

PROJECT NARRATIVE

54 Lincoln Avenue, Portsmouth, New Hampshire

The Applicant proposes to construct a second floor over the existing two-car garage located at 54 Lincoln Avenue in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The proposed second floor will provide an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) for the homeowners, creating additional residential living space while making efficient use of an existing structure.

The project has been designed to work within the existing conditions of the property and to maintain the established residential character of the neighborhood. The proposed addition will be constructed vertically above the existing garage and will not expand the garage's footprint toward the rear property line, with the exception of the stairs and egress required by code.

The proposed ADU will function as an accessory use to the primary residence and will remain residential in character. The addition will be designed to complement the existing home and garage through appropriate architectural scale, proportions, materials, and detailing. The intent is to create a cohesive improvement that fits comfortably within the existing neighborhood.

The Applicant is requesting a variance from the applicable rear setback requirement to allow the vertical expansion of the existing garage within the rear setback. The requested relief is limited to the vertical expansion, and code required stairs and egress deck. The structure does not extend further than the ac condensing units that are currently in that location.

The project provides an opportunity to add residential living space without constructing a new detached building or substantially increasing the developed area of the property. The proposed ADU will provide a practical and efficient use of the property while preserving the existing residential use and character of the site.

The proposed improvements will be designed and constructed in accordance with applicable building, life-safety, and other regulatory requirements. The Applicant believes the project represents a reasonable and appropriate improvement to 54 Lincoln Avenue that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and will not adversely affect neighboring properties or the public interest.

The requested variance will allow the property to be reasonably utilized while preserving the intent of the City's zoning regulations and maintaining the character and quality of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

10.233.21

The Variance Will Not Be Contrary to the Public Interest

The requested variance will not be contrary to the public interest because the proposed project is a limited vertical expansion of an existing two-car garage at 54 Lincoln Avenue. The Applicant is not proposing to expand the existing garage footprint farther into the required rear setback. Rather, the proposed second floor will be constructed directly above the existing garage, allowing the property to accommodate an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). The only addition to the rear would be for the required egress for code compliance.

The proposed use will remain residential in nature and will be consistent with the established residential character of the property and surrounding neighborhood. The project will provide additional residential living space while making efficient use of an existing structure, rather than requiring the construction of a new detached building or an expansion of the existing footprint.

The granting of the variance will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare. The proposed improvements will be subject to all applicable building, life-safety, and zoning requirements, except for the specific rear setback relief requested.

The requested variance is therefore limited in scope and will allow the property to be improved and used in a manner that is compatible with its residential surroundings. The relief requested does not undermine the purpose of the rear setback requirement, as the existing footprint within the setback will only be expanded to accommodate the code required egress.

For these reasons, granting the requested variance will not be contrary to the public interest.

10.233.22

The Spirit of the Ordinance Will Be Observed

The spirit of the Zoning Ordinance will be observed by granting the requested variance because the proposed project maintains the fundamental purpose of the rear setback requirement while allowing a reasonable and appropriate improvement to the property.

The existing two-car garage is already located within the required rear setback. The Applicant is not proposing to enlarge the garage footprint or extend the structure farther toward the rear property line. Instead, the proposed second floor will be constructed vertically over the existing garage footprint to create an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). The only encroachment is the code required egress and that does not extend any further than the existing AC condensing units.

The rear setback is intended, in part, to provide separation between structures and property lines, preserve open space, and minimize impacts on neighboring properties. Those objectives will continue to be maintained.

The proposed ADU will remain residential in character and will be integrated into the existing residential use of the property. The project represents an efficient use of an existing structure rather than introducing a new structure or expanding the property's developed footprint.

The requested variance is therefore limited to allowing the vertical expansion of an existing structure while preserving the existing setback relationship. Granting the variance will allow the property to be reasonably utilized without defeating or substantially diminishing the underlying purposes of the Ordinance.

10.233.23

3. Substantial Justice Will Be Done

Substantial justice will be done by granting the requested variance to allow a vertical expansion of the existing two-car garage at 54 Lincoln Avenue to create an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) for the homeowners.

