

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD



Penny Pollard, Chair
Robert O'Brien, Vice Chair
Ian Jacob
Joy Naifeh
Julia Tate
John Turk

AGENDA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD MEETING

The Historic Preservation Board will hold a remote meeting on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, 5:00 p.m. This meeting will take place using Zoom.

Virtual meetings are allowed using emergency legislation approved by LD 2167; 1 M.R.S. §403-A, that authorizes cities and towns to conduct meetings online.

Allow your computer to install the free Zoom app to get the best meeting experience.

For public comment, you will need to use the "raise your hand" feature. To raise your hand via the telephone, please hit *9. You will be un-muted by the host when it is time for public comment.

ZOOM MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Dec 2, 2020 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Historic Preservation Board

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86791393000>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +19292056099,,86791393000# or +13017158592,,86791393000#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900 6833 or
+1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799

Webinar ID: 867 9139 3000

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86791393000>

For more information on how to use Zoom, please go to:

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/remotePUD>

Public comments will be taken for each item on the agenda and written comments should be submitted to hp@portlandmaine.gov

1. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM
2. REPORTS OF DECISIONS AT THE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 4, 2020

- i. There were no public hearing items to report on.

3. COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS

4. WORKSHOP - 5:00 PM

- i. Preliminary Review of Proposed Building Addition; 181 Western Promenade; Talcott and Jennifer Franklin, Applicant.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

- i. Certificate of Appropriateness for Dormer Additions and Exterior Alterations; 29 Commercial Street; EssexNorth, LLC., Applicant.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

WORKSHOP
181 WESTERN PROMENADE

TO: Chair Pollard and Members of the Historic Preservation Board
FROM: Deborah Andrews, Historic Preservation Program Manager
DATE: November 23, 2020
RE: December 2, 2020 **WORKSHOP – Preliminary review of proposed exterior alterations and new connector between house and garage**

Address: 181 Western Promenade
Applicants: Talcott and Jennifer Franklin
Project Architect: Carol DeTine

Introduction

Architect Carol DeTine, representing property owners Talcott and Jennifer Franklin, has requested a workshop to present preliminary plans for a building addition and exterior alterations at the northeast rear corner of the West Mansion at 181 Western Promenade. The subject structure is located at the corner of the Western Promenade and Carroll Street; the portion of the building affected by the project is accessed from an alleyway that leads from Carroll Street.

A major goal of the project is to provide direct access from the house to the garage, which is located at the end of the alleyway and just beyond the northeast corner of the house. A connector is proposed between the north elevation of the house and the south elevation of the garage. Also proposed are alterations to the bulkhead area to provide improved access to the cellar and replacement of the rear entry porch. The existing porch is not original and is in poor condition.

Staff has provided two aerial views of the property for orientation purposes—see ATTACHMENT 3. Ms. DeTine has provided a written project summary with photos of the project area as viewed from various vantage points—ATTACHMENT 5. Floor plans and preliminary elevations are provided as well. As this is a workshop session to get early feedback from the board, the drawings are not yet fully detailed and some dimensions are subject to change.

Board members are encouraged to visit the property prior to the workshop, as questions of visibility from abutting streets and the spatial relationship between the residence and the existing garage are best understood from a site visit.

Subject Property, Existing Conditions

Enclosed for the Board's review is the Historic Resources Inventory form for the West Mansion. The property description is unusually detailed and describes both the building itself and the history of the property. Information about original owner George West and architect Frederick Thompson is provided as well. See ATTACHMENT 1.

The inventory form provides little description of the rear (east) elevation of the building, except for noting the presence of a septagonal conservatory and open porch within clear view of Carroll Street. The rear elevation is not shown in the 1924 photo either. As you will note from the aerial view (ATTACHMENT --), there is a prominent cross-gambrel ell off the back of the house that projects well beyond the face of the conservatory and open porch. The proposed alterations and addition are confined to this cross-gambrel portion of the building that features an elevated rear entry, porch and bulkhead. In reviewing existing conditions, it appears that a number of original features in this area have been replaced or modified. Elements likely altered or replaced include the bulkhead doors, the raised porch and perhaps the rear door as well.

As is noted in the inventory, a garage was added to the property in 1991. Its form and detailing were drawn from the 1911 mansion. Given its position, the garage is visible from both Carroll Street and the Western Promenade (although from a considerable distance). The garage is located to the north of the house, but overlaps the north elevation of the mansion by several feet. A narrow passageway (@ five feet) separates the north elevation of the house and the south elevation of the garage.

Proposed Alterations and Additions

Ms. De Tine has provided a project summary that itemizes the specific alterations and addition being proposed—see ATTACHMENT 5.

Note that two options for the connector addition are shown for the Board's consideration and input. Under Option A, the connector is tucked back behind the northeast corner of the building and is out of view from Carroll Street. Although not indicated on the elevations, the front face of the connector is set back 2'9" from the face of the house, clearing the quoins by 6 inches. The west wall of the addition (facing the Western Prom) is set back 8" from southwest corner of the garage. Ms. DeTine notes that this option, while less visible, is not ideal from a practical standpoint as the walk to the addition's entry door is beneath the drip line of the garage roof. It also provides less clearance for interior door swings.

Under Option B, the addition has a larger footprint. The front of the addition projects approximately 8'10" beyond the face of the house and encloses the side door to the garage. The connector extends 8'8" from the garage wall and overlaps the east-facing wall of

the house by 3'6". The width was driven by a desire to avoid interference with the quoins. The position of the wall facing the Western Promenade is the same as in Option A. As Ms. DeTine notes, Option B is more commodious and moves the entrance to the connector away from the garage, thereby avoiding the drip line.

Regardless of which option is pursued, the work requires that a new opening be created on the north elevation of the house. Although not shown in elevation, staff understands that Option A has a 4' wide opening. At 6'8" high, the bottom of the opening will align with the top of the third corner quoin from the concrete base. The overall height would be adjusted to line up with the brick coursing. Option B has a 5' wide opening and also a 6'8" high opening, so the top of the opening is the same as it is in Option A. (Staff has asked for additional elevations that show the location and size of the opening under both options.)

Note that under both options the roof of the connector encroaches onto the hip roof of the garage. This is necessary to provide sufficient headroom and structure.

Prefinished exterior HardiPanels, or equivalent, are proposed for the addition's exterior. Clad wood windows and full lite door are proposed. The color palette is proposed to be dark to achieve a recessive appearance.

Proposed exterior alterations include lowering the sill at the bulkhead to provide more headroom when entering the basement. The new, longer doors will be based on a close examination of the existing doors to determine whether they are original. If so, the longer doors will be patterned after the originals. Lowering the bulkhead also requires creating a sloped sidewalk flanked by new low cheekwalls. Concrete is proposed to match existing concrete walks in this area.

As for the proposed rear porch replacement, although the existing porch is of more recent construction and crudely built, it appears that some of the original porch balusters remain and likely informed the design of new balusters. These balusters also match those on the balcony above the main entrance to the building, so the replicating them seems to be an appropriate choice. Other details, including posts, skirting, railings, etc. are consistent with traditional porch design. The skirting will be extended to enclose existing ground-mounted mechanical units. All details will be proportional to the scale of the building.

Although the project also calls for replacement of the garage doors, a door spec has not yet been provided.

Preliminary Staff Comments

Given the architectural significance of the West Mansion, any proposed alteration or addition requires very careful consideration, especially where the project includes an alteration that is not readily reversible, such as creating a new opening in an exterior wall.

Here, Standards #1 and #10 are instructive. Note that both Standards #1 and #10 do not preclude such changes, but require that the changes not diminish or destroy the character-defining features of the building. As Standard #10 states, “the essential form and integrity of the historic property [should] be unimpaired”.

Certainly, the addition is proposed for an area of the building/property that is perhaps the least sensitive to change, especially given the distance from abutting streets and the opportunity to tuck much of the addition between the garage and house. Creating a new opening on the West Mansion’s north elevation is unlikely to materially affect the integrity of the building even if the connector were removed in the future.

In terms of the addition itself, staff understands that the Option B provides a more commodious space and avoids conflict with the drip edge of the garage at the entry. Staff is concerned, however, about its visibility, the fact that it overlaps the corner of the mansion and that it creates a degree of visual confusion given the close proximity of the porch, garage and connector. While Option A is perhaps not ideal from a functional standpoint, it provides a far more recessive, and in staff’s view successful, design solution. While the connector’s encroachment on the garage roof is unfortunate, this encroachment would be less obvious in Option A.

As noted above, staff has asked that drawings be provided of the West Mansion’s north elevation showing the position and size of the proposed new opening.

Staff is generally supportive of the other proposed alterations, which will result in a significant upgrade in condition and appearance.

Applicable Review Standards

Standards for Review of Alterations

- (1) *Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for the property which requires minimal alteration to the character-defining features of the structure, object or site and its environment or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.*
- (2) *The distinguishing original qualities or character of a structure, object or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.*

- (5) *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a structure, object or site shall be treated with sensitivity.*
- (6) *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the feature being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Repair or replacement of missing historic features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects.*
- (9) *Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archeological materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.*
- (10) *Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.*

Attachments:

1. Building description from Historic Resources Inventory
2. 1924 tax photo
3. Aerial views of subject property
4. Google views of existing conditions
5. Project summary with close-up photos
6. Existing plans view and proposed (Options A and B)
7. Plan view- Option A
8. Plan view – Option B
9. Option A Elevation
10. Option B Elevation

Portland Historic Resources Inventory

Property Address: 181 Western Promenade

Inventory #: WP-318

Assessor's C/B/L: 69-B-5

District: Western Promenade Map #: 318

Rating:

Local Code: LANDMARK

National Register: Ind. Listing N/A District Western Promenade

Date of Placement: Local 08/01/1990 National 02/16/1984

Description of Significant Features and Subsequent Alterations:

181 Western Promenade is an imposing and elaborate Georgian Revival mansion designed by Portland architect Frederick A. Tompson in 1910 and built in 1911. Constructed of yellow "roman" brick with cast stone trim including Ionic columns supporting the two-story portico all topped with a vast gambrel roof covered in orange tile, the West Mansion is the largest and most elaborate turn-of-the-century dwelling in the city.

George Fletcher West (1862-1943) began to purchase land on the Western Promenade in 1906 that was formerly part of the estate of John Bundy Brown. Brown's estate called "Bramhall" was assembled in the 1850's and covered a large tract from Vaughan Street to the Western Promenade from Bowdoin Street to Pine Street. The Brown Mansion stood in the next block south of the West Mansion behind the present site of numbers 147-163 Western Promenade. It was built in 1856, and demolished in 1915.

The lot West purchased had a frontage on the Promenade and extended to the alleyway leading from Carroll Street towards Pine Street. On August 10, 1906, West purchased a similarly sized lot to the north of the previous one from J.B. Brown and Sons. Extending from the Promenade to the service alley, it had the same frontage as the previous lot. No more land was acquired until 1911, when the house was built. On April 26, 1911, West purchased another lot from J.B. Brown and Sons extending his holdings another 35.4' north along the Promenade.

Prior to moving into their grand new home, the Wests had resided at 14 Mellen Street starting in 1895. (That house had been built in 1880, and was designed by architects Francis Fassett and John Calvin Stevens.) George F. West was one of the most prominent businessmen in Portland in the early years of this century. He was an active promoter of gas and electric utilities as well as being involved in banking and other endeavors.

The architect of the West Mansion, Frederick A. Tompson, was a Portland native and was trained in the office of the distinguished architect Francis H. Fassett with whom he was in partnership from 1885 to 1891. During his years with Fassett, Tompson designed the McLellan School on Carroll Street in 1886. The firm also produced numerous commercial and residential buildings including the J. Henry Rines House of 1887 at 769 Congress Street, now the Roma Restaurant.

After leaving Fassett's office, Tompson's career blossomed. Between 1895 and 1915, he was probably the ranking architect in Portland after

John Calvin Stevens the acknowledged leader of the profession. His greatest public building is the Masonic Temple at 415 Congress Street, of 1911. George F. West was an active mason, and one can presume that he was well acquainted with Thompson and his abilities. As both the West Mansion and the Masonic Temple were under construction at the same time, it is interesting to speculate as to which commission came about as the result of which. Thompson also designed the Maine State Arsenal on Milk Street in the Old Port area in 1895, now converted into a hotel.

It is in the field of residential architecture, however, that Thompson achieved his greatest success, building several of the most imposing residences in the Western Promenade area in particular. In 1898, Thompson designed the Italian Renaissance-styled house at 233 Western Promenade for Henry P. Cox, later occupied by Hugh Chisolm. In 1902, he provided the plans for the Adam P. Leighton House at 265 Western Promenade. Numerous less imposing residences, including his own at 33 Carroll Street, built in 1901, came through the drawing boards of Thompson's office. But, it is the West Mansion that is his most significant achievement in the area of residential architecture. In scale, materials, detail and planning, it far exceeds any Portland house of its day reaching a palatial scale not often seen here, but more in line with the cosmopolitan aspirations of larger American metropolises or the summer homes of Newport or Boston's North Shore.

The building is two and a half stories tall with a massive gambrel roof punctuated by two fully pedimented dormers on the facade. A full-height portico and full-width open porch, dominates the symmetrical facade. In keeping with the Colonial Revival style there are many classical references in the architectural elements. The portico consists of pilasters and six colossal Ionic fluted columns. These columns support a full entablature topped by a fully enclosed pediment outlined with a bracketed raking cornice above a denticulated frieze. This cornice treatment is used consistently around the entire building and within the gambrels. Within the pediment is a fanlight. The portico is the focal point of a large open terrace that extends across the full-width of the facade. There are panelled corner posts and an original balustrade. The original lattice design can be seen on the two end panels of the porch; the four front panels do not share the same starburst design and may be replacements. The house is raised upon a high granite foundation which necessitated the construction of a flight of steps enclosed by side walls to the open porch and doorway. Currently, the portico, porch, and steps are painted though the side elevation trim is left in an unpainted state.

The roof is sheathed in orange tiles, one of a very few houses in the Western Promenade Historic District to use such a material; another example is the Harry Butler House at 1 Thomas Street, built 20 years earlier. The roofing material adds a great deal of textural interest to what would otherwise have been a broad expanse of flat surface. A number of chimneys rise from the roof, one is an interior end wall chimney, for the full-length library/living room at the southern end of the house, one is an interior chimney, and two rise from within the facade dormers. These dormers are fully pedimented like the portico and have two windows flanked by pilasters which visually support the entablature beneath the cornice of the pediment. The sash is 1/1. The windows on the facade are arranged in a strict balanced composition. Each has 8/1 sash except the two narrow windows flanking the doorway which have 6/1, and the oval oculus windows encircled by doubled arched frames with prominent voussoirs. The ground floor windows have blind- semi-circular arches above the sash outlined with iron blocks and keystone. There are bricks arranged in a herringbone pattern

within the blind arches. The second story windows have flared lintels with prominent keystones.

The doorway is topped by an elliptical fanlight and flanked by leaded glass sidelights. It is more Federal Revival than Georgian like the rest of the house. One of the most unique features of the house is the cantilevered balcony on large brackets over the doorway; it is enclosed by a balustrade and must command the finest views of the White Mountains in the city.

There is a one story bow window on the northern elevation, and a septagonal conservatory on the rear elevation beside an open porch enclosed by a balustrade. Brick quoins articulate the corners of the house.

A new garage was added to the property in the spring of 1991; it imitates the Colonial Revival garage across the mews behind the Burnham Block.

