



**HEIERMAN - HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION REVIEW**

02 November 2022



## The Heierman Building

115 E. 5th Street  
Austin, TX 78701  
Travis County

### Project Type:

Renovation, Selective Demolition of Non-Historic Elements,  
New Construction, and Addition to Existing Structure.

The Heierman Building is a three-story historic landmark building located in downtown Austin, Texas. The project scope consists of an exterior renovation to both the front and rear facades, an interior finish-out to the existing three floors, and new construction of an additional story structure with interior finish-out.

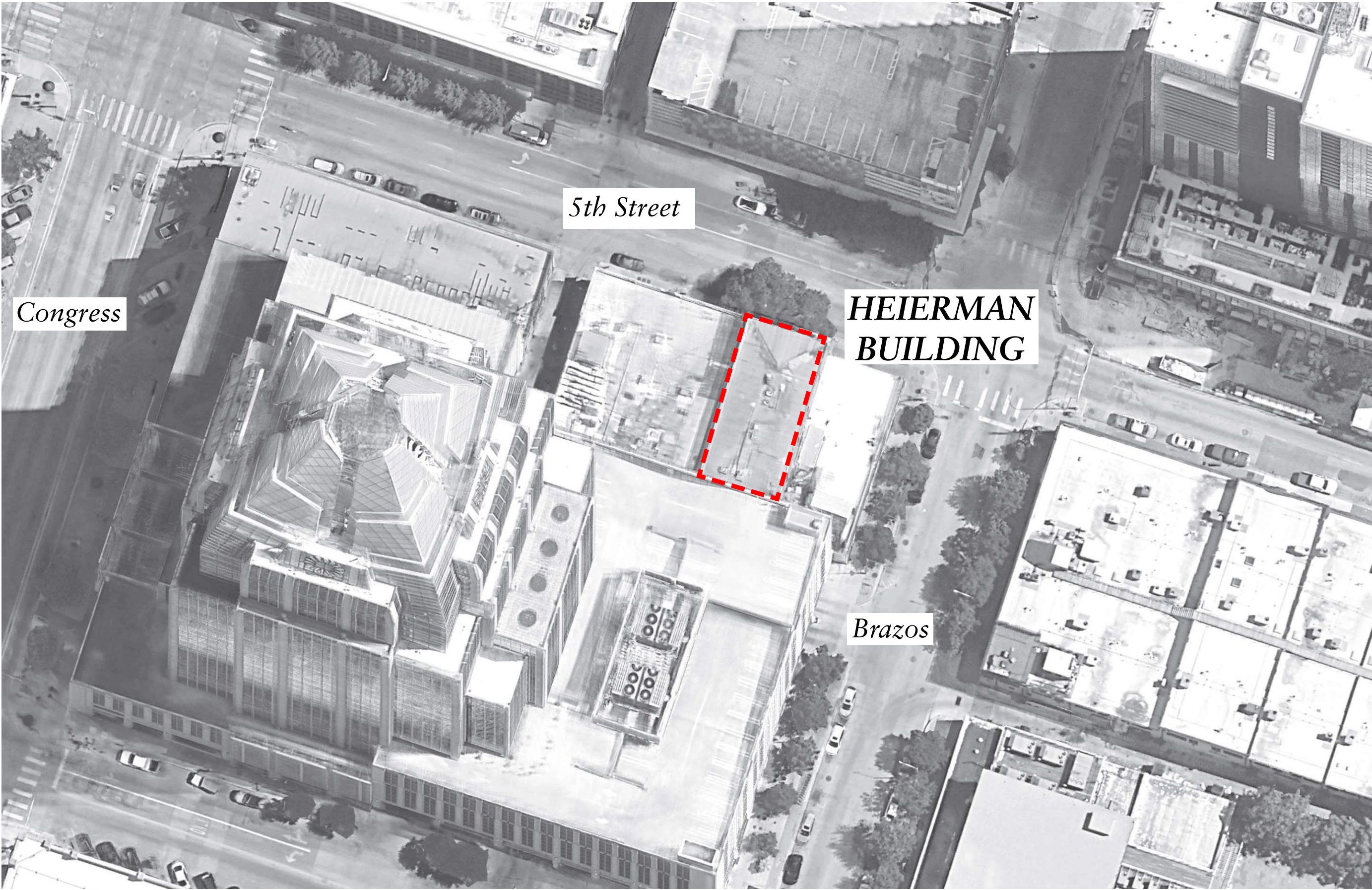
The first floor is to serve as an event space with access to an exterior rear courtyard, a second floor commercial office with a rear exterior balcony, a third floor residential apartment, and a fourth floor residential addition.

