



**LAND USE APPLICATION SUMMARY**

*Property Location:* 4345 Aldrich Avenue South  
*Project Name:* 4345 Aldrich Avenue South Porch Addition  
*Prepared By:* Janelle Widmeier, Senior City Planner, (612) 673-3156  
*Applicant:* Karen Backes  
*Project Contact:* Karen Backes  
*Request:* To allow an open front porch addition to a single-family dwelling.  
*Required Applications:*

<b>Variance</b>	To increase the maximum allowed impervious surface from 60 percent to 72.8 percent to allow an open porch addition.
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**SITE DATA**

<b>Existing Zoning</b>	RIA Single-family District
<b>Lot Area</b>	5,208 square feet
<b>Ward(s)</b>	13
<b>Neighborhood(s)</b>	East Harriet
<b>Designated Future Land Use</b>	Urban Neighborhood
<b>Land Use Features</b>	Not applicable
<b>Small Area Plan(s)</b>	Not applicable

<b>Date Application Deemed Complete</b>	August 16, 2016	<b>Date Extension Letter Sent</b>	Not applicable
<b>End of 60-Day Decision Period</b>	October 15, 2016	<b>End of 120-Day Decision Period</b>	Not applicable

## BACKGROUND

**SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE.** The existing principal structure was permitted for construction in 1925 as a duplex with a detached garage. Currently, the existing use is a single-family dwelling.

**SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND NEIGHBORHOOD.** The properties in the immediate area are a mix of single-family and two-family dwellings.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION.** The applicant is proposing to construct an open front porch addition to the existing single-family dwelling located at the property of 4345 Aldrich Avenue South. The porch would be 8 feet deep by 29 feet wide (232 square feet in area). In the RIA district, the maximum allowed amount of impervious surface coverage is 60 percent. The existing impervious surface coverage is 71.1 percent. The proposed amount of impervious surface is 72.8 percent. A variance is required to increase the maximum amount of impervious surface.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS.** As of the writing of this report, staff has not received any correspondence from the neighborhood group. Other comments were received and are attached to this report. Any additional correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Board of Adjustment for consideration.

## ANALYSIS

### IMPERVIOUS SURFACE VARIANCE

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application for a variance to increase the maximum allowed impervious surface from 60 percent to 72.8 percent to allow an open porch addition based on the following findings:

1. *Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property. The unique circumstances were not created by persons presently having an interest in the property and are not based on economic considerations alone.*

Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance due to circumstances unique to the property that were not created by the applicant. The existing impervious surface is 71.1 percent. The site is not adjacent to a public alley. A driveway connects the existing detached garage located in the rear southeast corner of the property to the street. The long driveway adds a significant amount of impervious surface to the property.

2. *The property owner or authorized applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.*

The maximum impervious surface requirements are established to provide benefits from landscaping including buffers between uses, on-site retention of stormwater, and preserving the residential character of an area. The applicant is requesting a variance to increase the maximum allowed impervious surface coverage to allow an open front porch addition to encourage community engagement and activity in front of their dwelling. To minimize the increase of impervious surfaces, the applicant is proposing to remove existing impervious surface areas where possible. Therefore, the proposed net increase is only 88 square feet in area. The request is reasonable and consistent with the intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.

3. *The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. If granted, the proposed variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties.*

The granting of the variance would not affect the character of the area or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. The applicant is requesting a variance to increase the maximum allowed impervious surface coverage to allow an open front porch addition to encourage community engagement and activity in front of their dwelling. The porch is designed to be compatible with the subject dwelling as well as residences in the surrounding area. To minimize the increase of impervious surfaces, the applicant is proposing to remove existing impervious surface areas where possible. Stormwater runoff from the porch should not be an issue for adjacent properties because it would be adjacent to two driveways that slope down towards the street. Because there is a large amount of existing impervious surface, the applicant is encouraged to explore additional ways to retain stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces on-site. If granted, the proposed variance would not be detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the public or those utilizing the property provided the proposed addition is constructed to current building codes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Zoning Board of Adjustment adopt staff findings for the applications by Karen Backes for the property located at 4345 Aldrich Avenue South:

### **A. Variance to increase maximum lot coverage and allowed impervious surface.**

Recommended motion: **Approve** the variance to increase the maximum allowed impervious surface from 60 percent to 72.8 percent to allow an open porch addition, subject to the following conditions:

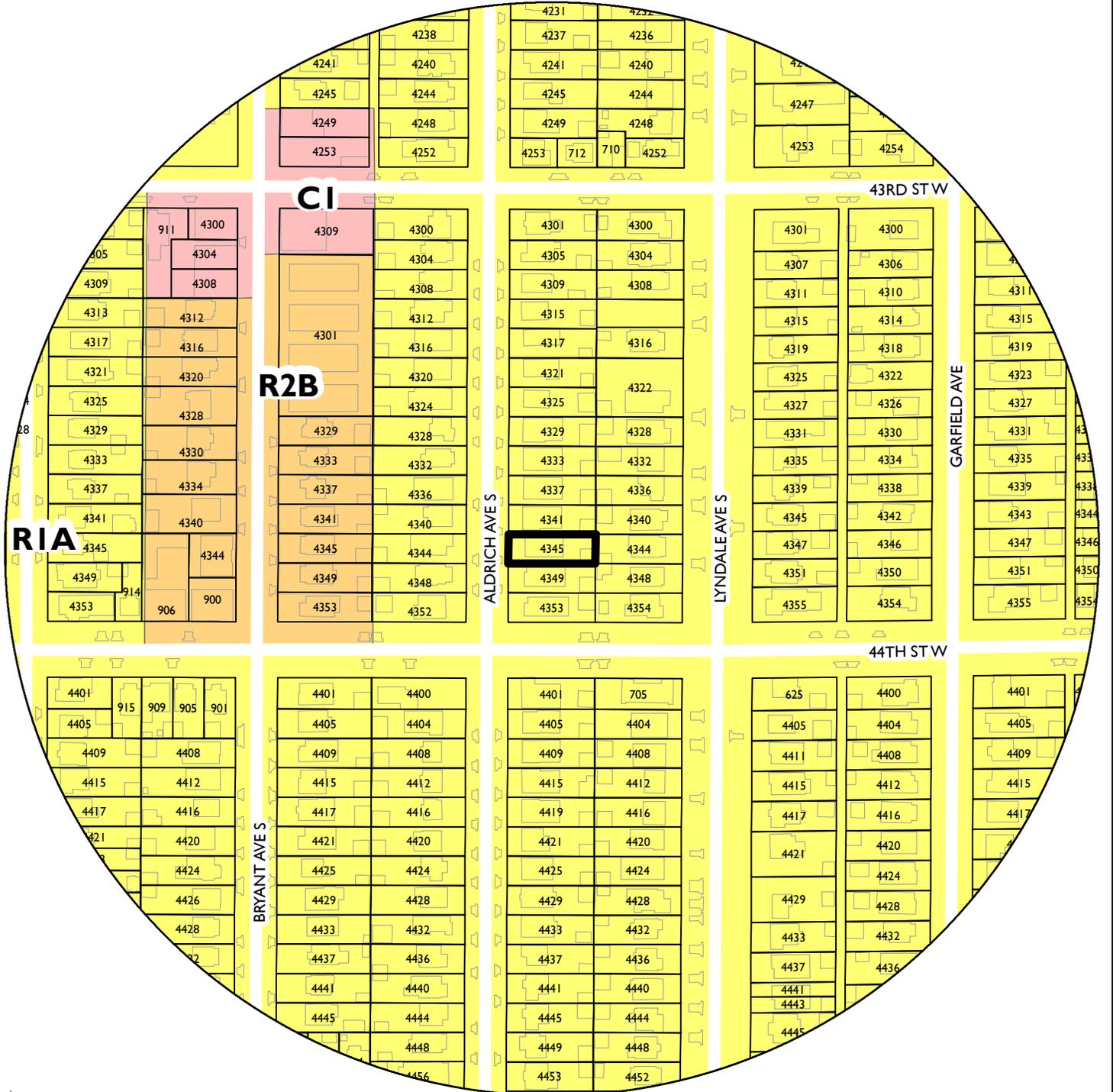
1. Approval of the final site, elevation and floor plans by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by September 29, 2018, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.
3. The applicant is encouraged to explore additional ways to retain stormwater runoff on-site.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Zoning map
2. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
3. Site plans, existing and proposed
4. Elevations
5. Photos
6. Public comments

NAME OF APPLICANT

WARD



PROPERTY ADDRESS

**4345 Aldrich Avenue South**

FILE NUMBER

**BZZ-7868**

## **Statement of Proposed Use and Description of Project** **4345 Aldrich Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55409**

We are looking at adding a wood with brick accent covered open porch across the front of our house to replace rotting pillars and crumbling cement steps. The size and scope of the proposed porch are to be within the required zoning dimensions. The proposed use is for front entry to our house as well as providing an outdoor sitting space for our family.

### **Email to City Council and Neighborhood Group**

**Karen <karen.l.backes@gmail.com>**

Aug 14 (2 days ago)

to info, linea.palmisano, janelle.widmei.

Hello,,

We are proposing to add a covered open front porch to our house at 4345 Aldrich Ave South. We currently have rotting pillars and crumbling cement steps and would like to improve the curb appeal and use of the front of our house.

We are working with the zoning department to ensure it meets code specifications and for a land use variance for hardcover percentages. We plan to remove some existing hardcover to lessen any impacts. We've been working with an architect/landscape architect to ensure the addition is in keeping with the house and block's architectural style and has minimal environmental impact. We have spoken with our proximal neighbors, all of whom are in support of the improvements.

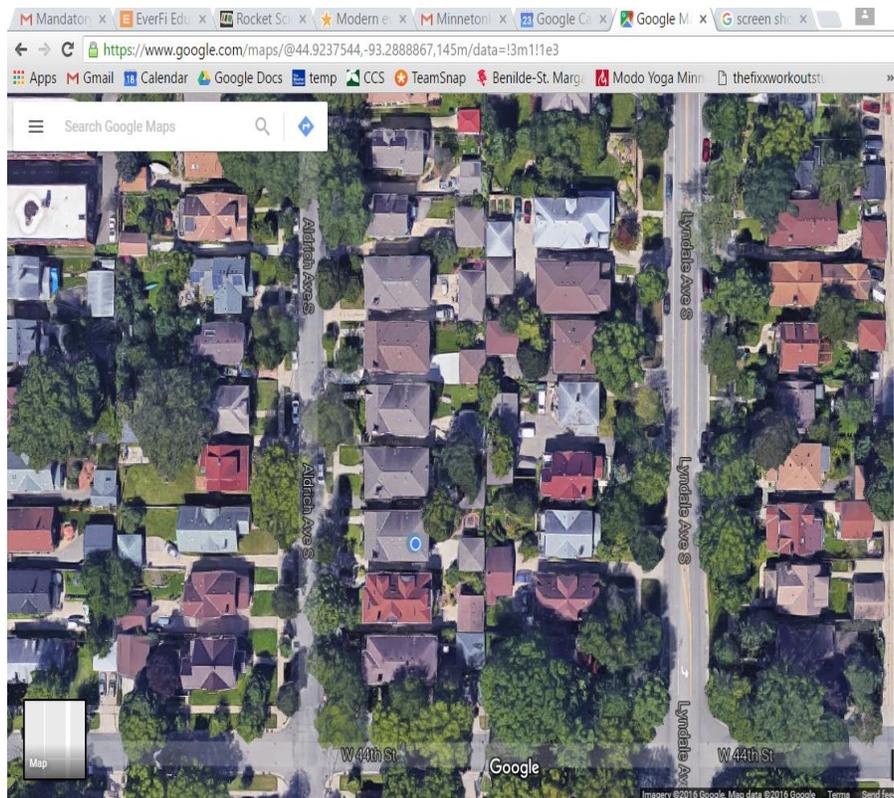
If there are any questions regarding this, please contact me. Thank you.

Karen Backes  
4345 Aldrich Ave South  
Minneapolis, MN 55409  
[612-849-1939](tel:612-849-1939)  
[Karen.l.backes@gmail.com](mailto:karen.l.backes@gmail.com)

## Variance Statement

### (1) Practical Difficulties –

- a. We are seeking a variance for hardscape coverage. Like most of our neighbors, given the size of our small and narrow city lot, our house as built and that we have a driveway that runs the length of the property to a detached garage at the back of our lot, our hardscape percentage (without the existing front stoop or walkway to our front door) is quite high. We do not have any alley access to our garage.
- b. The majority of the homes on our side of the block were developed at the same time by the same people. Most of the footprints, driveways and garages mimic our footprint and hardcover percentage. See our block below (our house is the one with the blue dot)...

