

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

South Coast Area Office  
 200 Oceangate, Suite 1000  
 Long Beach, CA 90802-4302  
 (562) 590-5071

Filed: 5/4/2009  
 49th Day: 6/22/2009  
 180th Day: 10/31/2009  
 Staff: Charles Posner - LB  
 Staff Report: 5/21/2009  
 Hearing Date: June 11, 2009  
 Commission Action:

**Th4a****STAFF REPORT: CONSENT CALENDAR**

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** 5-09-075

**APPLICANT:** Charles Christopher Forsyth

**AGENTS:** Maria Castellanos & M.E. O'Brien

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 2808 Strongs Drive, Venice, City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Co.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Demolition of a one-story single-family residence, and construction of a three-level, thirty-foot high (plus one forty-foot high roof access structures), 3,763 square foot single-family residence with an attached two-car garage on a canal-front lot.

Lot Area	2,700 square feet
Building Coverage	1,513 square feet
Pavement Coverage	313 square feet
Landscape Coverage	874 square feet
Parking Spaces	3
Zoning	RW-1
Plan Designation	Single Family - Waterway
Ht above final grade	30 feet (plus 40-foot high roof access)

**LOCAL APPROVAL:** City of Los Angeles Planning Department Approval, Case No. DIR-2008-4322 (SPP-MEL), 11/25/2008.

**SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS:**

1. City of Los Angeles certified Land Use Plan for Venice, 6/14/2001.
2. Coastal Development Permit 5-04-231 (Forsyth – 2808 Strongs Drive).
3. Coastal Development Permit 5-08-005 (Revell – 2621 Grand Canal).
4. Coastal Development Permit 5-08-032 (Salceda – 2308 Grand Canal).
5. Coastal Development Permit 5-08-276 (Gatto & Kingsbury – 2309 Grand Canal)

**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is recommending that the Commission grant a coastal development permit for the proposed development with special conditions relating to permeable yard area, landscaping, density, parking, building height, drainage, permit compliance and deed restriction. The applicant agrees with the recommendation. **See Page Two for the Motion.**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution to **APPROVE** the coastal development permit application with special conditions:

**MOTION:** *"I move that the Commission approve the coastal development permit applications included on the consent calendar in accordance with the staff recommendations."*

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in approval of all the permits included on the consent calendar. An affirmative vote by a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

**I. Resolution: Approval with Conditions**

The Commission hereby **APPROVES** a coastal development permit for the proposed development and adopts the findings set forth below on grounds that the development as conditioned will be in conformity with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. Approval of the permit complies with the California Environmental Quality Act because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the development on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible mitigation measures or alternatives that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts of the development on the environment.

**II. Standard Conditions**

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
4. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
5. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

### III. Special Conditions

#### 1. Permeable Yard Area

In order to maintain an open and visible access corridor, to enhance visual quality, and to preserve the water quality and biological productivity of the canals, an uncovered and permeable yard area totaling no less than fifteen times the width of the site (in this case: 15' x 30'= 450 square feet) shall be maintained on the project site in the front yard area between the structure and the front (Grand Canal) property line, as generally shown on **Exhibit #5 of the 5/21/09** staff report. The precise boundaries of the area that must remain uncovered and permeable yard area will be described and depicted in the exhibit attached to the Notice of Intent to Issue Permit (NOI) that the Executive Director issues for this permit. Uncovered means that no fill or building extensions (i.e. chimneys, balconies, stairs, trellises) shall be placed in or over the permeable yard area with the exception of fences or garden walls (not to exceed 42 inches in height) and permeable decks at grade (not to exceed 18 inches in height). The permeable yard area may include minimal coverage with impermeable pavers, stones, concrete walkways or other similar ground cover, but in no event shall impermeable materials occupy more than fifteen percent (15%) of the total amount of the required permeable yard area.

**PRIOR TO ISSUANCE, BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OF THE NOI FOR THIS COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**, and prior to the recording of the deed restriction required by **Special Condition Seven** below, the applicant shall provide a site plan, subject to the approval of the Executive Director, which complies with all of the above terms of this condition and clearly identifies the location and dimensions of the required permeable yard area, in accordance with the general description of that area in **Exhibit #5 of the 5/21/09** staff report. Once the Executive Director approves the site plan, the plan will be included as an exhibit to the NOI.

#### 2. Landscaping

Vegetated landscaped areas shall only consist of native plants or non-native drought tolerant plants, which are non-invasive. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society (<http://www.CNPS.org/>), the California Invasive Plant Council (formerly the California Exotic Pest Plant Council) (<http://www.cal-ipc.org/>), or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be employed or allowed to naturalize or persist on the site. No plant species listed as a "noxious weed" by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property. The use of pesticides and herbicides is prohibited in the front yard permeable yard area required by Special Condition One.

