



September 23, 2015  
Amended October 13, 2015

Ms. Kelly Perkins  
HARC Assistant Planner  
P.O. Box 1409  
Key West, FL 33040

**RE: 732 Poorhouse Lane – Compliance Issues**

Dear Kelly,

Gail Miller, who owns 728 Poorhouse Lane, objects to the proposed design for 732 Poorhouse Lane. She has asked me to represent her in this matter. My original objection was submitted for the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting, and forms the basis of this follow-up.

I have reviewed the application, and determined that 732 Poorhouse Lane is not in compliance with the HARC Guidelines or the City LDR's. Much progress has been made since September 29<sup>th</sup>, but some issues still remain. This report, with the attached photos and diagram, depict the areas where the project was and still is out of compliance. These documents are for distribution to the HARC commissioners prior to the meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

It is important that all Commissioners review this link to the National Park Service's publication, ***Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*** in order to understand the rationale behind my argument.

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm>

The National Park Service administers the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, and publishes the Preservation Briefs as a service to educate the public and in particular, Preservation professionals. The one that is included with this e-mail is Preservation Brief 14 which explains how to design new additions within historic districts. This document will explain the concepts that I used in formulating this opinion.

**Analysis:**

The proposed design is out of compliance with the Guidelines and the Land Development regulations in at least the following areas.

1. The project proposes to demolish non-historic rear additions. Once this is done, the existing zoning violations must be brought into compliance. The lot is 24 feet wide with required side yard setbacks of 5 feet. This reduces the allowable width of the rear addition to 14 feet, but the submittal shows a larger structure. A 14 foot wide building is more than adequate, as the attached photos show.

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2. The design proposes a two story rear addition with a shed roof dormer that runs the full length of the house. The overly large shed roof dormers violate the Standards. This violates the HARC Guidelines in the following areas:
- a) Height: (Pg. 38a) “The height of all new construction must be based upon the height of existing structures...” Under this guideline, the height of the new addition should not exceed the height of the existing building. The shed roof dormer in its current configuration, creates an out of scale mass.
- b) Additions: (Pg. 37) states:
1. *A structure shall not be altered and/or expanded in such a manner that its essential character-defining features are disguised or concealed.*
  2. *Additions and alterations may be reviewed more liberally on non-contributing buildings, which lack architectural distinction.*
  3. *Addition design should be compatible with the characteristics of the original structure, neighboring buildings and streetscapes.*
  4. *Additions should be constructed with a scale, height and mass that is appropriate to the original building and its neighbors.*
  5. *Additions should be attached to less publicly visible secondary elevations of an historic structure.*
  6. *Additions should not alter the balance and symmetry of an historic structure.*
  7. *No existing structure shall be enlarged so that its proportions are out of scale with its surroundings.*
  8. *New additions should be designed and constructed to be clearly differentiated from the historical so that character-defining features are not changed, obscured, damaged or destroyed.*

*In order to preserve the integrity of the Historic District, a number of design criteria have been developed by which individual structures may be compared and evaluated. The intent in developing these criteria has been to identify specific design elements which, if repeated or echoed a sufficient number of times, will assure the maintenance and preservation of the architectural character of the district.*

*These criteria will become the working tools for the developer, architect and builder. Ideally, they should be studied and evaluated before design development work begins so that the desired relationships can be established as design objectives, properly relating individual buildings to the total environment.*

The intent is clear. Under 3) compatibility with the characteristics of the original structure will lead to an addition that does not exceed the historic envelope profile, i.e., a gable roofed structure that is no taller than the original and reflects the historic gable roof slope and height. In layman’s terms, an addition behind the historic house would not extend beyond the historic facades profile. Under 4) “...constructed with a scale, height and mass that is appropriate to the original...” would encourage the same approach, i.e., to match, or be no larger than, the historic building envelope. Under 6) to “...not alter the balance and symmetry of the historic structure” will lead to a solution that is no larger than the historic envelope.

I have attached documents in addition to Preservation Brief 14, that describe these concepts: a sketch over the 732 Poorhouse demolition elevations and photographs of contemporary spaces that are the same scale as those that will result from this approach. A 14 foot wide rear addition will meet the code required setbacks and create a very livable space. The attached photos of 619 Elizabeth are of 14 foot wide, or smaller, elements. Clearly this size space is adequate. A variance to the zoning regulations or the HARC Guidelines should not be allowed.

