

ISSUE: Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction

APPLICANT: 808 Washington LLC c/o Wire Gill LLP

LOCATION: Old & Historic Alexandria District
802-808 North Washington Street

ZONE: CRMU-X Commercial residential mixed use (Old Town North) zone

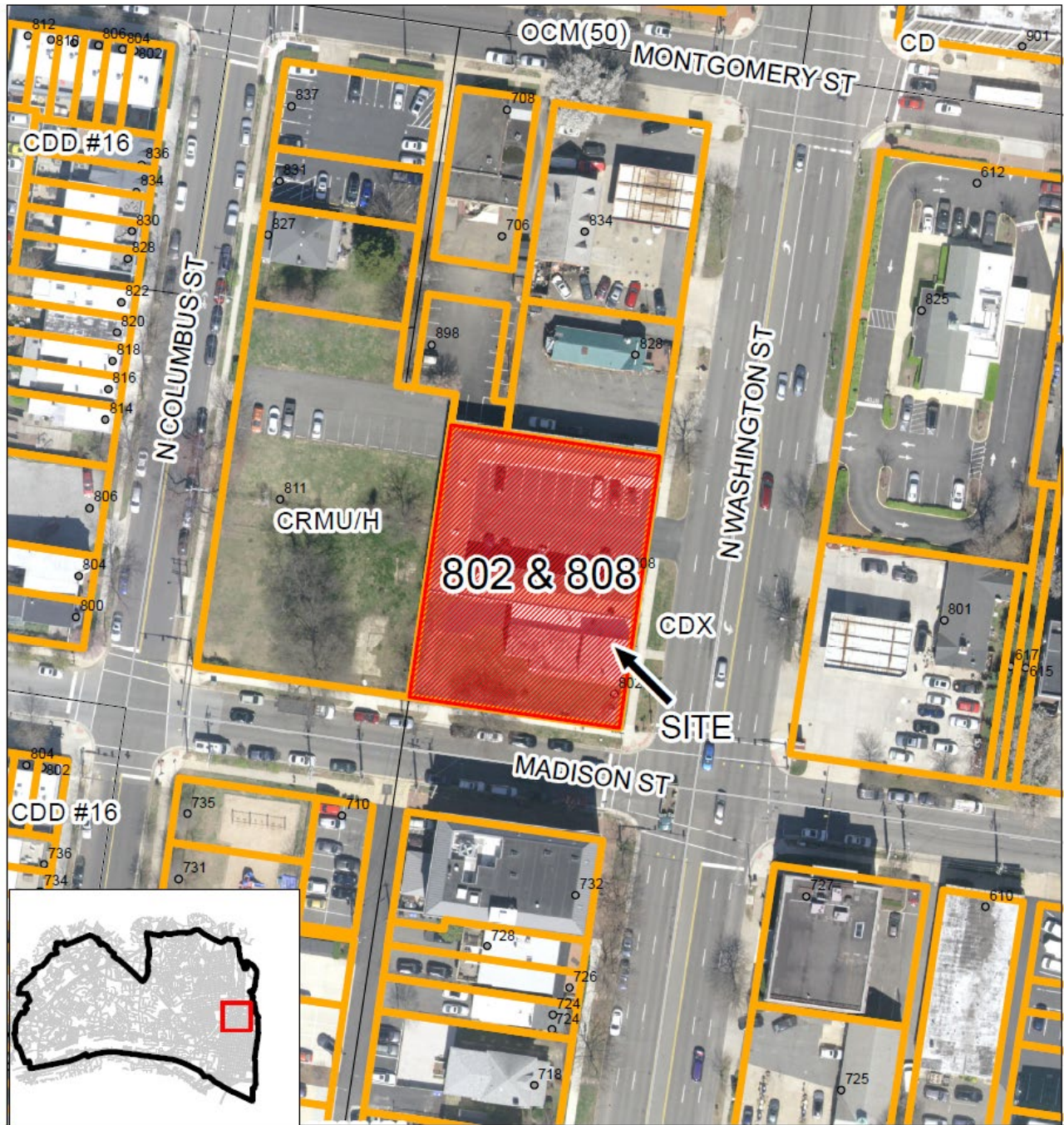
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **approval** of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations, with the following conditions:

1. The final selection of the windows and doors complies with the BAR Window Policy.
2. Exterior wall vents will be located so that they are entirely within a single exterior material. These vents will be painted a color to match the adjacent material.

GENERAL NOTES TO THE APPLICANT

1. **APPEAL OF DECISION:** In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, if the Board of Architectural Review denies or approves an application in whole or in part, the applicant or opponent may appeal the Board's decision to City Council on or before 14 days after the decision of the Board.
2. **COMPLIANCE WITH BAR POLICIES:** All materials must comply with the BAR's adopted policies unless otherwise specifically approved.
3. **BUILDING PERMITS:** Most projects approved by the Board of Architectural Review require the issuance of one or more construction permits by the Department of Code Administration (including signs). The applicant is responsible for obtaining all necessary construction permits after receiving Board of Architectural Review approval. Contact Code Administration, Room 4200, City Hall, 703-746-4200 for further information.
4. **ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS AND PERMITS TO DEMOLISH:** Applicants must obtain a copy of the Certificate of Appropriateness or Permit to Demolish PRIOR to applying for a building permit. Contact BAR Staff, Room 2100, City Hall, 703-746-3833, or preservation@alexandriava.gov for further information.
5. **EXPIRATION OF APPROVALS NOTE:** In accordance with Sections 10-106(B), 10-206(B) and 10-307 of the Zoning Ordinance, any Board of Architectural Review approval will expire 12 months from the date of issuance if the work is not commenced and diligently and substantially pursued by the end of that 12-month period.
6. **HISTORIC PROPERTY TAX CREDITS:** Applicants performing extensive, certified rehabilitations of historic properties may separately be eligible for state and/or federal tax credits. Consult with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR) prior to initiating any work to determine whether the proposed project may qualify for such credits.



BAR#2025-00139 & BAR#2025-00202
802 & 808 North Washington Street



0 37.5 75 150 Feet

UPDATE

The Board reviewed the proposed design for the project at a Concept Review session on January 15, 2025 (Figure 1). In addition to the BAR hearing, historic preservation staff has attended several working sessions with the applicant to review the proposed design and provide feedback.

The Board was largely supportive of the proposed design at the Concept Review session, making comments regarding specific portions of the design. The applicant has made changes to the building in response to comments from staff and the Board. Comments made during the Concept Review included the following:

- The Board supported the proposed massing and asymmetrical façade configuration.
- The Board supported the proposed light colored brick with similar colored metal panels located between the masonry sections. Some Board members discussed options for this including a darker brick.
- The link to the historic house should be moved back so that it does not interfere with the roof line of the townhouse.
- The level of detailing at the south elevation above the townhouse was discussed.
- The brick detailing at the north elevation was discussed.
- Board members asked for articulation in the panels at the west elevation



Figure 1: Design as reviewed at the Concept Review

The property required a developmental special use permit to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council. The DSUP associated with this project was approved by City Council and the project now returns to the Board of Architectural Review for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

I. APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the development of the property at 802-808 North Washington Street into a multi-unit residential building.

The proposed building will be in place of the hotel previously approved for this site. Construction began on the new hotel with below grade construction nearly completed and the townhome returned to its final location. Issues with the project forced construction to stop at that point and since that time no progress has been made on the partially completed project.

A new project team is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposal to begin construction on the site again with a new design for a multi-unit residential development project in place of the previously approved hotel use. As much of the below grade work has been completed, the building envelope for the new proposal will be largely the same as the previously proposed design, however a new design for the building is now being proposed. It should be noted that the proposed multi-family building for this site is being proposed in the context of the previously approved and currently under construction multi-unit development immediately to the west of the project site at 805 North Columbus Street.

Since the last Concept Review, the applicant has continued to develop the proposed design, making modifications that are consistent with the comments from staff and the Board. Some modifications to the design include the following:

During the Concept Review, Board members noted that the hyphen between the new building and the historic townhome appeared heavy and conflicted with the massing of the townhome. In response to these comments, the applicant has pushed the front elevation west to create a deeper gap between the two new and existing parts of the building. This also addresses the issue of the upper portion of the hyphen conflicting with the sloped roof of the townhome. To address the concerns about the heaviness of this part of the building, the applicant has reduced the extent of metal panels and replaced the solid parapet with a glass railing (figure 2).



Figure 2: Previous (left) and revised (right) design for hyphen between existing and new building

At the Concept Review, the submitted documents showed a roof deck on top of the rear ell at the historic townhouse but these documents contained little details. The current submission includes more details on the construction and design of the proposed roof deck. Located on the north side of the ell roof, the deck will be depressed into the roof slope and will feature a glass railing on the south and west sides (Figure 3). The roof deck will be accessed from a door on the west side of the main block of the house in a location previously occupied by a window.



Figure 3: Proposed roof deck at ell on historic townhouse

At the Concept Review discussion, BAR members noted that while the west portion of the building faces a courtyard, it is still visible from a public right of way and asked the applicant for additional details regarding the articulation of the exterior panels. The south and north portions of the western elevation are brick to match the north and south elevations, but the central part of the west elevation is being proposed to be architectural panels. The current submission includes details on these panels which include a simple joint pattern that aligns with the window openings (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Proposed panel joint patterns at west elevation

Included in the design at the Concept Review were ground floor entry stoops at Washington Street. The Board appreciated the inclusion of these elements noting that they help to relate the building to the historic district and enhance the pedestrian experience on North Washington Street. The previous submission did not include details on the design of these stoops, these details have been included with this submission. The stoops will feature a low wall of the same material and height as the building water table with a custom metal railing that matches the railings at the balconies mounted to the top of the wall. The stoops will be arranged in pairs with side entries, facing one another, aligned with the balconies above (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Design of proposed entry stoops

Site Context

The project site is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of North Washington Street and Madison Street. The new construction portion of the building fronts onto North Washington Street with the historic townhome located at the south end of the site. The west elevation of the building is visible from Montgomery Street through the courtyard located between this building and the previously approved project at 805 North Columbus Street. The north elevation of the building is visible from North Washington Street, meaning that all sides of the building are visible from a public right of way.

II. HISTORY

The three-story Second Empire style brick townhouse located at 802 North Washington Street was originally constructed by the McCauley family siblings in **1901** as a freestanding dwelling. The original owners had purchased several adjacent lots. The building features dark-red hard-fired brick with thin “butter” joints and a polychrome slate clad mansard roof. The south elevation features an original two-story, open wood porch along the length of the rear ell. The BAR approved a Permit to Demolish for relocation of this historic building on June 17, 2015 (BAR Case #2015-00153).

The remainder of the project site was dominated by the Towne Motel, located at 808 North Washington Street. The motel was a two-story brick faced structure in a U-shape plan around a central parking area. The motel consisted of 26 units and a small office and was constructed in the Colonial Revival style conveyed by the multi-paned windows, hipped roof, two story loggia, and small dormer vents. The motel was designed by respected local architect Joseph Saunders and constructed circa 1954-1955. The BAR approved a Permit to Demolish for the existing motel on June 17, 2015 (BAR Case #2015-00153).

On June 21, 2017, the BAR approved the Certificate of Appropriateness (BAR 2017-00099) for the redevelopment of this site into a new hotel including the relocation of the historic townhome at the southern end of the site. Pursuant to these approvals, the Towne Motel was razed and the townhome relocated to another portion of the site. Construction began on the new hotel with below grade construction nearly completed and the townhome returned to its final location. Issues with the project forced construction to stop at that point and since that time no progress has been made on the partially completed project.

III. ANALYSIS

Permit to Demolish/Capsulate

In considering a Permit to Demolish/Capsulate, the Board must consider the following criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, §10-105(B), which relate only to the subject property and not to neighboring properties. The Board has purview of the proposed demolition/capsulation regardless of visibility.

Standard	Description of Standard	Standard Met?
(1)	Is the building or structure of such architectural or historical interest that its moving, removing, capsulating or razing would be to the detriment of the public interest?	No
(2)	Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into a historic shrine?	No
(3)	Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?	No
(4)	Would retention of the building or structure help preserve the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway?	No
(5)	Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?	No

(6)	Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage, and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live?	No
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The analysis of the standards indicated above relate only to the portions of the wall areas proposed for demolition/capsulation. The proposed scope of demolition/capsulation is limited to the encapsulation of the north wall of the townhouse and the demolition of approximately 221 square feet of the roof of the existing ell in order to install a roof deck.

The applicant is proposing to enclose the north wall of the townhome with a connection to the new multi-unit residential building. This enclosure was approved under the previously proposed development for the site. Staff continues to support the approval of the north wall as it is of simple construction without ornament or openings. Note that the proposed design connects to the townhome behind the mansard roof allowing for the expression of the roof form and the cornice return.

The proposed demolition at the roof of the rear ell of the townhome will allow for the construction of a roof deck in the area. The proposal is to demolish a portion of the roof slope and a portion of the exterior wall under an existing window (Figure 6). This will create a flat surface for the roof deck and a new door providing access to the deck. Staff finds that the extent of demolition is minimal and does not include any unique or uncommon design. The proposed demolition will allow for a roof deck that is minimally visible and with little impact on the historic roof form.

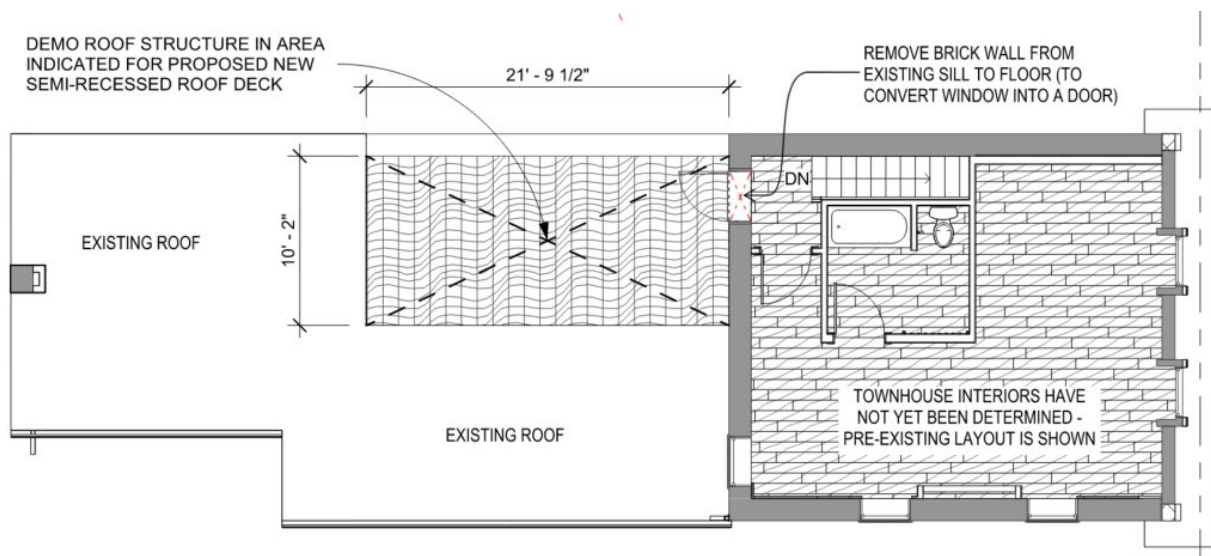


Figure 6: Proposed demolition of a portion of the roof at the rear ell

Certificate of Appropriateness

Within the historic districts, the Board utilizes the *Design Guidelines* to determine if potential new construction would be compatible with the character of the historic district and the immediately surrounding buildings. The proposed project includes the construction of a new multi-unit residential building directly adjacent to an existing historic townhome. As noted above, the proposed design is in place of the previously approved design for a hotel on the site. It should be noted that the location at the site at the far north end of Washington Street limits the number of nearby historic structures. The adjacent townhome dates from 1901 and stands as the oldest of the nearby structures. Immediately to the north of the project site is the Little Tavern building from the early twentieth century, which is historic in its own right as an example roadside architecture. Directly to the west of the project site is another recently approved multi-unit building. An office building lies on the adjacent corners of Madison Street and N Washington Street and a gas station lies directly across the street.

During the Concept Review hearing, Board members expressed support for the height, mass, and scale of the proposed design, including the light colored masonry and metal panels. Board members noted the elements of the design that clearly recall large historic buildings further south along Washington Street while utilizing design elements that are clearly modern. The modifications to the design that have been made since the Concept Review have not been extensive and maintain the proposed architectural character while addressing the direct comments from Board members.

Due to its location fronting the George Washington Memorial Parkway, any major modifications or additions to the building are subject to additional standards in both the *Design Guidelines* and the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance.

Standards to Consider for a Certificate of Appropriateness on Washington Street

In addition to the general BAR standards outlined in section 10-105 of the Zoning Ordinance, and the Board's *Design Guidelines*, the Board must also find that the *Additional Standards for Washington Street* are met. A project located on Washington Street is subject to a higher level of scrutiny and design to ensure that the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway is protected and maintained as required in the City's 1929 agreement with the federal government.

Staff's comments as to how the Standards apply are found below each Standard.

Washington Street Standards

Alexandria Zoning Ordinance Sec. 10-105(A)(3): Additional standards—Washington Street.

(a) In addition to the standards set forth in section 10-105(A)(2), the following standards shall apply to the construction of new buildings and structures and to the construction of additions to buildings or structures on lots fronting on both sides of Washington Street from the southern city limit line north to the northern city limit line:

(1) Construction shall be compatible with and similar to the traditional building character, particularly including mass, scale, design and style, found on Washington Street on commercial or residential buildings of historic architectural merit.

- i. *Elements of design consistent with historic buildings which are found on the street shall be emphasized.*

The design derives inspiration from other large scale historic buildings on Washington Street for its design, including the historic George Mason Hotel, now the Hotel Heron. The defined base-middle-top and grouping of windows into bays displayed in the proposed design is reminiscent of these buildings. Also, the brick detailing and custom metalwork is similar to details found throughout the historic district.

- ii. *New buildings and additions to existing buildings shall not, by their style, size, location or other characteristics, detract from, overwhelm, or otherwise intrude upon historic buildings which are found on the street.*

The breakdown of the new portion of the building into an asymmetrical composition prevents it from overwhelming the historic fabric that remains. The proposed design for the project will allow the historic townhouse to remain visually prominent. Further, the project includes rehabilitating and reusing the historic townhouse which has been vacated and boarded up for many years. The design includes a hyphen between the new construction and the historic townhouse to allow it to continue to be read separately from the new construction.

- iii. *The design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings shall be complementary to historic buildings which are found on the street.*

The use of a high level of brick detailing and the delineation of a clearly defined base-middle-top are consistent with buildings on Washington Street and throughout the historic district.

- iv. *The massing of new buildings or additions to existing buildings adjacent to historic buildings which are found on the street shall closely reflect and be proportional to the massing of the adjacent historic buildings.*

The proposed mass does not overwhelm the existing historic townhouse and the proposed massing for the new construction portion of the building is consistent with the nearby historic fabric. The Board should note that in this area of North Washington Street there is little remaining historic fabric in place beyond the townhouse and the Little Tavern building to the north of the project site.

