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June 3, 2020

Dear Commission on Chicago Landmarks,

Logan Square Preservation is writing in support of the proposed alterations to 2618 North Milwaukee Avenue, commonly known as the Grace Furniture Building. We would however, like to take this opportunity as a community organization to acknowledge the cultural environment in which we are voicing our support.

Historic preservation has a responsibility to stop perpetuating and to help dismantle the structural racism that pervades our built environment in Chicago, and we implore both landmarks staff and the landmarks commission to listen carefully to the needs of communities and to view their work through an equity lens.

Logan Square Preservation has worked with Blue Star Properties for over a year on the best possible outcome for the long vacant Grace Furniture Building, both in terms of a design that respects the historic character of the building and the use of the structure. We are pleased that the community voted in overwhelming support of this project during public meetings. While no historic preservation project is perfect, Logan Square Preservation agrees that the structure meets the Commission's guidelines. We are eager to see this historic building activated along the Milwaukee Avenue commercial corridor, and believe it will complement the Logan Square Boulevards Historic District.

Regards,

Andrew Schneider
Logan Square Preservation

June 3, 2020

To:
Commission on Chicago Landmarks
Permit Review Committee
Chicago City Hall
121 N La Salle St.
Chicago, IL 60602

From:
Barnaby Wauters
2520 N Drake Ave
Chicago, IL 60647
(312) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: Kandalyn Haun
Ward Miller

**RE: 2618 N MILWAUKEE AVE
PROPOSED EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS –
LOGAN SQUARE BOULEVARDS DISTRICT**

Dear Committee,

I am writing as a concerned citizen, long-time resident of Logan Square and member of Logan Square Preservation regarding the design of the proposed reuse of the old Grace's Furniture building as a hotel.

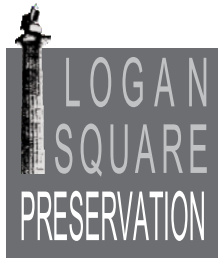
While I very much support the proposed use of the building, the developer has not addressed the changes and clarifications to the façade that were requested in a letter from Logan Square Preservation on September 11, 2019. This building is a critical part of the streetscape overlooking the historic Logan Square and is included in the Logan Square Boulevards Historic District. As such, the level of care and consideration in its design is of utmost importance. To date, this care has not been taken.

The letter that I have included in this email was sent to the developer and expeditor, Acosta Ezgur, LLC on September 11, 2019. I am requesting that the developer and architect address the issues compiled in this letter and accompanying sketches in detail before the City approves this project to proceed.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Barnaby Wauters', with a stylized, cursive script.

Barnaby Wauters



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Kate Slattery

Kerry Shintani

Jaime Szubart

Michelle Warner

Barnaby Wauters

September 10, 2019

Mr. Rolando R. Acosta
Acosta Ezgur, LLC
1030 W. Chicago Ave., 3rd Fl.
Chicago, IL 60642

Sent via E-mail: rolando@acostaezgur.com

Re: Grace's Furniture Building Redevelopment
2618 N Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647
Architectural Review

Dear Mr. Acosta,

Please see the attached architectural review comments on the latest design proposal for the Grace's Furniture Building, titled "Landmark Review Submittal", dated July 26, 2019 by K2 Studio.

While the general direction of the design is favorable, we take exception to some of the design elements as detailed in our review. We look forward to seeing the development of the building which will be an important landmark in Logan Square. We expect to review the updated drawings and details as they are produced. We would like to be apprised of any subsequent changes to the design and materials so that we may respond in a timely manner.

Sincerely yours,

Andrew Schneider

President, Logan Square Preservation

Kate Slattery

Barnaby Wauters

Co-Chairs, Preservation and Restoration Committee

Logan Square Preservation

Design Comments

With respect to the proposed facade design for the redevelopment of the Grace's Furniture Building Logan Square Preservation provides the following comments as part of its architectural review. These comments are based on the latest design drawings "Landmark Review Submittal", dated 7/26/2019 prepared by K2 Studio. We understand that K2 Studio Architects has been engaged to complete the design and prepare the construction documents.

We understand that the changes from the design of the previous developer that were reviewed by the LSP membership are due to the changes in the mechanical systems and interior programming. Changes include the elimination of through-wall room air conditioners that were concealed behind perforated metal panels which are now remotely located AC condenser units on the roof level. The size and spacing of the rooms now occur between columns instead of smaller rooms staggered between columns which allows larger window openings.

The following comments and the attached notated renderings are parts of the same review and should be taken as the totality of LSP's review.

1. Main Facades - Arrangement

SE Façade:

The current arrangement of the windows takes up most of the façade with narrow brick columns between. In a reference to the arrangement of more traditional facades of the area, there should be more brick and less slightly less window area, so they appear to be punched openings in a brick wall. In particular, the wider brick piers could be wider and the narrow intermediary brick piers could be wider and the adjacent windows narrower. Increase in brick area of 10-15%. (Less window area will also decrease solar heat gain and energy consumption.) The current alternating window arrangement between large and small windows and between recessed and flush windows adds visual interest to the façade.

NE Façade:

We recommend that the blank center bay of the façade have a decorative treatment similar to other local historic buildings. One possibility is to create a frame with recessed soldier course similar to the window treatment with addition of decorative corner elements. See similar conditions on the Hollander Storage building. (See notated renderings attached)

Stair/Elevator Tower:

The current treatment and integration of the stair tower into the overall design is not acceptable. Previous designs had a smaller or no stair tower or they were placed further west. While we understand the necessity of the tower, it's very prominent placement and size require that it be fully integrated into the façade. Possible revisions include adding windows in the stairs, blank windows, recessed decorative panels similar to those recommended on the Milwaukee Ave. The façade, and coping treatment should be consistent with the other street-facing facades. Horizontal row brick as indicated on the NE corner to conceal shelf angles is another option. In addition, the finish masonry should be the exact same modular brick as that on the main façade. Utility brick or CMU are not acceptable.

Action: Provide revised elevations and renderings.

2. Penthouse

The continuation of the full height of the parapet through the penthouse looks awkward. Consider extending the penthouse windows down so that the brick spandrel at the 6th floor is the same or more similar to the other floors. This also adds formal hierarchy to the façade. The light-colored, recessed part of the façade at the penthouse seems to be unresolved and does not support or “hold” the top of the building. Consider alternate designs that incorporate decorative brick detailing and formal hierarchy of the lower façade. Consider using the same color brick, maybe in a different bond pattern for the penthouse. Please provide several alternate options for resolving the recessed portion of the penthouse.

Action: Provide revised elevations and renderings of the penthouse.

3. General Façade Detailing

The current design shows recessed stack bond and brick rows surrounding each window opening. This provides visual interest in the façade that is contemporary. LSP suggests continuing this type of brick detailing where transitions occur elsewhere in the façade including the penthouse. We encourage the design team to add additional brick detailing at the Milwaukee Ave, South facades and elevator tower façade as indicated above.

4. Façade Materials

We understand that the primary façade material will be modern “modular” brick. The use of brick is preferable as it responds to the local vernacular and color pallet that should be maintained. Within that context, the use of the longer roman brick was discussed as a means to distinguish the façade while maintaining the traditional material and color pallet. All future presentation should include photo examples of selection of the intended brickwork, color and type and actual brick samples from the manufacturer.

a. Brick Color/Type -

The brick color should be carefully considered to respond to the traditional natural brick colors of the area. In particular the color should be considered in relation to the adjacent buildings to distinguish itself and visually hold that corner of the square. The brick finish should be smooth, not wire-cut or textured. Oversized or utility brick is not acceptable.

b. Brick Work –

The multi-layered brick detailing around the windows should be maintained as far as possible to provide visual interest and the level detail and craftsmanship that is worthy of this prominent location. Any presentation should include photographs of similar brickwork and detailing to demonstrate the design intention. It is expected that the detailing and brickwork is to be consistent on all elevations except the West.

We encourage a thoughtful treatment of the mortar joints such as raked or weather joint treatment. Typical concave tooling should be avoided. This tooling is also least prone to failure. Rope weeps are not acceptable, but cell vents are acceptable. Highly visible shelf angles and stainless-steel drip edges are not acceptable. We encourage the use of standoff shelf angle system that allows water to drain to the bottom of the wall. If drip edges are required at each floor, they should be copper so that they oxidize and visually recede. Consider the use of horizontal row(s) of brick to conceal the drip edge and create shadow lines. Shadow lines made by the drip edges is not acceptable. Sealant at defection joints and shelf angles should be kept to a minimum.

c. Shelf angles and Lintels -

We understand that the windows will be framed out with aluminum so that shelf angles will

be concealed. If they are exposed, they should be recessed into the brick course above. We recommend galvanized shelf angles and where exposed, primed with the appropriate primer and finish painted with the appropriate high-performance paint.

d. Ground Floor (Facing the Square) -

Based on previous discussion the material at the ground floor will match the existing terra cotta as closely as possible. We don't expect an exact match but would like it to match the color and tone of the existing terra-cotta. The design of the units should respond to the building grid and the formal arrangement of the Milwaukee Ave side, i.e., columns, window surrounds, cornice, entablature and base. We recommend that new, modern glazed terra cotta units be used in this area. Cast stone, if used should be high quality and tested for freeze/thaw resistance. The transition of the existing terra cotta to the new façade at the Northeast corner should be carefully detailed so there is a distinct, purposeful, logical and clean transition.

It is understood from previous discussion with BS that a consultant specializing in the preservation of historic masonry will be engaged in the restoration of the existing terra cotta. Klein & Hoffman or Altus Works are two such firms. Further, a qualified masonry contractor, experienced in the restoration of historic terra cotta should be engaged.

e. Existing Historic Terra Cotta -

We understand that the existing terra cotta along the Milwaukee Ave side will be restored and cleaned in place. If replacement pieces are needed, they should be replaced in kind with terra cotta, including the color and finish. If new anchors, straps and helical ties are installed, they should be stainless steel. The cleaning solution for the terra cotta should be as gentle as possible and not discolor or "burn" the glazing. Maintain or reuse the existing terra-cotta base were removed for change in programming.

