

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 15, 2017

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

FROM: HISTORIC PRESERVATION STAFF

SUBJECT: 1ST CONCEPT REVIEW OF 400 NORTH WASHINGTON STREET
BAR CASE # 2017-00064

BOARD ACTION: Deferred

By unanimous consent, the OHAD Board of Architectural Review voted to defer BAR Case #2017-00064 for further restudy. Mr. Sprinkle recused himself.

BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board generally supported the proposed direction for the overall height, scale and massing but wanted further refinement of the architectural character and additional refinement of the massing in the interior of the project (as visible from Princess Street). The refinement to the massing could be a physical reduction in the massing or a visual change in how the massing is perceived (such as transitioning to a porch typology rather than more solid building). In general, the Board supported the North Columbus Street townhouse approach and the overall open space/porosity of the site. There was no clear consensus on the preferred scheme, as some members liked 2B while others preferred the initial proposal that featured a prominent Georgian style building. The following are additional, though not necessarily unanimous, comments made by BAR members.

- Pursue a proud large main building, in the tradition of nearby large buildings such as the Cotton Factory (515 N Washington Street). Emphasize that the main entrance to the project is a more special building on the site and should be treated as such, like a hotel or apartment building.
- Consider separating the main building on Washington Street more and increasing the size of the hyphens; a 14' setback may not be enough.
- Vary the height and size of the windows between building styles to give the impression of a variety of floor heights.
- Those who preferred the originally proposed scheme with its central Georgian building recommended a lower, hipped form roof with a central elevation feature below a pediment or balustrade and suggested chimneys and other details to reduce the scale of the facade, such as stringcourses. Also, consider changing/lowering the windows at the top floor of the Georgian style building

section. The former Georgian building could also be reduced in width and still maintain its importance.

- Others preferred the scale and character of Alternate 2B, noting it was a quieter, background building that was based on a number of Victorian buildings historically found on Washington Street.
- Differentiate window sizes for the different building types to better express the different buildings and styles.
- The height of the entire roof, other than architectural features such as chimneys or a cupola, should stay below 50' on Washington Street.

SPEAKERS

Ken Wire, attorney for the applicant, introduced the project and responded to questions.

John Rust and Scott Fleming, project architects, gave a presentation and responded to questions.

Jerry Liang, Sunrise/applicant, was available for answering questions

Elaine Johnston, representing the Historic Alexandria Foundation, agreed with many aspects of the staff report and favored scheme 2B but wanted more open space on the north side and a front yard setback on Washington Street.

Bill Cromley, 426 North Columbus Street, generally supported the project but noted the scale was not small. He disagreed with the Washington Street Standards, advocating compatible contemporary design on Washington Street rather than historicism and noted that the selected design team was capable of good design.

Greg and Allison Ricketts, 420 North Washington Street, spoke in support and noted that the project should pick up design cues directly from the former Queen Anne style historic house on the site (the May House).

I. SUMMARY

Concept Review

The material before the Board is part of a BAR Concept Review for the redevelopment of the property at 400 North Washington Street and 413 and 417 North Columbus Street. The applicant is requesting concept review of a new multifamily assisted living building ranging from three to four stories in height that will have frontage on North Washington, Princess and North Columbus streets.

The Concept Review Policy was adopted by the two Boards of Architectural review in May 2000 and restated in December 2016. Concept Review is an optional, informal process at the beginning of a Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) application whereby the BAR provides the applicant, staff, the Planning Commission and the City Council with comments relating to the overall appropriateness of a project's height, scale, mass and general architectural character. The Board takes no formal action at the Concept Review stage. However, if, for instance, the Board believes that a building height or mass, or an area proposed for demolition, is not appropriate and would not be supported in the future, the applicant and staff should be advised as soon as

possible. This early step in the development review process is intended to minimize future architectural design conflicts between what is shown to the community and City Council during the DSUP approval and what the Board later finds architecturally appropriate under the criteria in Chapter 10 of the Zoning Ordinance and the BAR's adopted *Design Guidelines*.

The proposed DSUP project is tentatively scheduled for Planning Commission and City Council review in the fall of 2017 and the applicant will return to the Board for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for this project if that DSUP is approved.

As a reminder, many aspects of this development are not within the BAR's regulatory purview, such as the use, loading, trash and parking, and should not be considered by the Board during their deliberation about the appropriateness of the proposed design. The Planning Commission and City Council will consider the zoning aspects of the project. The BAR's purview in this concept review work session is limited to providing guidance on height, scale, mass and general architectural character.

History

The existing office building at 400 North Washington Street, a three-story Colonial Revival brick building, was approved for new construction by the BAR on **July 27, 1960**, and the designer was William Vosbeck, local Alexandria architect. An earlier scheme was denied because it was "inappropriate and not sufficiently colonial in design and appearance." The postmodern addition to the north, 414 North Washington Street, was approved by the BAR on **February 6, 1980**, and designed by Walter Brown, architect. An earlier scheme for the addition was "disapproved as detracting from the genuine historic buildings on Washington Street."

Historically there were two prominent and large houses on the lots fronting Washington Street with the corner house featuring a broad porch and a turret. One of these houses on the site constructed in the late 19th-century can be seen in Figure 1, which shows the architectural features including a projecting bay, arched windows, a curving tower element and intricate brickwork. The west side currently has two historic dwellings at 420 and 428 North Washington Street. For context, the east side 400 block of North Washington Street includes a number of historic dwellings, both freestanding and attached, exhibiting a high degree of architectural refinement reflecting the prominence of this street.



Figure 1. Historic photograph, circa 1950, showing one of these houses historically located on project site. The middle house (420 North Washington St) remains in the same form. (Provided to applicant by Allison Ricketts).

Although there are two vacant lots currently on North Columbus Street, there were historically two substantial freestanding houses, each with side yards and projecting front bays, on these lots. These townhouses were constructed circa 1905 and were demolished in 1961. The 400 block of North Columbus Street has a number of late 19th- and early 20th-century two- and three-story townhouses that retain a high level of historic integrity.

Permit to Demolish

The applicant will also be requesting a Permit to Demolish in the future for demolition of the existing 1960 building and its 1980 postmodern addition. While the building and addition were approved by the Board of Architectural Review and both are in the Colonial Revival tradition, based on a preliminary review staff does not believe that any of the criteria related to a Permit to Demolish are met. Although staff considers some of the 20th-century buildings on Washington Street to be noteworthy and significant as examples of Alexandria's response to the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and to the early preservation movement in America, staff does not find that this particular building possesses architectural, historic or cultural significance. Should any BAR members express concern regarding the proposed future request for a Permit to Demolish, it is recommended that these concerns be raised now.

General Analysis of Plans and Further Study

The BAR's *Design Guidelines* only require that new buildings be compatible with nearby buildings of historic merit and do not mandate the use of historic styles for new construction. However, they do state that where new buildings recall historic building styles, that the

architectural details used throughout the building be consistent with that same style and that the building should not be a slavish replica of any particular building in the district. The Washington Street Standards and Guidelines further dictate that "...the design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings shall be *complementary* to historically significant buildings found on Washington Street; they may not *detract from, overwhelm, or intrude upon* historic buildings." In addition, it is noted in the Standards and Guidelines that "new buildings...shall be designed to look separate and shall not give the impression of collectively being more massive than such historic buildings."

A walk down Washington Street reveals a range of uses, architectural styles and building types spanning three centuries. From 18th century Georgian and 19th century Italianate style buildings to 20th century Art Deco and Colonial Revival, the styles found throughout the historic district can all be seen on Washington Street. Aside from the visual interest of this outdoor architectural museum, the building styles clearly show the long history and evolution of the City. Furthermore, Washington Street includes a range of historic building masses, heights and scales, from modest two-story frame townhouses, to Christ Church, to the freestanding 4 ½ story brick, mid-19th century Mount Vernon Cotton Manufactory at 515 North Washington Street, or the 6-story George Mason Hotel by nationally prominent hotel designer William Lee Stoddart in 1926.

The project site is located within the historic core section of Washington Street between Pendleton and Wilkes streets. The Washington Street chapter of the BAR's *Design Guidelines* on this sector of Washington Street describes the scale and character as follows:

This is the historic core of Washington Street and the Old and Historic Alexandria District and is generally smaller in scale than the other sectors on the street. Design of new construction and alteration of buildings along this sector of Washington Street should reflect the low scale pattern. (p.8)

At the present time, this particular block of North Washington Street has a mixed and somewhat eclectic identity with the east side of the 400 block containing an intact collection of 19th century high-style townhouses that all possess a high degree of architectural integrity and also some historic gardens, such as that found to the south of the Lee-Fendall House. The historic townhouses on Washington Street, reflective of the street's prominence in the late 19th- and early 20th-centuries were often larger and higher style than townhouses in other parts of the historic district. These historic townhouses were often three stories in height and typically wider (25' at 411-413 North Washington Street, 32' at 407 North Washington Street and 36' at 417 North Washington Street) than elsewhere in the historic district where it was not uncommon for townhouses to range from 15'-24' in width. The west side's character is defined much more by the two large Colonial Revival commercial buildings which comprise most of the streetscape. There are two historic townhouses on this side of the block as well. To the north, at 515 North Washington Street, is the Mt. Vernon Cotton Factory at four and one-half stories in height. To the south in the 300 block is the well-proportioned and finely-detailed bank building from 1961 contrasting with the imposing and inappropriate seven-story commercial building at the northwest corner of Queen and Washington streets, approved in 1964. These blocks also contain excellent examples of late-18th and 19th-century townhouses. Certainly, the domineering and ill-proportioned Colonial Revival building at 300 North Washington Street is no justification for a large building; however, the range of sizes, massing and architectural styles of the other buildings indicate that there is a range to consider when determining appropriateness at the 400

North Washington Street site.