City Review of Certificates:

Date	Action	Type	Summary of Work
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Property Name: George F. West House
Property Name(Other):
Street Address: 181 Western Promenade
Town: Portland County: Cumberland
Date Surveyed: 05/1991 Surveyor: Rick Redlon
Updated: by (date) (surveyor)
by
by

Owner Name: Jeffrey Melchor
Owner Address:

Primary Use (Present):

Condition: GOOD

ARCHITECTURAL DATA

Primary Stylistic Category: COLONIAL REV

Other Stylistic Category:

Height: 2 1/2 STORY

Primary Facade Width (Main Block; Use Ground Floor): 5 Bay

Appendages: REAR ELL DORMERS PORCH

Porch: ATTACHED MORE THAN ONE FULL WIDTH OTHER PORCH

Plan: CENTRAL HALL

Primary Structural System: BRICK

Chimney Placement: INTERIOR INTERIOR END

Roof Configuration: GAMBREL

Roof Material: CERAMIC WATER

Exterior Wall Materials: BRICK

Foundation Material: GRANITE

Outbuildings/Features: LANDSCAPE/PLANT GARAGE

HISTORICAL DATA

Documentated Date of Construction: 1911

Estimate Date of Construction:

Date Major Additions/Alterations:



Architect: Frederick A. Tompson

Contractor:

Original Owner: George F. West

Subsequent Signific. Owner:

Dates:

Cultural/Ethnic Affiliation:

Historic Context(s): HABITATION

Comments:

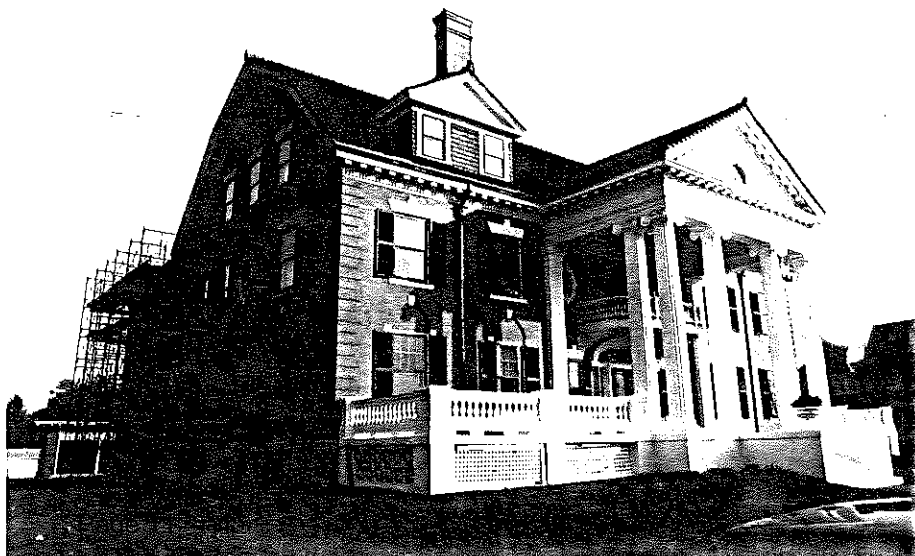
PHRI 1976; 1924 Tax Assessor's Report; 1967 Survey Form; Portland Street File; Arthur Gerner's Research Report; Richard's 1914 Atlas;

Historical Drawings Exist N

Location:

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

Site Integrity: Original Y Moved N Date Moved







181 Western Prom



181 Western Prom





CarriageHouseStudio

architects

PROJECT SUMMARY

Franklin Residence
181 Western Promenade, Back of House

Proposed Work includes:

- Lower the sill at the bulkhead to provide more headroom/access to the basement
- Remove the existing deck and stairs and build new to meet code for rise and run
- Replace the door to the house
- Install a fence and gates next to the deck to hide mechanical equipment
- Build an addition to provide direct access to the house from the garage and better winter access to the house from outside
- Replace the garage doors



BULKHEAD

Though the basement of the house has large-scale finished spaces, the bulkhead's low headroom and obstructions inside the basement do not allow tall furniture to be moved into the basement.

Proposed work will lower the existing sill of the bulkhead doors, re-use the sill and provide new doors about 6'-8" tall. Custom pre-cast retaining walls will be installed to maintain the existing grading each side of the bulkhead and to hide the concrete foundation that would otherwise be exposed. The existing concrete stepped walk will be removed. A concrete ramp is proposed.



HOUSE DOOR

The door to the house is drafty and doesn't appear to be original. We propose to replace it with a new door more suitable to the house.

DECK & STAIR

The existing deck and stair are in poor condition and is not original. We propose to replace them with a new deck and stair built with traditional detailing. The guardrail system will replicate the balustrade on the balcony above the front door of the house, utilizing the balusters on the back stair if they have not been modified from their original height. The stair will be built to meet the code requirement for rise and run. The guardrail may need an exemption from the required height of 36". Lattice panels are proposed under the deck to finish the underside of the deck. They will be hinged to provide access to storage and mechanical equipment.



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FENCE & GATES - see drawings

A fence is proposed to hide existing condensers. It will match the lattice under the deck, with hinged panels on the front for access.

ADDITION - see drawings

An addition is proposed to connect the garage to the house. in addition to providing enclosed access from the garage to the house, it will provide an at-grade entrance to the house from the driveway. The addition will be a safer entry in winter than using the back stair. It will also provide a more direct route from the kitchen to the side yard.

Two options for the addition are presented.

The first option is a minimal addition tucked between the house and garage. This option has some practical drawbacks. One in particular is that the walk to the addition is beneath the drip line of the garage roof.

The second option is a larger, more commodious and more visible addition that moves the entrance away from the garage.

Both options are designed to leave the corner quoins of the house undisturbed.

Materials

Prefinished exterior panels - Stonewood, HardiPanel or similar - dark gray, similar to the darkest colors in the existing brick

Modern clad wood windows and full lite door - Marvin or Pella - bronze or black

Membrane roof with black or bronze roof edge - or flat seam copper roof with copper roof edge and flashings

GARAGE DOORS

The garage doors are not appropriate to the house or the contemporary garage. We are looking for guidance on a more suitable design.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS



Narrow space between the house and the garage

View from the Western Promenade



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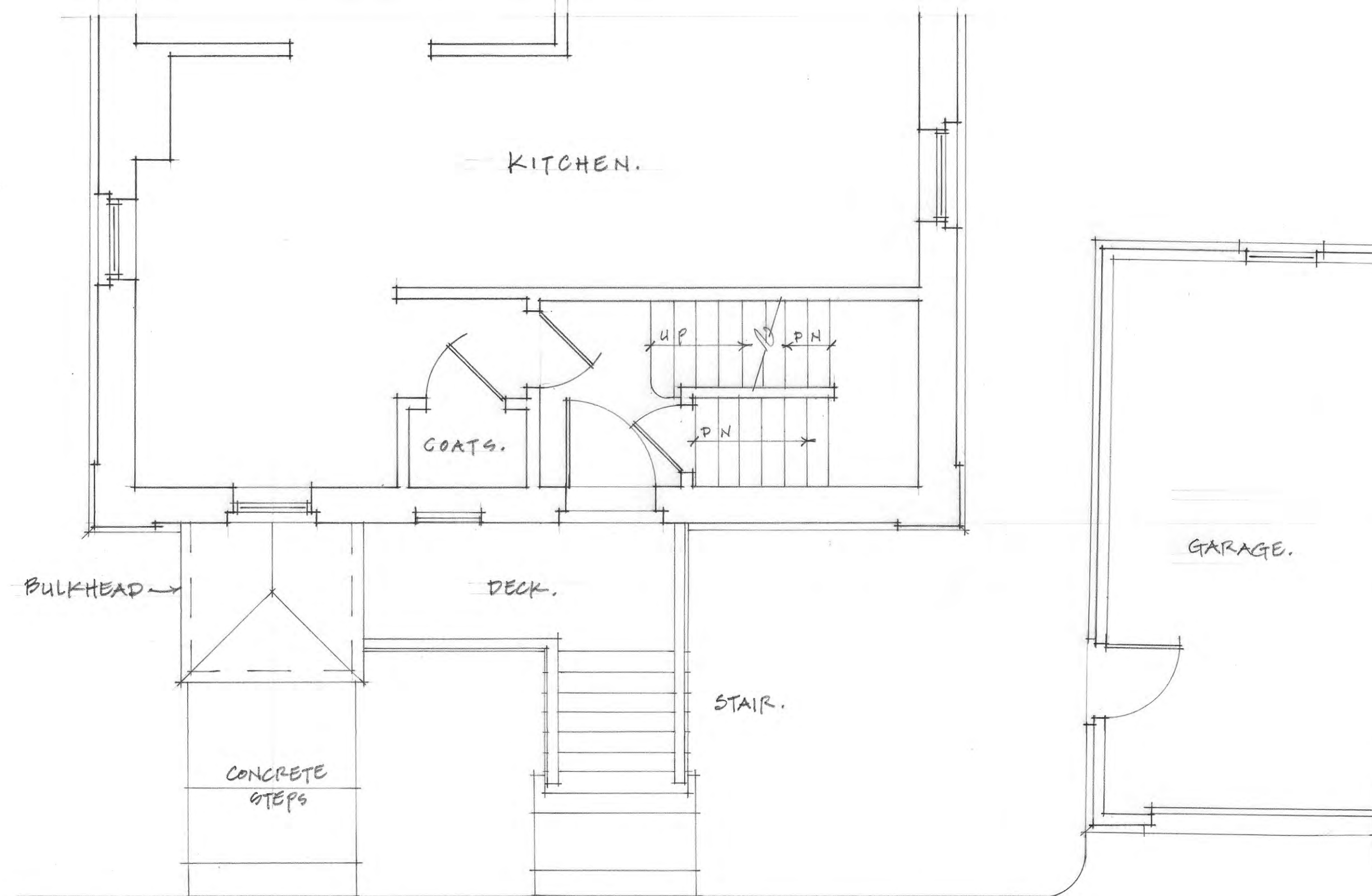
View from the Western Promenade



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View from the Western Promenade

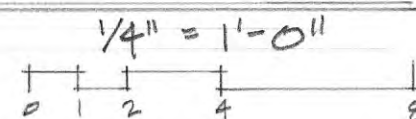


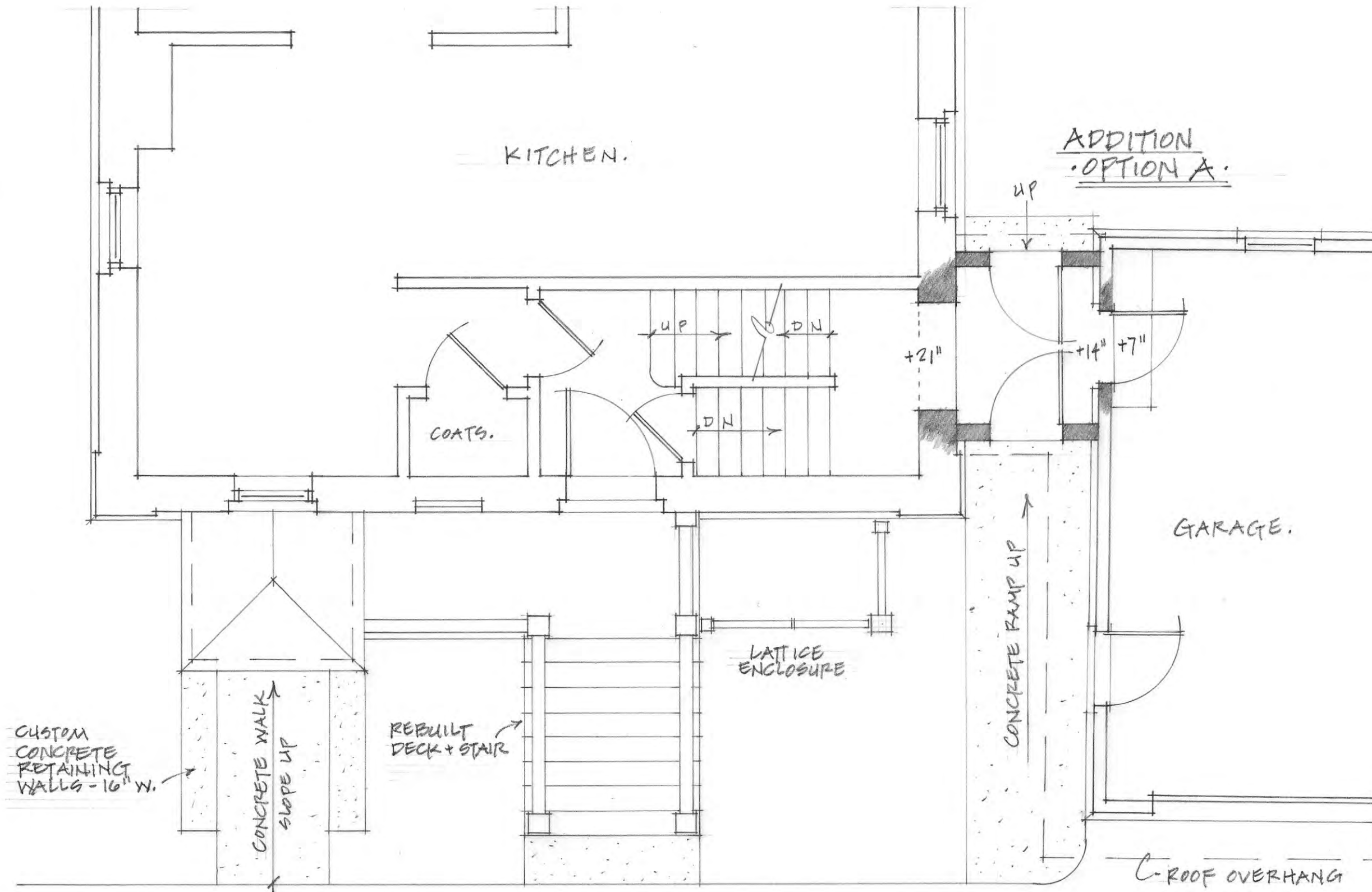


FRANKLIN RESIDENCE · 181 WESTERN PROMENADE
 EXISTING PLAN.

23 NOV. 2020

CARRIAGE HOUSE STUDIO ARCHITECTS LLC
 PORTLAND · MAINE

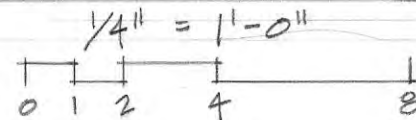


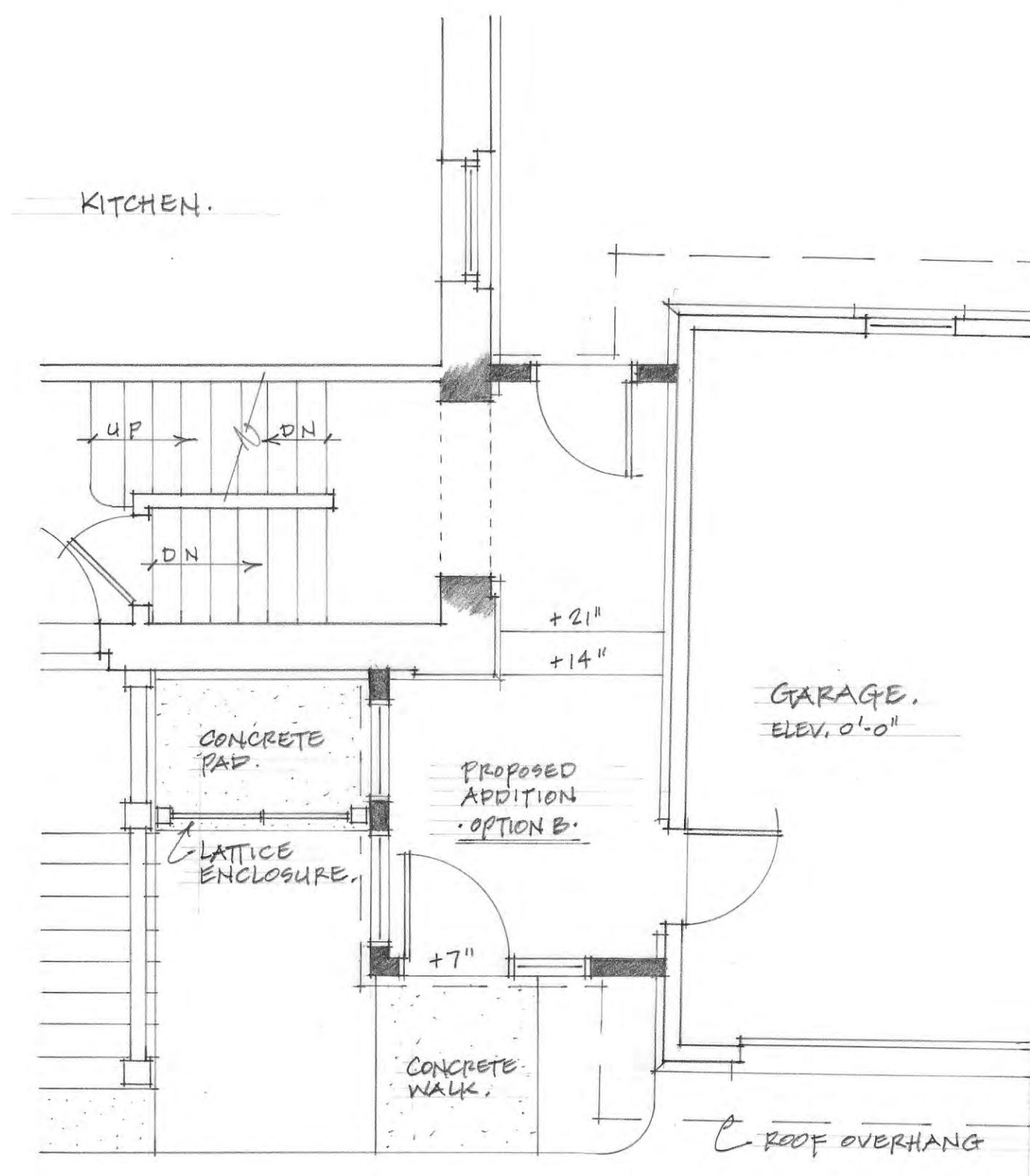


FRANKLIN RESIDENCE • 181 WESTERN PROMENADE
PROPOSED PLAN INCLUDING OPTION A.

