

### Program Summary:

Accessory structure on a mixed-use residential/commercial lot to include a home office and loft.

### Program Statement:

Our client came to us with a small but complex design issue: a free standing, new structure to become a home office and loft at their existing mixed-use property with tight space requirements. Their desire was to maximize contiguous open space while allowing for the new structure. Adding to the complexity of the project: the existing main structure (completed by a separate firm) was undergoing a renovation with historical tax credit oversight. This led to our team developing various form studies for this accessory building. Through this process, two variations of folded planes emerged. Harkening to the typical "lean-to" shed structures of the neighborhood, the final design has a pair of opposing single slopes stepping at the rear yard setback limits, allowing for the loft. The vast glazed opening on the front facade references a large shed opening and acts as a bridge to the contemporary material palette used to distinguish the structure as a new adaptation of the classic shed vernacular.

## SP-125.01

Building Area: (sf)  
**375 sf**

Cost per Square Foot:  
**\$416/sq ft**

Construction Cost  
**\$156,000**

Date of Completion:  
**March 22, 2024**

# SP-125.02

## The Overall Balance

Located on the site of a formerly vacant, mixed-use property, this project had to balance several needs, desires, and constraints.

The Owner had the vision of restoring the commercial corner space and leasing it to a neighborhood business while converting the rental apartment into their full-time residence. They were downsizing from a much larger living space and realized their need for an expansion of their personal area.

As a self-employed attorney and co-owners of several retail businesses, the Owners needed an office and their desire to have separated work and living spaces was pivotal.



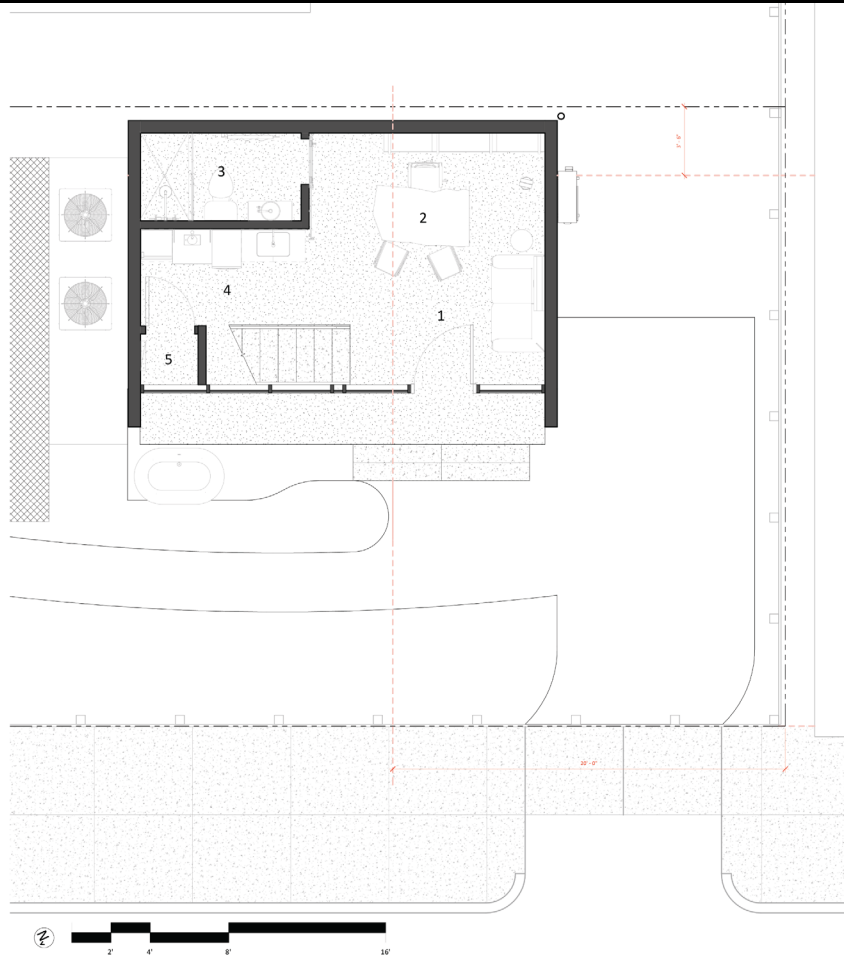
# SP-125.03

## Site Constraints

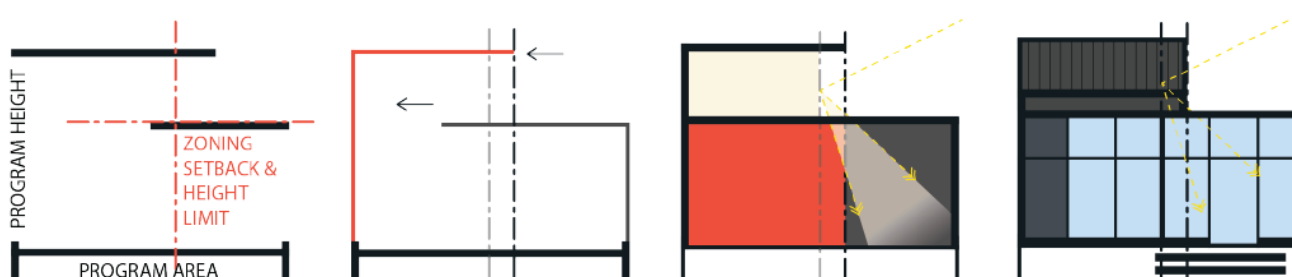
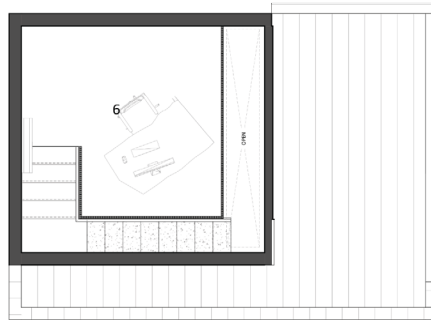
Being located on a corner lot provided both opportunities and challenges. The setback requirements on a corner lot limit the building location more than an interior block lot would. Additionally, the desire of the Owner to have a gated, off-street parking space and still outdoor space to entertain guests led to a study of the optimal site placement.