At this time, staff recommends conceptual support for the proposal, specifically the height and scale, but advises further study of the proposed architectural character, overall design composition and massing. It is recommended that the applicant continue to meet with BAR staff to refine the design and return to the BAR for a second concept review work session prior to approval of the DSUP. Staff finds the most successful elements of the design to be the following:

- The façade depicted as Alternate 2B
- The corner element at Princess and North Washington street
- Porosity of site including pedestrian path and connected open spaces
- The “townhouse” facades on North Columbus Street

Staff recommends the following refinements to enhance the design and architectural character:

Continue to break down the overall massing.

The massing study is useful for understanding the overall program for the building on the site and how it will work across the entire site. Staff finds the massing on the North Columbus Street to be most successful. The massing fronting onto Washington Street is also generally successful but could be continue to be refined in conjunction with architectural refinement. Additional setbacks and other variation associated with the architectural design will further improve the massing. However, while large buildings with substantial massing are not uncommon on Washington Street, it is historically unusual for a single building to span the depth of the block within the historic core sector. The northern and southern ends of Washington Street with large garden apartment buildings certainly occupy the entire site but it is more unusual within the historic core where buildings tend to have smaller footprints and be more integrated within the overall historic fabric of Old Town.

In this case, the applicant has sought to create a sense of porosity or openness through the block by creating open spaces on both the south and north sides of the project. There will be an open path on the north side of the building connecting Washington Street and Columbus Street. The sense of porosity is particularly successful on the North Columbus Street elevation. However, staff is concerned about the three-story to four-story massing the entire depth of the block as this will be visible from many vantage points, including both North Columbus and Princess streets. While staff is cognizant of the programmatic need to have a physically connected interior space, staff recommends restudying the massing, particularly adjacent to the collection of historic townhouses on Princess and North Columbus streets, including the 1797 freestanding dwelling at 711 Princess Street. Reducing the height of portions of the building in the middle of the block or stepping in and changing color and materials where a true rear ell would step in are options to explore to substantially improve the overall massing and not detract from the setting of the adjacent historic resources.



Figure 2. Proposed Princess Street elevation showing relationship of new construction with historic buildings.

Pursue “Alternate 2B” scheme with refinement.

Staff greatly appreciates the applicant sharing the design evolution and providing four elevation options for Washington Street, noting that the BAR review process is an iterative process. Applicants are always encouraged to explore a variety of design solutions, as some will be more appropriate than others. While the first proposal (*Proposed*) is well-composed and appropriately proportioned, the large central Georgian Revival element with pronounced portico and gable roof is perhaps not the best response to the Washington Street Standards in this location. As noted in the Washington Street Guidelines, the historic core sector has a smaller scale. Staff appreciates that the design provides a strong foundation for the Washington Street composition but is concerned that a Georgian Revival building of this size would compete with the historic Georgian townhouses, and even other civic Georgian style buildings such as the Courthouse at the Princess Street intersection. (see also Attachment #4: Peter H. Smith’s article on defining the memorial character of the GW Parkway published in the Summer 1999 Historic Alexandria Quarterly)

Alternate 1 features a collection of 19th-century buildings with the largest building (smaller in size than in the Proposed Scheme) deriving its design inspiration from the Corn Exchange. This building also shares design cues from the recently approved new construction for a hotel at 808 North Washington Street. Alternate 2 and 2B share the same collection of buildings however they are organized slightly differently with the main building located farther north in Alternate 2B to provide a more centered entrance. The scale and architectural style of the main building with the entrance is appropriate and complements historic buildings without overwhelming them. Additionally, the corner building with a projecting tower element and the northern townhouse set back in alignment with the historic townhouse at 420 North Washington Street are also both appropriate.

It will be important for any hyphens to truly function as visual hyphens to realistically convey these as connections between separate “buildings” rather than merely a material change in the façade. The northern hyphen in Alternate 2B has a significant setback which will create useable outdoor space. Staff appreciates this meaningful setback and notes that it relates to the small gardens that historically separate some townhouses on Washington Street. The building between the central building and the northern townhouse needs additional work (Figure 3). This building appears to have some townhouse elements in a building that is larger than a historic townhouse scale and staff recommends that this be reconciled. The building also reads as a four-bay townhouse which is an unusual configuration in Old Town where prominent or larger-scale

townhouses are typically either three-bay (side entry) or five-bay (center entry). The applicant has provided a number of examples of historic townhouses that exist in pairs (two or three-bay) and staff suggests that the applicant study a way to make this a pair, perhaps widening if necessary to get the proper proportions, or contemplate other alternatives.

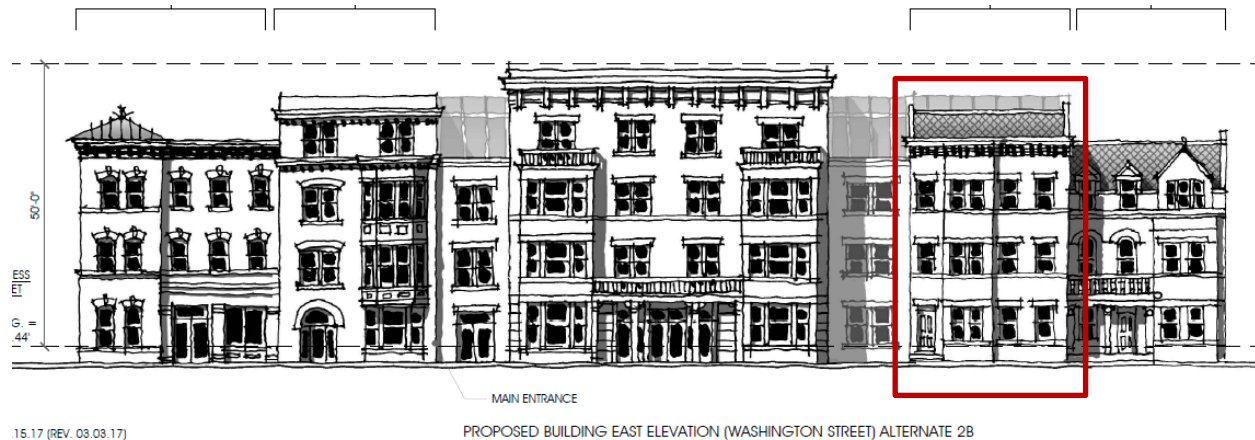


Figure 3. Washington Street elevation Alternate 2B. Red box indicates "building" that needs further refinement.

Refine "townhouses" on North Columbus Street.

A pair of townhouses is an appropriate and encouraged approach for this section of the project however staff notes that they must truly read and relate as two townhouses. For example, there should be two entrances. As discussed above in the massing section, these two townhouses should read as two townhouses both in massing and volume for a substantial depth. Staff is concerned that the rear connection to the Washington Street elements may make the townhouse approach appear to be merely a facade motif. Because there will be visibility above and beyond the existing historic townhouses and through oblique views, such as through open space areas, it is important to continue the approach of "two townhouses" in a meaningful way. The applicant should study variation in height, material or setbacks to reflect traditional townhouse development proportions.

Avoid appearance of Princess Street as "back-of-house."

The garage entrance to the site will be immediately adjacent to the garden at 711 Princess Street, an excellent example of a late 18th-century dwelling in this part of the historic district. There are also other historic townhouses nearby. The Princess Street elevation, which will also be visible from Washington Street, should be designed as a street-facing elevation and feature a true entrance space as well as minimize the appearance of the garage and loading areas. High-quality detailing and the same variety as appears on Washington Street should also occur at this location, without detracting from the adjacent historic structures.

The National Park Service comments are included as Attachment 3.

WASHINGTON STREET STANDARDS

Standards to Consider for a Certificate of Appropriateness on Washington Street

In addition to the general BAR standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance, and the Board's *Design Guidelines*, the Board must also find that the Washington Street Standards 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 based on the City's 1929 agreement with the federal government.

Staff has included below the additional standards for Washington Street described in the Zoning Ordinance. Staff's comments as to how the Standards are satisfied or need further study are found below.

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 overall design intention draws inspiration from late 19th-century and early 20th-century architecture, similar to that found historically on Washington Street. The buildings feature several elements that draw from these styles, illustrating this lineage.

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 proposed design is composed to appear as a collection of multiple buildings on both the Washington Street and Princess Street elevations so as not to overwhelm the historic buildings located on Washington Street and also on Princess Street. While the applicant has provided elevations for four schemes, each scheme reads as a collection of at least four or five “buildings” with portions attached by recessed hyphens. The architectural style and detailing is intended to not be a higher style or more ornamented than the historic buildings of merit. Overall, the proposal seeks to create background “buildings” that will not overwhelm the historic buildings on Washington Street.

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

As noted above, the design, style, siting and materials are consistent with historic patterns of development and design found on Washington Street in the historic core without being a slavish replication, therefore complementing the historic buildings. The scale, mass and setback of the northernmost

“building” is deferential to the historic townhouse to the north at 420 North Washington Street.

- 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 creation of multiple “buildings” assists in breaking down the overall massing as does the variation in height from three stories to five stories and use of setbacks. Although the scheme does result in avoiding an overwhelming sense of mass, staff recommends that the applicant continue to study ways to reduce the overall mass.

