

# MEMORANDUM

CITY/BOROUGH OF JUNEAU  
155 South Seward Street, Juneau, Alaska 99801

**DATE:** February 7, 2013

**TO:** Board of Adjustment

**FROM:** Beth McKibben, Planner *Bme*  
Community Development Department

**FILE NO.:** VAR2012 0033

**PROPOSAL:** Request for height variance from required 35 feet to 47 feet for proposed dormitory.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Applicant:** MRV Architects

**Property Owner:** University of Alaska

**Property Address:** 11120 Glacier Hwy

**Legal Description:** USS 2391 FR

**Parcel Code Number:** 4-B23-0-103-004-0

**Site Size:** 22.73 acres

**Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Designation:** IPU –Institution and Public Use

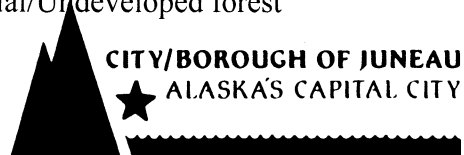
**Zoning:** D5

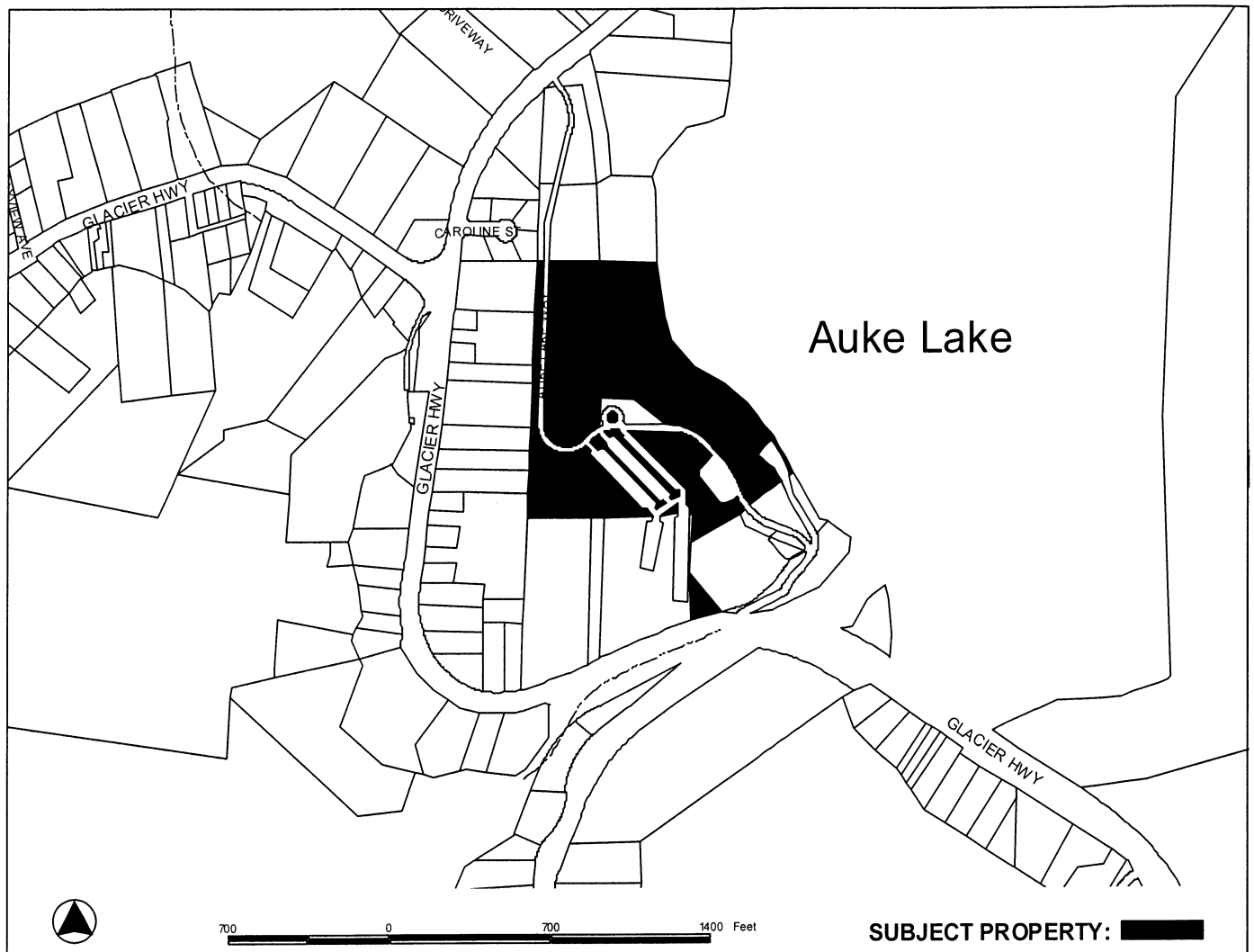
**Utilities:** City water & sewer

**Access:** Mendenhall Loop Road (Backloop) and Glacier Hwy.

**Existing Land Use:** University

**Surrounding Land Use:** North -D5-Single Family Residential/UAS Campus parking area  
South -D5 Single Family Residential/Undeveloped forest  
East -D5 Single Family Residential/UAS Campus parking area  
West -D5 Single Family Residential/Undeveloped forest





## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A –sheet A100 site plan  
Attachment B – sheet A2 height calculations  
Attachment C – sheet Z908 3D view of site  
Attachment D – conceptual drawing

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting a Variance to exceed the 35' maximum height allowance in the D5 zoning district. The applicant proposes to build a 47 foot high, five story, 34,724 square foot building to house a 120 bed dormitory with associated meeting spaces, study rooms, seminar space and shared laundry as well as storage and mechanical space. The project will be built in two phases, with 30 rooms having a capacity of 60 beds and associated spaces with an additional 60 beds (30 rooms) to be added later. This variance request is submitted in conjunction with a conditional use permit USE2012 0023 and CSP2013 0004, which are addressed in a separate staff report.

## **BACKGROUND**

The proposed project is to be located on the main campus of the University of Alaska Southeast. New development of university facilities in a D-5 residential zoning district requires a Conditional Use permit approved by the Planning Commission under the Table of Permissible Uses, CBJ§49.25.300, Use 5.130, Colleges, universities, community colleges. Additionally, Juneau's Title 49 and Alaska State Statutes require a state project review. These required reviews are addressed in USE2012 0023 and CSP2013 0004.

