

HPC Review - Preliminary
for 328 Ridge Road

HPC2020-8-18-01

Property owner Mel Golden submitted elevation drawings and floor plans for a new house proposed to be built at 328 Ridge Road. The Town Clerk has confirmed that a building permit application for the plan has not yet been submitted.

The HPC reviewed the project at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 18, held via Zoom. Before the meeting, Mel advised he was out of town and unable to participate in the review, but provided contact information should HPC have questions.

General Description: A 3,240 sq.ft. two-story house is proposed to be constructed on a new lot at 328 Ridge Road, subdivided from 326 Ridge Road.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The documents submitted were sufficient for HPC’s preliminary review of the project. They included a site plan, floor plans for each level, and depictions of all four elevations of the proposed house. The plans have been prepared by architect Raoul Lissabet and are dated 7-22-20.

Neither the height of the structure nor the contemplated materials were specified in the submission.

General Scope of Project: The planned construction consists of a 5-bedroom, 5-1/2 bathroom house. The front façade presents a two-car garage and a stepped-back covered porch sheltering a double-doored main entrance. The garage and porch, having similarly scaled shallow-pitched front-facing gables, present a symmetrical façade to Ridge Road.

The current plan shares certain features of the concept sketches submitted by Mel Golden on June 16, and reviewed by HPC at its regularly scheduled meeting that same evening. HPC’s comments on that plan were communicated to Mel by email on June 18.

Like the June plan, the current plan is composed of three discrete sections. The first section of the current plan shows a one-story elevation facing Ridge Road and consists of the garage, entrance porch, a living area and kitchen.

The middle section of the house is a two-story component and consists of two bedrooms and bathrooms on each level. On the south elevation of this section, a two-level covered porch stretches the width of the section, and is punctuated by two substantial columns as well as by balusters and railings on each level. Lattice work is shown below the porch structure. Two sets of double doors opening onto the porches are shown on each level.

The rear section of the house, which houses the master bedroom and bath, reverts to a one-story presentation.

The right-side (north) elevation and the rear (west) elevations incorporate fewer details than the front and south elevations, but each is harmonious and well fenestrated.

A partial basement is shown under the middle and rear sections of the house. A crawl space is contemplated under the kitchen and living area. One of the full bathrooms is located in the basement. A pair of glass doors is shown at the slightly below-grade walkout on the rear elevation. An alternate outside entrance to the basement is shown on the basement floorplan with access on the north elevation.

Visibility from public ways: The proposed house at 328 is located just past a sharp bend in Ridge Road, so all sides of the house will be visible from the public way.

Contributing structure: N/A

Nearby Contributing structures: The closest contributing resource in the current Washington Grove Historic District is 302 Ridge Road.

The 2019 Updated Nomination to the National Register also includes 300, 306, 326, 334, 342 and 354 Ridge Road.

Compatibility with the historic district and/or existing structure: A number of the elements outlined in the Town’s Design Guidelines have been creatively incorporated in the proposed plan. The plan includes a variety of roof forms and wall planes, and these serve to minimize the perceived scale of the house. The first floor lines remain close to the ground, and the one-story sections at the front and back of the house emphasize eave lines at the first floor, further minimizing the perceived mass of the structure. The porches add interest to the front and south elevations and reinforce connection with the outdoors.

However, the compatibility of the proposed construction with the historic district can be enhanced with the incorporation of the recommendations below.

HPC Recommendations:

1. The fourth of the eight conditions attached to the Planning Commission’s Approval of Subdivision Plat for 26 Ridge Road states:

*“4. Position the house to reflect the setbacks from Ridge Road of the **majority** (emphasis added) of the original houses. This will preserve the original sense of the neighborhood and reduce the impact on the large maple on the setback line.”*

The site plan shows the new construction to be in line with the setback of 326 Ridge Road only. HPC strongly recommends that the construction be pushed to the back of the buildable lot lines, making the setback of the new house approximately midway between the setback of adjacent homes at 326 Ridge and 330 Ridge Road.

