

Peter and Chris Jackson
163 McKinley Crescent
Prince George, BC
V2M 4S3

October 9, 2024

Planning and Development Department
City of Prince George
1100 Patricia Blvd
Prince George, BC
V2L 3V9

RE: REVISED Rationale for Development Variance – 163 McKinley Crescent, Prince George.

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are planning some renovations and additions to our house at 163 McKinley Crescent, Prince George. Among these is replacing the existing carport on the side of the house with a garage/workshop, and then adding a new carport to the front of our house extending toward the street from the new garage/workshop. Our zoning is RS2 which has a front setback requirement of 4.5 m. However, placing the new carport posts at the setback distance will not allow a large enough carport to cover a vehicle. Consequently, we are requesting a variance of the RS2 zoning section 10.2.5.5 to reduce the setback from 4.5 m to 1.2 m. This will allow a carport roof to extend 20' (6.1 m) which is sufficient to cover a small vehicle.

The reason for requesting this variance is that we purchased the home as it was originally built, so are unable to alter the placement of the home on the lot. On the west side of our lot, the house is quite close to the property line at the back of our house, so to add a garage and carport we need to build toward the street, rather than fully on the side of our house. Building in the back is not a viable option either, as our backyard is quite small, and it is fully landscaped with garden beds and a patio. We wish to have a garage/workshop that can fit a small car, and a carport that can cover a vehicle. To do so we will need to extend toward the street further than allowed by the RS2 zoning into the front setback allowance. We do not feel that an open carport with posts extending an additional 3.3 m into the setback allowance would be problematic or visually out of character in our neighborhood for the following reasons:

- The city-owned utility area between the street and our property line is approximately 4.9 m deep, so new carport posts will still be approximately 6.1 m from the street. This will allow plenty of space for snow clearing, storing snow, visibility, etc.
- Our house as well as neighboring houses have large trees, and other landscaping that extend close to or beyond the property lines so that the new carport would not

visually appear to “stick out” and would therefore not visually impact the form of the neighborhood.

- The houses along our side (south side) of McKinley Crescent are quite heterogenous, with different roof lines, house orientations, and different sized front yards – the house of our neighbor to the east is approximately 3 m closer to the street than we are, for example.
- The carport is an open structure that can be seen through – the only portion extending beyond the setback allowance would be the roof and posts. Consequently, the carport will not appear to protrude as a solid structure would.

To illustrate the visual impact of the requested variance, we have attached six pictures: two of these are looking toward the west, one from the road taken in front of our neighbour’s house looking along the street past our house (Fig. 1) and the second taken at the proposed carport post location pointed parallel to the road (Fig. 2). Similarly, there are two figures looking toward the east (Figs. 3 and 4). One (Fig. 5) is a view from the front, and the last (Fig. 6) is an air photo showing a plan view of our house and the proposed carport extent in relation to other houses in the neighborhood. In the pictures taken from the road we have indicated the approximate proposed carport post location distance with a red arrow. The figures all show that McKinley Crescent is already quite heterogenous with houses at different orientations and different distances from the street, as well as large trees and other vegetation going up to the property lines and beyond. We do not feel that visually, the open carport would be out of character on our street or appear to “stick out” visually.

We met with the neighbours on both sides of our house, as well as the four nearest houses on the other side of the street and have included letters from all of them indicating their support for our plans. The support letters are based on our original proposal which had the same carport area but with posts 0.6 m closer to the house, and a front overhang of 1.2 m, but when we met with the neighbors we explained that the posts might be 0.6 m closer to the road, and they did not indicate an issue with that either.

We hope that you will be able to grant this requested variance. If you find the requested variance is too great, a second option for us would be to move the posts and overhang 2’ closer to the house, which would result in an 18’ carport coverage and a requested front setback of 1.8 m for the post locations. We are also open to increasing the front overhang and moving the posts yet closer to the house as long as we can have 20’ (or 18’ in option 2) of carport coverage (which was our original proposal).

