan to show how this will be accomplished. The lot is approximately 63-feet wide and 105 feet deep.

Staff initially made recommendations throughout this evaluation to attempt to bring the project closer in line with the guidelines, but the volume of recommendations lent itself to almost re-designing the building, which is not within staff's purview. Therefore the project is evaluated on the information presented.

PERTINENT SECTIONS FROM GUIDELINES

Section 5: New Construction

PRINCIPLES

Within the Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn district, there are numerous vacant lots and noncontributing structures. The construction of new or replacement structures on these lots will greatly affect the district by either reinforcing or undermining existing historic patterns. New construction should be consistent with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, proportion and rhythm of openings, setbacks, orientation and spacing. However, new buildings need not imitate past architectural styles to be successful infill; they may reflect the era of their own construction while using significant themes, such as height, materials, roof form, massing, set-back, and the rhythm of openings to insure that a new building blends with its context. It is hoped that the new construction of today will be contemporary and contextual so that it will be worthy of the affection and designation of future residents.

1. Height: The characteristic height in Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn is 1 to 2 stories. Construct new buildings to a height that is compatible with the height of surrounding historic buildings. New construction shall not vary greatly in height from older buildings in the vicinity.

The height of the building is two stories, which is found in the district, however staff has not been provided measurements on the total height of the building. The site plan provided by the applicant does not indicate where the grading will occur and how it will affect the perceived height of the house, whether it will diminish or enhance it, so it is somewhat difficult to discern the actual height. The plans do not give an indication of the building's height to the roof peak; there are some exterior measurements suggesting each floor has an 8' height, but there is no measurement provided that includes the area between the floors, the foundation height, or the roof height.

Foundation Height: The elevations provided show a very short, brick foundation wall, which is not what is being proposed in terms of height. The applicant has indicated that they plan to do grading at the site but has not specified exactly how that will affect the proposed house. Due to the slope of the lot the proposed foundation height along the façade will be about 5'-4" at left to 4'-8" at right; the left side will be about 5'-4" at front to 3'-4" at the rear; and the right side will be about 4'-4" at front to 1'-8" at rear. These measurements are approximate.

Foundation heights in the district appear to be around two to three feet on average. The tall foundation heights presented here on the facades are taller than what is typical for the area. The increased height requires a longer and therefore more prominent front set of front steps, rather than the typical shorter set of steps found in much of the district. Part of

this increase is due to the slope of the lot, but the result is a foundation and stair height that is not compatible with those of historic buildings. In the past, some projects that were approved on sloping lots were actually constructed with much taller foundations and front steps than what was represented in the elevations, proving that topography can dramatically impact the façade of a house.

2. Size & Scale: The size and scale of a new building shall be visually compatible with surrounding buildings. Do not construct buildings that disrupt the existing scale of the area.

The size and scale of the building is determined in part by the total height, which has not been indicated, although two-story buildings are present in the district. The width of the house is 38'2" and the depth is 38'8" total. This is a typical façade width for some two-story historic buildings around the corner that are within the district.

3. Massing: Arrange the mass of a new building (the relationship of solid components (ex. walls, columns, etc.) to open spaces (ex. windows, doors, arches)) so that it is compatible with existing historic buildings on the block or street. Breaking up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses is essential to maintaining the character of the streetscape. Do not construct single, monolithic forms that are not relieved by variations in massing.

Two-story, historic, single-family buildings in the district typically have very simple massing. They often have flat or simple walls with front porches or one-story side wings as the only significant projections from the main mass of the building. The Powell house that is nearby is the only one of its kind in the area, and its massing is somewhat more complex with a two-story block and a one-story block.

The massing of the proposed building is not compatible with historic two-story buildings in the district. It appears to be divided into two vertical halves that have little relationship to each other, as each of their massing is different from the other. This disunity in the façade is unlike historic single-family homes in the district. There are other massing features that are not compatible with historic buildings. The porch gable covers almost half of the front elevation but the porch wall recesses on both floors about 2/3rds of the way across the porch. This makes the gable of the porch and the porch itself somewhat disjointed, which is not compatible with historic buildings. A nearby home at 1401 Shirley has a gable that is the width of the projecting bay. Another component of the massing is the relationship of solid components like walls to open spaces such as windows and doors. The doubled doors and single door on the second floor porch wall creates a much larger opening than is visually compatible with historic front facades in the upper stories and the presence of four full-size doors in the façade is not visually compatible with historic buildings. Side elevations may feature more doors leading to porches, but historic facades do not typically have this feature.