#### 3. Parking and Residential Density

The permitted use of the approved structure is a single-family residence. Three parking spaces shall be provided and maintained on the site as proposed and as indicated on **Exhibit #5 of the 5/21/09** staff report: two spaces in the garage and a third space on the driveway. Any proposed change in the number of residential units, change in number of on-site parking spaces, or change in use shall be submitted to the Executive Director to determine whether an amendment to this permit is necessary pursuant to the requirements of the Coastal Act and the California Code of Regulations.

#### 4. Building Height

No development is authorized within ten feet of the fronting canal property line (Grand Canal) and within or above the required 450 square foot permeable front yard area, except as described in Special Condition One above. At a point ten feet landward of the fronting canal property line the maximum height of any structure shall not exceed 22 feet above the centerline of the rear alley. Beyond ten horizontal feet from the fronting canal property line, one foot in additional height is permitted for each two additional horizontal feet to a maximum height of thirty feet (30') except for chimneys, ducts, and ventilation shafts which are limited to 35 feet. Roof deck railings shall not exceed 42 inches above the thirty-foot height limit. Building height is measured from the elevation of the centerline of the adjacent alley (Strong's Drive). This permit approves one roof access structure (stairway enclosure), with a footprint not exceeding one hundred square feet in area, to extend up to forty feet (40') above the elevation of the centerline of the adjacent alley.

#### 5. Drainage – Water Quality

**PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**, the applicant shall submit, for the review and approval of the Executive Director, a drainage plan that provides for the following:

- a) During construction of the proposed project, no runoff, site drainage or dewatering shall be directed from the site into any canal or street that drains into a canal, unless specifically authorized by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- b) All equipment and materials shall be stored and managed in a manner to minimize the potential of pollutants to enter the canals.
- c) A one hundred cubic foot french drain shall be installed on the project site to collect and reduce the amount of runoff that leaves the site.
- d) All runoff leaving the site shall be directed away from the canals and into the City storm drain system.
- e) No water from any pool or spa shall be discharged into any canal or street that drains into a canal.

The permittee and all successors in interest shall construct and maintain the development consistent with the drainage plans approved by the Executive Director.

#### 6. Permit Compliance

All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application, subject to any special conditions. Any deviation from the approved plans must be submitted for review by the Executive Director to determine whether an amendment to this coastal development permit is required.

## 7. Deed Restriction

**PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**, the applicant shall submit to the Executive Director for review and approval documentation demonstrating that the applicants have executed and recorded against the parcel governed by this permit a deed restriction, in a form and content acceptable to the Executive Director: (1) indicating that, pursuant to this coastal development permit, the California Coastal Commission has authorized development on the subject property, subject to terms and conditions that restrict the use and enjoyment of that property; and (2) imposing the Special Conditions of this permit as covenants, conditions and restrictions on the use and enjoyment of the property. The deed restriction shall include a legal description of the entire parcel governed by this coastal development permit. The deed restriction shall also indicate that, in the event of an extinguishment or termination of the deed restriction for any reason, the terms and conditions of this coastal development permit shall continue to restrict the use and enjoyment of the subject property so long as either this coastal development permit or the development it authorizes, or any part, modification, or amendment thereof, remains in existence on or with respect to the subject property.

The deed restriction required by this permit, once recorded, shall supersede and replace the deed restriction originally required and recorded pursuant to Coastal Development Permit 5-04-231 (Los Angeles County Instrument No. 04-2807848, recorded October 29, 2004).

## IV. Findings and Declarations

The Commission hereby finds and declares:

### A. Project Description

The applicant proposes to demolish an existing 1940s era one-story single-family residence on the canal-fronting lot, and to construct a new three-level, 3,763 square foot single-family residence (See Exhibits). An attached two-car garage and the driveway provide three on-site parking spaces, all accessed from Strongs Drive, the rear alley (Exhibit #5). The proposed project has been approved by the City of Los Angeles Planning Department (Case #DIR-2008-4322, 11/25/08) and is consistent with the RW-1 zoning designation and the surrounding land uses. On October 13, 2004, the Commission approved Coastal Development Permit 5-04-231 (Forsyth) for the construction of a thirty-foot high, 3,816 square foot single-family residence on the project site. That permit, however, expired prior to being vested.

The project site is a 2,700 square foot lot situated on the west bank of Grand Canal in the Venice Canals residential area (Exhibit #2). The neighborhood is comprised of both old and new one, two and three-story single-family residences, and a few non-conforming duplexes. Public sidewalks currently provide public access along all banks of the canals, including the west bank of Grand Canal in front of the project site (Exhibit #3).

The proposed project provides a front yard setback and a permeable yard in conformance with the Commission-certified building standards for the Venice Canals neighborhood. The certified City of Los Angeles Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice requires that all new houses maintain a permeable yard area equal to fifteen times the width of the lot (15'x 30'= 450 sq. ft.) between the canal property line and the front of the house. The proposed project provides the required 450 square foot permeable yard area within the fifteen-foot deep front yard setback area adjacent to the Grand Canal public walkway (Exhibit #5). The Venice LUP requires that new structures be set back at least ten feet from the front (canal) property line.

