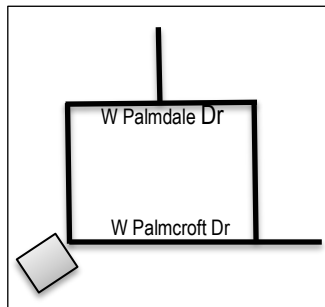

**CITY OF TEMPE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Meeting Date: 03/09/2022
Agenda Item: 4**

ACTION: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story addition known as the STRONG ADDITION, located at 137 West Palmcroat Drive. The STRONG ADDITION is being constructed on a contributing property within the DATE PALM MANOR HISTORIC DISTRICT (Ordinance 2009.12). The applicant is Jeremiah Domenech. (PL220013 / HPO220001)

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, with conditions



Property Owner
Applicant
Tempe Hist. Prop. Reg. Status
National Register Status

Justin Carlson / Devi Davis-Strong
Jeremiah Domenech
Designated
Listed

ATTACHMENTS: Development Project File

STAFF CONTACT(S): Robbie Aaron, Planner, Interim Historic Preservation Officer (480) 350-8096

Department Director: Shelly Seyler, Interim Community Development Director

Legal review by: N/A

Prepared by: Robbie Aaron, Planner, Interim Historic Preservation Officer

COMMENTS

The property (137 West Palmcroft Drive) is located at the intersection of West Palmcroft Drive and South Dromedary Drive in the southwest corner of the Date Palm Manor Subdivision. The property is a contributor to the Date Palm Manor Historic District, which is listed in the Tempe Historic Property Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

Staff evaluation of the Certificate of Appropriateness request employed the Date Palm Manor National Register Nomination and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as guidance when analyzing the submittal.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

The Date Palm Manor Historic District is an example of a well-preserved neighborhood of custom-built homes, which exhibit the highest artistic expression of midcentury Ranch-style architecture.

Excerpt from the Date Palm Manor Historic District National Register nomination:

The Ranch style was introduced in California in the 1930s and quickly became a popular regional style. After the war, its innovative design and construction fit well with emerging social, economic, and technological trends. Eventually it became the dominant architectural style in the United States where, particularly in the West, it would represent the most ubiquitous house-form for the next 30 years. In contrast to previous Period Revival styles, early Ranch architecture was deeply rooted in the American West. The Ranch style drew its inspiration from the 19th century adobe ranch houses of California, as well as the Craftsman style and early Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie houses. The simple and sparsely adorned houses reflected the romantic imagery of the past and the new social trends of informality and casual home life embodied in post-war suburbia. The Ranch house typically featured a low-pitched roof with deep eaves and a few traditional elements such as clapboard, false shutters, and a small entry porch. It also reflected the growing importance of the automobile, which brought sprawling subdivisions with larger lots, allowing the broadest side of the house to be the primary façade. The low horizontal profile of the home facing the street shows many visible planes and angles, creating a bigger, more spacious look for a small house. The new orientation of the house also placed more emphasis on the back yard, and large windows, glass doors, and patios often faced a landscaped private refuge at the rear of the lot. The substantial break from the more exotic designs and materials of the earlier Period Revival styles reflects the new postwar optimism for the future and modernism's tenets of simple, clear, unpretentious design.

Perhaps the greatest advantage that the Ranch style had in the early postwar period was its simplicity of design and construction, which allowed fast and efficient mass production of homes to meet the growing demand for affordable housing. Construction on a cost-efficient concrete slab surmounted by traditional wood frame, brick, or concrete block bearing walls was typical. The introduction of steel casement windows and other standardized building components cut construction time and costs considerably. The typical house built in the late 1940s or early 1950s was generally small with a simple design and a stark exterior with little or no ornamentation; collectively, all of the houses in a subdivision reflected the same standardized design with only slight variations. The early postwar Ranch style was greatly constrained by the restrictive guidelines of the Federal Housing Administration and the urgent need to efficiently build millions of new homes.

By the mid 1950s, building restrictions were eased and the typical Ranch house incorporated

more decorative elements, such as brick wainscot, scroll-cut fascia, board-and-batten siding, eyebrow dormers, wrought iron porch posts, and weeping mortar. At this time, concrete block, and particularly pumice block made from native volcanic scoria materials, became the building material of choice for the majority of Arizona builders. It was cheap, costing an average of \$500 less per house than wood, and was locally manufactured. Superlite Builders Supply Company was established in Phoenix in 1945, and within 15 years grew to be the largest block manufacturer in the United States. Its pumice block was lighter in weight with a higher fire rating, a higher R value, and was more effective for sound absorption (NRC rating). Of course, larger concrete masonry units also reduced labor as fewer blocks were handled to construct the same wall area. Ultimately, concrete block would become the least expensive and most readily available building material in the Phoenix metropolitan area, largely as a result of the phenomenal postwar success of the locally operated Superlite Company.

