

Large House Review (LHR) Committee
Monday August 18, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Charles River Room
Public Services Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham, MA
AND
Virtual Meeting using Zoom
Meeting ID: **885 4714 5967**
(Instructions for accessing below)

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US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 Then enter ID: **885 4714 5967**

Direct Link to meeting: <https://needham-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/88547145967>

1. Approval of meeting minutes.
2. Update on RFP & Consultant.
3. Modeling presentation.
4. Review of spreadsheet prepared by Ed Quinlan comparing Needham to Lexington, Concord & Wellesley allowable built area.
5. Discussion of potential recommendations for dimensional controls.
6. Review of Updated Schedule.

LHR Committee Members:

Artie Crocker	Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee
Jeanne McKnight	Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee
Heidi Frail	Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Marianne Cooley	Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Moe Handel	Design Review Board Member / Design Review Board Designee
Tina Burgos	Finance Committee Member / Finance Committee Designee
Nik Ligris	Zoning Board of Appeals Member / Zoning Board of Appeals Designee
Bill Paulson	Real Estate Broker appointed by the Planning Board
Paul McGovern	Developer appointed by the Planning Board
Oscar Mertz	Architect appointed by the Planning Board
Chris Cotter	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Rob Dangel	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Joe Matthews	At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Ed Quinlan	At Large appointed by the Planning Board



Large House Review (LHR) Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 4, 2025
7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

Artie Crocker Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Bill Paulson Real Estate Broker appointed by the Planning Board
Oscar Mertz Architect appointed by the Planning Board
Joe Matthews At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Moe Handel Design Review Board Member / Design Review Board Designee (Co-Chair)
Heidi Frail Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Ed Quinlan At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Marianne Cooley Select Board Member / Select Board Designee
Paul McGovern Developer appointed by the Planning Board
Chris Cotter At Large appointed by the Planning Board
Jeanne McKnight Planning Board Member / Planning Board Designee

Staff Present:

Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development
Alex Clee, Assistant Planner

Committee Members Absent:

Nik Ligris Zoning Board of Appeals Member / Zoning Board of Appeals Designee
Tina Burgos Finance Committee Member / Finance Committee Designee
Rob Dangel At Large appointed by the Planning Board

1. Welcome and Introductions

Introductions of Committee members present were made.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

Upon motion duly made by Moe Handel and seconded by Heidi Frail, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of July 21, 2025, as amended. By roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Update on RFP & Consultant; establish fiscal analysis working group – *The Committee took up this agenda item*

Heidi Frail noted that the background for the RFP mentions that many smaller existing houses on small lots are being torn down and replaced with very large expensive new homes. It goes on to talk about the economics of the renovations or replacements. She explained that it was not the affordability of houses that prompted this but rather the aesthetics and massing of homes. While there was an impact on affordability and accessibility, the primary reason this was brought to the Town's attention was the aesthetics and a feeling of crowding in the neighborhood. The point of

46 this RFP is to review the economic impact, and she suggested divorcing the RFP a bit from the
47 social aspect. Artie Crocker agreed that the RFP is a fiscal impact study, but he does not see
48 anything written that is incorrect. Marianne Cooley agreed with Heidi Frail that nothing the
49 group is reviewing deals with affordability, and it would be misguided to believe that any
50 changes made would impact affordability. Jeanne McKnight suggested listing the visual impact
51 first in the paragraph.

52
53 Alex Clee, Assistant Planner, stated that the RFP is already out and changing the wording may
54 not be possible at this time. Heidi Frail stated that she would like the fiscal impact to be
55 completed agnostically. She would like wording to be more neutral in the future. Joe Matthews
56 stated that he is skeptical of the exercise. It is unclear if someone who is good at both house
57 evaluations and municipal finance will be found. Staff would like to create a working group for
58 this RFP review. It was agreed that Chris Cotter, Bill Paulson, and Paul McGovern would be part
59 of this group.

60 61 4. Modeling presentation

62
63 Oscar Mertz introduced Steve Watchorn, Raymond Design Associates, Inc. (RDA), consultant
64 on the project. Oscar Mertz explained that three sample houses on varying lot sizes between
65 7,500 sf and 10,000 sf were selected for the study. The study reviewed three levels of house
66 “bulk” reduction for each sample house. The study was able to adjust the limits for selected
67 dimensional controls including FAR, coverage, and height. The reduction studies used 3D
68 modeling to visualize the various levels of change. The presentation for this evening is
69 considered in progress and includes two of the three houses being studied. This study and
70 presentation are the work of RDA, the Town’s consultant.

71
72 Marianne Cooley stated that she would have liked to see a picture or massing of the original
73 house that was torn down in order to compare it to the large house. Oscar Mertz stated that he
74 believes this could be added.

75
76 Mark Gluesing, 48 Mackintosh Avenue, stated that he tried to sketch a new house within the
77 proposed models created. The last reduction led to smaller bedrooms and only 2.5 bathrooms,
78 but the models could contain the houses.

79
80 Joe Matthews stated that he would like the dimensional calculations for the stock houses to be
81 included, as those stock houses used are not from Needham. Heidi Frail stated that what is next
82 to the houses is not as important as the changes to the houses themselves. Oscar Mertz suggested
83 including one smaller house and one larger house on either side for comparison.

84
85 Oscar Mertz explained that this is an approach to modeling how houses would change. The
86 Committee can extract from this how to measure FAR and coverage from certain reductions.
87 This leads to an FAR which is flexible but still reduces the bulk. Those control mechanisms
88 allow for an extraction of a modified FAR and coverage range. This exercise will allow the
89 Committee to see how these changes look on three houses on different sized lots. This allows for
90 a sliding set of controls.

92 Moe Handel stated that what he liked about the Wellesley system was that it provides an escape
93 valve for someone who needs an exception, and it gives the affected homes around the lot in
94 question the opportunity to participate in a public hearing on the project.

95
96 The Committee discussed that there were approximately two more public hearings before a
97 recommendation is supposed to be made to the Planning Board. There will also be a public
98 meeting in September. It is unclear when there will be information available from the fiscal
99 analysis. The Committee discussed having additional meetings with other towns to hear how
100 they handle this topic.

101
102 There was discussion regarding counting the garages in the FAR and the model showing
103 reductions in the garages. Marianne Cooley stated that she is concerned with height and
104 mounding on the lots, as this does not seem to have been solved for yet.

105
106 The Committee agreed to potentially add a meeting on August 25th, if the financial analysis
107 information is available for review, and one on September 30th.

108
109 Upon motion duly made by Heidi Frail and seconded by Moe Handel, it was voted to adjourn at
110 8:56 p.m. By roll call, the motion passed unanimously.

111
112 *Respectfully submitted,*
113 *Kristan Patenaude*



Large House Review Study Committee

*House Reduction Studies
(progress review)*

AUGUST 18, 2025



Reduction Study Parameters:

- ❑ Select three sample houses on varying lot sizes between 7,500 and 10,000 sf
- ❑ Prepare three levels of house “bulk” reduction for each sample house
- ❑ Adjust limits for all dimensional controls for each reduction step including:
 1. FAR (measured using 1, 2, 3 and G)
 2. Coverage
 3. Height
- ❑ Reduction studies use 3D modeling to visualize the various levels of change
- ❑ This initial review is “In Progress” and includes two of the three houses being studied





Base



Reduction 1



Reduction 2



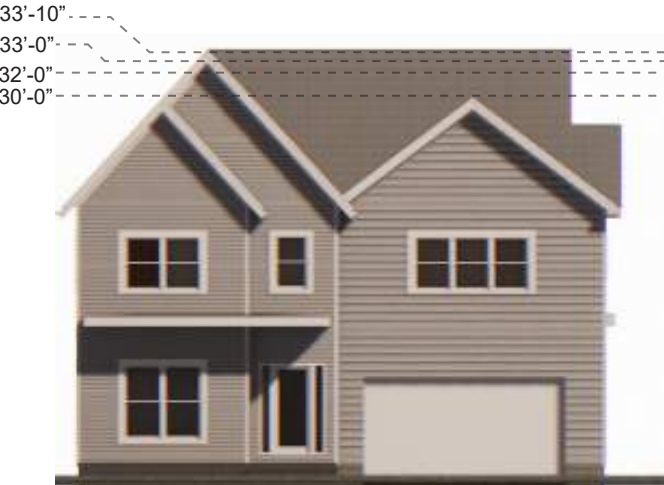
Reduction 3

	Base
1st fl	1,370
2nd fl	1,606
attic	1,004
basement	1,245
garage	475
footprint	1,875
Lot Size	7,828
1st-2nd Flr	10'-2 1/2"
2nd-Attic	9'-2 3/4"
FAR	57% (4,455)
LFAR	67% (5,225)
Coverage	24%
Ave Grade - Ridge	34'-2 1/2"

	1st	
1st fl	1,300	-67
2nd fl	1,460	-146
attic	872	-132
basement	1,152	-93
garage	420	-55
footprint	1,720	-122
Lot Size	7,828	
1st-2nd Flr	10'-2 1/2"	0
2nd-Attic	9'-2 3/4"	0
FAR	51% (4,029)	-10%
LFAR	60% (4,754)	-9%
Coverage	22%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	33'-4 1/2"	-10"

	2nd	
1st fl	1,300	-67
2nd fl	1,152	-454
attic	587	-417
basement	1,152	-93
garage	420	-55
footprint	1,720	-122
Lot Size	7828	
1st-2nd Flr	9'-8 1/2"	-6"
2nd-Attic	8'-8 3/4"	-6"
FAR	44% (3,459)	-22%
LFAR	54% (4,191)	-20%
Coverage	22%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	32'-4 1/2"	-1'-10"

	3rd	
1st fl	1,226	-144
2nd fl	1,317	-289
attic	0	-1,004
basement	1,050	-195
garage	420	-55
footprint	1,627	-248
Lot Size	7,828	
1st-2nd Flr	9'-6"	-8 1/2"
2nd-Attic	8'-6"	-8 3/4"
FAR	38% (2,963)	-33%
LFAR	46% (3,593)	-31%
Coverage	20%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	30'-4 1/2"	-3'-10"



Base



Reduction 1

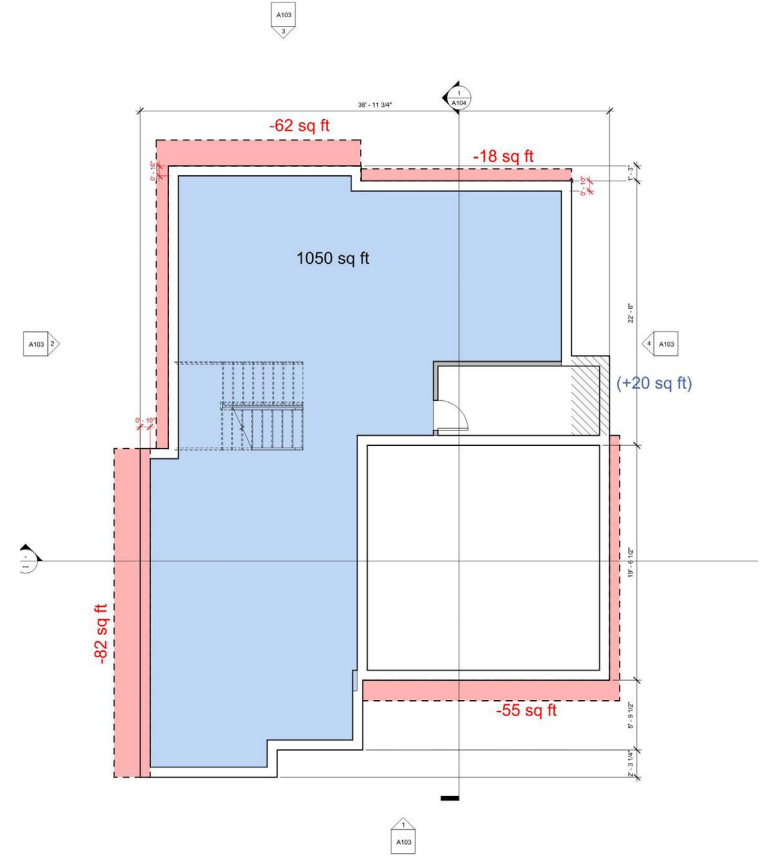
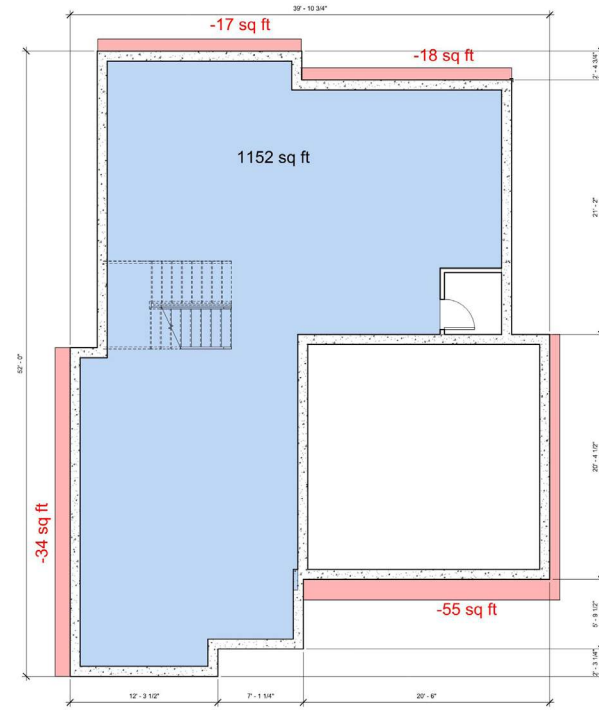
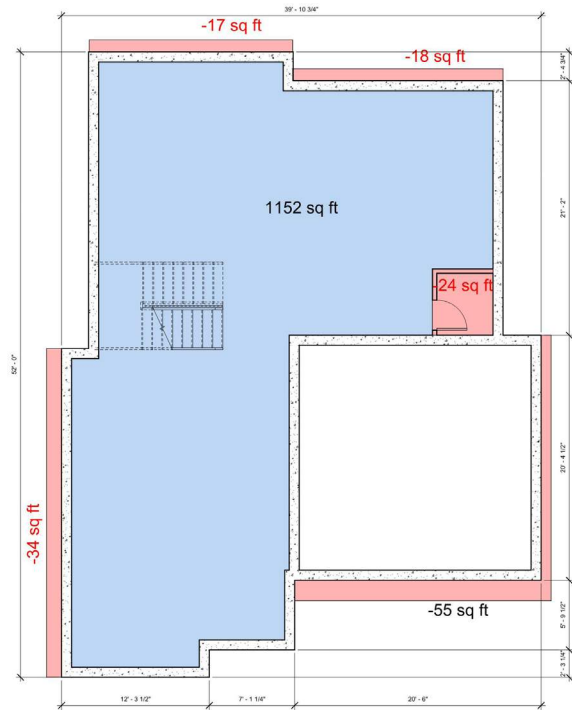


Reduction 2

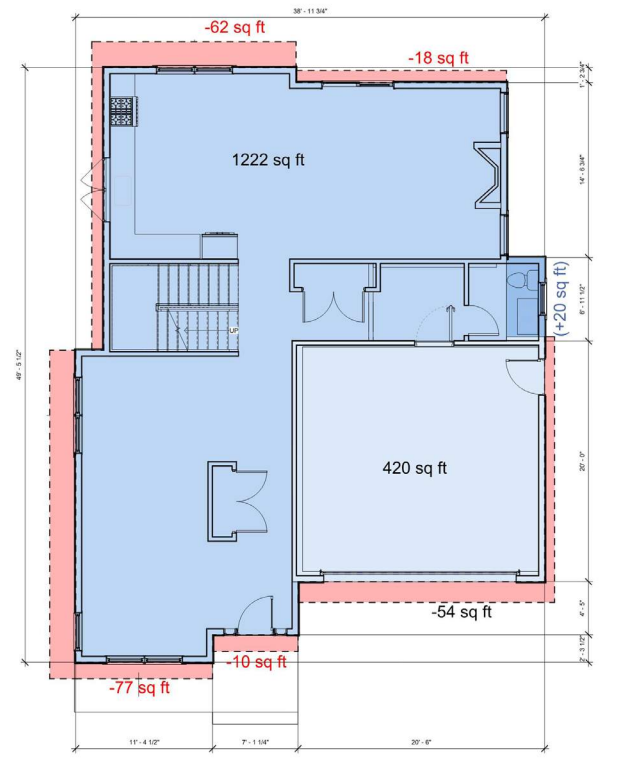
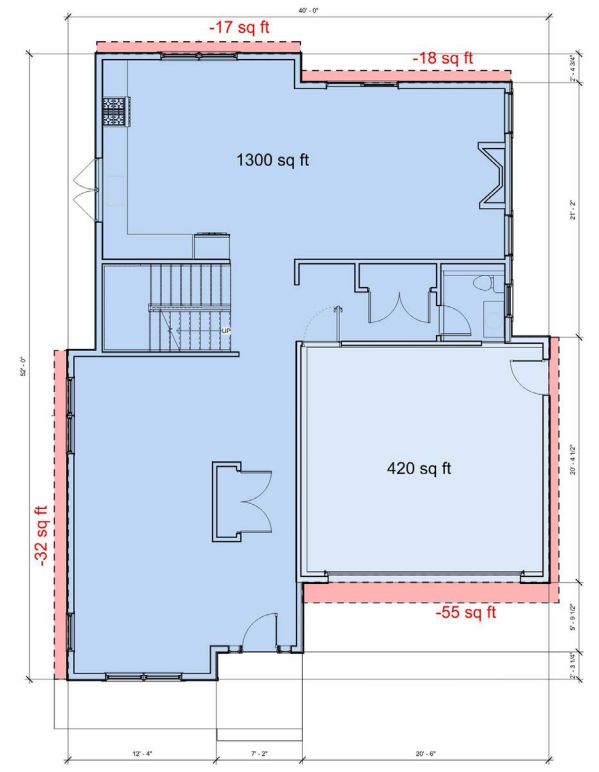
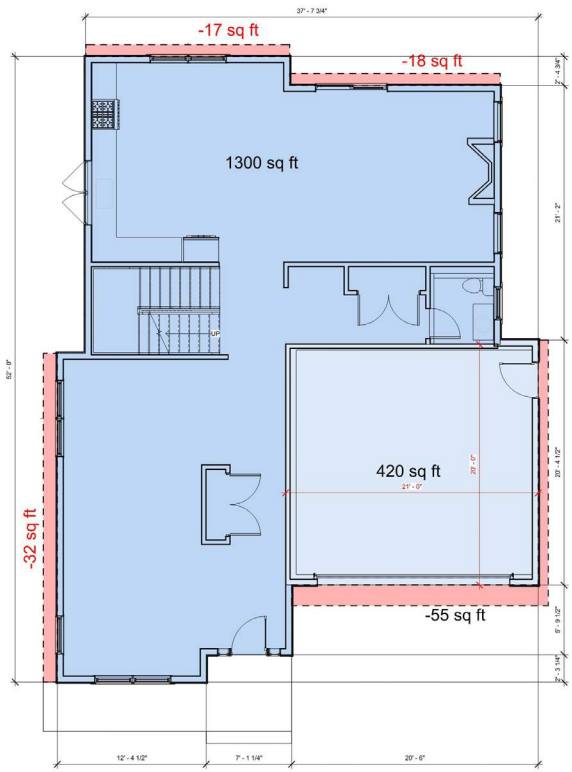
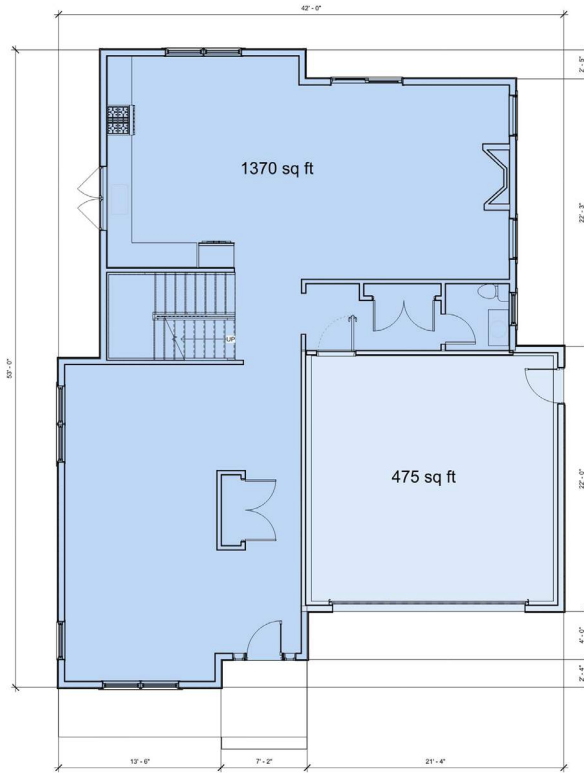


Reduction 3

B



1



Base

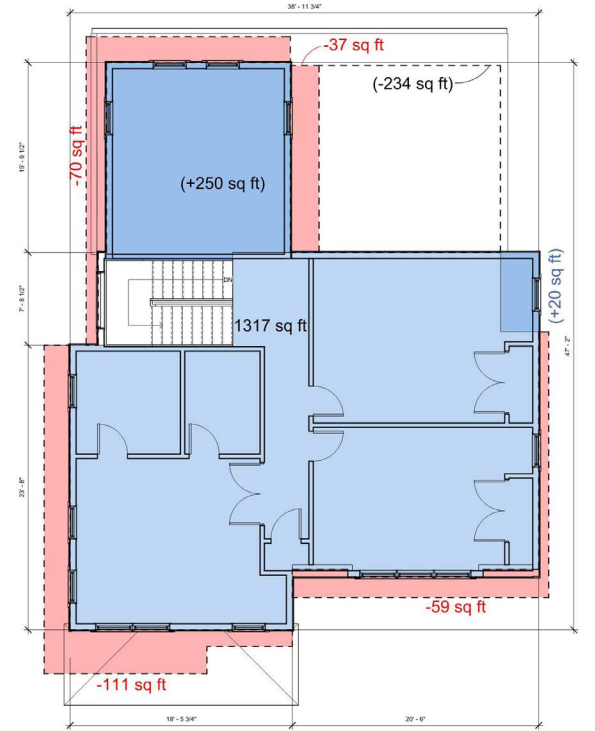
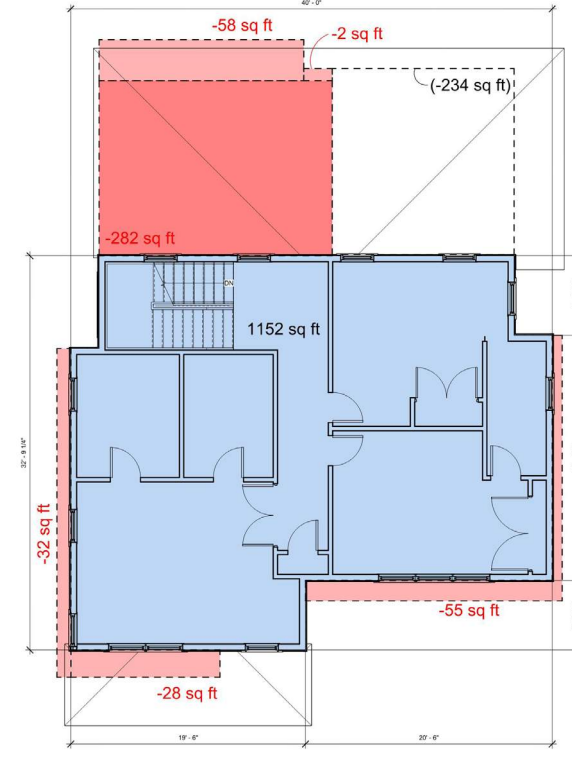
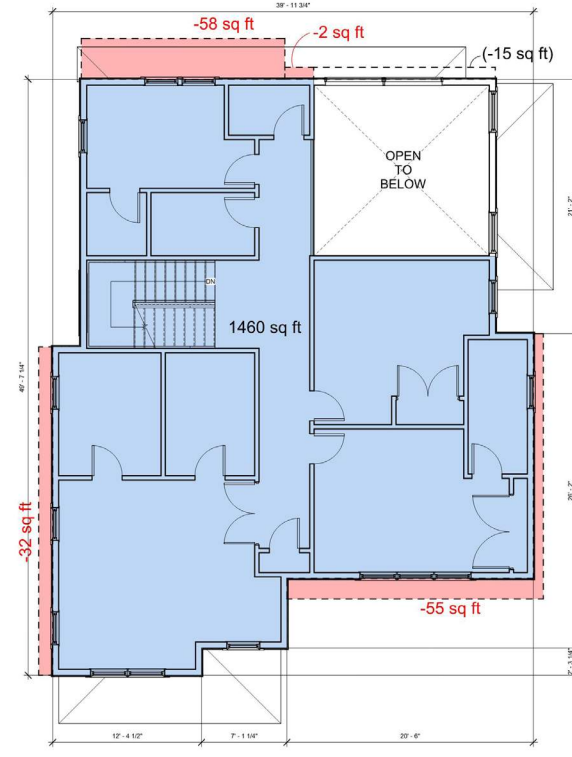
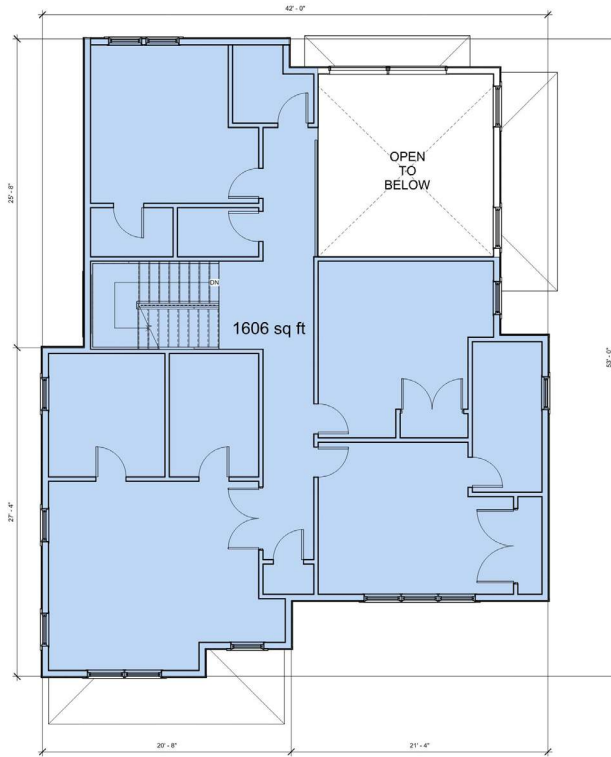
Reduction 1

House 1

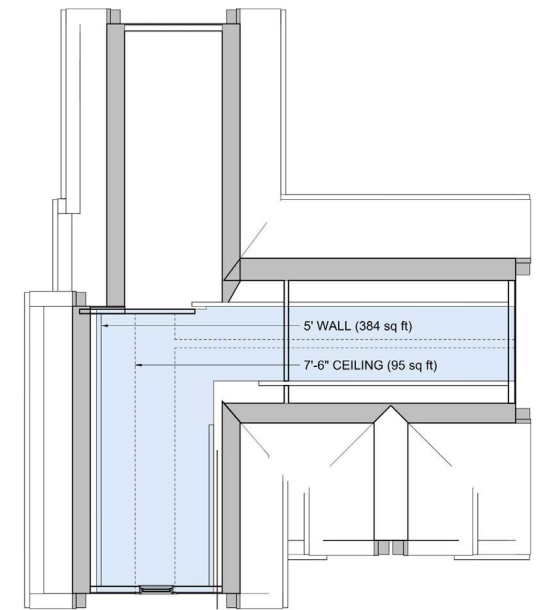
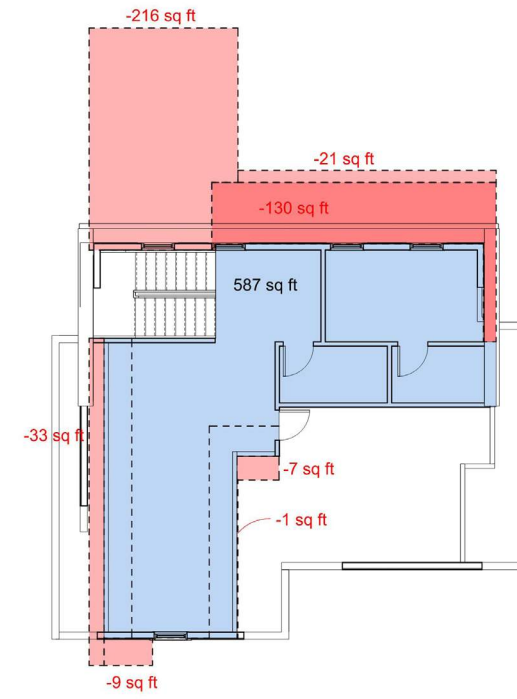
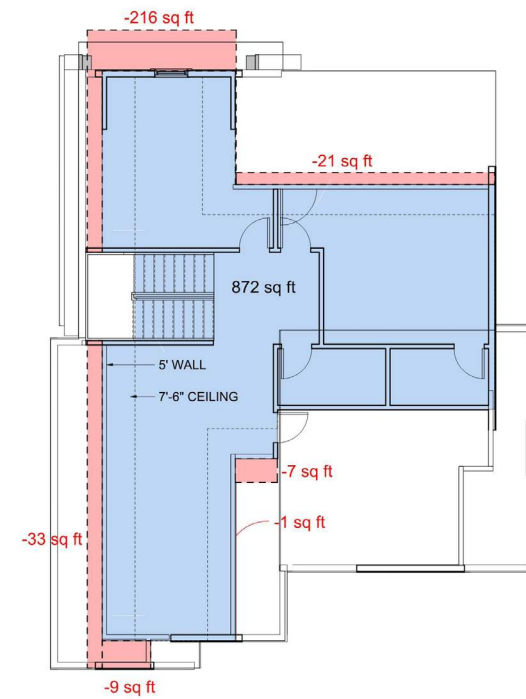
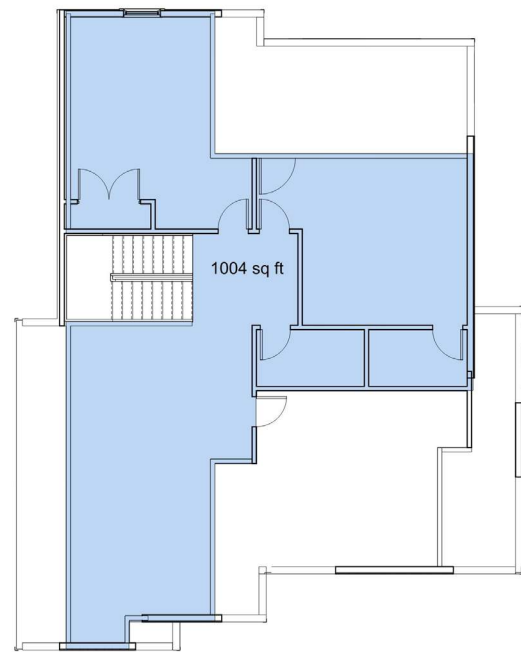
Reduction 2