- v. *New buildings and additions to existing buildings which are larger than historic buildings which are found on the street shall be designed to look separate and shall not give the impression of collectively being more massive than such historic buildings. This design shall be accomplished through differing historic architectural designs, facades, setbacks, roof lines and styles. Buildings should appear from the public right-of-way to have a footprint no larger than 100 feet by 80 feet. For larger projects, it is desirable that the historic pattern of mid-block alleys be preserved or replicated.*

While the proposed building is larger than many typical historic buildings, the breakdown of the massing gives the impression of a building that is comfortably integrated into its surroundings. Rather than attempting to create the impression of completely separate buildings, the proposed design is clearly a single building integrated into the streetscape.

- vi. *Applications for projects over 3,000 square feet, or for projects located within 66 feet of land used or zoned for residential uses, shall include a building massing study. Such study shall include all existing and proposed buildings and building additions in the six block area as follows: the block face containing the project, the block face opposite, the two adjacent block faces to the north and the two adjacent block faces to the south.*

The submission includes massing studies showing the other larger buildings on the surrounding blocks of North Washington Street.

- vii. *The massing and proportions of new buildings or additions to existing buildings designed in an historic style found elsewhere in along Washington Street shall be consistent with the massing and proportions of that style.*

The breakdown of the massing into components that do not imitate historic buildings but reduces the overall impression of the size of the building is consistent with other large scale buildings along Washington Street. The overall proportions of the scheme are appropriate.

- viii. *New or untried approaches to design which result in new buildings or additions to existing buildings that have no historical basis in Alexandria or that are not consistent with an historic style in scale, massing and detailing, are not appropriate.*

The proposed design uses classical elements such as groupings of windows into bays, the creation of a strong base-middle-top, and refined brick detailing that are found throughout the historic district. The use of a hyphen to connect between historic and modern portions of buildings is found elsewhere in the district and is similarly used here. While the use of metal panels is not typically found in the historic district, their use in this application will help to separate the two more traditional masses in a way which is not unusual.

- (2) *Facades of a building generally shall express the 20- to 40-foot bay width typically found on early 19th century commercial buildings characteristic of the Old and Historic Alexandria District, or the 15- to 20-foot bay width typically found on townhouses characteristic of the Old and Historic Alexandria District. Techniques to express such typical bay width shall include changes in material, articulation of the wall surfaces, changes in fenestration patterns, varying roof heights, and physical breaks, vertical as well as horizontal, within the massing.*

The widths of the building components and the individual bays is consistent with those found on buildings throughout the historic district.

- (3) *Building materials characteristic of buildings having historic architectural merit within the district shall be utilized. The texture, tone and color of such materials shall display a level of variety, quality and richness at least equal to that found abundantly in the historic setting.*

The use of a highly detailed brick on the proposed design is consistent with buildings in the historic district.

- (4) *Construction shall reflect the traditional fenestration patterns found within the Old and Historic Alexandria District. Traditional solid-void relationships exhibited within the district's streetscapes (i.e., ratio of window and door openings to solid wall) shall be used in building facades, including first floor facades.*

The proposed fenestration generally utilizes traditional solid-void relationships within a load-bearing masonry construction form. The masonry sections clearly display the hierarchy of wall openings found in historic buildings.

- (5) *Construction shall display a level of ornamentation, detail and use of quality materials consistent with buildings having historic architectural merit found within the district. In replicative building construction (i.e., masonry bearing wall by a veneer system), the proper thicknesses of materials shall be expressed particularly through the use of sufficient reveals around wall openings.*

High-quality materials and appropriate detailing, consistent with materials and details found on buildings of architectural merit, are used throughout the project.

Staff finds that the proposed design is compatible with the standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance for the historic district and for the more restrictive requirements for buildings facing Washington Street. The height and scale of the proposed design is consistent with the previously proposed design for this site and as such staff finds them to be appropriate for this portion of North Washington Street. Regarding the proposed design, staff finds that the breakdown of the massing into two separate brick sections separated by a more simple metal panel clad hyphen to be an appropriate response to the challenges of the site and to the architectural character of Washington Street.

Staff finds the modifications to the proposed design to be responsive to comments made by Board members at the Concept Review hearing. At this hearing, the Board made comments regarding the connection of the new building to the historic townhouse, details on the front stoops and details regarding the panel system at the rear elevation. The revised design addresses these issues and provides a greater level of detail for other portions of the design.

The portions of the building which have been further described include the main building entrance and the proposed roof deck on top of the historic townhouse. While this roof deck was previously shown in the Concept Review submission, there were few details regarding its construction.

During the Concept Review, Board members expressed concern regarding the relationship of the hyphen between the new building and the historic townhouse. They specifically noted that the proportions of the hyphen were heavy with wide horizontal bands, specifically at the top of the bay. Board members also noted that because of the location of the hyphen, the upper portion clashed with the mansard roof on the historic townhouse. Suggestions from Board members included moving the face of the hyphen back so that it would be behind the mansard roof and introducing additional areas of glazing.

In response to these comments, the revised design for the hyphen shows it pushed back from the front façade and with a revised exterior skin. In the new location, the front of the hyphen is behind the mansard roof allowing it to cleanly turn the outside corner and return to the side of the townhouse. Additionally, the areas of metal panels have been reduced with the solid parapet now replaced by a glass handrail (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Revised design for hyphen connecting the new building to the historic townhouse

The applicant includes grade level entries to units that face Washington Street. These elements were included in the design as reviewed during the Concept Review phase; however little detail was shown at that time. As is consistent with the evolution of design shown in the Certificate of Appropriateness, these features are now shown with the required details. The Board typically endorses the use of these ground floor unit entries as a way to break up the building massing and to improve the pedestrian experience at the street face. Raised entry stoops are also a feature commonly found on residential architecture throughout the historic district. Their inclusion on modern buildings represents an opportunity to reflect this historic building component in a contemporary language.

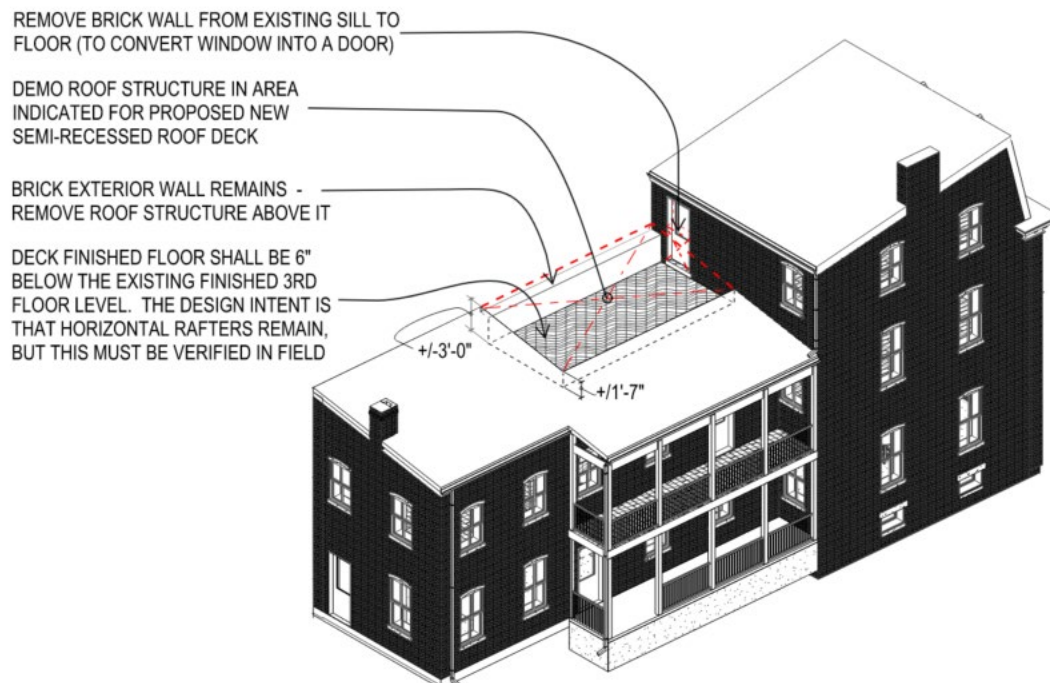
As shown in the proposed design, these stoops include a side entry with a low wall topped with a custom metal railing that matches the railing at the balconies above. The low wall aligns with and is the same material as the water table that makes up the base for the building. A full lite entry door with a head that aligns with the adjacent windows provides entry to the ground floor units at the top of each entry stoop (Figure 8).



Figure 8: View of proposed grade level entry stoops

Another building feature that was shown in the Concept Review phase, but with little detail, is the proposed roof deck on top of the rear ell at the historic townhouse. The updated submission now includes details on how this element will be created.

The roof deck will be recessed into the shed roof at the existing ell by removing a portion of the sloping roof area and creating a sunken level area (Figure 9). Access to the roof deck will be through a new exterior door created by enlarging an existing window opening. The perimeter of the roof deck will be enclosed by a glass guard rail. The effect of this configuration is that the roof deck will be unobtrusive when viewed from the street. The *Design Guidelines* state that “Roof decks should be constructed so that they do not interfere with the historic roofline of a building.” Often, roof decks are installed above existing roofs which obscure the historic roofline. In the proposed design, the historic roof line is retained, expressing the original design intent for the rear ell. Staff finds this approach to be less intrusive to the historic architecture of the townhouse.



TOWNHOUSE AXONOMETRIC

Figure 9: Proposed design for the roof deck at the rear ell of the historic townhouse

With these comments, Staff recommends **approval** of the Permit to Demolish/Capsulate and Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations, with the following conditions.

- (1) The final selection of the windows and doors complies with the BAR Window Policy
- (2) Exterior wall vents will be located so that they are entirely within a single exterior material. These vents will be painted a color to match the adjacent material.

STAFF

Bill Conkey, AIA, Historic Preservation Architect, Planning & Zoning
Tony LaColla, AICP, Land Use Services Division Chief, Planning & Zoning

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C- code requirement R- recommendation S- suggestion F- finding

Zoning

C-1 Proposed multi-unit building will comply with Zoning.

C-2 Project falls under review of DSUP 2024-10017 and all of its conditions.

Code Administration

F-1 A building permit is required.

Transportation and Environmental Services

F-1 Comply with all requirements of DSUP2024-10017 (T&ES)

F-2 The Final Site Plan must be approved and released and a copy of that plan must be attached to the demolition permit application. No demolition permit will be issued in advance of the building permit unless the Final Site Plan includes a demolition plan which clearly represents the demolished condition. (T&ES)

Archaeology

F-1 In the nineteenth century this lot was located on the outskirts of Old Town Alexandria. According to 1850 tax lists, Erskin Catlett owned the vacant property as a real estate investment. The property (and entire block) remained vacant as of 1877 when JW Green owned it. Eventually, by the 1890s, a three story dwelling was standing on the lot at 802 N Washington Street. By the mid-twentieth century, the Towne Motel was built on the lot adjoining 802 North Washington Street to the north.

C-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-746-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds. The language noted above shall be included on all final site plan sheets involving any ground disturbances.

C-2 The applicant shall not allow any metal detection and/or artifact collection to be conducted on the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology. Failure to comply shall result in project delays. The language noted above shall be included on all final site plan sheets involving any ground disturbing activities.

V. ATTACHMENTS

1 – Application Materials

- Completed application
- Plans
- Material specifications

- Scaled survey plat if applicable
- Photographs

2 – Supplemental Materials

- Public comment
- Any other supporting documentation

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 808 N. Washington Street

DISTRICT: ☒ Old & Historic Alexandria ☐ Parker – Gray ☐ 100 Year Old Building

TAX MAP AND PARCEL: 054.04-02-13 ZONING: CRMU-X

APPLICATION FOR: *(Please check all that apply)*

☒ CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

☒ PERMIT TO MOVE, REMOVE, ENCAPSULATE OR DEMOLISH
(Required if more than 25 square feet of a structure is to be demolished/impacted)

☐ WAIVER OF VISION CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT and/or YARD REQUIREMENTS IN A VISION
CLEARANCE AREA (Section 7-802, Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

☐ WAIVER OF ROOFTOP HVAC SCREENING REQUIREMENT
(Section 6-403(B)(3), Alexandria 1992 Zoning Ordinance)

Applicant: ☒ Property Owner ☐ Business *(Please provide business name & contact person)*

Name: 808 WASHINGTON LLC c/o Wire Gill LLP

Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

Authorized Agent *(if applicable)*: ☒ Attorney ☐ Architect ☐ _____

Name: Kenneth W. Wire and Megan Rappolt, Wire Gill LLP

Phone: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Legal Property Owner:

Name: 808 WASHINGTON LLC c/o Patrick Bloomfield

Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]

NATURE OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please check all that apply*

- ☒ NEW CONSTRUCTION
- ☐ EXTERIOR ALTERATION: *Please check all that apply.*
- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> awning | <input type="checkbox"/> fence, gate or garden wall | <input type="checkbox"/> HVAC equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> shutters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> doors | <input type="checkbox"/> windows | <input type="checkbox"/> siding | <input type="checkbox"/> shed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> pergola/trellis | <input type="checkbox"/> painting unpainted masonry | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | | | |
- ☐ ADDITION
- ☒ DEMOLITION/ENCAPSULATION
- ☐ SIGNAGE

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK: *Please describe the proposed work in detail (Additional pages may be attached).*

The Applicant plans to convert the partially-constructed 98-room hotel to a 48 unit multifamily building, and retain the historic townhouse.

The hotel did not proceed, & the Applicant seeks to repurpose the property. The hotel was approved by City Council via DSUP #2019-0002.

Pursuant to rezoning # 2024-00004 and DSUP #2024-10017, the Applicant seeks to build a multifamily building and retain the townhouse.

The building height varies and extends up to 50 feet at its highest point. As part of the townhouse roof improvements for an outdoor deck, which requires minor demolition of ~500 SF, the Applicant will encapsulate the north wall. Please see enclosed BAR plans for architectural details.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

- ☐ Check this box if there is a homeowner's association for this property. If so, you must attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

Items listed below comprise the **minimum supporting materials** for BAR applications. Staff may request additional information during application review. Please refer to the relevant section of the *Design Guidelines* for further information on appropriate treatments.

Applicants must use the checklist below to ensure the application is complete. Include all information and material that are necessary to thoroughly describe the project. Incomplete applications will delay the docketing of the application for review. Pre-application meetings are required for all proposed additions. All applicants are encouraged to meet with staff prior to submission of a completed application.

Demolition/Encapsulation : *All applicants requesting 25 square feet or more of demolition/encapsulation must complete this section. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.*

- N/A
- ☐ ☒ Survey plat showing the extent of the proposed demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☒ Existing elevation drawings clearly showing all elements proposed for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of all elevations of the building if the entire structure is proposed to be demolished.
- ☒ ☐ Description of the reason for demolition/encapsulation.
- ☒ ☐ Description of the alternatives to demolition/encapsulation and why such alternatives are not considered feasible.

Additions & New Construction: Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☐ N/A Scaled survey plat showing dimensions of lot and location of existing building and other structures on the lot, location of proposed structure or addition, dimensions of existing structure(s), proposed addition or new construction, and all exterior, ground and roof mounted equipment. ***See DSUP for survey***
- ☒ ☐ FAR & Open Space calculation form. ***See enclosed DSUP sheets for FAR and open space***
- ☒ ☐ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable. ***See enclosed Sheet 3 "Street/Context Elevations"**
- ☒ ☐ Existing elevations must be scaled and include dimensions.
- ☒ ☐ Proposed elevations must be scaled and include dimensions. Include the relationship to adjacent structures in plan and elevations.
- ☒ ☐ Materials and colors to be used must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided or required.
- ☒ ☐ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☒ ☐ For development site plan projects, a model showing mass relationships to adjacent properties and structures. ***See enclosed Sheets 3 and 5 for massing and relationship to adjacent properties***

Signs & Awnings: One sign per building under one square foot does not require BAR approval unless illuminated. All other signs including window signs require BAR approval. Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☐ N/A
- ☐ ☒ Linear feet of building: Front: _____ Secondary front (if corner lot): _____.
- ☐ ☒ Square feet of existing signs to remain: _____.
- ☐ ☒ Photograph of building showing existing conditions.
- ☐ ☒ Dimensioned drawings of proposed sign identifying materials, color, lettering style and text.
- ☐ ☒ Location of sign (show exact location on building including the height above sidewalk).
- ☐ ☒ Means of attachment (drawing or manufacturer's cut sheet of bracket if applicable).
- ☐ ☒ Description of lighting (if applicable). Include manufacturer's cut sheet for any new lighting fixtures and information detailing how it will be attached to the building's facade.

Alterations: Check N/A if an item in this section does not apply to your project.

- ☐ ☐ N/A
- ☐ ☒ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, especially the area being impacted by the alterations, all sides of the building and any pertinent details.
- ☐ ☒ Manufacturer's specifications for materials to include, but not limited to: roofing, siding, windows, doors, lighting, fencing, HVAC equipment and walls.
- ☐ ☒ Drawings accurately representing the changes to the proposed structure, including materials and overall dimensions. Drawings must be to scale.
- ☐ ☒ An official survey plat showing the proposed locations of HVAC units, fences, and sheds.
- ☐ ☒ Historic elevations or photographs should accompany any request to return a structure to an earlier appearance.

ALL APPLICATIONS: *Please read and check that you have read and understand the following items:*

- ☒ I understand that after reviewing the proposed alterations, BAR staff will invoice the appropriate filing fee in APEX. The application will not be processed until the fee is paid online.
- ☒ I understand the notice requirements and will return a copy of the three respective notice forms to BAR staff at least five days prior to the hearing. If I am unsure to whom I should send notice I will contact Planning and Zoning staff for assistance in identifying adjacent parcels.
- ☒ I, the applicant, or an authorized representative will be present at the public hearing.
- ☒ I understand that any revisions to this initial application submission (including applications deferred for restudy) must be accompanied by the BAR Supplemental form and revised materials.

The undersigned hereby attests that all of the information herein provided including the site plan, building elevations, prospective drawings of the project, and written descriptive information are true, correct and accurate. The undersigned further understands that, should such information be found incorrect, any action taken by the Board based on such information may be invalidated. The undersigned also hereby grants the City of Alexandria permission to post placard notice as required by Article XI, Division A, Section 11-301(B) of the 1992 Alexandria City Zoning Ordinance, on the property which is the subject of this application. The undersigned also hereby authorizes the City staff and members of the BAR to inspect this site as necessary in the course of research and evaluating the application. The applicant, if other than the property owner, also attests that he/she has obtained permission from the property owner to make this application.

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Kenneth W. Wire / Megan Rappolt, Wire Gill LLP

Date: May 12, 2025

OWNERSHIP AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Use additional sheets if necessary

1. Applicant. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the applicant, unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. See disclosure attachment		
2.		
3.		

2. Property. State the name, address and percent of ownership of any person or entity owning an interest in the property located at 808 N. Washington St. (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than three percent. The term ownership interest shall include any legal or equitable interest held at the time of the application in the real property which is the subject of the application.

Name	Address	Percent of Ownership
1. See disclosure attachment		
2.		
3.		

3. Business or Financial Relationships. Each person or entity listed above (1 and 2), with an ownership interest in the applicant or in the subject property is required to disclose any business or financial relationship, as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance, existing at the time of this application, or within the 12-month period prior to the submission of this application with any member of the Alexandria City Council, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals or either Boards of Architectural Review.

Name of person or entity	Relationship as defined by Section 11-350 of the Zoning Ordinance	Member of the Approving Body (i.e. City Council, Planning Commission, etc.)
1. See disclosure attachment	None	N/A
2.		
3.		