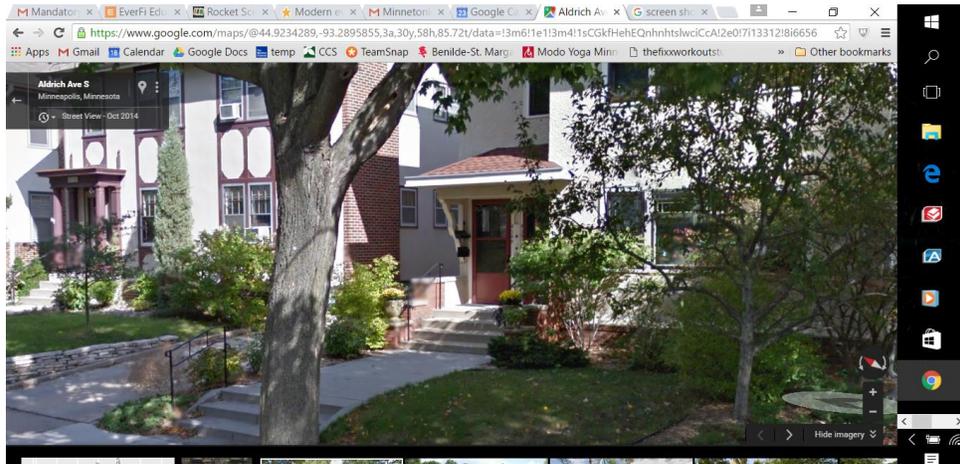


- c.
  - d. When adding the open front porch to improve curb appeal, we are also planning on removing some existing hardscape as well as planting beds that currently have impervious plastic to lessen the impact of the project. Our net add is less than 2%.
- (2) The main purpose of adding the open front porch is to replace the rotting pillars and crumbling cement steps on the existing walk and stoop. Additionally, we would like to improve the overall curb appeal of our house and have a space to meet and greet our neighbors. While we have a lovely back patio, we find ourselves mostly on the front stoop talking with neighbors as they come and go. We believe this is important in an

urban neighborhood to promote community and deter crime—particularly on our block as many of the houses are duplexes and thus rentals.

(3) Character and use

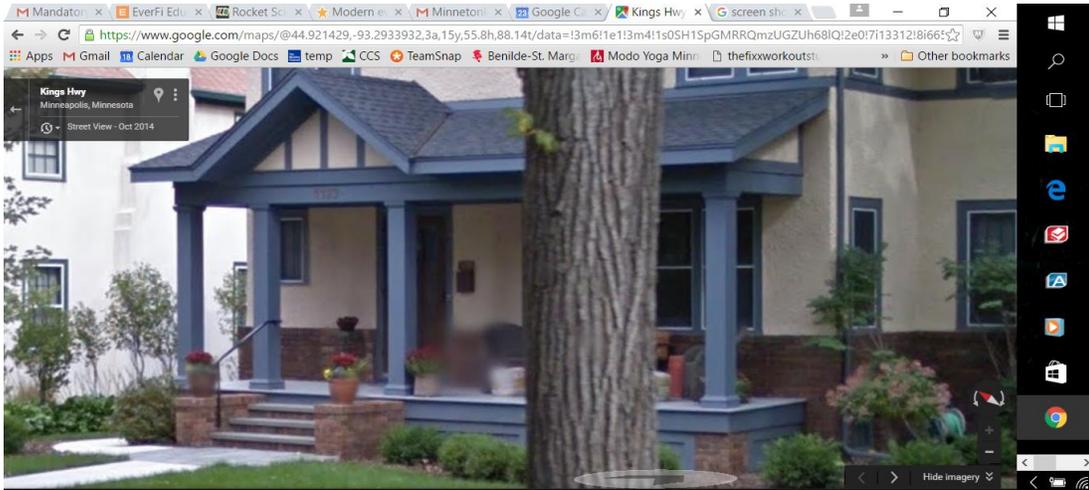
- a. We have been working with a designer to ensure the proposed porch is in keeping with the architectural style of the house and neighborhood. We have also spent countless hours walking in our neighborhood looking at porch, stair, balustrade, cheek wall, skirting and stair styles and combinations.
  - i. We are looking to tie in the existing brick foundation by using brick in the base of the porch columns as well as cheek walls on either side of the stairs (similar to several of our neighbors on the block—see below).



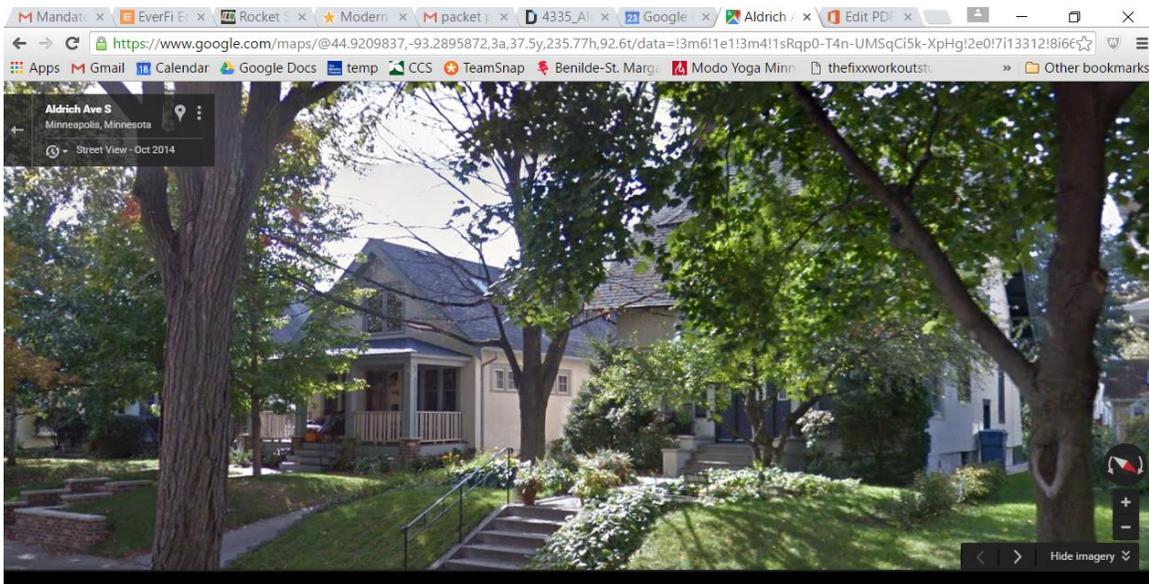
- ii.
- iii. We plan to add stucco with inlaid wood (as we currently have) to the front side of the gabled roof and on the south side of the shed roof. We have seen several houses in our neighborhood that have this and think it ties it together well. See the next image below.
- iv. We are planning on a hard wood decking for the porch. The balustrades and skirting patterns were designed from others we saw in the neighborhood. These would tie into the wood trim we currently have around the windows.