- 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.*

The Washington Street elevation is composed of four or five “buildings”, depending on the scheme, and no building has a footprint larger than 80’ by 100’. In each scheme, the design approach has been to include a signature three-story “building” with a feature roof at the corner and one larger “building” with a clearly defined entrance. The other “buildings” are more of a townhouse scale and stylistically referencing nearby historic buildings. The design schemes also feature different roof styles (Mansard, flat, and hipped feature) as well as projecting bays and varying setbacks. There are added setbacks both at the side and front at the northernmost “townhouse” in deference to the historic Second Empire townhouse on the adjacent property to the north.

- 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 applicant has included digital massing models of the surrounding blocks illustrating that the proposed massing, with some additional refinements, will be consistent with the mix of both residential and commercial scale buildings in this portion 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 proposed massing of the “buildings” is working to appropriately employ the traditional massing, details and proportions of the architectural styles from which they derive inspiration. Staff finds that further refining the massing will greatly improve how the overall projects rests within this streetscape, noting that it is relatively unusual for a site in the historic core sector to connect through the depth of the entire block. 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.*

No aspect of the proposed design is without historical basis in Alexandria’s rich architectural heritage. Historically, as enterprises, businesses, churches or other institutions have expanded, they often create hyphens or connections that physically connect multiple structures but allow the main structures to visually retain their prominence. On Washington Street, one example would be the Downtown Baptist Church which has a hyphen to the south side. The use of hyphens to connect the multiple “buildings” is both an appropriate and tried approach.

- (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 building features bay widths consistent with commercial and substantial residential buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

- (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.*

As the applicant develops the design, it should be noted that all materials should be high-quality, historically-appropriate materials generally found in the district. As new construction, high-quality modern materials may be permitted.

- (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.

- (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.*

The Board's final approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness will require that high-quality materials and appropriate detailing be used consistently throughout the project. The concept plans and precedent images indicate that this will be fully met.

- (b) *No fewer than 45 days prior to filing an application for a certificate of appropriateness, an applicant who proposes construction which is subject to this section 10-105(A)(3), shall meet with the director to discuss the application of these standards to the proposed development; provided, that this requirement for a preapplication conference shall apply only to the construction of 10,000 or more square feet of gross building area, including but not limited to the area in any above-ground parking structure.*
- (c) *No application for a certificate of appropriateness which is subject to this section 10-105(A)(3) shall be approved by the Old and Historic Alexandria District board of architectural review, unless it makes a written finding that the proposed construction complies with the standards in section 10-105(A)(3)(a).*
- (d) *The director may appeal to city council a decision of the Old and Historic Alexandria District board of architectural review granting or denying an application for a certificate of appropriateness subject to this section 10-105(A)(3), which right of appeal shall be in addition to any other appeal provided by law.*
- (e) *The standards set out in section 10-105(A)(3)(a) shall also apply in any proceedings before any other governmental or advisory board, commission or agency of the city relating to the use, development or redevelopment of land, buildings or structures within the area subject to this section 10-105(A)(3).*
- (f) *To the extent that any other provisions of this ordinance are inconsistent with the provisions of this section 10-105(A)(3), the provisions of this section shall be controlling.*
- (g) *The director shall adopt regulations and guidelines pertaining to the submission, review and approval or disapproval of applications subject to this section 10-105(A)(3).*
- (h) *Any building or addition to an existing building which fails to comply with the provisions of this paragraph shall be presumed to be incompatible with the historic district and Washington Street standards, and the applicant shall have the burden of overcoming such presumption by clear and convincing evidence.*
- (i) *The applicant for a special use permit for an increase in density above that permitted by right shall have the burden of proving that the proposed building or addition to an existing building provides clearly demonstrable benefits to the historic character of Washington Street, and, by virtue of the project's uses, architecture and site layout and design, materially advances the pedestrian-friendly environment along Washington Street.*

Next Steps

At this time, it is anticipated that the DSUP will be reviewed by Planning Commission and City Council in the late fall of 2017. The applicant should continue to work with staff as plans are refined to ensure continued conformance with BAR policies and conditions and to make revisions based on the Board's comments.

II. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board support the height and scale concept proposal featuring Alternate 2B with direction for additional study related to the architectural character and refinement of the massing as perceived from North Columbus and Princess streets. Details and materials selection will be reviewed and approved as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness request after approval of the DSUP.

STAFF

Catherine K. Miliaras, Principal Planner, Planning & Zoning
Al Cox, FAIA, Historic Preservation Manager, Planning & Zoning

III. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

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

Zoning Comments

The proposed site consists of the properties addressed as 400 North Washington Street, 418 North Washington Street, 413 North Columbus Street, and 417 North Columbus Street. The two properties fronting North Washington Street is zoned CD. The applicant proposes to rezone the two properties fronting North Columbus Street from RM to CD.

The applicant is requesting a development site plan and special use permits to demolish the existing three-story office building and parking area and construct a four-story building with approximately 90 units of senior housing and a one-story below grade parking garage. The proposed design would include a new pocket park along North Columbus Street.

C-1 Proposed project must comply with all terms and conditions of DSUP2016-00041.

Alexandria Archaeology (from the DSUP Concept 2 letter)

C-1 A stately mansion built ca. 1830 once stood on the lot at 400 N. Washington Street (at the time the street address was 414 N. Washington St.). Four stories tall and containing 20 rooms, the Union Army commandeered the dwelling during the Civil War and used it as a hospital from August 1862 and until April 1865 when the war ended. Known as

Grosvenor Hospital during the war, it contained 160 beds in the main building and in a two-story wooden barracks converted into a hospital ward to the west of the main house. A detailed Quartermaster map of the property depicts the main house, the adjacent 20 ft. by 100 ft. hospital ward, a 13 ft. by 16 ft. dead house (morgue), a 12 ft. by 14 ft. laundress's quarters, a 10 ft. by 18 ft. sink (privy), and a 20 ft. by 30 ft. "smoke room" (presumably a smokehouse). After the war the building served as a private residence until it was torn down in 1960 to make way for the current office building on the site. The property has the potential to yield archaeological evidence of Civil War hospitals as well as domestic life in nineteenth-century Alexandria.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE COMMENTS

See attached letter.

IV. ATTACHMENTS

1 – Supporting Materials

2 – Application for 400 North Washington St Concept Review Work Session

3 – Comment Letter from National Park Service.

4 - GW Parkway, Historic Alexandria Quarterly 1999

13 February 2017

Ms Catherine Miliaras
Department of Planning and Zoning
City of Alexandria
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22313

RE: 400 North Washington Street – BAR Concept Submission

Catherine,

Per your request, the following is an itemized description of compliance with the Washington Street Standards. Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Alexandria Zoning Ordinance §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 overall style of the proposed building has been drawn from historic buildings on Washington Street; individual elements of the design are consistent with these styles which are Georgian/Federal, Victorian and Colonial Revival. See images of prototypes on last page.

(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.*

On many blocks in the city of Alexandria, the height of historic buildings varies dramatically. Architecturally significant buildings with height/number of stories comparable to that proposed include the Cotton Factory (515 N. Washington Street), Washington Street Methodist Church (109 S. Washington Street), George Mason Hotel (126 S. Washington Street), and the Martin VB Bostetter, Jr., U.S. Courthouse (200 S. Washington Street). The architecture of the proposed building has been designed so that it will not “detract from, overwhelm, or otherwise intrude” on historic buildings elsewhere on Washington Street.

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

Because the overall style as well as individual elements of the proposed building have been drawn from historic buildings on Washington Street and elsewhere in the Old and

Historic Alexandria District, the design of the proposed building is complementary to historic buildings on Washington Street.

- (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 massing of the new proposed building on Washington Street steps down in height and façade width at the North, adjacent to the existing historic townhouse. The building is also set back from the front property line to align with the front façade of this existing townhouse. The proposed new building steps down in height and façade width in the same fashion on Princess and Columbus Streets to relate to the existing townhouse on the South and West elevations.

- (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.*

Varying materials, colors, and setbacks, differing roof forms and heights, and the introduction of details such as an organizing element combine to visually reduce the massing of the proposed building.

- (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.*

This application includes the required massing study.

- (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.*

Prototypes for architectural style and massing include the Washington Street Methodist Church and the Corn Exchange. Prototypes for massing also include the George Mason Hotel and the Martin V.B. Bostetter, Jr., U.S. Courthouse. See images below.

- (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 designs of the various "buildings" that make up the proposed building have a historical basis in Alexandria and are consistent with their respective historic styles in scale, massing, and detailing.

- (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*

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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.

Facades of the individual "buildings" consist of 20'-40' bays, as expressed by changes in materials, plane, architectural details, roof heights, massing, and articulation.

- (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.*

Proposed building materials include brick, cast stone, and synthetic wood.

- (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 fenestration patterns and solid-void relationships proposed are those found in historic buildings throughout the Old and Historic Alexandria District.

- (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.*

The quality of materials and richness of detail proposed is consistent with that of historic buildings with architectural merit existing within the Old and Historic Alexandria district. Construction documents will substantiate this at a later time.

Please don't hesitate to call me if you've got any questions.

