

**AGENDA**  
**VIRTUAL BIRMINGHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY – March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**\*\*\*\*\* 7:00 PM\*\*\*\*\***

**Link to Access Virtual Meeting:** <https://zoom.us/j/91282479817>  
**Telephone Meeting Access:** 877 853 5247 US Toll-free  
**Meeting ID Code:** 912 8247 9817

- 1) Roll Call
- 2) [Approval of the HDC Minutes of March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021](#)
- 3) Courtesy Review
- 4) Historic Design Review
  - A. [361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building](#)
- 5) Sign Review
- 6) Study Session
- 7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication
  - A. Pre-Application Discussions
  - B. Draft Agenda
    1. [April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021](#)
  - C. Staff Reports
    1. [Administrative Sign Approvals](#)
    2. [Administrative Approvals](#)
    3. [Demolitions](#)
    4. [Action List 2021](#)
- 8) Adjournment

*Notice:* Individuals requiring accommodations, such as interpreter services for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) at least on day in advance of the public meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

**A PERSON DESIGNATED WITH THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING.**

**Historic District Commission**  
**Minutes Of March 3, 2021**  
Held Remotely Via Zoom And Telephone Access

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission ("HDC") held Wednesday, March 3, 2021. Chair John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**1) ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Chair John Henke; Board Members Gigi Debbrecht; Keith Deyer, Natalia Dukas, Dustin Kolo, Patricia Lang (arrived 7:05 p.m.), Michael Willoughby; Alternate Board Members Steven Lemberg, Cassandra McCarthy (arrived 7:08 p.m.); Student Representatives Charles Cusimano, Elizabeth Wiegand (all located in Birmingham, MI except Dustin Kolo, who was in Gaylord, MI.)

**Absent:** None.

**Administration:** Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner  
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist  
Leslie Pielack, Museum Director

**03-022-21**

**2) Approval Of Minutes**

**Motion by Mr. Willoughby**

**Seconded by Mr. Kolo to approve the HDC Minutes of February 3, 2021 as submitted.**

**Motion carried, 5-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Yeas: Willoughby, Dukas, Henke, Kolo, Deyer

Nays: None

Abstain: Lemberg, Debbrecht

**03-023-21**

**3) Courtesy Review**

A. 556 W. Maple - Birmingham Museum

Museum Director Pielack was present on behalf of the item.

A number of HDC members commended Museum Director Pielack on the quality of her report. There were also comments that the report should be made more widely available by the Community Development Department so that residents could reference it in their own historic preservation projects.

The report was unanimously endorsed by the HDC.

**03-024-21**

#### **4) Historic Design Review**

##### **A. 743 W. Frank – King-Argus House**

CP Dupuis reviewed the item.

Kabir Mendiratta, applicant, and John Simlik, builder, were present on behalf of the application.

It was noted that the storm door would be removed. The beveled glass on either side of the front door would be replaced with non-beveled glass since there was no other beveled glass on the home.

Mr. Deyer noted that the heights of the glass on either side of the front door in the drawings were slightly mismatched.

Mr. Simlik said that was an error in the drawing. He said the right side represented the accurate height and that the left side would be brought up to match the right side.

##### **Motion by Ms. Dukas**

**Seconded by Mr. Deyer to approve the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 743 W. Frank – King-Argus House. The work as proposed meets The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation standard numbers 1, 2, 5, 6, 9.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

##### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Yeas: Dukas, Deyer, Willoughby, Henke, Kolo, Lang, Debbrecht

Nays: None

##### **B. 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building**

CP Dupuis summarized the item.

Faiz Simon, owner, and Chris Longe, architect, were present on behalf of the project. Mr. Longe reviewed the plans.

Chair Henke noted that the HDC is not charged with endorsing historic preservation projects that only maintain the facades of buildings. He also noted that the appropriate massing of a historic building is considered in terms of the amount of old structure preserved and new structure added. He noted that because of this it is not relevant to compare the massing of a development that encompasses a historic building to the massing of entirely non-historic buildings on the same street.

Mr. Willoughby recommended Mr. Longe review the plans for the glass canopy that is at the top of the historic opening a bit further, and that he consider making the columns more subtle. He suggested putting the columns behind glass was one option.

Ms. Lang said she liked the idea of putting the columns behind glass.

After HDC discussion, there was some consensus that the project should relocate the egress stairway in the front facade and redesign the area; step back the glass a bit more from the second floor up and clarify the drawings to make the setback more clear; and, remove the upper peak that was designed to cover the rooftop mechanicals.

Mr. Willoughby said he was not as concerned about the proposed massing, since he said it fit with the historic building and that permitting development on historic buildings in the City actually allows for historic aspects to be promoted and maintained. He said if maintaining the rear facade were important there might be a way to do that in the plans, and that while the front facade is not the only historic aspect of a building, it is one of the most important to preserve.

Mr. Kolo and Ms. Lang agreed with Mr. Willoughby that the proposed design preserved the historic aspects of the building to an acceptable extent, and that the standards for developing historic buildings should be applied with a modicum of flexibility.

When asked by Mr. Deyer, Mr. Longe indicated that the project would prefer a postponement of the discussion over a denial of the application. Mr. Longe stated he could have the updated plans ready in time for the March 17, 2021 HDC meeting.

**Motion by Mr. Deyer**

**Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to postpone consideration of the Historic Design Review application for 361 E. Maple -- The Hawthorne Building to the regular HDC meeting of March 17, 2021.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

**ROLL CALL VOTE**

Yeas: Deyer, Debbrecht, Dukas, Willoughby, Henke, Kolo, Lang

Nays: None

**03-025-21**

**5) Sign Review**

None.

**03-026-21**

**6) Study Session**

**A. Promoting Historic Preservation – Outline**

CP Dupuis asked if the HDC had any additional ideas for the item.

Mr. Deyer recommended plans be made to promote historic education, including publicizing historic building events in the local press.

Ms. Debbrecht reiterated that the work being done on the Allen House should be further publicized.

Mr. Kolo recommended that the consequences of not attending to historic preservation be publicized.

Ms. Lang and Mr. Kolo recommended that when owners seek demolition permits for houses older than either 50 or 100 years the project should be required to come before a City board for review.

Chair Henke noted that would require an ordinance change.

CP Dupuis concurred with Chair Henke. He noted that such an ordinance change might gain support among residents since many have expressed concern about the rate of teardowns in the City.

**03-027-21**

## **7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication**

### **A. Pre-Application Discussions**

#### **1. 141 W. Maple – Fields Building**

Prior to the meeting the applicant requested the pre-application discussion be pulled with the possibility of returning at a future meeting.

### **B. Draft Agenda: March 17, 2021**

#### **C. Staff Reports**

##### **1. Administrative Sign Approvals**

##### **2. Administrative Approvals**

##### **3. Demolitions**

##### **4. Action List - 2021**

The HDC provided brief feedback regarding the proposed action list.

**03-028-21**

## **Adjournment**

### **Motion by Ms. Lang**

**Seconded by Ms. Debbrecht to adjourn the HDC meeting of March 3, 2021 at 9:00 p.m.**

**Motion carried, 7-0.**

ROLL CALL VOTE

Historic District Commission  
Minutes of March 3, 2021

Yeas: Debbrecht, Dukas, Lang, Henke, Kolo, Deyer, Willoughby  
Nays: None

Nicholas Dupuis  
City Planner

DRAFT



# MEMORANDUM

Planning Division

**DATE:** March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**TO:** Historic District Commission

**FROM:** Nicholas Dupuis, City Planner

**SUBJECT:** Preliminary Historic Design Review – 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building (**ALL UPDATES IN BLUE TEXT**)

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**Zoning:** B-4 (Business-Residential) & D-4 (Downtown Overlay)

**Existing Use:** One-Story Commercial Building

## History

The small one story storefront was built in 1927. During the 1940's it housed the Bell telephone company. It has been well kept and changed very little over the years. It is decorated with a sign band, small pediment, and limestone urns at the party walls. It is believed that the pressed metal storefront is original.

## Historic District Commission Review History

The review process for the building at 361 E. Maple began with an application for Preliminary Site Plan review in 2017, which was ultimately never reviewed by the Planning Board. Shortly thereafter, the applicant submitted an unsuccessful request to de-designate the building to the City Commission. The applicant then moved to the Historic District Commission with an application for Design Review and was placed on several agendas and on each occasion requested postponement, the final request being made in January 2019 for an indefinite postponement.

The applicant returned to the Historic District Commission on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with a proposal for a new 5-story mixed use building constructed behind 3 ft. of preserved historical storefront. The HDC motioned to postpone the Historic Design Review to a future date citing concerns with the massing and the application of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

**On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, the Historic District Commission reviewed a revised proposal for a new 3-story addition (reduced from original 4-story addition proposal) to the existing 1-story commercial building. The Historic District Commission again motioned to postpone the application restating their concerns about massing, the setback of the additions, and the storefront proposal for the historic building.**

## Proposal

The applicant has re-submitted an application for Design Review for a three-story addition to the one-story commercial historic resource. The proposal is similar to the previous submittals, as the building storefront (first 3-ft. **5 ft.**) is proposed to remain and be re-worked while (essentially) a new four-story building is proposed to be constructed behind. The applicant is proposing a first floor retail use with a rear garage, one floor of office/commercial, two floors of residential and a rooftop use.

**The applicant has made three modifications to the building per the direction of the Historic District Commission. First, the applicant has removed the pitched roof design that was proposed to house the rooftop mechanical units in favor of a flat roof louvered mechanical enclosure and covered terrace. The redesign lowers the overall height of the building by 2 ft. from 67 ft. 6 in. to 65 ft. 6 in.**

**The second change is the increased setback from 3 ft. to 5 ft. of the addition. There are some discrepancies between the drawings in the plan view and elevations. However, the applicant has clarified that the new construction (and subsequently the setback of the new addition) will be 5 ft. from the historic building façade.**

**Finally, the applicant has re-worked the storefront design and relocated the egress stairs to the rear of the building. This change brings 75% of the storefront back to the same plane as the historic façade. However, the remaining 25% will be open to an hallway where users of the building will access the retail space and elevator for the upper stories.**

The materials proposed on the building façade are as follows:

Material	Location	Color
Brick	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor South Façade, North Facade	Red (Existing)
Metal and Glass	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Storefront System	TBD
Limestone	2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Floor South Façade, North & West Façade Headers & Sills	Natural
Glass	2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Floor Windows (North, West & South Facades)	TBD
Aluminum Frame	2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> Floor Windows (North, West & South Facades)	TBD
Steel Railing	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor & Rooftop	TBD
Metal	Roof	TBD
Mechanical Louver	Rooftop (North Façade)	TBD
Stucco	East & West Facades	TBD
Overhead Garage Door	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor (North Façade)	TBD

The applicant has not yet submitted material specifications or colors for most of the proposed addition. Although the applicant has indeed noted the majority of the materials proposed, the applicant is not customarily required to have detailed material specifications at this preliminary stage. At final Design Review, colors are required to be selected and specification sheets on all newly proposed materials including glass, metal, windows, doors, and all other materials will be required.