In its June 18 email comments on the earlier June concept sketches, HPC wrote:

*“Finally, we strongly suggest that the detached garage **not** be placed in front of the house, but rather be moved further back on the lot. Our guidelines encourage garages that are visually separated from the main house, as maintaining separation of the main building from accessory structures preserves the original character of the Town.”*

HPC is aware that the limitations of the buildable lot at 328 Ridge Road make it difficult to locate a freestanding garage at the back of the property. HPC is willing to remove its objection to the front-facing garage if the house is moved to the back of the buildable lot. The increased distance from Ridge Road will give the garage less prominence as seen from the public way.

In conclusion, HPC strongly recommends that the Planning Commission enforce the increased setback outlined in Condition No. 4 of its June 4 Approval of Subdivision Plat and require that construction be shifted some 20+ feet back from the front buildable setback line.

2. Natural materials serve to incorporate Grove houses into the forest and are strongly recommended. HardiePlank, which presents as painted, is another option for the siding.
3. It is recommended that the stonework facing on the garage be limited to the foundation level only.

Emilia A. Styles
for the Historic Preservation Commission

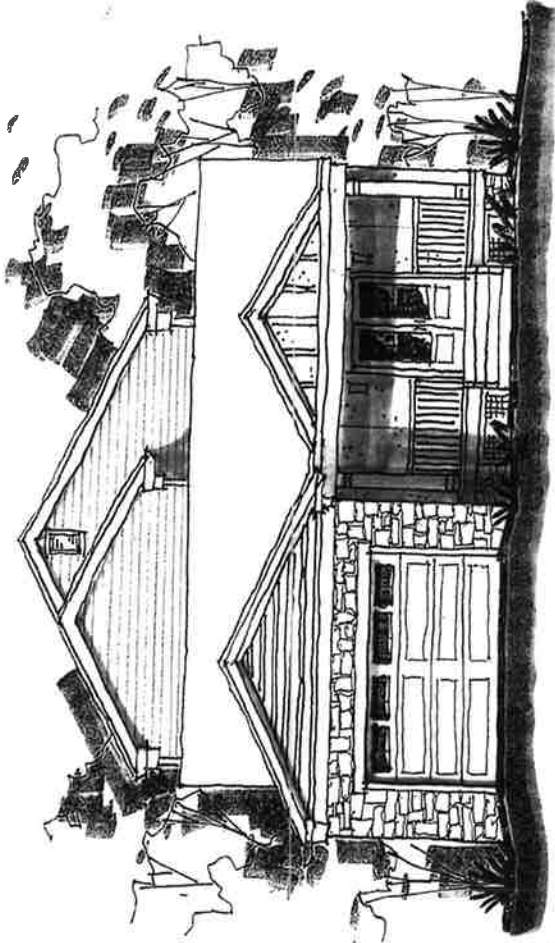
Date: August 24, 2020

cc: Applicant Planning Commission
 HPC members Mayor John Compton
 HPC Binder Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman
 Web site, Bill Saar

Please note that the Historic Preservation Commission acts only in an advisory capacity to both applicants and the Planning Commission. The reviews undertaken are designed to assist homeowners in their projects, to provide input to deliberations of the Planning Commission and, more generally, to contribute to historic preservation in Washington Grove.

Further information regarding the scope, powers, duties, and structure of the Historic Preservation Commission may be found in Article XV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Washington Grove. Section 5 (a) of Article XV describes the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission in the building permit process. This section reads as follows:

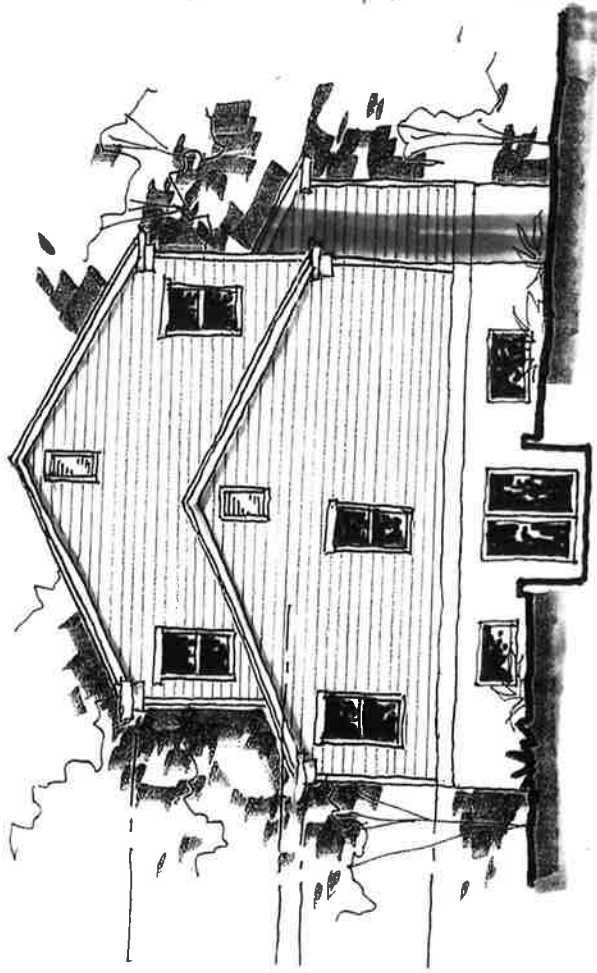
The Commission shall review all applications for building permits filed with the Town Planning Commission which would involve any change to a structure or site visible from any public way for historical accuracy, integrity, or compatibility with the neighborhood and improvements therein. The Commission may recommend to an applicant alternative historical designs, materials and sources for the same which may be more historically compatible. The Commission shall forward its recommendations regarding the same, if any, in an advisory capacity, to the Planning Commission for consideration by the Planning Commission within thirty (30) days from the Commission's receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.



Front Elevation
1/8"

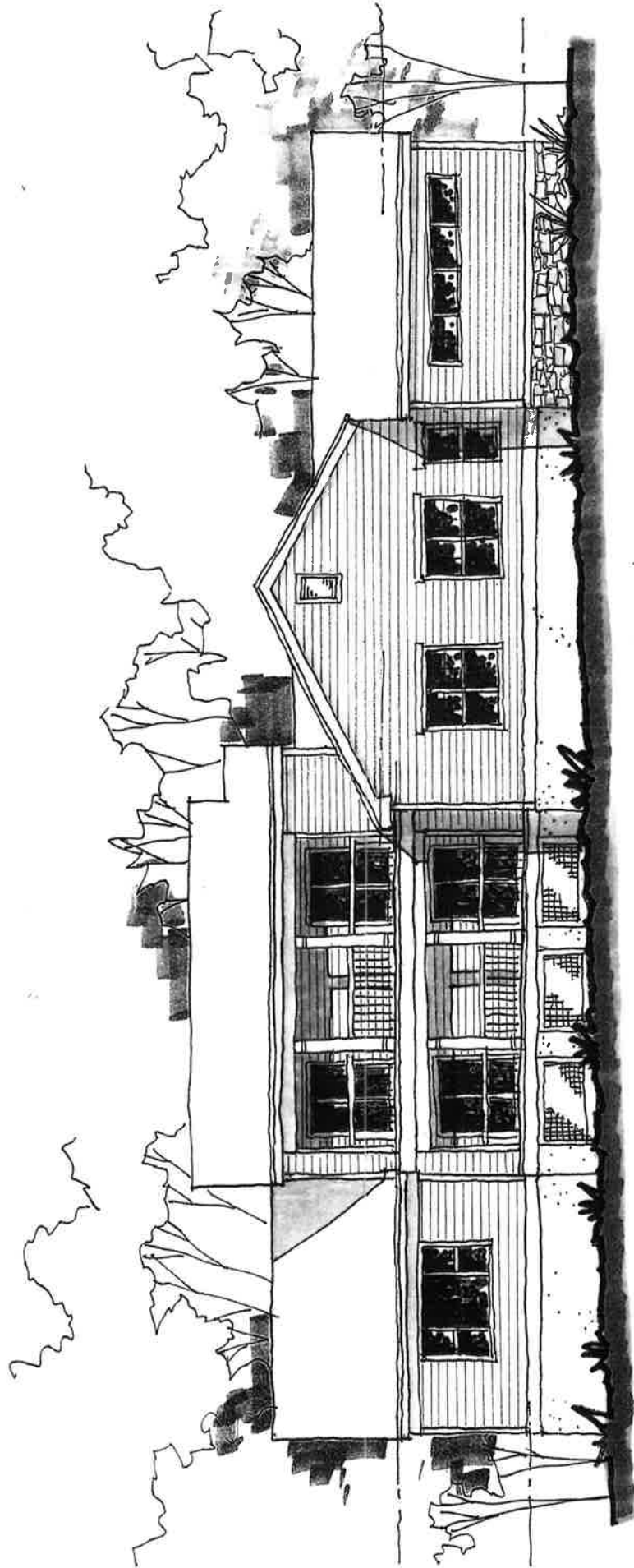
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7-22-20



