

NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORIC PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION
848 THIRD AVENUE

NH STATE NO. 675

LOCATION: 848 Third Avenue, Berlin, Coos County, New Hampshire

USGS: Berlin, New Hampshire, Quadrangle
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 19.326050.4926800

PRESENT OWNER: New Hampshire Department of Transportation

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1926

PRESENT USE: vacant
ORIGINAL USE: residential

SIGNIFICANCE: The Boulay Block is significant as a well-preserved example of a three-story "Block," a distinctive multi-family urban New England building type. This building type combines French Canadian and New England multi-family building forms and plans. In addition, it is commonly built by and occupied by French Canadians. This three-story, three-family, flat-roofed building retains its characteristic features including three-story porches that wrap around the side elevation, and exterior stairways on the side porches, providing access to each unit. The mortared stone foundation, distinguished by its rough squared ashlar stones and raised mortar in a simulated grapevine joint, is a characteristic feature employed by local builders in Berlin. The plan is typical of French Canadian residences, with the kitchen the largest room in each flat and all rooms radiating off of that space. Also associated with the property are two buildings originally associated with the Boulay Roofing Company. Subsequent uses included single-room occupancies, garages, and storage. The Boulay Block represents the most complete representations of its vernacular property type, one of eight types encountered among the twenty-six dwellings being documented for this project.

PROJECT INFORMATION: Project personnel included Principal Lynne Emerson Monroe, Specialist Frank Whittemore, and Architectural Historians Laura B. Driemeyer and Kari Laprey. Charley Freiberg, Elkins, New Hampshire, was the photographer. Existing Conditions Surveys, Inc. prepared the measured drawings. This documentation is mitigation for the relocation of N.H. Route 110 through the Berlin Heights Neighborhood Addition.

Architectural Description

Location/Setting/Landscaping

The 0.23-acre property discussed in this document consists of two adjoining parcels with a total of 68' of frontage on the easterly side of heavily trafficked Third Avenue at its intersection with Wight Street. The rear (eastern) boundary of the northerly lot and the northeast corner of the southerly lot abut the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad right of way and tracks. The southerly portion of the property slopes down slightly from front (west) to rear (east). The Bouley Block occupies much of the southerly 0.13-acre rectangular lot. The building is set back slightly, spans much of the width of the lot, and faces slightly northwest. The detached garages extend along the rear boundary of the lot. A driveway to the south of the Bouley Block leads to the garages in the rear. Two altered one-story garages, historically known as 6 Wight Street, occupy the northerly 0.10-acre lot. These two west facing buildings were originally occupied by Bouley Roofing, used for storage. Minimal landscape features include a very shallow front lawn and some mature trees along the rear property line.

Character-Defining Elements

The Boulay Block was one of two adjacent Blocks built in 1926 by local builder Stephen Boulay (1859-1950) a French-Canadian immigrant who came to Berlin as a child. The other block to the south (844 Third Avenue) was heavily damaged by fire in July 2008 and subsequently demolished. The Boulay Block, a large, three-story, flat-roofed, three-family residential block is a version of the three-story, three-family dwelling, developed by French-Canadian immigrants to Berlin and a number of other industrial New England cities, and commonly referred to as a “block” or sometimes a three-decker. This type of multi-family residence can be found in a small number of other New England towns and cities, such as Southbridge, Massachusetts, and Augusta, Maine. On the exterior, the distinguishing characteristic is the three-story open porch with exterior stairs (typically along the side elevation) to each apartment. The interior plan is characterized by a group of rooms radiating from the kitchen, which served as the primary gathering space. This use of space was a continuation of a pattern found in houses in Quebec (Lessard and Marquis 1972). In Berlin, most also have a stone foundation with decorative mortar.

Three overlapping circumstances appear to foster or enable the construction of this building form: initial concentrated development of the industrial town beginning in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century, the presence of large numbers of French-Canadian immigrants, and most significantly, the presence of French-Canadian builders and developers. The appearance of this building type coincides with the construction of three-family housing in many urban New England areas in the early decades of the twentieth century. The Block type, however, modifies that more common type, known as the three-decker, by applying certain characteristics common to urban French-Canadian cities such as Montreal and Quebec.¹ The most notable feature that

¹ See Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981), especially pages 266-281.

has precedence in those cities is the multi-story porches with exterior stairs leading to exterior entries to each of the units. In addition, the plan differs from the traditional New England three-decker which is typically a linear, two rooms wide, three rooms deep plan, with separate interior entries to each flat within the main block.

Exterior

The wood frame building rises three stories from a high foundation to a flat roof. The three-bay wide, three-room deep block has a rectangular footprint. The rough-cut local stone foundation is laid in irregular courses, bound with a coarse concrete mortar detailed with a contrasting tooled grapevine joint to suggest irregularly coursed ashlar blocks. The rectangular main mass is augmented on the rear with a three-story storage-room ell rising from a frame foundation. The walls are sheathed in wood clapboards, painted a dark green and trimmed in white emphasizing the trim details. The flat roof is covered with roofing paper and shingles. The extended eaves have molded edges above a simple frieze.

A full-width, three-story porch spans the façade and wraps around the south elevation, extending the full depth of the main block to just beyond the exterior entry into the rear storage room. The porches are supported by regularly spaced Tuscan columns at each story separated by closed vertical board balustrades. An original open stair rises through all three levels of the side porch, providing exterior access to the upper two flats. Each flight consists of fourteen treads and fifteen risers. Each run measures 10½" and the rise is 7½". The underside of each is finished with the same ¾" edge-and-center bead board used elsewhere in the building. A new flight of open stairs constructed of pressure treated wood rise to the first-story porch. Each flat can be entered from a doorway centered on the three-bay façade, now obscured by an added staircase that rises through all three levels.² Each front door has a three-quarter upper panel with a light edged with an egg-and-dart pattern. Below the light is a bed molding with dentils and a horizontal panel, with an egg-and-dart molding. A secondary entry, on the south elevation at each story, provides entry into the kitchen. Painted diagonal lattice work (age unknown) screens the area under the front and much of the side porch.

Fenestration is regular though the number of openings differs on the north and south elevations, reflecting the plan. On the three-bay façade large plate glass windows topped with six vertical lights frame the centered doorways at the first and third stories; the second floor has replacement 1/1 vinyl sash. Large four-light glass storm windows, possibly original, cover the façade windows on the first and third stories. The north elevation has three 1/1 sash windows with added track storm windows. On the south elevation pairs of 1/1 sash windows, also with track storm windows, frame the centered rear secondary doorway. A third doorway in the last bay leads into the storage room on each story. Modest additional decorative detailing includes narrow 6½" x 6½" corner boards. On the west and south windows the exterior trim includes 4½" plain board side trim and 6½" top trim with a bed molding and cap. The sills are 2" thick with 1" ears. A plaque embossed with the name S.J. Boulay and the date 1926 was originally centered

² The now demolished 844 Third Avenue did not have front stairs, confirming the ones at 848 Third Avenue are a later addition.

on the frieze of the front porch. Photographs taken in August 2008 and November 2010 show the plaque was removed sometime between those two dates, as it was present in the earlier photograph but not in the later one.

Attached to the block is a one-story, one-bay garage, located in the northeast re-entrant angle between the main block and storage room ell. The east and south elevations are sheathed in painted shingles. It has double-leaf doors hung with strap hinges on the north elevation. The doors, constructed of the ubiquitous vertical edge-and-center-bead boards, are trimmed with cross-bracing. Back-to-back six-light fixed sash in the window opening on the east elevation allow some light into the space.

Foundation and Framing

The mortared stone foundation is characteristic of many residential buildings in Berlin and is continuous under the rectangular block. The storage room ell, however, is supported only by framed walls, sheathed on the exterior with shingles continuing down to the ground. Owing to the slope of the lot from front to rear, much of the foundation is above grade. The thick foundations walls are constructed of random-sized, rough-cut local stone laid in irregular courses, bound with a coarse concrete mortar detailed with a tooled grapevine joint on the exterior. On the interior the walls were parged and white washed.

The original brick stove flue chimney is a square stack (two bricks wide on each face with thick mortar joints) that rises from the basement floor up through the full height of the building. The base has an ash clean out on the south face two bricks up from the floor.

The north and east foundation walls each have two window openings, all filled with three-light fixed sash windows. The pair on the east elevation, however, no longer provides light to the basement because of the added garage on that elevation. An entry on the north elevation has been blocked on the interior. The original door, however, remains in place on the exterior. The door has two vertical molded panels above the meeting rail; those below are covered by an added panel. On the east elevation is a doorway with a double-thick plywood replacement door hung with strap hinges and opens into the basement. Butt hinges still in place on the south door jam show the door originally opened out.

The first-floor framing is visible in the basement. The framing consists of 2" x 8" north-south running joists let into the east-west 6" x 8" carrying beam and cross braces or bridging between the joists. The vertically and circularly sawn joists are cut around 2" x 3" ledger boards on the face of the carrying beam. Additional north-south 6" x 8" carrying beams are placed to carry the room walls above. The first-floor vertically sawn, random-width (roughly 6"-12") floor sheathing is laid diagonally over the joists.

The wall framing is only visible in the unfinished rear storage rooms but is presumed to be the same throughout the building. The stud-frame construction consists of 2" x 4" studs set 1'-4" on center.

Interior

The inside of the Boulay Block retains many of its original finishes and nearly all of its original floor plans. The second- and third-floor flats are the most intact. There are plaster walls throughout. The second- and third-floor bathrooms and the second-floor kitchen feature original 3¼" edge-and-center-bead board wainscoting, 3'-4½" high with a 2¼" dado cap. The 7" baseboards have a 1½" basecap. Window and door trim is 4½" on the sides with a 7" head casing with ½" lower bead and a 1 1/8" bed molding and cap. All the window and door trim and baseboards are now painted but originally they were varnished. The majority of the windows (except the cottage windows on the façade) are 2'-7½"-wide with sash cords, pulleys, and weights. The jambs or pulley stiles are screwed into place and so can be removed to allow ease of access to the weights and cords. Most rooms have narrow wood strip flooring. Most of the openings have doors, except the 5'-4"-wide openings from the front hall to each of the front rooms. The latter represents an open plan concept popularized in the early twentieth century (Gottfried and Jennings 2009, 159). At various times the opening to the south room has been modified in each of the flats to allow it to be used as a bedroom. This is a common practice in Berlin housing with rooms with wide door openings. The families typically had greater need for additional sleeping space than a second public room.³ Other doorways have wood horizontal five-panel doors, except in the first-floor apartment where the doors are replacement hollow-core doors. The hardware on the original doors is characteristic early twentieth-century plain metal escutcheon plates with beveled edges and convex knobs. Finishes include plaster and suspended tile ceilings, painted woodwork, wood flooring in the living rooms and bedrooms, vinyl flooring in the kitchens and bathrooms. Wall coverings include wood paneling, painted or papered plaster. Most rooms, except the kitchens, have narrow wood strip tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring, which has been painted in the third-floor flat front rooms. Drop ceilings have been added at unknown dates to a number of the rooms on all three stories, most commonly in all the rooms but the bedrooms. Many of the rooms have ceiling light fixtures, typically mid- to late twentieth century, and of varying styles. Heat and hot water for all three apartments supplied by an oil-fired boiler and forced hot water system. Electrical service is 100 amps per floor with each unit having its own meter. Radiators remain in all the first-floor rooms and several of the second-floor rooms; some have a wood cover with decorative panels with metal grills. All other rooms have added baseboard heaters. Bathroom fixtures in the second- and third-floor flats are original, including the clawfoot tubs and oval wall mounted sinks. The first-floor bathroom has all new fixtures.

Floor Plan

The Block has three apartments, one on each floor. Each unit is two rooms wide and three rooms deep. The general plan is the same in each apartment, with slight variation in the door openings or closets, or in the case of the first-floor apartment, the presence of stairs to the basement. In the front pile, a short center entry hall is flanked by a pair of rooms. The front rooms are typically used as a living room and as a bedroom. At the east end of the hallway is a doorway into the kitchen, the largest room in the apartment, in the middle pile. The kitchen has doorways

³ [oral history source]

to the other middle pile space, the bathroom, and to the two back bedrooms in the rear pile. The secondary entry from the south side porch is into the kitchen. In the rear storage ell is an unfinished room, typically used for storage and originally accessible only from the south porch. In the first-floor apartment, however, an added doorway in the southeast bedroom provides interior access.

Basement

The full basement interior measures 24'-1" x 34'-0". The rectangular, unfinished space has parged foundation walls, exposed first-floor framing, and a concrete floor.

As first built, the basement was only accessible from the exterior, through doorways on the north and east elevations. The north doorway is now blocked on the interior though the door remains in place on the exterior. The original 4'-wide doorway on the east elevation is now accessible only through the added garage. Always screened, original access was from a doorway on the south elevation of the storage room ell, now blocked. Interior access was added from the first-floor flat at an unknown date. A narrow, partially enclosed stair ascends from the first-floor flat in the area originally occupied by the northeast bedroom closet. The steep, open flight has carpeted runs and is flanked by edge-and-center-bead board paneling. A reused turned porch column supports the added beam supporting the floor joists that were cut when the opening was added.

In the northwest corner is an added room with a toilet on a platform in the west half and a sink in the east half. This bathroom was added at an unknown date. The space is roughly framed with 2" x 3" studs and rough-sawn, random-width horizontal boards, painted white. The floor is concrete. The porcelain enamel oval wall sink has a high back splash. The four-panel door matches the exterior north door.

In the center of the basement, just west of the stairs is some added 6'-wide shelving backed with 3¼" edge-and-center-bead boards. On the north side is floor-to-ceiling shelving while the south side consists of three 7"-deep shelves above a 1'-1"-deep shelf at counter height.

The basement houses all the utilities for the apartments. Heat is provided by an oil-fired boiler and hot water is provided by forced hot water systems. The old furnace is vented into the west elevation of the chimney. A vent in the southeast corner of the first-floor parlor floor, just above the furnace allowed additional heat to rise into that space from the heat exchanger atop the boiler. Electrical service is 100 amps with each unit having its own meter in the basement. The electrical panels are located on the west wall in the northwest corner. Different generations of wiring including BX wiring and Romex wire are visible in the cellar. The plumbing is a mix of cast-iron and PVC pipes.

First-floor Apartment, Front Hall and North Room (Parlor)

The front hall is accessed by a nearly centered front entry and is now fully open to the parlor/living room but originally a 5'-4"-wide opening separated the two spaces, as it does with south room. Patches in the flooring indicate the presence of the earlier wide opening into the north room. The original openings remain in place in the upper two flats. A doorway at the end

of the 11'-9" deep hallway leads to the kitchen. A 5'-4"-wide opening on the south wall leads to the south room. The trim on that doorway is plain board replacements.

The 12'-1" x 14'-6" north room has a cottage window centered on the west wall and a narrower window opening centered on the north wall. The brick stove flue chimney that rises through the building from the basement projects into the southeast corner of the room. The chimney, however, has the same finishes as the rest of the wall surfaces in the room. The room retains all its original finishes and trim, which were originally the same not only throughout each flat but also within all three flats. Characteristic features found throughout the flat include plaster walls, baseboard, base cap, and narrow strip flooring. The lath-and-plaster ceiling has a center fixture plate.

The 4'-0¼" x 5' front window opening has a large 3'-8½" x 3'-7" light topped by a row of six 7" x 12" lights. The opening has the characteristic side trim and head casing, the latter topped with a ½" lower bead and a 1⅛" bed molding and cap. Below the 4½" stool is a 3½" apron. The standard north sash window has the characteristic trim.

Centered under the front (west) window is a radiator with a wood cover with decorative panels with metal grills.

First-Floor Apartment, Front South Room

The smaller, nearly square south room measures 10'-8" x 11'-9". The room is accessed through a 5'-4" wide open doorway from the front hall. A doorway on the east wall is to the kitchen. A large picture window like in the parlor is nearly centered on the west wall. A second window, nearly centered on the south wall matches the north window in the parlor. Nearly all the finishes and details match those in the parlor. These include lath-and-plaster walls and ceiling, baseboard and basecap, window sizes, lights and trim; and flooring. A mid-twentieth-century pendant light fixture is centered in the room. A radiator with a cover like that in the parlor is centered under the front window. The door to the kitchen is a replacement hollow core door, which are now present in all room doorways. On the floor in the opening to the hall is shadow evidence that the room was closed off at some point, likely for use as a bedroom. This explains why this door opening trim is simple plain boards, and does not match the original trim used elsewhere in the room.

First-Floor Apartment, Middle South Room (Kitchen)

The kitchen is the largest room in the flat and, in addition to the adjoining bathroom, has the most altered finishes. The irregularly shaped room has doorways to all but the parlor and also has the secondary entry. Doorways on the west wall lead to the front south room and to the hallway. On the north wall are doorways to the bathroom and the northeast bedroom. An added narrow doorway on the east wall adjacent to the southeast bedroom doorway leads to the basement. The back entry leads to the south side of the wraparound porch. The room measures 17'-2" at its widest part and 13'-4" at its deepest part. A pair of shortened replacement windows on the south wall provides illumination to the room. The stove flue chimney projects into the room in the northwest corner.

The replacement finishes include vinyl sheeting on the floor, a drop ceiling with recessed fluorescent lighting, three-quarter-height faux wood Masonite sheet panels wainscoting, and clamshell baseboards. Behind the replacement wainscoting is evidence that the wainscoting was originally edge-and-center-bead board of the same height and dimensions as still is present in the kitchens of the upper two flats. The wall and counter cabinetry on the east wall and the counter cabinetry on the south wall are modern replacements, with varnished plywood doors. In the northeast corner between the bathroom and northeast bedroom doorways is a nearly full height (7'-3" high) modern built-in cabinet with two doors of unequal size. The window and door trim matches that in the front rooms except the head casing bed molding and cap have been removed. The doors are all hollow-core replacement doors. The rear entry door has a two-horizontal light upper panel. The radiator on the west wall has the same covering as in the front rooms.