Reduction 3

2



A



Base

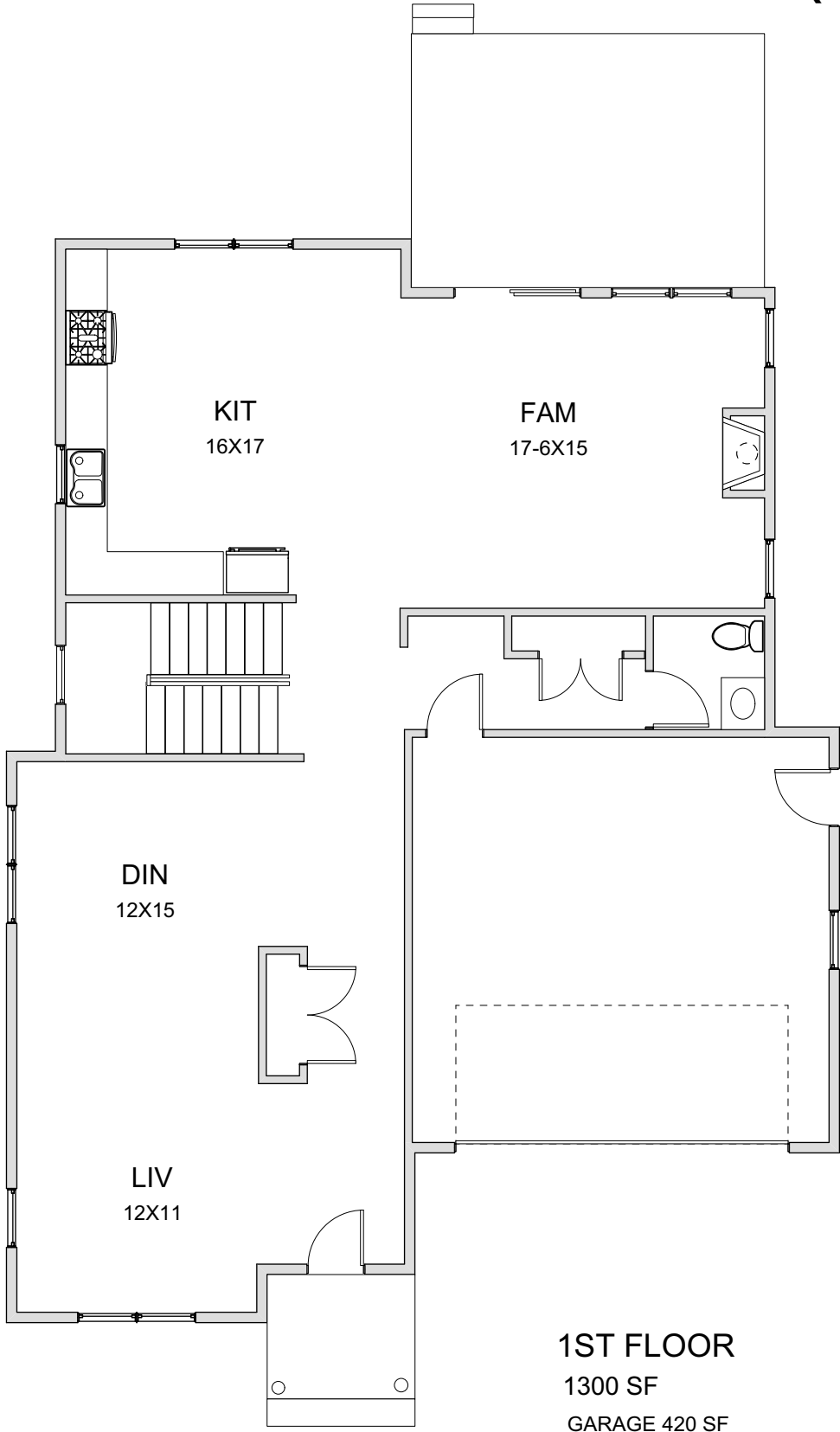
Reduction 1

House 1

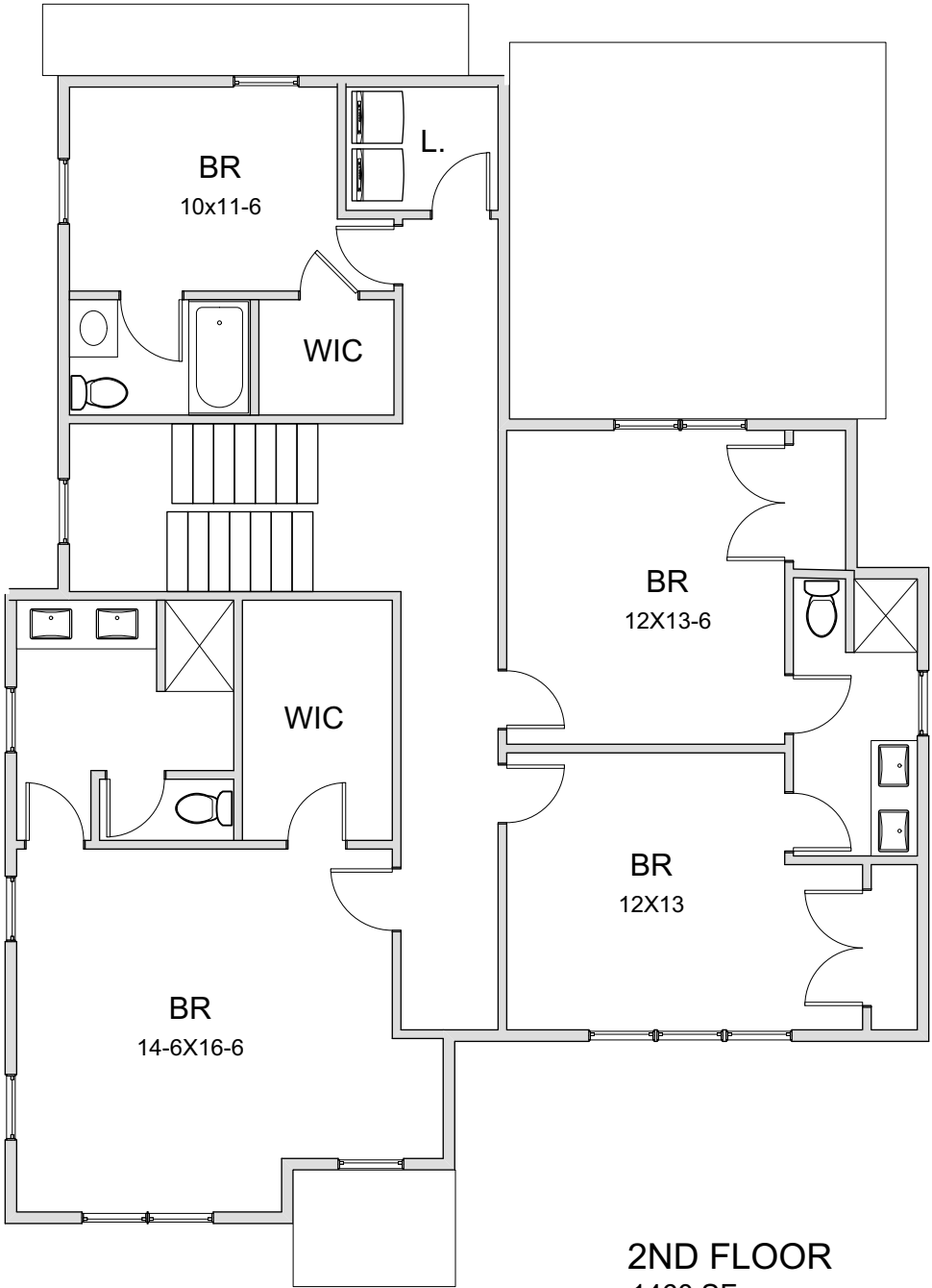
Reduction 2

Reduction 3

House #1
(Reduction 1 - Test layout)

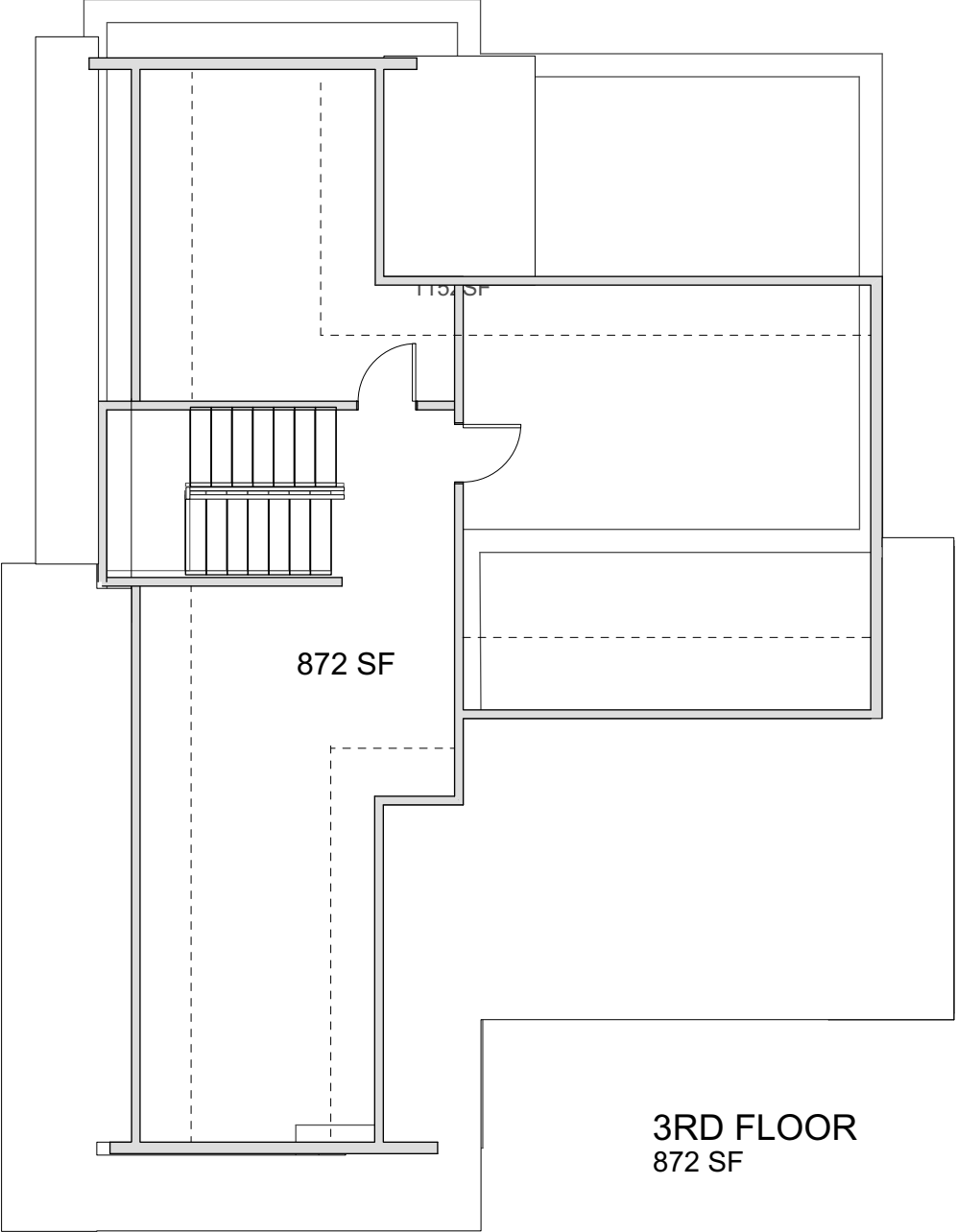
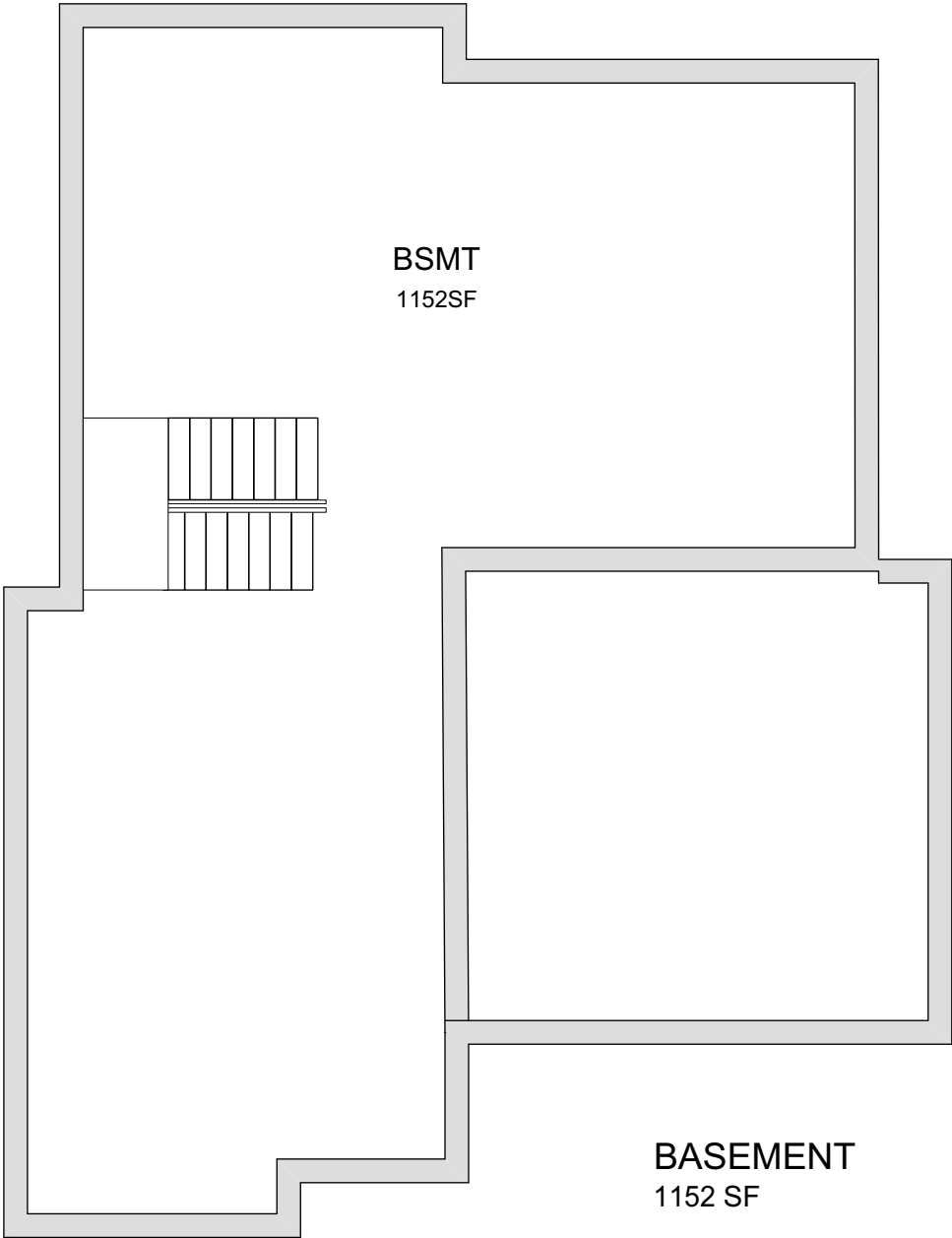


1ST FLOOR
1300 SF
GARAGE 420 SF

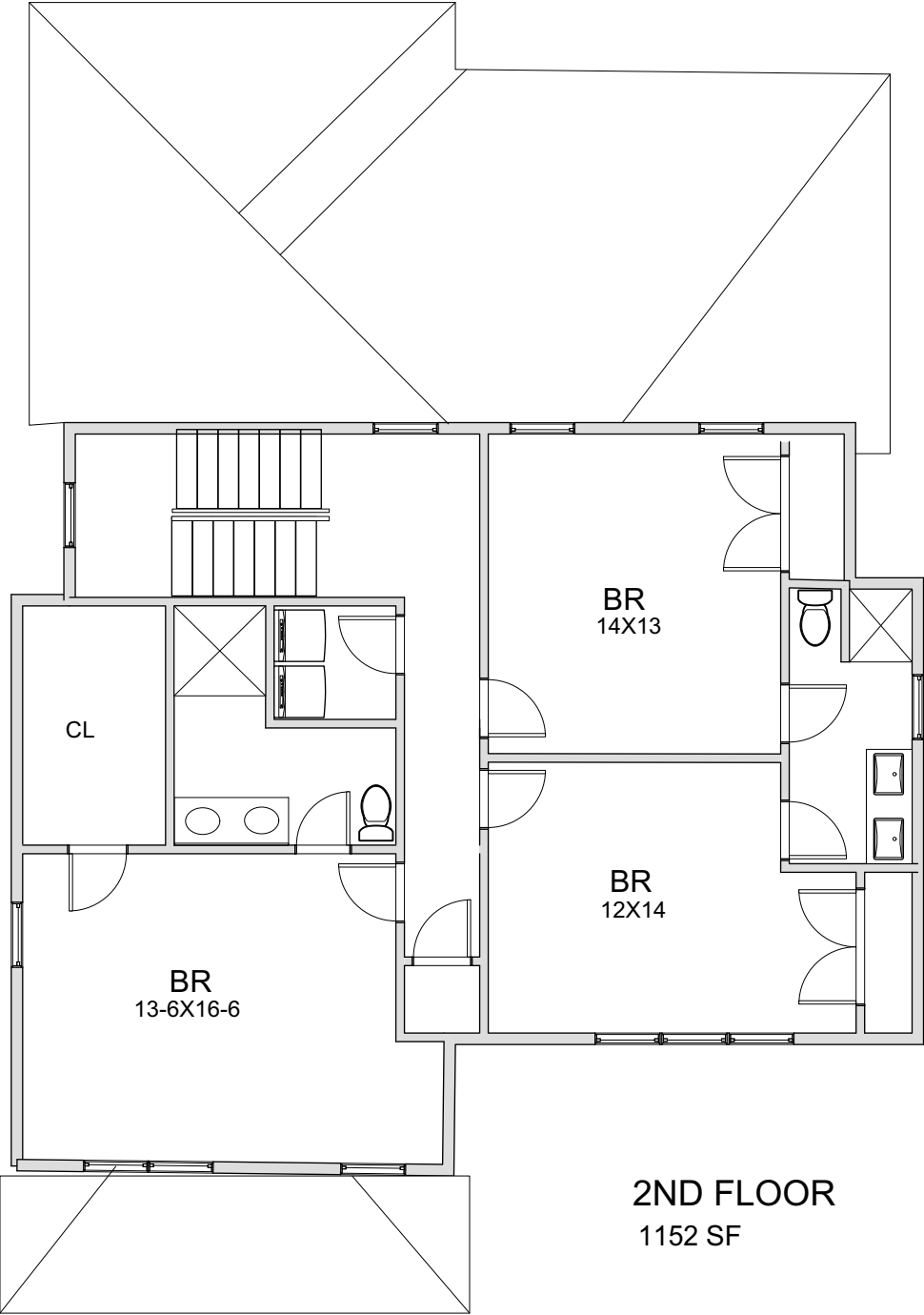
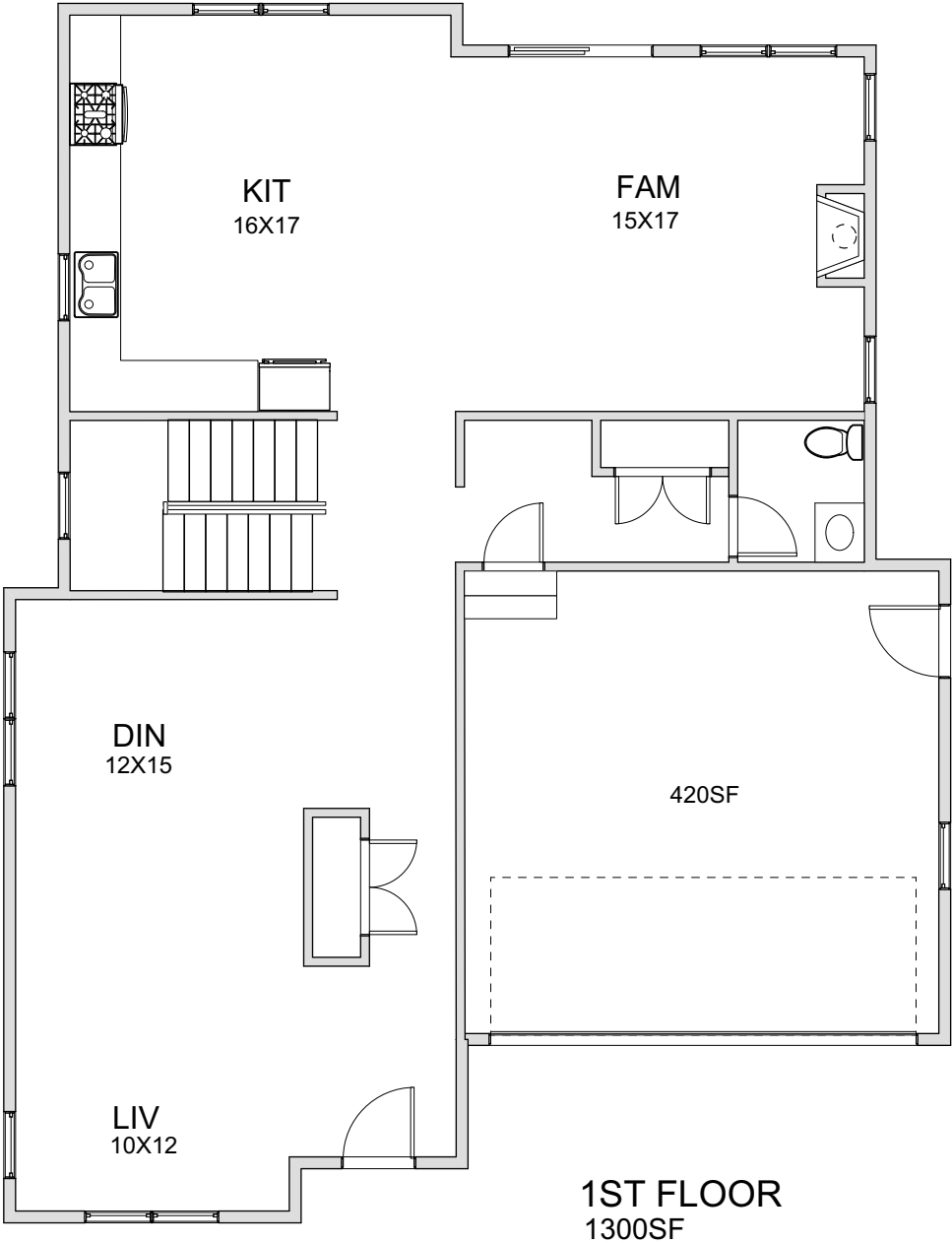


2ND FLOOR
1460 SF

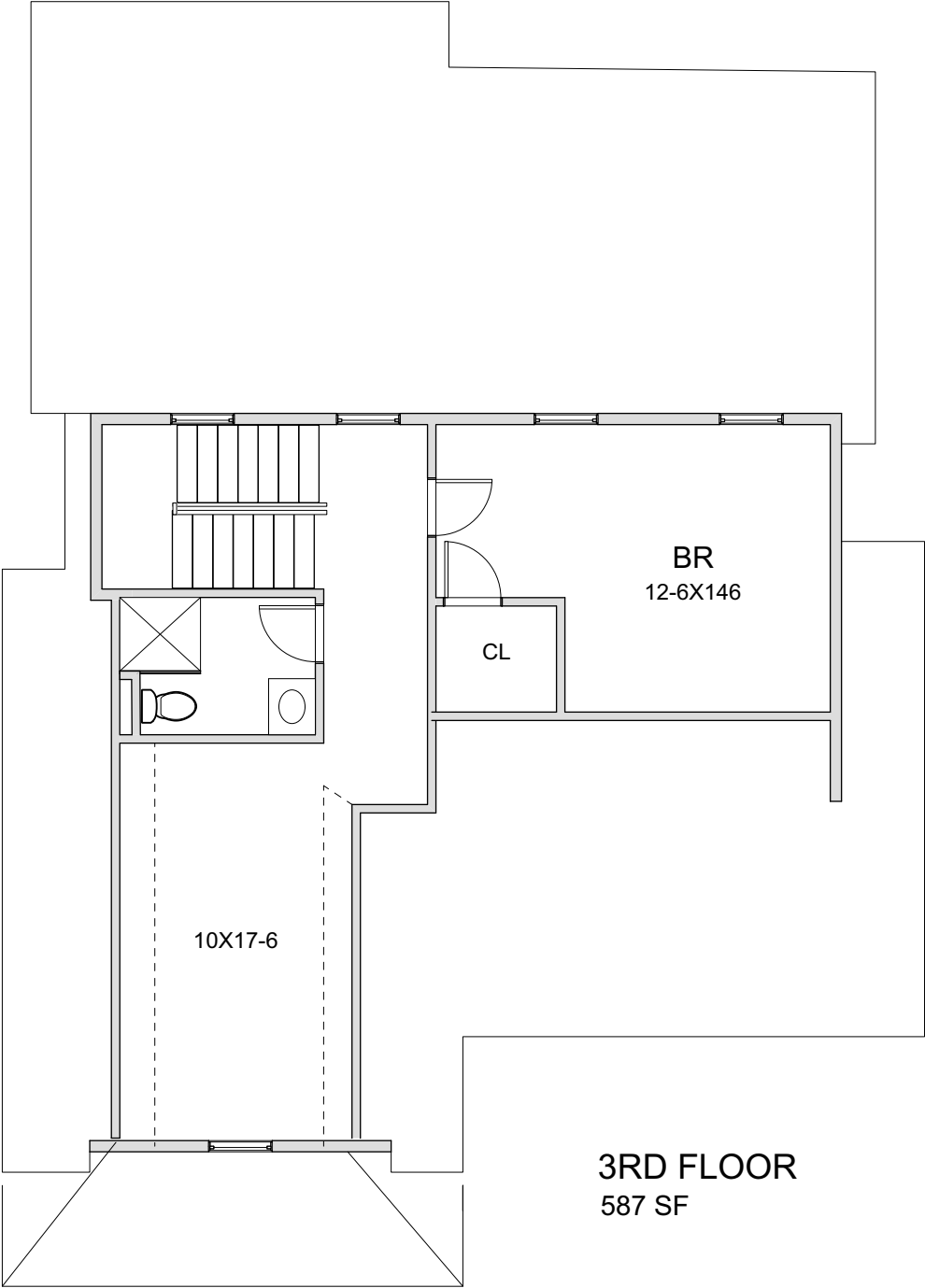
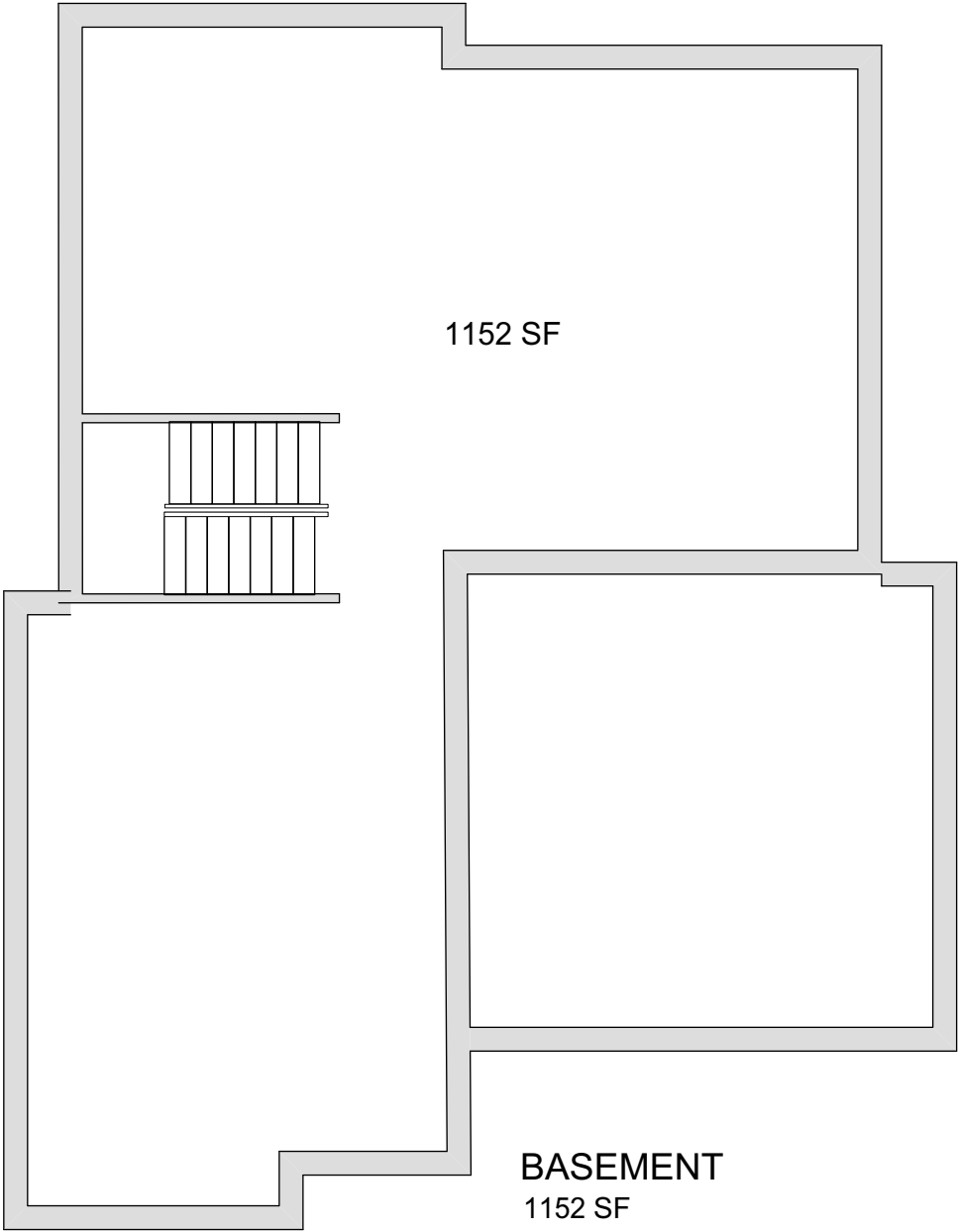
House #1
(Reduction 1 - *Test layout*)



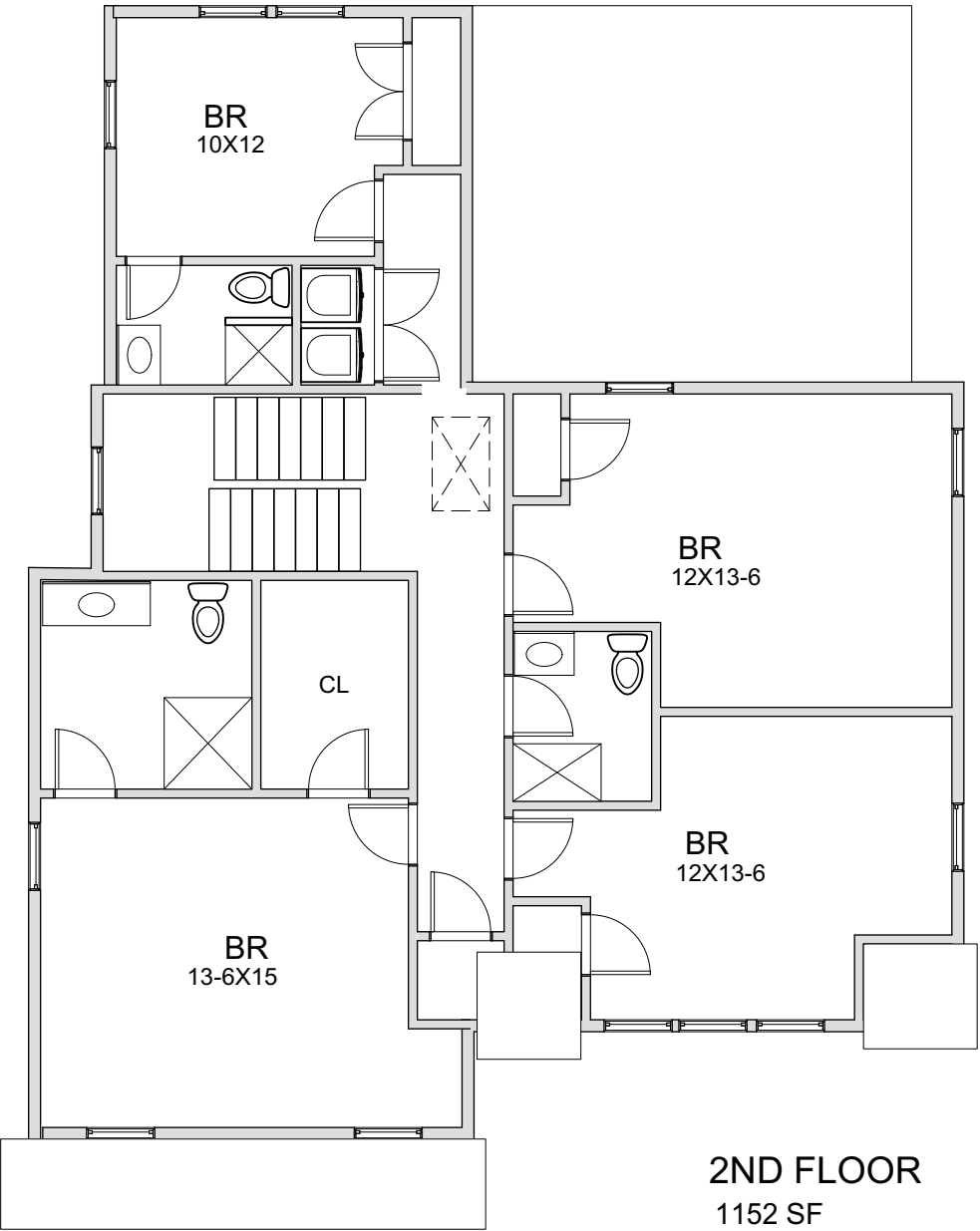
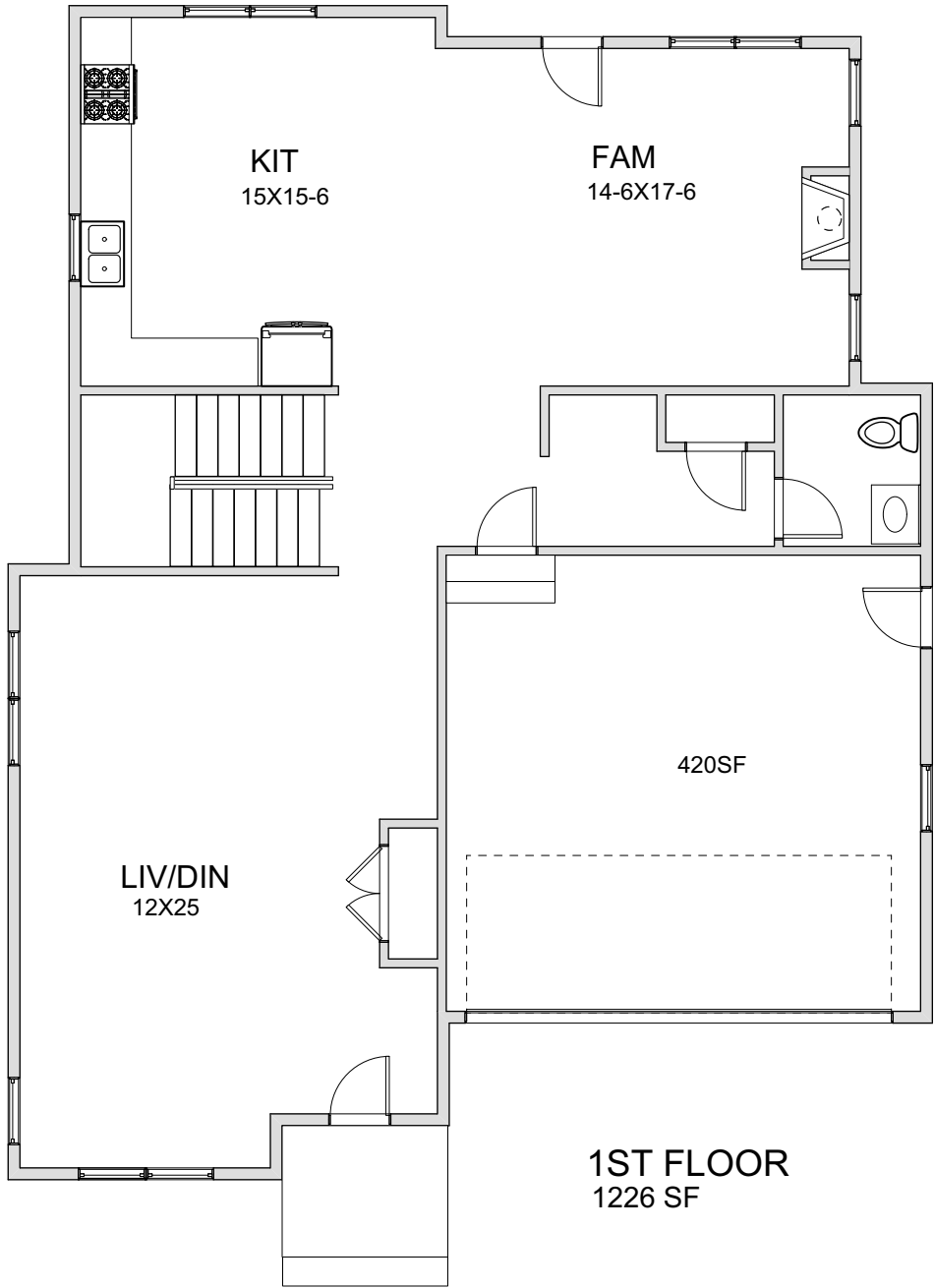
House #1
(Reduction 2 - Test layout)