## **ANALYSIS**

The proposed residence hall is located well away from any setbacks and Auke Lake on the west edge of a developed parking lot, between Noyes Pavilion and the drop-off circle to Egan Library (attachment A). The project site is bordered by an existing parking lot, access road, Noyes Pavilion, near forested wetlands. Portions of the site are steep with bedrock near the surface. The hillside behind the proposed residence hall (west) will be not be disturbed.

According to the application materials, phase 2 of the project is the highest at just under 47 feet, just about 12 feet higher than the maximum height of 35 feet allowed in the D5 zoning district (attachment B). The building is designed to set into the hillside. The five story building has been designed to create a smaller building footprint so as to minimize disturbance of the site and existing trees. The application and associated drawings indicate that the roofline of the proposed dormitory will be similar to that of the Noyes Pavilion when viewed from the parking lot (attachment C & D).

## **Variance Requirements**

Under CBJ §49.20.250 where hardship and practical difficulties result from an extraordinary situation or unique physical feature affecting only a specific parcel of property or structures lawfully existing thereon and render it difficult to carry out the provisions of Title 49, the Board of Adjustment may grant a Variance in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Title 49. A Variance may vary any requirement or regulation of Title 49 concerning dimensional and other design standards, but not those concerning the use of land or structures, housing density, lot coverage, or those establishing construction standards. A Variance may be granted after the prescribed hearing and after the Board of Adjustment has determined:

- 1. That the relaxation applied for or a lesser relaxation specified by the Board of Adjustment would give substantial relief to the owner of the property involved and be more consistent with justice to other property owners.***

The applicant has indicated that requested relaxation to the D5 height requirement will provide substantial relief to the owner of the property in several ways. The larger building footprint that would be required by a lower building height will increase site development costs for rock removal and excavation. Minimizing the building footprint with a taller building reduces the environmental impact of the development as well as preserves the heavily treed vegetated buffer between the University and neighboring properties. The other buildings on the campus, as well as neighboring properties comply with the height requirement. However, building with a smaller building footprint thus providing for a larger forested buffer to remain in place, provides a superior buffer than if they constructed a lower building with a larger footprint. The requested relaxation will give substantial relief to the owner and the preserved forested buffer will be consistent with justice to other property owners.

**Yes. This criterion is met.**

- 2. That relief can be granted in such a fashion that the intent of this title will be observed and the public safety and welfare be preserved.***

The intent of Title 49 is to ensure that growth and development is in accord with the values of Juneau residents; to identify and secure the beneficial impacts of growth while minimizing negative impacts; to ensure that future growth is of appropriate type, design, and location; to provide adequate open space for light and air; and to recognize the economic value of land and encourage its proper and beneficial use. Chapter 14 of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan speaks to Community Education and Services. On page 239 the plan states that one of the most important factors influencing the quality of life in a community is a good elementary, secondary and university educational system. Guideline and Consideration 11 for Subarea 3 of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan (page 199) states:

*“Provide for expansion of the UAS campus, including student and faculty housing and athletic facilities.”*

No evidence has been presented indicating the requested height variance will have a negative effect on public safety and welfare. The building will have a sprinkler system, and the CBJ Fire Marshall has indicated that fire safety needs are appropriately addressed.

**Yes. This criterion is met.**

**3. *That the authorization of the Variance will not injure nearby property.***

No evidence has been presented indicating the requested variance will injure nearby property. Maintaining the heavily treed buffer between the University and neighboring properties by minimizing the building footprint will maintain a buffer between uses. Because of the topography of the area and the forest the University and the proposed dormitory are not visible from adjacent property.

**Yes. This criterion is met.**

**4. *That the Variance does not authorize uses not allowed in the district involved.***

The proposed use is appropriate according to the Table of Permissible Uses. The Conditional Use permit is listed at CBJ §49.25.300 section 5.130 for the D5 zoning district.

**Yes. This criterion is met.**

**5. *That compliance with the existing standards would:***

**(A) *Unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property for a permissible principal use;***

The proposed building, a dormitory facility associated with the University is permitted in the D5 zoning district with an approved conditional use permit. The applicant is seeking a conditional use permit for the building. The applicant could build a 35' high building and use the site for this use.

**No. This sub-criterion is not met.**

**(B) *Unreasonably prevent the owner from using the property in a manner which is consistent as to scale, amenities, appearance or features, with existing development in the neighborhood of the subject property;***

As mentioned above, the main campus of the University of Alaska Southeast is situated in such a manner that it seems isolated from neighboring developments. It is not visible from the street and generally not visible to neighboring properties. Other buildings on

the campus are quite large, but there are no requests for height variance for other buildings. The drawings show that the proposed building, even at five stories, has a similar roof height to the existing Noyes Pavilion because of the topography. Development in the neighborhood complies with the height requirement. The proposed 47 foot high dormitory is not consistent in scale with existing development.

**No. This sub-criterion is not met.**

**(C) *Be unnecessarily burdensome because unique physical features of the property render compliance with the standards unreasonably expensive;***

The unique features of the site are the existing development, buildings and parking areas, sloping topography and adjacent forested wetlands. The applicant indicates that complying with the 35 foot height limit would require either a much smaller housing facility or a much larger building footprint. Reducing the amount of housing provided does not facilitate the long term goals of the University or of the community as articulated in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Constructing the dormitory with a larger building footprint increases the development costs. The cost of site preparation, bedrock removal, as well as the costs for a larger foundation and roof increase significantly with the larger building footprint. Evidence presented indicates that complying with the 35 foot height requirements is unreasonably expensive.

**Yes. This sub-criterion is met.**

*or*

**(D) *Because of preexisting nonconforming conditions on the subject parcel the grant of the Variance would not result in a net decrease in overall compliance with the Land Use Code, CBJ Title 49, or the building code, CBJ Title 19, or both.***

There are no non-conforming conditions associated with this site.

**This sub-criterion is not applicable.**

**6. *That a grant of the Variance would result in more benefits than detriments to the neighborhood.***

The granting of this variance will result in several benefits to the neighborhood. The smaller building footprint will reduce impacts to the site, reduce the area of heavily forested buffer that would be removed, and eliminate impacts to the adjacent forested wetlands. Furthermore, due to topography, the proposed building will not impact views from surrounding properties. Construction of the dormitory, regardless of the height of the building, will provide many

benefits to the neighborhood, such as increasing safety by reducing the number of students walking to the campus and it will facilitate the expansion of UAS.

**Yes. This criterion is met.**

## **FINDINGS**

***1. Is the application for the requested Variance complete?***

**Yes.** We find the application contains the information necessary to conduct full review of the proposed operations. The application submittal by the applicant, including the appropriate fees, substantially conforms to the requirements of CBJ Chapter 49.15.