However, Date Palm Manor was unlike any other residential development in Tempe at the time. The houses were not built fast and efficiently, but with skilled craftsmanship and attention to detail that represent the highest artistic expression of the Ranch style. As there was clearly a growing market for expensive houses, there were no restraints on size and design. The Agnew Construction Company used a variety of building materials and decorative elements. As every house had a unique design, the neighborhood as a whole exhibits every plan and profile associated with the Ranch house. There are two houses not designed in the Ranch style, but rather, representative of the Contemporary and Split-Level styles. Agnew did use the nearly universal concrete block as his primary building material, but exterior walls were usually not plain block surfaces. Other contrasting materials—brick, wood, stucco, pierced block, metal and stone—were often overlaid or imbedded in the masonry for unique effect. Date Palm Manor was strikingly different in the mid-1950s, but it was a precursor to a new style of building that would become more common in the 1960s. The Housing Act of 1954 recognized the changes in the market, and lowered the amount of down payment required for houses costing up to \$25,000. This made it possible to finance larger houses. By 1960 there was much greater diversity in residential architecture. Houses generally became larger and more richly decorated, and builders started offering a greater variety of different models with more optional features.

Contributing resources in the Date Palm Manor Historic District exhibit a very high level of architectural integrity. The neighborhood clearly conveys its historic appearance and sense of place merit recognition for its outstanding examples of Ranch style architecture.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The applicant seeks to construct a two-story addition to the rear of the house on the southeast portion of the property. Per the City of Tempe Zoning and Development Code, this will require that the applicant obtain a Use Permit.

Guidelines from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties relevant to this proposal include:

- Using the same forms, materials, and color range of the historic building in a manner that does not duplicate it, but distinguishes the addition from the original building.
- Distinguishing the addition from the original building by setting it back from the wall plane of the historic building.
- Constructing a new addition on a secondary or non-character defining elevation and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

The proposed addition is to the rear of the existing home, which is a secondary and non-character-defining elevation of the home and is distinguished from the original building by being set back from the front wall plane. The addition will maintain the same style pitched roof as the historic portion, although most of the materials on the addition will be different, thus not duplicating the historic home.

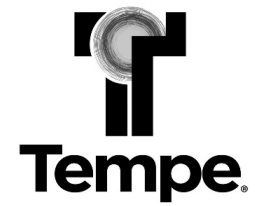
The overall scale of the new addition does appear to be out of scale with the original building. However, there are other large buildings in the vicinity of the neighborhood and a two-story home across the alley which could appear to be part of the existing property when viewed from a distance. Furthermore, there is a large tree on the east side of the property that will likely block a large portion of the addition when looking at the historic house at certain angles from the street.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the information provided and the above analysis, should the Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed addition as part of case PL220013 / HPO220001, staff recommends approval be subject to the following condition(s).

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. The Certificate of Appropriateness shall only be valid after the property owner obtains all other necessary entitlements from the Planning Division, including, but not limited to, a Use Permit for a second story.
2. Paint colors for the addition shall be in a color range compatible with the existing building while still distinguishing the addition from the original building.
3. All plans are to be approved as submitted. Any changes to the plans as submitted shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Officer for compliance with the Certificate of Appropriateness and issuance of a Certificate of No Effect.



DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FILE

for

**STRONG ADDITION
(PL220013/HPO220001)**

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Applicant's Letter of Explanation
2. Property Owner Letter
3. Site Plan & Building Elevations

DOMENECH DRAFTING & DESIGN

RESIDENTIAL ADDITION – VARIANCE / Historic Preservation

REVIEW: Addition

PL220013

ADDRESS: 137 W Palmcroft Dr

DATE: 1/21/2022

Letter of Explanation:

Intent of addition at 137 W Palmcroft Dr is to provide garage space as there is no current driveway accessible to the existing city street. Also included in the addition will be game room / pool house accessible from the first floor. On the 2nd level, there will be additional livable as the current owners' parents are sickly, and will be moving into the residence so that the current owners can provide assistance. Due to the hardship that the lot provides due to its abnormal layout, the current owners would like to explore the idea of extended the allowable boundaries to accommodate their current living needs.

Take note that the intrusion into setbacks will take place at the rear setback of the lot (West boundary). After multiple calls into the City of Tempe, it has been settled that the current owners are allowed to extend past the side setback, up to property line. (South portion of lot).

