

**LAND USE APPLICATION SUMMARY**

*Property Location:* 184 Seymour Avenue Southeast  
*Project Name:* 184 Seymour Avenue Southeast Retaining Walls  
*Prepared By:* [Janelle Widmeier](#), Senior City Planner, (612) 673-3156  
*Applicant:* Amy Hargens  
*Project Contact:* Jack Dorcey, Landscape Design Studios  
*Request:* Construct retaining walls that would not retain natural grade.  
*Required Applications:*

<b>Variance</b>	To reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the north lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.
<b>Variance</b>	To reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the south lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.
<b>Variance</b>	To reduce the minimum rear yard requirement adjacent to the west lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.

**SITE DATA**

<b>Existing Zoning</b>	R2B Two-Family District UA University Area Overlay District
<b>Lot Area</b>	6,510 square feet
<b>Ward(s)</b>	2
<b>Neighborhood(s)</b>	Prospect Park
<b>Designated Future Land Use</b>	Urban Neighborhood
<b>Land Use Features</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Small Area Plan(s)</b>	<a href="#">Stadium Village University Avenue Station Area Plan (2012)</a>

<b>Date Application Deemed Complete</b>	October 23, 2015	<b>Date Extension Granted by Applicant</b>	December 2, 2015
<b>End of 60-Day Decision Period</b>	December 22, 2015	<b>End of Extension</b>	March 11, 2016

## BACKGROUND

**SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE.** The existing single-family dwelling was permitted for construction in 1913. The dilapidated, detached 10 foot by 14 foot garage adjacent to the alley was permitted for construction in 1921. There is an existing parking pad located at the front of the dwelling with curb access from Seymour Avenue.

**SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND NEIGHBORHOOD.** The surrounding properties are predominately single-family dwellings. The subject property abuts a dead-end, unimproved public alley. Interstate 94 is also one-half block away.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION.** The applicant is proposing to install a retaining wall in the rear 34 feet of the property located at 184 Seymour Avenue Southeast. In this area, there is a detached garage and the grade slopes down 14 feet towards the public alley. The garage is proposed to be demolished. With the construction of the 12.5 foot retaining wall, backfill would be added for the purpose of creating a flatter, larger and more usable back yard. Along the alley, the wall would be 12.5 foot tall and the height would taper where the natural grade rises. On top of the retaining wall, a 4 foot tall, open and decorative aluminum fence would also be installed.

The retaining wall would abut the north and south interior side lot lines and the west rear lot line. The minimum yard requirement adjacent to the interior side lot lines is 6 feet. The minimum yard requirement adjacent to the rear lot lines is 5 feet. Walls that retain natural grade are permitted obstructions in required yards. However, walls that do not retain natural grade are not permitted obstructions. Because the proposed wall would not be retaining natural grade, yard variances are required to allow the wall.

The variances were continued from the December 3, 2015, meeting of the Board of Adjustment to the January 7, 2016, meeting to allow the applicant more time to review the CPED report, prepare the best case for the homeowner possible, and solve the issues with the site. The applicant granted an extension of the decision making period to March 11, 2016, which allows sufficient time to accommodate any appeals. Updated documents that were submitted by the applicant since the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting have been attached to this report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS.** Correspondence from the neighborhood group was received and is attached to this report. Any additional correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Board of Adjustment for consideration.

## ANALYSIS

### VARIANCE

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application for **1) a variance to reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the north lot line, 2) a variance to reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the south lot line, and 3) a variance to reduce the minimum rear yard requirement adjacent to the west lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade** based on the following [findings](#):

1. *Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property. The unique circumstances were not created by persons presently having an interest in the property and are not based on economic considerations alone.*

**All variances:** The minimum interior side yard setback requirements adjacent to the north and south lot lines are 6 feet. The minimum rear yard setback requirement adjacent to the west lot line is 5 feet. A retaining wall is proposed to be installed in the rear 34 feet of the subject property in the required yards. In this area, the grade slopes down 14 feet towards the public alley. Along the alley, the wall would be 12.5 foot tall and the height would taper where the natural grade rises. In required yards, retaining walls are not permitted obstructions when they do not retain natural grade. The ordinance allows walls that retain natural grade.

Reasons stated by the applicant for requesting the variances include difficulty in maintaining the slope and to allow for the removal of the existing dilapidated garage in order to address rodent, raccoon, trespassing, and vagrancy issues. The garage holds up part of the slope. Replacing it with a retaining wall would also prevent compromising the stability of the neighboring retaining walls.

For a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade, CPED staff did not find that practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property that were not created by the applicant. Although properties with substantial slopes are relatively unique within the city, properties with significant slopes are common in the immediate area. Therefore the steep slope is not a circumstance unique to this property. The slope also does not prevent reasonable use of the property. Although the grade changes significantly at the rear of the property, the remainder of the site is relatively flat. The need for a 12.5 foot tall wall would be created by backfilling on top of the natural grade. To make the slope more manageable, a terraced wall would more closely follow the topography without exceeding a height that would not be allowed for a fence, similar to the neighbor's property to the south. Stairs could be incorporated to facilitate ease of access to provide maintenance. A terraced wall may still require yard variances to account for some smaller portions not retaining natural grade, but would be more in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance.

2. *The property owner or authorized applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.*

**All variances:** In general, yard controls are established to provide for the orderly development and use of land and to minimize conflicts among land uses by regulating the dimension and use of yards in order to provide adequate light, air, open space and separation of uses. When a wall does not retain natural grade it is more akin to a fence in relation to impacts to adjacent properties. Fence standards are established to promote the public health, safety and welfare, encourage an aesthetic environment and allow for privacy, while maintaining access to light and air. Solid fences in interior side and rear yards are allowed to be up to 6 feet in height. The proposed wall height would greatly exceed what would be allowed for a fence. The total length of the wall would be 117 feet. Of that, approximately 80 feet would extend 6 or more feet above natural grade. A wall supporting significant modifications to grade has the potential to impact privacy of adjacent properties and reduce natural surveillance and visibility of the adjacent public alley. As proposed, the request would not be reasonable or consistent with the intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan. A terraced retaining wall could accomplish similar objectives stated by the applicant without creating adverse impacts.

3. *The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. If granted, the proposed variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties.*

**All variances:** The granting of the variances would likely affect the character of the area and be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. When a wall does not retain natural grade it is more akin to a fence in relation to impacts to adjacent properties. Solid fences in interior side and rear yards are allowed to be up to 6 feet in height. The proposed wall height would greatly exceed what would be allowed for a fence. The total length of the wall would be 117 feet. Of that, approximately 80 feet would extend 6 or more feet above natural grade. A 12.5 foot tall wall supporting a significant modification of grade has the potential to impact privacy of adjacent properties and the character of the area. Properties with significant slopes are common in the immediate area. Allowing tall retaining walls for significant grade modifications would also affect the character of the area. The granting of the variances would not be detrimental to the health or welfare of the public or those utilizing the property provided the proposed wall is constructed to current building codes. However, reduced visibility of the adjacent public alley has the potential to affect the safety of the surrounding area.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Zoning Board of Adjustment adopt staff findings for the applications by Amy Hargens for the property located at 184 Seymour Avenue Southeast:

**A. Variance of the north interior side yard requirement.**

Recommended motion: **Deny** the variance to reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the north lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.

**B. Variance of the south interior side yard requirement.**

Recommended motion: **Deny** the variance to reduce the minimum interior side yard requirement adjacent to the south lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.

**C. Variance of the west rear yard requirement.**

Recommended motion: **Deny** the variance to reduce the minimum rear yard requirement adjacent to the west lot line to allow a 12.5 foot tall retaining wall not retaining natural grade.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
2. Zoning map
3. Site survey
4. Site plan
5. Engineered drawings
6. Photos and renderings
7. Wall materials
8. Public comments

Property Owner: Amy Hargens  
Landscape Designer: Jack Dorcey, Landscape Design Studios  
Property Address: 184 Seymour Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

**2015 Variance Request for Retaining Wall along 184 Seymour Ave SE Property Lines**

Dear Neighbors of Prospect Park;

I am a landscape designer working at 184 Seymour Ave SE.

We are hoping to improve the landscape, and one important goal is to tame the hillside on the west side of the property, which slopes 16-18' down to the back alley, and has been full of volunteer growth vegetation (buckthorn, boxelder, grape vine, etc.) for the past 40+ years. The back slope is no longer maintainable by the homeowner, and the existing concrete garage is an unusable eyesore.

What we would like to proceed with is a retaining wall system that can retain the hillside and create a larger more usable back yard. This will enable the hillside to be properly retained to prevent erosion, and also will make it more easily maintained in the future.

The City of Minneapolis does not allow walls to be built in the set back on properties, so we are applying for a variance in order to enable us to build a wall to properly retain the grade and establish a stabilized back yard, with new landscape work to enhance the look of the yard.

Please refer to the existing conditions photos and the concept rendering attached.

Sincerely,

Jack Dorcey  
Owner  
Landscape Design Studios LLC  
651-239-7038  
jack@landscapedesignstudios.com

c/o Amy Hargens, 612-578-7008, alhargens@gmail.com

# Statement of Proposed Use and Description of the Project:

- We propose to build a retaining wall on the setback area of the property of 184 Seymour Ave SE, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The retaining wall will be 12' tall, the same height of existing garage, and we purpose it be allowed to be built on the property setbacks. The existing conditions of the site have a steep hill grade, about 30 degrees, off of the back yard to the alley in the back yard. The hill is too steep to be properly maintained by the homeowner. We also propose removing an existing concrete garage that faces the alley and is falling apart. The proposed retaining wall will remove the issues of the slope and the maintainability of the yard.

# Variance Findings: 1

- Retaining the hillside with one continuous wall provides the best option to resolve the grading issues and to allow for the best use for the homeowner. Terracing the retaining walls provides several issues that will not work towards the goal of a sustainable landscape. The first issue with terracing is access to maintaining the terraces. The homeowner will not be able to climb over 4' tall retaining walls to maintain the landscape beds. In order to get to each terrace level stairs will need to be built into the wall. A wall system with 4 terraces would require 25 steps. Designing a staircase to fit this situation would require a system of switch backs of stairs and walkways using up a large portion of the yard just for the stair case. The engineering on building this type of wall system is much more difficult than building a singular wall. The increase cost, 25-50% more than the proposed wall, is not an option for the homeowner to cover. Multiple walls will increase the hard cover on the property and additional 236 sqft, at minimum, to allow for additional walls, steps to access the wall and walkway to connect the steps. Maintaining the landscape beds between the terrace will require the home owner to haul all of the debris and yard waste from the bottom of the yard, up all the stairs to the front yard where their trash services are collected. Creating the proposed retaining wall will allow for gently sloping yard that will allow for the best maintenance and the greatest reduction in rain water runoff.