In addition to the overall design specifics, there will be considerable discussion of the planning and zoning issues present in the proposal at Final Design Review such as building height, rooftop uses, projections into the right-of-way, setbacks, parking and glazing. At this time, there appear to be no major planning and zoning related disqualifiers present in the current plans submitted. As this project (if approved by the HDC) would be required to go to the Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Site Plan review as well as a Final Design Review at the HDC, the planning and zoning issues will be fully vetted by the Planning Board and do not require an in-depth review at this time.

### **Recommendation (Updated)**

Due to the longevity of this particular review and the range of arguments that have been employed by both the City and the applicant up to this point, it is important to take a step back and review the Historic District Commission's design review standards and guidelines as required in Chapter 127 of the City Code of Ordinances. In addition, a review of the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, as well as National Park Service Guidelines for exterior additions is offered below to ensure that the HDC has all of the tools to make a focused and *defensible* decision.

#### Chapter 127 (Historic Districts) - Design Review Standards and Guidelines:

In reviewing plans, the commission shall follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings as set forth in 36 C.F.R. part 67. Design review standards and guidelines that address special design characteristics of historic districts administered by the Commission may be followed if they are equivalent in guidance to the secretary of interior's standards and guidelines and are established or approved by the State Historic Preservation Office of the Michigan Historical Center.

In reviewing plans, the commission shall also consider all of the following:

1. The historic or architectural value and significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.
2. The relationship of any architectural features of the resource to the rest of the resource and to the surrounding area.
3. The general compatibility of the design, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.
4. Other factors, such as aesthetic value, that the commission finds relevant.

5. Whether the applicant has certified in the application that the property where work will be undertaken has, or will have before the proposed project completion date, a fire alarm system or a smoke alarm complying with the requirements of the Stille-DeRossett-Hale single state construction code act, 1972 PA 230, MCL 125.1501 to 125.1531.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

The proposed development appears to meet, although not entirely, the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 2, and 5. However, the proposal seems to contradict standards number 1, 4, 9 and 10. The following analysis provides some detail on this viewpoint:

1. Although the proposed development will retain a portion of the historical retail use of the building on the first floor, the proposed 3-story addition introduces a new use to the site that will drastically change the defining characteristics of the existing one-story commercial building and its site and environment. These changes include the character and feel of the streetscape to pedestrians on the sidewalk of the Downtown Historic District.
2. The applicant is proposing to retain most of what they feel is the original building façade and its character. The historical description (quoted above) for the building asserts that the storefront is likely to be original. The applicant has provided a counter to that description in a more detailed inspection memo which asserts that the certain elements of the storefront such as the wall framing, limestone, windows and sign band are in fact not original to the building based on their findings. However...
4. As standard number 4 notes, buildings change over time and those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved. The HDC could reasonably argue that the current storefront (IF it is not original) has gained such significance. The City has photographs of the building and East Maple area that show the storefront in its current general form as early as the mid 1960's.
5. The applicant is proposing to preserve the distinctive features of the building, such as the small pediment and limestone urns.
9. The addition and exterior alteration proposed contain plans to remove the entirety of the building beginning at 5 ft. behind the façade. Although it could be argued that the removal of the rear of the building is not removing any materials that *characterize* the property, the HDC must consider the historic building as a whole and not just a storefront façade. Additionally, although the applicant has clearly differentiated the new work from the old, the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the additional 3 stories could serve as a detriment to the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. The proposed plan to completely remove the rear of the building in favor of (essentially) a new 4-story building could be considered an addition that would NOT be easily removed in the future. If it were to be removed, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment could be irreparably damaged.

National Park Service (NPS) – Technical Preservation Service Guidelines:

The NPS and U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) offer a Technical Preservation Service with more detailed information and explanation regarding the application of the SOI Standards and the appropriateness of common development/renovation proposals faced by historic buildings. The following information has been pulled directly (verbatim) from the documents provided by the NPS and the DOI to help guide the discussion regarding the proposed 3-story addition to the historic building at 361 E. Maple. Please see the following link to access the full preservation brief on new exterior additions: [New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns](#).

Designing a new exterior addition to a historic building:

1. A new exterior addition to a historic building should be considered in a rehabilitation project only after determining that requirements for the new or adaptive use cannot be successfully met by altering non-significant interior spaces.
2. A new addition should be simple and unobtrusive in design, and should be distinguished from the historic building—a recessed connector can help to differentiate the new from the old.
3. A new addition should not be highly visible from the public right of way; a rear or other secondary elevation is usually the best location for a new addition.
4. The construction materials and the color of the new addition should be harmonious with the historic building materials.
5. The new addition should be smaller than the historic building—it should be subordinate in both size and design to the historic building.

The same guidance should be applied when designing a compatible rooftop addition, plus the following:

1. A rooftop addition is generally not appropriate for a one, two or three-story building—and often is not appropriate for taller buildings.
2. A rooftop addition should be minimally visible.
3. Generally, a rooftop addition must be set back at least one full bay from the primary elevation of the building, as well as from the other elevations if the building is freestanding or highly visible.
4. Generally, a rooftop addition should not be more than one story in height.
5. Generally, a rooftop addition is more likely to be compatible on a building that is adjacent to similarly-sized or taller buildings.

Due to the arguments examined above, the Planning Division recommends that the Historic District Commission **DENY** the historic Design Review application for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building. The proposed work does not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation numbers 1, 4, 9 and 10.

### **Wording for Motions**

I move that the Commission **DENY** the Historic Design Review application for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building. Because of \_\_\_\_\_ the work does not meet The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation number(s) \_\_\_\_\_.

**OR**

I move that the Commission **POSTPONE** the Historic Design Review application and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building – until the following conditions are met: (List Conditions). The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation number(s) \_\_\_\_\_ will be met upon fulfillment of condition(s).

**OR**

I move that the Commission **APPROVE** the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building – provided the conditions below are met. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation number(s) \_\_\_\_\_ will be met upon fulfillment of the condition(s):

**OR**

I move that the Commission **APPROVE** the Historic Design Review application and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for 361 E. Maple – Hawthorne Building. The work as proposed meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation number(s) \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Notice to Proceed**

I move the Commission issue a Notice to Proceed for number \_\_\_\_\_. The work is not appropriate, however the following condition prevails: \_\_\_\_\_ and the proposed application will materially correct the condition.

### **Choose from one of these conditions:**

- a) The resource constitutes hazard to the safety of the public or the structure's occupants.
- b) The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community and the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances.
- c) Retaining the resource will cause undue financial hardship to the owner when a governmental action, an act of God, or other events beyond the owner's control created the hardship, and all feasible alternatives to eliminate the financial hardship, which may include offering the resource for sale at its fair market value or moving the resource to a vacant site within the historic district. have been attempted and exhausted by the owner.

d) Retaining the resource is not in the best interest of the majority of the community.

## **THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION AND GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS**

The U. S. secretary of the interior standards for rehabilitation are as follows:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.



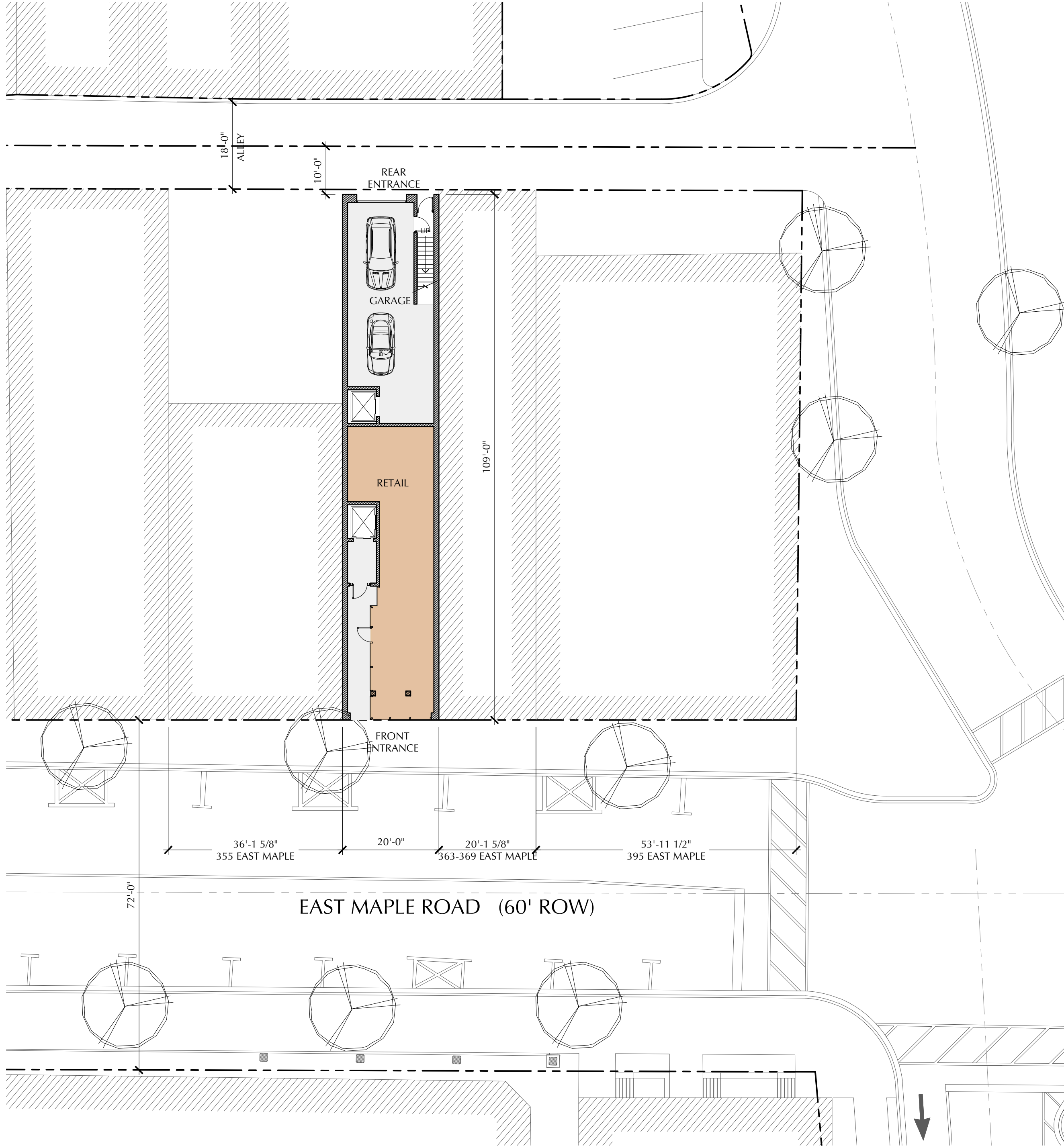
East Maple View (looking north)