House #1
(Reduction 2 - Test layout)



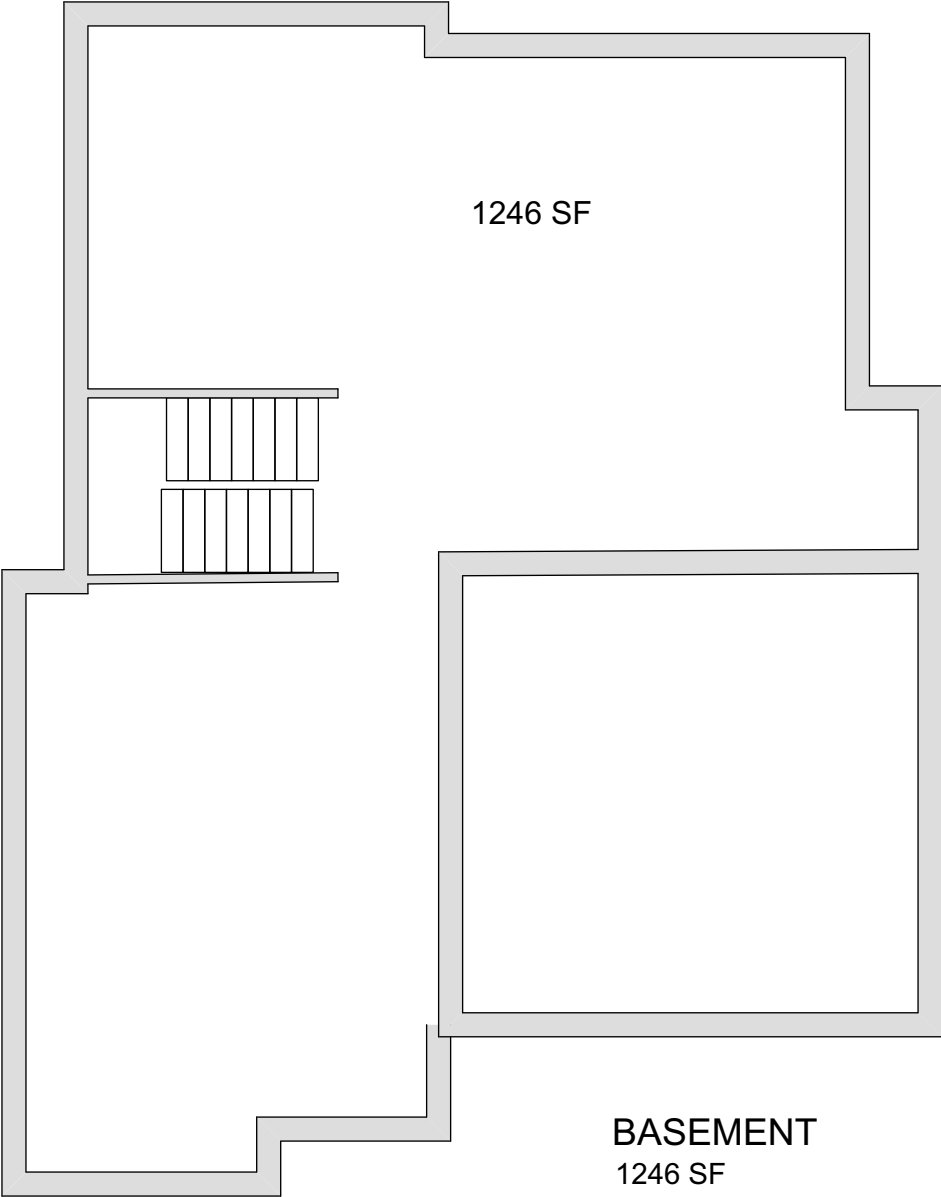
House #1
(Reduction 3 - Test layout)



SAMPLE #1

REDUCTION 3

House #1
(Reduction 3 - *Test layout*)



NO 3RD FLOOR

SAMPLE #1
REDUCTION 3



Base



Base

House 1



Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base



Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base



Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



8.18.2025

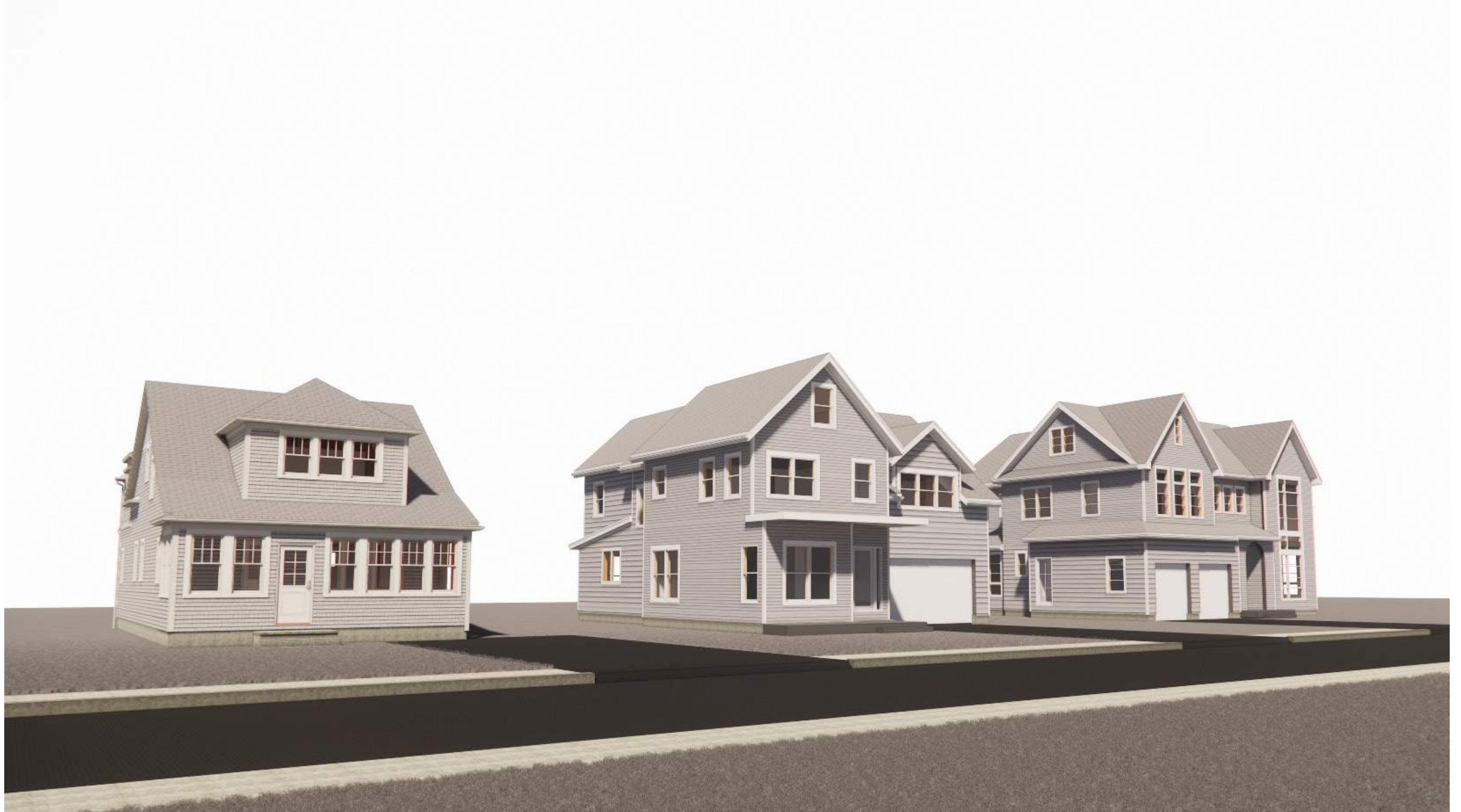
House 1 - Base





8.18.2025

House 1 - Reduction 2



8.18.2025

House 1 - Reduction 3



8.18.2025

House 1 - Base







House #1

	Base	1st		2nd		3rd	
1st fl	1,370	1,300	-67	1,300	-67	1,226	-144
2nd fl	1,606	1,460	-146	1,152	-454	1,317	-289
attic	1,004	872	-132	587	-417	0	-1,004
basement	1,245	1,152	-93	1,152	-93	1,050	-195
garage	475	420	-55	420	-55	420	-55
footprint	1,875	1,720	-122	1,720	-122	1,627	-248
Lot Size	7,828	7,828		7828		7,828	
1st-2nd Flr	10'-2 1/2"	10'-2 1/2"	0	9'-8 1/2"	-6"	9'-6"	-8 1/2"
2nd-Attic	9'-2 3/4"	9'-2 3/4"	0	8'-8 3/4"	-6"	8'-6"	-8 3/4"
FAR	57% (4,455)	51% (4,029)	-10%	44% (3,459)	-22%	38% (2,963)	-33%
LFAR	67% (5,225)	60% (4,754)	-9%	54% (4,191)	-20%	46% (3,593)	-31%
Coverage	24%	22%		22%		20%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	34'-2 1/2"	33'-4 1/2"	-10"	32'-4 1/2"	-1'-10"	30'-4 1/2"	-3'-10"



Base

	Base
1st fl	1,684
2nd fl	1,774
attic	1,177
basement	1,535
garage	566
footprint	2,250
Lot Size	9,191
1st-2nd Flr	10'-0"
2nd-Attic	10'-0"
FAR	57% (5,201)
LFAR	67% (6,170)
Coverage	24%
Ave Grade - Ridge	33'-10"



Reduction 1

	1st	
1st fl	1,480	-204
2nd fl	1,654	-120
attic	1,049	-128
basement	1,341	-194
garage	453	133
footprint	1,933	-317
Lot Size	9,191	
1st-2nd Flr	10'-0"	10'-0"
2nd-Attic	10'-0"	10'-0"
FAR	50% (4,636)	-11%
LFAR	50% (5,524)	-10%
Coverage	21%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	33'-0"	-10"



Reduction 2

	2nd	
1st fl	1,480	-204
2nd fl	1,283	-491
attic	683	-494
basement	1,341	-195
garage	453	-113
footprint	1,933	-317
Lot Size	9,191	
1st-2nd Flr	9'-6"	-6"
2nd-Attic	9'-6"	-6"
FAR	42% (-3,899)	-25%
LFAR	52% (-4,787)	-22%
Coverage		
Ave Grade - Ridge	32'-0"	-1'-10"



Reduction 3

	3rd	
1st fl	1,388	-296
2nd fl	1,477	-297
attic	0	-1,177
basement	1,250	-285
garage	453	-113
footprint	1,841	-409
Lot Size	9,191	
1st-2nd Flr	9'-2"	-10"
2nd-Attic	9'-2"	-10"
FAR	36% (3,318)	-36%
LFAR	45% (4,115)	-33%
Coverage		
Ave Grade - Ridge	30'-0"	-3'-10"



Base



Reduction 1

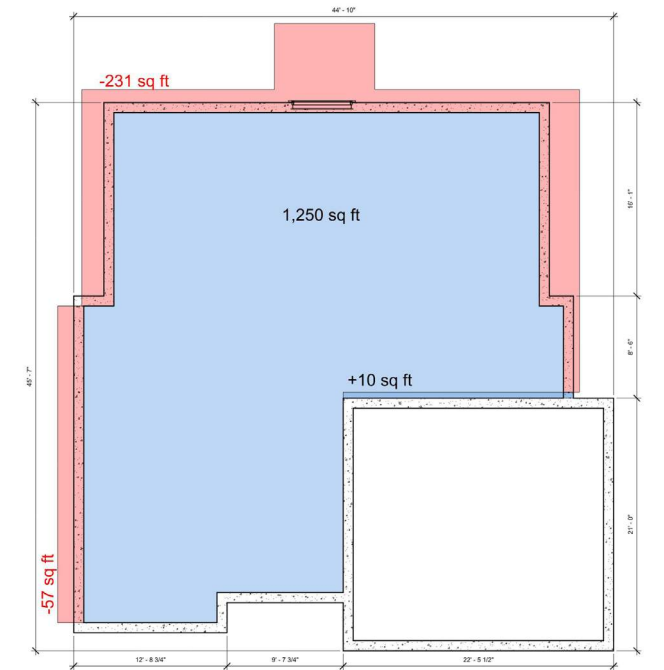
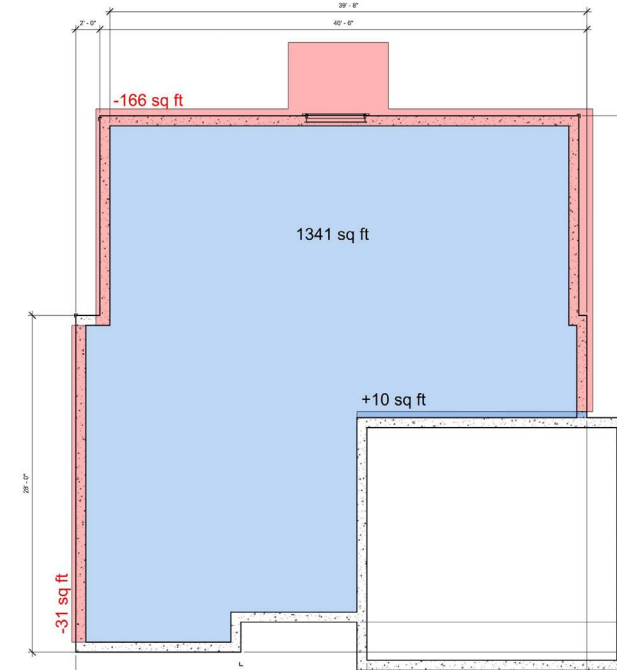
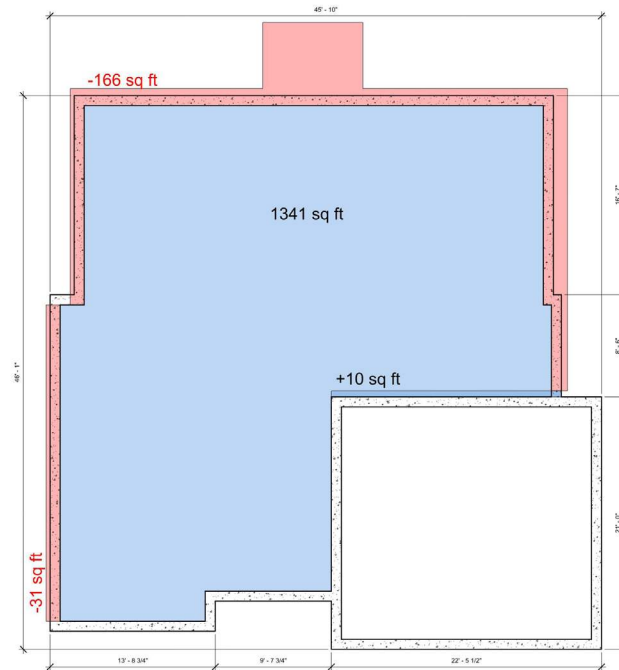
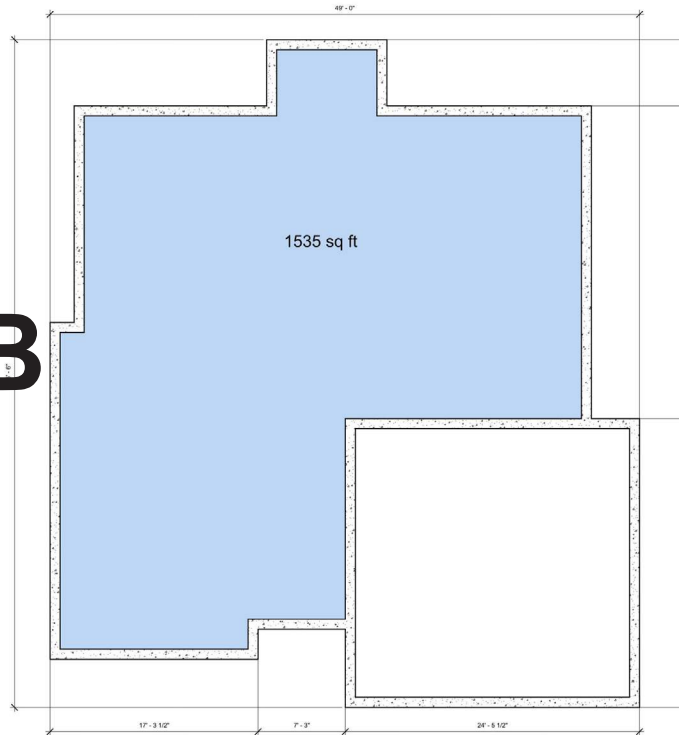


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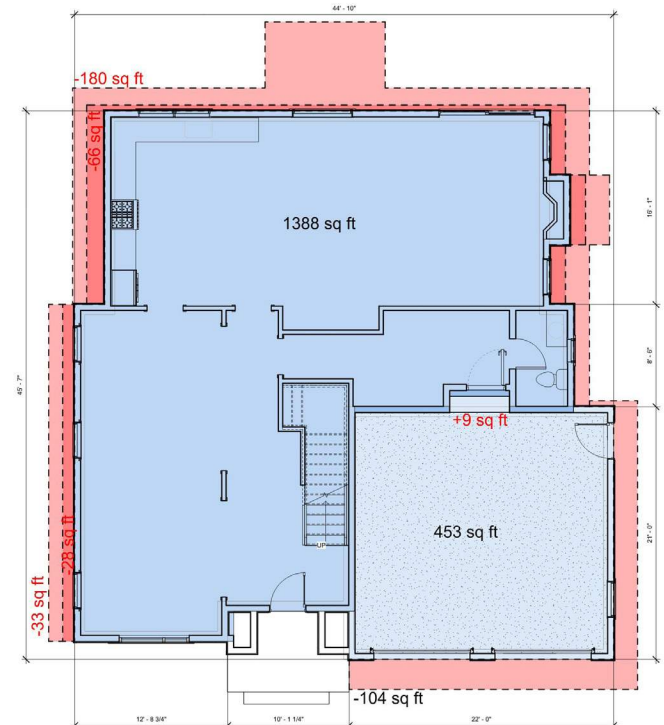
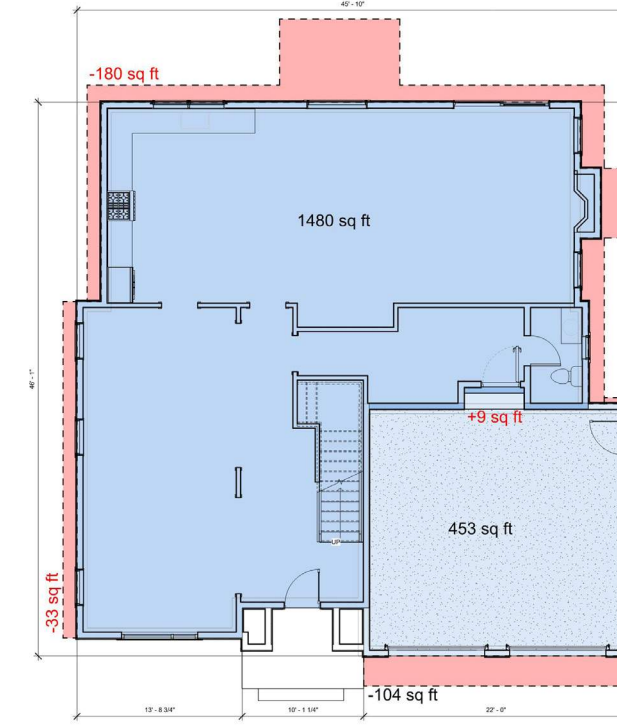
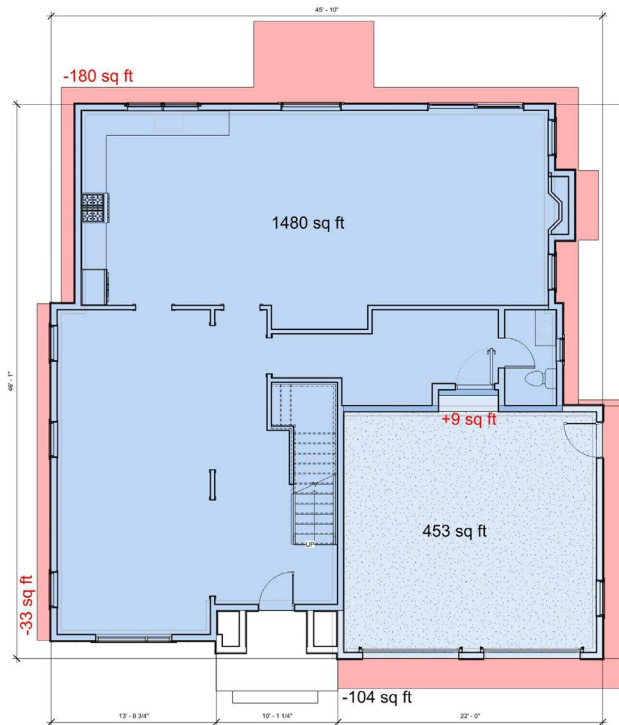


Reduction 3

B



1



Base

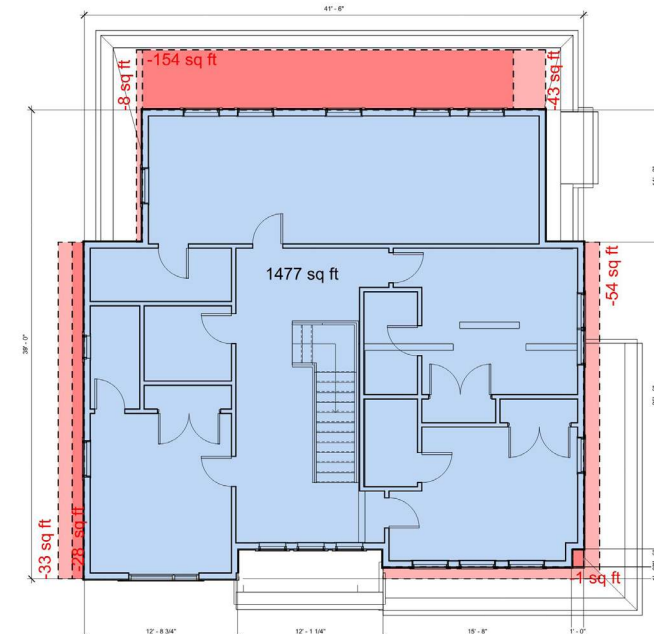
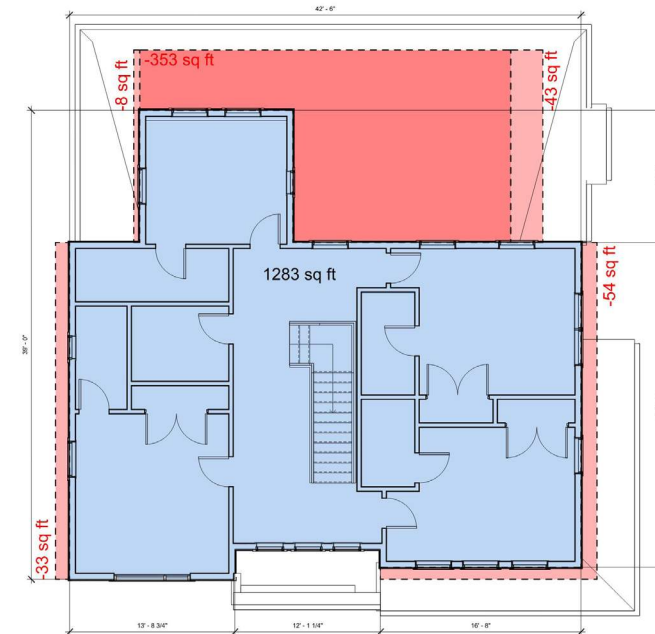
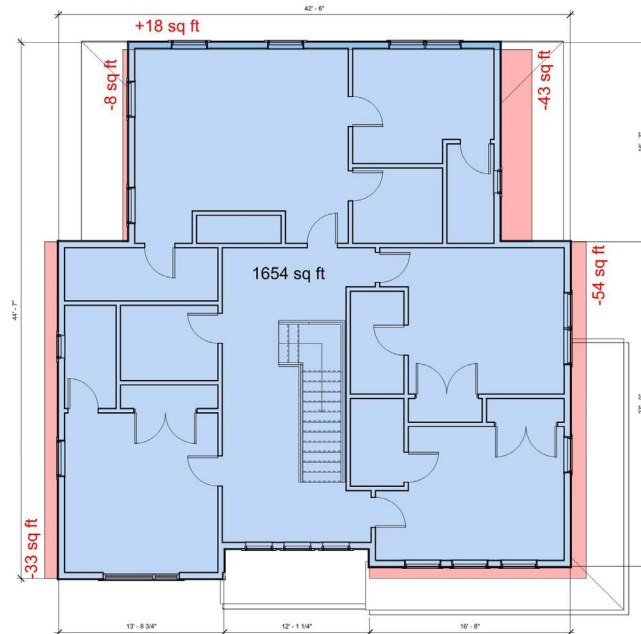
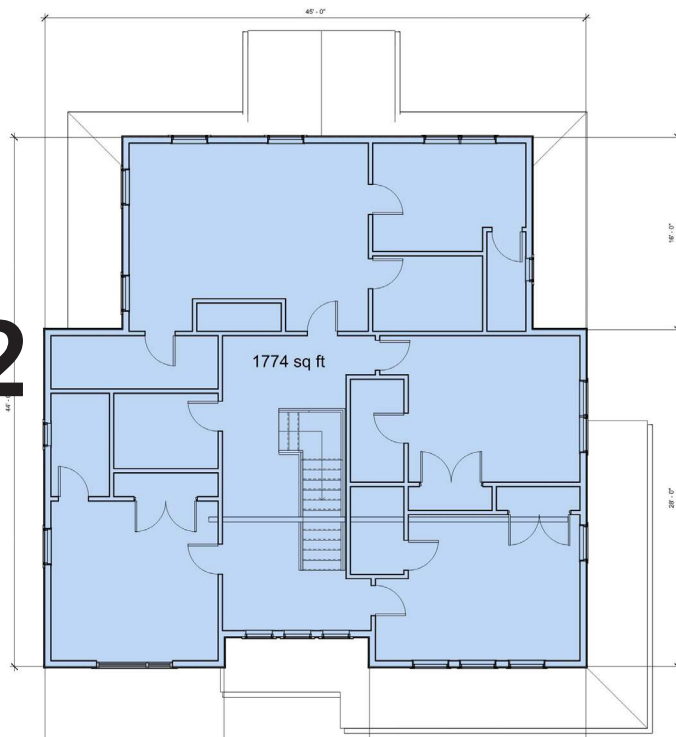
Reduction 1

House 2

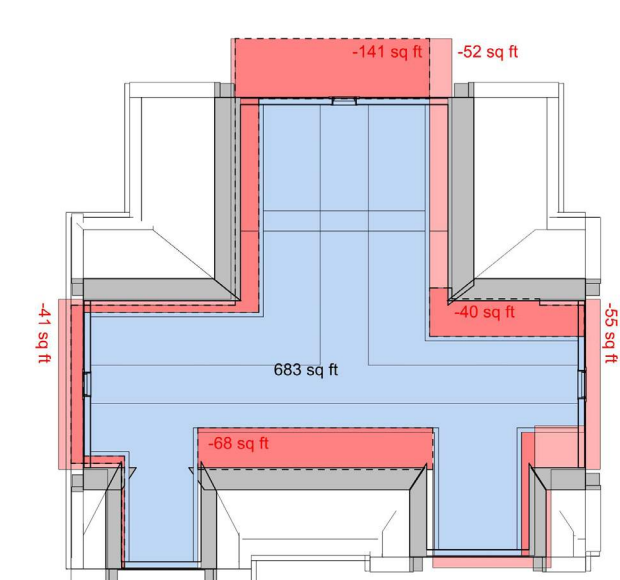
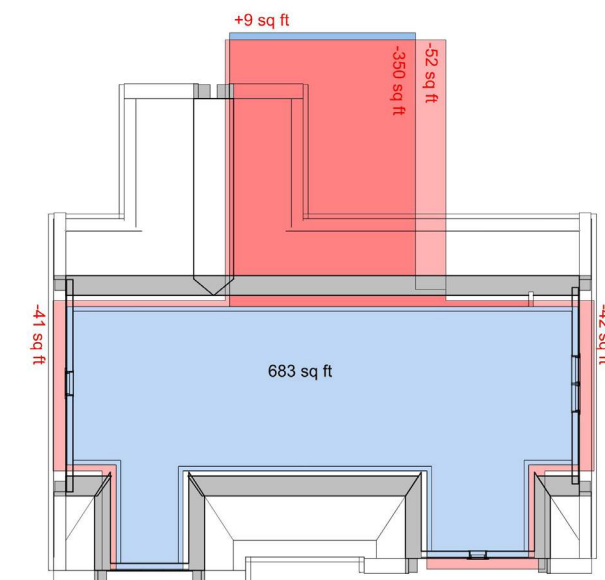
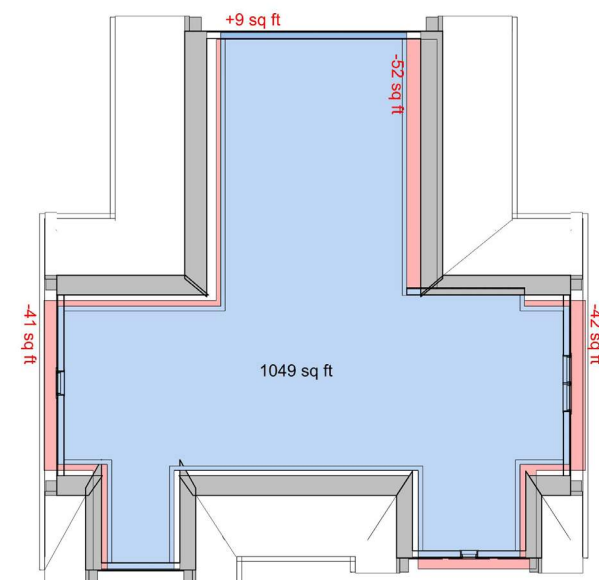
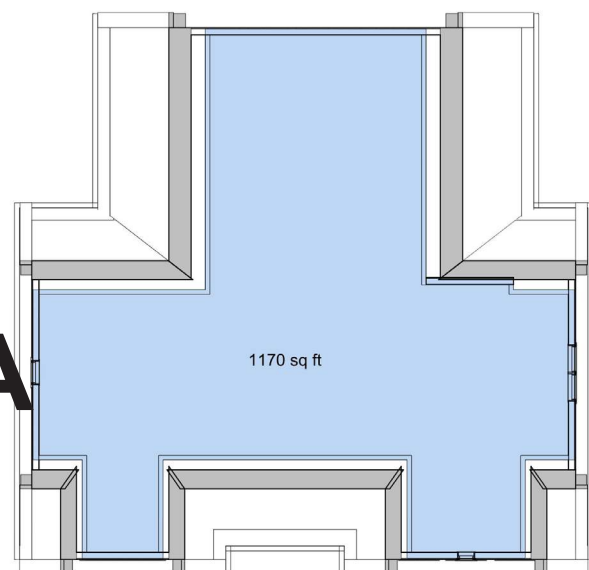
Reduction 2