5. Existing Diagonal Site Wall

We understand that the CTA site wall against the building is to be removed pending review by CTA which owns the adjacent property and the wall. The angled portion of the wall that extends from the building's SE corner is to be protected during construction and remain in place. The end of the wall adjoining the building should be cleanly sawcut 90 degree to the face at a distance that allows for the installation of the new façade materials and supporting structure. The façade treatment should continue to the SE corner of the building and make a clean transition on the alley side of the building so that if the free-standing wall is ever removed, it looks clean and finished. If the result of this work is a large gap (2'-3') between the end of the wall and the building, an appropriately designed steel barrier should be installed to prevent passage. Consult with LSP in the design of this closure barrier.

The section of the wall should be thought of as an artifact to remain and should be protected from damage and undermining during construction. It is recommended that the end of the wall be reinforced with stainless steel helical ties or threaded rods in epoxy from the alley side prior to saw cutting and that voids in the end of the wall be cleanly filled with mortar. It is anticipated that the exposed foundation wall and possibly the footing of the wall along the building will need to be removed; the footing for the section of wall to remain should be sawcut so that it is not damaged or destabilized. If the wall is damaged, Bluestar will repair it to match the existing, including but not limited to rebuilding with the existing brick and repointing. It is suggested that some brick and limestone coping from the demolished section of wall be salvaged to repair the wall to remain if needed.

Action: Provide a Site Plan with details of wall treatment.

6. Existing Trees and Building Entry

The current plans show a building entry at the south end of the east façade. This appears to presuppose that outdoor seating will be allowed. LSP does not agree with the taking of the public space on the square facing side of the building for outdoor seating. In addition, the doors would require there to be a sidewalk in this area which is in conflict with the two existing trees and the root area.

The two existing mature trees are to be strictly protected during construction. The roots of these trees extend out at ground level are not to be damaged by equipment, construction debris or the replacement of the sidewalk. We encourage some improvements be made to the pavement to define the tree bed and to protect the tree roots. Potential improvements may include but not limited to a raised concrete curb around the tree bed following the existing soil area that could be used as seating. A landscape architect should be engaged to address this area and the to assure the existing trees are protected.

In addition, there is a narrow strip of planted area along the existing CTA wall and bike racks between the CTA station and the wall. LSP does not necessarily want to lose this planted area but would be open to some improvement to the usability of this narrow area and the expansion and improvement of the bike racks.

Action: Provide a Site Plan with proposed Improvements

7. Rooftop Equipment and Enclosures

Rooftop equipment (mechanical, vents and plumbing) should be concealed so that they are not visible from the street or square. Rooftop railings and windscreens and other elements should be indicated realistically in the drawings and renderings. Glass guardrails should not be visible from the street; Iron railings may be more acceptable if visible. As far as possible the parapets should serve as the guard rail. Tall glass windscreens are not acceptable. If an overhead trellis or pergola is planned, it must be included in the initial design and not added as a “temporary” structure at a later date. The addition of a rooftop tent enclosure at a later date will not be acceptable and its prohibition should be included in the CBA.

8. Presentation Drawings and Renderings

In order to convey the proposed design to the LSP general members and for LSP to properly review, please provide the following presentation materials.

- a. Realistic renderings showing daytime and nighttime views from the North and the East.
- b. Views from other parts of the Square. These can be less realistic.
- c. Sketch-up model file that can be manipulated so that viewers can see different angles.
- d. Plans and elevations.
- e. Façade details and wall sections showing the critical details and design intent, including but not limited to vertical sections through the parapet, windows and base.
- f. Images of other buildings that help describe the design intent.
- g. Actual material samples to demonstrate texture and color.

9. Miscellaneous

a. Site Lighting and Signage

The proposed site lighting and signage should be indicated on the drawings and renderings.

b. Window Planters

Window planters are to be maintained and provided with irrigation and controlled drainage. Irrigation water should not be allowed to run down the façade but be internally drained.



Consider decorative brick detailing in this central bay similar to other similar historical conditions, I.e., soldier course with recessed infill.

Provide brick articulation here using the recessed brick at other areas of the facade. Consider changing brick coursing pattern.

Consider counting recessed brick banding to maintain grid.

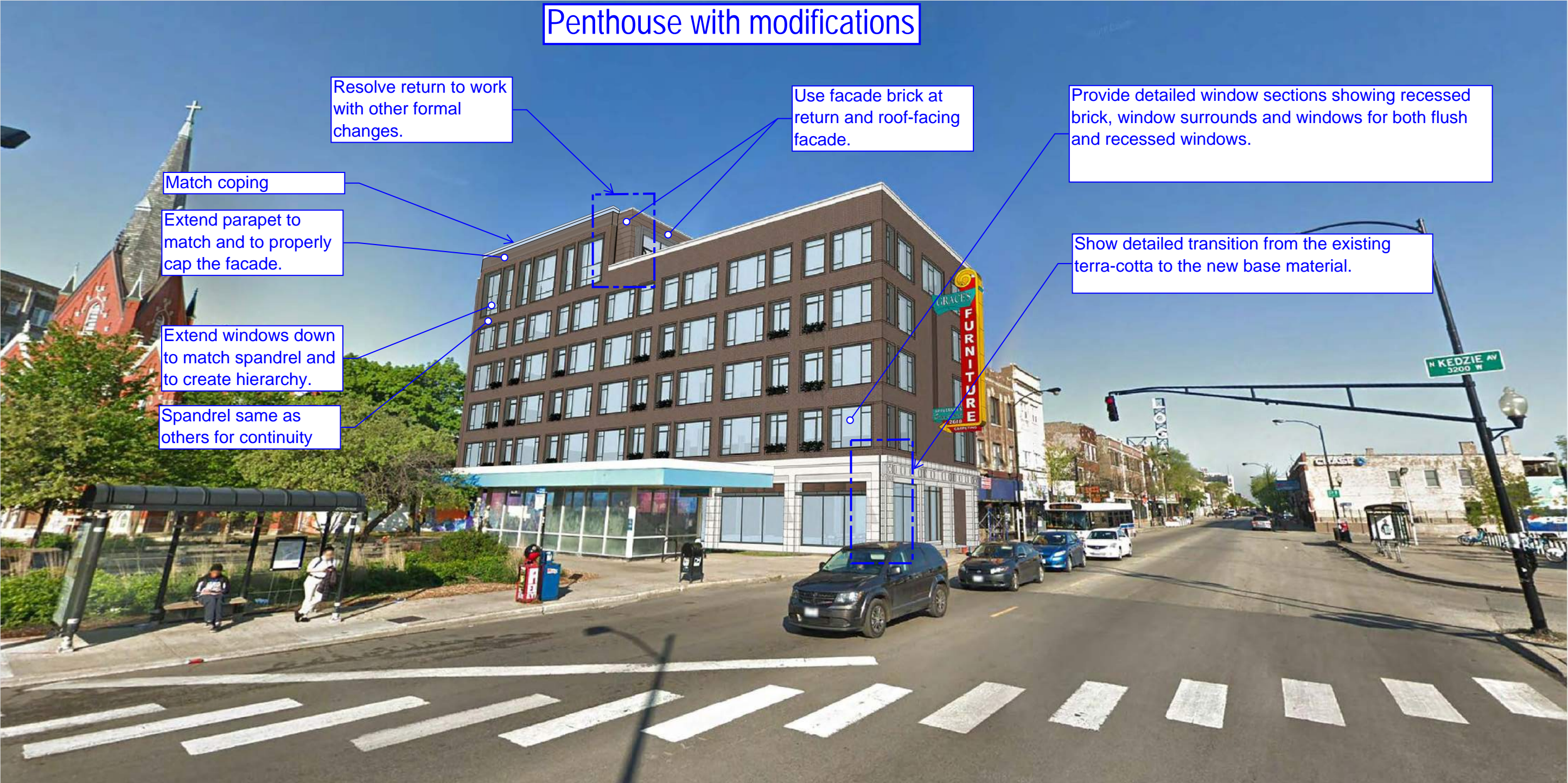
Consider accent detailing to match similar buildings with blank facade areas.

Show any proposed canopies, lighting and signage.

PROPOSED BUILDING
SITE RENDERING 1
SCALE: NTS

Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019

LOGAN SQUARE HOTEL
K2 **K2 STUDIO**
329 W. 18TH #501, CHICAGO IL. 60616
P: 312.275.5000E: STUDIO@K2ARCH.COM



Penthouse with modifications

Resolve return to work with other formal changes.

Use facade brick at return and roof-facing facade.

Provide detailed window sections showing recessed brick, window surrounds and windows for both flush and recessed windows.

Show detailed transition from the existing terra-cotta to the new base material.

Match coping

Extend parapet to match and to properly cap the facade.

Extend windows down to match spandrel and to create hierarchy.