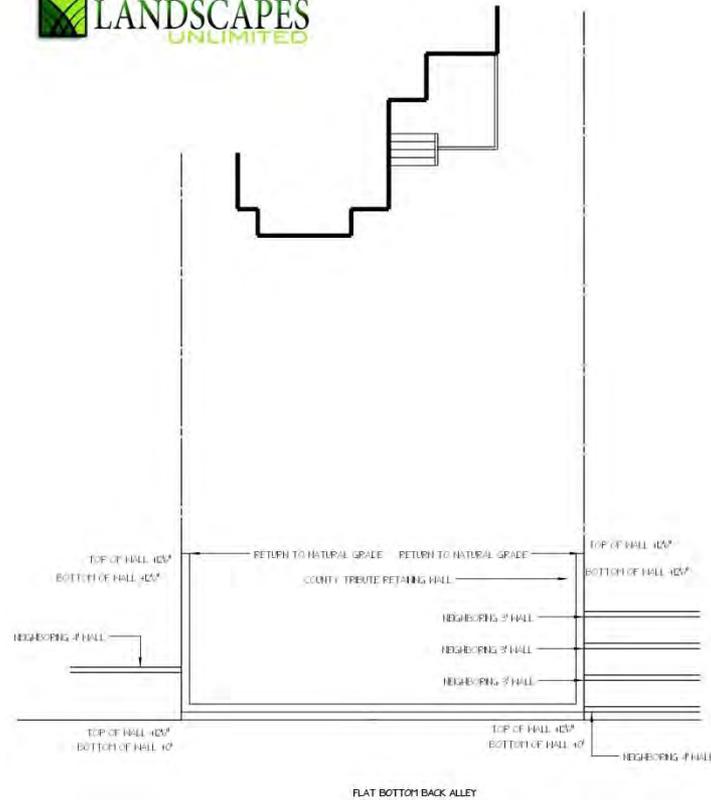
# Variance Findings 2:

- The proposed retaining wall will raise the grade of the existing yard, allowing the homeowner to better use and maintain the property. Ms. Hargens has owned the home since 1972, and raised her family there. Over the past few years she has found the hillside too steep for her to further maintain. She has taken pride in maintaining a beautiful yard. She would like to continue maintaining the yard to the level of standards she has for herself, and that her neighbors have become accustomed. The proposed retaining wall will provide a clean maintained look for many years to come.
- Leveling the existing yard with one continuous retaining wall will create the most sustainable yard possible. Hard coverage on the property will be lowered by 200 sqft over the current condition. The existing slope will go from a 30 degree grade slope to less than 5 degrees. This will increase the amount of rainfall infiltration, decreasing the runoff rate off of the site.
- The proposed retaining wall will not effect the light, air, open space and separation of uses to any neighbor on the south or west property since because the existing garage wall will simply be replaced by retaining walls. The neighbor on the north property line will have a new retaining wall that will effect the property slightly. The wall would not be visible from the house or the level portion on the yard. The retaining wall will be visible from the unmaintained wooded slope. The neighboring property has an existing four foot retaining wall built five feet in from the alley. At that point the tallest our proposed wall would be from that point on would be 7 foot tall, decreasing with the natural slope.

# Variance Findings 3:

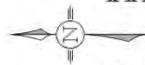
- The retaining wall will be in keeping with the existing character of the neighborhood.
  - Many homes have existing retaining walls that back up to the alley. Most of these walls are built on what would be within the setback of the property, right up to the property line. Both neighboring properties have walls built within the setback area, at the property line. With many of the walls in the area deteriorating it would be a drastic change to require new walls to be pushed off of setbacks.
  - The proposed wall will increase the safety of the neighborhood. The alley behind the property dead ends into a wooded area. There is generally very little traffic along the alley, and that has drawn the interest of vagrants. The existing garage is a welcome hiding place for homeless people, and others looking for a shelter out of the site of authorities. The new wall will keep the area without hiding spots. The over grown nature of the hillside has also been known as a dumping ground for years. The existing garage is also housing many rodents and raccoons. These vermin have caused problems for the neighbors over the years. The proposed wall will have no effect on the visibility of the alley to either neighbor because it replaces an existing garage on one side, and the other neighbor does not have a visible view of the alley, and wont be able to see the wall from their yard.
  - Other walls in the neighborhood have been allowed to be built on the property line (see photo of house on Clarence Ave Se) and are taller than the typical fence of 6'. It appears that the walls granted in the surrounding neighborhood are designed to allow for the maximum usage of the yard.
  - Because of the steep slope of the yards the height on the retaining wall will only be 12' for 5 foot on the north property line. The wall on the south is only 8' above current grade for four feet, then it drops to 5'. Please see elevation drawings.
  - The property owners to the south and west have submitted letters of support for the project.
  - The West retaining wall will be set back 1' from the property line to allow room to plant vines to create a green wall and soften the effect of the wall.

# Proposed Project



HARGENS RESIDENCE

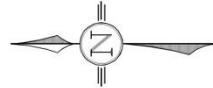
184 SEYMOUR  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN



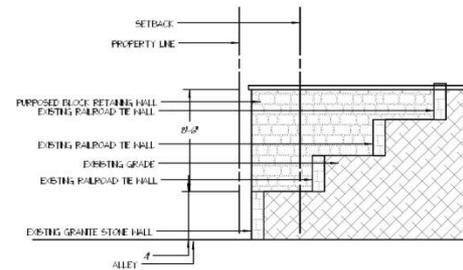
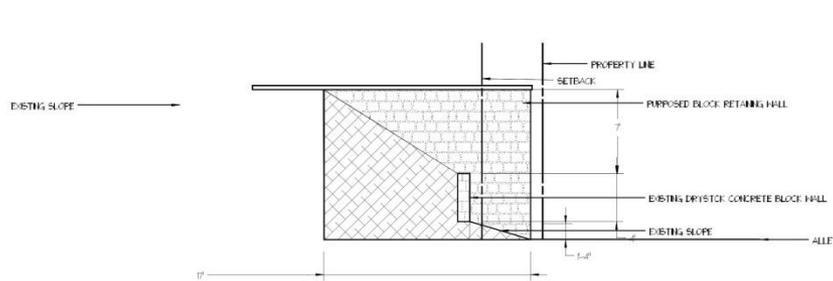
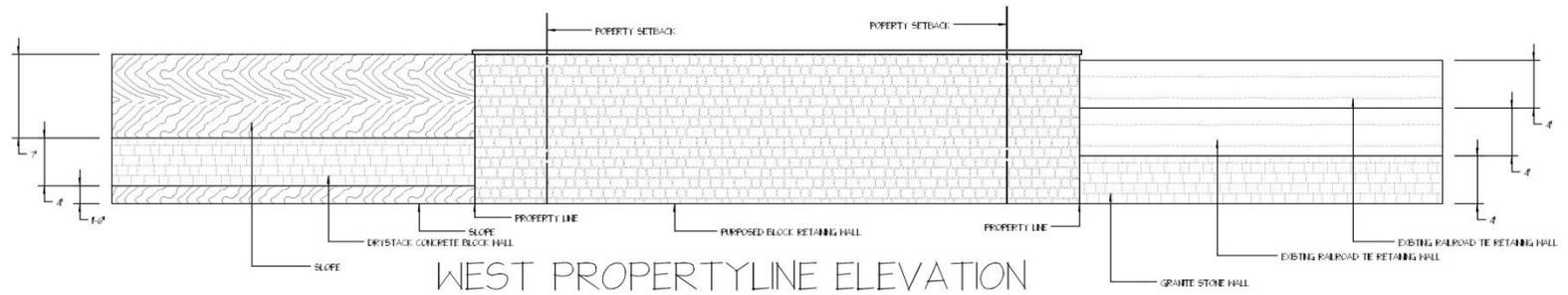
SEPT 2015 JACK DORCEY SCALE 1"=8'