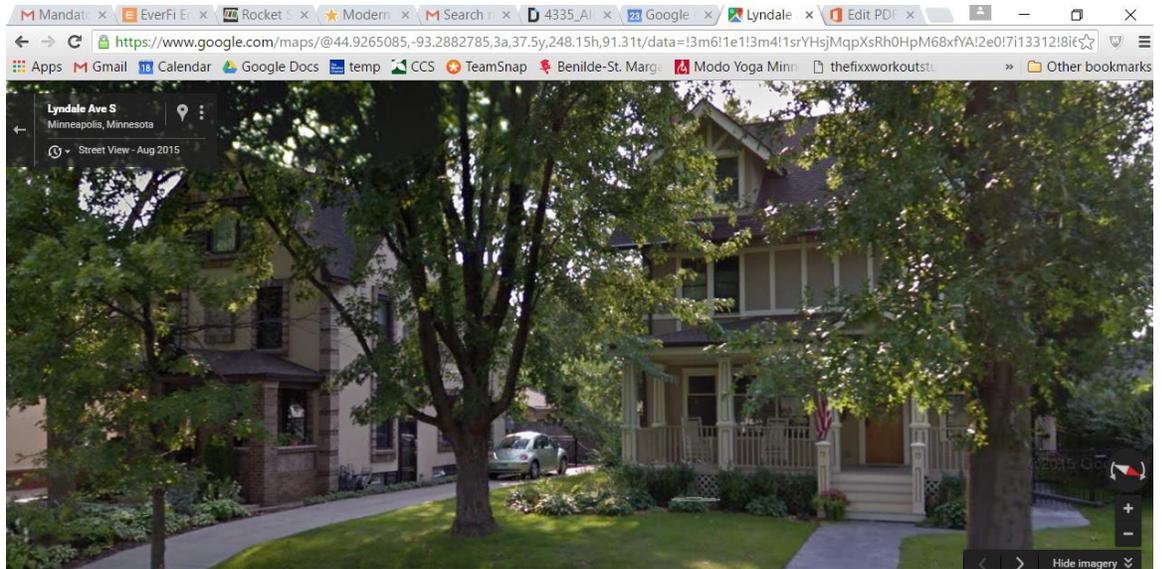
- v. These open porches (shown below), all within a few blocks of our house, use several elements described above—use of brick, stucco and wood decking and skirting.

vi.



vii.





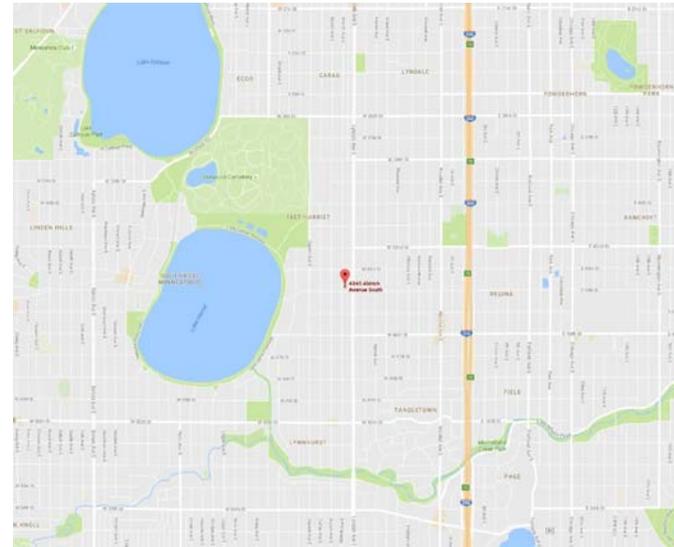
viii.

- b. We are also looking for ways to improve landscape curb appeal and runoff. These details are not finalized but we recently attended a presentation by urban ecosystem designers and the Minnehaha Watershed Creek District to learn about natural ways to prevent runoff. We plan to continue to consult our designer and my uncle who is a landscape architect to assist with this.
- c. The new porch and steps will also be a safety improvement given the state of the cement and more importantly safety-wise will replace a stoop that is currently too narrow to stand on when the door opens.



## SHEET INDEX

Sheet Number	Description
G.0	Cover Sheet
1.0	Existing Conditions, Removals Plan
1.1	Proposed Site Plan
1.2	Existing & Proposed Hardcover Plans
2.0	Porch Enlargement Plan
3.0	Porch Elevations
3.1	Porch Elevations



