

Harmon Apartments

2049 Dorchester Avenue

Boston, MA 02124-4799

Application for Small Project Review

Submitted to the:

Boston Redevelopment Authority



Harmon Apartments

March 2015

View 1, from Dorchester Avenue



March 26th, 2015

Sponsor:
The Boston Home Inc.
2049 Dorchester
Avenue Boston, MA
02124

Co-Developer:
Affirmative Investments, Inc.
33 Union Street
Boston, MA 02108

Harmon Apartments

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March 26, 2015

Brian P. Golden, Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority
Boston City Hall, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Harmon Apartments, 2049 Dorchester Ave., Dorchester, MA 02124

Dear Mr. Golden:

We are pleased to submit this Application for Small Project Review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80E, of the Boston Zoning Code.

The proposed project will consist of 39 residential units of mixed-income housing. 33 of the 39 units will be restricted to residents and families with income at or below 60% of Area Median Income and 4 of these units will be restricted to residents at 30% of Area Median Income.

The project location is 2049 Dorchester Avenue in South Dorchester on the campus of The Boston Home. Our goal is create affordable residential units that will allow persons with neurological disabilities to live independently and to remain part of the community.

This package does not include a zoning code Refusal Letter from Boston Inspectional Services Department. We did meet with Commissioner Christopher on March 9 and he encouraged us to submit our application for a building permit after we have met again with the BRA and incorporated any design changes that are proposed and adopted.

We look forward to working with the BRA on this important project.

Sincerely,

David M. Ennis
President and Co-Developer of Harmon Apartments

Harmon Apartments Project Team

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Development Sponsor

Founded in 1881, The Boston Home, Inc., a Massachusetts Nonprofit Corporation, (TBH) currently operates a 96 bed residence licensed as a skilled nursing facility serving adults with advanced Multiple Sclerosis [MS] and similar progressive neurological diseases. TBH is the only facility of its kind in New England and one of only a handful of similar organizations in the United States. TBH has led the way among long term care facilities in implementing an innovative medical home model of resident-centered, integrated and comprehensive care based within our residential facility. The existing facility is located on a parcel of land identified by the City of Boston Assessing Department as 2061 Dorchester Avenue.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society recognizes TBH as a “Center for Excellence in Long-term Care.” TBH also support individuals who prefer to live independently. An on-site social day program called B.Fit! serves disabled adults and their caregivers living in the community. Through B.Fit!; the outpatient wheelchair seating clinic; outpatient rehabilitation clinic; and newly established Wheelchair Enhancement Center, TBH actively engage people with a disability living in the community and addresses the full range of their physiological, mobility, assistive technology and social needs.

TBH partners with MIT and other colleges and universities in research and development of assistive technologies and training of undergraduate and graduate students. This project extends TBH’s mission of allowing those with disabilities to remain independent.

Project Description

Harmon Apartments, to be located on a parcel of land identified by the City of Boston Assessing Department as 2049 Dorchester Avenue, will create 39 highly independent housing units, with the goal to serve the needs of individuals and families living with MS and other progressive neurological disorders. The apartments are deliberately located near public transportation and specialized support services, fostering independent community living.

Thirty of the units will be reserved for persons (and their families) with significant physical disabilities, mainly paralysis, transitioning from long term care and individuals already living in the community but in need of additional support programs to live independently.

The goal is to create a national model for independent community living incorporating advanced technology and specialized support services for adults with a physical disability, primarily with a progressive neurological disease such as MS. Harmon Apartments is conceived in the spirit of Cordelia Harmon who founded TBH in 1881 ‘to construct buildings and provide services to alleviate the suffering of

those living with disabling chronic conditions’. TBH is a recognized leader and the winner of the 2012 Gold Award for Technology Innovation from McKnight’s Long Term Care.

Harmon Apartments is being developed in response to the tremendous need and interest demonstrated in the MS community to have more choice in housing as part of a continuum reflecting a variety of needs and interests. This project supports choice and extends the innovative programs developed by TBH to support independence in a unique residential community.

Progressive neurological diseases encompass several diseases including Parkinson’s and Huntington’s diseases, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and MS. MS represents the largest proportion of these disorders and numerous studies are available on its demographics. A 2011 housing survey sent to 5,739 individuals with MS confirmed the interest and need for accessible, affordable and supportive housing.

- 80% saw a need for housing for people with MS
- 50% would consider moving into specialized housing
- 40% have considered moving due to MS related needs
- 80% would consider living in housing specifically designed for people with MS

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society reports that 12,000 Massachusetts residents have MS and according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services there are over 13,200 nursing home residents with a primary diagnosis of MS in the United States or 0.9% of the total nursing home population. Based on our research, we believe there are over 2,500 supportive housing candidates with MS alone living in Greater Boston. A recent survey of the National Disability Institute reported that 30% of those with MS have household incomes of less than \$25,000 per year.

Neighborhood Context

The project is located in South Dorchester at 2049 Dorchester Avenue between Gallivan Boulevard to the south and Range Road to the north. The surrounding architectural fabric is composed of a mix of single-family homes, two family and three family triple-decker structures built in the first half of the twentieth century. Less than half a mile to the north lies Peabody Square with the recently constructed 6 stories Transit Oriented Development mixed-use Carruth Building, the historic Peabody apartment building and the renovated Ashmont Subway station. Half a mile to the south across Gallivan Boulevard lies Carney Hospital, Saint Gregory church and school and Dorchester Park.

The new building will be located at the northeast corner of the site, carefully sited to maintain the cluster of mature trees, and have minimal frontage facing abutting residences. It will complement the medium density developments along Dorchester Avenue and enhance the streetscape through its glass fronted first floor. The narrow end of the building will front Dorchester Avenue with 3 floors of residential apartments, with a street level floor with 2 apartments and common space accessible from the sidewalk; it will be used by the building residents and the Dorchester community. Along Range Road the building appears as three residential floors only, reflecting the immediate fabric of Peabody slope neighborhood.

Public Benefits:

Job Creation

Harmon Apartments will consist of a newly constructed 4, story, 49,000 square foot housing complex with a total construction cost of \$11,000,000. The project will create 66 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) construction jobs, with a preference towards Boston residents and minority employment. The apartment building will require a full time support and maintenance staff that will employ 2.5 permanent FTEs.

Transit Oriented Development

Harmon Apartments will add 39 new housing units to the Ashmont area of South Dorchester, adding density and housing opportunity within .25 miles of the Ashmont MBTA station.

Affordable Housing

The project will create 33 units of affordable housing in the South Dorchester neighborhood, which is experiencing rapidly rising price increases in recent years. 4 of the 33 units will be designated for individuals and families whose income is at or less than 30% of Area Median Income [AMI]. The remaining 29 units will be designated for individuals and families whose income is at or less than 60% of AMI. Although income restrictions will be at 60% of AMI, rents will be set substantially below the maximum rent for 60% of AMI so that the units will be available to a range of low-income renters without rental subsidies.