### Project Contact:

Michael Hsu Office of Architecture  
826 Houston Street, Suite 100  
Austin, Texas 78756  
512.706.4303









## c. 1890

This photo is the only surviving documentation of the original design. In the ARC meeting on August 8th, it was suggested that any changes to the facade would need to reference this original design.

Aside from the structural complications and ROW agreement that would be required to return the upper floor double balcony over the property line, there is not enough documentation of this design to pursue this option in a meaningful way.

- Original 1887 Victorian style design.
- Six-bay arched colonnade at the street level.
- Exterior double wood gallery on the upper levels.





**c. 1925**

Aside from changes in color and signage, the facade stayed fairly similar to this until the 1970's.

**Modifications to the 1887 design:**

- Double wood gallery and six-bay arched openings removed.
- Most upper level door openings converted to windows.
- 1920's era storefront added at the ground level with two recessed entries.
- Plaster finish added over masonry at upper levels.
- Metal fire escape added.





**C. 1972**

Same design as the 1925 photo, with changes in paint color, mechanical equipment additions, and signage removal.





### c. 1975

Renovated design representing the state of the Heierman Building when it was recorded as a Texas Historic Landmark in 1974.

#### Modifications to the 1920's design:

- In 1973, the building was sandblasted inside and out.
- The ground floor 1920's style storefront was replaced with one that mimicked New Orleans style facades.
- All windows on the primary facade were replaced with single pane tinted glass, fixed in wood mullions (previously double-hung).

This is very close the current building design with a few notable exceptions: there is now a door to the egress stair, added sidelites at the entry door, and the entire entry is currently not recessed as shown.





## c. Mid 1980's

Ground floor alteration closely represents the current state of the building, other than paint color changes that occurred around 2007.

### Modifications to the 1974 design:

- Entry no longer recessed.
- Sidelites added adjacent to entry door.
- Egress door added.
- Brickwork framing added to entry door and egress door to surrounds to mimic existing window brickwork treatment.





