<u>APPLICATION OF WILLIAM J. ARMSTRONG, JR. REVOCABLE TRUST</u> <u>70 Stark Street, Portsmouth, Tax Map 159, Lot 50</u>

APPLICANT'S NARRATIVE

I. THE PROPERTY:

The applicant, William J. Armstrong, Trustee, seeks a variance from Section 10.573.20 to permit the construction of a workshop within the rear yard setback.

The property has been the applicant and his family's primary residence since 1999. It is in the GRA zone and consists of two family dwelling and garage. Mr. Armstrong's father was a home building contractor and he inherited an impressive collection of woodworking tools that hold great personal and sentimental value. The proposal is to construct a woodworking shop with a second story storage space. Electricity will be installed, however, there are no plans to tie into the existing water service at this time.

The lot is fairly large in comparison to most of the lots in the vicinity, and sits at the corner of Stark and Thornton Streets. As such, it has two 15 foot front yard setbacks, which pushes the building envelope to the south east of the lot. Section 10.573.20 provides that an accessory building or structure more than 10 feet in height or more than 100 square feet in area shall be set back from any lot line at least the height of the building or the applicable yard requirement, whichever is less. As proposed, the height of the workshop is 22.9 feet to the peak. The applicable rear yard setback in the GRA zone is 20 feet. As proposed, the workshop would be 10.2 feet from the rear lot line.

Compliance with the required side yard setback would compromise a fair portion of the Armstrongs' actual useable backyard and squeeze the workshop uncomfortably close to the main structure. The property most affected by this proposal, 245 Thornton Street, has a barn structure, previously used for boat building, of similar size and height in approximately the same location set back approximately the same distance from the lot line and will not be negatively affected in any way. The project and the property otherwise fully comply with all dimensional requirements in the GRA zone.

II. CRITERIA:

The applicant believes the within Application meets the criteria necessary for the Board to grant the requested variance.

Granting the requested variance will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the ordinance nor will it be contrary to the public interest. The "public interest" and "spirit and intent" requirements are considered together pursuant to Malachy Glen Associates v. Chichester, 152 NH 102 (2007). The test for whether or not granting a variance would be contrary to the public interest or contrary to the spirit and intent of the

ordinance is whether or not the variance being granted would substantially alter the characteristics of the neighborhood or threaten the health, safety and welfare of the public.

In this case, were the variance to be granted, there would be no change in the essential characteristics of the neighborhood, nor would any public health, safety or welfare be threatened. A proposed workshop on this property is entirely appropriate and consistent with the existing residential neighborhood in which it sits. The workshop is similar in size and location to the accessory structure on the nearest adjacent lot. The essentially residential character of the neighborhood would remain unchanged. Additionally, the proposed use would not create any threat to the public health, safety and welfare. There remains adequate light, air, access and distance between structures.

Substantial justice would be done by granting the variance. Whether or not substantial justice will be done by granting a variance requires the Board to conduct a balancing test. If the hardship upon the owner/applicant outweighs any benefit to the general public in denying the variance, then substantial justice would be done by granting the variance. The project could be constructed in compliance with the 20 foot rear yard setback only by sacrificing a substantial portion of the Armstrongs' back yard and squeezing the workshop towards the main structure. This loss to the applicant far outweighs any gain to the public if the variance is denied.

The values of surrounding properties will not be diminished by granting the variance. The project meets all dimensional requirements in this zone except for the rear yard setback requirement. The immediate abutter has an accessory barn structure in almost the exact same adjacent location on their lot which has caused no negative impacts on property values in the neighborhood. The values of the surrounding properties will not be negatively affected in any way.

There are special conditions associated with the property which prevent the proper enjoyment of the property under the strict terms of the zoning ordinance and thus constitute unnecessary hardship. The property is an unusually large, trapezoidal corner lot, burdened by two front yard setbacks, which limits the building envelope available to the applicant. The existing built environment on the lot counsels against siting the proposed workshop in compliance with the rear yard setback requirement.