First-Floor Apartment, Middle North Room (Bathroom)

The fully remodeled rectangular bathroom measures 9'-8" x 6'-7". The room has all new finishes and fixtures. The window is a replacement awning window. Vinyl sheeting covers the floor and the walls and ceiling are sheetrock. The door trim and baseboard are clamshell moldings. The bathtub recess is tiled with 6" white tiles. The door is a hollow-core door.

First-Floor Apartment, Back North Room (Bedroom)

The spacious northeast bedroom is the larger of the two bedrooms, measuring 12'-1" x 15'-3". The room has a window centered on the north wall and a second window on the east wall, both with original 1/1 wooden double-hung sash windows. The window sizes and trim match the smaller windows in the two front rooms. A closet opening on the south wall is 2'-0³/₄" wide. The closet opening was added at some unknown date to allow for the insertion of a narrow stairway from the kitchen to the basement, in the location of the original closet to this room. The original five horizontal-panel closet door with stick moldings and trim were reused on the new closet. The original metal hardware includes a bevel edge escutcheon and convex face knob. The original closet doorway location is apparent by a patch in the baseboard and in the plaster walls. The finishes match those in the front rooms including lath-and-plaster walls and ceiling, baseboard, door trim, and narrow wood strip flooring. The room door is a replacement hollow-core door. The wide, low radiator under the north window has the same covering as in the other rooms.

First-Floor Apartment, Back South Room (Bedroom)

The southeast bedroom is the smaller of the two bedrooms in the flat, measuring 12'-0" x 11'-3". All finishes and materials in the room match those in the front rooms including the window and room doorway trim, baseboards, plaster walls and ceiling, and flooring. However, two alterations were made to the original plan. The original closet doorway on the north wall was blocked up and became the closet for the northeast room. A doorway was added on the east wall to provide interior access to the storage room, likely at the time the cellar stairway was added. Trim from the original closet doorway was reused on the added doorway, along with an early-twentieth-century narrow five-raised-field panel door with its original hardware. The room door is a replacement hollow core birch door, like all the other replacement doors in the flat. The

ceiling has a modern central light fixture. A radiator is centered under the 1/1 wooden sash window on the south wall and has the same cover as in the other rooms in the flat.

First-Floor Apartment, Storage Room

The storage room is located in the three-story rear storage ell on the east side of the main block. The roughly finished space, in addition to being accessible from the southeast bedroom, is also accessible from the original exterior entry off the south porch. The now L-shaped space has an added rectangular 2'-10" deep closet along the south wall, between the exterior entry and east wall. A window (1/1 wooden sash) on the east wall provides light to the room. Wall and ceiling materials match those in the kitchen but the faux paneling covers the full wall height. Sheetrock panels have been added over the lower portions of the north and east walls. The floor is plywood panels. The closet, which lacks a door, is finished on the interior with 6"-wide boards. Battleship gray spatter pattern vinyl tiles cover the floor. The original exterior door has a large light in the upper panel; an added board covers the lower portion.

Second-Floor Apartment, Front Hall

The well-preserved front hall provides access from the front (west) porch entry to the two front rooms and to a doorway to the kitchen at the east end. Wide 5'-4" doorways on the north and south walls lead to the north (parlor/living room) and south rooms. The opening to the south room has added modern bifold doors. The hallway retains all original finishes including plaster walls and ceiling, baseboard with base cap, doorway trim and head casing with finishes matching those in the first-floor flat hall. The doorways to the side rooms are unaltered and feature the original trim including 4¼" side trim and a 7" head casing with a ½" lower bead and a 1⅛" bed molding and cap. In the doorway at the east end is an original five-panel door with stuck moldings and original metal hardware including a beveled escutcheon plate and convex knob, and ball tip butt hinges.

Second-Floor Apartment, Front North Room (Parlor)

The front north room matches the first-floor north room in size and plan, except the room retains its original 5'-4"-wide opening from the hall. Painted faux wood paneling covers the original plaster walls. A dropped ceiling covers the original plaster ceiling which retains an original oval ceiling fixture of embossed cast metal and two lights. The base cap has been removed from the 7" baseboard and baseboard heaters have been added along the west and north walls. The narrow tongue-and-groove wood strip flooring matches that in the first-floor front rooms and throughout much of the building. The window openings and trim match those on the first floor but the west window has a replacement 1/1 vinyl sash window.

Second-Floor Apartment, Front South Room

The south room matches the first-floor front south room in size and in all of the finishes. The walls and ceiling are lath-and-plaster. The window and door trim and baseboard are the same in size and detail. The flooring is the same narrow wood strip tongue-and-groove flooring that runs across all three front-pile spaces. A five-horizontal-panel door is in the opening to kitchen on the east wall. The windows are replacement vinyl 1/1 sash windows set in the original window

openings. Added bi-fold doors in the hall doorway allow the space to be closed off from the hall. Baseboard heaters run along the west and south walls.

Second-Floor Apartment, Middle South Room (Kitchen)

The kitchen matches the configuration of the first-floor kitchen as the primary circulation space. In addition, the room retains some of its original finishes such as the characteristic window and door trim as in the first-floor front rooms. On the walls sheet-goods paneling has been applied over the original 3/4" edge-and-center bead board wainscoting, 3'-4½" high with a 2¼" dado cap, above the characteristic 7" baseboard. The walls above the wainscoting are lath and plaster. Over the original lath and plaster ceiling is a drop ceiling with recessed fluorescent lights. Mid-twentieth-century wall cabinets, a counter with a double metal sink, and counter cabinets run along the east wall. Vinyl sheeting covers the floor. On the south wall is a pair of original 1/1 wooden sash windows. The secondary entry, also on the south wall, has a replacement hollow-core door with a large light in the upper panel. A radiator runs under a portion of the windows.

Second-Floor Apartment, Middle North Room (Bathroom)

The rectangular bathroom retains many of its original finishes and layout. On the north wall is a 2'-3½" wide x 3'-8½" high 1/1 wooden double-hung sash window. On the lath-and-plaster walls is 4'-3½" high wainscoting (¾" edge-and-center-bead board) with a 2¼" dado cap, above a plain 7" baseboard. Vinyl sheeting covers the original narrow wood strip tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring. A drop ceiling with central light fixture has been added over the original lath-and-plaster ceiling. The window and door trim is that found throughout the building. Original or early porcelain cast-iron fixtures include a claw-foot tub and a wall mounted oval sink. The toilet is a modern replacement. The room is heated by a radiator.

Second-Floor Apartment, Back North Room (Bedroom)

The well-preserved northeast bedroom matches the first-floor northeast bedroom in size and retains all of its original finishes. These include lath-and-plaster walls and ceiling (the latter with a mid-twentieth-century center light fixture), narrow wood strip tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring, and characteristic window and door trim. It also retains the original five-horizontal-panel room door with stuck moldings and original metal hardware, as found in other rooms in this flat. The original windows on the north and east walls match those throughout the flat. In addition the closet remains in its original location on the south wall, adjacent to the room doorway. The closet finish includes lath-and-plaster walls above a varnished plain baseboard. The interior contains only a rod and a single shelf. The narrow five-panel door measures 1'-11¾" in width. Baseboard heaters have been added along the north and east walls.

Second-Floor Apartment, Back South Room (Bedroom)

The well-preserved southeast bedroom matches the first-floor southeast bedroom in size, but retains its original configuration. The original closet remains in place on the north wall and is finished like the one in the northeast bedroom. All the finishes are original and match those in the northeast bedroom, including lath-and-plaster wall and ceiling, baseboard with base cap, flooring, 1/1 wooden sash window, window and door trim, five-panel doors with original

hardware, and closet interior finishes. Baseboard heating has been added along the east and south walls.

Second-Floor Apartment, Storage Room

The well-preserved unfinished storage room is accessible only from an exterior entry from the south porch. The door is a characteristic five-horizontal-panel exterior door found in the upper-story flats. The west wall is sheathed with 4¼" tongue-and-groove vertical boards. The other walls are stud construction (2" x 4", 1'-4" on center) with random-width tongue-and-groove exterior sheathing boards. The 2" x 8" ceiling joists (also 1'-4" on center) exhibit the combination saw marks of vertical sawing on the long side and circular sawing on the bottom edge seen in many buildings of this period in Berlin. The west wall is vertical boards. On the east wall is a 2'-4"-wide x 4'-0½" high 1/1 wooden sash window. The rough 5¼" floor boards are covered with an oil cloth. Along south wall is a relocated 5'-1" wide cabinet, constructed of the characteristic plywood and edge-and-center-bead board. Its style and construction resembles that used for early twentieth-century kitchen cabinets still in place in other Berlin houses. It is likely this cabinet was placed in this space for storage purposes when the kitchen was updated with new cabinetry. The upper half has a 1'-1¼" deep cabinet with a pair of painted plywood doors with surface hinges and cupboard turns. Inside are three shelves. Below the 1'-10"- deep counter are three drawers with pull handles and an edge-and-center-bead board cabinet (with two shelves) with the same hardware as the upper cabinet doors.

Third-Floor Apartment, Front Hall

The rectangular third-floor hallway matches the second-floor hallway except the opening to the south room has been filled in with sheet rock and the door trim has been removed. The 5'-4"-wide opening to the north room remains, as does a doorway at the east end leading to the kitchen. The kitchen door, however, has been removed. The space retains many of its original finishes which match those on the lower two floors. These include lath-and-plaster walls (except in the area of the enclosed opening which is sheetrock), door trim (4¼" side trim and a 7" head casing with a ½" lower bead and a 1⅛" bed molding and cap), baseboard (7" with a 1½" base cap) except in the area of the closed opening, and narrow wood strip tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring which has been painted. A drop ceiling has been added over the original lath and plaster ceiling and has a modern center light fixture.

Third-Floor Apartment, Front North Room (Parlor)

The front north room or parlor matches the first- and second-floor front north rooms in configuration and retains many of its original finishes, identical to those in the front hall. The wide west window retains its original lights as in the first-floor flat; the north window is also original. The window and door trim is the same as is found throughout the building, as are the baseboards. The narrow strip tongue-and-groove flooring has been painted also. The two alterations are an added drop ceiling over the original lath-and-plaster ceiling and the addition of baseboard heaters along the west and north walls.

Third-Floor Apartment, Front South Room

The front south room has been closed off from the front hall with the addition of a sheetrock wall in the original door opening. Otherwise the room retains most of its original finishes, including lath-and-plaster walls, baseboards, window and door trim, large west window, and narrow strip tongue-and-groove flooring (which has been painted). The only other significant alterations are the added drop ceiling with recessed fluorescent lighting and the replacement 1/1 vinyl sash window on the south wall. The door to the kitchen, which originally opened into the room, has been removed. Baseboard heaters run along the west and south walls.

Third-Floor Apartment, Middle South Room (Kitchen)

The kitchen retains some of its original finishes but some of the alterations match those done in the second-floor kitchen. The original edge-and-center-bead board wainscoting has been covered with painted faux wood paneling. Mid-twentieth-century wall cabinets, a counter with a single metal sink, and counter cabinets run along the east wall. Vinyl sheeting covers the floor. Original finishes include the plain baseboard, lath-and-plaster walls above the wainscoting, and characteristic door trim on all the doorways and characteristic window trim. The Celotex tile ceiling has a center modern light fixture. A modern radiator runs under the pair of original 1/1 wood sash windows on the south wall. The replacement exterior door matches the second-floor secondary exterior door.

Third-Floor Apartment, Middle North Room (Bathroom)

The bathroom, like the second-floor bathroom, retains many of its original finishes. These include the edge-and-center-bead board wainscoting (same height as the second-floor bathroom), lath-and-plaster walls above the wainscoting, plain baseboard, 1/1 wooden sash window on the north wall, and porcelain cast-iron claw-foot tub and wall mounted oval sink. The toilet is modern as is the radiator under the window on the north wall. Vinyl tiles have been laid over the original narrow strip wood flooring. A drop ceiling with a center light fixture covers the original lath-and-plaster ceiling.

Third-Floor Apartment, Back North Room (Bedroom)

The northeast bedroom generally resembles the second-floor northeast bedroom in configuration and finish, retaining almost all of its original features. The walls, baseboards, flooring, window and door trim, windows, and closet and room doors and hardware are the same as in the second-floor northeast bedroom. The inside face of the closet door retains its original varnish, as do the closet baseboard and interior trim. The added Celotex tile ceiling (affixed to strapping attached to the original lath-and-plaster ceiling) has a center modern light fixture. Baseboard heaters run along the north and east walls.

Third-Floor Apartment, Back South Room (Bedroom)

The southeast bedroom retains all the same original finishes as the northeast bedroom and also retains the original varnish on the inside face of the five-panel closet door. The only alterations

are a drop ceiling below the original lath-and-plaster ceiling and baseboard heaters along the east and south walls.

Third-Floor Apartment, Storage Room

The unfinished storage room resembles the second-floor storage room in nearly all aspects. The exposed stud frame construction, ceiling joists, sheathing boards, west wall boards, and window on the east wall are the same as in the second-floor storage room. In addition, the original kitchen cabinetry, as in the room below, has been placed along the south wall, though it is missing one upper cabinet door and the original pulls on the drawers have been replaced. In addition, above the ceiling joists are the framing members for the slight shed roof. A scuttle is present in the ceiling, near the east wall.

Attached Garage

The interior of the low-ceiling attached garage is roughly finished with a mix of materials. The west wall is the foundation of the main block. The portion north of the doorway into the basement has grapevine mortar joints indicating that section was once visible on the exterior; the portion south of the doorway does not. The east and south walls are constructed of the edge-and-center-bead board. The former opening on the south wall to the exterior is now blocked. The ceiling is recently added, unpainted dry wall. The floor is poured concrete.

Outbuildings

Boulay Block Garages (East Garage)

In addition to the attached garage, the property includes a flat-roofed, three-bay garage connected to a shop or workspace sited along the rear (east) property line. The 44'-11"-wide clapboarded rectangular building has an irregular footprint. The southerly three-quarters consists of three differently sized garage bays, each with a double-leaf door constructed of edge-and-center-bead boards with decorative cross-bracing and strap hinges. On the north end is a shallower nearly square former shop or work space (14'-5" x 14'-4") with a pent roof spanning the façade, protecting a double-leaf door entry and a 1/1 wooden sash window. The well-lighted space also has 2/2 wooden sash windows centered on the north and east elevations. A small storage room, roughly constructed of horizontal boards covered with asphalt sheets, has been added in the re-entrant angle between the work space and adjoining garage bay. The entire structure sits on concrete slabs. The paint scheme of the clapboarded building matches that of the three-story Boulay Block.

Sanborn fire insurance maps show that this outbuilding originally consisted of a southerly two-bay garage and a small, one-story building to the north of the garage. Sometime after 1950 an addition was built between the two buildings, creating the present configuration with three garages (Sanborn 1928, 1928 updated to 1950).

The interiors of the different spaces confirm the different building phases and uses. In the northeast corner of the north space is a flue chimney and a built-in wall cabinet above a sink and lower cabinet. Faux wood paneling now covers the chimney and cabinetry which was

constructed of the ubiquitous edge-and-center-bead board. A mixture of finish materials are used on the walls, ceiling, and floor. Metaflex paper is nailed on the walls, over sheathing boards, except under the windows where faux wood paneling has been added. The ceiling is painted boards, roughly 6"-10" wide. The flooring is Celotex panels over a concrete pad.

The added garage bay between the original buildings is deeper than the original two southerly garages. Most of interior north and south walls are the former exterior walls of the original adjoining buildings and they remain sheathed in the original clapboards; only the easterly end of each wall is newer edge-and-center bead boards laid horizontally. Much of the east wall has deteriorated and is covered with particle board panels. The exposed rafters, which do not line up with the studs on the rear wall, support the sheathing boards of the low-pitched roof.

The original two-bay, 19'-7" x 17'-7" south garage is constructed of studs and edge-and-center-bead board sheathing. The southerly bay is roughly 1' narrower than the north one. The floor is poured concrete. The interior is unfinished showing the ceiling joists supporting the roof sheathing of the low-pitched roof. The joists are supported by the studs and single 2" x 6" carrying beams in each half which are affixed to center posts and supported by various nailed braces. The floor is poured concrete. Originally each bay had a 2/2 wooden sash window centered on the east elevation. Only the one in the northerly half remains in place; the southerly one is filled with a sheet good panel.

Boulay Roofing Buildings/Garages (6 Wight Street)

To the north of the Boulay Block are two additional buildings, one-story frame structures now used as garages but originally associated with Stephen Boulay's roofing and paving business in the 1920s. They are located on a small 0.10-acre triangular lot at the intersection of Third Avenue and Wight Street and abutting the railroad tracks to the northeast. Grass covers many parts of the lot. Historically the buildings were known as 6 Wight Street, built ca. 1920, thus predating the Blocks.

Boulay Shop/Garage (North Garage)

The Boulay Shop/Garage, built ca. 1920, is an altered one-story, pitched flat-roof, stud-framed building with a rectangular footprint. The long elevation of the 25'-4" x 18'-4" building is sited parallel to and close to the street. Sanborn maps show the building had two telescoped ells extending from the rear elevation that were removed sometime after 1950 (Sanborn 1928 updated 1950). The structure rests on a concrete pad foundation though some large rough-cut local stones at the foundation level are also in evidence on the south elevation. To the rear is a 9'-2" deep foundation, presumably the remnant of the now demolished extension. The building is sheathed in clapboards on the façade and side elevations and painted green with white trim to match the Boulay Block at 848 Third Avenue. The rear elevation shows evidence of the original telescope extension, leaving some of the studs exposed. The west facing elevation has been altered with the addition of two overhead garage doors. Each sixteen-panel wood garage door has four lights in the second row. Single 2/2 sash windows centered on the north and south elevations provide illumination to the interior. A patch in the clapboards on the south elevation fills in a doorway in this location; the door remains in place on the interior.

