

## **1833 Abbott Street House Rational** May 11, 2017

### Background

This house is a fire loss replacement. We bought 1833 Abbott Street in 2012 as we were looking forward at that time to our retirement and the rancher style house (Photo 1) suited us as we hoped to eliminate stairs in our old age. Things changed when the house was destroyed by fire at the end of October 2016. Now we are faced with the task of rebuilding but of course new opportunities open up where the new house may be even more appropriate to our needs than the old one.

### Streetscape

The original house was a rancher located on the east side of the street. The house to the south is a 50's split level (Photo 2) while the house to the north is a 50's house with a basement (Photo 3). The rest of the houses on the block include a small bungalow, 3 older stucco character homes, a colonial revival, and more recent houses (see Photos 4 to 11 which show the houses on the east side of the street in relation to the subject property). The west side of the street includes a mixture of house styles built in different eras including a split level, older stucco character houses, an arts and crafts house and an older modern style one (Photos 12 to 18 show the various house types on the west side of Abbott in the same block as the subject property). The street is level. All lots on the block are landscaped and are located on relatively even setbacks of about 24 feet.

### Site Layout

The proposed house will occupy only a slightly larger footprint than the old one. The width is the same as the old one and the depth only 7 feet deeper except for an enlarged master bedroom on the north side. The house is oriented north-south on the lot as was the old one and as are the neighbouring houses on each side (Photos 3 and 6) thereby maintaining the continuity of the streetscape. A carport is located in the back south corner of the lot and a single car garage on the back north corner. Neither was involved in the fire and both will be retained as will most of the back lawn and garden space. A large deciduous tree in the back yard, a few maples, shrubs such as a rose bush, and garden planters will be retained. The large tree in the front yard will also be retained. Future landscaping will add a couple of fruit trees and shrubs such as lilacs and forsythias, and flowers in the front and back yards shrubs. The front yard will feature a low decorative wrought iron fence with small shrubs along the perimeter (see attached landscape plan).

### House Style

We have reviewed in detail the Development Guidelines for the Abbott and Marshall Street Heritage Conservation Areas and see that the "preferred" style for the 1800 block of Abbott Street is Early Vernacular Cottage (1918- 1932 era). Keeping that and the "heritage" designation of the area in mind we have done our best, in conjunction with our building designer, to create house that will both meet our needs and contribute an historical flavour to the streetscape. Our "preferred" style was Arts and Crafts and our initial design involved many of the characteristics of that style including heavy lumber trim features, wood shingle siding,

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painted wood multi-sash windows, soffit tails, and a large porch. The rationale for such a design, besides being our preferred style, was that such houses incorporate so many historical construction features as listed above and there is one in our block. However, following a brief meeting with a member of the Kelowna city planning department, we have restyled the house to reflect some of the more prominent Early Vernacular Cottage features such as the characteristically prominent peaks and stucco finish (such as in Photos 7,9, 15, 17). We removed the soffit tails and restyled the roof line to be more consistent with Early Vernacular style in appearance. The house features a number of box outs and peaked roof lines with a small window in the peak (such as in Photos 9, 15, and 17) to contribute to the historical and interesting nature of the house along with accenting features such as an oval arch over the doorway (such as in Photos 9, 15, 17), painted wood, multi sash windows with the small paned windows (such as in Photos 15, 17, 18), porch pillars reflecting historical design, and asymmetrical window placements. The predominant construction materials will be those used in current wood framing, locally sourced windows and doors, noise quelling windows on the front in consideration of the proximity of the bridge, high quality asphalt roof shingles, insulation meeting or exceeding current code requirements, and both gas and electrical feeds to the house to allow adaptation to either for heating, cooling, and cooking, as the economy dictates.

