

Planning Department  
Portsmouth City Hall  
1 Junkins Avenue  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

**To:** City of Portsmouth- Technical Advisory Committee

**From:** Martin Ryan

**Date:** July 07, 2026

**Re:** Request for TAC Work Session  
Ryan Trust  
221 Woodbury Ave, Tax map 175-10  
General Residence A Zoning

Dear TAC Chairman Peter Stith & Technical Advisory Committee:

**The Zoning Board of Adjustment reviewed this application on June 16<sup>th</sup> and unanimously approved the single variance requesting relief from the frontage requirement.**

In support of the request for subdivision at 221 Woodbury Avenue, we respectfully submit this memorandum and the accompanying exhibits for the Planning Board's consideration at its meeting on July 16th, 2026.

**Attachments:**

- A. City Tax Map
- B. Drawing Set
  - T1- Title Sheet
  - C1- Historic Map & Figure Ground
  - C2- Existing Site Plan
  - C3- Proposed Site Plan
  - C4- Site Diagram
  - A1- Site Elevation
  - A2- Site Elevations
  - P1- Context Photographs
  - P2- Context Photographs
- C. Zoning Board of Adjustment Document

## Property:

Located at 221 Woodbury Avenue, the subject property is a 17,351-square-foot corner parcel with approximately 135 feet of Woodbury Avenue frontage and approximately 145 feet of Thornton Street frontage (see C2 Existing site Plan). Existing structures include a well-maintained two-family residence constructed circa 1900 and a detached garage.

The applicants, who have resided at and maintained the property for 30 years, seek a subdivision due to health-related challenges that make the current dwelling unfeasible. The objective is to subdivide the large parcel to create a new, adjacent lot. This will facilitate the construction of a more suitable residence, enabling the applicants to age in place within their established community.

While the proposed subdivision creates two appropriately sized lots that is consistent with the neighborhood's land use patterns, the project did require the approval of a frontage variance for the newly created lot.

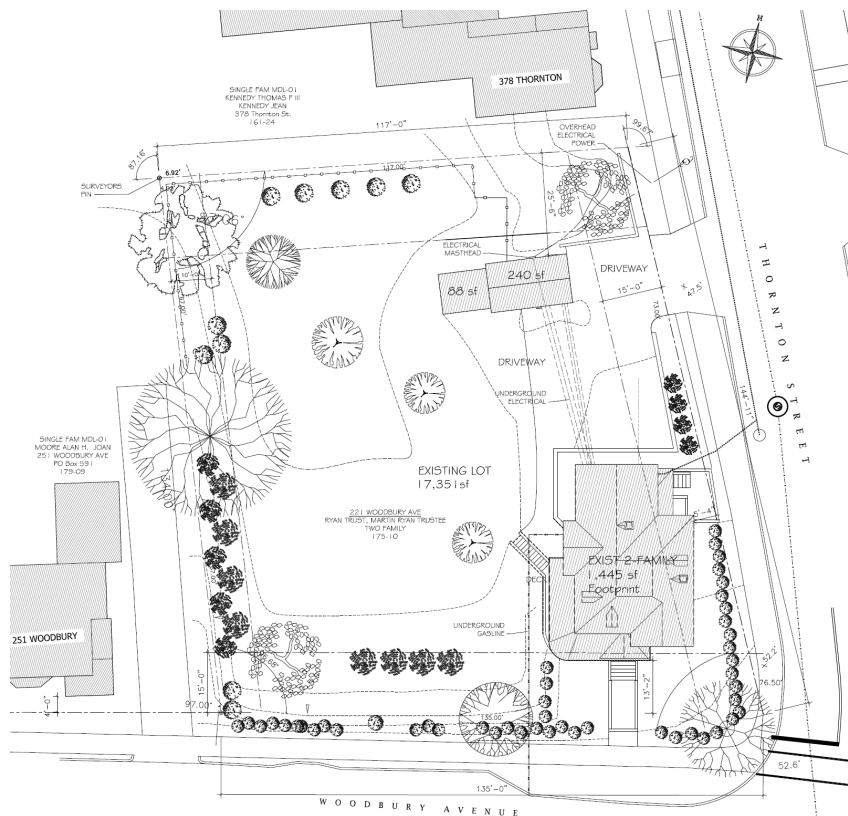


Figure #1 Existing Site Plan

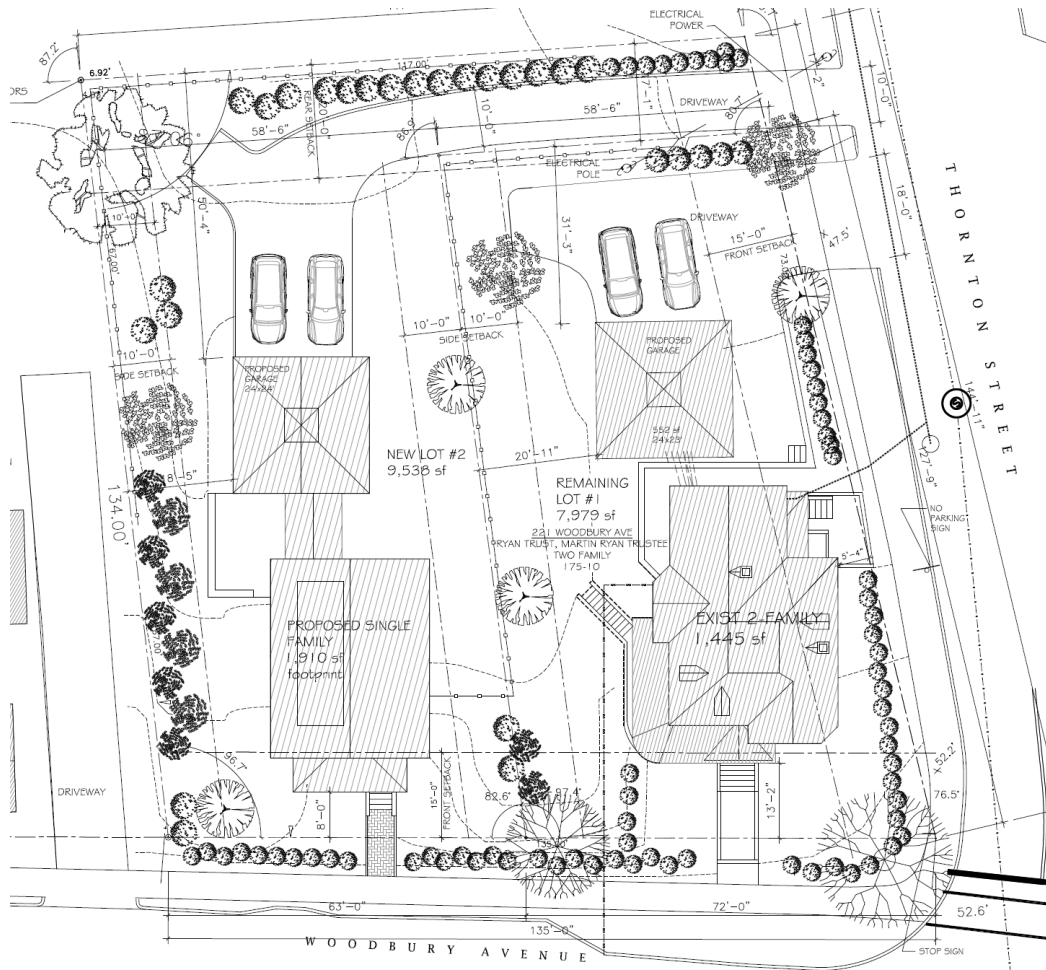


Figure #2 Proposed Site Plan

### Parking:

Each dwelling unit, the existing and the proposed single-family structure, will be supported by a standard two-car garage with a footprint of 24' x 24'. The resulting off-street parking, accommodated via the driveways and garages, exceeds the regulatory thresholds of Section 10.1112.31 (*Parking Requirements for Residential Uses*).

