City of Columbus – Bartholomew County
Planning Department

123 Washington Street
Columbus, Indiana 47201
Phone: (812) 376-2550
Fax: (812) 376-2643

CITY OF COLUMBUS
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
(April 28, 2026 Meeting)

STAFF REPORT

Docket No. / Project Title:	BZA-26-22 /Marpel Multi-Family (Conditional Use)
	BZA-26-31/ Marpel Multi-Family (Development Standards Variance)
Staff:	Melissa Begley
Applicant:	Marpel Real Estate, LLC
Property Size:	4,600 square feet
Zoning:	RE (Residential: Established)
Location:	152 Hege Avenue, in the City of Columbus

Background Summary:
The applicant has indicated that the proposed conditional use request is to allow a multi-family use, resulting from 2 additional dwelling units being added to the property for a total of 3 units. Those 2 units are proposed to be added behind the existing single family dwelling. The request also includes 2 development standard variances; from 1) Zoning Ordinance Section 7.1(A) and (Table 7.1) to allow 4 off-street parking spaces, 1 less than the required 5 off-street parking spaces; and 2) Zoning Ordinance Section 7.2(Part 4)(B)(3)(a) to allow parking spaces to back into a public street (Beatty Lane).

Key Issue Summary:
The following key issue(s) should be resolved through the consideration of this application: None

Preliminary Staff Recommendation:
Conditional Use: Approval, all criteria have been met. Approval shall include the condition that a 5 foot wide sidewalk shall be installed along the Hege Avenue frontage of the property, with that sidewalk completed prior to occupancy of the additional dwelling units.

Variance #1 - Parking Space Reduction: Approval, all criteria have been met.

Variance #2 - Backing into a Public Street: Approval, all criteria have been met.

Zoning Ordinance Considerations:
District Intent: The intent of the RE (Residential: Established) zoning district is as follows: To ensure the continued viability of neighborhoods and developments in existence on the effective date of this ordinance. This district should be used to maintain traditional, contextually appropriate setbacks, uses, and other standards in a manner consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Development Standards:
Section 7.1(Table 7.1) Multi-Family Residential: 1.5 parking spaces are required for every dwelling unit.

7.2(Part 4)(B)(3)(a) Access to Public Streets*:* Parking areas must be designed to prevent vehicles from having to back into, or maneuver upon public streets or roads (access to alleys shall be exempt from this requirement).

Current Property Information:	
Land Use:	Single-family residential
Site Features:	A single family dwelling
Flood Hazards:	No flood hazards exist on the property.
Vehicle Access:	Hege Avenue (Collector, Residential, Urban)

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:		
	Zoning:	**Land Use:**
North:	RE (Residential: Established)	Single-Family Residential, Two-Family Residential, and Three-Family Residential
South:	RE (Residential: Established)	Single-Family Residential & Two-Family Residential
East:	RE (Residential: Established)	Single-Family Residential Assisted Living Facility
West:	RE (Residential: Established)	Single-Family Residential

Interdepartmental Review:	
City Engineering:	No comments have been received at this time.
City Utilities:	No concerns.
Fire Department:	No concerns.
Code Enforcement:	No comments have been received at this time.

Planning Consideration(s):

The following general site considerations, planning concepts, and other facts should be considered in the review of this application:

1. Applicant Request: The applicant is proposing to construct a 2 story, 2-unit structure on the property. The concept plan provided by the applicant indicates the unit entrances would be oriented to the south. The structure would sit behind the existing single family dwelling on the property and the site would contain a total of 3 dwelling units, which is classified as a multi-family use. The zoning ordinance requires conditional use approval to allow multi-family in an RE (Residential: Established) zoning district.

2. Other Applicable Standards:
    a. Dwelling Size: Each unit will be approximately 960 square feet in size. The Zoning Ordinance states that in the RE (Residential: Established) zoning district that the minimum dwelling size for a multi-family dwelling is 500 square feet.
    b. Parking Standards: The Zoning Ordinance requires 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit for multi-family dwellings. The existing structure has 1 unit, which requires 2 parking spaces. The addition of the 2 new dwelling units and conversion of the site to multi-family use with 3 total dwelling units results in a total of 5 off-street parking spaces being required. The applicant is providing 4 off-street parking spaces. Access to the parking spaces will be from Beatty Lane and not from Hege Avenue. On-street parking is available on both sides of Hege Avenue.
    c. Parking Access to Public Streets: The zoning ordinance requires that parking areas must be designed to prevent vehicles from backing into a public street. As the site plan provided by the applicant shows, 4 parking spaces are located directly off of Beatty Lane and do not comply with this standard, as drivers would need to back onto Beatty Lane to exit the parking space.
3. Street Conditions:
    a. Hege Avenue has on-street parking available on both sides of the street. Many of the neighboring properties use this on-street parking, however there is also abundant space behind the homes, as an option.
    b. Hege Avenue does have sidewalks, although there is no sidewalk along the subject property nor the property to directly to the north. Otherwise the sidewalks then connect to those along State Street.
    c. Beatty Lane is a public street, however its acts as an alley and is only 11 feet in width. Many of the neighboring properties have parking located off of Beatty Lane that requires backing into Beatty Lane.
4. Area Context: This site is surrounded primarily by one and one and a half story single family structures. There are two-family homes and three family homes on the same block as the subject property.
5. This project represents infill development. Infill development is beneficial to the community because it makes use of vacant or underutilized lots within the center city, strengthens the real estate market and property values in the area, and utilizes existing infrastructure.
6. The subject property is near an abundance of goods and services. The site is about a little over a quarter mile walking distance to the Dollar General and Dollar Tree on State Street. The Orange bus route passes 2 blocks to the north along State Street, which provides excellent transit access to the site. The closest public park is the Pence Street Park, which is .16 miles to the southeast.

