

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 7, 2015

TO: CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT
BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

FROM: HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF

SUBJECT: 4th CONCEPT REVIEW OF 500 & 501 NORTH UNION STREET
(FORMERLY ROBINSON TERMINAL NORTH)
BAR CASE # 2014-0119

Minutes from a work session to discuss the proposed development project at 500 and 501 N Union St. on January 7, 2015

SPEAKERS

Ken Wire, land use attorney with McGuire Woods LLP, introduced himself and Mike Hickok, with Hickok Cole Architects. Mr. Hickok then presented the Board with updated drawings and a new proposal for the pavilion. The updated drawings were only refinements of what was shown in the BAR application and the only significant design change made was the revised pavilion design. The architect also provided a sample of the proposed slate and brick for the buildings.

Mr. Hickok clarified that the north wall will serve as public art and includes metal and slate to unify the design of the building with the landscape and history plan, which are not yet completed. He also further clarified that the space between this wall and the glass building above was intentional to provide light and ventilation to the truck entrance, as well as to differentiate the two uses.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Van Van Fleet, President of the Old Town Civic Association, said that the proposed building reminded him of Urban Renewal. He believed that the mass and scale of the building at 500 N Union was much too large and he cited the development guideline #7 in the Waterfront Plan that “encourage(s) modern design inspired by historic precedent (such as 18th century Alexandria warehouse architecture)”. He reminded the Board that this building violated the street grid, lacked connectivity to this historic district and was completely different than what was represented in the waterfront model. Regarding the proposal at 501 N Union St., he said that the amount of glass on the building made it look like a building in Miami Beach and gave the wrong impression of Alexandria to potential visitors and tourists.

Bert Ely, co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront, expressed frustration that the public was seeing very different drawings at the hearing than what was published online last week.

(The Chair explained that the building design has not changed from the application. These additional drawings were simply provided to show additional views for clarity.) He opposed the mass, scale, parking and the modern pavilion design and encouraged the Board to speak more broadly of the project, since their role is purely advisory. He felt the proposed buildings clashed with the historic district and that the Board should judge the proposal against the waterfront model.

Ted Pulliam, a member of but not necessarily representing the Alexandria Archaeological Commission, felt that use of the rough slate wall material was good because slate was used historically in Alexandria and that there could even be more of it on the buildings. He was supportive of the north wall being used for public art to interpret history. He found the latest version of the pavilion, as shown at the hearing, to be very interesting but took issue with the flat roof on the main building as flat roofs are atypical of historic Alexandria. He said that he looks forward to seeing the revised historic interpretation plan in the future.

Elaine Johnston, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) said that while HAF finds the current submission of the east building much improved due to the addition of masonry piers and a coherent window pattern, overall they did not agree with staff's recommendation for several reasons. She also agreed with Bert Ely that it is difficult for the public to comment on revised drawings without ample preparation.

Ms. Johnston stated that HAF found the west elevation of the east building to be a "block long hulk" that is a "psychic and visual" barrier to the waterfront. HAF felt it is unclear where the public access is located and suggested there be visual openings between N Union Street and the river. Furthermore, she expressed concern that the transition of glass and masonry is too abrupt, the glass expanse too large, that the simplicity of the glass wall design will be negatively affected by interior drapes, and that UV spectrum glass should be considered to reduce bird deaths. Lastly, she suggested that green roofs be included on the building. The applicant clarified that all roofs will be green roofs.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Ms. Finnigan found improvement in the current submission and stated that the applicant has proceeded in the right direction. She asked the applicant to clarify the material palette and color selection.

The applicant explained that they had presented two options of paired red and grey brick colors, with the primary difference being that one was more textured than the other. They also said that they wanted color direction from the Board as opposed to a color selection.

Ms. Finnigan said that her initial preference was for the more textured brick. She told the applicant that they have begun to gain her support of the west elevation on the east building and with the proposed variation in the penthouse setback. She found the north and east elevations to be the weakest point of the application. Regarding the pavilion, she was almost "wowed" by the new proposal shown on sheet A4 at the hearing because it was sculptural. She said that she could support Mr. Pulliam's suggestion of a sculptural wall and roof for the main building, as

well. She found this version of the east building to be a “vast improvement and moving in the right direction.”

Mr. Carlin thanked the applicant for responding to the Board’s requests, as the Board is works very hard to represent the public’s interest. He found the west wall of the west building to be an improvement and likes the building angle in plan and the garden spaces that this produces. He thought the architectural character and masonry wall appearance of the east building was a “phenomenal breakthrough.” He liked that the east and west buildings were tied together by several design cues and the load bearing masonry expression of the buildings. He preferred the new pavilion design because it tied into the environment and nature on the site and believed that the wave form and animated character appropriately reflected the Potomac River. He expressed preference for the more textured brick and warm tones as opposed to cool. He found both gray brick samples to be too monochromatic and asked the applicant to consider a gray brick with a wider range.

Mr. von Senden argued that low, sloped roofs are ubiquitous in Old Town due to the large number of Italianate Victorian buildings and found the proposed roofs appropriate. He expressed great enthusiasm for the proposed green roofs and found great improvement in the pergola style cornice “eyebrows,” but felt they still needed further development. He said he hoped the applicant would play up the visual effect of a cantilevered glass wing on the north end and visually minimize the support columns as much as possible. He liked the box bay windows and the rhythm that created on the street but asked the applicant to define the window lintels more to imply structural support. Regarding the materials, he found either color palette to be suitable, but preferred a more textured brick given the large scale of the buildings and preferred a pink tone over green. His preferred pavilion design was the Option 10 shown at the hearing, with option 6 being a distant 2nd.

Ms. Roberts expressed comfort with the current design of the west building and liked the additional wall articulation. On the east building, she liked the use of slate and said that she would like to see more of it. She found the rhythm of the east building coherent and appreciated the relationship between the east and west buildings. She was concerned about the way the glass and brick walls came together and asked for a more clear joint line there. She agreed with all of the comments already made by the Board members, except that she did not find the present east elevation needed to be changed and thought it should be kept simple to offset the pavilion. Regarding the pavilion, she preferred Option 8, but stated that she may grow to appreciate the revised pavilion Option 10 with additional study.

Ms. Miller stated that the applicant was headed in a good design direction and that she leaned towards a textured brick with color variety on the west building. She preferred the color tone of the smooth gray brick, but would like it to be more textured. She thought the east elevation of the east building should continue to be a calm backdrop to the pavilion. She preferred pavilion Option 8 because it looked like a single, unified building design where the elevation drawing of Option 10 looked like three separate buildings.

Mr. Carlin suggested that the brick texture between the two buildings need not match. He would prefer that the east building become a background to the pavilion. He preferred Option 8 due to

the movement within it and although he liked the sail concept of the new proposal, he found three pieces visually distracting. He asked what the height difference would be on both options. The applicant responded it would be between 4-5 feet.

Mr. Neale found that the pavilion design was beginning to succeed, particularly Option 8. He suggested the applicant heighten the peaks of the sail forms, perhaps using them as a screen for rooftop mechanical equipment in order to exceed the basic height limit. He felt the pavilion stood by itself and should be treated differently than the rest of the buildings. He also asked that a historic reference be introduced to the design. He said that the penthouse floor was too continuous and would like to see a sight line from the sidewalk because the design would be most successful if you don't see anything that bands the building all together, such as a continuous roofline. Regarding the color selection, he said it should be harmonious but as board a palette as possible to avoid the monolithic look, particularly on the east building. He found the proposed brick sample to be too hard-edged and contemporary. Lastly, he stated for the record that he did not like the west building and would prefer to see a design that filled out the street grid and that was two stories shorter.

Chairman Fitzgerald said that he was very pleased with the direction of the design and found the bay windows to be a beautiful reflection of the oriels within the historic district. He preferred a reddish brick for both buildings and thought the grey looked too much like concrete. He thanked the applicant for delivering on the Board's request to design something special for the pavilion. He found the revised pavilion design Option 10 "stunning" and expressed preference for it.

I. UPDATE

At the November 19, 2014 concept review work session, the OHAD BAR found the proposed design for the west building appropriate to its context, subject to limited specific refinement. Recommendations for refinement included a restudy of architectural details around the window openings and additional visual relief on the west elevation which the Board, based on the drawings they were provided at that time, described as having an institutional appearance that read as a massive and visually uninteresting brick wall. The Board also stated preference for a lighter, less severe red brick and mortar color.

The Board recommended a complete restudy of both the east building and the pavilion on its east side. The BAR rejected the Torpedo Factory frame design approach and recommended that the east building be a brick and glass structure that expressed load-bearing masonry construction, consistent with the architectural tradition of Old Town but expressed in a modern way. The BAR recommended that there be more articulation of the uniform building cornice and that the overall mass of the building be visually broken into smaller elements, particularly on N. Union Street. The Board found a much higher percentage of glass to be appropriate on the north and east sides facing the water, but generally supported a unit masonry wall with punched openings facing the historic district to the south and west. There was no consensus on the Board for what the pavilion should look like, only that this was the appropriate location for an iconic, modern sculptural form and that the previously proposed designs were a missed opportunity.

The Board acknowledged the rationale for the overall site plan and there was some, but not unanimous, support for building footprints that deviate from the orthogonal grid of Old Town

based on the historic land form of West's Point, topography and vistas from the site. The Board endorsed the historic interpretation opportunities that were presented but recommended that interpretation be expanded, integrated with the built environment, and that it include more than just sign panels.

Based on the Board's feedback at the November work session, the applicant has submitted design refinements for the west elevation of the west building, a substantially revised east building design concept, and three different pavilion design concepts for discussion. The applicant will continue to further refine the interpretative site elements once the general design direction for the east building and pavilion are confirmed.

Approved minutes from the work session on November 19, 2014 are provided below as Attachment #1 of the present report. Internet links to the staff reports for the first and second work sessions are available here: [RTN Work Session #1](#) & [RTN Work Session #2](#)

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

East Building

Load Bearing Masonry Wall with Punched Openings vs. a Concrete Frame

The applicant's revised submission shows a distinct and welcome change in the overall design direction of the east building. While the floor plan and building footprint have not changed, the exterior "skin" reflects a much different design rationale that responds directly to the comments made by the Board at the November 19, 2014 work session. The present building exhibits a significantly higher ratio of masonry-to-glass on the west and south elevations than previous submissions, tipping towards a brick and stone masonry wall with punched openings and away from the former concrete frame structural expression of the Torpedo Factory. The building also now has distinct paths of load bearing masonry with supporting pillars in a more formal and regular spacing that frames large glass storefront windows at the sidewalk level. As the BAR requested, the east building now speaks the same masonry and glass design language as the west building, without copying any specific feature. The current application drawings have purposely been kept monochromatic, so that the BAR may focus discussion on the overall building forms and architectural character rather than material colors and details at this time.