The proposed project is a vertical expansion of an existing structure. The existing two-car garage is already located within the required rear setback, and the Applicant is not proposing to further extend the garage footprint toward the rear property line. Instead, the proposed living space will be constructed above the existing garage footprint. The only further encroachment is for the required egress which will allow for the ADU to have a private entrance.

The requested relief provides a reasonable opportunity to make use of an existing structure while minimizing the physical impact on the property and surrounding neighborhood. The project allows additional residential space to be created without constructing a new detached structure or increasing the existing garage footprint.

The proposed ADU will remain residential in character and will be accessory to the primary residence. Its use will be consistent with the residential character of the neighborhood and will provide additional housing within an existing residential property.

Granting the variance will not provide a benefit to the Applicant that is outweighed by any corresponding detriment to the public or neighboring properties. The proposed work will not move the structure any closer to the rear property line, and the additional floor area will be located directly above an existing structure. The project can therefore accommodate the proposed residential use while maintaining the existing relationship of the garage to the rear property line. Even the stairs and deck for required egress will not go any further than the existing AC condensing units.

Conversely, denial of the variance would prevent the homeowners from making reasonable use of the existing garage structure for additional residential space, despite the fact that the proposed improvement does not increase the garage's existing footprint.

The benefit to the homeowners from being able to utilize the existing garage and provide an ADU is substantial, while the public benefit from requiring the existing garage to remain limited to one story within its current footprint would be minimal. There is no identifiable public benefit that would outweigh the hardship resulting from denial of the requested relief.

For these reasons, granting the variance would provide a reasonable balance between the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance and the reasonable use of the property. The requested variance is limited to the vertical expansion of an existing structure and does not increase the existing encroachment into the rear setback. Accordingly, substantial justice will be done by granting the variance.

10.233.24 The Values of Surrounding Properties Will Not Be Diminished

The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished by granting the requested variance. The proposed second-floor addition will create an Accessory Dwelling Unit that is consistent with the residential character and established use of 54 Lincoln Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood.

The addition will be designed to complement the existing home and garage, with appropriate architectural detailing, materials, scale, and proportions. The improvements will enhance the overall appearance, functionality, and usability of the property while maintaining a residential character compatible with neighboring homes.

The proposed ADU will not introduce a commercial use or an incompatible activity that would adversely affect neighboring properties. It will provide additional residential living space within an established residential property and will be subject to applicable building and safety requirements.

The project represents a thoughtful improvement to the property and is not expected to adversely affect the use, enjoyment, or marketability of surrounding properties. The quality and character of the proposed improvements should contribute positively to the property and the neighborhood as a whole.

10.233.25

Literal Enforcement of the Provisions of the Ordinance Would Result in an Unnecessary Hardship

Literal enforcement of the rear setback provisions would result in an unnecessary hardship because of the existing configuration of the property and the location of the two-car garage at 54 Lincoln Avenue.

The existing garage is a permanent and established structure that occupies a portion of the property within the required rear setback. Strict enforcement of the setback requirement would prevent the reasonable vertical utilization of this existing structure and effectively limit the property owner's ability to make productive use of the space above the garage.

The proposed project is specifically designed to work within the existing conditions of the property. Rather than expanding the garage outward or creating a new detached

structure, the Applicant proposes to utilize the space above the existing garage for an Accessory Dwelling Unit. This approach provides additional residential space while making efficient use of the property's existing development.

The hardship is therefore related to the physical characteristics and existing configuration of the property, rather than the personal circumstances or preferences of the Applicant. Without the requested variance, the property would be unnecessarily restricted from a reasonable use of an existing structure that can otherwise accommodate additional residential space.

The requested relief is limited in scope and will allow the property to be reasonably utilized while maintaining the residential character of the neighborhood and minimizing impacts on surrounding properties.

For these reasons, literal enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would result in an unnecessary hardship, and the requested variance provides a reasonable means of allowing the property to be used in a manner consistent with its residential character.