Reduction 3

2



A



Base

Reduction 1

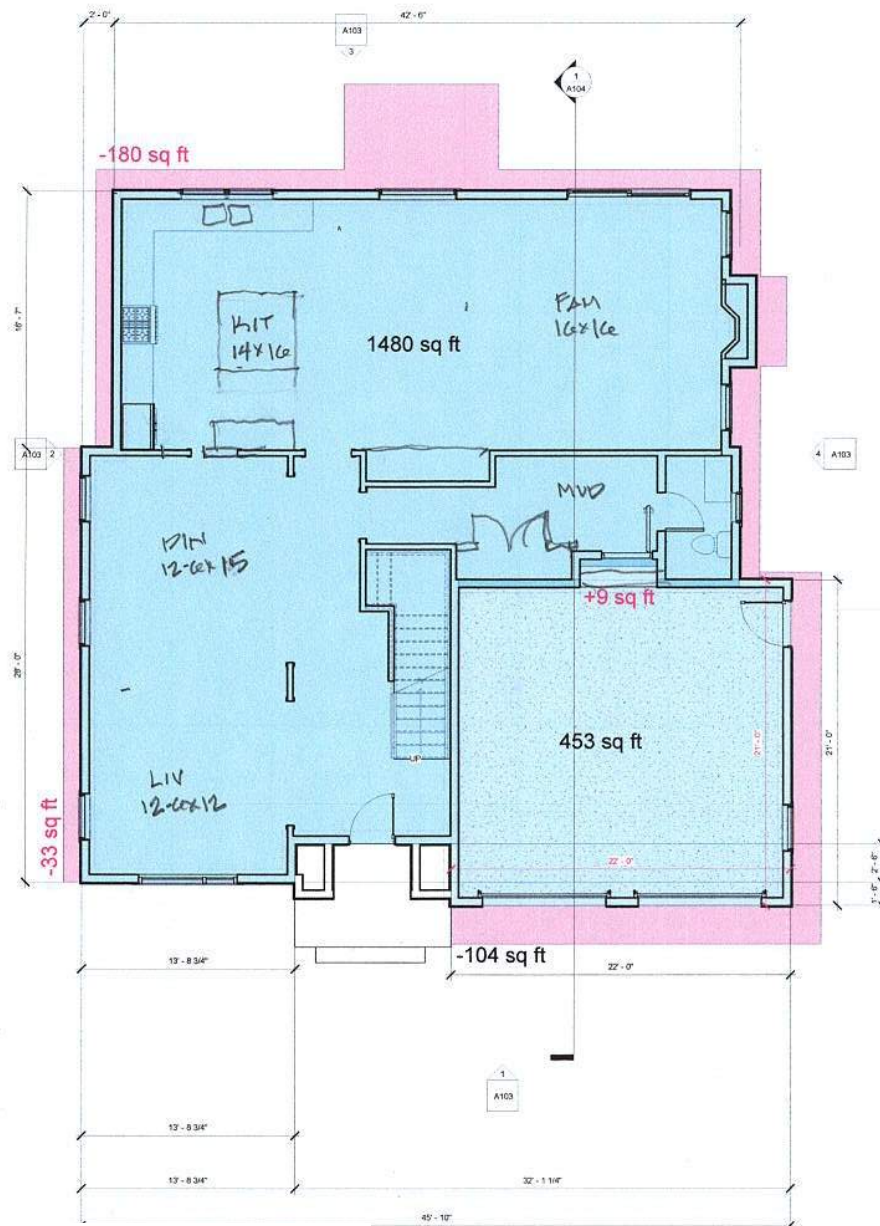
House 2

Reduction 2

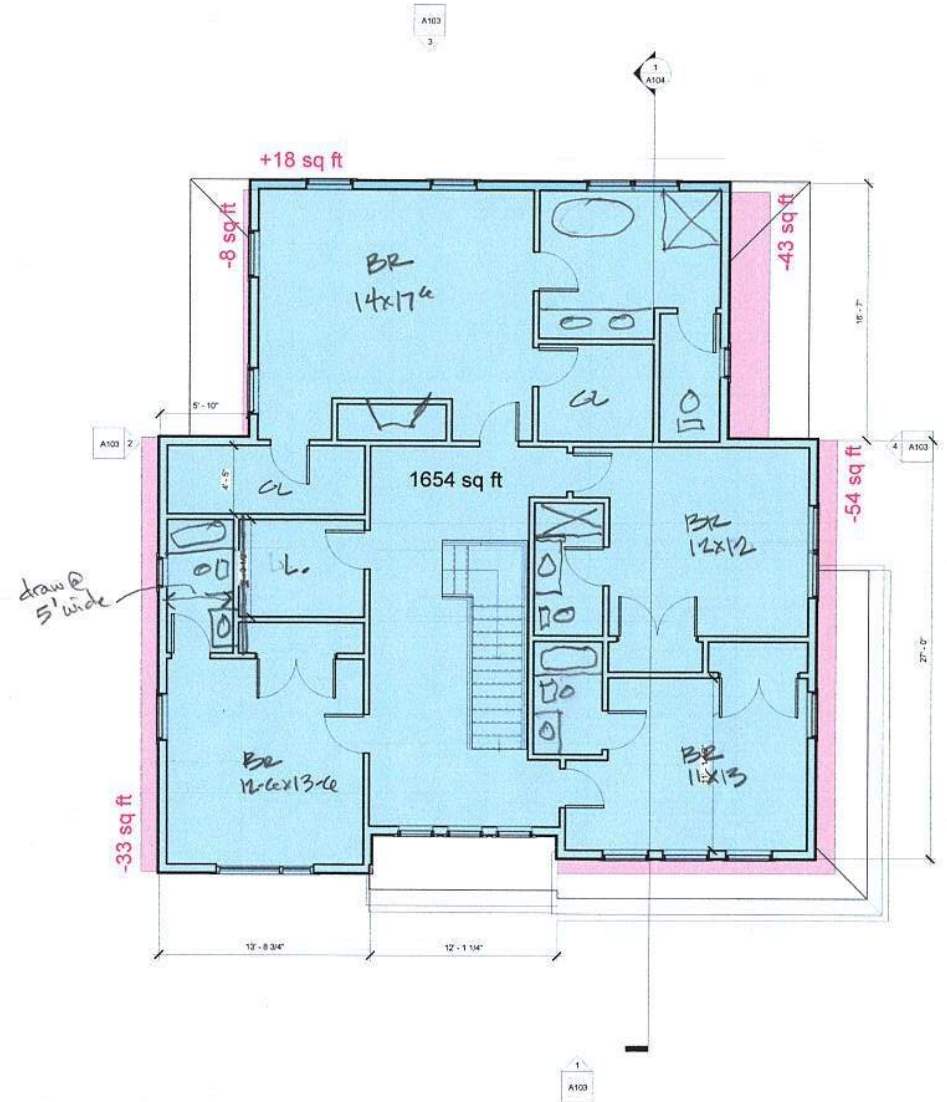
Reduction 3

House #2

(Reduction 1 - Test layout)



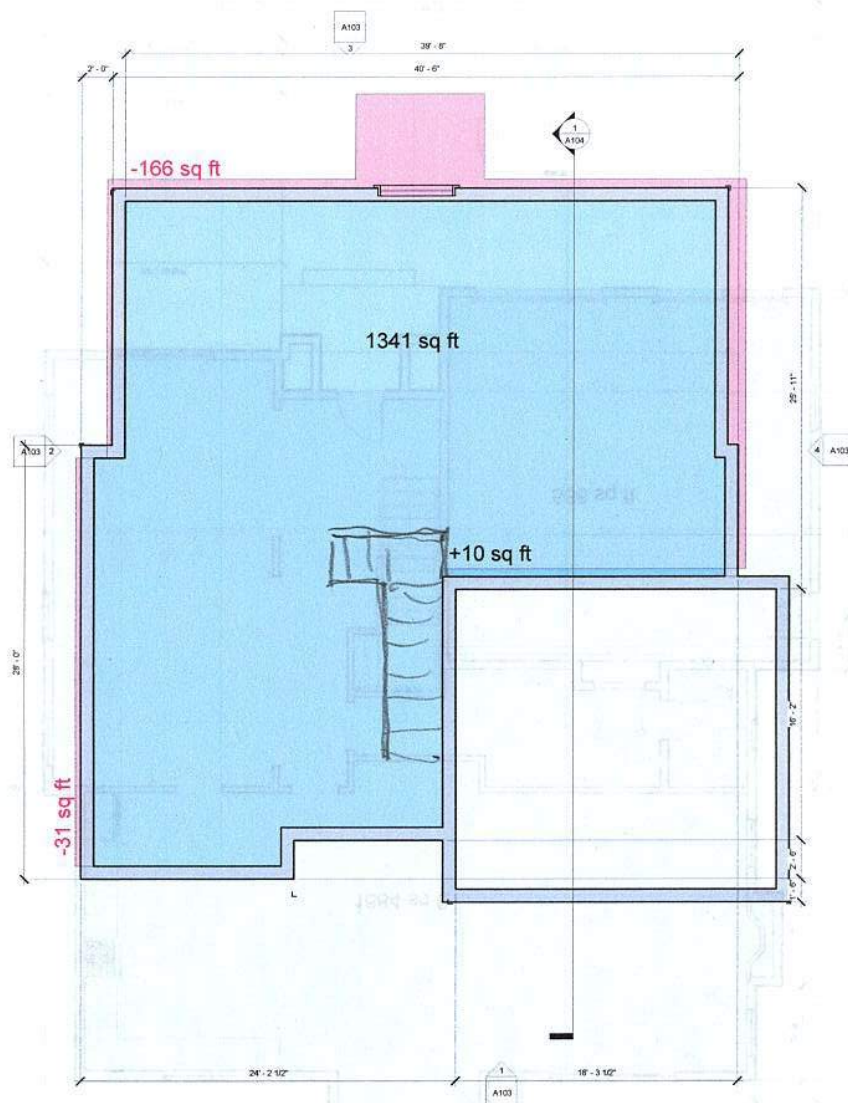
First Floor



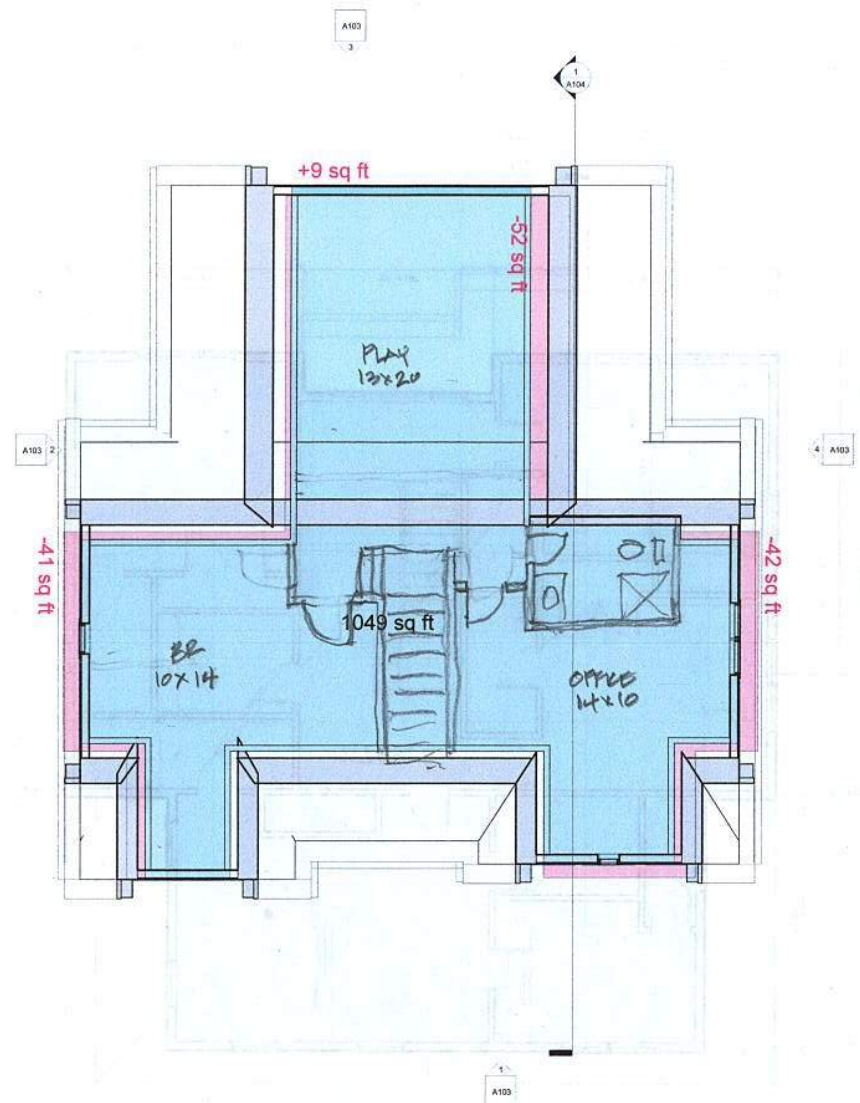
Second Floor

#9 Red 1

House #2 (Reduction 1 - Test layout)



Basement

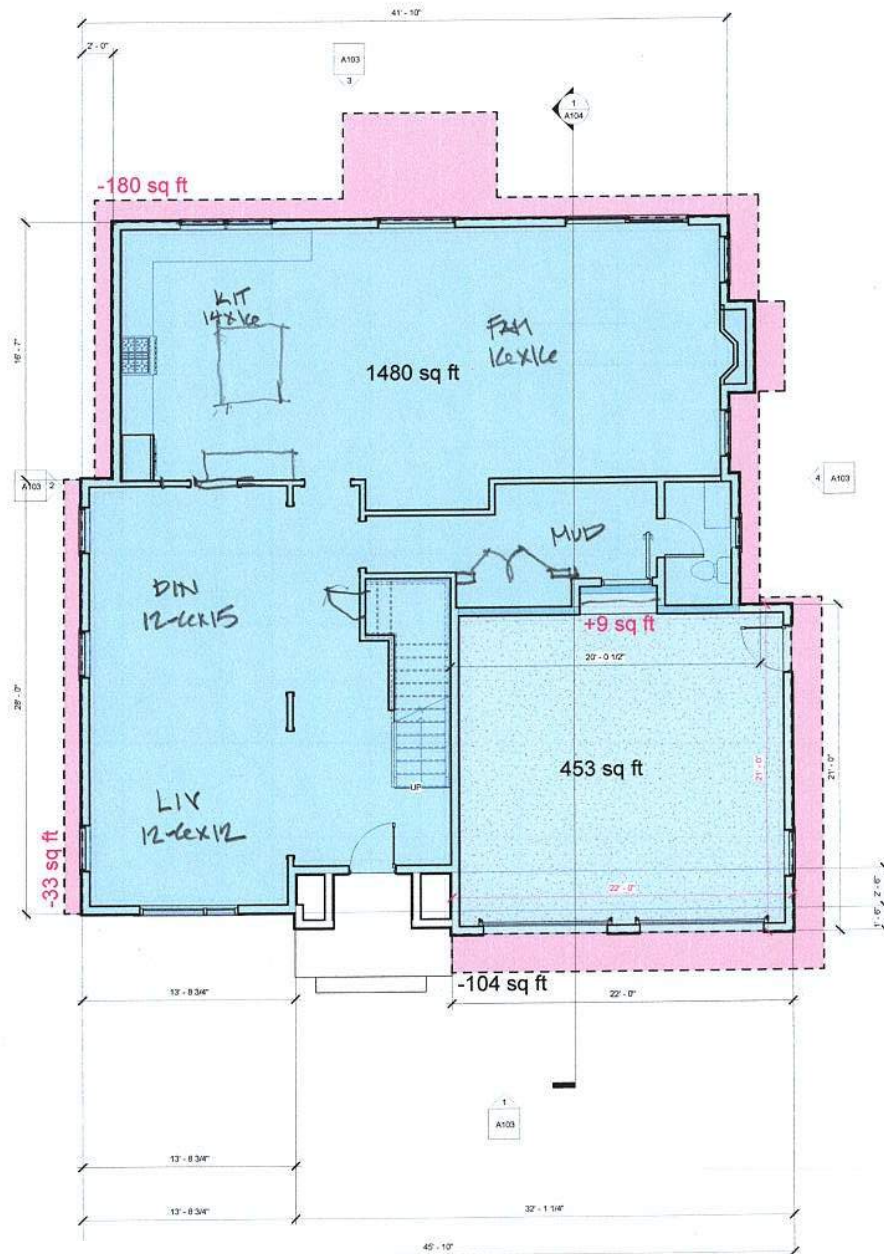


Third Floor

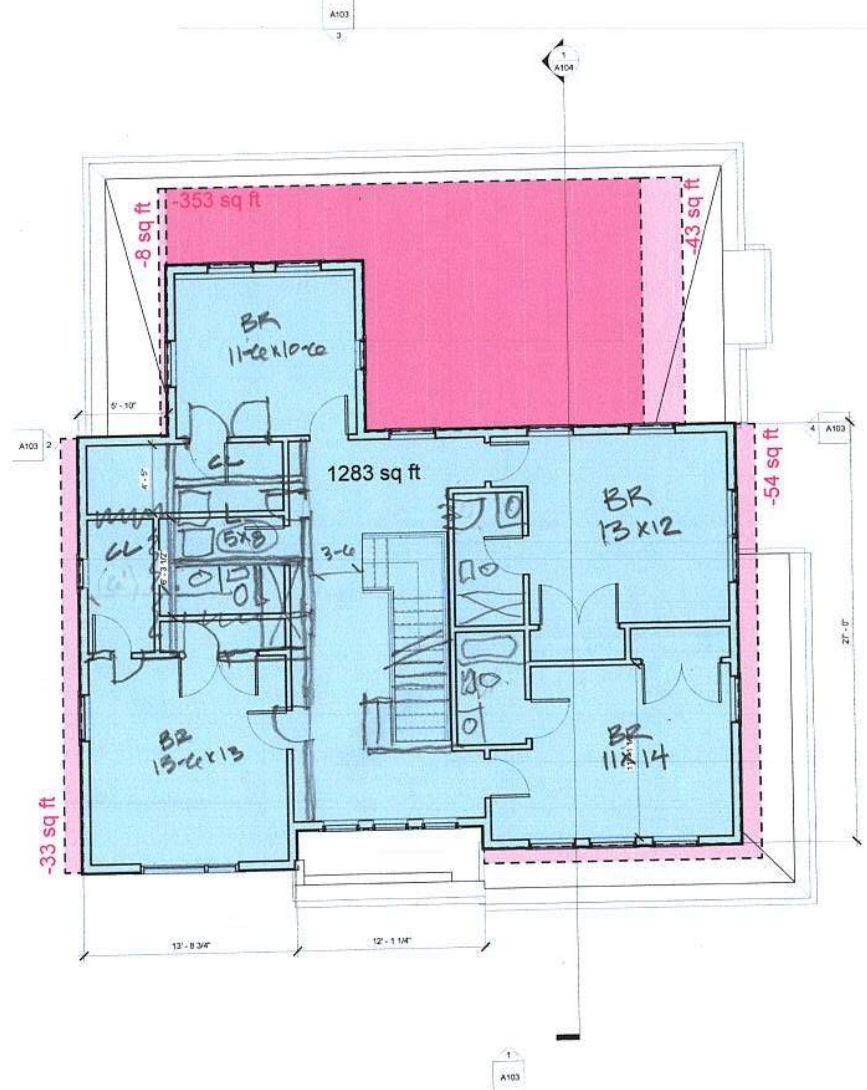
Aq Red #1

House #2

(Reduction 2 - Test layout)



First Floor

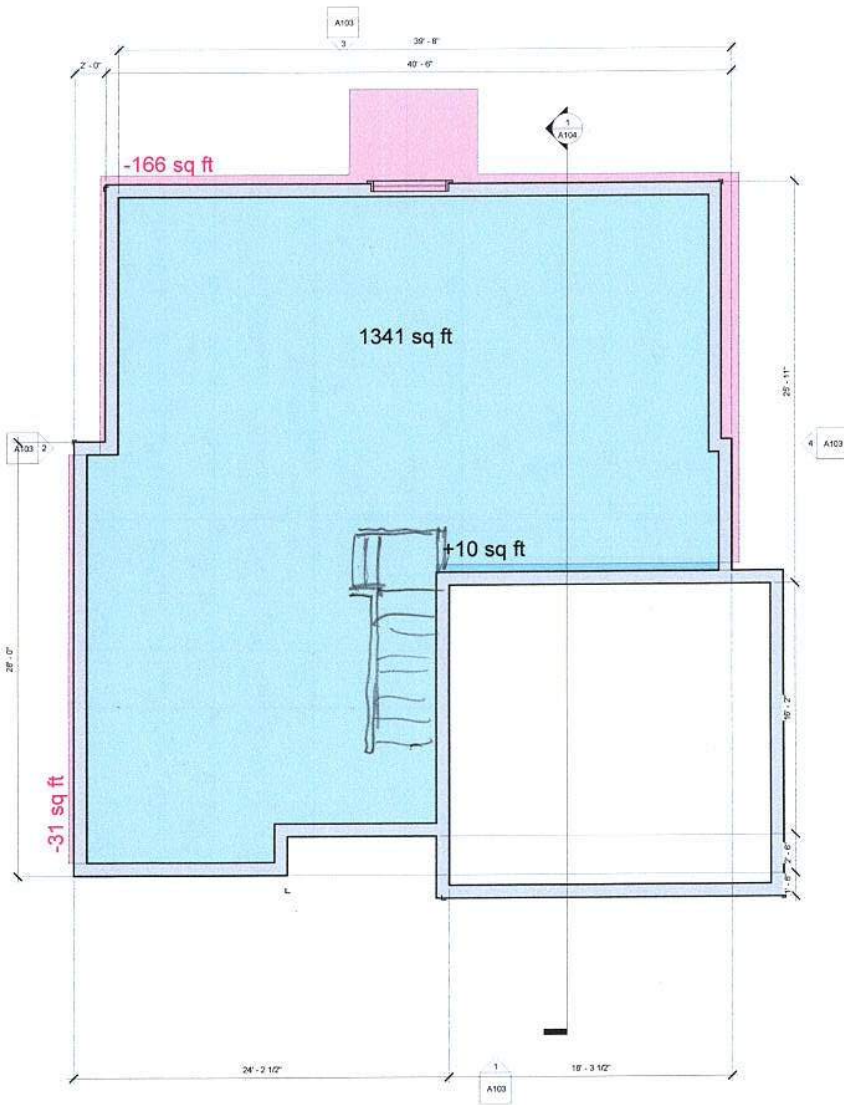


Second Floor

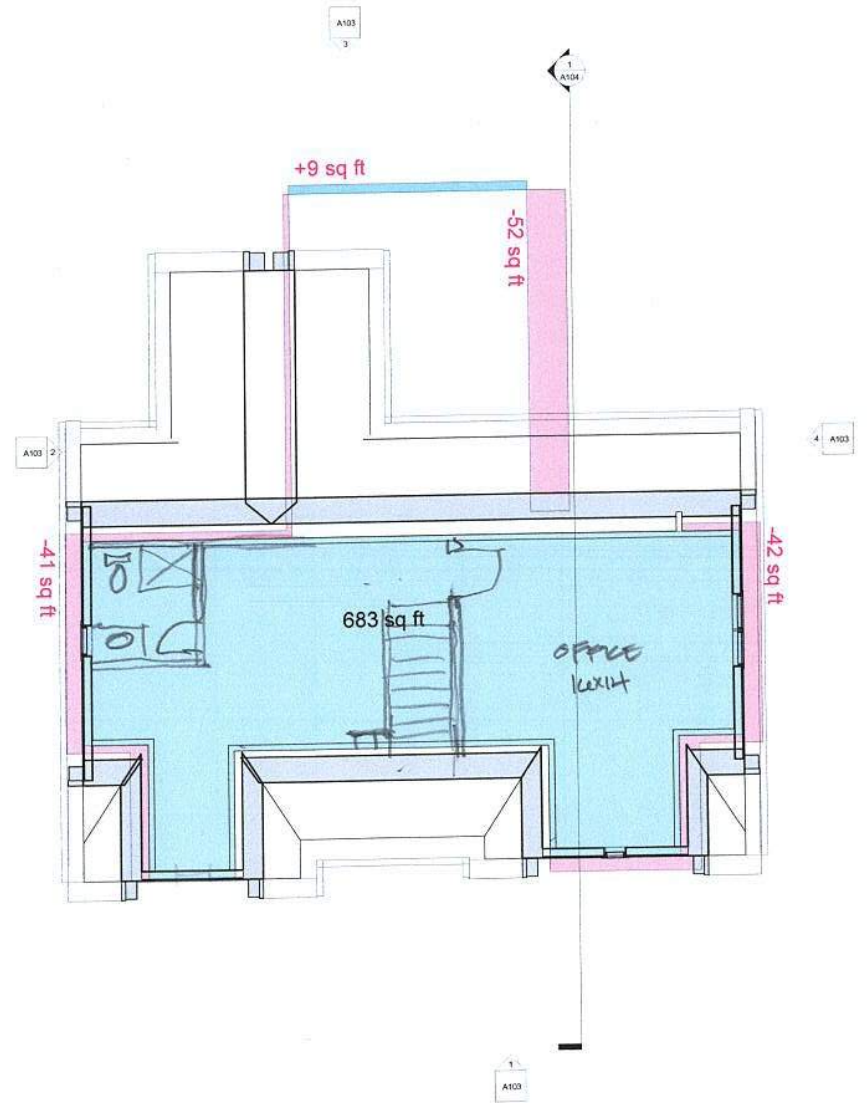
#9 Red 2

House #2

(Reduction 2 - *Test layout*)



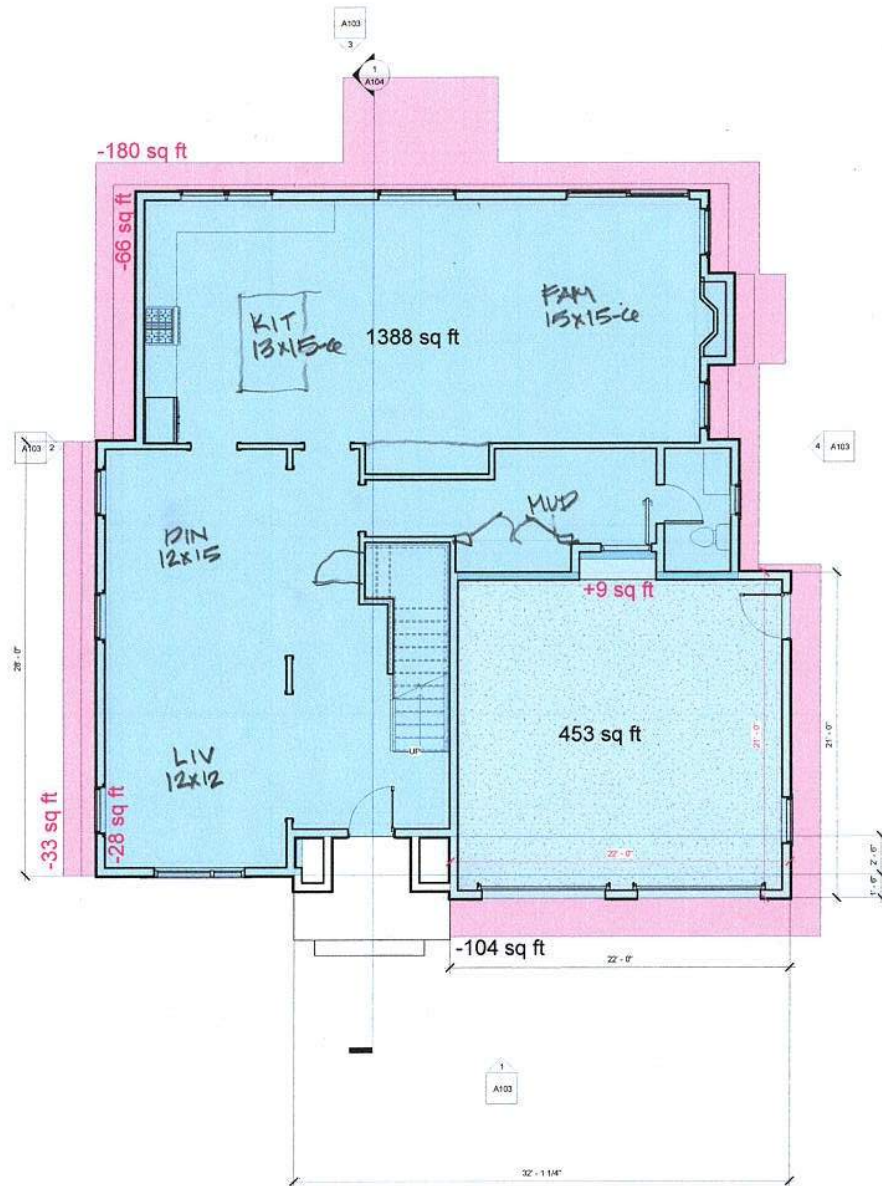
Basement



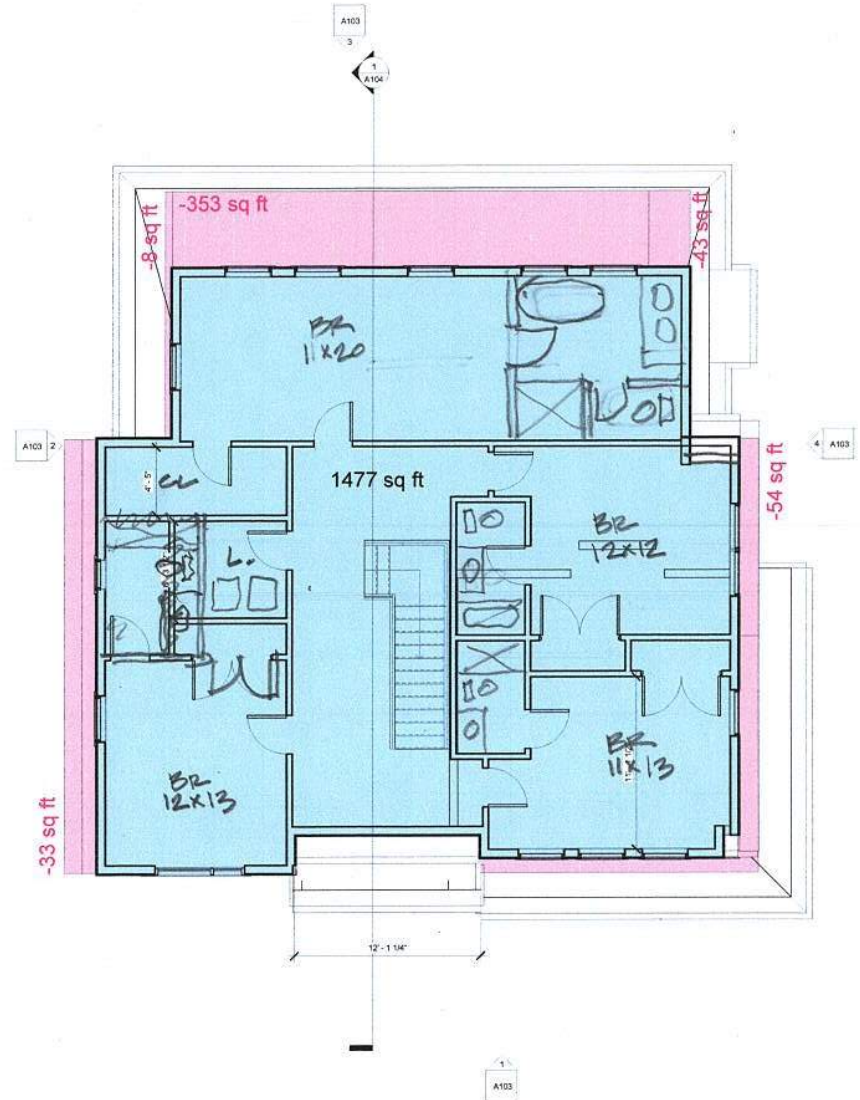
Third Floor

House #2

(Reduction 3 - Test layout)