Accessible Housing

All 39 units will be designed to be accessible to persons and families with members who are disabled. It is expected that most tenants will have limited mobility, with a large number in wheelchairs. Light switches will be appropriately placed,

appliances will be installed for ease of access for people in wheelchairs, showers will all be roll-in, doorways will have 48" clearance, all hallways and spaces will be designed to accommodate turning radii of wheelchairs. Attention will be paid to structural supports to allow for the addition of grab-bars in bathrooms and lifts in bedrooms

Technology Enhanced Housing

The sponsor, TBH, has been partnering with MIT's Laboratory for Adaptability to utilize technology that expands the ability of those with limited mobility to live independently. Current technologies include adaptations that allow remote access to open doors, close blinds, turn on TVs, call for assistance and control environment. The Harmon Apartments will include a number of features to expand independence and will be a testing ground for new technology.

Expansion of Mission

TBH was established in 1881 to provide quality housing and care for those with neurological disabilities. The existing building at 2061 Dorchester Avenue serves 96 individuals in a skilled nursing setting. These residents need the full nursing care that the facility provides. But there are 12,000 persons in Massachusetts with MS, many of whom live in the community and with families, who want to maintain their independence. In addition, both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the health community see tremendous benefits in allowing people to remain in a community setting.

TBH seeks ways to use its expertise to expand its reach beyond the current skilled nursing facility. It has created an adult day program, called B.Fit that provides daily activities for those with MS and other neurological disorders. It has developed a first-class shop to work on and enhance wheelchair technology. The independent housing of the Harmon Apartments will allow the Home to use its knowledge to provide independent housing for those living with MS.

Boston Zoning Code Data

The Property

The existing TBH facility is located on a parcel of land identified by the City of Boston Assessing Department as parcel no. 1704417000 which is 173,806 square feet. The tax status of the parcel is exempt. The address of this parcel in the records of the Assessing Department is 2061 Dorchester Avenue.

The proposed 39 residential unit structure will be located on a parcel of land identified by the City of Boston Assessing Department as parcel no. 1704416000 which is 98,161 square feet [approximately 2.25 acres]. The tax status of the parcel is exempt. The address of this parcel in the records of the Assessing Department is 2049 Dorchester Avenue.

Since these two parcels are held in common ownership, ISD is likely to treat the parcels as one lot for zoning and building code purposes.

Applicable Zoning Code Provisions – New 39 Unit Structure

The property lies within the Dorchester Neighborhood District, governed by Article 65 of the Boston Zoning Code, and Maps 5A-5E. The property is located in the 2F-5000 sub-district, a residential sub-district established by Article 65-7(2): two-family residential.

The two-family residential sub-districts [2F] are established to preserve, maintain and promote two-family neighborhoods, to preserve existing structures, to provide for new infill construction appropriate to the existing fabric, and to allow minor changes to occur as of right. In a 2F sub-district, the maximum number of Dwelling Units allowed in a single building shall be two.

Use Regulations

Article 65-8, Table A, establishes the use regulations in the residential sub-districts of the Dorchester Neighborhood District. Any use identified as “F” (forbidden) in Table A is forbidden in the residential sub-districts.

The proposed multifamily dwelling residential use is forbidden and as such will require a variance under Article 7.

Dimensional Regulations

Article 65-9 establishes the dimensional regulations in the residential sub-districts. The minimum Lot Area, Lot Width, Lot Frontage, Usable Open Space per Dwelling Unit, Front Yard, Side Yard, and Rear Yard required for any Lot in a Residential Sub-district, and the maximum allowed Building Height and Floor Area Ratio for such Lot, are set forth in Table C of Article 65.

The combined lots constitute a corner lot and as such are subject to the additional dimensional requirements of Article 65-42(5).

For the proposed new 39 residential unit structure, the required and proposed dimensional requirements are as follows:

Lot Area Minimum:

Required: 5,000 square feet
Provided: 98,161

Lot Width Minimum:

Required: 50 feet
Provided: Corner Lot

Lot Frontage Minimum:

Required: 50 feet
Provided: 584 feet [Dorchester Ave. frontage]

Floor Area Ratio [FAR] Maximum:

Required: .5
Proposed: .44 [new structure square footage of 43,676 on 98,161 square foot lot]

Building Height Maximum:

Stories: 2 ½
Proposed: 4 [on Dorchester Ave.]
3 [on Range Road]

Height: 35 feet
Proposed: 44 feet [on Dorchester Ave.]
33.5 feet [on Range Road]

Usable Open Space:

Required: None
Provided: Approximately 50,000 square feet

Front Yard Minimum:

Required: 15 feet
Provided: 15 feet

Side Yard Minimum:

Required: 10 feet
Provided: Art. 65-42(5) treats as front yard

Rear Yard Minimum:

Required: 30 feet
Provided: 31 feet

Other Zoning Requirements

Since ISD will treat the two parcels as one lot for zoning purposes, the proposal will be subject to the requirements of Article 65-42(13) and may require a conditional use permit for two or more dwellings on one lot.

Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements:

Article 65-41 establishes the minimum off-street parking requirements, as set forth in Table F.

Parking Spaces:

Required: 1.5 per Dwelling Unit [58.5]
Provided: 21 parking spaces

Anticipated Permits and Approvals Required

Boston Redevelopment Authority [BRA]

Article 80E Small Project Review
Affordable Housing Agreement
BRA Board Certification of Approval

Board of Appeal

Variances for:

Multifamily residential use
Excessive height: stories
Excessive height: feet
Insufficient Off-Street Parking

Possible Conditional Use Permit:
Two or more dwellings on one lot

Inspectional Services Department [ISD]