The interior is subdivided by a center wall running the depth of the building. It retains remnants of finishes present when the building was used as a shop/office. The stud-frame construction exhibits the characteristic combination saw marks seen in other Berlin buildings of the period. The atypical ceiling framing includes two carrying beams placed near the center wall and below the height of the ceiling, running east-west. The ceiling is random-width boards covered with some type of building paper. The rear (east) wall features a combination of materials, including tin sheeting, possibly a remnant of when the building was occupied for a time by a sheet metal company in the 1930s. On the north and south walls, thickly painted tar paper is laid over random-width sheathing boards and trimmed with a molded dado that also runs along the much altered east wall. The floor is random-width (roughly 4"-10") unfinished boards. A stove pipe opening is located high on the north wall near the rear elevation (though no chimney is apparent). The 2'-5" door on the south elevation, only visible on the interior, is located 6'-2" west of the rear wall. The varnished Colonial Revival door has four raised-field panels, upper two larger than the bottom two, and original metal hardware.

Northeast Garage

The northeast garage, probably also built ca. 1920 (Directory 1920; Sanborn 1928), is also a one-story, pitched flat-roofed, wood frame building with two unequally sized garage bays. The 28'-5" x 20'-0" rectangular building is located to the south and east of the Boulay Shop/Garage and sited with the long elevation parallel to the street. A shallow metal-clad addition, added after 1950, extends from the rear elevation, likely to provide sufficient depth for parked cars (Sanborn 1928 updated to 1950). The façade is sheathed with wood clapboards (painted green with white trim to match the Boulay Block) whereas a mix of materials is used on the other elevations including reused sheet metal panels (some with advertisements on the reverse face) on the south elevation. As recently as August 2008 each garage bay had a sixteen-panel replacement wood garage door with two lights in the second row; the southerly door has since been removed. On the façade, to the north of the northerly garage door is evidence of a now blocked doorway. A wooden 1/1 sash on the south elevation provides illumination to the interior of the south half; evidence of a now blocked window on the north elevation can be seen on the exterior and interior, slightly west of the south window.

On the interior, the space is divided unequally, with the north half larger. Portions of the original finish remain in the north half of this stud-framed building. These include narrow wood strip tongue and groove flooring (along the north wall), 2'-8"-high edge-and-center-bead board wainscoting (on the north and south walls, originally varnished) with a 2³/₄" dado and 8" baseboard with a 1³/₄" base cap. Most of the flooring has been removed, leaving a dirt floor. The ceiling framing consists of a 4" x 6" carrying beam and roughly sawn 2" x 4¹/₂" joists. The smaller south bay has an unfinished ceiling. Heavy paper (Metaflex) is nailed to the walls, covering the framing.

Building Comparison

The Boulay Block is one of the few Blocks in the Berlin Heights Addition neighborhood. Examples, however, can be found in other neighborhoods in Berlin especially on the east side of

the river which retains several well-preserved examples though not as large as the Boulay Block.⁴ This building type is a local variation of a multi-family building that combines the more common New England three-decker with a number of features characteristic of French-Canadian urban architecture. The form was most commonly constructed by French-Canadian builders, not only in Berlin, but in other industrial New England communities undergoing significant development in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Other New England communities with comparable examples include Southbridge and Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Historical Information

General Background of Locale

European settlement of Berlin (initially called Maynesborough) dates to the early nineteenth century. Initial settlement began in 1821 on the east side of the river with incorporation in 1829, at which time there were approximately seventy-three inhabitants (Merrill 1888, 789).⁵ The location was attractive for two main reasons. The powerful Androscoggin River at the confluence with the Dead River, a small waterway with little volume, provided significant water power for small saw and grist mills. Plentiful timber resources covered the hills on either side of the river valley and nearby mountains (Gove 1986, 82). In addition, there was sufficient arable land for farming for the original settlers. Only with the arrival of the railroad in 1851, however, and an economical means of transport for lumber and wood products did the town's development begin to flourish. The railroad provided access beyond a local market and attracted outside investors to the town to build large-scale operations.

Wood Pulp And Paper Manufacturing

The second most significant and transformative event in Berlin's long-term development was the introduction of the wood pulp industry, beginning in the late 1870s. Wood pulp and paper mills began to replace saw mills as the dominant industry, reaching their zenith in the early twentieth century with multiple mills constructed along both sides of the river. Innovations in the manufacture of paper, notably the supplanting of rags by wood pulp for its production, was the genesis of this transformation, along with refinements of the wood pulp manufacturing process (Watterson 1997; Smith 1970, 121-187). By 1896 the Burgess Sulfite Fiber Company was the largest in the United States, manufacturing 75-80 tons of pulp per day (Watterson 1997). During the peak decades of production, multiple mills operated along the Androscoggin, manufacturing a wide range of wood products. Many of the mills were under the aegis of the Brown family, the town's predominant employer, and its corporate entities from the 1890s to the 1940s. By the late 1910s, the company manufactured a range of wood, wood pulp, and paper products including clapboards, fibre tubes, druo wrappers, sheathing paper, general merchandise, pulp screenings,

⁴ See the Context Document for a discussion of examples located in other Berlin neighborhoods.

⁵ The following is only a brief overview. For a more thorough overview history of the area see the context document (forthcoming) being prepared in conjunction with this HABS documentation. See also the bibliography, especially Preservation Company 2002 and Preservation Company 2008. The above and sections of the context document draw extensively from those two earlier documents by Preservation Company, at times verbatim.

house plumbing, kream krisp (later Crisco), shingles, lumber, book paper, kraft paper, bond paper, blinds, kraft pulp, sash, chloroform, doors, bleach liquor, lignine, and bleached sulphite pulp (Brown Bulletin 1919, 1). The second major corporate entity, the International Paper Company (established 1898), which had purchased the Glen Manufacturing Company in 1898, became the largest producer of newsprint in the world with multiple plants nationally, including several in Berlin.

Population

This flourishing industrial development created a growing demand for an ever larger work force. Large numbers of immigrants and migrants, many with lumber skills, flocked to Berlin to work in the mills, which often had high-paying jobs. The recruitment of skilled labor and individuals in specific trades was likely done through a variety of means, none specifically identified to date. Word of mouth likely played a key role in recruitment but other more active means may have been employed though the specific means remain unexamined.⁶ In addition to attracting large number of migrants, primarily from New England, Berlin became home to large numbers of immigrants, predominantly from French Canada and Europe. The flourishing local economy also attracted large numbers of tradesmen, merchants, craftsmen, professionals, and laborers, to name a few, to provide the goods and services essential to a thriving metropolis. Over the forty-year period from 1880 to 1930 the population of the city swelled from just over 1,100 to over 20,000 (Bureau of the Census 1890-1930). The Depression, however, significantly curtailed the paper-making industry, and in turn the economy of the City of Berlin, from which it never fully recovered. While the paper industry remained in Berlin into the 1970s, the numbers of mills and individuals employed steadily decreased over the decades.

Platting And Residential Development

Residential neighborhoods arose on both sides of the Androscoggin River in the wake of the establishment and flourishing of the paper mills, along with the extensive subdivision of land in grid patterns laid over steeply rising hillsides. Berlin was largely developed out of separate large parcels platted predominantly between 1890 and 1910. The Berlin Heights Addition was one of a number of areas in Berlin first platted in the early 1890s and generally developed over the next thirty years. The area, referred to as “The Avenues” for its north-south running numbered avenues, was named Berlin Heights Addition during the platting process to differentiate it from an earlier neighborhood, called Berlin Heights located to the northeast, east of the Grand Trunk Railway tracks. The platting and development of the area occurred in several phases over the course of the 1890s. By 1930 the blocks within The Avenues/Berlin Heights Addition Historic District boundary had reached its greatest density, comprised of a mix of single- and multi-family wood residences with modest set backs on urban lots, most typically measuring 50' x 100'. Over the course of those peak forty years Berlin grew from a small town to a thriving, bustling metropolis, the largest city in the northern part of the state.

⁶ More recent sources have suggested that recruitment occurred at Ellis Island but this has not been substantiated with primary sources. In nineteenth-century Lowell, Massachusetts, recruitment of French Canadians was done by French-Canadians hired by the textile mills (Early 1979, 130).

In contrast with earlier nineteenth-century New England textile communities comparatively little company housing was constructed in Berlin. Two early companies, Forest Fibre Company and Glen Manufacturing Company did build a small number of houses and duplexes in the 1880s, outside of the Avenues, but the majority of housing was built by individuals. A cross section of individuals and entities, including Berlin businessmen, small-scale businesses, and individual property owners implemented the processes of platting, laying out roads, and financing and constructing housing. Speculative development was less common than individual development, either for owner-occupied or tenanted buildings.

Concurrent with the land development was considerable infrastructure development, including a sewer and water system, and electrification. The surveyor and engineer W.C. Perkins, president of the Berlin Heights Addition Corporation, was responsible for the layout of the town's water and sewer system which was first completed by 1893 (Bacon 1890:86; Annual Report 1893, 27-30). In the early 1890s the town Board of Health urged that all dwellings and businesses be connected to the sewers as sufficient water was now available for flushing them (Annual Report 1893, 27). As new areas were platted and developed, the systems were extended into those sections. The Berlin Electric Light Company had been established in 1887 and so lights were being placed along the streets. For instance, in 1894, a warrant included an addition of an electric light near the corner of Green Street and First Avenue and one near the school house west of the Grand Trunk Railway, both in the Avenues (Annual Report 1895, 5). In 1897 the city incorporated and the first city annual report includes a lengthy ordinance relating to sewers, including the requirement that plumbers get licensed "to do business as a plumber in connection with the Sanitary Sewer System" in Berlin (Annual Report 1898, 33).

From its inception the Berlin Heights Addition area, like many developments in Berlin, took on an urban character, with a grid street pattern in blocks of narrow acreage lots. The pace, character, and concentration of development in the neighborhood was influenced by geography and population pressures. First through Third Avenues and the lower cross streets were the earliest and most heavily developed, most likely because of their closer proximity to the downtown area and relative flat topography. The lots on First and Second Avenue were completely developed by ca. 1909 while Third Avenue and those above it were filled in more slowly (Sanborn 1901-1950).

Housing Stock

The housing stock in Berlin overwhelmingly is comprised of single, freestanding, wood-frame buildings on each lot, with air, light, and a small amount of land on all sides. The dwellings include a variety of single-family and multi-family residences with individual characteristics and distinguishable from their neighbors, though drawing upon certain common massing and spatial characteristics typical of the period of construction. They employ an assortment of forms and styles popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries on residential buildings. Many lots include outbuildings or garages, some of which post-date the construction of the original residence as evidenced by the large number of building permits filed for one-story buildings in the 1910s and 1920s (Annual Reports 1912-1928). The Avenues is made up of primarily

residential buildings of three units or less, typically one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half stories in height, with no building in the neighborhood rising above three stories. Some other neighborhoods do have four-story multi-family examples. The multi-family houses in Berlin as a whole have significantly larger porch structures than commonly seen in other urban environments, and tend to have porches on two or more elevations. Many of these porches provide exterior access to each living unit. Builders also used local materials in housing construction. Most dwellings have native stone foundations and are of wood construction. In much of the housing erected in the early twentieth century there is considerable similarity of interior finish materials, including window and door trim, doors, and edge-and-center bead wainscoting and cabinetry. Many of the wood building and finish materials would have been readily available locally from the Brown Company's Retail Lumber division which manufactured "All kinds of Building Material." An advertisement in the 1920 Directory listed Kyanized lumber, shingles, calno board, doors, windows, brick sheathing paper, "all kinds of moulding," and a "full line of interior finish" in hard pine, cypress and spruce, and soft pine (Directory 1920).

Ownership And Occupancy

The extent of rapid construction of housing in those decades along with the high percentage of rental properties can be gleaned from the census records. As of 1890 Berlin contained 364 dwellings housing a total of 702 families (Bureau of the Census 1890). Ten years later the number had more than tripled to 1,181 dwellings containing 1,672 homes.⁷ Of those total homes, 574 were owned, 1,077 were rented, with an additional twenty-one of unknown tenancy (Bureau of the Census 1900). By 1910 the dwelling number had increased by nearly one-half to 1,476, comprised of 2,302 homes, of which 892 were owned, 1,390 were rentals, and twenty were unknown (Bureau of the Census 1910). Those numbers had increased further by 1920. In that year Berlin had 3,115 homes (number of dwellings is not noted), of which 1,407 were owned, 1,656 were rented, and 52 were of unknown tenure (Bureau of the Census 1920).⁸ Of particular note is the increase in the number of owned homes. By 1930 the numbers had increased further, with a total of 2,959 dwellings. Of that total, 2,138 were single-family dwellings, 539 were two-family dwellings, and 282 were three-or-more-family dwellings (Bureau of the Census 1930).⁹ As of 1940 the number of dwelling units in Berlin had increased further, totaling 4,557. Of that total, 1,580 were detached one-family dwellings, twelve were attached one-family dwellings, 102 were side-by-side two families, 1,066 were other two-family dwellings, 765 were three-family dwellings, and the remainder 1,032 other types of dwellings including four-families (280), one- to four-family with business (133), five- to nine-family (531), ten- to nineteen-family (69), and other dwelling place (19).

Many of the residents who initially settled in the Berlin Heights Addition neighborhood comprised a class of moderately skilled workers, including shoemakers, mill engineers,

⁷ Home refers to living space, not a building, so if a dwelling is occupied by more than one family or household, it is the home for each of those families.

⁸ The summary reports do not include totals for number of dwellings.

⁹ The summary reports do not provide a breakdown of owned vs. rental properties.

papermakers, carpenters, contractors, and others. The relatively high wages paid by the wood and paper mills in Berlin allowed many families to purchase their own homes. Between 1900 and 1920 renters initially outnumbered homeowners in the neighborhood but after that date the ratio was nearly equal (Bureau of the Census 1900-1930). Households varied in size and often included several generations or extended family members. In addition, or alternatively, household size was increased through the taking in of boarders or lodgers to provide extra income (Bureau of the Census 1900-1930). In the Avenues multiple generations of a family frequently resided in the same general area, often acquiring several lots in close proximity to each other if not directly abutting each other.

Ethnicity

The ethnic diversity of the mill's workforce is apparent by the number of neighborhoods initially identified by the nativity of their residents. Berlin's immigrants included Scandinavians, French Canadians, Germans, Irish, Russians, Russian Jews, and Italians. Areas were known as 'Irish Acres,' 'Little Canada,' 'Norwegian Village,' and 'German Town.' A small cluster of Russians settled on the west side of the railroad tracks at the base of Mt. Forist. By the late 1930s the city had thirteen different churches where services were conducted in five different languages (WPA 1938, 124). The areas were never entirely segregated by ethnicity and by the 1930s they were becoming more diverse (WPA 1938, 124).

Though the Berlin Heights Addition/The Avenues area was dominated by French Canadians, who often established close-knit neighborhoods with family and parochial ties, it was a mixed ethnic neighborhood. The French Canadian church, St. Anne's, predated the development of the Avenues and so was located elsewhere in the City. The Russians, initially mostly single men, arrived around the turn of the twentieth century. By 1915, there were 300 Russian men in Berlin, but only a few families. A Russian Orthodox congregation was formed for moral and spiritual guidance and the Holy Resurrection Church was constructed (Berlin Heritage Trail Partnership 1997:11).

History 1940 to Present

The Depression had a profound impact on the economy of Berlin, with the Brown Company suffering a series of setbacks such that by the 1940s it was close to bankruptcy. Though the industry recovered to some extent during the war and in the several decades afterwards, its numbers and innovations never matched those of the early twentieth century. The company was no longer locally owned and ultimately was acquired by a succession of corporate entities (Rule n.d.). The other large paper manufacturer, the International Paper Company, closed their Berlin mill in 1931. The decline in the local paper industry contributed to a decline in population, which decreased from its high of over 20,000 in 1930 to just over 15,000 by 1970. The decline has continued up to the present, though the numbers increased slightly in the 2000s, resulting in a population of just over 10,000 as of 2011 (www.city-data.com). The remaining mills were demolished in 2007 though one remains just south of the town line in Gorham.

History Of Property With Ownership As Important To Building

The building history of the property and its ownership and occupancy patterns are representative of the Berlin Heights Addition Neighborhood. 848 Third Avenue was built as a three family residence in 1926, one of two three-story blocks on adjoining lots built by Stephen Boulay (1859-1950), a French-Canadian immigrant who came to Berlin as a young adult.¹⁰ Boulay had purchased several adjoining lots at the intersection of Third Avenue and Wight Street in 1914 yet they remained undeveloped for nearly ten years. This building type, while comparatively rare in the Berlin Heights Addition Neighborhood, is quite common on the East Side, a large neighborhood paralleling the east bank of the river. Consequently, the two Boulay Blocks represented important visual landmarks in the neighborhood. Construction of such buildings for rental purposes, followed by occupancy by the builder's adult children is a common theme in Berlin and to some extent in the Berlin Heights Addition Neighborhood. The ownership and occupancy patterns and the ethnicity of the owners and occupants are all characteristic of the Berlin Heights Addition neighborhood. Common themes of the neighborhood include French-Canadian multi-generational ownership, occupancy by the adult children of the original owner, and French-Canadian tenants (many employed in the mills) often with young families. 848 Third Avenue (and the other two Boulay blocks) was built primarily as an income-producing property for Boulay and his family and never occupied by Stephen Boulay. An additional characteristic pattern of the Berlin Heights Addition neighborhood is for a family to own several properties in close proximity, as Boulay did, owning a residence, several multi-families, and a commercial establishment all in the vicinity of Third Avenue and Wight Street. When the second generation owned and occupied the building, they resided in the first-floor apartment, as was typical of owner-occupied blocks.

