

December 3, 2025

JN 25354

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Mercer Island, WA 98040
via email: steve@steveturwitz.com

Subject: **Geotechnical Engineering Study**
Proposed Residence Addition
4141 – 80th Avenue Southeast
Mercer Island, Washington

Greetings:

We are pleased to submit this geotechnical engineering report for the proposed residential project to be constructed at 4141 – 80th Avenue Southeast in Mercer Island, Washington. The scope of our services consisted of exploring site surface and subsurface conditions in the area of the proposed addition location and then developing this report to provide recommendations for the geotechnical engineering aspects of the project. This work was authorized by your acceptance of our Contract for Professional Services dated June 27, 2024.

Based on a site plan prepared by First Lamp Architects dated April 2020, we understand that a main level, entry addition is proposed onto the central portion of the southern side of the residence. The grade of the ground at the location of the addition is near the proposed floor level of the addition.

If the scope of the project changes from what we have described above, we should be provided with revised plans in order to determine if modifications to the recommendations and conclusions of this report are warranted.

SITE CONDITIONS

SURFACE

The site is located near the central portion of Mercer Island just east of Island Crest Way. The rectangular site is bordered to the east by 80th Avenue Southeast. Overall, the site mostly slopes downward to the north, but also somewhat to the west. The highest point on the property is at the southwestern portion of the site, having a grade of approximately elevation 203 feet. The existing residence is located in the central portion of the site. It has a main level with a floor grade approximately elevation 201.5 feet. However, there is an attached garage at the southeastern corner of the residence that has a slab grade of about elevation 200 feet. The residence has a basement that daylights to the north whose slab grade appears to be in the range of elevation 190 feet. A steep slope is located off the northern side of the residence; it is inclined at approximately 50 to 60 percent over a height of approximately 15 to 20 feet. An east-west trending swale/ravine is located at the base of the steep slope. The top of the steep slope is located approximately 35 feet or more from the proposed addition area, and the residence is located between the slope and proposed addition.

Based on the logs of some nearby explorations we obtained, dense, glacially-consolidated soil is native soil in the area. We used a hand-auger and a 1/2-inch steel rod in some test areas at/near the proposed location of the addition. Dense native soil was revealed at depths ranging from approximately 4 to 5 feet. We have attached a Site Exploration Plan illustrating the location of these test holes. The depth to the dense native soil is also noted on the Plan.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL

THIS SECTION CONTAINS A SUMMARY OF OUR STUDY AND FINDINGS FOR THE PURPOSES OF A GENERAL OVERVIEW ONLY. MORE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS ARE CONTAINED IN THE REMAINDER OF THIS REPORT. ANY PARTY RELYING ON THIS REPORT SHOULD READ THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT.

This report provides geotechnical engineering conclusions and recommendations based on the information noted above. This report also addresses Geologic Hazard Areas per Mercer Island Code (MICC 19.07).

The test holes revealed dense native soil in the area of the proposed addition at depths of approximately 4 to 5 feet. Loose soils were revealed above the dense soil. In addition, because there is a basement for the residence, it is extremely likely that loose backfill exists down to the base of the basement (10 feet?). All building loads of the proposed addition need to be placed on or into the dense native soil. Due to the somewhat significant depths to the native soil in the addition area, including where it abuts the southern basement foundation, it is our opinion that the most feasible foundation option for the addition foundation is to support it on driven pipe piles. Only minimal excavations are needed for the foundation base if it is supported on the piles; much deeper excavation would be needed if a conventional footing foundation was used. Information regarding driven pipe piles is given in a subsequent section of this report.

Geotech Consultants, Inc. should be allowed to review the final development plans to verify that the recommendations presented in this report are adequately addressed in the design. Such a plan review would be additional work beyond the current scope of work for this study, and it may include revisions to our recommendations to accommodate site, development, and geotechnical constraints that become more evident during the review process.

We recommend including this report, in its entirety, in the project contract documents. This report should also be provided to any future property owners so they will be aware of our findings and recommendations.

CRITICAL AREAS STUDY (MICC 19.07)

Potential Landslide Hazard Area: As noted earlier, the entire property is mapped as Potential Landslide Hazard Area. However, the area of the proposed addition is relatively flat and all new foundations loads will bear into competent native soil. There is an approximate 15- to 20-foot-tall steep slope that is 35 feet or more from the proposed addition area. Although there are no indications of deep landsliding of the steep slope, any potential movement of the slope north of the residence will not affect the proposed addition. In summary, because of the reasons noted above, we believe the project is very suitable from a geotechnical engineering standpoint. No adverse

conditions will be made on the site or on adjacent sites as a result of this project if the recommendations in this report are followed.