**Vehicular and Pedestrian Traffic:**

To ensure independent vehicle access, both the proposed and existing single-family residences will utilize separate curb cuts and dedicated driveways. Each driveway configuration is intentionally designed with an integrated turnaround area, enabling vehicles to execute a safe three-point turn and exit onto the public right-of-way in a forward-facing direction, thereby eliminating the need to back out into the street.

The proposed driveway entrances on Thornton Street have been strategically positioned to minimize the visual impact of parked vehicles and driveway infrastructure, ensuring that vehicular traffic does not dominate the streetscape or the site's aesthetic character. Additionally, the layout prioritizes neighborhood safety by incorporating an on-site turnaround that prevents vehicles from reversing into street traffic, ensuring all egress onto Thornton Street is executed in a safe, forward-facing direction.

Sidewalks were installed in 2025 giving safe pedestrian movement along Thornton street and Woodbury avenue.

**Screening and Landscaping:**

To enhance the overall aesthetic of the streetscape and respect adjacent properties, the site design incorporates robust perimeter screening. This will feature a combination of high-quality privacy fencing and a curated mix of native evergreen trees and deciduous shrubs. This multi-tiered landscape buffer is strategically designed to provide year-round visual screening, soften the built environment, and harmonize the development with the neighborhood's existing character. A landscaping plan will be incorporated into the building permit for the new house.

**Water and Sewage:**

Municipal water and sewer services for the proposed residence will connect directly to the existing infrastructure on Woodbury Avenue. A new sewer tie-in will extend into the site from the 6-inch PVC sewer main, with its exact configuration subject to Portsmouth DPW approval. A dedicated 1-inch domestic water service line will be installed to serve the new home. Crucially, the existing home's utility connections will remain entirely separate, continuing to utilize the independent water and sewer lines currently serving the property from Thornton Street.

**Stormwater management:**

A civil engineer will be engaged to design a stormwater management plan to address the increase in impervious surfaces from the new home and driveway, ensuring compliance with all municipal requirements.

**Site Lighting:**

To prevent light pollution in the surrounding neighborhood, all proposed site lighting will be wall-mounted and designed at minimal levels. This configuration is optimized to deliver a safe, welcoming pedestrian experience without the use of free standing fixtures or flood lights.

**Trash Collection:**

Solid waste disposal for both the existing and new dwellings will be managed through the Portsmouth curbside collection service. Bins will be placed along the Thornton Street frontage for pickup.

**Site Utilities:**

Electrical service currently originates from an overhead utility pole at the northeast corner of the site, running overhead to the existing garage where it is metered before continuing underground to the existing residence.

As part of this project, the garage will be demolished, and all electrical and communication lines for the existing residence will be transitioned to a fully underground service originating from the same northeast utility pole.

To serve the proposed new residence, a separate, independent utility service will be established from the same pole and routed entirely underground. All final services for both structures will be located underground, eliminating overhead lines across the site.

**Snow Removal:**

The proposed snow removal strategy utilizes on-site plowing to clear all asphalt driveways and access points. Accumulated snow will be stockpiled in the dedicated, demarcated snow storage areas shown on the site plans. These storage zones are

strategically located adjacent to the driveways to minimize transport distances and ensure that melt runoff is directed toward approved drainage systems without impacting adjacent properties.

### Zoning Relief:

The proposed subdivision was formally presented to the Portsmouth Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) for review. The applicant requested a dimensional variance to permit 63 linear feet (LF) of frontage for the newly created lot, where a minimum of 100 LF is required under the current zoning district regulations.

All other applicable dimensional and setback requirements for both lots were fully satisfied. Following a review of the application materials and public testimony, the ZBA found that the request met the criteria for municipal relief and voted unanimously (6-0) to grant the variance.

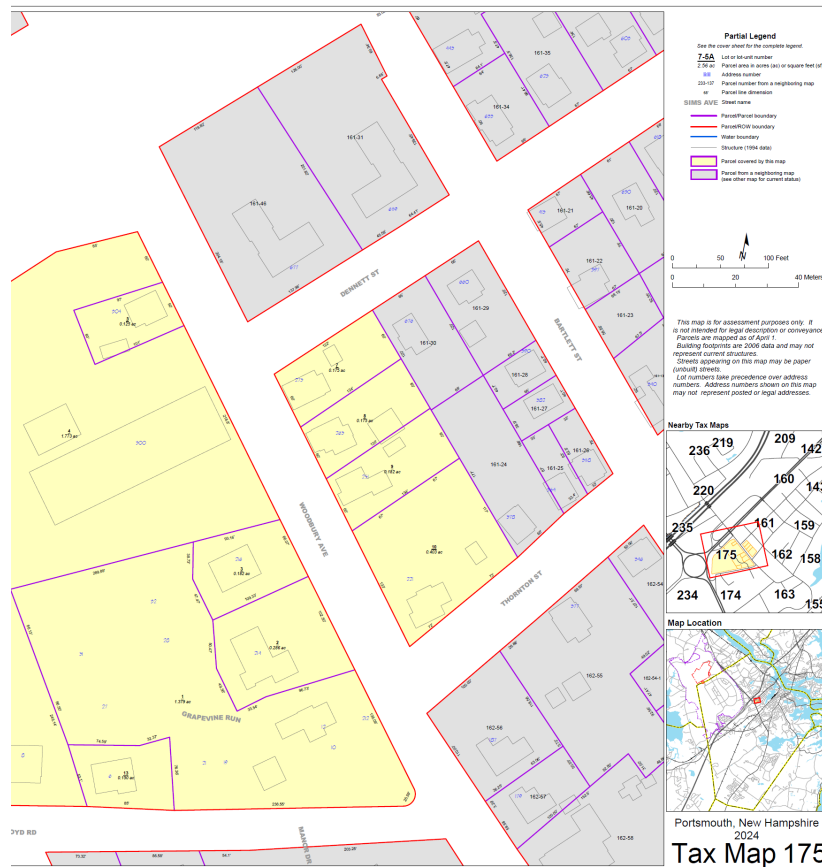
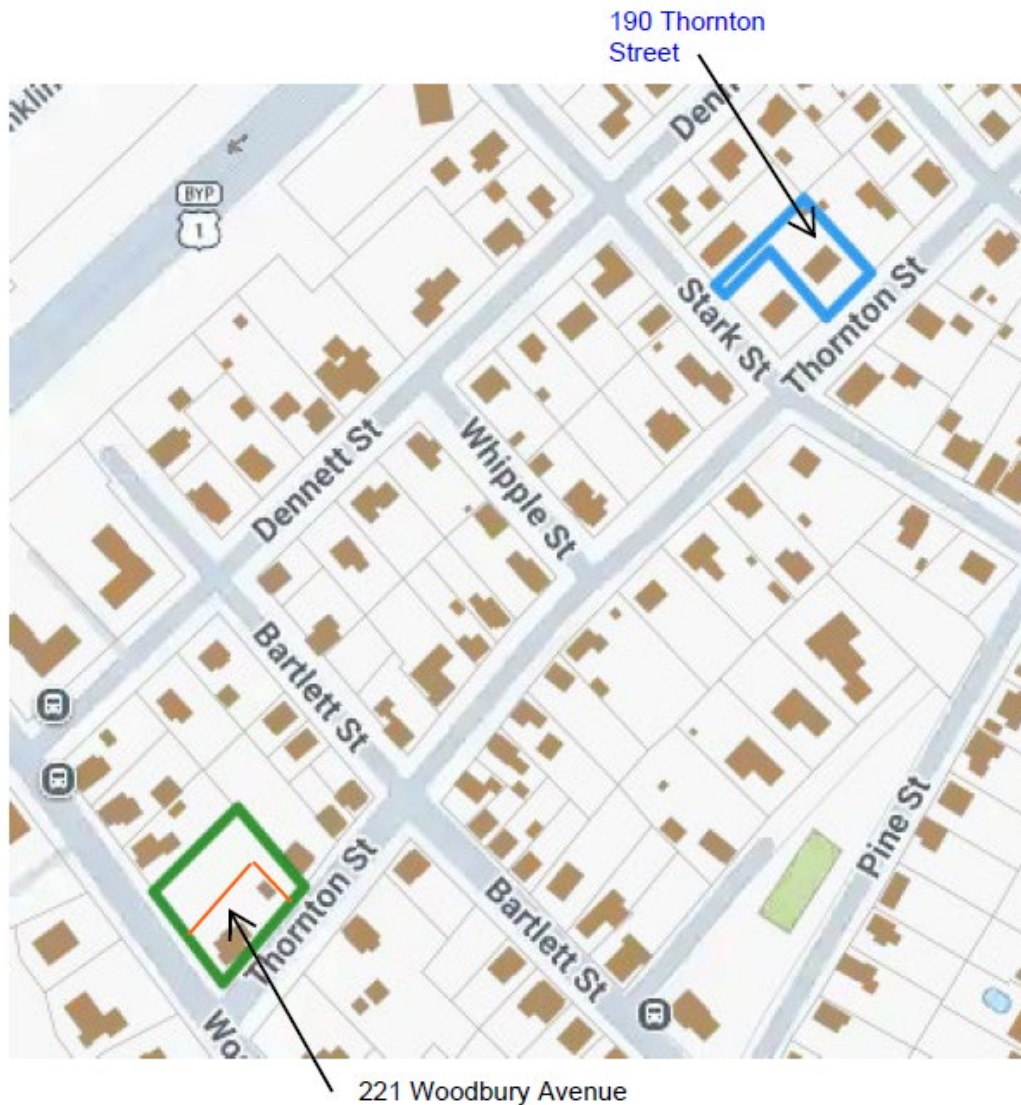