On the left elevation the first floor has a large, double-car garage door. This oversized opening is not found on historic buildings. Although the applicant moved the garage door from the façade to a side elevation, the side elevations of historic buildings in the district still do not feature such oversized openings. The large amount of solid space on this elevation is also not typical of the area. The garage door opening is also inconsistent with the massing of openings due to its requirement to disrupt the foundation wall. Openings in historic buildings are located within the wall plane, not the foundation wall. Due to the slope of the lots, the garage door will interrupt a somewhat tall foundation wall, and the top of the garage opening will be lower than typical window heights along the side elevation.

This will disrupt the massing of the two stories on this elevation that should appear somewhat consistent in height in order to be visually compatible with historic buildings.

The left elevation has a lot of solid space in relation to voids like window openings and does not appear consistent with historic patterns. The right elevation has a more consistent pattern, although the ribbon or transom window is too small to replicate the typical massing of a normal sized window.

4. Setback: Locate the new building on the site so that the distance of the structure from the right of way is similar to adjacent structures. In Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn, the characteristic setback is between 10 – 20'. Do not violate the existing setback pattern by placing buildings in front of or behind existing façade lines.

Many streets in the district have somewhat consistent setbacks, but the historic buildings on nearby Shirley Street have various setbacks, from around 30 feet to as deep as about 60 feet. As there are no adjacent structures to create an existing façade line, the proposed setback of about 28 feet appears appropriate.

5. Sense of Entry: Place the main entrance and the associated architectural elements (porches, steps, etc.) so that they are compatible to surrounding structures. The main entrance shall be constructed with covered porches, porticos or other architectural forms that are found on historic structures on the block or street. Do not construct facades without a strong sense of entry.

The house has a somewhat strong sense of entry due to the door's location and the surrounding porch.

6. Rhythm of Openings: Construct new buildings so that the relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door & window openings) is visually compatible with historic buildings on the block or street. Maintain a similar ratio of height to width in the bays of the façade. Do not introduce incompatible façade patterns that upset the rhythm of openings established in surrounding structures.

The rhythm of openings on the façade is somewhat consistent with rhythm of openings found on historic buildings, with at least one opening in each of the defined bays. The right elevation also creates a rhythm of openings that is compatible with historic buildings. The left elevation does not achieve the same rhythm. It has two single windows on the second story, spaced well apart, but the first story has only one large opening. The large double-car garage door opening is unlike any feature found in the rhythm of openings in historic buildings in the district. Openings of that size disrupt the established patterns found in the area; therefore the proposed rhythm of openings does not meet the guideline.

7. Roof Shape: Use roof shapes, pitches, and materials that are visually compatible with those of surrounding buildings. Nearly all of the buildings in Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn have pitched roofs, with gable, hip or a combination thereof as the predominant style. Do not introduce roof shapes or pitches that are not found in the area.

The main roof is a clipped gable roof with an 8/12 pitch. The proposed pitch is found in the district, however the clipped gable is a feature typically found on shorter buildings, such as a one and half story, and associated with a particular style of architecture. However, this is not introducing a shape that is not found in the area. The gable roof of the porch is also found in the area. The small hip roof on the projecting "bay" window in the second floor does introduce a shape that is not found in the area at that size and location. There is a hip roof proposed along the façade, between the first and second floors. This is not a feature

that is visually compatible with historic buildings. Therefore, several of the proposed roof features do not meet the guideline.

8. Outbuildings: Construct garage and storage buildings so that they reflect the character of the existing house and are compatible in terms of height, scale, and roof shape. Place such buildings away from the primary façade of the building. Do not allow outbuildings to obscure character-defining features of a building.

Not applicable.

9. Materials, Texture, Details: Use materials, textures, and architectural features that are visually compatible with those of historic buildings on the block or street. When selecting architectural details, consider the scale, placement, profile, and relief of details on surrounding structures for the basis of design decisions. If horizontal siding is to be used, consider the board size, width of exposure, length, and trim detail such as corner boards on adjacent historic structure for specifications of the new material.

Shingles: Typical asphalt or architectural shingles are proposed and are appropriate.

Eaves: Boxed eaves with shingle mold are proposed and are visually compatible.

Siding: Cement fiberboard “clapboard” style siding with an approximately 6 ¼” reveal is proposed for most of the exterior and is a material that is visually compatible with the historic buildings in the district that have wood siding.

