



AGENDA
City of Gig Harbor Design Review Board
Virtual Meeting of December 9, 2021 at 5:00 pm

Due to public health concerns, this meeting will be accessible to listen by using the information below:

link to join Webinar <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89568206345>
Call-in: (253) 215-8782 Webinar ID: 895-6820-6345

To speak during the meeting, press the Raise Hand button near the bottom of your Zoom window or press *9 on your phone. Comments are only allowed during designated portions of the meeting. Please refrain from "raising your hand" until the Design Review Board Chair has announced that he has opened the public comment portion of the meeting. Your name or the last four digits of your phone number will be called out when it is your turn to speak. When using your phone to call in you may need to press *6 to unmute yourself. All speakers will have up to three minutes to speak.

If you wish to submit written public comment, please provide your comments to the Planning Division by **Wednesday December 8, 2021**. All written comments must be able to be read in 3 minutes or less to be included in the record and have the title: **FOR PUBLIC COMMENT** included. Send comments to: candrews@gigharborwa.gov. Written comments will be read during the appropriate agenda item.

- I. **Call to Order:**
- II. **Roll call:**
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** [July 22nd, 2021](#)
- IV. **Agenda Items for Formal Review**
 - a. Announcement of Application
 - b. Open Public Meeting Announcement
 - c. Appearance of Fairness Issues
 - d. Staff Report
 - e. Applicant Introduction and Presentation
 - f. Public Comment (See Assistance Memo)
 - g. Discussion and Voting

DrillnFill Properties, LLC, c/o Peter Elton, 11616 Hunter Lane NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332: Cedarbrook Dental - (PL-SPR-21-0002, PL-DR-21-0124) The proposal includes the remodel of the existing building (previously occupied by Wells Fargo) to accommodate a

new dental office including a minor increase to the building footprint. Exterior work includes a new façade & glazing, a new staff entrance and other associated site improvements. The site is legally nonconforming in its existing state, and the proposed remodel does not increase the nonconforming elements of the structure. The applicant is seeking a design alternative recommendation from the DRB related to one specific requirement of Article IV: Architecture. 5501 Soundview Dr., site is located within the Olympic Village Shopping Center in the building previously occupied by the Wells Fargo Bank. Sec 17, Tw 21, R 02 Qtr 42. Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 0221174076 & 0221174014

Upcoming Meetings

December 23, 2021 - Cancelled

V. Adjourn



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
PLANNING DIVISION
STAFF REPORT**

TO: Design Review Board
FROM: Planning Staff – Kimberly Mahoney, Senior Planner
DATE: December 2, 2021

RE: Cedarbrook Dental (PL-SPR-21-0002 & PL-DR-21-0124)
Public Meeting Date: December 9, 2021

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Owner/Applicant:** DrillnFill Properties, LLC, c/o Peter Elton
11616 Hunter Lane NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98332
- B. Agent:** Freiheit Architecture, c/o Dustin Thorlakson
777 108th Ave NE, Suite 1650
Bellevue, WA 98003

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes the remodel of the existing building (previously occupied by Wells Fargo) to accommodate a new dental office including a minor increase to the building footprint. Exterior work includes a new façade & glazing, a new staff entrance and other associated site improvements. The site is legally nonconforming in its existing state.

III. SITE DESCRIPTION

- A. Location:** 5501 Soundview Dr., site is located within the Olympic Village Shopping Center in the building previously occupied by the Wells Fargo Bank. Sec 17, Tw 21, R 02 Qtr 42.
Assessor's Parcel Number: 0221174089 (previously Assessor's Parcel Numbers 0221174076 & 0221174014; lots combined via PL-BLA-21-0003)

- B. Site Area/Acreage:** 0.43 acres
- C. Existing Site Characteristics:**
- 1. Topography:** Topographic relief in the amount of approximately 6 feet exists on the site. The site slopes nominally at approximately 2-3% from the west to the east.
 - 2. Vegetation:** The site is currently developed and is sparsely landscaped.
 - 3. Wetlands and Critical Areas:** There are no wetlands or critical areas within regulated proximity of the subject site.
- D. Zoning:**
- 1. Subject parcel:** B-2 General Business District
 - 2. Adjacent zoning and current use:**
 - a. North:** B-2 – restaurant
 - b. South:** B-2 – restaurant
 - c. East:** B-2 – retail
 - d. West:** SR-16 Right-of-way
- E. Utilities / Road Access:** The site is accessed from a private accessway extending southeast from the Soundview Drive right-of-way and is served from City of Gig Harbor water and sewer.