The proposed project has a thirty-foot high roof deck and a forty-foot high stairway enclosure (roof access structure) to provide access to the roof deck (Exhibit #7). The footprint of the proposed roof access structure does not exceed one hundred square feet in area, and it is set back more than sixty feet from the canal. One roof access structure, with a footprint not exceeding one hundred square feet in area. Is permitted to exceed the thirty-foot height limit.

Therefore, the proposed project conforms to the height limitations for the project area, provides the required permeable front yard and three on-site parking spaces, and is consistent with community character. The proposed project, as conditioned, will have no negative effects on visual resources or coastal access. As conditioned, the project is consistent with Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act, the policies of the certified Venice LUP, and previous Commission approvals, and will not prejudice the City's ability to prepare an LCP.

#### **B. Public Access**

As conditioned, the proposed development will not have any new adverse impact on public access to the coast or to nearby recreational facilities. Thus, as conditioned, the proposed development conforms with Sections 30210 through 30214, Sections 30220 through 30224, and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

#### **C. Public Recreation**

The proposed development, as conditioned, does not interfere with public recreational use of coastal resources. The proposed development, as conditioned, protects coastal areas suited for recreational activities. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed development, as conditioned, is in conformity with Sections 30210 through 30214 and Sections 30220 through 30223 of the Coastal Act regarding the promotion of public recreational opportunities.

#### **D. Marine Resources and Water Quality**

The proposed work will be occurring in a location where there is a potential for a discharge of polluted runoff from the project site into coastal waters. The storage or placement of construction material, debris, or waste in a location where it could be carried into coastal waters would result in an adverse effect on the marine environment. To reduce the potential for construction and post-construction related impacts on water quality, the Commission imposes special conditions requiring, but not limited to, the appropriate storage and handling of construction equipment and materials to minimize the potential of pollutants to enter coastal waters and for the use of on-going best management practices following construction. As conditioned, the Commission finds that the development conforms with Sections 30230 and 30231 of the Coastal Act.

**E. Development**

The development is located within an existing developed area and, as conditioned, will be compatible with the character and scale of the surrounding area, has been designed to assure structural integrity, and will avoid cumulative adverse impacts on public access. Therefore, the Commission finds that the development, as conditioned, conforms with Sections 30250, 30251, 30252, 30253 and the public access provisions of the Coastal Act.

**F. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA)**

As conditioned, the development will not result in significant degradation of adjacent habitat, recreation areas, or parks and is compatible with the continuance of those habitat, recreation, or park areas. Therefore, the Commission finds that the project, as conditioned, conforms with Section 30240(b) of the Coastal Act.

**G. Deed Restriction**

To ensure that any prospective future owners of the property are made aware of the applicability of the conditions of this permit, the Commission imposes one additional condition requiring that the property owners record a deed restriction against the property, referencing all of the above Special Conditions of this permit and imposing them as covenants, conditions and restrictions on the use and enjoyment of the property. Thus, as conditioned, this permit ensures that any prospective future owners will receive actual notice of the restrictions and/or obligations imposed on the use and enjoyment of the land in connection with the authorized development. The deed restriction required by this permit, once recorded, shall supersede and replace the deed restriction originally required and recorded pursuant to Coastal Development Permit 5-04-231 (Los Angeles County Instrument No. 04-2807848, recorded October 29, 2004).

