2. CASE 20.061, 59 WILLIAMS STREET, House, 1875-95 (COLLEGE HILL)

Victorian Cottage; 1 story; clapboard; gabled roof with bracket cornice; 4 bays wide with bracketed pediments above windows and doorway.

CONTRIBUTING



Arrow indicates 59 Williams Street.



Arrow indicates project location, looking north.

Applicant: Joseph Furtado, 188 Pratt Street, Providence, RI 02906 Owner: College Hill Realty Trust, 188 Pratt Street, Providence, RI 02906

Architect: Friedrich St. Florian, FAIA, 146 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903

Proposal: The scope of work proposed consists of Moving/Relocation and Major Alterations and includes: the moving of the existing cottage set back approx. 21' from Williams St, and the construction of a new addition to the east elevation of the existing cottage with an attached garage to the west.

The following issues are relevant to this application:

- The application is for conceptual approval. At the August 24th meeting the Commission continued the application with the applicant's consent. The applicants had returned with a revised plan which the Commission commented was an improvement over the previous iteration. There were still concerns with the siting of the relocated cottage, now set back approximately 21' from Williams Street, as related to the retaining wall that runs perpendicular to Williams Street. The applicants had graded the property at the rear of the relocated cottage and requested the applicants consider also regrading the front yard. This would place the cottage in a more appropriate setting and allow for the proposed front stair to be reduced in size. There were additional comments related to materials of the addition, slope of the roof. The Commission stated that these elements could be more "modern" if so desired. The applicants agreed to review their proposal and submit alternate plans;
- Revised plans, a survey, tree survey and renderings have been submitted. The revised design for a new residence continues to feature the historic 19th century cottage which is now set back approx. 21 feet from the existing masonry wall along Williams Street in order to provide a landscaped foreground that extends the parklike setting at the eastern section of the site. The perpendicular retaining wall has been reduced so that there is now only an approximately one-foot wall required to lessen the impact on the significant tree to the east, with the area below now sloped to the west. The new addition is to the east of the cottage. It occupies the south east corner of the parcel. A patio area connects the great room of the cottage with the new addition at the south side of the buildings offering the privacy of outdoor living with a city garden facing south. A garage is located to the southwest of the kitchen area of the cottage; and,
- An analysis of the historic atlas & map history of 59 Williams Street informs the following:
 - The <u>1857 Walling Map</u> shows that the cottage was not there at that time. The lot was owned by "C Allen," probably Crawford Allen who was living at 77 Williams according the 1844 Providence Directory. 77 Williams is a large double-house designed by John Holden Greene about 1816. According to the RIHPHC Providence survey, 77 Williams Street was built as an investment property. The west unit at 77 Williams Street appears to be located on the same lot as today's 59 Williams Street. The 1857 map shows the remainder of the lot as vacant, except for a very small structure in the southwest corner of the lot.
 - The 59 Williams Street lot adjoins the rear of the Thomas F. Hoppin property at 383 Benefit Street; the house was designed by Alpheus Morse and completed in 1855. Hoppin died in 1872, and the Hoppin house was rented to several RI governors and was the setting for a reception for President Rutherford B. Hayes in the late 1870s (PPS Guide). The Hoppin property boundary does not include the 59 Williams property; however, the property line makes an odd jog at the rear of 77 Williams Street.
 - The <u>1875 Providence Atlas</u> shows the lot was owned by "James Coates," [sic]. James Coats (1834-1913), a Scotsman, was the head of J & P Coats-Conant Thread Company in Pawtucket. He was living in Providence in 1871, and the 1905 Providence Directory lists "Mr. & Mrs. James Coats" living at 77 Williams Street as well as "James Burr, butler." The RIHPHC Providence survey speculates that Coats may have built the large addition at the rear "in the mid-1870s". James Coats subsequently built the house at 13 Brown Street (RIHPHC). He died in Scotland in 1913.
 - The map shows that the 1857 structure at the southwest corner of the lot appears to have been enlarged or replaced; it is likely that this structure was a stable and/or carriage shed. In addition, a long, narrow structure appears along Williams Street, which is designated as a masonry building. This structure is in the vicinity of the existing brick and brownstone wall that runs along the sidewalk (now reinforced with metal straps and diagonal braces on the garden side). The existing cottage is not shown on the property in 1875. However, the property line at the rear of 77 Williams Street has changed to include the 1857 jog shown as part of the Hoppin lot. Two back-lot buildings are shown in this area.