<u>The use is a reasonable use</u>. The proposed accessory use is similar in character and is consistent with the existing use of the adjacent and abutting properties and those within the neighborhood. Accessory uses are permitted by right.

There is no fair and substantial relationship between the purpose of the ordinance as it is applied to this particular property. The purpose of setback requirements is to assure properties are developed with adequate light, air, access and building separation. Many, if not all, of those concerns would be frustrated if the applicant were forced to comply with the ordinance and squeeze the workshop into the

existing backyard and closer to the primary structure. There is no fair and substantial relationship between the purposes of the rear yard setback requirements and its application to this property.

III. Conclusion.

For the foregoing reasons, the applicant respectfully requests the Board grant the variance as requested and advertised.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 18, 2025 By: Christopher P. Mulligan

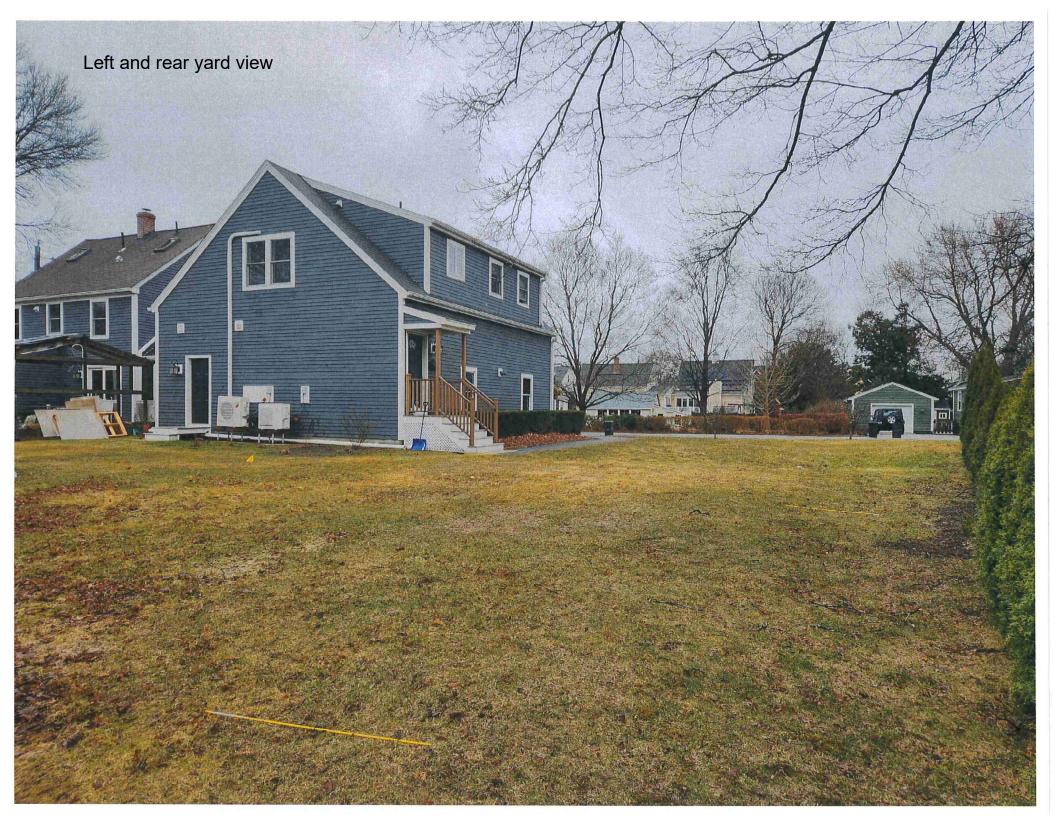
Christopher P. Mulligan, Esquire



Stark Street view

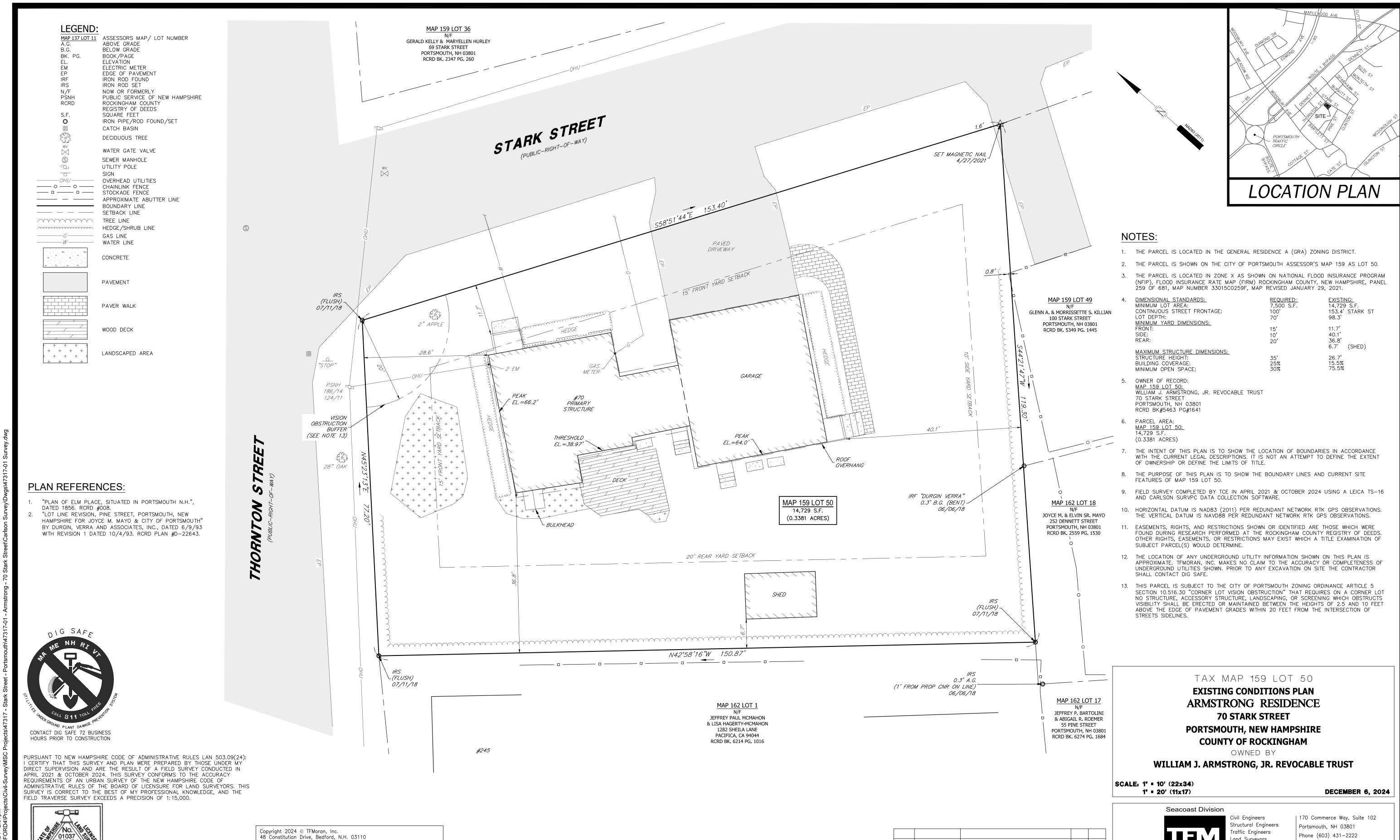


Thornton Street view





Accessory barn structure
245 Thornton Street



Land Surveyors

Scientists

DR RJB FB

CK BMK CADFILE

REV. DATE