**H. Local Coastal Program**

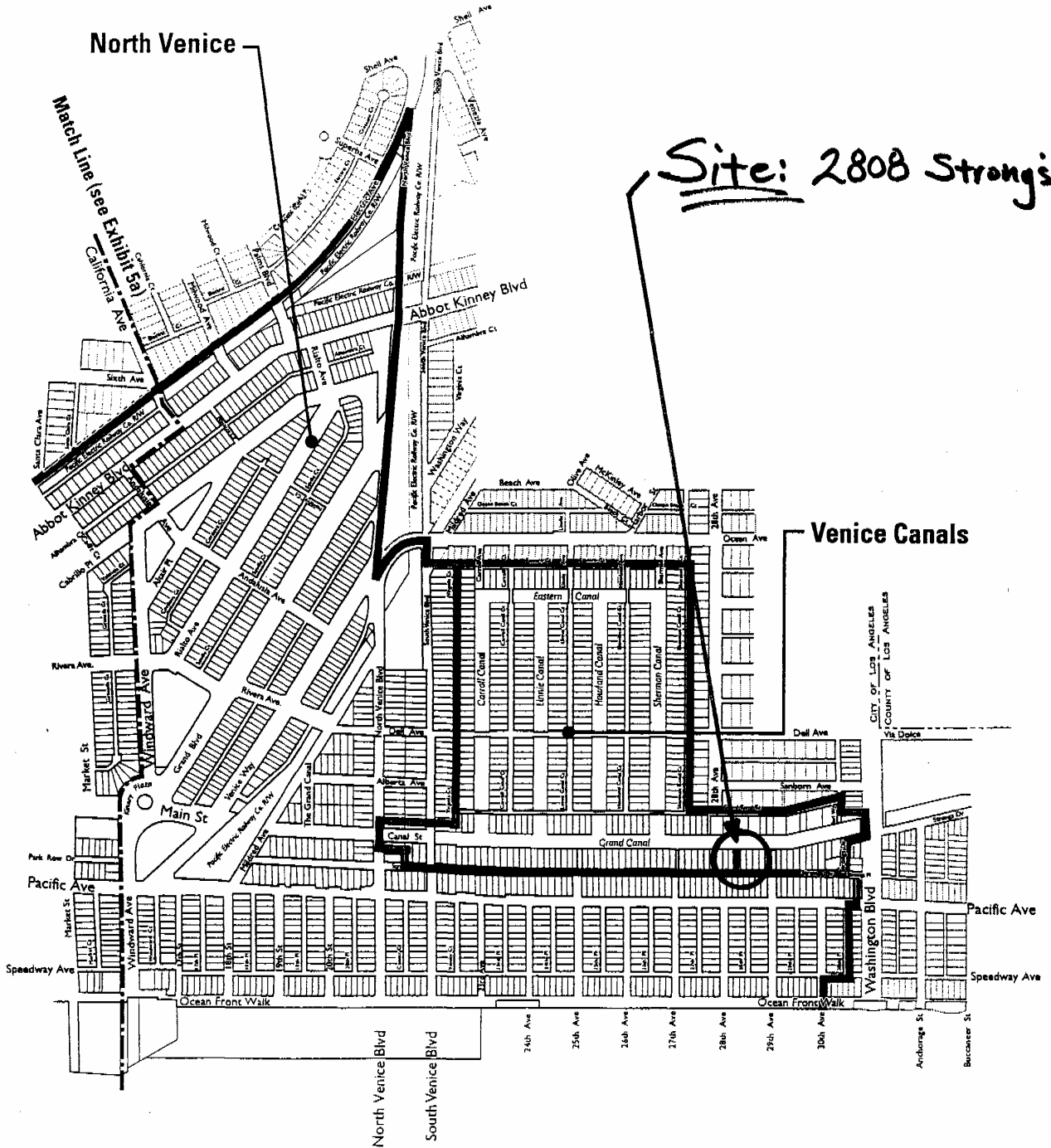
Coastal Act section 30604(a) states that, prior to certification of a local coastal program ("LCP"), a coastal development permit can only be issued upon a finding that the proposed development is in conformity with Chapter 3 of the Act and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare an LCP that is in conformity with Chapter 3. The City of Los Angeles Land Use Plan (LUP) for Venice was effectively certified on June 14, 2001. As conditioned, the proposed development is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act and with the certified Land Use Plan for the area. Approval of the project, as conditioned, will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare an LCP that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

**I. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

As conditioned, there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed project, as conditioned to mitigate the identified impacts, is the least environmentally damaging feasible alternative and can be found consistent with the requirements of the Coastal Act to conform to CEQA.







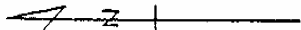
LUP  
 Exhibit 5b  
 Subarea: North Venice • Venice Canals