Our living requirements are primarily located on the main floor. Early Vernacular houses, as illustrated in part 4.3 of the Development Guidelines, are typically one and a half stories. That style of second floor with its severely sloped walls had minimal usable space. Those houses, with their elevated main level, usually had basements or at least usable crawl spaces. We are not allowed to have a basement due to the Mill Creek floodplain regulations. Therefore, we need a functional and usable second storey. However, in the spirit of only a half storey we have designed the second storey to be a partial one with setbacks on both the south and east sides. The partial second floor is for guests that will include children, grandchildren, and friends. It also provides for a small office, a storage space, and a family, or “rec” room, features of most modern homes. As stated previously, while we are doing our best to accommodate the heritage guidelines, we also have to build a house that meets our needs and is unique.

The house will have its main floor as close to ground level as possible to minimize the need for steps (only two). (The old house had a level entrance which was part of the “no steps” attraction of the rancher style.) As such the porch will be framed with low level railings and spindles. The front porch is 8 feet deep and 21 feet long extending from the front entrance to the south end of the house. It will employ locally sourced materials and will include decorative features designed to contribute to the “fanciful” or at least interesting look of the house. Porches or porticos are listed features of Early Vernacular Cottage houses. Coincidentally, our porch has been an integral ingredient of our plans from the very beginning for a couple of important reasons. Firstly, the house faces west and the porch will help shade the living room windows from the afternoon summer sun which in turn will help reduce air conditioning costs and be more environmentally friendly. Secondly, having a large usable porch will make it possible to socialize with friends and neighbours while enjoying the front street landscape and passersby in warm spring, summer and fall evenings. Porches help pull people out of their back

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yards and thereby contribute to a more community oriented design. Many houses in the area do have porches/decks/front seating areas of one kind or another (Photos 1 (our original house), 3, 4, 6, 10, 12, 13), we imagine, for the very reasons described here.

#### General Comments

The property is zoned RU-1 large lot housing and allows for houses up to 2 and half storeys. This house falls well within the zoning parameters.

The Development Guide encourages us to consider the architectural forms of the preferred style. While we have done our best to incorporate “preferred” architectural forms according to the guide, we also note that on the first page of the Introduction, Part 1.3, it states “design freedom” is encouraged while striving to maintain the historical integrity of the area. This has been our objective from the beginning. Our old house was categorized as Early Suburban and in our opinion not very historical in appearance (Photo 1). Our objective then became one of a balancing act in an attempt to replace it with something that would lend more historical character to the area while at the same time reflecting current restrictions (i.e., no basement) but also meeting our needs. What we have discovered in this process is that historical design doesn’t necessarily lend itself to modern requirements. Houses built in the 1918 to 1932 era probably featured a wood stove and ice box in the kitchen and the entertainment unit was perhaps a radio or record player. Historical houses can be preserved, but a new house that is built with heritage characteristics must still incorporate the requirements of a house of its era.