Site



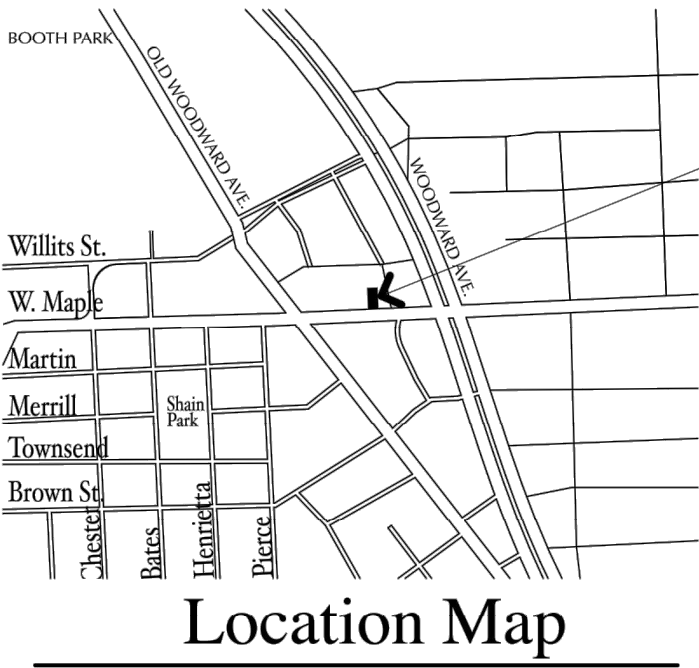
Alley View (looking south)

361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



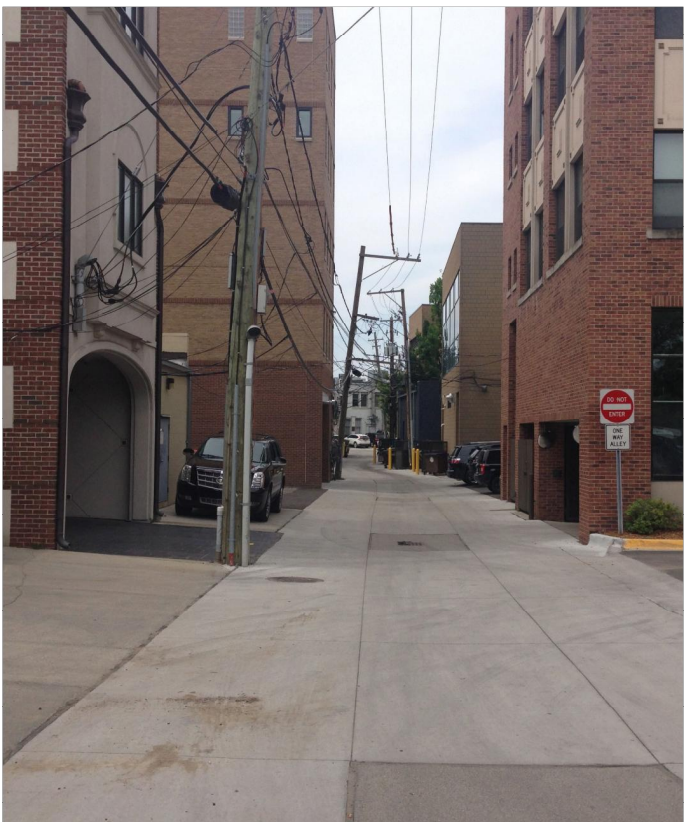
Site Plan (Proposed)

1/16"=1'-0"



Site  
361 East Maple

Zoned:  
B-4 (business - residence)  
Overlay:  
D-4



Alley (looking west)



East Maple (looking west)

Occupancy Areas

Occupancy	Location in Building	Net Usable Area
Retail + Lobby + Garage	Level 1	1358 SF
Office	Level 2	1622 SF
Residential	Levels 3 & 4	3300 SF

Parking Tabulation

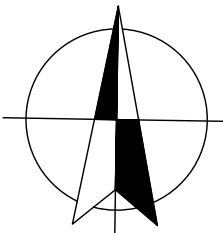
Residential		Required	Provided
Apartment	1 Residence x 1.5	1.5 spaces	2.0 spaces
Retail	parking assement district	0 spaces	
Office			
Total		1.5 spaces	2.0 spaces
Total with 1 street parking spaces			3.0 spaces