- The <u>1889 Sanborn Map</u> and the <u>1895 Providence Atlas</u> show that a building in the location of the existing cottage has been added to the 77 Williams lot. The map also shows that the two 1875 outbuildings behind 77 Williams Street have been replaced by a large addition to the main building.
- The <u>1937 Providence Atlas</u> shows that the building in the location of the existing cottage remains on the lot, but the 1875 structure in the southwest corner of the lot has been replaced by a structure that appears to be the existing parking garage. The property was owned by "Robert H. I. Goddard, et. al.," while the primary Goddard residence was at 66 Power Street.

Preliminary conclusions:

- The lot at 59 Williams Street appears to have been a yard associated with the double-house at 77-79 Williams. This
 property does not appear to be associated with the Thomas Hoppin House or the Edward Carrington House.
 (This observation has been updated with Pierre Irving's email testimony (Exhibit 2 from the 8/24 meeting's public
 testimony)
- Persons of local prominence and wealth have owned and lived at 77 Williams Street with its associated yard at 59
 Williams Street.
- The lot at 59 Williams Street has had several modest structures over time probably stables and service structures.
- The existing cottage was added to the property by James Coates, possibly as a residence for his butler, James Burr. Is it possible that the existing cottage was one of the 1875 back-lot buildings behind 77 Williams Street, and that it was moved to its present location when Coats built the addition? Perhaps.
- The 1875 map shows a wood 'stable or barn' structure in the back of 77 Williams (by its cross-hatching) abutting a barn belonging to 79 Williams. The building does seem to be the same size and shape as the cottage but it's hard to imagine that the cottage would have been built in such a tight space with windows on all sides.
- The existing cottage has been in its current location for 131 to 145 years and has been in an open-garden setting.
 Whether the cottage was built originally on site or was moved to the site, it has the character of an informal secondary structure and lacks evidence of a formal street presence.
- An inspection of the rear of the cottage shows that it appears to be on its original foundation but it's not conclusive.
 The brick foundation, which is capped with a molded brick course, bears on a field stone footing that's partially exposed. The window treatment is different than the opposite side. The back wall of the 4-car garage to be demolished is composed of rusticated concrete block bearing on a poured-in-place concrete foundation (and retaining wall). It appears to date to the 1930s
- The moving of an historic structure is discouraged and seen as a last resort, as an alternative to demolition. The Commission does not consider this proposal lightly. In the case of the cottage at 59 Williams Street there is evidence that the structure may have been moved from a different location. However, this is unclear and not definitive. There is clear evidence that the portion of the property where the cottage and the addition are to be located once contained various utilitarian structures. In reviewing applications, the Commission often considers the historic significance of the property. It is of no debate that the cottage at 59 Williams Street is a contributing historic resource. However, the degree of its significance is not singular. It is debatably a secondary structure, in its form and purported use. The applicants have stated that the cottage as it currently exists is not a viable single-family home. By moving the structure, the proposal allows the cottage to be repurposed as a viable single-family residence. This seems a reasonable statement given the current layout of the cottage and the necessities of modern living. The Commission has often stated that we cannot treat all historic buildings as "house museums" that the intent of an historic district is to acknowledge and allow growth but in a manner that is appropriate to the guidelines. In this case, it is Staff's assertion that the proposal meets this intent. The moving of the cottage and proposed additions will not have an adverse impact on the property or the district. It is staff's opinion that the opposite will actually occur: The movement of the cottage will be of beneficial impact to the property and district by allowing the house to flourish in an appropriate use for the future while introducing an appropriate addition of distinction into the district.