Breaking the Large Building into Smaller Units

The west elevation along North Union Street is now composed of three separate but related masonry masses joined together by glass hyphens, responding to the Board's suggestion that this could appear to be three different "buildings," so that the massing better reflects the rhythm and scale of historic buildings on the waterfront – without being a historicist fabrication of something that never existed at this site. The visual illusion of three separate masonry structures is further enhanced by the deep perpendicular returns of the masonry at entrances and balconies, so that the brick façade does not read as a wallpaper veneer on a glass box. The three masonry forms are separated by glass hyphens that clearly denote major entrances, and which tie the overall building together by the use common glass wall details at the fourth floor, north and east facades.

Articulation of the Roofline

Another fundamental change to the previous design is the vertical articulation of the building bays at key locations and elimination of the uniform cornice overhang that had been unfavorably compared by some to the Kennedy Center. Although portions of the masonry frame now extend above the third floor in two locations, the third floor cornice still clearly defines a setback at the basic 30 foot height required in §6-404 of the Zoning Ordinance. This visual break in the roofline allows the building to better achieve another requirement of §6-404, which requires that the “bulk and mass” be compatible with the historic streetscape of Alexandria. The applicant’s perspective looking north on N. Union Street (Figure 2) shows a roofline that more accurately recalls a historic Alexandria block (Figure 3.)

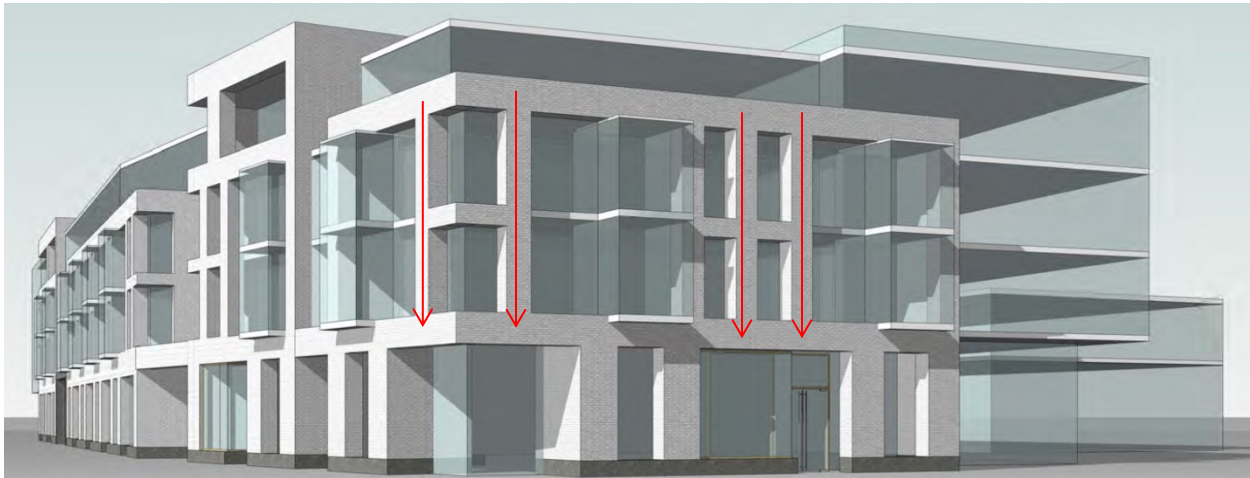


Figure 1: In this interim design study, red arrows show the load path of the upper stories bearing on a masonry beam - something atypical of traditional building techniques in historic masonry architecture. At the same time, the heavy piers on the first floor precluded views into the retail spaces fronting N. Union Street (process study on current submission Sheet A4).



Figure 2: Red arrows in the present proposal show the load path traveling directly to the ground, a character-defining feature of Alexandria's historic masonry architecture, with large storefront windows below each bay

providing a visually interesting streetscape for pedestrians and establishing a building bay width that relates to the scale of nearby townhouses (current submission Sheet A6).

The applicant has verbally represented that the remainder of the fourth floor will be set back a minimum of 6' to 8' from the building face. Staff notes that the applicant has not shown an actual dimension for the proposed fourth floor setback and recommends that the Board discuss what an appropriate setback would have to be for the fourth floor to visually recede for pedestrians from various vantage points around the site.



Figure 3: North side of the 300 block of Cameron Street showing a varied cornice height at the skyline.

Bay Windows

The applicant has retained but simplified the projecting glass bay windows from the previous design. The spacing of these bay windows, combined with the adjacent pair of punched windows, establish the 20' – 30' bay width recommended in the BAR's *Design Guidelines* and recall the width of an average townhome.

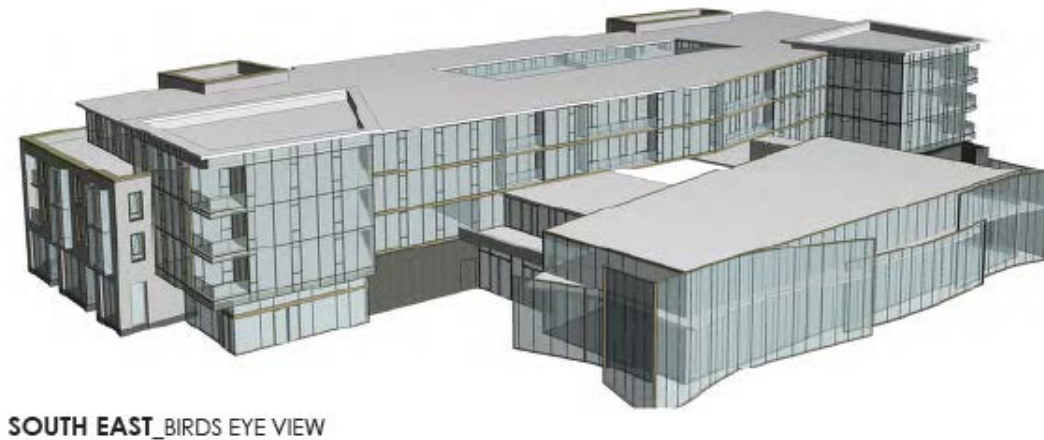


Figure 4: East elevation of East Building with Pavilion Option 8

North and East Elevation

As with the east elevation of the west building, the east elevation of the east building is now a more rational and organized bookend plan with two projecting and slightly taller masses separated by a glass running wall. A unified and greatly simplified window muntin pattern ties the building together and forms a more neutral backdrop on the east side as a foil for the pavilion. The hyphen connecting the main building to the pavilion has been reduced in size to allow the pavilion to appear freestanding and to have its own distinct artistic character.

Like the east elevation, the north elevation facing the river is largely glass, as recommended by the BAR, and floats above the stone art wall/loading dock screen (Sheet A8). The applicant acknowledges that this elevation is the least developed at the present time and requires work around the loading dock entrance to maintain adequate utility screening, provide visual support for the upper floors and integrate the historic interpretation artwork on the stone wall.

Summary

Overall, the proposed design direction for the east building successfully responds to its site context and straddles the boundary between Old Town and North Old Town, shielding an appropriately contemporary and glassy structure facing the water from the historic district with a masonry veil. The simple cube and modular appearance of the east and north elevations keep the eye focused on the form and shape of the overall building, as opposed to the cacophony of distracting muntin and column patterns that were shown in the previous submission. This quieter east façade can now provide the foil the Board recommended for the pavilion. With some clarification and refinements to the “art wall” and pending review of the proposed materials, colors and details, staff strongly recommends support of this new design direction.

Pavilion

The applicant has presented three distinctly different pavilion designs, designated Options 4, 6 and 8. As the BAR noted previously, the pavilion is an opportunity to construct an iconic sculptural architectural folly at this key location on the waterfront and is an opportunity for substantial artistic expression that should not be wasted. At the same time, it must still be functional and integrate the residential units above the retail base into a single building form.

While staff finds that all three options generally comply with the standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and Waterfront Area Plan, staff believes that pavilion Option 8 (Sheet A15) has, perhaps, the best chance to provide both the flexibility for the competing uses inside and uniformity for architectural expression on the exterior. It is also potentially the most “dynamic building that is modern and Chuhily-esque,” as expressed by one Board member.

West Building (west elevation)

Based on the discussion at the last work session, the applicant has made a few refinements to the rear (west) elevation of the west building. These include variation in the brick color and depth to emphasize paired windows, belt courses that align with adjacent cornices, and additional windows. These organize and give scale to the large wall by providing a base, middle and top, and enliven the rear elevation of the building. The applicant has also provided much better renderings of the west elevation that explain the substantial modeling of the wall and the depth of the wall offsets (Sheet A2) which are sculpturally rich, viewed in perspective from the north and south. The west side will never be viewed the way it is represented in the direct elevation drawing, and the dashed lines on Sheet A1 show that the majority of this elevation will be screened from the west by existing adjacent structures.

The brick color in the rendering remains unaltered from what was previously shown to (and rejected by) the BAR at the last hearing. Staff has asked the applicant to provide material samples to the Board at the hearing so that the Board can better evaluate the color selections for both buildings.

III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal as shown in this application generally satisfies the requirements set forth in the *Potomac River Vicinity Height District and Additional Standards*, as well as the *BAR Design Guidelines* which in this case are only advisory. Staff recommends that the Board find:

1. That the refinements to the west elevation of the west building are appropriate;
2. That the design direction for the architectural character of the east building is appropriate, with further refinements of architectural details, particularly at the north elevation; and
3. That the design direction for architectural character of pavilion Option 8 is appropriate, with further refinements to the design.

STAFF

Mary Catherine Collins, Historic Preservation Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 – *Approved minutes from the work session on November 19, 2014*
- 2 – *Supporting Materials for BAR Concept Review Work Session #4*

ATTACHMENT 1

APPROVED MINUTES FROM THE WORK SESSION ON NOVEMBER 19, 2014

SPEAKERS

Ken Wire with McGuire Woods LLP, introduced himself as the land use attorney for the applicant and introduced the architect, Mike Hickok, with Hickok Cole Architects. Mr. Wire thanked the Board for their time and reminded them that the applicant is not asking for final approval but for direction, so that everyone could be excited about the project. He stated that he would like to divide the discussion into four parts: 1. discussion of the site constraints, 2. the site layout, 3. the west building, and 4. the east building.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Site Plan

Mr. Wire described the site constraints resulting from a 1983 settlement agreement with the federal government that restricted the buildable area in exchange for significant open space. The architect explained the necessary grade changes on the site to accommodate the flood plain requirements.