**Per CBJ §49.70.900 (b)(3), General Provisions, the Director makes the following Juneau Coastal Management Program consistency determination:**

***2. Will the proposed development comply with the Juneau Coastal Management Programs?***

**N/A.** According to the previous analysis, the JCMP does not apply to the development.

***3. Does the variance as requested, meet the criteria of Section 49.20.250, Grounds for Variances?***

**Yes.** Based on the analysis above, staff has determined that the applicant has presented an argument that justifies the grounds for this variance. Criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are met.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of Adjustment adopt the Director's analysis and findings and approve the requested Variance, VAR2012 0033. The Variance permit would allow for a height variance from required 35 feet to 47 feet for proposed dormitory at the UAS main campus.

Please refer to **USE2012 0023 & CSP2013 0004** Staff Report for complete project drawings submitted by MRV Architects.



# VARIANCE APPLICATION

Project Number <b>VAR20120033</b>	Project Name (15 characters) <b>UAS Student Residence Hall</b>	Case Number	Date Received <b>12/24/12</b>
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**TYPE OF VARIANCE REQUESTED:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Variance to the Sign Standard (VSG)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Variance to Dimensional Standards (VDS)
<input type="checkbox"/> Variance to Habitat Setbacks (VHB)	<input type="checkbox"/> Variance to Parking Requirements (VPK)
<input type="checkbox"/> Variance to Setback Requirements (VSB)	

**DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY WHICH REQUIRES A VARIANCE:**  
The maximum building height exceeds the limit of 35' for D5 zoning. As the building is specific to the campus context and campus usage, a height variance of 11'-10 1/2" is requested. (12')

**Previous Variance Applications?** ☐ YES ☒ NO Date of Filing: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Case Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Was the Variance Granted? ☐ YES ☐ NO

**UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF LAND OR BUILDING(S):** \_\_\_\_\_  
The site is bordered by an existing parking lot, paved road, open pavilion, and proximity to forested wetlands. The land is also steep with bedrock close to the surface.

**UTILITIES AVAILABLE:** WATER: ☒ Public ☐ On Site SEWER: ☒ Public ☐ On Site

**WHY WOULD A VARIANCE BE NEEDED FOR THIS PROPERTY REGARDLESS OF THE OWNER?**  
Lot L is embedded in the core of the University of Alaska Southeast campus. Expansion of the building footprint would impact existing vegetation, require more bedrock excavation, and encroach on forested wetlands. The proximity of the existing parking lot and road also impart boundary limits.


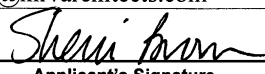
**WHAT HARDSHIP WOULD RESULT IF THE VARIANCE WERE NOT GRANTED?**  
There is a deficit of campus housing, particularly for freshman students, adjacent to campus services. The building height is a response to UAS program specificity, elevator height requirements for ADA and appropriate mechanical access between the floors. Given the site complexity, compliance with the height requirement would be cost prohibitive and increase negative environmental impacts.

For more information regarding the permitting process and the submittals required for a complete application, please see the reverse side.  If you need any assistance filling out this form, please contact the Permit Center at 586-0770.	<b>VARIANCE FEES</b>				
		Fees	Check No.	Receipt	Date
	Application Fees	\$ <u>400</u>	<u>22423</u>	<u>01003249</u>	<u>12/24/12</u>
	Adjustment	\$ _____	_____	_____	_____
	Total Fee	\$ <u>400</u>	_____	_____	_____


**NOTE: MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION FORM**

# DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION

Project Number <b>Var 2012 0033</b>	CITY and BOROUGH of JUNEAU	Date Received: <b>12/24/12</b>
Project Name (City Staff to Assign Name)		

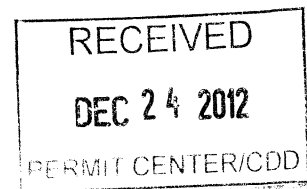
<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>Project Description</b> New freshman dormitory on the University of Alaska Southeast campus. The project consists of a 120-bed residence built in two, 60-bed phases. The residences are connected by a meeting space, study rooms, seminar space, and shared laundry. Phase I consists of one 60-bed unit with central space. Phase II consists of an additional 60 beds. The facility will embody best practices for environmental stewardship.		
	<b>PROPERTY LOCATION</b>		
	Street Address 11120 Glacier Highway	City/Zip Juneau/99801	
	Legal Description(s) of Parcel(s) (Subdivision, Survey, Block, Tract, Lot) USS 2391		
	Assessor's Parcel Number(s) 4B2301030040 LOT L		
	<b>LANDOWNER/ LESSEE</b>		
	Property Owner's Name University of Alaska Southeast	Contact Person: Keith Gerken	Work Phone: 907-789-6498
	Mailing Address 11120 Glacier Highway	Home Phone:	Fax Number:
	E-mail Address keith.gerken@uas.alaska.edu	Other Contact Phone Number(s): Ke Mell 796-6498	
	<b>PROJECT / APPLICANT</b>	<b>LANDOWNER/ LESSEE CONSENT</b> ****Required for Planning Permits, not needed on Building/ Engineering Permits****	
I am (we) are the owner(s) or lessee(s) of the property subject to this application and I (we) consent as follows: A. This application for a land use or activity review for development on my (our) property is made with my complete understanding and permission. B. I (we) grant permission for officials and employees of the City and Borough of Juneau to inspect my property as needed for purposes of this application.			
X <u></u> Landowner/Lessee Signature		<u>12/21/12</u> Date	
X _____ Landowner/Lessee Signature		_____ Date	
NOTICE: The City and Borough of Juneau staff may need access to the subject property during regular business hours and will attempt to contact the landowner in addition to the formal consent given above. Further, members of the Planning Commission may visit the property before the scheduled public hearing date.			
<b>APPLICANT</b> If the same as OWNER, write "SAME" and sign and date at X below			
Applicant's Name MRV Architects		Contact Person: Sherri Brown	Work Phone: 907-586-1371
Mailing Address 1420 Glacier Ave. Suite 101		Home Phone:	Fax Number:
E-mail Address sherri@mrvarchitects.com		Other Contact Phone Number(s): Paul Voelckers 586-1371	
X <u></u> Applicant's Signature		<u>12/20/2012</u> Date of Application	