Comprehensive Plan Consideration(s):

The Comprehensive Plan designates the future land use of properties in this area as residential.

The Comprehensive Plan includes this property in the East Columbus character area. The following planning principles for that character area apply to this application: Encourage new housing development.

The following Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and/or policy(ies) apply to this application:

1. **POLICY A-2-9**: Preserve and enhance the character of neighborhoods.
   Older neighborhoods have distinctive characteristics which should be retained. These vary from one neighborhood to another, but they include such things as smaller lots, lesser setbacks, service alleys, and a distinctive architectural style.
2. **POLICY A-2-11**: Encourage all new development to be in scale (height, area, mass, setback, etc.) with its surroundings, determined on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis.
   New development should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to the surroundings.
3. **POLICY A-4-2**: Encourage infill development, and/or use of vacant parcels for projects such as parks or other amenities which complement the neighborhoods in which they are located.
   Vacant parcels represent lost opportunities, and they can become neighborhood nuisances. These parcels should be used, either for development, or for other neighborhood assets such as parks or community gardens. It is less expensive to develop these parcels than to create new subdivisions.

4. **GOAL D-1**: Develop new housing where adequate public services can be provided economically.
5. **GOAL D-2**: Encourage development of a sufficient supply of diverse housing types, sizes, and price ranges in the community.
6. **POLICY D-2-1**: Encourage housing which is affordable to those whose incomes are below the median, particularly those significantly below the median.
   A thriving community needs socio-economic diversity which in turn requires a range of housing prices. The city should encourage the development of housing in a variety of price ranges so that all citizens will have decent, safe, and sanitary housing at prices they can afford.
7. **POLICY D-2-2**: Allow for various housing types.
   A diverse population needs diverse housing. The city should encourage a variety of housing types, including single-family detached houses, townhouses, and apartments.
8. **POLICY D-2-4**: Explore options for providing incentives for development of affordable housing which is consistent with these policies and conforms to an overall plan for community growth.
   The private market produces a housing supply sufficient for those in middle- and upper-income categories, but land and development costs make it difficult for private entrepreneurs to produce houses that can be purchased by those in the lower income brackets. These incentives might include tax abatements and low-interest loans. The incentives would not include lower standards for houses or neighborhoods.
9. **POLICY D-2-5**: Encourage neighborhoods which contain a diverse socioeconomic mix.
   Socioeconomic diversity is beneficial to the community. The city should encourage developments which contain a variety of housing types and prices. The diversity of neighborhoods affects the diversity in public schools, particularly elementary schools. Traditional development, such as in the downtown area, contains a socioeconomic mix of housing types (apartments, single-family houses, duplexes, townhouses) in different price ranges.
10. **POLICY D-2-6**: Encourage development of a sufficient supply of housing in all price ranges so that all citizens of the community can enjoy decent, safe, and sanitary housing in desirable neighborhood settings.
    A diversity of housing prices and types accommodates a diverse population and differing preferences.
11. **GOAL D-3**: Provide high-quality residential neighborhood environments.

Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria – Conditional Use:

Section 12.4(D) of the Zoning Ordinance permits the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow conditional uses that meet the criteria listed below. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval.

1. The proposal will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Provisional Findings: The new structure will not block sight visibility for traffic on Hege Avenue or Beatty Lane and will be required to meet all applicable building codes. While the additional units will add additional vehicles to the area, they will not generate significant traffic that would cause congestion or place additional vehicles on roads that cannot support the additional traffic (the Engineering Department provided no comments on the request). Further, neither the Fire Department nor City Utilities reported any concerns with the proposed new units. Therefore, this proposal will not be injurious to the public health, safety and welfare of the community. *This criterion has been met.*

2. The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.

Provisional Findings: The property is located in an established near-downtown neighborhood that includes single, two, and three-family homes. The applicant has provided a concept plan and is requesting a variance to reduce the required parking spaces by one space, which can be accommodated on-street, if needed (but must provide the required parking if the variance is denied). They are also requesting a variance to allow parking spaces to back out onto a public street, which also can be supported because Beatty Lane acts as an alley rather than a street. The project will be otherwise required to comply with the development standards of the zoning ordinance and therefore will be

consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the zoning ordinance. *This criterion has been met.*

3. **Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.**

   Provisional Findings: There are other two-family and three-family homes in the vicinity. Allowing this parcel to be further developed for a multi-family use would not appear to be inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood or impede the normal use of adjacent homes. The parking required for the multi-family residential use can be accommodated both on site and on-street and would not affect neighboring properties in an adverse manner. The new dwellings add additional living units to a neighborhood that can support the additional homes and has excellent proximity to high capacity streets, transit, and goods and services. *This criterion has been met.*

4. **The proposed use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.**

   Provisional Findings: The Comprehensive Plan encourages infill development, a mix of housing types, and neighborhoods which contain a diverse socioeconomic mix. Further, the current character of the RE zoning district, especially in this area, includes a mix of single-family, two family and three family homes. *This criterion has been met.*

Board of Zoning Appeals Options – Conditional Use:

In reviewing a request for *conditional use* the Board may (1) approve the petition as proposed, (2) approve the petition with conditions, (3) continue the petition to a future meeting of the Board, or (4) deny the petition (with or without prejudice). Failure to achieve a quorum or lack of a positive vote on a motion results in an automatic continuance to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria – Variance #1 (Parking Space Reduction):

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve or deny variances from the development standards of the City of Columbus Zoning Ordinance. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval. A variance from the development standards may only be approved upon a determination in writing that:

1. **The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.**

   Provisional Findings: The applicant proposes to provide 4 of the 5 required parking spaces. Additional parking is available on-street on Hege Avenue and reducing the off-street parking requirement by one space will, therefore, not cause any public health, safety, morals, or general welfare issues. Further, neither the City Engineering nor Fire Departments indicated any concerns with the request. *This criterion has been met.*

2. **The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.**

   Provisional Findings: Many of the neighboring properties use on street parking, however there is also space behind most homes for additional off-street parking. On-street parking is available on both sides of Hege Avenue and therefore the reduction of 1 on-site parking space will not negatively affect the adjacent properties in an adverse manner. *This criterion has been met.*

3. **The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.**

Provisional Findings: The property is a smaller urban lot, located in an area with other two, and three family homes and located in an area with access to goods and services. Transit services via ColumBus is also convenient to the property. 4 of the 5 required parking spaces can be provided on-site. The abundance of other travel options within this walkable neighborhood, together with the need to maximize the efficiency of the re-development causes the strict application of the zoning ordinance's off-street parking requirements to result in a practical difficulty in the use of the property. *This criteria have been met.*

Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria – Variance #2 (Backing into a Public Street):

The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve or deny variances from the development standards of the City of Columbus Zoning Ordinance. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval. A variance from the development standards may only be approved upon a determination in writing that:

1. **The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.**

   Provisional Findings: Beatty Lane is a low-volume street and although it is classified as a public street there are no structures on either side that are oriented towards Beatty Lane and it in essence acts similar to an alley. Further, it is only 11feet in width, significantly smaller than a typical street. Neither the City Engineering nor Fire Departments indicated any concerns with the request. It will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community. *This criterion has been met.*

2. **The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.**

   Provisional Findings: All the adjacent residential properties are oriented so that Beatty Lane is effectively along back yards for these homes. Most of those homes have garages and parking areas accessed by and backing into Beatty Lane. Creating additional parking spaces that require backing into Beatty Lane will not negatively impact the other properties in the vicinity. *This criterion has been met.*

3. **The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed, nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain.**

   Provisional Findings: Beatty Lane is only 11 feet in width, which is more typical of an alley than a street. All the adjacent residential properties are oriented so that Beatty Lane is effectively adjacent to back yards for these homes. Not permitting this site to have parking back onto Beatty Lane creates a practical difficulty in providing any off-street parking on the property and therefore a practical difficulty in the use of the property. Further, if Beatty Lane were an alley, the parking would be permitted. *This criteria have been met.*

Board of Zoning Appeals Options – Development Standards Variances:

In reviewing a request for *development standards variance* the Board may (1) approve the petition as proposed, (2) approve the petition with conditions, (3) continue the petition to a future meeting of the Board, or (4) deny the petition (with or without prejudice). Failure to achieve a quorum or lack of a positive vote on a motion results in an automatic continuance to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Record No: BZA-26-22

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Application

Status: Active

Submitted On: 3/23/2026

Primary Location

152 HEGE AVE
COLUMBUS, IN 47201

Owner

MARPEL REAL ESTATE LLC
TERRACE LAKE 2231 COLUMBUS, IN 47201

Conditional Use Request

I am requesting a Conditional Use per Zoning Ordinance Section (insert the ordinance section number below):*

3.12(B)

Please Describe the Proposed Use:*

Construct a new duplex on the property.

The approval of the conditional use will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. For example: What harm could come from approving the conditional use? Would it create any public safety issues? Why or why not?*

Building a new duplex on this property would not cause any troubles to the public or the neighborhood. It would add 2 additional affordable housing options to the are. 4 Parking spaces will be made available on site, while there is also 2 off street parking spaces on Hege for the exisiting home.

The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses. For example: Will the conditional use be able to meet minimum building setbacks, parking standards, and other requirements? If not, are variances being sought to address those items?*

The conditional use to build a duplex will meet all minimum set backs and parking standards. No variances are being sought at this time.

Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity. For example: Are there risks that the conditional use will cause harm to the neighbors' ability to use and enjoy their property? Is there reason to believe that the conditional use will cause harm to neighboring property values?*

Granting the conditional use in our opinion would not hinder property values or surrounding neighbors propertys. It should increase values in the area.

The conditional use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Will the conditional use change the character of the area? Will it involve a building, operation, or features that are significantly different than what is common to the zoning district?*

The new construction duplex will adhere to local building architecture and blend in with the surrounding homes.

The City of Columbus Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/.

The Bartholomew County Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/comprehensive-county-plans/.

Record No: BZA-26-31

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Application

Status: Active

Submitted On: 4/9/2026

Primary Location

152 HEGE AVE
COLUMBUS, IN 47201

Owner

MARPEL REAL ESTATE LLC
TERRACE LAKE 2231 COLUMBUS, IN 47201

Development Standards Variance Request

I am requesting a variance from the Zoning Ordinance Section (insert the ordinance section number below):*

7.1

Please provide the details of the variance request:*

THe number of on site parking spaces provided is 4 not 5. Wed like for the on street parking spaces located in front of 152 Hege to be considered as sufficient.