Regards,

John Rust, AIA

Enclosure: Images of prototypes

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Images of Prototypes



400 Block North Washington Street



210 and 216 North Washington Street

1215 CAMERON STREET | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314
T 703 836 3205 F 703 548 4779 WWW.RUSTORLING.COM

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BAR2017-00064
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515 N. Washington Street

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Martin V. B. Bostetter, Jr., U.S. Courthouse



George Mason Hotel



A PRINCESS & NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



B PRINCESS & NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



C NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



D NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



E NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



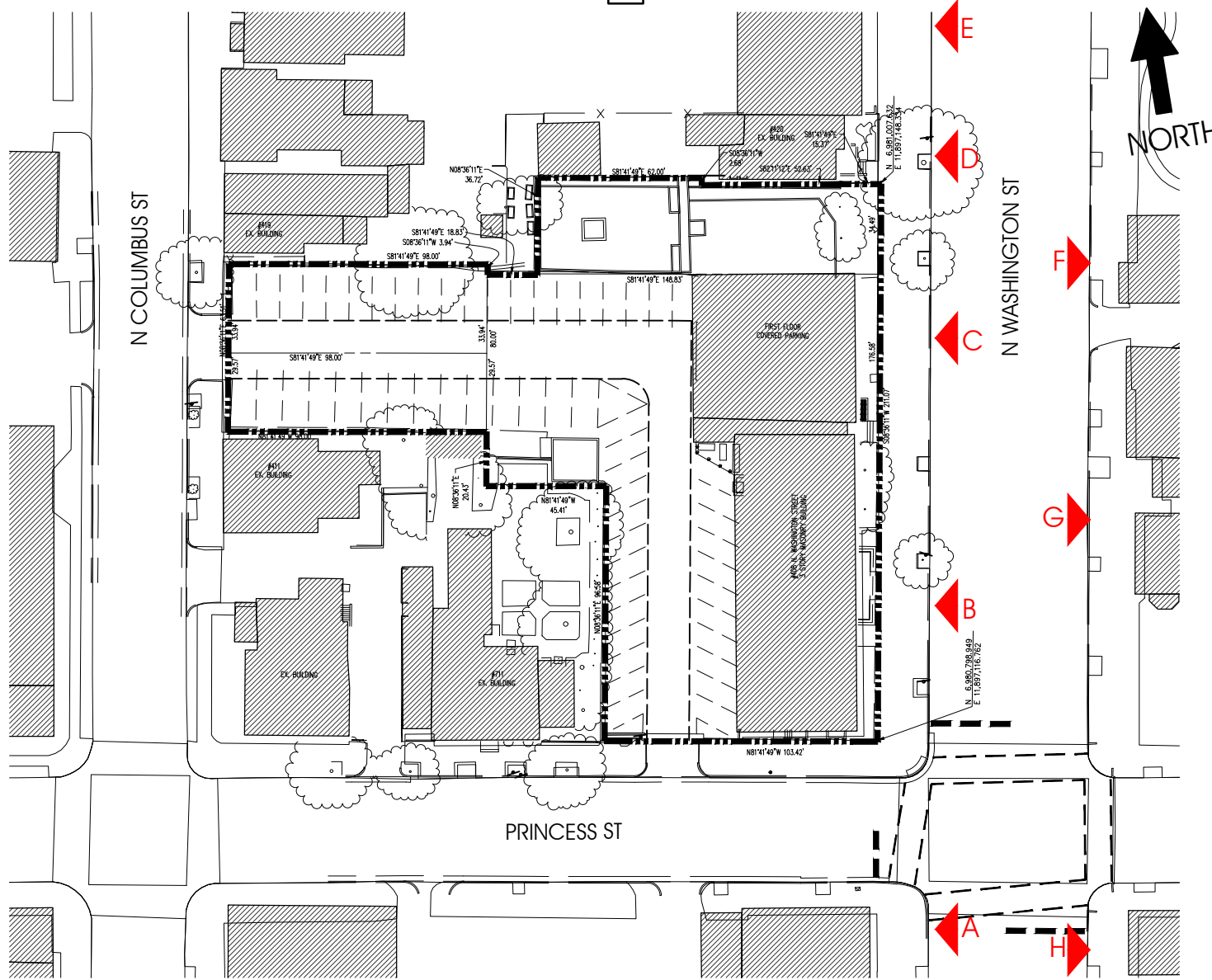
F NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



G NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



H NORTH WASHINGTON STREET



EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: 1"=60'

400 North Washington Street 16040

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J NORTH COLUMBUS & PRINCESS STREET



K PRINCESS STREET



L PRINCESS STREET



M NORTH WASHINGTON & PRINCESS STREET



N PRINCESS & NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



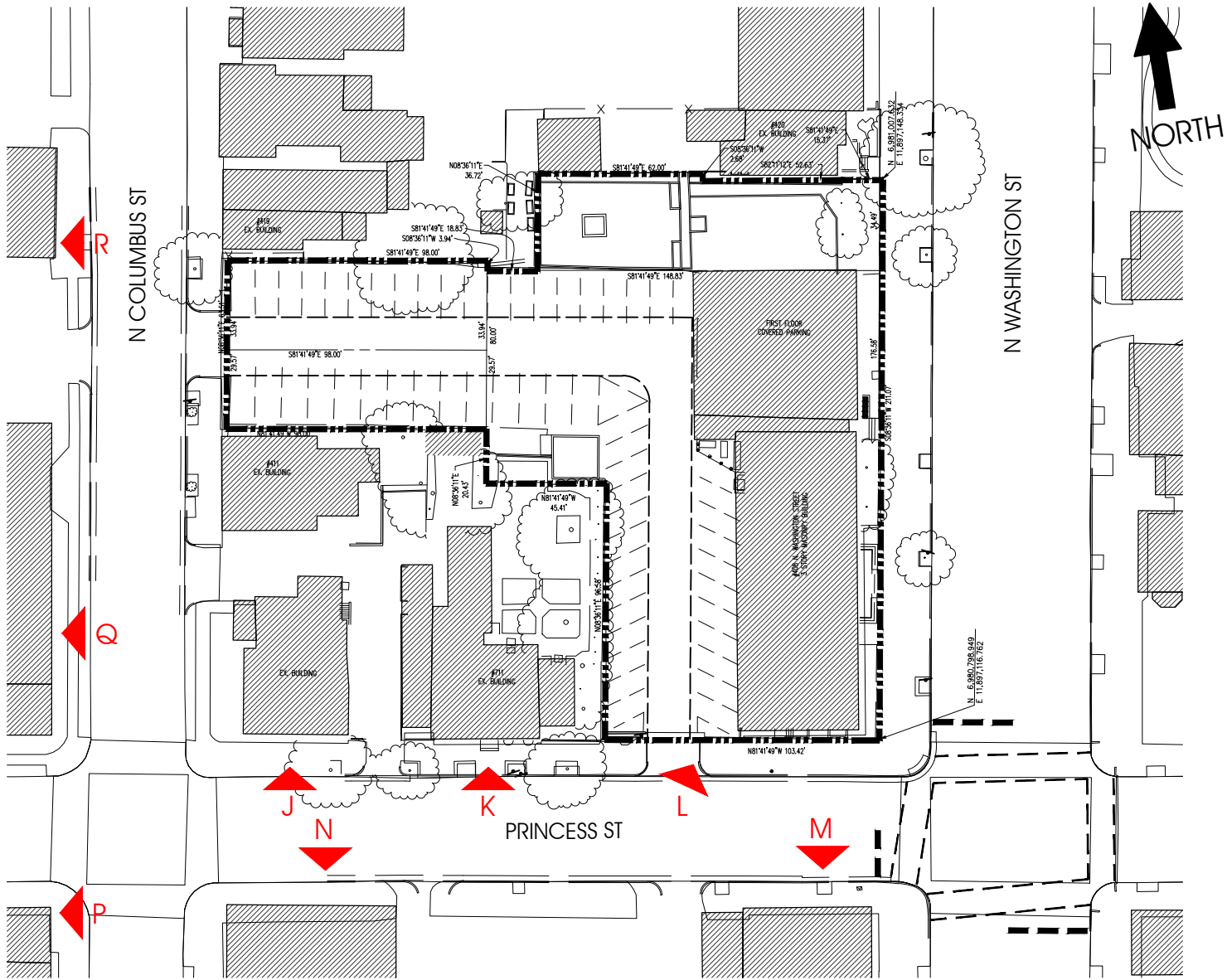
P NORTH COLUMBUS & PRINCESS STREET



Q NORTH COLUMBUS & PRINCESS STREET



R NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCALE: 1"=60'

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S NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



T NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



U NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



V NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



W NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



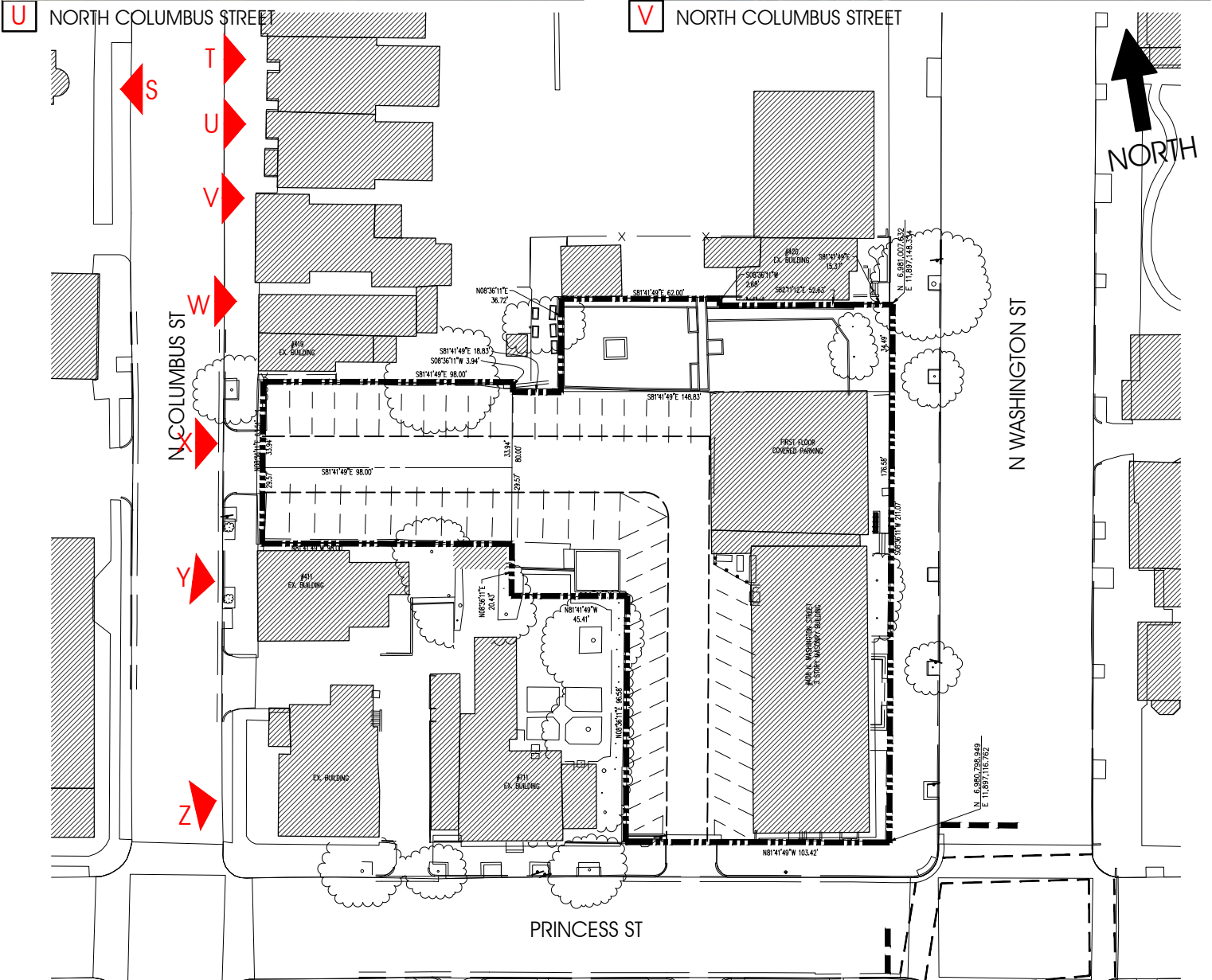
X NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



Y NORTH COLUMBUS STREET



Z NORTH COLUMBUS & PRINCESS STREET



EXISTING CONDITIONS

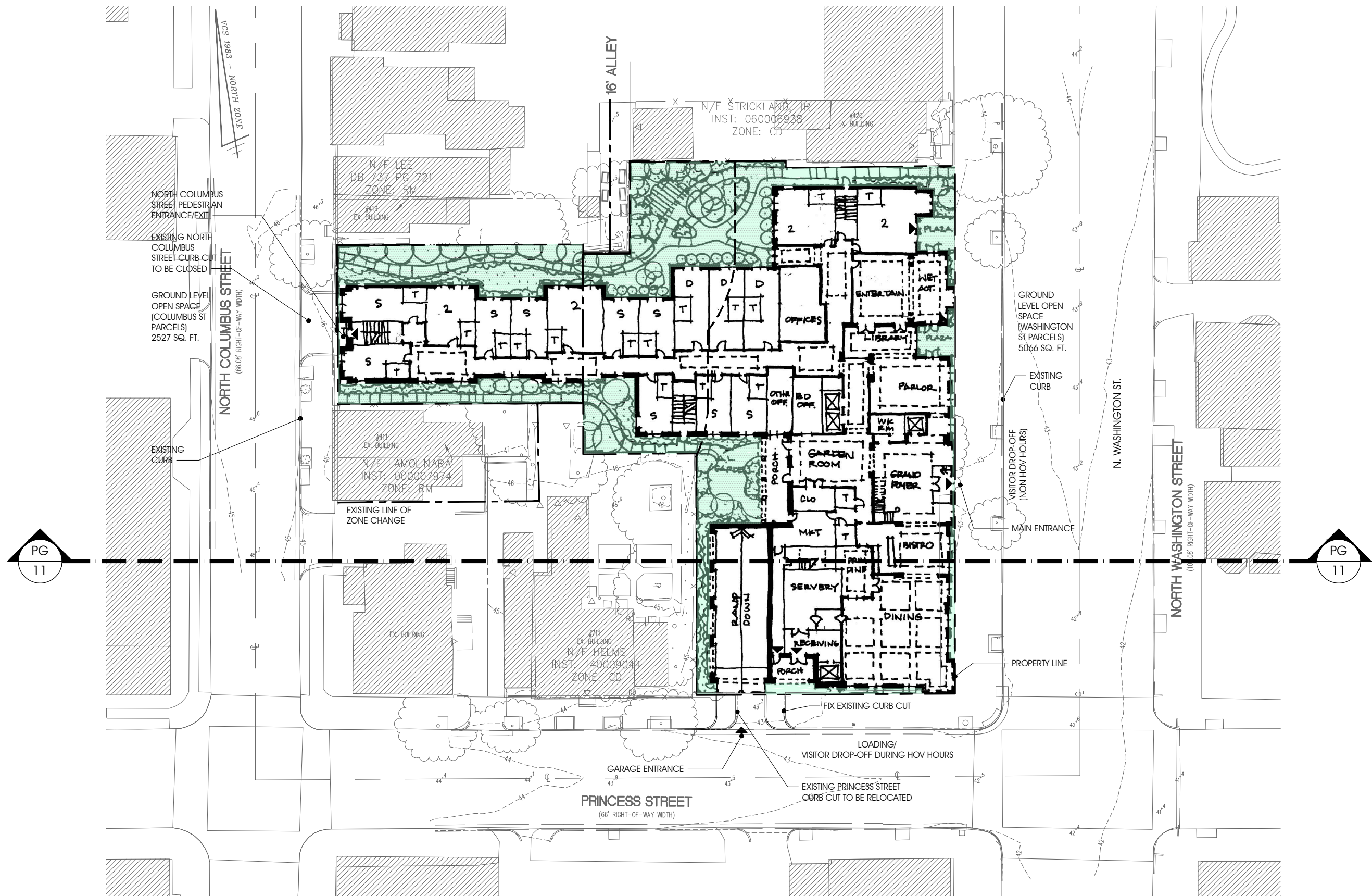
SCALE: 1"=60'