Porch: The porch presented is two stories and is located on the right half of the façade. Porches are common in the district, but there do not appear to be any examples of two-story porches in the district, therefore the porch design does not meet this guideline.

Columns: The porch columns proposed are simple wood posts, which is a feature found in the district.

Railings: The railings will be dimensional 2”x2” vertical wood pickets with wood top rails and bottom rails, which is appropriate.

Floor: The porch floor will be concrete. While wood-sided houses, which the cement-fiberboard will replicate, typically have wood floors, there are some houses in the area with concrete porch floors and wood siding.

Steps: The front steps will be brick.

Windows: Most of the windows will be aluminum-clad wood, double hung in appearance with the typical 3’x5’ size. There appears to be a square, glass-block window in the center of the second story on the left side. Glass block is not a feature that is compatible with historic buildings as it was not used historically on these buildings. There is a ribbon or transom window in the center of the upper story on the right side. This too is a feature not typically found on historic buildings. The one-foot deep “bump out” window bay on the façade’s second floor also introduces a feature that is not visually compatible with historic buildings in the area. The bump out itself is not typical, but it also includes very thin windows on the sides that are not visually compatible with the district. Therefore, there are several windows proposed that do not meet the guidelines.

Shutters: The shutters proposed appear somewhat proportional to the window openings. The material has not been provided; therefore staff cannot review the material.

Trim: The trim will be cement fiberboard. The windows and doors on the façade show areas of trim. Trim is an important component of wood-sided buildings in the historic district, and to be visually compatible with historic buildings, trim board would be placed along the sides and tops of the windows on all three visible elevations of the building. A skirtboard separating the siding from the foundation would be a trim feature that replicates historic patterns in the district. The vertical corner boards already proposed are in keeping with the district, but the lack of trim around windows does not meet the guideline.

Door: The proposed main entry door is fiberglass with an oval glass with etching. This type of door is not typical for the historic district. While the material will be indistinct once painted, the shape and character of the glass is not found on historic buildings nearby. The upper story features three full glass doors with muntins. As second-story porches are not typical, this arrangement of multiple doors on a second-story façade is not visually compatible with the historic district. The proposed doors do not meet the guidelines.

Garage Door: The double-wide, metal garage door that is proposed will have glass in the top row of panels, which would offer some slight massing relief from the solid block of the paneled door. A particular design for the door has not been provided beyond what is shown in the proposed plans, which is a simple multi-panel design. It appears that none of the historic homes in this neighborhood originally had integrated garages such as the one proposed. The detached garages that are present were typically single-car, though there are some later two-car versions. The doors proposed are not visually compatible with historic garage doors in the area and therefore they do not meet the guideline.

Other Details: The fireplace “bump out” bay on the left side is not visually compatible with historic buildings. Chimneys are typical, but these short, small projections are not typical and the D/DRC has repeatedly denied this feature on several other projects.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff finds that the proposed project does not meet Section 5 of the guidelines, namely the portions on massing, roof shape, rhythm of openings and detailing, and that there is insufficient information to review other detailing such as height, and recommends that the request for a Certificate of Design Approval be denied.



Above and Right: Images of the project location



Above: Duplex across the street that is outside of the district
Right: Image of Longleaf Drive





Above: Powell House, Prairie style, to the rear of the project area



Above: Contributing house on Shirley Street



Below: Contributing house on Shirley Street, Google image



Above and Right: Two-story examples in the district



Non-contributing buildings in the district, nearby on Shirley Street



Façade submitted by applicant (flipped by staff)



Online image found by staff of the same plan, with minor differences
www.hiltonandcompany.com