IV. PERTINENT DESIGN REVIEW POLICIES

- A. Comprehensive Plan:** The site is designated as Commercial/Business. The Community Design Element is directly applicable (pgs. 4-1 – 4-19) while other elements are indirectly applicable.
- B. Gig Harbor Municipal Code:** The subject parcel is zoned General Business District (B-2). Chapter 17.36 GHMC contains development and performance standards for this district. Other applicable chapters include, but are not limited to: 17.72 Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements, 17.78 Landscaping, 17.80 Sign Code, 17.96 Site Plans, 17.98 Design Standards and Review, 17.99 Design Manual. Title 18 contains the pertinent environmental provisions and Title 19 contains the administrative process provisions.
- C. Design Manual:** The Design Review process is outlined in chapter 17.98 GHMC. Section 17.98.055 outlines the process for review of projects by the Design Review Board (DRB). This section states that after a public meeting, the DRB will make a recommendation to the decision maker for approval or denial of the application.

The DRB shall review an application which does not strictly conform to the specific requirements of the Design Manual under the following criteria: a) whether the alternative design represents an equivalent or superior design solution to what would otherwise be achieved by rigidly applying specific requirements; and b) whether the alternative design meets the intent of the general requirements of the Design Manual.

To best determine the general requirement's intent, the DRB shall consider the specific requirements as appropriate examples of compliance. General requirements include all bold and underlined text in the Design Manual. Specific standards include the more detailed text, which immediately follows the general requirement.

V. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The subject site was annexed into the City of Gig Harbor in 1978 via Ordinance 277. The site is bordered by the Olympic Village Shopping Center short plat and the Olympic Commercial Center binding site plan, but itself is not a part of either of these land redivisions and is therefore not subject to their agreements or provisions.

The site has been the subject of numerous pre-application conferences in 2018 and 2019. Specific to the proposed development, the now property owner of the site participated in a pre-application conference with staff on November 13, 2019 to consider the site's redevelopment into a dental office. Subsequently, the applicant submitted an application for nonconforming structure review, which was administratively approved on December 17, 2019; see permit file no. PL-NCR-19-0006.

The applicant also applied for a Boundary Line Adjustment to combine what had previously been two separate legal parcels (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 0221174076 & 0221174014) to allow for the proposed site improvements which extended over the previously-existing shared lot line. This Boundary Line Adjustment was approved by staff on September 7, 2021 and was recorded with the Pierce County auditor on November 3, 2021 (recording number 202111035002).

The applicant formally applied for its major site plan review and design review applications on March 16, 2021. In staff's review of the subject design review permit application, inconsistencies in the applicant's proposed design and the City of Gig Harbor's Design Manual were identified, resulting in the applicant's decision to propose a design alternative to the Design Review Board (DRB). This request is discussed in Section VI of this staff report and in the applicant's narrative included with this staff report as Exhibit A.

VI. DESIGN ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The applicant has requested that the following item be reviewed by the DRB. See Exhibits A and B of this staff report for the project agent's narrative and plan

set, respectively, discussing the proposed alternative design. Planning staff has reviewed the materials submitted as Exhibits A and B to this staff report and makes the following analysis, findings, and recommendations on the specified Design Manual requirement.

Article IV. ARCHITECTURE

A. 17.99.380(A) Mass and Scale – Avoid long, low wall planes. Prominent facades shall have no wall plane wider than two and one-half times the height of the wall plane. If a new wall plane is required to achieve compliance with this requirement, it must be offset by at least six feet.

1. **Applicant's Request:** The applicant is requesting the DRB review and recommend approval of its proposed design of the subject structure's north façade, which includes a long, low wall plane in a manner inconsistent with GHMC 17.99.380(A).