Recommendations: The staff recommends the PHDC make the following findings of fact:

 a) 59 Williams Street is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contribute to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Historic Landmarks District; The structure may have been moved to its current location during the late 1880s;

- b) The application for Moving/Relocation, Major Alterations is considered complete for conceptual approval; and,
- c) The work as proposed is in accord with PHDC Standards 8 & 9 as follows: as the proposed alterations are appropriate having determined that the proposed relocation and construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district (8), and whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure and the site would be unimpaired (9).

Staff recommends a motion be made stating that: The application is considered complete. 59 Williams Street is a structure of historical and architectural significance that contribute to the significance of the College Hill local historic district, having been recognized as a contributing structure to the College Hill National Historic Landmarks District. The Commission grants Conceptual Approval of the proposal as submitted as the proposed alterations are appropriate having determined that the proposed relocation and construction is architecturally and historically compatible with the property and district having an appropriate size, scale and form that will not have an adverse effect on the property or district (8), and whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure and the site would be unimpaired (9), citing and agreeing to the recommendations in the staff report, with the applicant to return to the Commission for final approval.

APPLICATION FOR 59 WILLIAMS STREET submitted to the PROVIDENCE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION October 5, 2020 Meeting

Friedrich StFlorian Architects

59 WILLIAMS STREET

Friedrich StFlorian Architects

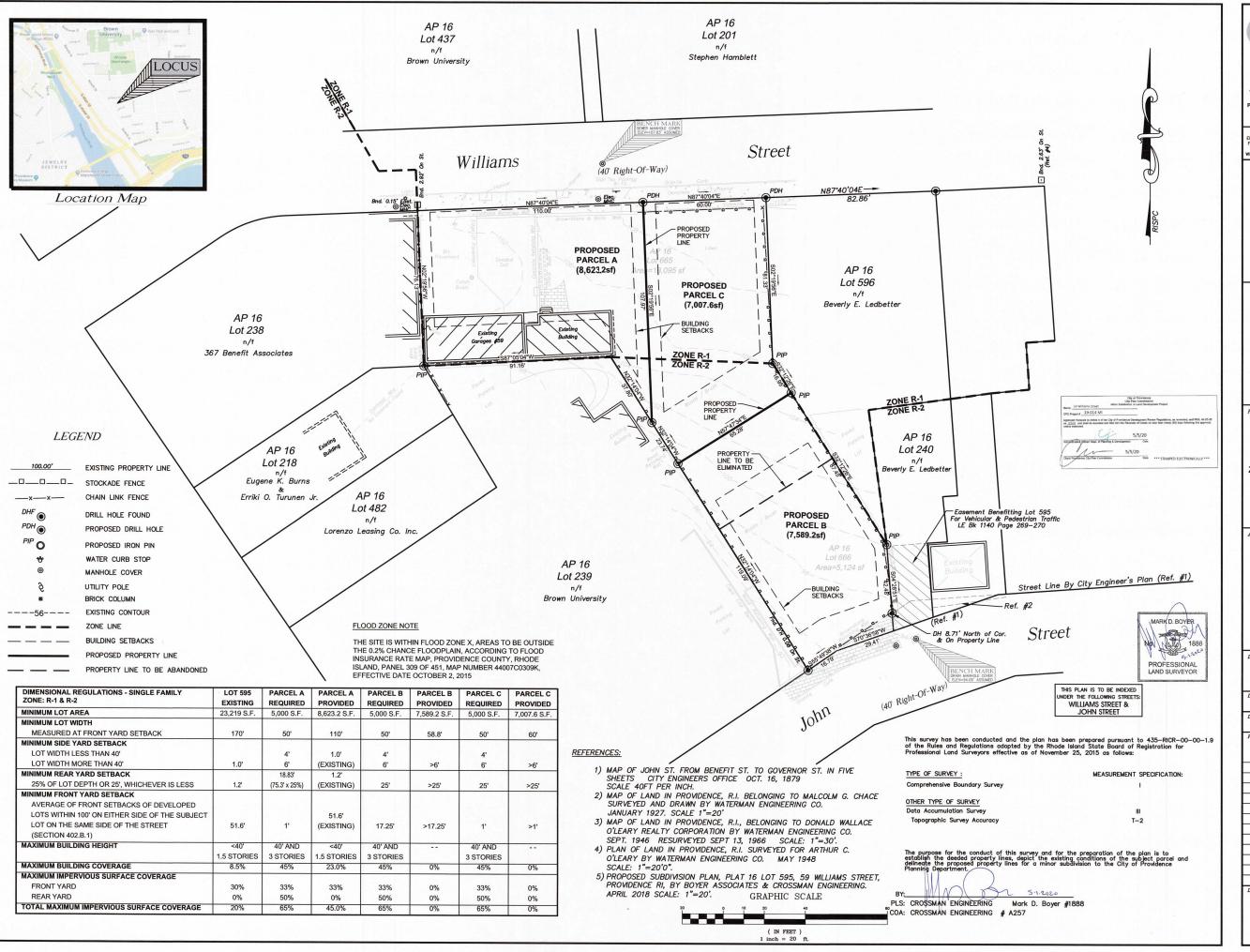
The revised design for a new residence continues to feature the historic 19th century cottage, which is now set back 20 feet from the existing masonry wall along Williams Street, in order to provide a landscape foreground that extends the park like setting at the eastern section of the site.