400 North Washington Street

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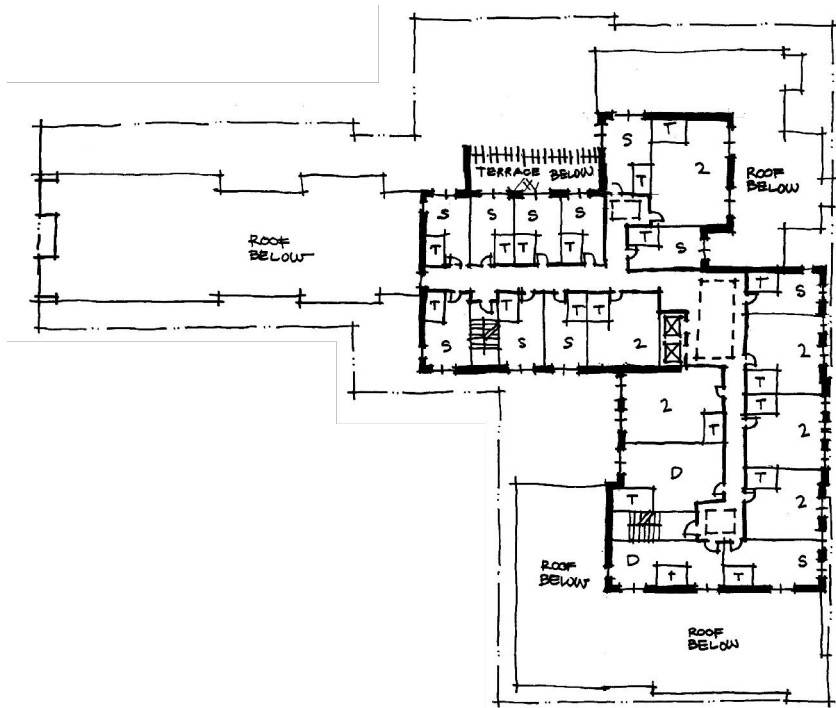
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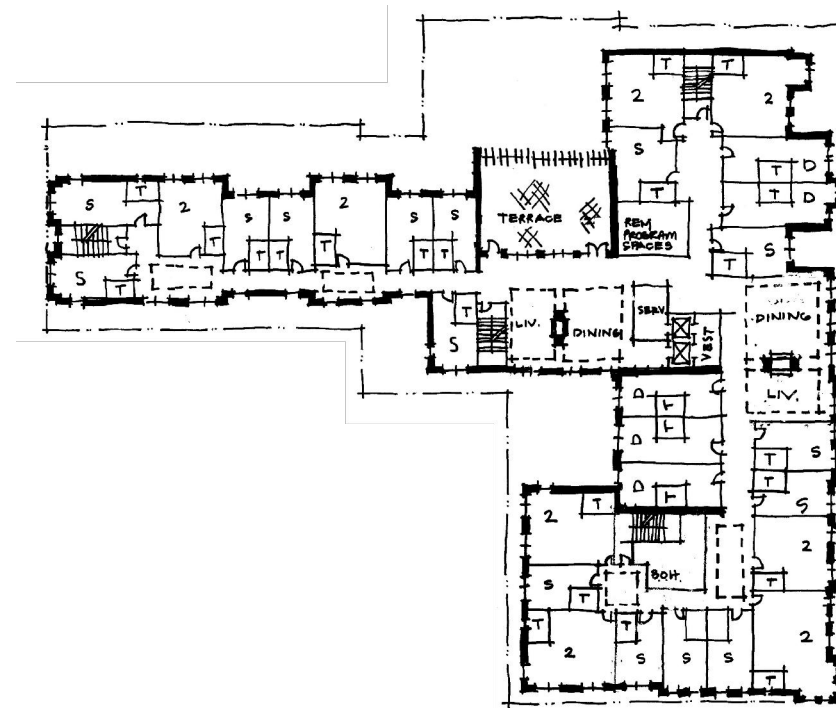
PROPOSED SITE PLAN
400 N. Washington Street
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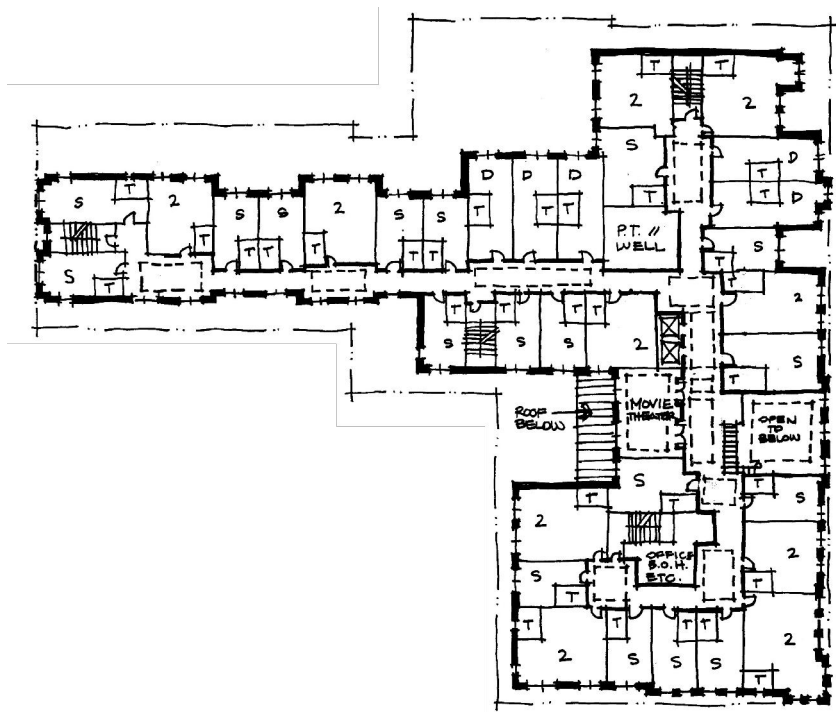
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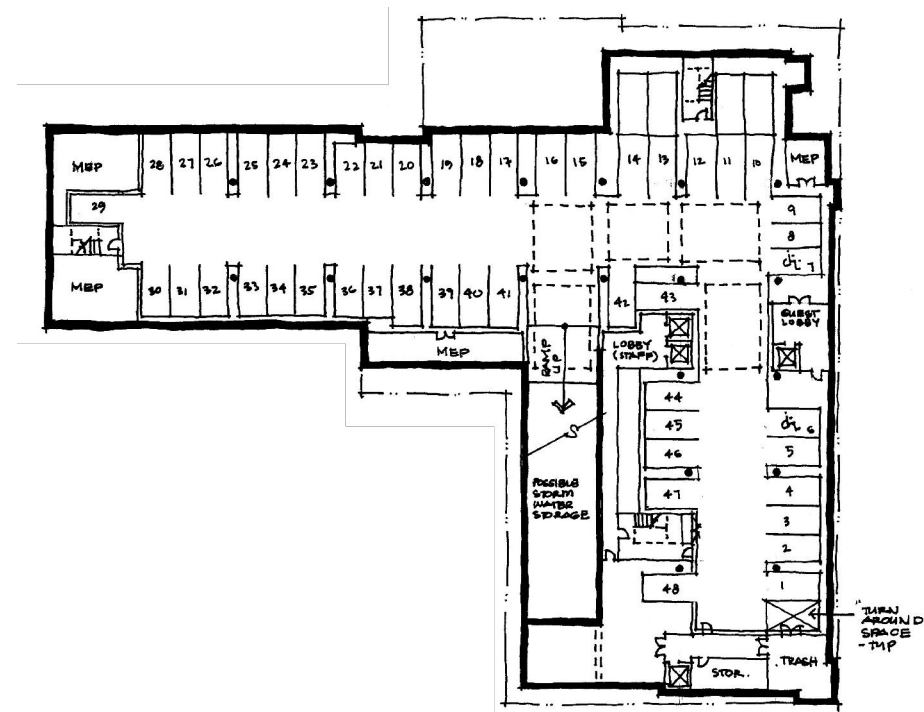
4TH FLOOR PLAN



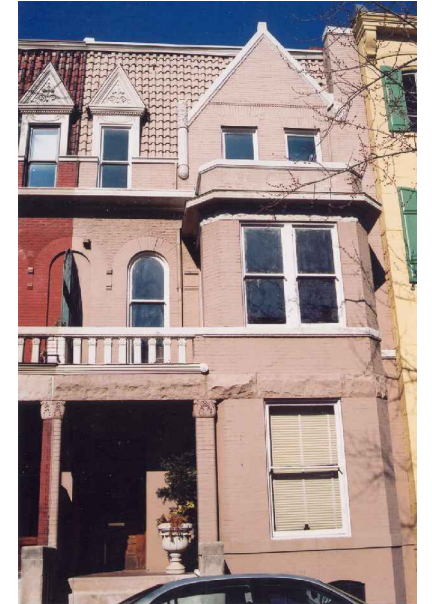
3RD FLOOR PLAN

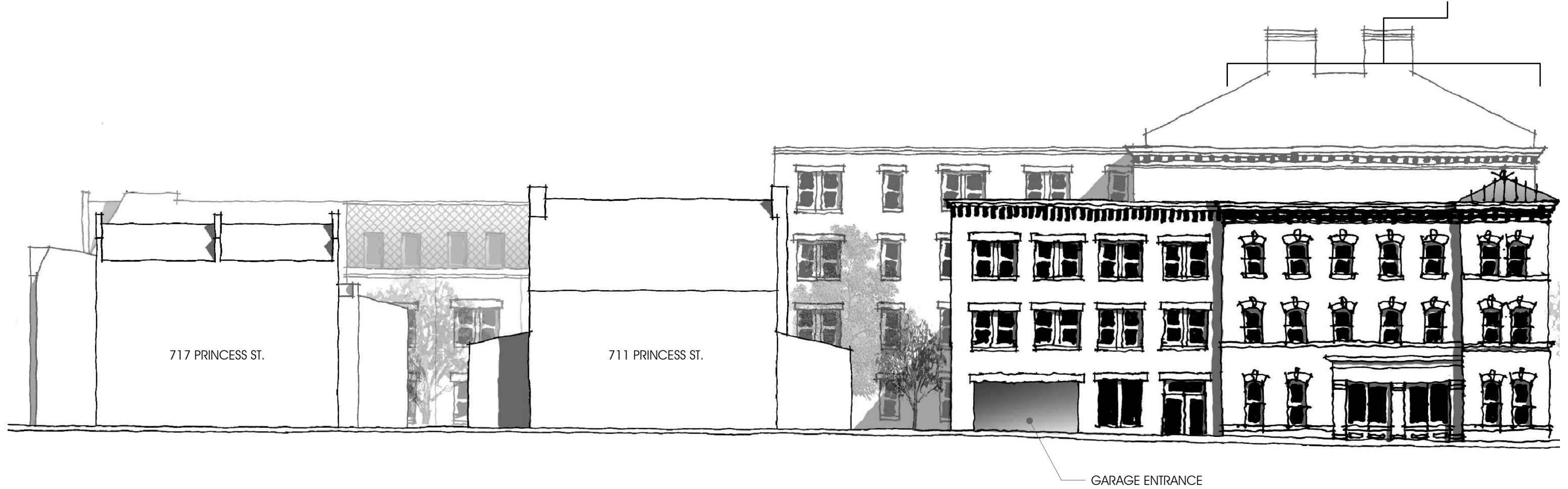
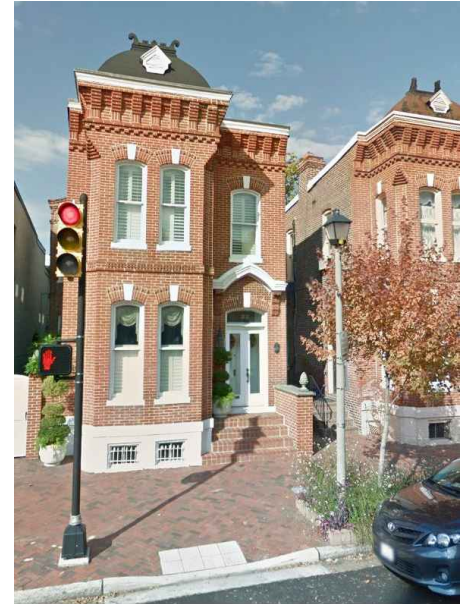