Steep Slope Hazard Areas: As noted in the preceding paragraph, there is a steep slope north of the residence that is 35 feet or more from the proposed addition area. This slope is considered a Shallow Landslide Hazard Area per MICC 19.07.160. A code-prescriptive buffer of 25 feet is recommended for such slopes. This buffer is very suitable in our opinion, and the proposed addition will be located outside of this prescriptive buffer.

Erosion Hazard: Much of the site also meets the City of Mercer Island Code's criteria for an Erosion Hazard Area. However, the work area for the proposed addition, which is quite small, is located where the ground is flat. Thus, typical erosion control measures will be very suitable to suitably control the potential of erosion during construction. A silt fence should be erected as close as possible to the western, somewhat downslope side of the work area, and the existing vegetation should be left intact as much as possible. Also, any soil stockpiles should be covered with plastic during wet weather. Soil stockpiles should be minimized. Following rough grading, it may be necessary to mulch or hydroseed bare areas that will not be immediately covered with landscaping or an impervious surface.

Statement of Risk: In order to satisfy the City of Mercer Island's requirements, a statement of risk is needed. As such, we make the following statement:

It is our professional opinion that the recommendations presented in this report for the proposed additions project will render the development as safe as if it were not located in a geologically hazardous area and will not adversely impact adjacent properties.

SEISMIC CONSIDERATIONS

In accordance with the International Building Code (IBC), the site class within 100 feet of the ground surface is best represented by Site Class Type C (Stiff Soil). As noted in the USGS website, the mapped spectral acceleration value for a 0.2 second (S_s) and 1.0 second period (S_1) equals 1.43g and 0.50g, respectively.

The IBC and ASCE 7 require that the potential for liquefaction (soil strength loss) during an earthquake be evaluated for the peak ground acceleration of the Maximum Considered Earthquake (MCE), which has a probability of occurring once in 2,475 years (2 percent probability of occurring in a 50-year period). The MCE peak ground acceleration adjusted for site class effects (F_{PGA}) equals 0.68g. The soils beneath the site are not susceptible to seismic liquefaction under the ground motions of the MCE because of their dense nature and/or the absence of near-surface groundwater.

Sections 1803.5 of the IBC and 11.8 of ASCE 7 require that other seismic-related geotechnical design parameters (seismic surcharge for retaining wall design and slope stability) include the potential effects of the Design Earthquake. The peak ground acceleration for the Design Earthquake is defined in Section 11.2 of ASCE 7 as two-thirds (2/3) of the MCE peak ground acceleration, or 0.45g.

PIPE PILES

A 2-inch-diameter pipe pile driven with a minimum 90-pound jackhammer or a 140-pound Rhino hammer to a final penetration rate of 1-inch or less for one minute of continuous driving may be assigned an allowable compressive load of 3 tons.

Three or 4-inch-diameter pipe piles driven with a 850- or 1,100- or 2,000-pound hydraulic jackhammer to the following final penetration rates may be assigned the following compressive capacities.

INSIDE PILE DIAMETER	FINAL DRIVING RATE (850-pound hammer)	FINAL DRIVING RATE (1,100-pound hammer)	FINAL DRIVING RATE (2,000-pound hammer)	ALLOWABLE COMPRESSIVE CAPACITY
3 inches	10 sec/inch	6 sec/inch	2 sec/inch	6 tons
4 inches	16 sec/inch	10 sec/inch	4 sec/inch	10 tons

Note: The refusal criteria indicated in the above table are valid only for pipe piles that are installed using a hydraulic impact hammer carried on leads that allow the hammer to sit on the top of the pile during driving. If the piles are installed by alternative methods, such as a vibratory hammer or a hammer that is hard-mounted to the installation machine, numerous load tests to 200 percent of the design capacity would be necessary to substantiate the allowable pile load. The appropriate number of load tests would need to be determined at the time the contractor and installation method are chosen.

Extra-strong, Schedule 80 steel pipe should be used for 2-inch-diameter piles. At a minimum, Schedule 40 pipe should be used for 3-inch-diameter or larger piles. The site soils are not highly organic, and are not located near salt water. As a result, they do not have an elevated corrosion potential. Considering this, it is our opinion that standard "black" pipe can be used, and corrosion protection, such as galvanizing, is not necessary for the pipe piles.