Graphic Scale in Feet

DESCRIPTION

DR CK

47317-03

Landscape Architects

606

SEE MARGIN

Fax (603) 431-0910

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KOLBOW

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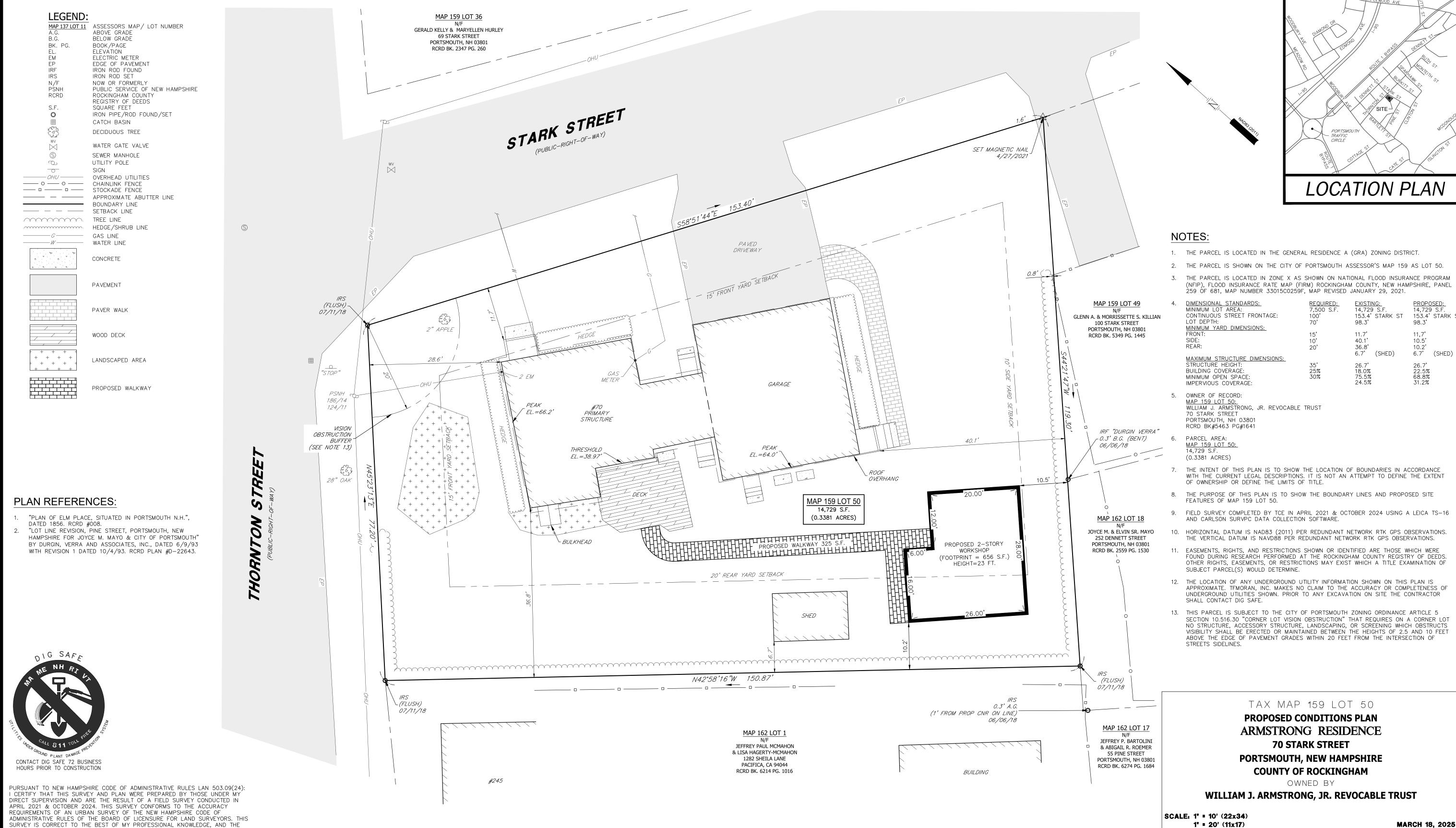
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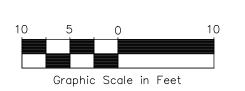
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REVISED COVERAGE CALCUATIONS 3/31/2025 BMK JCC DR CK REV. DATE DESCRIPTION



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MARCH 18, 2025

PROPOSED: 14,729 S.F.

10.2' 6.7' (SHED)

98.3'

11,7'

10.5

26.7' 22.5% 68.8%

DR OMS FB 606 S-1 47317-03 CK BMK CADFILE SEE MARGIN