NOTE: Business or financial relationships of the type described in Sec. 11-350 that arise after the filing of this application and before each public hearing must be disclosed prior to the public hearings.

As the applicant or the applicant's authorized agent, I hereby attest to the best of my ability that the information provided above is true and correct.

May 12, 2025

Date

Kenneth W. Wire / Megan Rappolt, Wire Gill LLP

Printed Name



Signature

Disclosure Attachment

JRicciardi Development LLC

1422 Longfellow Street, NW

Washington DC 20011

Jerry Ricciardi

Greater than 3%

P.T. Blooms Development LLC

7905-C Cessna Ave.

Gaithersburg, MD 20879-4113

Patrick Bloomfield

Greater than 3%

Zehn, LLC

14904 Windmill Terrace

Silver Spring, MD 20905

Juan Lopez

Greater than 3%

Investor's Advantage LLC

10701 Boca Pointe Drive

Orlando, FL 32836

Mohammed Shamari

Greater than 3%

Frank Hetrick

15 Francis Street, 2nd Floor

Annapolis, MD 21401

Greater than 3%



BASE SCHEME - GREY BRICK



ALTERNATE SCHEME - RED BRICK

NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
 THE WHITLEY, PHASE 2
 808 N. WASHINGTON STREET
 ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
 CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS SET -
 B.A.R. HEARING JUNE 18, 2025

JUNE 12, 2025



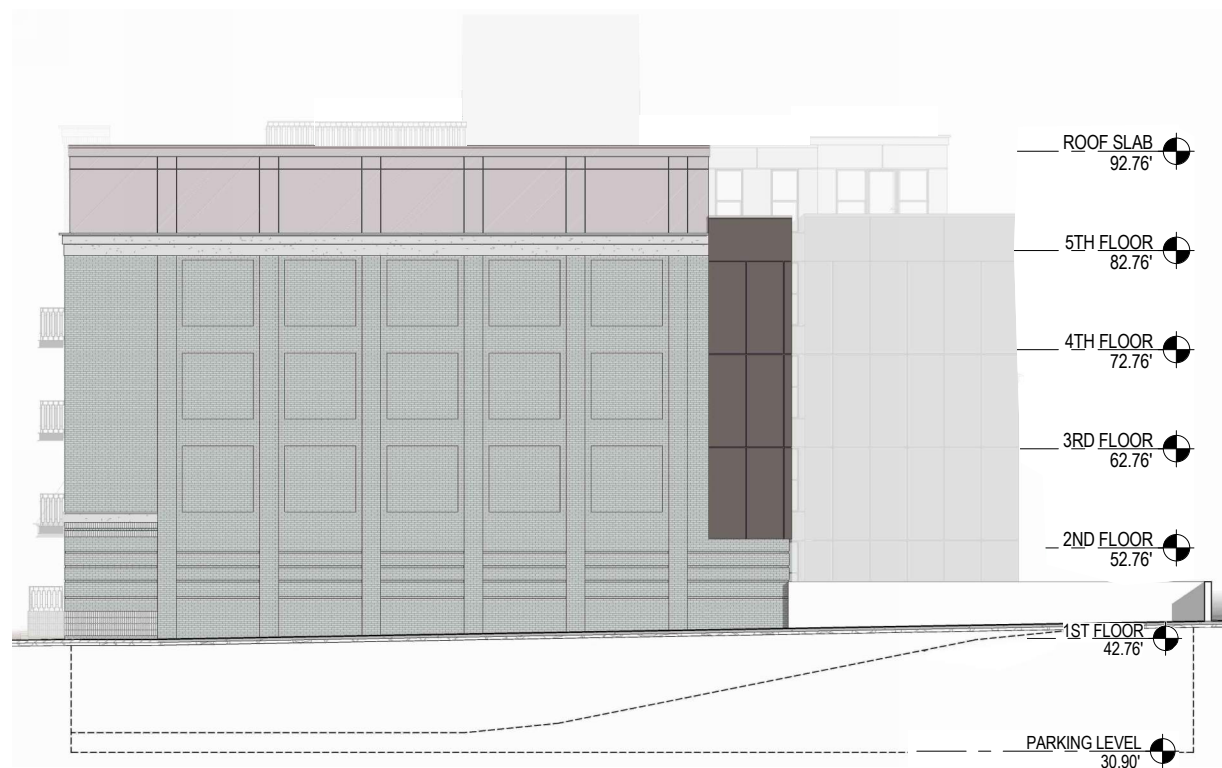
SOUTH (MADISON STREET) ELEVATION



EAST (N. WASHINGTON STREET) ELEVATION

SEE SHEETS 7A - 7E FOR FINISH
MATERIAL INFORMATION

THESE ELEVATIONS ARE NOT
INTENDED TO INDICATE COLORS.
SEE RENDERINGS, SHEETS 2A-2F.



NORTH (FACE-ON-LINE) ELEVATION



WEST (ALLEY) ELEVATION





PEDESTRIAN-EYE PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTHEAST
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2A-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)



RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE: PEDESTRIAN-EYE PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTHEAST
(SEE SHEET 2A FOR GREY BRICK BASE VERSION.)





PEDESTRIAN-EYE PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTHWEST
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2B-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)





PEDESTRIAN-EYE PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTHWEST
 (RED BRICK ALTERNATIVE SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2B FOR BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION.)



PERSPECTIVE FROM NORTHEAST (FROM APPROX 15' ABOVE GRADE)
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2C-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)



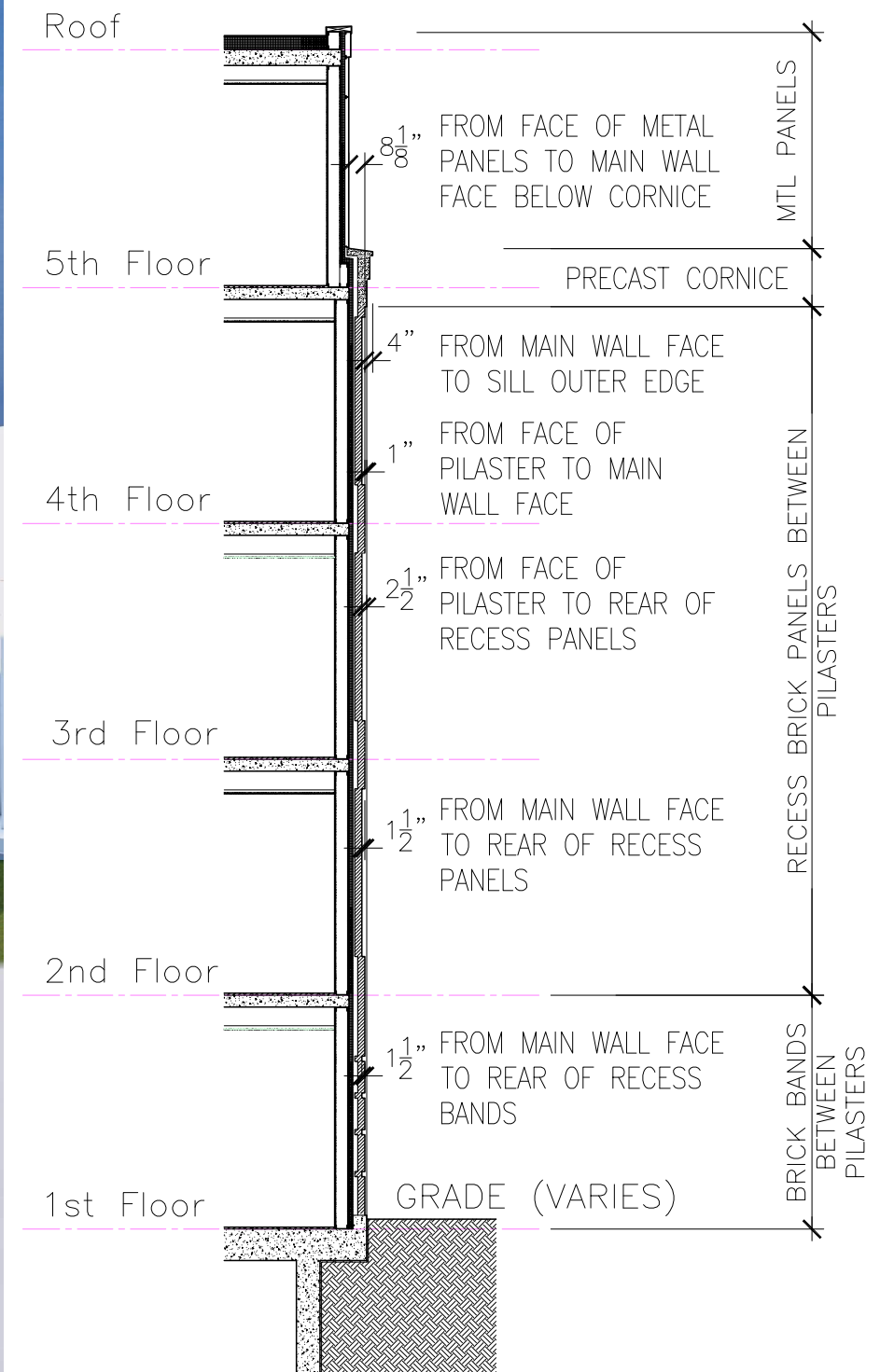


PERSPECTIVE FROM NORTHEAST (FROM APPROX 15' ABOVE GRADE)
(RED BRICK ALTERNATIVE SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2C FOR BASE/GREY-BRICK VERSION.)





PERSPECTIVE FROM NORTH-NORTHEAST (FROM APPROX 15' ABOVE GRADE)
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2C-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)



SECTION AT NORTH WALL SHOWING
 SETBACK FEATURES
 (APPLICABLE TO EITHER BRICK COLOR OPTION
 - RED OR GREY)



PERSPECTIVE FROM NORTH-NORTHEAST (FROM APPROX 15' ABOVE GRADE)
 (RED BRICK AT LTERNATIVE VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEET 2D FOR BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION.)

FOR SECTION DETAILS SHOWING PROFILES/SETBACKS OF MASONRY & METAL PANELS AT NORTH
 WALL, SEE SHEET 2D.



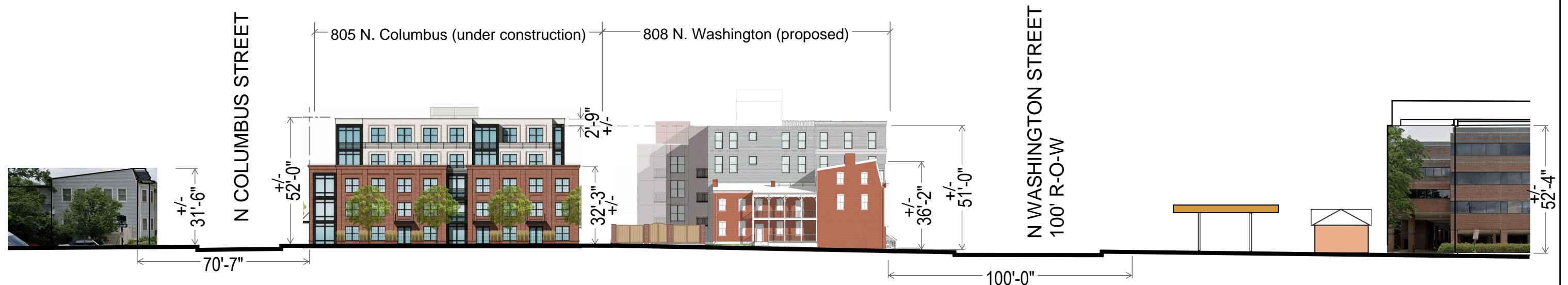
AERIAL OF ALLEY / WEST FACADE (FROM APPROX 70' ABOVE GRADE)
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEETS 2A-ALT, 2B-ALT, & 2C-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)



AERIAL FROM NORTHWEST: ALLEY & NORTH FACADES (FROM APPROX 70' ABOVE GRADE)
 (BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN -- SEE SHEETS 2A-ALT, 2B-ALT, & 2C-ALT FOR RED-BRICK ALTERNATIVE.)



NORTH WASHINGTON STREET ELEVATION (EAST FACADES OF BUILDINGS)



NORTH WASHINGTON STREET ELEVATION (EAST FACADES OF BUILDINGS)



Hotel Heron (George Mason Hotel)



Gables Old Town



Hyatt Centric King Street



312 S. Washington Street

Adherence to North Washington Street Design Standards - Narrative

1. In addition to general historic compatibility, the project is designed to be compatible with existing historic buildings on Washington Street itself, notably the Heron Hotel (George Mason Hotel) which has similar paired windows and base-middle-top cornice definition.
2. The facades are designed to be complementary to Washington Street buildings, in particular the existing historic townhouse that it part of the project (as it is the only historic building in the immediate vicinity).
3. Through facade treatments and small setbacks, the massing has been broken down so that the building appears smaller, specifically, broken to pieces smaller than 100' by 80', each of which has a directional orientation toward N. Washington Street.
4. The front plane is adjacent to the sidewalk, with entrances directly open to the sidewalk. The design fosters a sense of place, arrival, and community. Parking is underground (except for 2 surface spaces for the townhouse at its rear), and loading is in the rear off the private alley that is being created by this project and the adjacent 805 N. Columbus Street.
5. The architectural style of each piece is consistent; that is, the traditional parts adhere to traditional forms and motifs (in a neo-traditional manner), while the modern part is cleanly modern, a background element that provides definition and proportion to the traditional parts. The solid/void relationship of traditional buildings is employed in all facades.

HISTORIC & CONTEXT
INSPIRATION & NARRATIVE



PROPOSED STOOP - TWILIGHT (BASE/GREY BRICK SHOWN)

Design comment: *The proposed stoops are a modern interpretation of the historic side-step stoops sprinkled throughout the Old Town Historic District. The knee wall extends the water table treatment of the building and provides a (modest) sense of separation (protection) from wide, busy North Washington Street.*



PROPOSED PAIR OF STOOPS (BASE/GREY BRICK SHOWN)

HISTORIC EXAMPLES OF SIDE-STAIR STOOPS



415 S. Pitt Street



219 S. Royal Street



614 S. Fairfax Street

STOOPS - HISTORIC &
CONTEXT INSPIRATION



AERIAL MASSING-IN-CONTEXT FROM SOUTH-SOUTHEAST



AERIAL MASSING-IN-CONTEXT FROM NORTHEAST

SITE SECTIONS & AERIAL MASSING



WASHINGTON STREET FACADE DETAILS - BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION
(SEE SHEET 6A-ALT FOR RED BRICK ALTERNATIVE)



WASHINGTON STREET FACADE DETAILS - RED BRICK ALTERNATIVE
(SEE SHEET 6A FOR BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION)



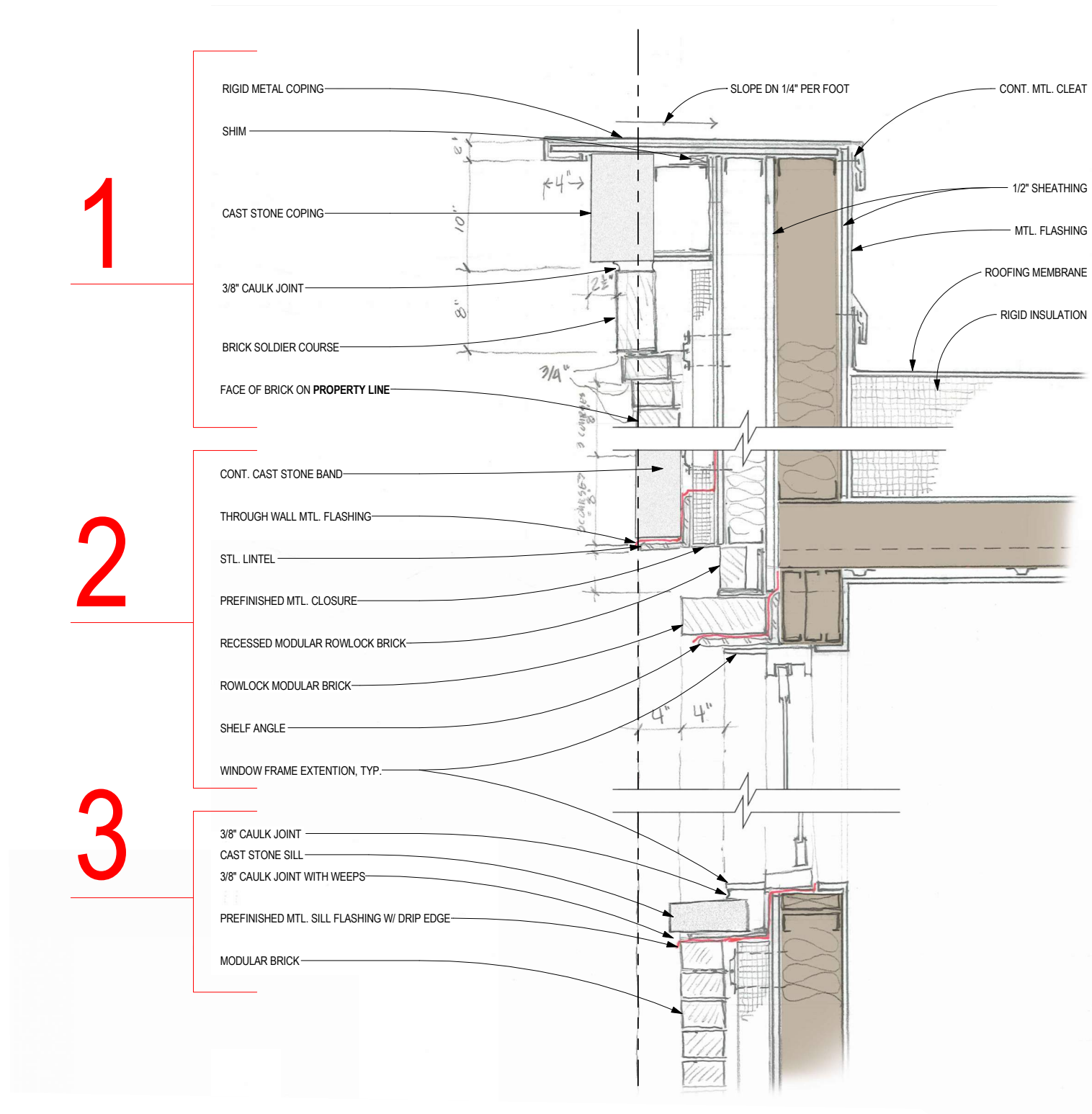


ENTRANCE / STREETSCAPE DETAIL - TWILIGHT
(BASE/GREY BRICK VERSION SHOWN)