To the **Historic Preservation Committee**, take note that the architectural style meets the Date Palm Manor historic requirements. The existing architectural style of "French Provincial Ranch" will not be disturbed. The new addition will adopt the existing architectural style.

[If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.](#)

Thank you,

Jeremiah Domenech

D 623-332-8132

Jeremiah.domenech@gmail.com

To the Tempe Historical District:

We appreciate you taking the time to review our application to add a two-story addition to our home. We love the look of our neighborhood and would not do anything to disturb the aesthetic. Absolutely no changes will be made to the front of the property. *The proposed addition is behind the house to the South West and could actually improve the neighborhood appeal.* The photo left was taken entering our subdivision from the main entrance off of Mill Avenue traveling West. Our home is the grey house located in the corner of the subdivision. As you can see, as denoted by the red arrows, there is a large industrial plaza behind our home, which is clearly visible from the neighborhood. Furthermore, as designated by the blue arrow, the proposed addition is on the south side of the property and will not be visible when traveling West into the subdivision. This is to say that not only are two story buildings visible, there are other two-story homes in this neighborhood AND the proposed addition will not be visible from this direction



Traveling into the neighborhood off of Broadway (the only other entrance to the neighborhood) facing South, the proposed addition *may* be visible. Our home is beneath the red arrow. The proposed addition will be to the south, designated by the blue arrow. As you can see, there is already a two-story home directly across the alley from our home and visible from our neighborhood, see the black arrow in the photo below. Our proposed structure and roof line will match our home and the Palmcroft Manor aesthetic and thereby will actually be an improvement.