Frost Tower Garage Visible Beyond

### C. 2022

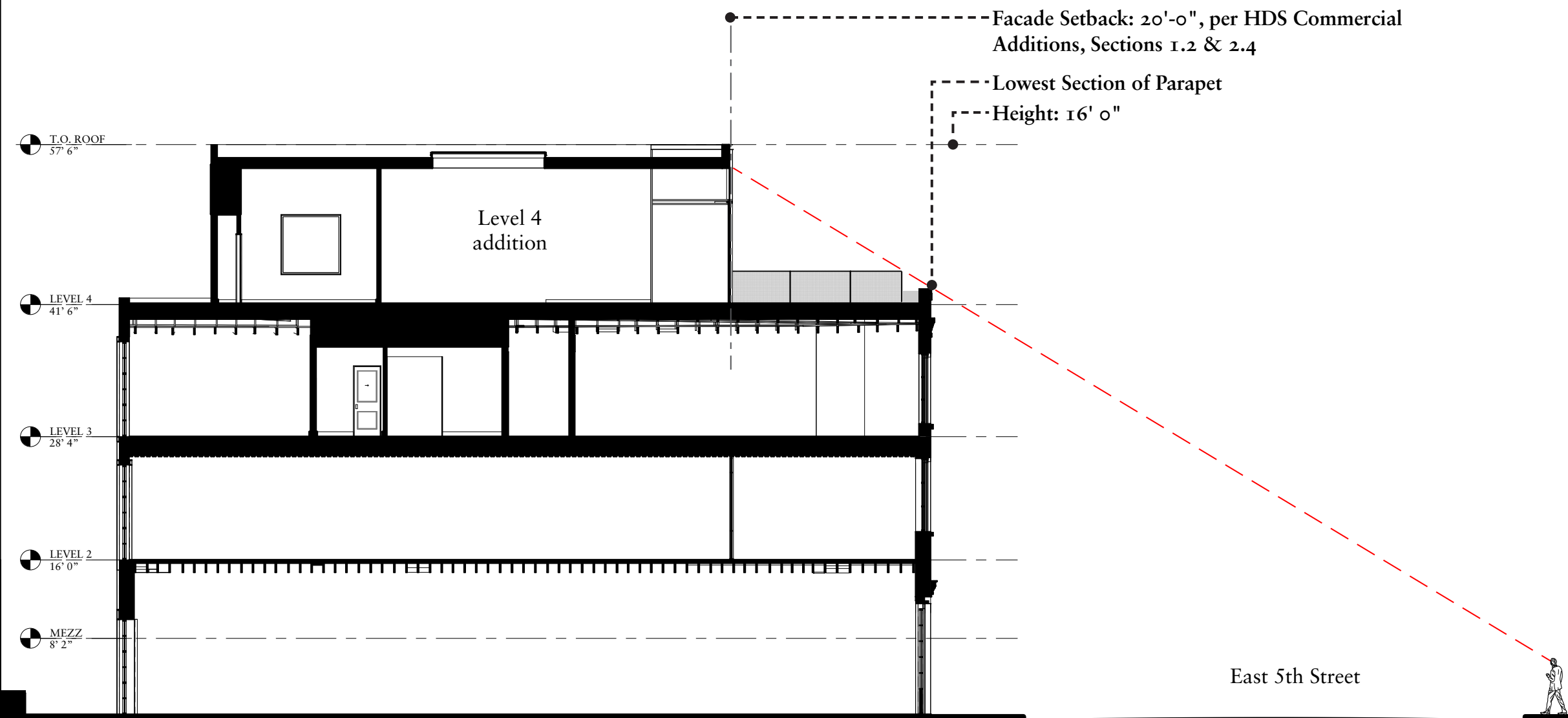
Based on the surviving documentation and historical data available, as well as accounting the existing physical conditions of the building; we are proposing the following:

- Use the 1973-1975 alteration as the reference for the proposed design alterations. This was the period in which the building was recorded as a Texas Historic Landmark.
- Throughout our research efforts, and correspondence with the THC from 1984 seems to confirm, it appears that the only portion of the building remaining that is definitely original is the brick envelope that has been sandblasted inside and out on at least 2 occasions.
- The level 1 facade has been altered at least 4 times to date, two of which were significant design changes. We feel that the alterations we are proposing to this portion of the facade respect the existing design and reference the design at the time the building was made a Landmark.
- Follow the guidelines outlined by Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Comply with the City of Austin Historic Design Standards, while following all applicable building codes and amendments.