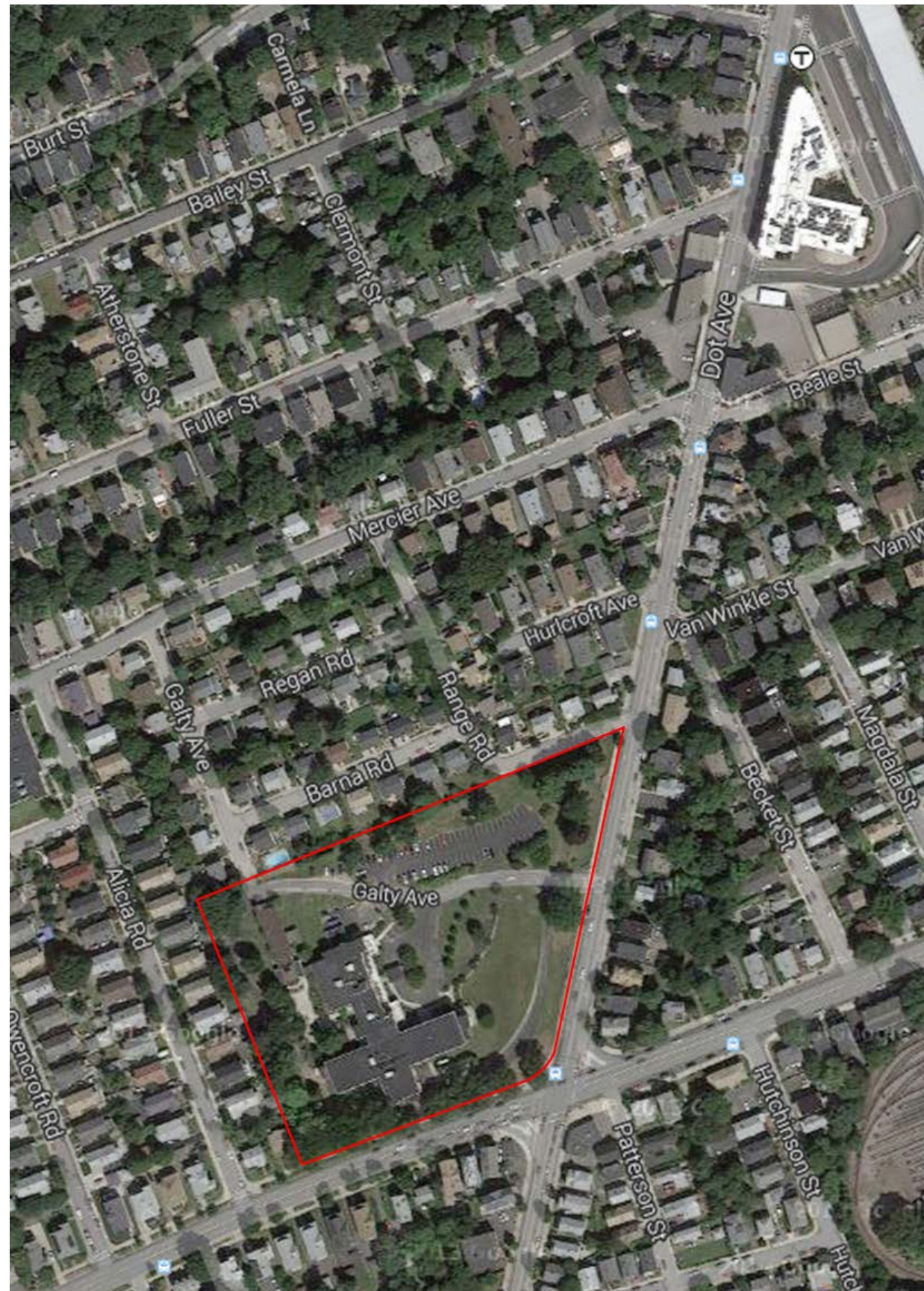
Building Permits
Certificate of Occupancy

Boston Water & Sewer Commission [BWSC]

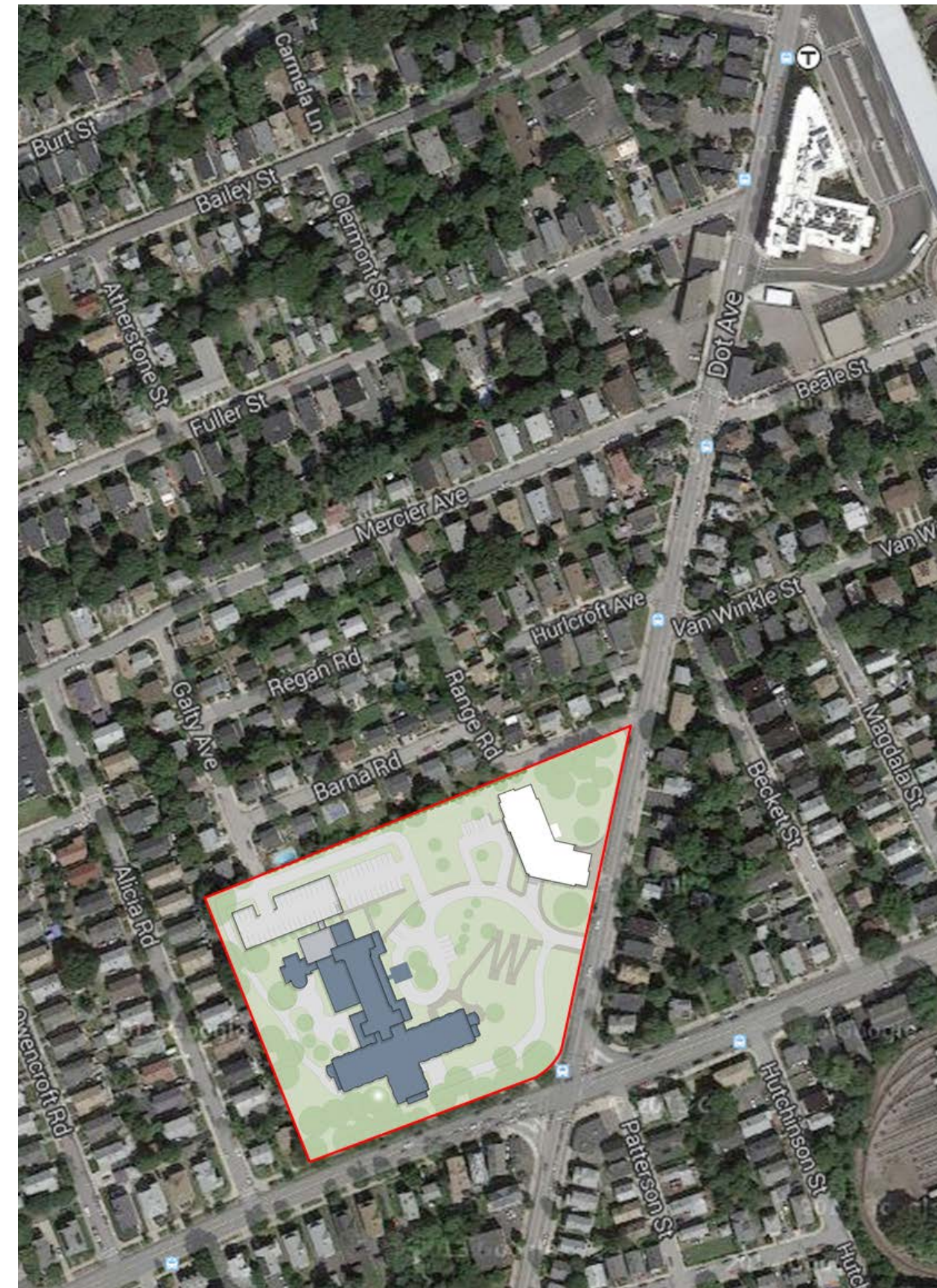
Local water & sewer tie-in and site plan approval