Current Address

Street Address	Sidwell Number	Zoning
361 East Maple Road	19.25.456.027	B3/D4

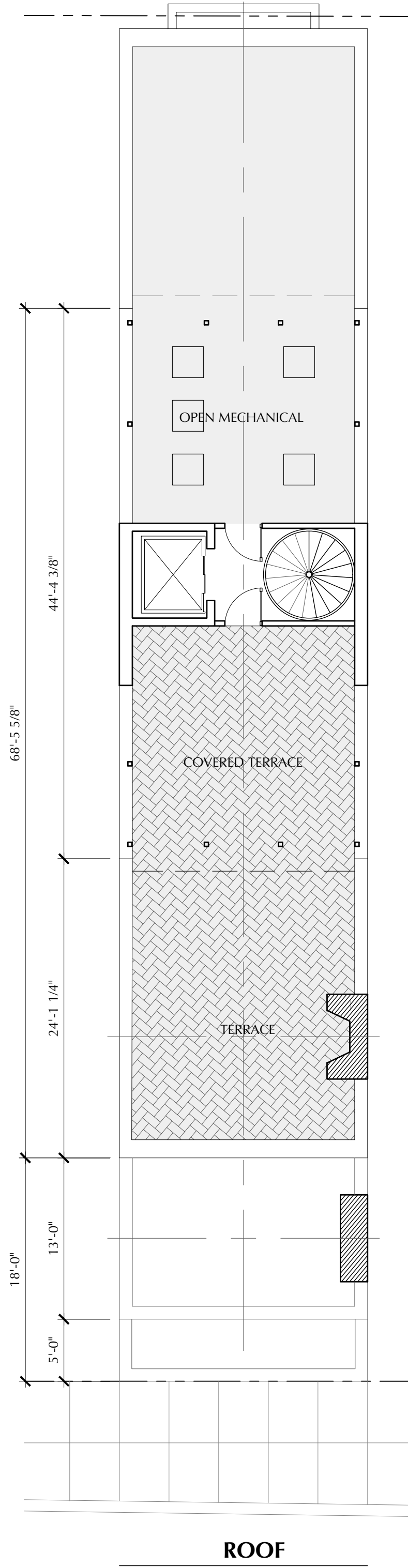
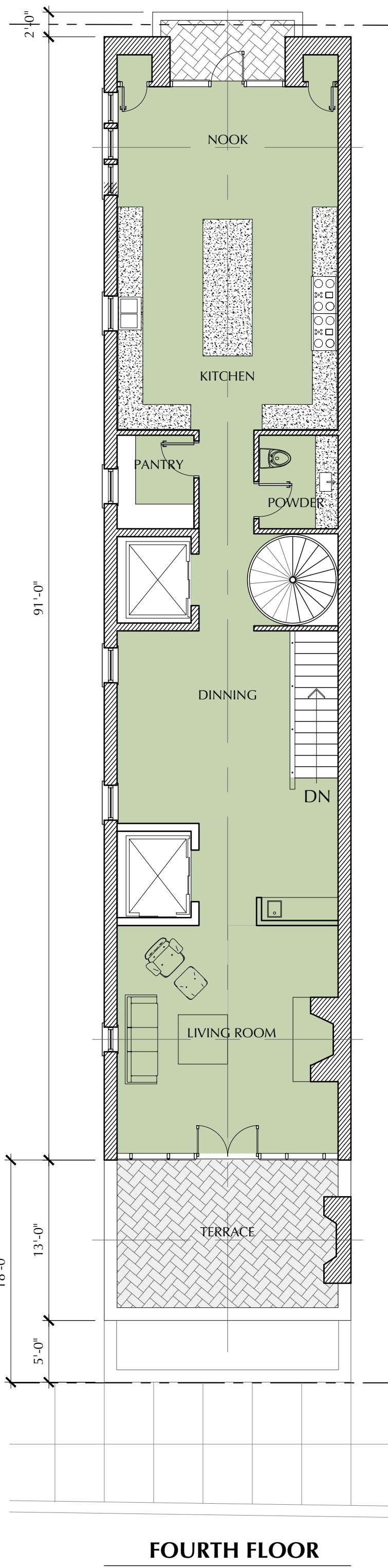
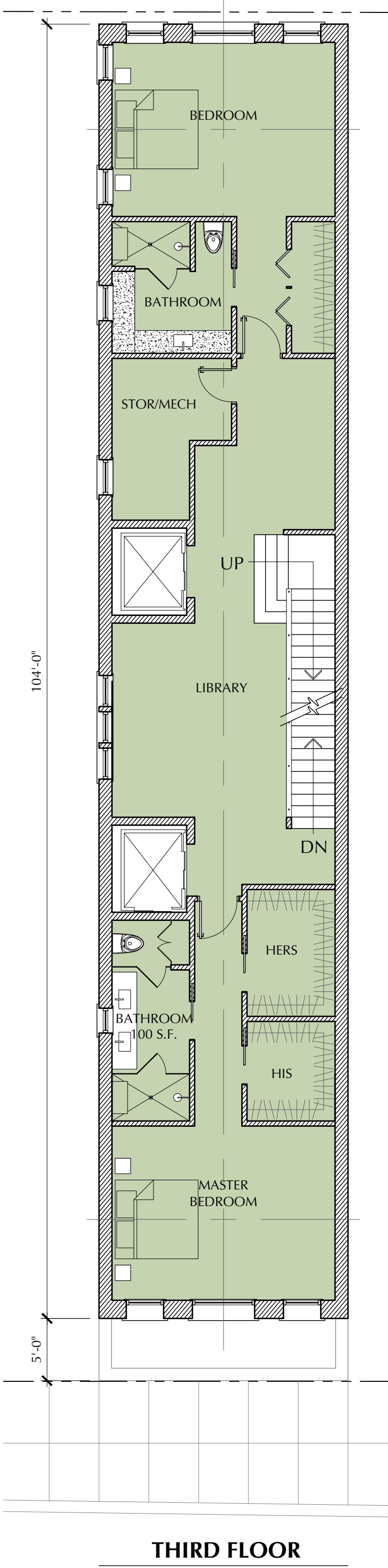
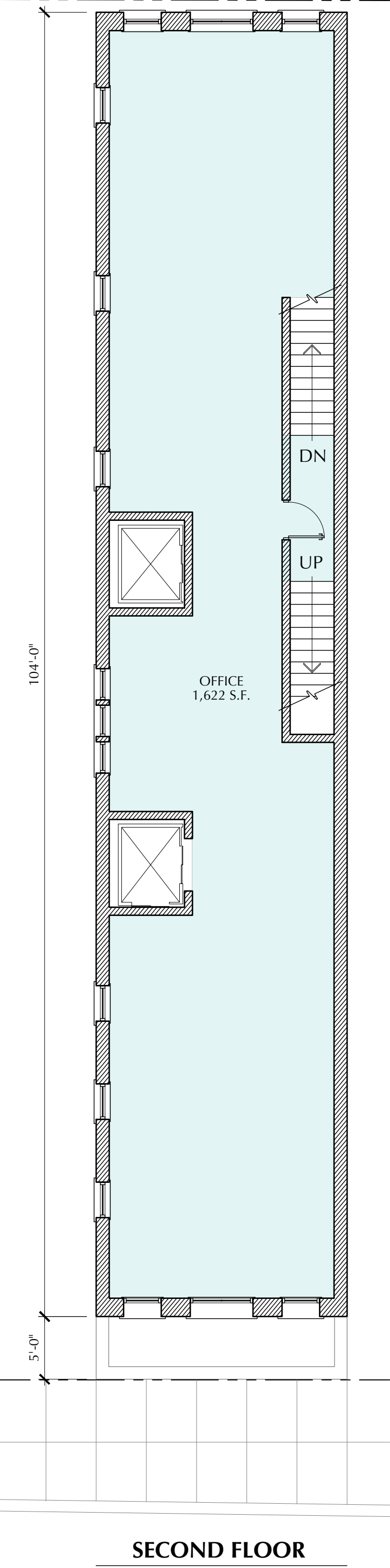
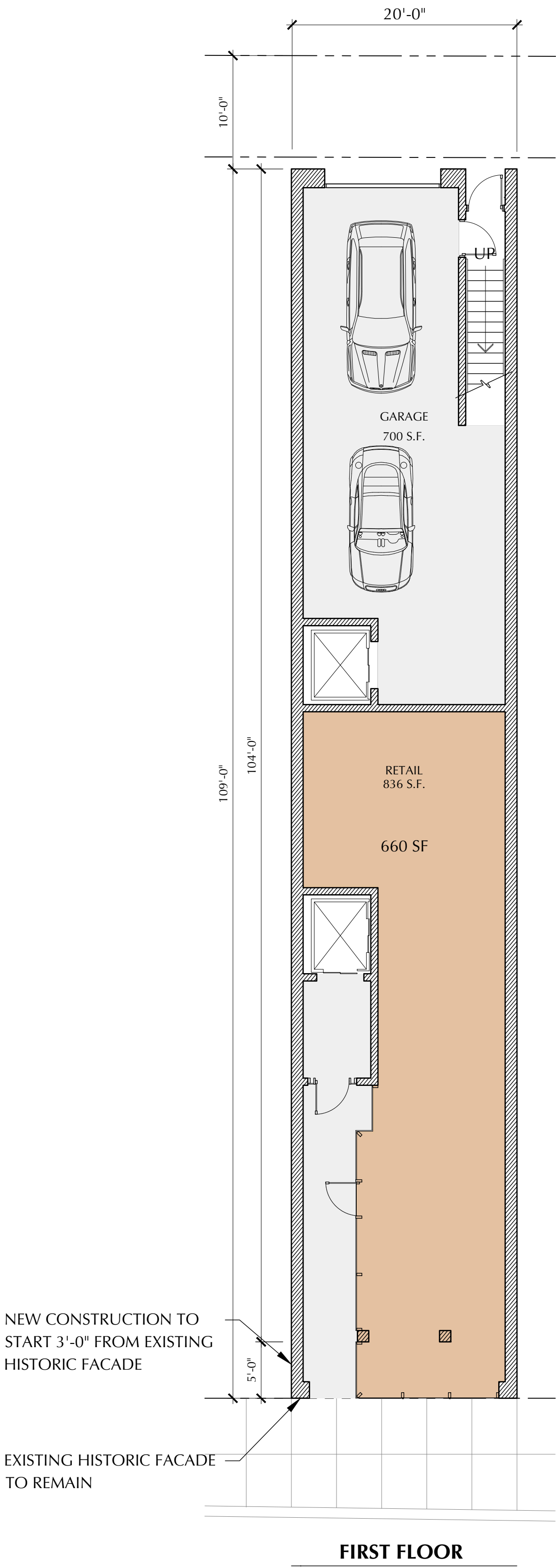
Building Calculations

Location	Spaces / Units	Net Usable Area	Gross Area
Level 1	2 Parking Spaces	1,358 SF	2,200 SF
Level 2	Office	1,622 SF	2,140 SF
Level 3/4	1 Residence	3,030 SF	3,980 SF
Total	-	6,010 SF	8,320 SF



CHRISTOPHER J LONGE AIA  
ARCHITECTURE  
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124 Peabody, Birmingham, Michigan 48009 248.258.6940

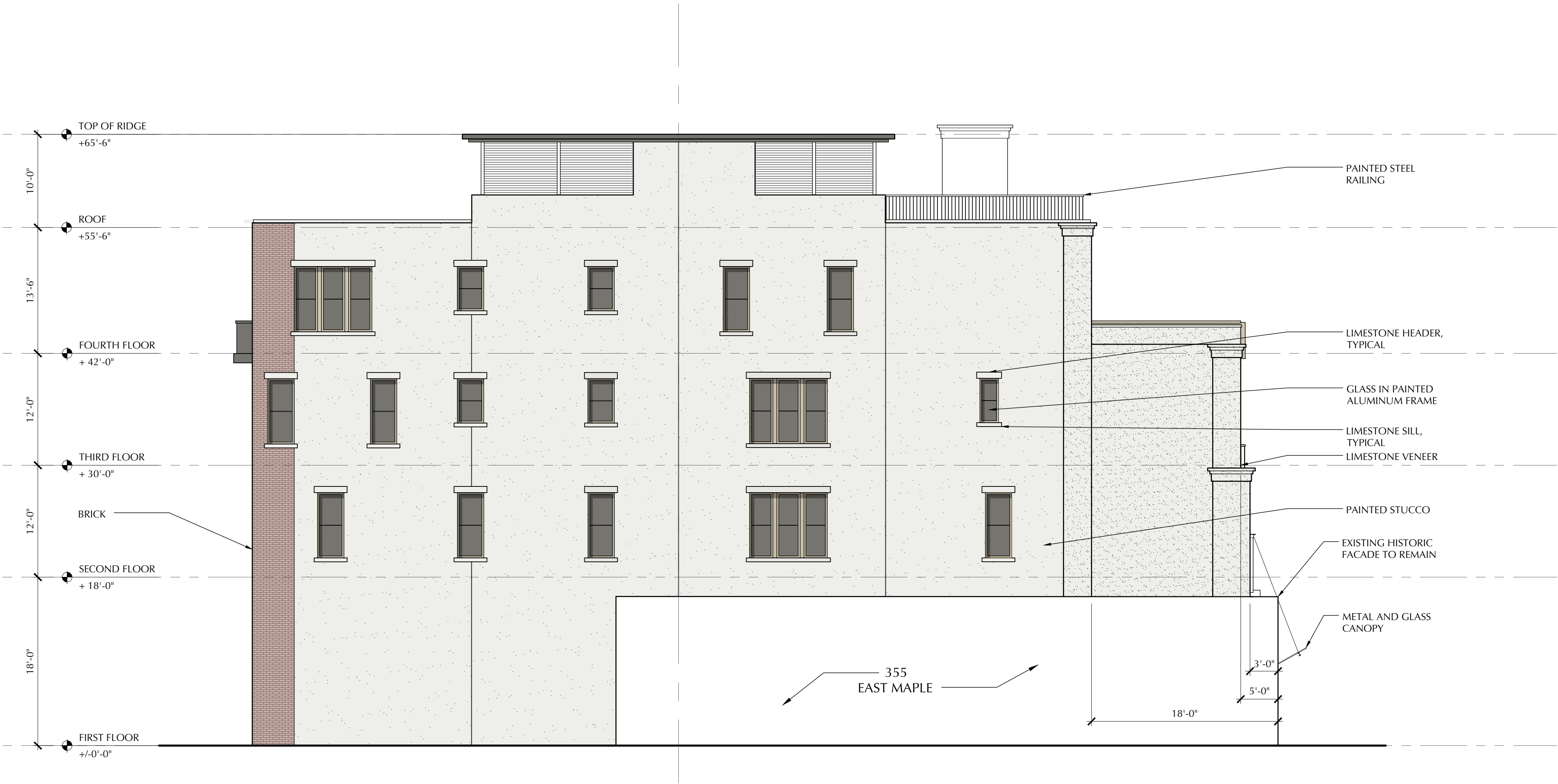
361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