PETERS ADU

54 LINCOLN AVE, PORTSMOUTH, NH

PROPERTY INFORMATION

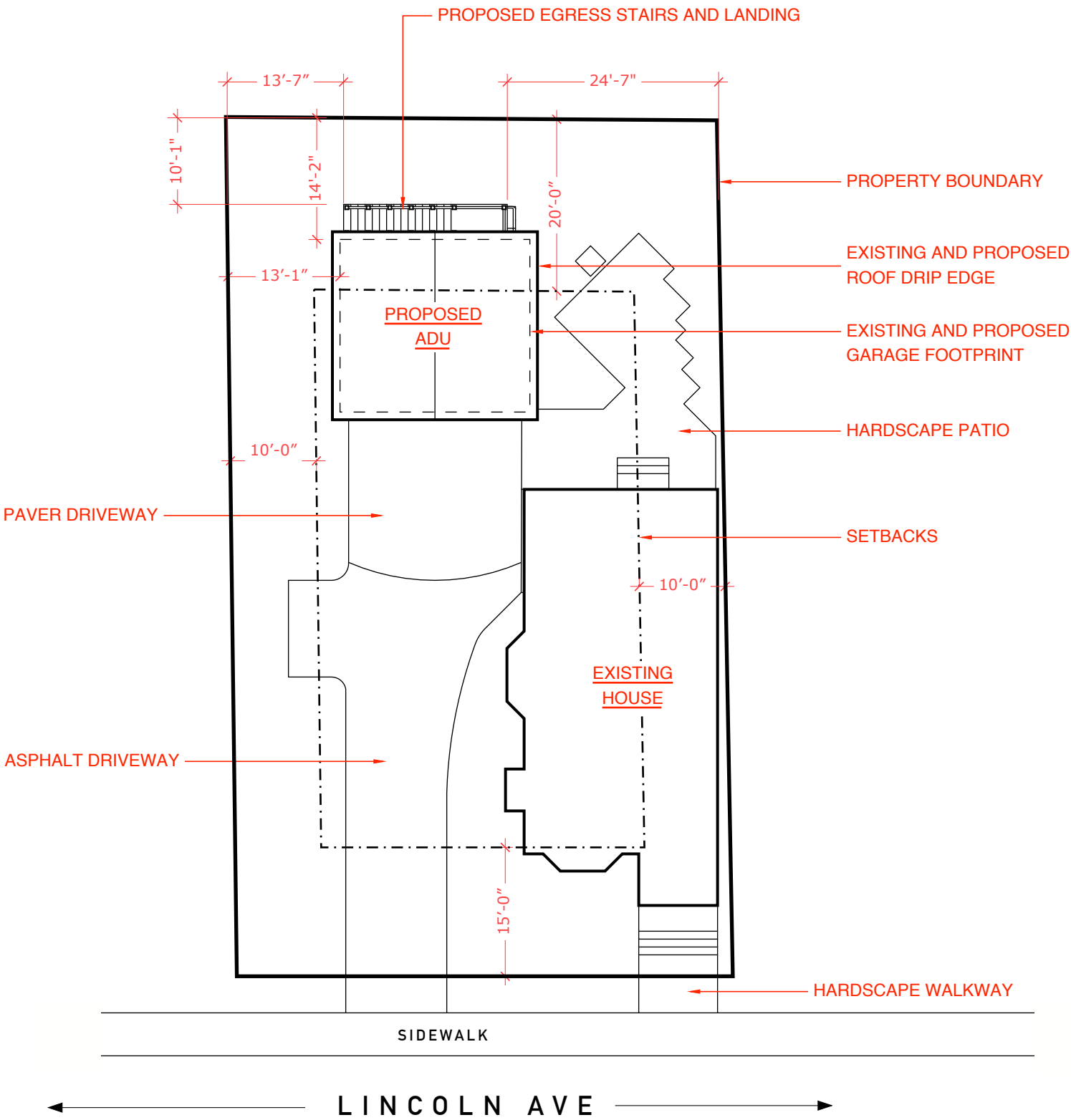
MAP/LOT/ID:	111-21
ZONING DISTRICT:	GRA
LOT SIZE:	5,663 SF (0.13 ACRES)
SETBACKS:	
FRONT	15 FT
REAR	20 FT
SIDE	10 FT
MAX BUILDING COVERAGE:	25%
MIN OPEN SPACE:	30%
EXISTING BUILDING COVERAGE:	27.2% (1,541 SF)
PROPOSED BUILDING COVERAGE:	28.9% (1,635 SF)
EXISTING OPEN SPACE:	44.9% (2,543 SF)
[5,663 - 3,120 = 2,543]	
PROPOSED OPEN SPACE:	43.5% (2,466 SF)
[5,663 - 3197 = 2,466]	