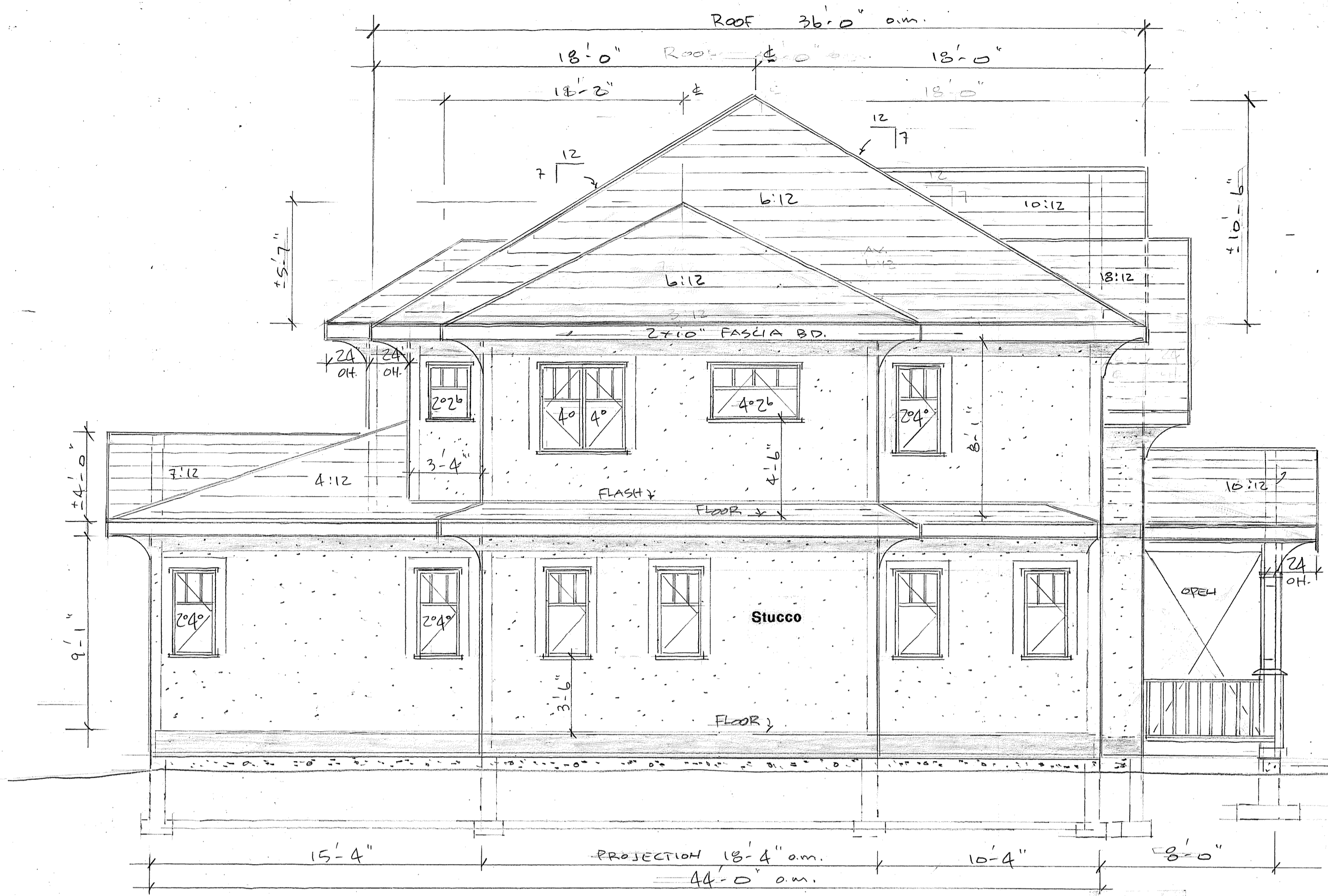
We have done our best to unite all these complicating forces in the development of our design. It has been a time consuming process. We dearly hope that the Heritage Committee will give careful consideration to our proposal and if they feel any adjustments would be preferred, they communicate those to us to assist us in moving forward as quickly as possible.

We thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

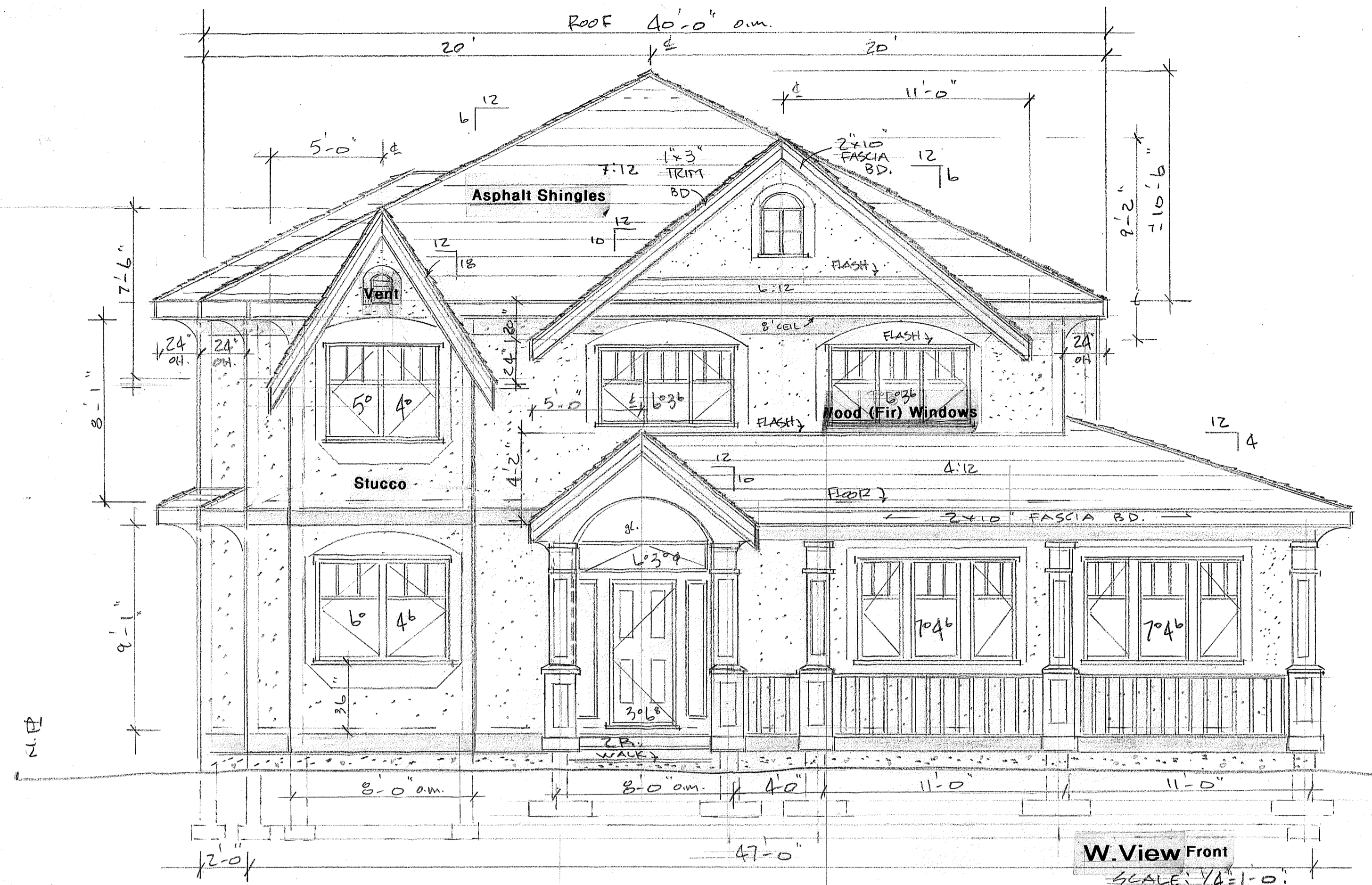
Sincerely,  
Susan Ames and Dave Erikson, owners