Department of Public Works/Public Improvement Commission

Curb cut for new entrance driveway on Dorchester Avenue



Site, Existing



Site, Proposed

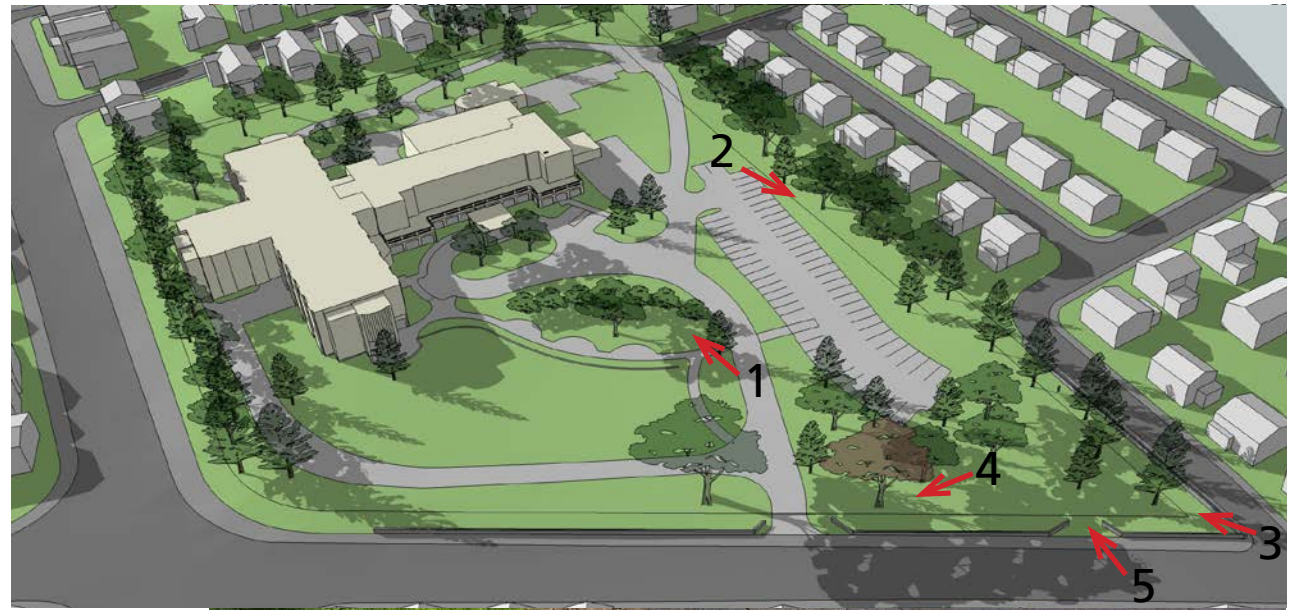
50' 100' 200'

