

# APPLICANT'S REPORT

*January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

*Special Use Permit Request  
1211 and 1213 Porter Street, Richmond, Virginia  
Map Reference Number: S000-0870/015*

---

Submitted to:

**City of Richmond**

Department of Planning and Development Review

Land Use Administration

900 East Broad Street, Suite 511

Richmond, Virginia 23219

Submitted by:

Mark Baker

Baker Development Resources

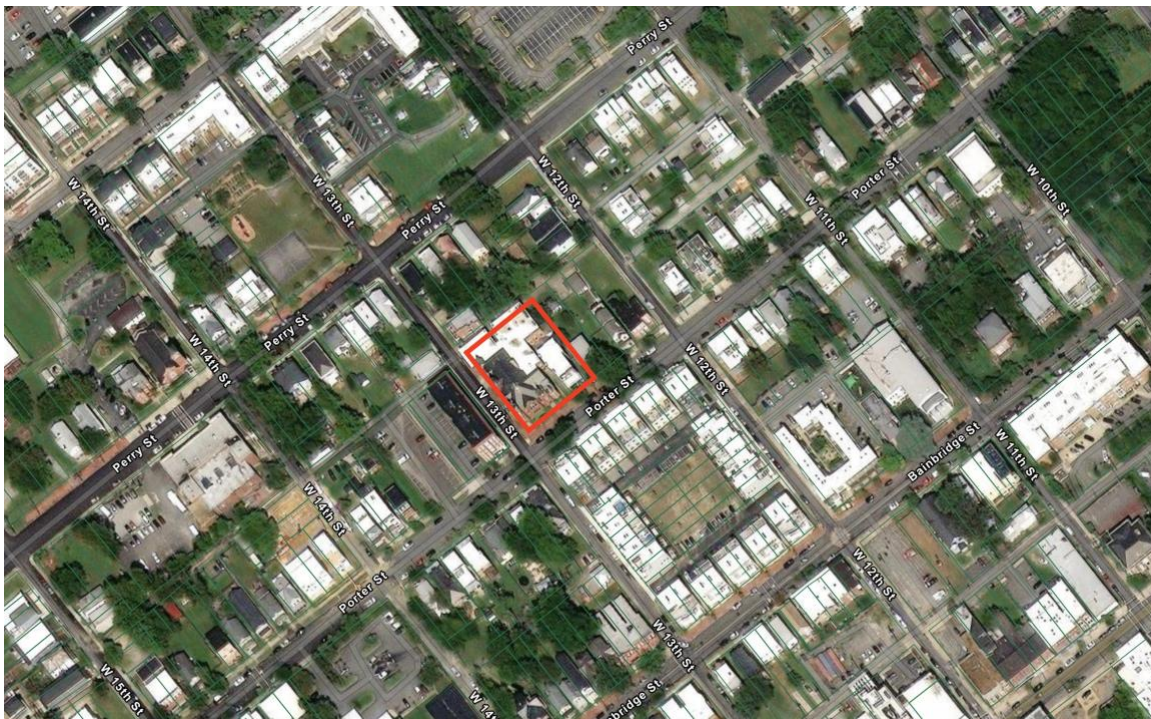
530 East Main Street, Suite 730

Richmond, VA 23219

The applicant is requesting a special use permit (the “SUP”) for the property known as 1211 and 1213 Porter Street (the “Property”). The SUP would authorize the division of the parcel and the rehabilitation of a parsonage as a multifamily dwelling. While the multifamily use is conditionally permitted by the underlying R-8 Urban Residential zoning district, some of the applicable feature requirements cannot be met and therefore the SUP is required.

## SITE DESCRIPTION AND EXISTING LAND USE

The Property is located at the northern corner of the intersection of West 13<sup>th</sup> and Porter Streets. It is referenced by the City Assessor with a tax parcel number of S000-0870/015. The Property is large for the area with 155 feet of frontage along West 13<sup>th</sup> Street and roughly 137 feet of frontage along Porter Street. The Property includes approximately 21,924 square feet of lot area. The Property is currently improved with a masonry church building, constructed c. 1899 and a two-story, vacant, masonry parsonage. The church building is located on the western portion of the parcel and is recognized by the City Assessor as 1213 Porter Street while the parsonage is located on the eastern portion of the parcel and is designated 1211 Porter Street. The parsonage is a large single-family dwelling which is accessory to the church and which includes over 3,000 square feet of floor area. An east-west alley provides access to the rear of the Property.