The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community. For example: What harm could come from approving the variance? Would it create any public safety issues? Why or why not.*

The allowance of using the 2 on street parking spaces would not cause any public safety issues. Those are the only 2 current parking spaces that are available for the primary structure.

The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner. For example: What impacts can the neighbors realistically expect to the use of their property and to their property values? Will approval of the variance cause any negative impacts to the neighbors? Why or why not?*

We do not forsee any issues that would adversly affect the neighbors. Again the 2 on street parking spaces are the only current parking spots available for the primary structure.

The strict application of the terms of the Zoning Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed; nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain. For example: Is there a reason the property cannot be used without the variance? If so, what is that reason (does a stream, existing building, well, or septic system limit options for new construction)? Explain the reason.*

The property as it sits does not have room for 5 on site parking spaces, we are proposing building a 2 unit accessory structure that would generally require 3 parking spaces. We are adding 4 to the site. This Variance is being requested so that the current 2 on street parking spaces would be taken into consideration.

The City of Columbus Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/.

The Bartholomew County Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/comprehensive-county-plans/.

I am requesting a variance from the Zoning Ordinance Section (insert the ordinance section number below):*

7.2(Part4)(B)(3)(a)

Please provide the details of the variance request:*

We are requesting for a variance to allow cars to back out onto what is considered a street on Beatty Ln. This street is much more like an alley in terms of no houses face this street. It is a single lane paved street. There are a handful of garages with parking spaces that are along this street.

The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community. For example: What harm could come from approving the variance? Would it create any public safety issues? Why or why not.*

We do not forsee this causing in public safety issues. As it is a single lane alley in our opinion that is deemed a street. One could make the suggestion that this street should be converted to a ONE WAY going from North to the South.

The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner. For example: What impacts can the neighbors realistically expect to the use of their property and to their property values? Will approval of the variance cause any negative impacts to the neighbors? Why or why not?*

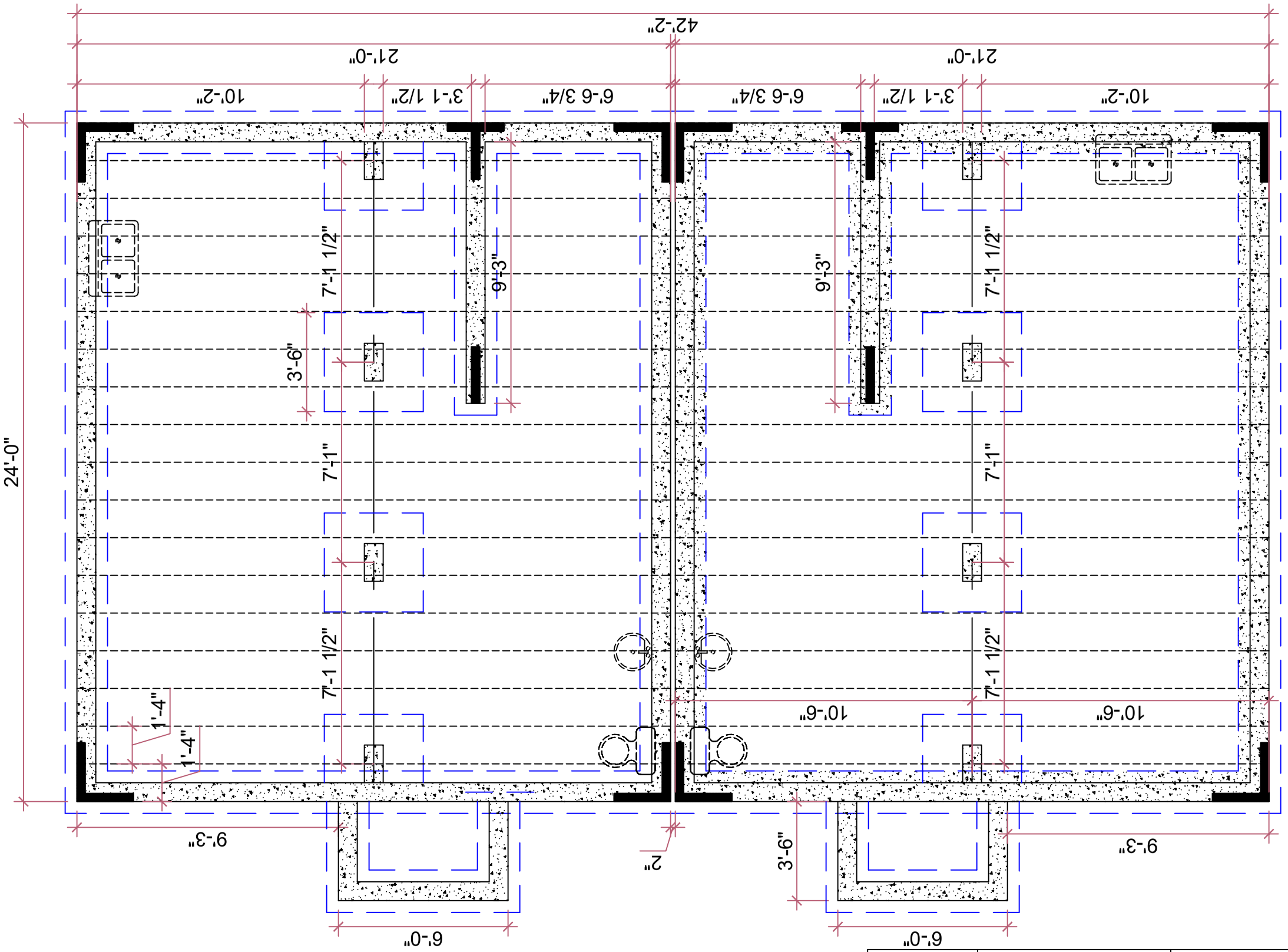
The volume of traffic up and down this street is minimal as it is. We do not forsee adding 4 parking spaces would cause any issues to the neighboring homes. Making the Street a ONE WAY would help with the flow of traffic.