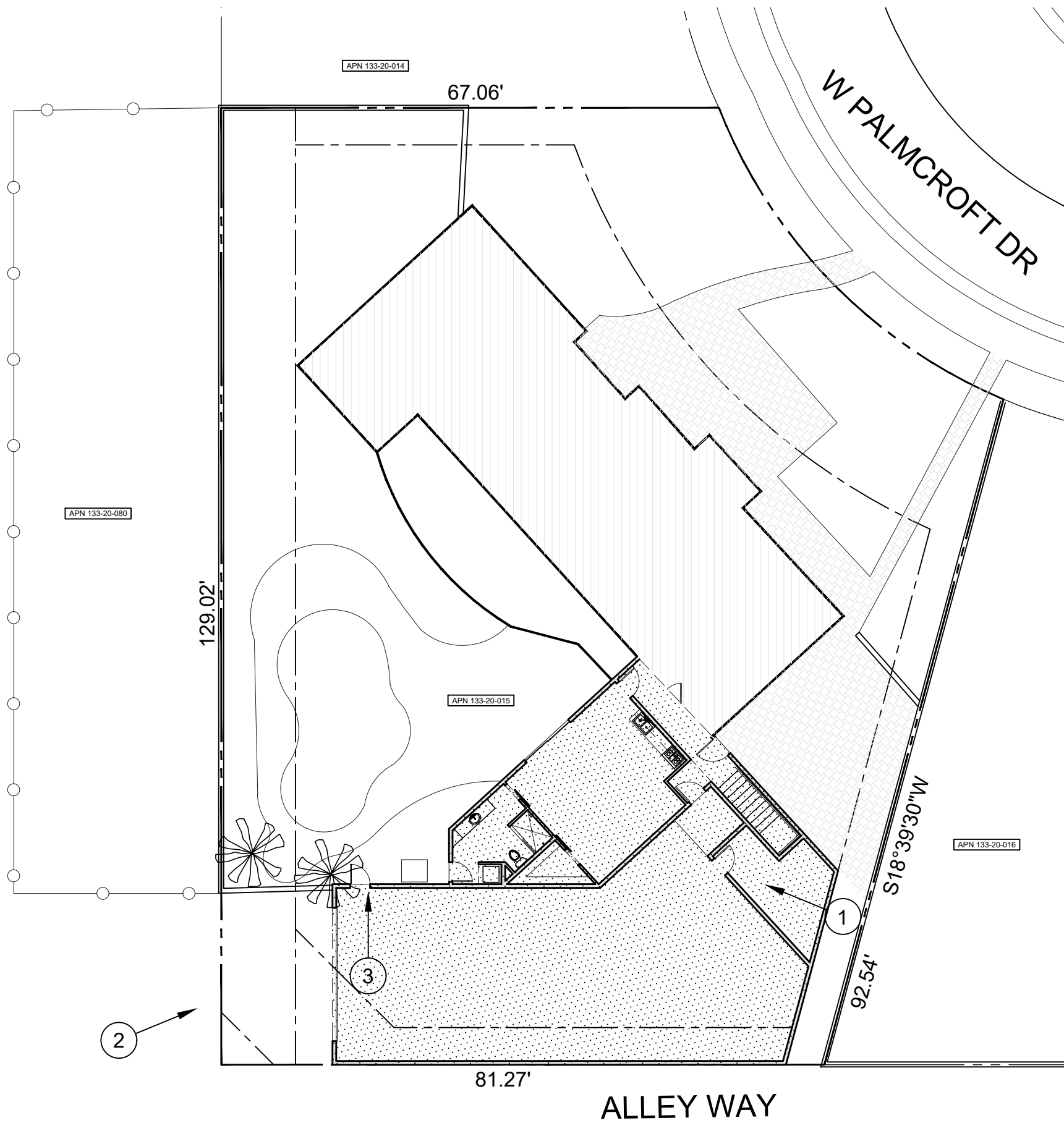


Thank you for taking the time to review our case. We hope that you will agree with us that the proposed addition is inobtrusive and a welcome addition to our quaint neighborhood.

Respectfully,

Devi Davis-Strong & Justin Carlson

UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD



LEGEND

- EXISTING HOME 1,967 SQ. FT.
- PROPOSED ADDITION (2,448 SQ. FT.)

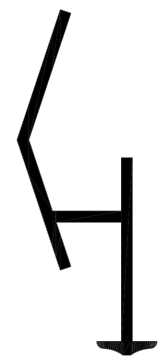
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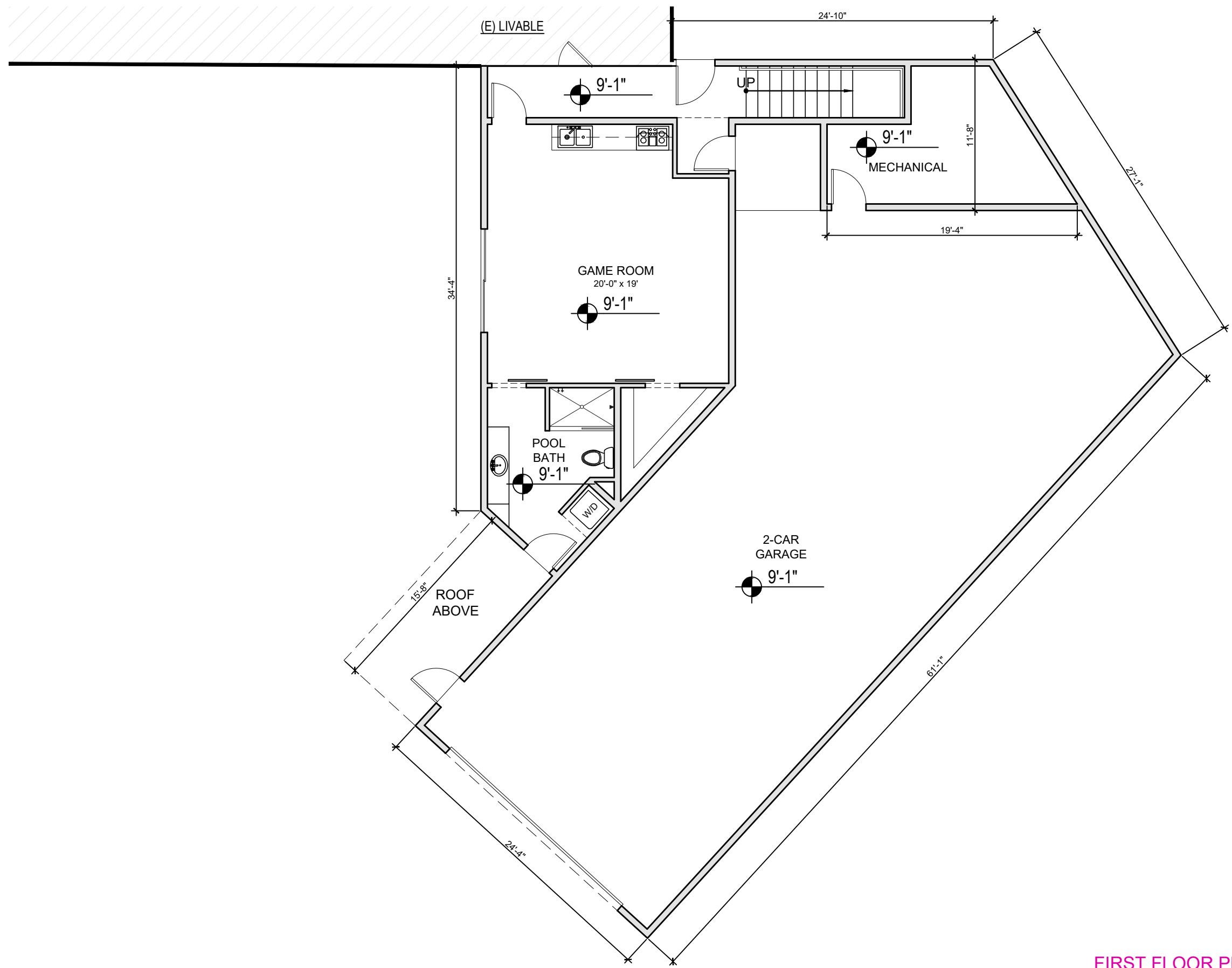