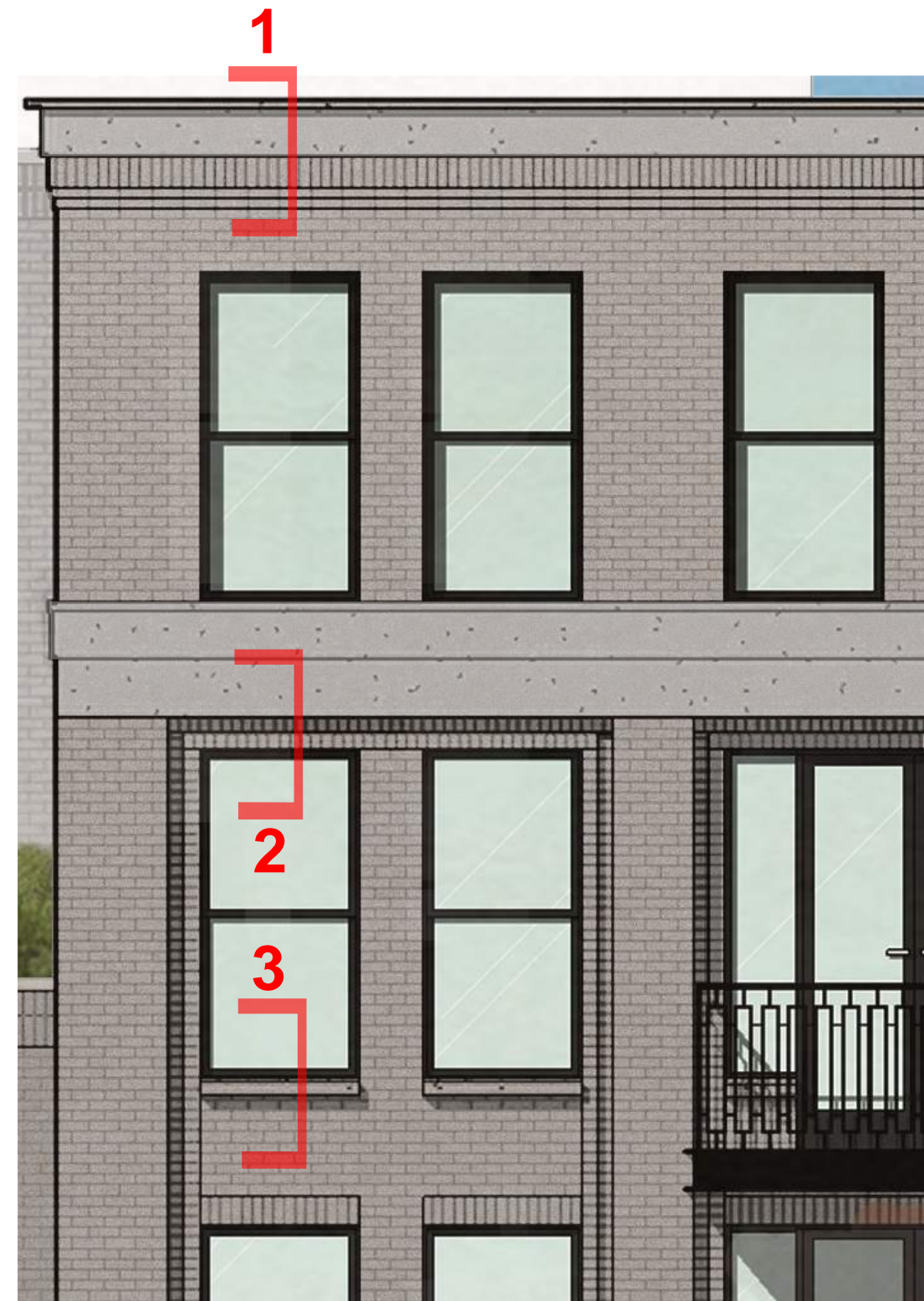


HYPHEN - DETAIL
(BASE/GREY BRICK SHOWN AT ADJACENT PORTION OF BUILDING)



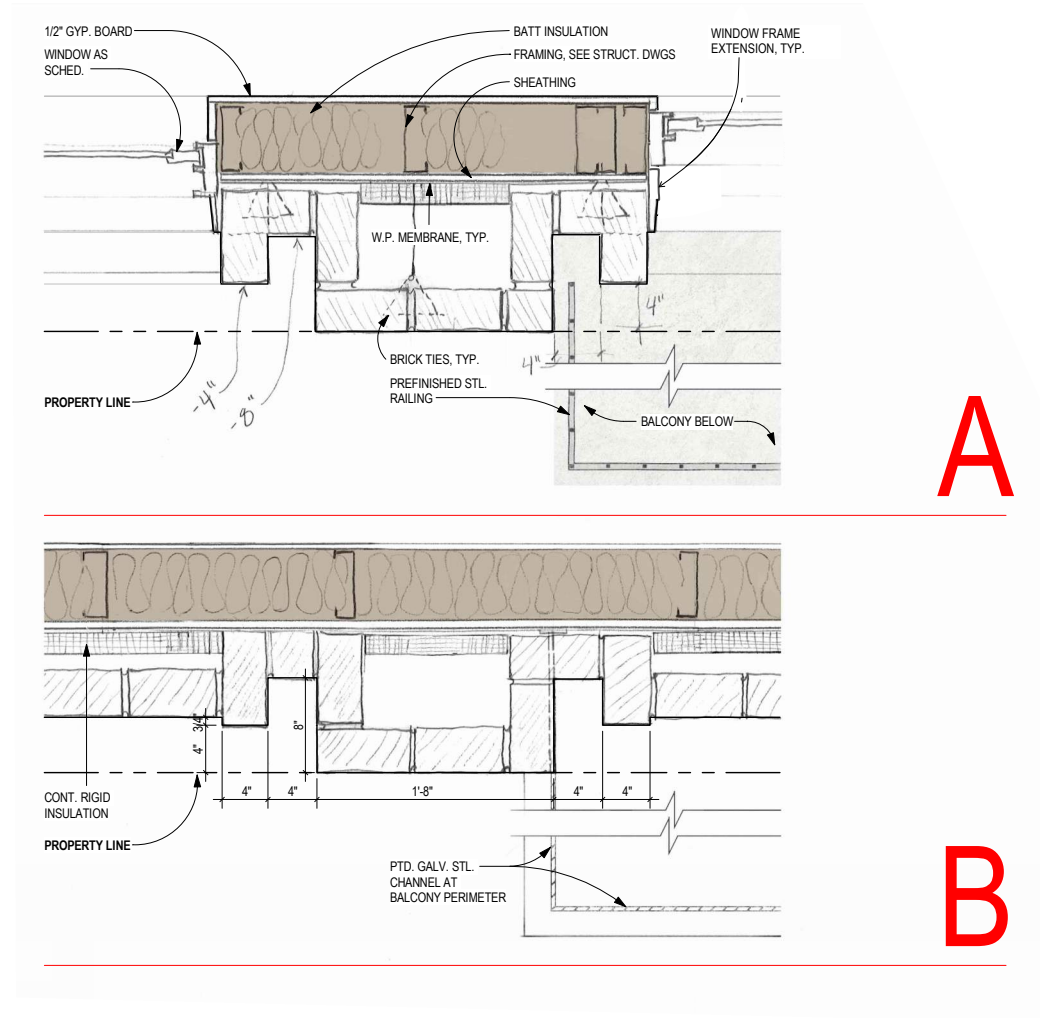


SECTION DETAIL SKETCHES

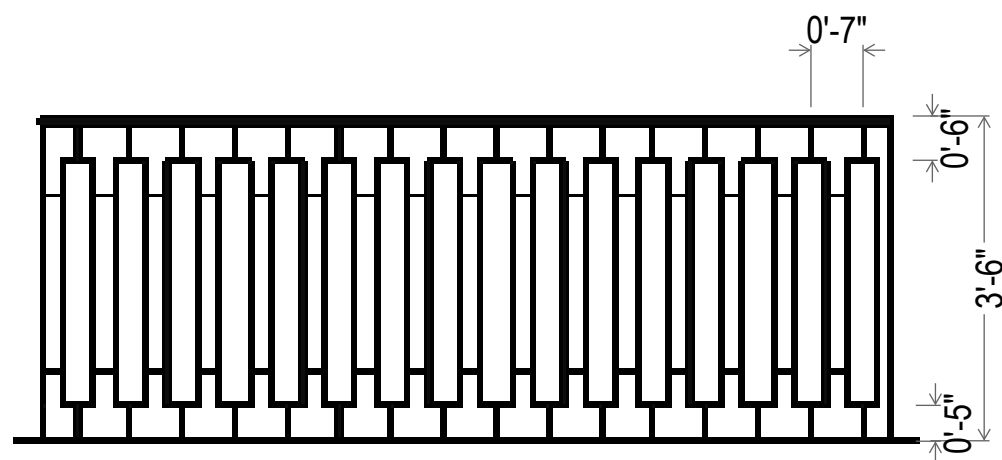


KEY / PARTIAL ELEVATION
(SEE SHEETS 2A & 2C FOR BRICK COLOR OPTIONS.)





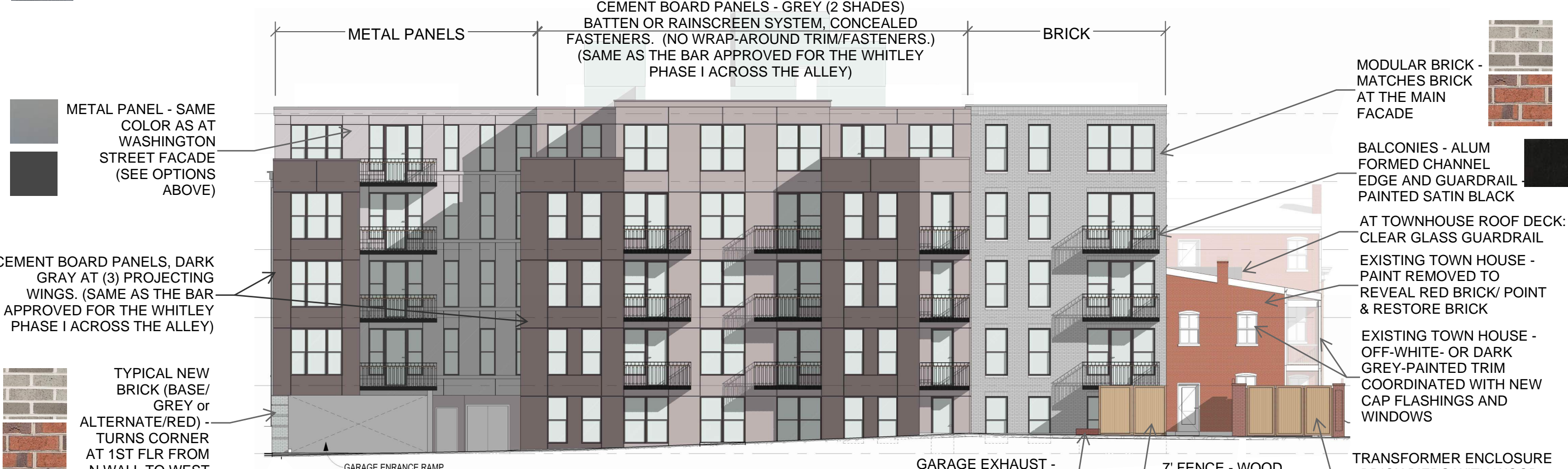
PLAN DETAIL SKETCHES



GUARDRAIL DETAIL



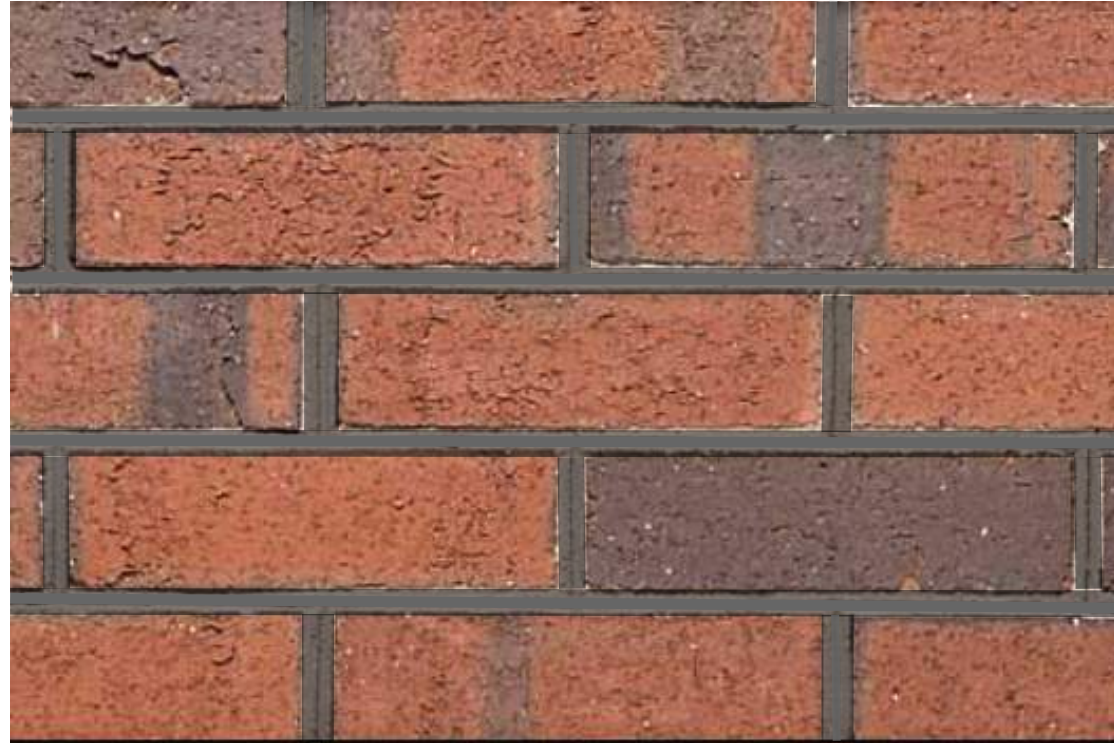
KEY / PARTIAL ELEVATION
(SEE SHEETS 2A & 2C FOR BRICK COLOR OPTIONS.)



SEE SHEETS 7B & 7C FOR MORE
SPECIFIC MATERIAL INFORMATION

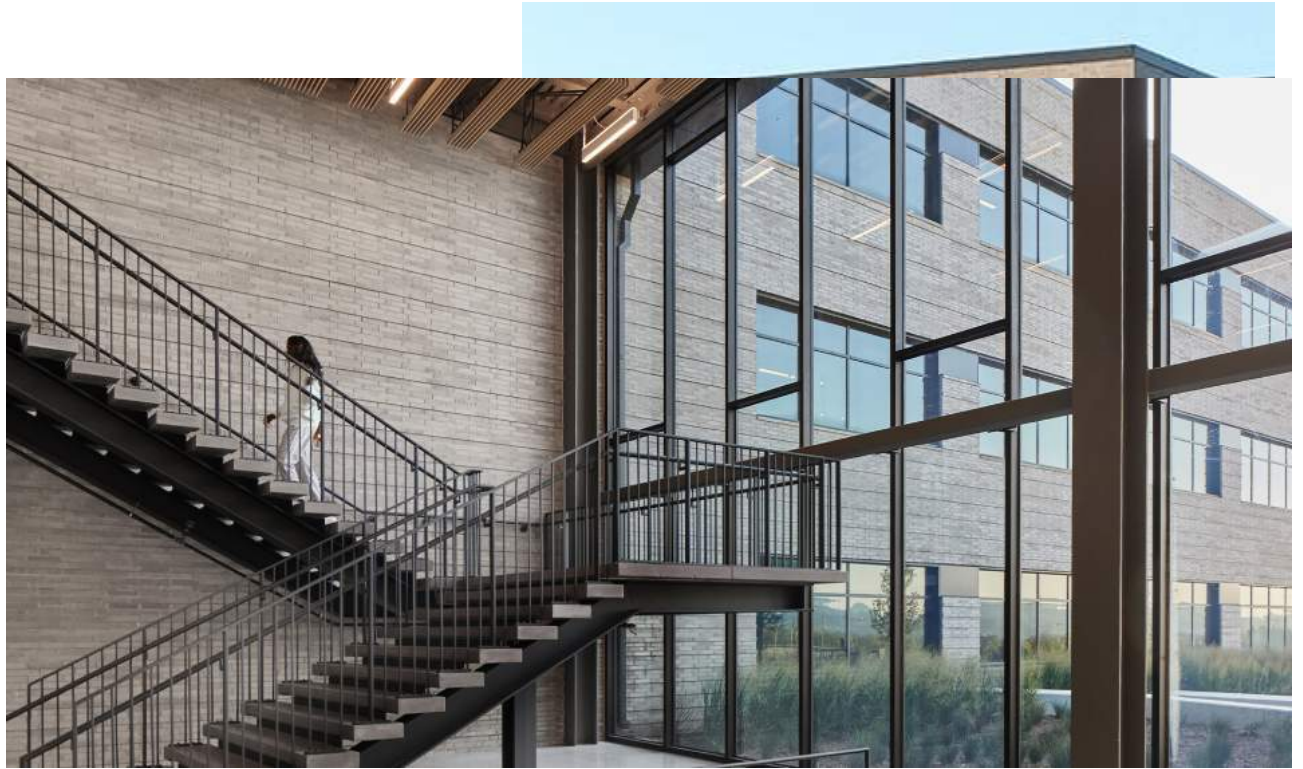


NEW BRICK (BASE OPTION): WATSON TOWN BRICK, "OYSTER BAY" - WIRECUT ("TORN") TEXTURE, WARM GREYS WITH RANGE OF LIGHT TO MEDIUM TONES, IRONSPOTS. WARM MEDIUM-GREY MORTAR COLOR.



NEW BRICK (ALTERNATIVE): MERIDIAN BRICK, "OLD LEXINGTON" - WIRECUT ("TORN") TEXTURE, RED WITH RANGE OF MEDIUM TONES AND DARK FLASHINGS. WARM DARK-MEDIUM-GREY MORTAR COLOR.

**CLEVELAND, PA
GOVERNMENT CENTER**



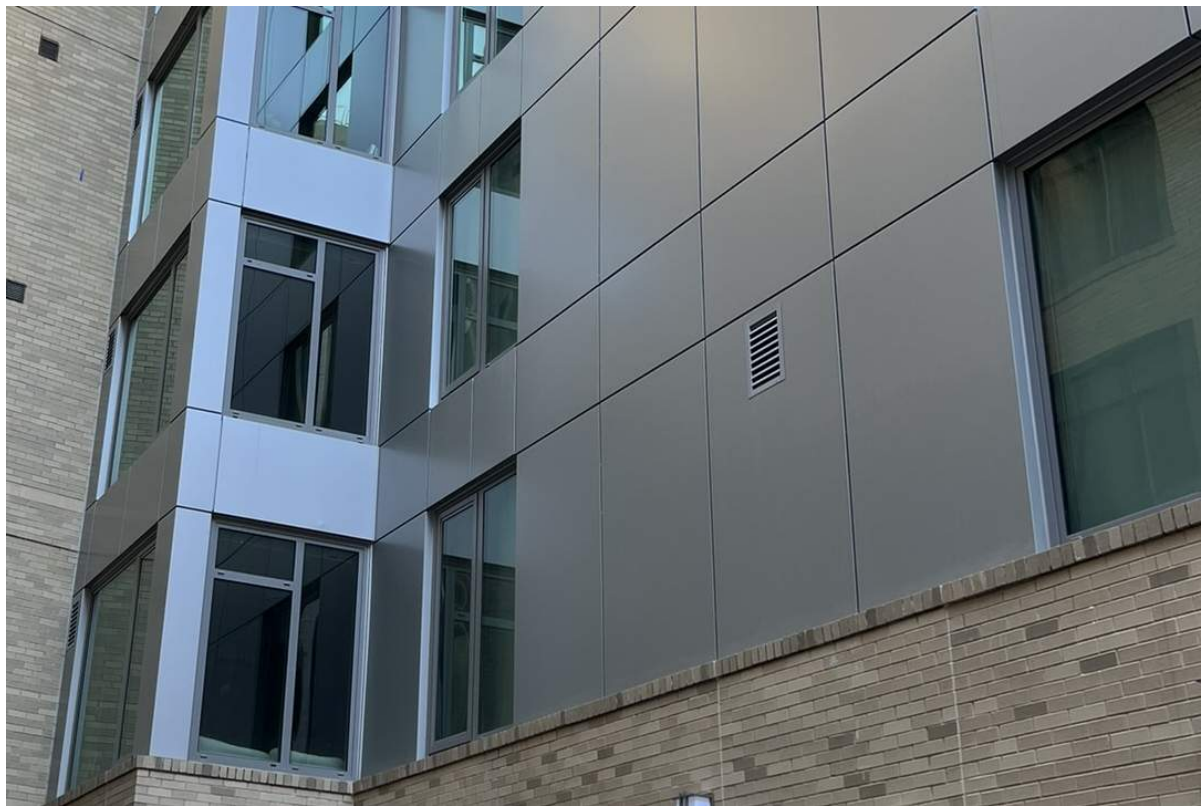
EXAMPLE IMAGES SHOW HOW THIS VERY TRADITIONAL BRICK IS USED TO GIVE LIFE TO CONTEMPORARY FACADE DESIGNS. IN CONTRAST, THE FACADE DESIGNS FOR 808 N WASHINGTON STREET USE THIS OLD-STYLE BRICK IN *TRADITIONAL* WAYS: BANDS, CORNICES, SILLS, PILASTERS, LINTELS, ETC. SEE DETAILS, SHEETS 6A - 6E.