Rear Elevation
1/8"

326 Bridge Road
Washington Grove, MD

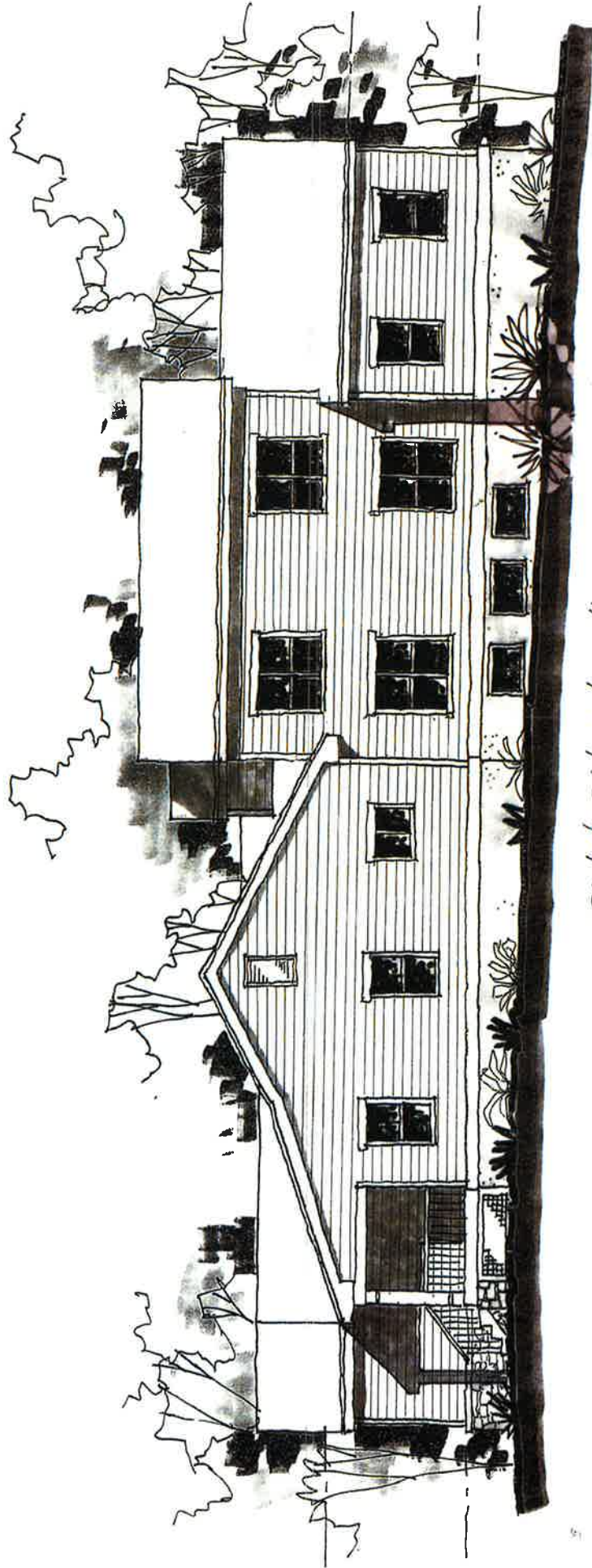


Left Side Elevation
1/8"