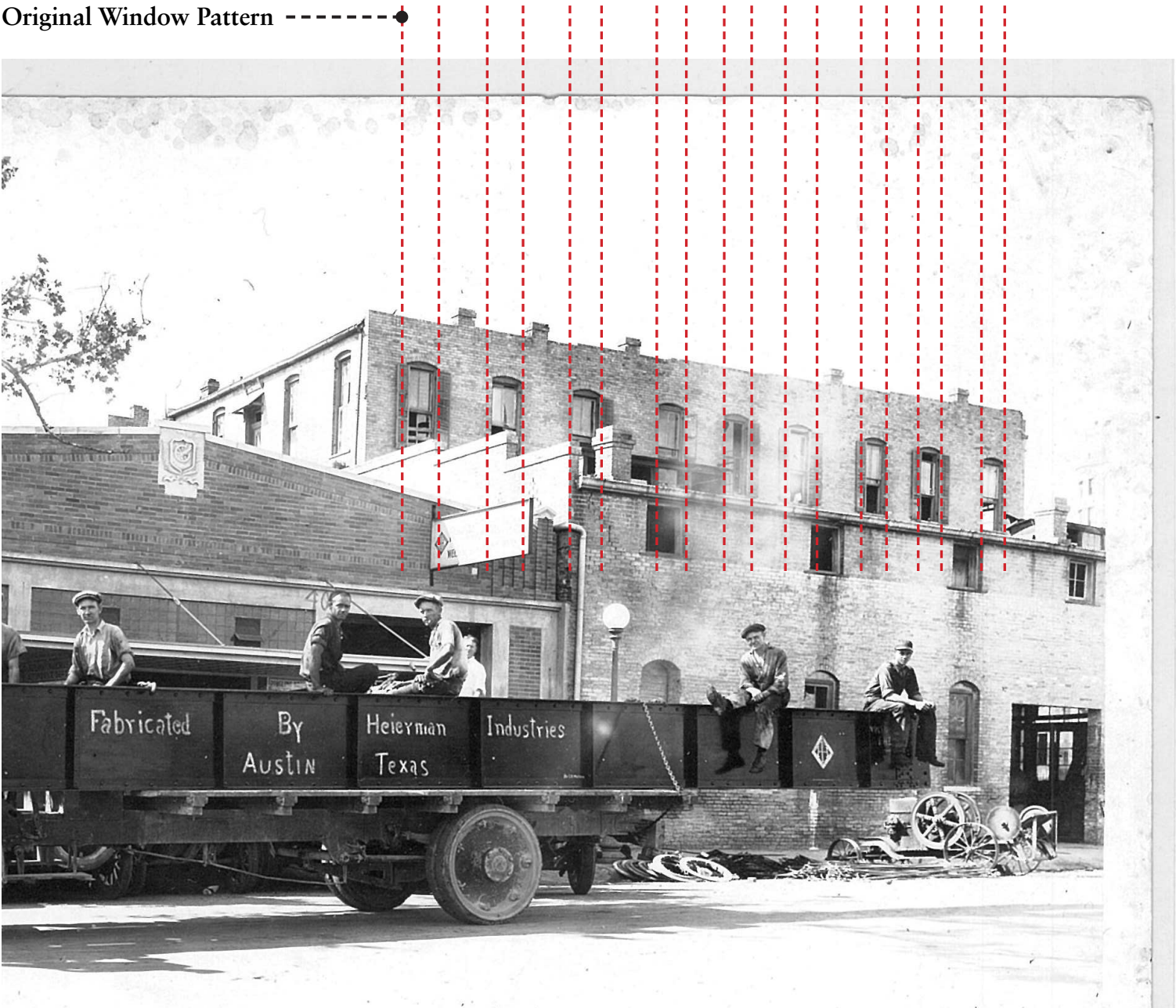


Section Diagram showing limited visibility of the rooftop addition from accross the street. Reference image fig. 24 from National Park Service - Preservation Brief 14 - Rooftop Additions.