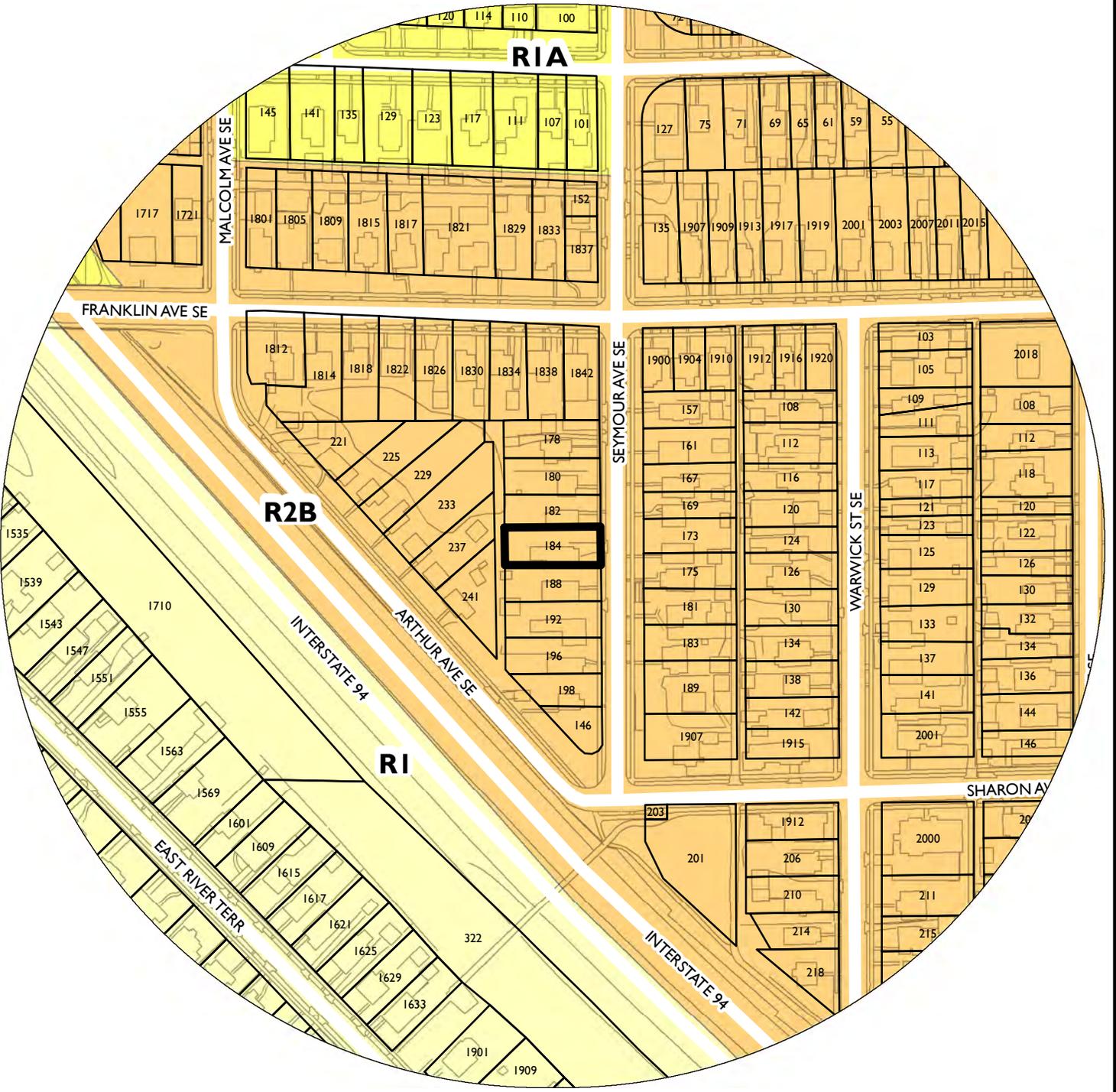
# PROJECT CROSS SECTIONS

184 SEYMOUR AVE SE RETAINING WALL



0 5 10 20  
SCALE IN FEET





PROPERTY ADDRESS

**184 Seymour Avenue Southeast**

FILE NUMBER

**BZZ-7496**

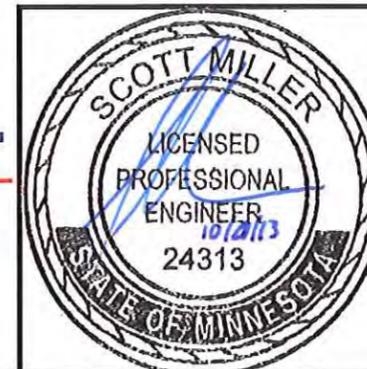


# HARGENS RESIDENCE MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

**JOB NO. 15358**

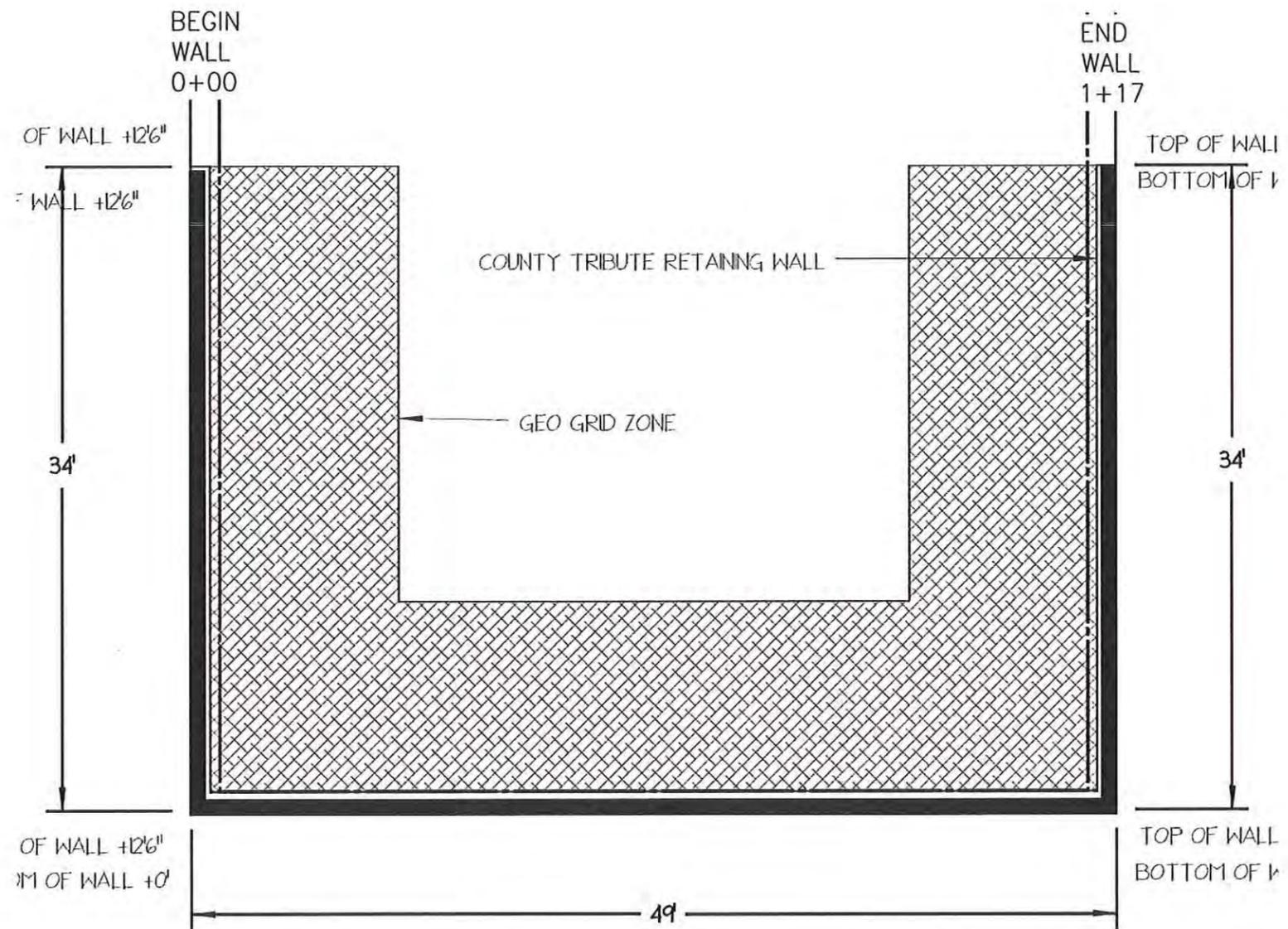
**PREPARED FOR:**

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN STUDIOS  
2482 MAYFAIR AVENUE  
WHITE BEAR LAKE, MN 55110**



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL PACKAGE



NOT TO SCALE

LAYOUT WALL PER CIVIL PLANS CONSIDERING  
WALL FACE BATTER OF 1(H):8(V)

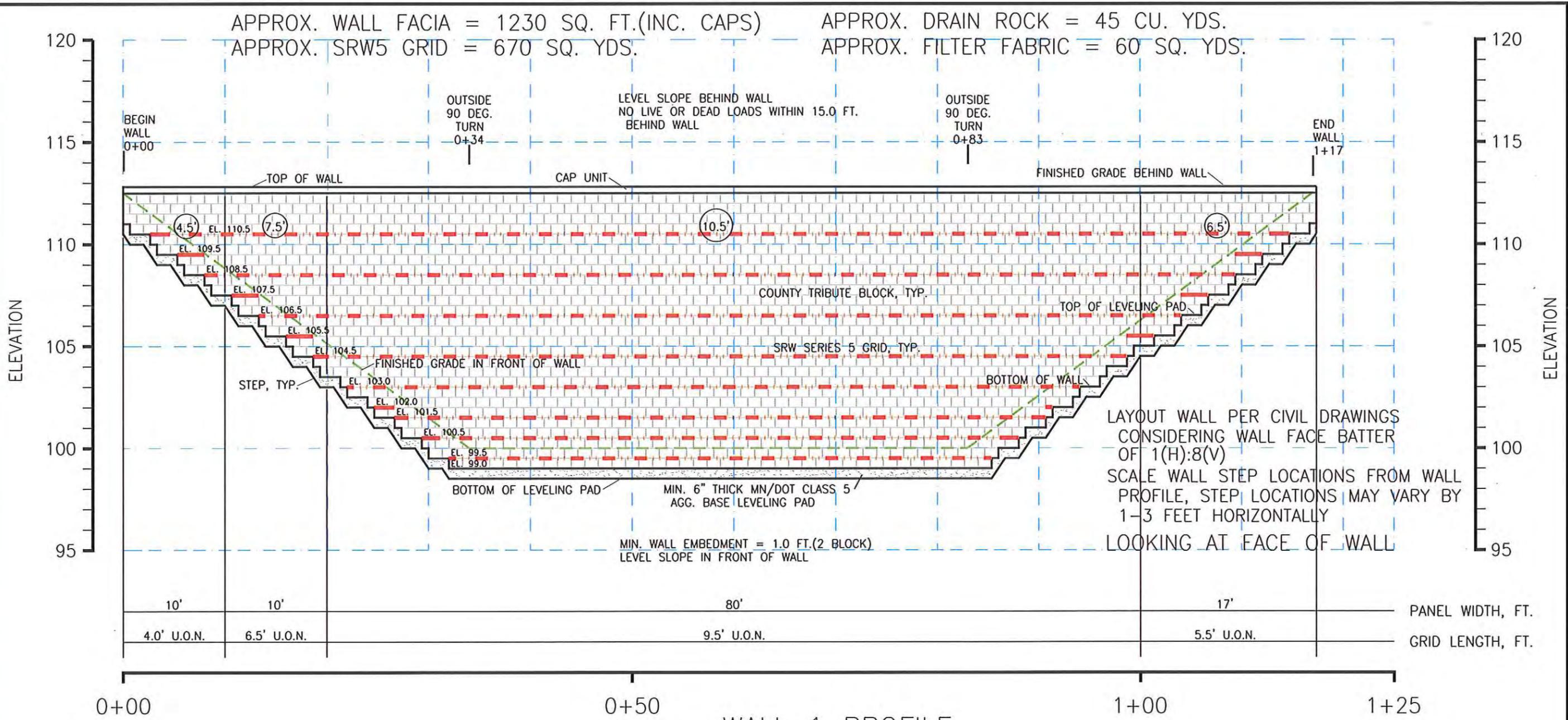


HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL LAYOUT

APPROX. WALL FACIA = 1230 SQ. FT.(INC. CAPS)  
 APPROX. SRW5 GRID = 670 SQ. YDS.

APPROX. DRAIN ROCK = 45 CU. YDS.  
 APPROX. FILTER FABRIC = 60 SQ. YDS.

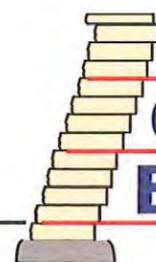


WALL 1 PROFILE

SCALE: HORIZ. 1" = 10'  
 VERT. 1" = 5'

KEY

- X' GRID LENGTH IN FT. FOR THIS LAYER ONLY
- SRW SERIES 5 GRID, TYP.
- U.O.N. - UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED ON PROFILE IN CIRCLE ON GRID LAYER



**Scott Miller**  
**Consulting**  
**Engineer**

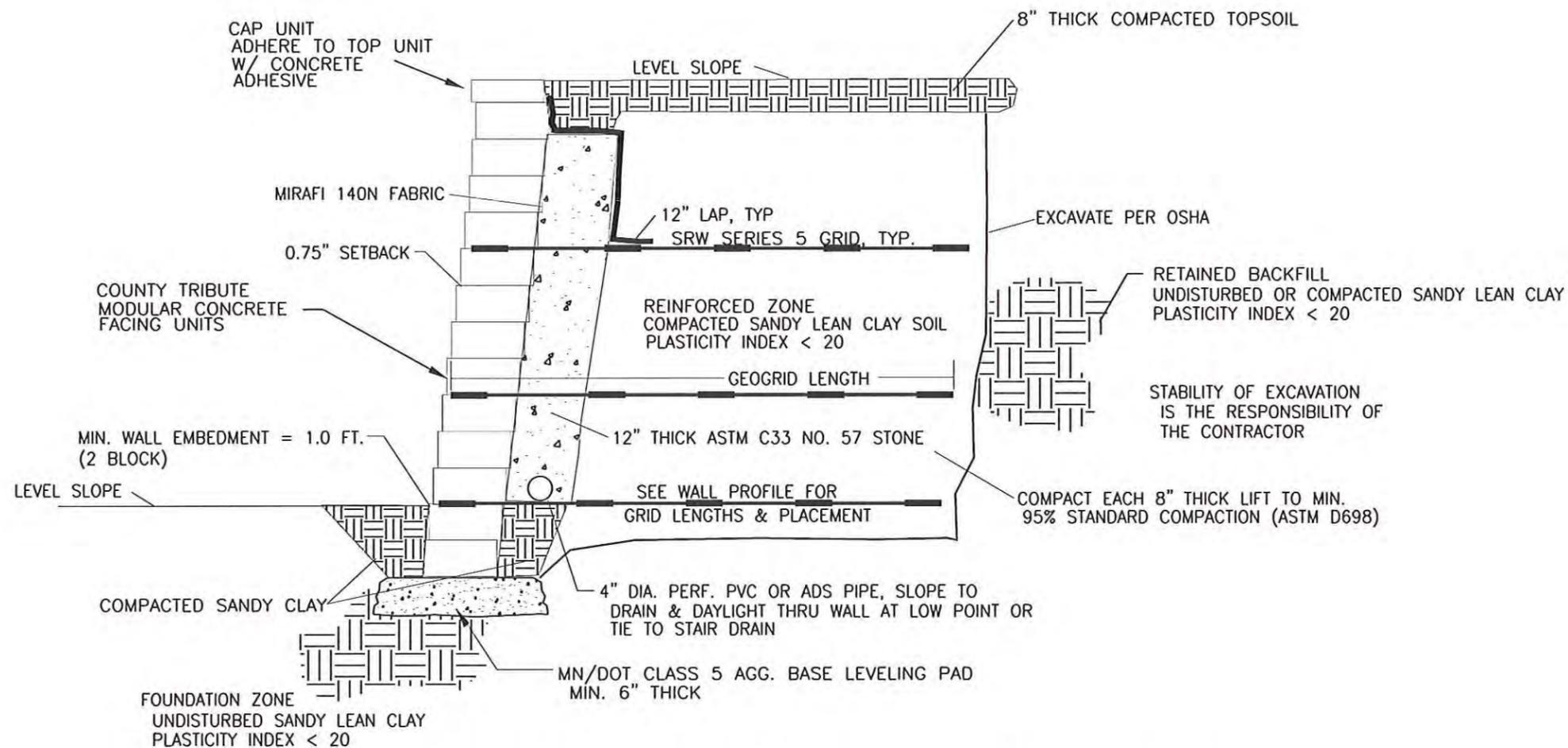


HARGENS RESIDENCE  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL PROFILE