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Neighborhood Site Maps

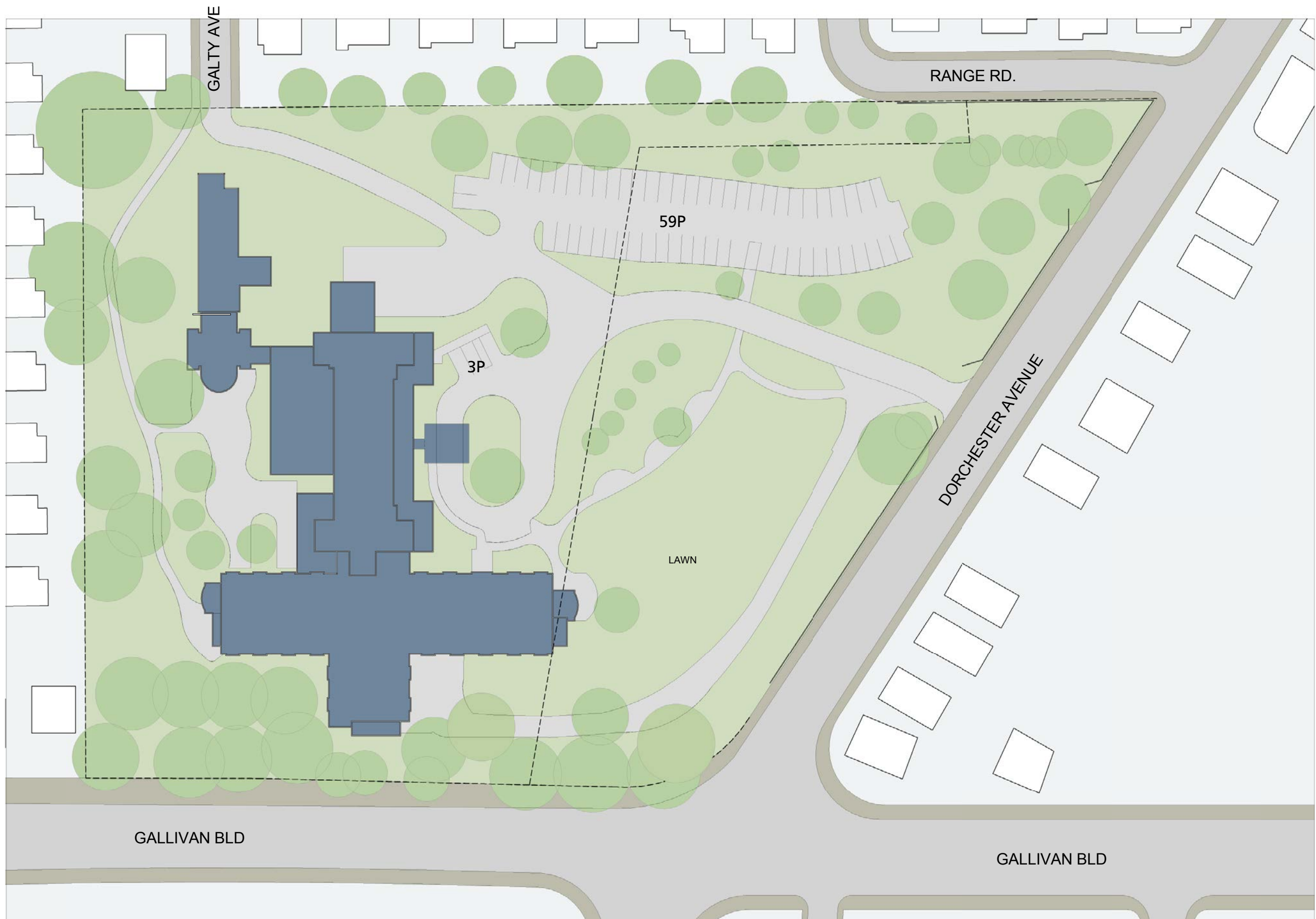




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Existing Site Photos

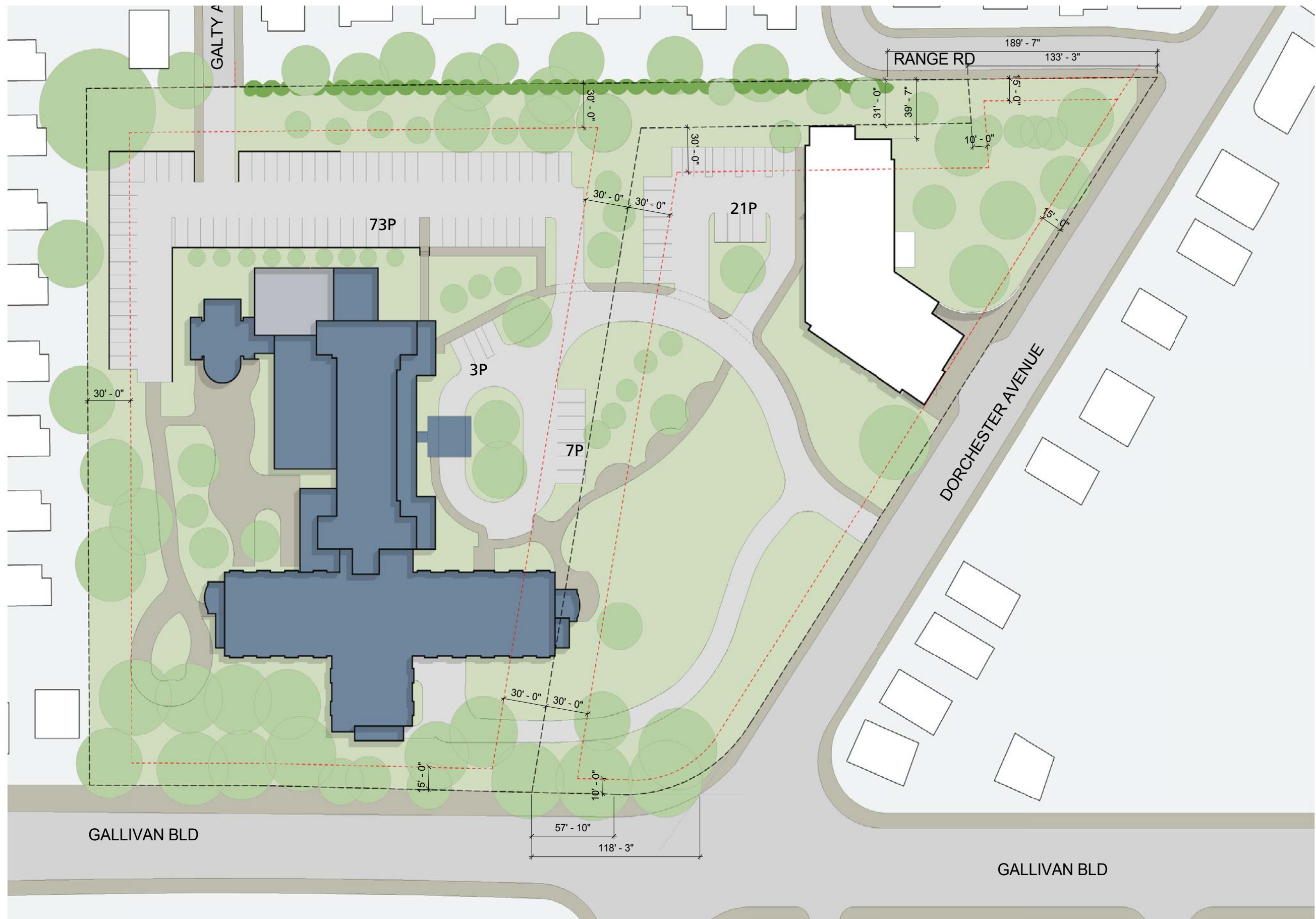


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Site Plan, Existing



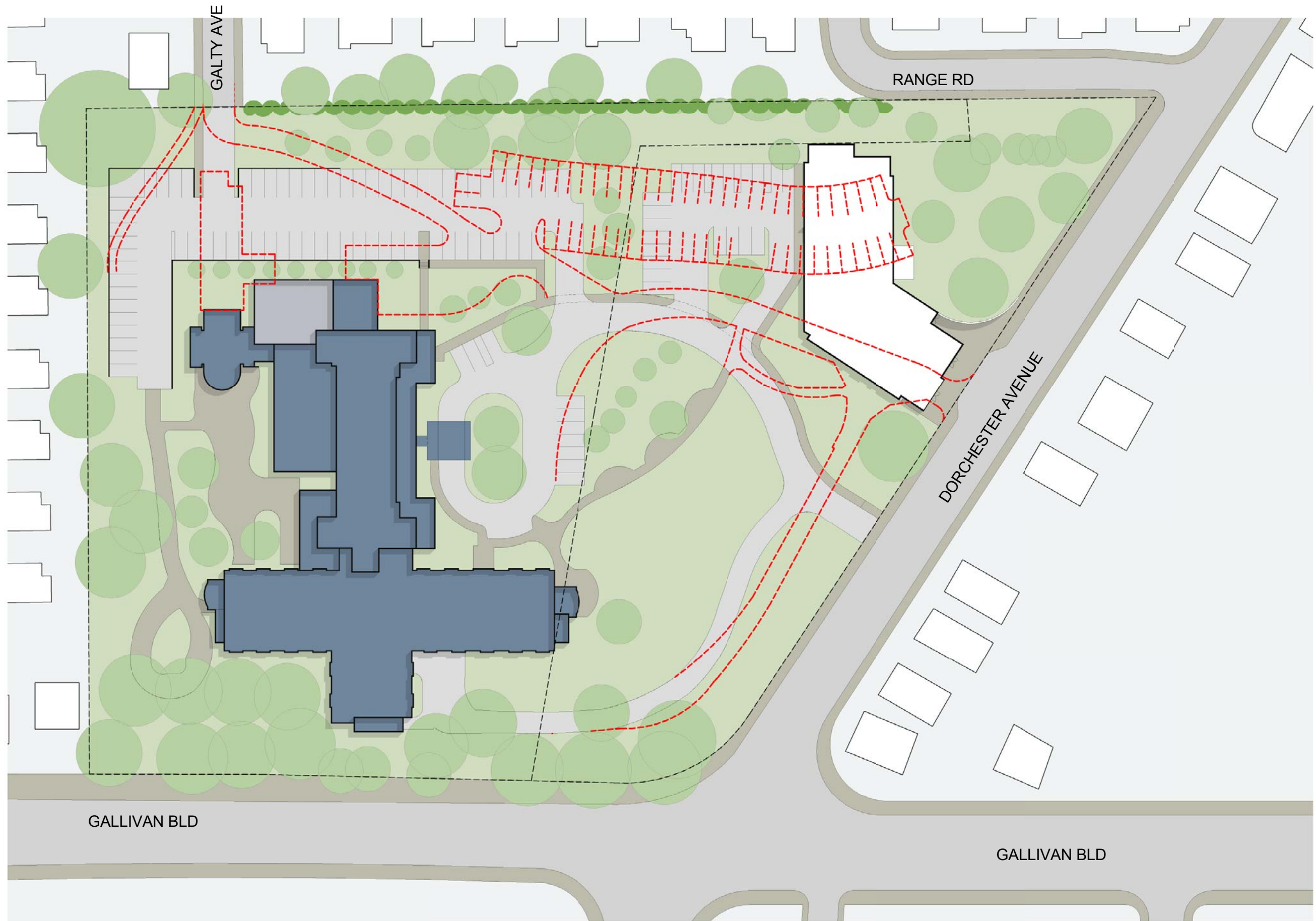


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Site Plan, Proposed



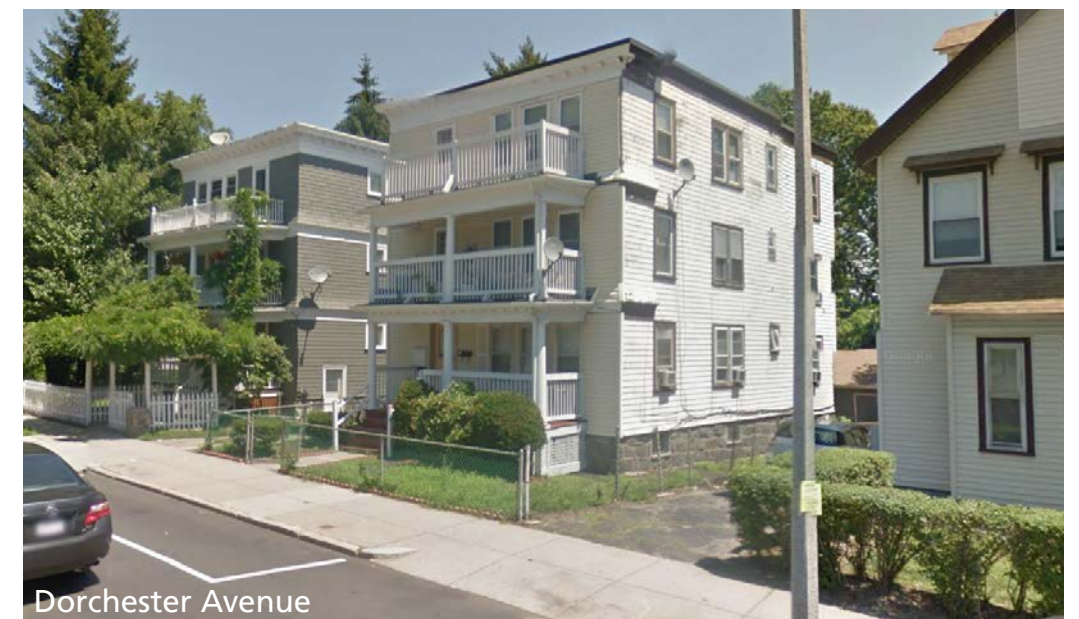
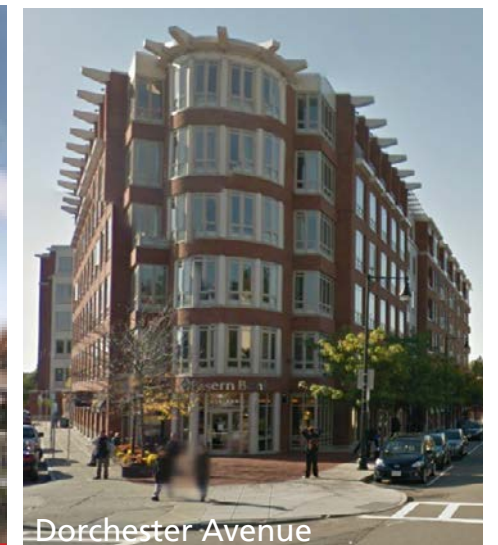


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Site Plan, Proposed





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Context



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Aerial View from the East