The strict application of the terms of the Zoning Ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property. This situation shall not be self-imposed; nor be based on a perceived reduction of, or restriction on, economic gain. For example: Is there a reason the property cannot be used without the variance? If so, what is that reason (does a stream, existing building, well, or septic system limit options for new construction)? Explain the reason.*

The proposed build site backing up to a one way alley limits where we can add parking. There is a neighboring residential strucutre to the north and a Storm Drain in an Easement located to the south. The lproposed ocation of the parking is the only option we have for this project. Without the granting of this Variance, the project will not be able to move forward and we lose the oppurtunity to build 2 new afforadable apartments on the East side of town.

The City of Columbus Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/.

The Bartholomew County Comprehensive Plan can be found at: https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/comprehensive-county-plans/.



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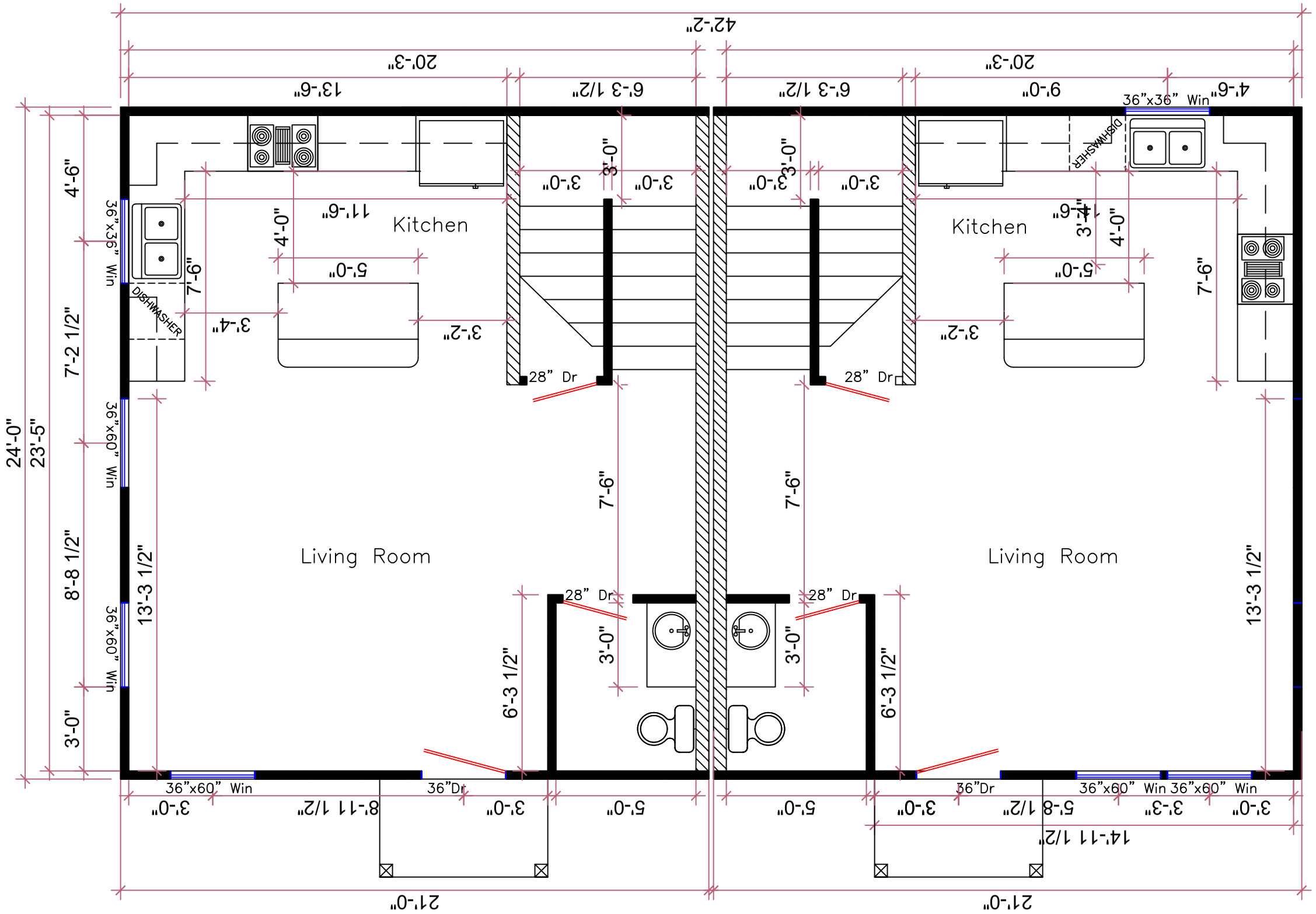
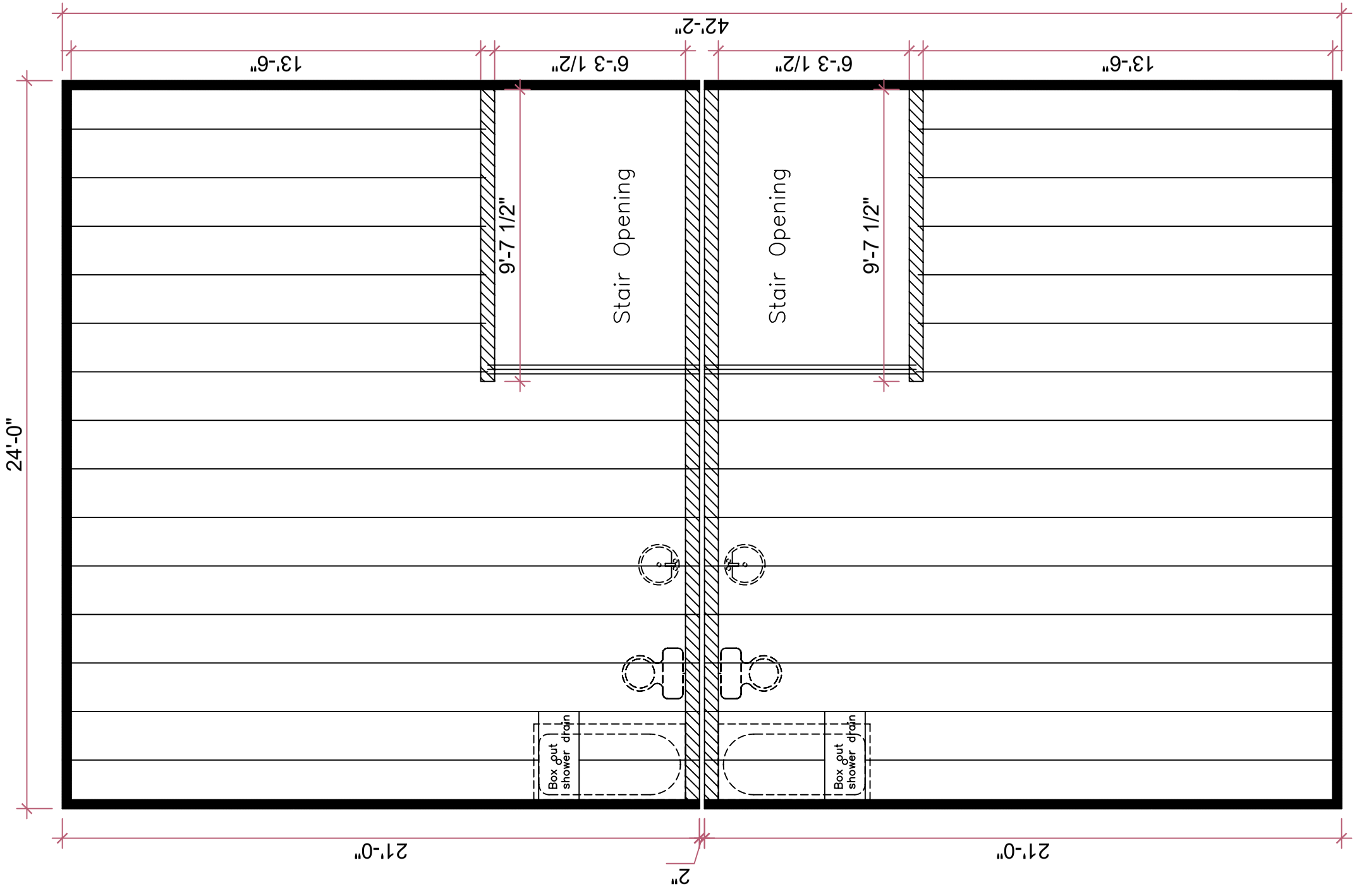
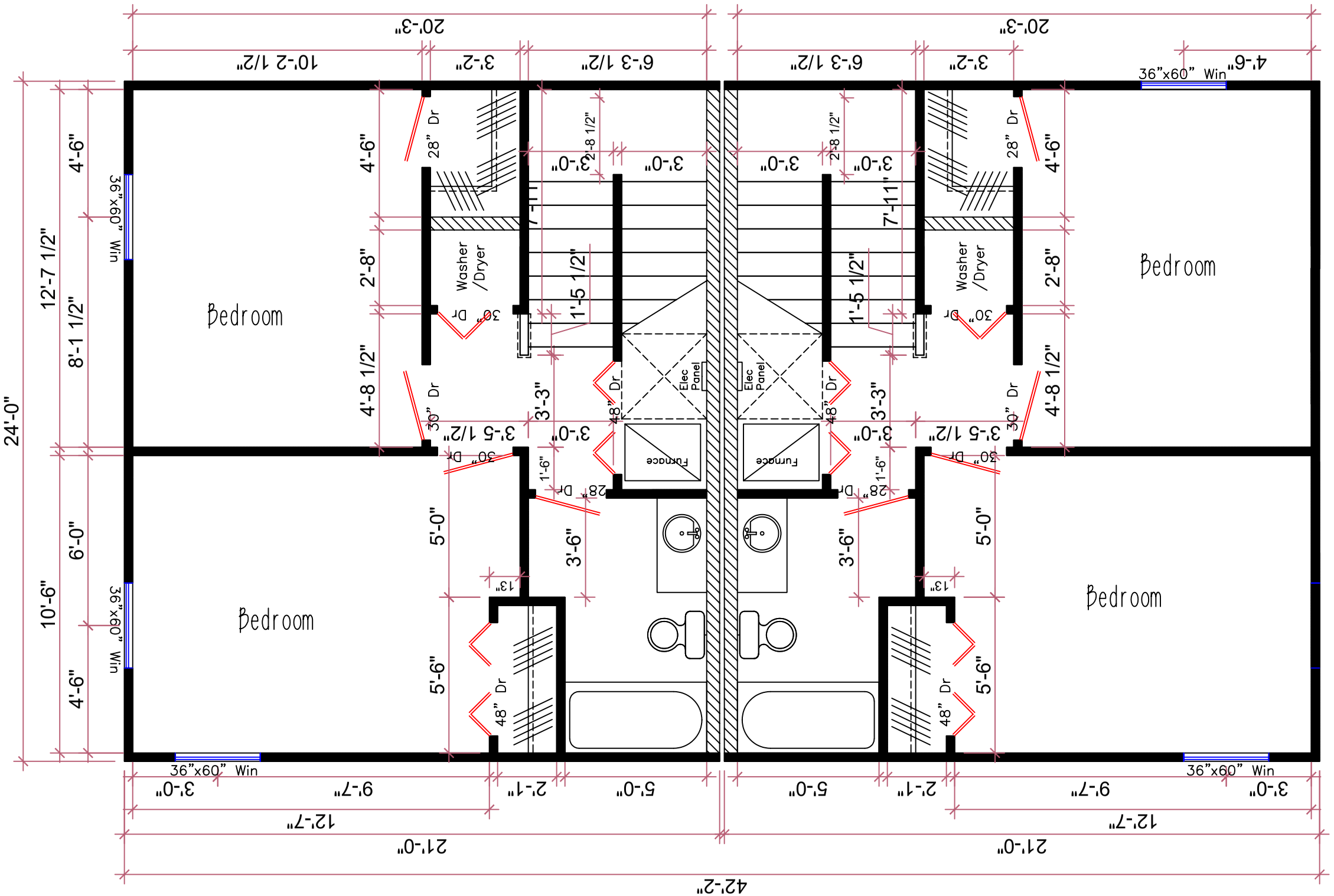