23 NOV 2020

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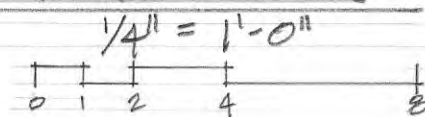




FRANKLIN RESIDENCE • 181 WESTERN PROMENADE
 PROPOSED PLAN OF ADDITION - OPTION B

23 NOV. 2020

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BULKHEAD

LATTICE
PANELS

DECK + STAIR
NEW DOOR

LATTICE
FENCE

ADDITION
OPTION A.

GARAGE

FRANKLIN RESIDENCE • 181 WESTERN PROMENADE
EAST ELEVATION - WEST ELEVATION SIMILAR

23 NOV. 2020

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$\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'-0''$

0 1 2 4 8



EAST
ELEVATION.

PROPOSED
ADDITION.



SOUTH
ELEVATION.

CONCRETE
PAD.

PROPOSED
ADDITION.

FRANKLIN RESIDENCE • 181 WESTERN PROMENADE
ELEVATIONS OF OPTION B

23 NOV. 2020

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE

PUBLIC HEARING
35 COMMERCIAL STREET

TO: Chair Pollard and Members of the Historic Preservation Board
FROM: Rob Wiener, Preservation Compliance Coordinator
DATE: November 25, 2020
RE: December 2, 2020 **Public Hearing** – Exterior Alterations and Additions

Address: 35 Commercial Street, Galt Warehouse Block (a.k.a. 29-39 Commercial St.)
Applicants: Ara Aftandilian, Essex North Portland, LLC
Project Architects: Jamie Broadbent and David Lloyd, Archetype Architects

Introduction

On December 2, 2020 owner Ara Aftandilian of Essex North Portland LLC, will return to the Board with his architects Jamie Broadbent and David Lloyd of Archetype Architects, for a public hearing on proposed alterations and additions at 35 Commercial Street, the Galt Warehouse Block. At a workshop on November 4, 2020, the proposed alterations included a long shed dormer facing Commercial Street; a shorter rear dormer facing inland, in the middle of the north roof slope; recessed insets at either end of the rear roof to provide exterior decks, and added windows and doors on the ground floor to activate new commercial spaces. The proposal package also included site alterations in the strip of land between the west end of the Galt Block and Franklin Street.

Mr. Aftandilian's programmatic goals include several retail or restaurant spaces on the ground floor, and residences on the upper floors. Board members will recall that the prominent warehouse block was renovated in the early 1990's to serve as the offices of Auto Europe, and it was added in 1997 to the Portland Waterfront Historic District – several years after the renovations.

At the early November workshop Board members had some questions about the best approach to adding fifth floor dormers to the expansive roof, but a general level of Board support for the concepts proposed for the ground and top floors led to this public hearing request, with only a few significant revisions to the plans.

In addition to the summary letters from the applicant and the design team the submission packet includes a drawing set showing existing and proposed elevations, a ground floor

plan, sections, and details. A landscape plan has also been updated since the workshop. Staff is again including the 1924 tax photo, some recent photos of existing conditions, and several pages from the workshop submission.

Subject Property

The Galt Block is a simple, strong example of the mid-19th Century warehouses lining Commercial Street. It is notable for having one of the few remaining roofs of those structures without dormers, and the basic form and features of the building are still very present. It has the typical tall, prominent granite base, and a very orderly pattern of 6/6 windows on the façade, with granite lintels. The roof has a small gambrel near the top, also expressed by end wall parapets, and a brick frieze under the rakes.

Both end walls were mostly devoid of windows in the 1924 tax photo, though neither had a tall building next door; Franklin Street was to the west and a one-story building was attached to the east end. Late 20th Century renovations carried out before the block's inclusion in the Waterfront Historic District transformed the Commercial Street façade from a regular pattern of doors and large windows to open a large central recess for a main entry alcove. Many windows were also added to the east and west ends, similar to the originals in size and configuration, but mostly grouped in triple mulls.

A collection of utilitarian functions are clustered on the rear, inland face of the building. These include HVAC equipment, a generator, a transformer, trash receptacles, canopies, and roller doors that perhaps recall the past use as a warehouse.

November 4 Workshop - Proposed Alterations and Additions and Board Feedback

Board members will recall that in addition to shed dormers on both the south and north roofs, preliminary plans included additional windows and doors on the first floor, window replacements, and a fence to screen the rear mechanicals.

- The front shed dormer extended across almost all of the length of the Commercial Street roof, and was drawn fairly low, simple, and dark colored. End wall cladding was unclear from the plans, but confirmed by Mr. Lloyd as a dark bronze metal, or possibly metal shingles – most likely the same as the faces.
- The rear dormer was similar to the front, but only included the middle two bays, while the front dormer had four bays of five windows each.
- Insets on the rear roof were proposed at either end of the dormer, for outdoor decks. They would hardly be visible from the street nearby, but as viewed from higher on the Franklin Street hill, they would be.
- Windows proposed to be added on the ground floor followed the existing pattern of large undivided openings, with bulkheads lower than in 1924; as in the 1990's renovations they were clearly modern.
- New doors on the south (front) and west (Franklin Street) walls were also proposed in a style communicating their contemporary origin.

- Outdoor seating and landscaping at the Franklin Street end of the building was to be associated with a possible restaurant space at the western end of the ground floor.
- A fence was proposed for the rear of the building, to screen various mechanical equipment and trash receptacles, but the specifics were yet to be determined. Some existing HVAC equipment attached to the rear wall can be removed, as well as two of the three existing roller doors and two canopies, and also the very large, freestanding cooling condenser at the northeast corner.
- A canopy on the East end wall that is over an existing entrance stair and door is to be removed but plans indicate the door and stairs are to be retained.

At the workshop Board members referred to Standards One and Two in evaluating the potential compatibility of the proposed roof additions, and considering how to assess whether they could be considered minimal alterations, necessary for the proposed use. Many of the Board's workshop comments concerned the significance of the large roof, and the most suitable and recessive characteristics that might quiet the visual effects of adding dormers:

- A low, dark, continuous dormer (the so-called "unibrow") was suggested as the most recessive type of dormer.
- In order to create quiet dormers the design should avoid pronounced, varying rhythms: in interrupted massing, in fenestration, and in cladding.
- Alternately, it was suggested that a more secondary intervention might be several shorter dormers, leaving more roof exposed and establishing a relationship to the bay patterning of lower floors.
- Examples of both approaches can be found along Commercial Street, as well as some successful (and some less successful) inset dormers.
- Another suggestion for more secondary dormers was to shorten them, so the ends would be further from the ends of the roof.
- More than one Board member questioned whether dormer window proportions should be consistent with the horizontal orientation of the long, low dormer, or express a more vertical orientation as found in the lower floor windows.
- Several comments advocated for dormers that would be symmetrical – the same on both sides of the roof.
- The architects and Mr. Aftandilian were asked if they considered reversing the fifth floor plan, to locate the shorter dormer and the insets on the Commercial Street roof, and the longer dormer on the inland side.
- Several Board members had reservations about the inset dormers proposed for the north roof plane, as they would cut away sections of the roof plane not being transformed by a shed dormer. These reservations also applied (perhaps more so) if the insets were moved to the south roof.

In general, the Board supported the simple contemporary approach to the design, and it was noted by both architects and reviewers that the windows on the end walls (1990's units due to be replaced) should be differentiated as modern openings. Therefore, there was

general agreement that the 6/6 configurations that aped the historic facades when installed in the east and west end walls in the 1990's was not appropriate, and new windows proposed for those faces should be 1/1 units.

Other observations by the Board addressed the commercial, warehouse character of the block, and the visibility of it from all sides. Several comments stressed the importance of renderings, including views from the west on Commercial Street and from up the Franklin Street hill.

- It was noted that the alley behind the building is a public way, and the design would have to avoid treating the north façade feeling too much like the “back of the house.” (Given the concentration of mechanical equipment there, that is a challenge.)
- Despite the proposal to change the use of upper floors to residential, it was suggested that landscaping and screening should favor the commercial and industrial past of the context, and not overemphasize a residential aesthetic.

Final Proposal for December 2 Public Hearing

Please see the revised description provided by the architects, which lists revisions that respond to a number of Board comments, while refining plans that have not changed dramatically since the early November workshop:

- There are now matching shed dormers on the north and south roofs, shorter than the preliminary version's south dormer. (The ends of the centered dormers are now about 12' from the ends of the building.)
- Smaller inset decks on the north roof are fitted between the now longer north shed dormer and the building ends.
- Staff notes that the window proportions in the dormers appear to be more vertically oriented, or at least they are not horizontal in shape as they were in the preliminary elevations.
- On the rear side, the fence is described as 6'-6" high, vertical Corten steel slats.
- The fence will hide a phalanx of new compressors for heating and cooling, trash, generator, and transformer; the existing large cooling unit is to be removed.
- The landscape plan for the western end of the property is more developed, but is still dependent on possible changes to the City owned right-of-way and licenses for the private use.

Staff Comments

Despite updating that has occurred, the appearance of the Galt Block retains much of its purity, simplicity and order. Any new interventions need to respect that character, even while conveying that they will be of their own time. It must be acknowledged that finding viable, compatible uses for buildings like the Galt Block is essential to their sustainability, and so review of proposed alterations repeatedly returns to Standards for Review of Alterations One and Two. How should the essential character and features be maintained,

and what constitutes minimal alterations, necessary for modern use?

Given the many precedents for rooftop dormers and additions on former warehouses and other commercial buildings in the Old Port, it would be difficult to deny the possibility at the Galt Block. Nonetheless, it is important to apply the Standards sensitively to protect the resource's integrity even as it evolves. The architects continue to keep the profile of the dormers low and simple, and in response to the Board's input have now proposed a matched pair of shorter, continuous additions with neutrally proportioned windows and (on the south,) more of the original roof visible at either end.

Board members may still question the necessity of the inset decks on the north-facing back of the building, and may conclude that the clean simplicity and larger remnants of original roof of the proposed south elevation should be mirrored on the back. It is hoped that by December 2 a rendering will be available to depict the appearance of the north side from some distance up Franklin Street.

The challenge of minimizing the effects of necessary infrastructure on the appearance of the "back side" is being handled by a quite solid and continuous screen that is firmly industrial in its aesthetic qualities. Here too, a rendering would help one judge whether the approach feels a bit harshly utilitarian, or a suitable reference to a gritty past and a practical present. Staff wonders if there might be an alternative to being cut off from the entire length of the rear face's ground floor.

For the landscaping on the west end of the building, a rendering would be helpful to assess the plantings and granite and brick hardscape. The materials are common to the context, but the balance of plantings and a commercial aesthetic in the landscape is hard to visualize.

Staff believes that the choice of high quality clad windows, with appropriate configurations and details (1/1 for the east and west ends, and 6/6 to match the historic windows on the south and north) is sound. Final detailed specifications should be reviewed by staff, including the exterior trim details. It is unclear whether any historic wood details have survived at the upper story windows on the north and south.

Staff suggests some additional details that may be available at the public hearing, but in any event will be important to review as redevelopment plans become more concrete:

- Site details
- New exterior lighting
- Signage – a general sense of an overall signage plan
- Onsite masonry inspection by staff
- Final window specifications

Applicable Review Standards

Standards for Review of Alterations

- (1) *Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for the property which requires minimal alteration to the character-defining features of the structure, object or site and its environment or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.*
- (2) *The distinguishing original qualities or character of a structure, object or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.*
- (3) *All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time, place and use. Alterations that have no historical basis or create a false sense of historical development such as adding conjectural features or elements from other properties shall be discouraged.*
- (4) *Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a structure, object or site and its environment. Changes that have acquired significance in their own right, shall not be destroyed.*
- (5) *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a structure, object or site shall be treated with sensitivity.*
- (6) *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the feature being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Repair or replacement of missing historic features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects.*
- (7) *The surface cleaning of structures and objects, if appropriate, shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be undertaken.*
- (9) *Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archeological materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.*
- (10) *Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.*

Motion for Consideration

On the basis of plans and specifications submitted by the applicant for the December 2, 2020 public hearing and information included in the accompanying staff report, the Board finds that the proposed alterations and additions at 35 Commercial Street **meet (fail to meet)** the historic preservation ordinance's Standards for Review of Alterations **(subject to the following conditions.....)**

Attachments:

1. Project summary letters from applicant and architect
2. Plans, elevations and details
3. Pages from the November 4 workshop preliminary plans
4. Staff and Google photos
5. 1924 tax photo

November 23, 2020

Deb Andrews
Historic Preservations Program Manager
Portland City Hall
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101

RE: 35 Commercial Street

Dear Deb,

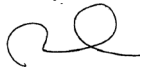
We are requesting a review for changes to 35 Commercial Street (Galt Block). The building fronts Commercial Street and Franklin Arterial. We are asking for review of a new dormer along Commercial Street, a new dormer on the North side plus two recessed decks at the ends, as well as the addition of a handful of doors and windows at street level. This proposal calls for some brick removal for new windows along Franklin and the parking lot side (East), as well as changes to screening of a generator, transformer and HVAC unit along the back (North) side.

The owner's intention is to add egress points such that the interior spaces at street level delineated by the original brick structure can function independently as retail and restaurant spaces. The addition of the new dormers and decks on the top floor will add livable space and light for top floor residential units.

The included landscape plan is showing proposed outdoor seating and landscaping for a restaurant in the end unit along Franklin. It is using the proposed changes to the ROW at the Franklin & Commercial intersection.

Please see attached sketches and letter from the owner outlining some project history to date. We look forward to the boards review.

Respectfully,



David Lloyd
Maine Licensed Architect



October 29, 2020

Deb Andrews
Historic Preservation Program Manager
City of Portland
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101

Re: "Galt Warehouse"
35 Commercial Street

Dear Deb:

As a follow up to David Lloyd's letter, we are moving towards changing the upper floors use from commercial office to residential. The updated Archetype plans add a rear dormer in the middle two warehouse bays, and exterior space in the two outside bays.

We have been working diligently to secure office and retail tenants for this building subsequent to the previous office tenant defaulting on their lease. The unfortunately reality is the current covid pandemic has put a halt to the office leasing market, and frankly we do not see this improving for a long time. Not only are office tenants choosing to remain in place many office tenants are seeking to reduce their office space requirements going forward, resulting in a substantial amount of vacant and "shadow" space (leased but not occupied) in the market.

This is not all bad news, however, as we believe this building can work really well for residential use. The Twenty Thames Condominium project that EssexNorth Portland completed last year is sold out. We learned a lot about the residential market on the Twenty Thames project and we are confident that this great historical building can be a great residential building. I am a firm believer in continued residential development in the eastern waterfront area. More residents mean more demand for retail services and amenities, to truly create a 24 hour city. The other benefit is more residents create a larger pool of office workers for this area's new employers such as WEX, Covetrus and Tilson.

We look forward to discussing the original proposal and this update with the Board as well as other improvements that are likely required for residential use. This includes replacing the existing windows and potentially adding more windows on the east elevation similar to the existing west/Franklin Street side. We are researching options and hope to have more information to present and discuss with the Board at the workshop next week.