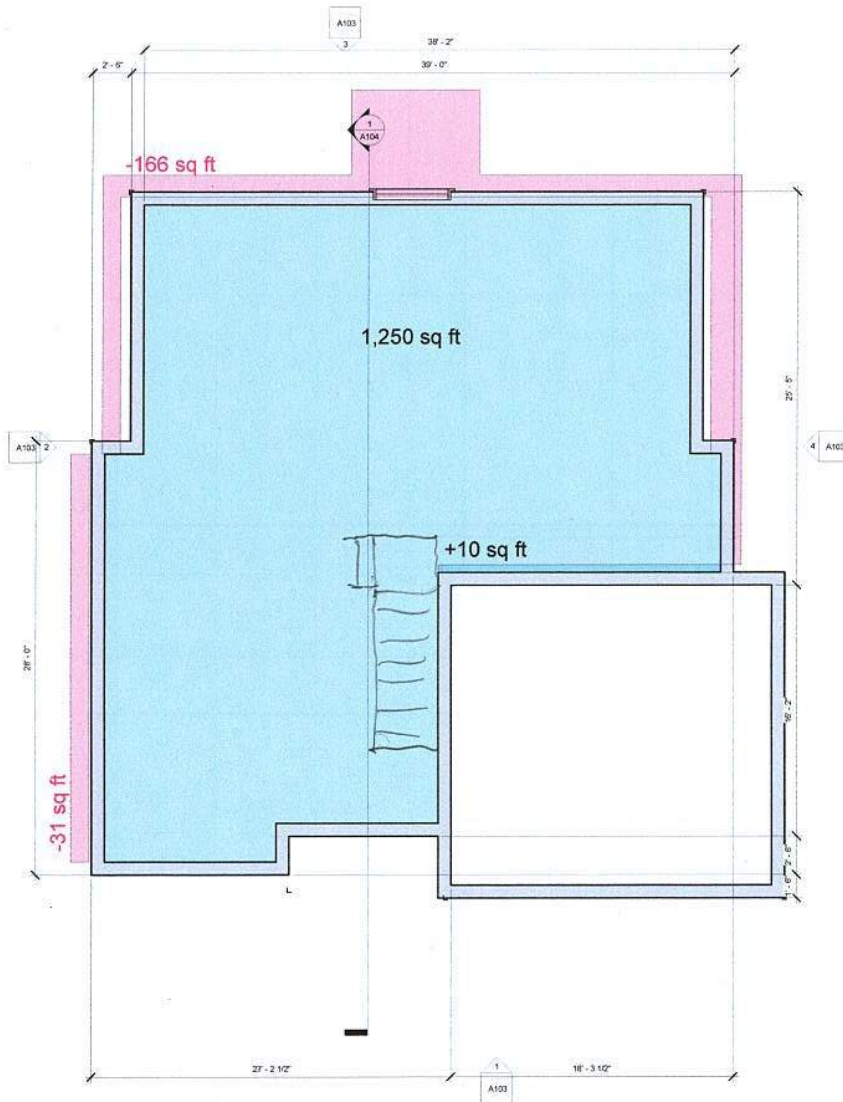
First Floor



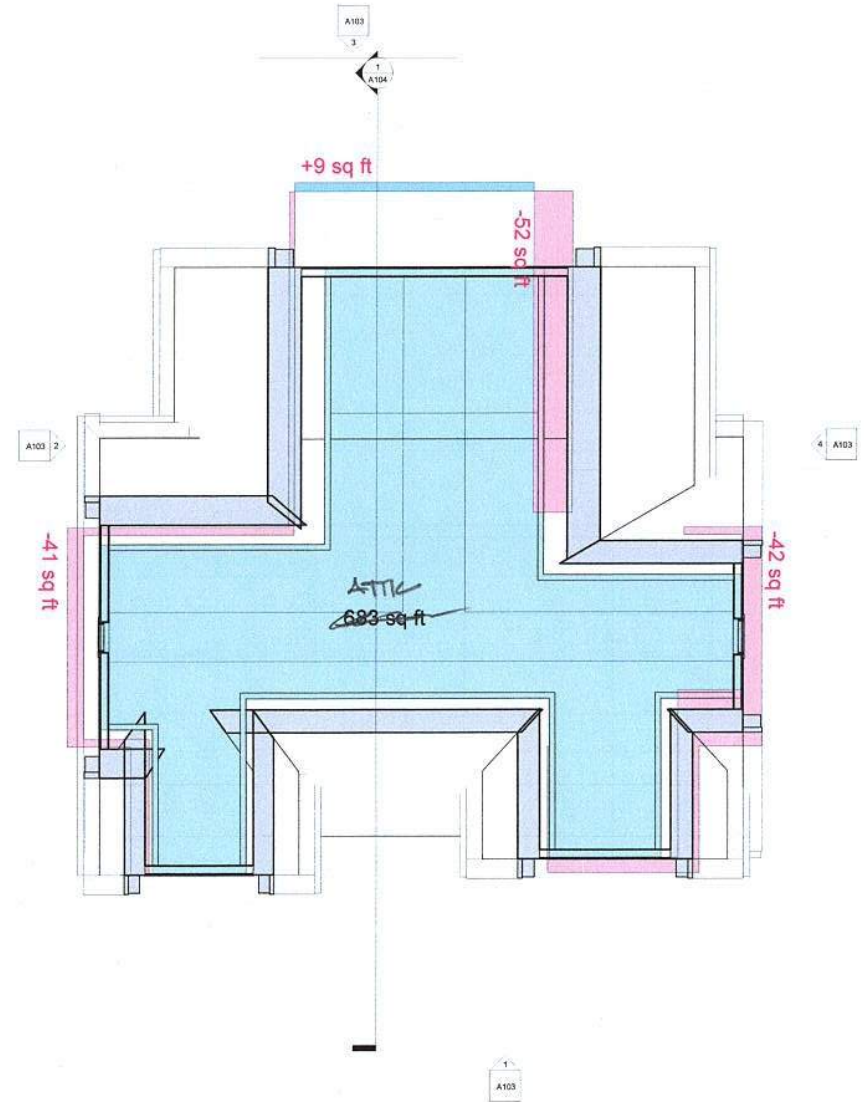
Second Floor

#9 Red 3

House #2 (Reduction 3 - Test layout)



Basement



Third Floor

#9 Red 3



Base

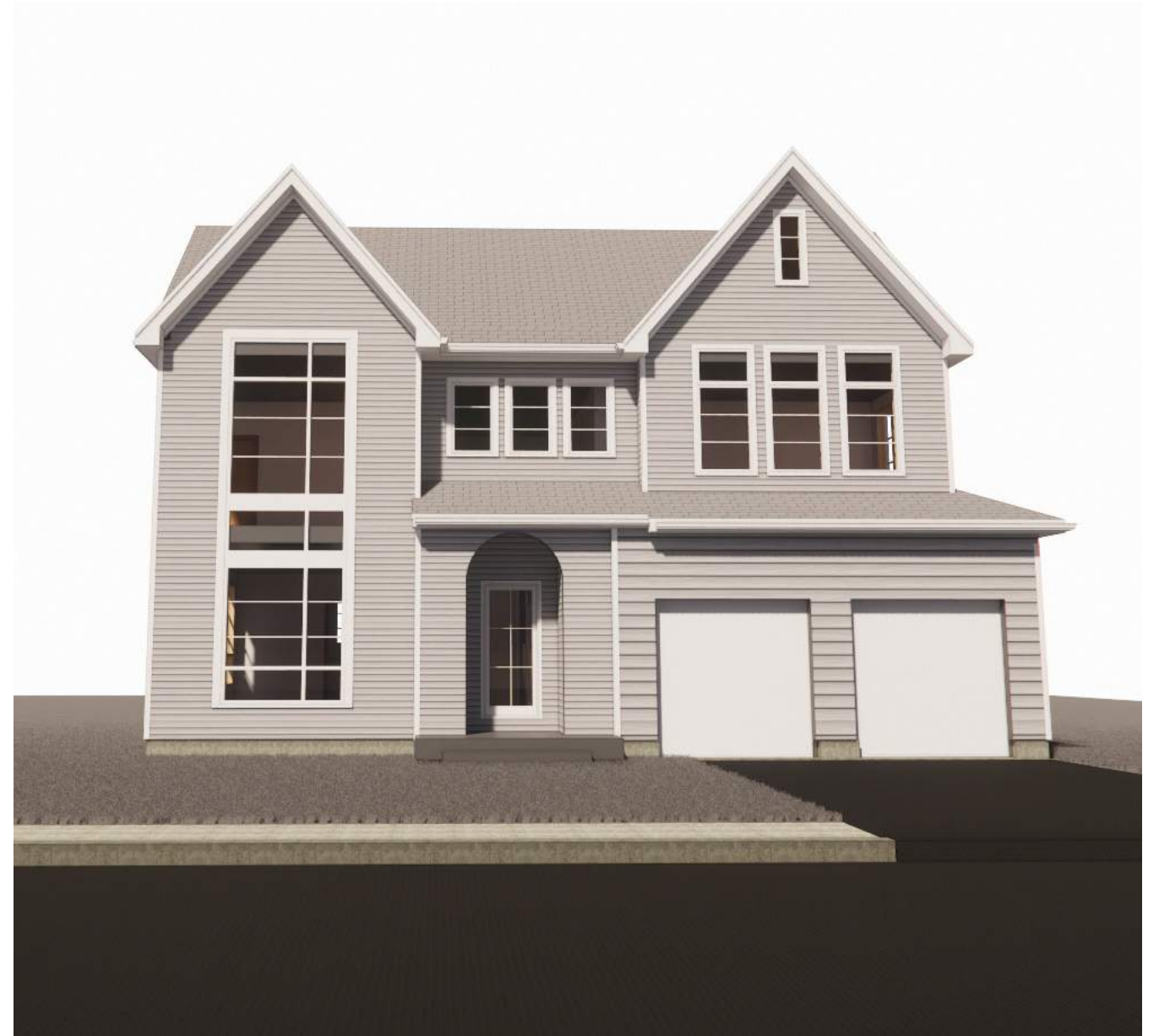


Base

House 2



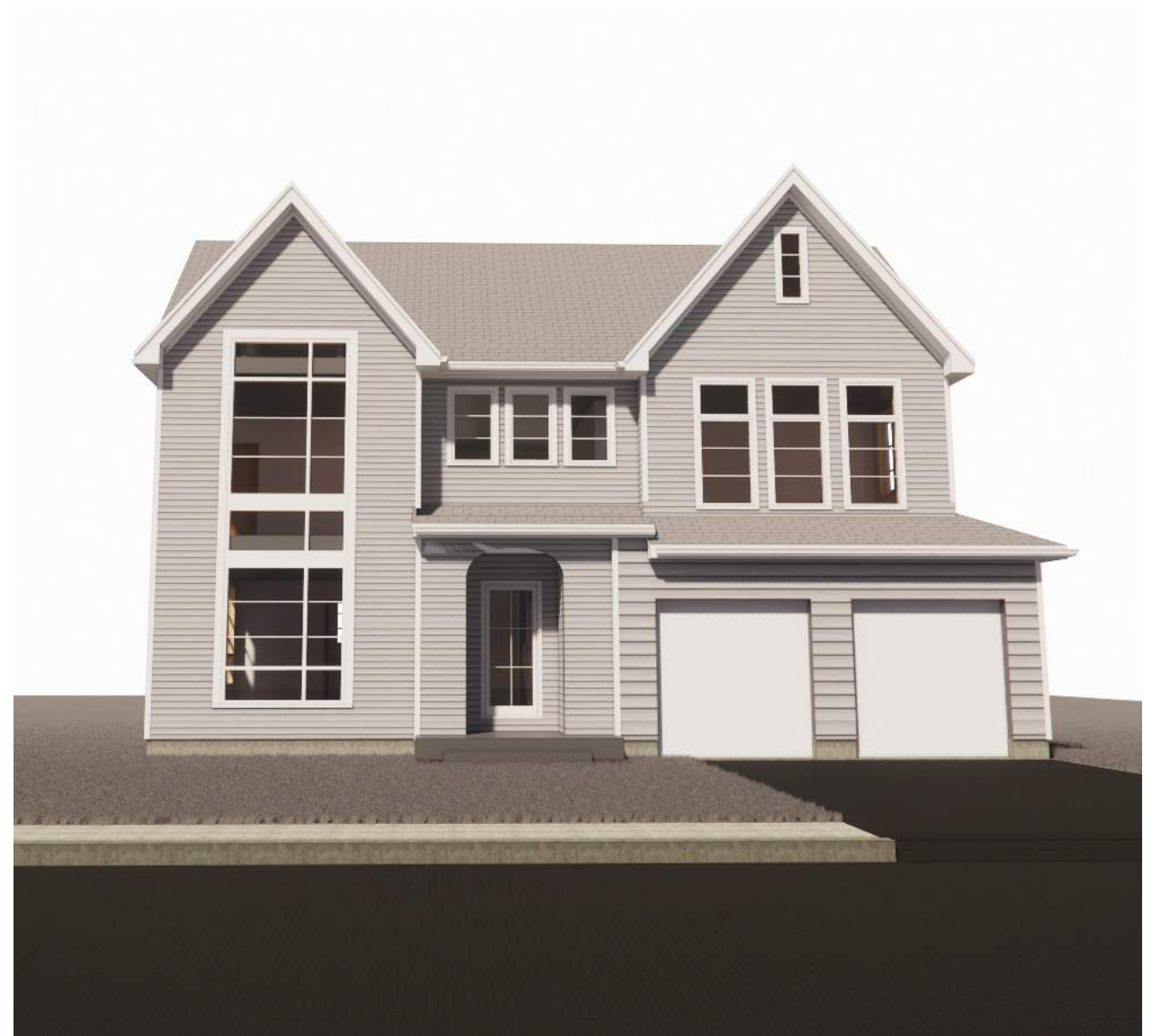
Base



Reduction 1



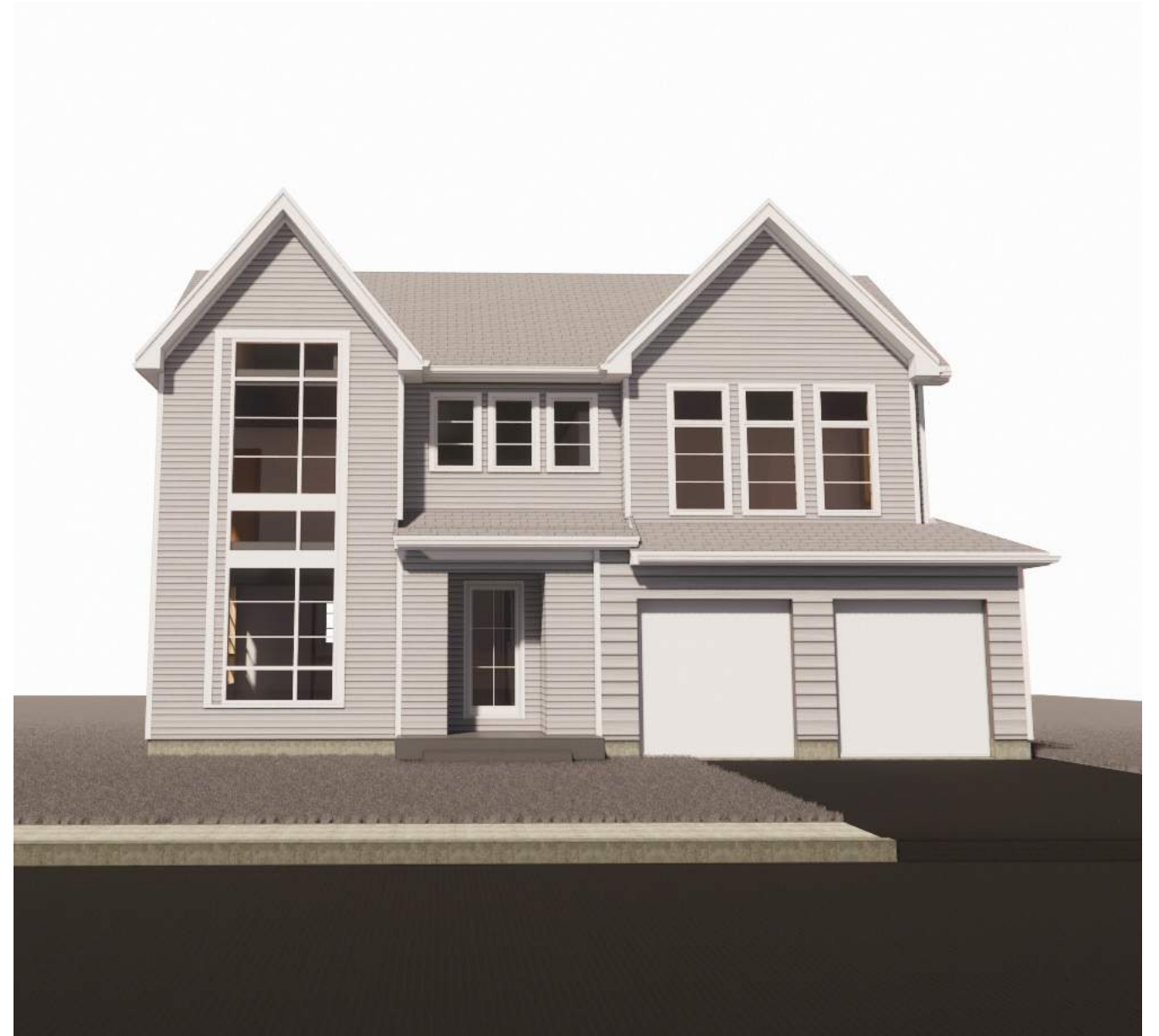
Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base



Base



Reduction 1

House 2



Base



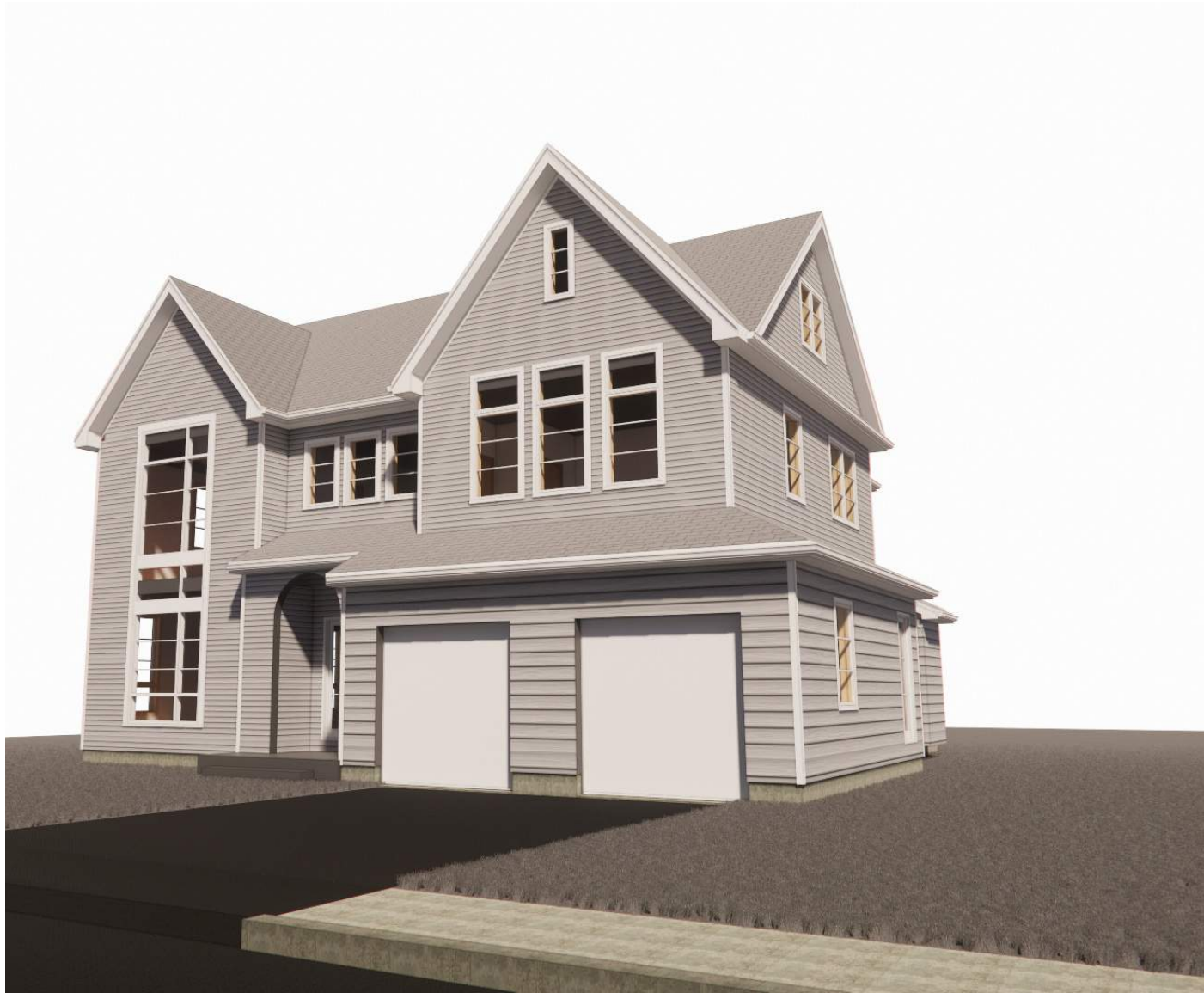
Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base



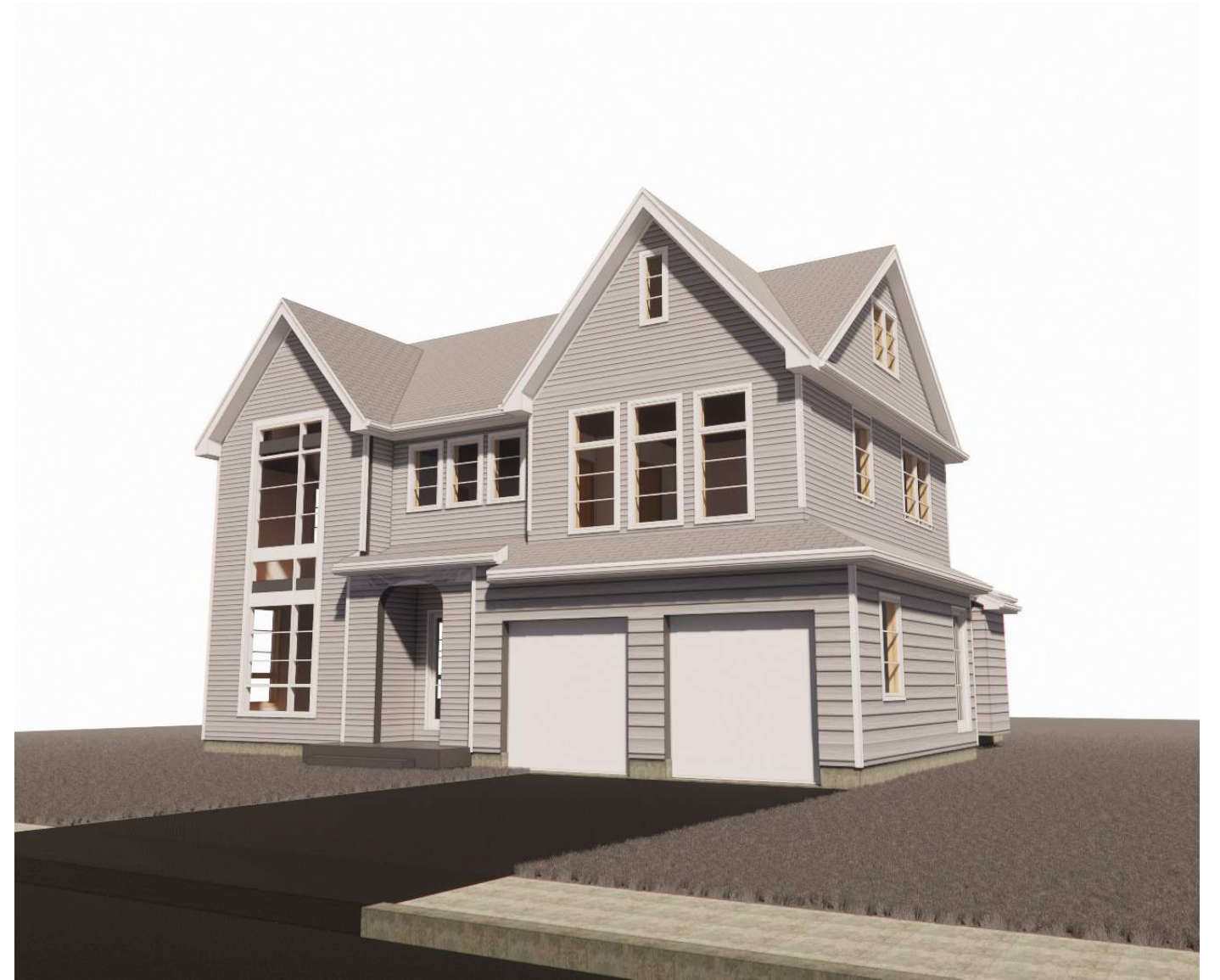
Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3







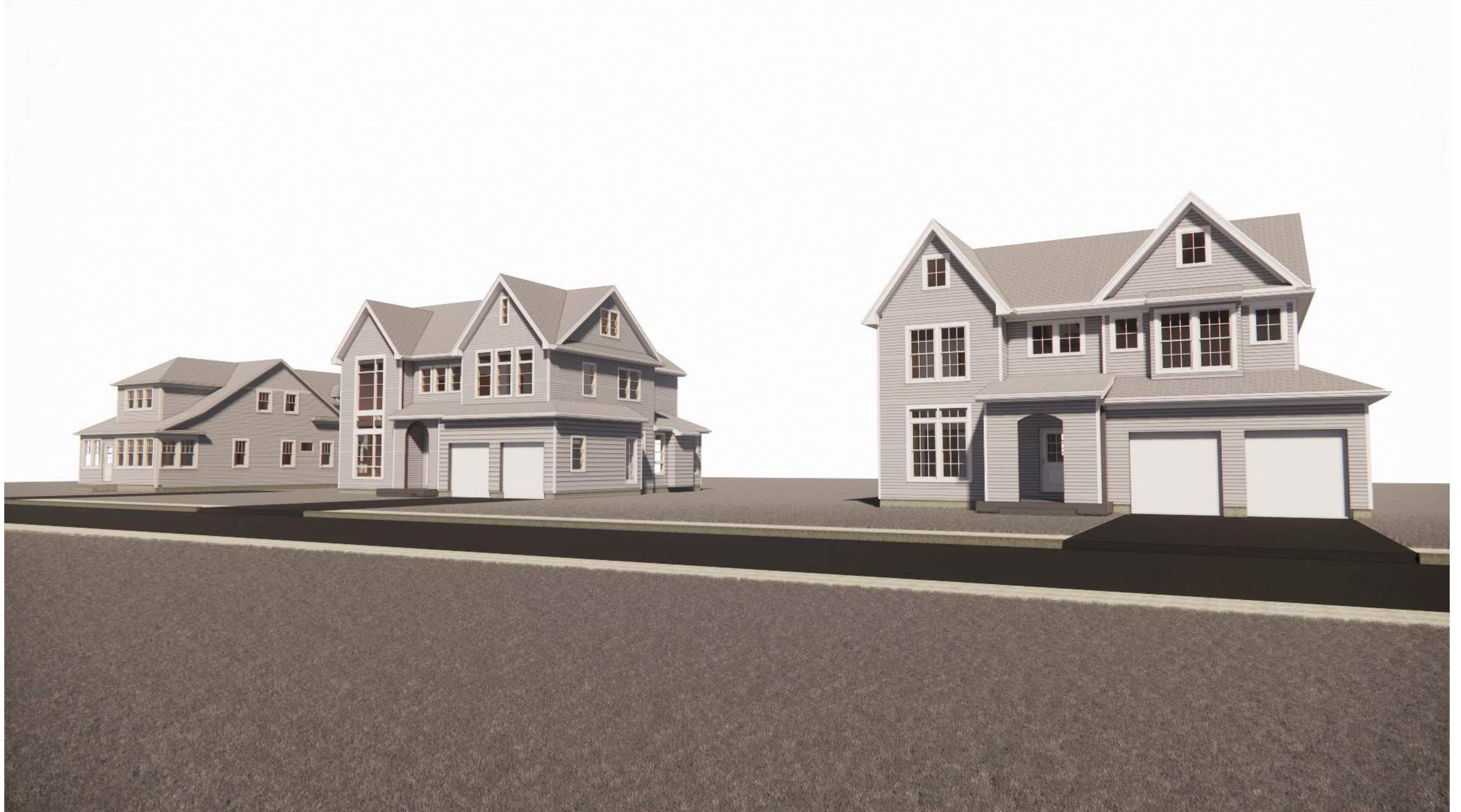


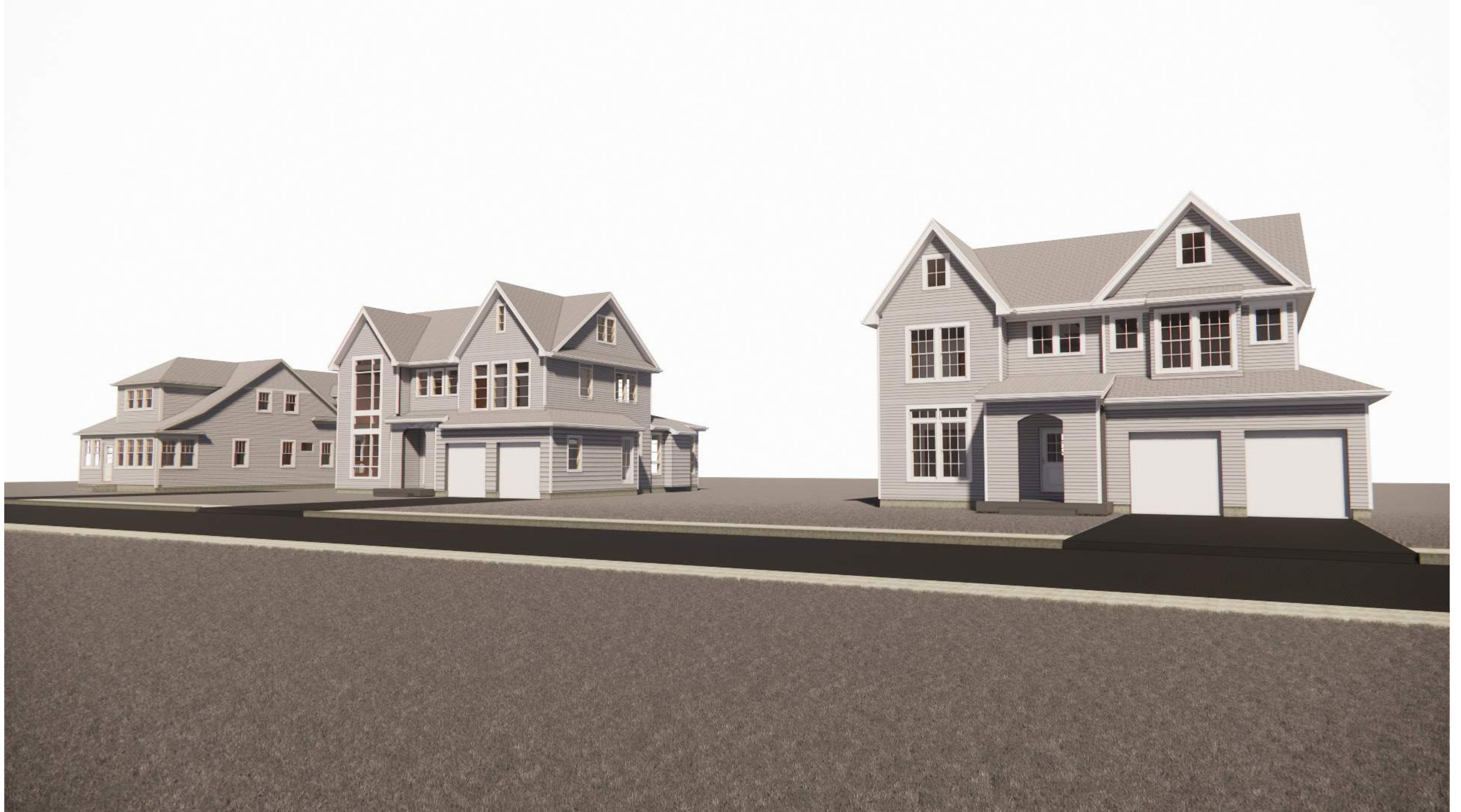


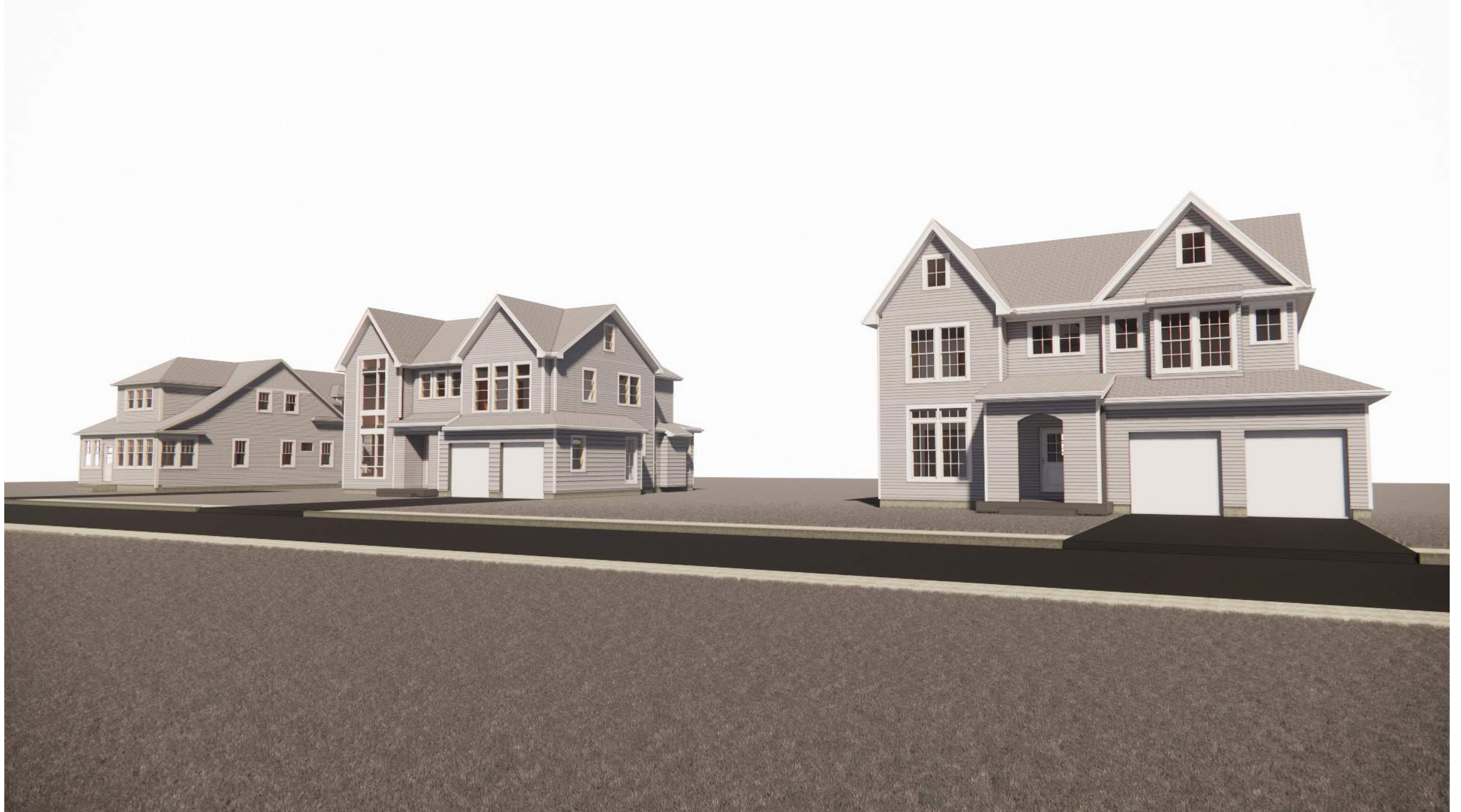
8.18.2025

House 9 - Base

RDA







8.18.2025

House 9 - Reduction 3

RDA

house #2

	Base	1st		2nd		3rd	
1st fl	1,684	1,480	-204	1,480	-204	1,388	-296
2nd fl	1,774	1,654	-120	1,283	-491	1,477	-297
attic	1,177	1,049	-128	683	-494	0	-1,177
basement	1,535	1,341	-194	1,341	-195	1,250	-285
garage	566	453	133	453	-113	453	-113
footprint	2,250	1,933	-317	1,933	-317	1,841	-409
Lot Size	9,191	9,191		9,191		9,191	
1st-2nd Flr	10'-0"	10'-0"	10'-0"	9'-6"	-6"	9'-2"	-10"
2nd-Attic	10'-0"	10'-0"	10'-0"	9'-6"	-6"	9'-2"	-10"
FAR	57% (5,201)	50% (4,636)	-11%	42% (-3,899)	-25%	36% (3,318)	-36%
LFAR	67% (6,170)	50% (5,524)	-10%	52% (-4,787)	-22%	45% (4,115)	-33%
Coverage	24%	21%					
Ave Grade - Ridge	33'-10"	33'-0"	-10"	32'-0"	-1'-10"	30'-0"	-3'-10"