2

and two single-family dwellings can be found east of the Property on the northern block face. The properties in the greater vicinity are developed with a wide range of uses and building forms. Single- and two-family dwellings, both attached and detached, can be found throughout the area, and are generally located on traditionally narrow urban lots. Multifamily dwellings of various sizes and densities are common in the area as well. As an example, a four-story, multi-family building, containing 16 dwelling units lies on Porter Street to the west of the Property, directly across West 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Other uses typical within residential zoning classifications, including churches, parks, and community centers, can also be found in the vicinity. Further to the south and west, a wide range of commercial uses can be found along the Hull Street and Commerce Road commercial corridors, respectively.

## **EXISTING ZONING**

The Property and the surrounding properties to the north and west are zoned R-8 Urban Residential, which permits multifamily detached dwellings with a Conditional Use Permit. Properties to the south and east, including those across Porter Street are zoned R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential. Further south along Hull Street properties are zoned B-5 Central Business while to the east along Commerce Road lies a B-6 Mixed-Use Business district.

## **MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION**

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends “Neighborhood Mixed-Use” for the Property. The Master Plan describes this land use category as follows: “Existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses...” which is supportive of this request. Small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 dwelling units) are listed as a primary use within this classification.

In addition to the Property-specific guidance offered by the Vision and Core Concepts chapter, there are a number of other goals elsewhere within the Master Plan that support this request. The Property also lies within the Manchester National/Regional Priority Growth Node, is within two blocks of Hull Street (Enhanced Transit Corridor), and is within short walking distance of high frequency transit stops on both Hull Street and Semmes Avenue, all of which lends additional support for the request. This support goes so far as to suggest this type of development should be permitted by-right with future Zoning Ordinance updates/rewrites.

- Page 109 (Equitable Transportation Chapter), Objective 6.1 to “Increase the number of residents and jobs at Nodes and along enhanced transit corridors in a land development pattern that prioritizes multi-modal transportation options.”
  - b. Develop housing at all income levels in and near Nodes and along major corridors (see strategies Goal 14).
- Page 136 (Diverse Economy Chapter), Objective 11.1 to “Increase the areas of appropriately zoned land near various transportation modes and housing to retain, create, and attract employers.”
  - d. Encourage the development of a variety of quality housing types to house employees across the economic spectrum (see Goal 14).
- Page 150 (Inclusive Housing Chapter), Objective 14.1 to “Increase city-wide awareness of the importance of integrating housing at all income levels into every residential neighborhood so every household has housing choice throughout the city.”

- **Page 152 (Inclusive Housing Chapter), Objective 14.5 to “Allow the development of middle housing (2- to 4-unit buildings) by-right within a half mile of high-frequency transit stops.”**
- Page 152 (Inclusive Housing Chapter) (see map on p. 153), Objective 14.5 to “Encourage more housing types throughout the city and greater density along enhanced transit corridors and at Nodes (shown in Figure 38 [p.153]) by amending the Zoning Ordinance.”
- Page 159 (Thriving Environment Chapter) Objective 15.1 to “Reduce air pollution related to transportation.”
  - a. Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles (see Goal 1, Goal 8, Goal 14).
- Page 86 (High-Quality Places Chapter), Objective 1.4, to “maintain and improve primarily residential areas by increasing their linkages to...corridors...and maintaining high-quality design standards.”
- Page 100 (High Quality Places Chapter), Objective 4.1, to “create and preserve high-quality, distinctive, and well-designed neighborhoods and nodes throughout the City,” as the request introduces thoughtfully designed new construction in a manner not otherwise assured by-right.

## Proposal

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The SUP would authorize the division of the parcel and the rehabilitation of the existing parsonage as a multifamily dwelling which does not conform to the underlying R-8 Urban Residential district zoning requirements applicable to the Property.

### PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The proposed multifamily use is not a permitted principal use in the R-8 district. The R-8 district does permit multifamily use by Conditional Use Permit. However, there is insufficient width between the Church and parsonage buildings to accommodate the required side yard setbacks. If on separate lots as proposed, a 3' setback is required for the parsonage while a 5' setback would be required for the church. A zero-lot-line is proposed for the church and a variable setback within approximate minimum dimension of 3.22' is proposed for the parsonage building. In addition, no parking would be provided. As a result, a SUP is necessary in order to authorize the proposed lot split and re-use of the parsonage.