B02	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	Main Floor 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com



B03	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	2nd Flr Joist 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com

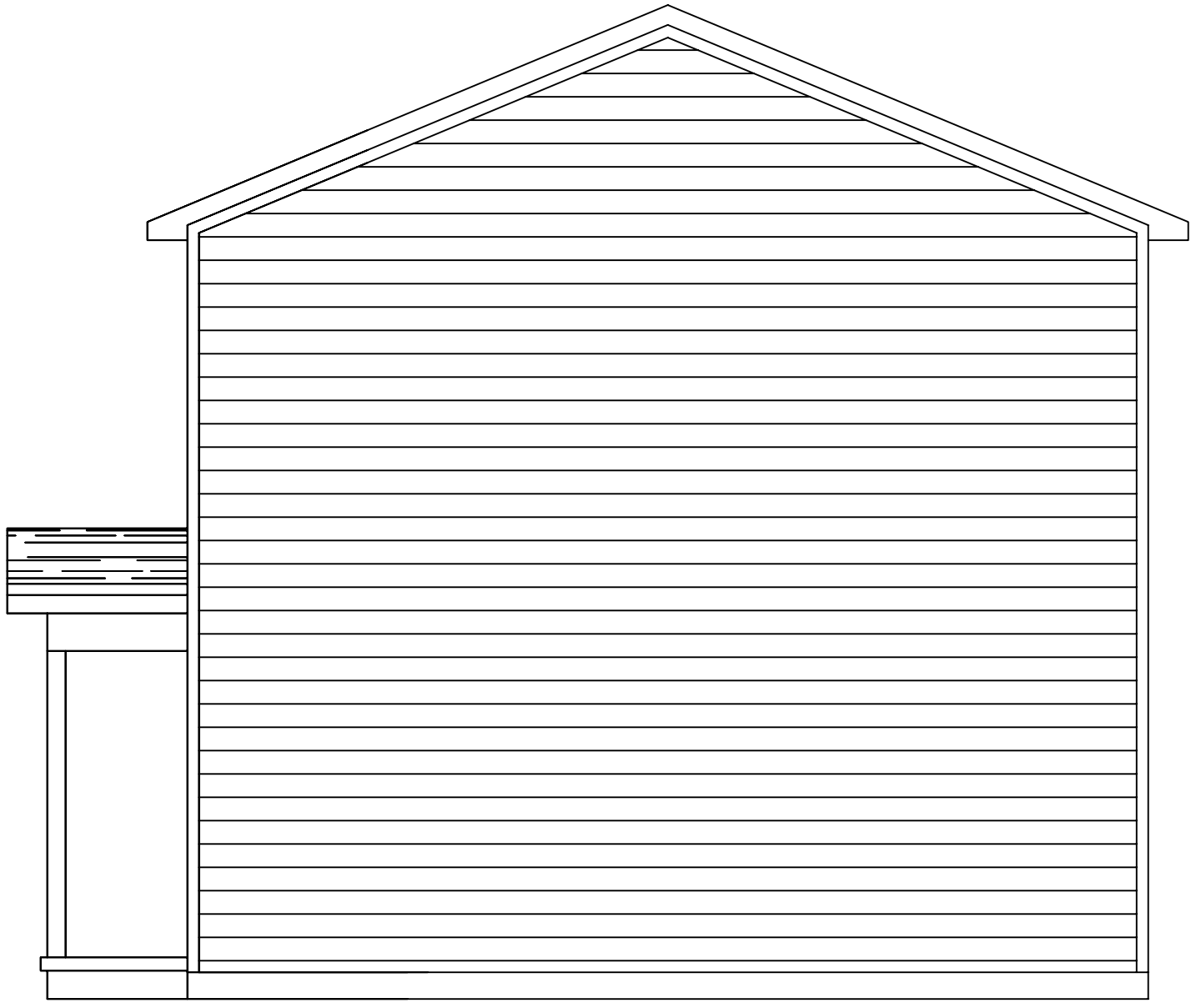


Open Lot

Hege Side

B04	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	2nd Floor 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 8125810036 www.PlanOurSpace.com