DRAWN BY: CMM DATE: 10/04/15 SHEET 3 OF 11

NO WATER SHALL BE ALLOWED TO FLOW OVER THE WALL  
 ROUTE ALL SURFACE WATER AND ROOF DRAINS  
 AROUND OR THRU THE WALL FACE  
 NO LIVE OR DEAD LOADS WITHIN 15.0 FT. BEHIND WALL



TYPICAL COUNTY TRIBUTE BLOCK REINFORCED WALL SECTION

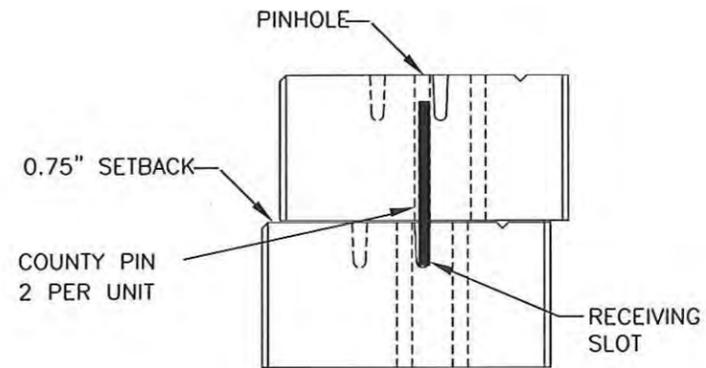
SCALE: NONE



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL DETAILS

DRAWN BY: CMM DATE: 10/04/15 SHEET: 4 OF 11



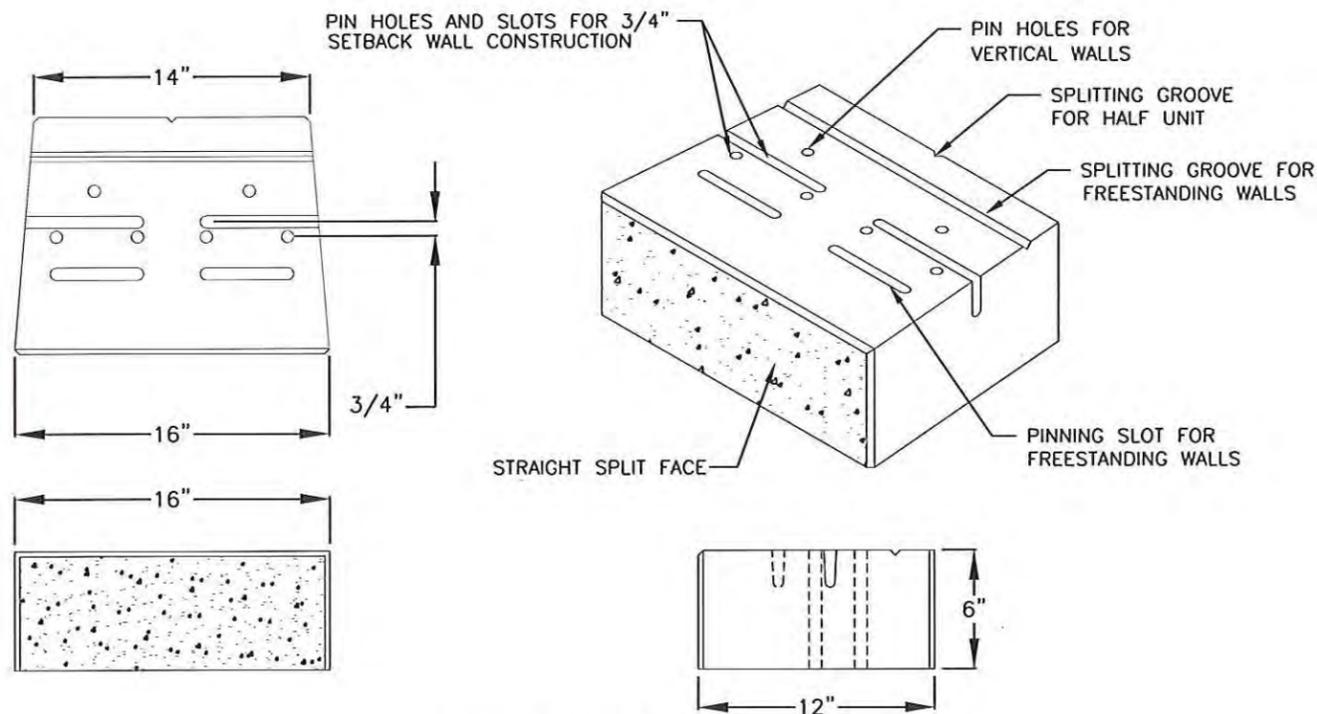
PINNING DETAIL

CROSS SECTION  
SCALE: NONE



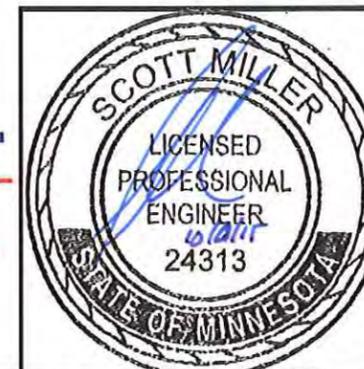
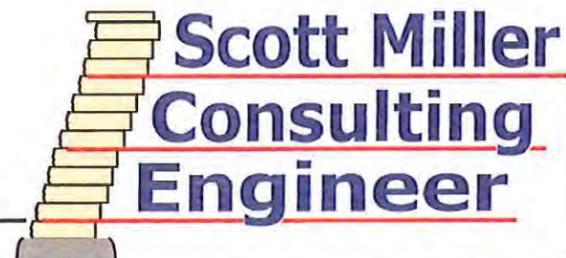
COUNTY PIN

PIN DIMENSIONS  
SCALE: NONE



COUNTY TRIBUTE UNIT

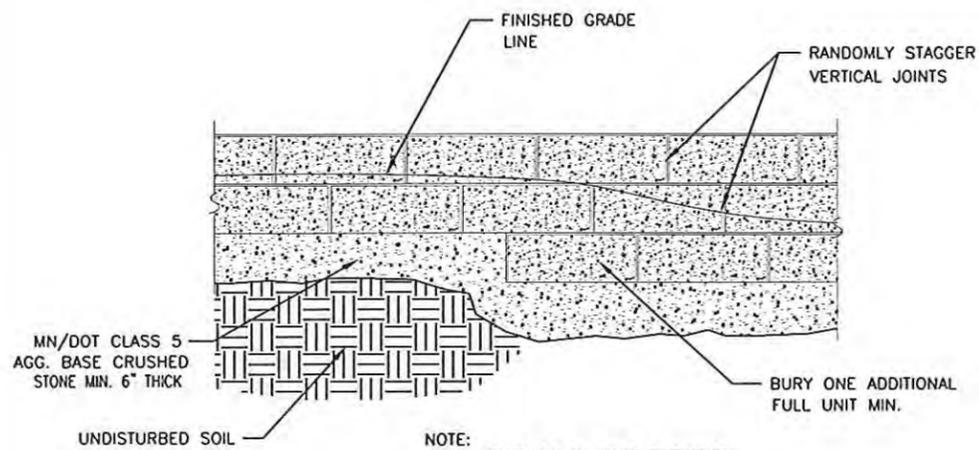
UNIT DIMENSIONS  
SCALE: NONE



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL DETAILS

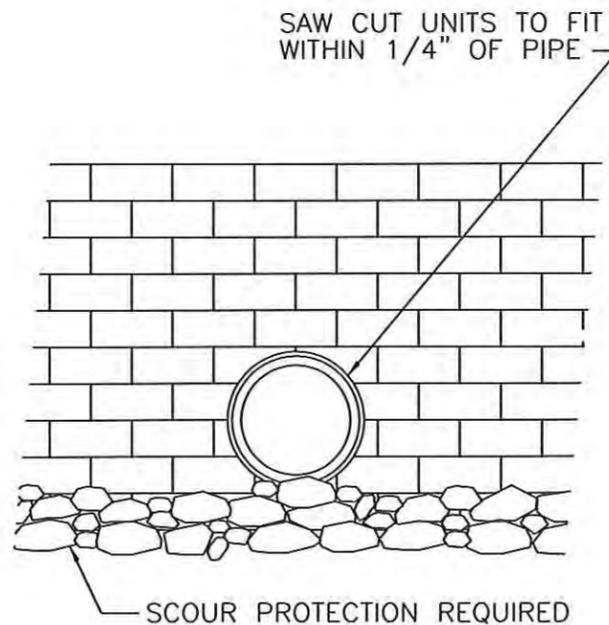
DRAWN BY: CMM    DATE: 10/04/15    SHEET: 5 OF 11



NOTE:  
 -LIMIT CHANGES IN BASE ELEVATION TO 6" PER STEP TO AVOID DIFFERENTIAL SETTLEMENT  
 -STEP OFTEN ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM REQUIRED EMBEDMENT

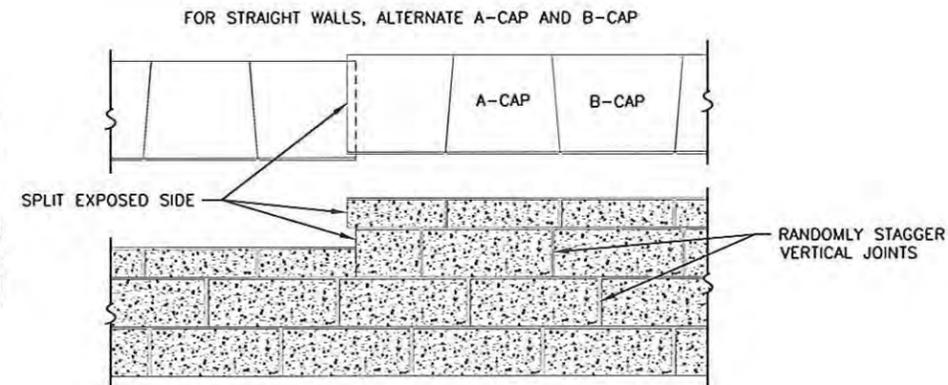
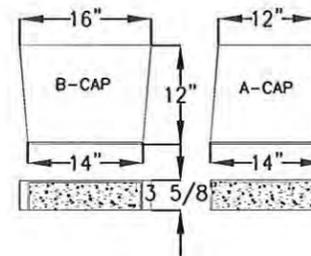
**STEPPING BASE DETAIL**