Where the north façade presently incorporates a four-foot shift in the wall plane's depth, the applicant proposes to redesign the north façade by aligning the depth of the wall plane to create one consistent wall plane void of any offsets. While this proposal is inconsistent with strict adherence to GHMC 17.99.380(A), the applicant posits that the proposed alternative is consistent with the criteria for approval of an alternative design set forth in GHMC 17.98.055(A) as the design removes what will become a confusing, unused space and introduces a cohesiveness to the structure's design that will otherwise be lacking in the proposed remodel. Please see Exhibit A for a more detailed narrative prepared by the applicant and Exhibit B for plans and renderings which visually communicate the requested alternative design.

2. **Staff Analysis:** The intent of this section of the Design Manual is to avoid long, low wall planes by ensuring that the length of prominent façade wall planes is no more than two and a half times the height of the wall planes.

The applicant is proposing to remodel the north façade of the site's existing structure in a manner which creates a long, low wall plane. Specifically, the wall plane on the north façade of the subject structure measures approximately 12-feet in height, and the proposed design will create a continuous wall plane of approximately 79-feet-and-2-inches in length; whereas strict adherence to GHMC 17.99.380(A) would avoid a wall plane that is longer than two and a half times (2.5x) the height of the wall plane, the applicant in this case proposes a wall plane that is approximately six and a half times (6.5x) the height of the wall plane.

In its existing state, the north façade incorporates a 4-foot shift in the structure's footprint; modulation of this design is also inconsistent with GHMC 17.99.380(A), but the existing shifted footprint speaks to the

previous use of the structure as a bank which utilized the recessed area in the north façade as a second entrance to the structure. In this manner, the offset in the wall plane served a functional purpose to the use of the structure, despite the nonconforming nature of the design.

The subject structure is now being remodeled to facilitate a dental office. Whereas two entrances to a bank are purposeful and functional, the same cannot necessarily be said for a dental office. The applicant is retaining the entrance to the structure that is presently located along the south façade; to retain the current recessed area in the north façade but remove the existing second entrance associated with this recessed area creates an unusable space that can otherwise be enclosed to offer a functional space in the interior of the structure. In light of the increase in functional use of the structure, staff concurs that the applicant's alternative design proposes an equivalent or superior design solution to that of strict adherence to the long, low wall plane standards set forth in the Design Manual.

Furthermore, the applicant's use of a variety of materials in the north façade present architectural interest that may otherwise be absent in a long, low wall plane. The applicant proposes to use both horizontal wood plank and tiled cladding siding materials in the north façade, and also incorporate floor-to-ceiling windows in the façade's design which constitute approximately 37% of the wall plane. The interesting combination of siding materials and the considerable use of glazing provides intrigue to the façade despite the dimensionally long, low wall plane, and by virtue communicates the characterized and unobtrusive development that is intended by the scale and massing standards of the Design Manual (see side panel discussion on page 17-220 of the Design Manual; Exhibit C). As such, the applicant's proposed alternative design achieves a design solution that is equivalent to GHMC 17.99.380(A) and is consistent with the general intent of the mass and scale standards codified in the Design Manual.

As the DRB shall consider the specific requirement as an appropriate example of compliance with the intent of the provision's general requirement, the DRB may wish to consider the proposed alternative's equivalence to the provision's specific requirement as a de facto compliance with the intent of the general requirement.

If the Design Review Board agrees with the analysis above, staff suggests the DRB make the following findings and recommendation:

3. **Findings:** The DRB finds that the proposed design alternative meets the intent of the general requirement of GHMC 17.99.380(A) and

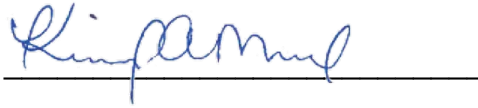
represents an equivalent or superior design solution to what would otherwise be achieved by rigidly applying the specific requirements of GHMC 17.99.380(A).

4. **Recommendation:** The Design Review Board recommends the decision maker accept the proposed design alternative as compliant with the criteria of approval for an alternative design request set forth in GHMC 17.98.055(A).

VII. PUBLIC NOTICE

Legal notice of the meeting was published in The News Tribune and posted on the subject site by December 2, 2021. In addition, notice was mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the subject site on November 24, 2021. As of the date of this report, staff has received no public comments in response to the public meeting notice.

Project Planner: Kimberly Mahoney, Senior Planner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kimberly Mahoney", is written over a horizontal line.