Not to Scale  
**COASTAL COMMISSION**  
**5-09-075**  
 EXHIBIT # 2  
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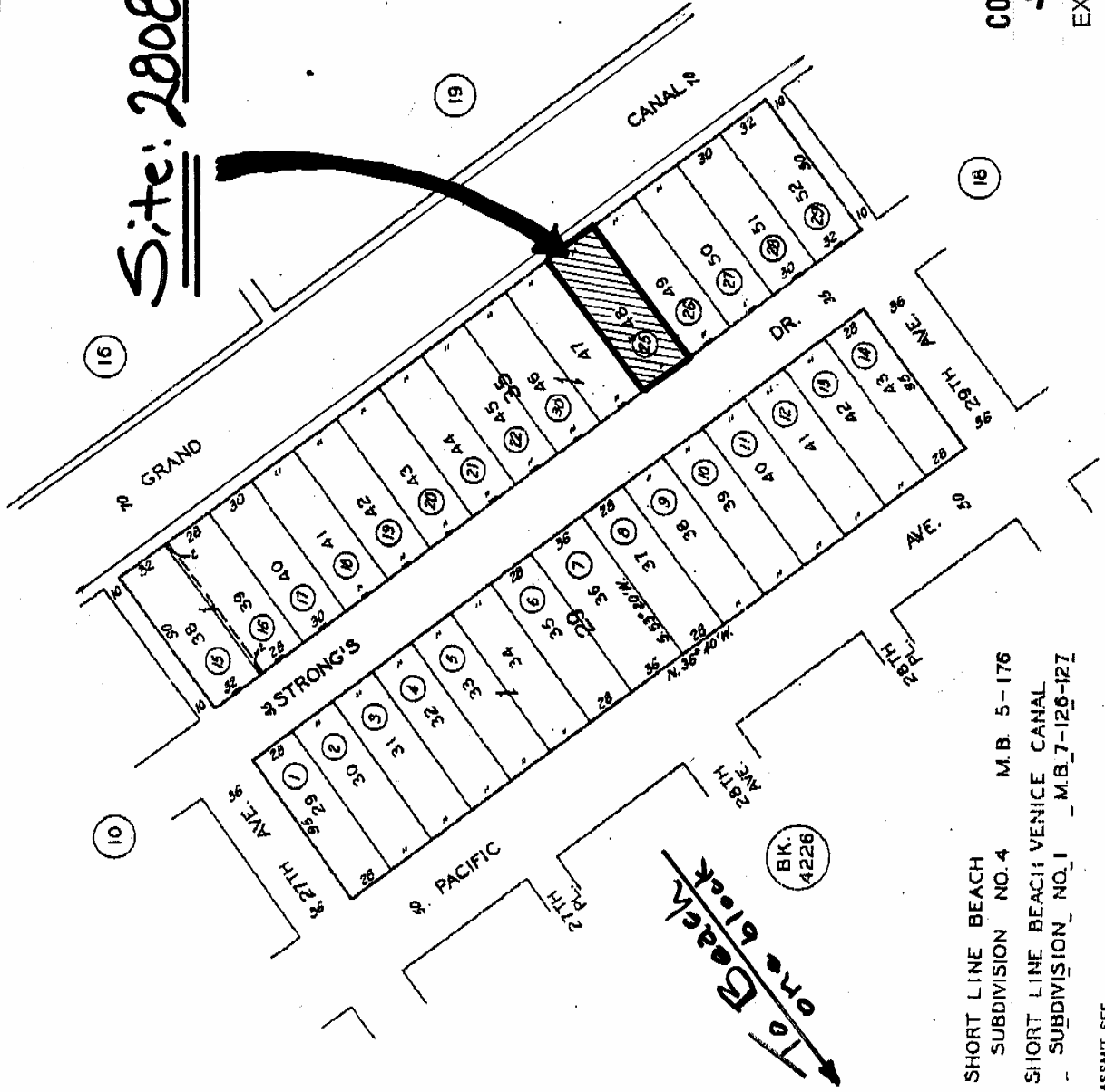
County of Los Angeles: Rick Auerbach, Assessor

4227 17

SCALE 1" = 60'



Site: 2808 Strong's Dr.



CODE 87  
 SHORT LINE BEACH SUBDIVISION NO. 4 M.B. 5-176  
 SHORT LINE BEACH VENICE CANAL SUBDIVISION NO. 1 M.B. 7-126-127

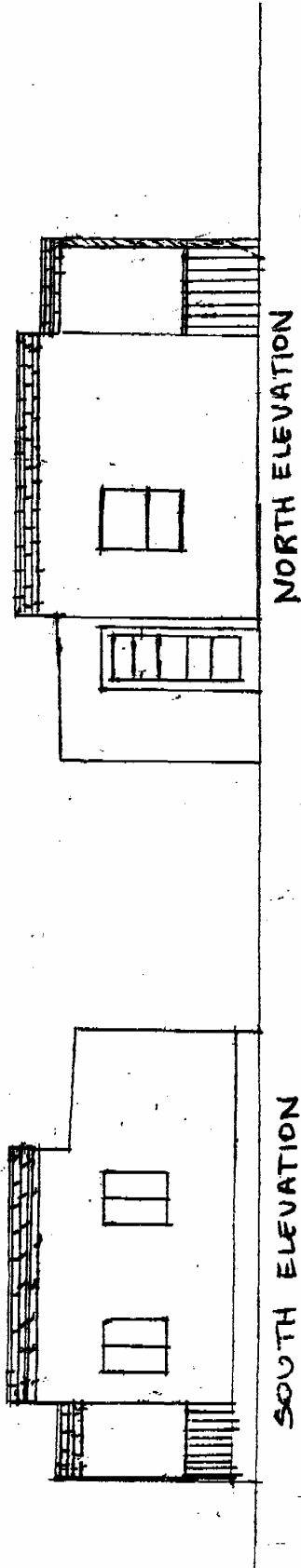
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COASTAL COMMISSION