-----OFFICE USE ONLY BELOW THIS LINE-----

<b>STAFF APPROVALS</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Permit Type</b>	<b>**SIGN</b>	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
		Building/Grading Permit				
		City/State Project Review and City Land Action				
		Inquiry Case (Fee In Lieu, Letter of ZC, Use Not Listed)				
		Mining Case (Small, Large, Rural, Extraction, Exploration)				
		Sign Approval (If more than one, fill in all applicable permit #'s)				
		Subdivision (Minor, Major, PUD, St. Vacation, St. Name Change)				
		Use Approval (Allowable, Conditional, Cottage Housing, Mobile Home Parks, Accessory Apartment)				
	X	Variance Case (De Minimis and all other Variance case types)		12/24/12	Var 2012 0033	
		Wetlands Permits				
		Zone Change Application				
		Other (Describe)				
	***Public Notice Sign Form filled out and in the file.					
	Comments: _____ _____ _____					<b>Permit Intake Initials</b>  

# MRV ARCHITECTS, PC

1420 GLACIER AVENUE, JUNEAU, AK 99801 TELE: (907)586-1371 FAX: (907)463-5544



## TRANSMITTAL

To: CBJ Permit Center

Project: UAS Student Residence Hall

MRV No. 1213

Date: 28 December 2012

Attn: City Planner

Total Pages Including This Sheet: 31

Copies 1

Date 12/28/2012

Description: 1. Conditional Use Permit & Ht. Variance Narrative  
2. Parking Count Data  
3. Additional Copy of plans, elevations, site, and annotated drawings.

### Remarks:

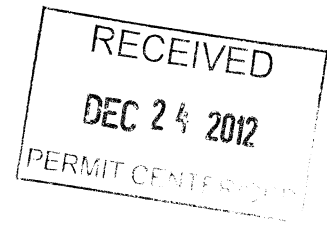
Attached is the expanded narrative to include with the UAS Student Residence Hall Conditional Use Permit application #USE20120023 and Height Variance application #VAR20120033. Also included is an additional copy of the plans, elevations, site, and annotated drawings.

Kind regards,  
Sherri Brown

By: Sherri Brown

# MRV ARCHITECTS

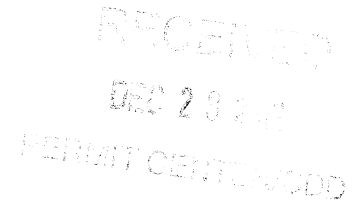
1420 GLACIER AVENUE, JUNEAU, AK 99801 (907) 586-1371



## UAS Freshman Student Residence Hall

December 24, 2012

Juneau Permit Center  
155 S. Seward Street  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Location:  
230 South Franklin Street  
4th Floor- Marine View Center



Re: Project Background for Conditional Use Permit and Height Variance,  
120-bed Freshman Dormitory

To whom it may concern:

The University of Alaska Southeast has contracted with MRV Architects for planning and design on the long-anticipated new residence hall for incoming Freshmen students. A prime central campus site was selected for the new residence hall. This location will combine several positive attributes, with its central campus location, easy proximity to existing food service at Mourant Building, use of existing parking and infrastructure, and the potential for increased student academic and social connections. The new facility should function as a central campus anchor to support critical incoming student needs.

All major development on the UAS Auke Bay campus is subject to CCD Staff and Planning Commission review as part of a Conditional Use Approval. The following information is offered to facilitate that review, with an overview of major planning and design decisions for the new residence hall.

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

Size and Capacity: The new residence hall will contain 60 beds in the current first phase, with future growth to 120 beds in a second phase, slated to occur within a year or two. The basic plan layout pairs two double occupancy rooms with a shared bathroom. ADA accessible rooms and a manager apartment are included. Phase I consists of the central core spaces and residential space totaling 21,600 sf. Phase II adds 13,124 square feet of residential space.

Support Spaces: The residence hall will feature a general-purpose meeting and social room, sized to hold all residents for a special event. This space is located on the third floor, with a panoramic view across the campus, Auke Lake, and to the mountains beyond. A small general-purpose kitchen space adjoins the assembly room, providing flexibility to support a variety of events. Other spaces in the

building include a flexible study room, a seminar space and full laundry facilities. The service spaces include mechanical, electrical/data, and a trash and recycling area.

ADA Access: Phase I and Phase II provide 60 double occupancy resident rooms. The code requires that 3 of these rooms be ADA accessible with roll-in shower access. For our project, two dedicated ADA suites will provide 4 accessible guest rooms with associated roll-in showers. All community spaces and routes are ADA accessible. Turning radius, fixtures, and clear floor space clearances comply with ADA requirements. There are two designated ADA parking spaces adjacent to the curb ramp.

Sustainability and LEED: The facility will embody best practices for environmental stewardship, including high levels of thermal insulation, low system operating costs, low maintenance, and healthy indoor materials. The University has directed MRV to design and construct the project as a LEED-Silver project, a 3rd party national benchmark for excellent sustainable design and construction. The Chancellor's office also approved a sustainability upgrade to install a ground source heating system, in lieu of a conventional fuel oil heating system.

## PLANNING AND DESIGN GOALS

Site Planning: The new residence hall will be located on a prime site on the westerly edge of the developed parking area, situated between Noyes Pavilion and the drop-off circle to Egan Library. Food service will be provided at the Mourant Building. Generalized planning has considered the potential for a second future housing facility on the opposite side of Noyes Pavilion, and other adjoining UAS facilities and connective infrastructure, including roadways and pedestrian routes.

Site issues: Site development, to be completed in Phase II, will include a covered exterior canopy and amenities to support socialization and interaction between students exterior to the building, including benches, lighting and bike racks. Site features include ADA access for pedestrians and adjacent accessible parking. Maintenance service and accessibility to the building are considered.

The site is bordered by an existing parking lot, access road, Noyes Pavilion, and proximity to forested wetlands. Portions of the site are steep, with bedrock close to the surface. The area on the rising hillside behind, or westerly, of the Student Residence Hall will remain undisturbed forest.

## PARKING

The existing UAS parking is underutilized for current University needs. Based on previous parking studies, it is anticipated that the existing parking will readily absorb the parking requirements associated with this freshman student dormitory. Resident parking projections are based on the following:

1. The dormitory is slated for incoming freshman students. These students do not typically own cars. As such, they are intentionally housed proximate to the university campus core, within walkable distance to classes, dining, library, and mixed-use resources. To reduce the impact of cars on the environment, UAS has promoted the use of alternative transportation, such as

walking, biking, and public transportation. The primary pedestrian routes, bus stop, and bike racks are located within 200 feet of the dormitory, encouraging alternative transportation use connecting both UAS students and our broader community.