2ND FLOOR PLAN

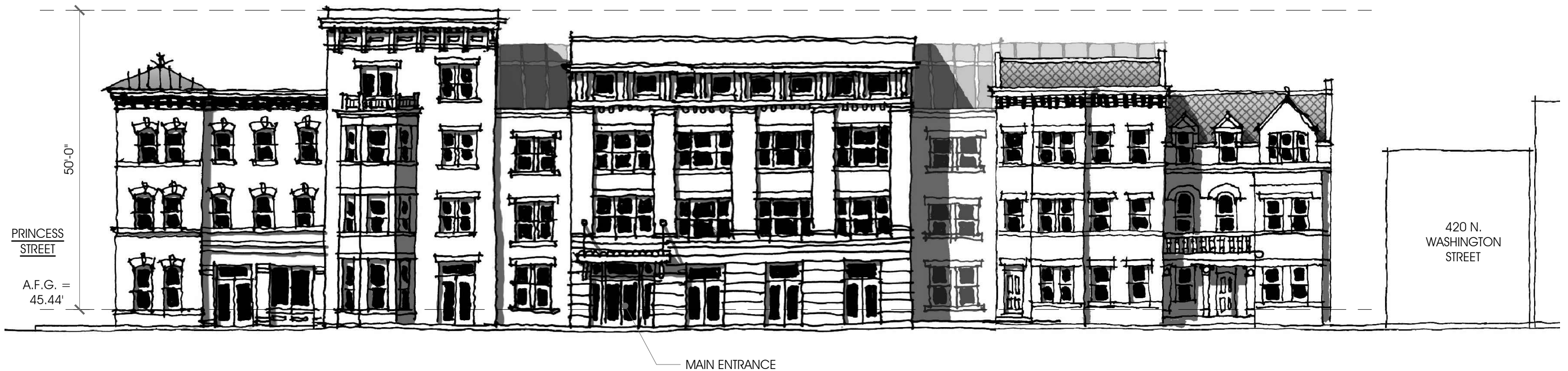
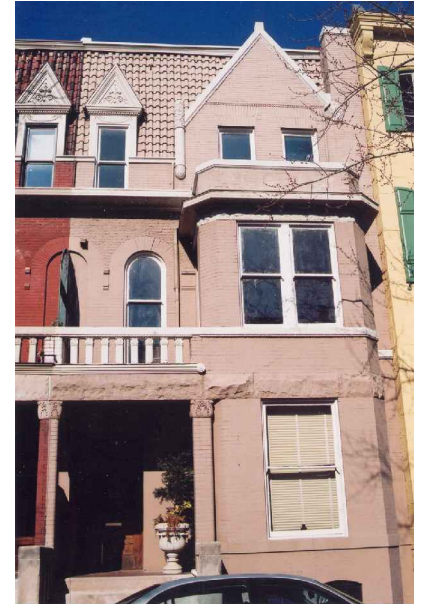


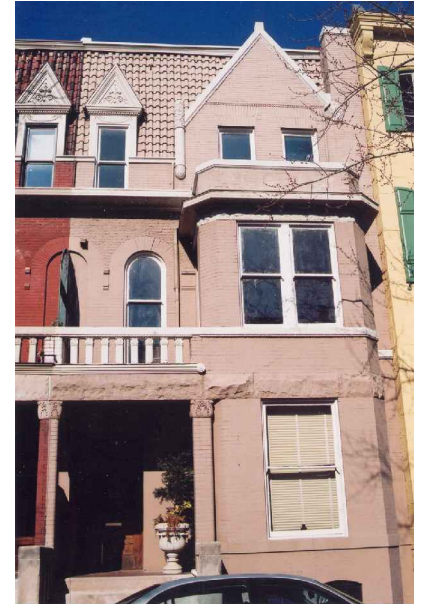
GARAGE PLAN











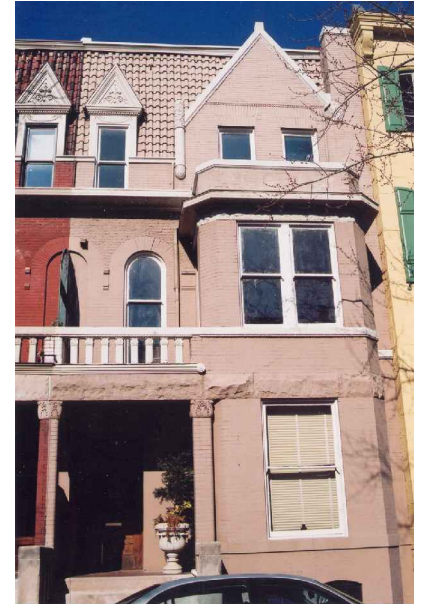
02.15.17 PROPOSED BUILDING EAST ELEVATION (WASHINGTON STREET) ALTERNATE 2

SCALE: 1/16" = 1' - 0"

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02.15.17 (REV. 03.03.17)
Page 9b

PROPOSED BUILDING EAST ELEVATION (WASHINGTON STREET) ALTERNATE 2B

SCALE: 1/16" = 1' - 0"

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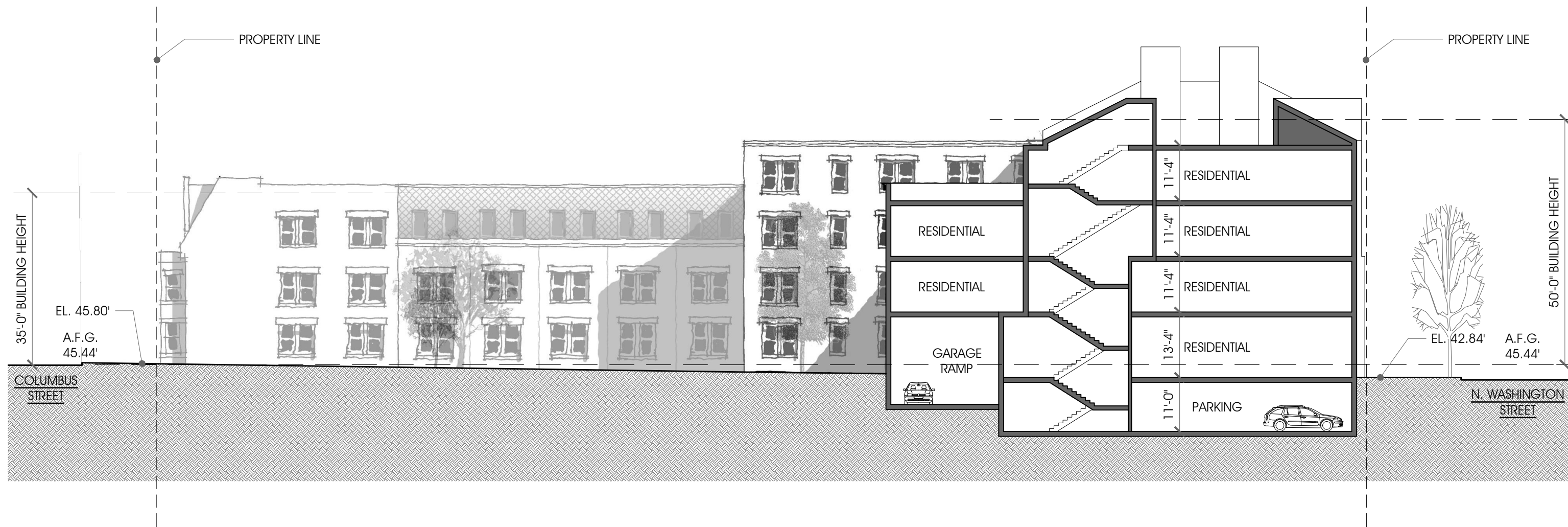
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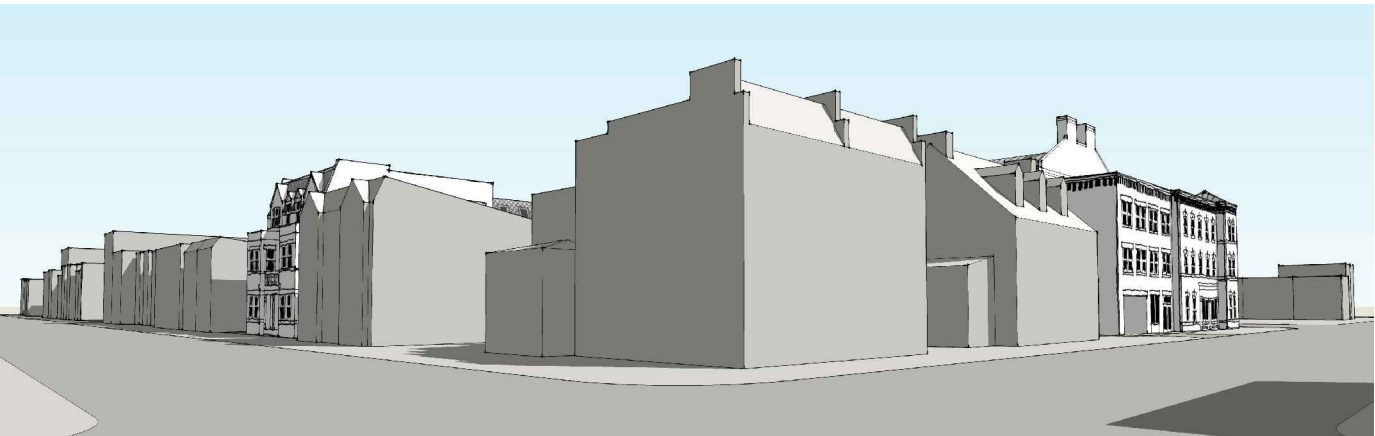
PROPOSED BUILDING IN CONTEXT
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BUILDING SECTION
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16040