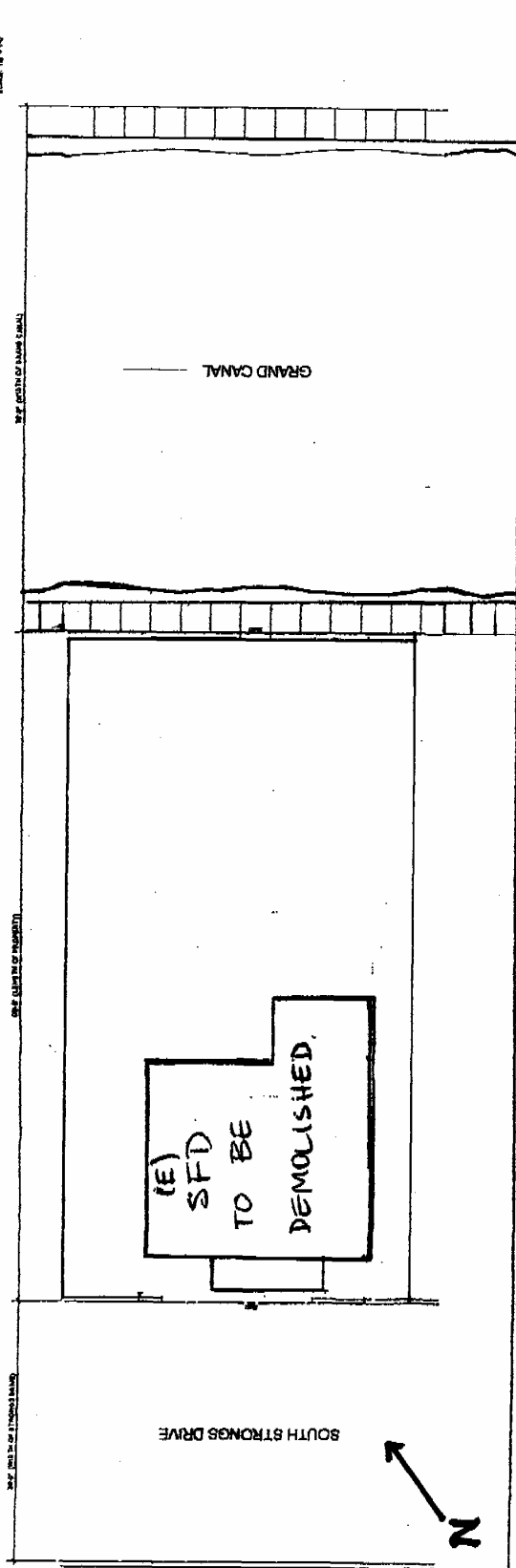
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EXHIBIT # 3

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



(E) 550 ± SQ. FT. SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING.

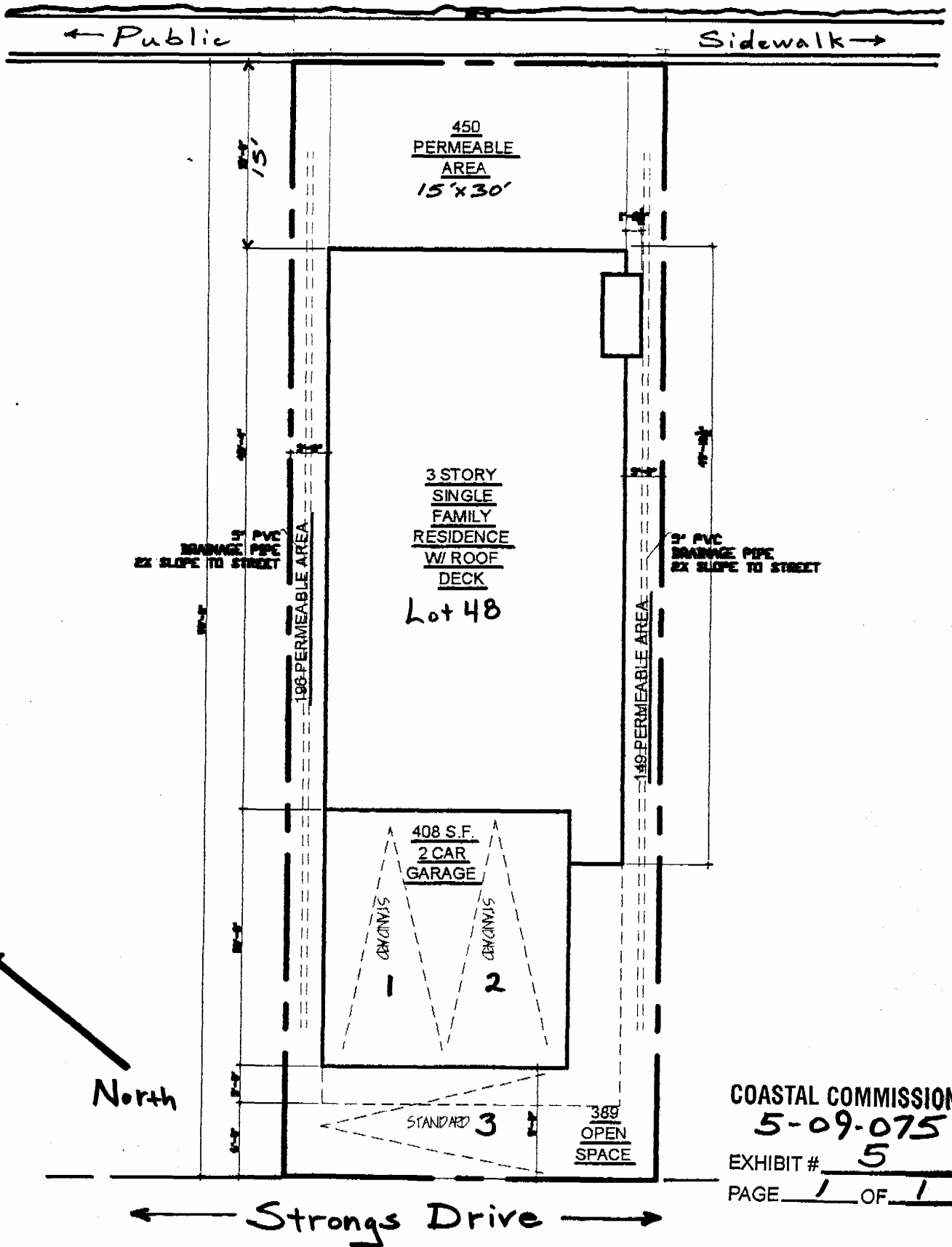
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5-09-075