The request would also provide for resolution to a property line issue between the Property (1211 Porter Street) and the adjacent property. An existing fence between 1209 and the Property has been the de facto boundary between the two properties for years. Despite this fact, the fence encroaches onto the Property substantially. The encroachment area varies from approximately three to four feet in width and contains approximately 585 square feet of lot area. Should the SUP be authorized, it is the intention of the applicant to quit claim the encroaching area to the owner of 1209 Porter Street for their continued use and enjoyment.

Finally, the owner (the Central United Methodist Church) has offered the parsonage for sale and reuse in order ensure the continued viability of the church building at 1213 Porter Street. The

approval of the SUP would permit the individual sale of the parsonage building at 1211 Porter Street, the revenue from which would fund needed maintenance and improvements related to the church building at 1213 Porter Street.

## PROJECT DETAILS/DESIGN

A lot split is proposed in order to place the existing two-story, masonry, parsonage structure on a roughly 5,550 square foot parcel at the eastern side of the current parcel. The exterior of the building would be kept intact. The building, which is large at over 3,000 square feet of floor area, would be rehabilitated as three dwelling units. The first floor would contain a total of 1,371 square feet of finished floor area with a two-bedroom, two-bathroom unit located at the front of the dwelling and accessed through a common front foyer. A one-bedroom, one-bathroom unit located at the rear of the dwelling would be accessible from a private entrance located at the rear porch. The second floor would contain a 1,532 square foot three-bedroom, three-bathroom unit with access to a private rear porch. The proposed floor plans are modern and efficient and work well within the constraints of the existing building. The units would be of high quality with traditional details, high ceilings and designs/layouts that meet the needs of the market. Accessible outdoor space would be available for the use by future residents.

## Findings of Fact

The following are factors included in Section 17.11 of the Charter and Section 30-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to the approval of special use permits by City Council. The proposed special use permit will not:

- ***Be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community involved.***

The proposed SUP will not impact the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the nearby neighborhoods. The proposed site improvements and density are compatible with the existing development in the vicinity. This request would simply permit the efficient utilization of the Property by allowing for the rehabilitation of an existing building. The improvement of the Property in conjunction with the high quality/benefits provided by the SUP will provide positive impacts in terms of health, welfare, etc., and furthermore will add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood.

- ***Tend to create congestion in streets, roads, alleys and other public ways and places in the area involved.***

The proposed SUP will not result in significant traffic impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. The traffic generation for three additional dwelling units will be negligible, especially within the context of a walkable neighborhood. As such, the SUP will not create congestion on streets, roads, alleys or any other public right of way.

- ***Create hazards from fire, panic or other dangers.***

The Property will be developed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the building code and in accordance with the requirements of Fire and Emergency Services. The City's codes applicable to this development are designed to eliminate such hazards.

- ***Tend to overcrowding of land and cause an undue concentration of population.***

The SUP will not tend to overcrowd the land or create an undue concentration of population.

- ***Adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements.***

The SUP would not adversely affect the above referenced City services. To the contrary, the proposal would provide positive fiscal (tax) benefits that would enhance the City's ability to provide these services to the proposed development. The SUP would place 1211 Porter Street, which is currently not taxed, on the tax rolls.

