

02/27/2015



## D/DRC Case

1317 Geiger Street

Cottontown Architectural Conservation District

TMS: 09110-11-07



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**DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION**  
**DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT**  
**HISTORIC AGENDA**  
**EVALUATION SHEET**  
**Case # 6**

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**ADDRESS:** 1317 Gieger Ave.

**APPLICANT:** Jeff Seshun, homeowner

**TAX MAP REFERENCE:** TMS#09110-11-07

**USE OF PROPERTY:** Residential

**REVIEW DISTRICT:** Cottontown Architectural Conservation District

**NATURE OF REQUEST:** Request Certificate of Design Approval for exterior change

**FINDINGS/COMMENTS:**

This is a c. 1925 Bungalow style single-family home that is contributing to the Cottontown Architectural Conservation District. The building features a prominent side gable roof that engages to cover the full-width front porch. A dormer is located centrally and near the ridge of the front plane of this roof. It appears slightly smaller than average due to the fact that the roof extends past the front wall of the building and continues seamlessly to cover the front porch, which extends the front plane of the roof considerably. The building retains other original features including windows, front door and porch columns, giving this building a high degree of historic and architectural integrity despite the addition of vinyl siding.

The current proposal is to remove the front dormer in order to construct a second story addition/conversion of existing attic space, with the construction of a new, inset dormer on the front plane of the roof whose own gable will extend up higher than the main roof ridge. The dormer's design is to provide egress through the front windows since the converted attic is proposed for use as a bedroom.

**PERTINENT SECTIONS FROM GUIDELINES**

***SECTION 6: GUIDELINES FOR ADDITIONS/ENCLOSURES TO EXISTING BUILDINGS***

***A. PRINCIPLES***

*It is often necessary to increase the space of a building in order for it to continue to adapt to the owner's needs. Over time, a family's/business's space needs change and, in order to accommodate these needs, a building may need to be enlarged. While these additions are permitted, they should serve to reinforce and not detract from the existing architectural form and design of the building.*

*Additions shall not significantly alter original distinguishing qualities of buildings such as the basic form, materials, fenestration, and stylistic elements. They shall be clearly distinguished from original portions of the building and shall result in minimal damage to it. Character defining features of the historic building shall not be radically changed,*

*obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of adding new construction. The size and scale of the new addition shall be in proportion to the historic portion of the building and clearly subordinate to it. Additions should be attached to the rear or least conspicuous side of the building. They should be constructed so that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building will be unimpaired.*

## **B. GUIDELINES**

### **Additions**

- 1. Site additions so that they do not detract from or obstruct important architectural features of the existing building or others around it, especially the principle façade.*

As proposed, the addition actually removes an important architectural feature of the principal façade. The gable dormer is a typical and integral part of many Bungalow style homes, and in this case it reinforces its contribution to the house by repeating the window pattern found throughout the building in its single window sash. The deep eaves of the gabled dormer repeat those of the house and underneath the vinyl there are likely exposed rafter tails in both the dormer and house's eaves.

Removal of the original dormer would not meet this guideline, which discourages obstructing or detracting from important architectural features when building an addition.

- 2. Design additions to be compatible with the original structure in materials, style and detailing.*

The proposed new dormer maintains a gable roof shape with wide eaves and central windows, which are some details similar to what exists now. However, overall the new front dormer is inconsistent with the house's style; Bungalows do not usually feature inset dormers with a long platform in front of the dormer.

The material proposed for the dormer siding is cement fiberboard, with the same material used for the trim. The windows proposed would match those found on the house, according to the architect, although their material has not been proposed as of yet. The low pitched platform in front of the windows in the dormer is presumably shingle to match the house.

Currently the house has vinyl siding, which was likely placed on top of original wood siding. According to this guideline the material should match the "original structure" and both the wood siding originally used and the vinyl siding applied are different in thickness and reveal than the proposed cement fiberboard.