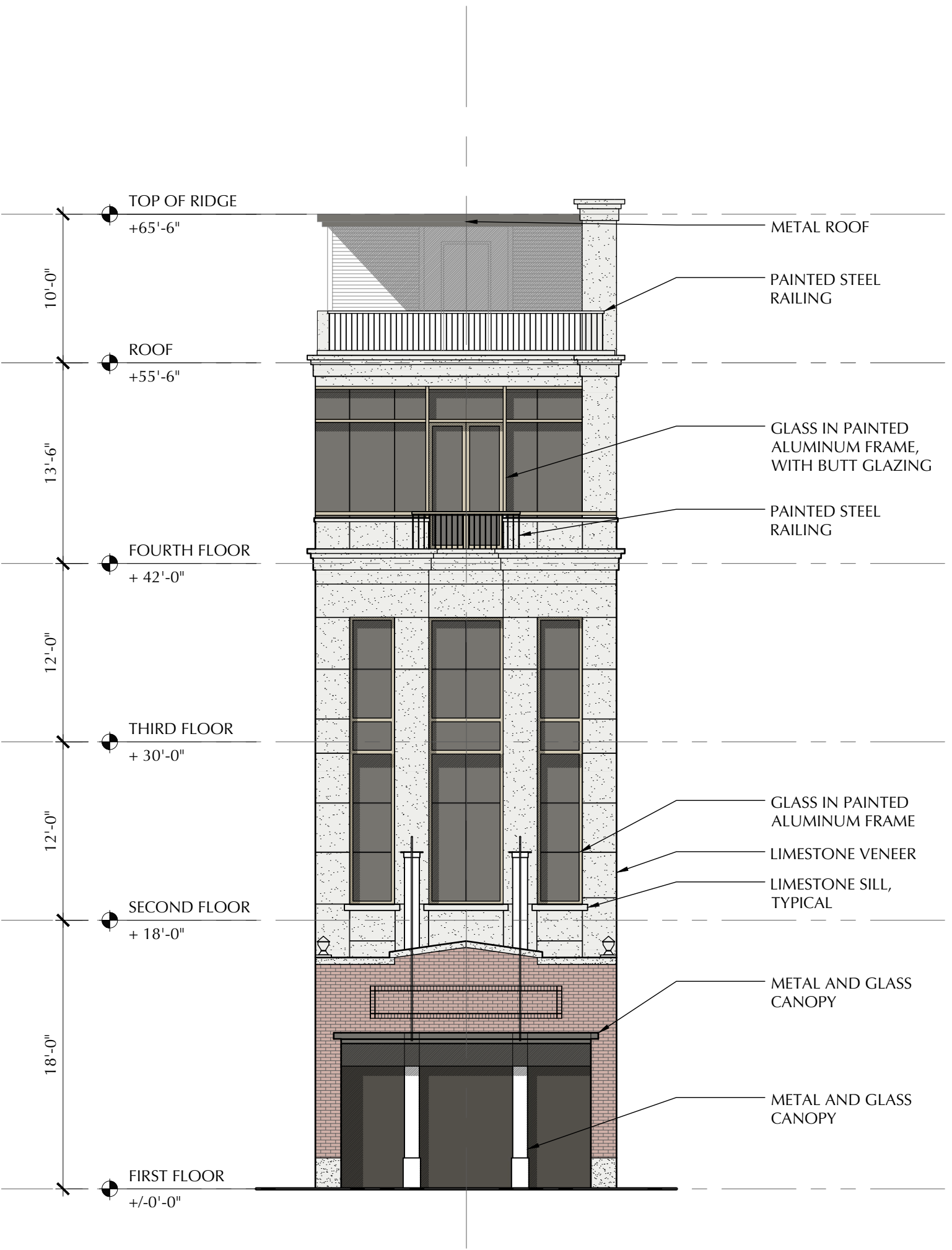
361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