STRONG RESIDENCE
 137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
 ADDITION

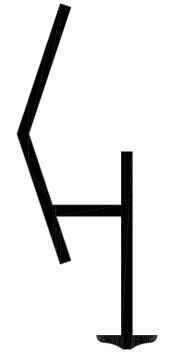


SP.2

DATE: 1/13/22



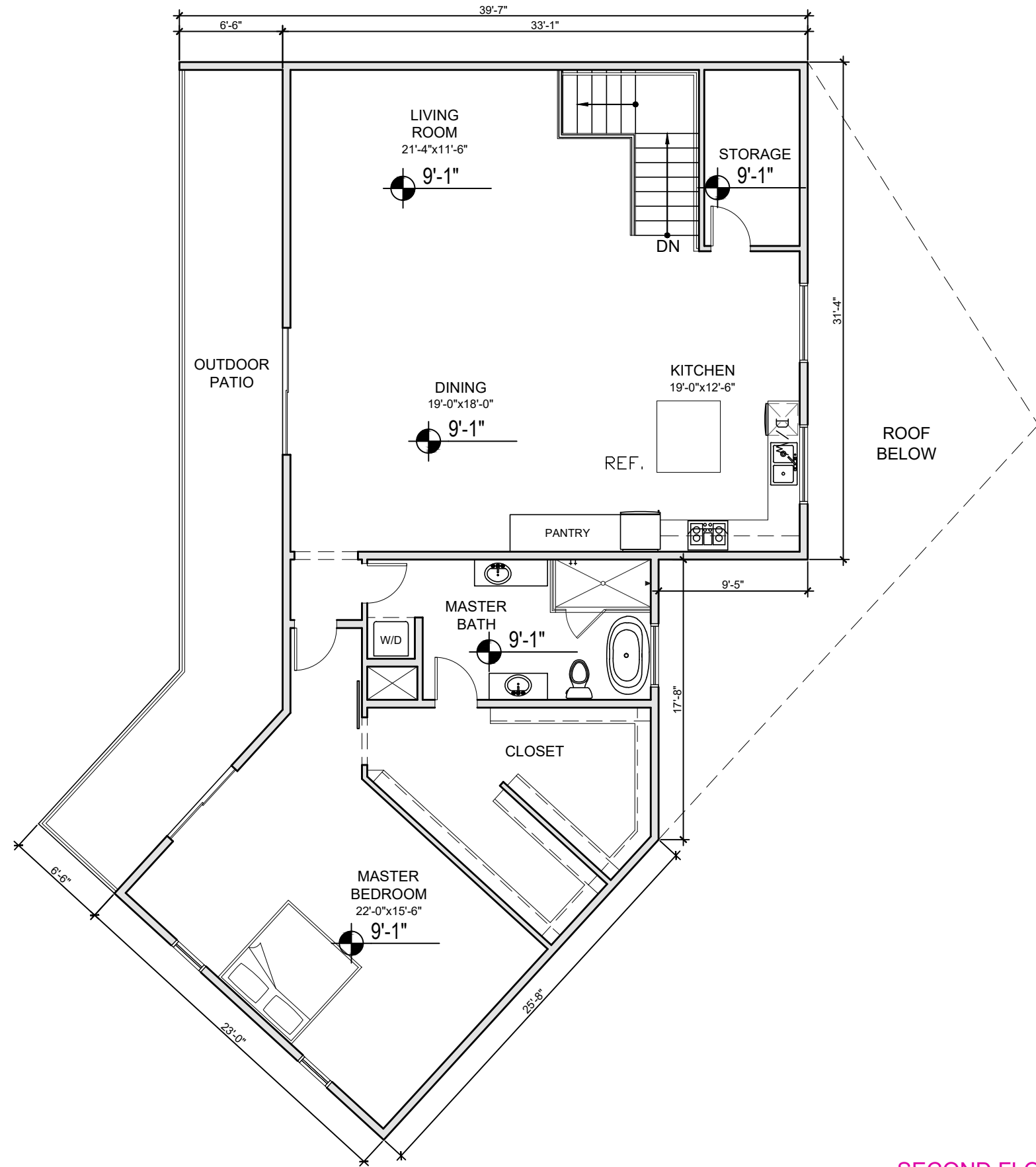
STRONG RESIDENCE
 137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
 ADDITION