I look forward to discussing these concepts with you and the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bert L. Bender', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bert L. Bender, Architect

BLB/ddk

cc: Enid Toregrossa  
Gail Miller  
Bryan Greene, HARC Chair, via City Staff  
All HARC Commissioners, via City Staff

619 ELIZABETH ST., KEY WEST, FL.



THE CENTRAL FIRST FLOOR ELEMENT IS THE 14 FOOT WIDE LIVING ROOM. THE BUILDING TO THE RIGHT IS A 12'x10' MOTHER-IN-LAW GUEST COTTAGE.

619 ELIZABETH ST, KEY WEST, FL.

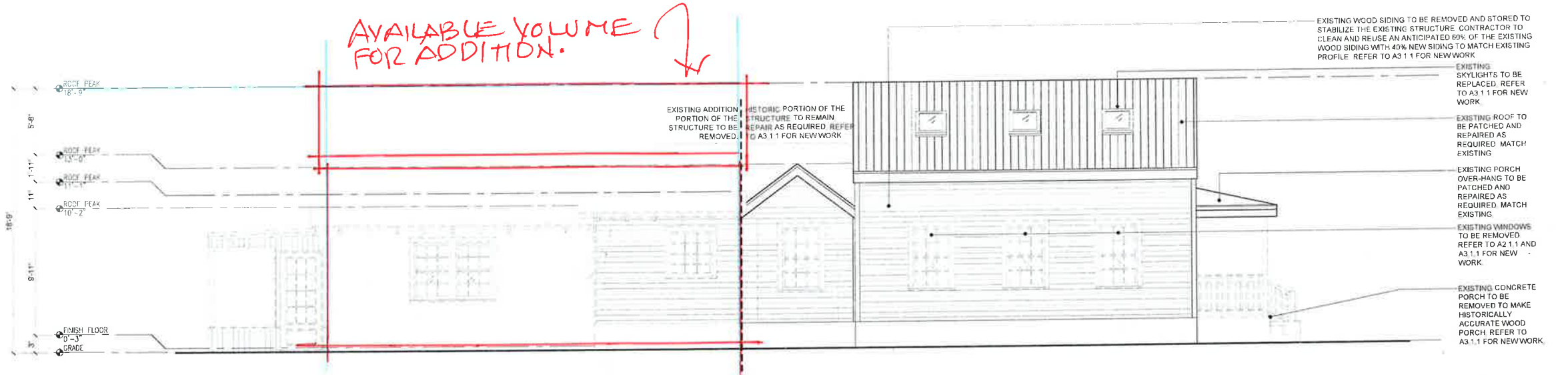


THE LIVING ROOM IS 14' WIDE OVERALL WITH AN INTERIOR WIDTH OF JUST OVER 13 FEET

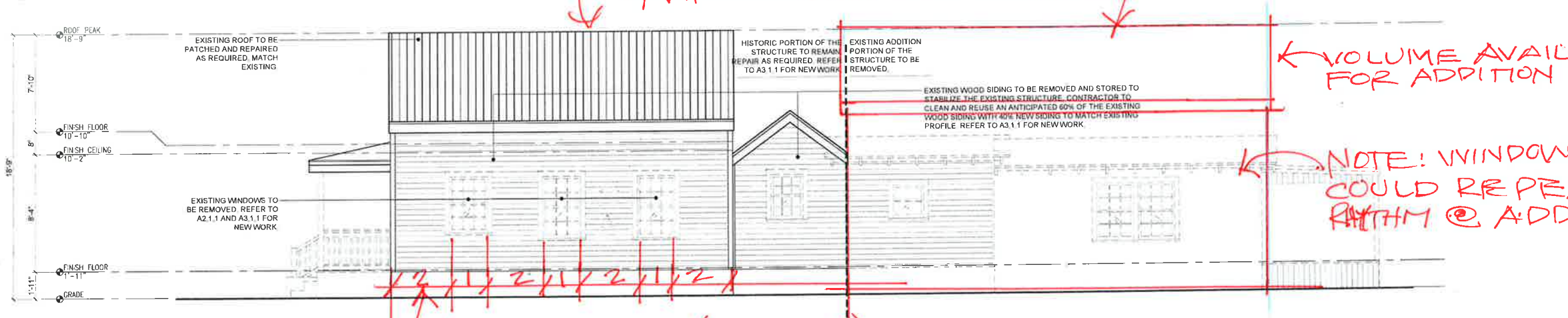
619 ELIZABETH ST., KEY WEST, FL.