LOCATION MAP

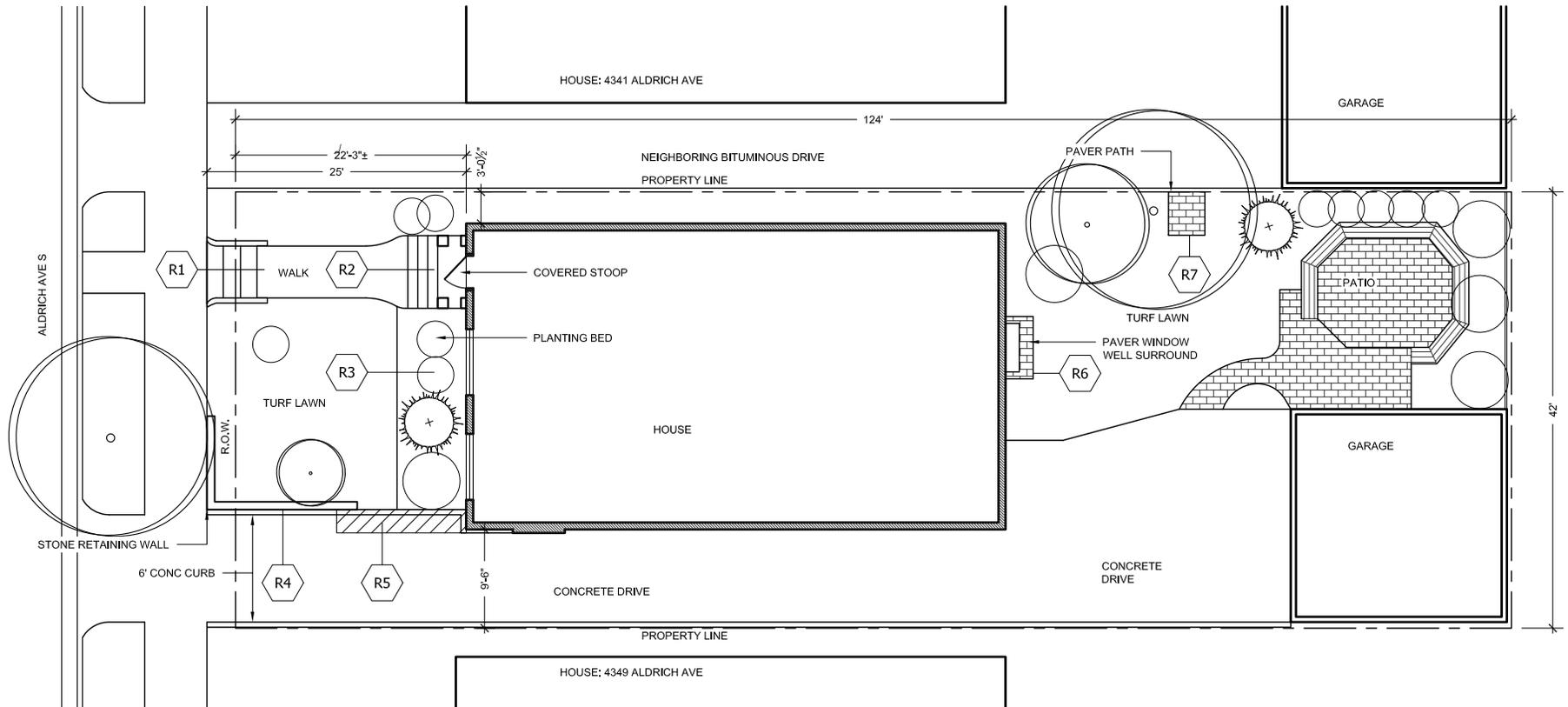
08/14/2016

BACKES RESIDENCE  
 4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

**SHEET G.0**  
 COVER SHEET



1 EXISTING CONDITIONS & REMOVALS PLAN

Scale: 1/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 1/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET

KEYED REMOVAL NOTES

- R1 EXISTING WALK, REMOVE
- R2 EXISTING COVERED STOOP, REMOVE
- R3 EXISTING PLANTING BED, REMOVE
- R4 EXISTING STONE RETAINING WALL, REMOVE
- R5 EXISTING CONCRETE CURB AND DRIVEWAY, REMOVE TO EXTENTS
- R6 EXISTING PAVER WINDOW WELL SURROUND, REMOVE
- R7 EXISTING PAVER PATH, REMOVE

08/14/2016

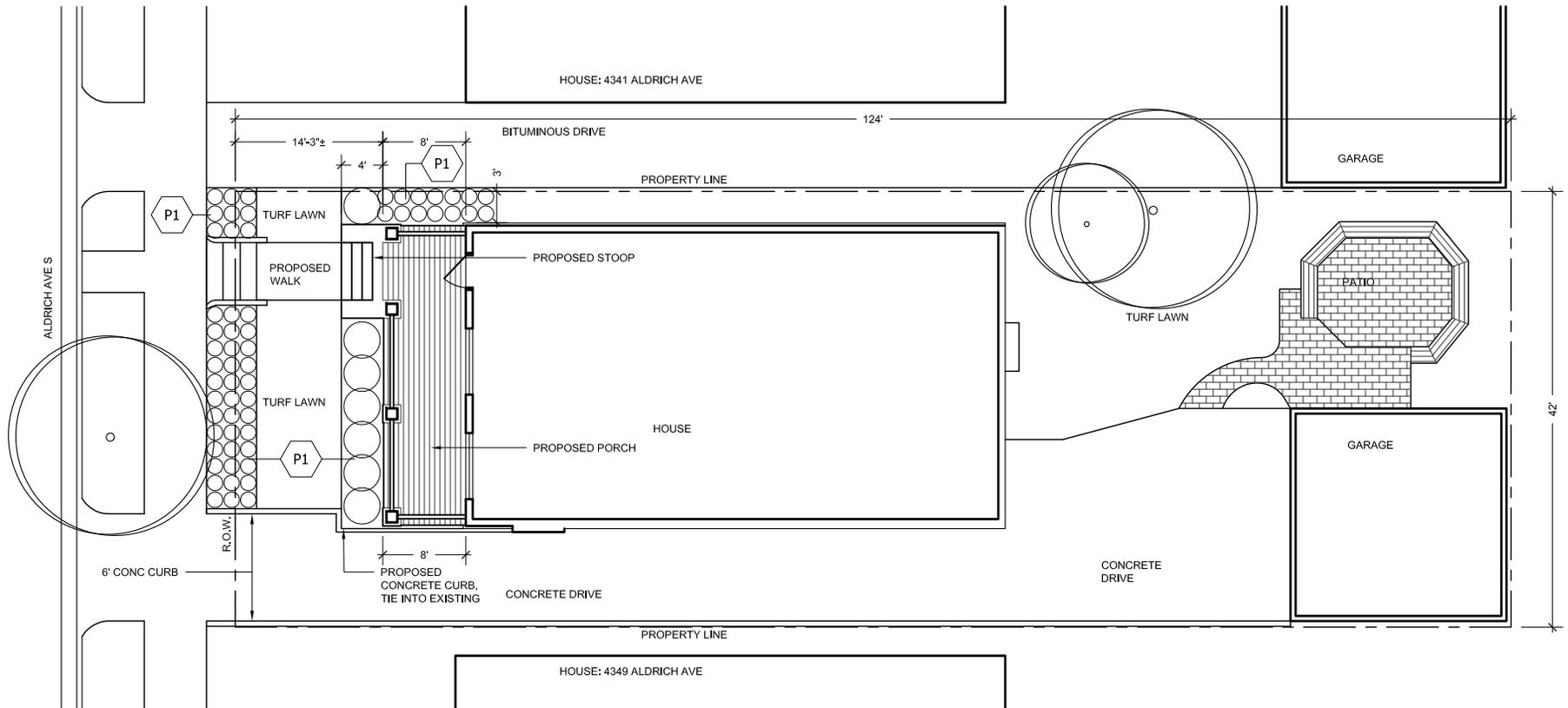
BACKES RESIDENCE  
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FRONT PORCH ADDITION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