B05	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	Elevations 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com

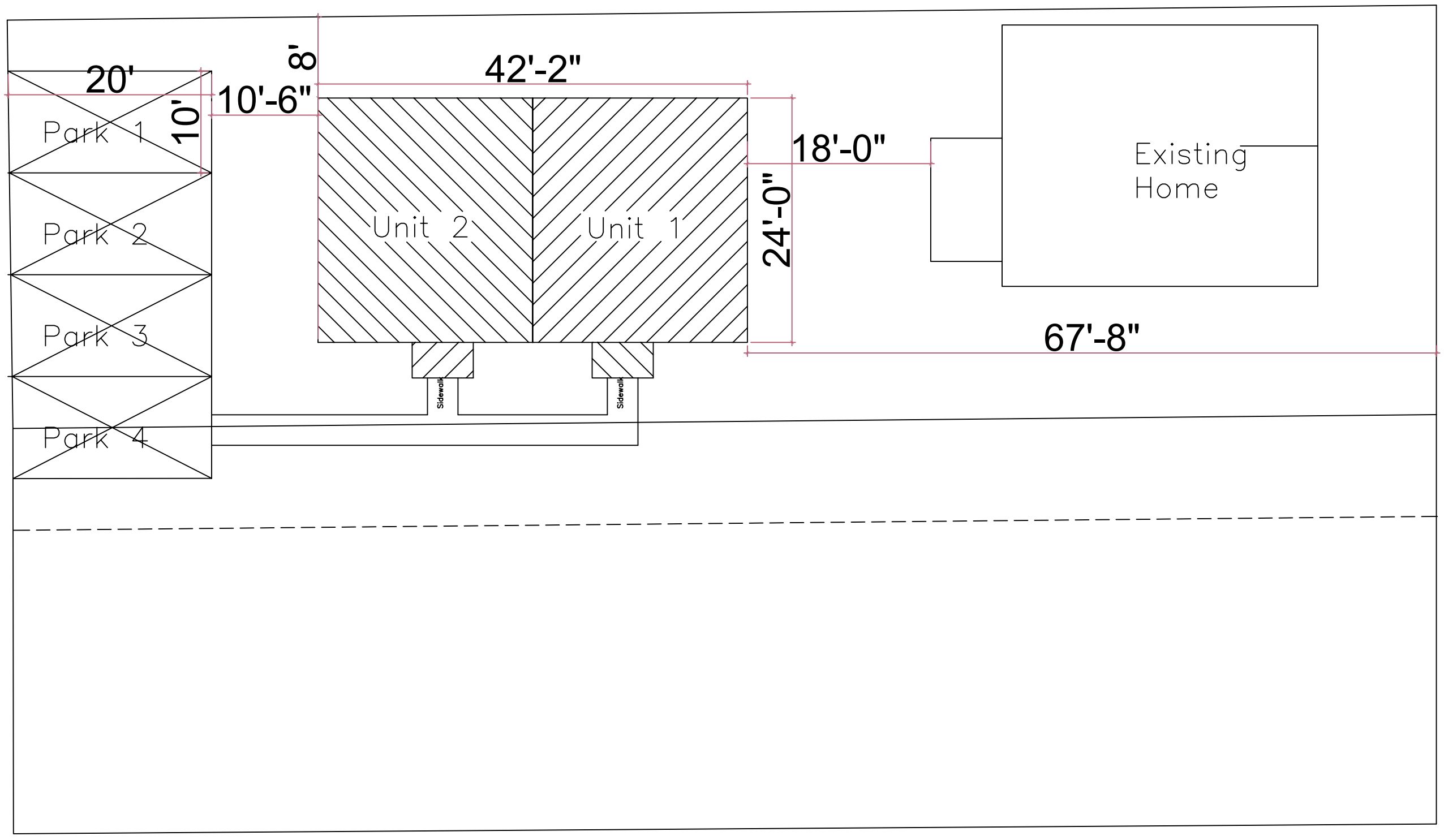


Hege Side

B06	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	Elevations 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com

5/12 Pitch

B07	March 1st, 2026 Scale - 1/4"=1'-0"	Elevations 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com



Site	March 1st, 2016 Scale - 3/32"=1'-0"	Site Planning 152 Hege Ave, Columbus, IN	Design Concepts Douglas Herold 812.581.0036 www.PlanOurSpace.com