*326 Ridge Road
Washington Grove, MD*

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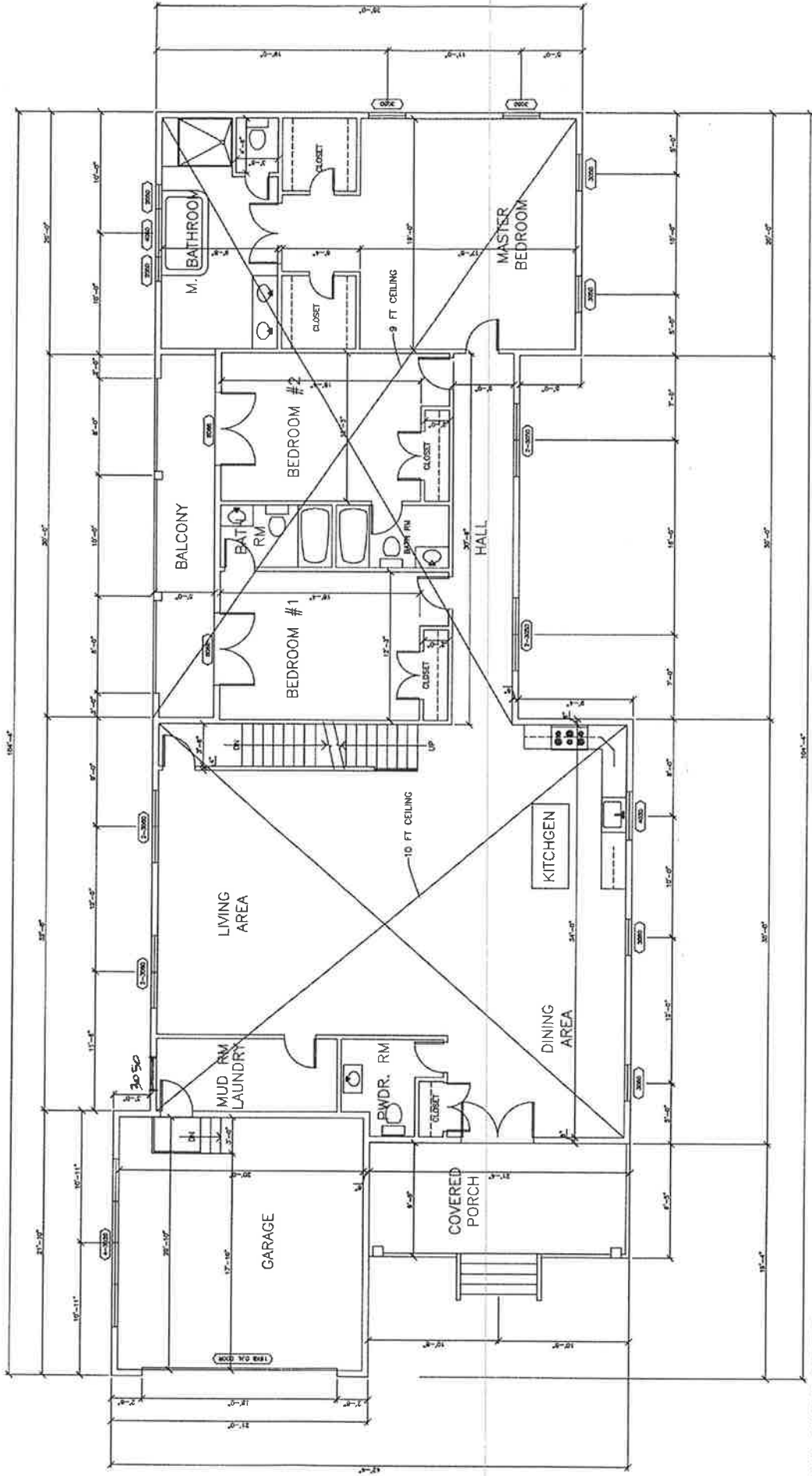
7-22-20