2. UAS parking consists of six lots. (See A4- Aerial Parking Image) There are a total of 349 parking spaces available to students. Tier 4, the upper-most parking tier adjacent to Noyes, contains 54 parking spaces, including 2 designated ADA spaces for the freshman dormitory. This lot averages 10 vacant spaces per day. Tier 3 averages 14, Tier 2 averages 12, and Tier 1, averages 4 vacant spots per day. The two finger lots south of Noyes average 82 vacant spaces per day. (See attached parking count from week of September 10, 2012)
3. Assuming a walkable mixed-use parking requirement of 1 parking space per 500 sf of resident living area for Phase I and Phase II, only 53 spaces are required (26,248sf/500sf). Given the practical impact of points 1 and 2 above, the appropriate parking density could be argued in the range of 1 space per 1000sf resident living space, or a total of 26 spaces. This is readily absorbed within the current parking configuration.
4. UAS is committed to minimizing its impact on the natural environment and reducing its dependence on non-renewable energy. Strategies include densification of community resources and minimization of the impact of cars through the conservation and preservation of natural areas by limiting the potential over-development of parking.

Design Proposal: The upper, or southerly, Phase I housing wing starts one story above the main entry level, due to rising site slope and shallow bedrock, and has four levels. The project program, ADA elevator access requirements, and other mechanical parameters impart specific height requirements floor to floor.

## HEIGHT VARIANCE

CBI Approvals: For the residence hall, a variance will be required relative to the D-5 height restriction of 35'.

Calculated Heights and Variance: The site is steeply graded. The building steps down the grade in three primary masses. Following the calculation process described by the city planner Ben Lyman, the maximum height of each building section is calculated independently, using the existing topography as baseline. (See attached document A1- diagram of building overlay on existing topography). Phase II (Volume C) is the highest, 46'-10 1/2", with a calculated project variance of 11'-10 1/2". (See attached document A2- diagram of height calculations.) For simplicity, a 12' variance is requested covering both Phase I and Phase II. All remaining dimensional standards are met.

Height Variance Rationale: The building is tucked into the forested slope on the uphill side of the existing parking lot. Authorization of the variance will not affect other private property or block views from adjacent UAS buildings. Due to the slope of the hill up from the campus dorm and down to Glacier Highway, and existing vegetation on neighboring properties, the building will not be visible from other properties. The smaller footprint associated with vertical expression of the building also limits site disruption and preserves more of the existing native vegetation and trees. The existing Noyes Pavilion roofline is of comparable height when viewed from the parking area.

Detailed Response to CBJ Variance 49.20.200, 6-Point Criteria:

- 1) Relaxation of the variance would provide substantial relief in the following areas:
  - a. Cost- The current footprint already requires extensive site work for rock removal and excavation. A larger footprint has significant costs implications.
  - b. Minimize Environmental Impact- The site is bordered by an existing parking lot, road, and forested wetlands. UAS is committed to preserving native landscaping and minimizing secondary issues impacting the environment such as soil erosion and sedimentation build up within sewer and waterways.
  - c. Preserve Trees- Minimization of the building footprint allows for preservation of more trees. This site is embedded in the university campus. The trees provide habitat for animals, a green relief between other buildings, and a privacy barrier for the freshman dormitory residents.
- 2) There are no negative safety implications. The building will contain a fire sprinkler system and has appropriate means of egress. The CBJ Fire Marshall has confirmed that fire safety needs are appropriately addressed, including access with the current fire truck and ladder.
- 3) Authorization of the variance will not injure nearby property. There is a significant distance between this site and the nearest private property owner. (See attached document A3- annotated property adjacencies) Given the topography, the site and building cannot be viewed from adjacent private properties.
- 4) The entire campus is currently designated a D5 zone. This is a historical zoning remnant for this region, predating the current campus. All UAS campus community development has required conditional use permitting. From the Table of Permissible Uses, 1.610, a conditional use permit includes use for '*rooming or boarding with shared facilities and a manager living on-site*'.
- 5) Criteria Five, in CBJ code, identifies several possible needs to justify the variance. Item C is most relevant to this project, stating:

*Compliance with existing standards would be unnecessarily burdensome because unique physical features of the property render compliance with the standards unreasonably expensive.*

Given the topographical & geological challenges of the existing site, a desire to protect natural habitat, and the unique program considerations of the campus community, compliance with the existing standards would be both cost prohibitive and impractical. The resultant project would either provide a much smaller housing complex in the current setting, or require relocation to a larger site which lacks the proximity needed for the unique freshman housing criteria.

- 6) A grant of the variance would provide significant benefits to the campus community. Incoming students would live within walkable distance to classes and mixed-use resources, without a necessary reliance on cars. Decreased reliance on cars provides environmental benefits to the campus community as well as our neighbors in Auke Bay and beyond.

Development of student housing on the core campus provides the additional benefit of improved safety for both students and our neighboring Auke Bay community. The current housing options

require students to cross a busy road to access the campus. The University has expressed safety concerns about the current crossing of Back Loop Road. The winding road and inclement weather diminishes both visibility and the range of cleared walking paths for students. Development of a central campus student residence reduces the incidence of exposure between ambulatory students and community drivers, improving the safety for both.

Densification of resources within the existing campus core also minimizes community sprawl. This is beneficial to the broader community as proximity improves access to facilities and services for everyone, while maximizing efficient use of existing infrastructures with resultant energy savings. Public transportation resources provide access and maintain mutual community links.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to discussing this project further and believe it will provide a major positive benefit to the UAS campus, and the greater Juneau community.

Sincerely,

Sherri Brown

Attached Documents:

- UAS Parking Count Data
- Permit Application Forms (DPA, Conditional Use Permit, and Variance)
- Code Study
- Project Site
- Existing Parking
- Project Plans
- Project Elevations
- A1- Building Footprint Overlay on Existing Topography
- A2- Height Variance Calculation Diagram
- A3- Property Adjacencies, annotated
- A4- Aerial Parking Image

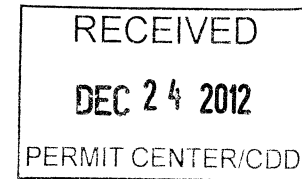


# UAS Parking Count

WEEK OF <u>9/10/12</u>		MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	Average Vacant	Average Occupied
Parking Lot	Spaces							
Tier 4 (top) Pavilion	54	5	8	12	9	15	9.8	44.2
Tier 3	42	2	8	24	18	20	14.4	27.6
Tier 2	78	3	11	16	14	19	12.6	65.4
Tier 1 (bottom)	33	1	4	5	2	8	4.0	29.0
Southeast Parking Lot	65	53	46	64	56	58	55.4	9.6
Southwest Parking Lot	43	36	28	29	24	20	27.4	15.6
Chapel Auxiliary Lot	34	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	34.0
Total Vacant Spaces:	349	100	105	150	123	140	77.3	225.4
		29%					65%	