Ms. Miller inquired why the buildings were not aligned with the street, as the Board had suggested at the previous work session. She asked if a hotel is required in the Waterfront Plan and why it was located on the west parcel. Mr. Wire explained that the plan does not limit a hotel to the east parcel and it is a permitted use. The proposed hotel will have approximately 115 rooms.

Mr. Neale expounded on Ms. Miller's comments, stating that he believed the west building should be in alignment with the street, to create an historically appropriate block face. He suggested that the residential units be continued along the entire street face and stated that the designers needed a different iconography of architecture for this building.

Mr. von Senden said it was unfortunate that the drawings do not show the townhouses to the south. He suggested that the applicant consider flipping the angle of the west building the opposite way to function as a transition from rigid linearity of Old Town to the curvature of Oronoco Bay. He found that the proposed west building would generally be successful with some further refinements.

Mr. Carlin found the site composition to be strong and supported a hotel in its proposed location. He thanked the applicant for explaining the rationale of the proposed building plan angles and appreciated that the open space would face Founders Park as opposed to the Dalton Wharf parking lot behind the building. He concurred with Mr. von Senden's comments to align with the block face on the southeast corner and expressed a preference for a series of 90 degree step-backs rather than the proposed angles. Furthermore, he wanted to see the entrance to the hotel be open and highly visible.

Chairman Fitzgerald said that the applicant had made a good case for breaking from the block face due to grade issues and the result would lessen the canyon-like feel of N Union Street on this block.

Ms. Roberts encouraged the applicant to include other interpretive themes, including women's history and Native American history related to West's Point.

Ms. Finnigan expressed hesitation with the interpretative panels and emphasized that the sense of place is more important than historical facts on a panel. She wanted to see the location of West's Point on the ground, regardless of where that may be within or outside of the building.

Ms. Miller asked if all of the environmental enhancements shown will be funded by the developer, to which Mr. Wire responded: "if we show it, we are building it".

West Building

Mr. Hickok, the architect for the project, introduced the west building located at 500 N Union Street and showed the Board updated renderings. He explained that they had reduced the penthouse height since the last hearing.

Ms. Miller asked for an absolute building height, which the applicant responded was 80' (66 feet of building and 14 feet of penthouse or mechanical).

Ms. Finnigan emphasized the visibility of the west elevation, stating that it was very plain.

Chairman Fitzgerald found that the rear may not appear as massive as he initially thought, but thought the brick should be lighter in color.

Mr. Carlin asked the applicant to explore other brick colors and texture and to consider the dimensional changes on the west elevation using various widths of brick. He felt the brick and mortar colors must be warm and characteristic of Old Town and not dark and severe, as shown in the rendering.

Chairman Fitzgerald seconded the sentiments of Mr. Carlin, stating that the dark brick was the biggest problem with this building.

Mr. von Senden observed that the applicant has not truly shown eye-level views or the pedestrian experience, as their rendering capture more of the building than one would actually see. He felt it was important that the applicant show the buildings adjacent to the project site in the next review. Regarding the west elevation, he suggested that it be designed to look less like the "back of a building" and that perhaps the top could be further developed and differentiated from the lower stories. Overall he found that the west building was successful.

Mr. Carlin stated that simplicity is good and that he particularly liked the angled windows in the center of the east facade. He said that he wants this building to have a successful architectural handshake with the Founders Park neighborhood.

Ms. Finnigan suggested that the applicant incorporate different heights or glass on the west elevation as they had done on the east façade. She prefers visual coherence on all sides of the building.

Ms. Roberts agreed with Ms. Finnigan and asked where the loading dock would be located. The applicant described the interior loading layout.

Ms. Miller said that she likes the east façade but that the west is institutional and lacked identity. She stated that she would like to see more interplay of light on the west elevation and suggested more glass or balconies. She agreed with the other Board members regarding the color of the brick. Lastly, she said that there needs to be more symmetry or logic to the angles on both the east and west buildings.

East Building

Mr. Hickok presented updated renderings on the east building and made himself available to answer questions from the Board.

Chairman Fitzgerald thought that the schematic of the east building, with glass facing the water, was a good idea but found the building really needs to be brick on the west side.

Ms. Miller said that it would be nice to see glass on the north side of the building, as this would be very visible for travelers arriving from Washington, DC or Georgetown. The applicant agreed, stating that this building is a transition between Old Town and North Old Town.

Mr. Neale reiterated that this building sits on the seam of Old Town and North Old Town and suggested the building be articulated as two buildings joined at the hip: one with a north front and the other with a south.

Mr. von Senden found that brick would be most appropriate on the south and west elevations, with the walls predominately glass on the north and east. He told the applicant that the west building was more successful than the east because of its formality that reads as two bookends with a differentiated center portion. He warned the applicant not to be arbitrary in the articulation, which becomes repetitive on a 20-24' width. He found the continuous projecting cornice to be too similar to the Kennedy Center, to which Chairman Fitzgerald, Ms. Miller, and Ms. Finnigan agreed, expressing concern that the overhanging roof eave visually dominates the building.

Mr. Neale found improvement in the vertical rhythm shown, as opposed to the horizontal massing shown at the last hearing. However, he said that the frames do not break down the mass well enough and called for more masonry and less glass within the wickets. He told the applicant if they go this route, that a masonry base is needed so that the walls do not appear to float or that it is on stilts. He suggested the applicant use colors and fenestration patterns to differentiate the building units. He felt that the applicant does not need to use traditional architecture, but abstract qualities of Old Town architecture to instill character and reduce redundancy.

Mr. Carlin expressed preference for figure 9 shown in the staff report and page 17 in the application package. He, too, felt that there should be ample visual masonry support for the bay windows and that the building order could be reflected in the cornice, through breaks or heights.

Chairman Fitzgerald summarized the Board's findings thus far, stating the mass should be broken into modules and to add brick. He further clarified that the frames could not simply be clad in brick in their current size and shape.

Mr. Carlin asked the applicant to abandon the strange angles and to consider stepping the building wall back in 90 degree angles. He wanted the applicant to invest in Alexandria's grid and demonstrate the same cohesion on the east building that he sees in the west building.

Mr. von Senden found that the mass and floor plan do not work and that these two items should be restudied. He found the reason the frames are suitable on the Torpedo Factory is because that building is formal and symmetrical, whereas the proposed east building at 501 N Union Street, is not. He said that formality, per the Alexandria buildings of genuine architectural merit discussion, is what was missing here.

Pavilion

Ms. Roberts liked the sloped pavilion roof and found it a subtle reference to the shed roofs of Old Town. She also appreciated the bay rhythm on the north side and found it overall a good modern take on the abstract character of Alexandria architecture. She felt that the pavilion will stand out regardless of the design of the east façade of 501 N Union Street.

Mr. von Senden said that he did not mind the sloped roof and found it most successful in the aerial perspective. He felt that at first glance it appeared to a Brutalist architectural style and looked like a house of cards supporting a very heavy roof. He told the architect they had good goals, but had not achieved them yet and suggested a more dynamic building that is modern and Chuhily-esque (referencing Dale Chuhily's free form, blown glass art).

Ms. Miller agreed with both comments made, but felt the pavilion was visually lost against the east building and preferred a foil approach.

Ms. Finnigan felt that of all of the elements, the pavilion had evolved the least since the last work session. She said that she was not opposed to a slant in the roof, but found the proposed to be too heavy for the building, focusing on the depth of the eaves and width of the fascia. She liked the term "sculptural" and told the applicant she wants to be wowed by the pavilion design at the next work session.

Mr. Neale said, by definition, a pavilion should sit in contrast to what is around it. He was okay with the white color palette on the pavilion and found the hyphen a good start, but not complete. He thought a more iconic form could be applied, but found that the current proposal with refinement, was good too. He felt this was a focal point in the park and a foil approach would make this more successful.

Chairman Fitzgerald stated that he was not convinced of the slanted roof, as it was too reminiscent of a 1960's design.

Mr. Carlin found the roof overhand to be too heavy handed and said it should be cut back. He suggested a primarily glass and steel structure that is divorced from the condo building. He wanted to see more of a hyphen between the buildings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bert Ely, co-chair of Friends of the Alexandria Waterfront, stated that the proposed buildings do not have a good handshake with Old Town and give a false representation of Old Town when viewed from the river. He found that the Torpedo Factory and Ford Plan were an unfortunate point of reference as they are not representative of Old Town architecture. He summarized by stating that the applicant should return to the drawing board.

Van Van Fleet, president of the Old Town Civic Association, stated that he found the proposal was too large and lacked connectivity to Old Town. It reminded him of the failures of Urban Renewal. He encouraged the Board and applicant to not use Edmonson Plaza or the window replacement at 100 Quay Street as justification for glass on this site, as the view from the river is important. He, too, felt the applicant should return to the drawing board.

Bob Wood, a resident at 711 Potomac Street stated that function and form must be complementary, especially with the pavilion. He felt that the flat roof gave it a look that is starkly different from Old Town. He suggested the applicant use the pier to help tell the history of the site.

Steve Mutty, a resident at 300 Madison Street and representative from Planning District 1 on the Waterfront Commission, but speaking on his own behalf, stated that the proposal should not have brick and should be contemporary and contrast with the historic architecture of Old Town.

Elaine Johnston, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation (HAF) stated that the proposal was not compatible with the historic district, nor with Alexandria buildings of genuine architectural merit. She referred the Board to her letter on behalf of HAF.

Ted Pulliam, representing the Alexandria Archaeological Commission that wrote the Alexandria History section of the Waterfront Plan, stated that he would like the Board to make a recommendation to include the Archaeological Commission in future refinements of the Interpretative Plan. He found that the plan submitted by the applicant was a good start, but agreed with Mr. Wire and Ms. Finnigan that the 1749 shoreline boundary and historic West's Point should be articulated in the site plan, regardless of whether it is located inside a building or outdoors. He reminded the Board of the significance of the 1748 surveyor's map of West's Point which was drawn by George Washington at age 16. He seconded Ms. Roberts' desire to include the first European landowner of Alexandria, Ms. Brent, on the site. Mr. Pulliam summarized, saying the proposal should celebrate the origins and firsts of Alexandria, which cannot be done through mid-20th century architecture. He recommended the applicant study 110 S Union Street or the map in Council Chambers as a successful example of appropriate architecture that includes peaked roofs.

Kathryn Papp, a resident at 504 Cameron Street, stated that flat roofs are California Modern and do not work here. She reiterated the applicant should return to the drawing board and that the view from the river needs to be taken seriously. She suggested the applicant break apart the buildings to provide walkways to the water and look less detached from Old Town.