Base

	Base
1st fl	2,041
2nd fl	1,992
attic	1,292
basement	1,837
garage	520
footprint	2,561
Lot Size	
1st-2nd Flr	10'-3"
2nd-Attic	10'-3"
FAR	58% (5,811)
LFAR	71% (7,128)
Coverage	26%
Ave Grade - Ridge	34'-2 1/2"



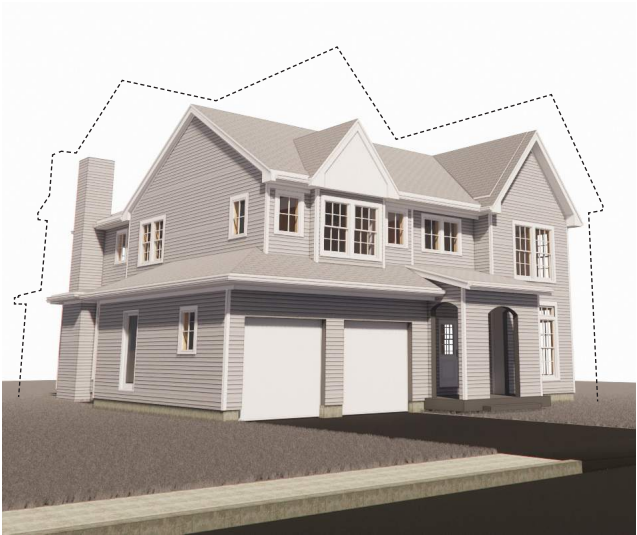
Reduction 1

	1st	
1st fl	1,517	-524
2nd fl	1,711	-281
attic	975	-336
basement	1,351	-486
garage	420	-55
footprint	1937	-122
Lot Size		
1st-2nd Flr	10'-3"	0
2nd-Attic	10'-3"	0
FAR	46% (4,623)	-10%
LFAR	54% (5,355)	-9%
Coverage	19%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	33'-0"	-1' 2 1/2"



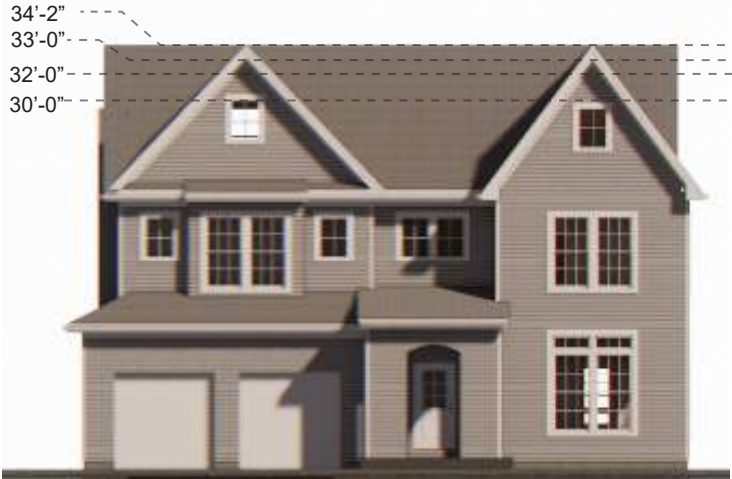
Reduction 2

	2nd	
1st fl	1,517	-524
2nd fl	1324	-668
attic	705	-587
basement	1,351	-486
garage	420	-55
footprint	1,937	-122
Lot Size		
1st-2nd Flr	9'-9"	-6"
2nd-Attic	9'-9"	-6"
FAR	40% (3,966)	-32%
LFAR	49% (4,897)	-32%
Coverage	19%	
Ave Grade - Ridge	32'-0"	-2'-2 1/2"



Reduction 3

	3rd	
1st fl	1,417	-624
2nd fl	1,521	471
attic	0	-1,929
basement	1,255	-582
garage	420	-55
footprint	1,837	-724
Lot Size		
1st-2nd Flr	9'-6"	-9"
2nd-Attic	9'-3"	-1'-0"
FAR	(34%) 3,358	-42%
LFAR	(42%) 4193	-41%
Coverage		
Ave Grade - Ridge	30'	-4'-2 1/2"



Base



Reduction 1

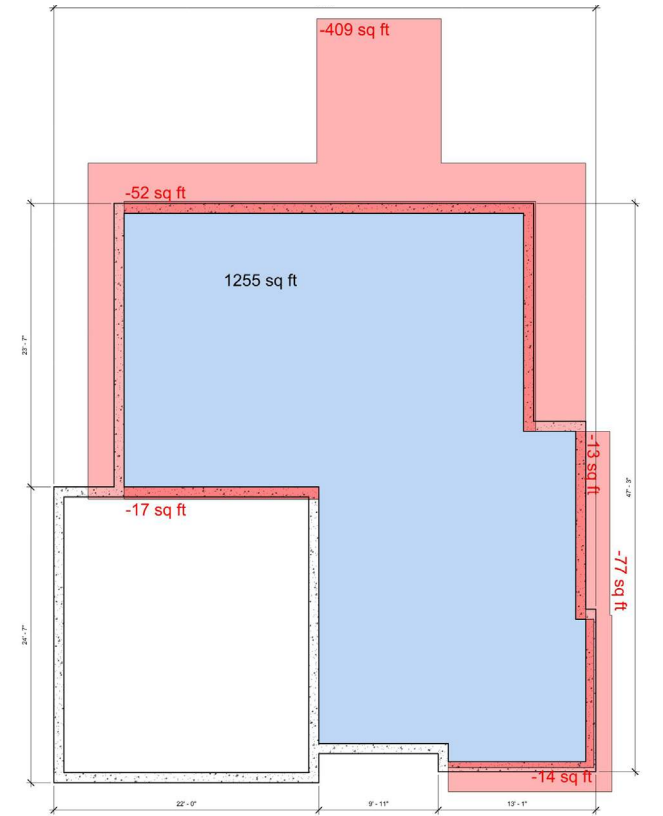
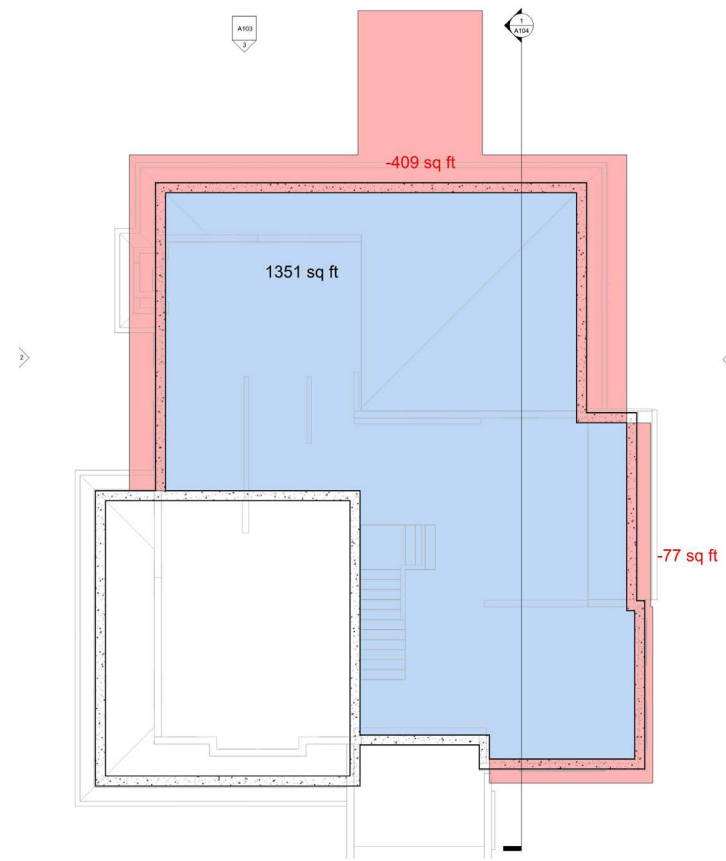
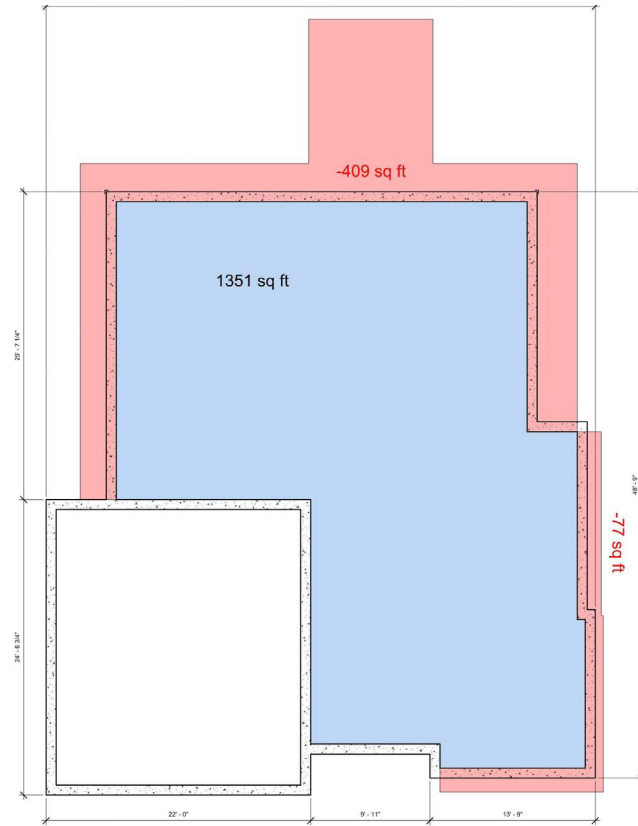
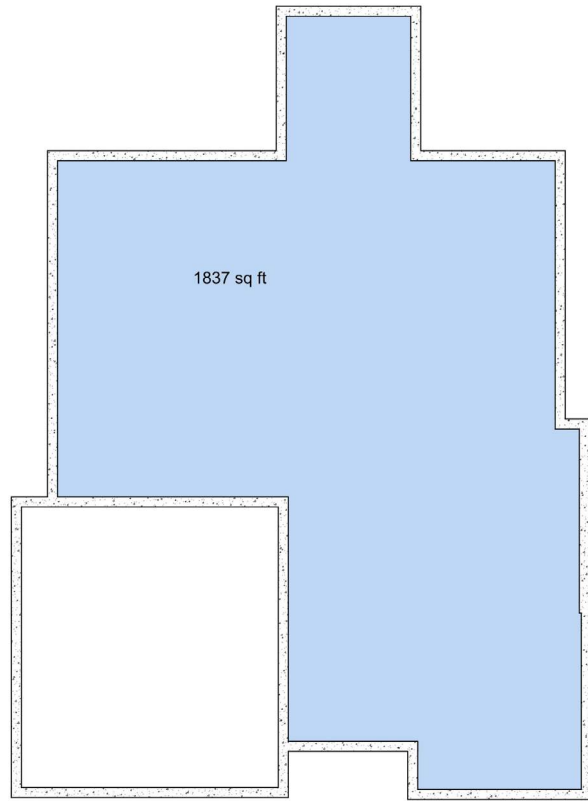


Reduction 2

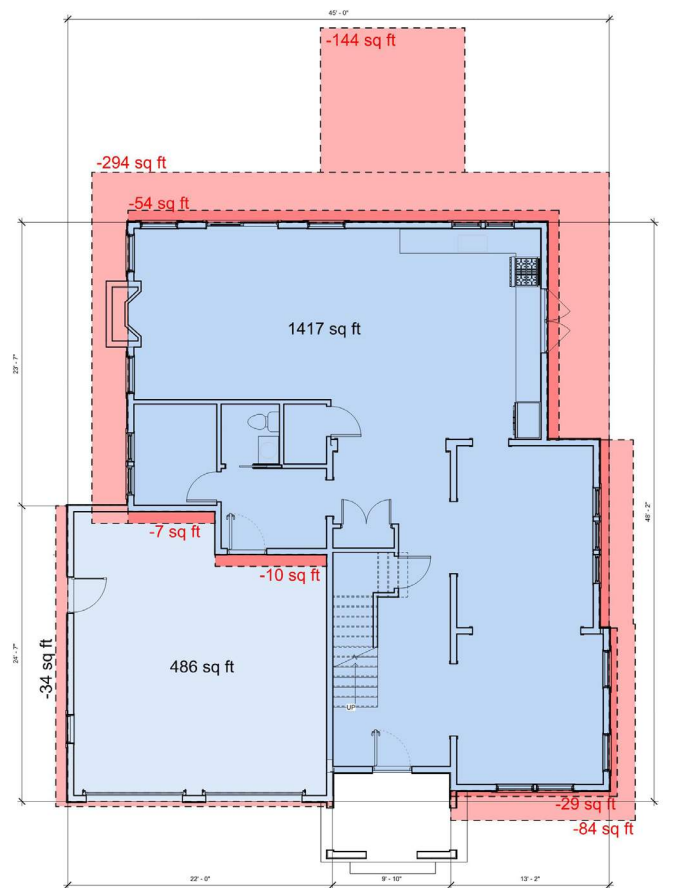
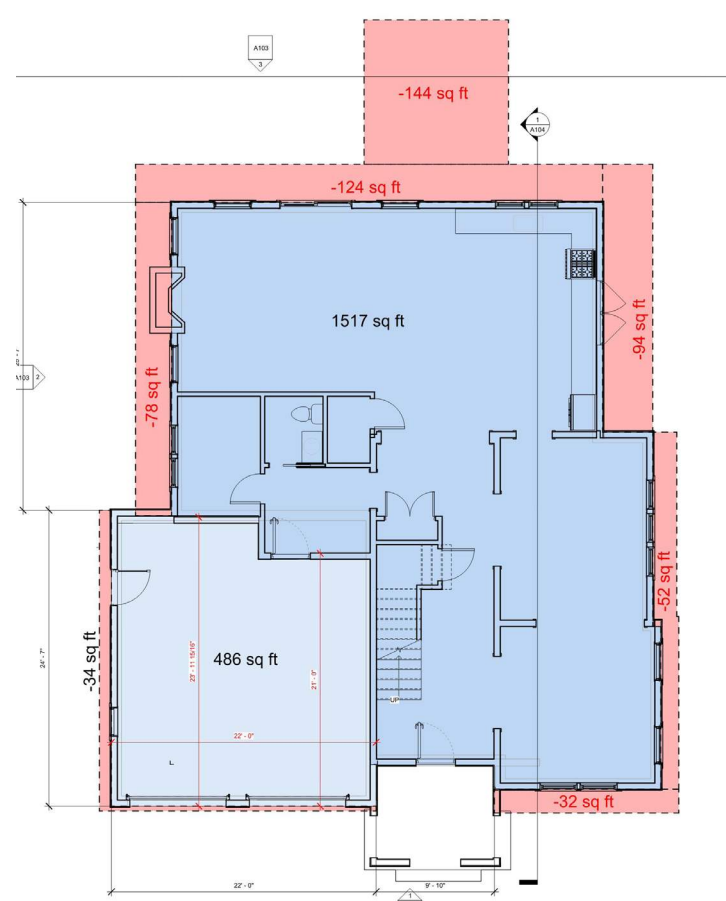
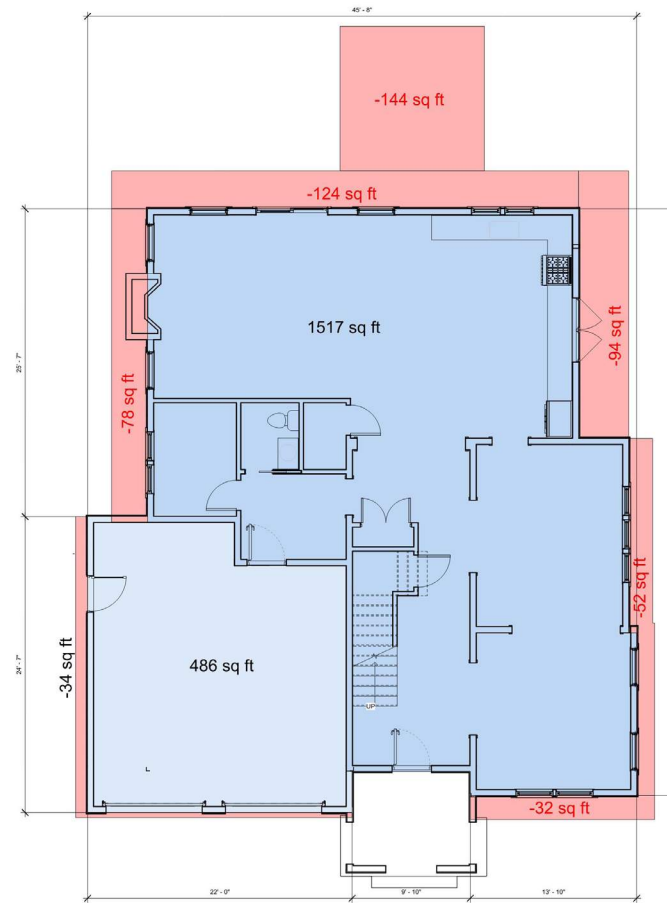
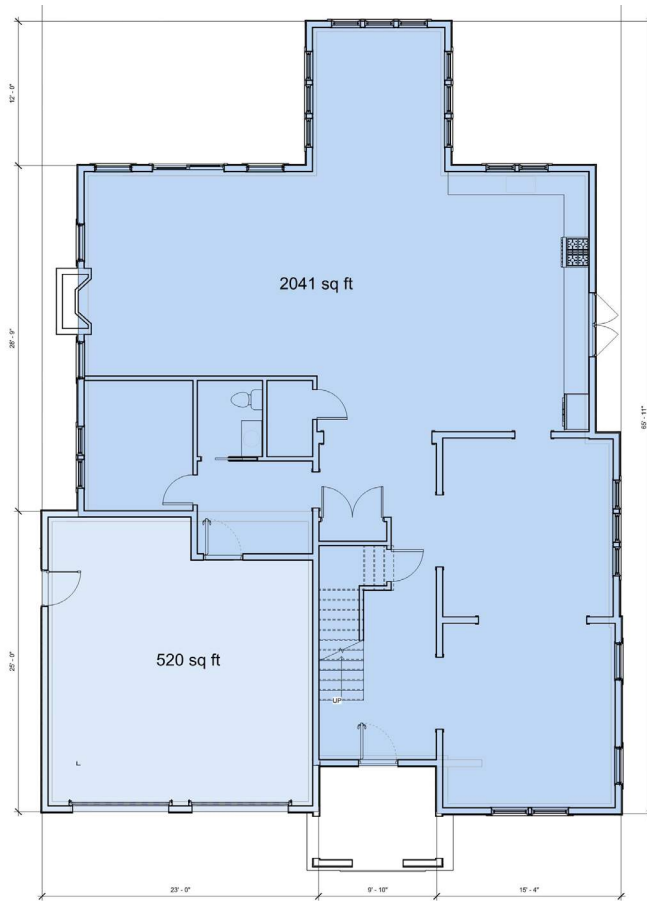


Reduction 3

B



1



Base

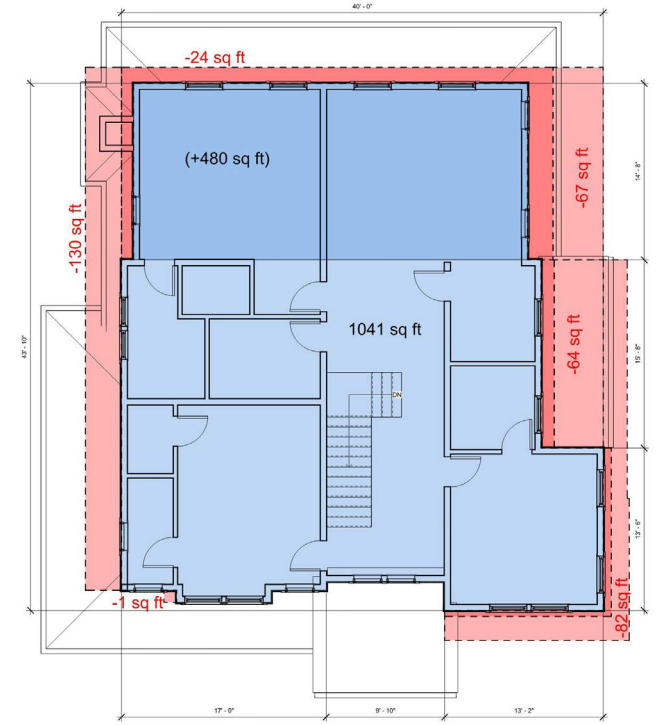
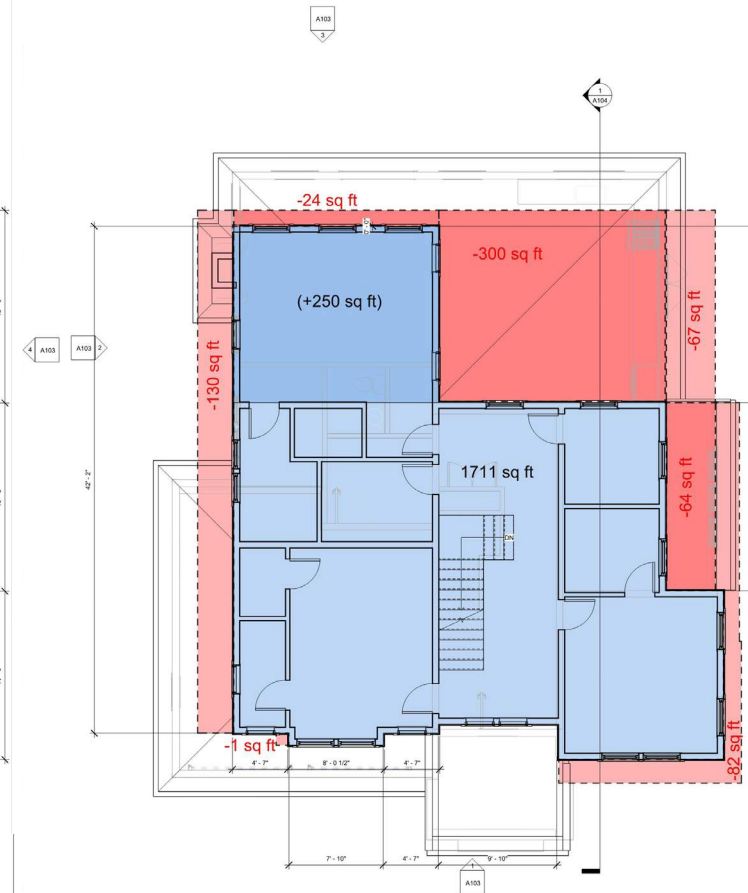
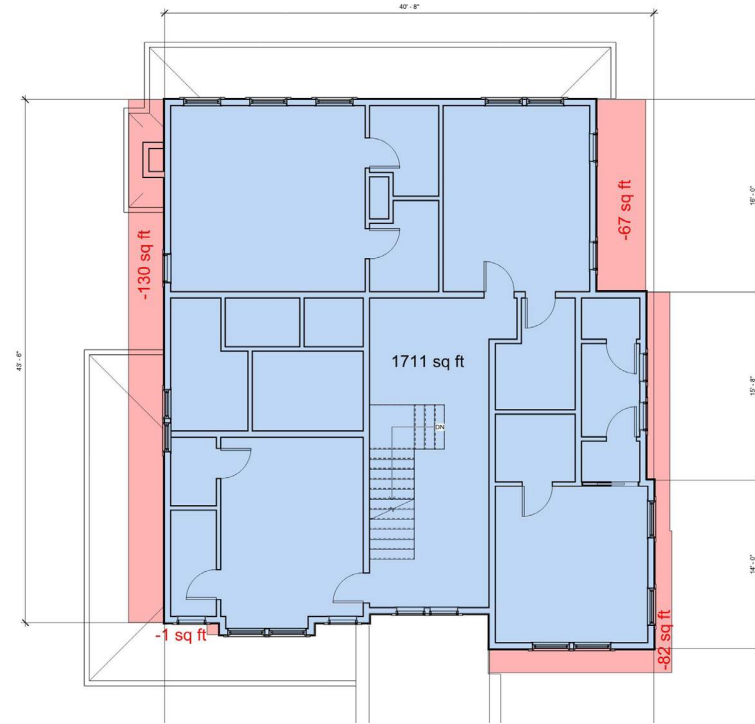
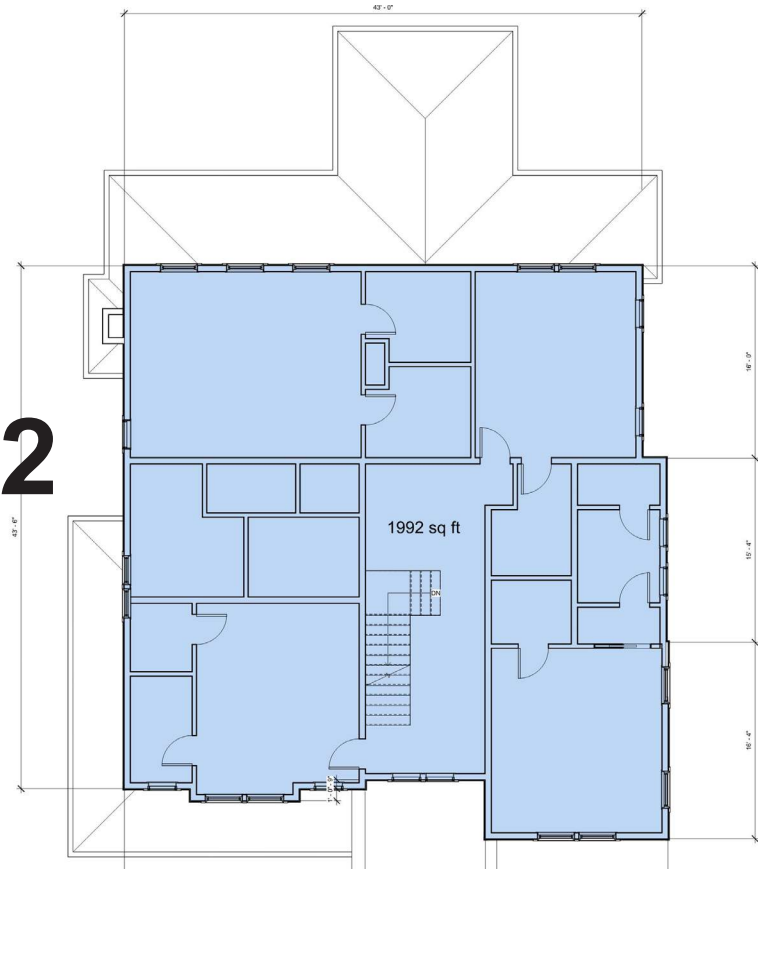
Reduction 1