Sincerely,

Ara Aftandilian

Ara Aftandilian
President/Managing Member



ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS
A1.01 PLANS & SECTIONS
A2.01 BUILDING ELEVATIONS
A2.02 BUILDING ELEVATIONS - EXIST/DEMO
A5.00 DETAILS

Prepared For:

Ara Aftandilian

Consultant:
Carrol Associates
Landscape Architects

Architect:

ARCHITYPE
architects

8 Union Wharf Portland, Maine 04101
(207) 772-6022 ARCHTYPE@ARCHTYPEPA.COM

Project: **Galt Block**

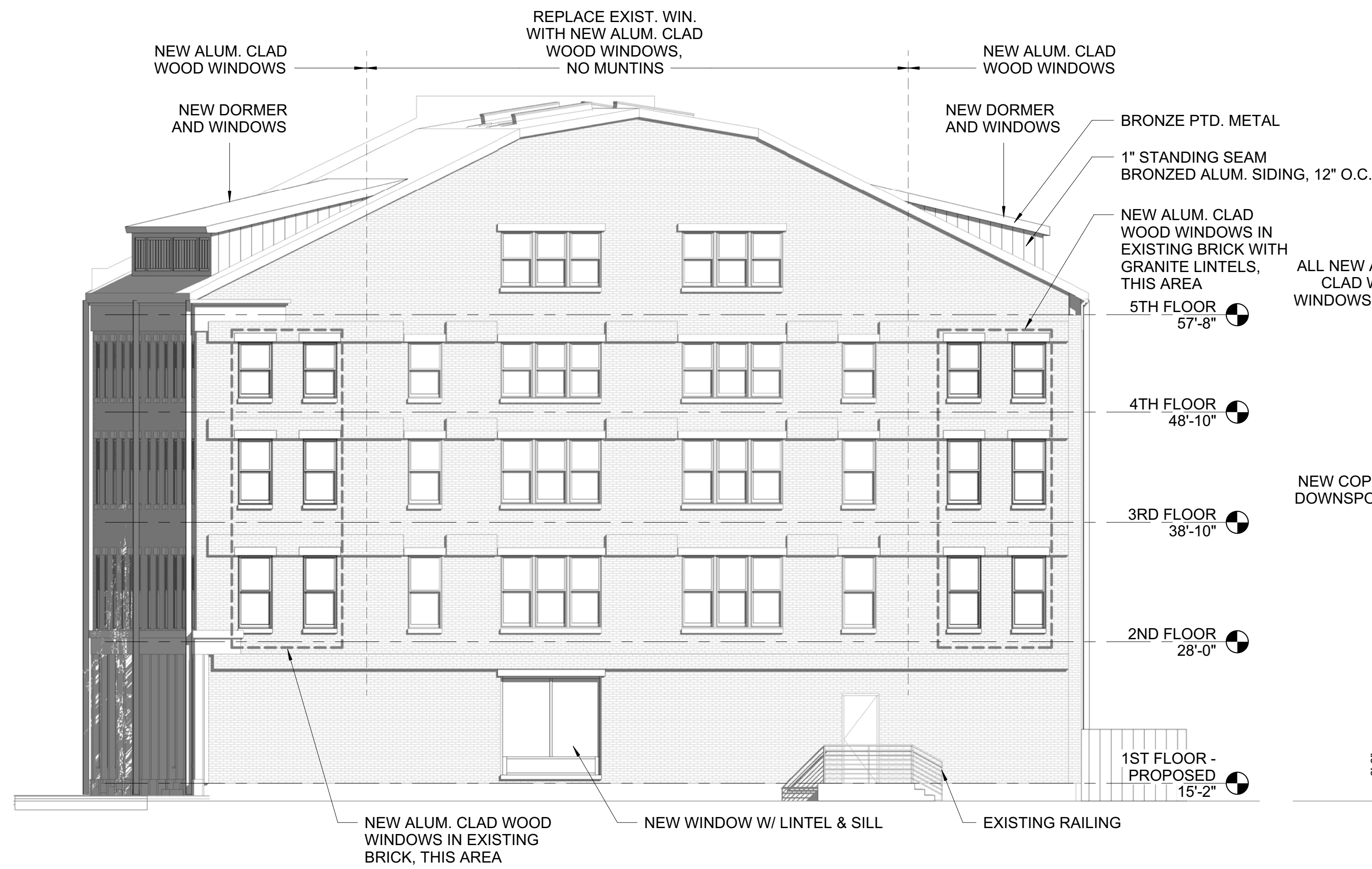
35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

Revisions:

Date: /23/2020	Scale: As indicated
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PLANS & SECTIONS

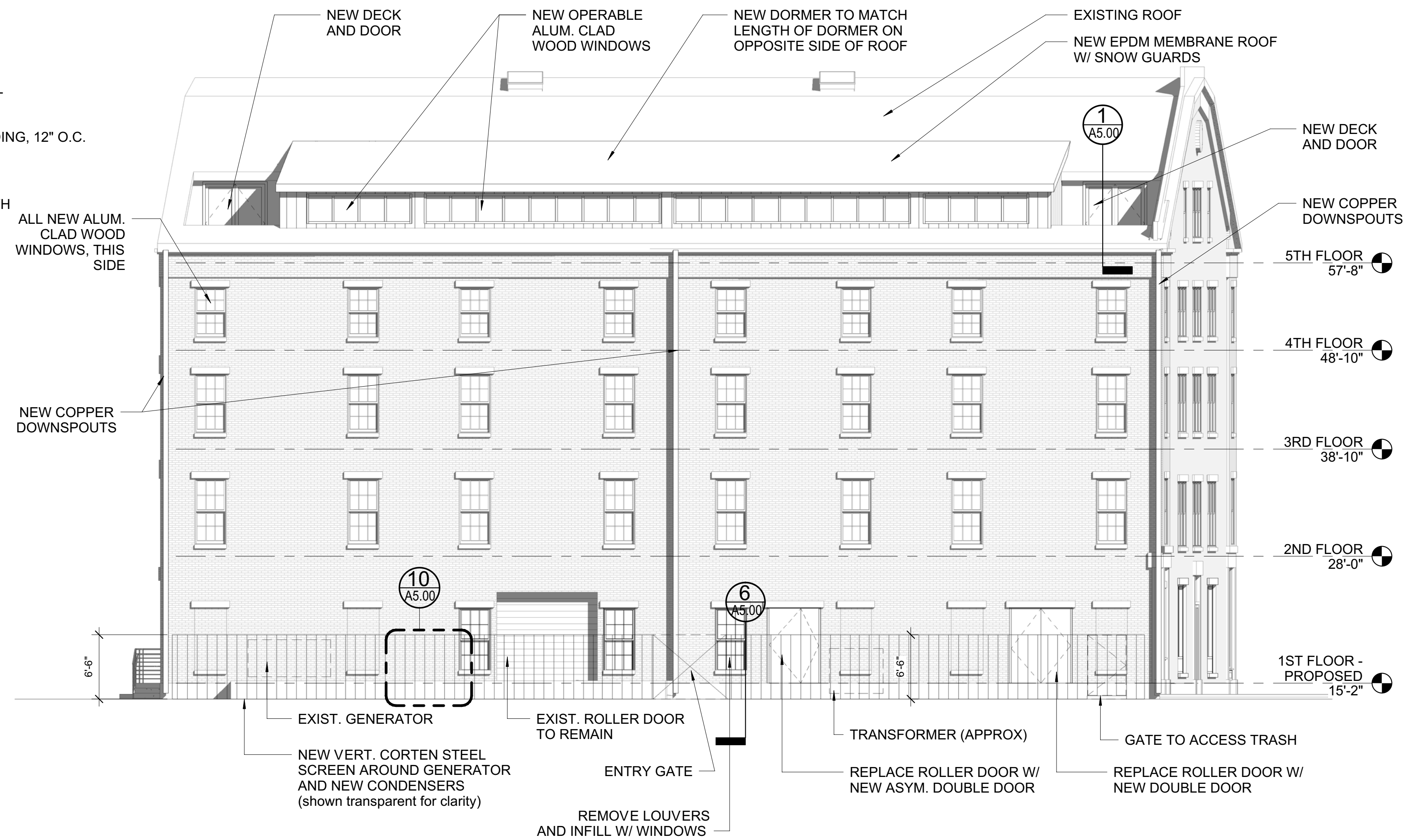
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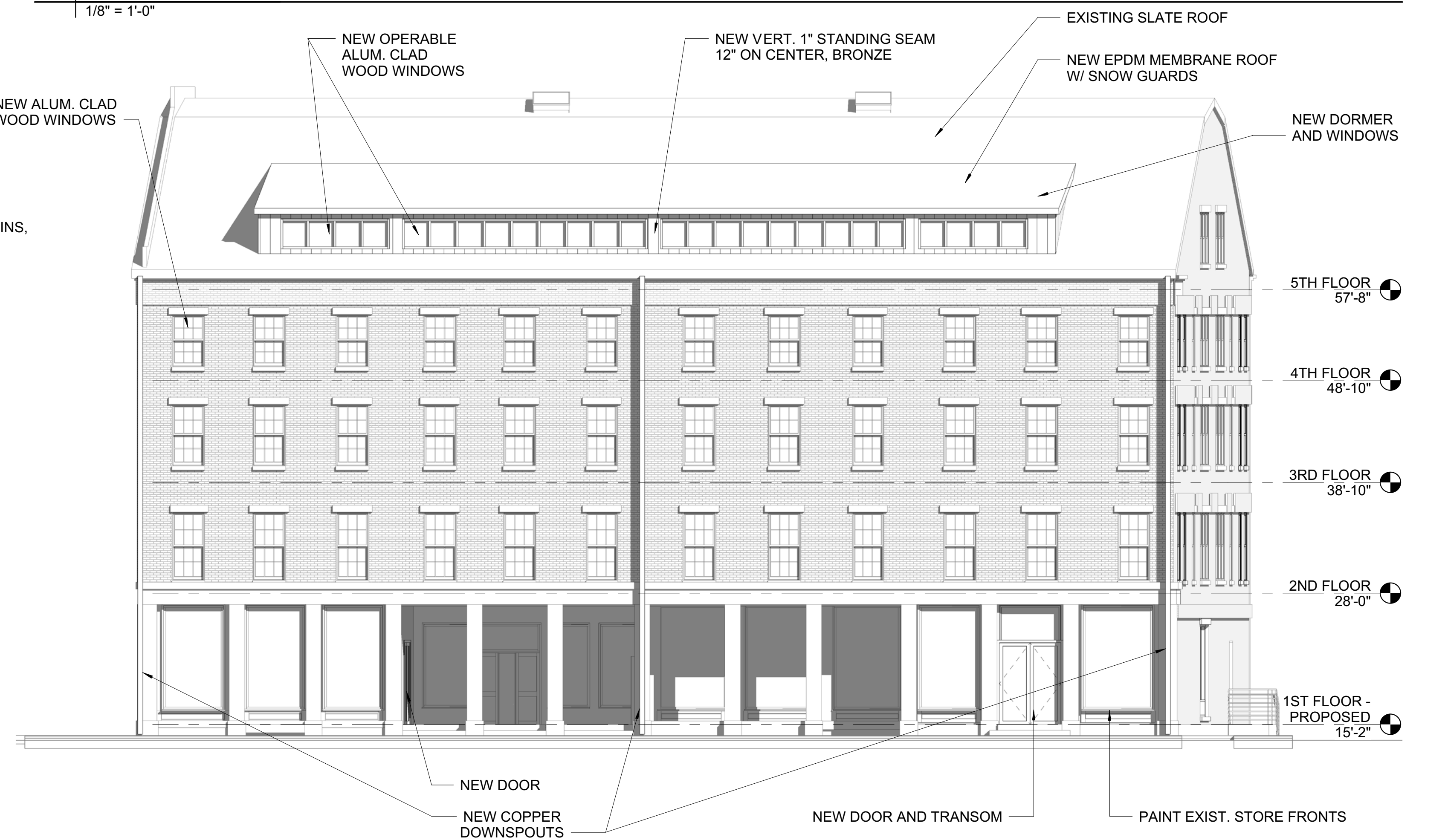
4 | EAST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 | FRANKLIN STREET WEST
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 | BACK OF BUILDING NORTH
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 | SOUTH COMMERCIAL STREET
1/8" = 1'-0"

Prepared For:
Ara Aftandilian

Address
City, State

Consultant:

ARCHETYPE
architects
48 Union Wharf Portland, Maine 04101
(207) 772-6022 ARCHETYPE@ARCHETYPEPA.COM

Architect:

Project:
Galt Block

35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

Revisions:

Date: 11/23/2020
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

**BUILDING
ELEVATIONS**

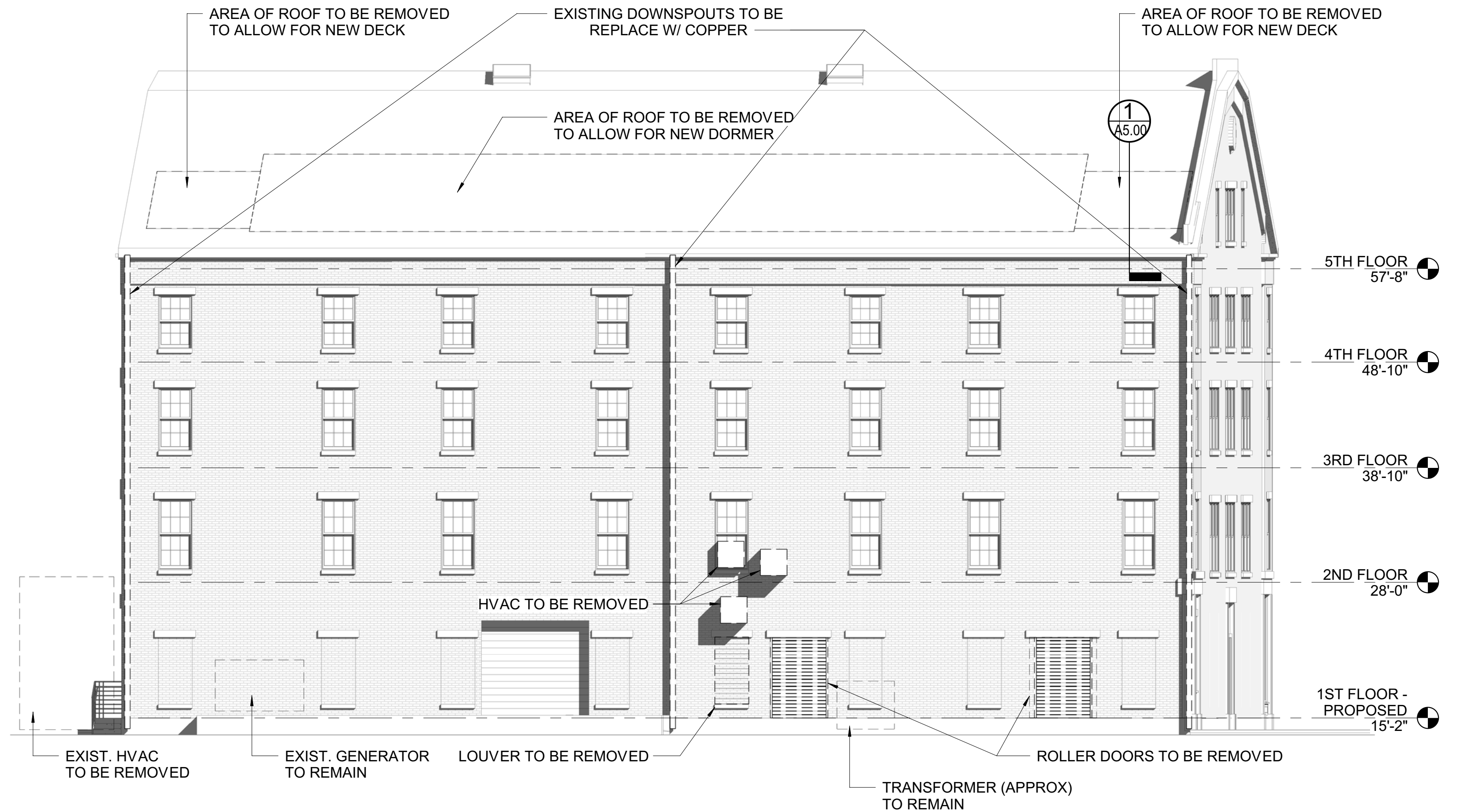
A2.01



4 | EAST ELEVATION - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 | FRANKLIN STREET WEST - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 | BACK OF BUILDING NORTH - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 | SOUTH COMMERCIAL STREET - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"

Prepared For:
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Project:
Galt Block