Response to City Staff internal review of original application (June 20, 2024):

In this revised application we have made several changes in response to the summary of the internal review provided in the July 16, 2024 letter from Bryce Deveau in the City Planning Department that are now incorporated into the application. Specifically, we have amended the application as advised to have the carport front overhang at 0.6 m (rather than extend it to 1.2 m as in the original application). Consequently Option 1 (preferred) is

to request a variance in the front yard setback from 4.5 m to 1.2 m. Option 2 is to request a variance in the front yard setback from 4.5 m to 1.8 m. However, if a 1.2 m front carport overhang is allowed, the front setback for Option 1 would be 1.8 m, while for Option 2 it would be 2.4 m as we originally proposed.

The review by the Land Use Planning Division did not support our original application. They suggested that we consider options that would allow the garage/workshop and carport to fit within the setback areas, such as placing the carport along the side with the garage/workshop in the back yard. We did consider these options initially, however the back yard is quite small and it is already fully landscaped with garden beds, trees, and a patio; building a garage/workshop in the back is not a desirable option. The main reason for Planning staff not supporting the application was that the requested variance would “impact the consistent frontages of the neighborhood creating a fractured or fragmented appearance”. The Land Use Planning Division review recommends the design be revised to request a variance that is 30% or less of the required front yard. However, a 30% front setback variance would only allow a carport that can cover 13.5’ – insufficient to cover even a small vehicle. We do not believe that the proposed variance would contribute significantly to a “fractured appearance” to a neighbor or casual observer. As can be seen in Figures 1-6 there is already extensive vegetation and large trees in the front yards along McKinley Crescent that extends up to the property lines, the houses along the south side of McKinley Crescent are already quite heterogeneous with different orientations and front yard sizes, and there is a 4.9 m city-owned utility right of way zone between the property line and the road that contributes to the front yard so that carport posts would still be 6.1 m from the street. We do not think that extending a “see through” open carport into the setback zone as we have proposed would add significantly to the fractured appearance, and our neighbors agree.

Subsequently, on October 2, 2024, we were informed of comments from City Roads Department staff who also did not support the application, stating:

“We would not support the request to reduce the setback to 1.2 m. We could consider 2.5 meter setback at a minimum. Snow storage is intended to stay in the City ROW however depending on annual snowfall it can potentially be outside of that.”

The contention by the City Roads Department staff member that 7.4 meters (4.9 m City ROW + 2.5 m setback) is needed for snow storage is unrealistically large; snow piled up from the road and driveway clearing is usually stored within 3.5 m of the road and has not gone beyond 4.5 m from road at least since 1996 when we purchased the home. We are certain of this because there is a large birch tree located 4.5 m from the road and 1.8 m from our driveway – it is 1.6 m closer to the road than the Option 1 post would be located (refer to Fig. 7) and 2.9 m closer to the road than the Roads department staff member suggests could be needed for snow storage. When the City snow clearing crew open our driveway, they pile the snow between the roadway and the birch tree shown in Fig. 7. The pile can get quite high in heavy snow years – up to about 3 m, however the edges of the snow pile have not reached the birch tree since we have lived in the home. Consequently, it

is unrealistic that snow clearing could impact the proposed carport post, even in an extremely heavy snow year.

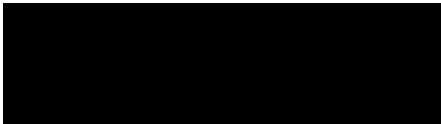
In summary, we disagree with the reasons staff have not recommended that Council support our variance application:

- The front yards along our side of the street are already quite heterogenous due to different sized front yards, different orientations of homes, and the presence of large trees and other vegetation up to and beyond the property lines. Our proposed “see through” carport addition would not add much to this: our neighbors all agree and support our variance application.
- The proposed carport post location leaves approximately twice as much space for snow storage as has been needed since at least 1996.

Consequently, we ask that City Council approve this variance request. Should it be deemed that 1.2 m is too small of a front setback, permitting a 2.4 m front setback (Option 2 with a 0.6 m smaller carport and allowing a 1.2 m overhang) could still allow us to proceed with our desired renovations.