BOARD SUMMARY

The Chair recommended that the Board take a straw poll on the site and its historic interpretation, the west building design, the east building, and the pavilion so that the applicant would receive specific design direction for each portion.

Mr. Neale made a motion to restudy the massing of the west building, which was seconded by Ms. Miller. The motion failed 2 - 5.

Mr. Carlin made a substitute motion to follow staff's recommendation for the west building which included the angled site plan with a restudy of specific details, such as brick articulation on the west façade and detailing of the windows on the west and east facades. Ms. Roberts seconded the motion which passed, 5-1-1, with Mr. Neale voting against and Ms. Miller abstaining.

Chairman Fitzgerald observed from the discussion that the Board seemed unanimous that the east building required restudy. Mr. von Senden made a motion to restudy the east building organization within the confines of the consent decree, in particular the floor plan, and that the applicant bring an alternative massing plan to the next hearing, in addition to a restudy of the façade materials and architectural character. Mr. Neale seconded the motion and it passed unanimously, 7-0.

Chairman Fitzgerald asked the Board to provide a vote of confidence regarding the proposed low-sloped roof of the pavilion. Mr. Neale made a motion that the applicant restudy the pavilion so that it be expressed in a more iconic way referencing Alexandria's heritage. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Mr. Carlin made a substitute motion that the applicant restudy the pavilion, making it predominately glass and steel, scale back the roof overhang, and provide multiple roof forms at the next hearing. Ms. Finnigan seconded the motion, which failed on a vote 2-4-1, with Ms. Miller abstaining.

Mr. von Senden then moved that the applicant restudy the pavilion completely, to which Chairman Fitzgerald responded that seemed obvious based on the Board's earlier discussion and that the applicant needed more direction. The motion was not seconded.

The Chairman called a vote on the proposed slanted roof for the pavilion, asking who was in favor. Ms. Roberts and Mr. von Senden voted in favor of the sloped roof; Mr. Carlin, Ms. Finnigan, and Chairman Fitzgerald voted in opposition; and Ms. Miller and Mr. Neale abstained. The proposed sloped roof on the pavilion failed on a vote of 2-3-2. The majority of Board members did not favor the proposed slanted roof and found that alternative roof forms should be presented with the restudy of the pavilion.

501 UNION

ALEXANDRIA, VA

BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW SUBMISSION
DECEMBER 16, 2014

ROONEY
PROPERTIES

4075 WILSON BOULEVARD, SUITE 650
ARLINGTON, VA 22203


CITYINTERESTS

2900 K STREET NW, SUITE 401
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

Hickok Cole

ARCHITECTS

1023 31ST STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20007


WRT

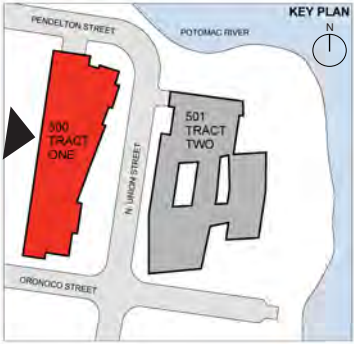
1700 MARKET STREET, SUITE 2800
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103

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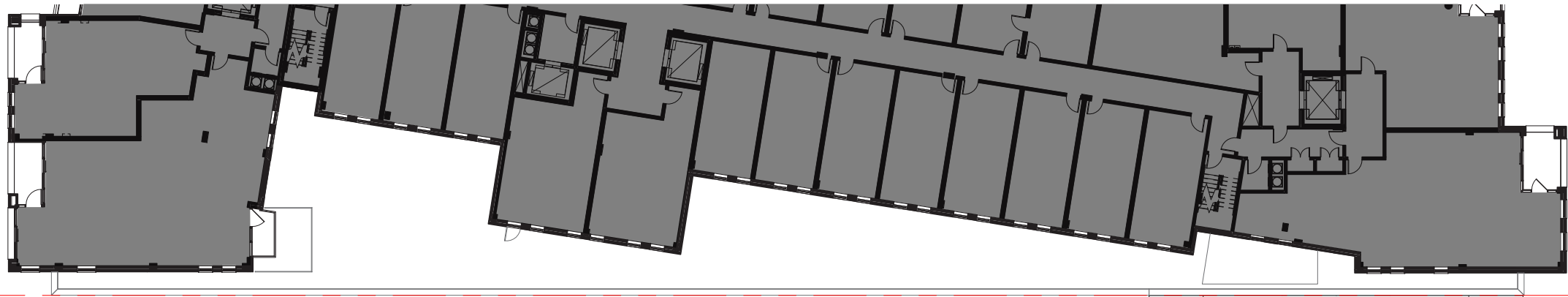
WEST BUILDING WEST ELEVATION



METAL

BRICK

ADJACENT
STRUCTURES
(DASHED WHITE)



RESIDENTIAL
NORTH TOWER

HOTEL

RESIDENTIAL
SOUTH TOWER

WEST BUILDING

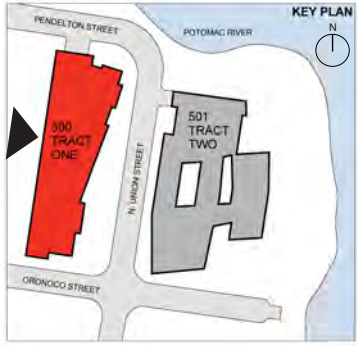
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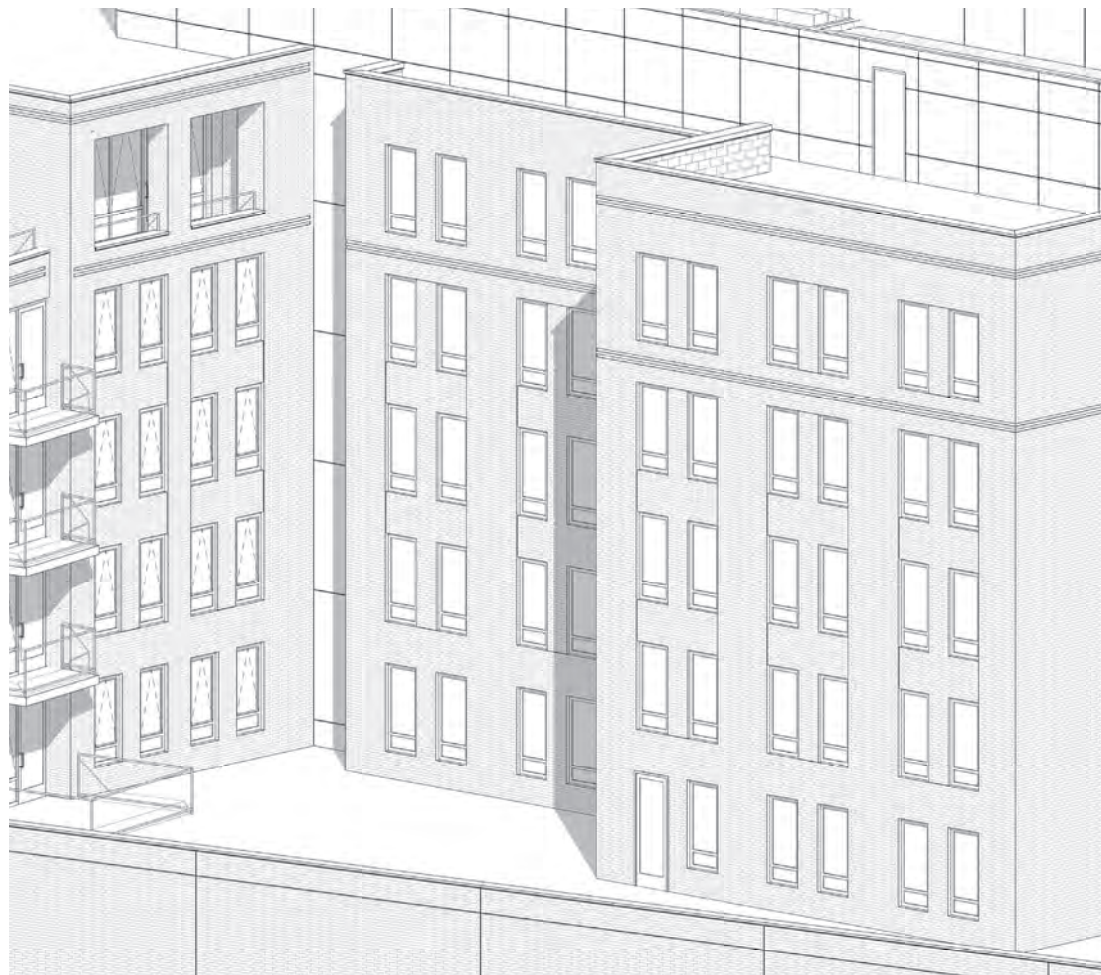
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A1





WEST BUILDING WEST ELEVATION



ENLARGED AXONOMETRIC "B"



ENLARGED AXONOMETRIC "A"