361 EAST MAPLE  
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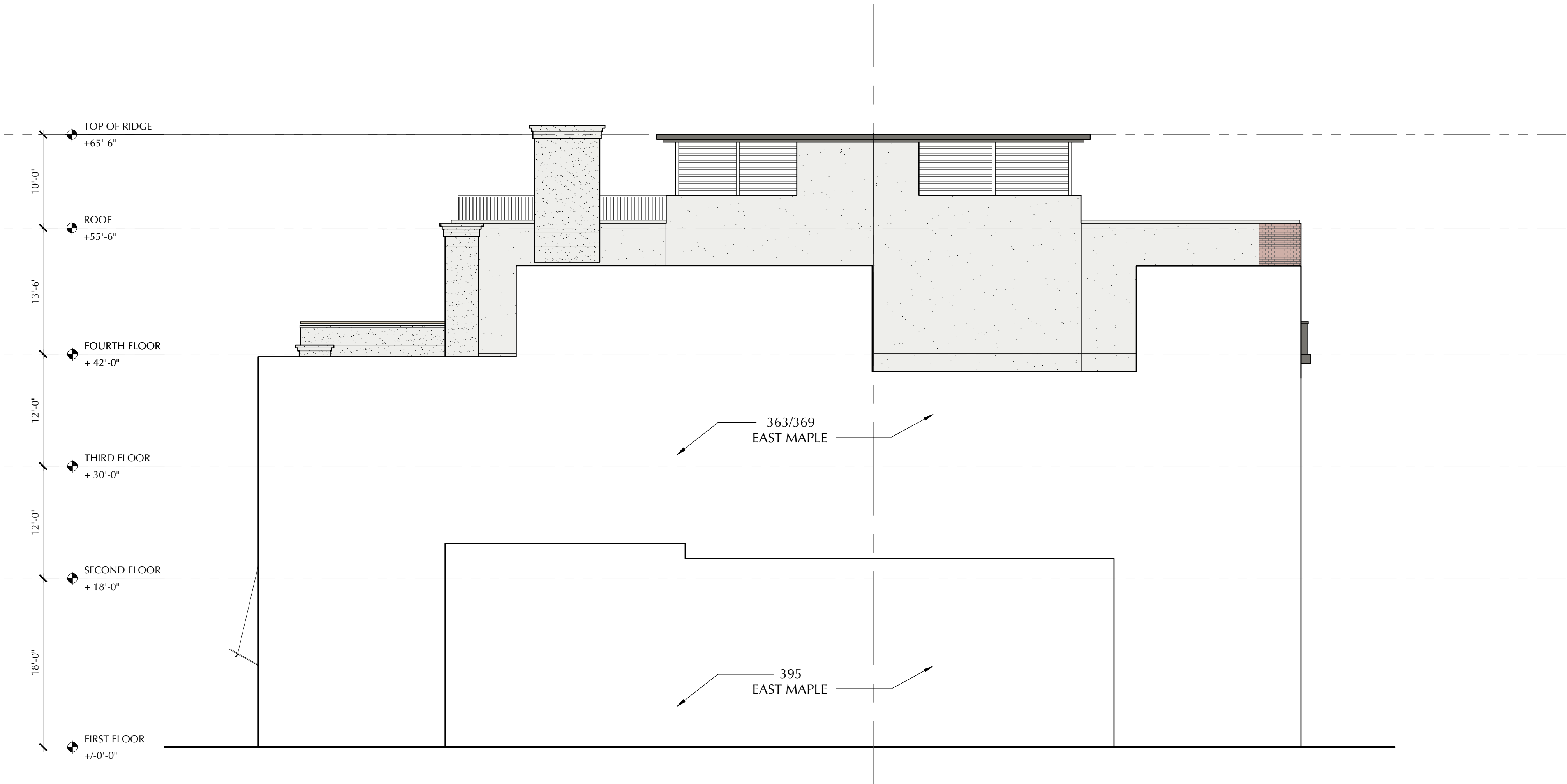


WEST ELEVATION

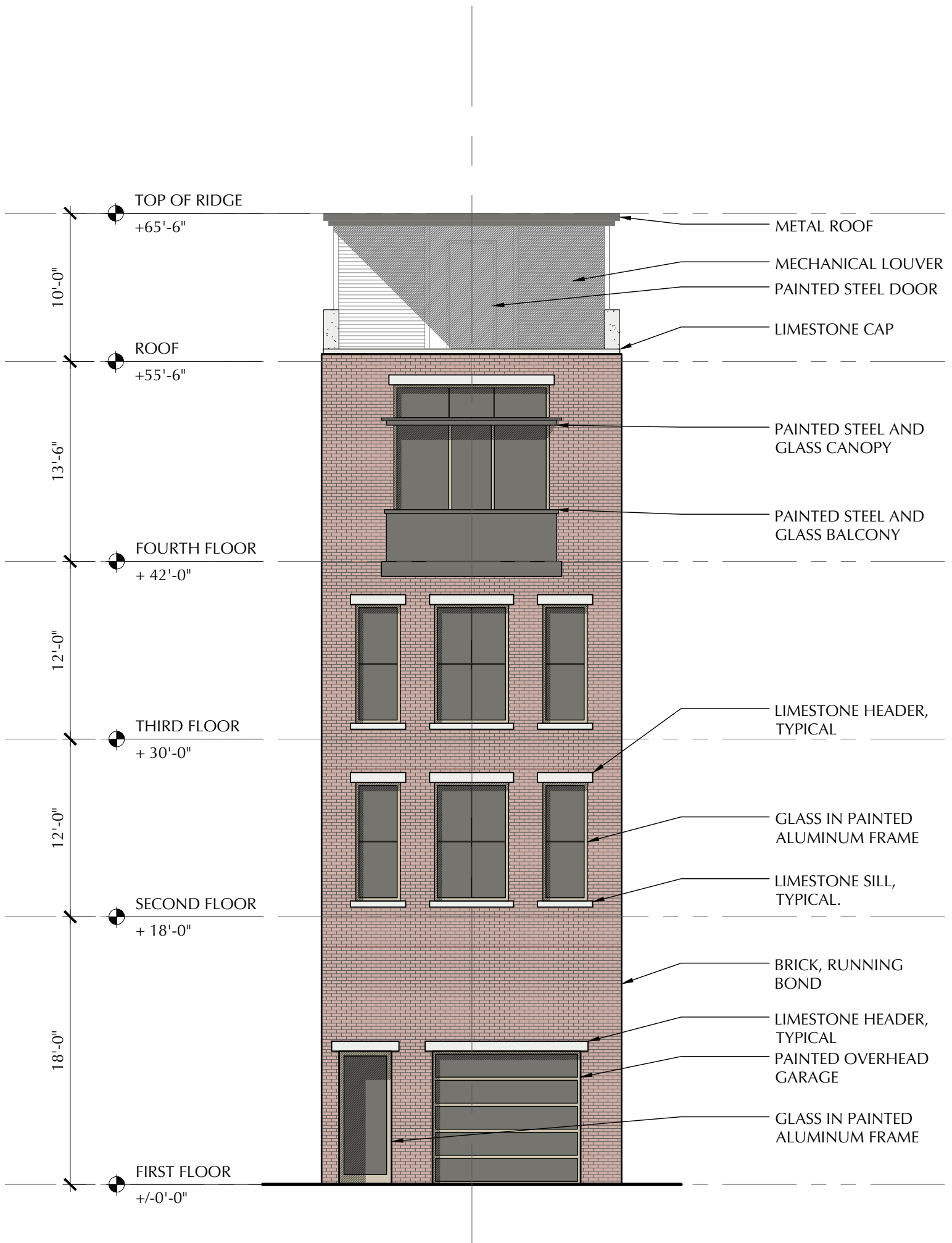


SOUTH ELEVATION

361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



EAST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION

361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



STREET WEST VIEW

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361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



STREET EAST VIEW

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361 EAST MAPLE  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48009



PRECEDENT STUDY

CHRISTOPHER J LONGE AIA  
ARCHITECTURE  
INTERIORS  
124 Peabody, Birmingham, Michigan 48009 248.258.6940

Memorandum re: 361 EAST MAPLE

Dear Nick,

I have examined and photographed the 361 East Maple building in an effort to explain and determine what architectural components are believed to not be original to the building construction (1927) and its Architectural design. Please see the list of Architectural & Construction elements and corresponding pictures below.

***Display Window Knee Wall***

Generally, the present entry system is not of the original design and had been altered sometime after the original building was constructed. The storefront window is constructed on top of limestone sill set on 7 courses of a brick knee wall. As the photo below indicates, the wall is stepped back from the adjacent limestone base of the building. The stepped back limestone stone sill and brick knee wall is constructed as a single width brick wall with a metal stud backer. The metal stud knee wall backer shown in the photo is in fact 'new' and significantly postdates the building age. There is no further use of metal studs in the building.

In support of the above explanation, the limestone sill on top of the brick knee wall is of a different limestone (*unselect variegated limestone*) than the adjacent building (*select*) limestone – clearly shown in the photo below indicating the construction of the knee wall came sometime after the original building was constructed.

While certainly the prerogative of the designer or mason, the brick portion of the knee wall - if it were original – would have more typically been constructed as a continuous limestone knee wall.



### ***Display Window***

The display window itself has been significantly altered over the course of time. The painted pressed metal frame (photo below) of the window glass has been haphazardly ‘pieced’ together to reflect the altered storefront- suggesting the glass size was originally different than the present configuration. This has probably been done over the course of time to reflect the needs of the building owner or tenant.



### ***Sign Band (as part of the storefront)***

The sign band is clearly not original to the building design. It is constructed of wood with faux dentils along with the louvered vent above the front door.

There are clear exterior indications (and interior) that this wooden sign band altered the original building façade. As mentioned above, the exterior stamped metal frame has been altered (to accommodate different glass sizes). The interior ceiling (above the lay-in ceiling) is much higher than the present display window head and in fact aligns with remnants of what would have trim work for an originally taller display window.



***Sign Band (original)***

The brick detail consisting of a rowlock (proud of the adjacent brick field) with limestone corner blocks was clearly to be the storefront signage band – as would be customary for a building of this vintage reinforcing the idea that the wood sign band was added sometime after the original building was constructed.



DATE: March 12, 2021

TO: Historic District Commission

FROM: Leslie Pielack, Museum Director

SUBJECT: Hawthorne Building and Birmingham History

---

The Hawthorne Building is one of the last examples of a 20<sup>th</sup> century small commercial building in Birmingham. Its simple façade and one-story design reflects a time in the Village of Birmingham when local economic forces were shifting from that of primarily agricultural to primarily commercial and manufacturing economy. The building's historical value lies primarily in the physical reference to this function and its meaning for the evolution of the town.

Built in 1927, the structure was part of the growth period of Birmingham that occurred during the 1920s. Its function and occupancy during and after the Great Depression are also of note, as it reflects an important part of Birmingham history. In the 1920s and 1930s, Harry Allen (who built the Allen House) was a significant force in the shaping of modern Birmingham. As the writer of our city charter and first mayor, Allen helped navigate the town's evolution from village to city structure. At the time the Hawthorne Building was built, Birmingham was enjoying unprecedented growth in business and banking, and small businesses and commercial interests were drawn to the town's location and stability. As the Village neared the end of the 1920s, the pressure was mounting to incorporate as a city and enjoy the attendant economic benefits and independence.

During the Depression years, Allen worked tirelessly to stabilize city finances so that, unlike some of its neighbors, Birmingham would be positioned for robust growth when the economy began to grow again. Businesses such as those in the Hawthorne block were among the first to realize this potential. Small business has been a significant part of Birmingham's financial success ever since.



The Hawthorne building's façade reflects this period, and its straightforward nature is one of the last of its kind in the downtown. Since the building has been designated and preserved as a historic resource, its unique character is more important than ever. It helps maintain the historical sense of pre- and post-Depression Birmingham through its features that reflect our small business heritage. As such, it is much more than just a footnote to history.

I hope that it will be possible to take this greater historical context into consideration in future decision-making for this building. The Hawthorne building is an important vestige of Birmingham's story.

# City Commission Minutes from de-designation attempt

City Manager Valentine recommended withdrawing this item for the time being pending a full legal review. Subsequently the item would come back before the Commission.

Commission Hoff asked for the number of plots under payment plans and the total dollar amount of payments made on those lots to date.

City Clerk Mynsberge replied:

- She could have that information for when this item returns to the Commission.
- Thirty plots are currently under payment plan.

Mayor Harris:

- Asked how the purchaser is made aware of the policy;
- Stated he would like to see language about pre-payment and how those payments would be allocated to plots;
- Stated the accelerated payment or pre-payment options are inconsistent with a proportionate distribution if there are multiple plots, which should be clarified;
- Stated purchasers should not forfeit all previous payments if one payment is missed, as there should be a cure period; and,
- Stated the allocation of funds to the perpetual care account should be clarified.

Mayor Pro Tem Bordman said paragraph two has unnecessary repetition which should be revised.

The Commission took no action.

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

09-259-18

### REQUEST TO ELIMINATE THE HISTORIC DESIGNATION OF 361 E. MAPLE

Senior Planner Baka:

- Reviewed the materials in the agenda packet regarding this item, including his September 7, 2018 memo to City Manager Valentine.
- Clarified that a historic designation does not preclude changes to a building.
- Confirmed that the facade of a building is generally considered the most important part to preserve.
- Confirmed that no historically designated buildings in the historic district have been de-listed.
- Explained that the district establishes the purview of the Historic District Study Commission (HDSC), which means any changes to a building within the district must go before the HDSC. Only the landmark buildings, however, are subject to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. These requirements are part of City ordinances.
- Said there is no restriction on height for historically designated buildings. Drastic changes would be more challenging, but there are ways to modify buildings while remaining sensitive to their historic nature.
- The only home that has been de-listed was 505 Townsend, because there were so many previous undocumented changes that the home was no longer considered historic. To Senior Planner Baka's knowledge there have also been no other requests to de-list beyond 505 Townsend and 361 E. Maple.

John Gabor, attorney representing property owner Victor Simon, explained:

- Mr. Simon requested the de-listing of 361 E. Maple to allow development of the building consistent with the City's 2016 Plan and the overlay district ordinance.
- It is not mandatory for the Commission to follow the recommendation of the HDSC to deny, as the Commission is free to consider other factors including plans, ordinances, patterns of development, and comments from other Board and Commissions.
- A report included in the agenda packet, as submitted by historic architect William L. Finnicum at the owner's request, found there is no historic significance to 361 E. Maple and supported de-listing the property. Mr. Gabor reported that in Mr. Finnicum's forty year career this is only the second time that Mr. Finnicum has supported de-listing a building.
- 361 E. Maple was of minimal historic significance when it was designated. It would not be designated as a landmark today because of the changing character of E. Maple.
- 361 E. Maple has lost that small shop context that enabled the building to be designated as a landmark.
- 361 E. Maple is a twenty-foot wide building with minimal architectural features. The original inventory form filled out at the time of designation showed very weak rationale for the designation. Question #18 on the inventory, which specifically asked about architectural significance, specified no significance. Question #19 on the inventory, asking about historical significance, also specifies no significance. It was a good example of buildings from the time, but bears no significance in and of itself. 361 E. Maple was somewhat arbitrarily chosen, as other buildings nearby have identical characteristics.
- Changes to the structures adjacent to the landmark buildings matter as much for changing or maintaining the character of the district as changes to the landmark buildings themselves.
- Due to surrounding development, the designation of 361 E. Maple has been rendered irrelevant, whereas other landmark buildings remain significant in their context.
- Robin Boyle and Daniel Share of the Planning Board supported the de-listing of 361 E. Maple, and Michael Willoughby, Thomas Trapnell, Doug Burley and Adam Charles of the Historic District Commission supported the de-listing as well.
- While this will be a precedent-setting decision, the rationale for de-listing 361 E. Maple does not apply to other landmarks, so this will not cause a landslide of other de-listing applications.
- Mr. Simon renovated 159 Pierce Street, which was also historically designated.

Property owner Victor Simon stated:

- 361 E. Maple was purchased in 2016.
- He was aware of the property's historic designation when he purchased it.
- An architect already determined that the the facade could not be maintained while achieving the development goals.