Section through 5th Street



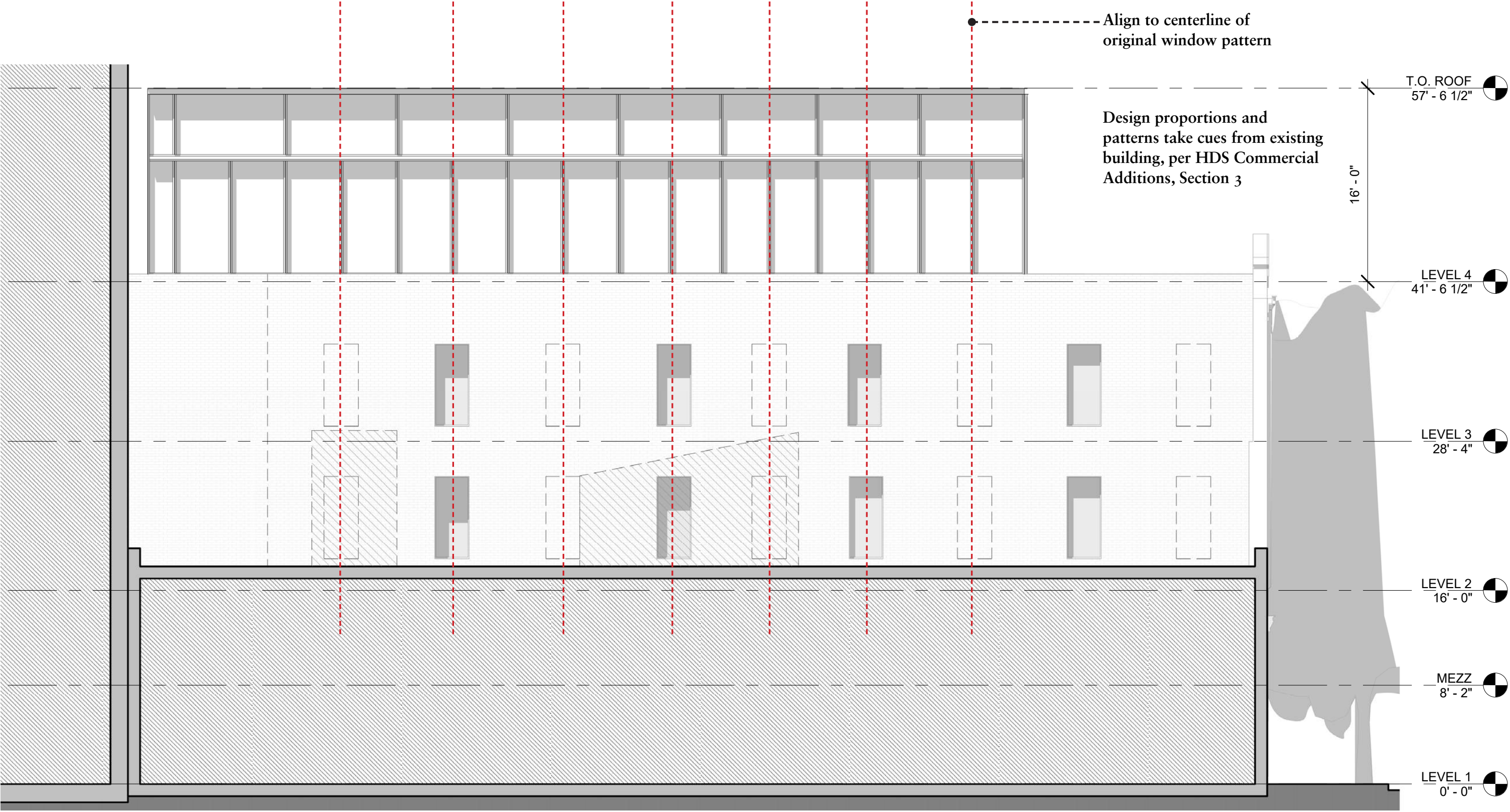


c. 1922



c. 1975







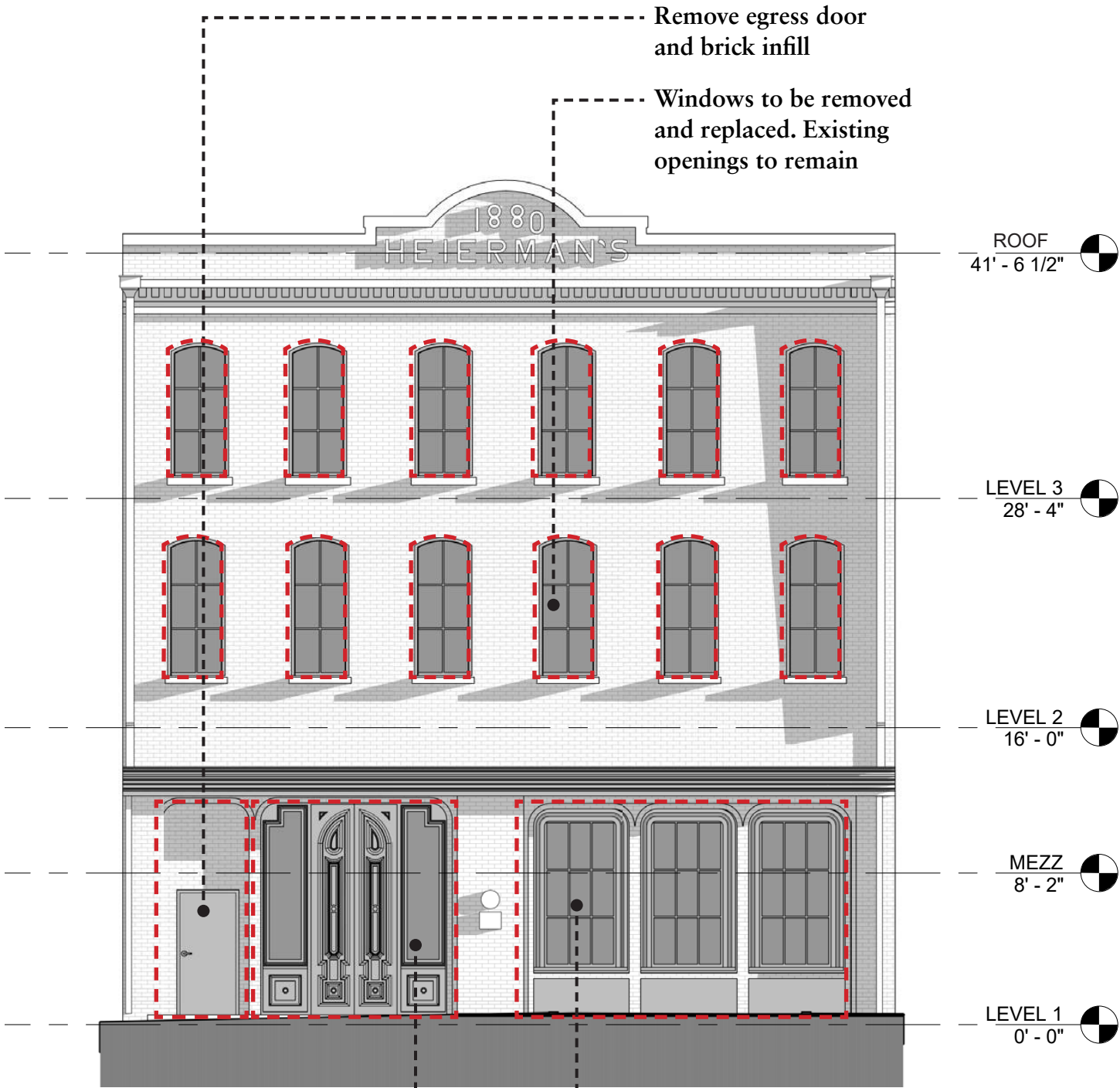








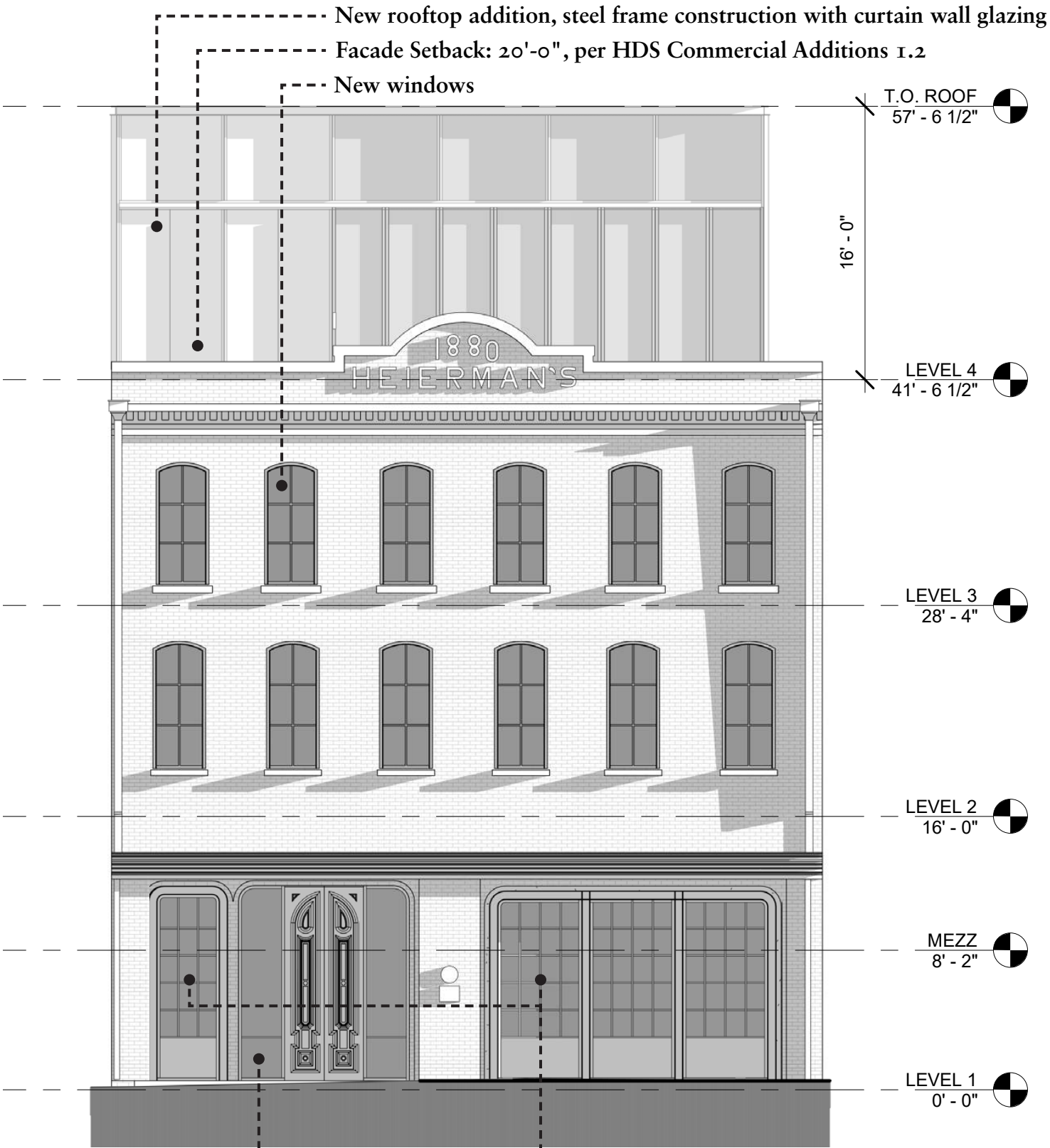
Area of Alteration



Existing Conditions

Remove existing storefront assembly

Remove sidelites and salvage entry door