WEST BUILDING

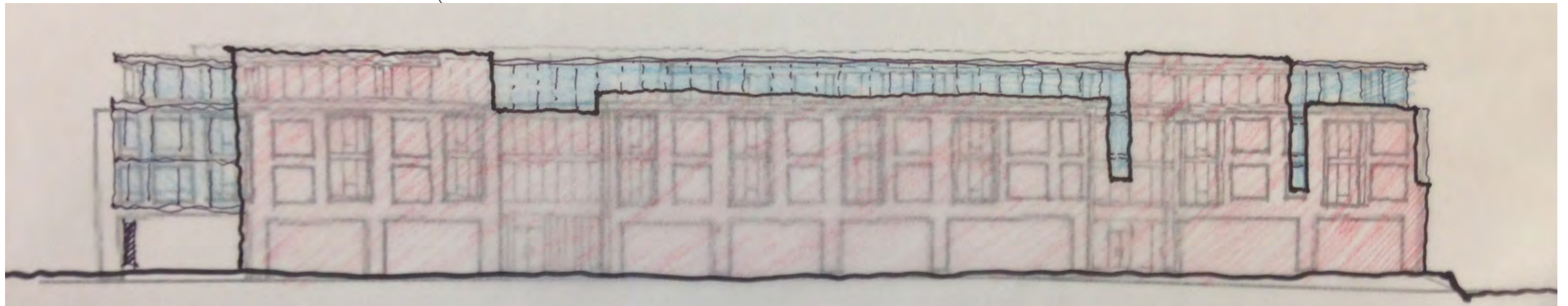
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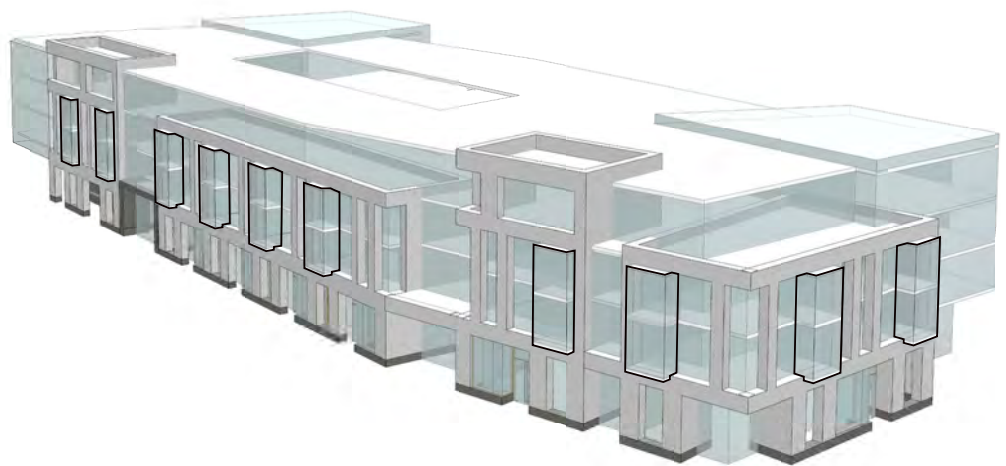
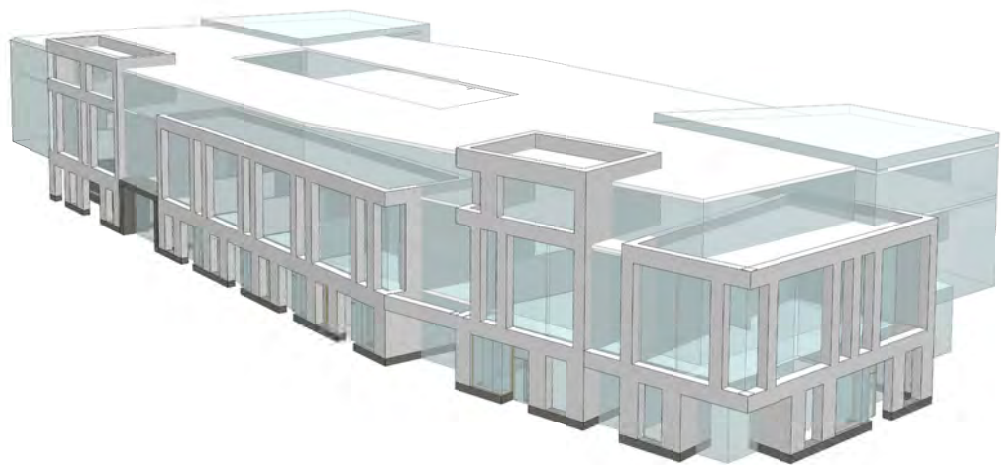
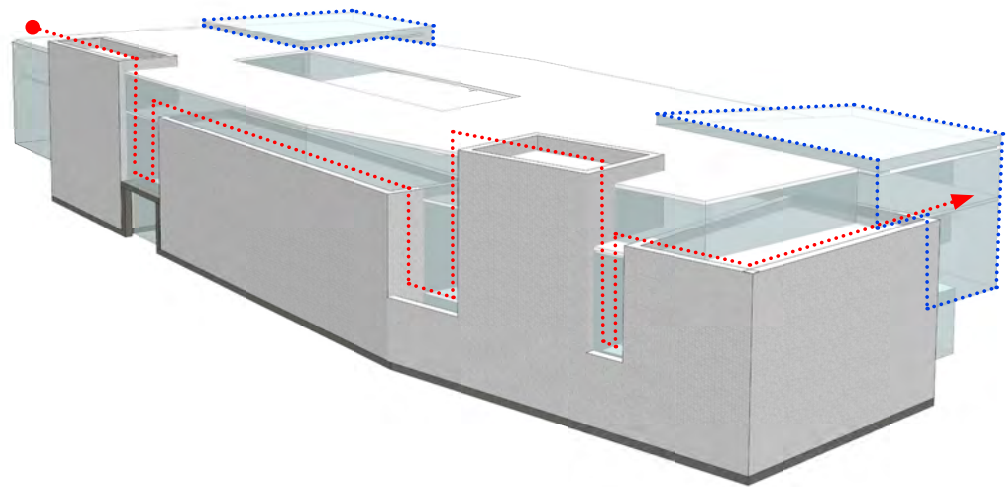
A2





EAST BUILDING

PROCESS SOUTHWEST PERSPECTIVE



EAST BUILDING

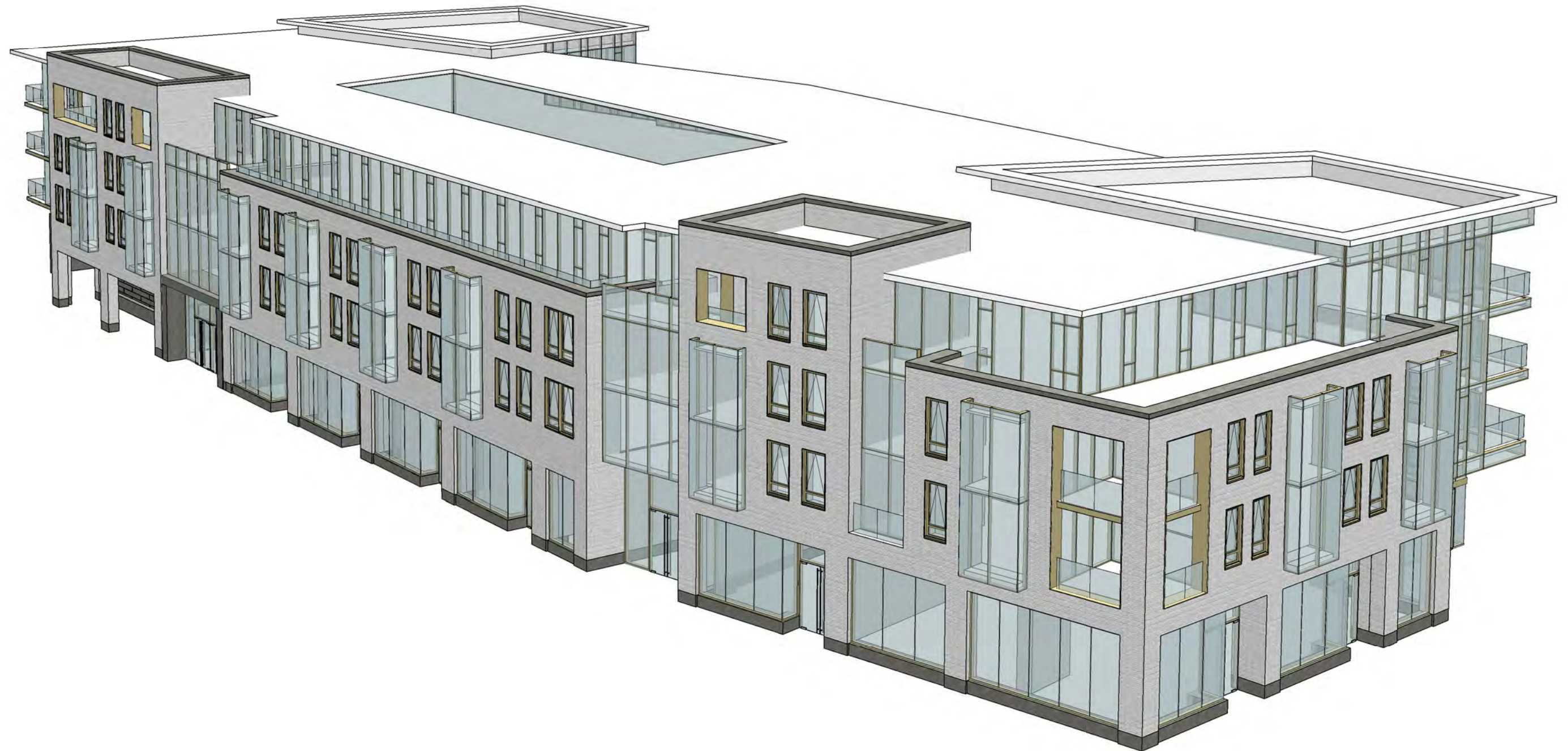
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A4





EAST BUILDING

EAST BUILDING SOUTHWEST PERSPECTIVE



EAST BUILDING

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EAST BUILDING RESIDENTIAL ENTRY



EAST BUILDING

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EAST BUILDING NORTHWEST PERSPECTIVE



EAST BUILDING

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Alexandria, Virginia

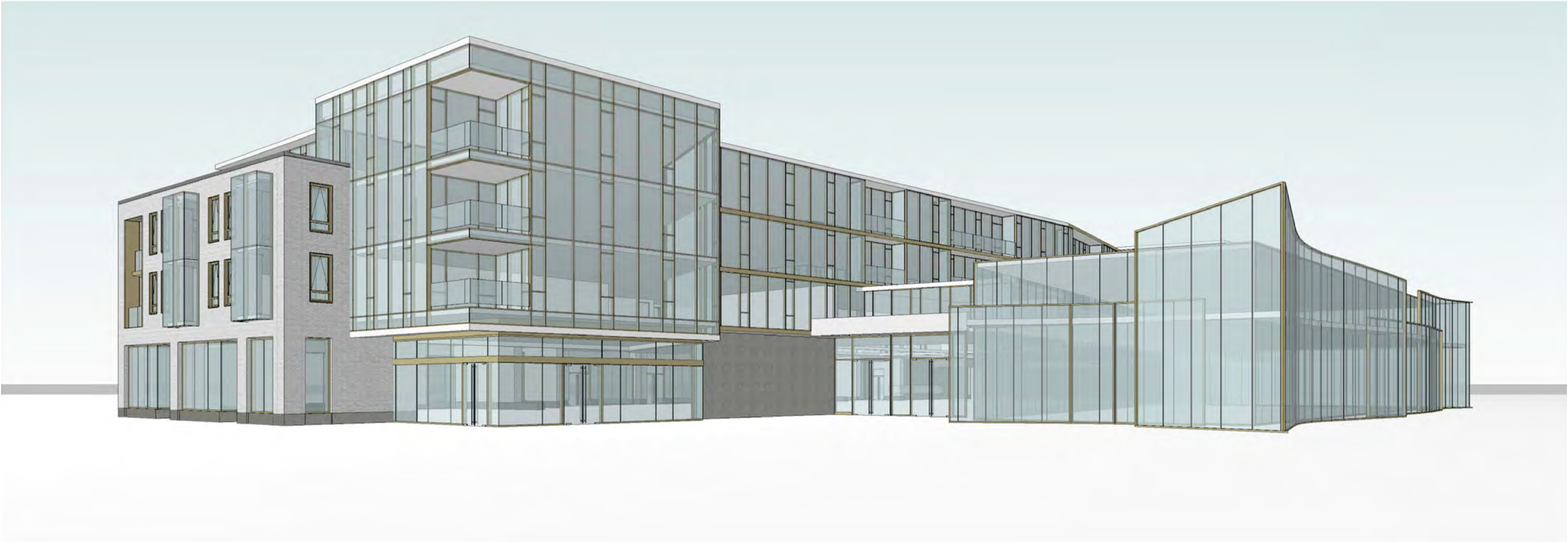
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A8