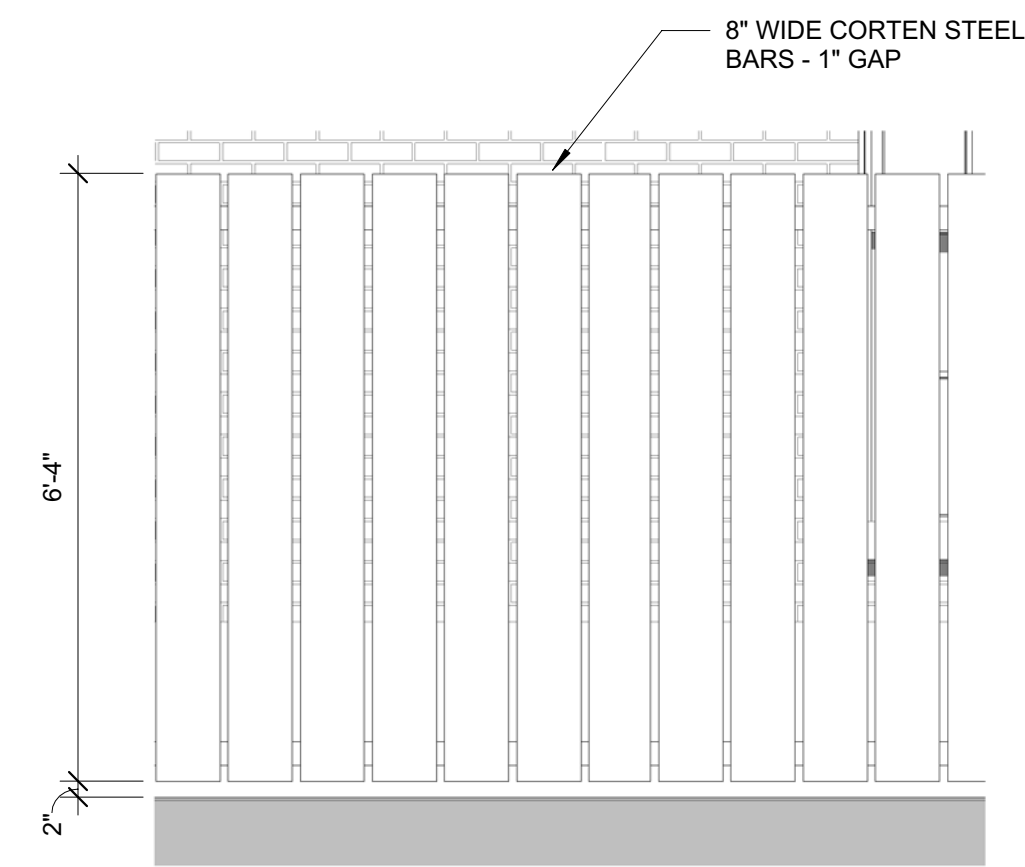
35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

Revisions:

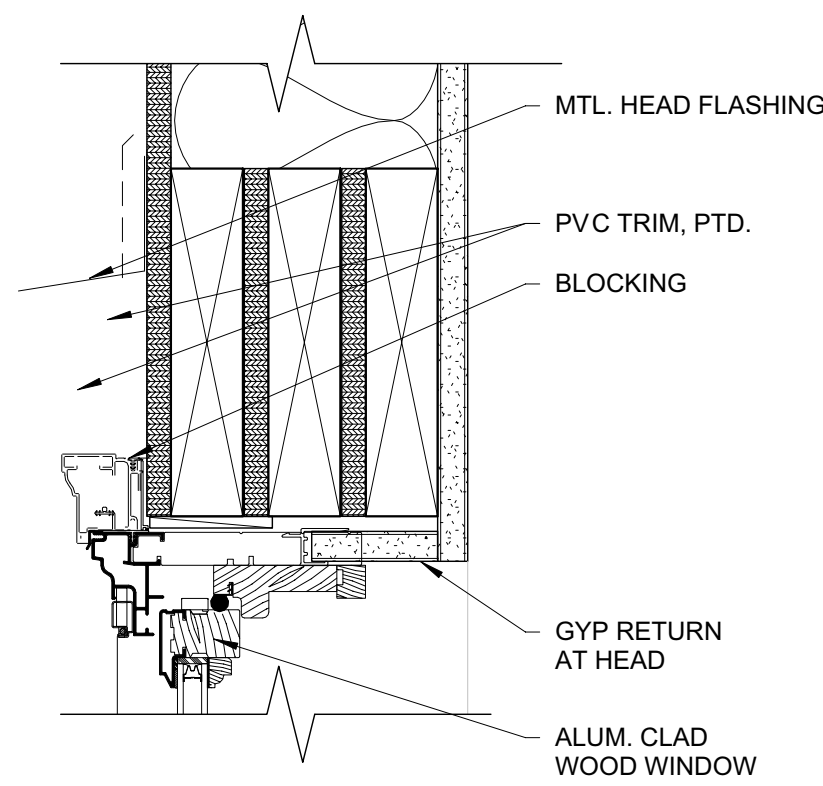
Date: 11/23/2020
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

BUILDING
ELEVATIONS -
EXIST/DEMO

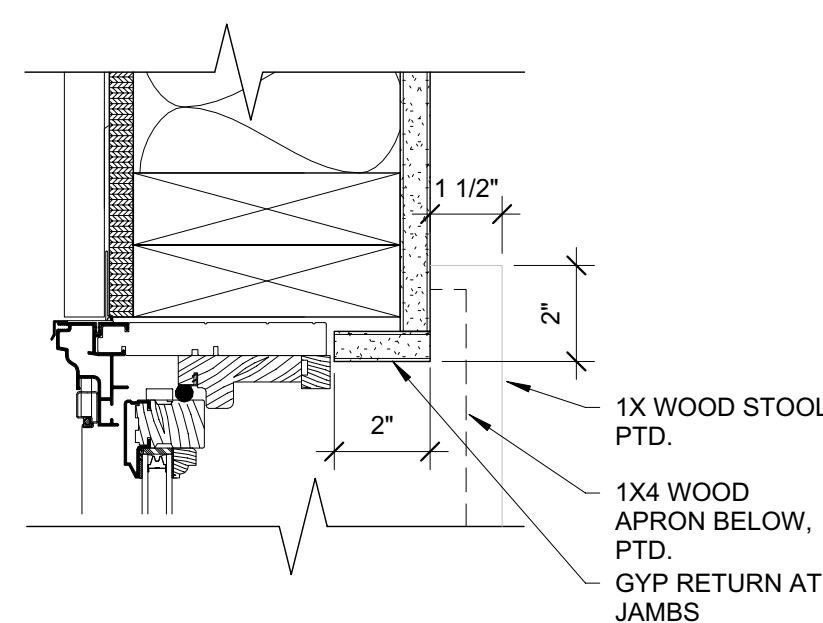
A2.02



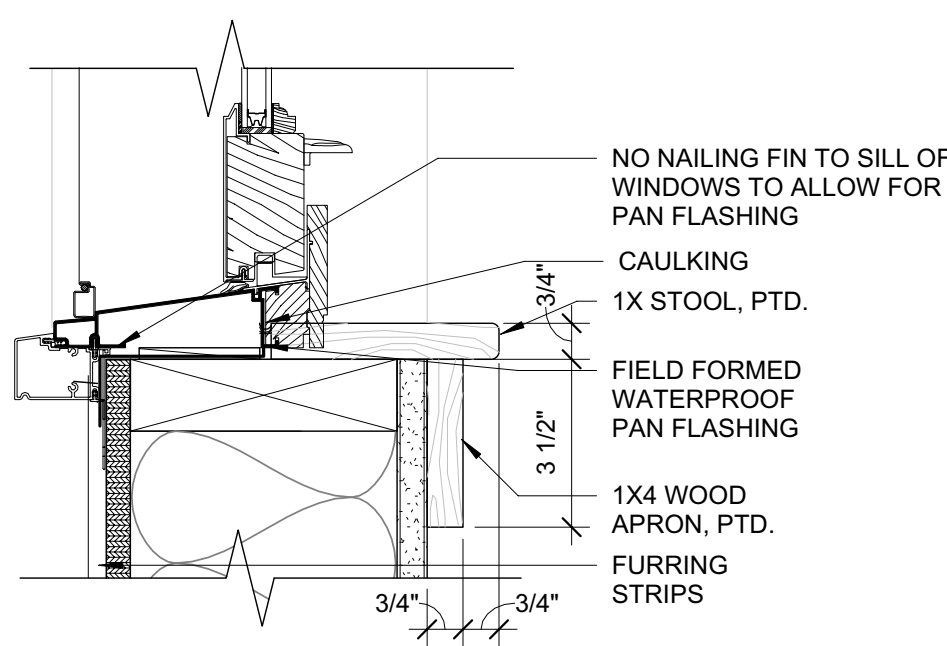
10 | FENCE ELEVATION DETAIL
1/2" = 1'-0"



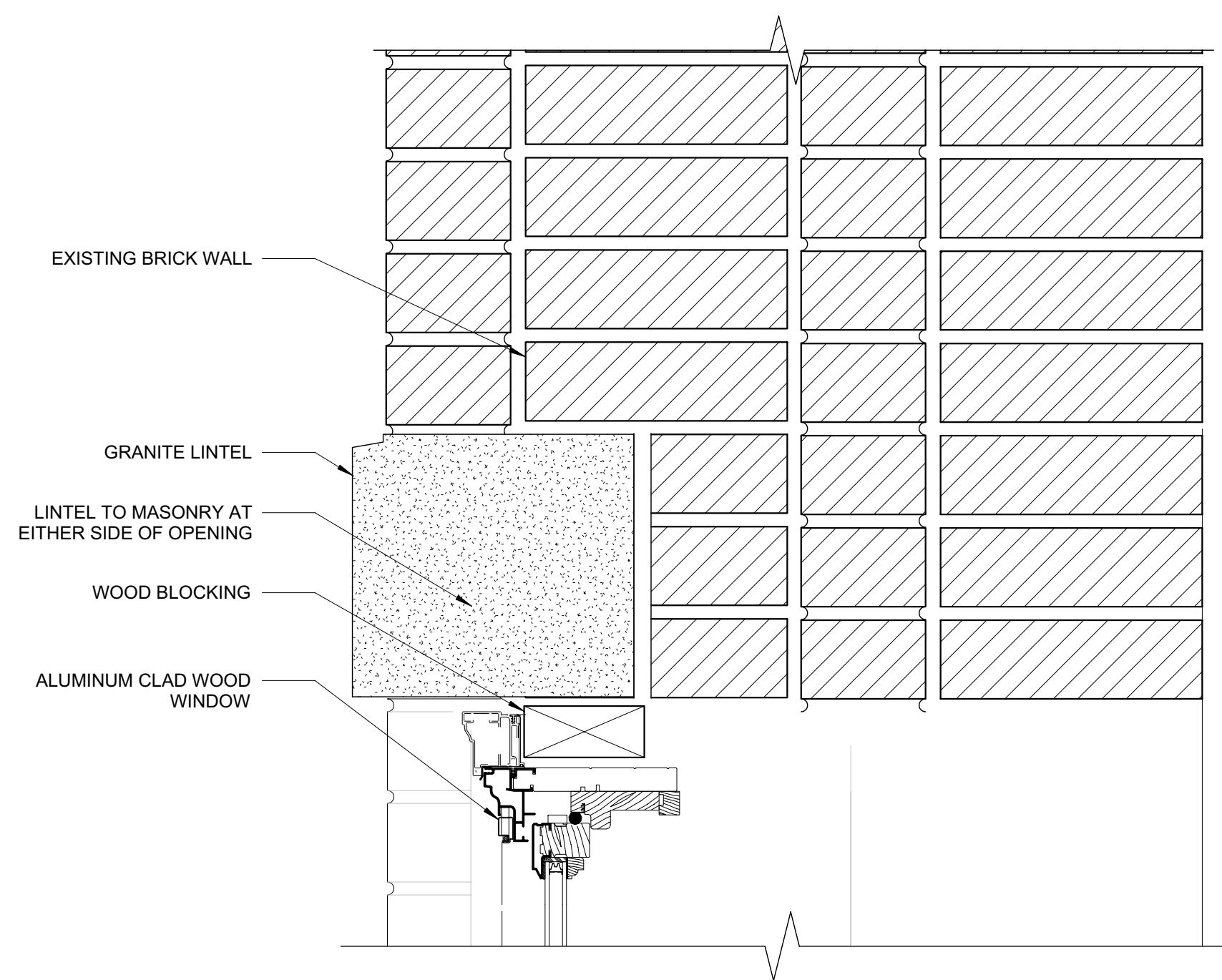
9 | TYP. WINDOW HEAD SECTION
3" = 1'-0"



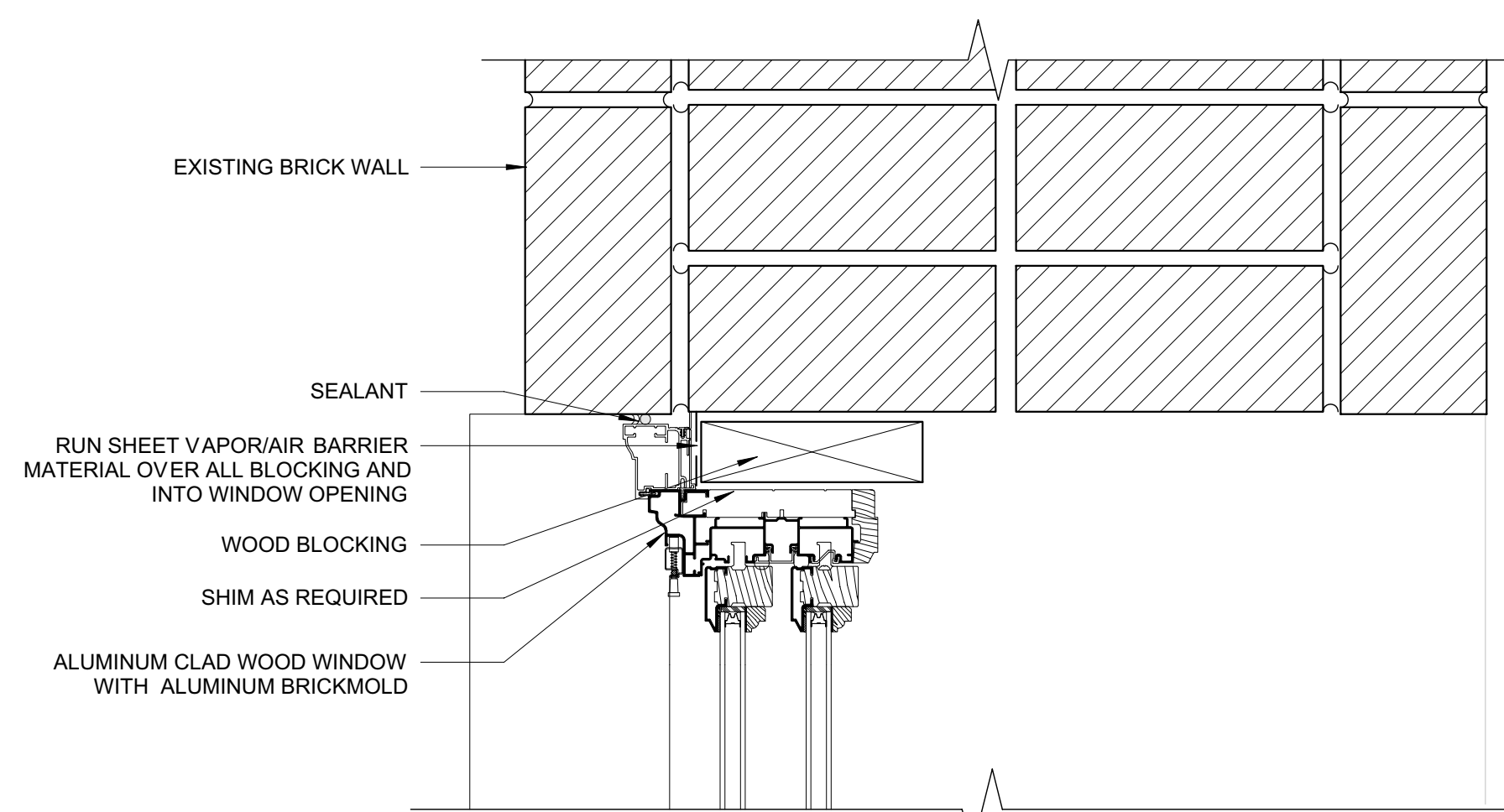
8 | TYP. WINDOW JAMB SECTION
3" = 1'-0"