Spandrel same as others for continuity

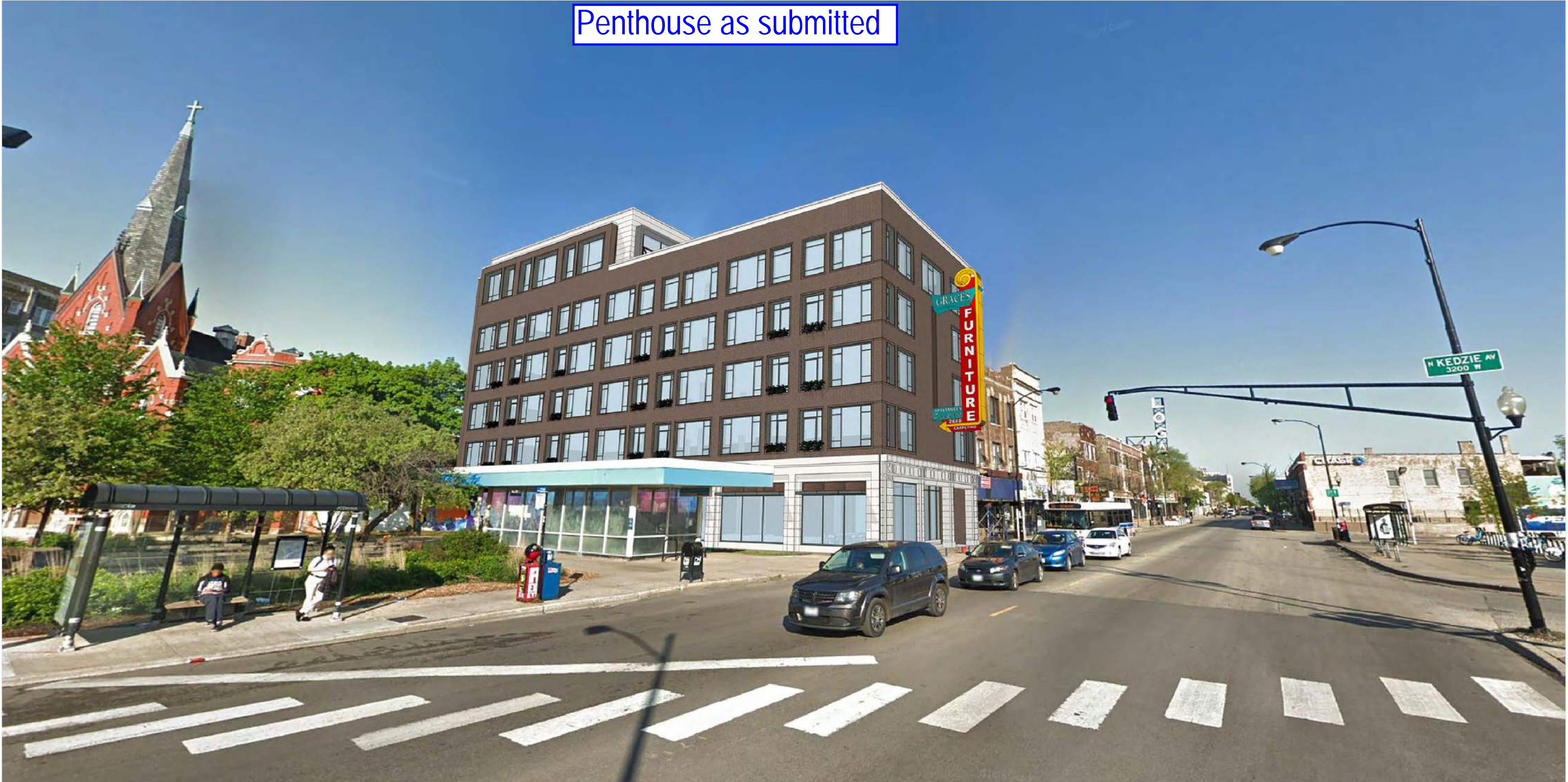
PROPOSED BUILDING
SITE RENDERING 2
SCALE: NTS

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Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019

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Penthouse as submitted



PROPOSED BUILDING
SITE RENDERING 2
SCALE: NTS

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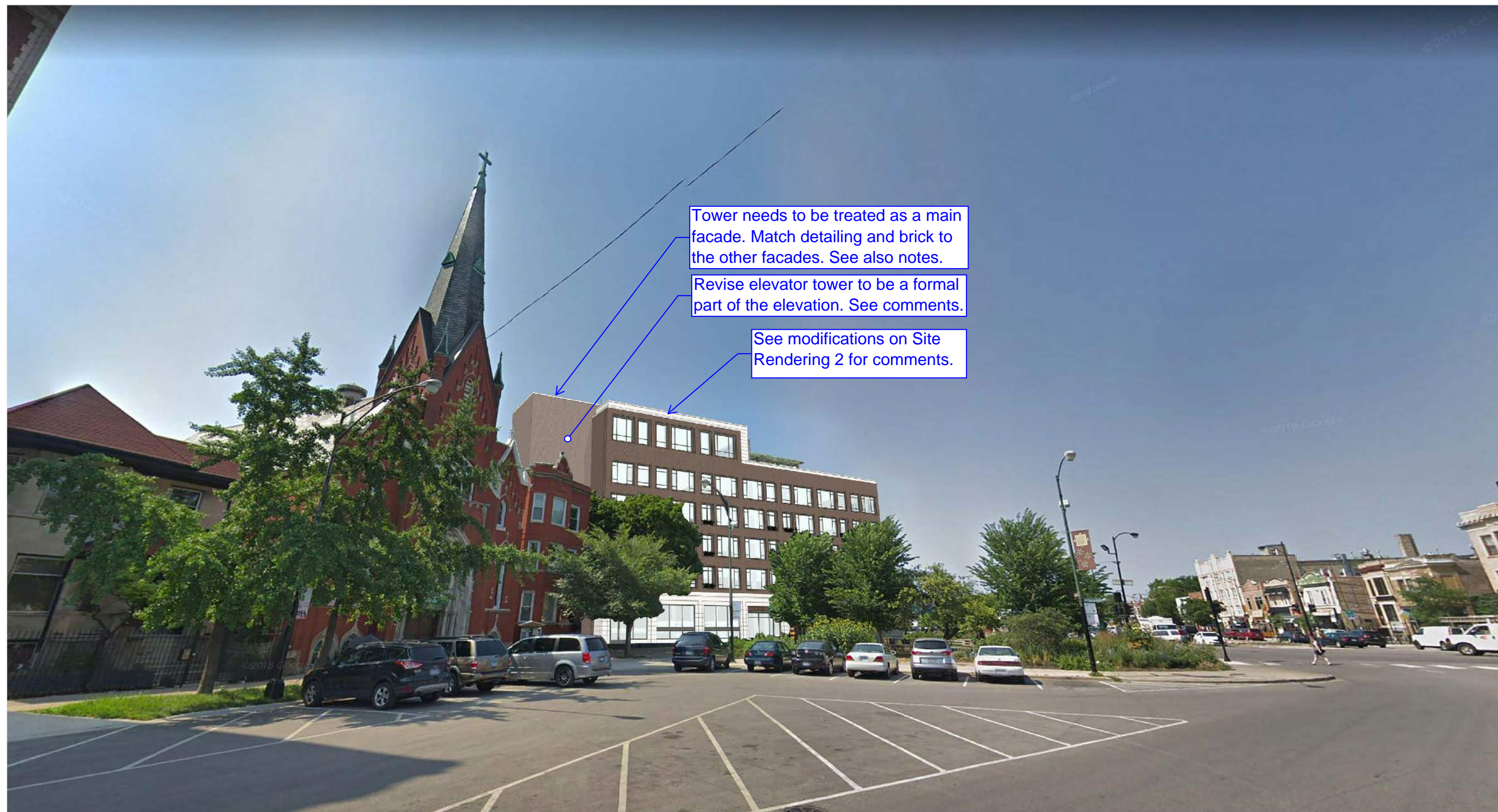


PROPOSED BUILDING
SITE RENDERING 3
SCALE: NTS

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PROPOSED BUILDING
SITE RENDERING 4
SCALE: NTS

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RENDERING AT BUILDING
ROOFTOP TERRACE
SCALE: NTS



See notes on Site
Rendering 4



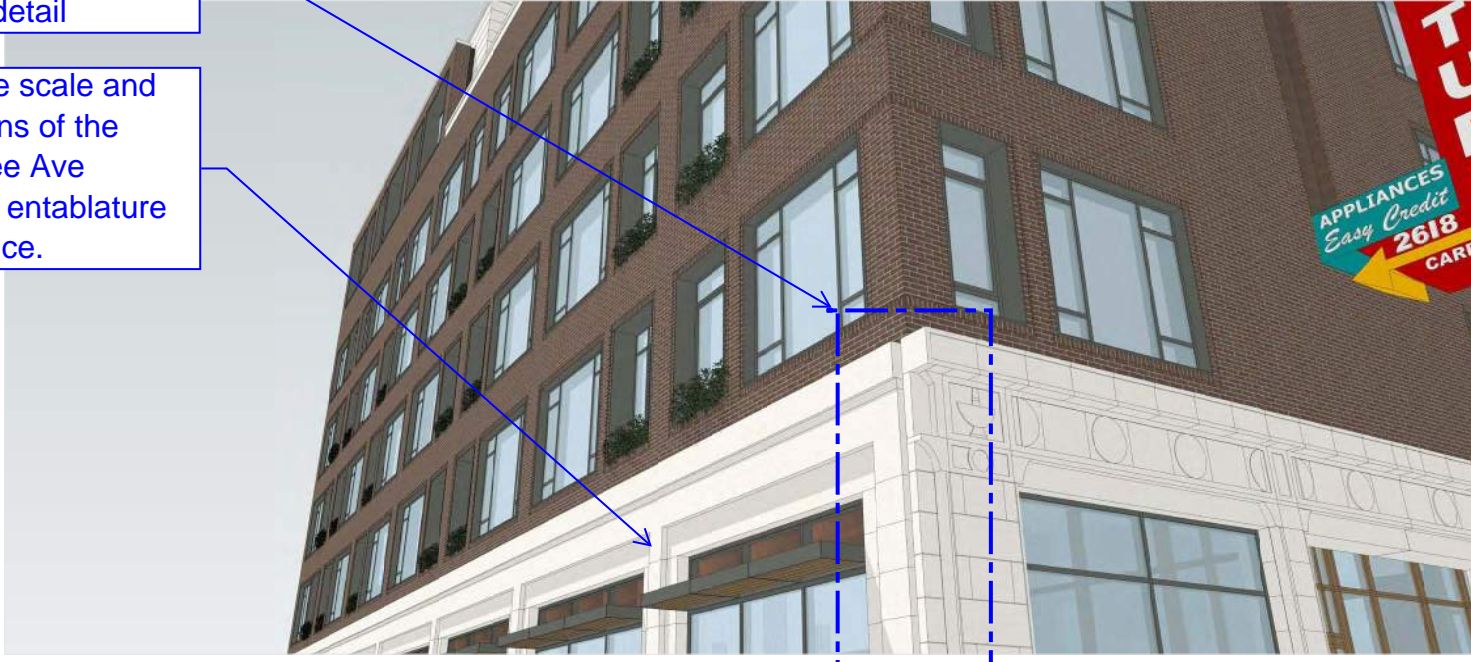
RENDERING AT BUILDING
KEDZIE ELEVATION
SCALE: NTS



RENDERING AT BUILDING
COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT
SCALE: NTS

Show the transition
between the existing
historic and new terra
cotta in detail

Match the scale and
proportions of the
Milwaukee Ave
columns, entablature
and cornice.