Please contact us should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Peter Jackson

Chris Jackson



Figure 1: View looking along the street toward the west. The red arrow indicates the proposed distance of the carport posts.



Figure 2: View looking from the post position toward the west, parallel to road.



View looking east from road in front of neighbor post distance indicated by red arrow

Figure 3: View looking along the street at 163 McKinley Cres toward the east. The red arrow indicates the proposed distance of the carport posts.



View looking west from post location, parallel to road

Figure 4: View looking from the post position toward the east, parallel to road.



Figure 5: Front view of house from neighbor across the street. Red arrow / ladder indicates carport post position distance from the road.



Figure 6: Air photo showing neighboring houses with outline (red) of proposed carport addition. Note that the property lines shown are incorrect: they are shifted slightly too far north based on fence lines. From PG Map site: <https://pgmap.princegeorge.ca/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=PGMap>

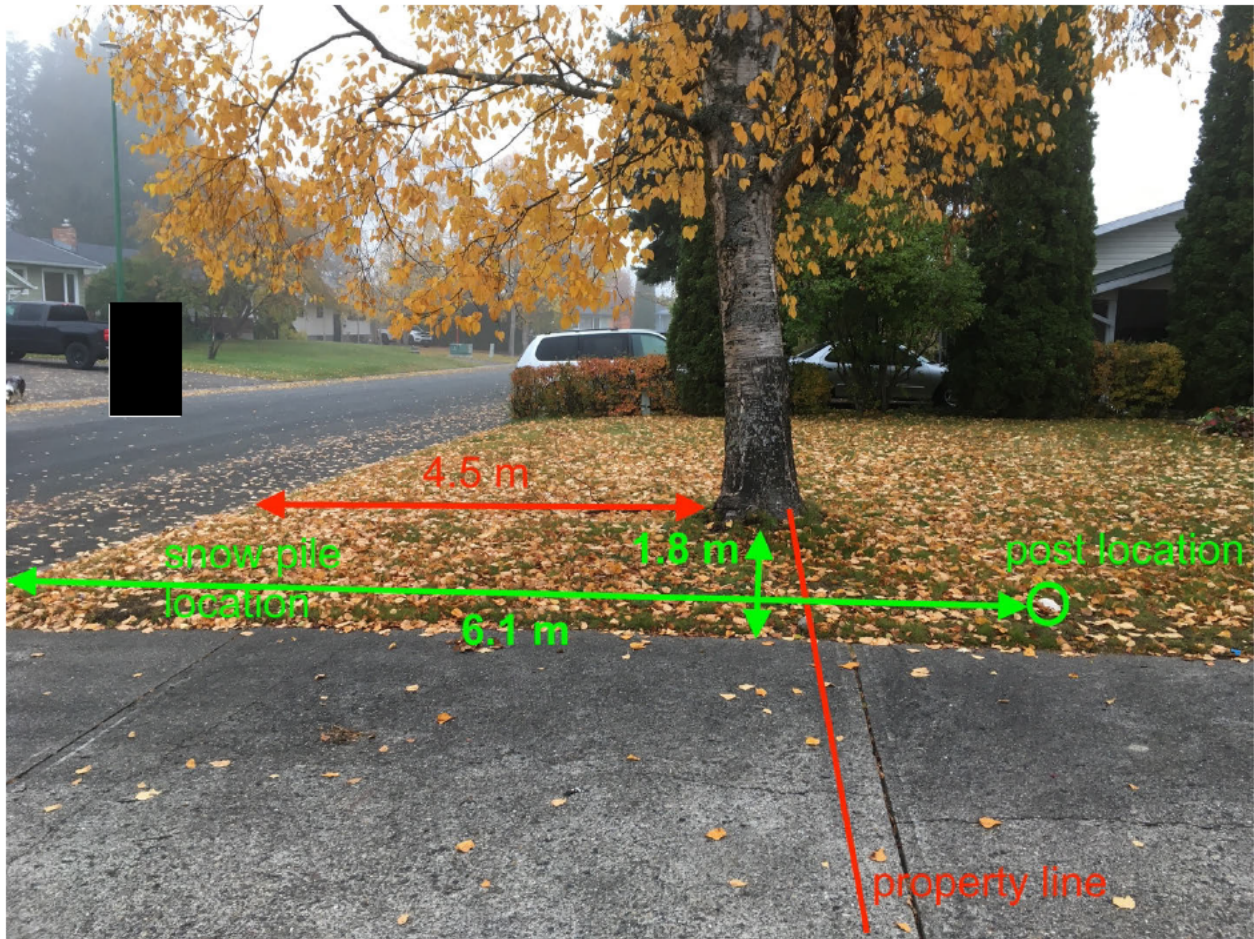
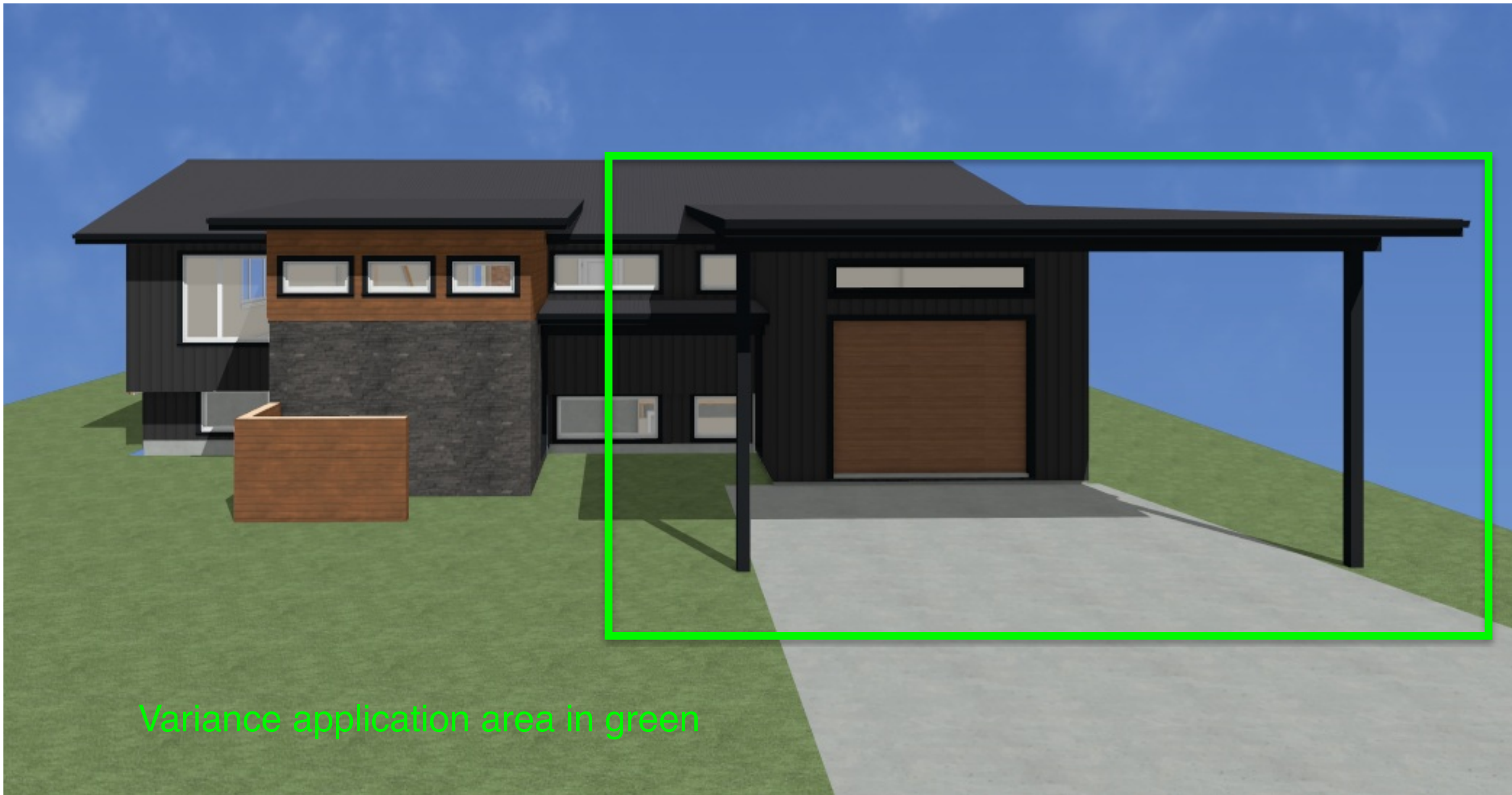