**THE LAUREATE APTS,
ROCKVILLE MARYLAND**



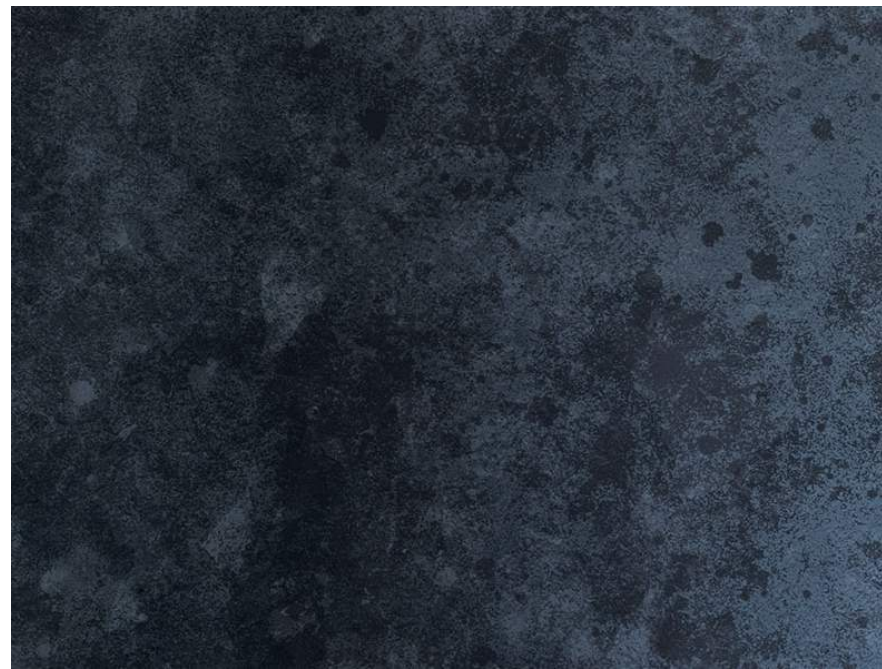


METAL PANELS, BASE (GREY BRICK) VERSION: ACM (ALUMINUM COMPOSITE MATERIAL) - FINISH DURANAR "SILVERSMITH," WHICH IS A SLIGHTLY SILVER-METALLIC LIGHT GREY - BASIS OF DESIGN, ALUCOBOND. APPLICATION SHOWN: DRAKE-II APARTMENTS, WASHINGTON DC.



METAL PANELS, RED BRICK ALTERNATIVE: ACM (ALUMINUM COMPOSITE MATERIAL) - FINISH DURANAR "STATUARY BRONZE," WHICH IS A NEUTRAL DARK WARM GREY - BASIS OF DESIGN, ALUCOBOND. APPLICATION SHOWN: 1333 OAK LAWN OFFICE BUILDING, DALLAS TX.





METAL PANELS AT HYPHEN: ALUMINUM PANELS BY MANUFACTURER PURE+FREEDOM - FINISH "BROOKLYN STEEL," WHICH IS A CHARCOAL GRAY WITH FAUX-PATINATION. APPLICATION SHOWN: BRONCO DEALERSHIP. KENDALL, FLORIDA.



WINDOWS - PELLA "IMPERVIA" LINE, FIBERGLASS HIGH-PERFORMANCE WINDOWS, OR "ARCHITECT SERIES" ALUMINUM-CLAD WOOD WINDOWS BY PELLA; IN TYPES (SINGLE-HUNG, FIXED, CASEMENT), COLORS (BLACK-TYPICAL), AND CONFIGURATIONS (E.G. TRANSOMS) AS SHOWN ON THE ELEVATIONS. ALTERNATES: EQUIVALENT LINES FROM MARVIN AND ANDERSEN WINDOWS (ALUMINUM-CLAD WOOD OR FIBEREX-TYPE COMPOSITE -- NOT VINYL).



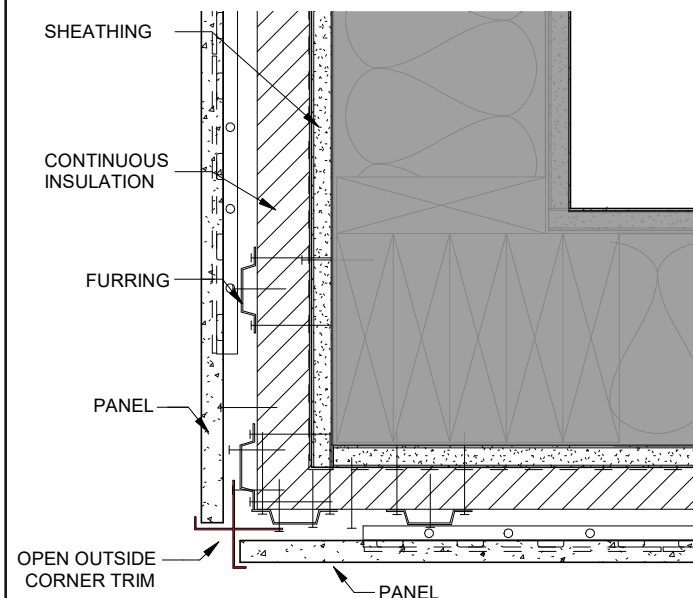
FIBER-CEMENT PANELS AT REAR/ALLEY: SHADES OF GRAY BY JAMES HARDIE ("HARDIEPANEL"), USING METAL TRIM PIECES AT CORNERS AND PANEL JOINTS, AND BREAK METAL AT OPENINGS.



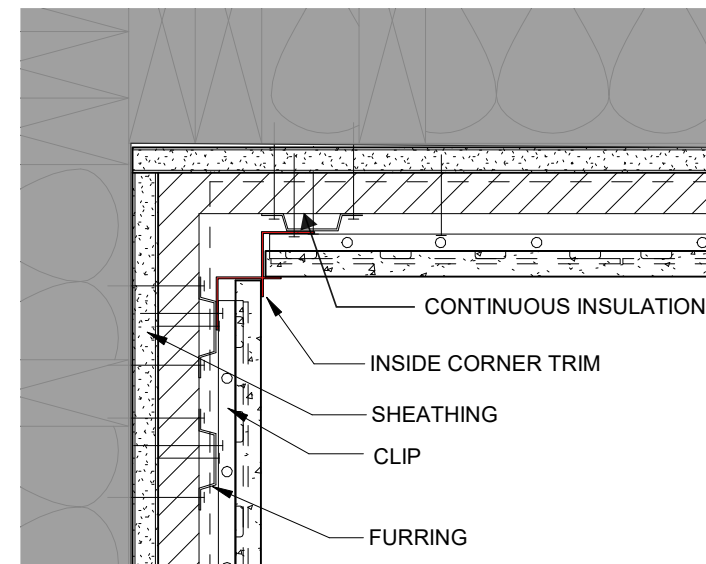
THE FIBER-CEMENT PANELS SHOWN ARE THE SAME AS THOSE APPROVED BY THE BAR FOR PORTIONS OF THE ALLEY FACADE OF THE ADJACENT "WHITLEY" CONDOMINIUM, 805-823 N. COLUMBUS STREET (CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION).

GENERIC SAMPLE DETAILS ARE SHOWN BELOW. NOTABLY:

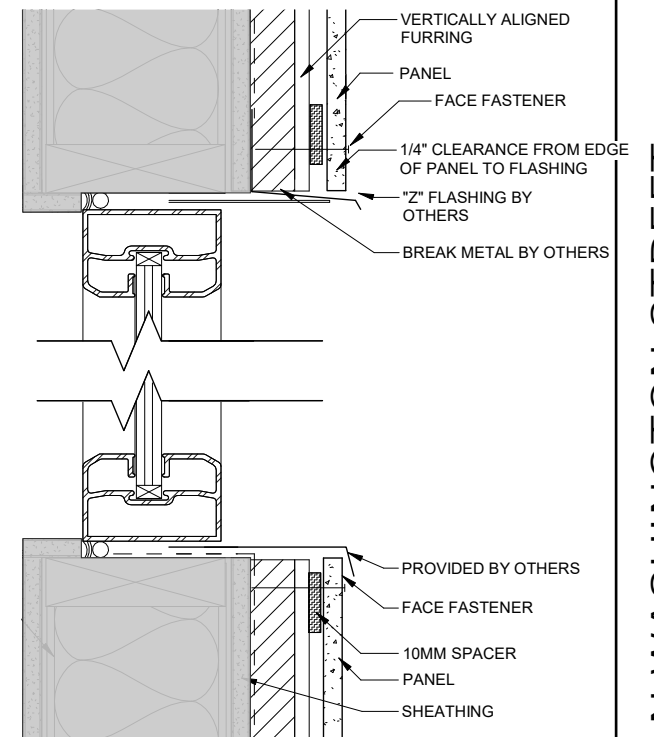
- AT CORNERS, NO LAP OR MITERED DETAILS.
- AT OPENINGS, WINDOWS ARE SET BACK (TO PROVIDE SHADOW LINE.)