The City of Mercer Island has adopted the City of Seattle's Director's Rule 10-2009 that contains several prescriptive requirements related to the use of pipe piles having a diameter of less than 10 inches. Under Director's Rule 10-2009, load tests are not required for 2-inch-diameter piles that are designed for an allowable 3-ton capacity. Load tests and a code alternate or modification would be required if alternative installation methods are used, or if a higher capacity is desired. Under Director's Rule 10-2009, load tests are required on 3 percent of the installed piles (3-inch-diameter or larger) up to a maximum of 5 piles, with a minimum of one pile load test on each project. Additionally, full-time observation of the pile installation by the geotechnical engineer-of-record is required by Director's Rule 10-2009.

We recommend a minimum pile length of 7 feet below the ground surface. Our experience with installation of small-diameter pipe piles indicates that it is likely that they will be longer than this minimum length to reach refusal.

Pile caps and grade beams should be used to transmit loads to the piles. Isolated pile caps, should include a minimum of two piles to reduce the potential for eccentric loads being applied to the piles. Subsequent sections of pipe can be connected with slip or threaded couplers, or they can be welded together. If slip couplers are used, they should fit snugly into the pipe sections. This may require that shims be used or that beads of welding flux be applied to the outside of the coupler.

Lateral loads due to wind or seismic forces may be resisted by passive earth pressure acting on the vertical, embedded portions of the foundation. For this condition, the foundation must be either poured directly against relatively level, undisturbed soil or be surrounded by level compacted fill. We recommend using a passive earth pressure of 250 pounds per cubic foot (pcf) for this resistance. We recommend a safety factor of at least 1.5 for the foundation's resistance to lateral loading, when using the above ultimate passive value.

FOUNDATION AND RETAINING WALLS

Retaining walls backfilled on only one side should be designed to resist the lateral earth pressures imposed by the soil they retain. The following recommended parameters are for walls that restrain level backfill:

PARAMETER	VALUE
Active Earth Pressure *	35 pcf
Passive Earth Pressure	300 pcf
Soil Unit Weight	130 pcf

Where: pcf is Pounds per Cubic Foot, and Active and Passive Earth Pressures are computed using the Equivalent Fluid Pressures.

* For a restrained wall that cannot deflect at least 0.002 times its height, a uniform lateral pressure equal to 10 psf times the height of the wall should be added to the above active equivalent fluid pressure. This applies only to walls with level backfill.

The design values given above do not include the effects of any hydrostatic pressures behind the walls and assume that no surcharges, such as those caused by slopes, vehicles, or adjacent foundations will be exerted on the walls. If these conditions exist, those pressures should be added to the above lateral soil pressures. Where sloping backfill is desired behind the walls, we will need to be given the wall dimensions and the slope of the backfill in order to provide the appropriate design earth pressures. Heavy construction equipment should not be operated behind retaining and foundation walls within a distance equal to the height of a wall, unless the walls are designed for the additional lateral pressures resulting from the equipment.

The values given above are to be used to design only permanent foundation and retaining walls that are to be backfilled, such as conventional walls constructed of reinforced concrete or masonry. It is not appropriate to use the above earth pressures and soil unit weight to back-calculate soil strength parameters for design of other types of retaining walls, such as soldier pile, reinforced earth, modular or soil nail walls. We can assist with design of these types of walls, if desired.

The passive pressure given is appropriate only for a shear key poured directly against undisturbed native soil, or for the depth of level, well-compacted fill placed in front of a retaining or foundation wall. The values for friction and passive resistance are ultimate values and do not include a safety factor. Restrained wall soil parameters should be utilized the wall and reinforcing design for a distance of 1.5 times the wall height from corners or bends in the walls, or from other points of restraint. This is intended to reduce the amount of cracking that can occur where a wall is restrained by a corner.

Wall Pressures Due to Seismic Forces

The surcharge wall loads that could be imposed by the design earthquake can be modeled by adding a uniform lateral pressure to the above-recommended active pressure. The recommended surcharge pressure is $8H$ pounds per square foot (psf), where H is the design retention height of the wall. Using this increased pressure, the safety factor against sliding and overturning can be reduced to 1.2 for the seismic analysis.

Retaining Wall Backfill and Waterproofing

Backfill placed behind retaining or foundation walls should be coarse, free-draining structural fill containing no organics. This backfill should contain no more than 5 percent silt or clay particles and have no gravel greater than 4 inches in diameter. The later section entitled ***Drainage Considerations*** should also be reviewed for recommendations related to subsurface drainage behind foundation and retaining walls.