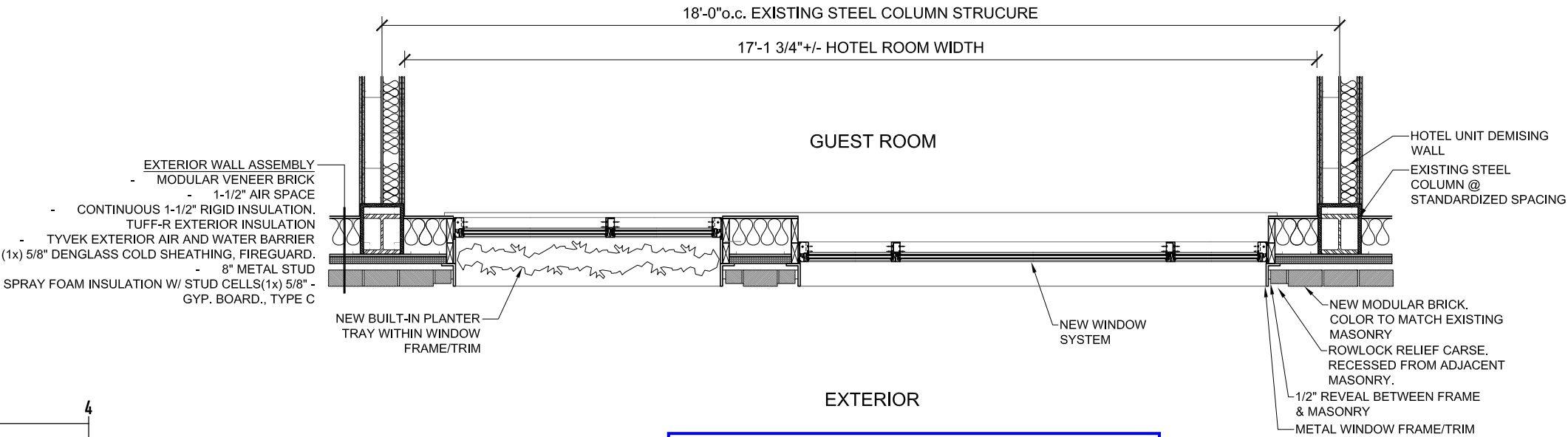
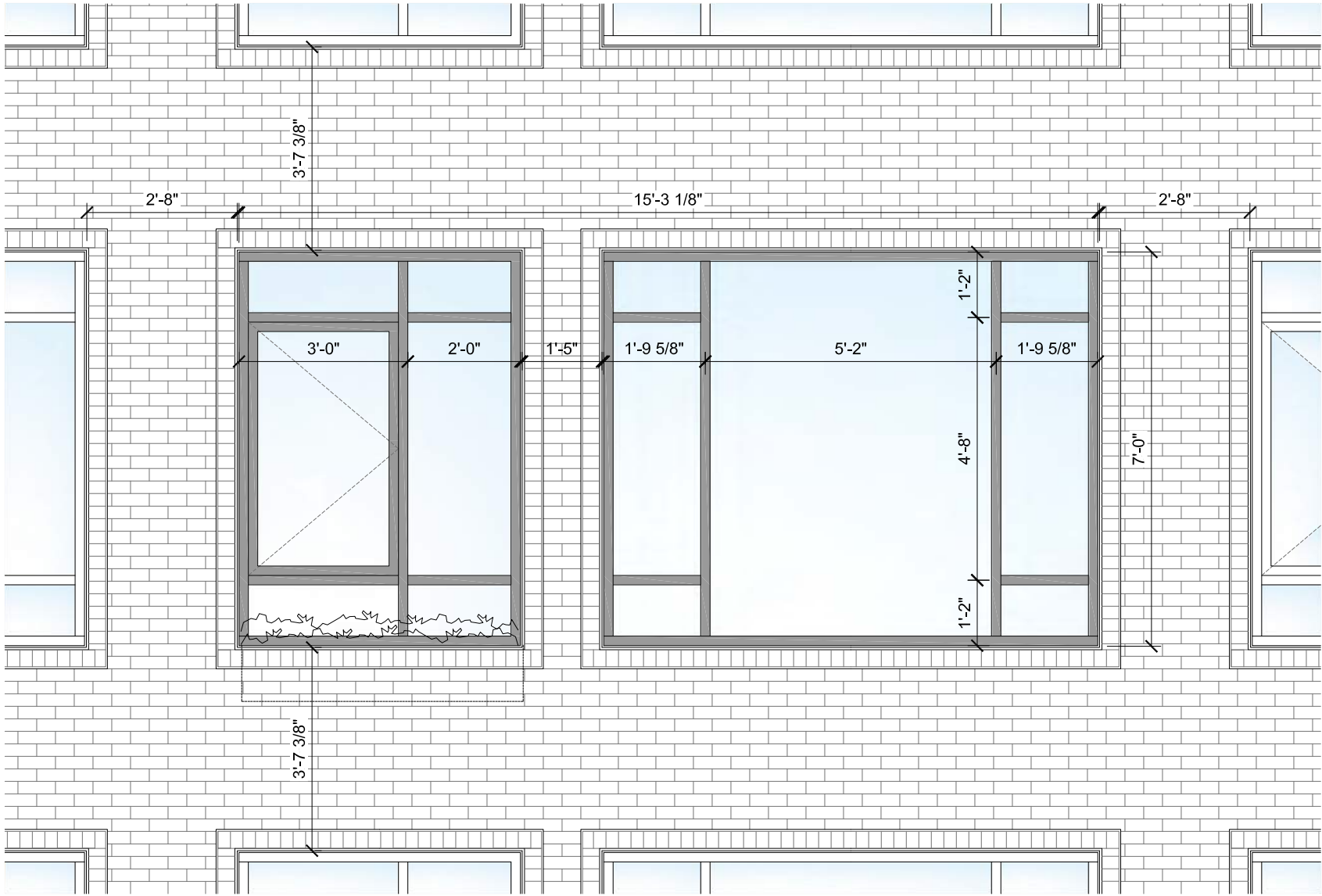


RENDERING AT BUILDING
SOUTHEAST CORNER
SCALE: NTS

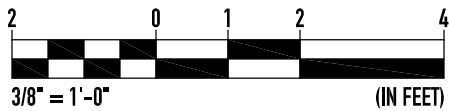
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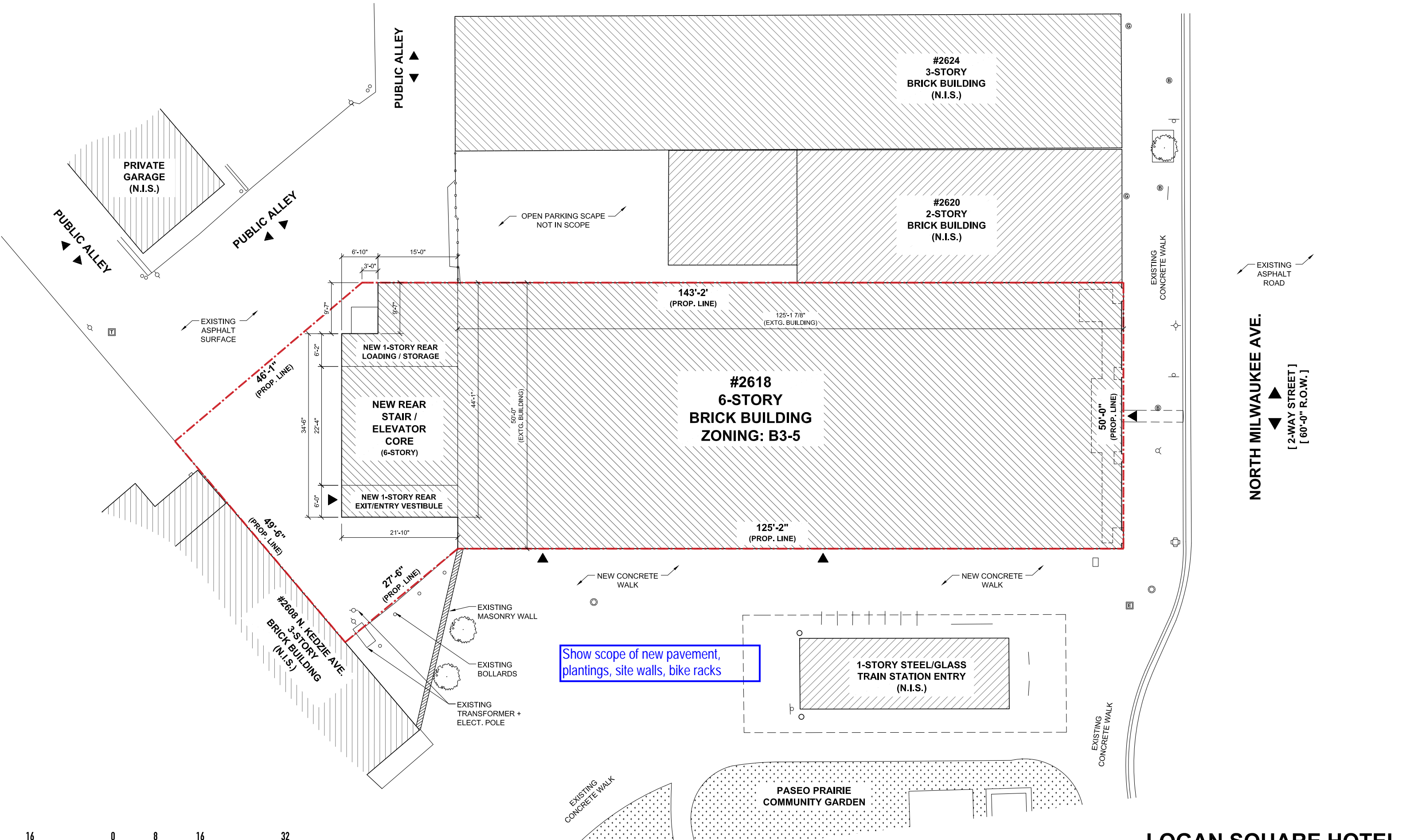


TYPICAL WINDOW DETAIL
PLAN + ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019