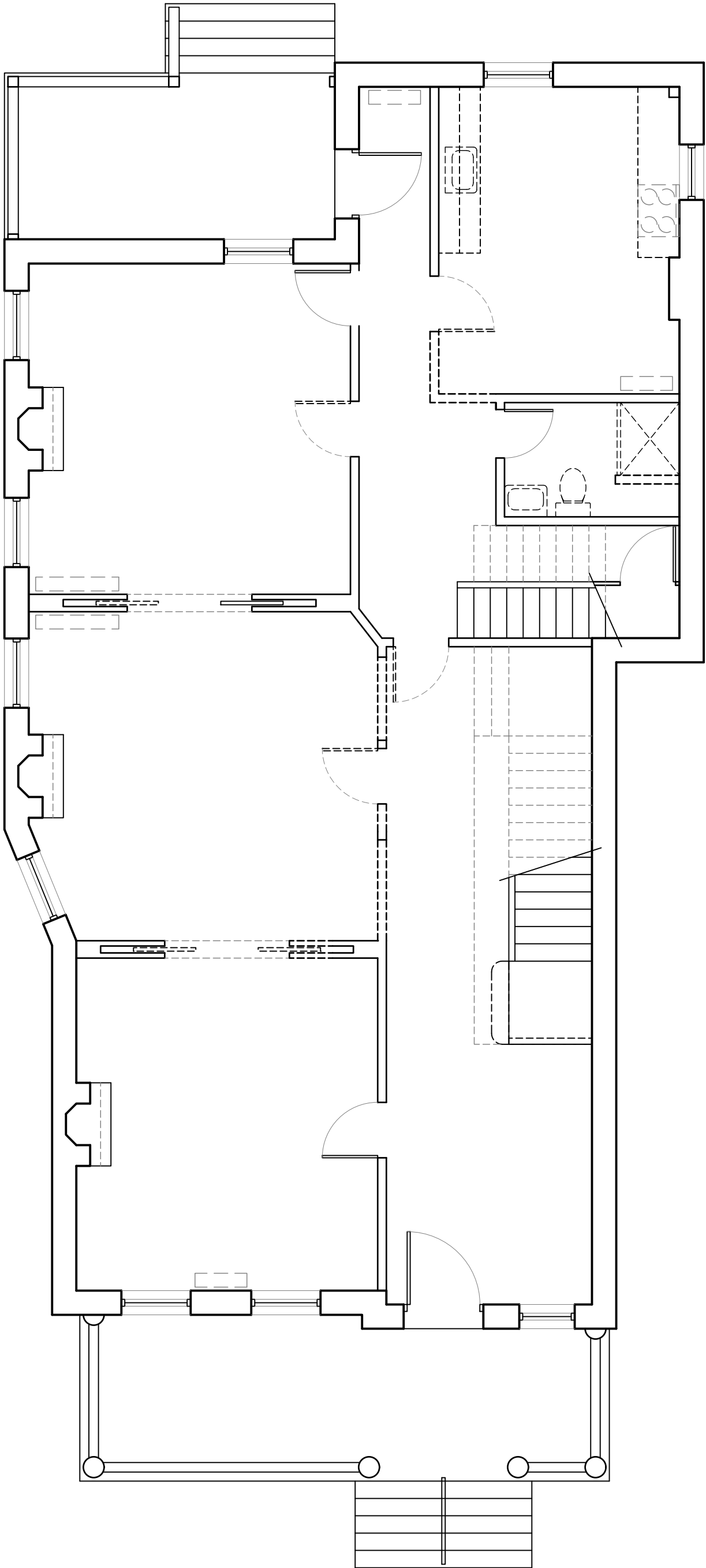
- ***Interfere with adequate light and air.***

The light and air available to the subject and adjacent properties will not be affected. The structures are existing and the site layout will not be changed as a result of this request.

## Summary

In summary we are enthusiastically seeking approval for the division of the existing parcel and the rehabilitation of the existing parsonage as a three-unit multifamily dwelling. The SUP would allow for the reasonable re-use of the vacant parsonage building and allow for the continued stewardship of the Property while also placing the Property on the tax rolls. The SUP would permit the individual sale of the parsonage building, thereby allowing the owner/church to fund needed maintenance and improvements related to the church building.

The proposal is consistent with the Master Plan recommendations applicable to the Property and the proposed use offers compatibility with surrounding residential uses. The assurances conditioned through the SUP would guarantee an appropriate re-use of the building that is complementary to the surrounding residential neighborhood. The request would contribute to the overall vibrancy of the block by reactivating and preserving an existing structure that has long been part of the neighborhood fabric.