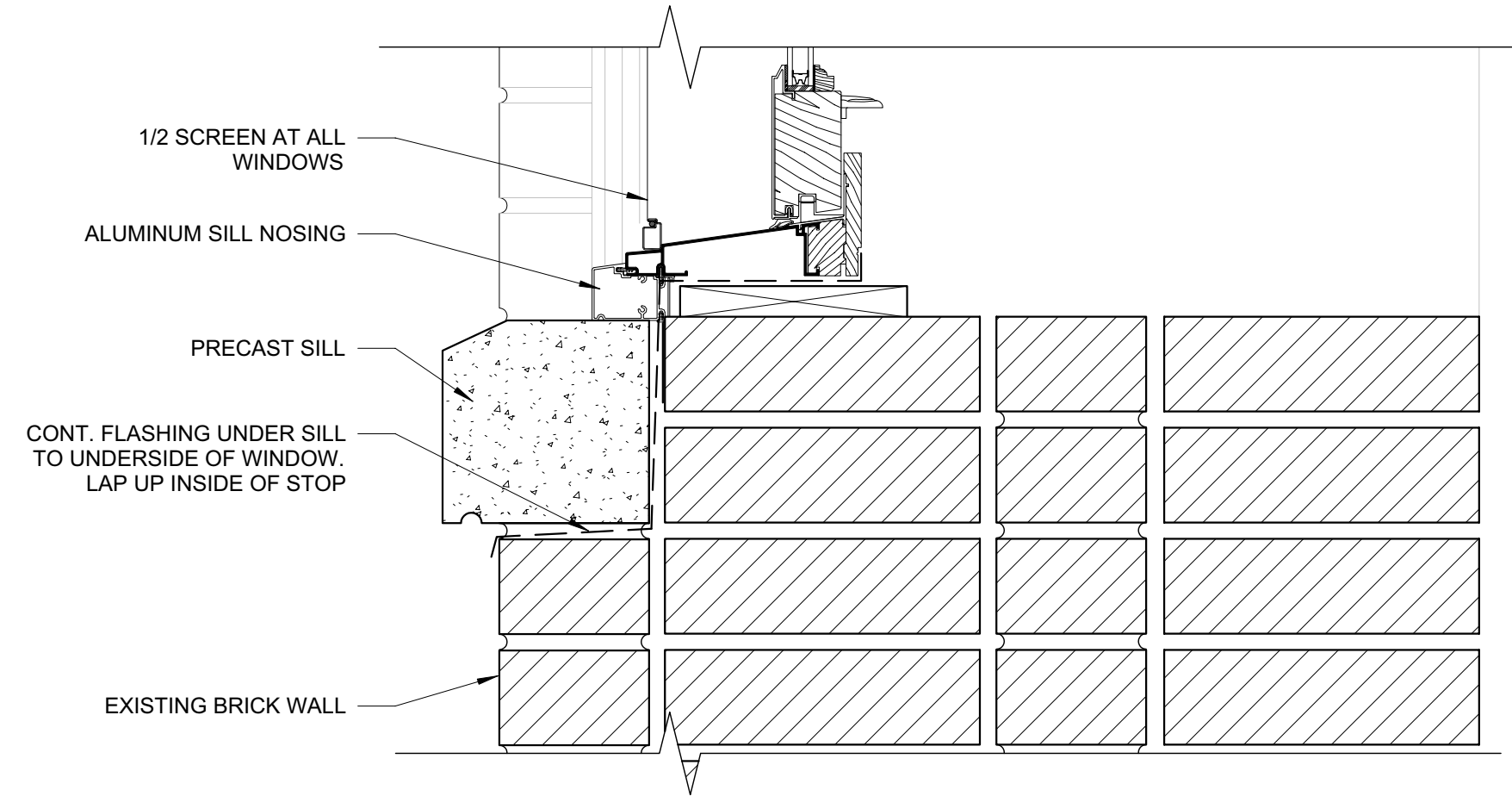
7 | TYP. WINDOW SILL SECTION
3" = 1'-0"



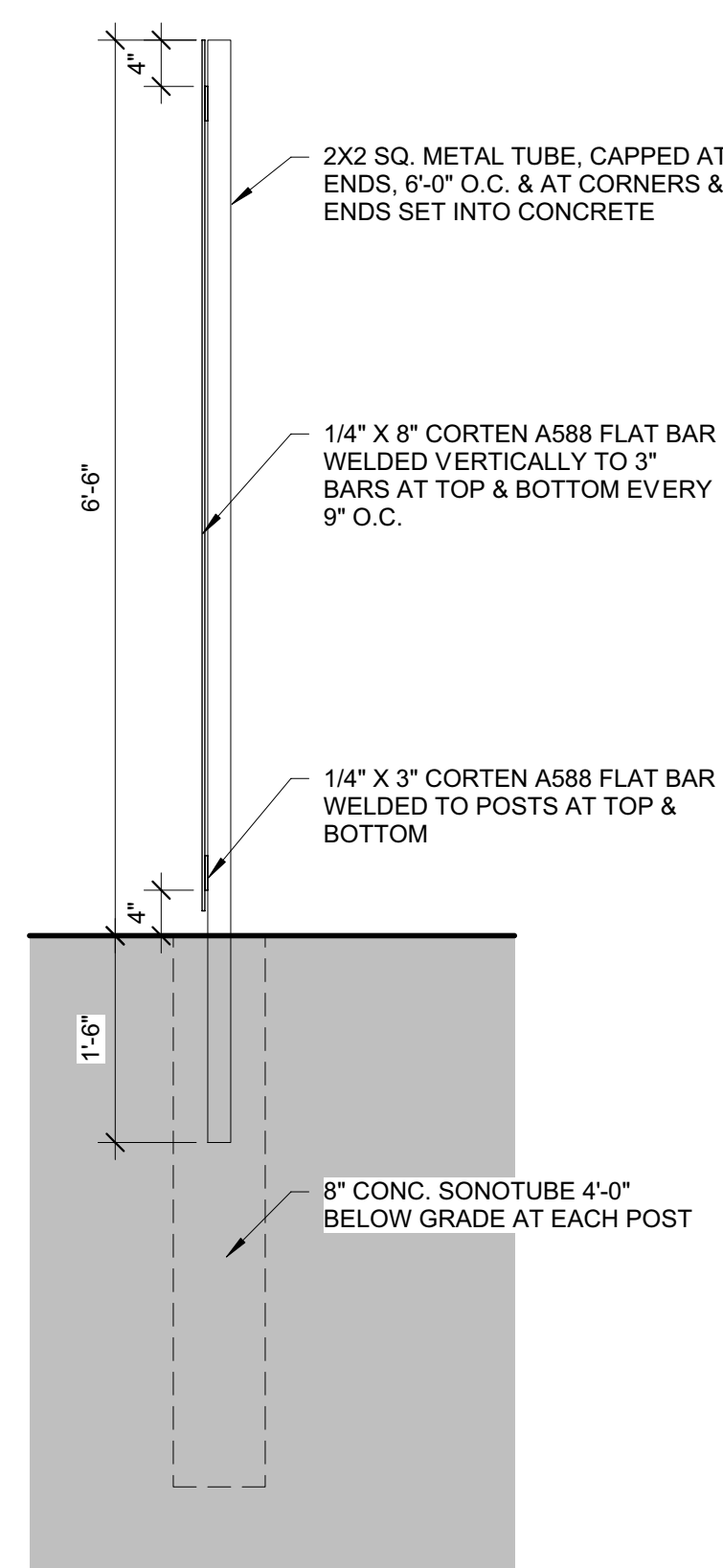
5 | WINDOW HEAD AT BRICK
3" = 1'-0"



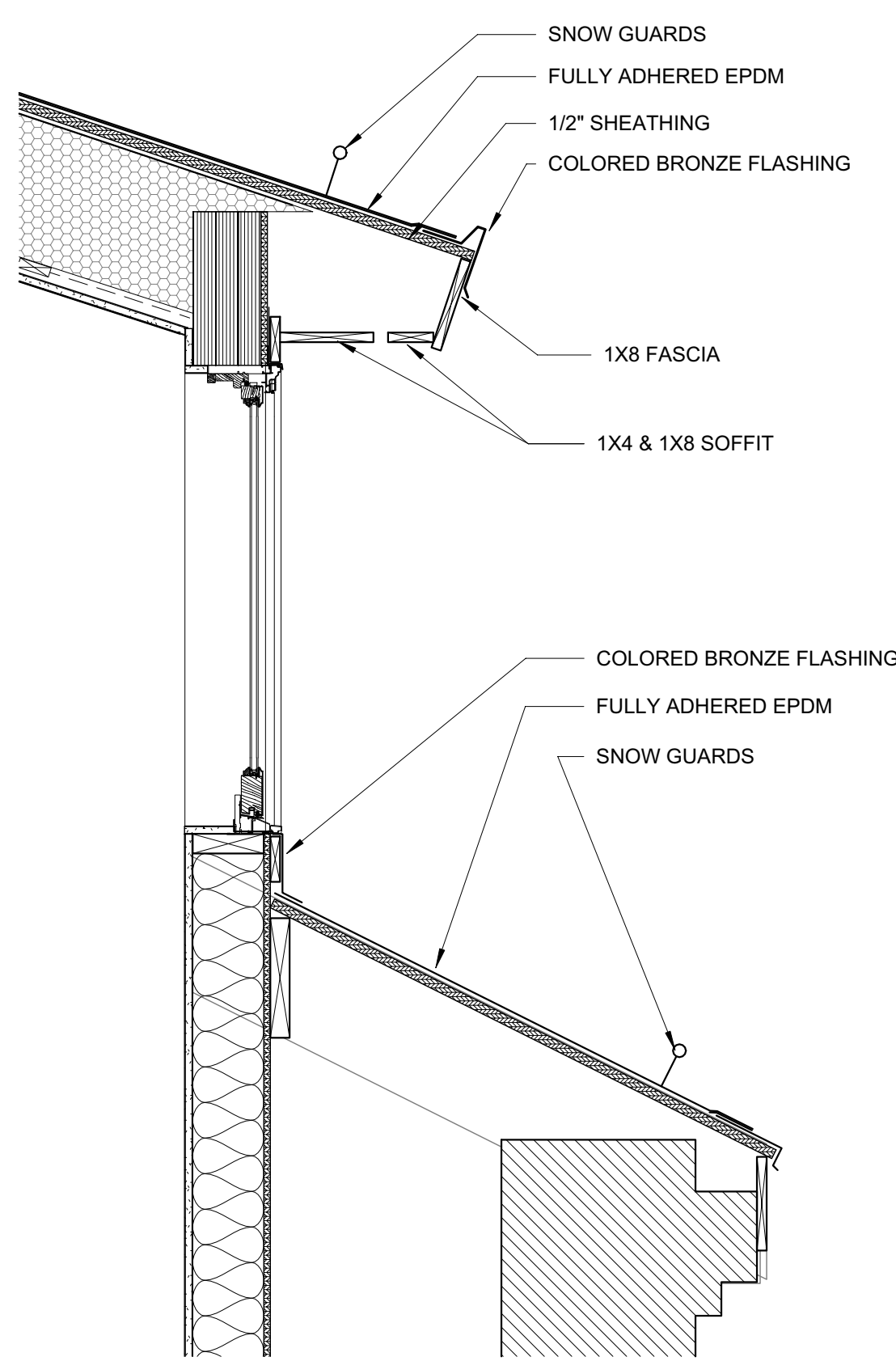
4 | WINDOW JAMB AT BRICK
3" = 1'-0"



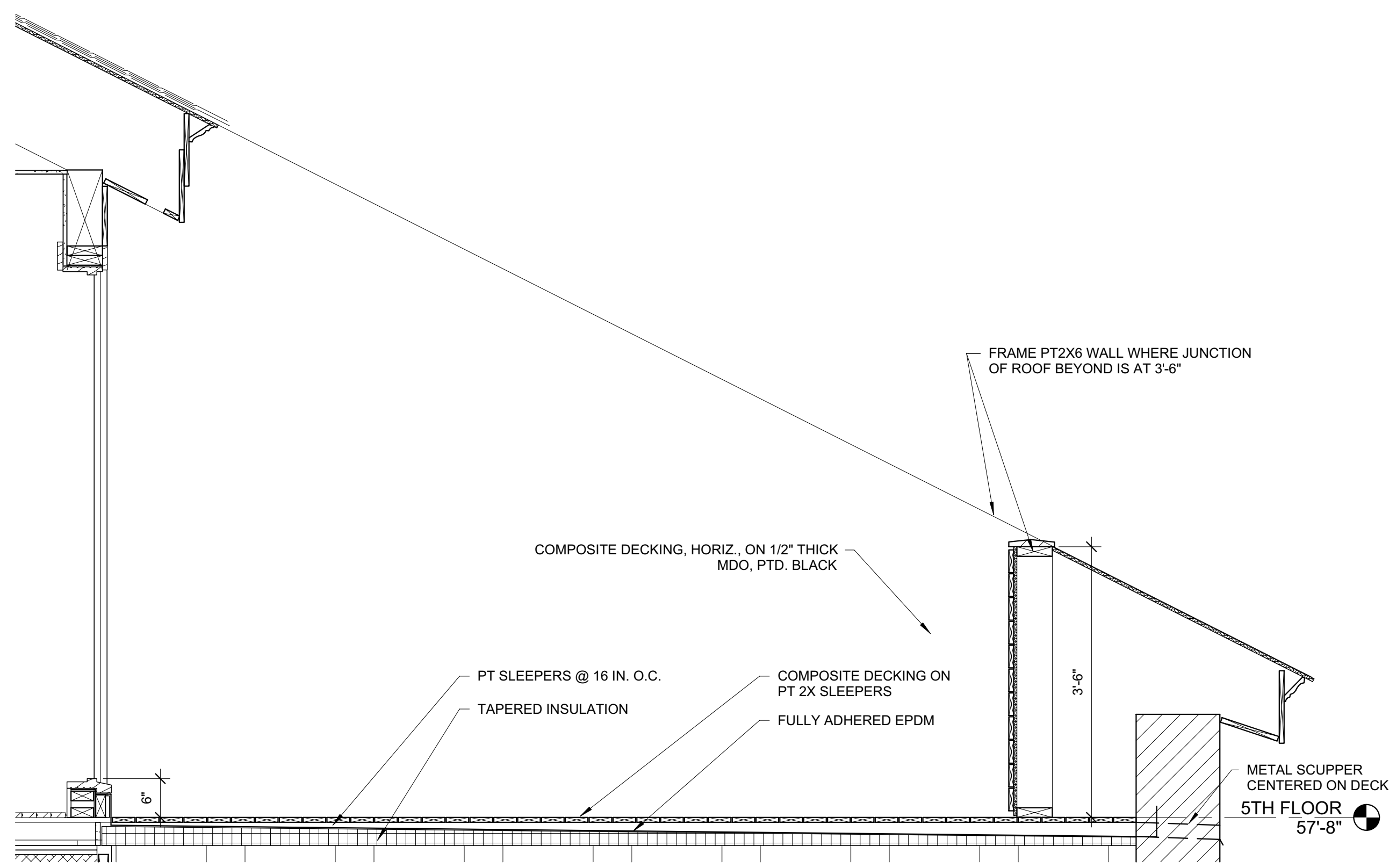
3 | WINDOW SILL AT BRICK
3" = 1'-0"



6 | SECTION AT FENCE
3/4" = 1'-0"



2 | DORMER ROOF DETAIL
1" = 1'-0"



1 | ROOF DECK SECTION
3/4" = 1'-0"

Prepared For:
Ara Afandilian

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Consultant:

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Project:
Galt Block

35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

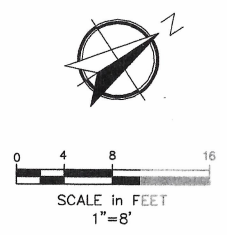
Revisions:

Scale:
As indicated

Date:
11/23/2020

DETAILS

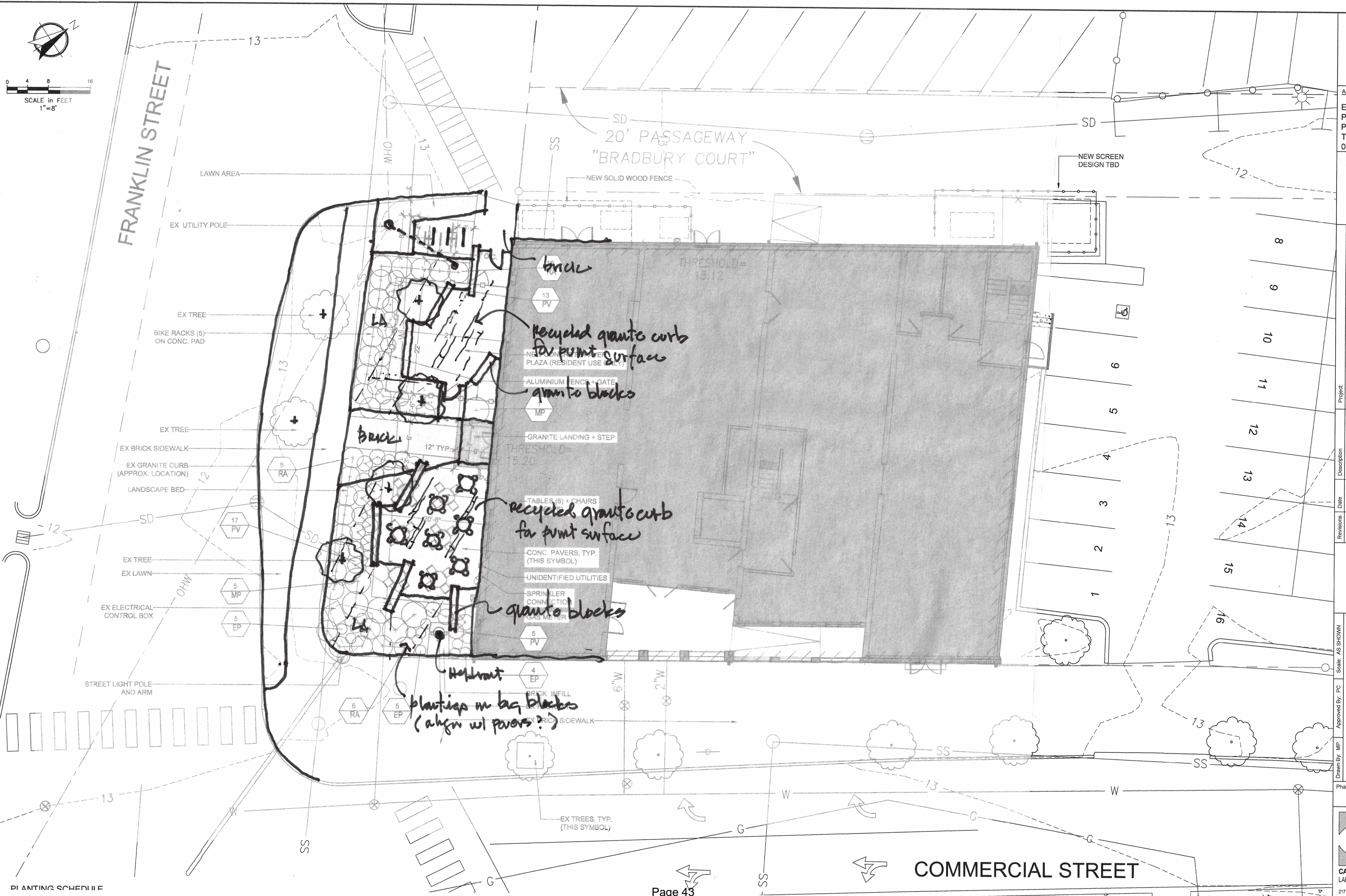
A5.00



FRANKLIN STREET

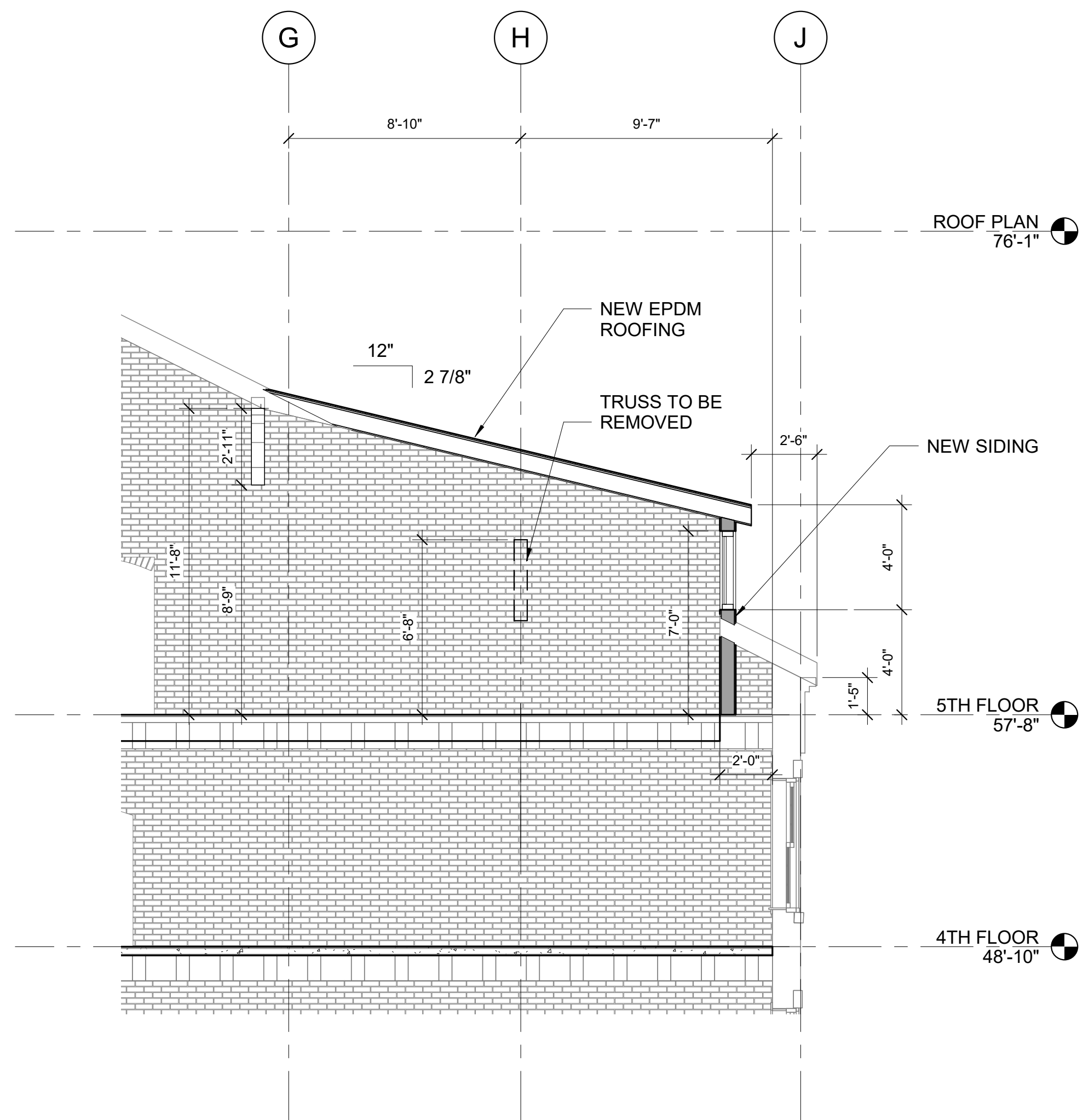
SD
20' PASSAGEWAY
"BRADBURY COURT"

NEW SCREEN
DESIGN TBD





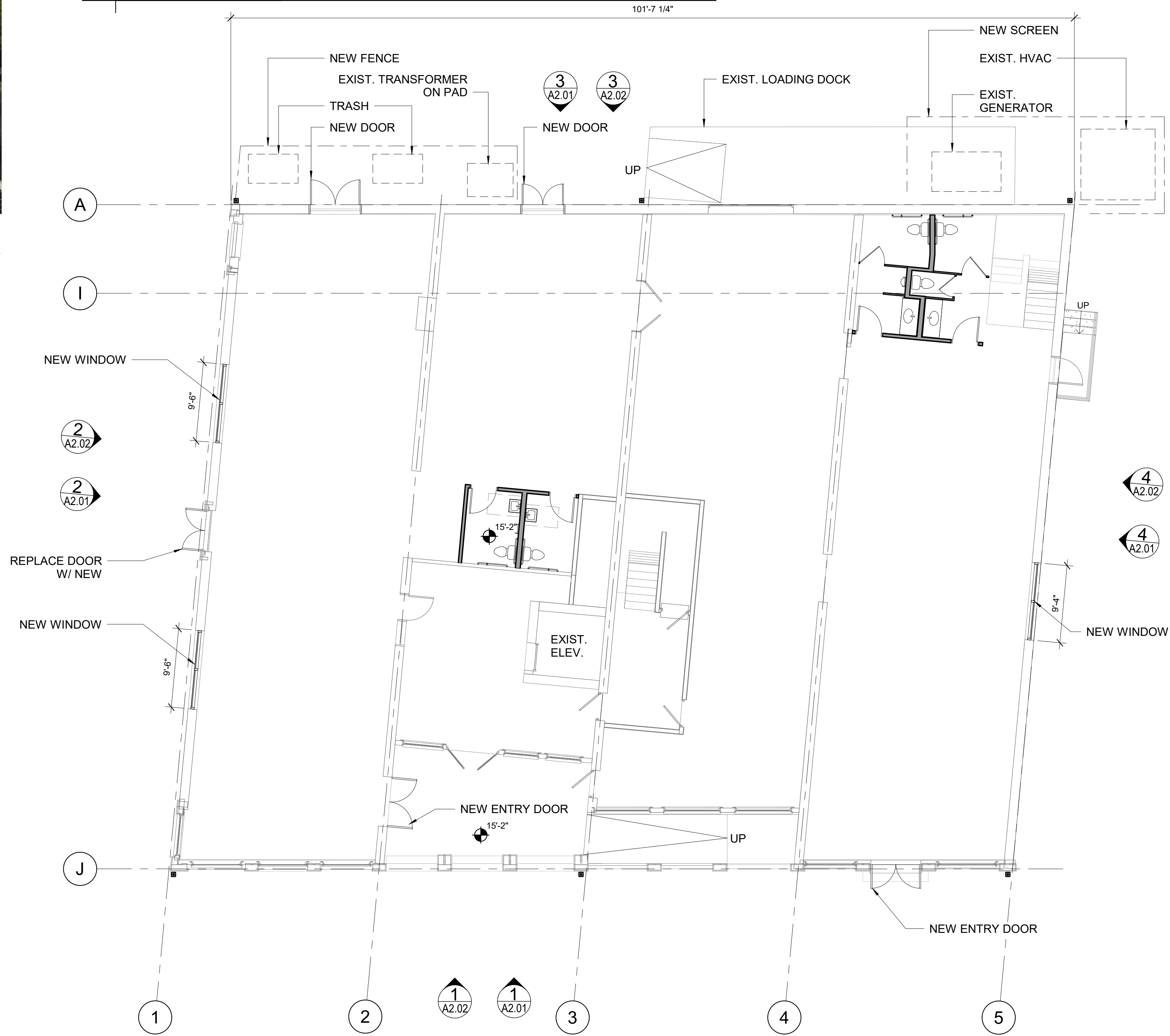
3 | VIEW FROM CORNER OF FRANKLIN & COMMERCIAL



2 | SECTION THROUGH DORMER
1/4" = 1'-0"



4 | VIEW OF NORTH SIDE FROM FRANKLIN



1 | 1ST FLOOR - PROPOSED (EXTERIOR ONLY)
1/8" = 1'-0"

DRAWING LIST

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS	
A1.01	PLANS & SECTIONS
A2.01	BUILDING ELEVATIONS
A2.02	BUILDING ELEVATIONS - EXIST/DEMO

Prepared For:
Ara Aftandilian

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Project:
Galt Block
35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

Revisions:

Date: 10/28/2020
Scale: As indicated
PLANS & SECTIONS

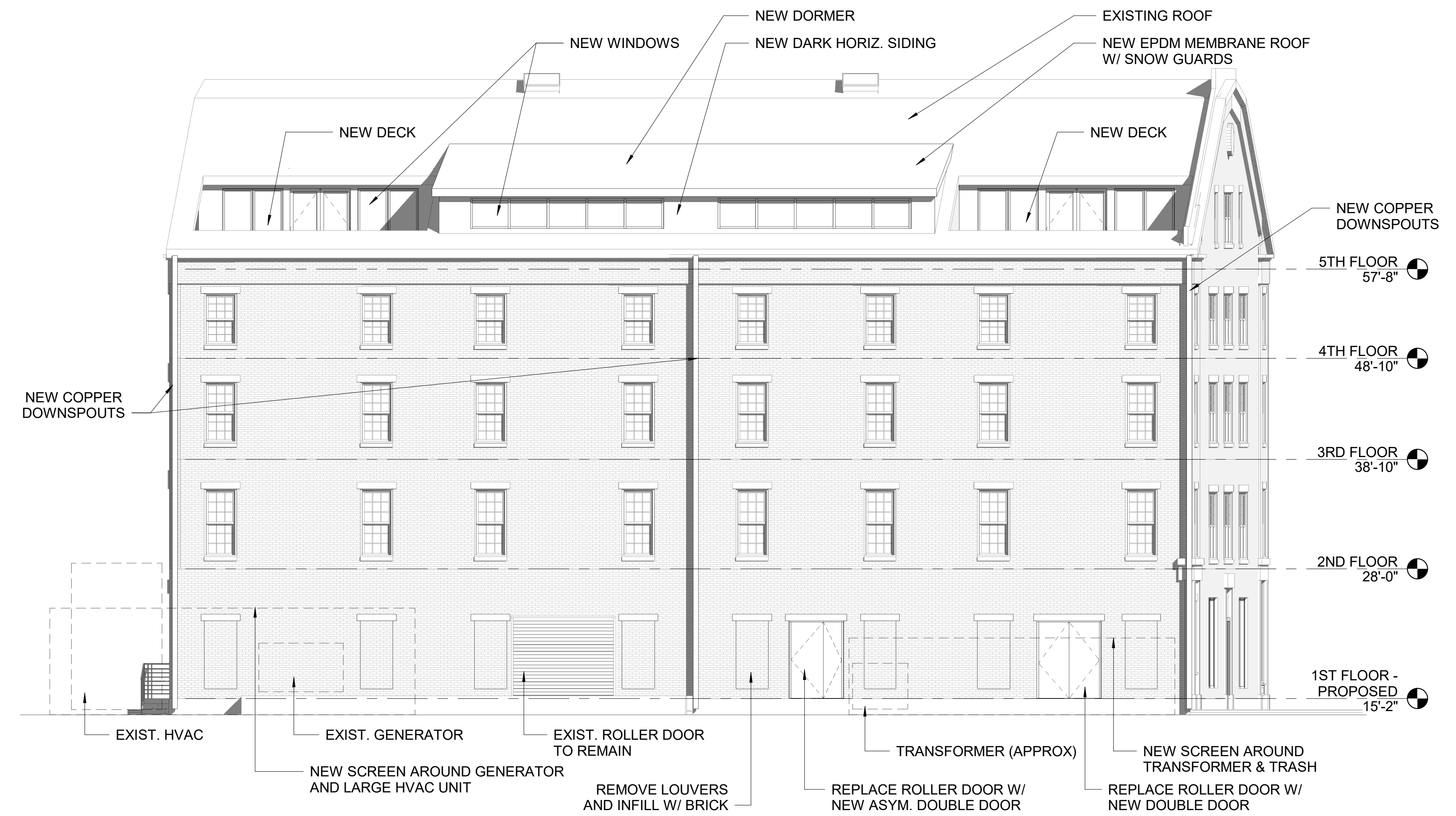
A1.01



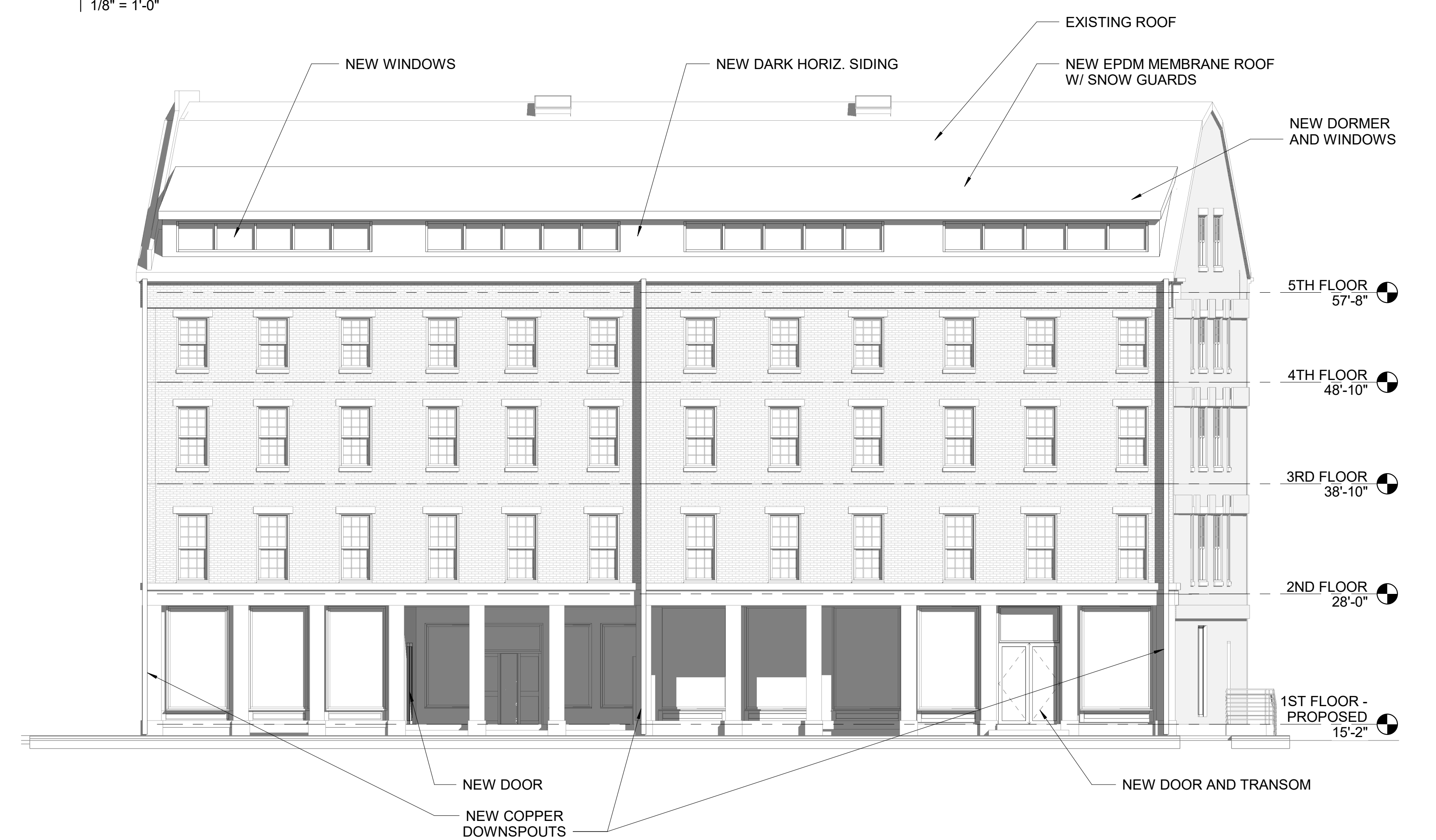
4 | EAST ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 | FRANKLIN STREET WEST
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 | BACK OF BUILDING NORTH
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 | SOUTH COMMERCIAL STREET
1/8" = 1'-0"