Figure 7: Picture showing position of birch tree, property line, location of snow pile made by City snow clearing crew when they open our driveway, and the proposed carport post location (O). The snow pile would never come close to the proposed carport post location as it has not reached the birch tree location since at least 1996.



Variance application area in green

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NO.	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE

SHEET TITLE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
Jackson Addition
163 McKinley Cres

DRAWINGS PROVIDED BY:
NLI Design Studio
 12e - 1839 1st Ave, Prince George
 250-561-1888 design@newlookinteriors.ca

DATE:

2024-06-03

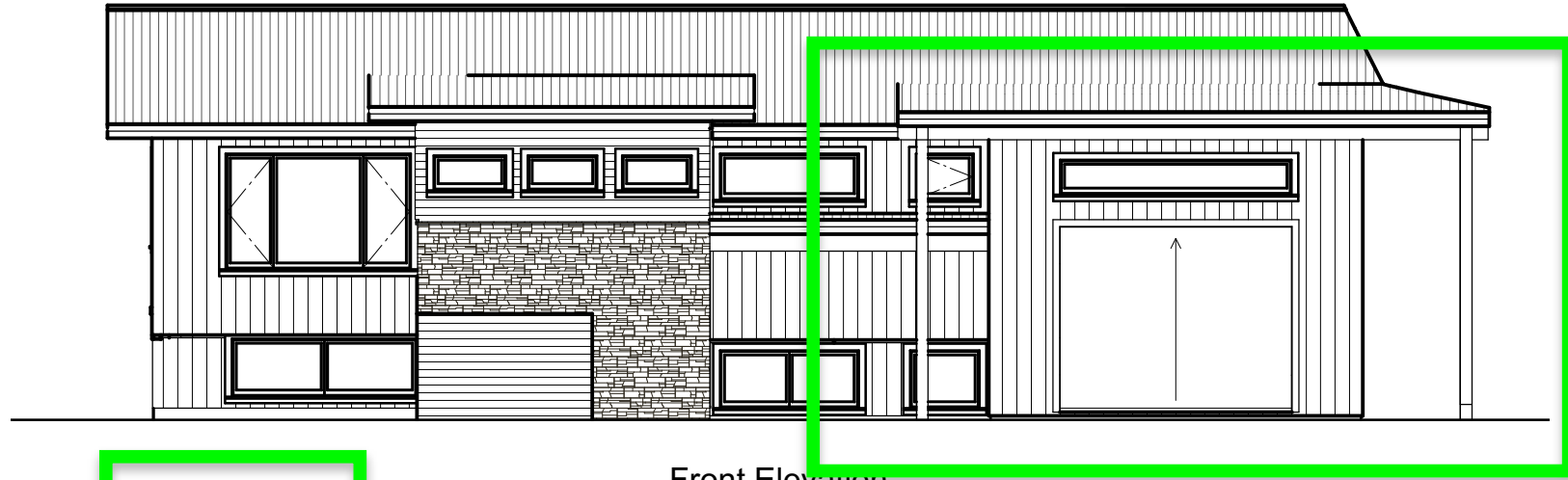
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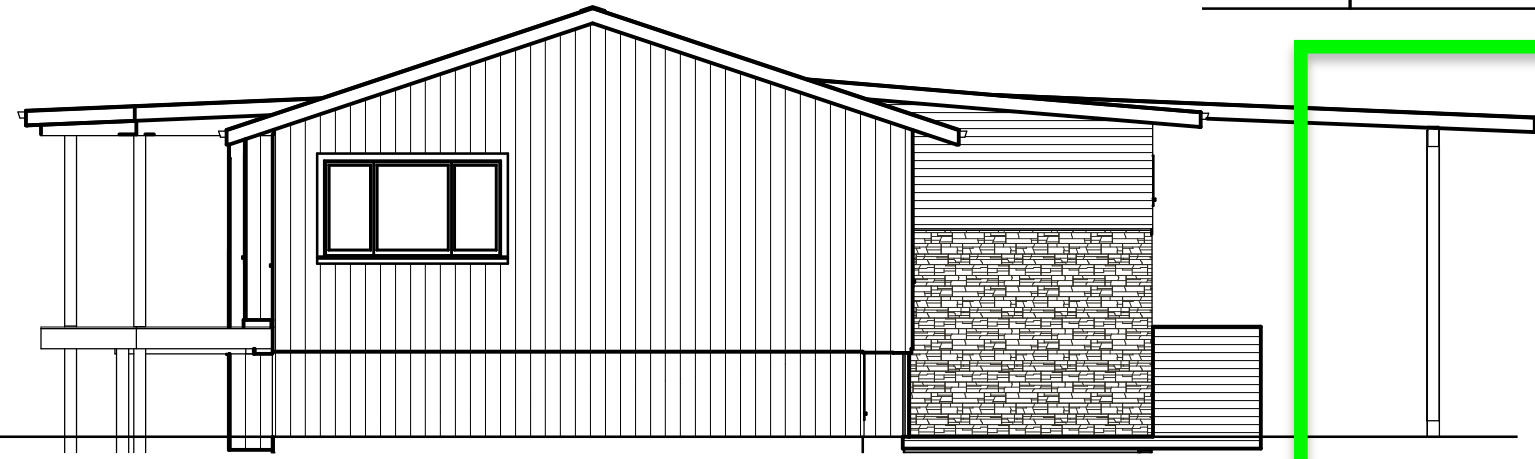
SHEET:

A-1

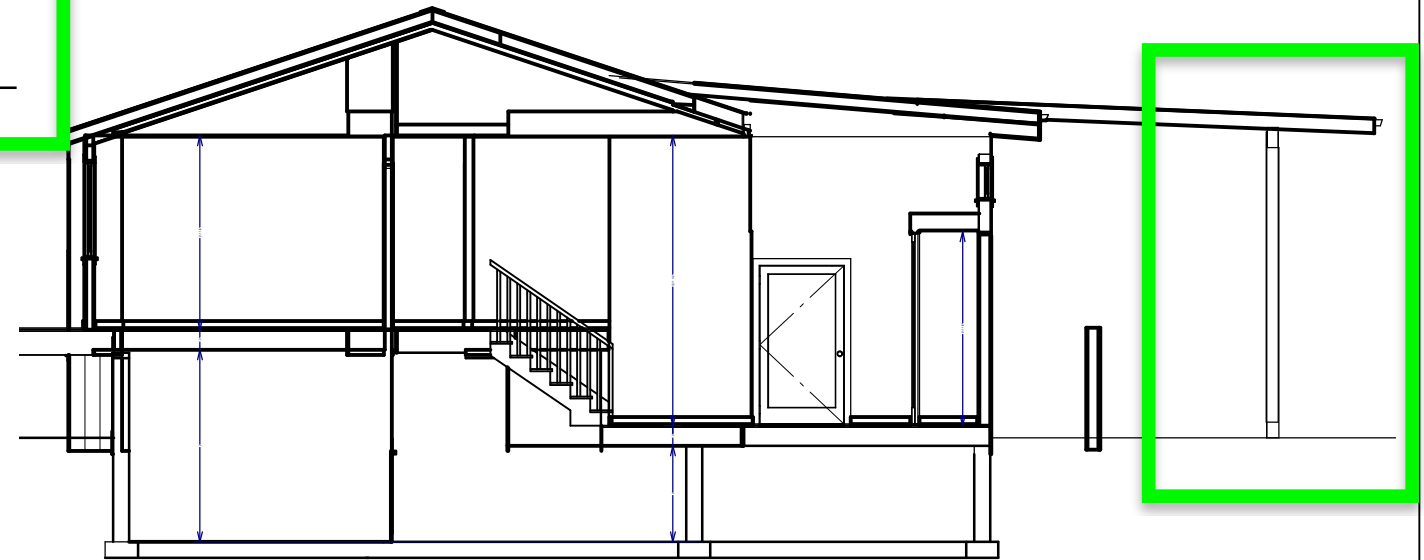
Variance application area in green



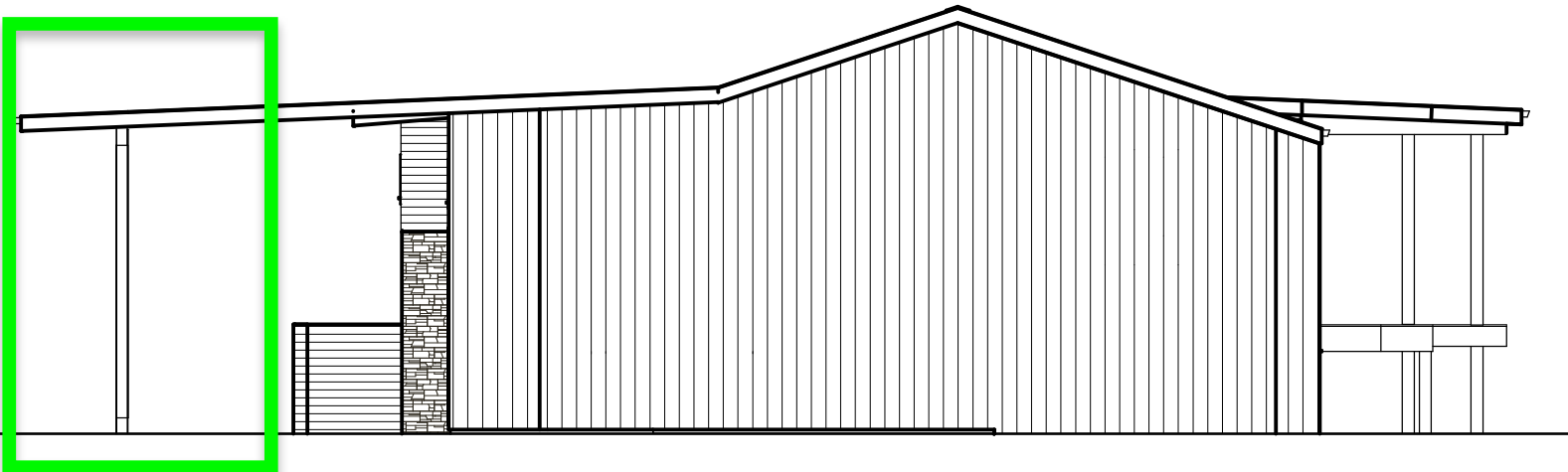
Front Elevation



Left Elevation



Elevation 3



Right Elevation

NO.	DESCRIPTION	BY	DATE

SHEET TITLE
ELEVATIONS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
**Jackson Addition
163 McKinley Cres**

DRAWINGS PROVIDED BY:
NLI Design Studio
12e - 1839 1st Ave, Prince George
250-561-1888 design@newlookinteriors.ca