The new addition is now to the east of the cottage. It occupies the south east corner of the parcel.

A patio area connects the great room of the cottage with the new addition at the east side of the building while offering the privacy of outdoor living with a city garden facing south. A garage is located to the southwest of the kitchen area of the cottage.

We are pleased to have met the concerns and recommendations of the PHDC's members and look forward to discussing the new design.







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CROSSMAN ENGINEERING

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DDO I DOM MIN

PROPOSED
SUBDIVISION PLAN
PLAT 16, LOTS 665 and 666
(FORMERLY LOT 595)
ZONING DISTRICTS R-1 and R-2
RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS
HISTORIC DISTRICT
59 WILLIAMS STREET
PROVIDENCE, RI 02906

APPLICANT:

ALLEN and ANN PIPKIN

59 WILLIAMS STREET PROVIDENCE, RI 02906

DRAWING TITLE:

FINAL SUBDIVISION PLAN

DATE: SCALE: 1"=20'

DWC. NAME:
59 Williams St — Proposed Subdivision
REVISIONS

NUMBER REMARKS DATE

DRAWING NUMBER

C1

EXISTING WALL WILLIAMS STREET NEW WALL Most prominent tree, but covered in old bittersweet that will need to be cut away or will kill the tree eventually. 20'-25'Ø snow fencing around tree trunk during construction. If retaining wall has to be reconstructed, roots should not be exposed for long or will kill the tree. This area of trees were not planted, but rather droppings from other trees. They have not been cultivated and are growing underneath each other. Should be assessed to choose which ones to keep. One tree has fallen over onto another one and may have compromised it. 22"Ø OAK TREE 25"Ø OAK TREE CHERRY TREE This tree is dead and covered in bittersweet. Should be removed. 22"Ø OAK TREE 23"Ø OAK TREE This tree has structural problems and does not need to be retained. RED MAPLE TREE 45"-50"∅ OAK TREE On adjacent property. More prefereable for driveway on this side so new foundation construction doesn't harm tree roots. Permeable driveway surface recommeded. Any work done near this tree should This Norway Maple tree is deteriorating and does not need to be retained. maintain serious caution. JOHN STREET

PARCEL A, B & C PROVIDENCE, RI 02906

NOTES:

1 EXISTING CONDITIONS
3 1/32" = 1'-0"

OWNER / DEVELOPER COLLEGE HILL REALTY TRUST

188 PRATT STREET PROVIDENCE, RI 02906

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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