**SHEET 1.0**  
EXISTING CONDITIONS  
& REMOVALS PLAN



1 PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Scale: 1/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 1/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET

KEYED NOTES

- P1 PROPOSED PLANTING BED, TO BE TOPPED WITH SHREDDED HARDWOOD MULCH
- P2 --
- P3 --
- P4 --
- P5 --
- P6 --
- P7 --

08/14/2016

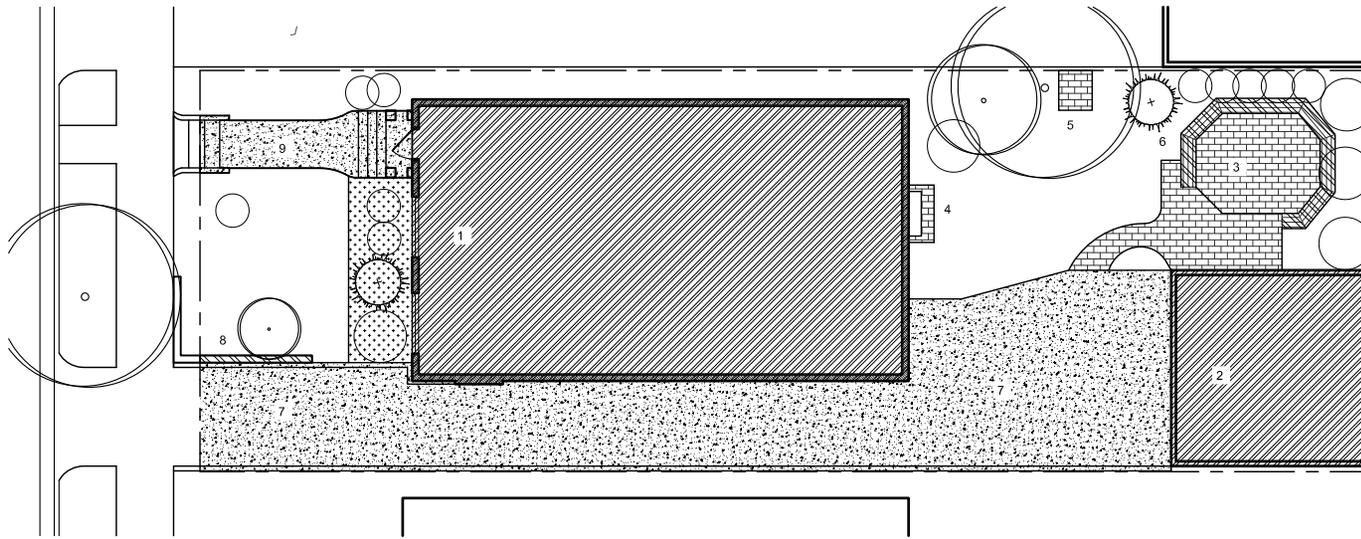
BACKES RESIDENCE  
4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



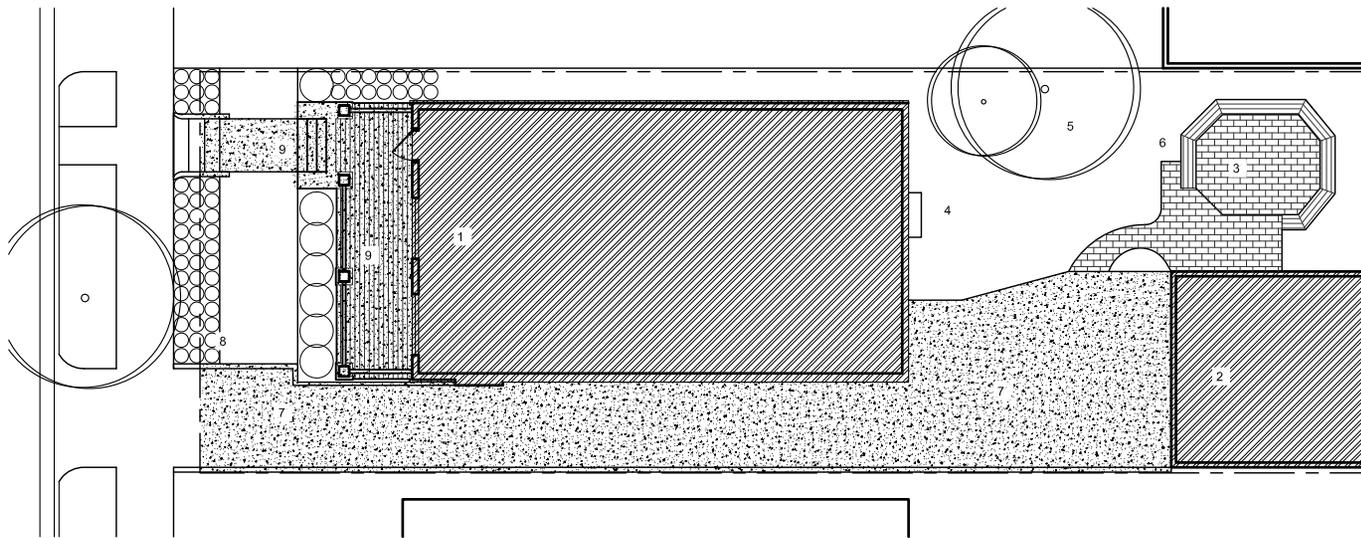
**SHEET 1.1**  
PROPOSED SITE PLAN



EXISTING HARDCOVER		
ITEM KEY #	TYPE	AREA in SF
1	House	1535
2	Garage	425
3	Paver Patio	240
4	Paver Window Well	10
5	Paver Path	15
6	Wood Patio Seat	55
7	Concrete Drive	1284
8	Stone Retaining Wall	10
9	Concrete Walk/Stoop	130
TOTAL EXISTING		3704
TOTAL LOT AREA 42'x124'		5208
<b>PERCENT HARDCOVER</b>		<b>71.12%</b>