DRAWING LIST

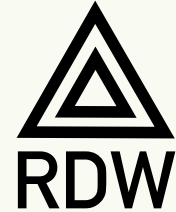
01	COVER, SITE PLAN
02	BUILDING COVERAGE
03	EXISTING CONDITIONS / PROPOSED
04	FLOOR PLANS
05	ELEVATIONS
06	ELEVATIONS

PROJECT SUMMARY

SECOND FLOOR ADDITION TO EXISTING GARAGE TO ACCOMMODATE NEW ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT.



1 SITE PLAN
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"



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PROJECT

LOCATION
54 LINCOLN AVE
PORTSMOUTH, NH

NORTH
SHEET
11 X17

PHASE
PERMITTING

DATE
09 OCT 2026

PAGE



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EXISTING BUILDING COVERAGE

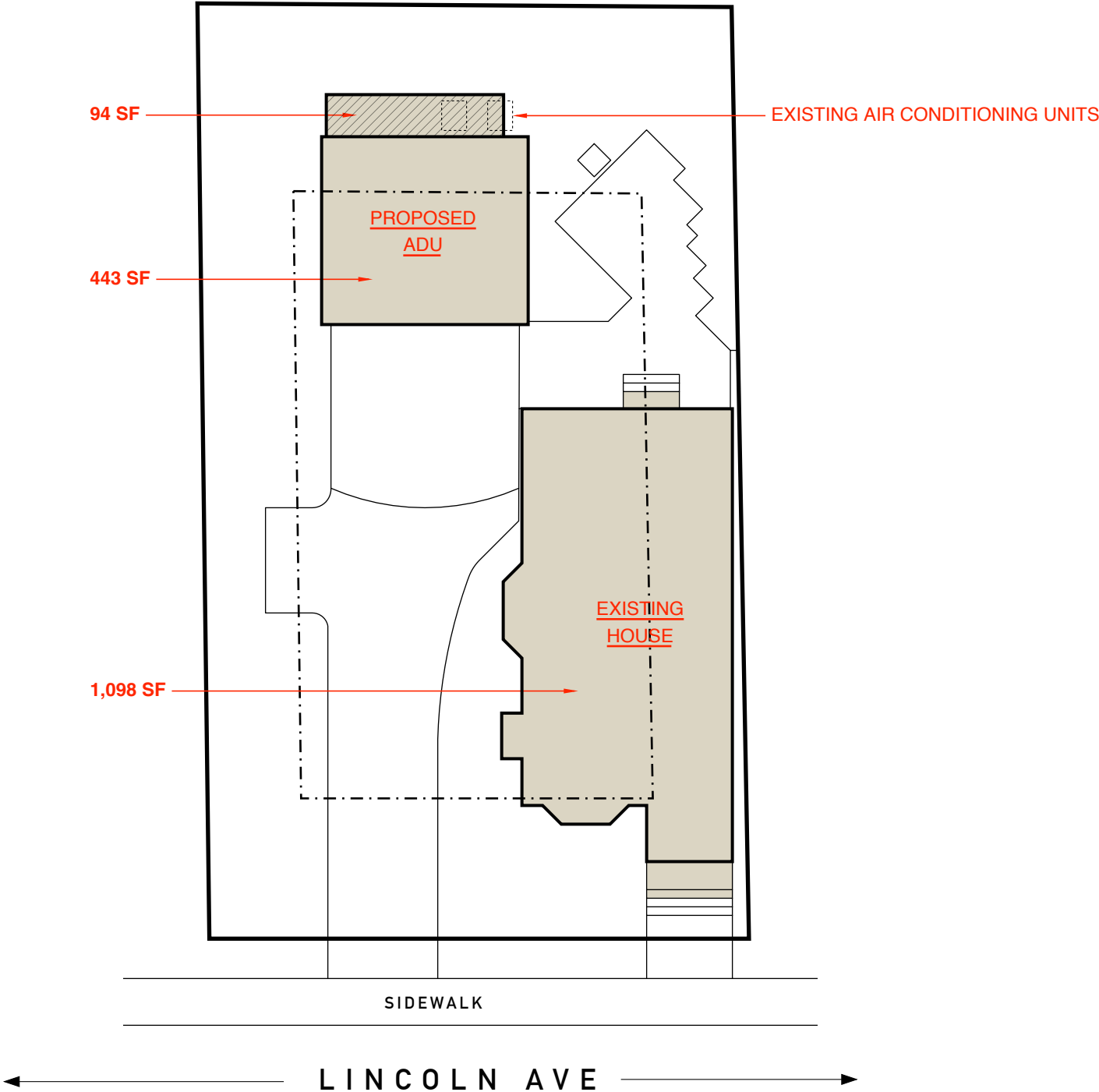
EXISTING HOUSE, EXTERIOR LANDINGS, EXTERIOR STEPS ABOVE 18" 1,098 SF
EXISTING GARAGE 443 SF