LOGAN SQUARE HOTEL



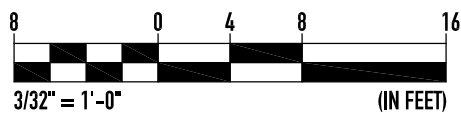
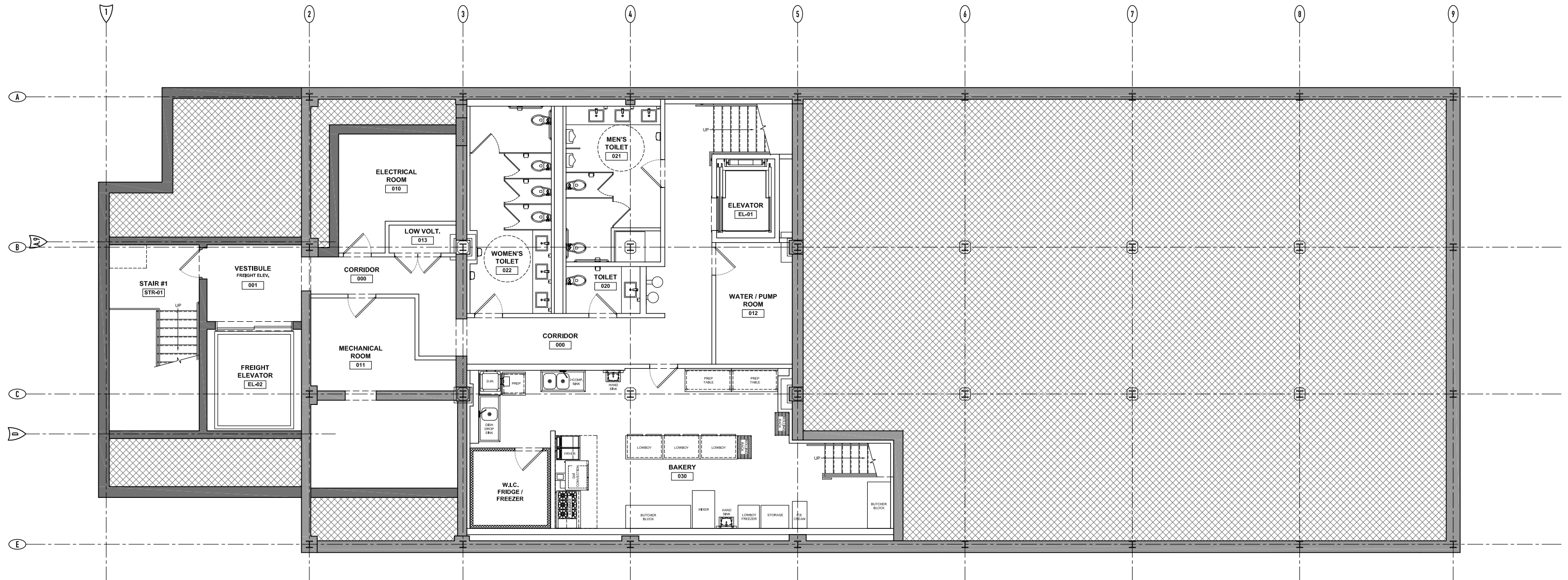
Show scope of new pavement,
plantings, site walls, bike racks

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NEW SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

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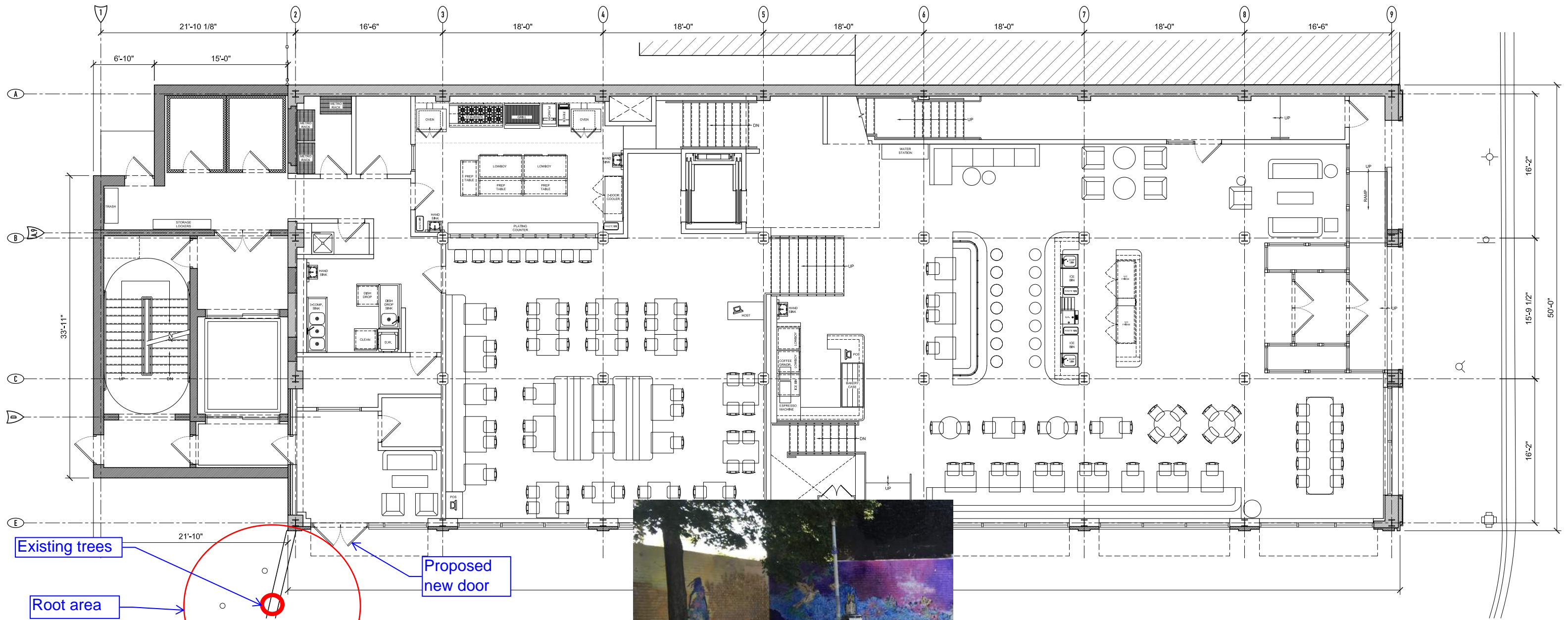
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NEW BASEMENT LEVEL PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

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Existing trees

Root area

Proposed new door



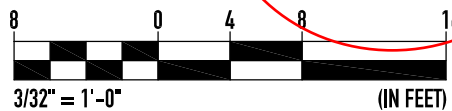
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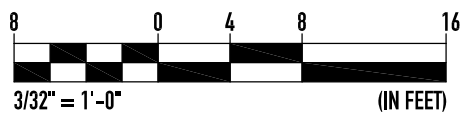
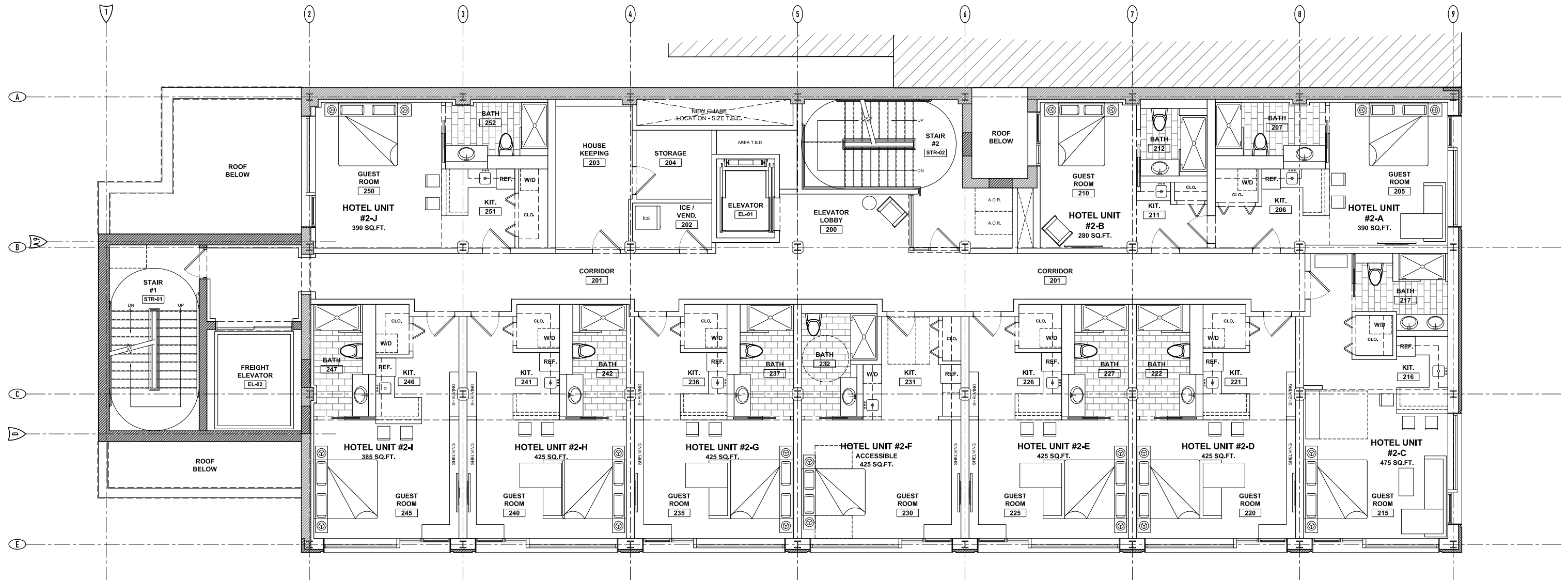
NEW 1st LEVEL PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