SCALE: NONE



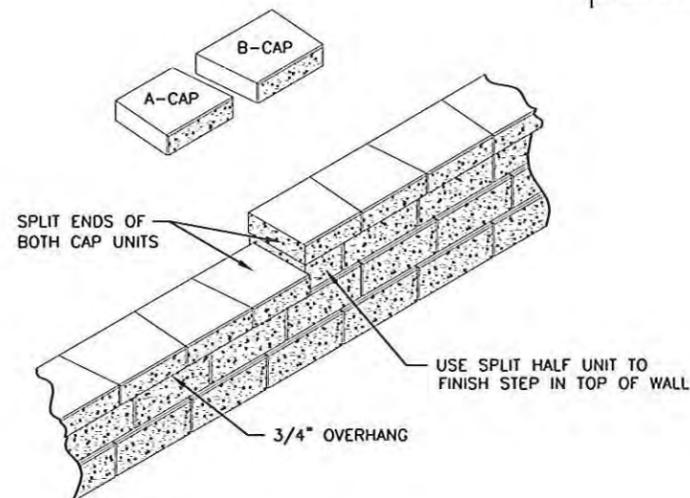
**PIPE DETAIL <12" DIA.**

SCALE: NONE



**CAPPING DETAIL - PROFILE**

STEP AT TOP OF WALL  
 SCALE: NONE



**GENERAL NOTES FOR CAPPING:**

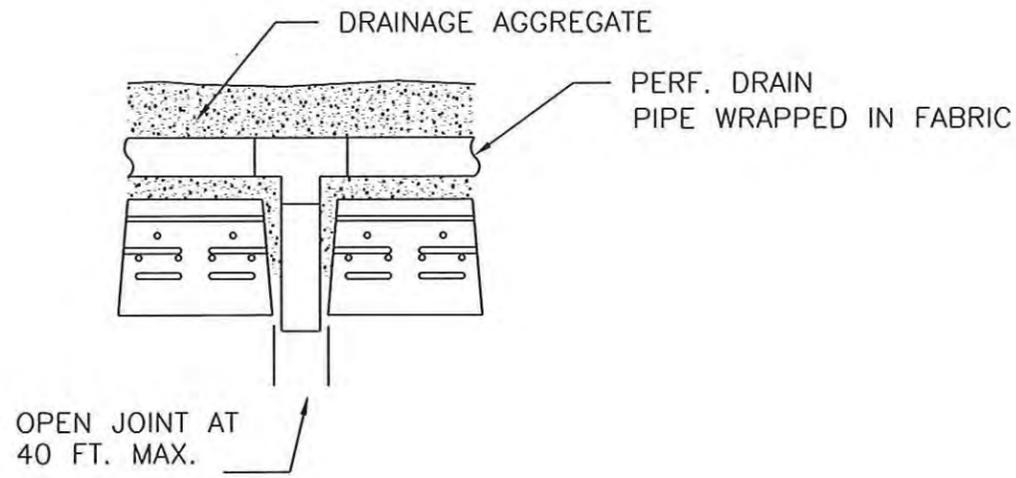
1. CAPS SHALL BE ADHERED TO WALL USING CONCRETE ADHESIVE
2. CAPS MAY BE PLACED WITH A 1/2" TO 3/4" OVERHANG OF TOP COURSE
3. WHEN SPLITTING CAP UNIT FOR WALL END DO NOT USE A CAP SECTION LESS THAN 6" WIDE
4. DO NOT OVERHANG CAP AT END OF COURSE MORE THAN 1"



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
 MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

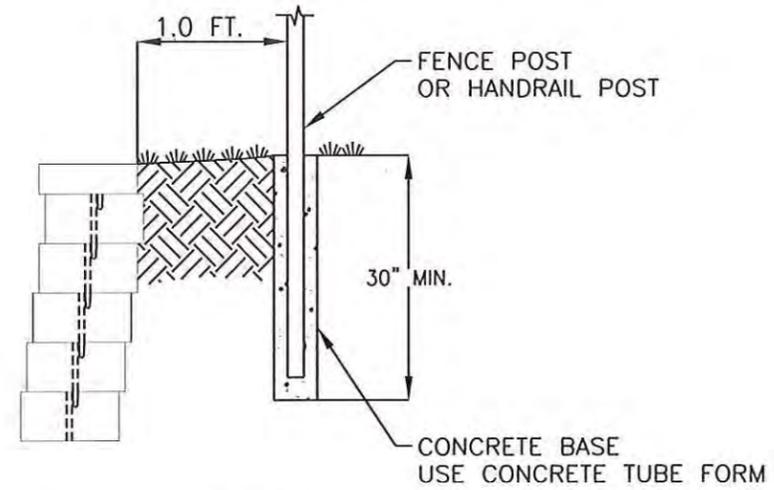
**WALL DETAILS**

DRAWN BY: CMM    DATE: 10/04/15    SHEET: 6 OF 11



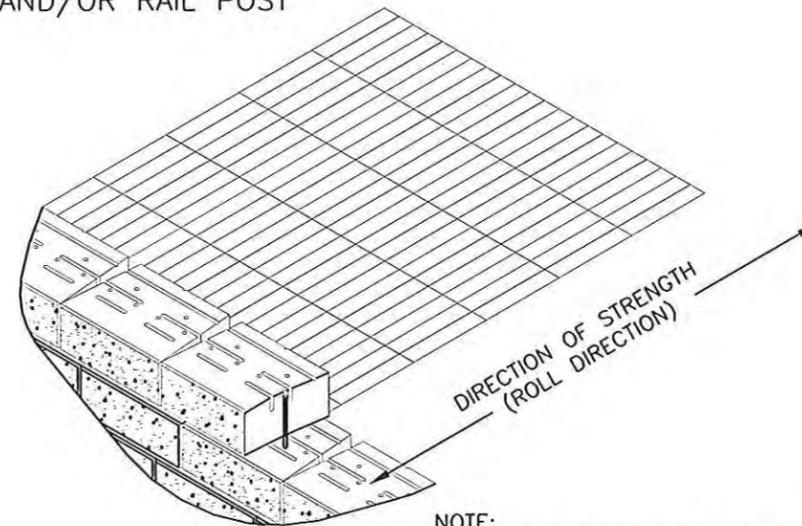
DRAIN DETAIL

SCALE: NONE



POST & RAIL DETAIL

TYPICAL HANDRAIL AND/OR RAIL POST  
SCALE: NONE



NOTE:

1. FOLLOW GEOSYNTHETIC GRID MANUFACTURER'S INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS AND SPECIFICATIONS
2. GEOGRID LENGTH AND ELEVATION PLACEMENT SHALL BE DETERMINED BY PROJECT ENGINEER

GEOSYNTHETIC INSTALLATION DETAIL

SCALE: NONE



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL DETAILS

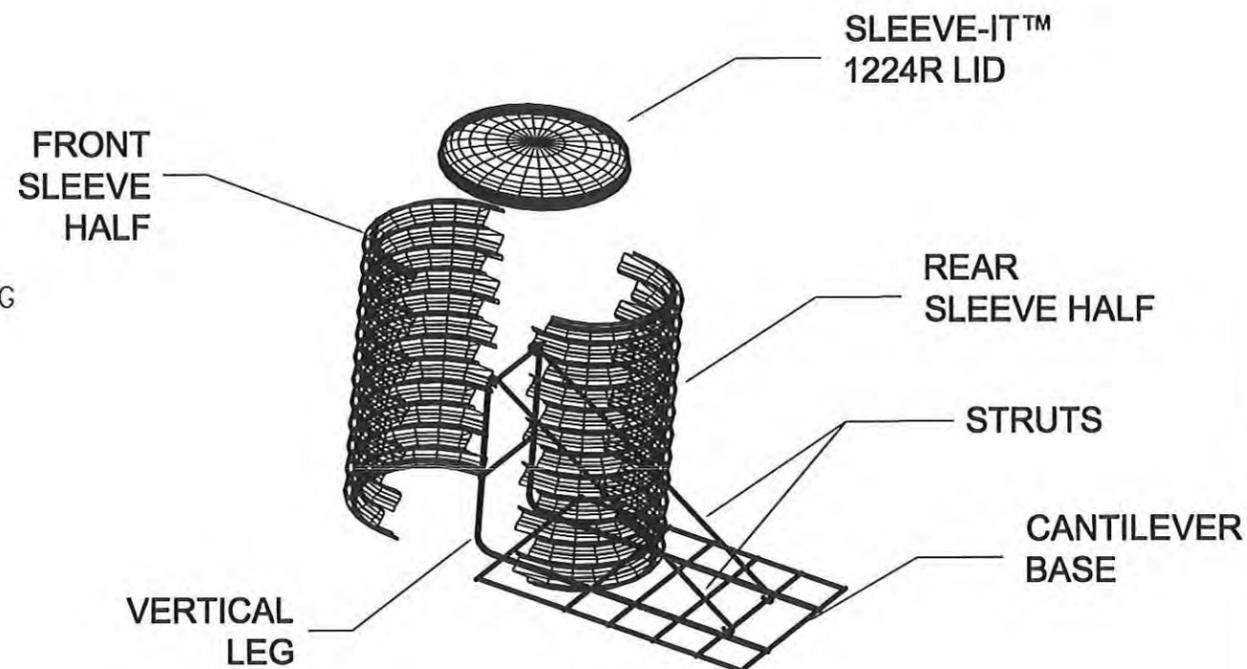
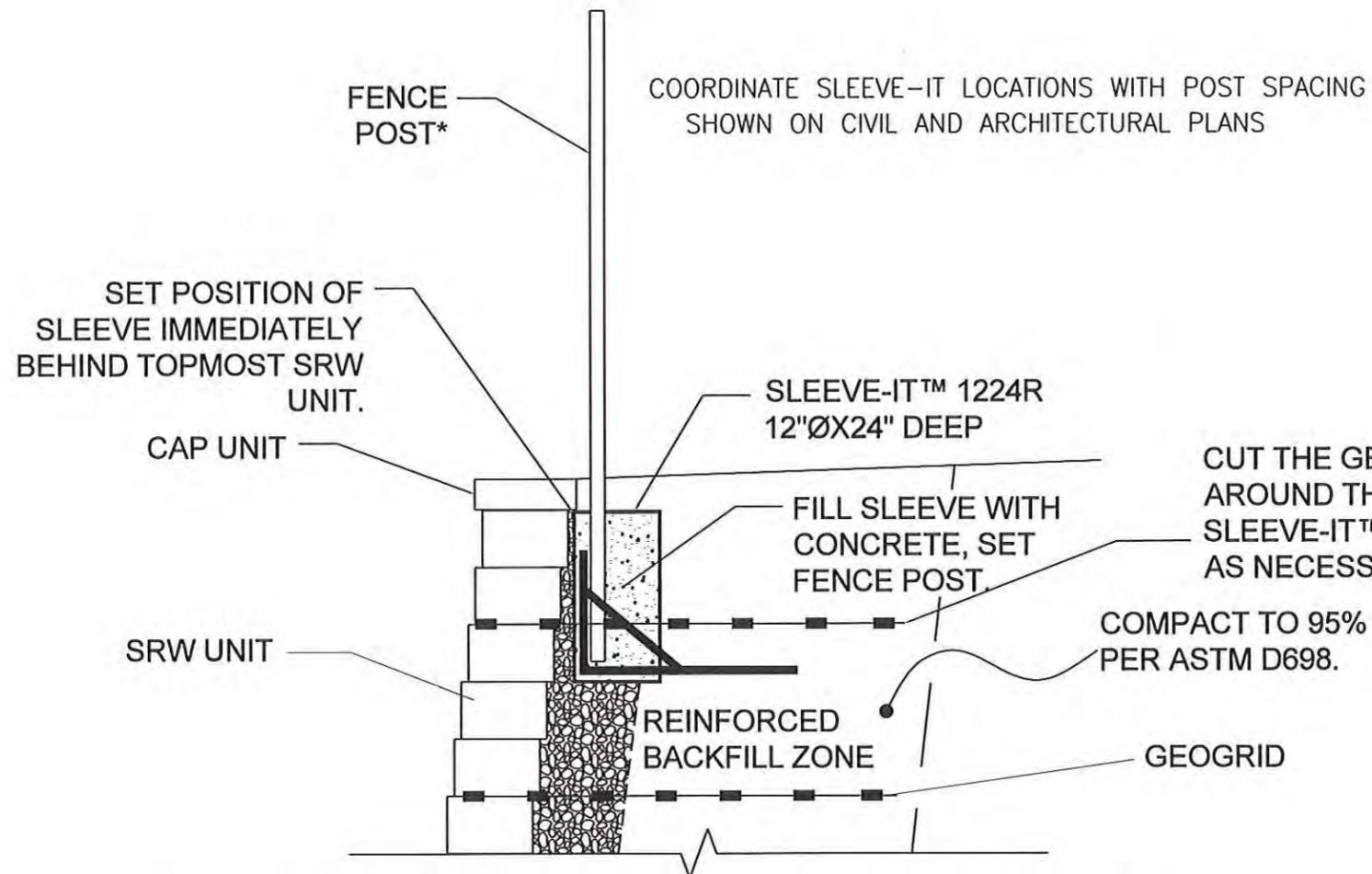
DRAWN BY: CMM