Figure 3. – Tax Map.

**Site Layout:**

The proposed subdivision is deliberately designed to maintain the neighborhood's character by preventing driveways and garages from dominating the property's architectural facade.

**SUBDIVISION PRECEDENT**

*Figure 4. - Precedent for lot configuration.*

By relocating these visual elements to the interior of the lot, the proposed lot configuration successfully preserves the existing streetscape and the historic charm of the area. This approach would maintain the historic language of the “urban street wall”.

**July 14, 2026**

Additionally, this driveway configuration eliminates the danger of backing into street traffic. A comparable precedent for this L-shaped lot and driveway configuration can be found at 190 Thornton Street.

In this case, were the subdivision to be granted, there would be no change in the essential characteristics of the neighborhood. A second dwelling lot is entirely appropriate and consistent with the existing subdivision in which this property sits. It does not increase the amount of residential density beyond what is permitted by right. Thus, the fundamental residential character of the neighborhood will not be altered and the health, safety and welfare of the public will not be threatened.

Thank you for your consultation on this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Ryan". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Martin" and "Ryan" being capitalized and prominent.

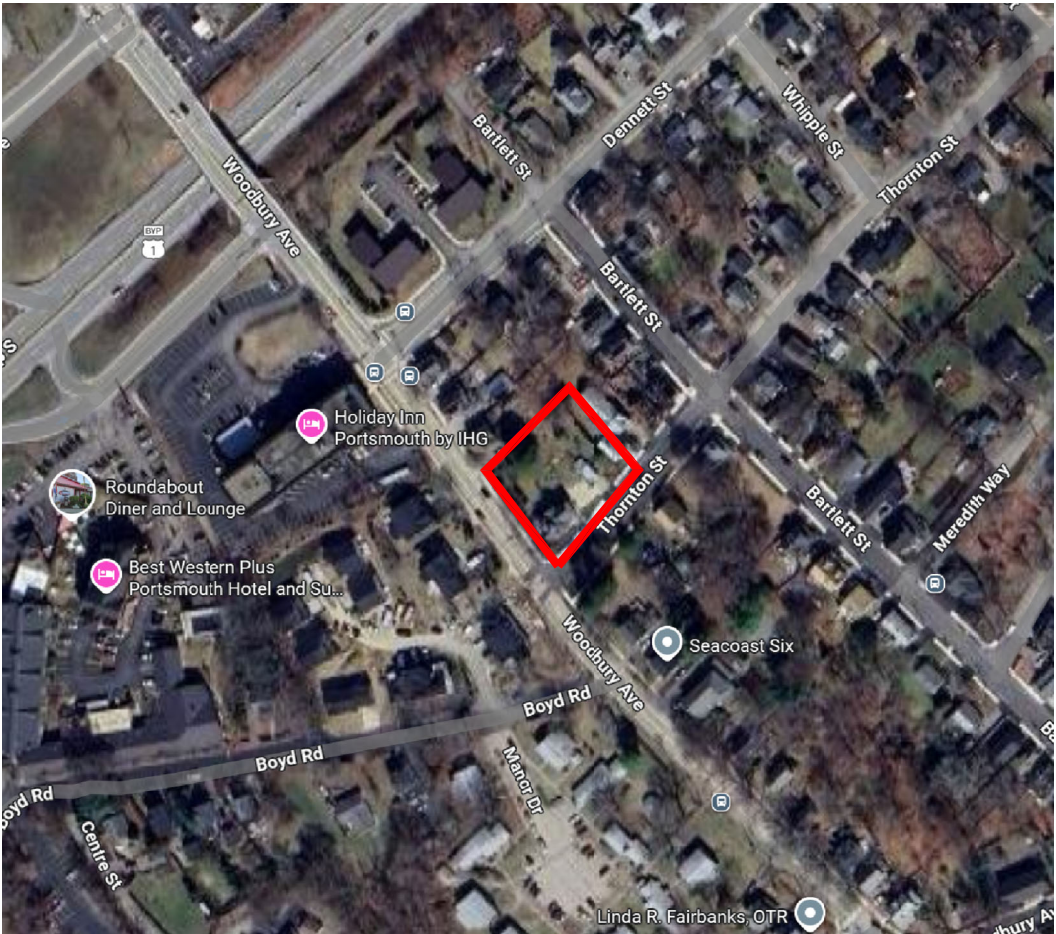
Martin Ryan

DRAWING LIST

| NO | TITLE                        |
|----|------------------------------|
| T1 | TITLE SHEET                  |
| C1 | HISTORIC MAP & FIGURE GROUND |
| C2 | EXISTING SITE PLAN           |
| C3 | PROPOSED SITE PLAN           |
| C4 | SITE DIAGRAMS                |
| A1 | SITE ELEVATIONS              |
| A2 | SITE ELEVATIONS              |
| P1 | CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS          |
| P2 | CONTEXT PHOTOGRAPHS          |