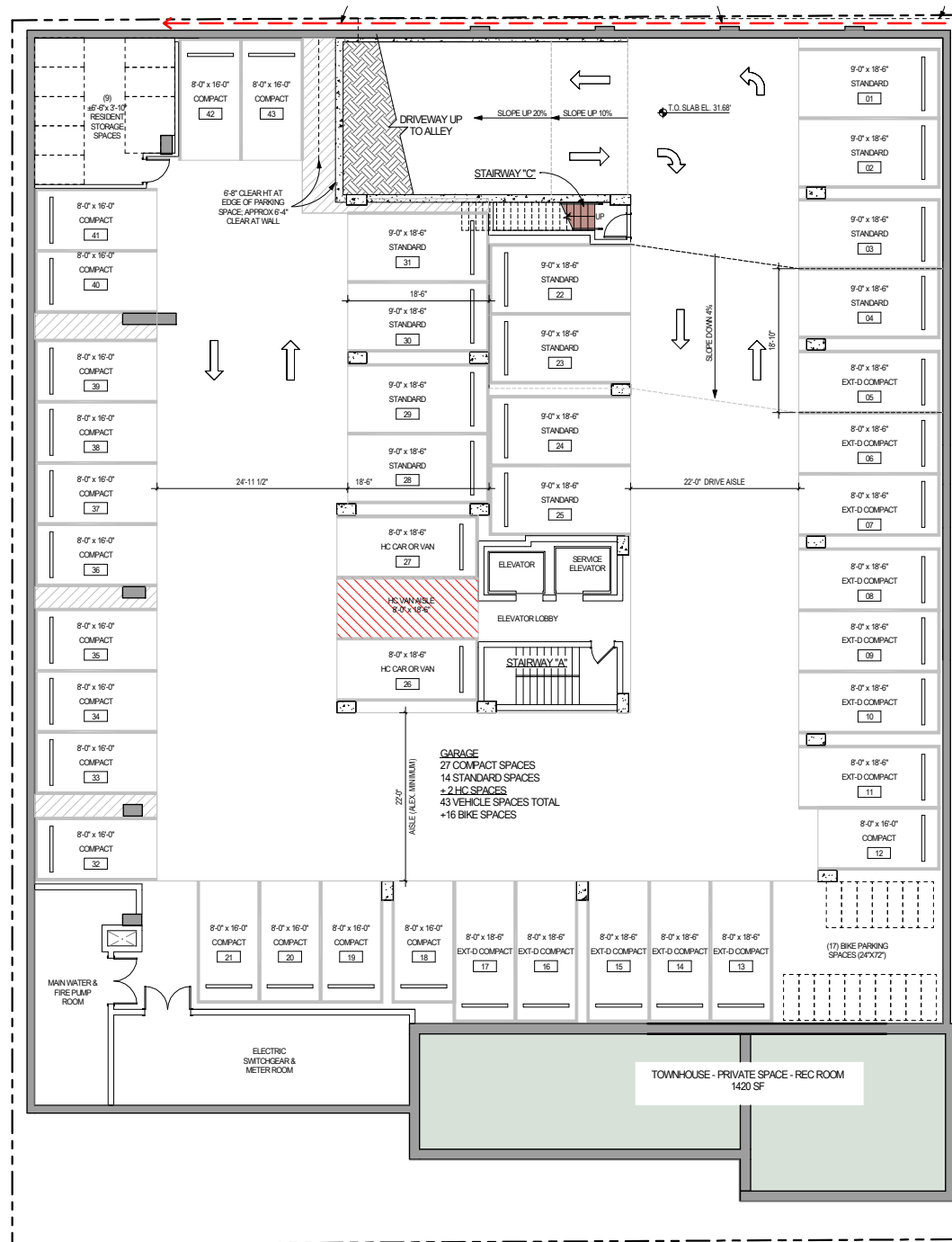
AT OUTSIDE CORNER - TRIM PIECE



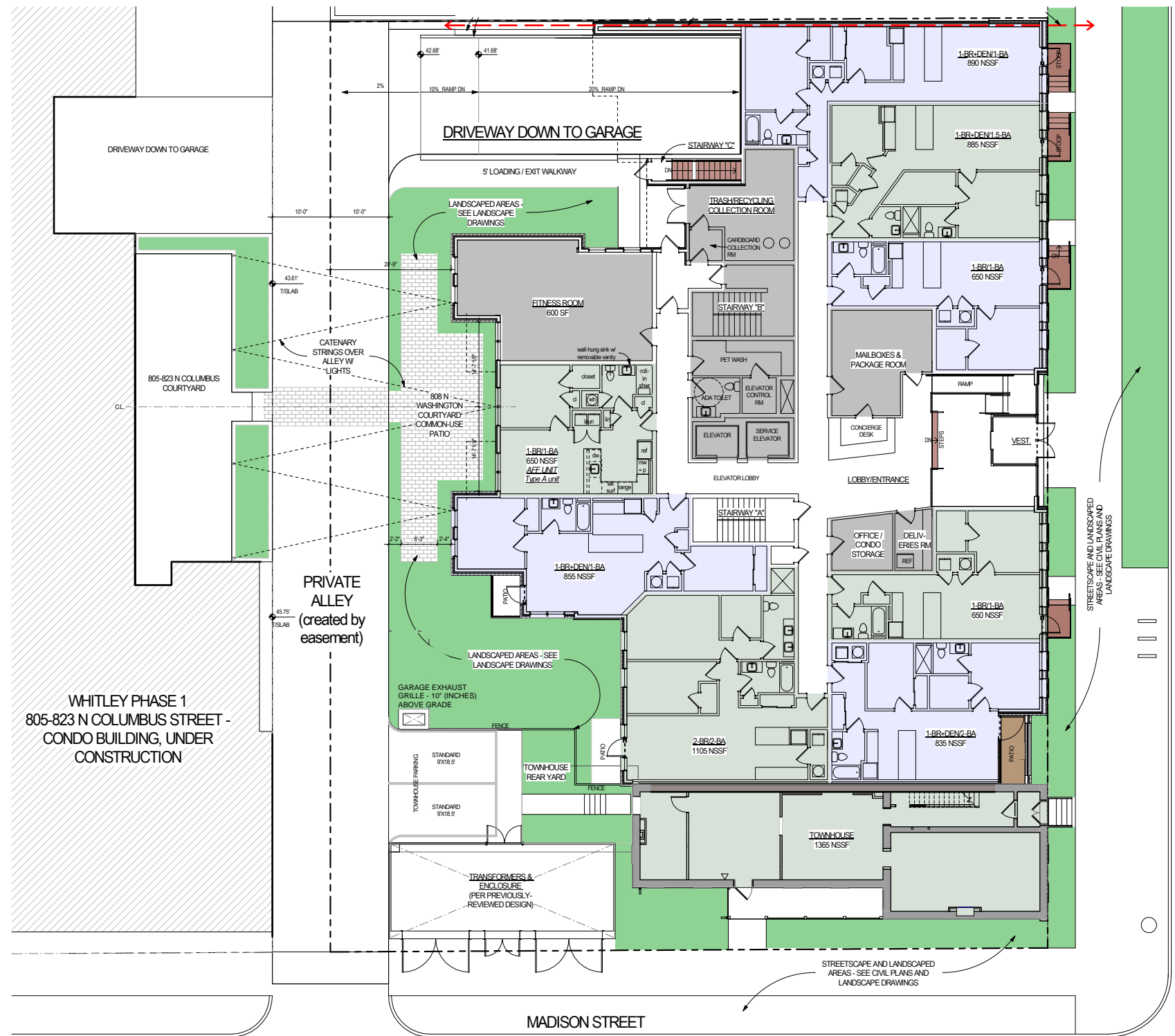
AT INSIDE CORNER - TRIM PIECE



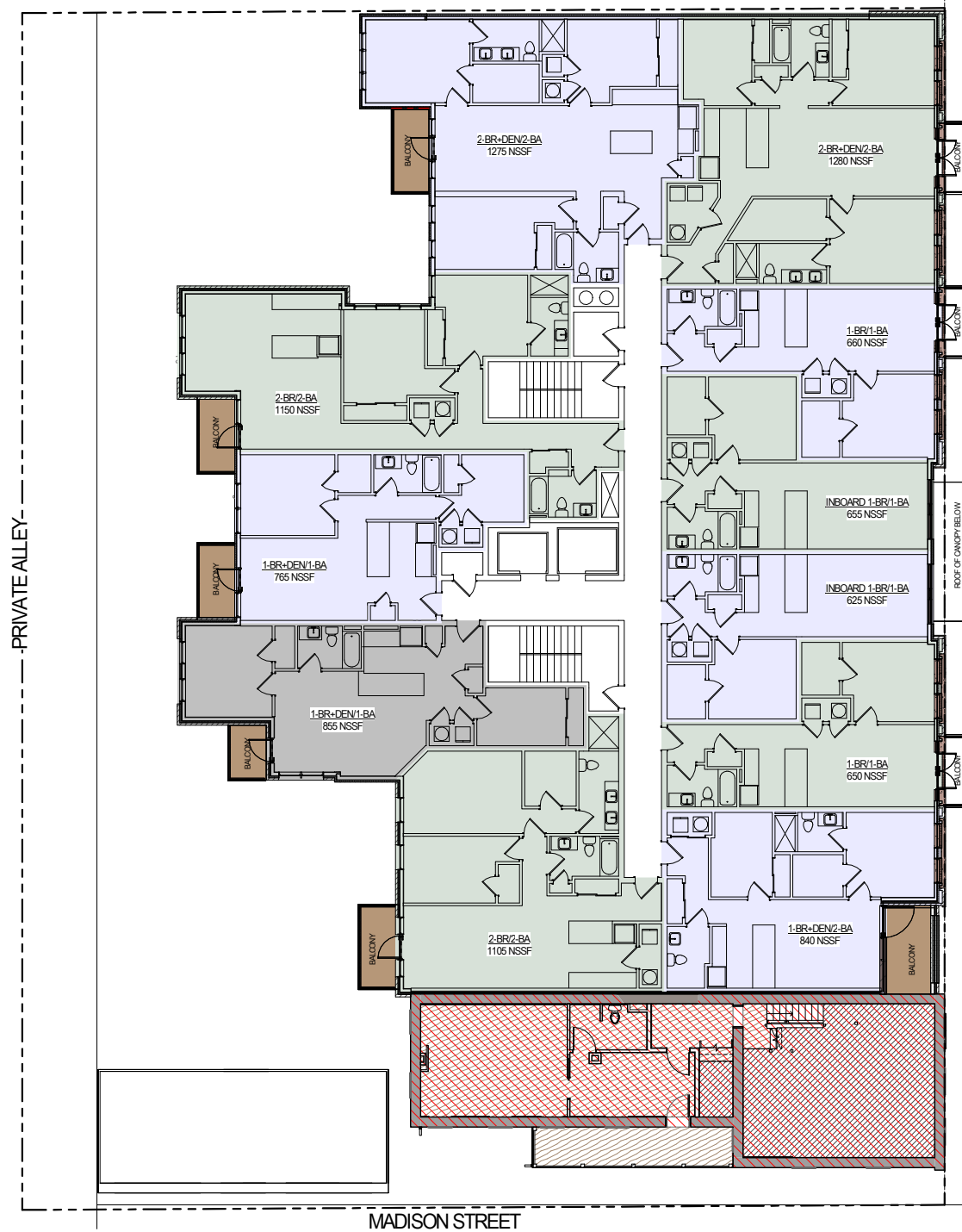
AT WINDOWS/OPENINGS - BREAK METAL FOR SETBACK



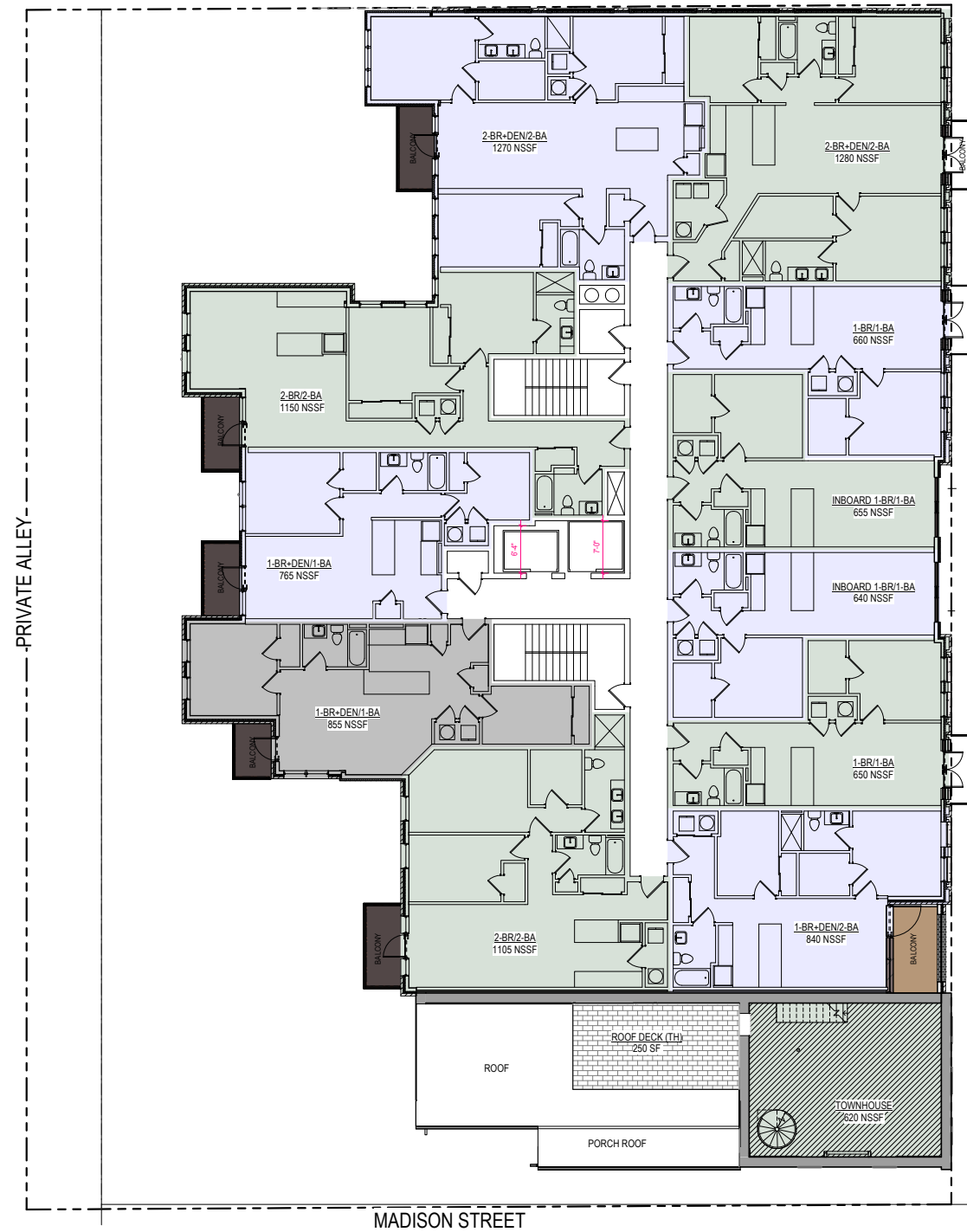
PARKING LEVEL (UNDERGROUND)



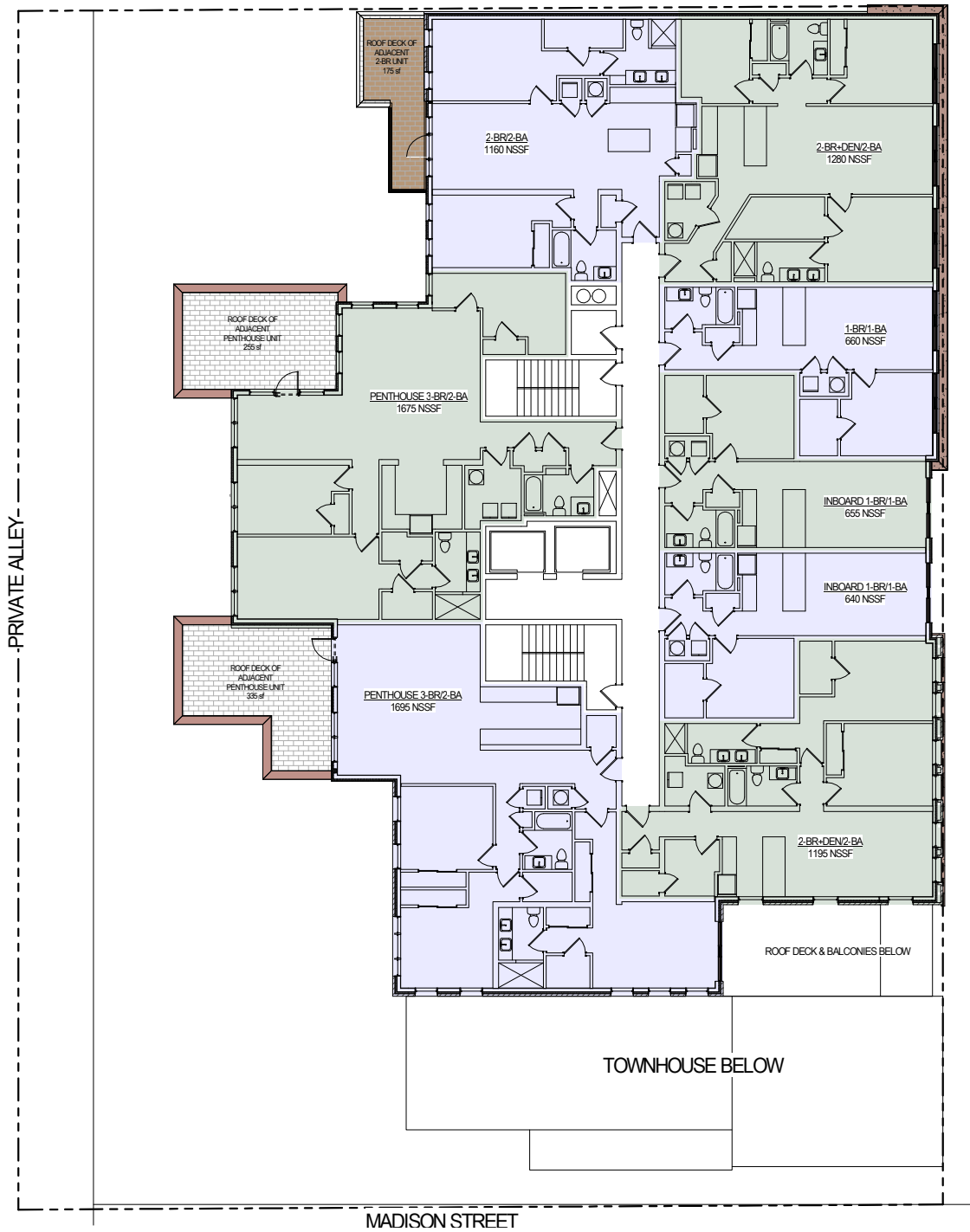
FIRST FLOOR & SITE PLAN



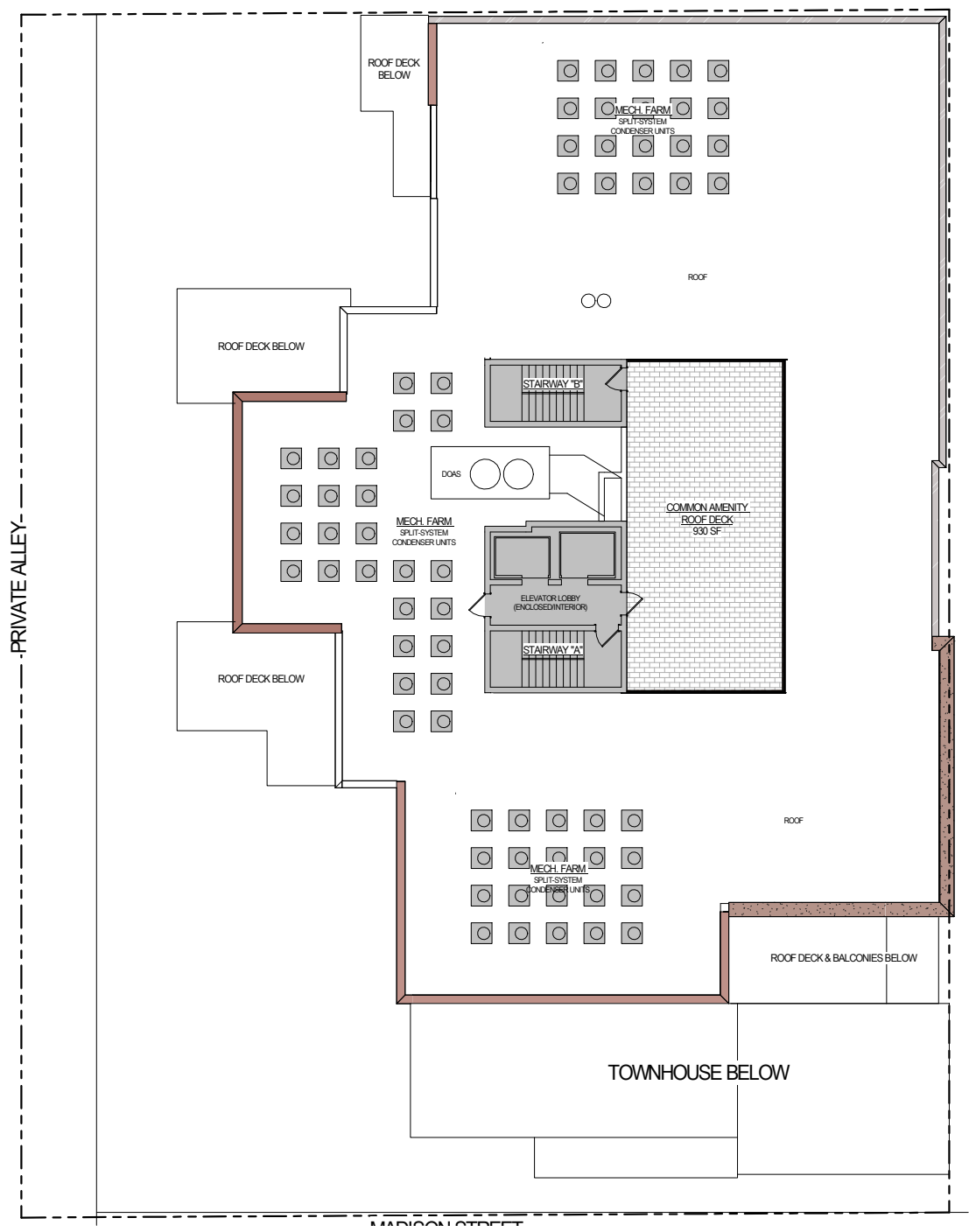
2ND FLOOR



3RD FLOOR (4TH SIMILAR)



5TH FLOOR



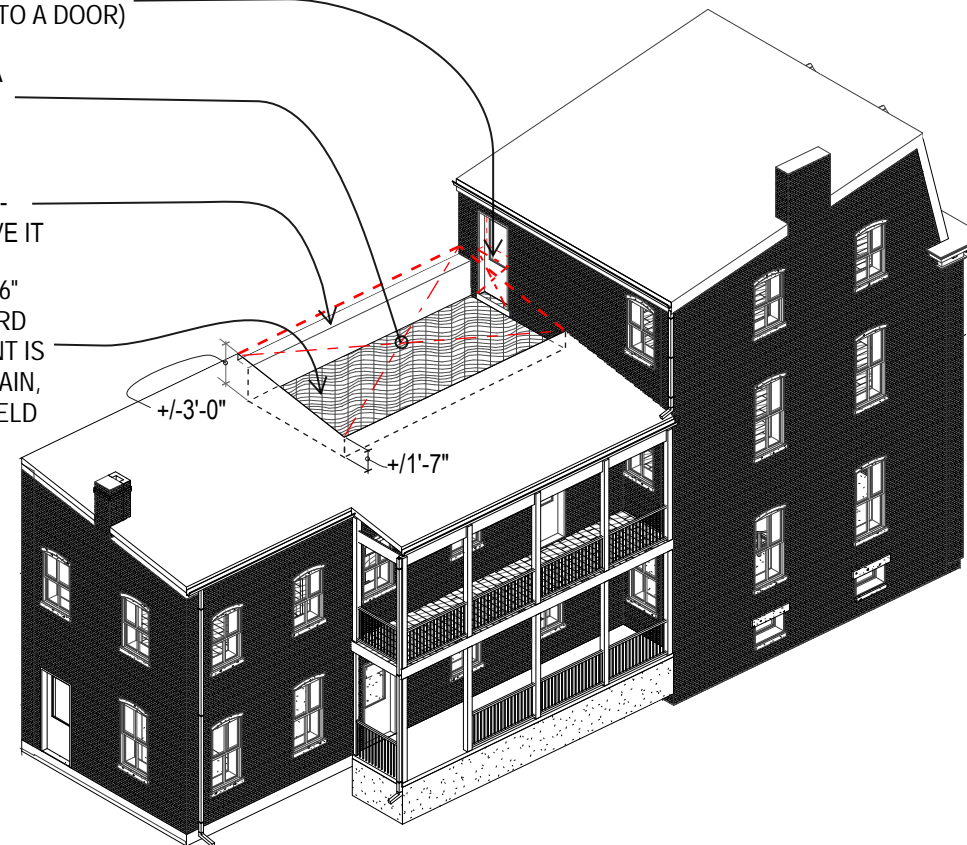
ROOF PLAN

REMOVE BRICK WALL FROM EXISTING SILL TO FLOOR (TO CONVERT WINDOW INTO A DOOR)

DEMO ROOF STRUCTURE IN AREA INDICATED FOR PROPOSED NEW SEMI-RECESSED ROOF DECK

BRICK EXTERIOR WALL REMAINS - REMOVE ROOF STRUCTURE ABOVE IT

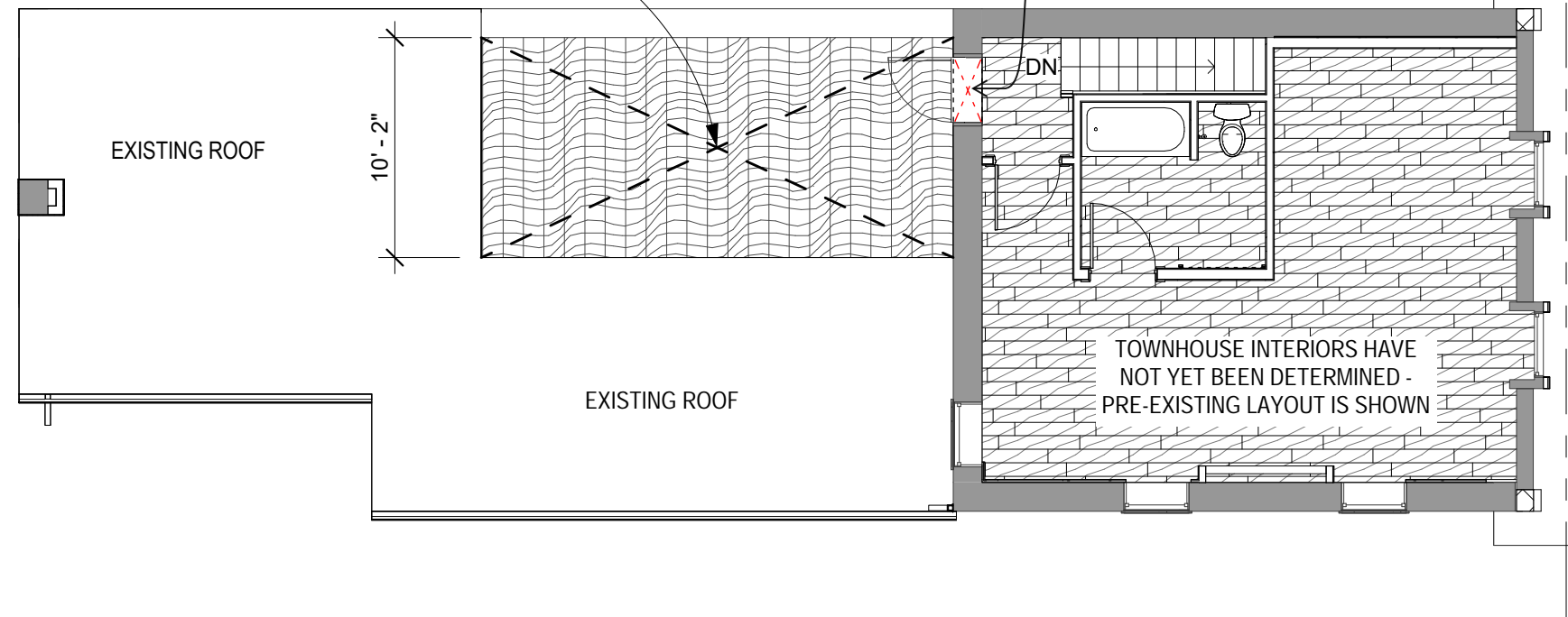
DECK FINISHED FLOOR SHALL BE 6" BELOW THE EXISTING FINISHED 3RD FLOOR LEVEL. THE DESIGN INTENT IS THAT HORIZONTAL RAFTERS REMAIN, BUT THIS MUST BE VERIFIED IN FIELD