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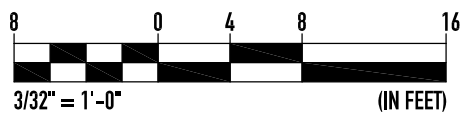
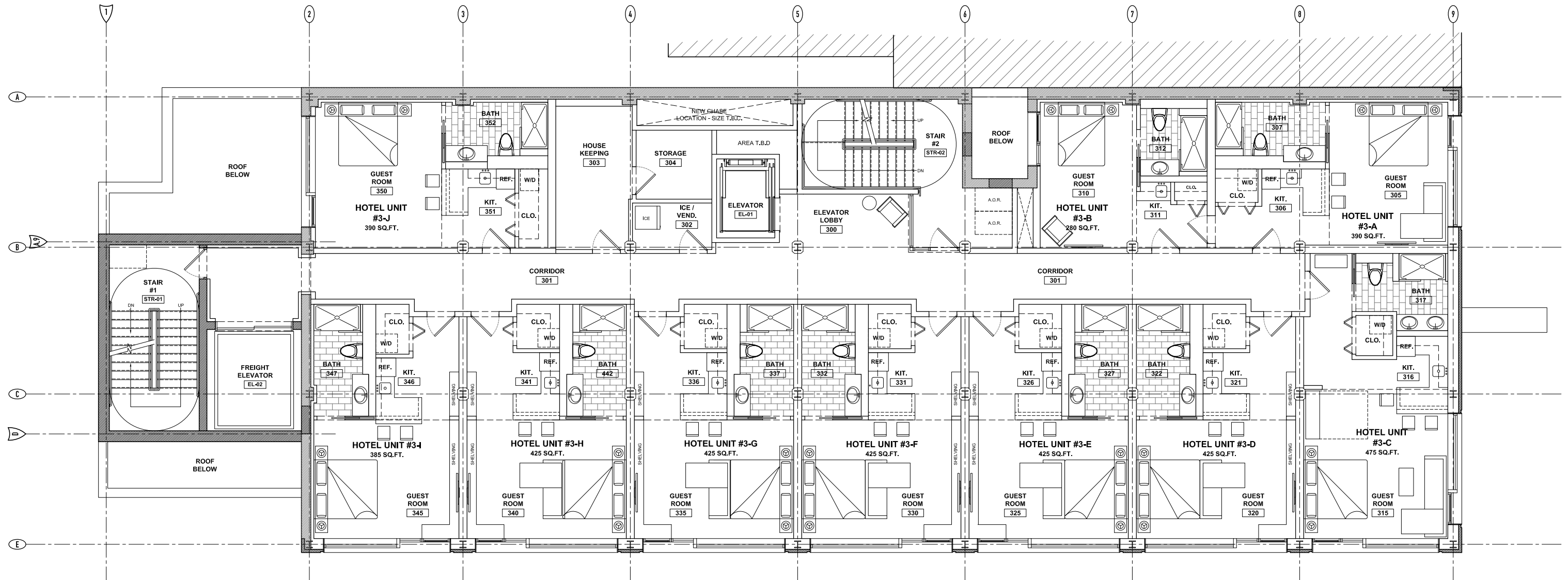
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NEW 2nd LEVEL PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

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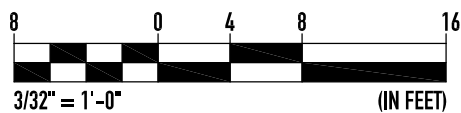
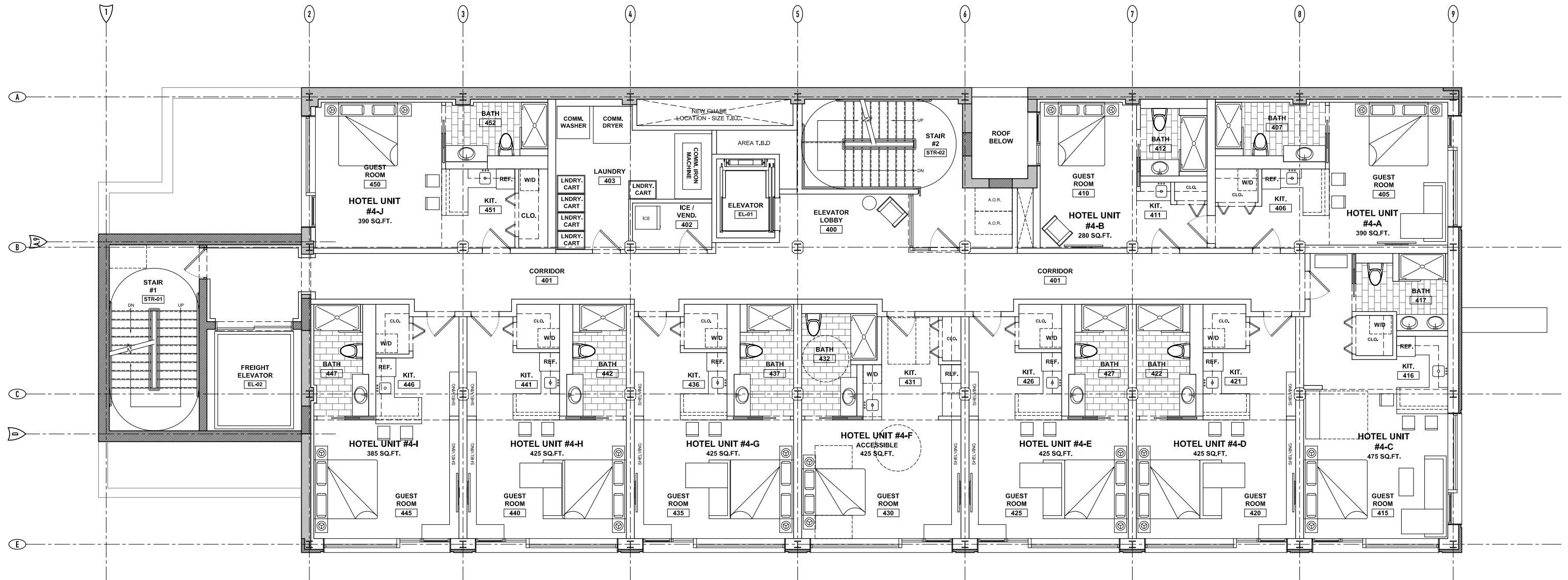
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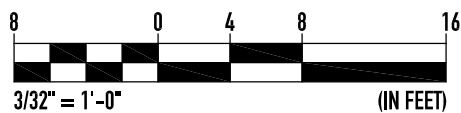
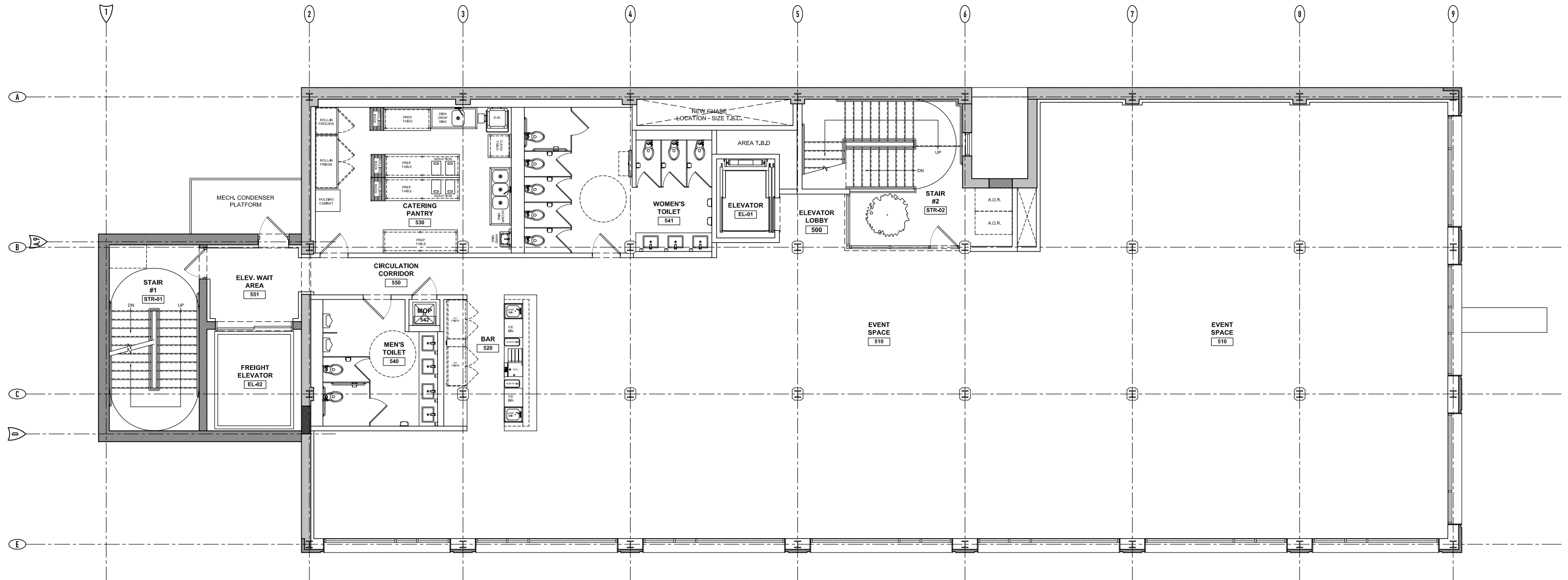
NEW 3rd LEVEL PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