Land Platting and Development, 1890s-1920s

The lots occupied by 848 Third Avenue and the two abutting Boulay properties (6 Wight Street and 844 Third Avenue) were first platted in 1893 as lots 4, 5, and 6 in Block 50 in Plan E of the Berlin Heights Addition (BHA) but they would remain undeveloped for over thirty years (Plan E 1893; later revised Plan E 1893). Within a year of the platting BHA had sold multiple lots in the vicinity of the intersection of Third Avenue and Wight Street, including these three lots, to Cyril Brooks, an apothecary, and Napoleon Rouleau, a tobacconist and real estate agent (Deed 1893 69/24).¹¹ Together and individually the men acquired multiple lots throughout the Berlin Heights Addition neighborhood. Soon after acquiring the land that included lots 4, 5, and 6 in

¹⁰ The first was 844 Third Avenue (now gone) and the other was 124 Wight Street to the north that is still owned by the Boulay family.

¹¹ The men paid \$3,000 for twenty lots (Deed 1893 69/24). They appear to have intended to sell the lots individually and provide the financing for their purchase, making back the money through interest received for the mortgages. Rouleau had sold his interest in the lots to Brooks in 1894 (Deed 1894 73/56). By 1897, however, Brooks was selling developed lots (Preservation Company 2004, 42).

Block 50 in Plan E they began to sell them individually, including lot 5.¹² By 1914, however, that lot had been reacquired by the Estate of Cyril Brooks (Deed 1914 120/367).

In 1907 Boulay began purchasing lots in the vicinity of Wight Street and Third Avenue (Preservation Company 2008, A-188). His purchase of these three lots at the north end of Third Avenue in 1914 from the Estate of Cyril Brooks represented some of his last acquisitions in the area (Deed 1914 120/367). It would be over ten years, however, before Boulay developed the lots.

Boulay Family and Ownership

Stephen Boulay had arrived in Berlin ca. 1882 from Quebec as a young adult with his first wife Cecelia. Their son Napoleon was born soon thereafter (Census 1900). Initially Boulay (variously spelled Boulle and Bouley also) worked in the sulphite mill (Census 1900). By 1909, however, he had established a roofing business, Stephen Boulay & Sons with his oldest surviving son Napoleon (Directory 1909-10). Father and son remained in business for less than ten years but Stephen continued the roofing business and by 1920 he had expanded it to include house construction (Directory 1909-1910, 1915-16, 1920; Census 1920). An advertisement in the 1920 Directory promotes the roofing company as a contractor of slate, metal, gravel, and slag roofing and providers of Amatite roofing and all kinds of roofing, felt and building sheeting, shingle stain, tar paint composition, and concrete and paving (Directory 1920:19). By that time Stephen had also erected some buildings, used for storage, at 6 Wight Street (Directory 1920). Boulay also acquired additional property on the west side of Wight Street, just northwest of 848 Third Avenue. Beginning in the 1930s he built and managed a filling station across the street at 25 Wight Street (not extant) (R. and A. Leclerc 2008; Directory 1936). By the mid-1930s he used the buildings at 6 Wight Street for his roofing business, in addition to at 15 Wight Avenue near his residence (Directory 1936).

Boulay never resided in 848 Third Avenue but rather lived in a single-family house on Wight Avenue (now Boulay Street) less than one-quarter mile northwest of the multi-family. Boulay had acquired his house (15 Boulay Street) from J.H. Wight through an agreement made in 1907 for which Boulay made monthly payments until 1911 (Lot E52-3) (Deed 1907 136/17; Deed 1911 153/258). After the death of his first wife Boulay remarried, to Mary Lavoie (born ca. 1876) in 1906 not long after she had emigrated from Quebec. The couple would have three children Alfred, Iphigenie, and Rose Marie (1912-1995). All of the children acquired some of their father's property after his death in 1950 with Rose Marie inheriting 848 Third Avenue though Boulay's widow Marie retained a life estate in all of his property for the remainder of her life (Census 1910, 1920; Deed 1951 392/276). In addition Alfred and Rose Marie would live in 848 Third Avenue as adults.¹³

¹² The new owner, Joseph Lemieux, promptly mortgaged the property to the men for \$275 but he eventually lost the property through foreclosure without having developed it (Deed 1893 67/89; Deed 1914 120/367).

¹³ The adjacent block, 844 Second (not extant) was willed to Boulay's daughter Iphigenie who had married William DeChamplain in November 1932 (NH Marriage Records Index). By 1940 the couple had two children, Richard

Rosemarie Gagnon died in 1995. Maurice Gagnon sold the building to his sons, but retained a life interest in it, and continued to live in the building until the family sold it in 2003, along with the adjacent garages (Deed 1996 853/791; Deed 2003 1019/74). Maurice Gagnon died 27 September 2010. The property was sold again in 2004 and was up for sale between January 2007 and June 2009 (Bernard 2010, 9). The state acquired it in 2010 (Deed 2010 1313/217).

Occupants, 1926-present

The earliest known tenants of 848 Third Avenue include Charles and Algie White and their three daughters, who moved to Berlin from Vermont. White (born 1884), a native of England, came to the United States as a child. He worked as a laborer in the paper mill. Edward and Emma Garneau and some of their ten children also lived in the block. Garneau, a first-generation French-Canadian from Vermont, was a foreman for city jobs. The third unit was rented by Alcide Joseph Brisson (born 1878) a carpenter who later lived elsewhere in The Avenues (Directory 1927, 1930; WWII Draft card; Census 1920, 1930).

By 1930 two of the three units had new tenants, with only the White family still in residence. By that time Charles White was a car inspector for the Canadian National Railroad. One of the apartments now was occupied by a family member and his young family. Stephen Boulay's son Alfred J. was now living in one of the apartments, possibly the first-floor unit, with his wife Leda, who had come from Quebec ca. 1924, and their young son Ralph (born ca. 1928). Alfred worked with his father in the roofing business but also as a laborer in the paper mill (Directory 1930, Census 1930). Abe and Helen Wiseman and their daughter Eunice (born ca. 1915) lived in the third apartment. Abe and Helen had emigrated from Poland ca. 1912 and ca. 1914, respectively. Wiseman owned a clothing store (Directory 1930). Before moving to Third Avenue the Wisemens lived on the lower end of Second Avenue (Census 1920, 1930). Whereas Boulay paid \$26 per month in rent, the other two tenants paid \$25 per month (Census 1930).

By the early 1930s, two of the three apartments had new occupants or were vacant, that latter indicative of the Depression. Alfred J. Boulay and his family continued to live in the block until the mid-1930s. As of 1932 the Libert Nolet family occupied one of the units. Nolet was the proprietor of Nolet's Clothes Shop on Main Street (Directory 1930, 1932). The third unit, however, was vacant for a time in 1932.

By 1936 all three units were occupied by employees of the Brown Company and their families. Two of the families (the Drapeaus and the Maines) would live in the block for over five years (Directory 1936, 1941, 1948). Romeo E. Drapeau (born ca. 1908), a first-generation French-Canadian, lived in one unit, along with his father Napoleon and possibly his mother. The Drapeaus had previously lived nearby at 776 Third Avenue. Leroy E. Maines (1894-1985) and various family members including his wife Augusta, and at least four children (Walter L., a Brown Company employee, Charlotte L., Catherine, and Christine) lived in a second unit. Brown Company tinsmith and mill man Aime Giguere (1899-1977) lived in the third unit

(born ca. 1934) and John (born 1939). At that time the DeChamplains were living with the Boulays on Boulay Avenue (Census 1940). As of 2012 John DeChamplain still owned his grandfather's house.

(Directory 1936, 1941; Census 1930). Three years later the Drapeaus and Maines still lived in the block but the Gigueres had moved and the third unit was temporarily vacant. The Drapeaus and Maines moved out of the block in the mid-1940s (Directory 1941, 1948).

In the 1940s new tenants moved into all three units, some of whom would live in the building for many years. In June 1935 Boulay's daughter Rose Marie (Rose) married Maurice A. Gagnon, a chef, and by 1940 they had moved to 848 Third Avenue, with their first son Gerald (born ca. 1936). The couple, who occupied the first floor apartment, raised their family there that grew to include three more sons (Andre L., Marc S., and Carl D.). Rose died in 1995 but Maurice remained in the apartment until 2003. Maurice Gagnon (1912-2010), a first-generation French Canadian, initially worked for Berlin Mills. He later was a restaurant and hotel chef (Census 1930; Directory 1953, 1956; SSDI). By 1948 the other two apartments had new tenants and by 1950, the block was occupied by tenants who remained for over ten years. Francis J. Gallant, who worked at the A&P Tea Co., and his wife Annette, lived in one unit for just a few years beginning in the late 1940s (Directory 1948, 1950). The second unit was occupied by Elzear Dumont, an employee of the city, and his wife Alice. The Dumonts lived in the block for over ten years (Directory 1948, 1956, 1961). By 1951 Mathew A. Gogan, a car inspector for Brown Company, and his wife Alice had moved into the unit formerly occupied by the Gallants. The Gogans lived at 848 Third Avenue until sometime after 1961 (Directory 1950, 1961, 1968).

By the early 1960s the residents of 848 Third Avenue were the Gogans, the Gagnons, and Paul Remillard (Directory 1961). Nearly ten years later the residents were, in addition to the Gagnons, Robert P. Laflamme and Anita A. Comeau (Directory 1969-70). Five years later it was Richard and Monique Guay and Ronald Couette (Directory 1971, 1974).

6 Wight Street

The abutting parcel to the north of the Boulay Block and the structures on it were originally used as storage by Stephen Boulay in the 1920s (Directory 1920, 1923, 1924, 1927). By 1930 Godbout and Hoffman (Napoleon Godbout [ca. 1901-1973] and William Hoffman), a sheet metal and roofing company occupied 6 Wight Street. They also had an auto repair shop at this location. They occupied the building for about five years (Directory 1930, 1932, 1936). By 1936, however, Boulay was using 6 Wight Street for his roofing business (Directory 1936).

By 1941 the buildings were vacant (Directory 1941). Beginning in the late 1940s, however, the buildings had been converted to residential use, occupied by single immigrant men. A 1951 plan shows the L-shaped building with exterior stairs in the re-entrant angle between the main block and rear ell (Plan 1952 392/276). In 1948, identified individuals were Joseph Martineau (retired), Wladislaw Nowoiscik, and Wasel Waschuck (retired). The first two men were still there five years later, along with Ferdinand J. Belanger (retired), Dan Protorcky, and Nikita Yakischick (who previously lived next door at 10 Wight Street). By 1969 they were vacant again in 1969 (Directory 1969).

The garages were inherited by Stephen Boulay's daughter Rosemarie Gagnon at the same time she inherited 848 Third Avenue. The lot was sold in 2003 at the same time as 848 Third Avenue.

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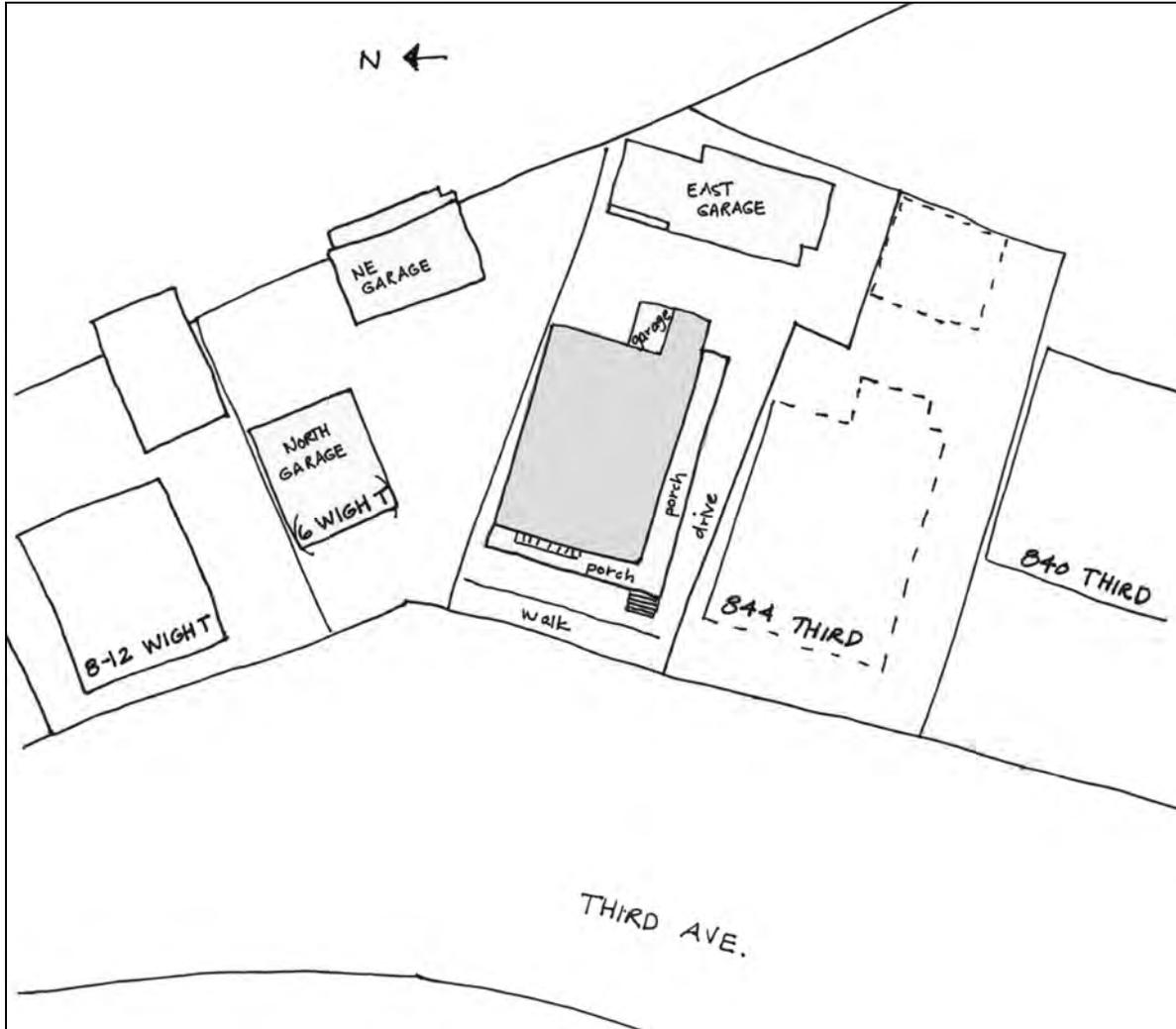
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Websites

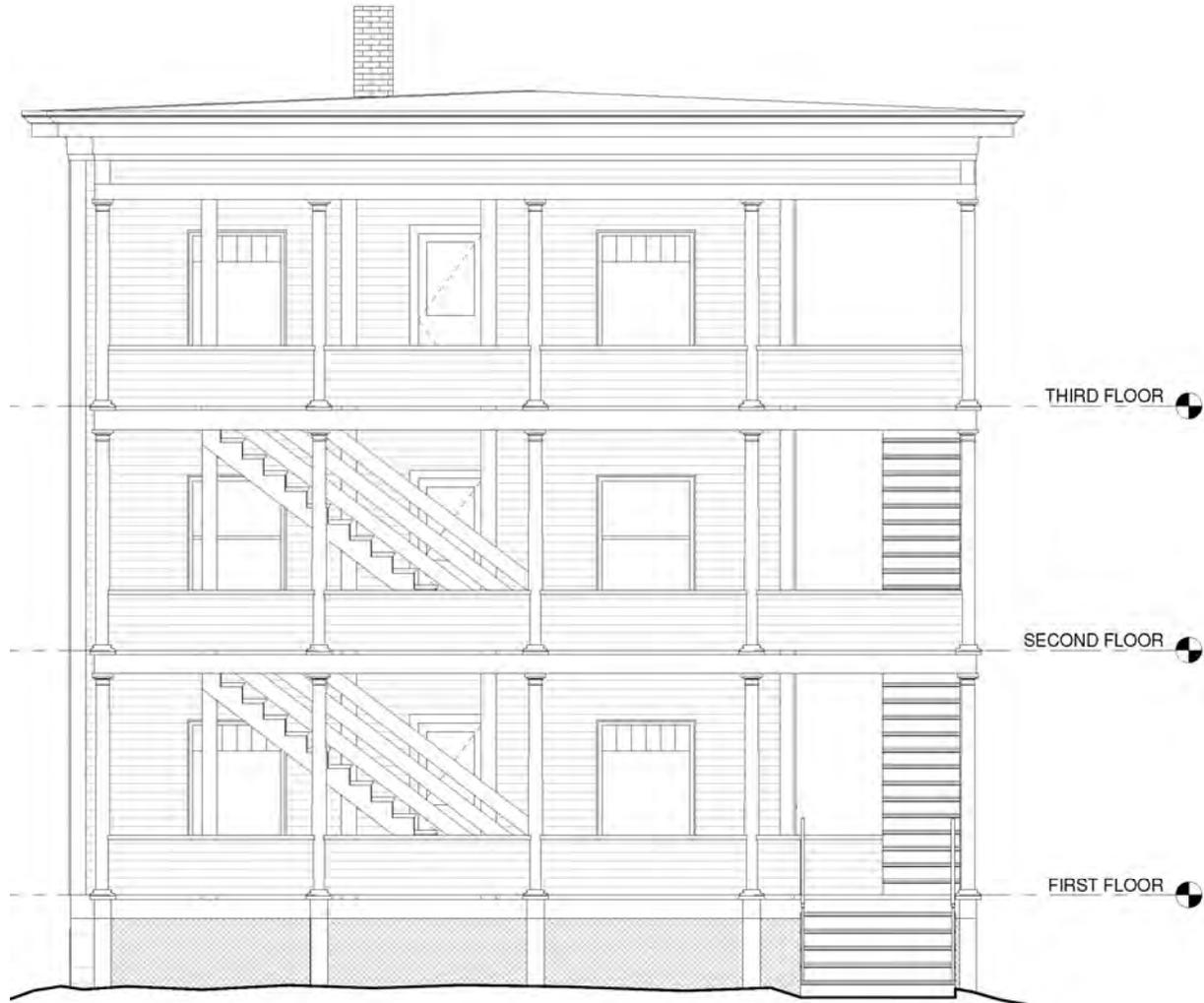
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DRAWINGS