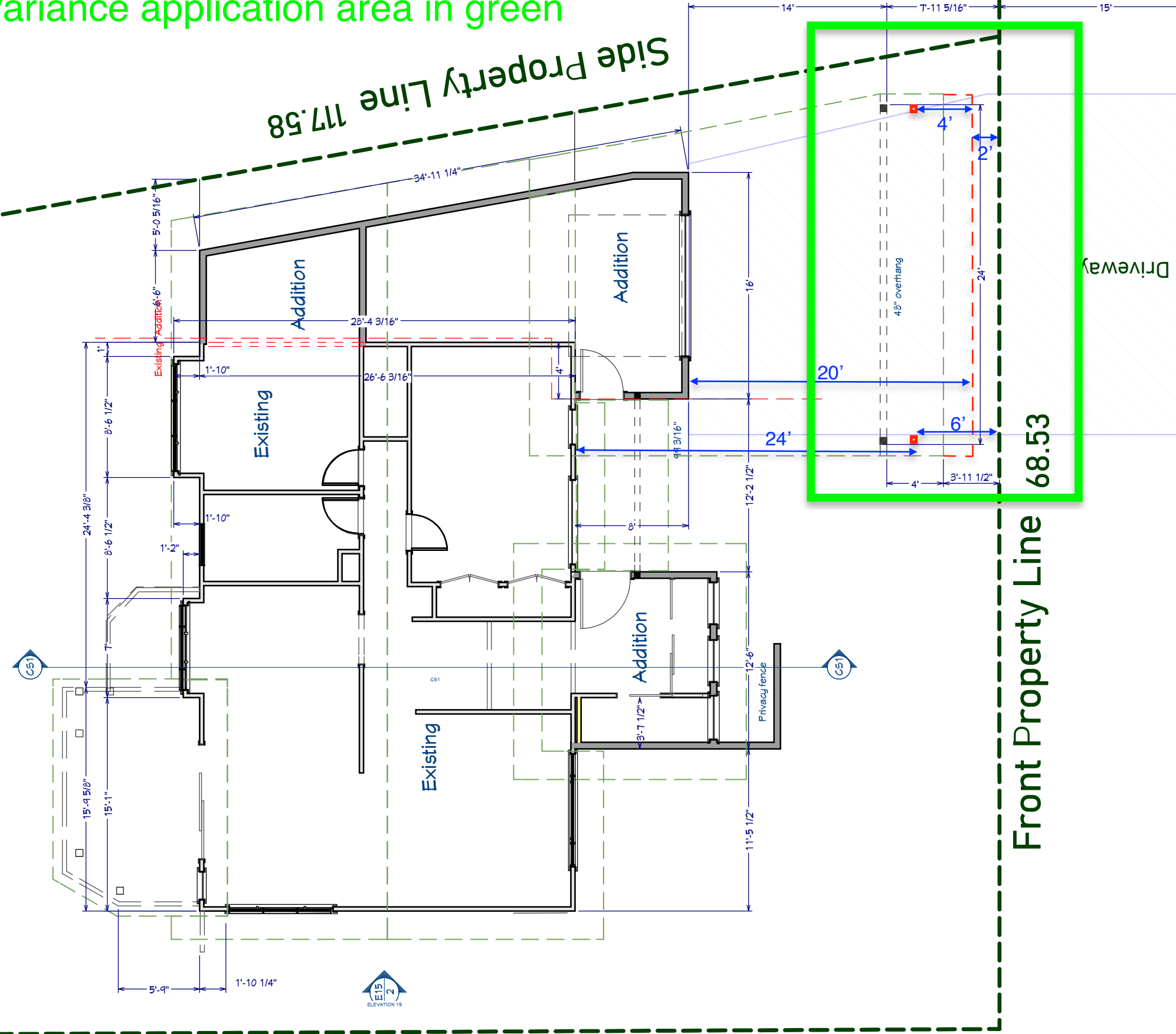
DATE:
2024-06-03

SCALE:
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SHEET:
A-2

Variance application area in green

Side Property Line 117.58



Red posts and roof overhang is in red which is our preferred plan with a 20' carport.

Post position in black is 2' closer to house and has an 18' carport.

McKinley Cres.

Side Property Line 96.13

DRAWINGS PROVIDED BY:		PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	
NLI Design Studio 12e - 1839 1st Ave, Prince George 250-561-1888 design@newlookinteriors.ca		Jackson Addition 163 McKinley Cres	
DATE:	2024-06-03	SHEET TITLE:	MAIN FLOOR
SCALE:	1/4"=1'	SHEET NO. / DESCRIPTION	
SHEET:	A-3	BY	
		DATE	