© ratio 2022

11.18.22  
Design 03

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

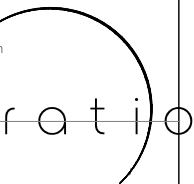
SK - 01  
Drawing: 1 of 4

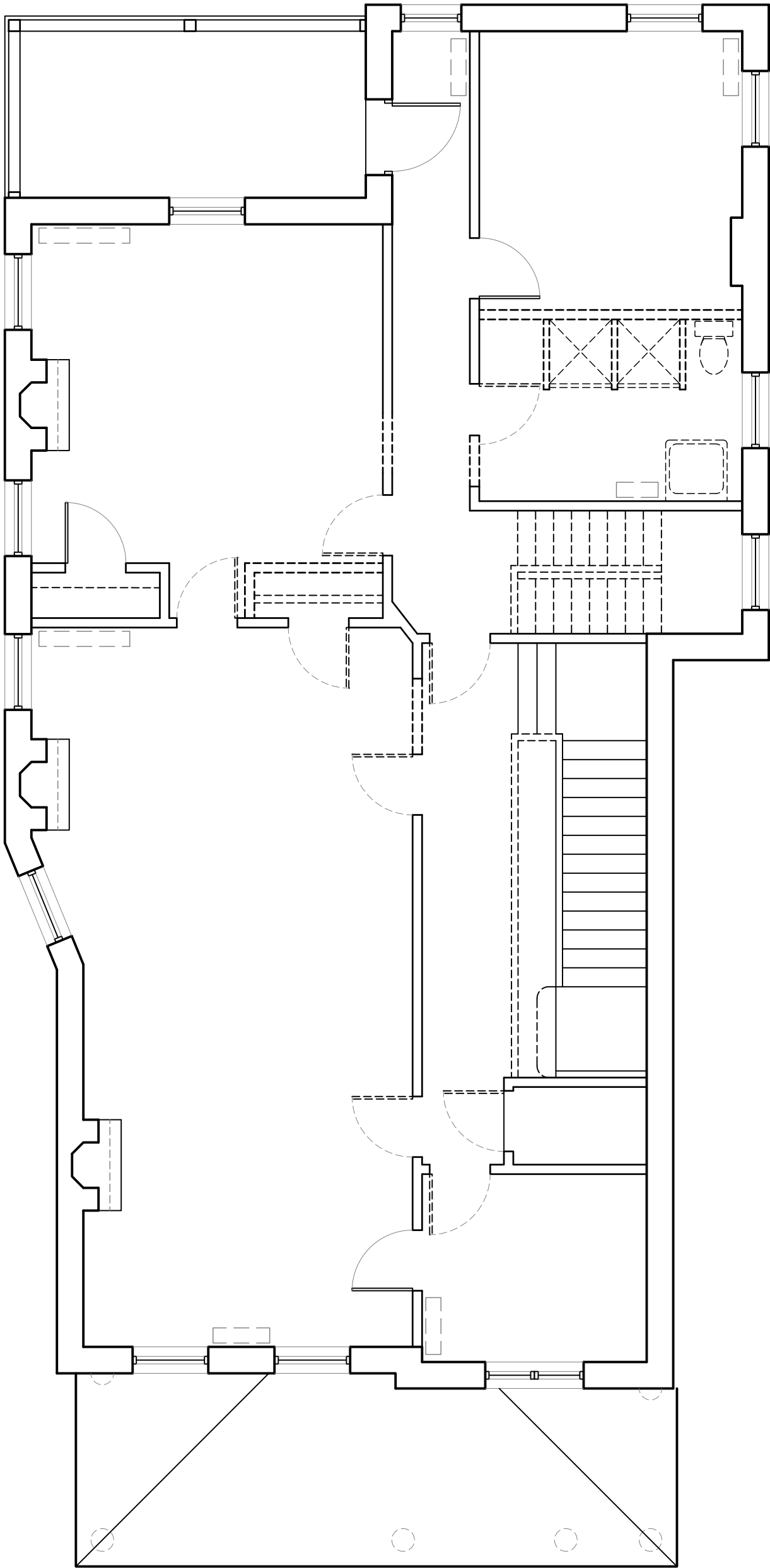
# 1211 Porter St.