LOGAN SQUARE HOTEL

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Review Comments
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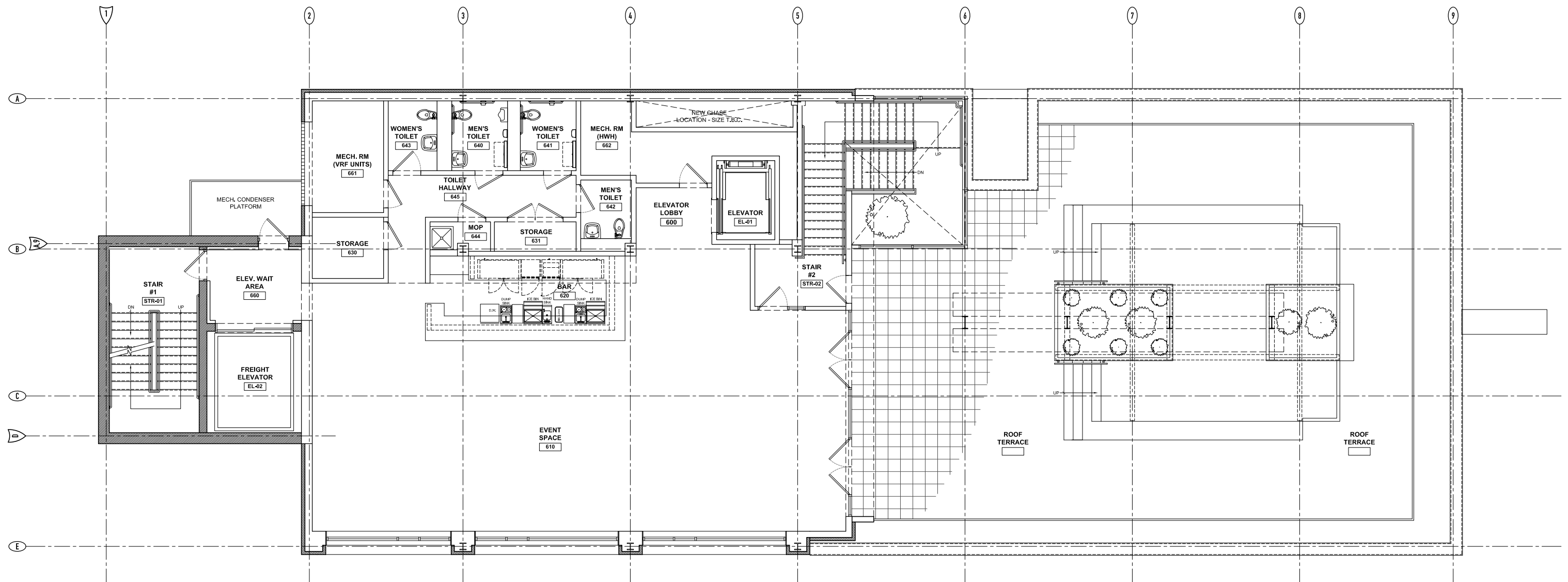
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August 30, 2019

NEW 5th LEVEL PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

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8 0 4 8 16
 3/32" = 1'-0" (IN FEET)

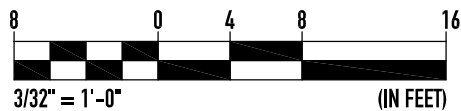
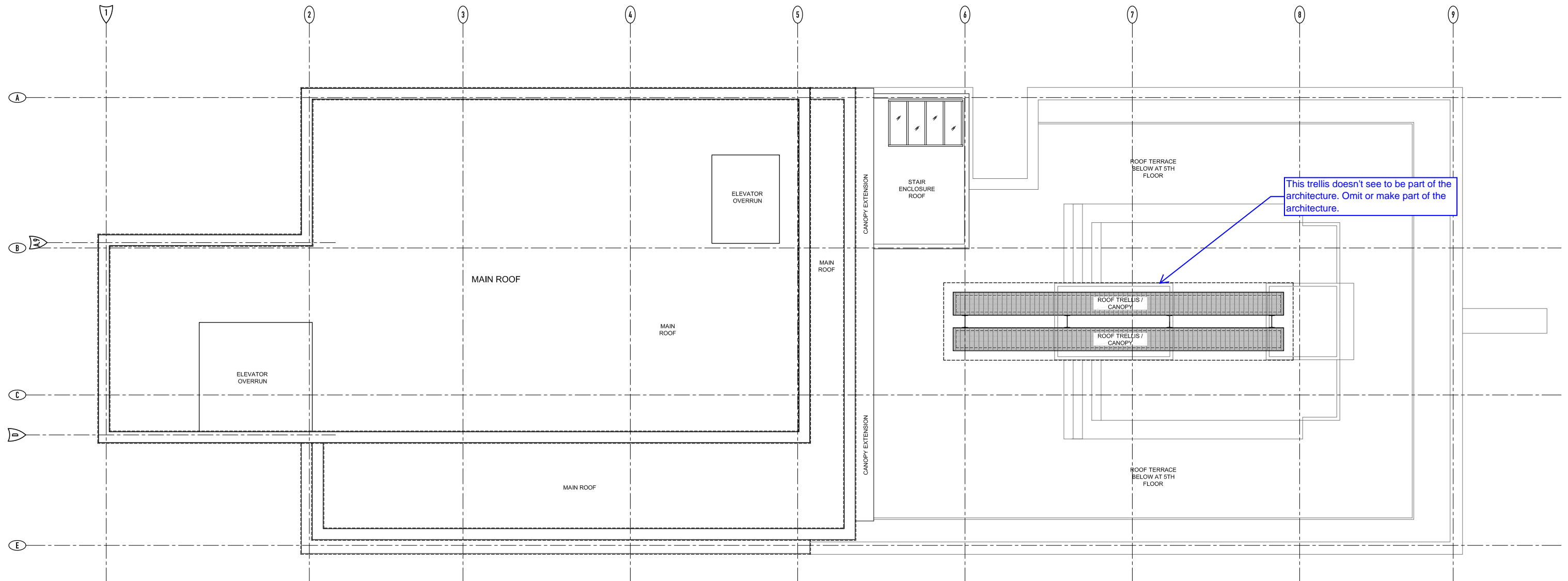
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Review Comments
 Logan Square Preservation
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NEW 6th LEVEL PLAN
 SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

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Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019

NEW ROOF PLAN
SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

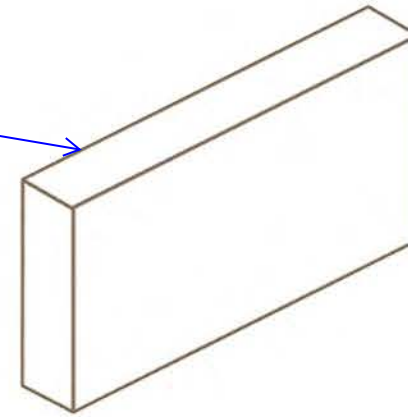
LOGAN SQUARE HOTEL



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P: 312.275.5000E: STUDIO@K2ARCH.COM



Provide actual material samples and options



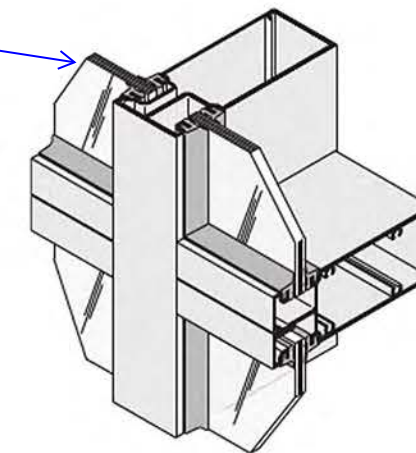
6 | 8
SYNTHETIC
LIMESTONE/CAST
STONE UNITS