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Aerial View from the Southwest



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View 1, from Dorchester Avenue



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View 2, from Dorchester Avenue



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View 3, from Dorchester Avenue



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View 4, from Dorchester Avenue



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View 5, from TBH



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View 6, from Range Road

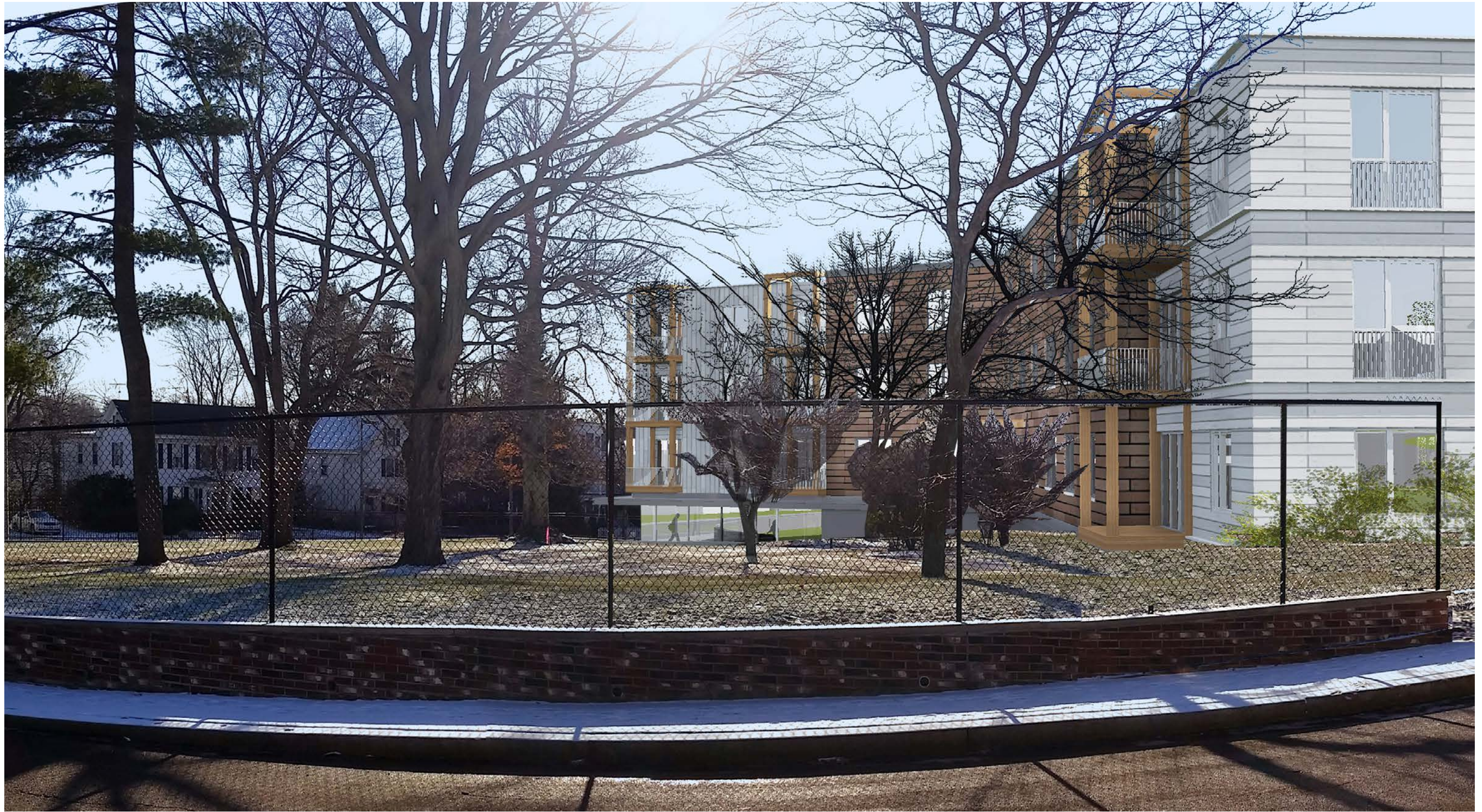


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View 7, from Range Road



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View 8, from Range Road



East Elevation, Dorchester Ave.