Date: December 2, 2021

cc: Owner/Applicant, Agent

The following documents pertinent to your review are enclosed:

- A. Applicant's Design Review Narrative, prepared by Freiheit Architecture, dated November 24, 2021
- B. Applicant's Plan Set and Renderings, prepared by Freiheit Architecture, dated November 22, 2021
- C. City of Gig Harbor Design Manual, Page 17-220

Cedarbrook Dental | PL-DR-21-0124

**Design Review Board
Exhibit A**

11/24/2021

City of Gig Harbor
Design Review Board
3510 Grandview Street

Gig Harbor, WA 98335
(253) 851-6170

Cedarbrook Dental | Gig Harbor, Washington

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN RECOMMENDATION

The project site is located at 5501 Soundview Drive. The existing stand-alone building has been operated as a bank since 1965. Dr. Peter Elton DMD purchased the vacant building with the intent to move his Dental Practice to the property. His practice, Cedarbrook Dental, has been operating in Gig Harbor since 1988. The existing office location, off of Olympic Drive and 50th street court, is no longer adequate to support the current size of the practice. In addition to the increased space needs, Dr. Elton sees moving to a more prominent location within Gig Harbor as an opportunity to bring a modern, revitalized building to the core of the city.

The design intent of this project is to maintain the overall mass and form of the building while upgrading to modern materials and finishes. However, there are inherent challenges with adapting a building to a Dental Practice which was specifically designed for a prior banking use. Our request is for the Design Review Board to recommend approval of an alternative design solution to the "long, low wall plane" provision of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code so that the north façade may be straightened out to accommodate the required interior design layout. The specific code language is as follows:

GHMC 17.99.380(A) Avoid long, low wall planes (IBE): Prominent facades shall have no wall plane wider than two and one-half times the height of the wall plane. If a new wall plane is required to achieve compliance with this requirement, it must be offset by at least six feet.

While the building was operated as a bank, it utilized two main entrances to a central lobby. Both the North side and the South side of the building served this purpose. A dental use, however, only wants to have a single, clearly defined main entry. For this site, the south elevation was determined to be the prominent façade facing both the northbound traffic on Highway 16 and the Olympic Village Shopping Mall. In addition, the majority of traffic will come from the south off of Olympic Drive. The proposed floor plan maintains the south entry to the building and eliminates the north recessed entry by pushing the window wall plane to align with the adjacent walls. This architectural intervention, however, creates a long, low wall plane per the definition of the Municipal Code. With this narrative we will outline how this solution addresses the requirements for approval of an alternative design solution per GHMC 17.98.055.

GHMC 17.98.055: An applicant may request review by the design review board (DRB) of an application or portions thereof which do not strictly conform to the specific requirements of Chapter 17.99 GHMC, Design Manual. A request for review by the DRB for an alternative design shall be processed as follows:

- A. The board may recommend approval of alternative design solutions to specific requirements only if all of the following criteria are met:
 1. The alternative design represents an equivalent or superior design solution to what would otherwise be achieved by rigidly applying specific requirements; and

2. The alternative design meets the intent of the general requirements of Chapter 17.99 GHMC, Design Manual.

The north elevation of the building currently has a change in plane of four feet at the existing entry door. This is an existing non-conformance as it does not meet the required six-foot change in wall plane. We believe that moving the windows out to align with the main building façade creates an architecturally superior design to what is existing. Aligning the façade does not require any change to the existing roof overhang and rationally brings the elevation together as a holistic design. In addition, since this is no longer a second main entry to the building, the recess would prove confusing to patients and simply be an unused, unattractive alcove. By aligning the windows, we create a cohesive building form which clearly speaks the same architectural language across all elevations. The solid and void character of this wall also eliminates the need to enforce this design requirement as no solid wall is designed to be more than 2.5 times the height of the building. This visually breaks the façade from appearing as if it were a long, low wall plane. Further, the change in materials between wood siding, tile, and glazing breaks down the visual perception of a long low wall plane. The proposed final building elevations are a superior design to the existing building and should be approved as an alternative design solution.