The purpose of these backfill requirements is to ensure that the design criteria for a retaining wall are not exceeded because of a build-up of hydrostatic pressure behind the wall. Also, subsurface drainage systems are not intended to handle large volumes of water from surface runoff. The top 12 to 18 inches of the backfill should consist of a compacted, relatively impermeable soil or topsoil, or the surface should be paved. The ground surface must also slope away from backfilled walls at one to 2 percent to reduce the potential for surface water to percolate into the backfill.

Water percolating through pervious surfaces (pavers, gravel, permeable pavement, etc.) must also be prevented from flowing toward walls or into the backfill zone. Foundation drainage and waterproofing systems are not intended to handle large volumes of infiltrated water. The compacted subgrade below pervious surfaces and any associated drainage layer should therefore be sloped away. Alternatively, a membrane and subsurface collection system could be provided below a pervious surface.

Wall backfill should be placed in lifts and be properly compacted in order for the above-recommended design earth pressures to be appropriate. The recommended wall design criteria assume that the backfill will be well-compacted in lifts no thicker than 12 inches. The compaction of backfill near the walls should be accomplished with hand-operated equipment to prevent the walls from being overloaded by the higher soil forces that occur during compaction. The section entitled ***General Earthwork and Structural Fill*** contains additional recommendations regarding the placement and compaction of structural fill behind retaining and foundation walls.

The above recommendations are not intended to waterproof below-grade walls, or to prevent the formation of mold, mildew or fungi in interior spaces. Over time, the performance of subsurface drainage systems can degrade, subsurface groundwater flow patterns can change, and utilities can break or develop leaks. Therefore, waterproofing should be provided where future seepage through the walls is not acceptable. This typically includes limiting cold-joints and wall penetrations, and using bentonite panels or membranes on the outside of the walls. There are a variety of different waterproofing materials and systems, which should be installed by an experienced contractor familiar with the anticipated construction and subsurface conditions. Applying a thin coat of asphalt emulsion to the outside face of a wall is not considered waterproofing, and will only help to reduce moisture generated from water vapor or capillary action from seeping through the concrete. As with

any project, adequate ventilation of basement and crawl space areas is important to prevent a buildup of water vapor that is commonly transmitted through concrete walls from the surrounding soil, even when seepage is not present. This is appropriate even when waterproofing is applied to the outside of foundation and retaining walls. We recommend that you contact an experienced envelope consultant if detailed recommendations or specifications related to waterproofing design, or minimizing the potential for infestations of mold and mildew are desired.

The **General**, **Slabs-On-Grade**, and **Drainage Considerations** sections should be reviewed for additional recommendations related to the control of groundwater and excess water vapor for the anticipated construction.

SLABS-ON-GRADE

The building floors can be constructed as slabs-on-grade atop non-organic, firm existing soil or on structural fill. The subgrade soil must be in a firm, non-yielding condition at the time of slab construction or underslab fill placement. Any soft areas encountered should be excavated and replaced with select, imported structural fill.

Even where the exposed soils appear dry, water vapor will tend to naturally migrate upward through the soil to the new constructed space above it. This can affect moisture-sensitive flooring, cause imperfections or damage to the slab, or simply allow excessive water vapor into the space above the slab. All interior slabs-on-grade should be underlain by a capillary break drainage layer consisting of a minimum 4-inch thickness of clean gravel or crushed rock that has a fines content (percent passing the No. 200 sieve) of less than 3 percent and a sand content (percent passing the No. 4 sieve) of no more than 10 percent. Pea gravel or crushed rock are typically used for this layer.

As noted by the American Concrete Institute (ACI) in the *Guides for Concrete Floor and Slab Structures*, proper moisture protection is desirable immediately below any on-grade slab that will be covered by tile, wood, carpet, impermeable floor coverings, or any moisture-sensitive equipment or products. ACI recommends a minimum 10-mil thickness vapor retarder for better durability and long term performance than is provided by 6-mil plastic sheeting that has historically been used. A vapor retarder is defined as a material with a permeance of less than 0.3 perms, as determined by ASTM E 96. It is possible that concrete admixtures may meet this specification, although the manufacturers of the admixtures should be consulted. Where vapor retarders are used under slabs, their edges should overlap by at least 6 inches and be sealed with adhesive tape. The sheeting should extend to the foundation walls for maximum vapor protection.