# MRV ARCHITECTS

1420 GLACIER AVENUE, JUNEAU, AK 99801 (907) 586-1371  
PAUL VOELCKERS ROBERT MINCH



## UAS Freshman Student Residence Hall

December 24, 2012

Juneau Permit Center  
155 S. Seward Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

Location:  
230 South Franklin Street  
4th Floor- Marine View Center

Re: Project Background for Conditional Use Permit and Height Variance,  
120-bed Freshman Dormitory

To whom it may concern:

The University of Alaska Southeast has contracted with MRV Architects for planning and design on the long-anticipated new residence hall for incoming Freshmen students. A prime central campus site was selected for the new residence hall. This location will combine several positive attributes, with its central campus location, easy proximity to existing food service at Maurant Building, use of existing parking and infrastructure, and the potential for increased student academic and social connections. The new facility should function as a central campus anchor to support critical incoming student needs.

All major development on the UAS Auke Bay campus is subject to CCD Staff and Planning Commission review as part of a Conditional Use Approval. The following information is offered to facilitate that review, with an overview of major planning and design decisions for the new residence hall.

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

Size and Capacity: The new residence hall will contain 60 beds in the current first phase, with future growth to 120 beds in a second phase, slated to occur within a year or two. The basic plan layout pairs two double occupancy rooms with a shared bathroom. ADA accessible rooms and a manager apartment are included. Phase I consists of the central core spaces and private residence totaling 21,600 sf. Phase II adds 13,124 square feet of residential space.

Support Spaces: The residence hall will feature a general-purpose meeting and social room, sized to hold all residents for a special event. This space is located on the third floor, with a panoramic view across the campus, Auke Lake, and to the mountains beyond. A small general-purpose kitchen space adjoins the assembly room, providing flexibility to support a variety of events. Other spaces in the building include flexible study rooms, a seminar space and full laundry facilities. The service spaces include mechanical, electrical/data, and a trash and recycling area.

ADA Access: Phase I and Phase II provide 60 double occupancy resident rooms. The code requires that 3 of these rooms be ADA accessible with roll-in shower access. For our project, two dedicated ADA suites will provide 4 accessible guest rooms with associated roll-in showers. All community spaces and routes are ADA accessible. Turning radius, fixtures, and clear floor space clearances comply with ADA requirements. There are two designated ADA parking spaces adjacent to the curb ramp.

Sustainability and LEED: The facility will embody best practices for environmental stewardship, including high levels of thermal insulation, low system operating costs, low maintenance, and healthy indoor materials. The University has directed MRV to design and construct the project as a LEED-Silver project, a 3rd party national benchmark for excellent sustainable design and construction. The Chancellor's office also approved a sustainability upgrade to install a ground source heating system, in lieu of a conventional fuel oil heating system.

## PLANNING AND DESIGN GOALS

Site Planning: The new residence hall will be located on a prime site on the westerly edge of the developed parking area, situated between Noyes Pavilion and the drop-off circle to Egan Library. Food service will be provided at the Maurant Building. Generalized planning has considered the potential for a second future housing facility on the opposite side of Noyes Pavilion, and other adjoining UAS facilities and connective infrastructure, including roadways and pedestrian routes.

Site issues: Site development, to be completed in Phase II, will include a covered exterior canopy and amenities to support socialization and interaction between students exterior to the building, including benches, lighting and bike racks. Site features include ADA access for pedestrians and adjacent accessible parking. Maintenance service and accessibility to the building are considered.

The site is bordered by an existing parking lot, access road, Noyes Pavilion, and proximity to forested wetlands. Portions of the site are steep, with bedrock close to the surface. The area on the rising hillside behind, or westerly, of the Student Residence Hall will remain undisturbed forest.

## PARKING

The existing UAS parking is underutilized for current University needs. Based on previous parking studies, it is anticipated that the existing parking will readily absorb the parking requirements associated with this freshman student dormitory. Resident parking projections are based on the following:

1. The dormitory is slated for incoming freshman students. These student do not typically own cars. As such, they are intentionally housed proximal to the university campus core, within walkable distance to classes, dining, library, and mixed-use resources. To reduce the impact of cars on the environment, UAS has promoted the use of alternative transportation, such as walking, biking, and public transportation. The primary pedestrian routes, bus stop, and bike racks are located within 200 feet of

the dormitory, encouraging alternative transportation use connecting both UAS students and our broader community.

2. UAS parking consists of six lots. (See A4- Arial Parking Image) One lot is designated parking for staff. The remaining lots contribute a total of 300 parking spaces available to students. At present, portions of the upper parking lot are frequently empty. This lot contains 58 parking spaces, including 2 designated ADA spaces for the freshman dormitory. Assuming a walkable mixed-use parking requirement of 1 parking space per 500 sf of resident living area for Phase I and Phase II, only 53 spaces are required (26,248sf/500sf).
3. Given the practical impact of points 1 and 2 above, the appropriate parking density could be argued in the range of 1 space per 1000sf resident living space, or a total of 26 spaces.
4. UAS is committed to minimizing its impact on the natural environment and reducing its dependence on non-renewable energy. Strategies include densification of community resources and minimization of the impact of cars through the conservation and preservation of natural areas by limiting the potential over-development of parking.

Additional details summarizing Murray Walsh's UAS parking analysis and additional informal parking counts will follow in a separate memo.

Design Proposal: The upper, or southerly, Phase I housing wing starts one story above the main entry level, due to rising site slope and shallow bedrock, and has four levels. The project program, ADA elevator access requirements, and other mechanical parameters impart specific height requirements floor to floor.

## HEIGHT VARIANCE

CBI Approvals: For the residence hall, a variance will be required relative to the D-5 height restriction of 35'.

Calculated Heights and Variance: The site is steeply graded. The building steps down the grade in three primary masses. Following the calculation process described by the city planner Ben Lyman, the maximum height of each building section is calculated independently, using the existing topography as baseline. (See attached document A1- diagram of building overlay on existing topography). Phase II (Volume C) is the highest, 46'-10 1/2", with a calculated project variance of 11'-10 1/2". (See attached document A2- diagram of height calculations.) For simplicity, a 12' variance is requested. All remaining dimensional standards are met.