- 3. Limit the size and scale of additions so that the integrity of the original structure is not compromised.*

The size and scale of the roof dormer addition is too large for the space. It is not larger than other dormers in the area, but it is too large for this building, as evidenced by its need to dig into the front plane of the roof and create a recess for itself. Dormers are secondary roof features that sit atop a roof plane and usually below the ridge line; this proposal creates a dormer that compromises the integrity of the original roof structure.

- 4. Additions are also subject to the guidelines for new construction*

See below.

## **SECTION 5: GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

### **A. PRINCIPLES**

*Within the Cottontown/Bellevue district, there are vacant lots. The construction of new or replacement structures on these lots will greatly affect the district by either reinforcing or undermining existing historic patterns. New construction shall be consistent with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, proportion and rhythm of openings, setbacks, orientation and spacing. However, new buildings need not imitate past architectural styles to be successful infill; they may reflect the era of their own construction while using significant themes, such as height, materials, roof form, massing, set-back, and the rhythm of openings to insure that a new building blends with its context. It is hoped that the new construction of today will be contemporary and contextual.*

## B. GUIDELINES

*1. Height: The characteristic height in Cottontown/Bellevue is 1 to 2 stories. Construct new buildings to a height that is compatible with the height of surrounding historic buildings. New construction shall not vary greatly in height from older buildings in the vicinity.*

Not applicable.

*2. Size & Scale: The size and scale of a new building shall be visually compatible with surrounding buildings. Although much larger than its neighbors in terms of square footage, the building shown maintains the same scale and rhythm as the existing buildings. Do not construct buildings that disrupt the existing scale of the area.*

See above.

*3. Massing: Arrange the mass of a new building (the relationship of solid components (ex. walls, columns, etc.) to open spaces (ex. windows, doors, arches)) so that it is compatible with existing historic buildings on the block or street. Breaking up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses is essential to maintaining the character of the streetscape. Do not construct single, monolithic forms that are not relieved by variations in massing.*

Not applicable.

*d. Directional Expression: Site the entrance of the building so that it is compatible with surrounding buildings. Horizontal buildings can be made to relate to more vertical adjacent structures by breaking the façade into smaller masses that conform to the primary expression of the streetscape. Do not construct strongly horizontal or vertical façade expressions.*

Not applicable.

*4. Setback: Locate the new building on the site so that the distance of the structure from the right of way is similar to adjacent structures. Do not violate the existing setback pattern by placing buildings in front of or behind existing façade lines.*

Not applicable.

*5. Sense of Entry: Place the main entrance and the associated architectural elements (porches, steps, etc.) so that they are compatible to surrounding structures. The main entrance shall be constructed with covered porches, porticos or other architectural forms that are found on historic structures on the block or street. Construct facades with a strong sense of entry.*

Not applicable.

*6. Rhythm of Openings: Construct new buildings so that the relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door & window openings) are visually compatible with historic buildings on the block or street. Maintain a similar ratio of height to width in the bays of the façade. Do not introduce incompatible façade patterns that upset the rhythm of openings established in surrounding structures.*

The rhythm of openings for the proposal is in keeping with some other dormer examples in the area with large windows.

7. *Roof Shape: Use roof shapes, pitches, and materials that are visually compatible with those of surrounding buildings. Nearly all of the buildings in Cottontown/Bellevue have pitched roofs, with gable, hip or a combination thereof as the predominant style. Do not introduce roof shapes or pitches that are not found in the area.*

The roof shape proposed would have an inset dormer with a gable that extends up past the original ridge line of the house. This inset shape is not found anywhere in the district, nor do dormers extend up past the main ridge line of the house. All dormers extend either along the same height from the ridge line, or, more commonly, they begin just below the ridge line. They do not extend up past the main house.

The proposed dormer addition does not meet this guideline as it introduces a roof shape that is not found in the area.