Provide actual material samples and options

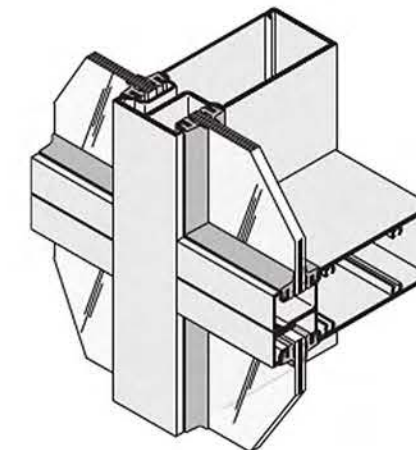


7
BRICK VENEER.
MODULAR BRICK TYPE
COLOR: T.B.D.

Clear anodized is not acceptable; pls clarify and provide material sample



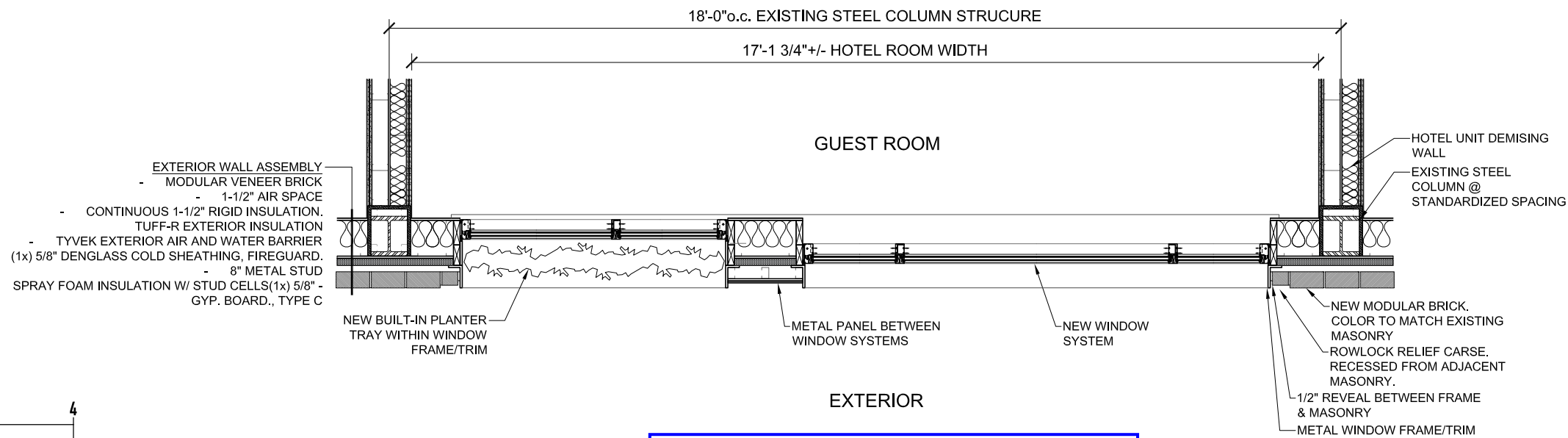
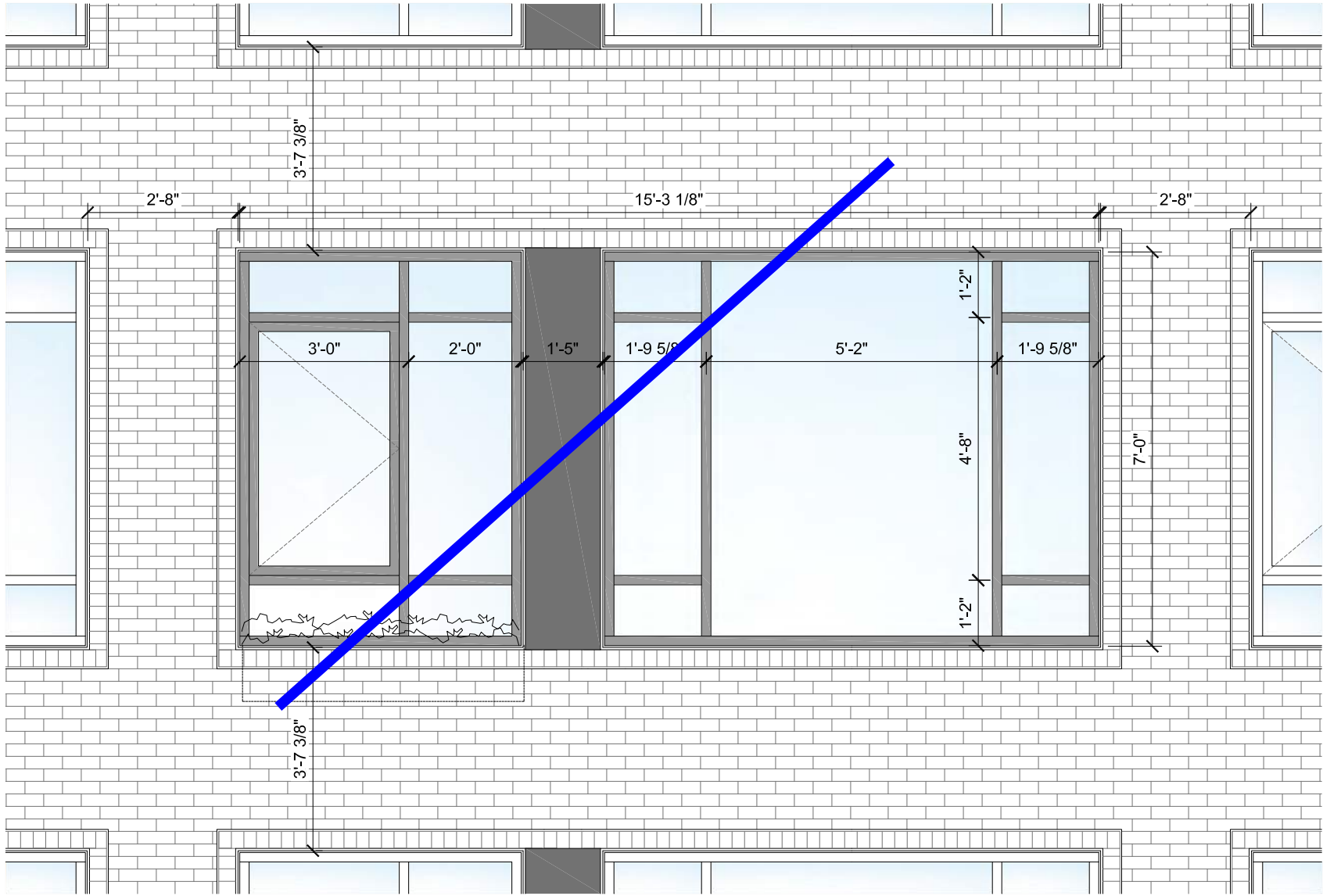
1a
ANODIZED ALUMINUM
STOREFRONT GLAZING
SYSTEM AT GROUND
FLOOR
COLOR: T.B.D.



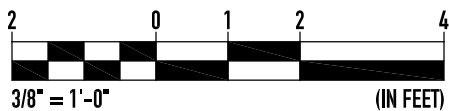
1b
ANODIZED ALUMINUM
STOREFRONT GLAZING
SYSTEM AT UPPER FLOORS.
COLOR: T.B.D.

SEE 'FACADE MATERIAL DESIGNATIONS' SECTION IN THE 'LANDMARK DESIGN DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION' DOCUMENT

Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019



ALTERNATE OPTION -
TYPICAL WINDOW DETAIL
PLAN + ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



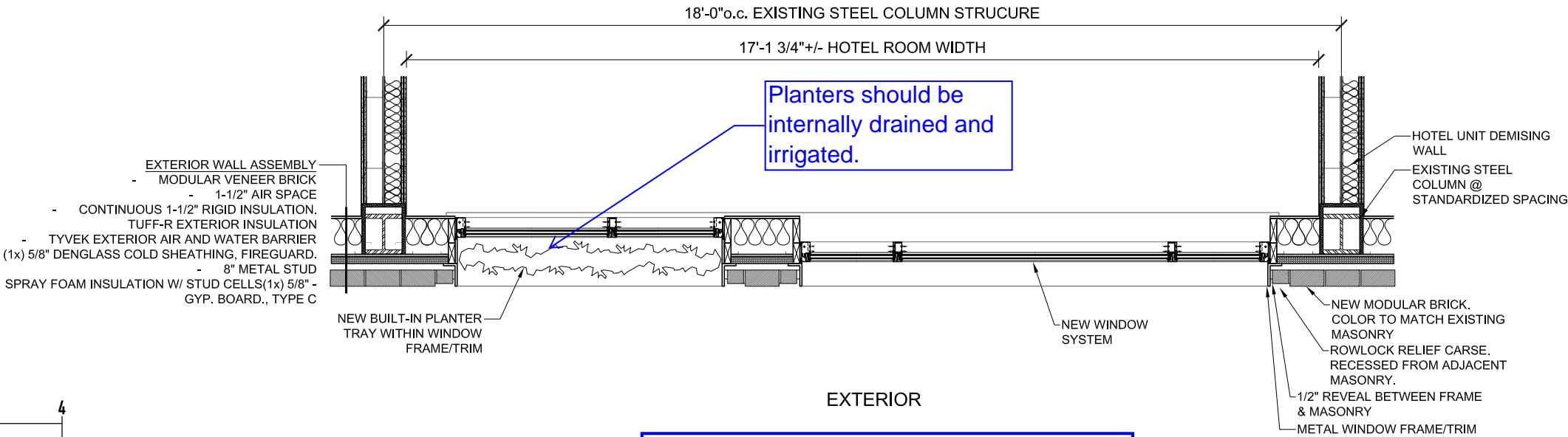
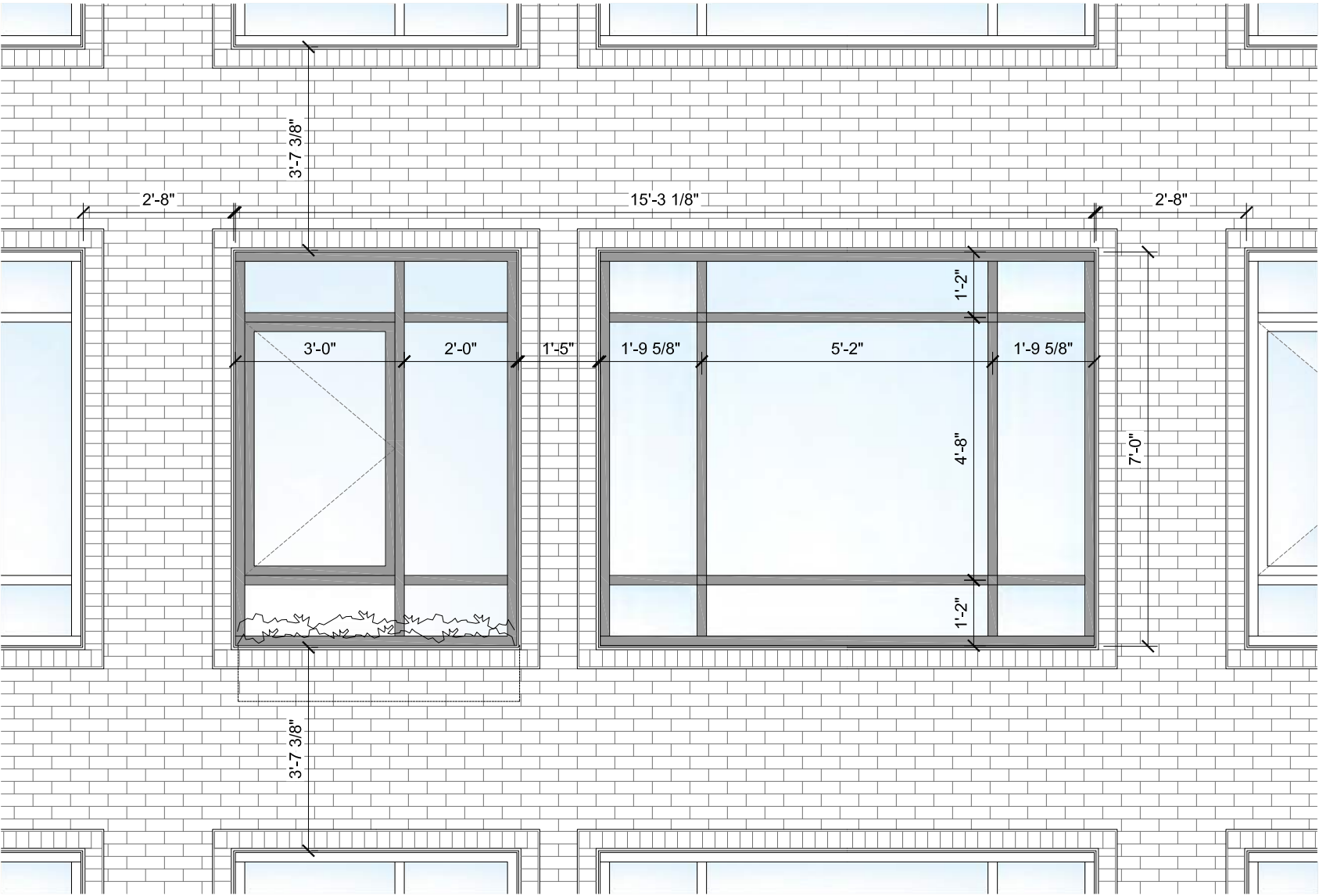
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Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019

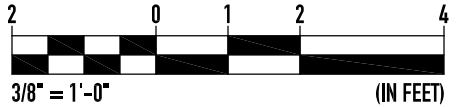


LOGAN SQUARE HOTEL

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ALTERNATE MULLION OPTION 2 -
TYPICAL WINDOW DETAIL
PLAN + ELEVATION
SCALE: 3/8" = 1'-0"



Review Comments
Logan Square Preservation
August 30, 2019