EXHIBIT # 4

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CANAL

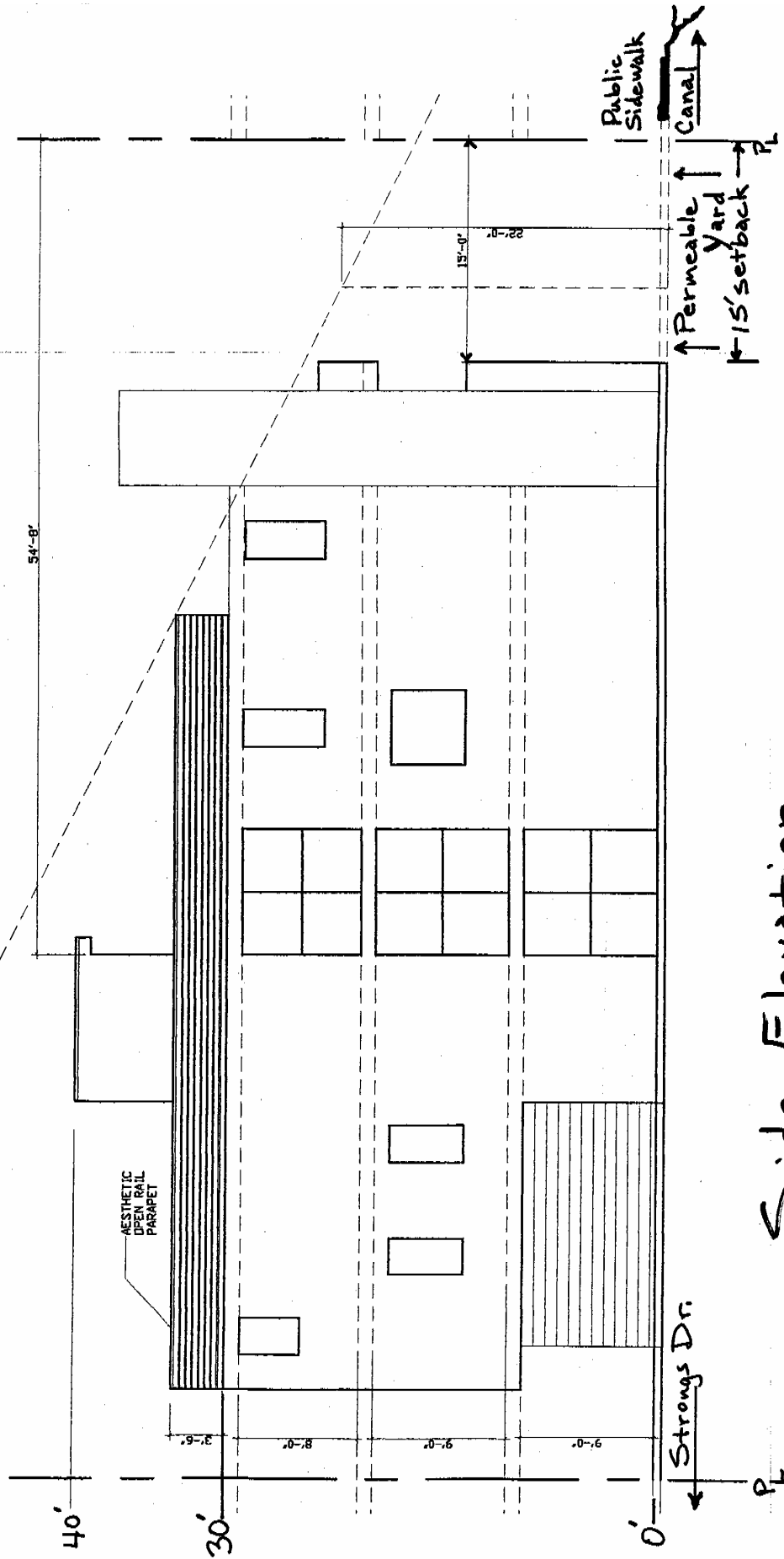


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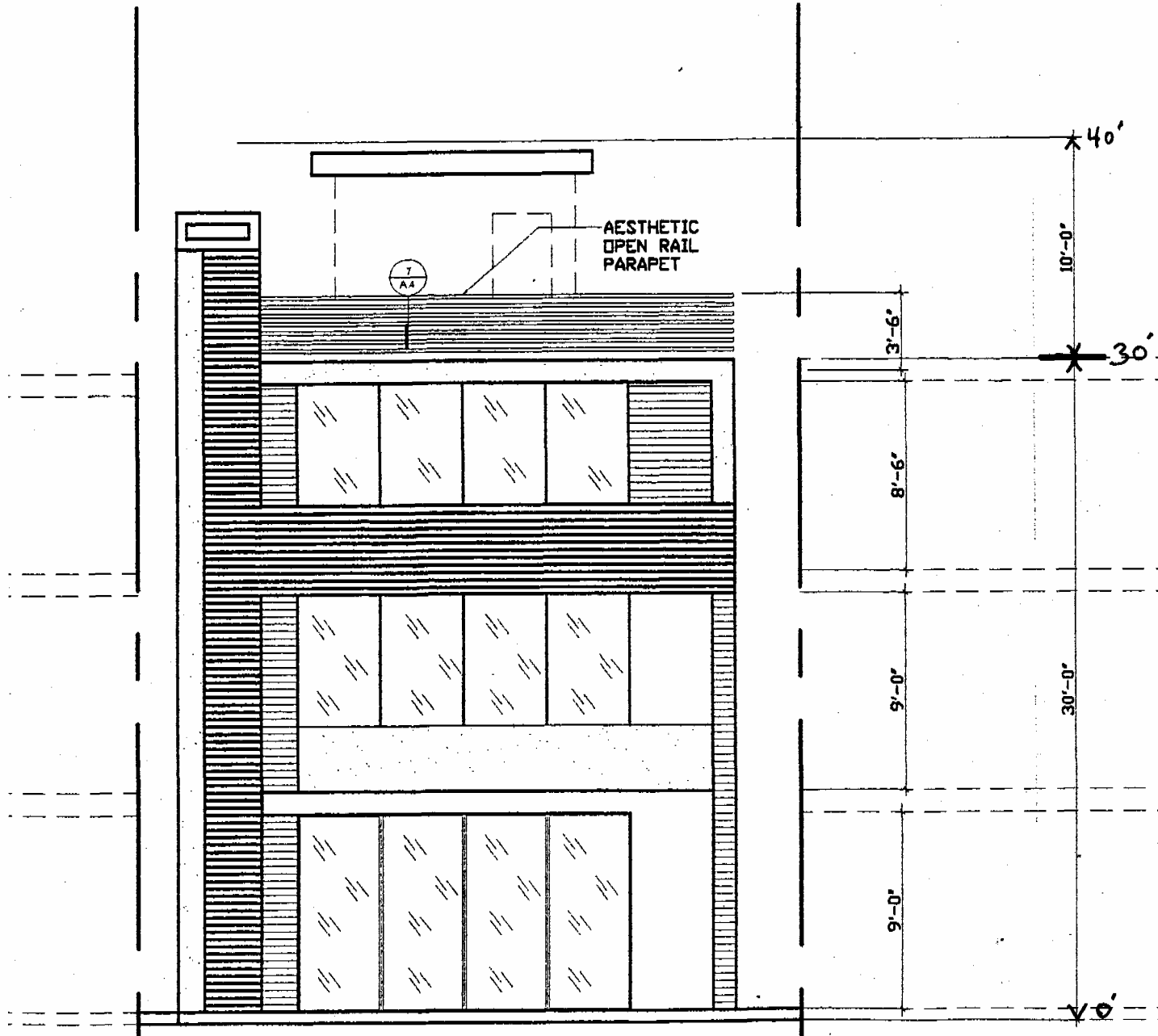
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EXHIBIT # 5

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Side Elevation



Front (Grand Canal)  
Elevation

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EXHIBIT # 7

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