221 WOODBURY AVENUE  
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801  
SUBDIVISION PROPOSAL PLAN  
TAC WORK SESSION

OWNER- RYAN TRUST  
JULY 14, 2026



AERIAL VIEW  
SCALE: NTS

MARTIN RYAN ARCHITECT  
221 Woodbury Ave  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
+

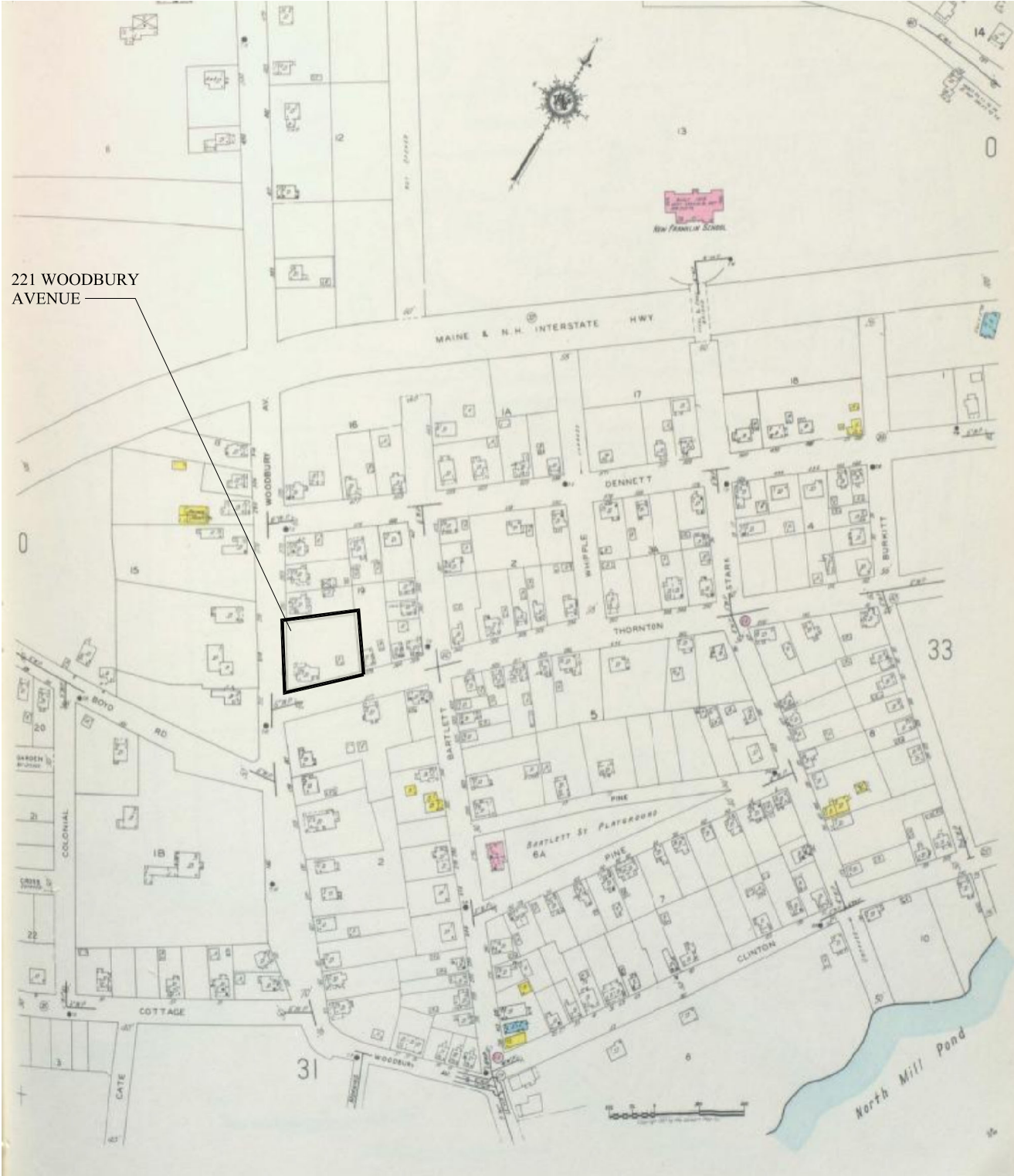
JULY 14, 2026  
TAC WORK  
SESSION

221 WOODBURY AVE  
PORTSMOUTH, NH  
SUBDIVISION PLAN

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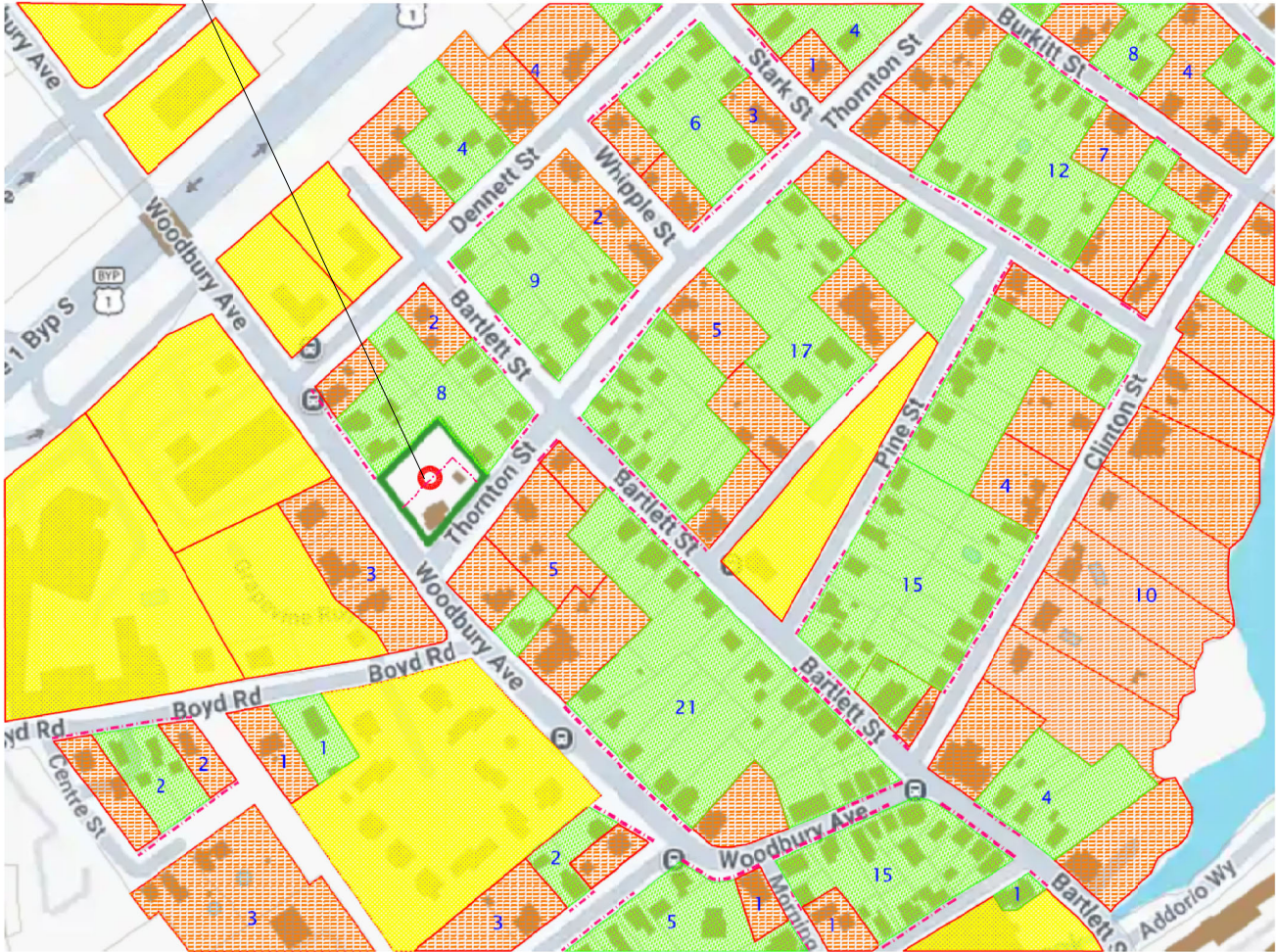
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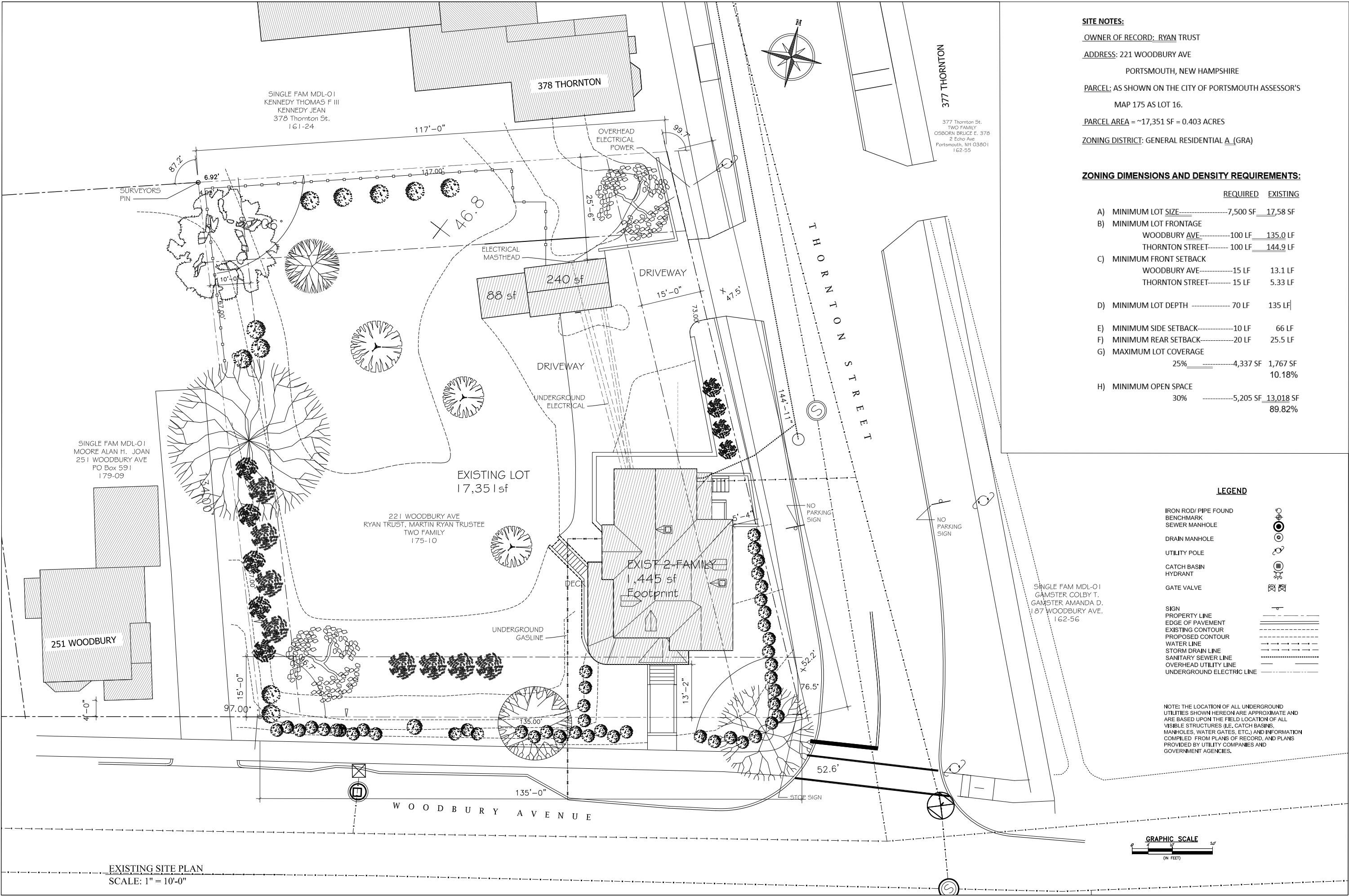
SANBORNE MAP 1920  
SCALE: NTS

221 WOODBURY  
AVENUE



- GREEN— LOTS WITH LESS THAN THE 100LF REQUIRED STREET FRONTAGE (TOTAL 134 LOTS)
- ORANGE— LOTS THAT MEET THE 100 LF STREET FRONTAGE REQUIREMENT (TOTAL 60 LOTS)
- YELLOW— COMMERCIAL OR MULT-FAMILY LOTS
- FRONTAGE EQUAL OR LESS THAN 63 LF (82 TOTAL)
- SITE— 221 WOODBURY AVENUE
- 204 LOTS TOTAL SHOWN

FIGURE GROUND  
SCALE: NTS



**SITE NOTES:**  
**OWNER OF RECORD:** RYAN TRUST  
**ADDRESS:** 221 WOODBURY AVE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**PARCEL:** AS SHOWN ON THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH ASSESSOR'S  
MAP 175 AS LOT 16.  
**PARCEL AREA** = ~17,351 SF = 0.403 ACRES  
**ZONING DISTRICT:** GENERAL RESIDENTIAL A (GRA)

|    |                       | REQUIRED | EXISTING  |
|----|-----------------------|----------|-----------|
| A) | MINIMUM LOT SIZE      | 7,500 SF | 17,58 SF  |
| B) | MINIMUM LOT FRONTAGE  |          |           |