EAST BUILDING SOUTHEAST PERSPECTIVE



EAST BUILDING

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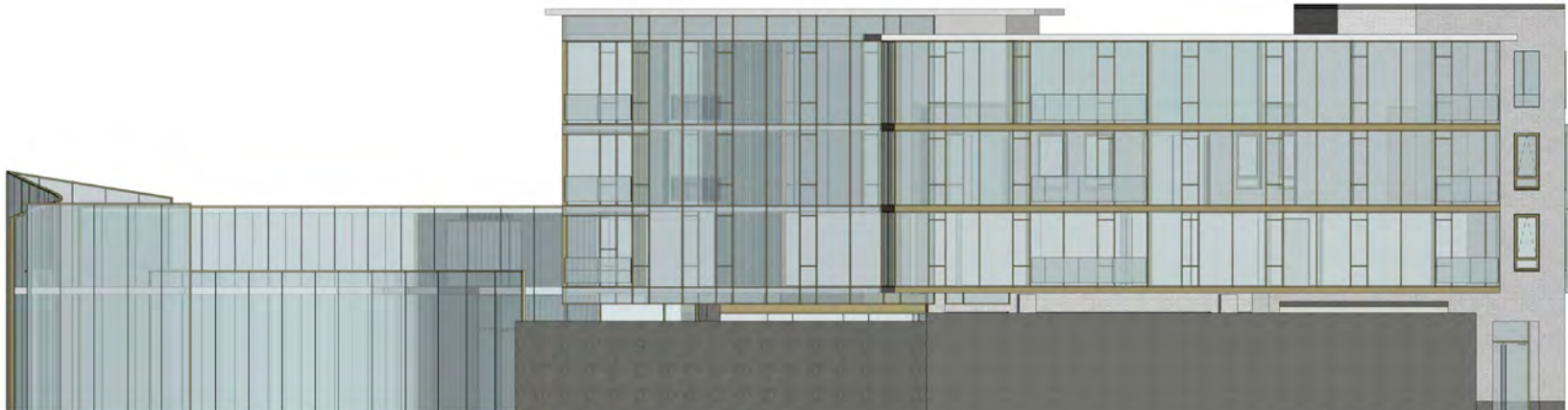
EAST BUILDING AXON & WEST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

EAST BUILDING

EAST BUILDING NORTH & SOUTH ELEVATION



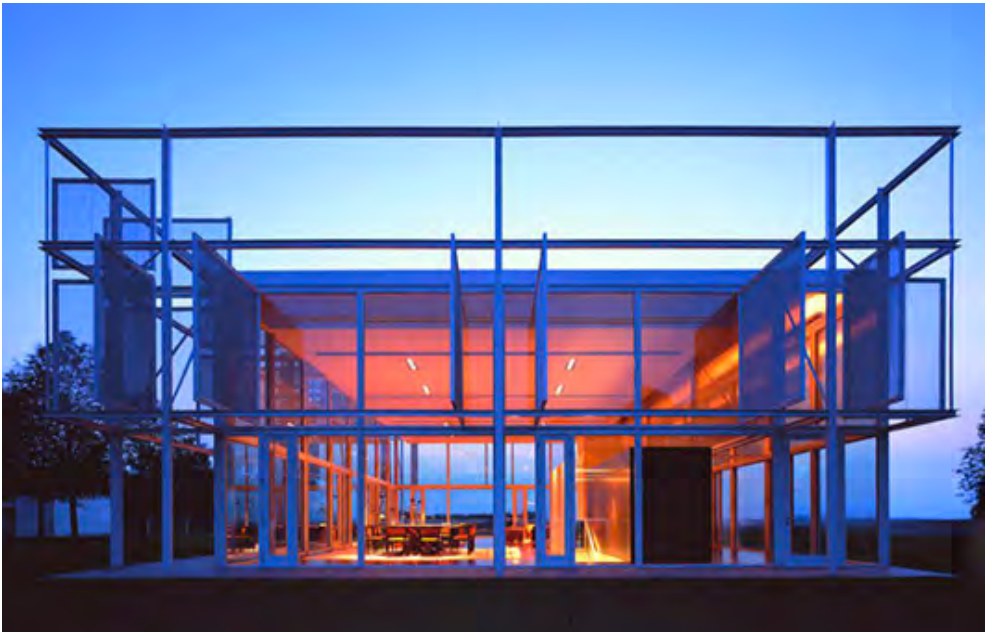
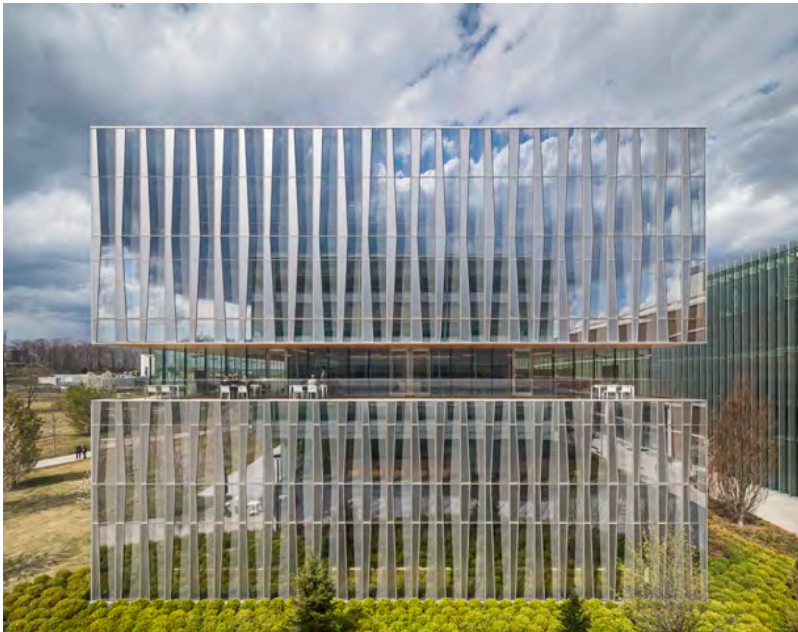
NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