TOWNHOUSE AXONOMETRIC

DEMO ROOF STRUCTURE IN AREA INDICATED FOR PROPOSED NEW SEMI-RECESSED ROOF DECK

REMOVE BRICK WALL FROM EXISTING SILL TO FLOOR (TO CONVERT WINDOW INTO A DOOR)



N WASHINGTON STREET

MADISON STREET

TOWNHOUSE 3RD FLOOR PLAN



218 North Lee Street, Suite 310
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 549-5811
www.HistoricAlexandriaFoundation.org
HistoricAlexandriaFoundation@gmail.com

May 15, 2025

Andrew Scott (Chair)
Robert Bentley. (Bud) Adams
Michael Lyons
Margaret Miller
Theresa del Ninno
James Spencer
Nastaran Zandian
Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

By e-mail

**Re: BAR#2025-00139 - OHAD, Request for alterations and new construction at
802 & 808 North Washington Street**

Dear Chairman Scott and BAR members:

We are writing to object in the strongest possible terms to the application for alterations and new construction for the property at 802 & 808 North Washington Street that is pending on your agenda for May 21, 2025. The proposed design for this massive new structure on the George Washington Memorial Parkway makes no pretense of complying with the enhanced Washington Street Standards applicable to this property. The "alterations" in the plans completely abandon the elements of the previously approved design formulated after extensive consultation with and multiple hearings by the Board of Architectural Review, all to ensure that this entry point to Old Town along the Memorial Parkway did not present precisely the façade requested in this new application. In our view, the proposed change of use does not warrant or justify the abandonment of the many compromises and adjustments so painstakingly worked out in the prior approval to arrive at a new construction plan that would not do irreparable harm the Old and Historic District and the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Board of Architectural Review
City of Alexandria
May 15, 2025
Page 2

As you know, Historic Alexandria Foundation (“HAF”) was formed in 1954 “to preserve, protect and restore structures and sites of historic or architectural interest in and associated with the City of Alexandria, Virginia, to preserve antiquities, and generally to foster and promote interest in Alexandria’s historic heritage.” In furtherance of this mission, we are vitally concerned with the proper administration of the Zoning Ordinance in the two Historic Districts, the proper functioning and observance of the process and jurisdiction of the Board of Architectural Review (“BAR”), and the preservation of the historic fabric of our City.

Moreover, since HAF is an owner of real estate on Washington Street (410 South Washington Street), we are directly impacted and concerned with the proper application of the Washington Street Standards that are mandated by the City Ordinance and the City’s 1929 agreement with the Federal Government.

Prior review of construction proposals for this property have been extensive and detailed. The BAR reviewed the proposed new construction at three separate concept reviews (BAR Case #2015-0154) on June 17, September 2 and November 4, 2015. Even after three rounds of concept review, numerous meetings were required between the property owner and BAR staff to further refine plans for this property to satisfy the Washington Street Standards. See, e.g., *BAR Staff Report*, Bar Case #2017-00099, Docket #8, BAR Meeting April 19, 2017 at 4. Even that level of consultation and revision still required further refinement and provision of detail before the plans could be approved. See *BAR Staff Report*, Bar Case #2017-00099, Docket #3, BAR Meeting June 21, 2017 at 5 (“Since the April 19, 2017 BAR hearing, the applicant has made a number of refinements based on the BAR’s comments.”).

The new plan proposed for this property has abandoned all of the design elements that were intended to break up the façade of the massive new structure and minimize the adverse effect on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Indeed, the new plan appears designed to mimic the new structures on the old Potomac Yards property, being indistinguishable from developments along any urban or suburban thoroughfare constructed in the 21st century without regard to historic uses or setting.

Board of Architectural Review
City of Alexandria
May 15, 2025
Page 3



EAST (N. WASHINGTON STREET) ELEVATION

Application, Building Elevation 1 (page 8 of pdf).

We do not believe that the application before you satisfies any of the Washington Street Standards required by Alex. Zon. Ord. § 105(A)(3). Specifically:

- 105(A)(3)(a)(1) which requires that “Construction shall be compatible with **and similar to the traditional building character**, particularly including mass, scale, design and style, found on Washington Street on commercial or residential buildings of historic architectural merit.” (emphasis added);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(i)(“Elements of design consistent with historic buildings which are found on the street shall be emphasized.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(ii)(“New buildings and additions to existing buildings shall not, by their style, size, location or other characteristics, detract from, overwhelm, or otherwise intrude upon historic buildings which are found on the street.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(iii)(“The design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings shall be complementary to historic buildings which are found on the street.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(iv)(“The massing of new buildings or additions to existing buildings adjacent to historic buildings which are found on the street shall closely reflect and be proportional to the massing of the adjacent historic buildings.”);

Board of Architectural Review
City of Alexandria
May 15, 2025
Page 4

- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(v) (“New buildings and additions to existing buildings which are larger than historic buildings which are found on the street shall be designed to look separate and shall not give the impression of collectively being more massive than such historic buildings. This design shall be accomplished through differing historic architectural designs, facades, setbacks, roof lines and styles. Buildings should appear from the public right-of-way to have a footprint no larger than 100 feet by 80 feet. For larger projects, it is desirable that the historic pattern of mid-block alleys be preserved or replicated.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(vi) (“Applications for projects over 3,000 square feet, or for projects located within 66 feet of land used or zoned for residential uses, shall include a building massing study. Such study shall include all existing and proposed buildings and building additions in the six block area as follows: the block face containing the project, the block face opposite, the two adjacent block faces to the north and the two adjacent block faces to the south.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(vi) (“The massing and proportions of new buildings or additions to existing buildings designed in an historic style found elsewhere in along Washington Street shall be consistent with the massing and proportions of that style.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(1)(vii) (“***New or untried approaches to design which result in new buildings or additions to existing buildings that have no historical basis in Alexandria or that are not consistent with an historic style in scale, massing and detailing, are not appropriate.***”)(emphasis added);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(2) (“Facades of a building generally shall express the 20- to 40-foot bay width typically found on early 19th century commercial buildings characteristic of the Old and Historic Alexandria District, or the 15- to 20-foot bay width typically found on townhouses characteristic of the Old and Historic Alexandria District. Techniques to express such typical bay width shall include changes in material, articulation of the wall surfaces, changes in fenestration patterns, varying roof heights, and physical breaks, vertical as well as horizontal, within the massing.”);
- 105(A)(3)(a)(3) (“Building materials characteristic of buildings having historic architectural merit within the district shall be utilized. The texture,

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tone and color of such materials shall display a level of variety, quality and richness at least equal to that found abundantly in the historic setting.”);

- 105(A)(3)(a)(4)(“Construction shall reflect the traditional fenestration patterns found within the Old and Historic Alexandria District. Traditional solid-void relationships exhibited within the district's streetscapes (i.e., ratio of window and door openings to solid wall) shall be used in building facades, including first floor facades.”); and
- 105(A)(3)(a)(5)(“Construction shall display a level of ornamentation, detail and use of quality materials consistent with buildings having historic architectural merit found within the district.”).

We repeat all of these conditions without additional commentary because we believe it is obvious from a review of the 33 page application package that no effort has been made to comply with any of these requirements — and it calls for no further commentary or amplification to make that point than to quote the language of the Washington Street Standards themselves.

Because the proposal has abandoned all of the guidance provided by the BAR through multiple reviews in the past, provides no reason or justification the exterior changes or rejection of prior guidance, and fails to meet any of the Washington Street Standards (or many of the general standards for the Old and Historic District), we urge you to reject this application.

Thank you for your consideration of our statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Historic Alexandria Foundation
By:

/s/ Gail Rothrock

Chair, HAF Advocacy Committee

cc.

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June 3, 2025

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Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

By e-mail

**Re: BAR#2025-00139 - OHAD, Request for alterations and new construction at
802 & 808 North Washington Street-Supplement**

Dear Chairman Scott and BAR members:

We write to supplement our prior letter dated May 15, 2025 opposing approval of the proposed addition to be located at 802-808 North Washington Street. As you know, your *Design Guidelines* state that "Today, Washington Street is one of the principal defining elements of the Old and Historic Alexandria District as well as a central commercial and retail artery for the City,". Therefore, we believe that it is important that the Washington Street Standards be upheld in the review of this application.

First, we wish to supplement the record before you with the attached copy of the explanatory article by Peter H. Smith, The George Washington Memorial Parkway—A statement of Policy on Memorial Character by the Old and Historic District Board of Architectural Review, Historic Alexandria Quarterly at 7 (Sum. 1999)(copy attached), which we believe adds background and clarity to our belief that, contrary to the Staff report, no reasoned argument can be made that the Application satisfies any of the Washington Street Standards quoted in our prior letter.

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Second, we believe it is important for you to recognize that the applicant has put forth in its application design precedents for buildings that are not located in the Historic District, much less within the stricter standards for Washington Street. See Staff Report at 37 (depicting “Gables Old Town”, located at 500 Block of Montgomery Street outside the Historic District); and (“Hyatt Centric King Street”, located at 1600 Block of King Street outside the Historic District).

As the Design Guidelines for Washington Street expressly state, these examples are not appropriate: “New buildings in the historic district should not create an appearance that have no historical basis in Alexandria,” [Washington Street Guidelines – page 6, Style].

Moreover, regarding Style, the Washington Street standards emphasize that “the styles of new buildings must be compatible with existing historic buildings on Washington Street itself. Examples of architecturally and historically important buildings on Washington Street include the Cotton Factory in the 500 block of North Washington Street, the George Mason Hotel in the 100 block of South Washington Street and the Federal Courthouse in the 200 block of South Washington Street.”¹

The current proposal can be usefully compared with the plans the BAR ultimately approved for this property in 2017. At that time, the approved elevation from Washington Street appeared as follows:



Certificate of Appropriateness, April 19, 2017, BAR Case #2017-00099 at Sheet A.2.

¹ Washington Street Guidelines – page 5; see also See Smith, *supra* at 3 (citing Christ Church, the Dulaney House and the Carlyle House, as well as the Alexandria Academy owned by HAF, as appropriate examples).

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The new plan violates every principle of the Washington Street Standards: it makes copious use of features prohibited by the Design Guidelines: e.g.:

- “Design elements (e.g., windows, doors, materials,) **must be** consistent with **historically significant buildings on Washington Street.**” Guidelines, Ch. 7, at 6 (emphasis added) — totally inappropriate modern windows.
- “Traditional fenestration patterns and solid/void relationships **must be used** on all facades viable from any public right-of-way, including the first floor.” *id.* (emphasis added) — inappropriate fenestration patterns
- “The color proposed for new buildings or addition should be compatible **with those used on historic buildings in the historic district.**” *Id.* at 7 (emphasis added). In this regard the use of grey brick proposed is without precedent among the “historically significant buildings on Washington Street, or the historic buildings in district at large.”
- “The massing of buildings **must** closely reflect and be proportional **to adjacent historic buildings.**” This massive block shows no proportional relationship to the adjacent historic townhouse.
- “If new construction includes large buildings, **they must be designed to look smaller.**” Guidelines, Ch. 7, at 6 (emphasis added). This massive monolithic façade looks like it was designed for north Route One



Applicant's Certificate of Appropriateness Set Sheet 1.

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Finally, we urge you to look to your overall mandate pursuant to the City Charter, which is “to promote the general welfare through the preservation and protection of historic places and any other buildings or structures within the city having an important historic, architectural or cultural interest and other areas of historic interest in the city and through the preservation of the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Highway.” Alex. City Charter § 9.09(i); see *also* Washington Street Guidelines at 6 (“It is the intention of the new language of the standards for Washington Street to promote neo-traditional architectural style for additions and new buildings.”).

In summary, we urge you to reject this proposal that so clearly skirts the most basic purposes of the City Charter, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and your Design Guidelines.

Thank you for your consideration of our statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Historic Alexandria Foundation
By:

/s/ Gail C. Rothrock

Chair, HAF Advocacy Committee

Attachment:

The George Washington Memorial Parkway—A statement of Policy on Memorial Character by the Old and Historic District Board of Architectural Review, Historic Alexandria Quarterly at 7 (Sum. 1999)

cc.

William Conkey

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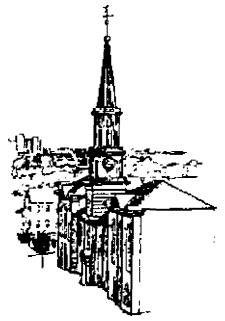
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Historic Alexandria Quarterly



Summer 1999



Gunston Hall Apartments, 900 block of S. Washington Street.

The George Washington Memorial Parkway-- A Statement of Policy on Memorial Character by the Old and Historic Alexandria District Board of Architectural Review

by
Peter H. Smith

The George Washington Memorial Parkway is treasured by those who use it, as it has been called one of the nation's most beautiful roadways. This road is not without controversy, however, as buildings along the Parkway, specifically in Alexandria, at times have threatened its memorial character.

The most recent controversy involves a proposed office building in the north end of Old Town that has been designed for construction in place of the current Old Colony Inn. The original design elicited negative reaction from local citizenry and the Old and Historic Alexandria District of Board of Architectural Review (BAR). On recommendation from the BAR, the design was scaled back and has received conceptual approval by the BAR. Currently, the

application for the Development Special Use Permit, which is required for the large-scale building, has been recommended for denial by the Planning Commission. City Council makes the final decision regarding the permit application, which is scheduled to be heard by Council on September 18, 1999.

In 1928 the U.S. Congress authorized the creation of a "suitable memorial highway" leading from Memorial Bridge to George Washington's Mount Vernon.¹ The George Washington Memorial Parkway was constructed by the federal government as a memorial to Washington on the bicentennial of his birth in 1932. The authorizing legislation did not set any parameters to the memorial highway other than defining its purpose as a memorial road for visitors to

Mount Vernon. As a result, the practical definition of the roadway was left largely in the hands of the original highway's engineers and landscape architects.

As the road and its attendant supporting facilities were designed, the architects and engineers envisioned a roadway that would provide a pastoral, inspirational, and patriotic automobile route from the nation's capital to Mount Vernon. The goal was to create a scene that would arouse a contemplative mood to encourage reflection on George Washington and his importance and significance to our nation.

The George Washington Memorial Parkway was designed to go along Washington Street, the main street of Alexandria. In order to blend the Washington Street section of the Parkway with the desired character of the entire Parkway project, the federal government, acting through the Bureau of Public Roads, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the City of Alexandria in 1929.² The agreement provided that the city would undertake certain zoning measures to ensure that building activity along the Parkway would be "of such character and of such types of building as will be in keeping with the dignity, purpose and memorial character of said highway." While this noble goal was agreed to by both the federal government and the City of Alexandria, there has never been a written operating definition of conditions that would apply to a building that protects the memorial character of the Parkway.

This lack of a clear policy has created controversy throughout the years. In an attempt to abate the controversy and decrease the confusion, a firm set of parameters and guidelines have been established by the Old and Historic Alexandria District Board of

Architectural Review. The BAR is the local city body which reviews and approves designs for buildings along Washington Street. This article is based on this organization's Statement of Policy on the definition of keeping with the Parkway's memorial character. This statement is meant to supplement the BAR's adopted *Design Guidelines*³ for Washington Street. The policy statement provides background information for buildings that have been erected on the Parkway since 1932 and derives design principles for proposed new buildings that could be erected on Washington Street in the future.

In the original developmental plans for the Parkway it appears the designers divided the roadway from Memorial Bridge to the entrance of Mount Vernon into three sections: from the bridge to the memorial circle in Alexandria, paved with asphalt; the section that traverses Alexandria as Washington Street, paved with brick; and the southern boundary of Alexandria to Mount Vernon, which was paved in concrete. This construct allowed the designers to respond to the different site and environmental conditions found in each of the three areas.⁴

The Bureau of Public Roads in the Department of Agriculture was responsible for the development of the Parkway, but there was one segment of the sectioned roadway where the agency's engineers and landscape architects were not autonomous, and that was within the boundaries of the constructed City of Alexandria. The alignment of the route passed directly through the City of Alexandria along Washington Street as it does today. The geography posed somewhat of a challenge because Alexandria was primarily an industrial city in the 1930s, and the passage of the Parkway through the urban areas of the city did not befit the goal of a quiet and

reflective parkway. The urban nature of the city was fundamentally at odds with the pastoral setting of the Parkway, and the designers had little influence over the landscape within the Alexandria street grid. The project designers were placated, however, by a few conditions and qualifications that existed.

First, because there were extant buildings in Alexandria that were associated with the life of George Washington, the new Parkway was automatically given an historically accurate character. For example, Christ Church, the Alexandria Academy, the Dulaney House, and the Carlyle House were buildings which Washington knew and/or visited during his lifetime, and which were on or near the proposed parkway. Thus, the physical preservation of structures associated with Washington was of paramount importance to routing the Parkway through the urban fabric of Alexandria, and the designers recognized that.

Second, the designers knew the memorial character of the Parkway in the city would be maintained because future buildings constructed along Washington Street would have an architectural quality that would contribute to the memorial character. The document which proposed this concept was the 1929 Memorandum of Agreement. This agreement gave the federal government a perpetual easement, or control of property, over Washington Street, and was viewed as the chief instrument to guaranteeing that only the construction of "residential or business development of such character and of such types of building as will be in keeping with the dignity, purpose and memorial character" of the Parkway would be permitted.

Third, the distinction between the pastoral and romantic Parkway and the rigid grid of the

Alexandria street system was reconciled by the design of memorial circles at the north and south ends of the Alexandria grid. These circles served as a physical transition to and from the undeveloped pastoral areas of the Parkway to the highly constructed city. In the end, however, only the memorial circle at the north end of the city grid was actually constructed. It is not known why the memorial circle on the south end was not constructed. It is possible that a roundabout at the south end of the city at Hunting Creek may not have been deemed necessary for two reasons: in this area in the 1930s there was more of a gradual and natural transition from the deliberate urban grid to the curvaceous and quiet Parkway because at the time there was no development south of Green Street. Another possibility is the thought that visitors heading northbound, and consequently away from Mt. Vernon, did not have as much of a need to maintain a sense of contemplative reverence since they would be going away from, and not toward, the object of veneration.