**Details to follow in a separate memo within 4 days.**

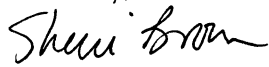
Brief summary:

Relief of the variance supports development utilizing a smaller building footprint. This allows for greater preservation of existing natural habitats and limits disruption of natural hydrology connections. Given the complexity of the site slope and shallow bedrock, development utilizing a larger footprint on this site would be cost prohibitive.

The current design supports the specific community housing needs of incoming freshman students utilizing existing infrastructures. Nearby properties are not injured and there are no negative safety implications.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to discussing this project further and believe it will provide a major positive benefit to the UAS campus, and the greater Juneau community.

Sincerely,

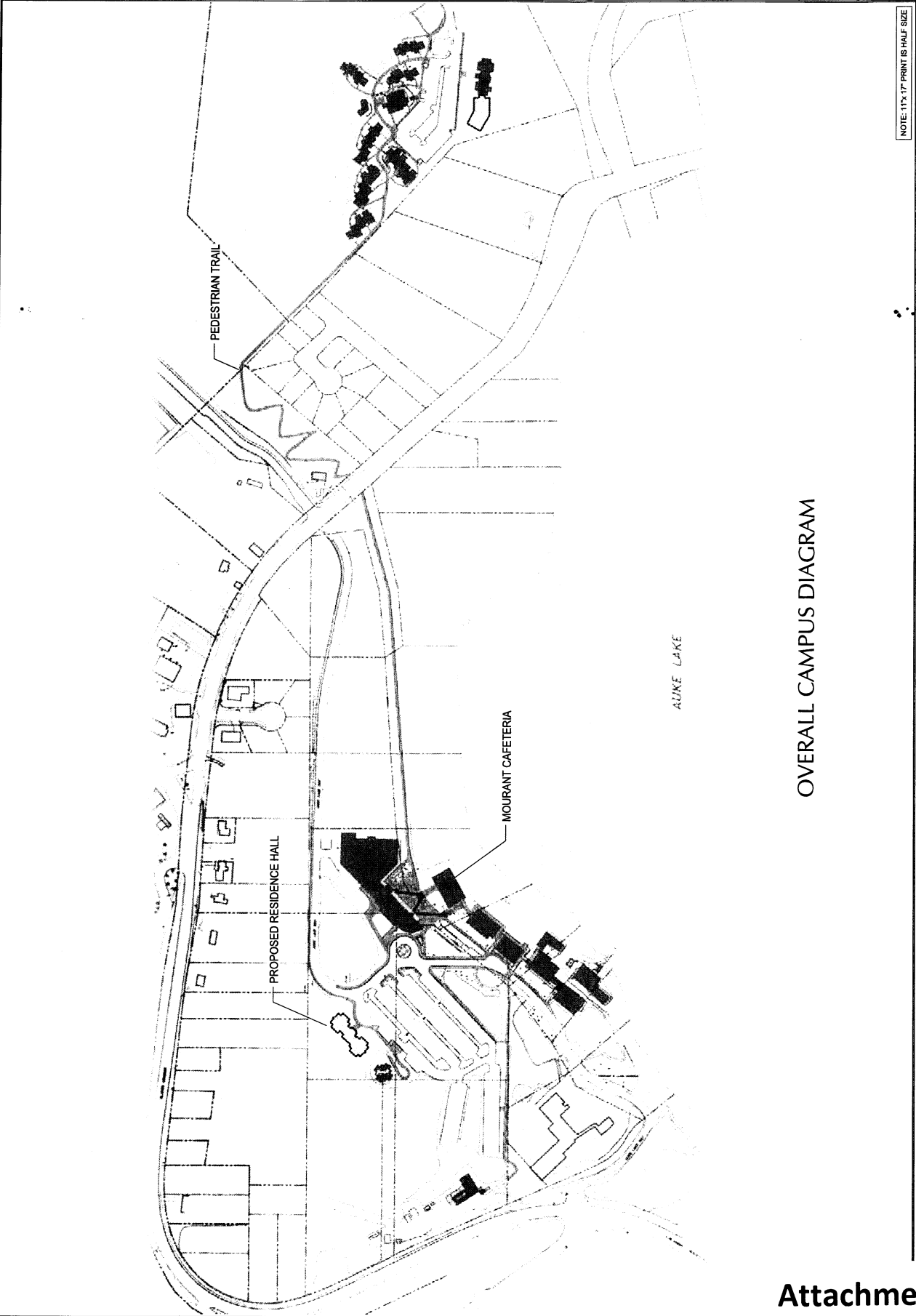
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherri Brown". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Sherri" and last name "Brown" clearly distinguishable.

Sherri Brown

Attached Documents:

- Permit Application Forms (DPA, Conditional Use Permit, and Variance)
- Code Study
- Project Site
- Existing Parking
- Project Plans
- Project Elevations
- A1- Building Footprint Overlay on Existing Topography
- A2- Height Variance Calculation Diagram
- A3- Property Adjacencies, annotated
- A4- Aerial Parking Image

MRV ARCHITECTS 1420 GLACIER AVE. #101 JUNEAU, AK 99801 (907) 586-1371 FAX (907) 586-5444 mrv@mrvarchitects.com	#1213	Design Development for UAS Student Residence Hall University of Alaska Southeast	SHEET TITLE: Overall Campus Diagram	DATE: 12/06/2012 2:56:28 PM	DRAWN: PV CHECKED: PV	SHEET NO.
			A100			



A2- HEIGHT VARIANCE CALCULATIONS: Height Variance 11'- 10 1/2" (12'-0" , for simplicity)

Volume A

Phase I Resident Unit- The maximum height difference of the existing topography from one building corner to the other is 10'.

Maximum building height is 42'- 4 1/2".

Volume B

Phase I Central Space- The maximum height difference of the existing topography from one building corner to the other is 10'.