North Elevation, Courtyard

Harmon Apartments March 2015

Elevations, 1/16" = 1'-0"



East Elevation, Courtyard



North Elevation, Range Rd.

Harmon Apartments

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Elevations, 1/16" = 1'-0"



West Elevation, The Boston Home

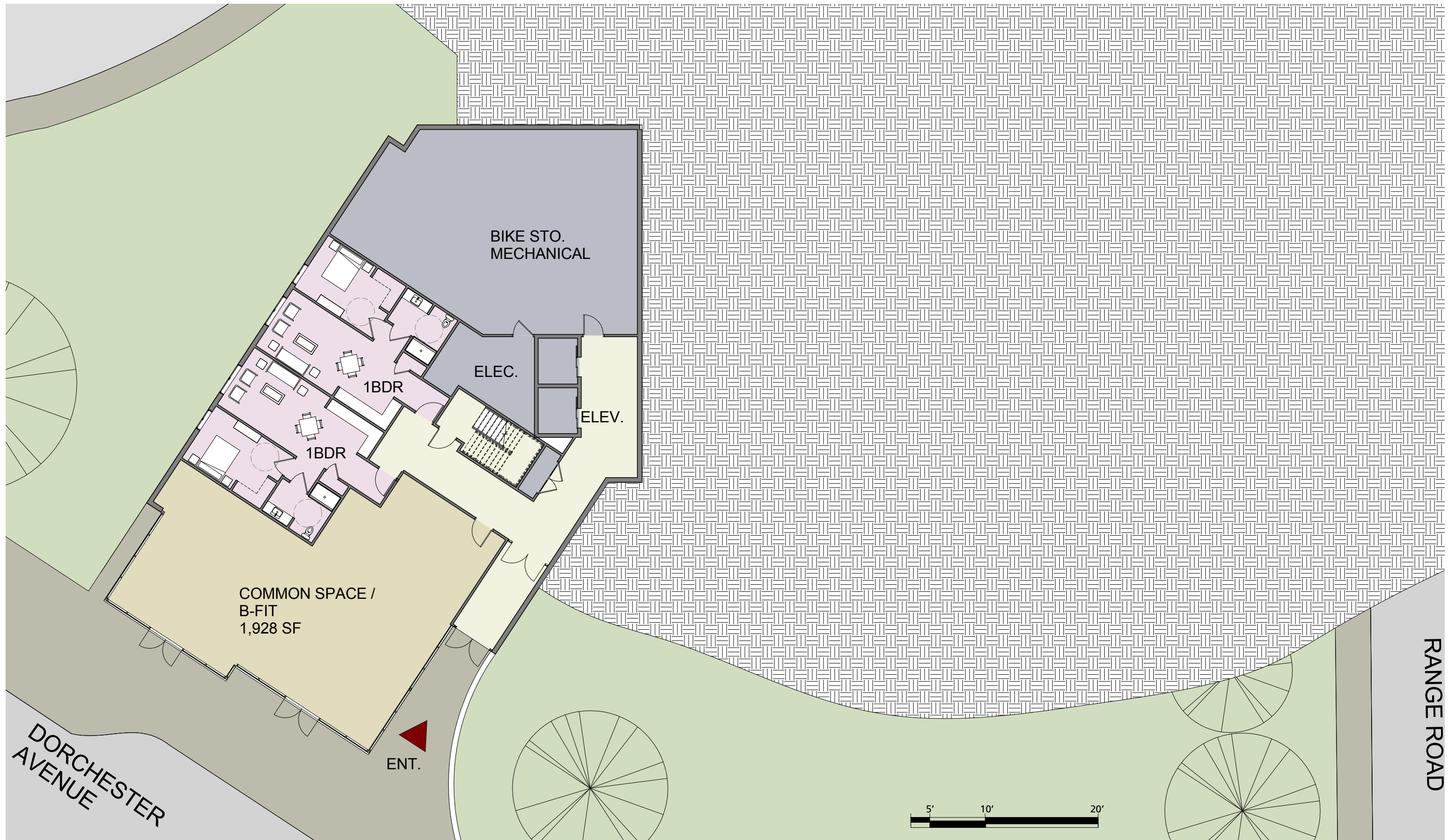


South Elevation, The Boston Home

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Elevations, 1/16" = 1'-0"



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Level 1 Plan, 1/16" = 1'-0"





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Level 2 Plan, 1/16" = 1'-0"