|    | WOODBURY AVE          | 100 LF   | 135.0 LF  |
|    | THORNTON STREET       | 100 LF   | 144.9 LF  |
| C) | MINIMUM FRONT SETBACK |          |           |
|    | WOODBURY AVE          | 15 LF    | 13.1 LF   |
|    | THORNTON STREET       | 15 LF    | 5.33 LF   |
| D) | MINIMUM LOT DEPTH     | 70 LF    | 135 LF    |
| E) | MINIMUM SIDE SETBACK  | 10 LF    | 66 LF     |
| F) | MINIMUM REAR SETBACK  | 20 LF    | 25.5 LF   |
| G) | MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE  |          |           |
|    | 25%                   | 4,337 SF | 1,767 SF  |
|    |                       |          | 10.18%    |
| H) | MINIMUM OPEN SPACE    |          |           |
|    | 30%                   | 5,205 SF | 13,018 SF |
|    |                       |          | 89.82%    |

| LEGEND                    |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| IRON ROD/ PIPE FOUND      |  |
| BENCHMARK                 |  |
| SEWER MANHOLE             |  |
| DRAIN MANHOLE             |  |
| UTILITY POLE              |  |
| CATCH BASIN               |  |
| HYDRANT                   |  |
| GATE VALVE                |  |
| SIGN                      |  |
| PROPERTY LINE             |  |
| EDGE OF PAVEMENT          |  |
| EXISTING CONTOUR          |  |
| PROPOSED CONTOUR          |  |
| WATER LINE                |  |
| STORM DRAIN LINE          |  |
| SANITARY SEWER LINE       |  |
| OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE     |  |
| UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC LINE |  |