1 EXISTING HARDCOVER

Scale: 1"=10' @ ANSI C SHEET, 1"= 20' @ LETTER SHEET



PROPOSED HARDCOVER		
ITEM KEY #	TYPE	AREA in SF
1	House	1535
2	Garage	425
3	Paver Patio	240
4	<i>Paver Window Well</i>	<b>0</b>
5	<i>Paver Path</i>	<b>0</b>
6	Wood Patio Seat	55
7	<i>Concrete Drive</i>	<b>1210</b>
8	<i>Stone Retaining Wall</i>	<b>0</b>
9	<i>Concrete Walk/Porch</i>	<b>327</b>
TOTAL PROPOSED		3792
TOTAL LOT AREA 42'x124'		5208
<b>PERCENT HARDCOVER</b>		<b>72.81%</b>

2 PROPOSED HARDCOVER

Scale: 1"=10' @ ANSI C SHEET, 1"= 20' @ LETTER SHEET

08/14/2016

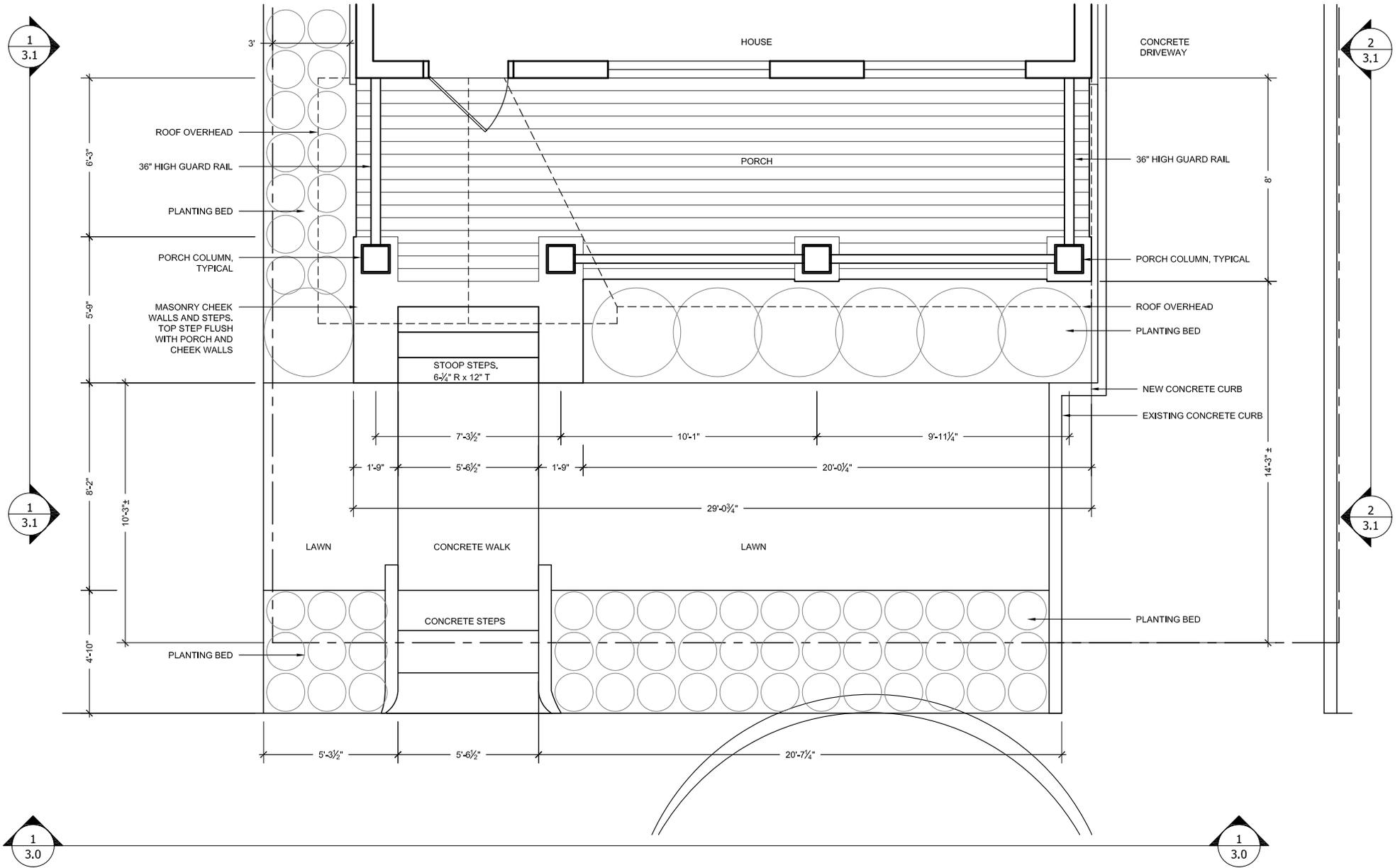
BACKES RESIDENCE  
4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION



NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

**SHEET 1.2**  
HARDCOVER PLANS



1 PORCH ENLARGEMENT FLOOR PLAN

Scale: 3/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 3/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET

08/14/2016

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

BACKES RESIDENCE  
 4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION



**SHEET 2.0**  
 PORCH ENLARGEMENT  
 FLOOR PLAN



1 PORCH ELEVATION WEST

Scale: 3/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 3/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET

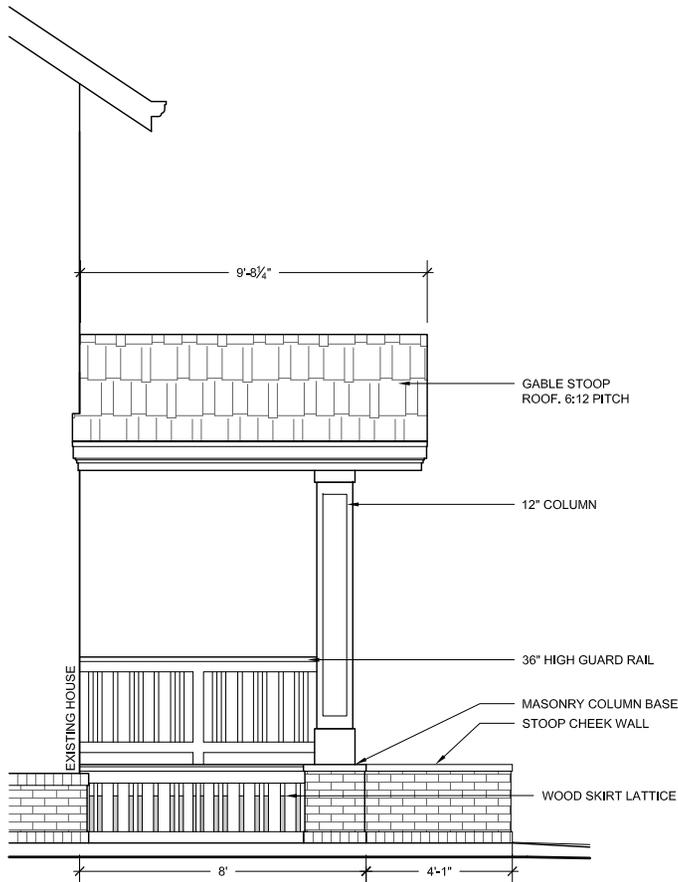
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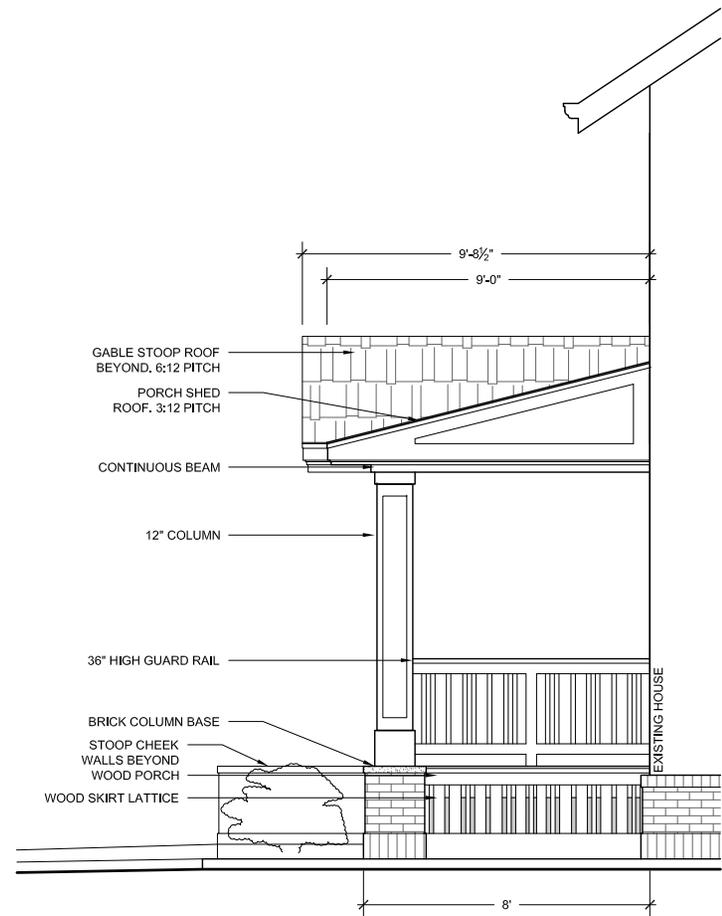
BACKES RESIDENCE  
4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION

**SHEET 3.0**  
ELEVATIONS



1 PORCH ELEVATION NORTH  
 Scale: 3/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 3/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET



2 PORCH ELEVATION SOUTH  
 Scale: 3/8"=1' @ ANSI C SHEET, 3/16"= 1' @ LETTER SHEET

08/14/2016

BACKES RESIDENCE  
 4345 ALDRICH AVENUE SOUTH  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55409

FRONT PORCH ADDITION

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

**SHEET 3.1**  
 ELEVATIONS

Existing Conditions Photos



West House Elevation



Stoop Enlargement



Driveway Retaining Wall



Driveway: View West



Garage



Patio & Neighboring Garage

**From:** [Jane Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [Widmeier, Janelle A.](#)  
**Cc:** [Karen Backes](#)  
**Subject:** 4345 Aldrich Ave South  
**Date:** Monday, September 19, 2016 11:29:22 AM

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Hello Janelle,

I want to tell you that I fully support Karen Backes' desire to add a front porch to her home. The design is in keeping with the neighborhood. Getting people outside in the front of their home, instead the back encourages friendships and community. Thank you for approving a variance for her project.

Sincerely,  
Jane Hamilton  
4329 Aldrich

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**Jane**  
**612-824-5921**

**From:** [Katie Bertelson](#)  
**To:** [Widmeier, Janelle A.](#)  
**Subject:** 4345 Aldrich Avenue south front porch  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 06, 2016 2:29:32 PM

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Janelle,

My husband, Peter Mitchell, and I are the owners of the duplex at 4341 Aldrich Avenue South. We have owned this duplex since August 2012 and plan to own it indefinitely. We lived there until just this summer and now have it rented to 2 groups of great people. We are 100% in favor of and in support of the Backes' new porch. We, too, enjoyed sitting in the front of the house as a chance to be open to the neighborhood and face the afternoon sun. We think it's a great idea and a great addition to their house and to the block.

Should you have any questions for us, feel free to reach out to me at this email address or the phone number below.

Best,

Katie Bertelson  
612-325-5270

**From:** [Tessa Gunther](#)  
**To:** [Widmeier, Janelle A.](#)  
**Subject:** 4345 Aldrich Avenue South  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 07, 2016 6:22:45 PM

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Dear Janelle:

My name is Tessa Gunther and I have owned my duplex, next door to the Backes family, for over 20 years.

I am in favor of the new Backes front porch design. It is a wonderful addition, for them and for our street. Not only does it improve curb appeal and property values in general, but this visible gathering spot will promote community in our neighborhood and, as a result, would inevitably cut down on crime.

I am happy to help in this process anyway that I can.

Sincerely,

Tessa Gunther (c: 612.600.6617)  
4349/51 Aldrich Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55409

**From:** [Nicholas White](#)  
**To:** [Widmeier, Janelle A.](#)  
**Subject:** Backes Porch / Aldrich Ave S  
**Date:** Monday, September 05, 2016 4:18:13 PM

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I support the addition of the front porch

Sent from my iPhone