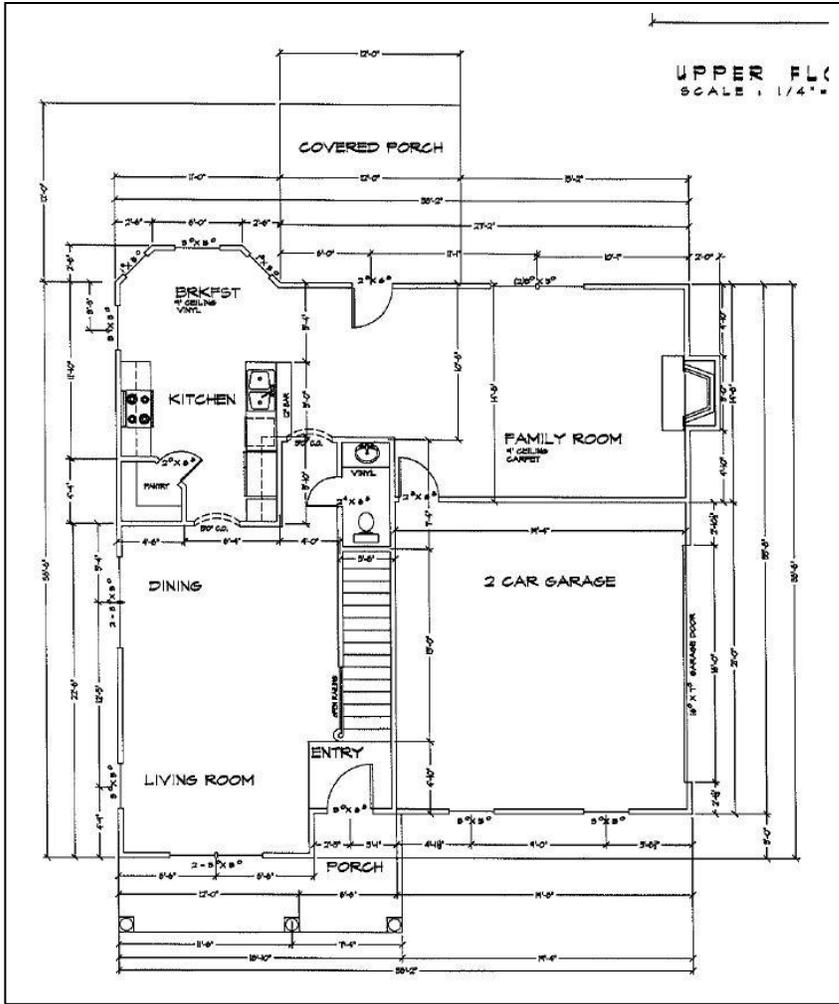




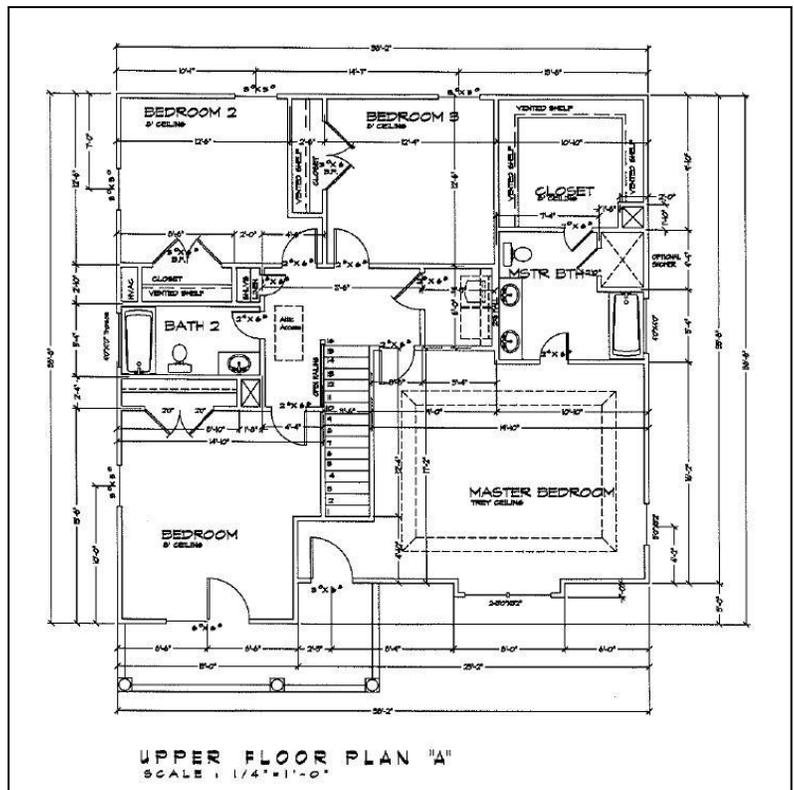
Right elevation, provided by applicant, flipped by staff