8. *Outbuildings: Construct garage and storage buildings so that they reflect the character of the existing house and are compatible in terms of height, scale, and roof shape. Place such buildings away from the primary façade of the building. Do not allow outbuildings to obscure character-defining features of a building.*

Not applicable.

9. *Materials, Texture, and Details: Use materials, textures, and architectural features that are visually compatible with those of historic buildings on the block or street. When selecting architectural details, consider the scale, placement, profile, and relief of details on surrounding structures for the basis of design decisions. If horizontal siding is to be used, consider the board size, width of exposure, length, and trim detail such as corner boards on adjacent historic structure for specifications of the new material.*

The horizontal siding proposed is cement fiberboard. This material is not a close approximation of wood siding when used on the same building with existing wood or vinyl siding, as it does not have the same width of exposure and thickness as wood or the shapes of vinyl siding, which was designed to closely mimic wood siding. However, the use of cement fiberboard on trim may be appropriate. Corner boards would also be appropriate.

The window material has not been submitted for review.

## **SECTION 7: GUIDELINES FOR MAINTENANCE & REHABILITATION**

### **5. ROOF PITCH/MATERIAL**

#### **a. Principles**

*Roofs are highly visible components of historic buildings. They are an integral part of a building's overall design and often help define its architectural style. The most common residential roof types are gable, hip, or a combination. The original shape and pitch of the roof should be retained.*

*Where existing roofing material is non-original, the existing roof may be retained, replaced in a manner known to be accurate based on documentation or physical evidence, or treated in a contemporary style.*

*Rooftop additions are another common change to historic buildings. The addition should be designed to be distinguished from the historic portion of the building; be set back from the wall plane; and be placed so it is inconspicuous when viewed from the street.*

#### **b. Guidelines**

*i. Preserve the original roof form in the course of rehabilitation.*

The proposed addition would not preserve the original roof form. It would require the removal of an original dormer and the installation of an inset dormer; the dormer would actually require the central bay of the roof to be removed to create a much shallower pitched platform in front of the proposed dormer windows. This would hollow out the center section of the front plane of the roof. The new dormer would also interrupt and go above the existing ridge line. These alterations to the original roof form do not meet this guideline.

*ii. Preserve historic roofing materials when technically and economically feasible.*

Not applicable.

*iii. Replace deteriorated roof surfacing with new material, such as composition shingles or tabbed asphalt shingles, that match the original in composition, size, shape, color, and texture.*

Not applicable.

*iv. Retain or replace where necessary: dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys, cresting, weather vanes, and other distinctive architectural or stylistic features that give a roof its essential character.*

This guideline encourages retaining original distinctive features that give a roof its essential character. Replacement “where necessary” refers to the need for replacement due to deterioration, but the first goal is to retain these items. The proposal to remove the original dormer does not meet this guideline.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff finds that the proposal does not meet Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the guidelines and recommends that the request for Certificate of Design Approval be denied.





At Left: Nearby historic dormers are circled in red; from this angle it is evident that they do not go above the main ridge lines.