Evidence suggests that the City of Alexandria was cooperative with the design and goal of the Parkway, as even before the completion of the Parkway in 1932 city officials had begun routinely referring for comment to the federal government city building permits involving projects which fronted on Washington Street. Initially such permits were referred to the Department of Agriculture. Gradually, the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (NCPPC) received the permits, and finally the National Park Service was the agency responsible for commenting on the building permits. This confusing process involved these different government organizations as a result of the federal government reorganizing its planning and preservation functions.

After construction of the Parkway was

completed, during the mid to late-30s and into the early 1940s there was a strong burst of residential construction activity in Alexandria and the surrounding metropolitan area, as the federal government launched massive programs to first combat the Great Depression, and later to increase military power with the imminent threat of World War II. Virtually without exception, the participating federal agencies applauded the construction of residential apartment complexes adjacent to the Parkway in Alexandria.

Some of these complexes consisted of extremely large buildings, such as the Mason Hall Apartments on West Abingdon Drive and Hunting Terrace at Washington and South Columbus Streets. Others were smaller and reflected the garden apartment movement, like the Williamsburg Apartments at Washington and Green Streets.



Gunston Hall Apartments, 900 block of S. Washington Street

Despite the variance in size and slight differences in architectural style, all of these complexes shared a common construction vocabulary of a red brick finish with punched window openings. The red brick finish is an important design concept because this style became the ideal architectural characteristic of Washington Street buildings.

While it gave enthusiastic support to the

architectural style of much of the residential construction along Washington Street, the federal government was considerably less sanguine regarding commercial buildings and the advertising signs which had begun to crop up along Washington Street. The National Park Service was so concerned with the commercial character of Washington Street that following World War II officials proposed the construction of an elevated freeway along the waterfront of Alexandria in order to divert Mount Vernon-bound traffic away from Washington Street, which was considered to have lost its semblance of memorial character.



603 S. Washington Street.

Furthermore, the National Park Service considered condemning property along Washington Street that did not meet the desired memorial nature of the Parkway. Either one of these proposals would have been disruptive to the city and would have seriously affected the economic base of Alexandria. In response to these proposals, Alexandria's City Council enacted the third local historic district ordinance in the nation in 1946.⁵ One of its chief purposes was "the preservation of the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Highway" as a means of protecting the city's tax base and also to placate the federal government. While construction proposals along Washington Street still continued to be referred to the National Park Service for comment, it was now the city's Board of Architectural Review that assumed the major burden of protecting the memorial

character of the Parkway after 1946.

At the same time that the Park Service became concerned about the lack of memorial character on Washington Street, the pastoral setting of the Parkway north of Four Mile Run, too, had been inalterably transformed by the federal government with the expansion of what would become National Airport. The airport was constructed immediately adjacent to the ruins of Abingdon, the estate where Eleanor "Nellie" Custis, the adopted daughter of George Washington, was born and which burned to the ground in 1930. The original designers of the Parkway considered Abingdon to be an important component to the sense of reverence along the road to Mount Vernon. During Parkway construction, a scenic overlook was created at the site of the Abingdon ruins that allowed "pilgrims," as Mount Vernon-bound travelers were called, on their way to the "shrine" to view a physical site that pertained to Washington's life. The scenic overlook also provided a sweeping panoramic vista of the broad expanse of the Potomac River to the southeast, which served to remind the viewer of the importance of this waterway to the 18th century world of Washington.

During the 1939 construction of National Airport, however, the Parkway was re-routed slightly to the west, and portions of the original Parkway became a roadway internal to the airport itself. As a result, the important symbolic overlook of Abingdon was abandoned. Today, the foundation has been stabilized and remains in the Ronald Reagan National Airport complex between two new parking garages. The site is accessible to visitors and features interpretive signage, but its significance to the Parkway has been overlooked by airport developers.

Directly to the south of the Abingdon ruins,

the Bureau of Public Roads, the very agency responsible for the design and construction of the Parkway, constructed an office and road testing facility on a 54 acre site in 1936. This facility consisted of a U-shaped collection of Georgian Revival style brick buildings that strongly resembled a college campus. At that time, the Parkway passed immediately to the east of the facility on the side closest to the Potomac River. A glimpse of the facility drew comparisons to the reconstructed Governor's Palace at Colonial Williamsburg or the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary. By designing this facility, the Bureau of Public Roads clearly established the preferred theme for the architectural treatment of new construction along the Parkway--buildings of the aesthetically pleasing Georgian Revival style. Indeed, the design of the complex was approved by the Commission of Fine Arts, which praised its architectural treatment.

When the airport was constructed a few years later and the Parkway relocated westward, the orientation of the complex lost its significance because a motorist's view was now of the backs of the buildings, and the colonial flavor of the facility could not be viewed and appreciated. The complex is still extant today, and it serves as a maintenance support facility for Ronald Reagan National Airport. Its original context has been lost completely, and the facility is located amidst the airport surface parking lots and garages.

Moving the Parkway westward during airport construction counteracted an important design element of the original Parkway. One of the principal reasons of keeping the original Parkway alignment eastward and nearer the River from a design standpoint was to avoid the visual intrusion of the Potomac Yard, a railroad classification facility constructed in 1906 which stretched from the area of the

Fourteenth Street Bridge (or Long Bridge) well into the City of Alexandria. By the time the Parkway's construction was proposed, Potomac Yard was reportedly the largest railroad classification facility in the country.⁶ The rail yard created not only a visual blight but also an audible intrusion for travelers in their pre-air conditioning automobiles, and the original designers proposed a thick growth of trees on the west side of the Parkway in an attempt to mitigate these negative effects. Thus, the construction of the airport disrupted much of the original design intention of the Parkway when the roadway had to be relocated westward of its original alignment and immediately adjacent to Potomac Yard.

The memorial character of the Parkway has been substantially eroded in other sections as well, specifically to the north of Alexandria, with the construction of highway bridges, office buildings, and parking garages, many of which were built by and for federal government agencies in the last 20 years. For example, the highway bridges that carry the Fourteenth Street Bridge and I-395 over the Parkway do not in any way resonate with the memorial character of the roadway; the structures of METRO immediately adjacent to the Parkway likewise make no concession to the memorial landscape of the Parkway nor to the natural palette of materials used for structures along the Parkway; similarly, Crystal City, the massive office and residential complex adjacent to the Parkway and directly west of the airport, thwarts any contemplative nature. In addition, the prefabricated metal industrial buildings at the maintenance facility constructed by the National Park Service, which is adjacent to the Parkway and directly west of the airport, can hardly be deemed compatible with the memorial character of the Parkway.

As evidenced by the aforementioned

government sponsored projects, the interest of the federal government in protecting the Parkway has waxed and waned since the 1929 agreement with Alexandria. Its interest has often been tied to the personal predilections of the various administrators of the government agencies charged with enforcing the agreement. By contrast, the City of Alexandria has generally proved consistent in its attempts to maintain the vision of a designated memorial Parkway along one of its principal commercial arteries. Through both governmental action and the intense scrutiny of citizen activists, there has been a strong preference for buildings designed in a Colonial Revival style. While this style has been interpreted loosely at times, it normally consists of constructed red brick buildings with doorways framed by pediment surrounds,



First Union at 330 N. Washington Street.

multi-light punched wood windows, and often wood rooftop cupolas.

There have been, however, some noticeable lapses in the city's original embrace of the 1929 agreement, most of which are readily visible at the south end of the Parkway in Alexandria. Gerrymandering of the boundaries of the historic district in 1970

permitted the construction of the Humro office buildings in the 1100 block of South Washington Street (built in 1983), as well as the Porto Vecchio complex (1979). Because both projects were constructed outside the historic district, the Board of Architectural Review did not have jurisdiction to review the designs. Following the construction of these buildings, the boundaries of the historic district were returned to their former points in 1984 and now once more encompass the land where these structures exist. Both the current Zoning Ordinance and the *Design Guidelines* of the Board of Architectural Review would preclude their approval if these designs were proposed today.

There are a number of other buildings on Washington Street which were approved in the past by the Board of Architectural Review that today are considered to detract from the memorial character of the Parkway. These buildings include: the Harris Building at 1201 East Abingdon Drive, which has ribbon windows, an overly large mansard penthouse, and surface parking exiting directly onto the Parkway; the Jefferson Building at 901 North Washington Street, the only overtly modernistic building fronting on Washington Street;



Jefferson Building at 901 N. Washington Street.

and the United Fruit and Vegetable Growers building at 727 North Washington Street with

its ground floor interior parking exiting directly onto Washington Street. These buildings were approved because the BAR was not using the protective guidelines that are used today.

In the attempt to ensure that the memorial character of the Parkway is perpetuated, the City of Alexandria's Zoning Ordinance has mandated design standards for the construction of new buildings on Washington Street since 1990. These standards are even stricter than those applied elsewhere in the historic district. In the last several years there have been a number of new buildings constructed on Washington Street, and all have met the high design standards required by the Zoning Ordinance and the *Design Guidelines*.

Some building designs that have not been approved by the Board of Architectural Review because its members did not think they contributed to the memorial character of the Parkway have been built anyway due to approval by City Council on appeal of the Board decision. This was the case with the Atrium Building at 215 South Washington Street, which uses Colonial Revival detailing on a gargantuan scale coupled with a two story mansard roof. Another example is the building at 300 North Washington Street, which consists of seven stories in height and visually overwhelms its section of the street. Its approval was the result of ineffective height restrictions in the Zoning Ordinance. Since its approval and construction, the height limit along all of Washington Street has been considerably reduced to a maximum height of 50 feet, or approximately four stories.

This review of the history of the George Washington Memorial Parkway on Washington Street shows there is no single standard of what constitutes the Parkway's

memorial character. However, several principles can be derived from original goals and the styles and guidelines that have worked in the past, which should be used as aids and examples for defining memorial character of the Parkway as it passes along Washington Street:

1. Preservation of Historic Properties

Of utmost importance is the physical preservation of all properties actually associated with the life of George Washington or his family. This principal is in concert with the City of Alexandria's goal to preserve historic and architecturally important buildings along Washington Street. Consequently, the preservation and interpretation of these buildings binds together the purpose of the Parkway with Washington Street.

2. The Memory Test

The principal overriding design objective for new construction on Washington Street is to create buildings which are not overt visual intrusions on the established cityscape. Such buildings must be predominately background buildings that do not seek to make a strong impact on the Washington Street vista. This includes ensuring that these buildings are not visually jarring in scale, mass, materials, or color. The intention of the memory test lies in the concept that by the time one traverses the Parkway and enters Mount Vernon, the principal memory of buildings in Alexandria will be of the surviving historic buildings associated with Washington and not of modern constructs.

3. Red Brick with Punched Windows

As demonstrated by this article, due to the lack of a clear policy in the past there is no single architectural building style that is mandated for Washington Street in order to maintain the memorial character of the

Parkway. There are highly regarded examples of historic architectural merit that range from late 18th-century wood frame Federal style townhouses to high style center hall Georgian buildings to a limestone Art Deco style office building constructed in 1930. The designs of these buildings vary, and as a result it should be noted that mere replication of Federal or Georgian style buildings on an exaggerated scale for late 20th-century use is not normally considered to contribute to the architectural patrimony of Washington Street. There should be serious design consideration for Washington Street buildings so that all proposed buildings are not automatically Federal style replicas.

The most common building type on Washington Street, and therefore the one most likely to meet the memory test described in the second principal, is a building which visually expresses the historic red brick in a traditional load bearing manner. In other words, the red brick must be of structural masonry construction that appears to actually bear the load or weight of the building. On Washington Street windows for this building type grew from small Georgian style multi-pane sashes to proportionally larger openings.



700 S. Washington Street.

This trend evolved as improvements were made in glazing technology, and it is reflected in window openings found in buildings of the

Chicago School or Beaux Arts style. In each instance the windows are surrounded by masonry and appear to be "punched" through a solid load bearing masonry wall. By contrast, ribbon windows (a continuous horizontal band of windows) and glass curtain walls that are found on modern office buildings are not appropriate treatments along Washington Street.

The historical treatment of building facades along Washington Street has established a materials palette largely consisting of red brick with surface modulation that includes vertically punched windows which are proportionally appropriate. These traditional building treatments, in addition to a quietude of facade treatment rather than an exuberance of surface ornamentation, give a sense of timeless solidity to construction along the Parkway and a sense of connection to the building materials of Washington's lifetime. In this way, the memorial character of the Parkway can best be maintained, which, as most will agree, is a unique and important historical gift from Alexandria to its residents and visitors.

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About the Author

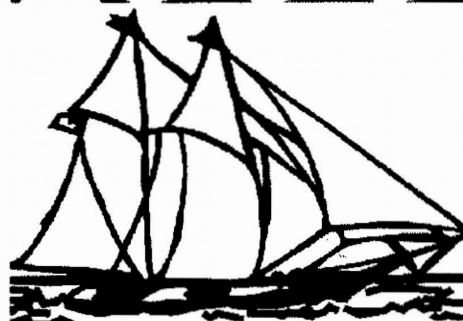
Peter H. Smith is the Principal Staff for the Boards of Architectural Review in the Department of Planning and Zoning. He has a Ph.D. in American Studies from George Washington University. Mr. Smith has written previously for the *Historic Alexandria Quarterly*.

This issue of the Historic Alexandria is sponsored Mr. and Mrs. Oscar P. Ryder

End Notes

All photographs are courtesy of the Department of Planning and Zoning.

1. United States Congress, May 23, 1928, "An Act to authorize and direct the survey, construction and maintenance of a memorial highway to connect Mount Vernon, in the State of Virginia, with the Arlington Memorial Bridge across the Potomac River at Washington."
2. Memorandum of Agreement between City Council of the City of Alexandria and the United States of America, represented by the Secretary of Agriculture, June 20, 1929, Council Chamber, City Hall.
3. City of Alexandria Design Guidelines, Chapter 7 "Washington Street Guidelines," pp 1-10. Adopted by the Boards of Architectural Review, May 25, 1993.
4. EDAW, Inc. for the National Park Service, Cultural Landscape Report, Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, 8 vols., ca. 1985.
5. Ordinance No. 470 to amend Chapter 28, of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia. Sec. 33 "Certificate of appropriateness; its purpose," August 13, 1946.
6. Cox, Al, Historic Structure Report, An Analysis of the Alexandria Union Station, City of Alexandria, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, 1995, p. 25.



Previous Issues of the
Historic Alexandria Quarterly:

Remembering Alexandria's Bicentennial--Philately
By Timothy J. Dennee

The Alexandria Union Station
By Al Cox

Equally Their Due: Female Education in Antebellum Alexandria
By Gloria Seaman Allen

A Study in Decentralized Living: Parkfairfax, Alexandria, Virginia
By Laura L. Bobeczko

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By Timothy J. Dennee

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By Kristin B. Lloyd

*Recollections of a Board of Architectural Review Member:
Thomas Hulfish III Reflects*
By Timothy J. Dennee and Peter Smith

*Volunteers for Freedom: Black Civil War Soldiers in
Alexandria National Cemetery*
By Edward A. Miller, Jr.

Alexandria's 250th Anniversary Calendar of Events

August, 1999

August 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29

Mount Vernon Chamber Series. Free. The Lyceum. 3:00 pm.
703/838-4994, 703/799-8229.

August 2 and 9

Waterfront Park Concerts. Free. Waterfront Park. 7:00 pm.
703/883-4686.

August 4, 11 and 18

Lunch Bunch Concerts. Free. Market Square. 12:15 pm.
703/883-4686.

August 4

through September 6

The Art League's "The American Landscape Show." Opening reception on August 8. The Art League Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center. 703/683-1780.

August 5, 12 and 19

Music at Twilight Concerts. Free. Fort Ward Park. 7:00 pm.
703/883-4686.

August 6

through September 28

"George Washington: Profile of a Patriot." New exhibit featuring 19th-century prints of Washington, including *Washington Crossing the Delaware* by Emanuel Leutze and other famous, stirring images of the nation's first President. Traveling exhibit from the Mount Vernon Ladies Association. The Lyceum. 703/799-8229.

August 6 and 20

Colonial Games. Children are invited to learn how to play 18th century games. Suggested donation of \$1 per child. Carlyle House. 10:00 am-Noon. 703/549-2997.

August 6 and 20

Alexandria Citizens Band Concert. Free. Market Square. 7:30 pm. 703/838-4844, 703/883-4686.

August 7

The Friendship Firehouse Festival. Displays and demonstrations on fire safety and rescue operations. Children will receive balloons, fire hats and birthday cake. Free. The Friendship Firehouse. 10:00 am-3:00 pm. 703/838-3814, 703/883-4686.

August 7

Alexandria Archaeology "Dig Days." Help archaeologists excavate a site. \$5 per person. Reservations required. 10:00 am and 1:30 pm. 703/838-4399.

August 8

Production of "1776," benefit event for the Alexandria 250th Anniversary Celebration. \$20 per person. Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street. 8:00 pm. 703/838-4554.

August 11

Alexandria 250th Anniversary Music Series. Come dance the Lindy! Second Story, Worldbeat, blues and swing music. Free. Landmark Mall Food Court. 6:00 pm-9:00 pm. 703/941-2582.

August 13

Alexandria Harmonizers Concert. Free. Market Square. 7:30 pm. 703/838-4844, 703/883-4686.

August 14

Irish Festival. Music, dancing, vendors and food. Free. Waterfront Park. Noon-6:00 pm. 703/838-4844.

August 21

Victorian Tea. 19th-century parlor games and tea for young ladies and their dolls. \$20. The Lyceum. 2:00 pm. 703/838-4994.

August 21

American Indian Festival. Music, dancing, vendors and food. Free admission. Market Square. Noon-6:00 pm. 703/838-4844, 703/883-4686.

August 21

Library Card Protest Commemorative. On August 21, 1939, five young African-American men from Alexandria staged a peaceful protest for library cards in the city's Queen Street (Barrett) Library. Honor the courage of these young men on the 60th anniversary of this protest which led the City to build the Robert Robinson Library for African-American citizens in 1940. Alexandria Black History Resource Center. 2:00 pm. 703/838-4356.

August 24

through September 19

"WIRED" exhibit. Potomac Craftsmen Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center. 703/548-0935.

August 29

through September 25

"250 Years of Alexandria Faces: Historic and Contemporary Portraits." Free. The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street. Wed-Fri, 11:00 am-3:00 pm; Sat, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm; Sun, 1:00 pm-4:00 pm. 703/548-0035.

Office of Historic Alexandria

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Public Comment on BAR #2025-00139 & 2025-00202 (June 5th docket)
Date: Wednesday, June 4, 2025 1:34:23 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Public Comment on BAR #2025-00139 & 2025-00202, Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction at 802 and 808 N Washington St.

I am a resident of Old Town North and can see the site of the proposed development from my windows. The staff recommendation favors the light-colored brick option. The provided examples of light-colored brick in the neighborhood are accurate, but they are selective. Immediately across the street to the south of the development at 732 N Washington is a red brick building. The majority of the 700 block of N Washington consists of varying shades of red brick; even the sidewalk is red brick. To the east of the development are 601 Madison, 500 Madison, and 801 N St Asaph—all red brick buildings.

The proposed development sits directly between the architectural styles of Old Town and Parker-Gray. The light-brick option creates a jarring contrast between the two styles and provides no transition. The red-brick option blends the materials and styles of Old Town and Parker-Gray, seamlessly transitioning from one neighborhood to the other. It complements both the preserved townhouse and the newer construction in the surrounding neighborhood.

I encourage the Board to select the red brick option.

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