TOTAL 1,541 SF

PROPOSED BUILDING COVERAGE

EXISTING HOUSE, EXTERIOR LANDINGS, EXTERIOR STEPS ABOVE 18" 1,098 SF
EXISTING GARAGE 443 SF
PROPOSED STAIRS AND DECK 94 SF

TOTAL 1,635 SF





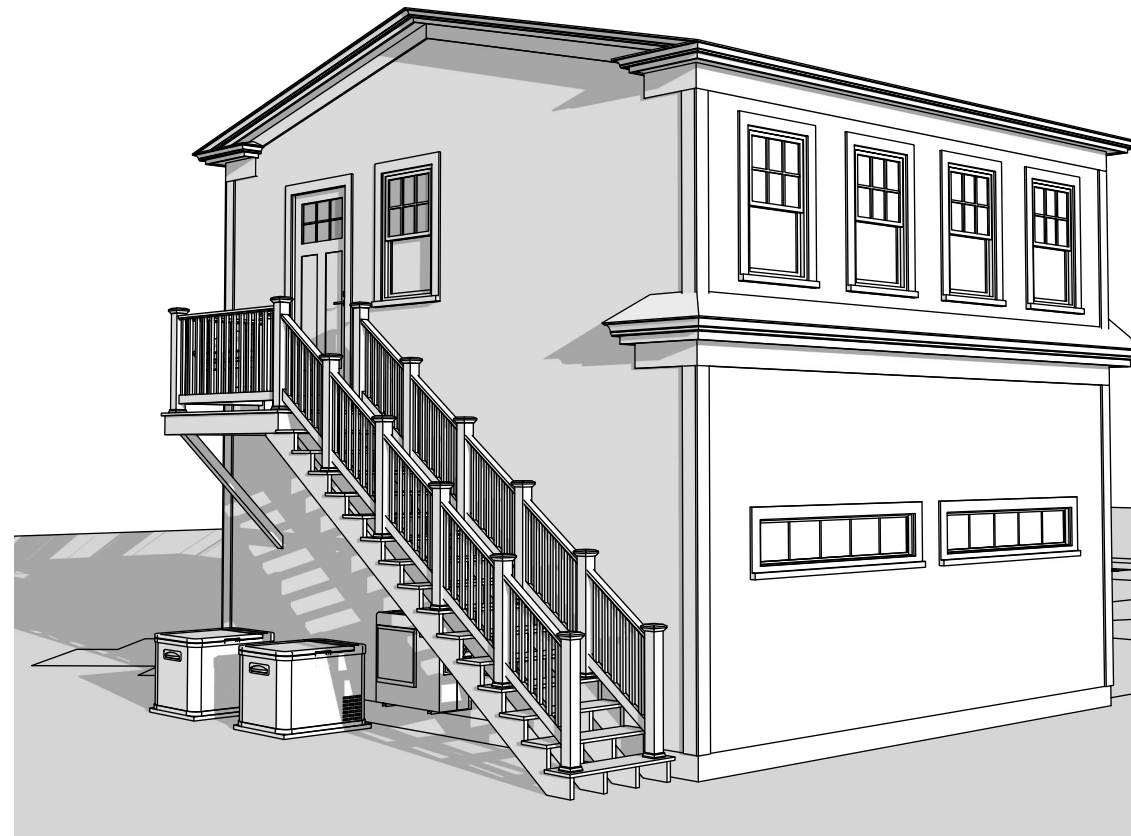
1 EXISTING HOUSE AND GARAGE



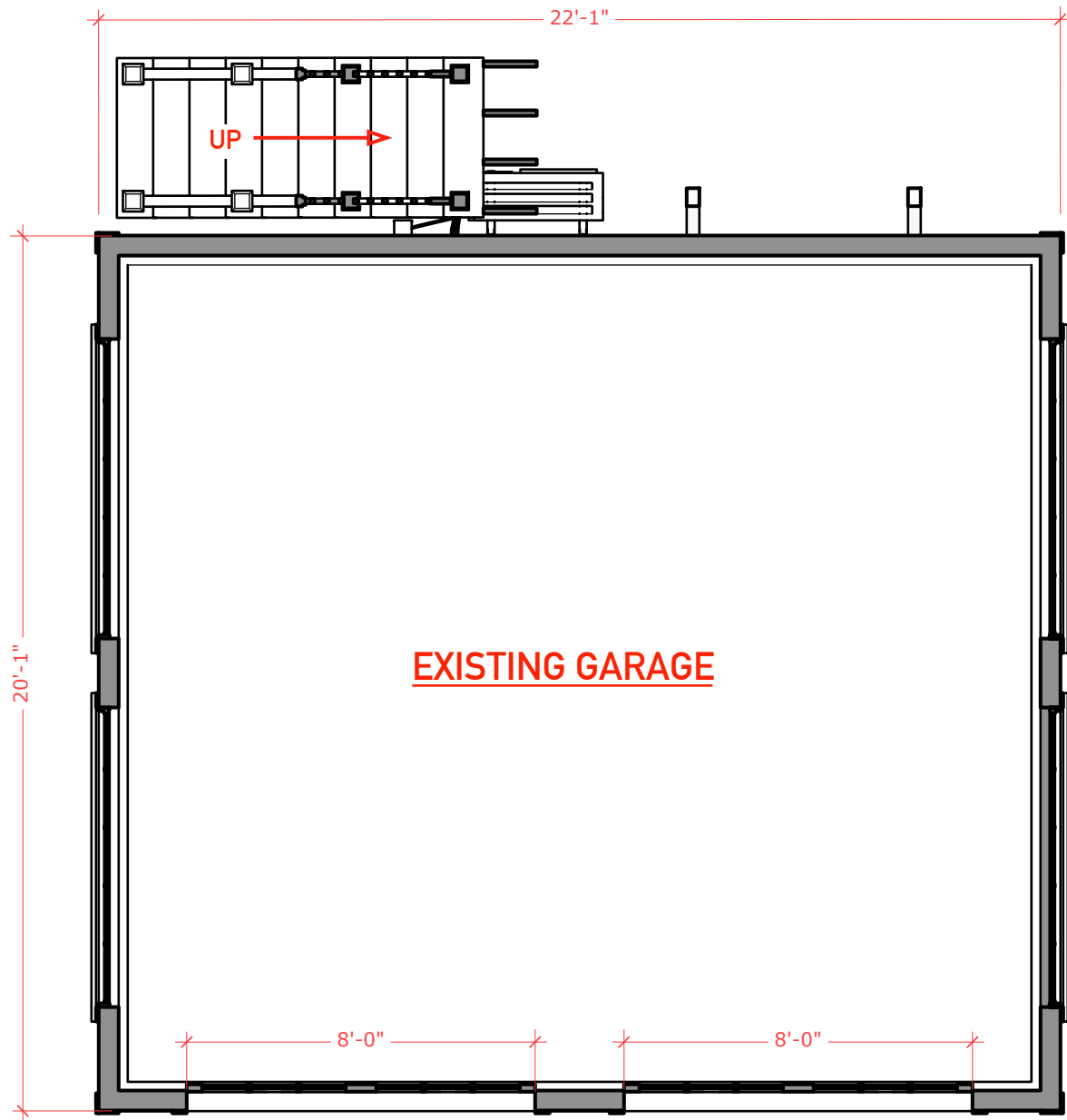
2 EXISTING GARAGE