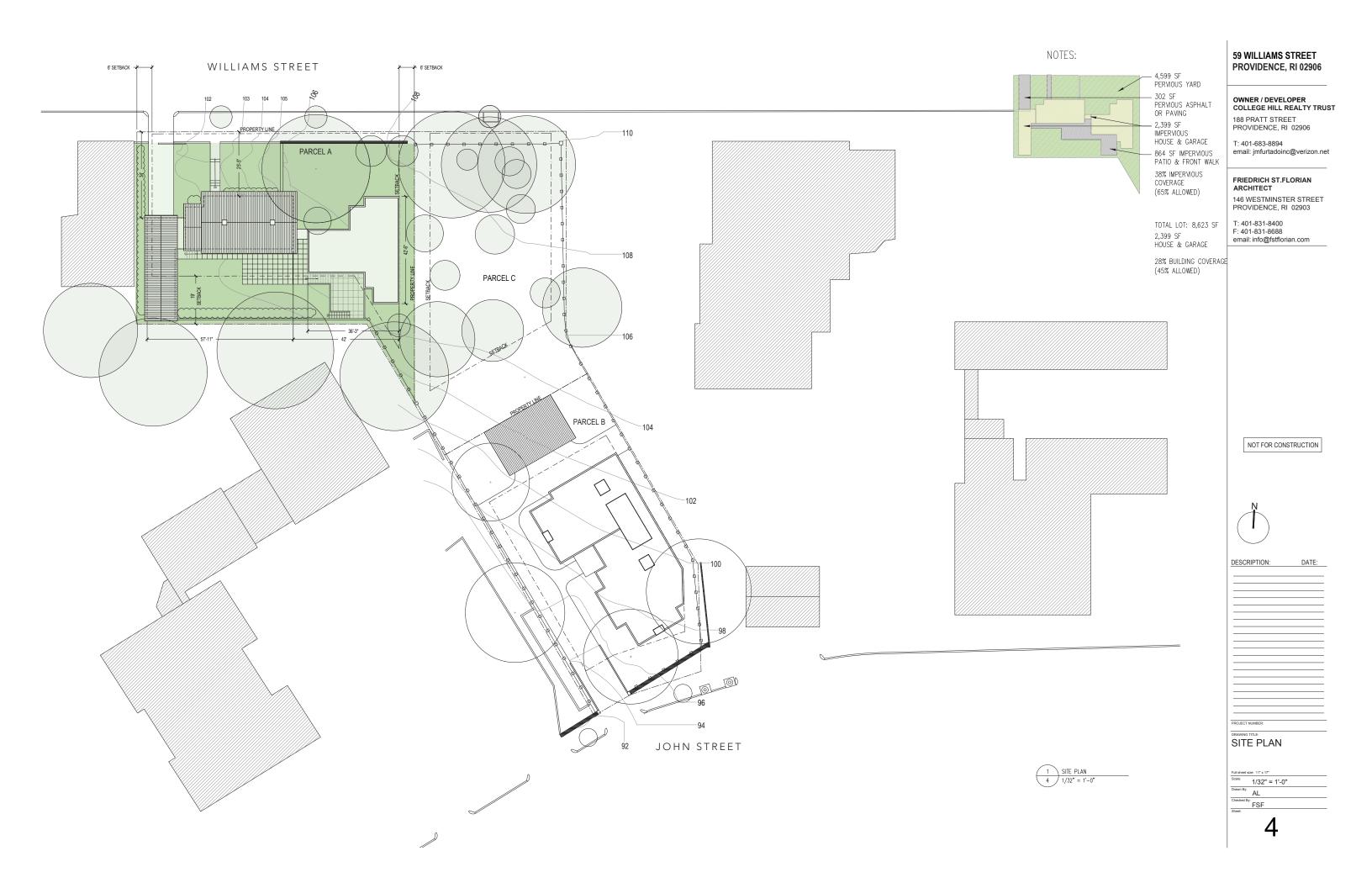


EXISTING CONDITIONS PLAN

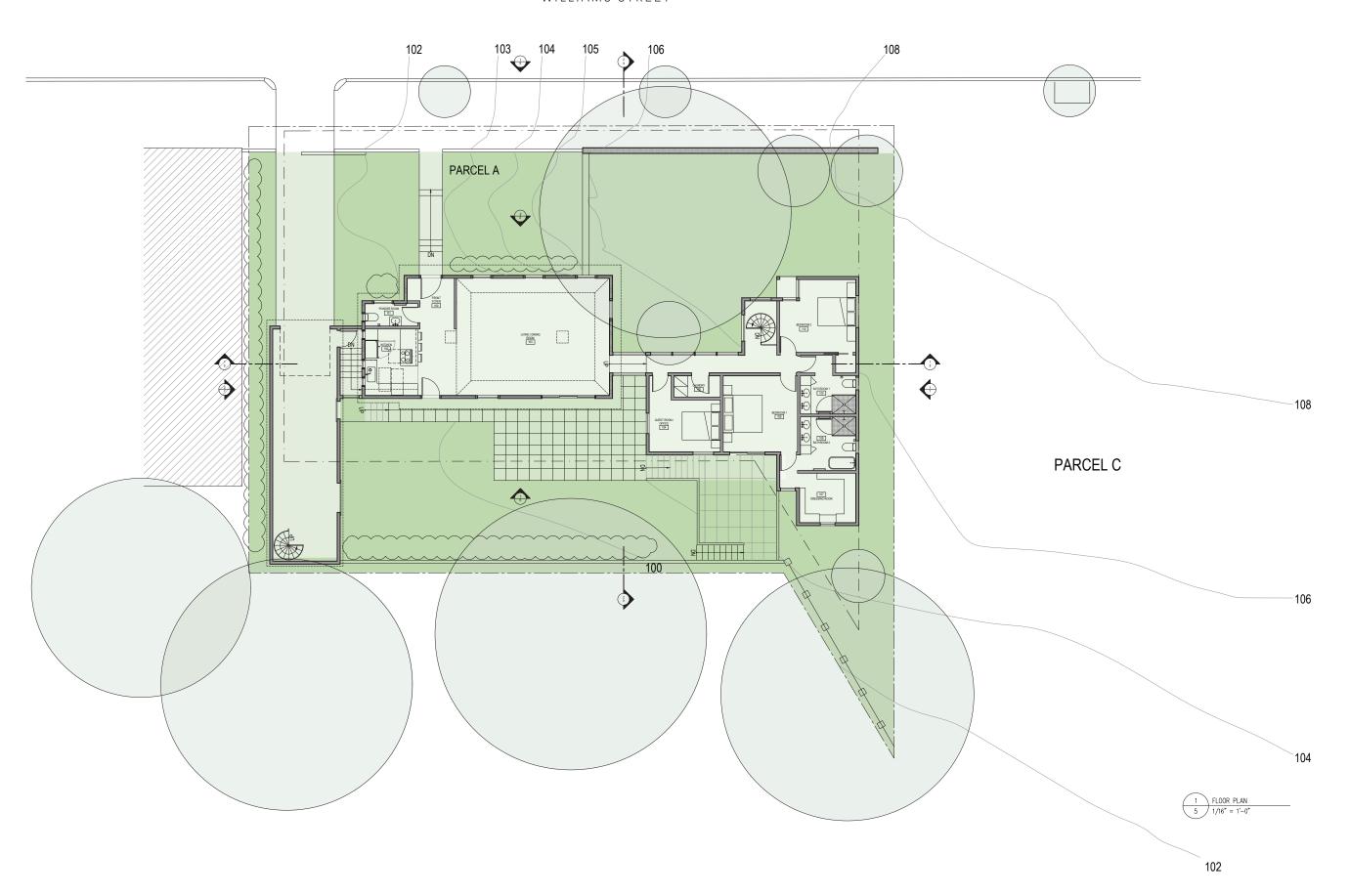
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Drawn By: AL

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WILLIAMS STREET



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5

1/16" = 1'-0"

AL

By: FSF





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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

DESCRIPTION: DATE:

PROJECT NUMBER:

DRAWING TITLE:

DRAWING TITLE:

EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Full sheet size: 11"x 17"

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Drawn By: AL

Checked By: FSF

Sheet:

7



59 WILLIAMS STREET PROVIDENCE, RI 02906

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NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

1 NORTH ELEVATION 8 1/8" = 1'-0"

EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS

Full sheet size: 11" x 17"

Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0" Drawn By: AL Checked By:
FSF
Sheet:

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