NOTE: THE LOCATION OF ALL UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHOWN HEREON ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE BASED UPON THE FIELD LOCATION OF ALL VISIBLE STRUCTURES (I.E., CATCH BASINS, MANHOLES, WATER GATES, ETC.) AND INFORMATION COMPILED FROM PLANS OF RECORD, AND PLANS PROVIDED BY UTILITY COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

MARTIN RYAN ARCHITECT  
221 Woodbury Ave  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

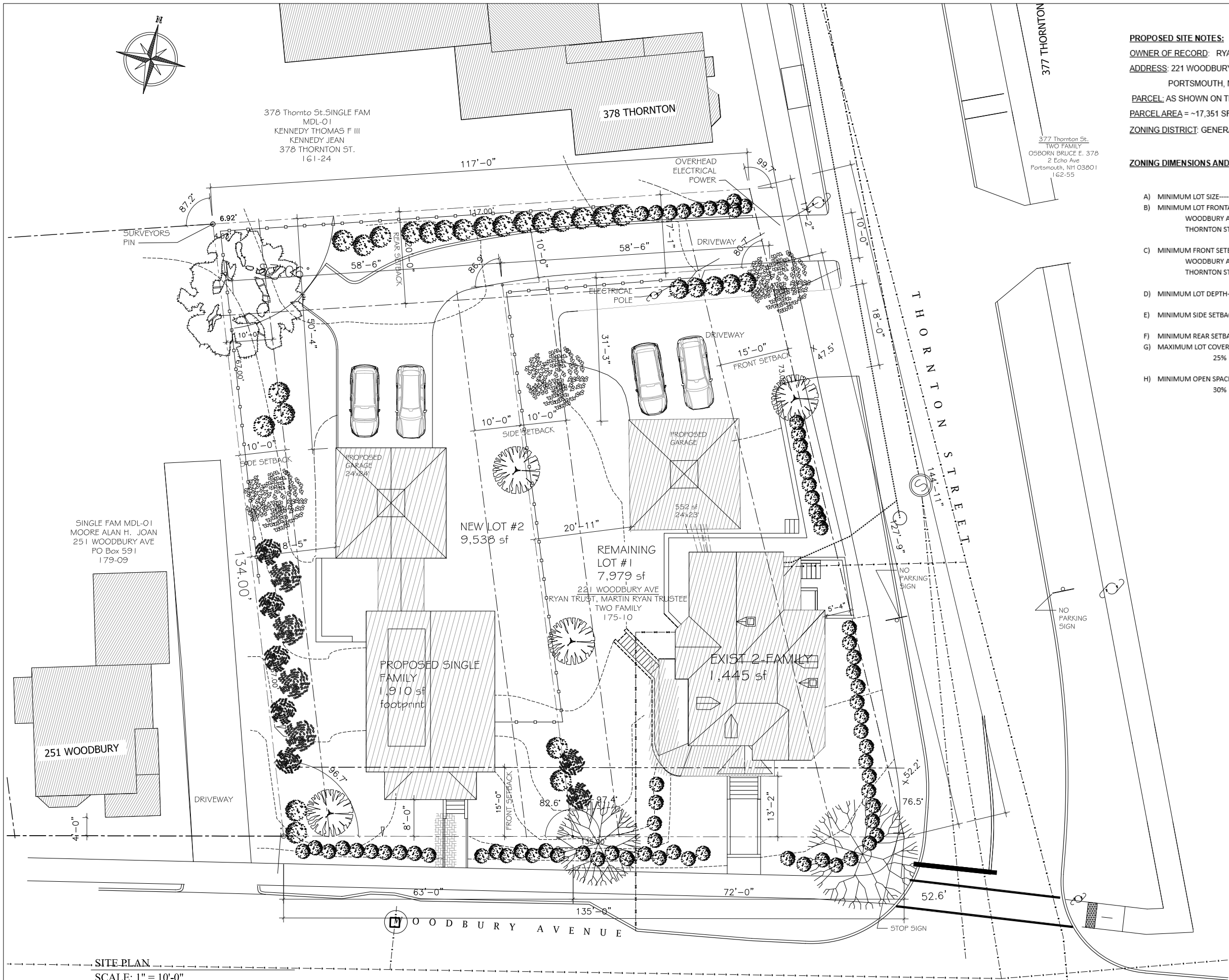
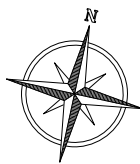
JULY 14, 2026  
TAC WORK  
SESSION

221 WOODBURY AVE  
PORTSMOUTH, NH  
SUBDIVISION PLAN

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EXISTING SITE  
PLAN

C2



**PROPOSED SITE NOTES:**  
**OWNER OF RECORD:** RYAN TRUST  
**ADDRESS:** 221 WOODBURY AVE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
**PARCEL:** AS SHOWN ON THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH ASSESSOR'S MAP 175 AS LOT 16.  
**PARCEL AREA** = ~17,351 SF = 0.403 ACRES  
**ZONING DISTRICT:** GENERAL RESIDENTIAL A (GRA)

| ZONING DIMENSIONS AND DENSITY REQUIREMENTS: |          |           |          |          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
|                                             | REQUIRED | EXISTING  | LOT#1    | LOT#2    |
| A) MINIMUM LOT SIZE-----                    | 7,500 SF | 17,358 SF | 7,979 SF | 9,538 SF |
| B) MINIMUM LOT FRONTAGE                     |          |           |          |          |
| WOODBURY AVE-----                           | 100 LF   | 135.0 LF  | 72.0 LF  | 63.0 LF* |
| THORNTON STREET-----                        | 100 LF   | 144.9 LF  | 127.8 LF | N/A      |
| C) MINIMUM FRONT SETBACK                    |          |           |          |          |
| WOODBURY AVE-----                           | 15 LF    | 13.1 LF   | 13.1 LF  | 9.33 LF  |
| THORNTON STREET-----                        | 15 LF    | 5.33 LF   | 5.4 LF   | N/A      |
| D) MINIMUM LOT DEPTH-----                   | 70 LF    | 139 LF    | 123 LF   | 136 LF   |
| E) MINIMUM SIDE SETBACK-----                | 10 LF    | 66 LF     | 19.1 LF  | 18.4 LF  |
| F) MINIMUM REAR SETBACK-----                | 20 LF    | 25.5 LF   | 29.8 LF  | 49 LF    |
| G) MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE                     |          |           |          |          |
| 25% -----                                   | 4,337 SF | 1,812 SF  | 1,997 SF | 1,910 SF |
| 25% -----                                   |          |           |          | 20%      |
| H) MINIMUM OPEN SPACE                       |          |           |          |          |
| 30% -----                                   | 5,205 SF | 13,018 SF | 5,982 SF | 7,628 SF |
| 30% -----                                   |          |           | 75%      | 80%      |

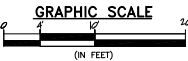
LEGEND

- IRON ROD/ PIPE FOUND
- BENCHMARK
- SEWER MANHOLE
- DRAIN MANHOLE
- UTILITY POLE
- CATCH BASIN
- HYDRANT
- GATE VALVE
- SIGN
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- OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE
- UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC LINE

NOTE: THE LOCATION OF ALL UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHOWN HEREON ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE BASED UPON THE FIELD LOCATION OF ALL VISIBLE STRUCTURES (I.E. CATCH BASINS, MANHOLES, WATER GATES, ETC.) AND INFORMATION COMPILED FROM PLANS OF RECORD, AND PLANS PROVIDED BY UTILITY COMPANIES AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.