Sketch Map



Exterior Elevations

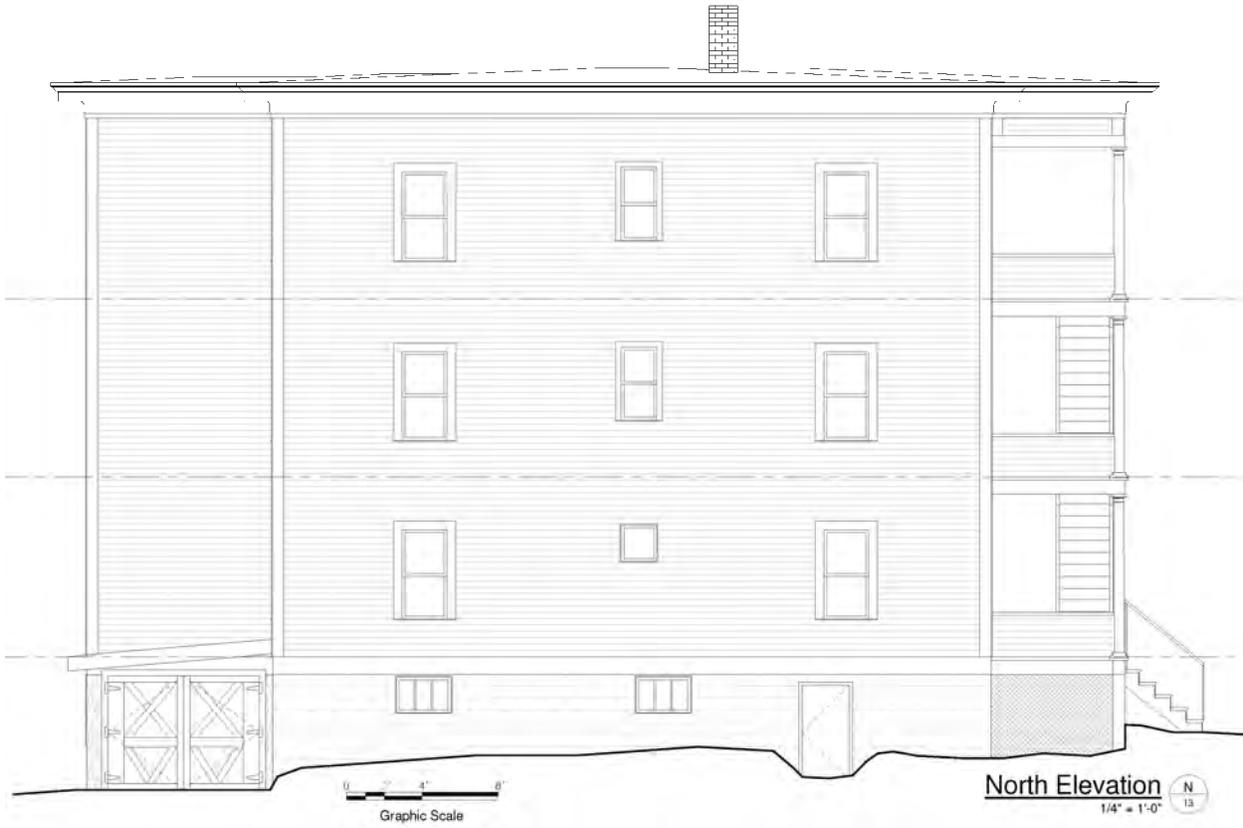


0 2' 4' 8'
Graphic Scale

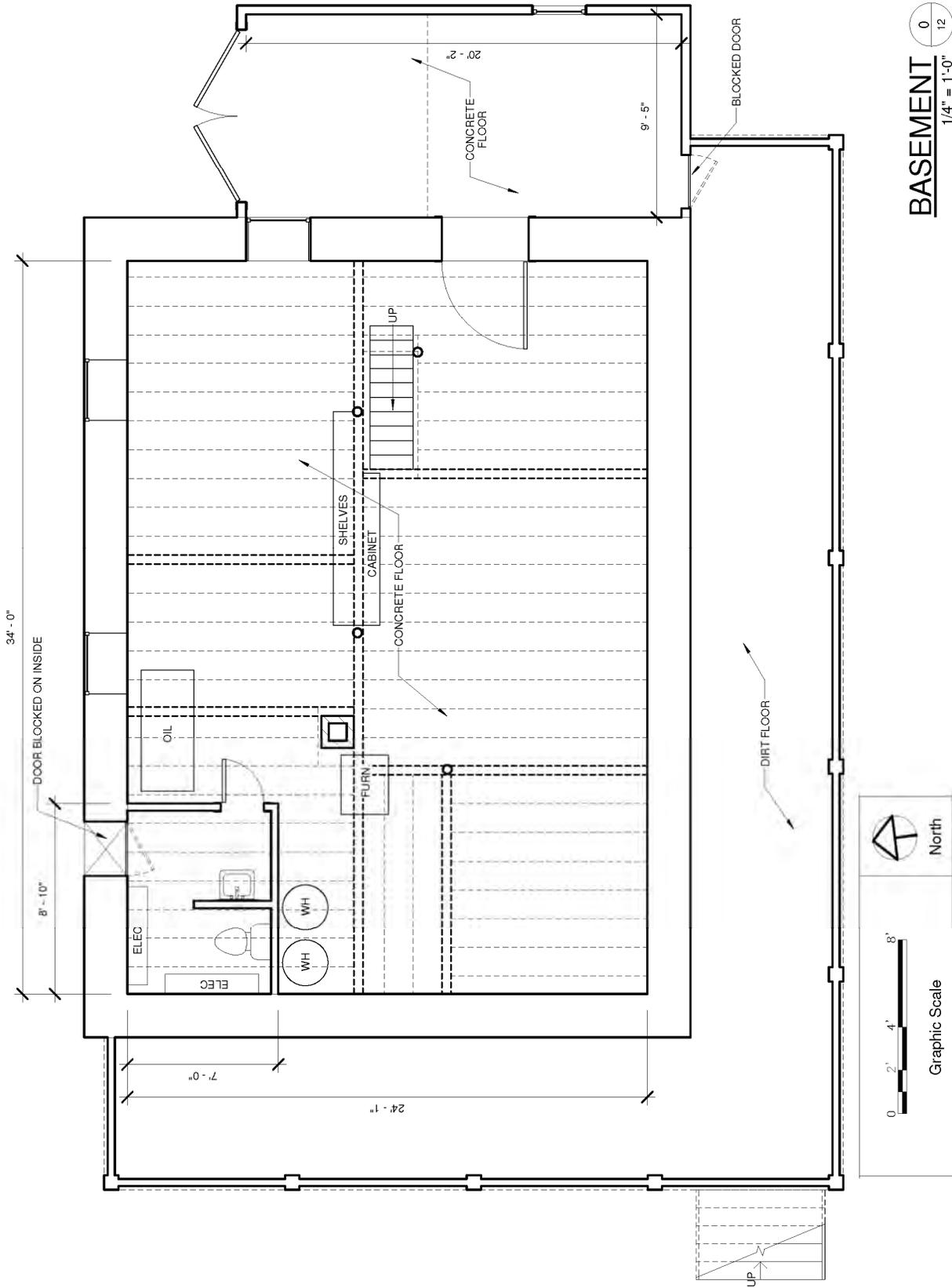
West Elevation W
13
1/4" = 1'-0"

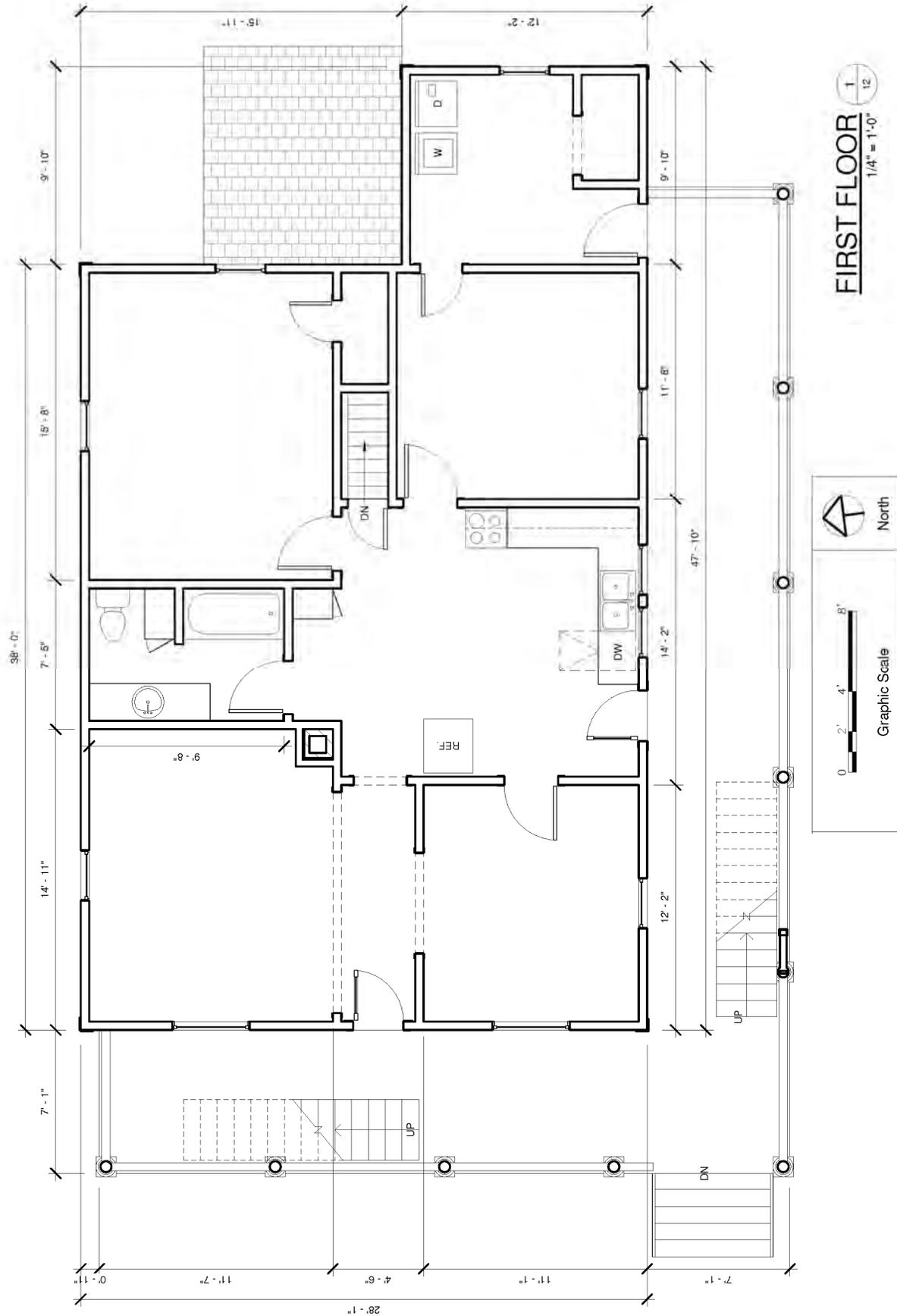


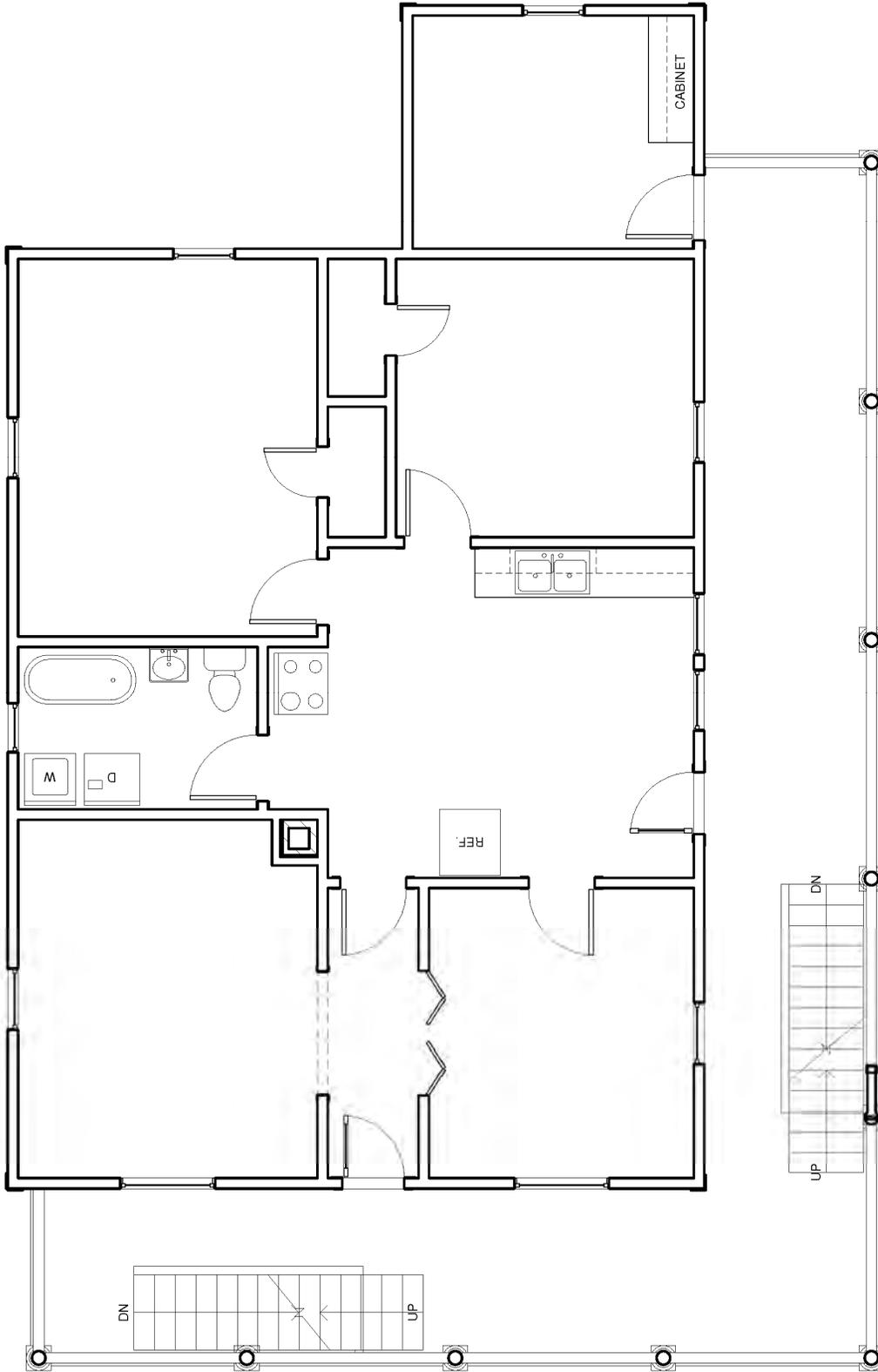




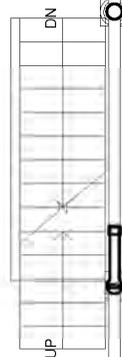
Interior Plans







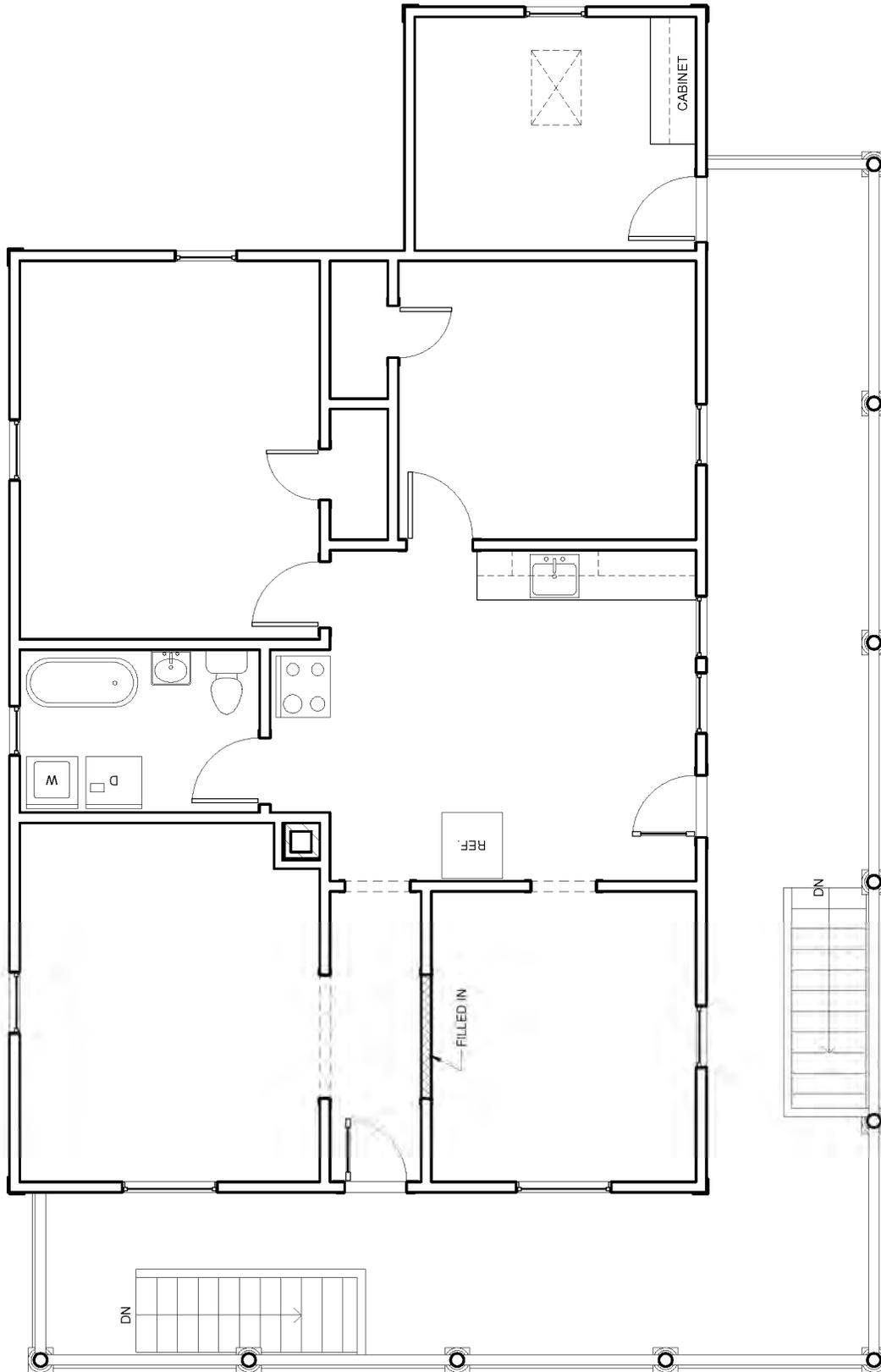
SECOND FLOOR 2
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1/4" = 1'-0"