Right Side Elevation
1/8"
326 Ridge Road
Washington Grove, MD

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7-22-20

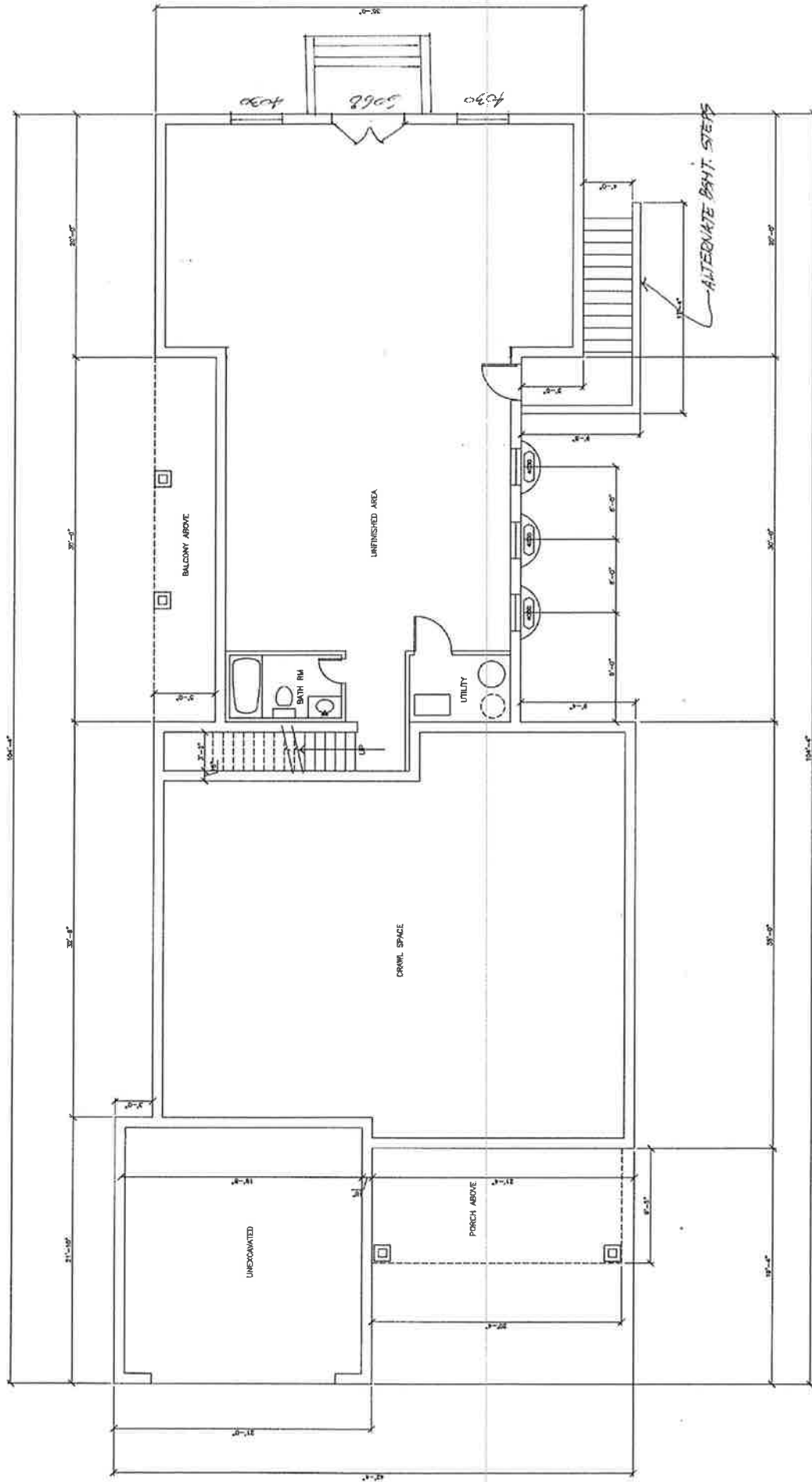


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

1/10"

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7-22-20



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN
1/8"

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