187 Woodbury Ave  
SINGLE FAM MDL-01  
GAMESTER COLBY T.  
GAMESTER AMANDA D.  
187 WOODBURY AVE.  
162-56

SITE PLAN  
SCALE: 1" = 10'-0"



MARTIN RYAN ARCHITECT  
221 Woodbury Ave  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

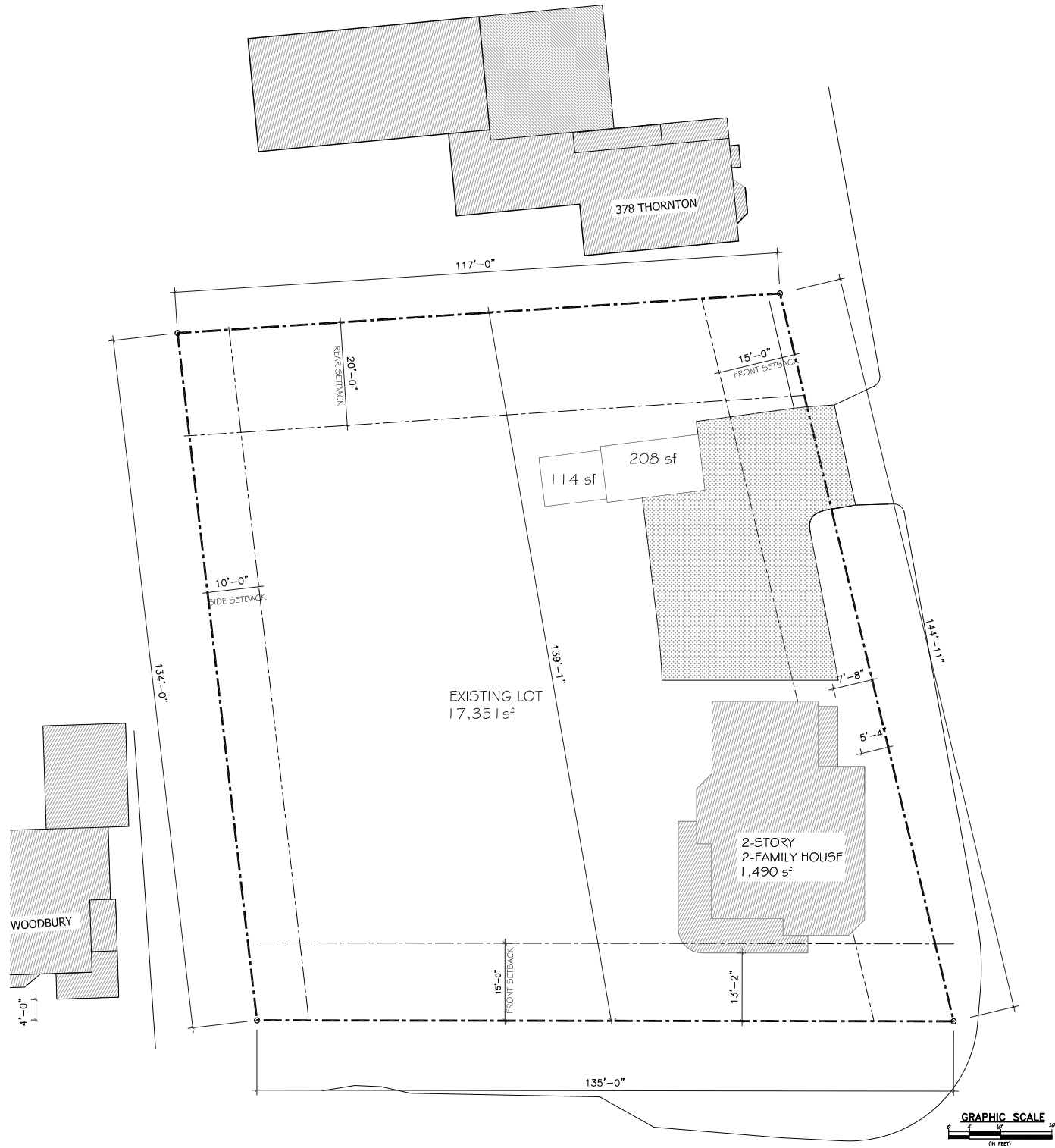
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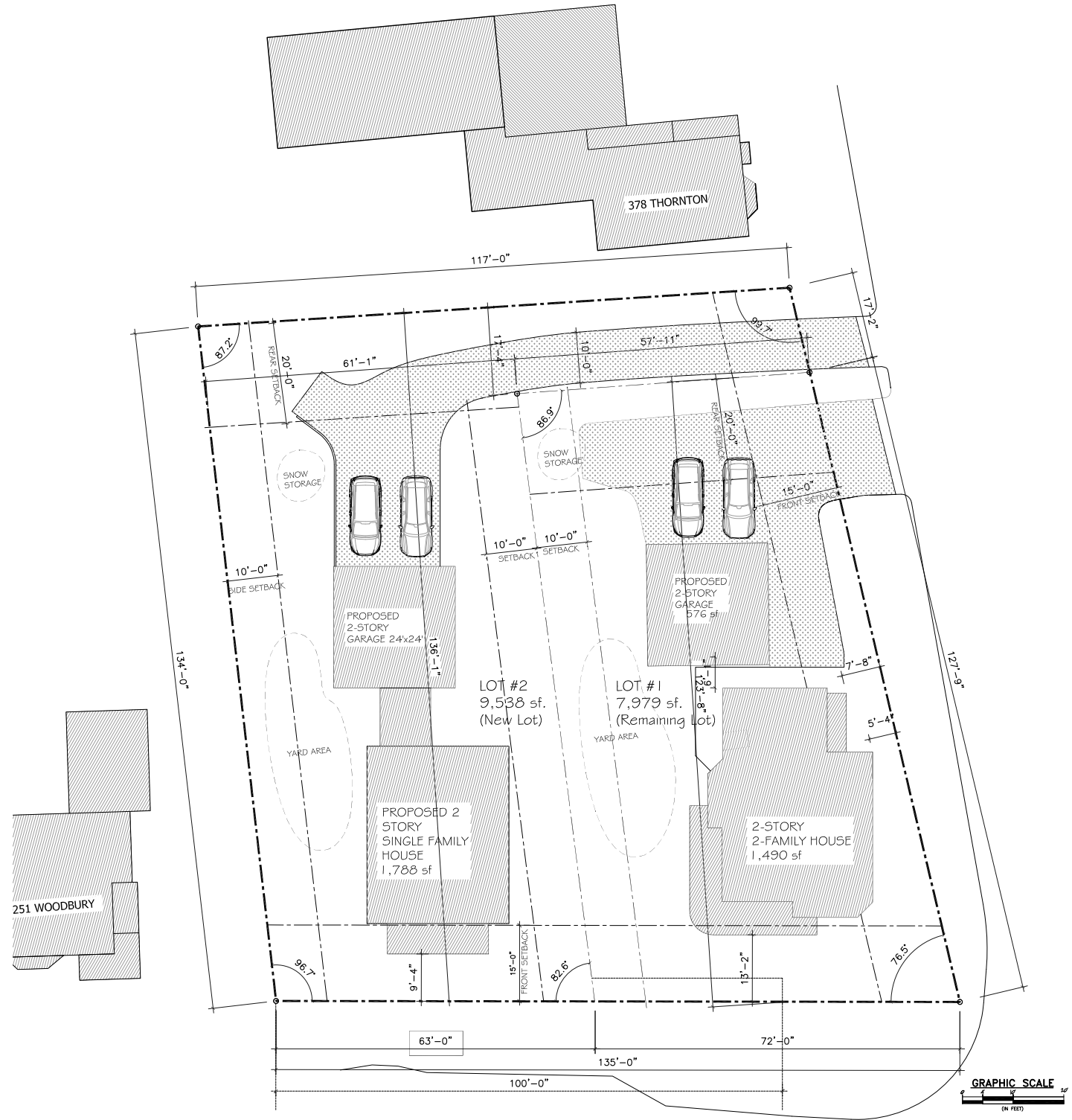
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PROPOSED SITE  
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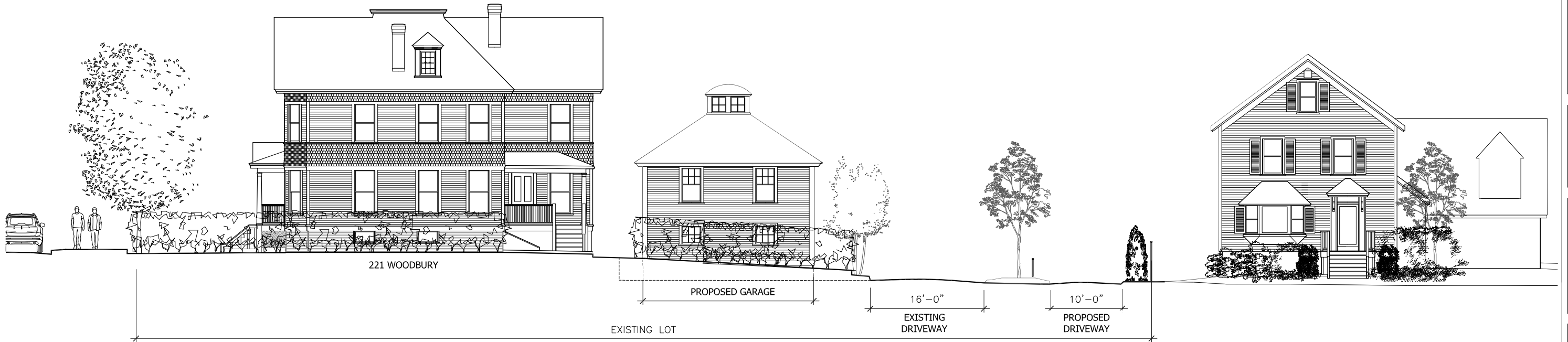