Dr. Elton wants his practice to be an addition to the Gig Harbor core that everyone is proud of and accurately reflects the character of the city. To that end, eliminating the north alcove entry to the building is essential to appropriately address the change of use from a bank to a dental office while bringing an enhanced design aesthetic to an existing building.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dustin Thorlakson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

DUSTIN THORLAKSON | AIA
President | Principal
Freiheit Architecture



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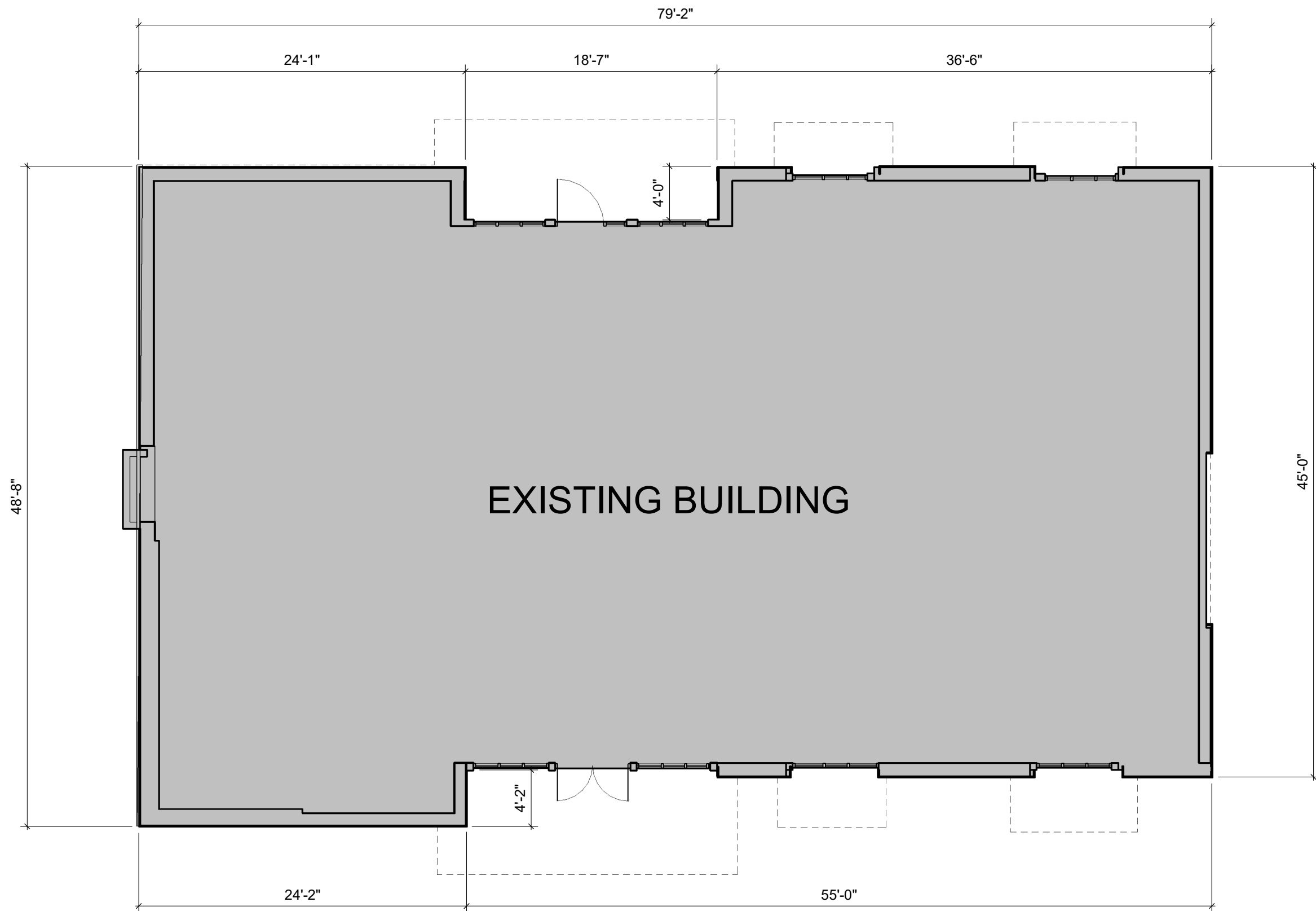