The oblong circle highlights 1317 Geiger Street

Google Image

## Information Provided by Applicant

## 1317 Geiger Ave – Neighborhood Dormer Window Examples



1319 Geiger



1401 Confederate



1308 Summerville



2220 Marion



2234 Marion



2113 Marion



2203 Marion



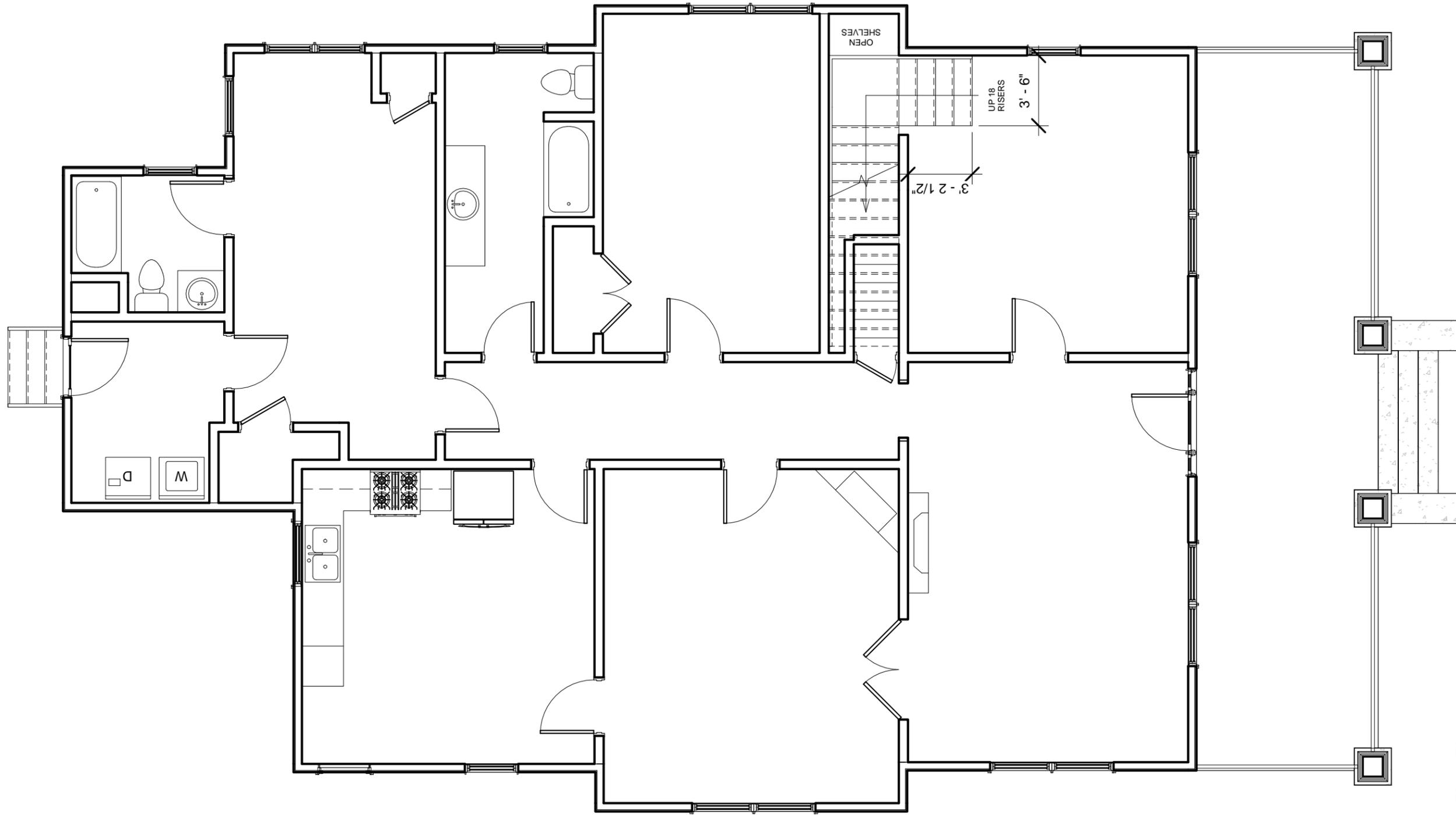
2126 Wallace



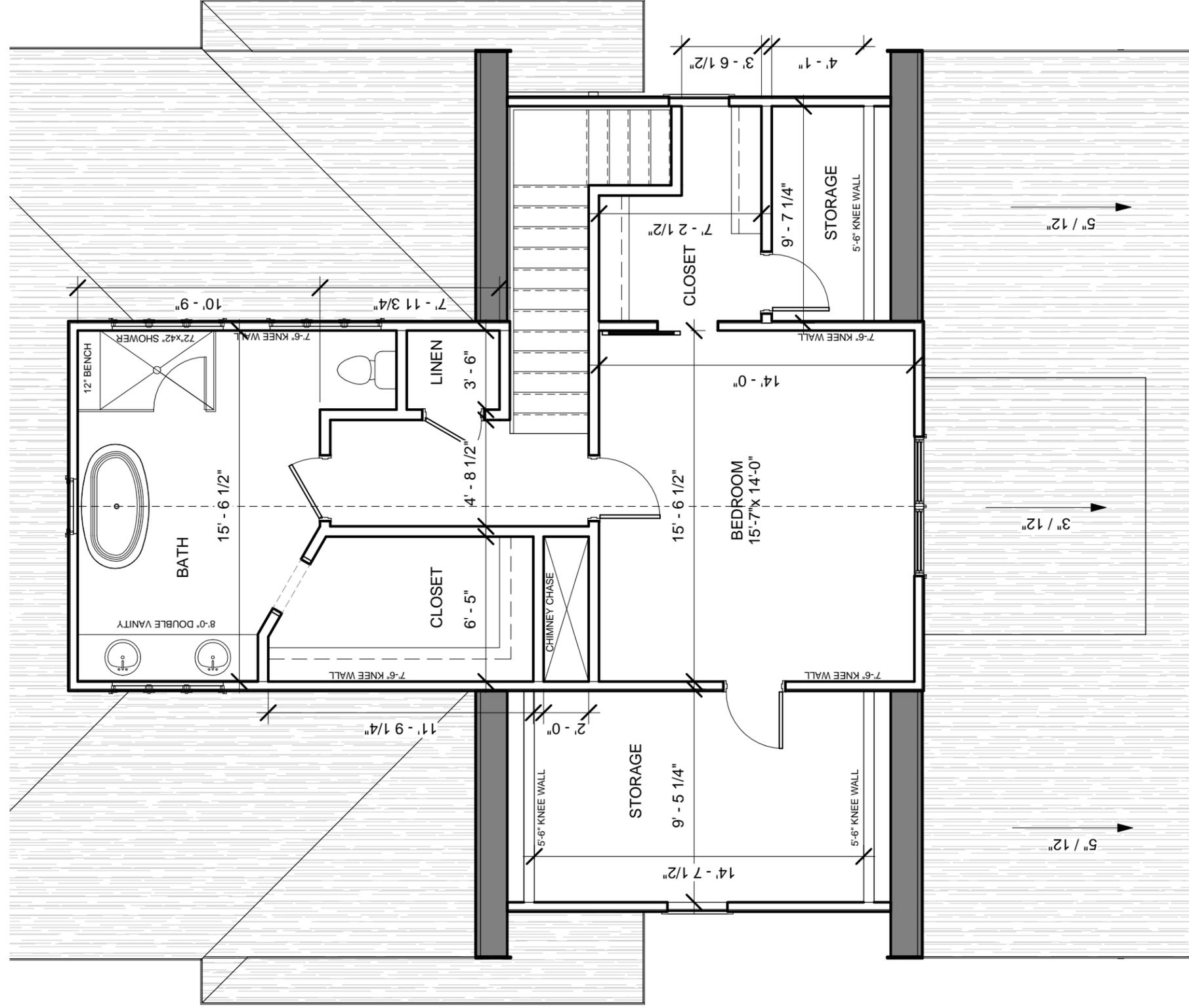
2806 Marion



1420 Victoria



1 First Floor Plan  
 3/16" = 1'-0"



1 Proposed Second Floor Plan  
 3/16" = 1'-0"



① Front Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"



② Left Side Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"



① Rear Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"



② Right Side Elevation  
3/16" = 1'-0"

FIRST FLOOR



**SESHUN RESIDENCE**  
Columbia, South Carolina  
Front Perspective  
07.06.2016



**SESHUN RESIDENCE**  
Columbia, South Carolina  
Overall Perspective  
07.06.2016