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Graphic Scale

North

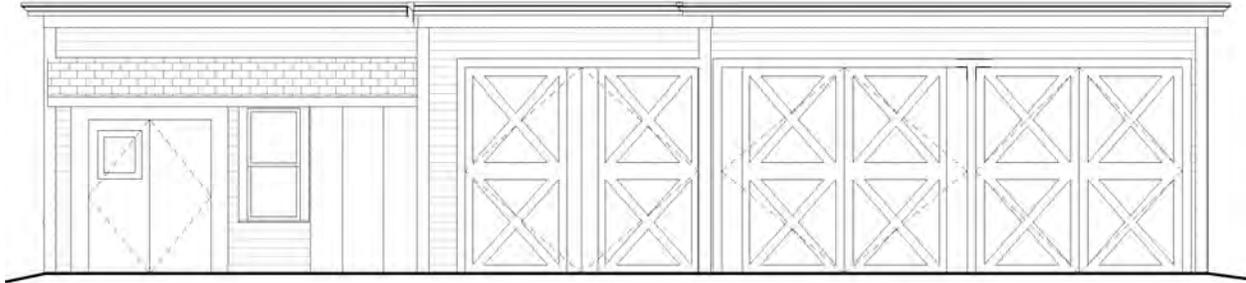


THIRD FLOOR 3
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1/4" = 1'-0"

0 2' 4' 8"
Graphic Scale

 North

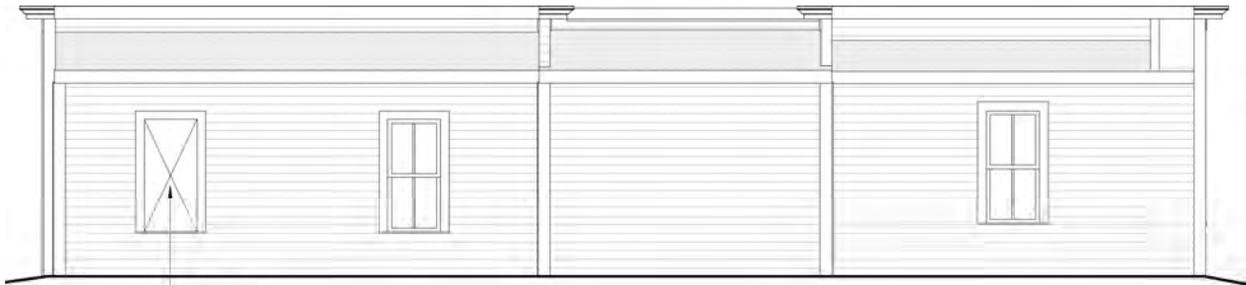
Garages



East Garage - West Elev W
14
1/4" = 1'-0"

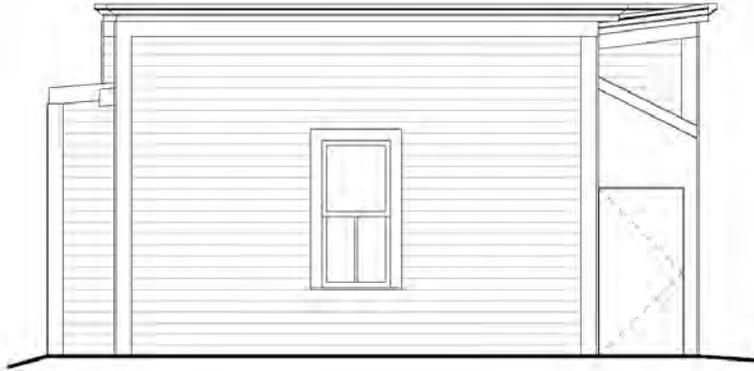


Graphic Scale



East Garage - East Elev E
14
1/4" = 1'-0"

BLOCKED



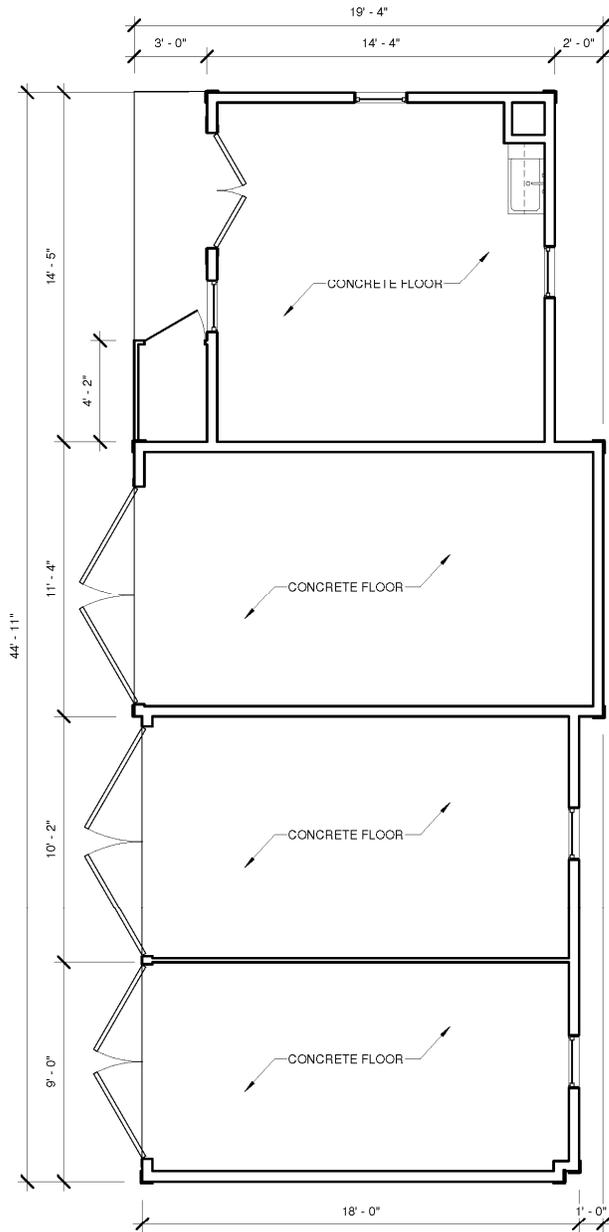
East Garage - North Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



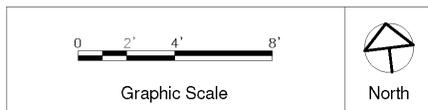
Graphic Scale



East Garage - South Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



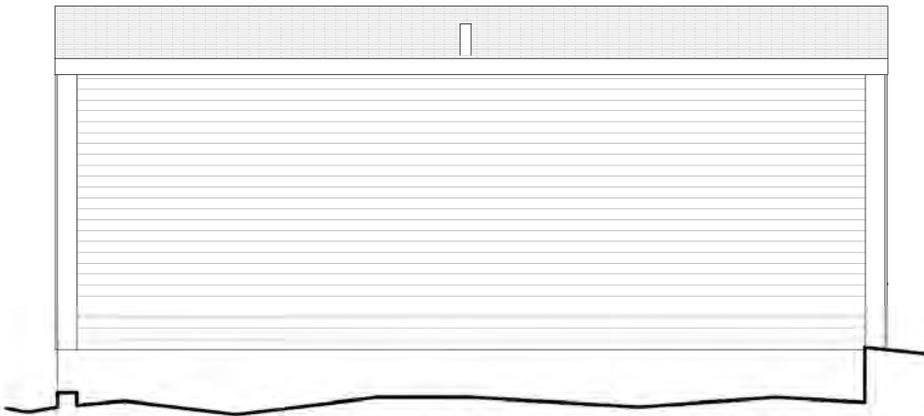
East Garage - Floor Plan 0
14
1/4" = 1'-0"





North Garage - West Elev

1/4" = 1'-0"

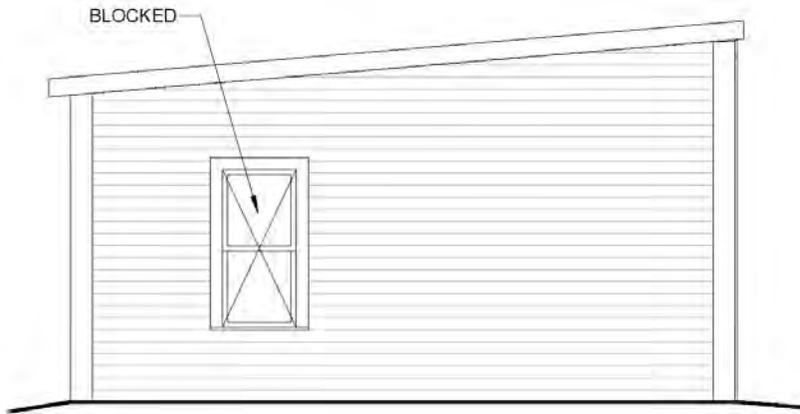


North Garage - East Elev

1/4" = 1'-0"



Graphic Scale



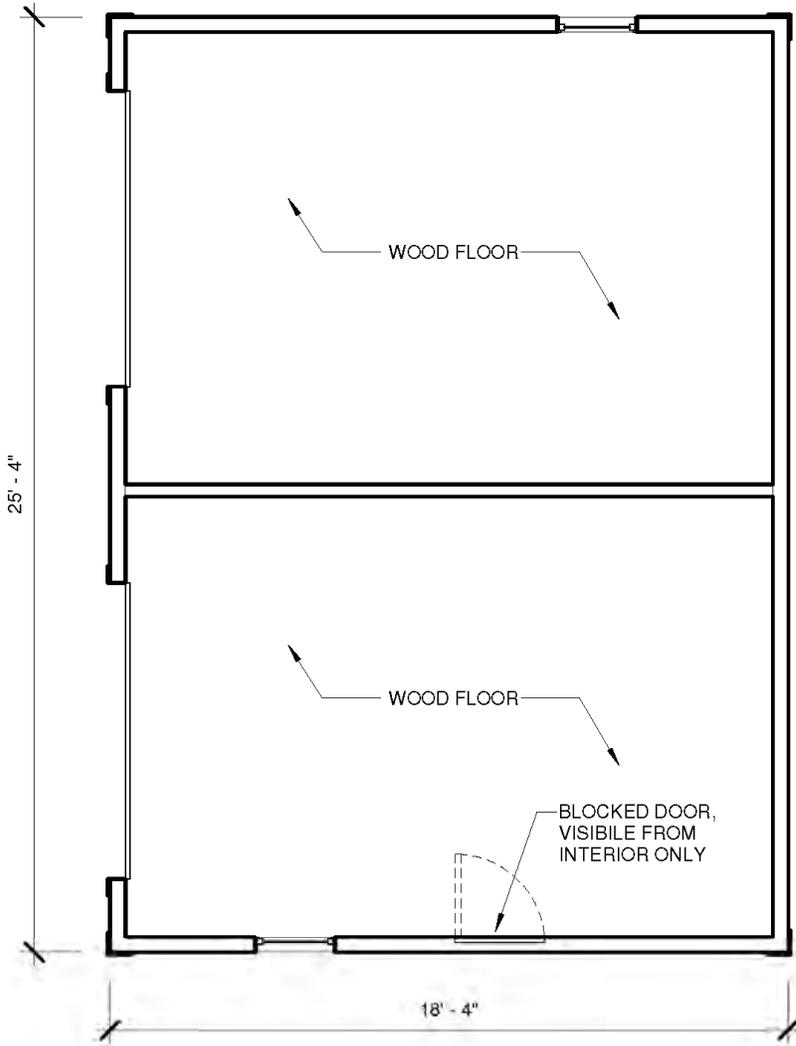
North Garage - North Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



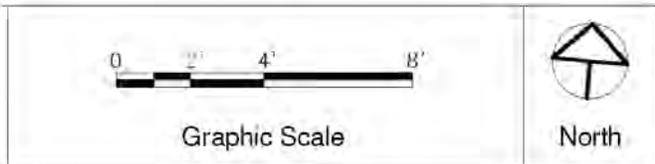
North Garage - South Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



Graphic Scale

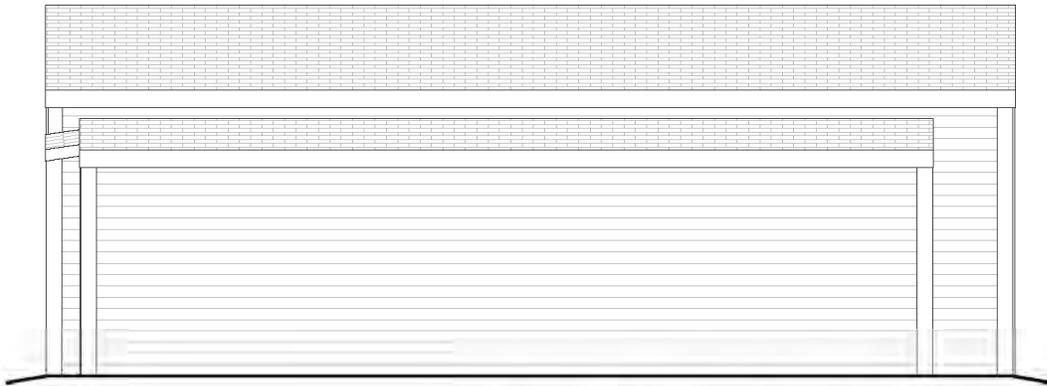


North Garage - Floor Plan $\frac{0}{16}$
 $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$





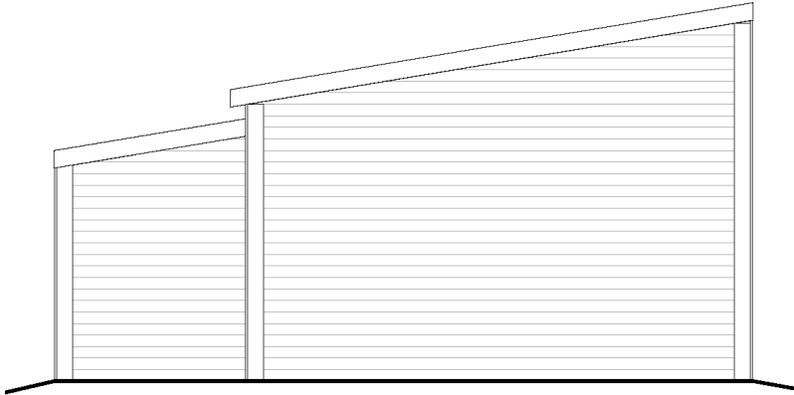
NE Garage - West Elev (W)
1/4" = 1'-0" 15



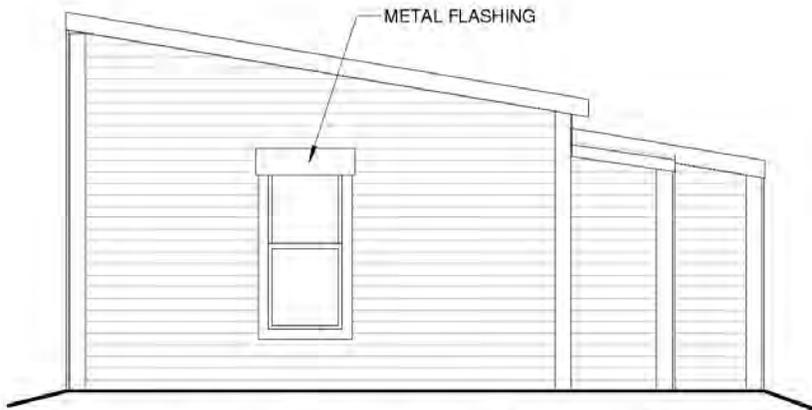
NE Garage - East Elev (E)
1/4" = 1'-0" 15