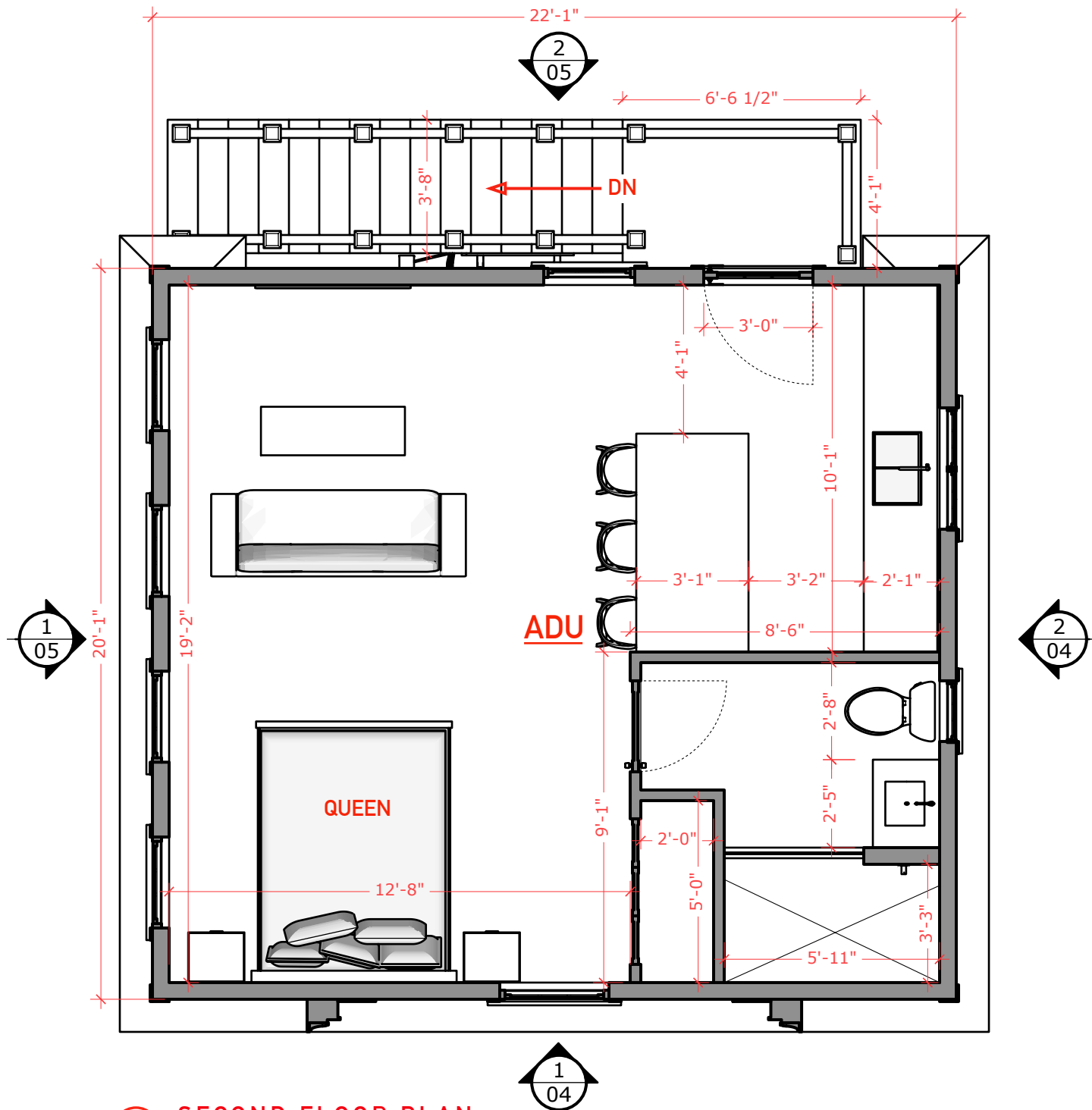
3 PROPOSED ADU FRONT



4 PROPOSED ADU REAR



1 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



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PETERS ADU

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54 LINCOLN AVE
PORTSMOUTH, NH

NORTH



SHEET

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1 NORTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



2 SOUTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



1 SOUTHWEST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

EXISTING AC UNIT



2 SOUTHEAST ELEVATION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

EXISTING AC UNITS

PROPOSED HEAT PUMP
OUTDOOR UNIT