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HOW TO PREPARE A SITE SURVEY

Here are my notes detailing what I will need for our upcoming design consultation.

I need an accurate site drawing showing the footprint of the house, and all hard surfaces as located on the property. By hard surfaces I mean driveways, concrete sidewalks, gravel paths, patios, stairs and decks. The City or County Planning Department will have a copy of what the builder submitted to receive a building permit if you did not receive one when you purchased the house.....however

what the builder submitted is before it was built. We need an "as built" drawing which will involve measuring and correcting as needed. The house location as built is usually different than the submitted drawing and that is the first piece of information to collect.

First I locate the property markers.

Then I take a 50' tape measure, secure it with a long nail at the property marker and measure the distance to the various house corners.

I take measurements from the corners of the house to the same known property line mark. For instance from the property line next to the driveway to 3 corners of the house. Then take the property line from the back corner of the landscape and measure to 3 corners of the house. This will give accurate information about where the house is on the property.

Peg your measuring tape to a property marker and lay a tape running across the front of the property or the house and if possible another tape running down the side from the same property marker.

I note doors and windows, overhangs, existing hard surfaces, (decks, patios, sheds, driveway etc) hose bibs, utilities, neighbors trees within 10' of the property line. It is very important to know where underground utilities such as drain fields, subterranean heat pump pipes, septic, dry well etc. are. Where does the water, electricity and gas come into the property? See sample drawing for other details and "nice to haves"

A north arrow, some info on winter wind direction (if you know), wet areas during winter and or summer, areas where most plants have died or look so bad you wish they would. This type of info can just be noted off to the side or on notepaper.

Tools I find helpful-2 50' tape measures or at least a couple of 25' ones. Long nails to hold the tap measure down or a helper. A flat board and graph paper in an easy scale like 1/4" = 1' or 1/8" = 1'. The paper I supply is a 1/8" = 1' but it can easily be turned into 1/4" by using each square equals 1/2'.

I'll only need the area we're going to design on the paper, but if you do the entire yard, you'll probably be glad it's there when you go to work on another area of your yard.

I hope these notes are helpful to you. Please send me a copy of the drawing in advance of our meeting by mail or fax if possible. This preview helps me prepare for the meeting and give me a chance to have you update the site survey if needed. Fax - 591-1645 Please call ahead at the same number and ask to have the fax turned on.