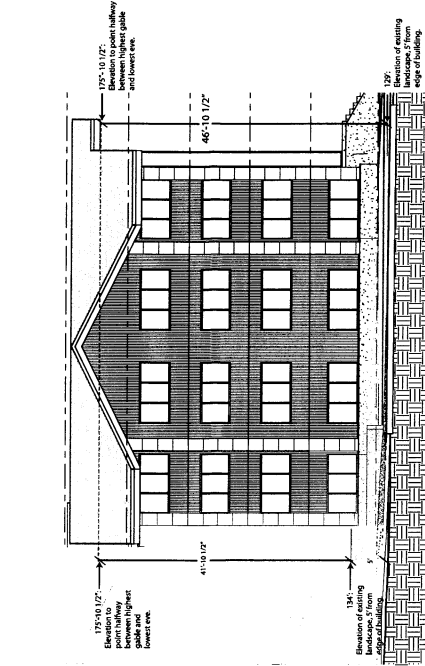
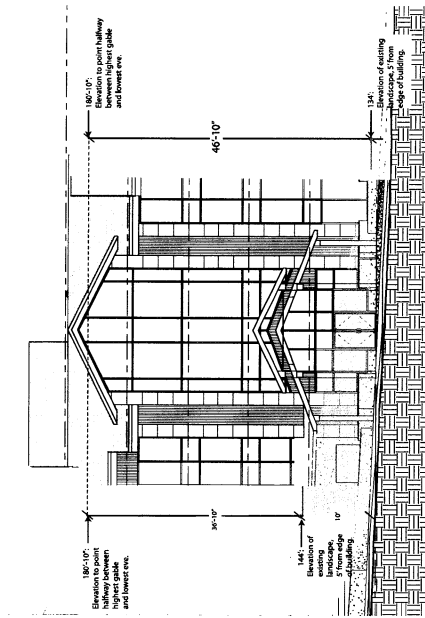
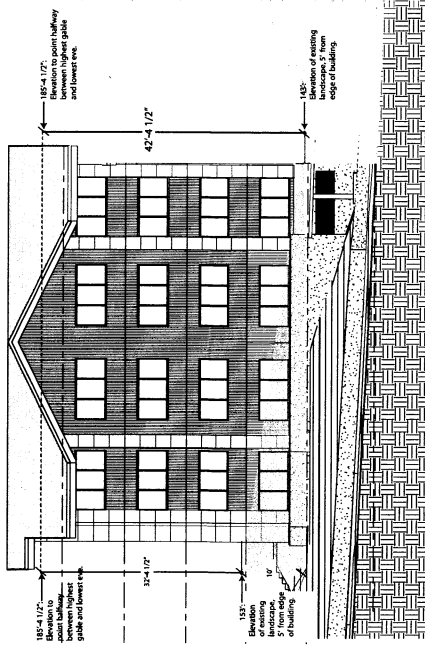
Maximum building height is 46'- 10".

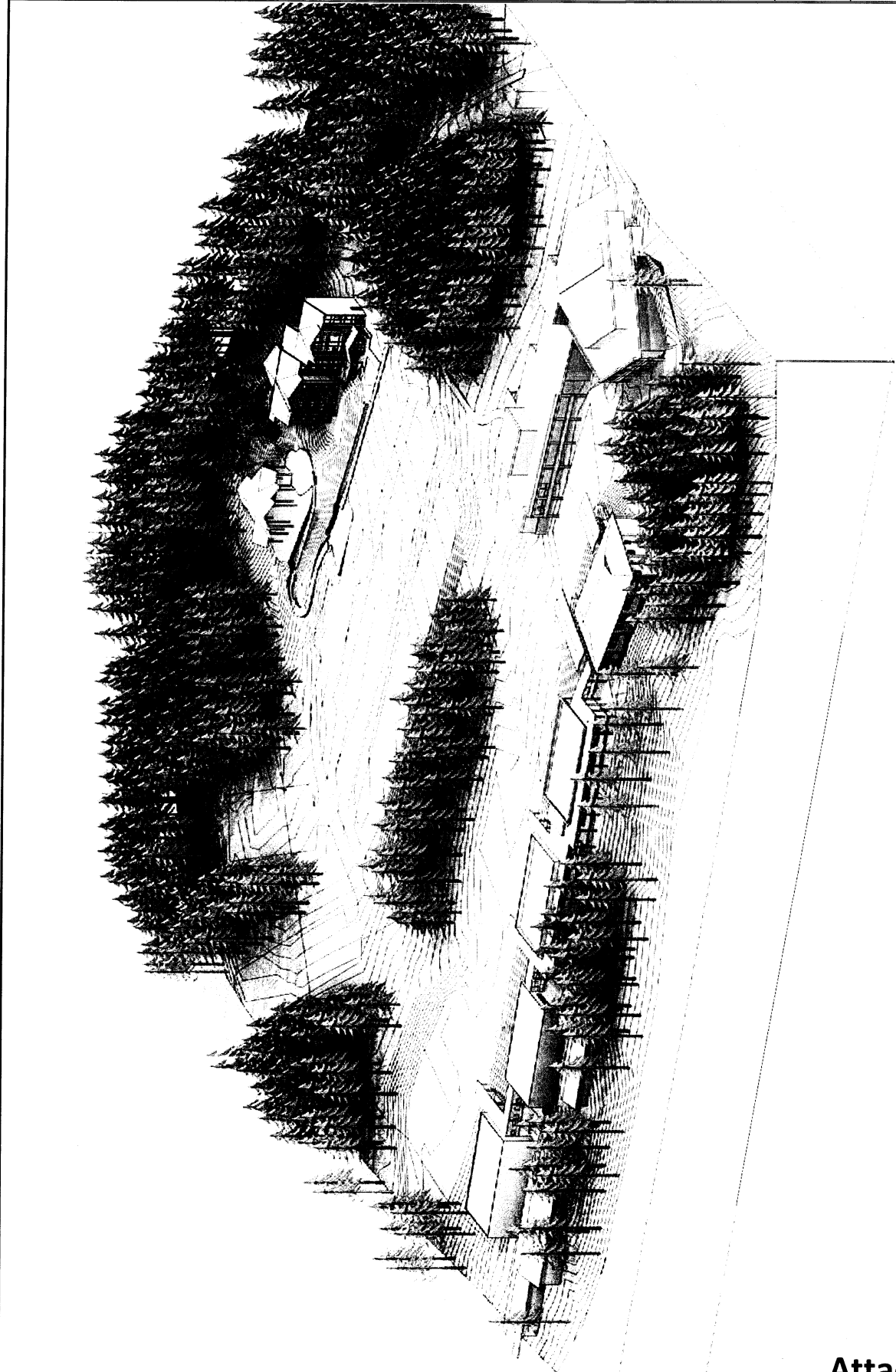
Volume C

Phase II Resident Unit- The maximum height difference of the existing topography from one building corner to the other is 5'.

Maximum building height is 46'- 10 1/2".

This portion of the building demonstrates the largest height difference from existing topography and would require a height variance of 11'- 10 1/2".





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# Attachment C

NOTE: 11"x 17" PRINT IS HALF SIZE

7908

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DATE: 12/20/2012

3D VIEW

SHEET TITLE:

Design Development  
for  
UAS Student Residence Hall

#1213

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