House 1

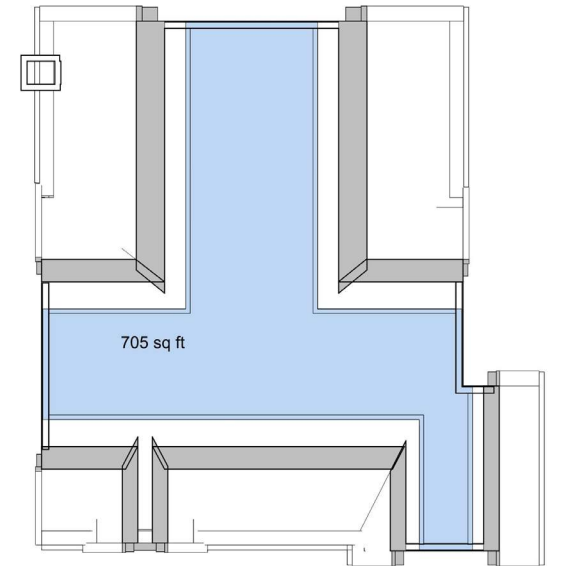
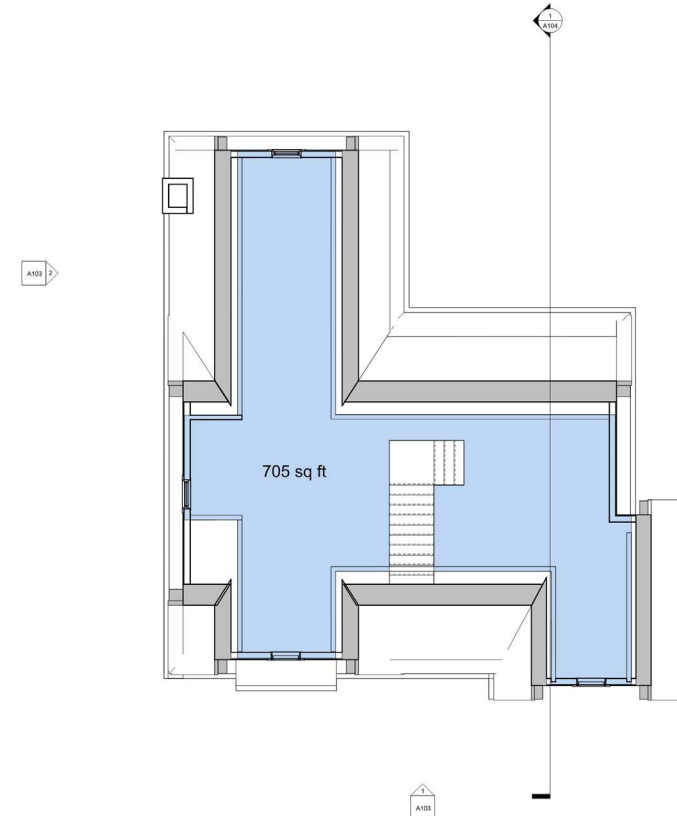
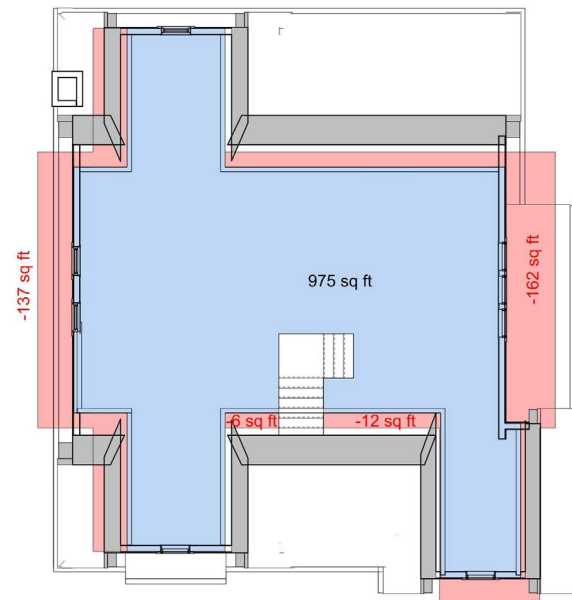
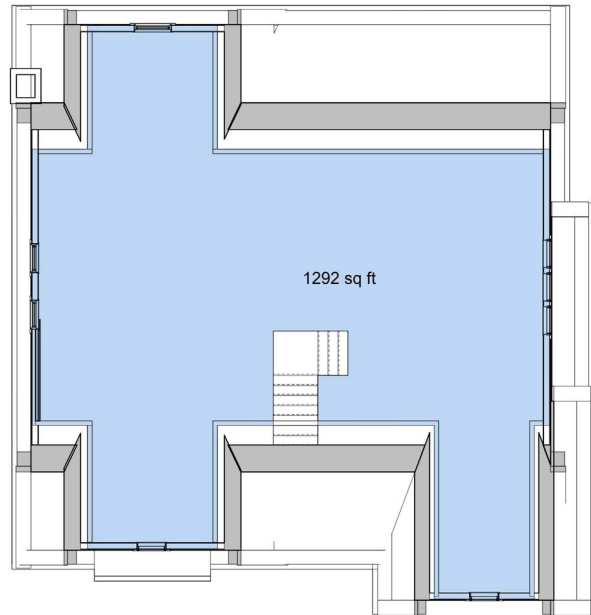
Reduction 2

Reduction 3

2



A



Base

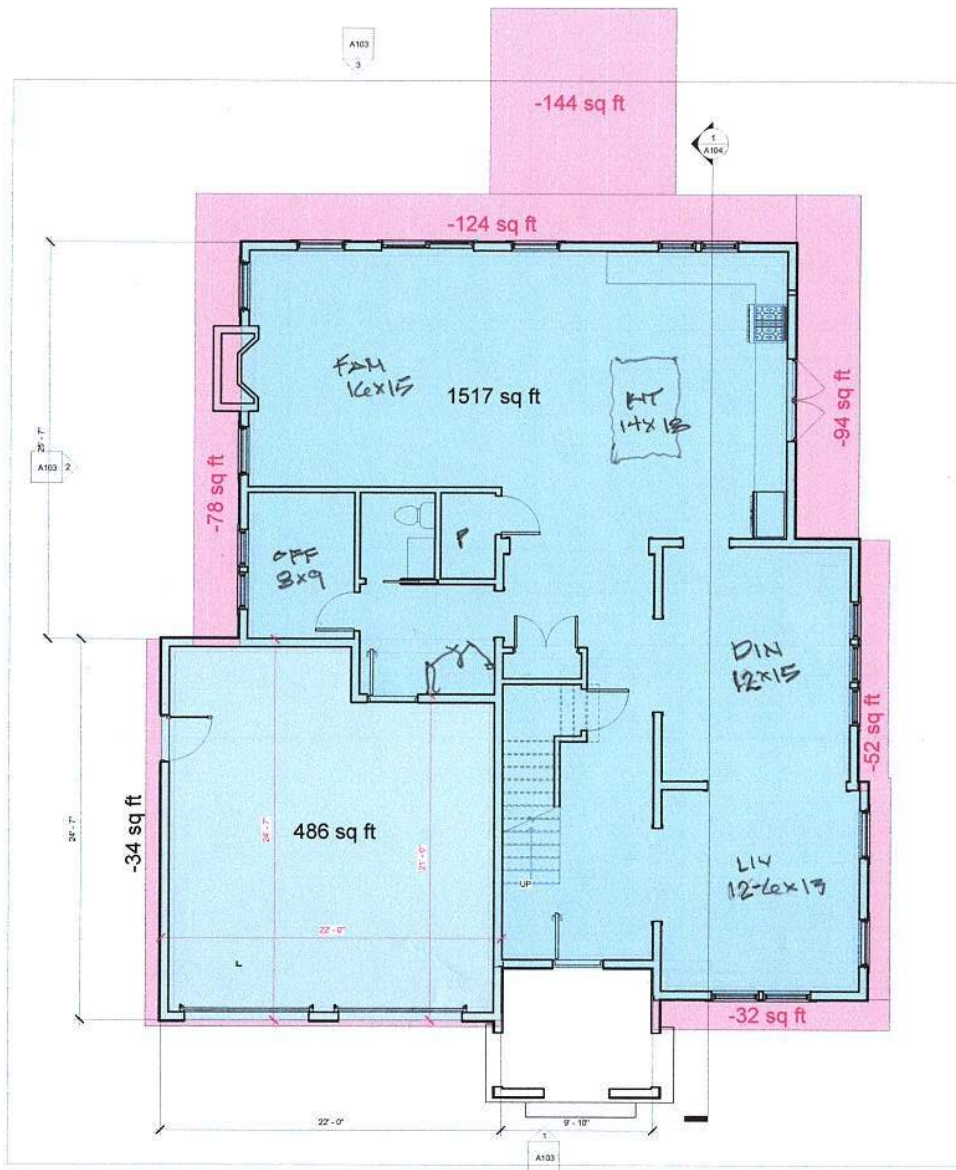
Reduction 1

House 1

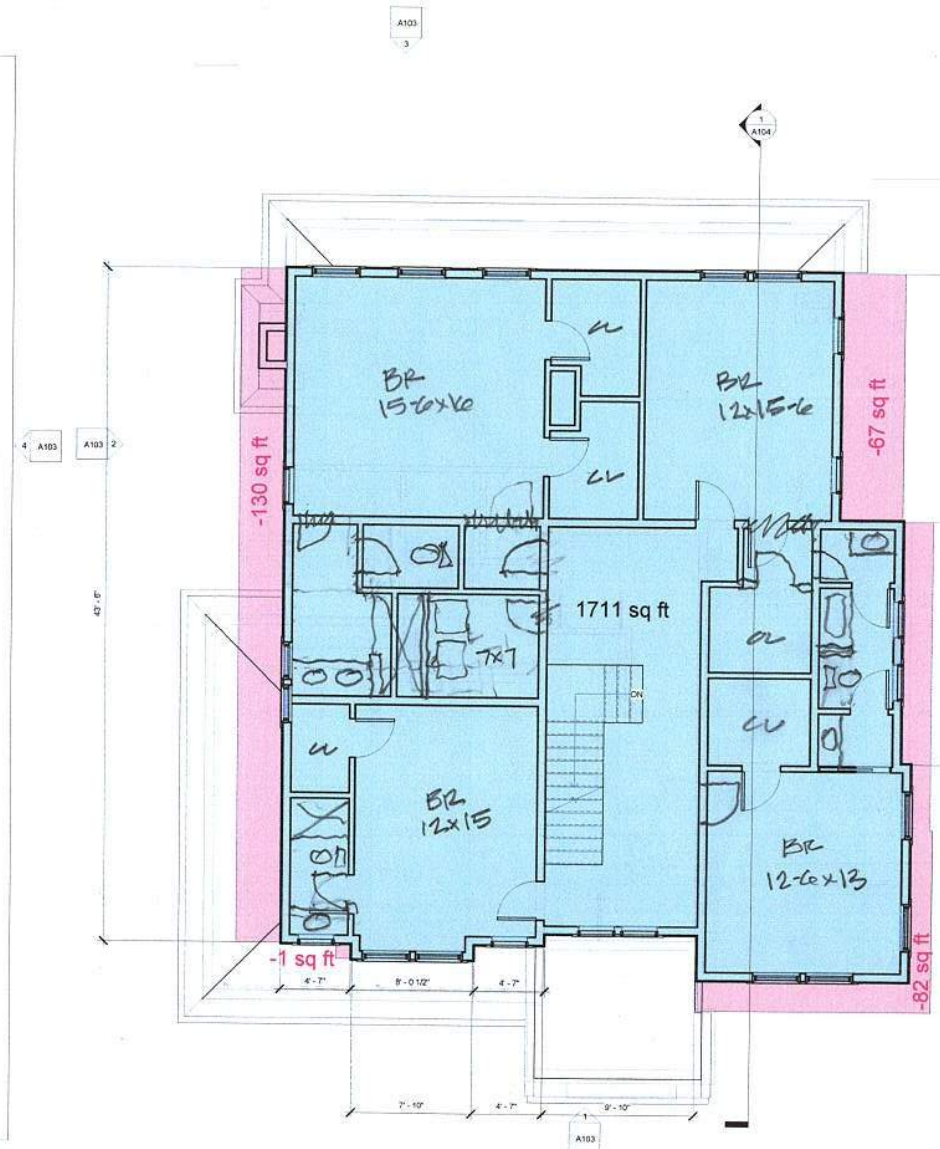
Reduction 2

Reduction 3

House #3 (Reduction 1 - Test layout)



First Floor

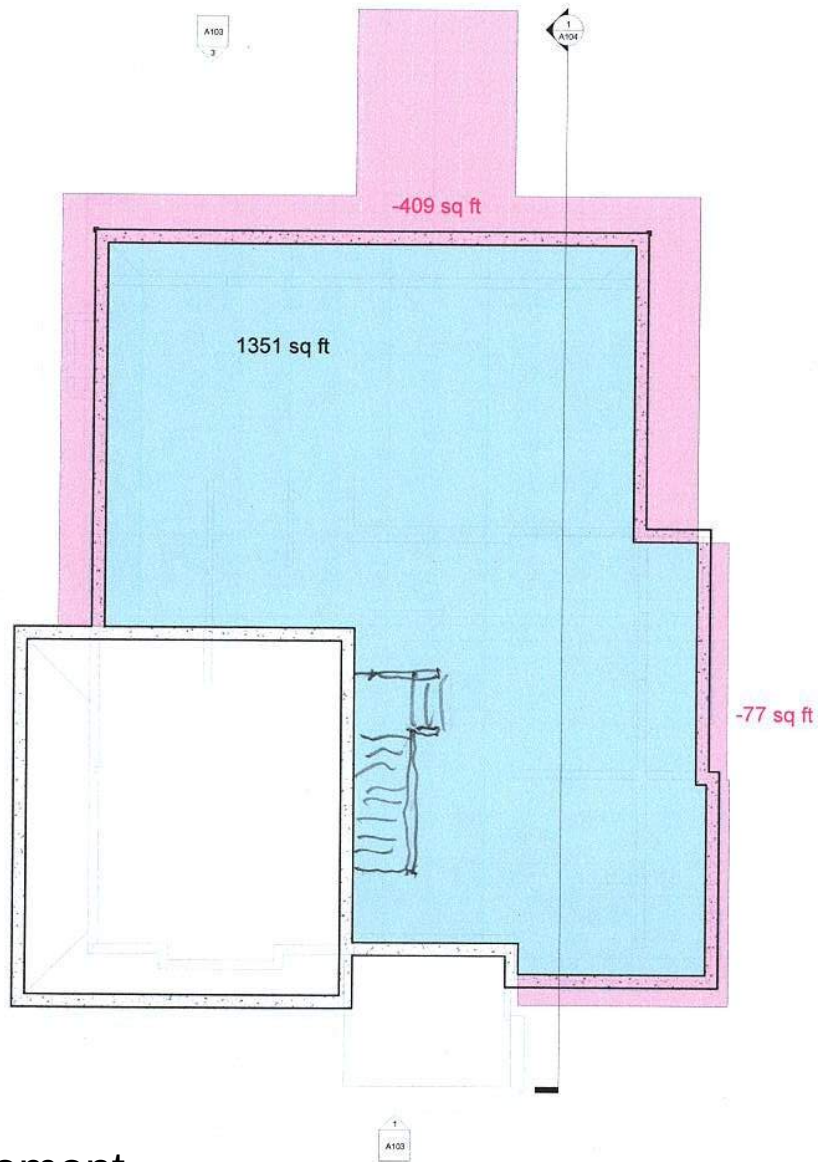


Second Floor

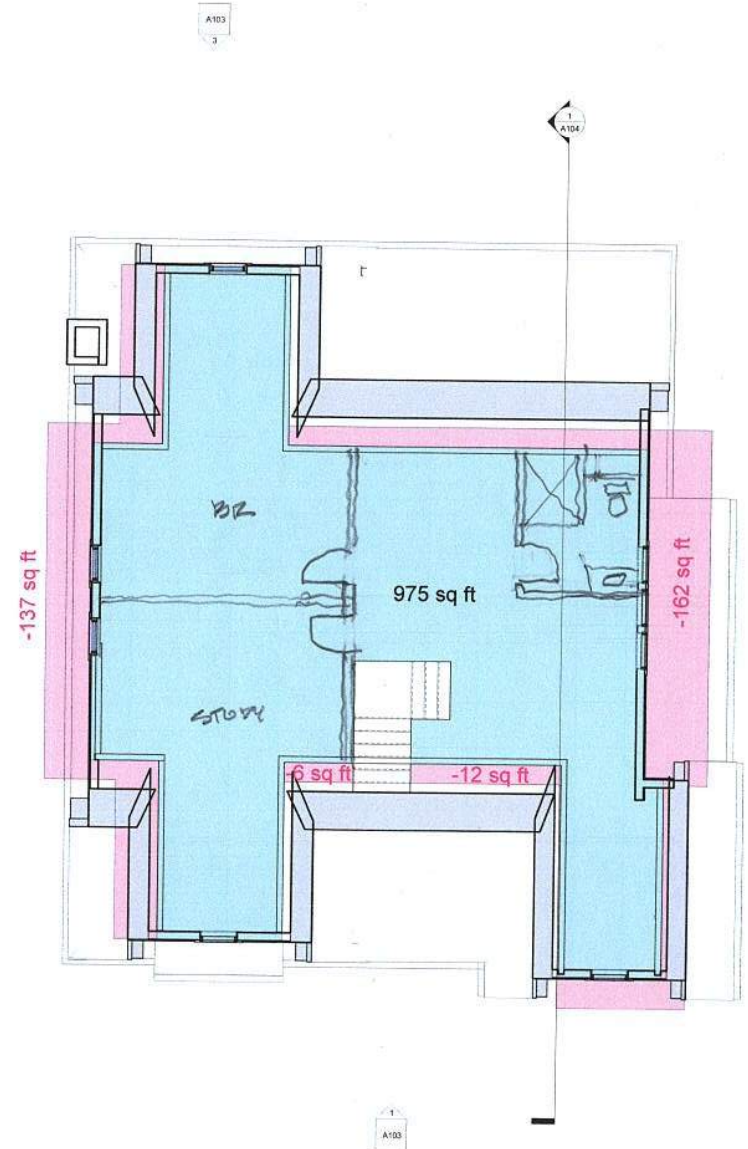
#3 Red 1

House #3

(Reduction 1 - Test layout)



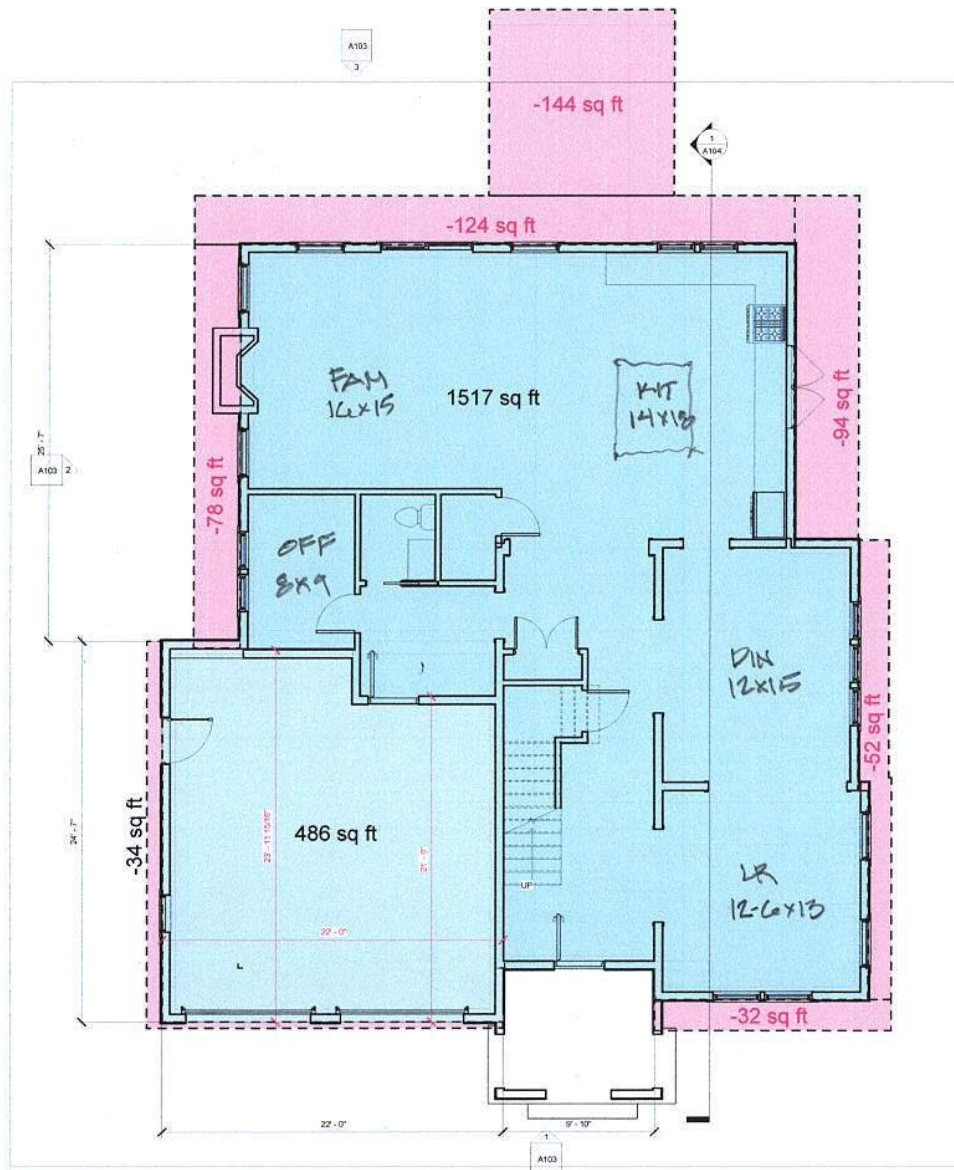
Basement



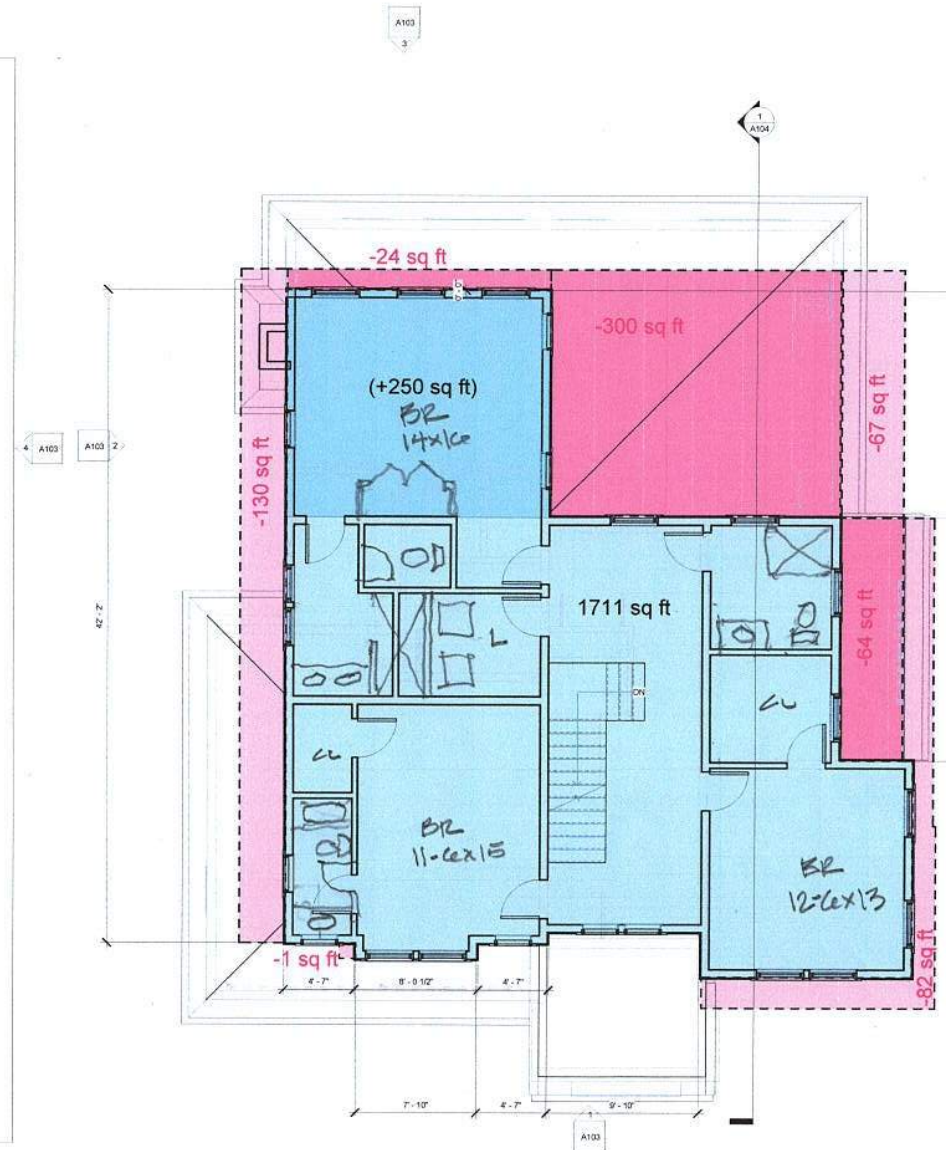
Third Floor

#3 Red 1

House #3 (Reduction 2 - Test layout)



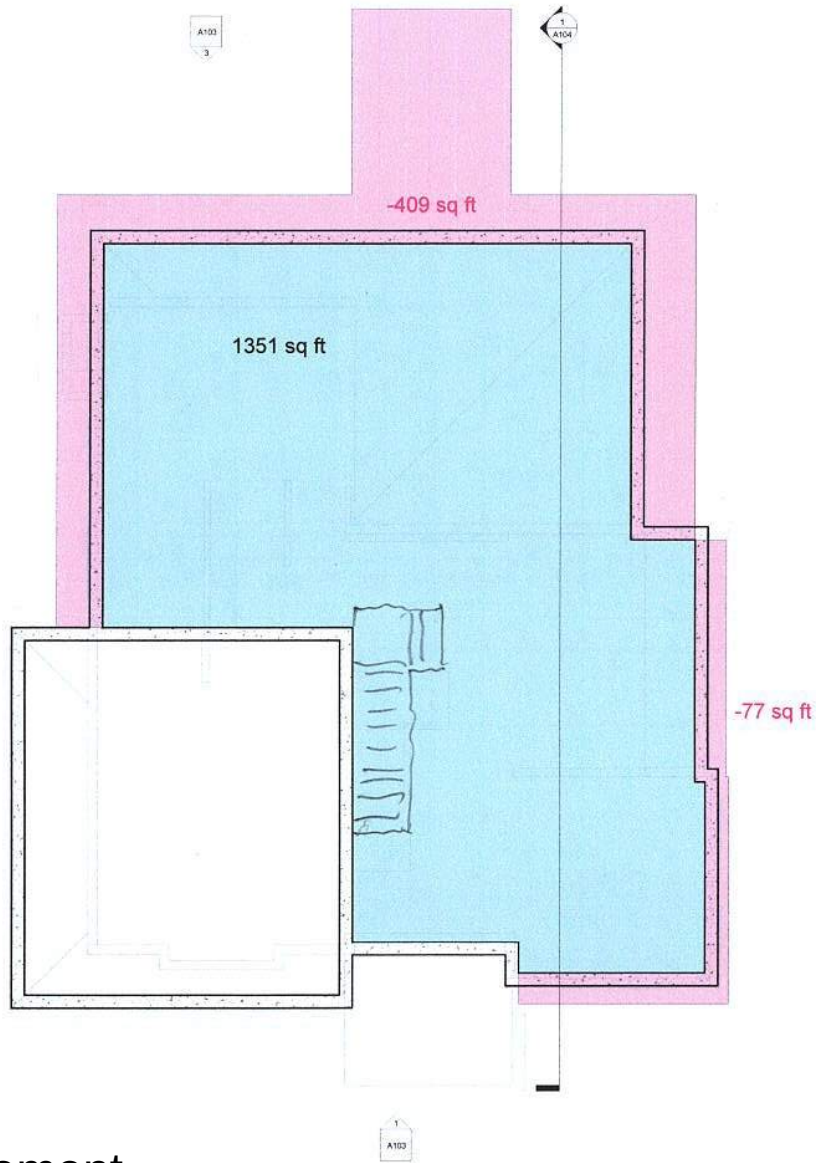
First Floor



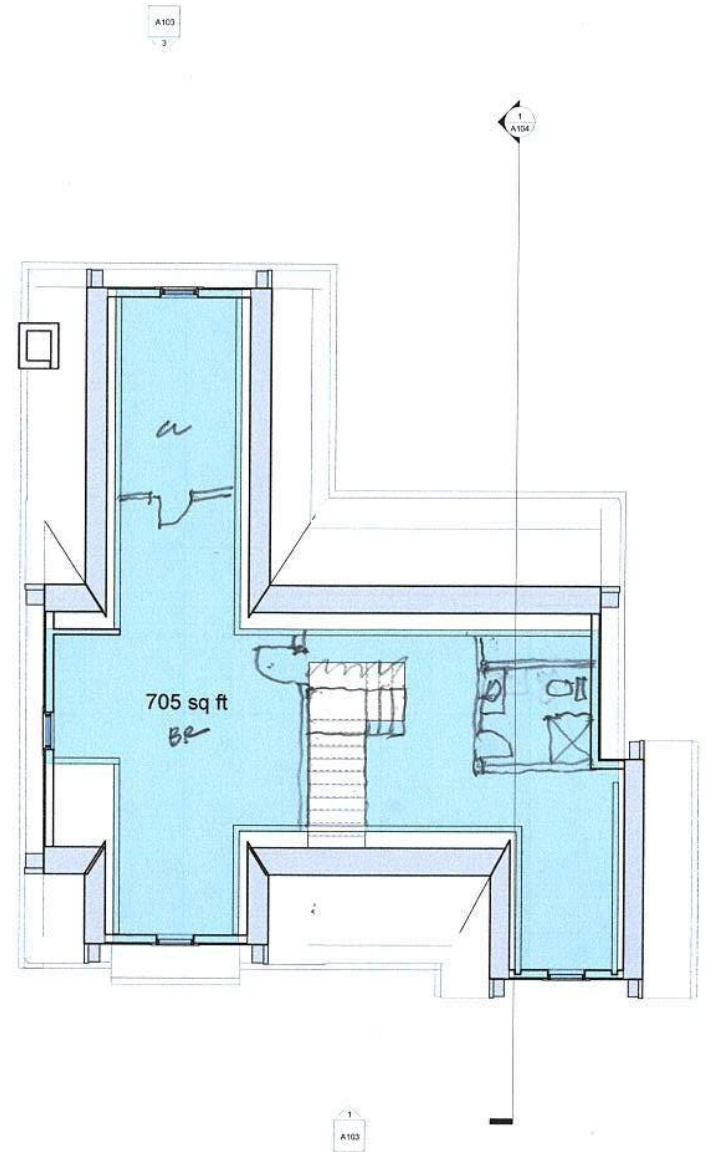
Second Floor

#3 Red 2

House #3 (Reduction 2 - Test layout)



Basement



Third Floor

#3 Red 2

Floor plan of the second floor of a building. The plan shows a large central area (1417 sq ft) and several smaller rooms (486 sq ft, 1417 sq ft, 1417 sq ft, 1417 sq ft). Dimensions are provided for various sections and rooms.

Rooms and Dimensions:

- Top Left: 1417 sq ft (14' x 16')
- Top Right: 1417 sq ft (14' x 17')
- Bottom Left: 486 sq ft (22' x 22')
- Bottom Right: 1417 sq ft (12' x 12')
- Central: 1417 sq ft (11' x 15')

Dimensions and Areas:

- Top Left: 1417 sq ft (14' x 16')
- Top Right: 1417 sq ft (14' x 17')
- Bottom Left: 486 sq ft (22' x 22')
- Bottom Right: 1417 sq ft (12' x 12')
- Central: 1417 sq ft (11' x 15')
- Top Left: 1417 sq ft (14' x 16')
- Top Right: 1417 sq ft (14' x 17')
- Bottom Left: 486 sq ft (22' x 22')
- Bottom Right: 1417 sq ft (12' x 12')
- Central: 1417 sq ft (11' x 15')

Hand-drawn floor plan of a building. The central area is labeled "1041 sq ft". Surrounding this central area are several rooms:

- Top left: BR 14x15 (+480 sq ft)
- Top right: BR 12x14
- Bottom left: BR 10x15
- Bottom right: BR 12x12

Other rooms and areas include:

- CL (Closets) in the top left and top right.
- WC (Washroom) in the bottom left.
- A central staircase area.
- A small room labeled "ON" (Office) near the staircase.

The plan is surrounded by a pink dashed border with dimensions:

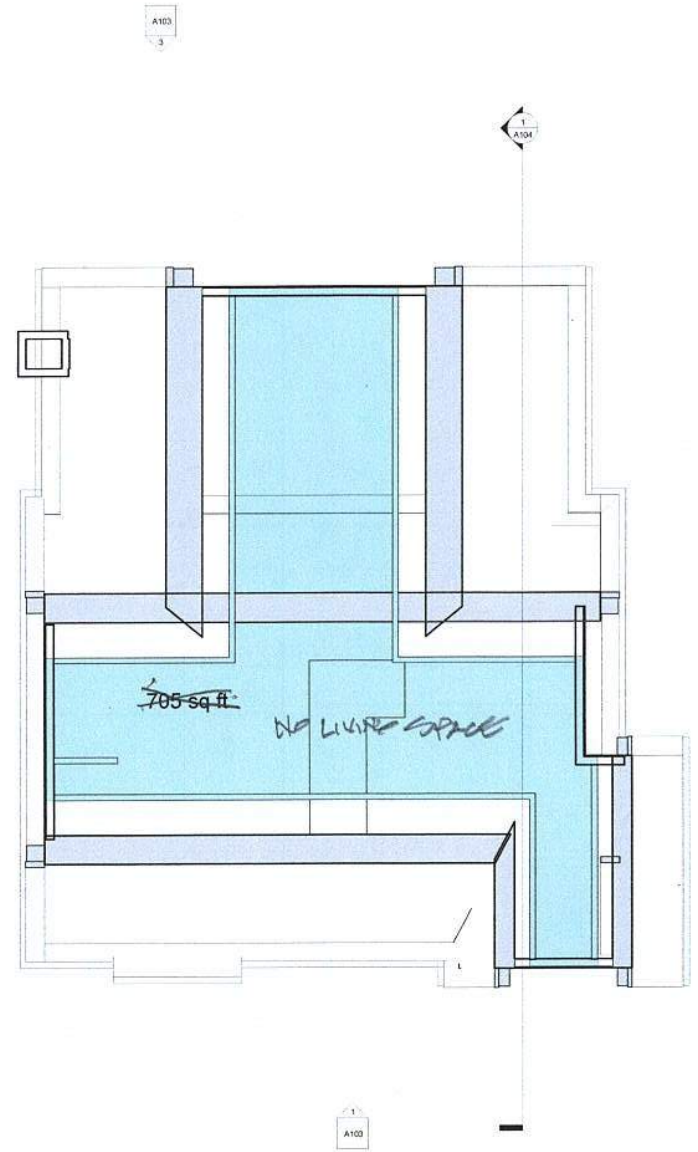
- Top: -24 sq ft
- Right: -67 sq ft
- Bottom right: -82 sq ft
- Bottom: -64 sq ft
- Left: -130 sq ft
- Bottom left: -1 sq ft

A north arrow is located at the top right. The plan is labeled "A103" at the top and "A104" at the bottom right.