If no potential for vapor passage through the slab is desired, a vapor *barrier* should be used. A vapor barrier, as defined by ACI, is a product with a water transmission rate of 0.01 perms when tested in accordance with ASTM E 96. Reinforced membranes having sealed overlaps can meet this requirement.

We recommend that the contractor, the project materials engineer, and the owner discuss these issues and review recent ACI literature and ASTM E-1643 for installation guidelines and guidance on the use of the protection/blotter material.

The **General**, **Permanent Foundation and Retaining Walls**, and **Drainage Considerations** sections should be reviewed for additional recommendations related to the control of groundwater and excess water vapor for the anticipated construction.

EXCAVATIONS AND SLOPES

Temporary excavation slopes should not exceed the limits specified in local, state, and national government safety regulations. Also, temporary cuts should be planned to provide a minimum 2 to 3 feet of space for construction of foundations, walls, and drainage. Temporary cuts to a maximum overall depth of about 4 feet may be attempted vertically in unsaturated soil, if there are no indications of slope instability. However, vertical cuts should not be made near property boundaries, or existing utilities and structures. Based upon Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 296, Part N, the upper, loose soil at the subject site would generally be classified as Type B. Therefore, temporary cut slopes greater than 4 feet in height should not be excavated at an inclination steeper than 1:1 (Horizontal:Vertical), extending continuously between the top and the bottom of a cut.

The above-recommended temporary slope inclination is based on the conditions exposed in our explorations, and on what has been successful at other sites with similar soil conditions. It is possible that variations in soil and groundwater conditions will require modifications to the inclination at which temporary slopes can stand. Temporary cuts are those that will remain unsupported for a relatively short duration to allow for the construction of foundations, retaining walls, or utilities. Temporary cut slopes should be protected with plastic sheeting during wet weather. It is also important that surface runoff be directed away from the top of temporary slope cuts. Cut slopes should also be backfilled or retained as soon as possible to reduce the potential for instability. Please note that sand or loose soil can cave suddenly and without warning. Excavation, foundation, and utility contractors should be made especially aware of this potential danger. These recommendations may need to be modified if the area near the potential cuts has been disturbed in the past by utility installation, or if settlement-sensitive utilities are located nearby.

Water should not be allowed to flow uncontrolled over the top of any temporary or permanent slope. All permanently exposed slopes should be seeded with an appropriate species of vegetation to reduce erosion and improve the stability of the surficial layer of soil.

LIMITATIONS

The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on site conditions as they existed at the time of our exploration and assume that the soil and groundwater conditions encountered in the explorations are representative of subsurface conditions on the site. If the subsurface conditions encountered during construction are significantly different from those observed in our explorations, we should be advised at once so that we can review these conditions and reconsider our recommendations where necessary. Unanticipated conditions are commonly encountered on construction sites and cannot be fully anticipated by merely taking samples in explorations. Subsurface conditions can also vary between exploration locations. Such unexpected conditions frequently require making additional expenditures to attain a properly constructed project. It is recommended that the owner consider providing a contingency fund to accommodate such potential extra costs and risks. This is a standard recommendation for all projects.

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of Stephen and Kathleen Hurwitz, and their representatives, for specific application to this project and site. Our conclusions and recommendations are professional opinions derived in accordance with our understanding of current local standards of practice, and within the scope of our services. No warranty is expressed or implied. The scope of our services does not include services related to construction safety precautions, and our recommendations are not intended to direct the contractor's methods, techniques, sequences, or procedures, except as specifically described in our report for

consideration in design. Our services also do not include assessing or minimizing the potential for biological hazards, such as mold, bacteria, mildew and fungi in either the existing or proposed site development.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Geotech Consultants, Inc. should be retained to provide geotechnical consultation, testing, and observation services during construction. This is to confirm that subsurface conditions are consistent with those indicated by our exploration, to evaluate whether earthwork and foundation construction activities comply with the general intent of the recommendations presented in this report, and to provide suggestions for design changes in the event subsurface conditions differ from those anticipated prior to the start of construction. However, our work would not include the supervision or direction of the actual work of the contractor and its employees or agents. Also, job and site safety, and dimensional measurements, will be the responsibility of the contractor.

During the construction phase, we will provide geotechnical observation and testing services when requested by you or your representatives. Please be aware that we can only document site work we actually observe. It is still the responsibility of your contractor or on-site construction team to verify that our recommendations are being followed, whether we are present at the site or not.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service on this project. Please contact us if you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

GEOTECH CONSULTANTS, INC.