EAST BUILDING

PAVILION PRECEDENTS

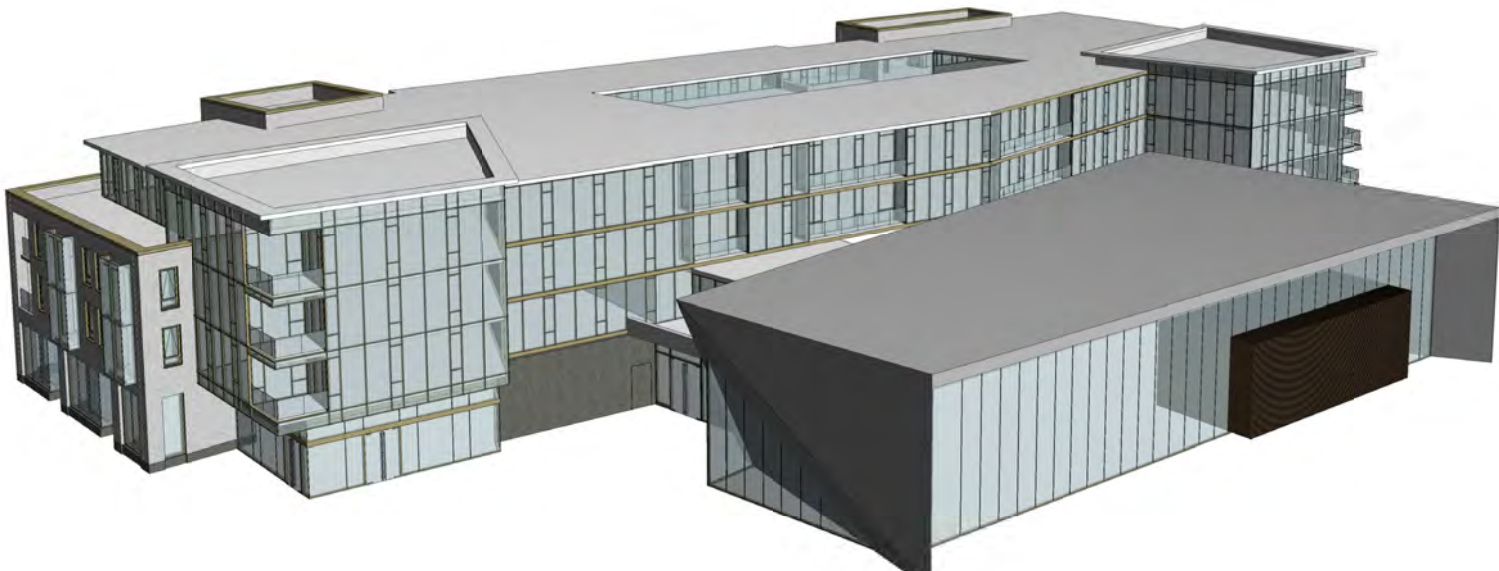


PAVILION

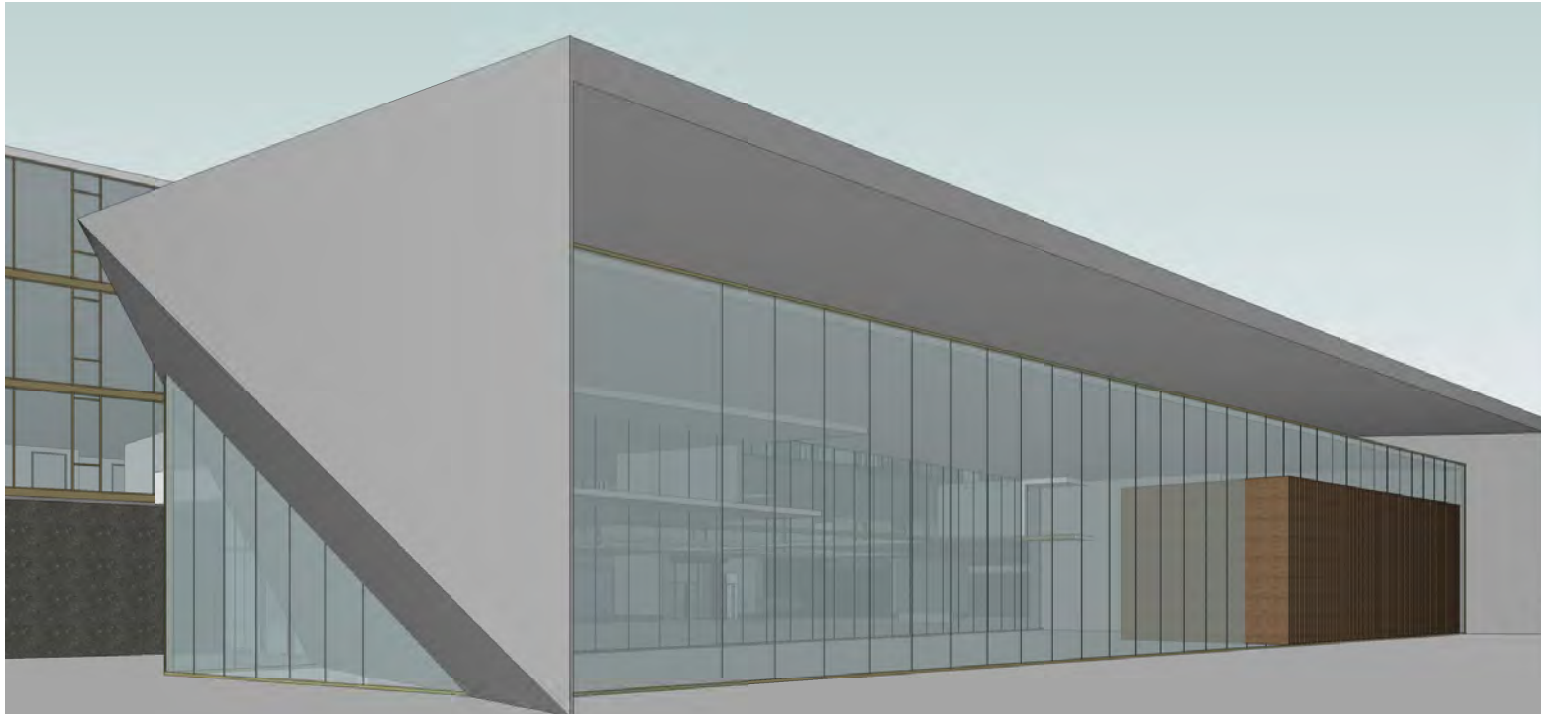
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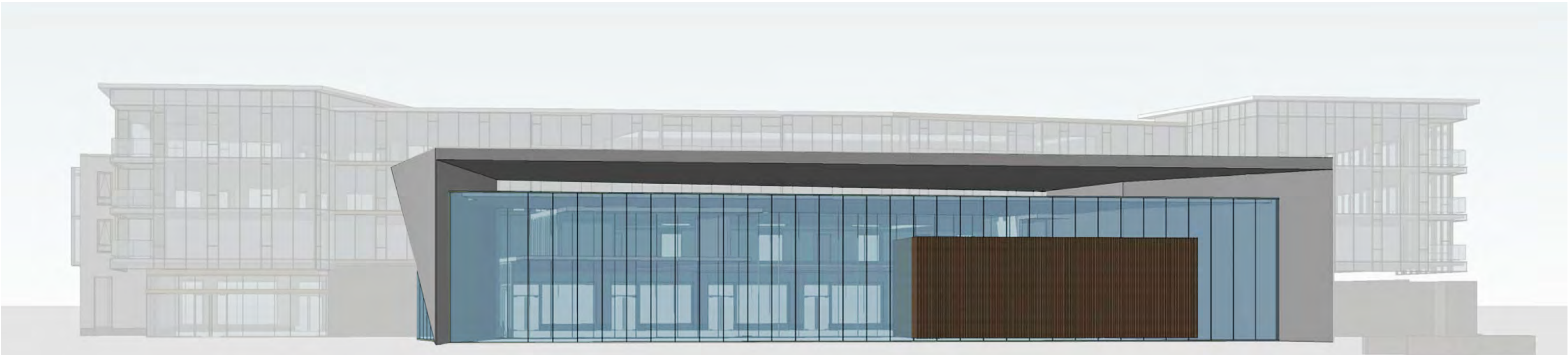
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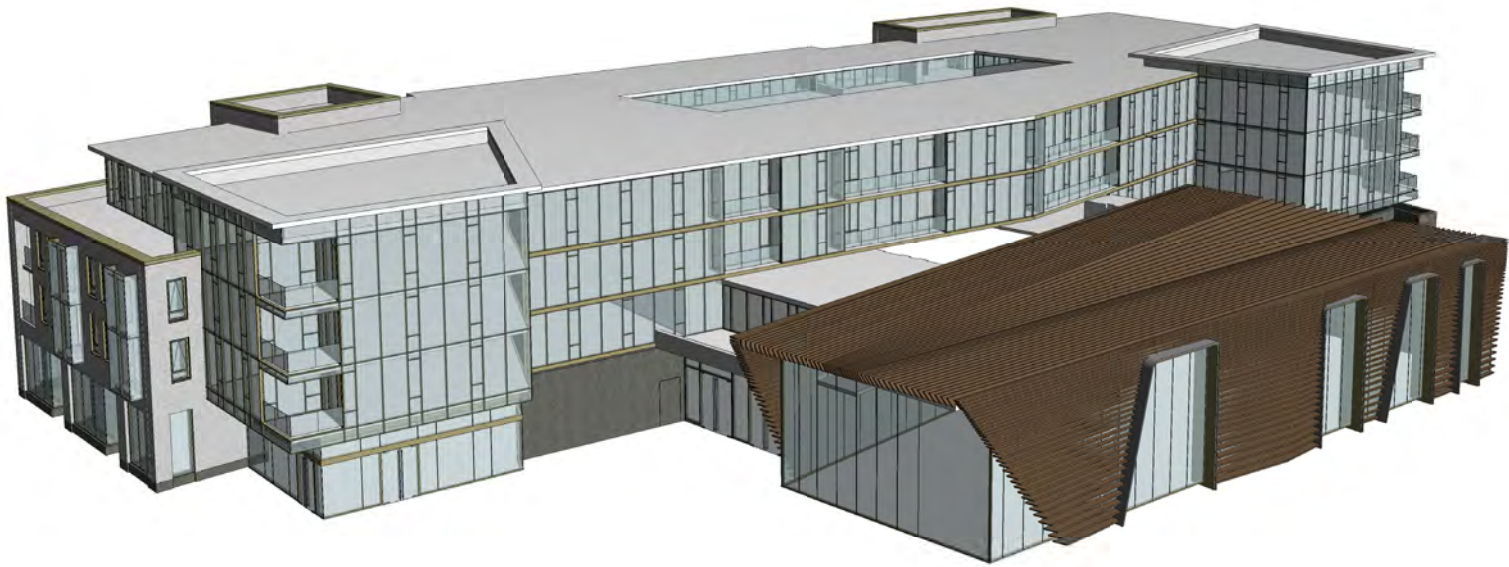


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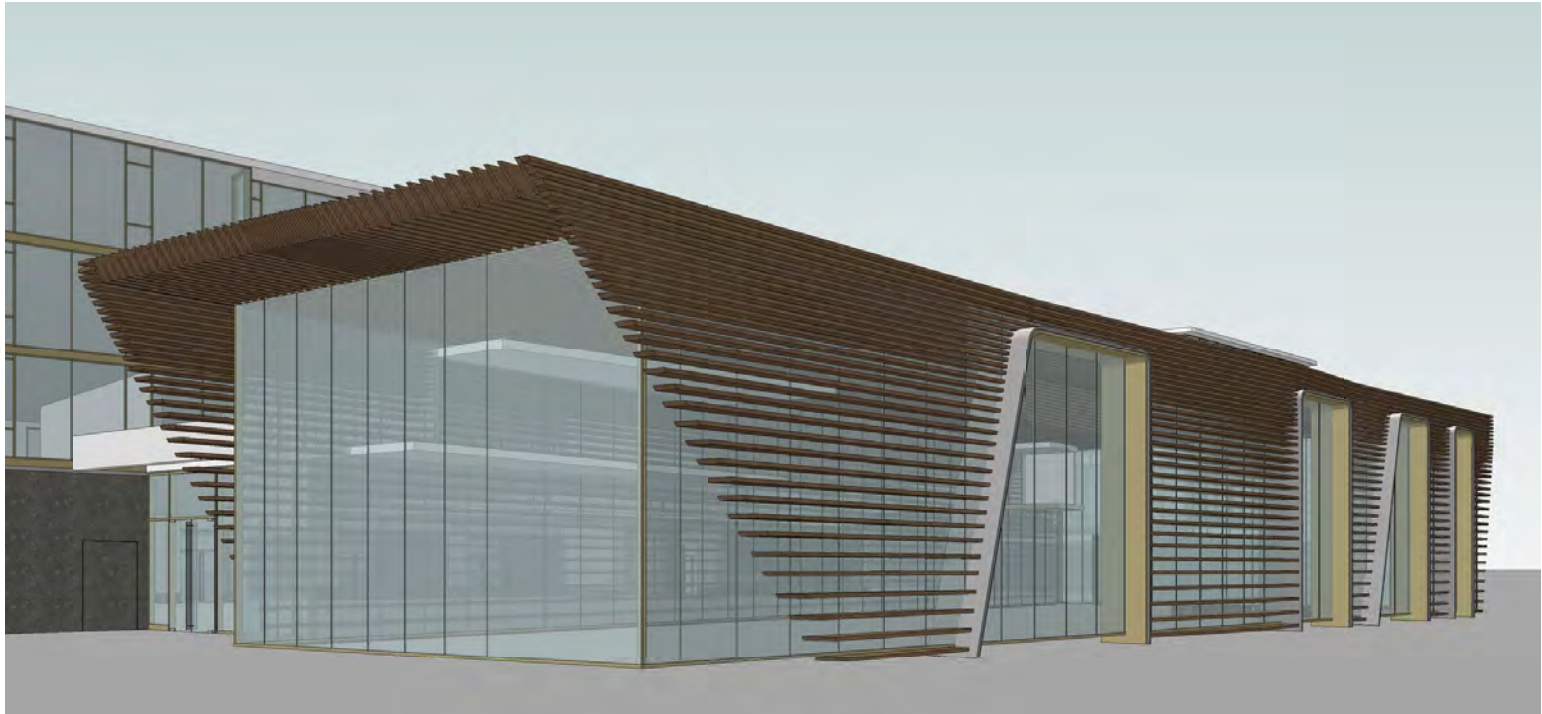