Blair Gould, attorney for the Kaftans who own the building immediately to the east of 361 E. Maple, laid out a number of reasons the Kaftans object to the proposed de-listing of 361 E. Maple including:

- Mr. Simon should have been aware of the designation at the time of purchase.
- The historic designation for these landmark properties were maintained after the 2016 Plan.
- The fact that this building is a one-story landmark building makes 361 E. Maple more significant, not less.
- The building has been zoned B-4 since 1984.

- The Kaftans have offered to acquire the property from Mr. Simon for the price that he paid in order to maintain the historic designation.

Melvin Kaftan said:

- The HDC heard the request to de-list 361 E. Maple twice and denied it.
- 261 E. Maple through 323 E. Maple are marked historic. An owner of some of those buildings said he was interested in de-listing his building as well if Mr. Simon's de-listing goes through.
- If 361 E. Maple is de-listed and is built bigger, it will require significantly more parking.

Gerri Kaftan said:

- She and her husband chose 369 E. Maple Road because the street is charming. They built their home with brick and lime in order to maintain the character of the street.
- 361 E. Maple just needs a bit of tender loving care.
- Like the man in the movie Up, Mr. Simon is trying to muscle all the charm out of Birmingham.

A member of the audience noted that 361 E. Maple is the smallest of the landmark buildings at twenty feet in width.

Patricia Lang stated three times that in the Bay Area historic buildings are not allowed to be demolished unless they are entirely beyond repair. She continued:

- That building owners in the Bay Area are not able to build a structure that would change the light neighbors receive unless all the neighbors sign off on it.
- She does not want to see Birmingham lose its character.
- She implored the Commission to maintain the historic designation for 361 E. Maple.

Mr. Gabor noted that 369 E. Maple was built to four stories, adhering more to the 2016 Plan and the overlay district than the previous character of the street.

Mr. Gould stated that there are alternatives to fully demolishing 361 E. Maple and clarified Mr. Kaftan's claim that another owner expressed his desire to de-list. The owner, rather, stated that he supported the de-listing of 361 E. Maple, describing the building as ugly.

Mayor Harris called a brief recess at 8:59 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Bordman noted:

- Birmingham's historic buildings are important to many Birmingham residents.
- 361 E. Maple fulfills the definition of a landmark because it is "an example of its type".
- It was built in 1927, and maintaining the building is a way to see the past.

**MOTION:** Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Bordman, seconded by Commissioner Hoff:

To deny the request by the property owner to eliminate the historic designation on 361 E. Maple as recommended by the Historic District Study Committee.

Commissioner Sherman said a skilled architect could maintain the facade of 361 E. Maple without needing to de-list the property.

Commissioner Hoff noted that since the building is one of the last of its kind, she will be supporting the motion.

Mayor Harris stated:

- The first question for de-listing a building is whether the building has lost its historic significance.
- He is concerned that if this building is de-listed buildings around it will also be de-listed and the historical significance will be eliminated.

Commissioner DeWeese said the best approach will be to maintain the designation and preserve the building's best features.

VOTE:	Yeas,	6
	Nays,	0
	Absent,	1

**09-260-18 PUBLIC HEARING – BISTRO ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 126, ZONING OF THE BIRMINGHAM CITY CODE**

Mayor Harris opened the public hearing at 9:09 p.m.

Planning Director Ecker Reviewed her September 7, 2018 memo to City Manager Valentine and explained:

- Bar seating is included in the maximum number of indoor seats.
- Any bistros with enclosures to allow year-round outdoor dining are grandfathered in.
- A special land use permit (SLUP) would allow the Commission to address the possibility of high-top tables without seats should the situation arise.
- Class C restaurants generally have at least 125 seats.

Mayor Pro Tem Bordman<sup>2</sup> shared concern about the possibility of competition between bistros and Class C restaurants since these ordinance changes allow bistros with up to 170 seats. She continued that bistros were originally intended to be intimate.

Mayor Harris closed the Public Hearing at 9:22 p.m.

Planning Director Ecker clarified:

- Class C restaurants have no restrictions on their seating numbers beyond what is determined by their SLUP.
- Outdoor rooftop dining for bistros is permitted as long as surrounding properties are not impacted in a negative manner.

Commissioner Hoff echoed Mayor Pro Tem Bordman's concerns regarding the number of potential seats being proposed for bistros.

Commissioner DeWeese said he was also concerned with the numbers, and with the possibility of encouraging nightclub-like atmospheres with these changes.

Mayor Pro Tem Bordman stated:

- Having bistros in the Rail District and the Triangle District is a fabulous idea.
- She appreciates all the work the Planning Board has done with these amendments.
- Encouraging bistros too aggressively stands to undermine Class C restaurants.

---

<sup>2</sup> As amended at the October 8, 2018 Commission meeting.

RECEIVED

AUG 25 2020

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPT.



CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
Date 08/28/2020 12:16:23 PM  
Ref 00172163  
Receipt 542996  
Amount \$400.00

## Preliminary or Final Historic Sign/Design Review Application Historic District Commission

### Planning Division

*Form will not be processed until it is completely filled out.*

#### 1. Applicant

Name: Faiz Simon  
Address: 335 East Maple  
Birmingham, Michigan 48009  
Phone Number: 313.662.3568  
Fax Number:  
Email address: fsimon@simongroupholdings.com

#### 2. Property Owner

Name: 361 East Maple LLC  
Address: 335 East Maple  
Birmingham, Michigan 48009  
Phone Number: 313.662.3568  
Fax Number:  
Email address: fsimon@simongroupholdings.com

#### 3. Applicants Attorney/Contact Person

Name: Victor Simon  
Address: 335 East Maple  
Birmingham, Michigan 48009  
Phone Number: 313.662.3568  
Fax Number:  
Email address: fsimon@simongroupholdings.com

#### 4. Project Designer/Developer

Name: Christopher J. Longe, AIA  
Address: 124 Peabody  
Birmingham, Michigan 48009  
Phone Number: 248.258.6940  
Fax Number:  
Email address: cjlonge@cjlongeaia.com

#### 5. Required Attachments

- Required fee (see [Fee Schedule](#) for applicable amount)
- Two (2) folded copies of scaled plans including color elevations showing all materials and an itemized list of all changes for which approval is requested with changes marked in color.
- Certified land survey
- Landscape plan showing all existing and proposed elements
- Photographs of existing site and/or building.
- Current aerial photos of the subject site, including all adjacent properties within 200 ft.
- Warranty Deed with legal description of property.
- Samples of all materials to be used
- Catalog sheets for all proposed lighting, mechanical equipment and outdoor furniture.
- Completed Checklist.
- Digital copy of plans.
- Any new structures or additions will require a signed letter from DTE approving the location of all electrical transformers and electrical equipment.
- Additional information as required.

#### 6. Project Information

Address/Location of the property: 361 East Maple  
Name of development:  
Sidwell #: 19.25.456.027  
Current Use: Vacant  
Proposed Use: Mixed Use  
Area of Site in Acres: .05 AC (2200 SF)  
Current zoning: B4 (D4 Overlay)  
Zoning of Adjacent Properties: Same  
Name of Historic District Site is Located in: CBD  
Date of Application for Preliminary Historic Design Review:

Date of Preliminary Historic Design Review Approval:

Date of Planning Board Approval:

Date of Application for Preliminary Site Plan:

Date of Preliminary Site Plan Approval:

Date of Application for Final Site Plan:

Date of Final Site Plan Approval:

Will proposed project require the division of platted lots?

No

Will proposed project require the combination of platted lots?

No

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
Date 08/28/2020 12:16:23 PM  
Ref 00172164  
Receipt 542996  
Amount \$400.00

**7. Details of the Nature of Work Proposed (attach separate sheet if necessary)**  
(Please specifically list all materials and colors to be used)

Proposed 4 Story addition to 1 story existing building

**8. Buildings and Structures**

Number of Buildings on Site: 1  
Height of Buildings & # of Stories: +/- 12'-0"

Use of Buildings: N/A  
Height of Rooftop Mechanical Equipment:

**9. Additions (in Square Feet)**

Proposed Use: Mixed Use  
Number of Floors: 4 Floors  
Number of Sq. Ft. on Each Floor: See Plans  
Height: 58'-0" (Total)  
Total Floor Area: 7197 SF

Retail Space: 660 SF  
Assembly Space:  
Office Space: 1615 SF  
Industrial Space:  
Seating Capacity:

**10. Required and Proposed Parking**

Required number of parking spaces: 1.5  
Typical angle of parking spaces: 0  
Typical width of maneuvering lanes: N/A  
Location of parking on site: Rear @ Alley  
Location of parking off site: N/A  
Number of light standards in parking area: N/A  
Screenwall material: N/A

Proposed number of parking spaces: 2  
Typical size of parking spaces: 14.20  
Number of spaces <180 sq. ft.: N/A  
Number of handicap spaces: N/A  
Shared parking agreement? N/A  
Height of light standards in parking area: N/A  
Height of screenwall:

**11. Landscaping**

Location of landscape areas: N/A

Proposed landscape material: N/A

**12. Building Lighting**

Number of light standards on building: N/A  
Size of light fixtures (L•W•H):  
Maximum wattage per fixture:  
Light level at each property line:

Type of light standards on building: N/A  
Height from grade:  
Proposed wattage per fixture:

**13. Maximum Signage Allowance Calculation**

Building Frontage (in feet): 20 Feet  
Maximum Sign Area Allowed: 20 SF  
Sign Area Proposed: 20 SF Max

**Maximum Sign Area** = 1 square foot (1.5 for Woodward addresses) per each linear foot of principal building frontage.

**14. Location of Proposed Signs**

On existing sign band

**15. Number of Sign(s)**

Wall: \_\_\_\_\_ 1  
Ground: \_\_\_\_\_  
Projecting (Blade): \_\_\_\_\_

Canopy: \_\_\_\_\_  
Building Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Hawthorn Building  
Post-Mounted Projecting: \_\_\_\_\_ N/A

**16. Sign Size, Material & Content****Sign #1**

Type of Sign: \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown  
Width: \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Square Feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height of Lettering: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height from Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Projection from Wall: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Reads: " \_\_\_\_\_ "

Sign Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Color(s) (including PMS color #): \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign #2**

Type of Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Width: \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Square Feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height of Lettering: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height from Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Projection from Wall: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Reads: " \_\_\_\_\_ "

Sign Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Color(s) (including PMS color #): \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign #3**

Type of Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Width: \_\_\_\_\_  
Depth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Square Feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height of Lettering: \_\_\_\_\_  
Height from Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Projection from Wall: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign Reads: " \_\_\_\_\_ "

Sign Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Color(s) (including PMS color #): \_\_\_\_\_

**17. Existing Signs Located on Property**

Number of Signs: \_\_\_\_\_ N/A  
Sign Type(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Square Feet per Sign: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Square Feet of Existing Signage: \_\_\_\_\_

**18. Sign Lighting**

Type of Lighting Proposed: \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown  
Size of Light Fixtures (LxWxH): \_\_\_\_\_  
Maximum Wattage per Fixture: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number Proposed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lighting Height from Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Proposed Wattage per Fixture: \_\_\_\_\_  
Style (include specifications): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**19. Landscaping (ground signs only)**

Location of Landscape Areas: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Landscape Material: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The undersigned states the above information is true and correct, and understands that it is the responsibility of the applicant to advise the Planning Division and / or Building Division of any additional changes made to an approved site plan. The undersigned further states that they have reviewed the procedures and guidelines for site plan review in Birmingham, and have complied with same. The undersigned will be in attendance at the Planning Board meeting when this application will be discussed.