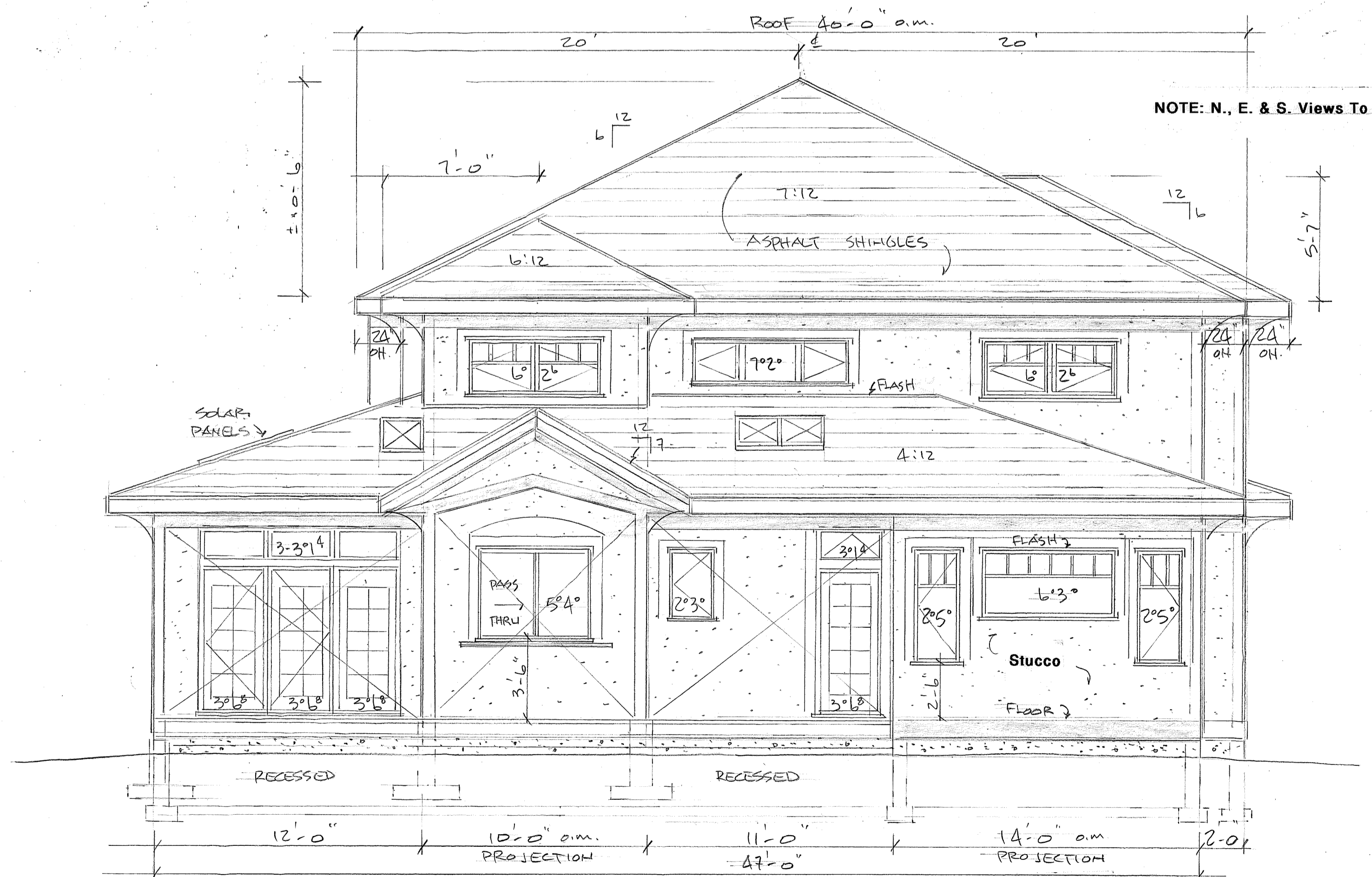




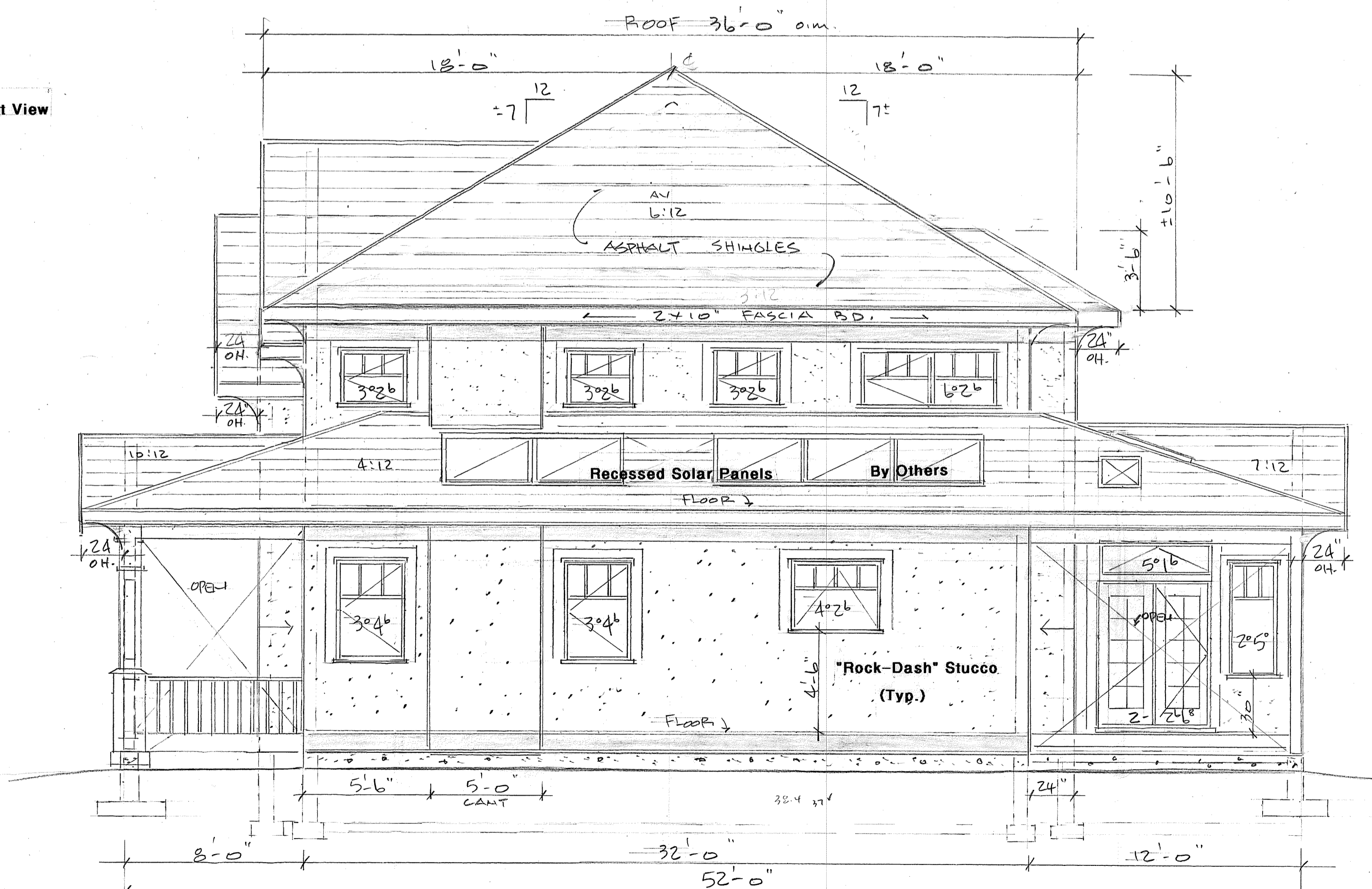
**N. View** L. SIDE  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