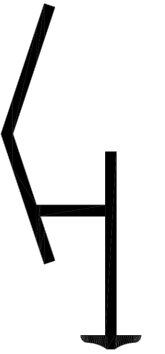
FIRST FLOOR PLAN - 732 SQ. FT.
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

FP.1

DATE: 1/13/22



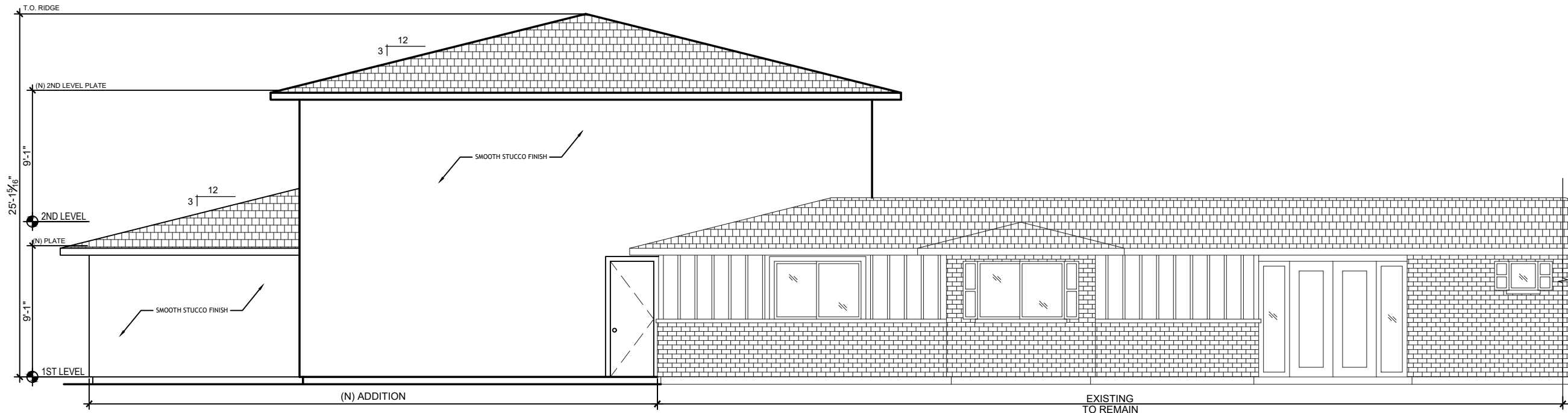
SECOND FLOOR PLAN - 1748 SQ. FT.
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



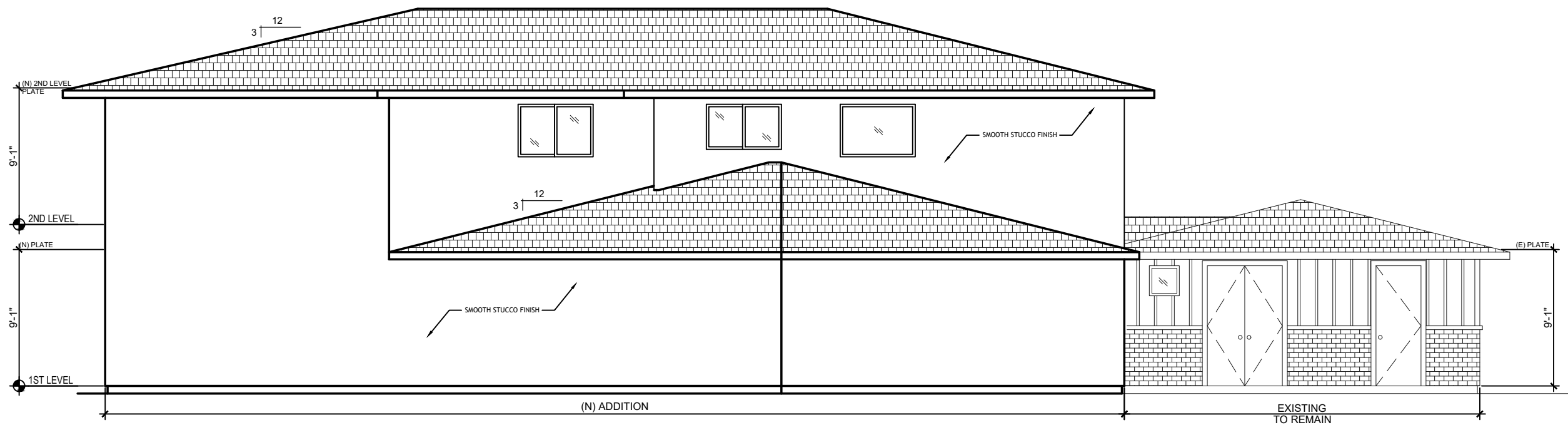
STRONG RESIDENCE
 137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
 ADDITION