Signature of Owner:



Date: 8.18.20

Print Name: Faiz Simon

Signature of Applicant:



Date: 8.18.20

Print Name: Faiz Simon

Signature of Architect:



Date: 8.18.20

Print Name: Christopher J. Longe, AIA

Office Use Only

Application #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Fee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Denial: \_\_\_\_\_ Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_



### CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER

I, Faiz Simon, OF THE STATE OF Michigan AND  
(Name of property owner)

COUNTY OF Oakland STATE THE FOLLOWING:

1. That I am the owner of the real estate located at 361 East Maple;  
(Address of affected property)
2. That I have read and examined the Application made to the City of Birmingham  
by: Faiz Simon;  
(Name of applicant)
3. That I have no objections to, and consent to the request(s) described in the  
Application made to the City of Birmingham.

Dated: 8.18.20

Faiz Simon

Owner's Name (Please Print)

  
Owner's Signature

**AGENDA**  
**VIRTUAL BIRMINGHAM HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY – April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

\*\*\*\*\* 7:00 PM\*\*\*\*\*

**Link to Access Virtual Meeting:** <https://zoom.us/j/91282479817>

**Telephone Meeting Access:** 877 853 5247 US Toll-free

**Meeting ID Code:** 912 8247 9817

- 1) Roll Call
- 2) [Approval of the HDC Minutes of March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021](#)
- 3) Courtesy Review
- 4) Historic Design Review
  - A. [142 S. Old Woodward – The Shade Store](#)
  - B. [100 N. Old Woodward – Maplewood \(Parks\) Building](#)
- 5) Sign Review
- 6) Study Session
  - A. [Promoting Historic Preservation](#)
- 7) Miscellaneous Business and Communication
  - A. Pre-Application Discussions
  - B. Draft Agenda
    1. [April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021](#)
  - C. Staff Reports
    1. [Administrative Sign Approvals](#)
    2. [Administrative Approvals](#)
    3. [Demolitions](#)
    4. [Action List 2021](#)
- 8) Adjournment

*Notice:* Individuals requiring accommodations, such as interpreter services for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) at least on day in advance of the public meeting.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:2485301880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

**A PERSON DESIGNATED WITH THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS MUST BE PRESENT  
AT THE MEETING.**

DRAFT

**Historic District Commission Action List – 2021**

<b>Historic District Commission</b>	<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Status</b>
Schedule Training Sessions for HDC and Community	1 <sup>st</sup> (January-March)	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create RFP for Historic Design Guidelines	1 <sup>st</sup> (January-March)	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop and Market Historic Walking Tours	2 <sup>nd</sup> (April-June)	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop Resources for the Michigan Historic Preservation Tax Credit	3 <sup>rd</sup> (July-September)	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adopt Historic Preservation Marketing Plan	3 <sup>rd</sup> (July-September)	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic District Ordinance Enforcement	4 <sup>th</sup> (October-December)	6	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Updates:

1. Three trainings selected (**need to be scheduled**):
  - Historic District Commissioner Training
  - Building Assessment 101
  - Understanding Historic Designation
- 2.



March 8, 2021

Planning Board Members  
City of Birmingham  
151 Martin St.  
Birmingham, MI 48012

**1st Draft Master Plan Workshop, March 10, 2021 Planning Board Meeting**

Dear Planning Board Members,

We look forward to completing the review of the Master Plan First Draft and are eager to make the revisions discussed. Through the detailed review process of the Master Plan First Draft, the Planning Board provided clear direction on many topics, along with place-specific recommendations. Below is a summary of that direction focused on plan elements that should be modified. Additional direction was provided concerning plan elements that should be prioritized but not necessarily changed. Some of this direction is reflected in the Master Plan Themes that have been refined through this review process. Additional supportive direction has been focused on connecting across Woodward, recommendations within mixed-use districts, and the use of planning districts to evaluate whether residents are well served with necessities like sidewalks and public amenities like parks. Some place-specific recommendations fall within the broader topics and are not separately specified here.

Over the course of review, many topics were revisited and direction made more clear. For instance, the discussion of Seams evolved from their first appearance during our Premise and Theme-based meetings, to consideration of housing infill in the Triangle District, and finally to the clear recommendation provided in the meeting focused on that topic specifically, recounted below. While the list here is relatively short, each item includes additional background from the conversations over this past year.

In addition to the feedback provided by Planning Board members, the planning team has received approximately 320 individual public comments through the project website and via email. Public input was also collected during the 11 meetings, both of the Planning Board and City Commission. Additional feedback was collected in a survey following the First Draft release, with 310 responses and 142 comments in the

open-ended questions. Many of these comments are addressed by the direction of the Planning Board, and have helped influence this direction through public comment at meetings which has mirrored many written comments received. Some comments include place and topic-specific recommendations beyond what can be more broadly addressed, which will be considered for the Master Plan Second Draft as it is prepared.

Some public comment has clearly expressed concern that changes have not yet been made. We are just now completing the initial review to collect input. It has been quite lengthy, but that has also allowed greater detail in review. Once the initial review is complete, the Second Draft will be written, reflecting the input received. The planning team is just as eager to revise the First Draft as the public is in seeing their input shape the plan.

Following is a summary of mostly high-level direction provided by the Planning Board.

**General Direction**

1. The length of the Master Plan should be significantly reduced.
2. The Master Plan should provide clear prioritization of recommendations, including the Themes created during the review process.
3. Language should be as plain as possible, where technical language is required, it should be clearly defined.
4. Infrastructure should be addressed. (the details of this request require discussion)
5. Increase the focus on sustainability.
6. Acknowledge Covid-19. (occurred after the Master Plan First Draft)
7. Schools should be more prominently featured in the plan.
8. Further address connections to surrounding communities.
9. Recommendations for new historic districts should be included.

10. Ensure all considerations for walkability address older adults and people of varying abilities.
11. Growth should be focused in Downtown, the Triangle District, and a small amount in the Rail District.
12. More outdoor gathering spaces are needed in light of Covid-19, including covered outdoor spaces in parks.
13. Increase the focus on connecting across Big Woodward and pedestrian safety.
14. Big Woodward north of Maple should be further investigated for traffic calming.
15. Retain the reduction of parking regulation complexity, but recommend that it be further studied by committee rather than proposing the solution.
16. More broadly address the Rouge natural area, including bank restoration, removal of invasive species, improving the natural condition, and trail modifications to increase accessibility without detracting from the natural environment.

#### **Direction Related to Mixed-use Districts**

1. Generally
  1. Consider more shared streets and pedestrian-only areas, including Worth Park as a potential piazza.
  2. Consider dining decks in light of Covid-19.
2. Downtown
  1. Bates Street should be included in recommendations.
  2. Revisit the pilot parking program for downtown housing in light of Covid-19 changing business demand and potential future office space demand.
  3. Retail district standards (redline) should be lightened on side streets.
3. Haynes Square / Triangle District
  1. Adams Square should be included in recommendations.

2. Consider live-work buildings.
  3. Add a pedestrian or vehicular connection from Worth to Bowers.
  4. Address how the abandoned portion of Old Woodward south of Haynes should be sold with concern for the existing property owners with frontage on Old Woodward. Also address the City's ability to vacate property by ordinance.
  5. Focus Missing Middle housing principally in Haynes Square and Adams Square.
  6. Look more closely at the Haynes / Adams traffic situation with respect to the proposed modifications.
4. South Woodward Gateway
1. Study the housing proposals along the South Woodward alleys more closely and consider other effective means to buffer noise.

#### **Direction Related to Neighborhoods**

1. Revise to define sub-areas of the City as "planning districts" and remove all recommendations related to neighborhood associations.
2. Seams should be significantly reduced in location, intensity, and building types allowed, and be thoughtfully located in the limited areas where they may be appropriate.
3. Accessory Dwelling Units need to be revisited and should be severely limited should they be permitted anywhere.
4. Neighborhood commercial destination locations should be reduced and thoughtfully considered, including more clarity on the uses that should be permitted.
5. Torry requires more amenities.
6. Include stronger reference to the Unimproved Streets Committee recommendations. (completed after the Master Plan First Draft)
7. Completing sidewalks requires more focus and prioritization, could be handled similarly to the committee on Unimproved Streets.

8. Provide more detail on green infrastructure opportunities.
9. Clarify the neighborhood loop, bicycle boulevards, and protected bike paths by including street sections and greater detail addressing different user types.
10. Clarify the Kenning Park path recommendations concerning both pedestrians and cyclists.
11. Increase aggressiveness of tree preservation and replacement recommendations.
12. Provide more detail on incentives for renovation of homes over new construction and provide greater ability to add 1st floor master bedrooms.
13. Review lot coverage standards and consider adjustments by lot size.
14. Provide more detail on design controls that may be considered.
15. Remove lot combination areas but review the existing ordinance to provide better direction.

We look forward to a discussion of this direction and to revising the Draft Master Plan; thank you.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Lambert', with a stylized, flowing script.

Matthew Lambert

Cc: Jana Ecker, Planning Director; Bob Gibbs, Gibbs Planning Group; Sarah Traxler, McKenna