**W. View** Front  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

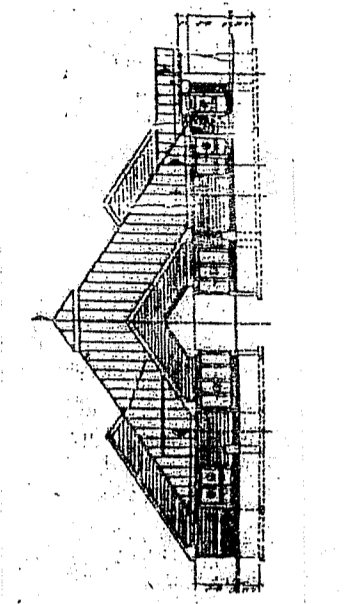


**E. View** Rear  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



**S. View** R.L. SIDE  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

NOTE: N., E. & S. Views To Match West View

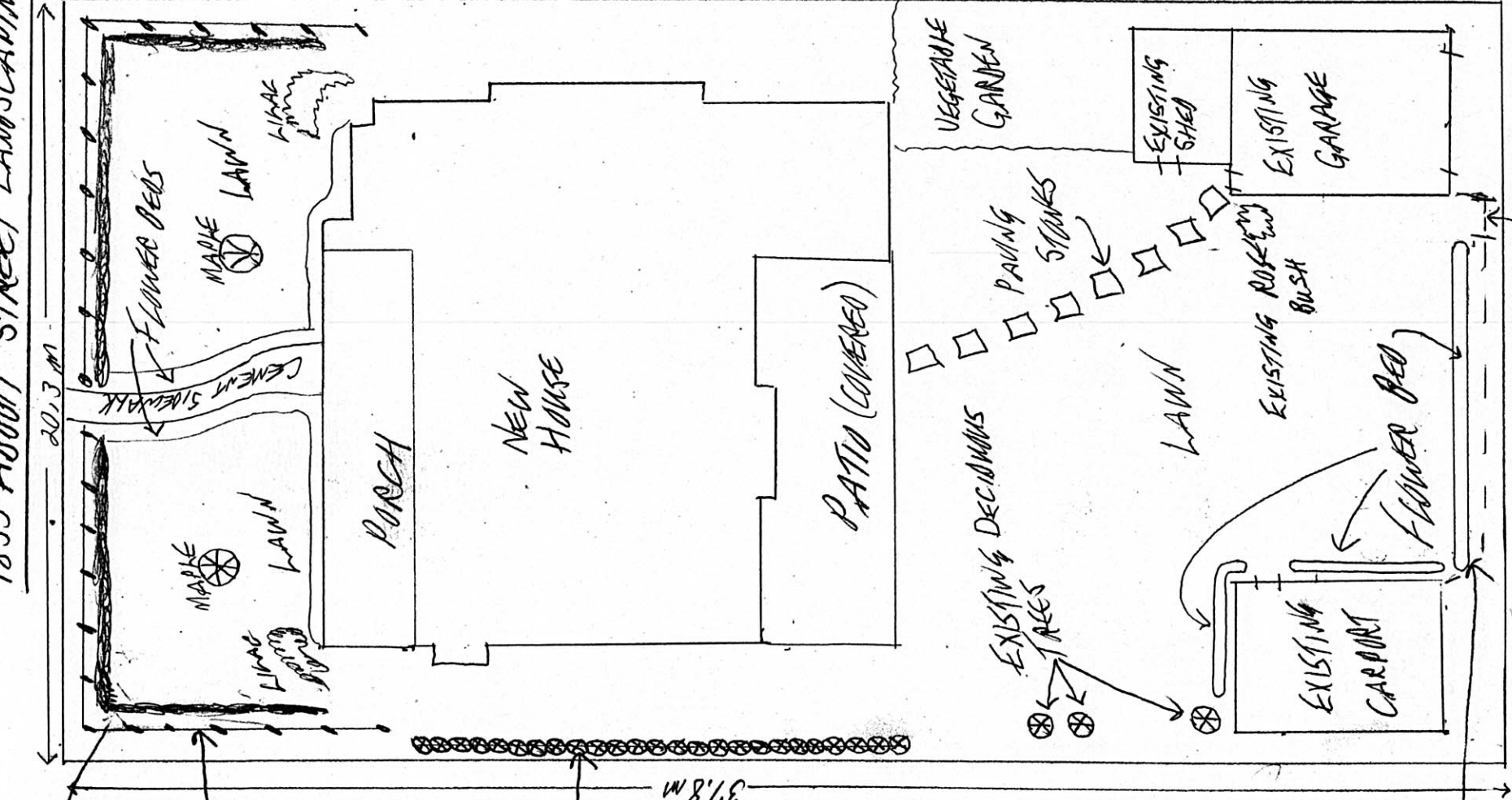


NOTES: H.A.P.

AMES/ERIKSON House FIRE LOSS  
1833 ABBOTT STREET, KELOWNA, B.C. V1Y 1B6 Schematic  
SCALE: AS SHOWN PROJ. NO. 2017-01-02  
Date: May 8, 2017. DWG. PIC



1833 ADOBE STREET LANDSCAPING



BOX WOOD HEDGE  
LOW HEIGHT WROUGHT IRON FENCE

CEGAR HEDGE

SCALE  
1 CM = 5'

EXISTING FENCE

LANE

GATE

## Photos of Houses on Abbott Street



Photo 1: 1833 Abbott Street (before fire). (East side of street).



Photo 2: Neighbor to south (50's split level).