FP.2

DATE: 1/13/22



FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



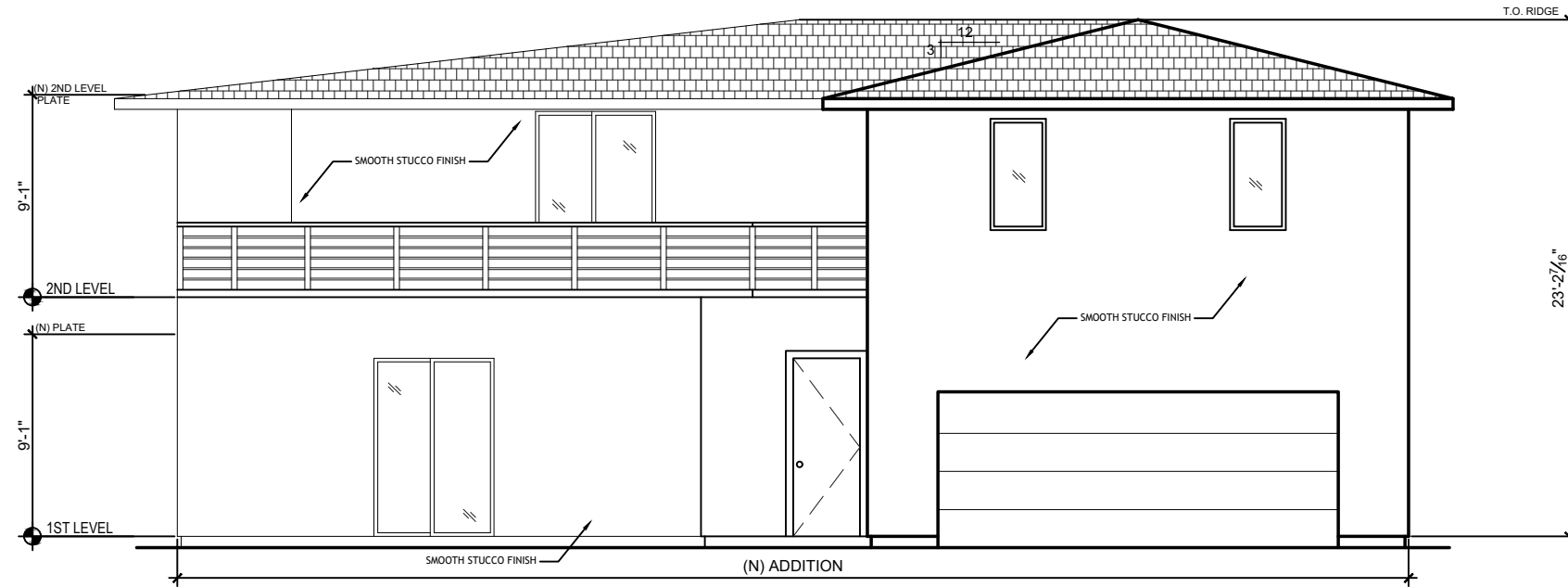
RIGHT ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



STRONG RESIDENCE
137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
ADDITION