1211 Porter St.  
Richmond, Virginia

NOTES:  
FIRST FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN

1406 LABURNUM PARK BLVD.  
RICHMOND VA 23227  
804.264.1729  
www.ratiostudio.com





© ratio 2022

11.18.22  
Design 03

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

SK - 02  
Drawing: 2 of 4

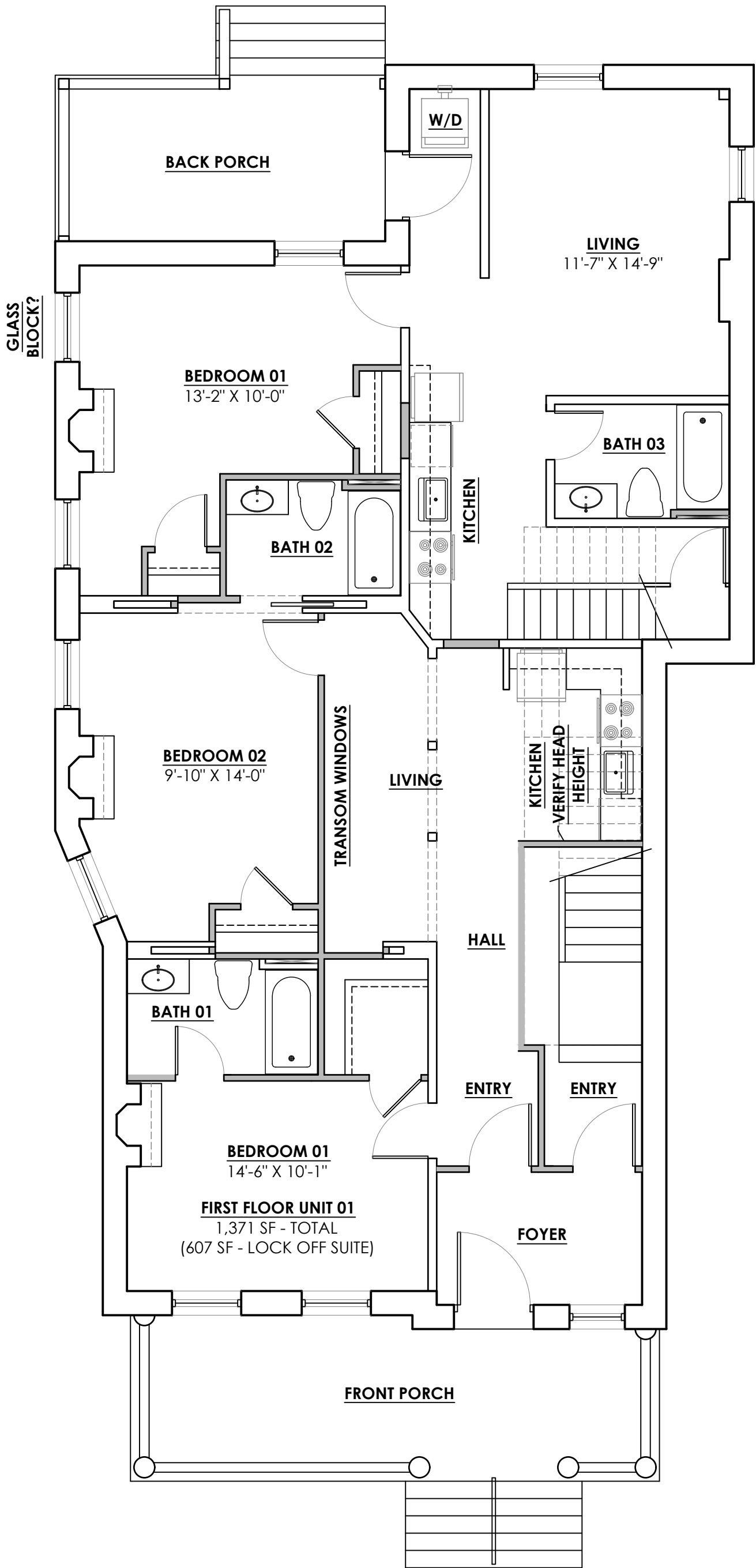
**1211 Porter St.**  
1211 Porter St.  
Richmond, Virginia