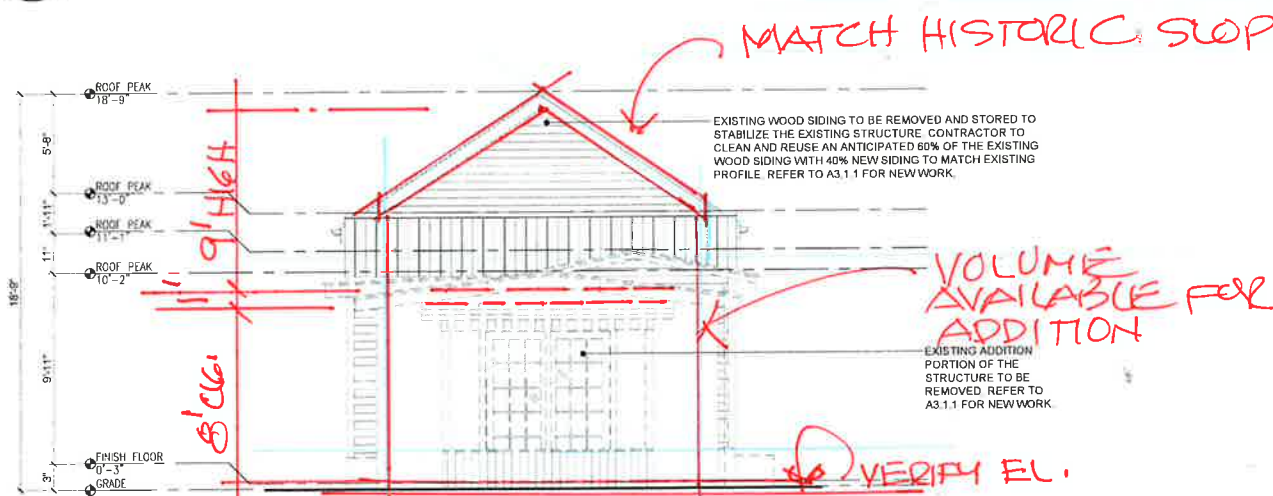
THE KITCHEN IS 12 FEET SQUARE INCLUDING EXTERIOR WALLS.



4 DEMOLITION WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



3 DEMOLITION EAST ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



2 DEMOLITION NORTH ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



1 DEMOLITION SOUTH ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

14' IF SETBACKS ARE HONORED  
16' W/ VARIANCE

NOTE: THE LIVING ROOM/DINING ROOM/STUDIO/DEN SPACE @ 619 ELIZABETH (BENDER RESIDENCE) IS 14 FEET WIDE.

FEMA AE 6 FLOOD ZONE

## Jo Bennett

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**From:** Kelly Perkins  
**Sent:** Friday, October 23, 2015 2:50 PM  
**To:** Jo Bennett  
**Subject:** FW: 732 Poorhouse Lane

**From:** Lynn-Marie & Brewster [mailto:sunrisedriven@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2015 11:43 AM  
**To:** Kelly Perkins <kperkins@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>  
**Cc:** Enid Torregrosa <etorregrosa@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>  
**Subject:** 732 Poorhouse Lane

Hello Kelly,

We live just around the corner from 732 Poorhouse Lane and have been following the renovation plans since the beginning. We supported the conclusion of your last staff report in September. We believe the scale of new renovations within the historic district is a very important issue. Our lovely neighborhood is full of small conch houses, and if one gets an exception from the guidelines others will certainly follow.

We're surprised that this third try is still out of line with HARC guidelines, and wonder why the owners and their architect are still submitting such plans. We have read Bert Bender's detailed letter and analysis and thus would like to go on record as being opposed to their plans yet again.

Once you have your staff recommendation we would appreciate seeing it. Unfortunately we cannot attend the meeting next week due to a prior commitment.

Sincerely,

Lynn-Marie Smith  
Brewster Chamberlin  
712 William St.