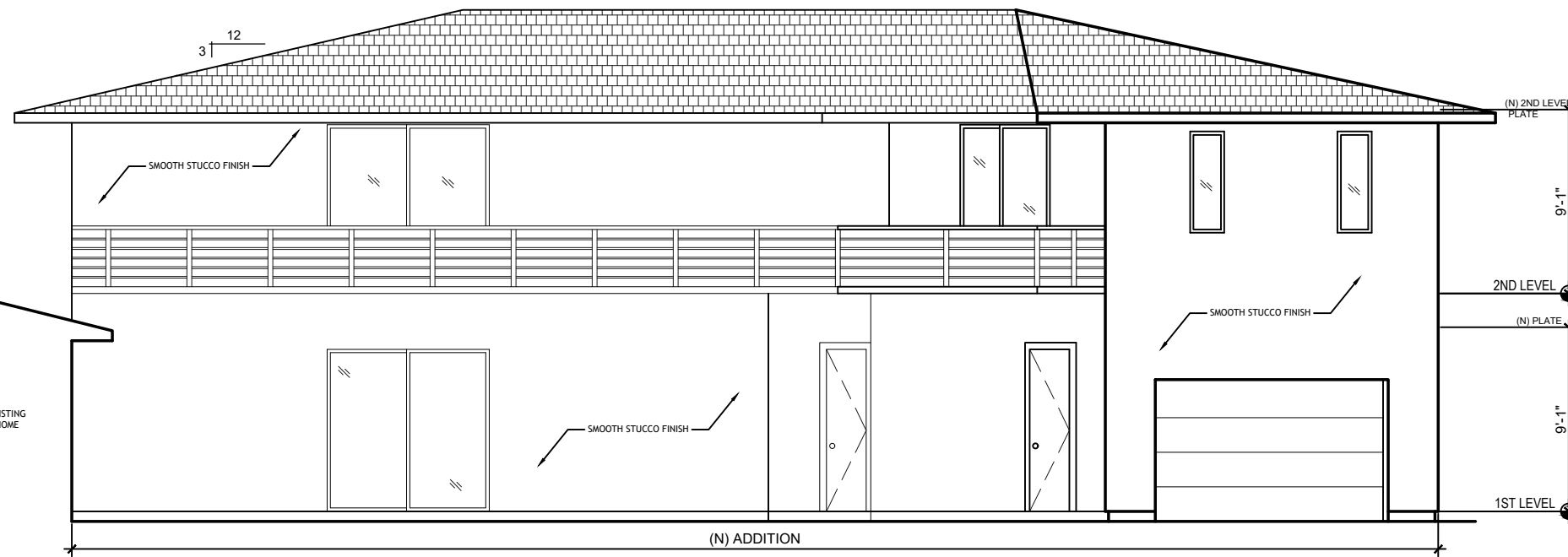
PE.1

DATE: 1/13/22



REAR ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



LEFT ELEVATION

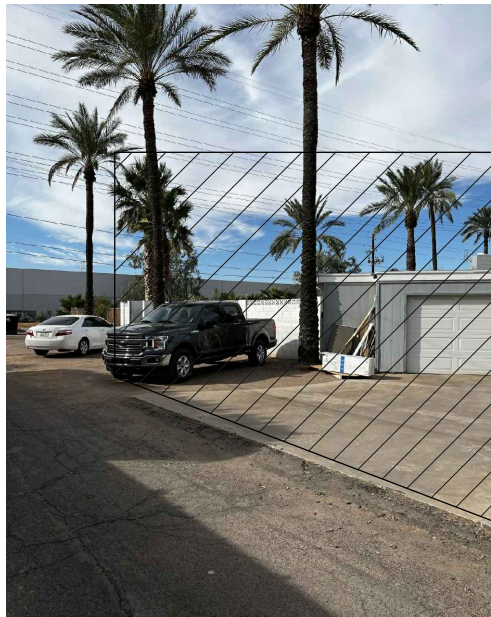
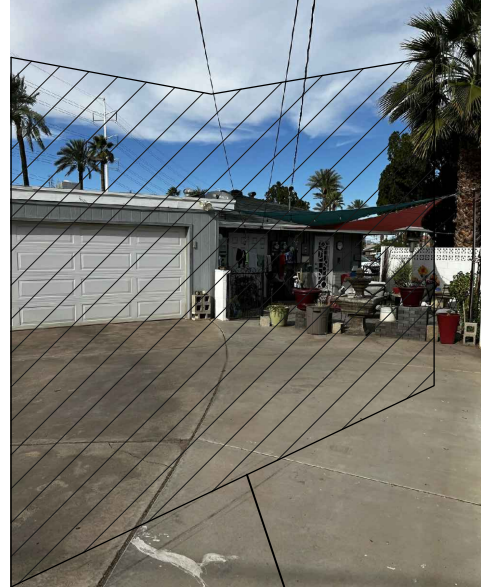
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



STRONG RESIDENCE
 137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
 ADDITION

PE.2

DATE: 1/13/22



LOCATION OF PROPOSED ADDITION

SITE PHOTOS



STRONG RESIDENCE
137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
ADDITION

PE.3

DATE: 1/13/22



CONCEPT PHOTOS



STRONG RESIDENCE
137 W PALMCROFT DR. TEMPE, AZ 85282
ADDITION

PE.4

DATE: 1/13/22