DATE: 10/04/15

SHEET: 7 OF 11

USE THIS DETAIL FOR CHAIN LINK FENCES UP TO 8.0 FT. IN HEIGHT, PRIVACY FENCES UP TO 6.0 FT. IN HEIGHT WITH MAX. 4"x4" POSTS. THIS DETAIL SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR GUARD RAIL POSTS

FENCE DESIGN AND LOCATION BY OTHERS



\*FENCING SYSTEMS APPROVED FOR USE WITH SLEEVE-IT™ 1224R ARE LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING HEIGHTS: CHAIN LINK - UP TO 8-FT, PRIVACY - UP TO 6-FT (WOODEN, PVC, METAL). POST SIZE 4"X4" MAX.

SLEEVE-IT FENCE POST ALTERNATE DETAIL

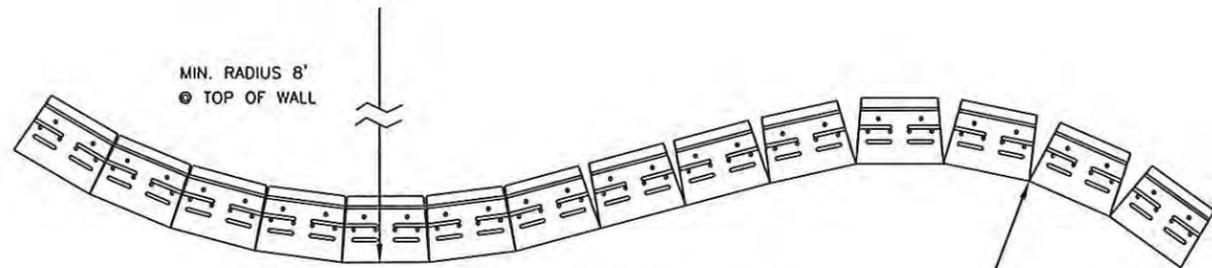
SCALE: NONE



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

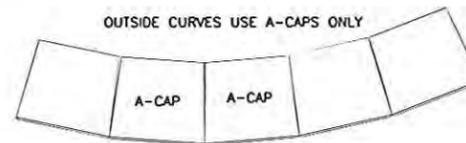
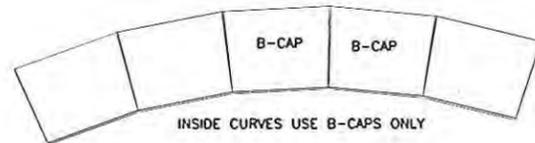
WALL DETAILS

DRAWN BY: CMM DATE: 10/04/15 SHEET: 8 OF 11

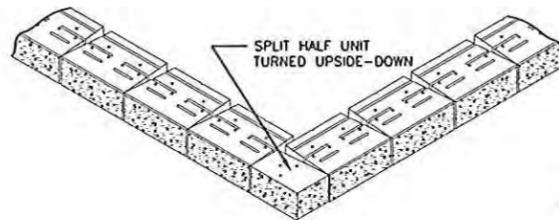
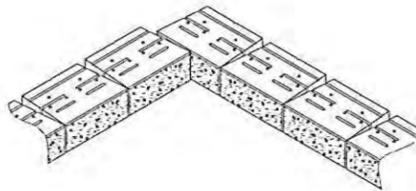


NOTE:  
FOLLOW GEOGRID MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR REINFORCEMENT PLACEMENT AT CURVES AND CORNERS.  
DO NOT PLACE OVERLAPPING GEOSYNTHETIC LAYERS DIRECTLY ON TOP OF EACH OTHER. PROVIDE 3" (MIN.) OF SOIL FILL BETWEEN OVERLAPPING LAYERS.

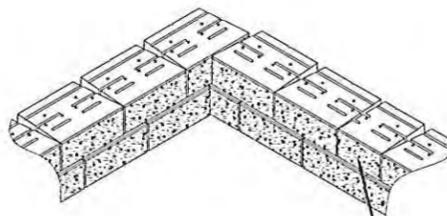
**CURVE DETAIL**  
TYPICAL CURVES  
SCALE: NONE



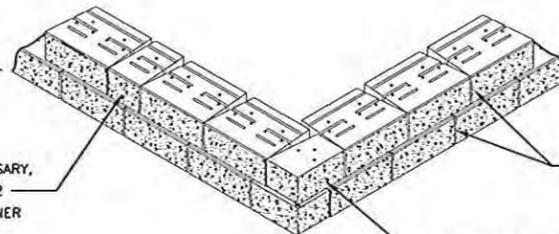
**CAPPING DETAIL-PLAN VIEW**  
CURVES  
SCALE: NONE



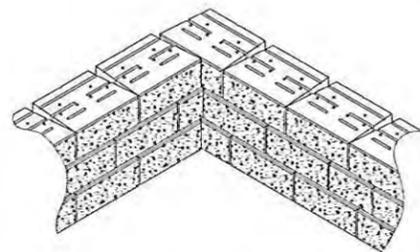
NOTE:  
FOR ALL COURSES,  
ALWAYS START CONSTRUCTION AT CORNERS  
AND WORK OUT INTO MIDDLE OF WALL



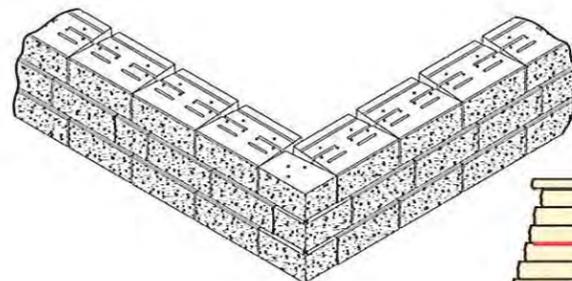
IF PARTIAL UNITS ARE NECESSARY,  
"HIDE" CUT UNITS AT LEAST 2  
FULL UNITS AWAY FROM CORNER



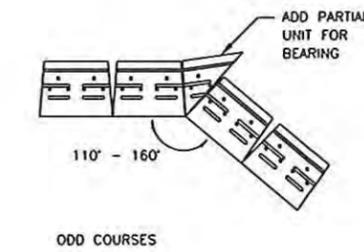
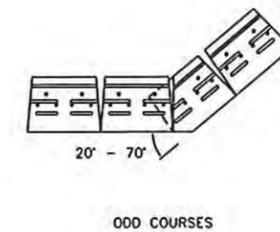
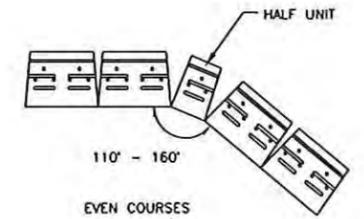
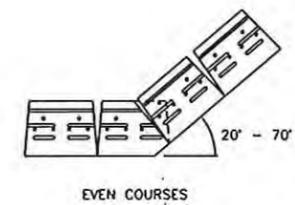
DO NOT MAINTAIN  
RUNNING BOND



THIRD COURSE

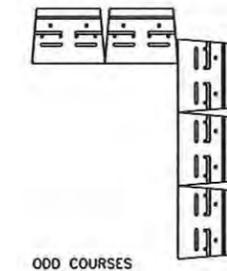
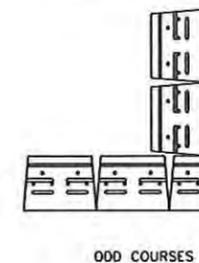
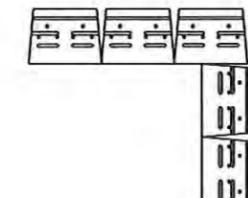
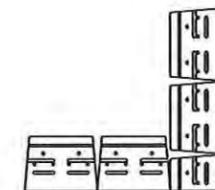