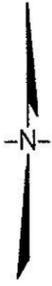


Left elevation, provided by applicant, flipped by staff

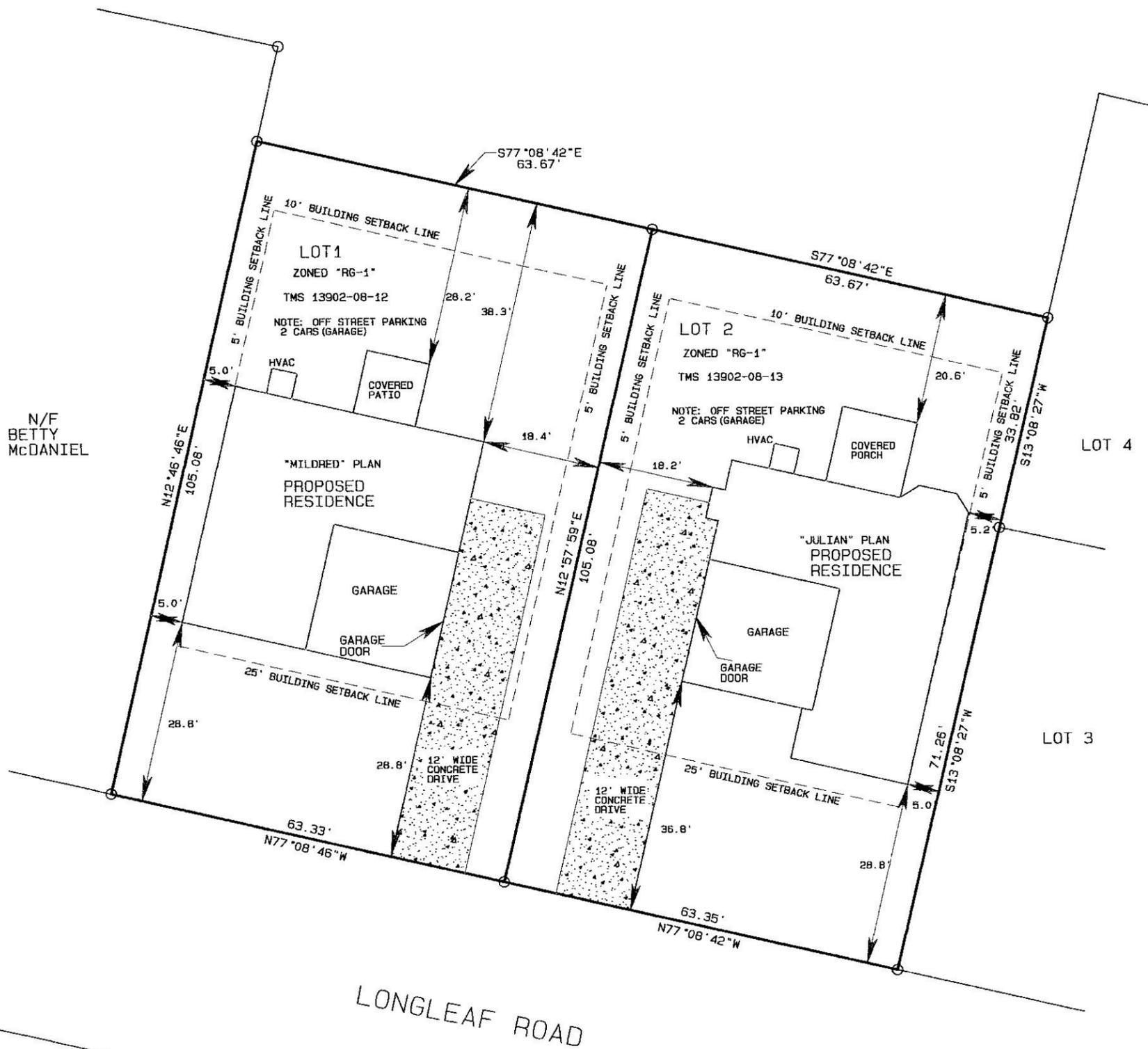


Plans submitted by applicant. These have not been flipped.





N/F
BETTY
McDANIEL

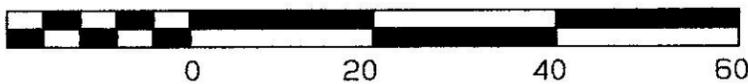


LONGLEAF ROAD

LEGEND:

NOTES:

GRAPHIC SCALE 1"=20'



PROPOSED NEW RESIDENCE SITE PLAN FOR

NEW START HOMES, LLC

CITY OF COLUMBIA RICHLAND COUNTY

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

TAX MAP #: SEE ABOVE DFT: 111

REFERENCES: RECORD BOOK 1347 Pg. 2271

SCALE: 1"=20' DATE: 05/06/2014 JOB # LONGLEAF

**SOUTHEASTERN LAND MANAGEMENT
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