STREET VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST



WASHINGTON STREET VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST



WASHINGTON ST. VIEW FROM NORTHEAST



AERIAL VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST



AERIAL VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST

PROPOSED BUILDING EAST ELEVATION (WASHINGTON STREET)

400 N. Washington Street
16040

PRELIMINARY FLOOR AREA RATIO AND OPEN SPACE CALCULATIONS									
A. Property Information									
A1. Street Address		400/414/418 North Washington St. + 413/417 North Columbus Street				Zone		CD	
A2.		32,769		x		2.5		=	
		<i>Total Lot Area</i>				<i>Floor Area Ratio Allowed by Zone</i>		<i>Maximum Allowable Floor Area</i>	
B. Existing Gross Floor Area									
		Existing Gross Area* (Based on Tax Records)		Allowable Exclusions (Based on Tax Records)					
		Basement		Basement**		3,179		B1. Existing Gross Floor Area *	
		First Floor		Stairways**				28,112 Sq. Ft.	
		Second Floor		Mechanical**				B2. Allowable Floor Exclusions**	
		Third Floor		Other**				3,179 Sq. Ft.	
		Porches/Other		Total Exclusions		3,179		B3. Existing Floor Area minus Exclusions	
		Total Gross*						24,933 Sq. Ft.	
								(subtract B2 from B1)	
C. Proposed Gross Floor Area (does not include existing area)									
		Proposed Gross Area*		Allowable Exclusions (Estimated)					
		Basement		Basement**		1,038		C1. Proposed Gross Floor Area *	
		First Floor		Stairways**				56,228 Sq. Ft.	
		Second Floor		Mechanical**				C2. Proposed Floor Exclusions**	
		Third Floor		Other**				1,038 Sq. Ft.	
		Fourth Floor		Total Exclusions		1,038		C3. Proposed Floor Area minus Exclusions	
		Fifth Floor						55,190 Sq. Ft.	
		Porches/Other						(subtract C2 from C1)	
		Total Gross*							
D. Existing + Proposed Floor Area									
D1. Total Floor Area (add B3 and C3)				80,123		Sq. Ft.		*Gross floor area is the sum of all gross horizontal areas under roof, measured from the face of exterior walls, including basements, garages, sheds, gazebos, guest buildings and other accessory buildings.	
D2. Total Floor Area Allowed by Zone (A2)				81,923		Sq. Ft.			
E. Open Space Calculations									
		Existing Open Space		4,085		(approximate)		** Refer to the zoning ordinance (Section 2-145(B)) and consult with zoning staff for information regarding allowable exclusions.	
		Required Open Space		0					
		Proposed Open Space		7,500					
If taking exclusions other than basements, floor plans with excluded areas must be submitted for review. Sections may also be required for some exclusions.									

ADDRESS OF PROJECT: 400 N. Washington StreetTAX MAP AND PARCEL: 064.02-08-05, -06, -12, -13ZONING: CDAPPLICATION FOR: *(Please check all that apply)*☒ CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS "CONCEPT PLAN"☐ 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: Sunrise Senior Living, LLCAddress: 7902 Westpark DriveCity: McLeanState: VAZip: 22046Phone: 703-744-1873

E-mail: _____

Authorized Agent *(if applicable)*: ☐ Attorney ☒ Architect☐ _____Name: John Rust, Rust Orling ArchitecturePhone: 703-836-3205E-mail: jruster@rustorling.com

Legal Property Owner:

Name: National Association of Professional Insurance AgentsAddress: 400 N. Washington St.City: AlexandriaState: VAZip: 22314

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there an historic preservation easement on this property?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, has the easement holder agreed to the proposed alterations?
- ☐ Yes ☒ No Is there a homeowner's association for this property?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, has the homeowner's association approved the proposed alterations?

If you answered yes to any of the above, please attach a copy of the letter approving the project.

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

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

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

This project consists of the construction of an approximately 80,000 square foot building at 400 N. Washington Street with approximately 96 residential units designated as "home for the elderly" and associated amenities. Parking will be provided in a below grade parking garage.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

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.

Electronic copies of submission materials should be submitted whenever possible.

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.

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Additions & New Construction: Drawings must be to scale and should not exceed 11" x 17" unless approved by staff. All plans must be folded and collated into 3 complete 8 1/2" x 11" sets. Additional copies may be requested by staff for large-scale development projects or projects fronting Washington Street. 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.
 - ☒ ☐ FAR & Open Space calculation form.
 - ☒ ☐ Clear and labeled photographs of the site, surrounding properties and existing structures, if applicable.
 - ☐ ☒ 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.

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 have submitted a filing fee with this application. (Checks should be made payable to the City of Alexandria. Please contact staff for assistance in determining the appropriate fee.)
- ☒ 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 3 sets of 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: JOHN RUSTDate: February 13, 2017

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2/15/2017

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 ten 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. Sunrise Senior Living, LLC	7902 Westpark Dr. McLean, VA 22102	100%
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 400 N. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314 (address), unless the entity is a corporation or partnership, in which case identify each owner of more than ten 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. National Association of Professional Insurance Agents	400 N. Washington St. Alexandria, VA 22314	100%
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. Sunrise Senior Living, LLC	none	none
2. National Association of Professional Insurance Agents	none	none
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.

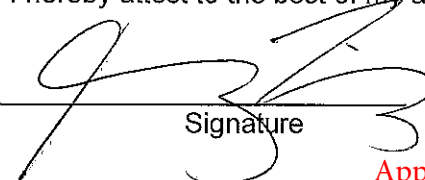
2/13/2017

Jerry Liang, VP

Date

Printed Name

Signature



Application Package
BAR2017-00064
400 N Washington Street
2/15/2017



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
George Washington Memorial Parkway
c/o Turkey Run Park
McLean, Virginia 22101

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
City of Alexandria, Town Hall
300 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3212

Reference:

BAR Case: 2017-00053 (407 S Washington Street)
BAR Case: 2017-00064 (400 N Washington Street)

March 8, 2017

Dear Sir/Madam:

The following are George Washington Memorial Parkway's (Parkway) comments on the above referenced proposal:

BAR2017 - 00053 (407 S Washington Street)

- The proposed awning is in scale with the doorway and height of building and is the appropriate form in the historic district (rigid framed, shed). The minimal detailing surrounding the door does make the building a likely candidate for an awning for weather-protection. The proposed awning is not expected to detract from the Memorial character of Washington Street.
- A single color is appropriate – recommend against any other bold, bright or striped colors.
- Exact fabric material is unclear from the attached package – recommend canvas type and not plastic.

BAR #2017-00064 (400 N Washington Street)

- The site is located within the historic core of Washington Street from Pendleton Street to Wilkes Street and should have smaller massing than other sectors of the historic district. The proposed senior home should reflect the smaller scale; the height of the first proposal exceeds the 50' height requirement and is disproportionate with the existing adjacent properties. None of the adjacent buildings exceed three-stories in height. Alternates 1 and 2 are more compatible with the neighboring massing.
- The first proposal utilizes formal elements from Greek Revival architecture with the front pediment and the entablature over the central entrance that differs from the existing adjacent properties along Washington Street. Consider similar architectural styles in the elevations.
- Consider increasing the area of open space/plaza adjacent to the existing 2-story building (420 Washington Street) where there is currently an open space/park.
- Historic setbacks, evident from adjacent properties are not acknowledged in the proposals – from the ground floor plan, the building begins at the property line. Consider revisiting as setbacks contribute to a pedestrian friendly streetscape.



United States Department of the Interior


NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
George Washington Memorial Parkway
c/o Turkey Run Park
McLean, Virginia 22101

IN REPLY REFER TO:

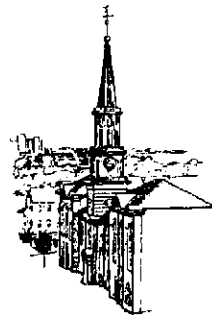
- In Alternates 1 and 2, the massing of the new construction is broken up through differing architectural styles (pulled directly from source/existing buildings evident in the photos). Reconsider the composition of the elevations by exploring through differing treatments, modulation, materials, etc. such that there is both a relationship throughout the proposed building and an acknowledgement of the small scale desired in this historic core.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the architecture that affects the Parkway. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Newman, Chief of Lands, Planning and Design at 703-289-2515.

Sincerely,


Blanca Stransky
Acting Superintendent

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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

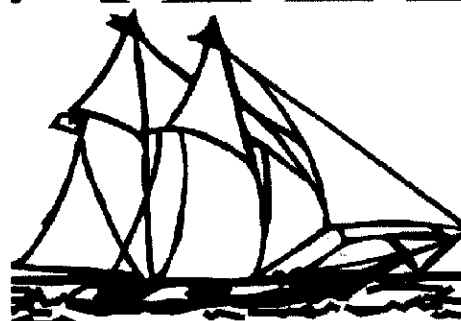
Peter H. Smith is the Principal Staff for the Boards of Architectural Review in the Department of Planning and Zoning. He has a Ph.D. in American Studies from George Washington University. Mr. Smith has written previously for the *Historic Alexandria Quarterly*.

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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.



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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.

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