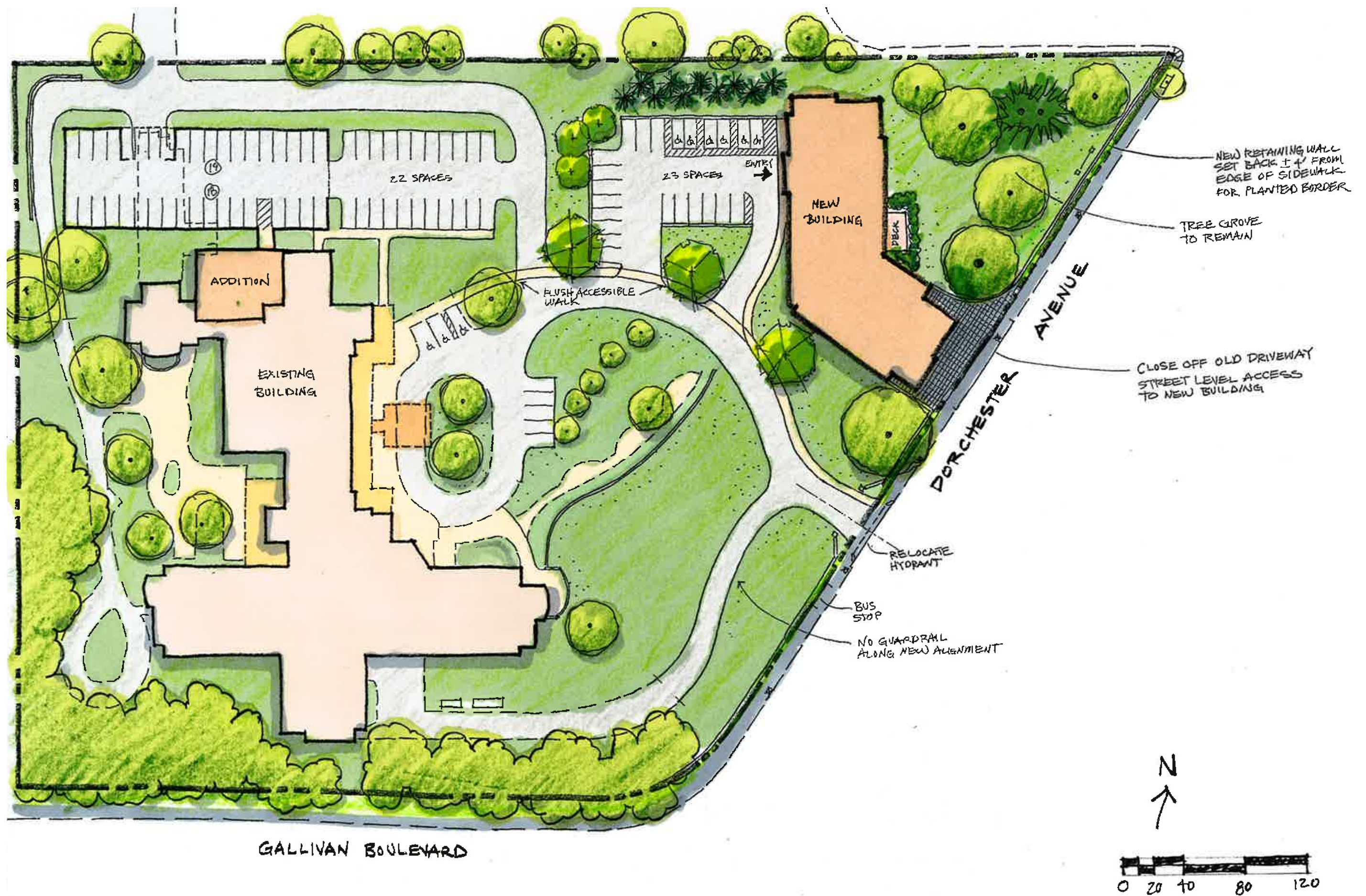


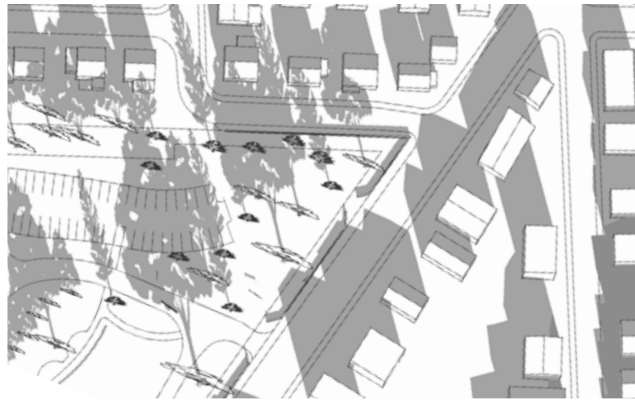
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Typ. Floor Plan, 1/16" = 1'-0"



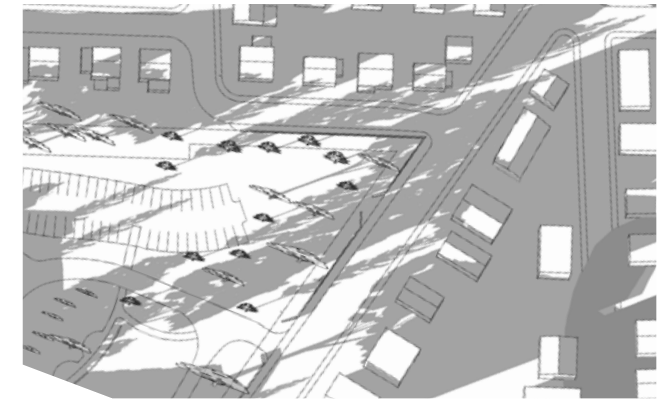




12/21, 9AM



12/21, 12PM



12/21, 3PM



3/21, 9AM



3/21, 12PM



3/21, 3PM



6/21, 9AM



6/21, 12PM



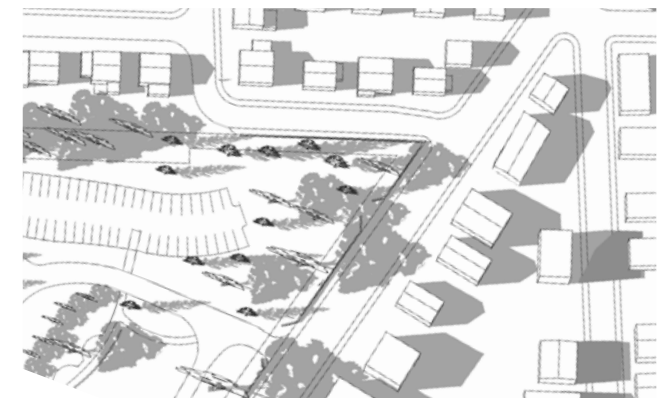
6/21, 3PM



9/21, 9AM

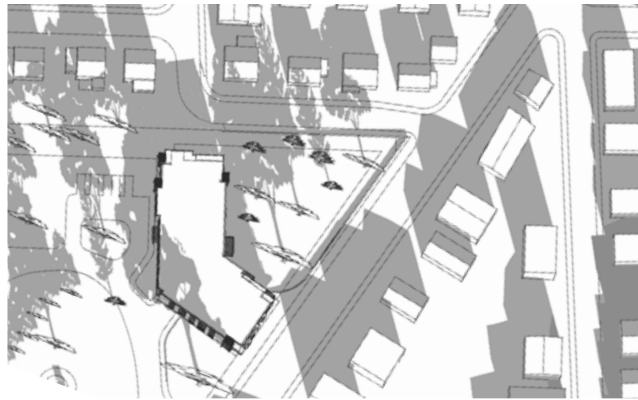


9/21, 12PM



9/21, 3PM

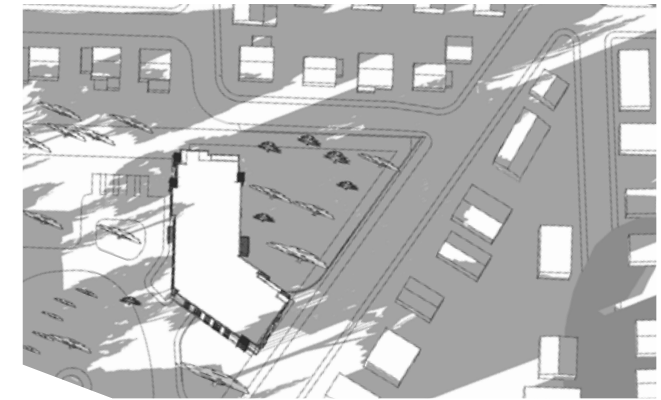




12/21, 9AM



12/21, 12PM



12/21, 3PM



3/21, 9AM



3/21, 12PM



3/21, 3PM



6/21, 9AM



6/21, 12PM



6/21, 3PM



9/21, 9AM



9/21, 12PM



9/21, 3PM