**INSTALLATION SEQUENCE**



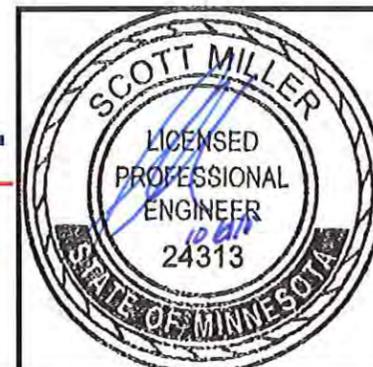
**CORNER DETAIL**  
OBLIQUE ANGLE-OUTSIDE  
SCALE: NONE

**CORNER DETAIL**  
OBLIQUE ANGLE-INSIDE  
SCALE: NONE

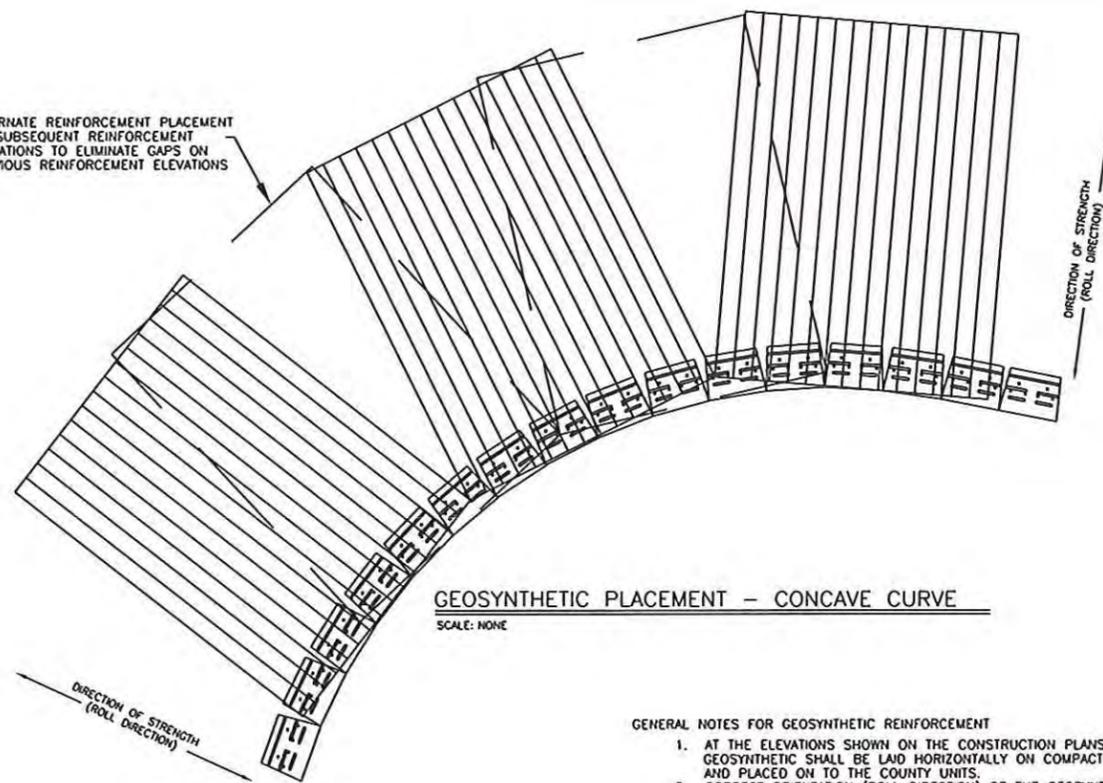


**CORNER DETAIL**  
90° -OUTSIDE  
SCALE: NONE

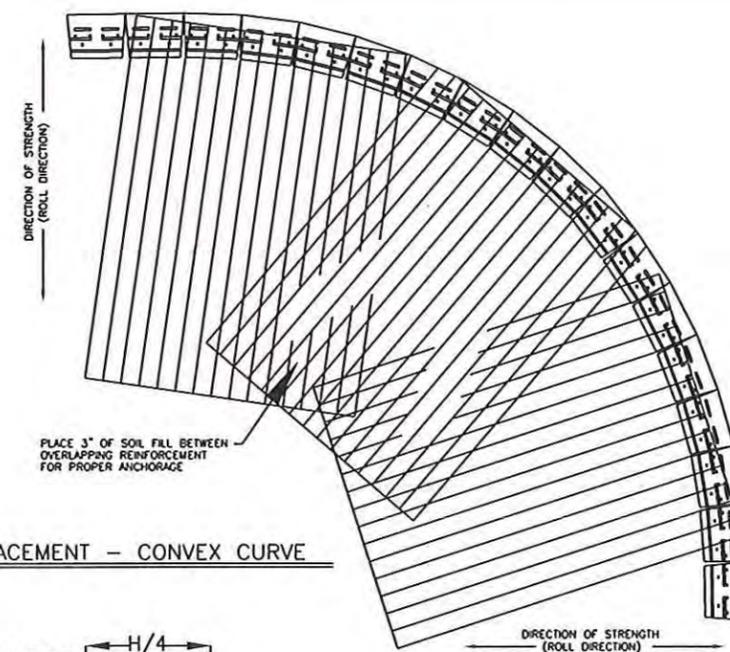
**CORNER DETAIL**  
90° -INSIDE  
SCALE: NONE



ALTERNATE REINFORCEMENT PLACEMENT ON SUBSEQUENT REINFORCEMENT ELEVATIONS TO ELIMINATE GAPS ON PREVIOUS REINFORCEMENT ELEVATIONS



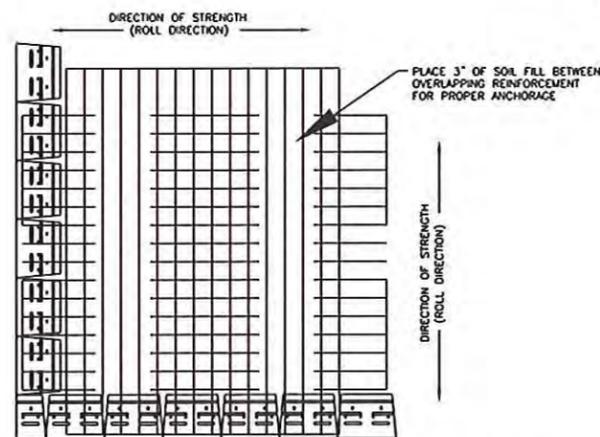
**GEOSYNTHETIC PLACEMENT – CONCAVE CURVE**  
SCALE: NONE



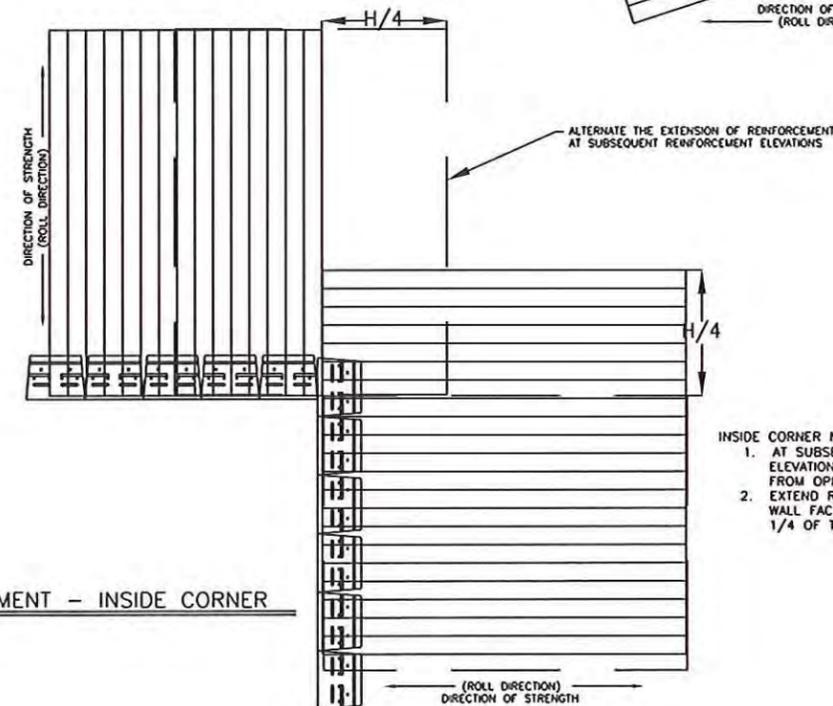
**GEOSYNTHETIC PLACEMENT – CONVEX CURVE**  
SCALE: NONE

**GENERAL NOTES FOR GEOSYNTHETIC REINFORCEMENT**

1. AT THE ELEVATIONS SHOWN ON THE CONSTRUCTION PLANS, THE GEOSYNTHETIC SHALL BE LAID HORIZONTALLY ON COMPACTED SOIL FILL AND PLACED ON TO THE COUNTY UNITS.
2. CORRECT ORIENTATION (ROLL DIRECTION) OF THE GEOSYNTHETIC SHALL BE VERIFIED BY THE CONTRACTOR TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GEOSYNTHETIC MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS.
3. THE GEOSYNTHETIC SHALL BE IN TENSION AND FREE OF WRINKLES PRIOR TO PLACEMENT OF SOIL FILL.
4. NOMINAL TENSION SHALL BE APPLIED TO THE GEOSYNTHETIC AND SECURED IN PLACE WITH STAPLES, STAKES OR BY HAND TENSIONING UNTIL THE GEOSYNTHETIC IS COVERED BY SIX INCHES OF SOIL FILL.



**GEOSYNTHETIC PLACEMENT – OUTSIDE CORNER**  
SCALE: NONE



**GEOSYNTHETIC PLACEMENT – INSIDE CORNER**  
SCALE: NONE

- INSIDE CORNER NOTES:**
1. AT SUBSEQUENT REINFORCEMENT ELEVATIONS EXTEND REINFORCEMENT FROM OPPOSITE WALL FACE
  2. EXTEND REINFORCEMENT BEYOND WALL FACE A DISTANCE EQUAL TO 1/4 OF THE HEIGHT OF THE WALL (H)



HARGENS RESIDENCE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

WALL DETAILS

P.O. Box 94529 North Little Rock, AR 72190

Tel: 501.374.3546 Fax: 501.374.3547 E-mail: segwalls@gmail.com

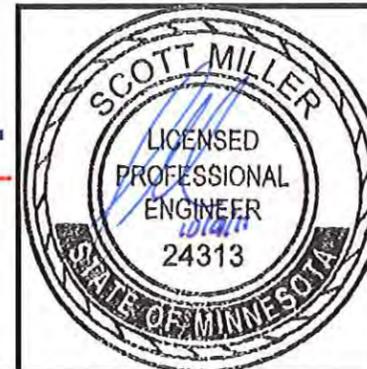
DRAWN BY: CMM

DATE: 10/04/15

SHEET: 10 OF 11

NOTES:

1. REINFORCED ZONE- COMPACTED SANDY LEAN CLAY SOIL WITH A PLASTICITY INDEX LESS THAN 20 WITH AN EFFECTIVE FRICTION ANGLE = 26 DEGREES, MOIST UNIT WEIGHT = 125 PCF, COHESION = 0 PSF.
2. LEVELING PAD- MINIMUM 6" THICK COMPACTED MN/DOT CLASS 5 AGG. BASE CRUSHED STONE.
3. FOUNDATION ZONE- UNDISTURBED HARD SANDY LEAN CLAY SOIL WITH A PLASTICITY INDEX LESS THAN 20 WITH AN EFFECTIVE FRICTION ANGLE = 26 DEGREES, MOIST UNIT WEIGHT = 125 PCF, COHESION = 0 PSF.
4. RETAINED ZONE- UNDISTURBED OR COMPACTED SANDY LEAN CLAY SOIL WITH A PLASTICITY INDEX LESS THAN 20 WITH AN EFFECTIVE FRICTION ANGLE = 26 DEGREES, MOIST UNIT WEIGHT = 125 PCF, COHESION = 0 PSF.
5. MINIMUM WALL EMBEDMENT = 1.0 FT. (2 BLOCK).
6. A GEOTECHNICAL REPORT WAS NOT SUPPLIED FOR THE PROJECT AND THE SOIL PROPERTIES USED WERE ASSUMED FOR THE SITE BASED ON OTHER SITES IN THE GENERAL AREA. THE FIELD SOIL PROPERTIES MUST BE VERIFIED BY THE TESTING AGENCY OF RECORD EMPLOYED BY THE OWNER AND THE WALL DESIGNER NOTIFIED OF SOILS DIFFERENT THAN THOSE NOTED HEREIN.
7. WALL BATTER WILL BE 0.75-INCH PER BLOCK COURSE.
8. THESE PLANS ARE BASED ON PROJECT PLAN BY HARDSCAPES UNLIMITED DATED SEPTEMBER 2015. THE TOP AND BOTTOM OF WALL ELEVATIONS AND SLOPES IN THE VICINITY OF THE WALLS MUST BE VERIFIED BY THE WALL INSTALLER BEFORE BEGINNING WALL CONSTRUCTION. THE WALL DESIGNER MUST REVIEW ANY CHANGES TO THE WALL DIMENSIONS OR SLOPES AROUND THE WALL.
9. THE WALL DESIGNER ASSUMES NO LIABILITY FOR INFORMATION PROVIDED BY OTHERS OR NOT VERIFIED.
10. ALL FILL MUST BE PLACED IN MAXIMUM 8.0 INCH THICK LIFTS AND COMPACTED TO A MINIMUM OF 95% STANDARD COMPACTION (ASTM D698). THE COMPACTION OF EACH LIFT OF SOIL FILL MUST BE VERIFIED BY THE TESTING AGENCY OF RECORD EMPLOYED BY THE OWNER WITH AT LEAST ONE TEST PER 2500 SQ. FT. OF FILL PLACED PER LIFT.
11. MAXIMUM WALL BEARING PRESSURE = 1800 PSF.
12. THE LONG-TERM STATIC GROUNDWATER LEVEL IS ASSUMED TO WELL BELOW THE BOTTOM OF THE WALL (GREATER THAN 6.0 FEET)
13. ALL QUANTITIES DO NOT INCLUDE ANY WASTE OR OVERLAP REQUIRED AND ARE BASED ON IN-PLACE COMPACTED VOLUMES. THE INSTALLER MUST VERIFY ALL QUANTITIES.
14. WALL HEIGHTS SHOWN MUST NOT BE EXCEEDED WITHOUT THE CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE WALL DESIGNER.
15. ALL FACIA BLOCK MUST BE COUNTY TRIBUTE BLOCK UNITS.
16. ALL REINFORCING GEOGRID MUST BE SRW SERIES 5 GEOGRID AS SHOWN ON THE WALL PROFILES AND DRAWINGS.
17. ALL UTILITIES BEHIND, IN FRONT AND UNDER THE WALL SHOULD BE INSTALLED BEFORE COMMENCING WALL CONSTRUCTION TO LIMIT DISTURBANCE AND DAMAGE TO THE GRID AND UNDERMINING OF THE WALL. THE COMPACTION OF ALL UTILITY BACKFILL UNDER THE BLOCK AND GRID ZONES MUST BE VERIFIED TO BE AT LEAST 95% STANDARD COMPACTION (ASTM D698).
18. THE SLOPES BEHIND AND IN FRONT OF THE WALL ARE SHOWN ON THE WALL DRAWINGS AND SHALL NOT BE EXCEEDED WITHOUT THE CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE WALL DESIGNER.
19. CARE MUST BE TAKEN WHEN INSTALLING ANY UTILITIES, STRUCTURES OR LANDSCAPING BEHIND THE WALL SO AS NOT TO DAMAGE THE GEOGRID OR WALL FACE. ANY DAMAGED GEOGRID OR WALL FACE DISTORTION MUST BE REPLACED.
20. ALL ROOF DRAINS AND SURFACE WATER MUST BE ROUTED AROUND OR PIPED THROUGH THE WALL FACE. NO SURFACE WATER SHALL BE ALLOWED TO FLOW OVER THE WALL FACE DURING OR AFTER WALL CONSTRUCTION.
21. ANY SPRINGS, SEEPS OR OTHER WATER SOURCES NOTED IN THE WALL EXCAVATION MUST BE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE WALL DESIGNER FOR REMEDIAL ACTION.
22. NO LIVE OR DEAD LOADS WITHIN 15.0 FT. BEHIND THE WALL.
23. ALL FILTER FABRIC MUST BE MIRAFI 140N NON-WOVEN FABRIC OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT.
24. FACTORS OF SAFETY USED IN THE WALL DESIGN: SLIDING = 1.5, OVERTURNING = 2.0, BEARING CAPACITY = 2.0, GLOBAL STABILITY ANALYSIS = 1.3



HARGENS RESIDENCE MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA		
WALL NOTES		
DRAWN BY: CMM	DATE: 10/04/15	SHEET: 11 OF 11

P.O. Box 94529 North Little Rock, AR 72190

Tel: 501.374.3546 Fax: 501.374.3547 E-mail: segwalls@gmail.com

# Existing Site Conditions



Existing Garage



Overgrowth on the hill



# Existing Site Conditions



Existing 12' tall garage

# Existing Site Conditions



# Proposed Retaining Wall



Current View



Proposed View



Current View



Proposed View

# Neighbor to the South



The property to the south of the Hargens residence has several retaining walls. The existing retaining walls are built to the property line, and rely on the existing garage to hold their structural integrity. The new wall will work with the existing walls to maintain the strength they have currently. The neighbors walls sit within the property set backs.



South neighbor retaining walls built to property lines. Walls rely on the garage for structural integrity. The garage can not be removed without replacing it with a retaining wall.

# Neighbor to the North



The property to the north of the Hargens' residence has an old retaining wall that is also built to the property lines.



View of North Property Line



# Neighborhood Retaining Walls Built within the setback, right on the property line





Retaining wall for property on Clarence Ave  
Over 8' tall and built on property line.

View looking west from the  
property over interstate 94.  
Walls seem to be a dominate  
feature of the landscape.





















188 SEYMOUR

MINNESOTA  
924-1  
RENTAL EXEMPT

# Proposed Retaining Wall Material



The proposed wall will be constructed out of County Material Tribute Retaining Wall Block. The wall block meets and exceeds all industry standards. The color chosen is Rustic Cedar Blend. The block was chosen for its strength as well as its aesthetic beauty. Pictures are of County Tribute wall block used on project designed by Jack Dorsey of Landscape Design Studios.



**PROSPECT  
PARK**  
ASSOCIATION

**To:** Joseph Giant, City Planner

**From:** Prospect Park Association Zoning and Project Review Committee

**Date:** November 9, 2015

**Subject:** Hargans Residence Variance Request for Retaining Wall on Property Setback  
Letter of Support

Dear Mr. Giant:

On behalf of the Prospect Park Association (PPA) Zoning & Project Review Committee we are writing to express our support for a variance to enable Amy Hargans to proceed with the construction of a retaining wall in the west side of her property to be located with the setback area.

After hearing Amy Hargans and her representative Mr. Jack Dorsey of Landscape Design Studios make a presentation of their need for a variance to the PPA Zoning & Project Review Committee, the Committee overwhelmingly voted to support the proposed retaining wall and the variance needed to place it within the 5' setback area on the west side of the property. As we were informed, the existing conditions of the steep grade on the west side of the property make it extraordinarily difficult for Ms. Hargans to maintain it particularly as she ages.

We were also informed that neighbors to the north and south support her project.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please feel free to contact me at [jonewix@aol.com](mailto:jonewix@aol.com), or 612-349-9353.

Sincerely,

John W. Wicks, AIA  
PPA Zoning and Project Review Chairperson

Oct 14, 2015

**Planning Commission**  
Public Service Center  
250 S 4th St, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Planning Committee Member,

I am writing this letter in support of the variance that Amy Hargens is seeking for the property at 184 Seymour Ave. I own a home on Arthur Ave. I do not for see any issue with the building of this wall. I think the wall will be a great improvement over the current old stone garage that is deteriorating. It's also difficult to maintain the current hill, which has erosion and overgrown with weeds.

Sincerely,

Tammy Earley

237 Arthur Ave SE

Oct 14, 2015

**Planning Commission**

Public Service Center  
250 S 4th St, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Planning Committee Member,

I am writing this letter to let you on the planning commission know that I am in support of the variance that Amy Hargens is seeking for the property at 184 Seymour Ave. I live just to the south of this property and firmly believe that the project will have no adverse effect on my property or the community as a whole. The building of the retaining wall at the rear of the property will improve the general appearance of the alley behind the property and views from my property looking north. Removal of the existing garage will improve the safety and security.

Sincerely



Elisabeth V Hoff

188 Seymour Avenue SE

Minneapolis, MN 55414

Support for building of retaining wall by my neighbor at 184 Seymour Ave SE.

I am in full support of my neighbor building a wall in her backyard, and believe it will add to the beauty of the neighborhood, and help with land management. I believe that careful thought has gone into this project, and it will be done professionally.

Paul Kuhn  
180 Seymour Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

October 15, 2015

Planning Commission  
Public Service Center  
250 S 4th St, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Variance for the property at 184 Seymour Ave. SE

Dear Planning Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in a hearty support of the variance that Amy Hargens is seeking.

This project will have no adverse effect on my property or the community as a whole. In fact, I hope that the *fresh, new back yard foundation wall and landscaping* will spark a new trend of vitality to the neglected alley which it fronts on.

This same alley leads to a pocket of woods - overgrown and deteriorating. Over the years it has attracted those seeking seclusion - the homeless, groups of partying teens, folks seeking a free garbage dump - to name a few.

So, I am looking forward to Amy's project and sincerely hope that you will find the variance acceptable.

Respectfully,

Jo Walstedt  
178 Seymour Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414

October 15, 2015

Lori Reese  
192 Seymour Ave SE  
Mpls, MN 55414

Planning Commission, Mpls  
Public Service Center  
250 S 4<sup>th</sup> St Room 300  
Mpls, MN 55415

To Whom It May Concern:

We are in support Amy Hargens proposed landscaping and new wall in our alley at 184 Seymour Ave SE. It is a dead end alley with 1 side being a hill, which is Amy's side. It is a steep hill, so it gets neglected.

Here are my 3 reasons/concerns I hope this feature will address:

1. There are lots of weeds that the wall would help eliminate.
2. Sometimes people wander back there since it isn't a path well traveled. So beautifying it will help for safety as well.
3. The biggest factor is that this should be a big help for the erosion issue, and maintaining water on her property.

I am happy that Amy wants to invest in our neighborhood and make it an even better place to live and call home

Sincerely

Lori Reese and family

*Planning Commission*

*Public Service Center*

*250 S. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Room 300*

*Minneapolis MN 55415*

*Dear Planning Committee Member,*

*I am writing this letter to let you on the planning commission know that I am in support of the variance that Amy Hargens is seeking for the property at 184 Seymour Ave. SE, Minneapolis MN 55414.*

*The back yard of Amy's home faces what is known as a dead-end alley. Not open to the public, but open to those that have a garage that one must use the alley to gain access. Amy's garage is also accessed through this alley, but has not been used for many, many years as it is a crumbling eye sore, and holds dangers of its own. From time to time proof of transients spending the night in it has been obvious. Also it has become home to several animals such as raccoons. I also see that the hill is eroding; this in its own right can easily be considered a danger. One does not know when this hill may collapse.*

*I would like to see her garage gone and a wall that supports the hill as soon as possible.*

*Thank you,*

*Verlaine Hutchins*

*198 Seymour Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414*



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## Variance

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**Carol Brown Hauser** <cbhauser@comcast.net>  
To: alhargens@gmail.com

Thu, Oct 15, 2015 at 10:53 PM

We the Hauser family, at 169 Seymour Ave SE, support our neighbor Amy Hargens in her quest to obtain a variance from the City of Minneapolis to build a retaining wall the entire width of her back yard along the alley. We believe it not only will be an aesthetic improvement, but also a safety one.

We have been Amy's neighbors for over 26 years, owning our home across the street from hers. Amy consistently has made improvements to her home and yard consistently over the years. The wall, we believe, also is an improvement to her property and hopefully will decrease noise from I-94 and the wall recently built by MNDOT in her backyard.

Thank you.

Most Sincerely, Tony and Carol Hauser

October 15, 2015

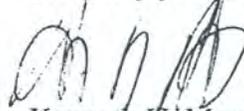
Planning Commission  
Public Service Center  
250 S 4th St, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Dear Planning Committee Member,

I am writing this letter to let you on the planning commission know that I am in support of the variance that Amy Hargens is seeking for the property at 184 Seymour Ave SE. I know that the project will have no adverse effect on my property or the community as a whole.

The building of the retaining wall at the rear of the property will improve the general appearance of the alley behind the property, and improve the safety by removing the existing garage. And as a practical matter, building the retaining wall to the property line, rather than leaving five feet of unretained slope, will reduce the cost to the neighbors of improving their back yards by providing an existing wall which they could incorporate into their future retaining walls or garages.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth U. Mowll', written over a faint, illegible typed name.

Kenneth U. Mowll  
183 Seymour Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414