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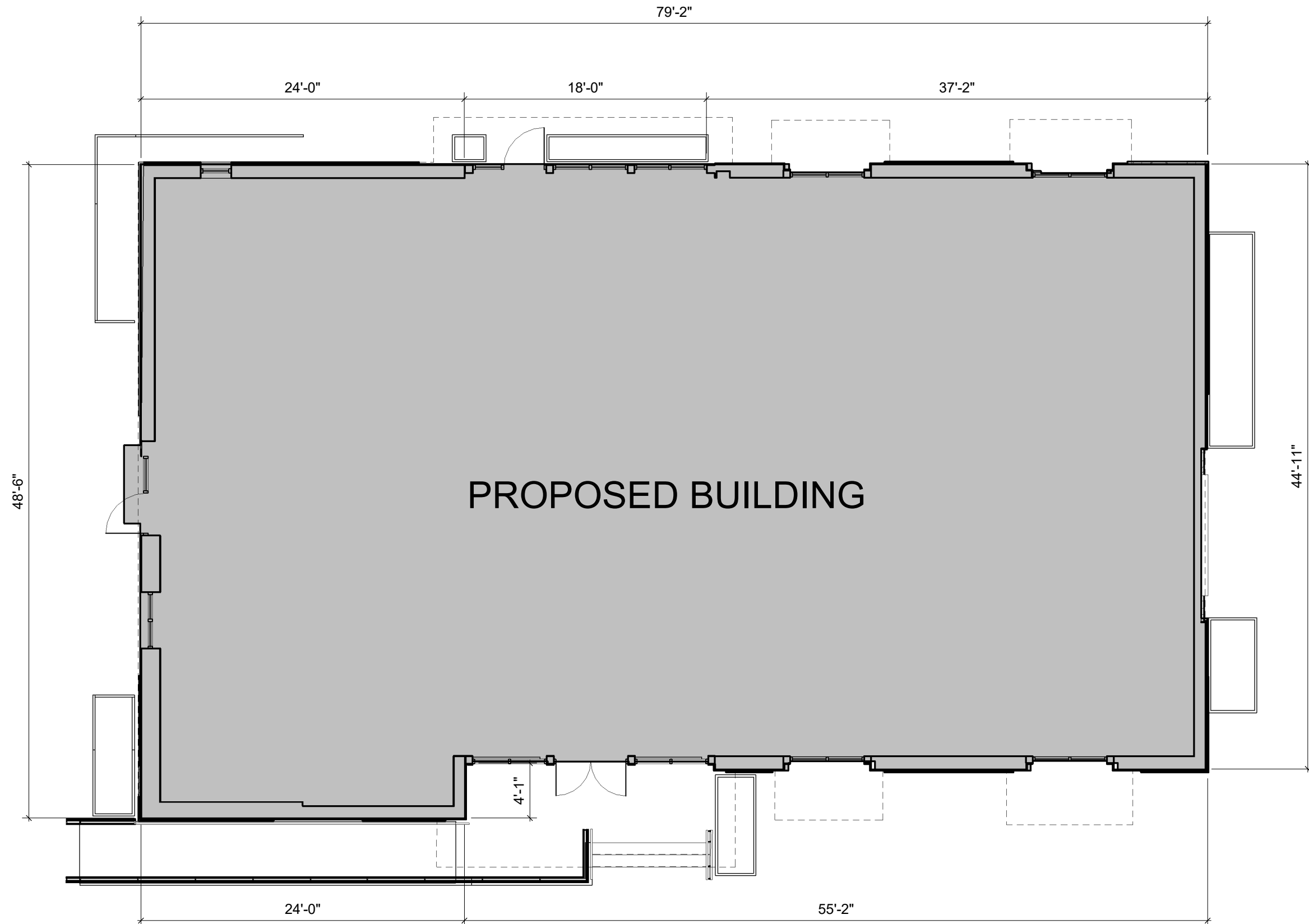
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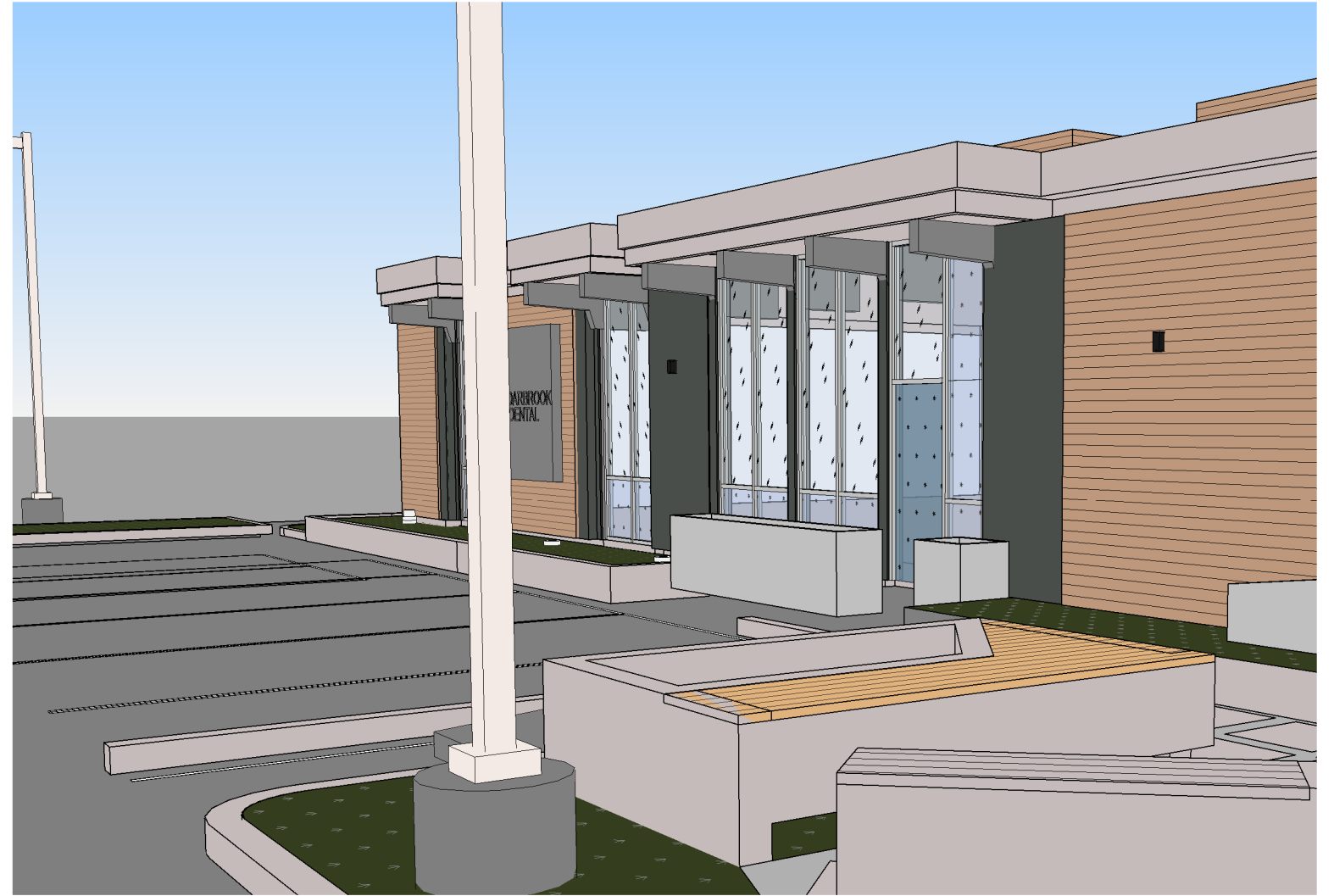
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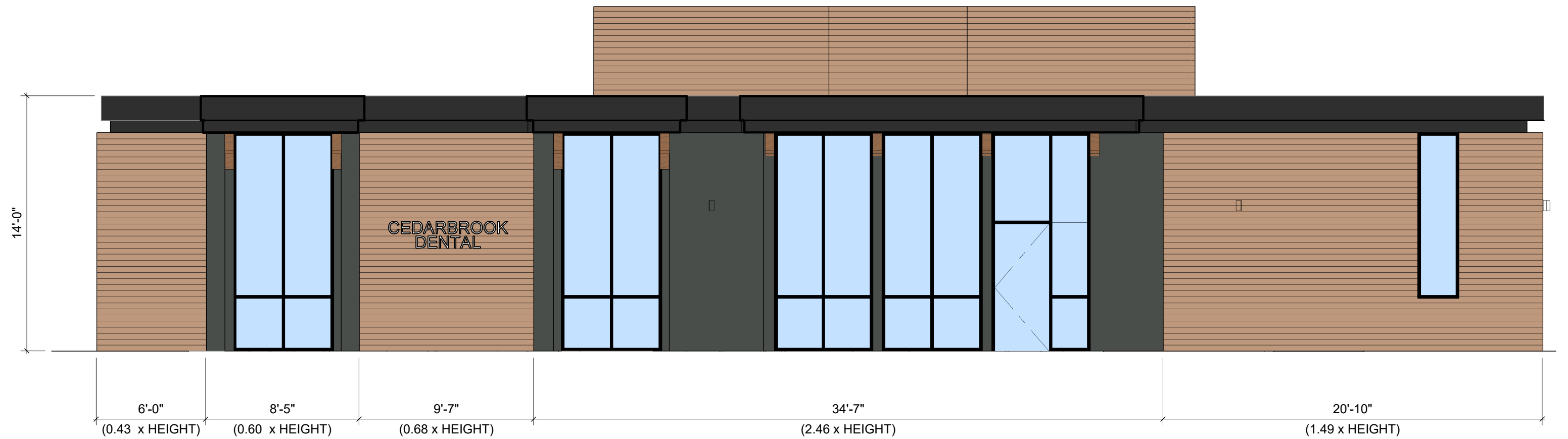
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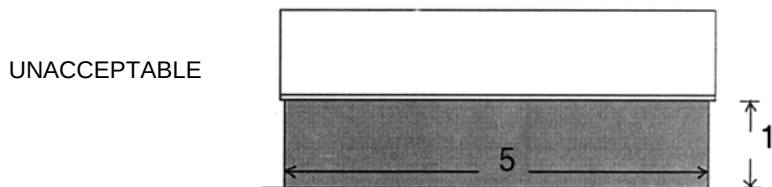
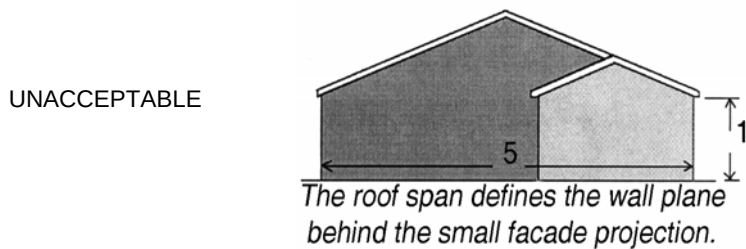
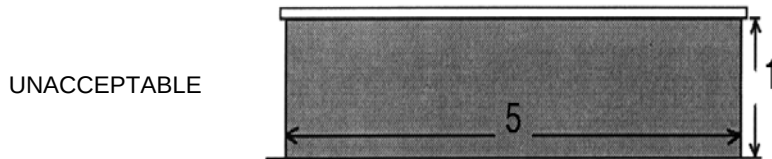
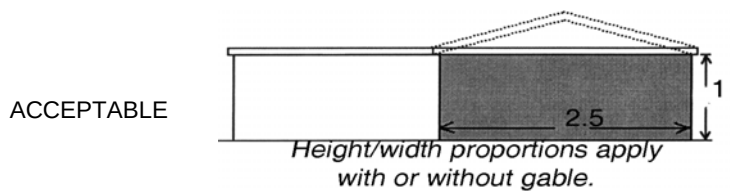


17.99.380 Mass and scale.

The following standards are applicable to all nonresidential and multifamily residential development. Their purpose is to break large structures down into smaller building modules and ensure that each module's proportions are consistent with the existing pattern of development in Gig Harbor.

A. Avoid long, low wall planes (IBE).

Prominent facades shall have no wall plane wider than two and one-half times the height of the wall plane. If a new wall plane is required to achieve compliance with this requirement, it must be offset by at least six feet.*



***Note: Porches, porticos and similar unenclosed projections do not affect the height/width ratio of the wall plane from which the unenclosed structure projects.**

One of the most prominent characteristics of a building's design is its scale and massing. The scale of a building determines its size in relation to its surrounding buildings, while the massing of a building gives it interest and character.

Modern building trends may emphasize large-scale designs with no thought toward massing. This imbalance between size and visual character has resulted in visually obtrusive development which is out of character with surrounding structures of a smaller scale. Large retail boxes epitomize this trend and are considered incompatible with Gig Harbor's small town characteristics.