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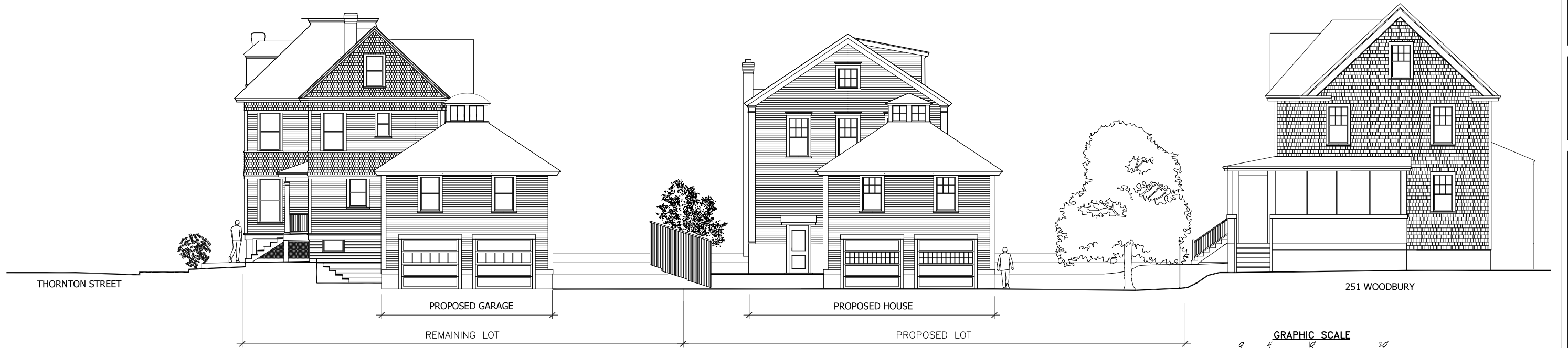


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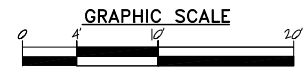




3 THORNTON STREET ELEVATION



4 NORTH ELEVATION





PHOTOGRAPH #5



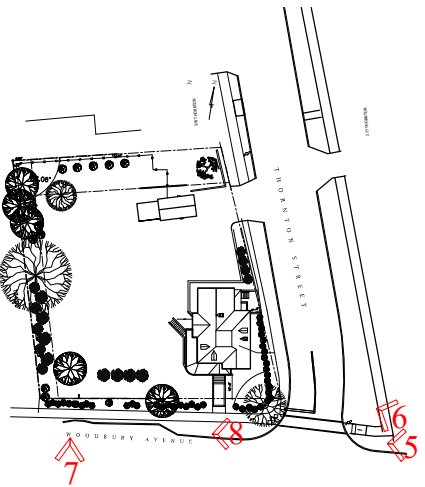
PHOTOGRAPH #6



PHOTOGRAPH #7



PHOTOGRAPH #8



SITE KEY PLAN  
SCALE: NTS



PHOTOGRAPH #1



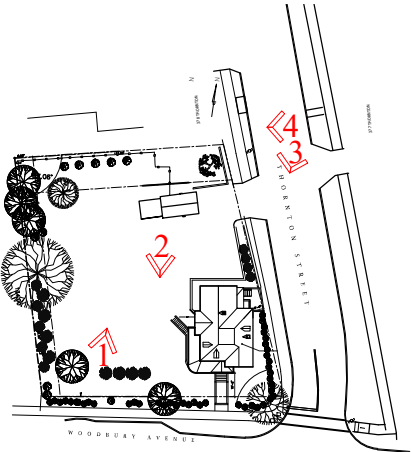
PHOTOGRAPH #2



PHOTOGRAPH #3



PHOTOGRAPH #4

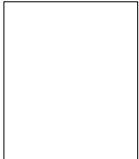


SITE KEY PLAN  
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221 WOODBURY AVE  
PORTSMOUTH, NH  
PROPOSAL

JULY 14, 2026  
TAC WORK  
SESSION



MARTIN RYAN ARCHITECT  
221 Woodbury Ave  
Portsmouth, NH 03801  
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CONTEXT  
PHOTOGRAPHS