NOTES:  
SECOND FLOOR DEMOLITION PLAN

1406 LABURNUM PARK BLVD.  
RICHMOND VA 23227  
804.264.1729  
www.ratiostudio.com

ratio





NOTES:  
FIRST FLOOR NEW CONSTRUCTION PLAN

1406 LABURNUM PARK BLVD.  
RICHMOND VA 23227  
804.264.1729  
www.ratiostudio.com

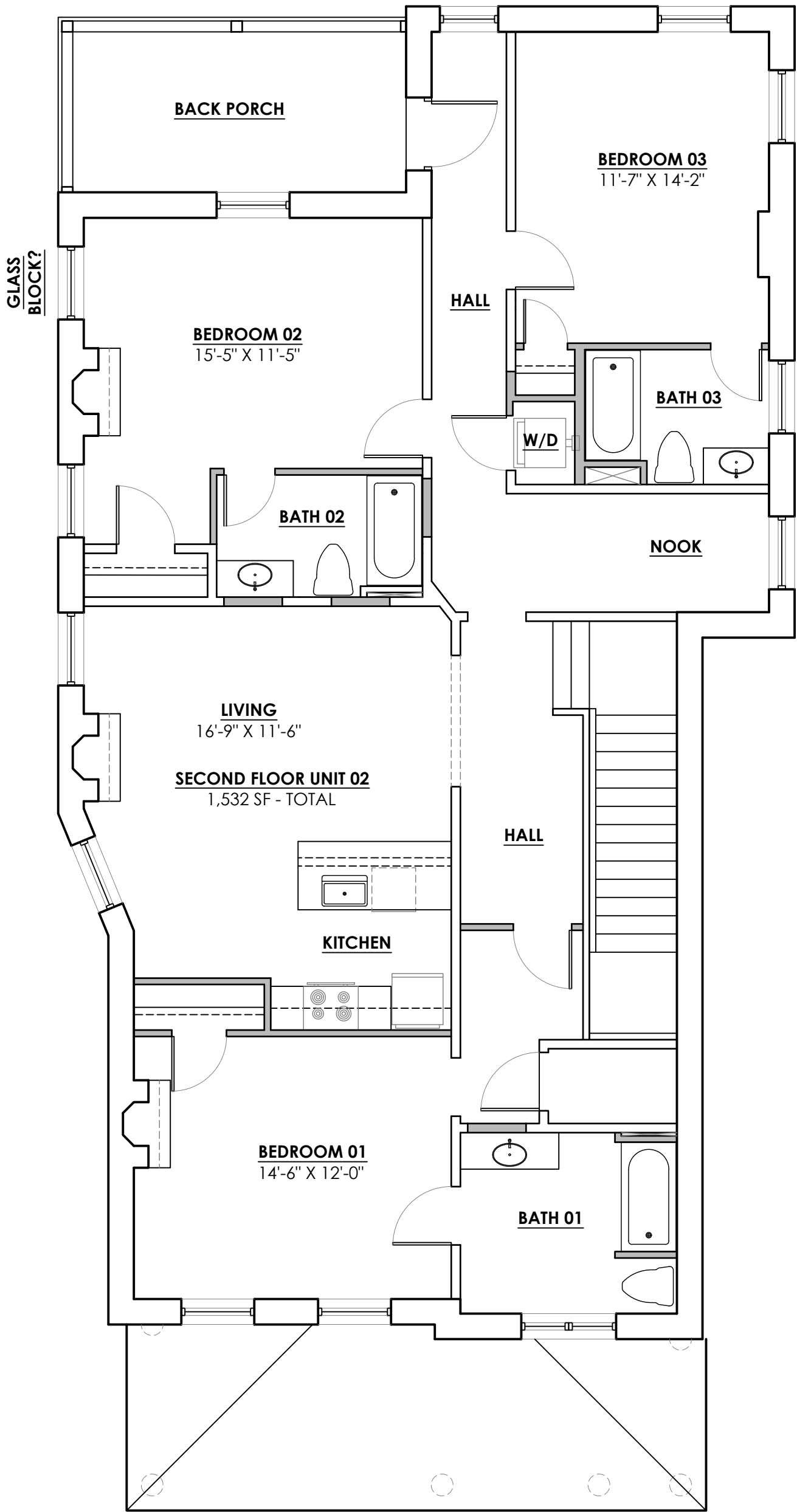
SK - 03  
Drawing: 3 of 4

**1211 Porter St.**

1211 Porter St.  
Richmond, Virginia

11.18.22  
Design 03  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

ratio



© ratio 2022

11.18.22  
Design 03  
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

SK - 04  
Drawing: 4 of 4  
**1211 Porter St.**  
1211 Porter St.  
Richmond, Virginia

NOTES:  
SECOND FLOOR NEW CONSTRUCTION PLAN

1406 LABURNUM PARK BLVD.  
RICHMOND VA 23227  
804.264.1729  
www.ratiostudio.com

ratio