Prepared For:
Ara Aftandilian

Address
City, State

Consultant:

Architect:
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48 Union Wharf Portland, Maine 04101
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Project:
Galt Block

35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

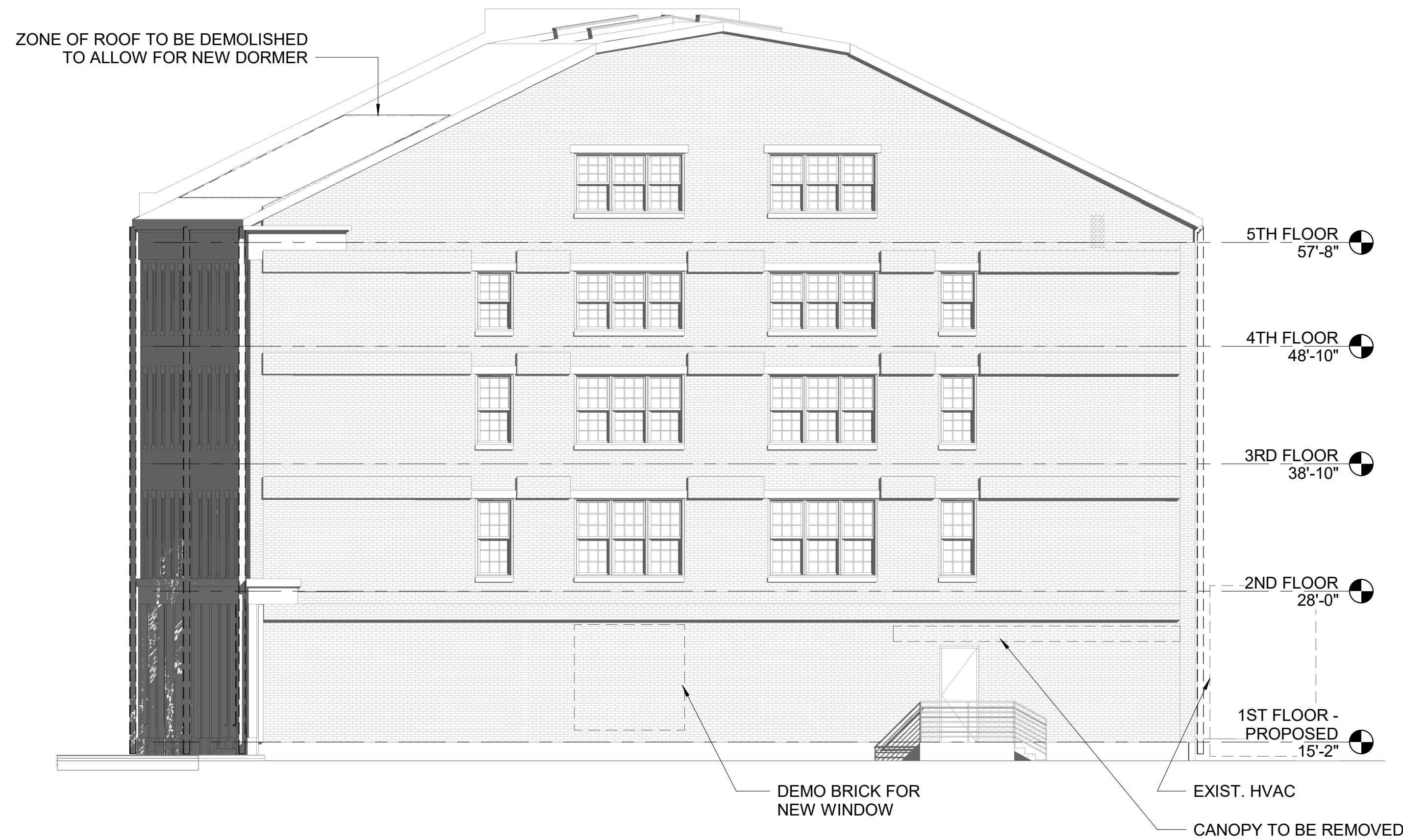
Revisions:

Date:
10/28/2020

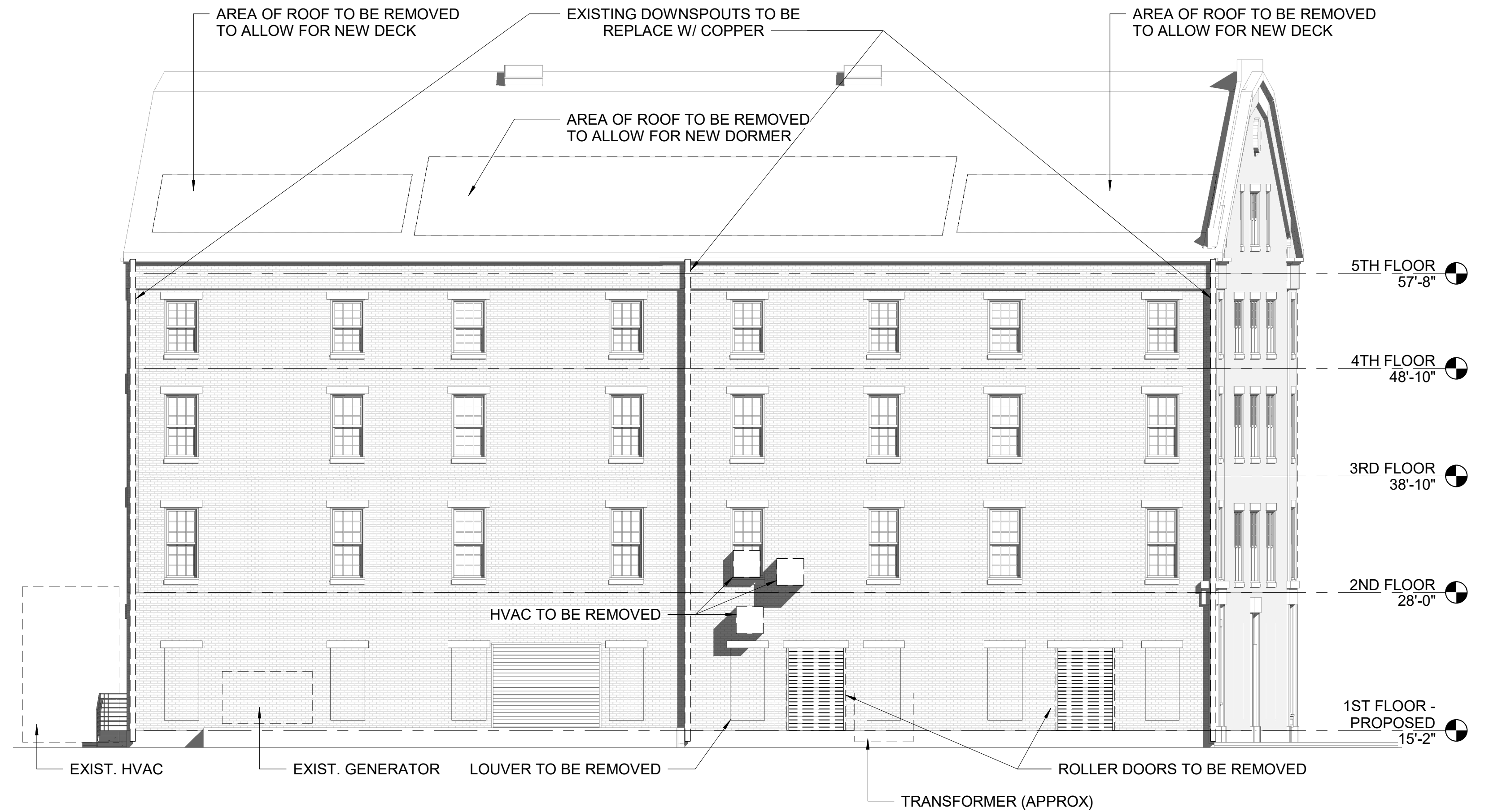
Scale:
1/8" = 1'-0"

**BUILDING
ELEVATIONS**

A2.01



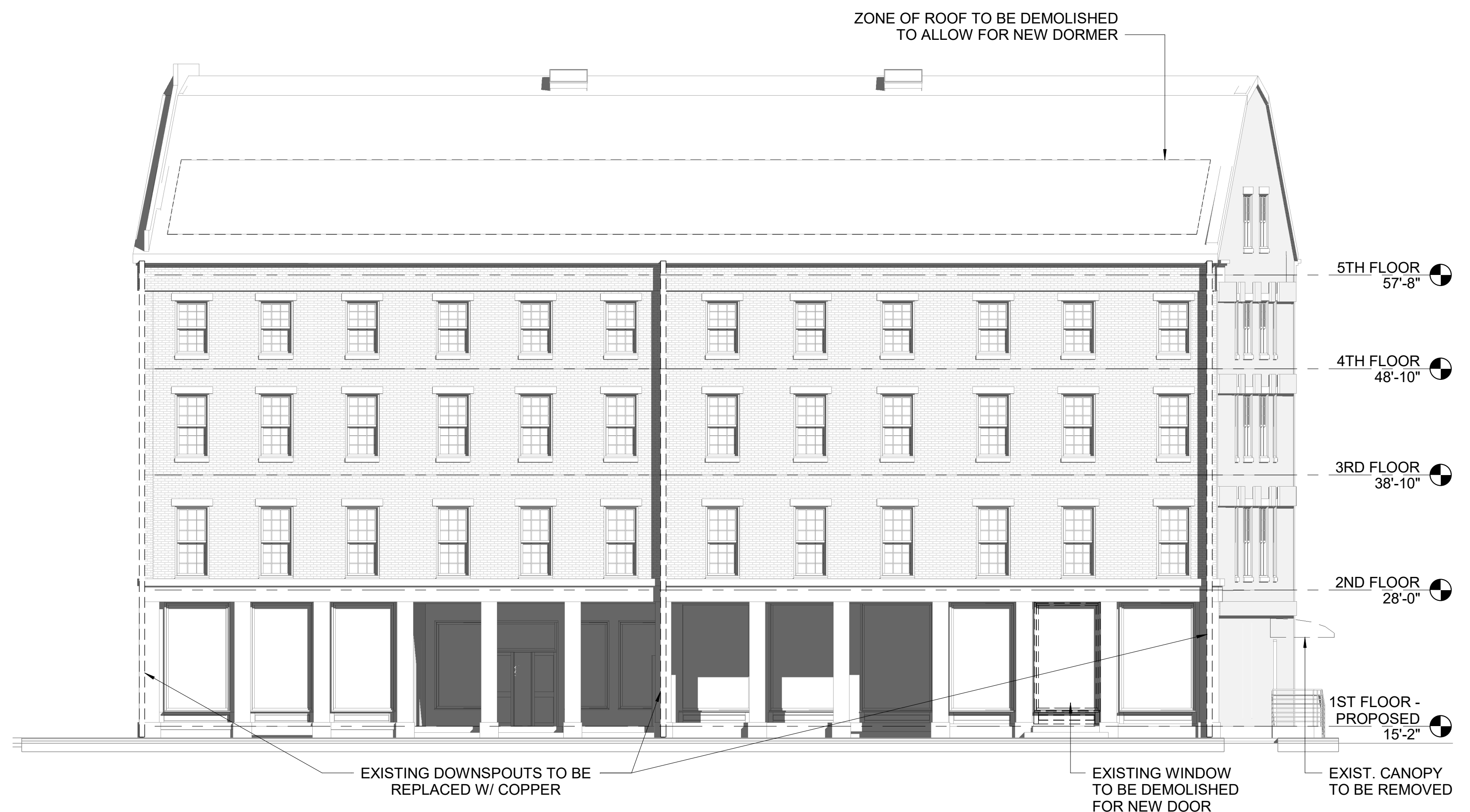
4 | EAST ELEVATION - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



3 | BACK OF BUILDING NORTH - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 | FRANKLIN STREET WEST - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 | SOUTH COMMERCIAL STREET - EXIST/DEMO
1/8" = 1'-0"

Prepared For:
Ara Aftandilian

Consultant:

Architect:
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architects
48 Union Wharf Portland, Maine 04101
(207) 772-6022 ARCHETYPE@ARCHETYPEPA.COM

Project:
Galt Block

35 Commercial Street
Portland, ME

Revisions:

Date:
10/28/2020

Scale:
1/8" = 1'-0"

BUILDING
ELEVATIONS -
EXIST/DEMO

A2.02



FORE STREET

OCEAN GATEWAY GARAGE

FRANKLIN STREET

BRADBURY COURT

COMMERCIAL STREET

INDIA STREET

170 FORE ST
OFFICE
RETAIL
(PLANNED)

5 INDIA ST
RESIDENTIAL
RETAIL

TWENTY
THAMES

AC
HOTEL

WEX

THAMES STREET

Rail Station

Visitor
Information
Center

Terrace

Event Lawn

Moon Tide Park

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT SITE

35 COMMERCIAL STREET

FRANKLIN STREET

SD
20' PASSAGEWAY
"BRADBURY COURT"

NEW SCREEN

NEW FENCE

EX UTILITY POLE

LAWN OR LANDSCAPE AREA

EX TREE

BIKE RACKS (6)

LANDSCAPE BED

EX TREE

EX BRICK SIDEWALK
EX GRANITE CURB
(APPROX. LOCATION)

LANDSCAPE BED

EX TREE

EX LAWN

EX ELECTRICAL
CONTROL BOX

STREET LIGHT POLE
AND ARM

NEW BRICK WALK

GRANITE LANDING + STEP

TABLES (7) + CHAIRS
(28 SEATS)

BRICK / CONC. PAVERS, TYP.
(THIS SYMBOL)

UNIDENTIFIED UTILITIES

SPRINKLER CONNECTION

GAS METER

BRICK SIDEWALK INFILL

EX HYDRANT

EX BRICK SIDEWALK

EX TREES, TYP.
(THIS SYMBOL)

COMMERCIAL STREET

APPLICANT:
ESSEXNORTH
PORTLAND LLC
P.O. BOX 394
TOPSFIELD, MA
01983

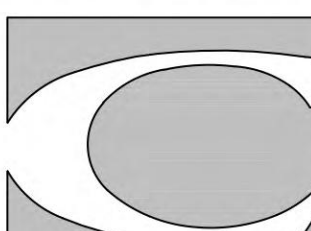
35 COMMERCIAL ST

Revisions	Date	Description

Phase: ISSUED
FOR REVIEW

SITE PLAN

Drawn By: MP
Approved By: PC
Scale: AS SHOWN


CARROLL ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
217 COMMERCIAL STREET, STE 200
PORTLAND, MAINE 04101
207.772.1552 V. F. 207.772.0712

Date:
09.14.2020

Sheet No:
1



0 4 8 16
SCALE in FEET
1"=8'



35 Commercial St





35 Commercial St



Franklin

WATERFRONT

↑ India Street District
Harborwalk Trail
Eastern Promenade Trail
Ocean Gateway
→ Towers
Maine State Pier
Parking

NO PARKING
ANY TIME

SMITH
BROS.
22-1708

7

LEASE
PULDINE







NO
PARKING
ANY
TIME