The zoning setbacks provided not only limitations of footprint but also height restrictions. This information led to the development of the two folded plans allowing one area to rise higher to accommodate the loft beyond the setback limitation.

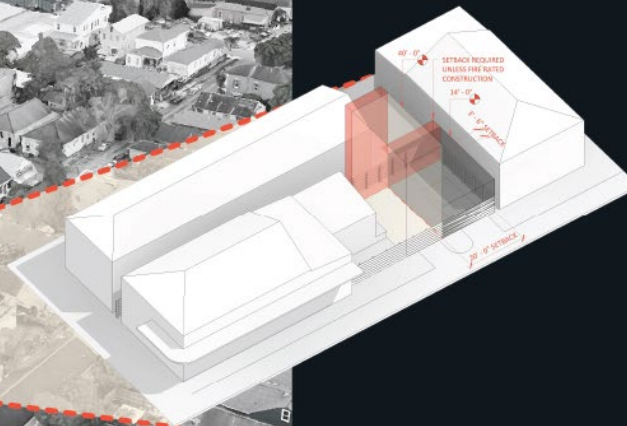
In the end, the building siting reacted to all of constraints and needs of the Owner.



- 1 ENTRY / SITTING AREA
- 2 OFFICE
- 3 BATHROOM
- 4 COFFEE/BEVERAGE COUNTER
- 5 STORAGE CLO.
- 6 PERSONAL USE OFFICE LOFT





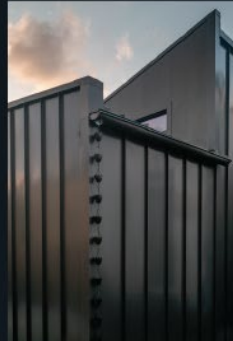


# SP-125.04

## Visibility & Context

The project is located within a local historic district and a National Register Historic District. The national designation allowed for the main building rehabilitation (completed by another firm) to apply for and receive Historic Tax Credits. With that, the accessory structure also had to be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service. Additionally, the local Historic District Landmark Commission required a full review through the Architectural Review Committee.

The design reacted to the requirements by both entities of limited street visibility. The overall form, "open" front and the use of contemporary metal siding are based on the "lean to" shed structures typical throughout the neighborhood allowing the building to be contextual, without being a reproduction.





# SP-125.05

## Lifestyle

The Owners of the property live an active and social lifestyle. The need for a space to entertain friends and family was paramount.

The accessory structure was designed to align with the existing screen porch structure to allow for a contiguous outdoor space. The floating front "porch" and stairs act as additional seating for outdoor gatherings.

The "open" face of the accessory structure, while glazed, allows for the exterior landscape to blend into the interior experience creating a connectivity across the different functions, while also allowing a barrier of separation of work and pleasure.



# SP-125.06

## Workplace

As an environmentally conscience attorney is concerned, the concept of his work environment was to have an elevated sense of focus while allowing home comforts and "bringing the outside, in." Interior finishes featured a limited palette as to not overpower the space while highlighting a sense of place.

The office space features a typical built-in bookcase for document storage and is placed behind the desk to keep the plan open and flow to the backyard.

Direct access to a full bathroom and a kitchenette/breakroom encourages continued productivity and multitasking as there is less downtime between spaces. With the workload of an attorney in mind, this was a necessity.





# SP-125.07

## Over the Workplace

With the desire to be able to fully step away and reorganize their thoughts, a lofted recess space was a must for the Owners. Although the ground floor features a small lounge area, the loft gives a sense of detachment, with the option for a quick re-entry to the office.

A low sloped ceiling with a single window, due south, gives a sense of enclosure while allowing natural light to drift to the office below. For this aspect, polycarbonate handrails were designed in lieu of full height walls. These railings allow for an overlook, greater natural light and spatial connectivity below.





## SP-125.08

### Treading Lightly

With a loft, in a 375 square feet building, the main question was how to ascend without shrinking the space even further. The answer was to create as open a stair possible while acknowledging the construction.

Floating 2" concrete slabs were poured and mounted to a custom hollow metal stringer to create a path leading to the loft. The horizontal metal tube railing varies from the polycarbonate to allow full visibility from the interior out. The concrete was mixed and poured to match the overall slab and the tube steel was finished to bring a sense of unity with handrails and supports throughout.

Enclosing the landing, both at the façade and under, allowed for hidden storage the Owners found integral.





## SP-125.09

### Pining for Nature

To continue the reach for nature in an office, finish grade plywood was chosen as the wall material.

Sheets of Grade A Plywood were further inspected, purchased, cut to size, sealed and mounted on either end of the structure to create an envelope of warm natural walls that framed your view out.

The plywood, mounted on a strict grid pattern, was spaced such to not create a monolithic wall. Exposing the underlayment in these gaps gives more texture and depth to an otherwise flat surface. The grid breaking at the sloped ceiling further reinforces the "lean to" shed vernacular.

# SP-125.10

## All Things Balanced

The completed accessory structure has successfully responded to the various forces directing its development.

The Owners have transitioned into the space seamlessly balancing their professional and lifestyle needs.

While small in scale, this project delivered large impact on their new living arrangements.