Graphic Scale



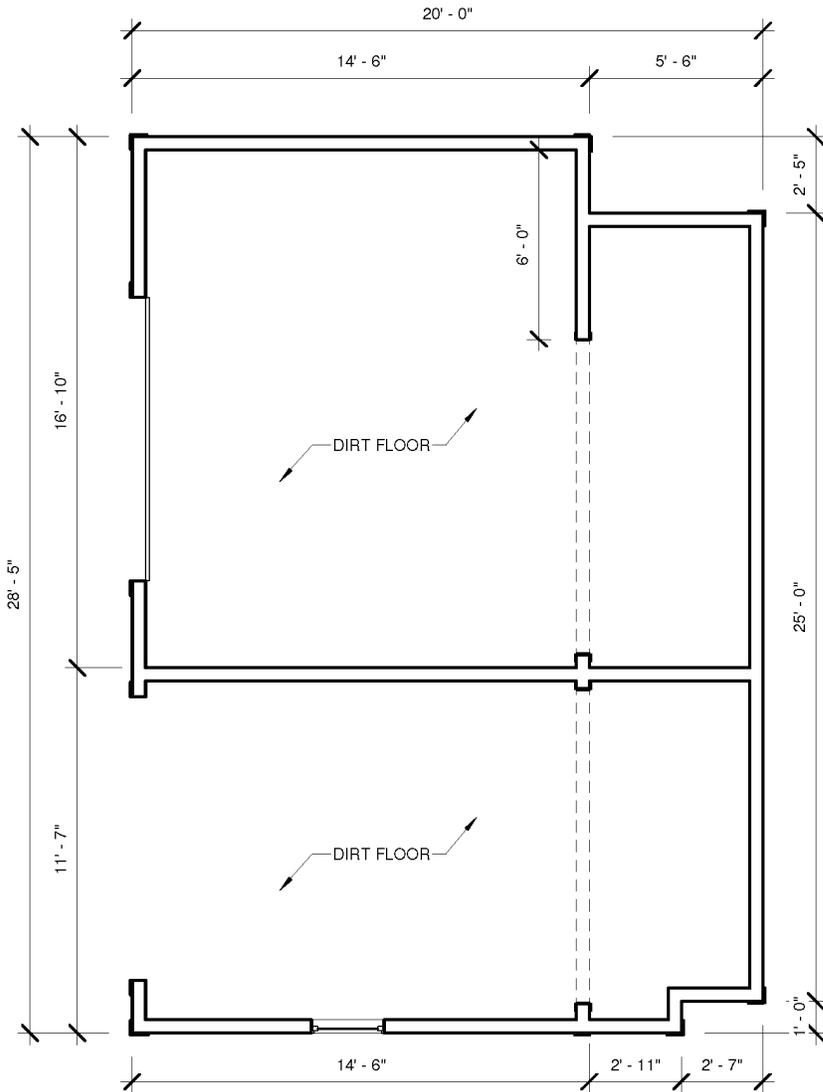
NE Garage - North Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



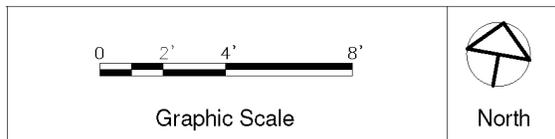
NE Garage - South Elev 
1/4" = 1'-0"



Graphic Scale



NE Garage - Floor Plan 0
15
1/4" = 1'-0"



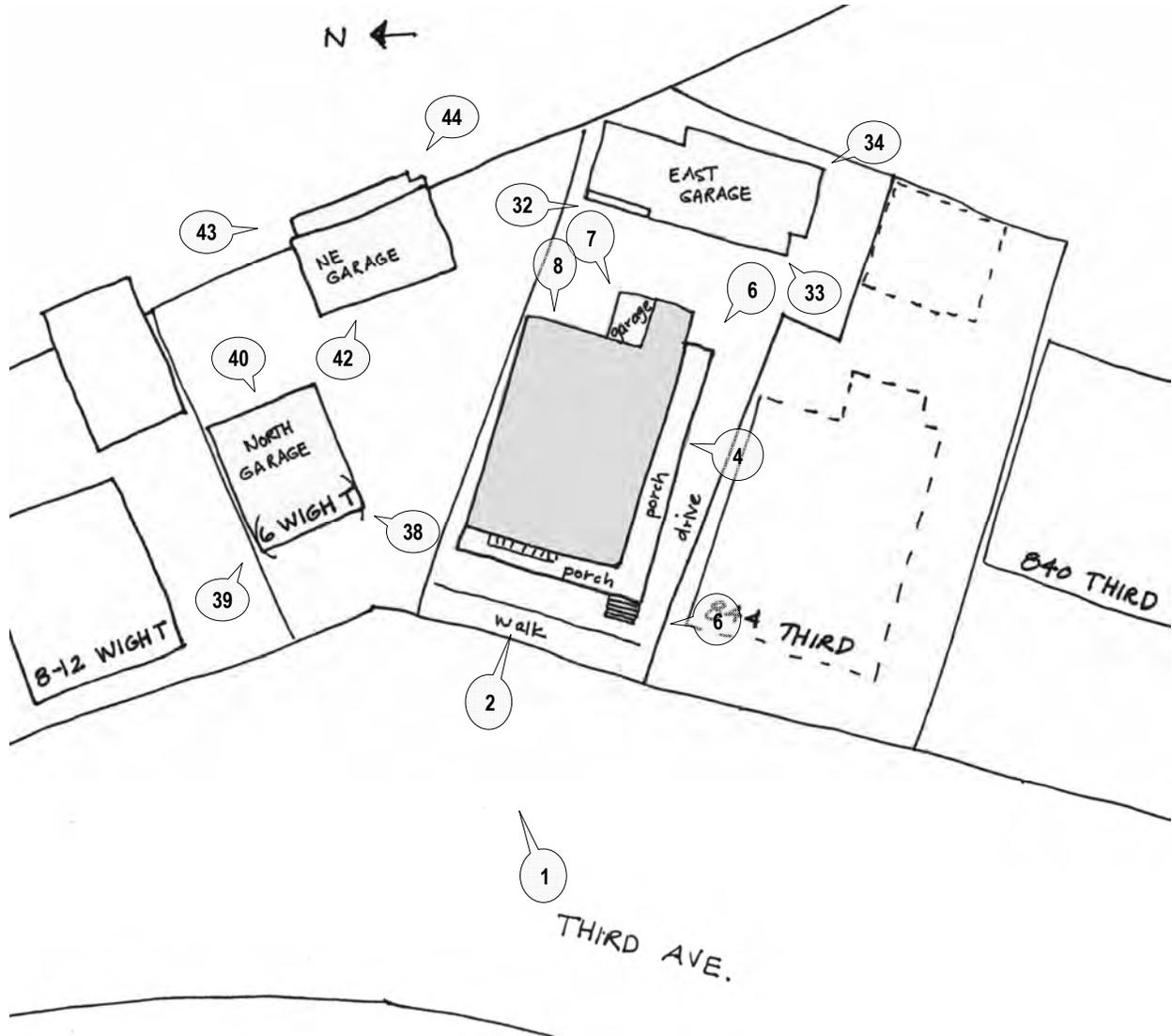
Index to Photographs

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3	Detail, first-story façade, showing center entry and picture windows	NE
4	South elevation, showing side porches and stairs	NNE
5	Stairs to third floor, on side porch	SE
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43	Northeast garage, north elevation	S
44	Northeast garage, south and rear (east) elevations	NW
45	Northeast garage, interior, north bay, northwest wall, showing some original wall finishes and flooring	NW

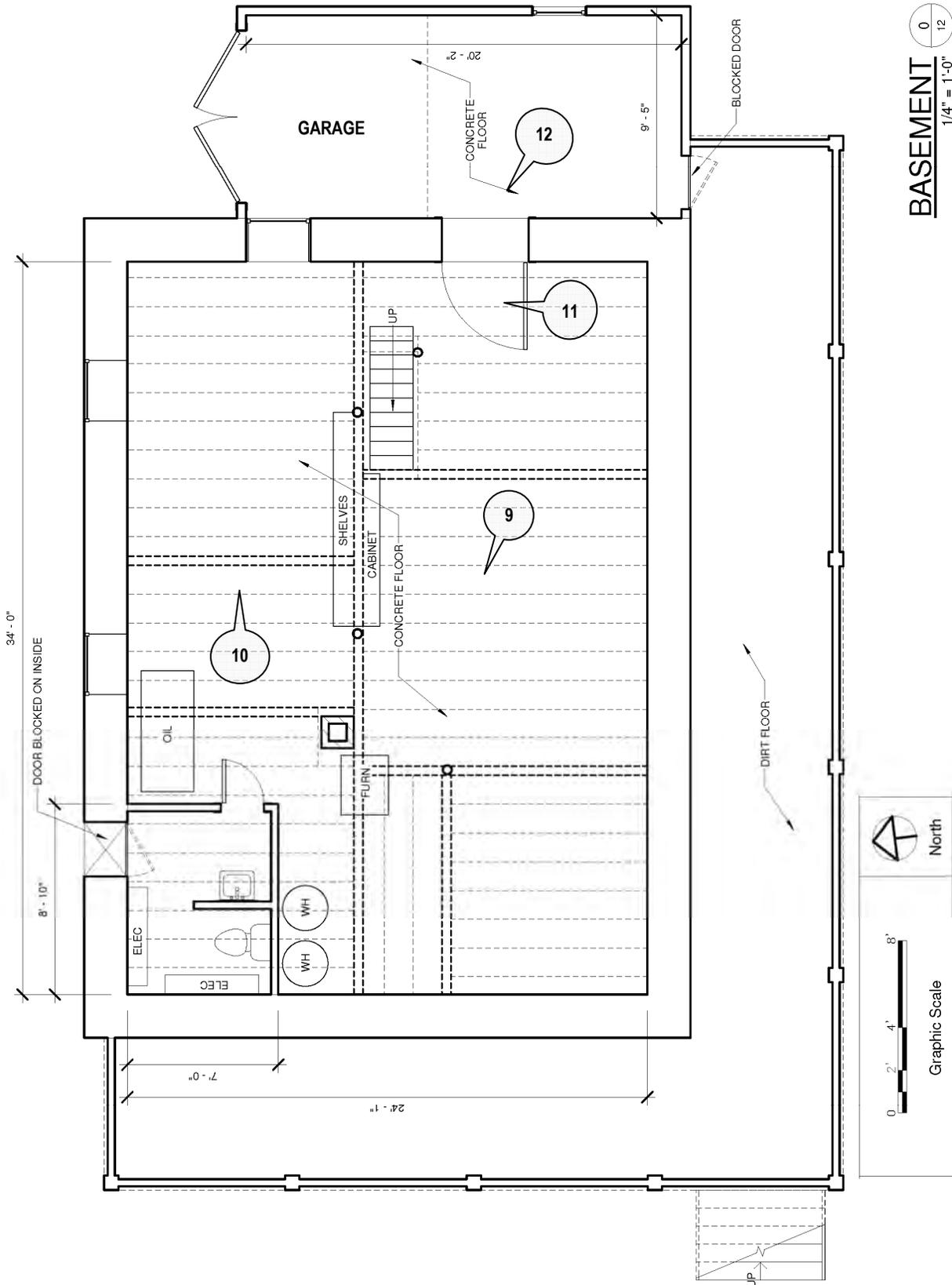
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Exterior



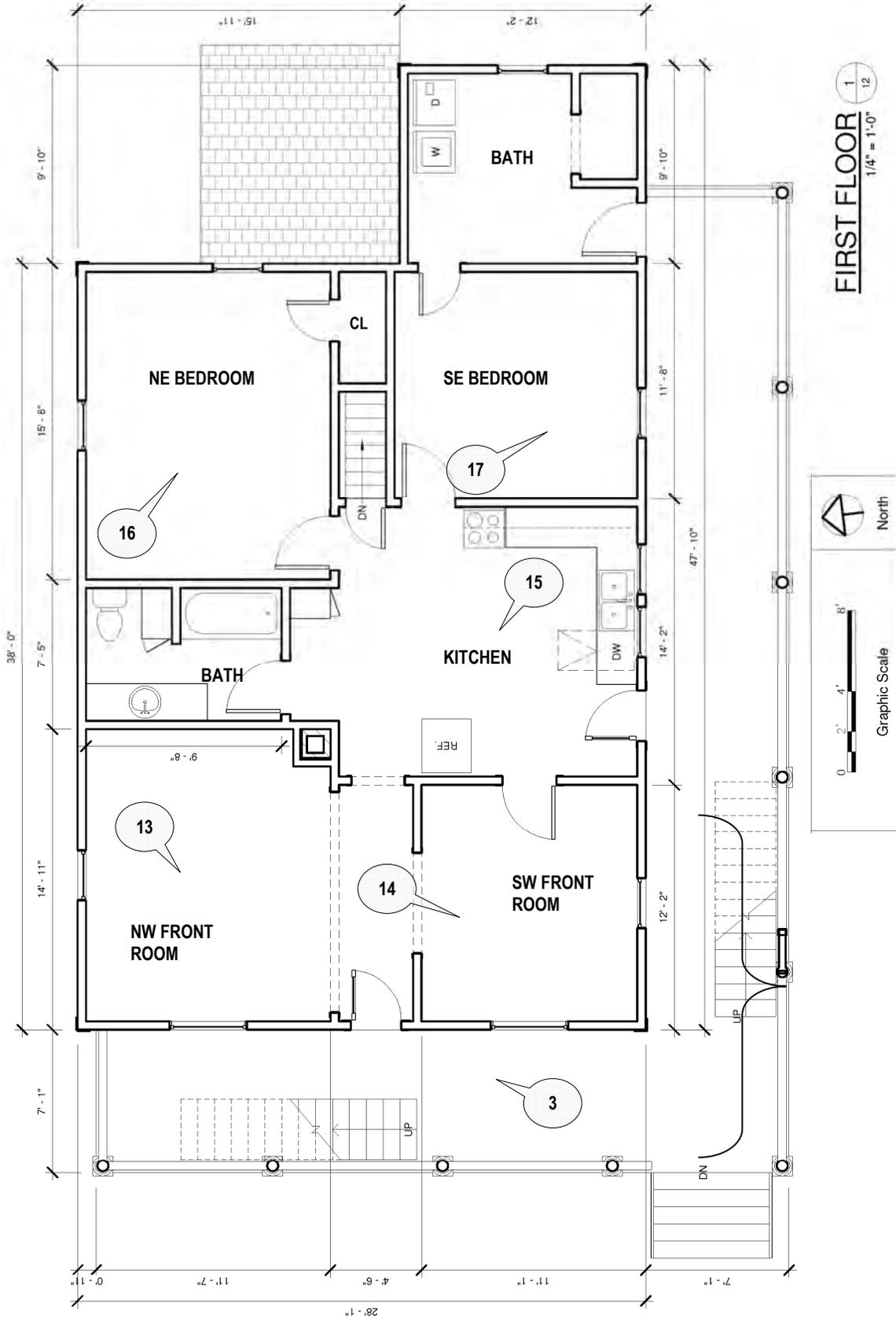
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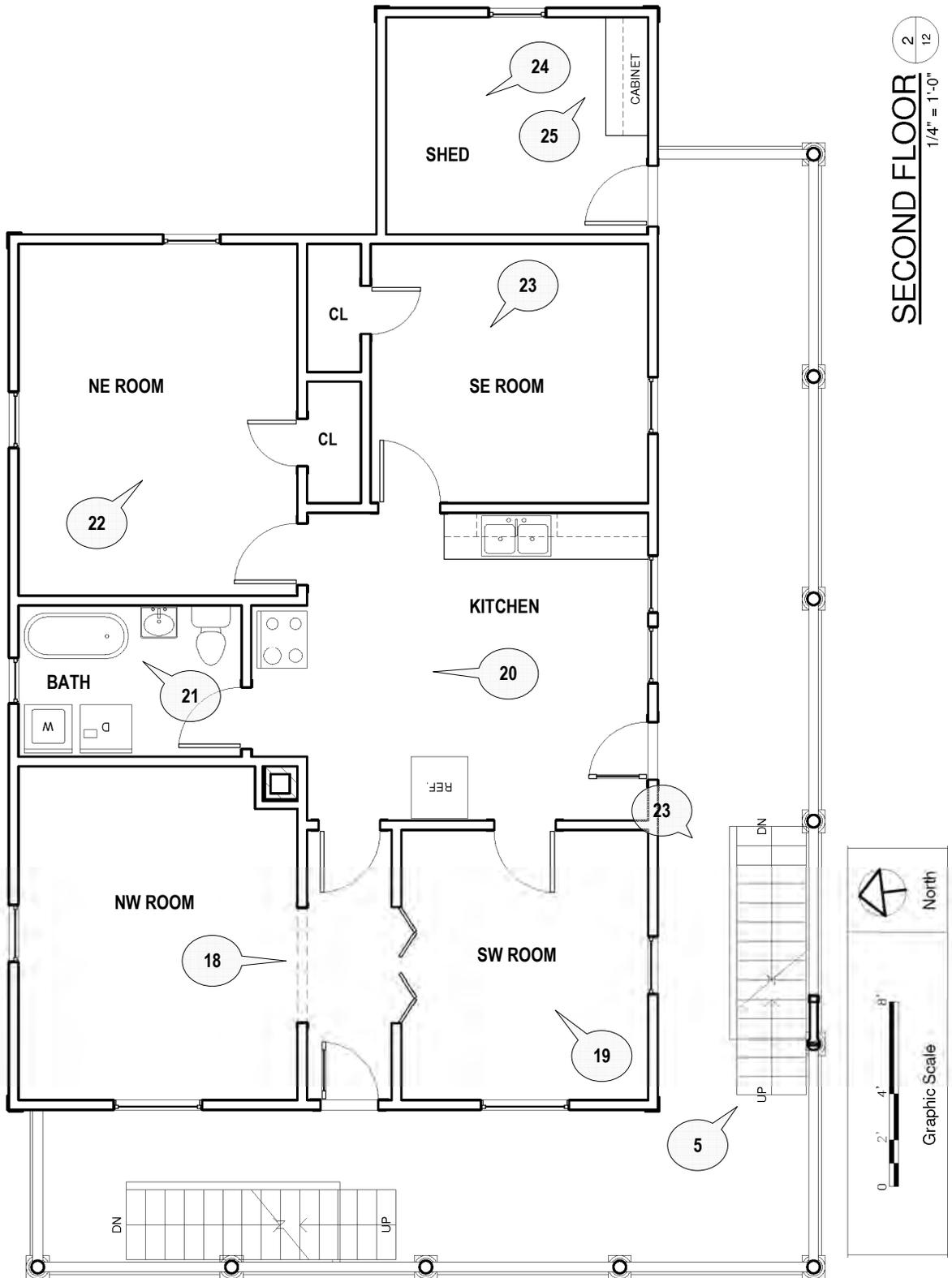
Interior