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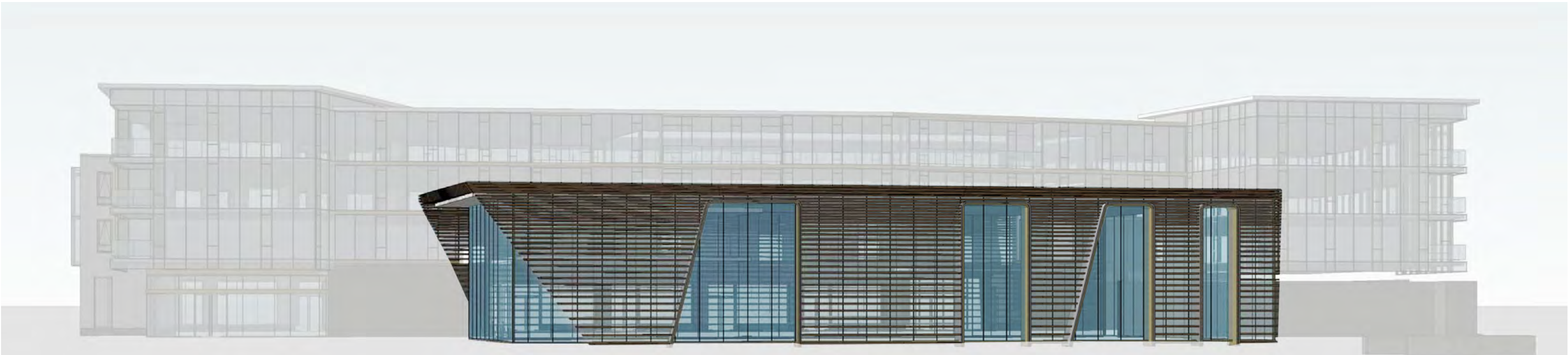
PAVILION



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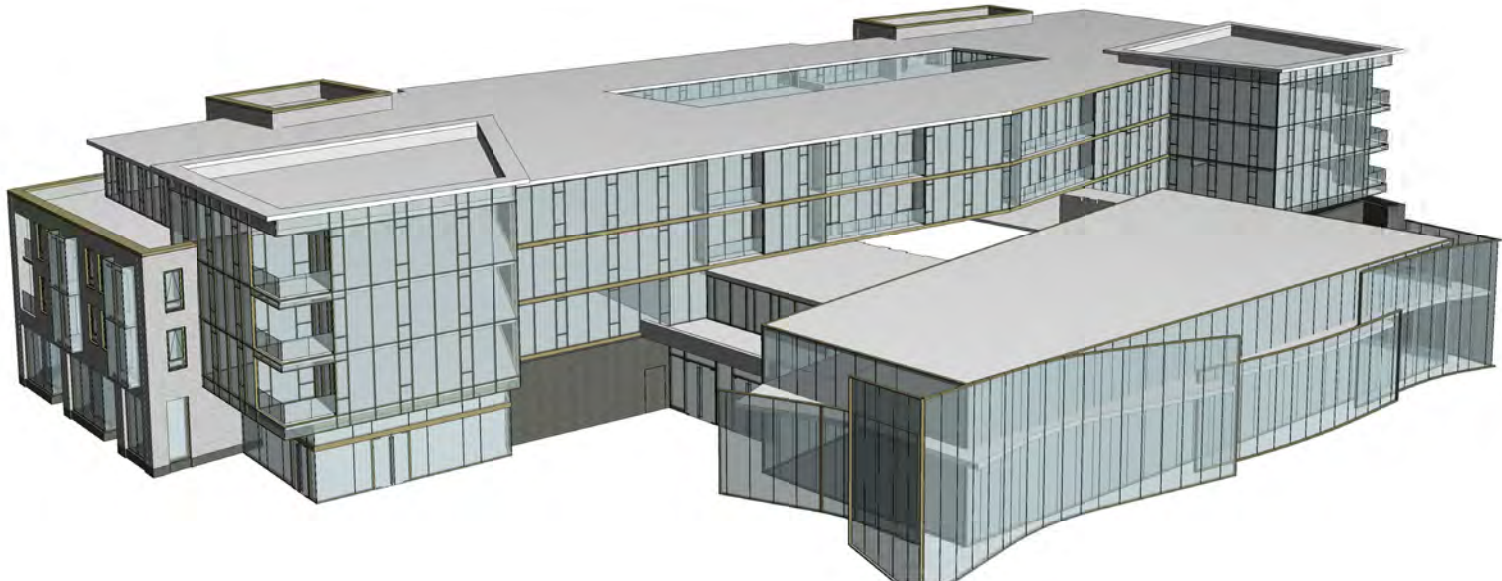


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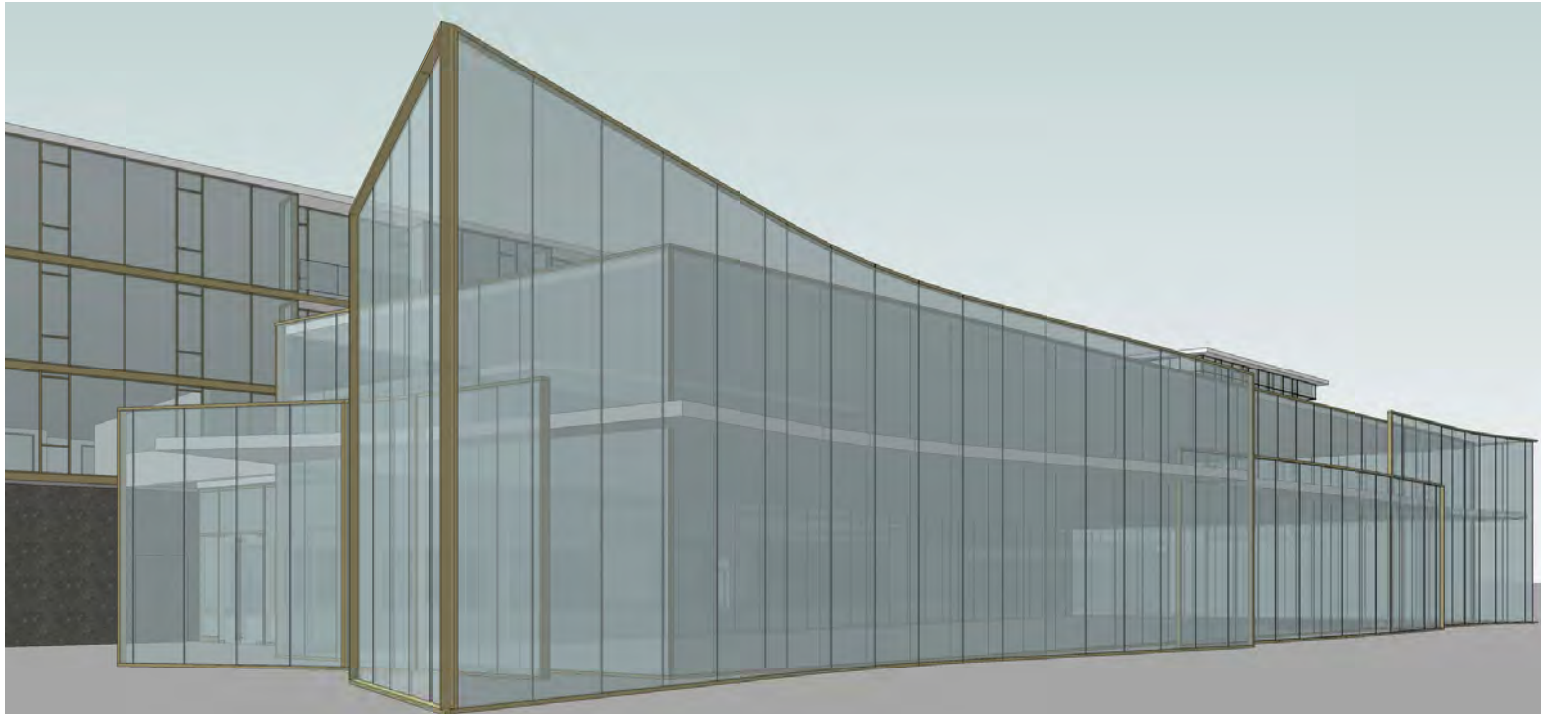


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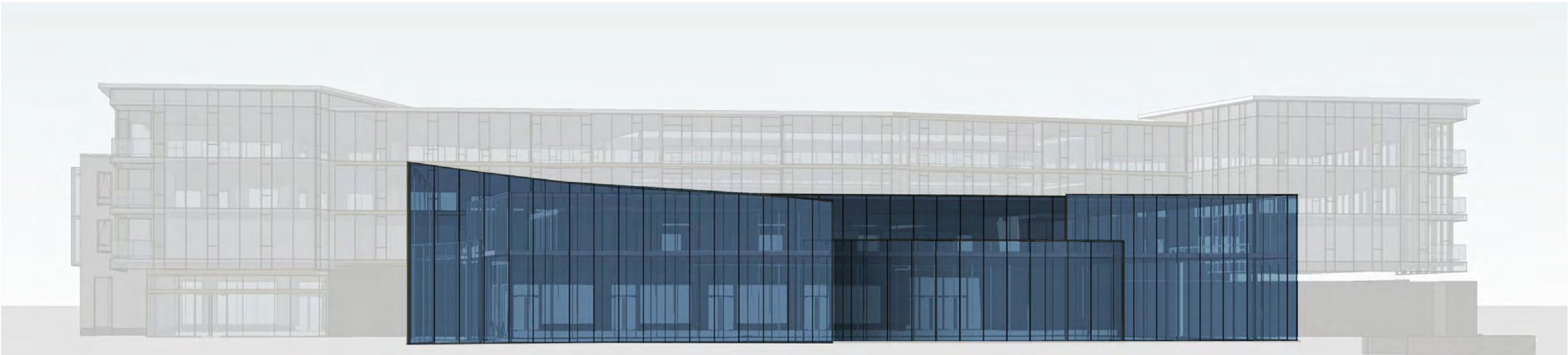
PAVILION



SOUTH EAST_BIRDS EYE VIEW



SOUTH EAST_PERSPECTIVE VIEW



EAST_PERSPECTIVE VIEW

PAVILION

END

EAST BUILDING

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