Photo 3: North neighbor (50's house).



Photo 4: 50's house 2 doors north of house.



Photo 5: House 3 doors north and on north corner of block.



Photo 6: Split level to south (with new front deck/seating area).



Photo 7: Older character home 2 doors south (2 floors). (Note peak and small window in peak, arch over front door).



Photo 8: Bungalow 3 doors south.



Photo 9: Older character home 4 doors south. (Note front peak and small window in peak).



Photo 10: Newer 2 storey 5 doors south. (Note front porch/seating area).



Photo 11: Renovated older character home 6 doors south and at south end of block.

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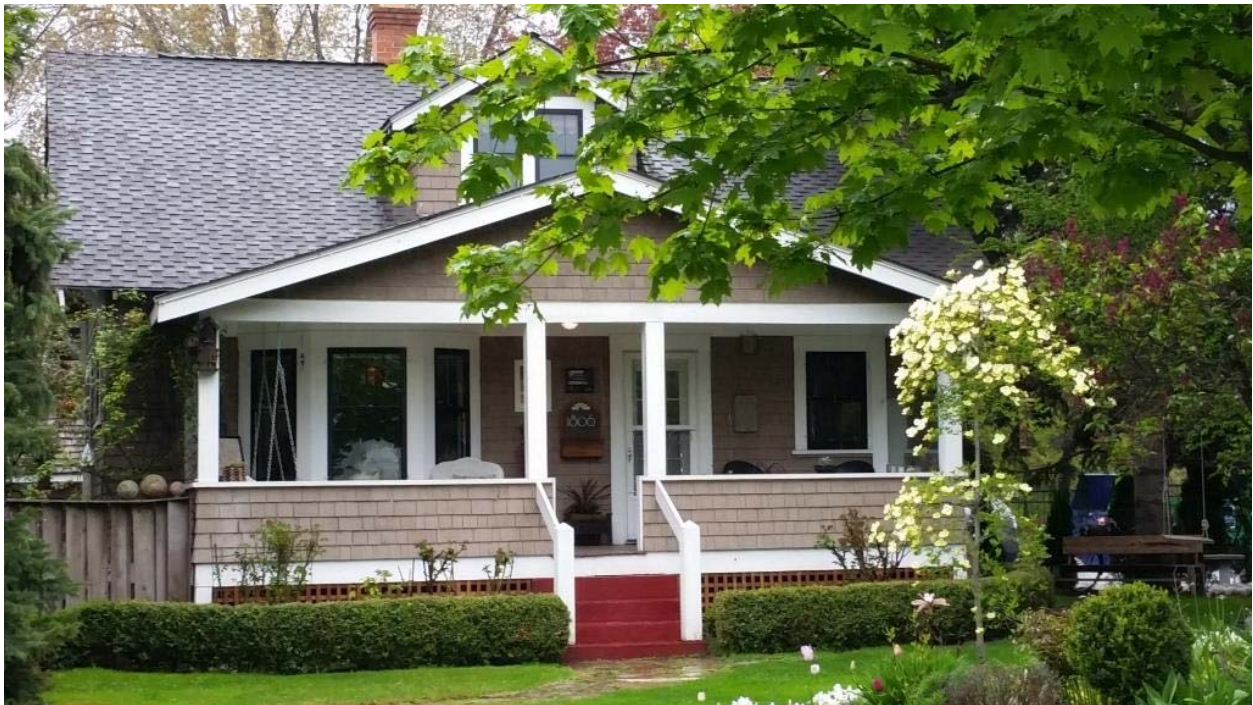


Photo 12: Arts and Craft style on west side of street (north end of west side).



Photo 13: House south of Arts and Craft on west side of street.



Photo 14: Split level south of house in Photo 13.





Photo 15: Capozzi house across from subject property (on west side). (Note the peaks and windows in peaks and style of windows).



Photo 16: Older "modern" home on west side of street.



Photo 17: Older character home on west side of street. (Note peak, small window in peak, arch over front door, and window style).



Photo 18: Older character bungalow on west side of street. (Note window style).