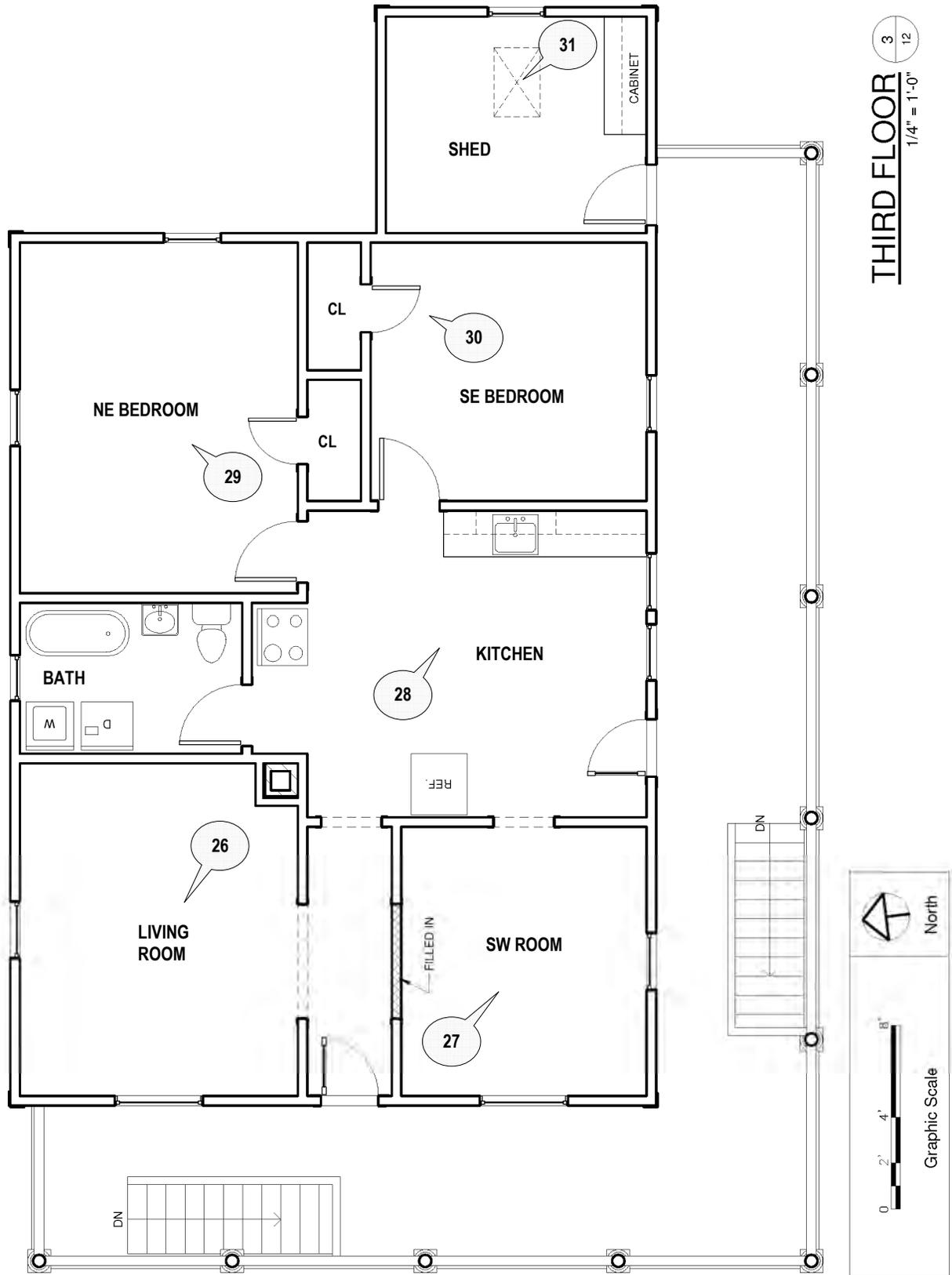
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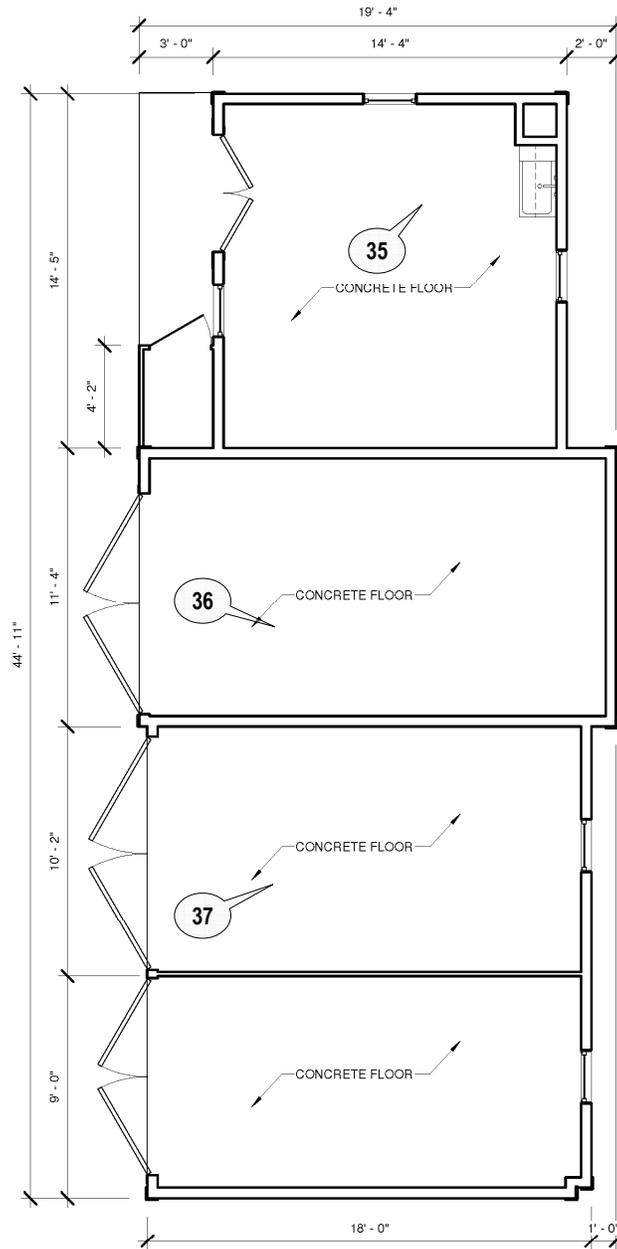
Porch Photo 3
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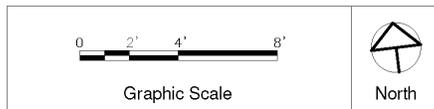
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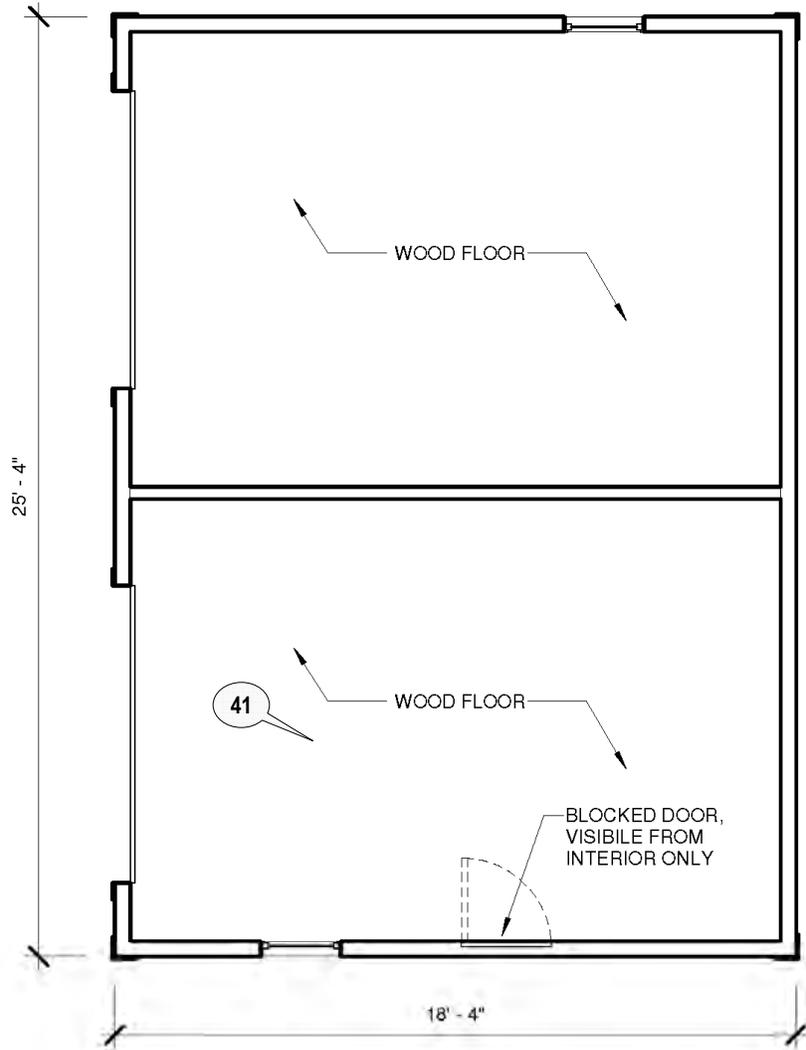
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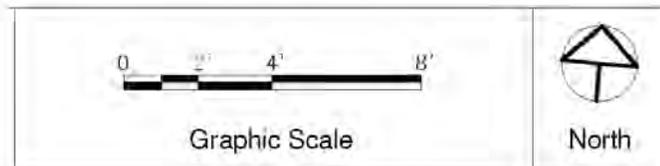
East Garage - Floor Plan 0
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1/4" = 1'-0"



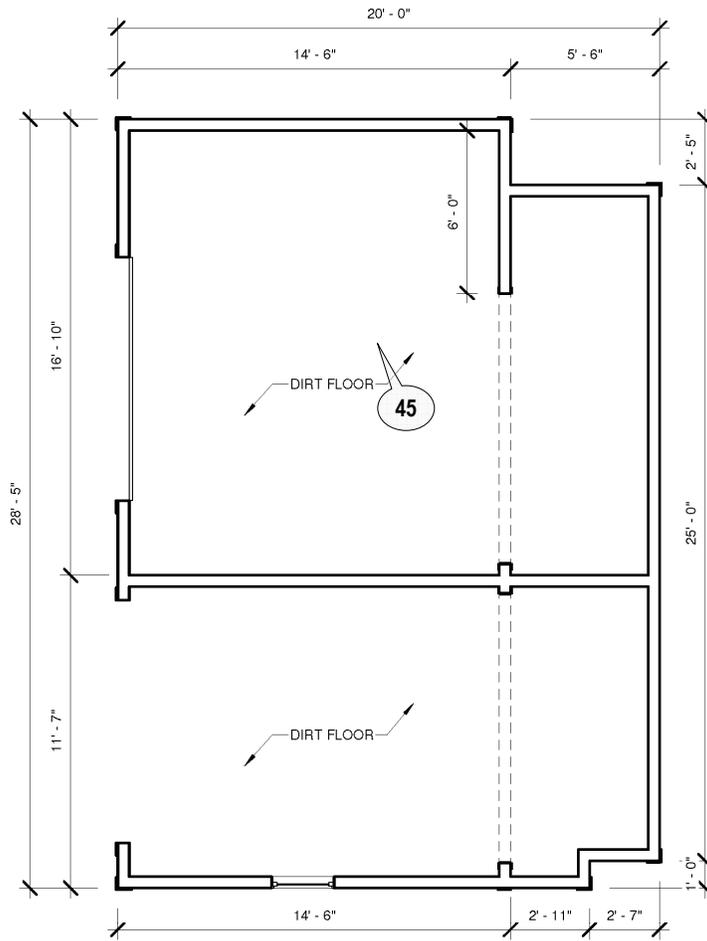
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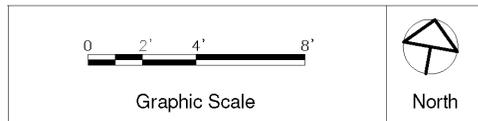
North Garage - Floor Plan 0
16
1/4" = 1'-0"



North Garage Photo 41



NE Garage - Floor Plan 0
15
1/4" = 1'-0"



Northeast Garage Photo 45

Reference Photos

Boulay Block

Exterior



Photo 1) Setting shot, showing site and relationship to outbuildings to the north
Direction: ENE



Photo 2) Façade (west elevation)
Direction: ESE



Photo 3) Detail, first-story façade, showing center entry and picture windows
Direction: NE



Photo 4) South elevation, showing side porches and stairs
Direction: NNE



Photo 5) Stairs to third floor, on side porch
Direction: SE



Photo 6) South and rear (east) elevations, showing side porches and sheds on rear
Direction: NW



Photo 7) Rear (east) and north elevations, showing sheds on rear and added garage
Direction: SW



Photo 8) Detail of foundation
Direction: W

Interior
Basement



Photo 9) South and west foundation walls, chimney base, and old furnace
Direction: NW



Photo 10) North and east foundation walls, with deep beveled window wells
Direction: E



Photo 11) Detailed for ceiling framing, showing joists, cross bracing, and diagonally laid floor boards
Direction: NNE



Photo 12) East entry to basement, now enclosed in added garage showing, section of foundation that was originally exterior (with grape vine mortar joints) and that which was originally enclosed
Direction: WNW

First Floor Apartment



Photo 13) Front rooms and front entry
Direction: SW



Photo 14) Southwest front room
Direction: SW



Photo 15) Kitchen and doorways to southwest room, front hall, and bathroom, and evidence of height of original edge-and-center bead wainscoting
Direction: NW



Photo 16) Northeast bedroom and south wall with relocated closet and trim
Direction: SE



Photo 17) Southeast bedroom
Direction SE

Second Floor Apartment



Photo 18) Wide doorways to rooms on either side of center hall, with original openings and trim
Direction: SSW



Photo 19) Southwest room, showing doorways to front hall and to kitchen (with original five-panel door)
Direction: NE



Photo 20) Kitchen, showing original edge-and-center-bead wainscoting and doorways to bathroom and northeast bedroom
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Photo 21) Bathroom, showing original wainscoting, wood flooring, clawfoot tub, and early wall mount oval sink
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Photo 22) Northeast bedroom, showing east window and original closet with original five-panel door
Direction: SE



Photo 23) Southeast bedroom, showing doorway from kitchen and closet with original five-panel doors
Direction: NNW



Photo 24) Shed, showing framing of unfinished, utilitarian space
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Photo 25) Shed, showing relocated original kitchen cabinetry
Direction: SE

Third Floor Apartment



Photo 26) Living room, showing front (west) picture window (and exterior four-light storm) and north window
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Photo 27) Southwest room, showing doorway to kitchen and south window
Direction: SE



Photo 28) Kitchen, showing doorway to southeast bedroom and replacement kitchen cabinetry
Direction: SE



Photo 29) Northeast bedroom, showing north and east windows
Direction: NNE



Photo 30) Southeast bedroom, closet showing original door and original varnish finishes
Direction: NNE



Photo 31) Shed, rough framing and scuttle
Direction: NW

OUTBUILDINGS
East Garage



Photo 32) East garage including heated workspace on north end, north and west elevations
Direction: S



Photo 33) East garage, west and south elevations
Direction: NE



Photo 34) East garage, south and rear (east) elevations
Direction: NW



Photo 35) East garage, north room, showing stove flue chimney and sink
Direction: NE



Photo 36) East garage, north bay, showing roof framing and exterior clapboards on original two-bay garage
Direction: SE



Photo 37) East garage, middle bay, showing north wall framing with studs and edge-and-center-bead sheathing
Direction: E

North Garage



Photo 38) North garage, west and south elevations
Direction: N



Photo 39) North garage, north and west elevations
Direction: SE



Photo 40) North garage, rear (east) elevation
Direction: WSW



Photo 41) North garage, interior, showing now blocked exterior door and window on southeast wall
Direction: SE

Northeast Garage



Photo 42) Northeast garage, façade (west) elevation
Direction: SE



Photo 43) Northeast garage, north elevation
Direction: S



Photo 44) Northeast garage, south and rear (east) elevations
Direction: NW



Photo 45) Northeast garage, interior, north bay, northwest wall, showing some original wall finishes and flooring
Direction: NW