12/03/2025

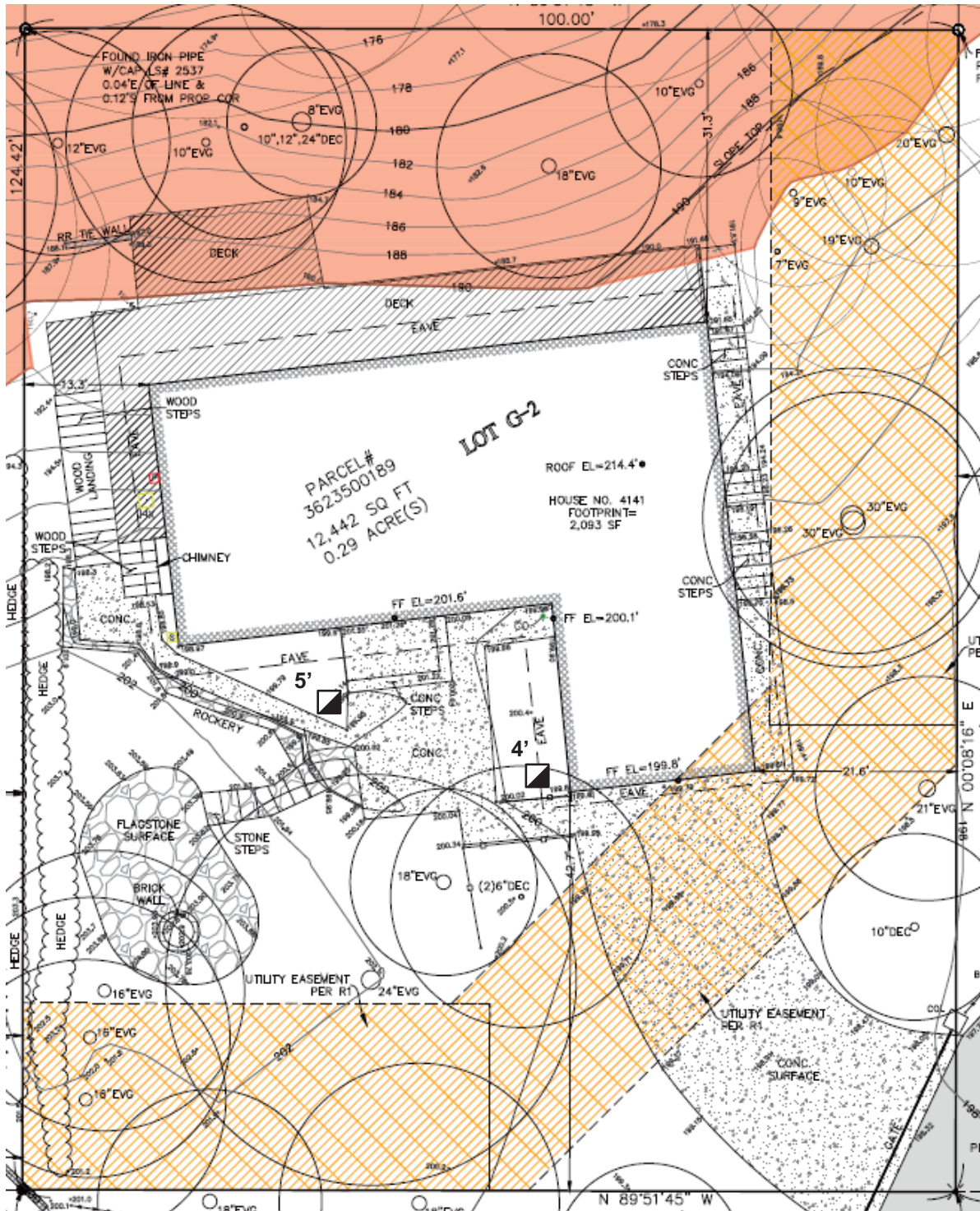
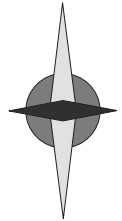
D. Robert Ward, P.E.
Principal

Attachment: Site Exploration Plan

cc: **First Lamp** – Matthew Johnson
via email: matt@firstlamp.net

DRW:kg

NORTH



Legend:

- Test Hole Location with Depth to Competent Native Soil



SITE EXPLORATION PLAN
 4141 - 80th Avenue Southeast
 Mercer Island, Washington

Job No: 25354	Date: Dec. 2025	No Scale	Plate:
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