#3 Red 3

Second Floor

Third Floor



#3 Red 3



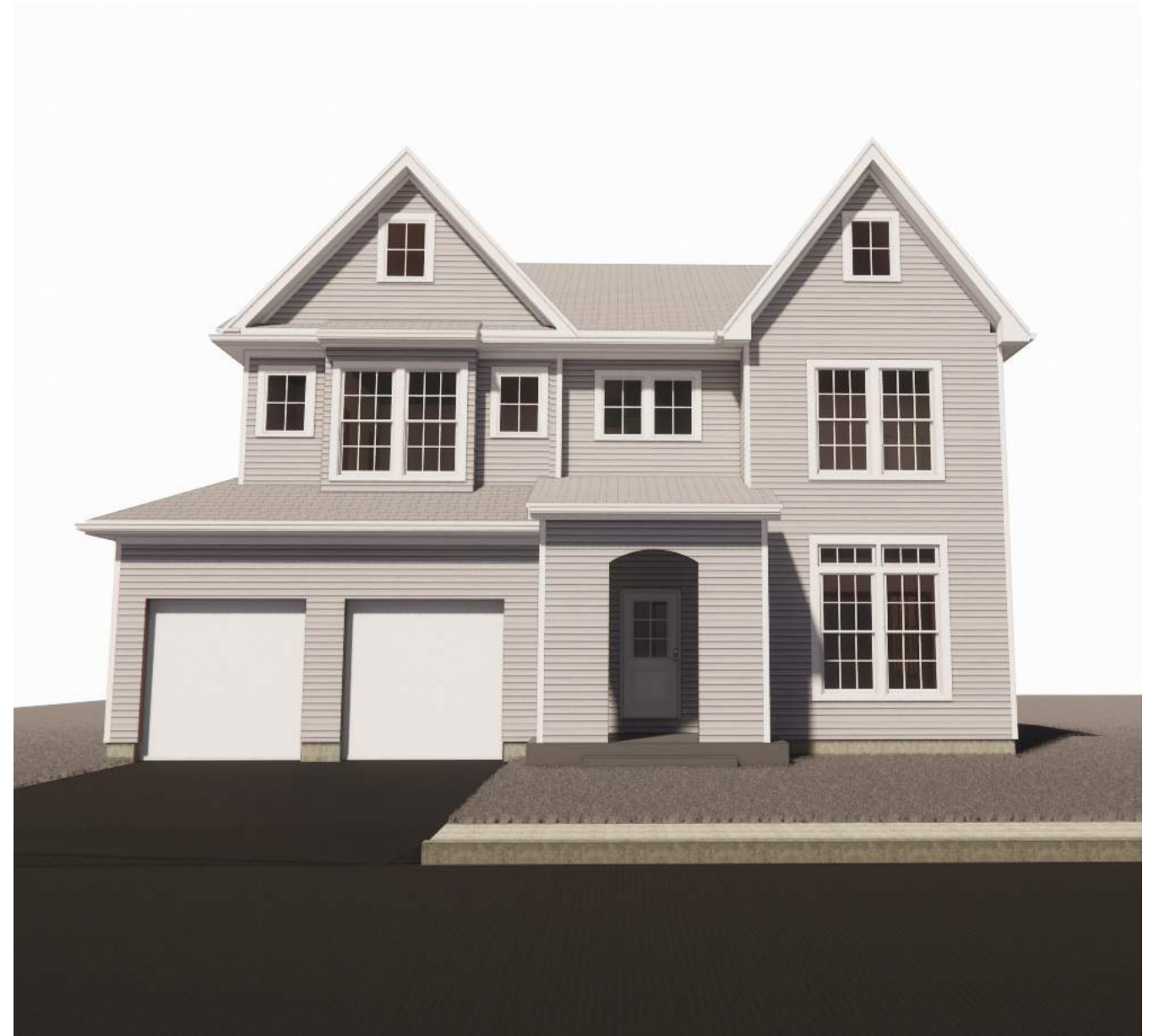
Base



Base



Base



Reduction 1



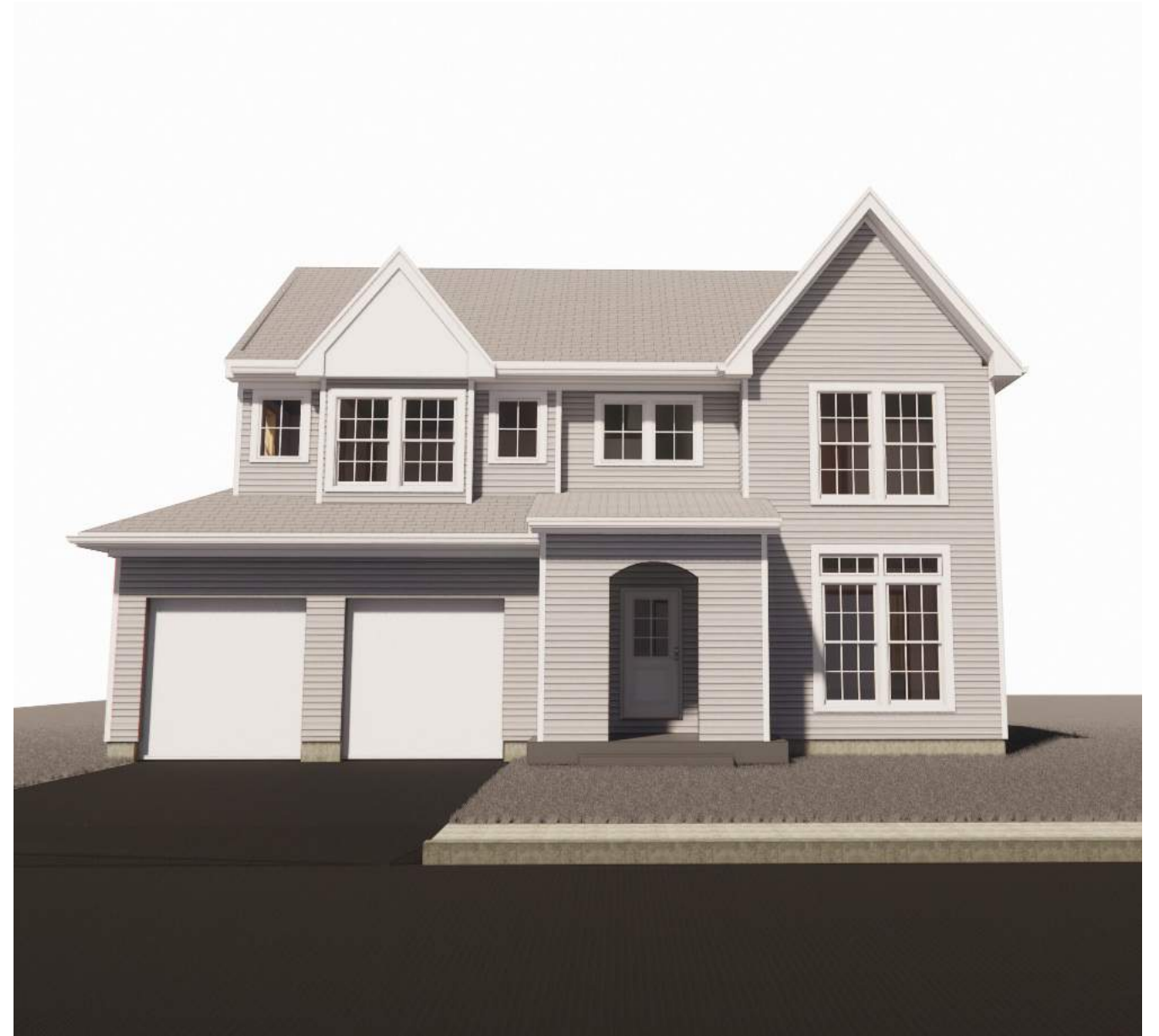
Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base

House 3



Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3



Base



Base



Base



Reduction 1



Base



Reduction 2



Base



Reduction 3





8.18.2025

House 3 - Reduction 1

RDA



8.18.2025

House 3 - Reduction 2

RDA



8.18.2025

House 3 - Reduction 3



8.18.2025

House 3 - Base







house #3

	Base	1st		2nd		3rd	
1st fl	2,041	1,517	-524	1,517	-524	1,417	-624
2nd fl	1,992	1,711	-281	1324	-668	1,521	471
attic	1,292	975	-336	705	-587	0	-1,929
basement	1,837	1,351	-486	1,351	-486	1,255	-582
garage	520	420	-55	420	-55	420	-55
footprint	2,561	1937	-122	1,937	-122	1,837	-724
Lot Size							
1st-2nd Flr	10'-3"	10'-3"	0	9'-9"	-6"	9'-6"	-9"
2nd-Attic	10'-3"	10'-3"	0	9'-9"	-6"	9'-3"	-1'-0"
FAR	58% (5,811)	46% (4,623)	-10%	40% (3,966)	-32%	(34%) 3,358	-42%
LFAR	71% (7,128)	54% (5,355)	-9%	49% (4,897)	-32%	(42%) 4193	-41%
Coverage	26%	19%		19%			
Ave Grade - Ridge	34'-2 1/2"	33'-0"	-1' 2 1/2"	32'-0"	-2'-2 1/2"	30'	-4'-2 1/2"

Reduction Study Comparisons with neighboring towns:

- The following charts reflect the information used in these reduction studies:
 1. Sample House Modeling - target areas for three reductions steps
 2. Chart of Three Existing Sample Houses compared to three towns
(Wellesley, Concord and Lexington)
 3. Graph of Above Comparison between Needham and three towns
 4. Chart of 20 Needham Sample Houses compared to four towns
(Wellesley, Concord, Lexington and Newton)



Large House Review - Reduction Study (FINAL) - (using coverage limits varying from 7K lot @ 24% coverage to 10K lot @ 20% coverage, then capped)

	House #1 (lot: 7,828 sf; frontage: 68')					House #2 (lot: 9,191 sf; frontage: 80')					House #3 (lot: 10,001 sf; frontage: 80')					House X (#10 - C) (lot: 11,761 sf; frontage: 80')			
	Existing House	Reduc. #1	Reduc. #2	Reduc. #3		Existing House	Reduc. #1	Reduc. #2	Reduc. #3		Existing House	Reduc. #1	Reduc. #2	Reduc. #3		Existing House	Reduc. #1	Reduc. #2	Reduc. #3
Basement *	1,249	1,235	1,235	1,165		1,390	1,330	1,330	1,247		1,748	1,365	1,365	1,275		1,512	1,662	1,662	1,556
First	1,368	1,373	1,373	1,294		1,680	1,477	1,477	1,385		2,039	1,516	1,516	1,416		2,063	1,846	1,846	1,729
Second	1,604	1,524	1,183	1,371		1,748	1,648	1,280	1,478		1,974	1,700	1,320	1,520		2,084	1,999	1,552	1,788
(limit % footprint)	n/a	85%	66%	80%		n/a	85%	66%	80%		n/a	85%	66%	80%		n/a	85%	66%	80%
Attic **	1,081	762	592	no habit. ****		905	824	640	no habit. ****		948	850	660	no habit. ****		1,028	1,000	776	no habit. ****
Garage	473	420	420	420		572	462	462	462		529	484	484	484		614	506	506	506
	22x21.5	(garage assumption 20x21)				24x23.8	(garage assumption 21x22)				23x21 / 23x25	(garage assumption 22x22)				24.5x25	(garage assumption 22x23)		
Footprint	1,841	1,793	1,793	1,714		2,298	1,939	1,939	1,847		2,500	2,000	2,000	1,900		2,677	2,352	2,352	2,235
Coverage	24.8%	22.9%	22.9%	21.9%		24.5%	21.1%	21.1%	20.1%		25.7%	20.0%	20.0%	19.0%		22.6%	20.0%	20.0%	19.0%
TLAG	4,526	4,078	3,567	3,086		4,905	4,412	3,859	3,325		5,490	4,550	3,980	3,420		5,789	5,351	4,681	4,022
TLAG Reduction		9.9%	21.2%	31.8%			10.1%	21.3%	32.2%			17.1%	27.5%	37.7%			7.6%	19.1%	30.5%
FAR	57.8%	52.1%	45.6%	39.4%		53.4%	48.0%	42.0%	36.2%		54.9%	45.5%	39.8%	34.2%		49.2%	45.5%	39.8%	34.2%
Livable	5,302	4,894	4,383	3,831		5,723	5,279	4,727	4,110		6,709	5,431	4,861	4,211		6,687	6,507	5,836	5,072
Livable Reduction		7.7%	17.3%	27.7%			7.7%	17.4%	28.2%			19.0%	27.5%	37.2%			2.7%	12.7%	24.2%
Lot Size:	7,828	7,828				9,191	9,191				10,001	10,001.00				11,761	11,761.00		
Roof Height: (w/ avg grade)	34.0 ft (35 ft. max)	33.0	32.0	30.0 or 31.0		33.7 ft (35 ft. max)	33.0	32.0	30.0 or 31.0		34.9 ft (35 ft. max)	33.0	32.0	30.0 or 31.0		34.7 ft (35 ft. max)	33.0	32.0	30.0 or 31.0
Roof Height: (max w/ slope)	(41 ft. max)	39.0	38.0	36.0 or 37.0		(41 ft. max)	39.0	38.0	36.0 or 37.0		(41 ft. max)	39.0	38.0	36.0 or 37.0		(41 ft. max)	39.0	38.0	36.0 or 37.0
FAR Definition:	1 & 2	1,2,3 +G				1 & 2	1,2,3 +G				1 & 2	1,2,3 +G				1 & 2	1,2,3 +G		
Coverage:	24.8% (25% max)	22.9%	22.9%	21.9%		24.5% (25% max)	21.1%	21.1%	20.1%		25.7% (25% max)	20.0%	20.0%	19.0%		22.6% (25% max)	20.0%	20.0%	19.0%
Setbacks:																			
Front	20'	20' unless matching a neighborhood pattern				20'	20' unless matching a neighborhood pattern				20'	20' unless matching a neighborhood pattern				20'	20' unless matching a neighborhood pattern		
Side ***	NC: 12'/14'	NC: 13'/15'	NC: 13'/15'	NC: 14'/16'		C: 14'/16'	C: 15'/17'	C: 15'/17'	C: 16'/18'		C: 14'/16'	C: 15'/17'	C: 15'/17'	C: 16'/18'		C: 14'/16'	C: 15'/17'	C: 15'/17'	C: 16'/18'

Notes: * Assume 90% of first floor area to allow for mech in basement
 ** Assume attic is 50% of second floor
 *** Increase side setbacks either 1 or 2 feet, depending on which scenario. Note - the two dimensions are for added 2' side wall setback after 32 feet
 **** For reduction #3, roof height is lowered to 30'/31' so storage is possible but not habitable attic space.(Def. of Habitable Attic: If the attic has sloped ceilings, at least 50% of the floor area must have a ceiling height of at least 6 feet 8 inches, and no portion of the ceiling can be less than 5 feet.

COVERAGE CALCULATION: (using coverage limits varying from 7K lot @ 24% coverage UP to 10K lot @ 20% coverage, then capped)						
Max SF Range	10,000	SF	(use 20% coverage limit then capped)			
Min SF Range	7,000	SF	(use 24% coverage limit)			
Cov % Limit at Max SF	20%					
Cov % Limit at Min SF	24%					
	Test:		H1	H2	H3	HX
Lot Size	8,500		7,828	9,191	10,001	11,761
Lot Cov Limit	22.0%		22.9%	21.1%	20.0%	20.0%
Pick a lot size between 7K & 10K	9,500					
Get the coverage percentage	20.7%					

Possible Needham FAR Calculation:				
NOTE: This study is using Concord FAR calculation approach adjusted for target Needham FARs				
SRB (10,000 min lot): (using sample house lots)	H1	H2	H3	HX
	7,828	9,191	10,001	11,761
FAR Calculation Options: (approximate)				
(Opt 1 - Avg of Reductions 1 & 2):	49.0%	45.4%	43.7%	40.9%
.25 + (1,875 / lot size) = FAR	3,832	4,173	4,375	4,815
(Opt 2 - Avg of Reductions 2 & 3):	42.8%	39.9%	38.5%	36.2%
.23 + (1,550 / lot size) = FAR	3,350	3,664	3,850	4,255
(Reduction #1):	52.2%	48.3%	46.5%	43.4%
.26 + (2,050 / lot size) = FAR	4,085	4,440	4,650	5,108
(Reduction #2):	45.7%	42.5%	41.0%	38.5%
.24 + (1,700 / lot size) = FAR	3,579	3,906	4,100	4,523
(Reduction #3):	39.6%	37.0%	35.7%	33.7%
.22 + (1,375 / lot size) = FAR	3,097	3,397	3,575	3,962

NOT BEING MODELED

OTHER TOWN HOUSE CALCULATIONS:					
		H1	H2	H3	HX
Lot Size		7,828	9,191	10,001	11,761
Wellesley	FAR (TLAG) = Total Livable Area + Garage SR10 district has 3,600 sf max TLAG before LHR is triggered	3,600 or LHR	3,600 or LHR	3,600 or LHR	3,600 or LHR
Lexington	Gross Floor Area (Calculation formulas - below) No lot coverage limit	4,889	5,053	5,150	5,344
Concord	Floor Area Ratio (Calculation formulas - below) FAR	39% 3,079	37% 3,406	36% 3,600	34% 4,023

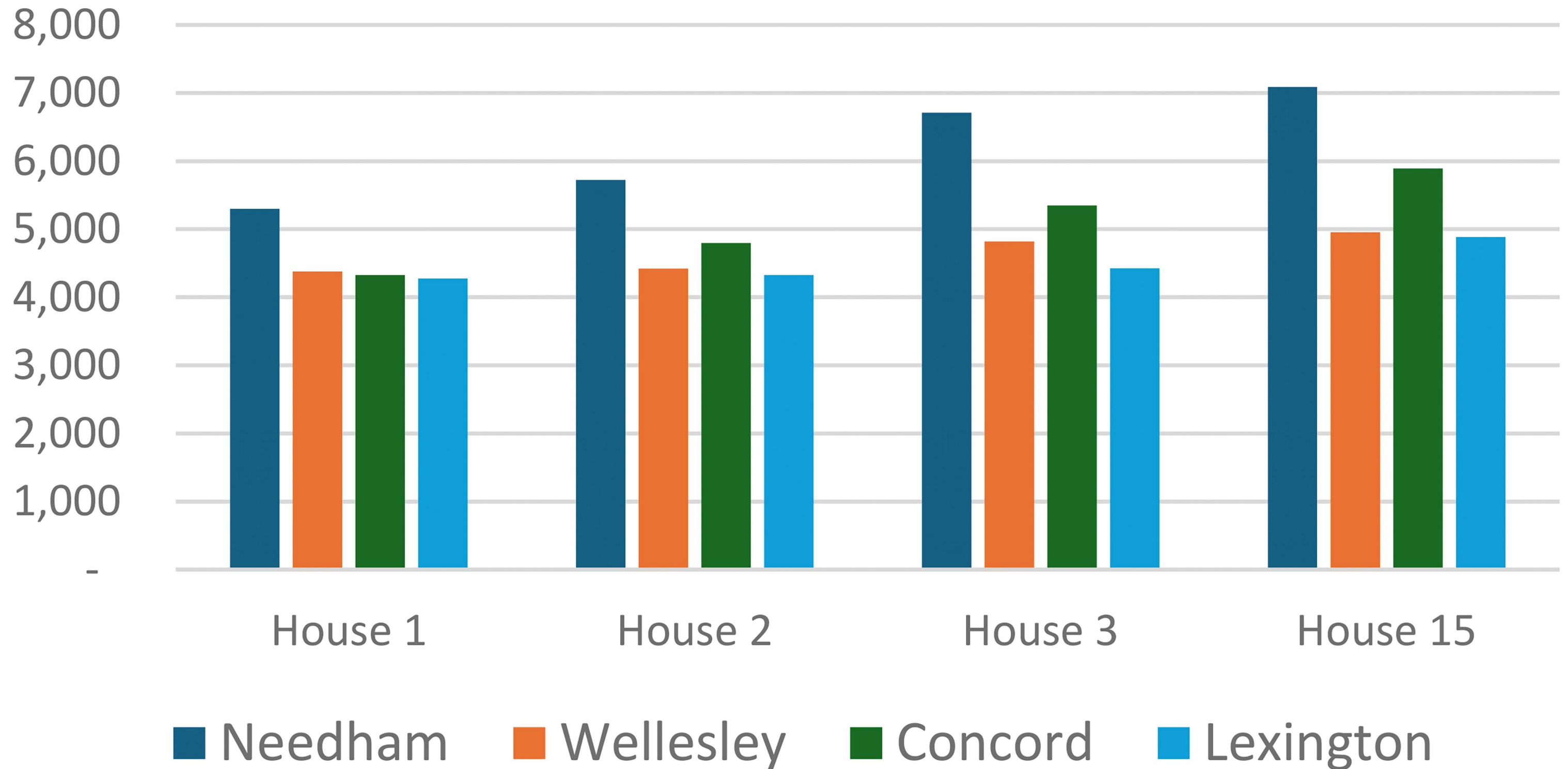
Lexington Formula (GFA):		
Lot Area	Max GFA (New Homes & shell > 50% removed)	Max GFA (Homes built before 1/1/24 w/ shell < 50% removed)
5K to 7.5K	3,800 + 0.42 * (Lot Area - 5,000)	4,000 + 0.55 * (Lot Area - 5,000)
7.5K to 10.0K	4,850 + 0.12 * (Lot Area - 7,500)	5,375 + 0.23 * (Lot Area - 7,500)
10K to 15K	5,150 + 0.11 * (Lot Area - 10,000)	5,950 + 0.20 * (Lot Area - 10,000)
15K to 30K	5,700 + 0.10 * (Lot Area - 15,000)	6,950 + 0.16 * (Lot Area - 15,000)
Concord Formula (FAR):		
Residence C (10,000 SF lot)	.24 + (1,200 / lot size)	
(All lot districts are the same)		
No lot coverage limit		

House Size Limit Comparison Needham, Wellesely, Concord, Lexington											
Needham House ID		Model Houses						Sample House			
Note: Data below is for the existing houses		#1		#2		#3		15			
Lot Area		7,828 SF		9,191 SF		10,001 SF		14,314 SF			
Lot Coverage		1,841 SF		2,298 SF		2,500 SF		3,722 SF			
Lot Coverage %		23.5%		25.0%		25.0%		26.0%			
Floor Area (by floor):											
Bsmt Gross		1,388 SF		1,544 SF		1,942 SF		1,395 SF			
Bsmt Net (10% Utility Rm Deduct)		1,249 SF		1,390 SF		1,748 SF		1,256 SF			
Garage		473 SF		572 SF		529 SF		598 SF			
First (w/o G)		1,368 SF		1,680 SF		2,039 SF		2,558 SF			
Second		1,604 SF		1,748 SF		1,974 SF		2,462 SF			
Third		1,081 SF		905 SF		948 SF		810 SF			
Total Gross Area (incl Bsmt & G)		5,914 SF		6,449 SF		7,432 SF		7,823 SF			
Total 1,2,3 (inc G)(proposed FAR)		4,526 SF		4,905 SF		5,490 SF		6,428 SF			
Livable Floor Area (MLS) Based on Current Town Bylaws											Counted
Needham Livable Floor Area		5,302	SF %Less	5,723	SF %Less	6,709	SF %Less	7,086	SF %Less	1,2,3,B	
Wellesley Livable Floor Area		4,376	SF -17%	4,418	SF -23%	4,819	SF -28%	4,958	SF -30%	TLAG -G + B	
Concord Livable Floor Area		4,328	SF -18%	4,796	SF -16%	5,348	SF -20%	5,891	SF -17%	Bylaw -G + B	
Lexington Livable Floor Area		4,278	SF -19%	4,326	SF -24%	4,427	SF -34%	4,887	SF -31%	Bylaw - G	
Note: Allowable Livable SF based on											
Existing Fixed FAR (Needham)		0.38	4,224	4,883	5,548	6,695	.38 x lot + B				

Summary of House Size Bylaws in Comparable Towns		
Wellesley Bylaw		
10K Lot District*	3,600 SF House Size limit	(includes X% of basement area when X% >25% exposed wall)
15K Lot District*	4,300 SF House Size limit	(includes X% of basement area when X% >25% exposed wall)
20K Lot District*	5,900 SF House Size limit	(includes X% of basement area when X% >25% exposed wall)
* Districts have a range of smaller and larger lot sizes		
Concord Bylaw		
(does not include basement)	Max Floor Area = Lot Area * (0.24 + (1200 / Lot Area))	
Lexington Bylaw		
(includes all areas)	0-5,000 SF = 0.76*Lot Area	
	5,000-7,500 SF = 3,800+0.42*(Lot Area-5,000)	
	7,500-10,000 SF = 4,850+0.12*(Lot Area-7,500)	
	10,000-15,000 SF = 5,150+0.11*(Lot Area-10,000)	
	15,000-30,000 SF = 5,700+0.1*(Lot Area-15,000)	

Current Town Bylaws

Liveable Floor Area (SF)



Allowable Livable under current regulations.							
	Needham			Wellesley	Concord	Lexington	Newton
	SF	Current FAR	Proposed FAR*				
Sample 1	5,101	0.38	0.57	4,246	4,199	4,290	4,560
Sample 2	5,759	0.46	0.69	4,536	3,816	4,185	4,436
Sample 3	3,939	0.38	0.55	3,669	2,949	4,128	3,569
Sample 4	3,659	0.38	0.45	3,979	3,324	4,231	4,016
Sample 5	4,125	0.35	0.49	4,105	3,470	4,215	4,182
Sample 6	5,152	0.38	0.57	4,287	3,765	4,456	4,601
Sample 7	4,778	0.38	0.56	3,846	3,404	4,459	4,325
Sample 8	4,623	0.42	0.56	4,091	3,456	4,432	4,168
Sample 9	4,862	0.38	0.54	3,967	3,547	4,407	4,492
Sample 10	5,730	0.38	0.56	4,182	3,988	4,480	5,177
Sample 11	6,298	0.38	0.58	4,206	4,158	4,661	5,507
Sample 12	6,618	0.38	0.58	4,206	4,158	4,661	5,507
Sample 13	6,298	0.38	0.58	4,401	4,401	4,628	5,802
Sample 14	6,385	0.38	0.56	4,360	4,360	4,650	5,761
Sample 15	5,990	0.38	0.51	4,515	4,515	4,615	5,915
Sample 16	5,729	0.38	0.52	4,143	4,157	4,597	5,573
Sample 17	5,334	0.37	0.45	4,408	4,419	4,658	5,831
Sample 18	5,836	0.36	0.49	4,466	4,501	4,579	5,940
Sample 19	6,204	0.38	0.52	4,315	4,451	4,604	5,999
Sample 20	6,428	0.38	0.51	4,574	4,762	4,768	6,366

Note: "Allowable Livable" means total sf of livable areas on ALL floors minus the garage and mech sf

** Proposed FAR is counting 1,2,3 + G*

- Largest house allowed vs other towns

Working Schedule for Large House Review Committee

From now forward

August 18 – LHR mtg

Review revised and new modeling

Finalize date/content/outreach for second community meeting

August 25 – added meeting

September 2 – LHR to Planning Board (at PB meeting)

September 8 – LHR meeting

September 15 – second community meeting (presentation of modeling; share likely recommendation for definition of FAR, height, lot coverage)

September 30, 2025 – Debrief from Community Meeting

October 6 – LHR meeting

October 21 – LHR to Planning Board (at PB meeting)

October 27 – LHR meeting

November 3 - third community meeting (final presentation of proposal, fiscal impacts, etc)

Nov. 10 or 12 – LHR meeting

November 18 – Planning Board meeting – present to PB final recommendation

Alexandra Clee

From: Teresa Combs <tcombs2@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 7, 2025 1:13 PM
To: Planning; Alexandra Clee
Subject: Re: Request for Direct Outreach to SRB Property Owners Regarding Potential Zoning Changes

Dear members of the LHRC and Planning Board,

I writing to follow up on my 7/31/25 email requesting that a direct outreach mailing be sent to all residents in the SRB zoning district who will be impacted by any proposed zoning changes.

Today I received the postcard shown below about the Pollard Project. This direct outreach mailing is informing residents about how to “participate in the Pollard Project, our shared investment in Needham’s future”. This outreach is exactly what I am requesting.

Again, I am requesting that the LHRC please send out a similar mailing. Residents need to be made aware of this equally important issue.

Thank you!

Teresa Combs

PARTICIPATE IN THE POLLARD PROJECT

OUR SHARED INVESTMENT IN NEEDHAM'S FUTURE

Pollard Middle School is over 65 years old, and the aging infrastructure is in need of critical upgrades. We are working on a solution to design a renovated or new school for our 1300+ middle school students that will fully meet their educational needs. **This project needs the input and support of the entire community, and we want to understand your priorities.**

Needham has a unique opportunity to partner with the state for partial funding of a renovated or new middle school facility that upgrades critical infrastructure while fully supporting the learning needs of our 6-8 students.

Your voice is vital! Join us at these upcoming sessions.
SHARE YOUR PRIORITIES. ASK QUESTIONS. LEARN MORE.



Visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/NSPollardProject>

WEB LINK!

TURN OVER FOR INFORMATION & MEETING DATES →



SHARE YOUR PRIORITIES FOR POLLARD

Join us at these important upcoming meetings to learn more about the Pollard Middle School Building Project and share your valuable input. Your perspective is essential as we shape the future of our schools and community.



<https://tinyurl.com/ZoomPollard>

UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETINGS & EVENTS:

- **Thursday, August 21 at 6:30 p.m.** (Zoom)
Community Meeting: *What is our Vision and Q&A*
- **Wednesday, September 10 at 6:30 p.m.** (In Person at Pollard & Zoom)
Community Meeting: *What We're Hearing*
- **Saturday, October 4 at 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.** (In Person at Pollard)
Pollard Open House: *Tours and Q&A*
- **Thursday, November 6 at 6:30 p.m.** (In Person at Pollard & Zoom)
Sharing Preliminary Plans & Gathering Additional Feedback
- **Saturday, November 15, 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.** (In Person at Pollard)
Pollard Open House: *Tours and Q&A*



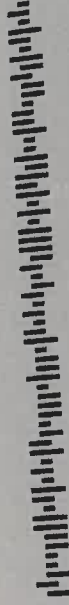
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Needham Public School
1330 Highland Ave.
Needham, MA 02492

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RESIDENT
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NEEDHAM HEIGHTS, MA 02494-2120



Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 31, 2025, at 3:07 PM, Teresa Combs <tcombs2@verizon.net> wrote:

Dear Members of the Large House Review Study Committee and Planning Board,

My partner and I have lived in Needham for almost 25 years, and our 26-year-old son attended and graduated from the Needham Public Schools. I am 65 years old, love our town and am committed to staying here.

I am writing to respectfully request that the Committee conduct direct outreach to residents of the more than 7,000 properties located within the SRB zoning district who will be impacted by any prospective zoning changes under consideration. These homeowners deserve to be made aware - through a mailed postcard or flyer - of the Committee's charge and ongoing discussions, so they have sufficient time and opportunity to understand the implications and share their perspectives.

I appreciate the work the Committee is doing and acknowledge the public outreach efforts to date, including the June 9th public hearing at Town Hall, the online survey, and the recent discussion with some local developers. That said, I have some concerns about the methods used to gather community input and how that input might be interpreted and/or used.

From my experience, residents who attend public meetings tend to be those already actively engaged or supportive of a particular viewpoint on an issue. Similarly, while the online survey received approximately 1,000 responses, the sample was self-selected and does not necessarily reflect a representative cross-section of Needham residents. Additionally, some of the survey questions appeared leading, subjective, or emotionally charged. For example, Question 1 - "Needham has a large house and/or teardown issue" - presupposes a problem and may have influenced responses to later questions. The fact that 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with that statement likely impacted the overall tone of the results.

I am also concerned by the use of ChatGPT to analyze and draw conclusions from the public meeting notes and survey responses. AI can be a helpful tool, but it is only as good as the information and context it is given. It would be irresponsible to draw strong conclusions - particularly statements about a community-wide mandate for zoning reform - based on this type of analysis.

Given these concerns, I urge the Committee to please broaden its outreach and specifically notify residents in the SRB district, many of whom may not be aware of the changes being considered or the potential implications for their properties and neighborhood. Direct outreach would ensure a more inclusive and equitable process.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Teresa Combs
7 Utica Road, Needham