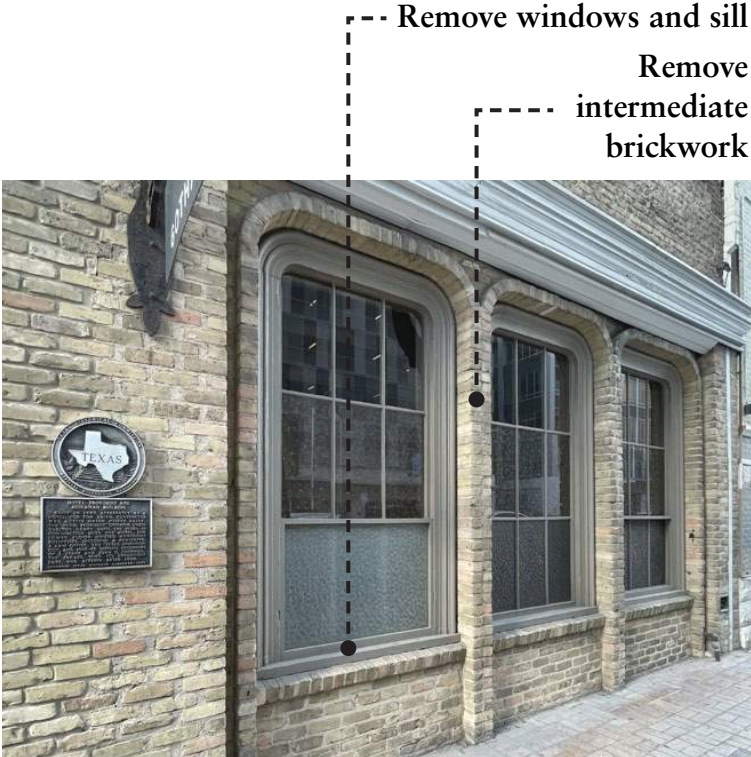


Proposed Design

Custom steel storefront. New glass to be insulated and as clear as possible

New recessed entry with salvaged door





Remove windows and sill  
Remove intermediate brickwork

Custom steel storefront. New glass to be insulated and as clear as possible

Referencing the 1974 era design in tone and style, and are proposing a change in material to steel.

Preserve entry door  
Remove sidelites  
Remove egress door and brick infill

New recessed entry with salvaged door  
Blackened plate steel frame  
Custom steel storefront. New glass to be insulated and as clear as possible



Punched Openings from Level 1



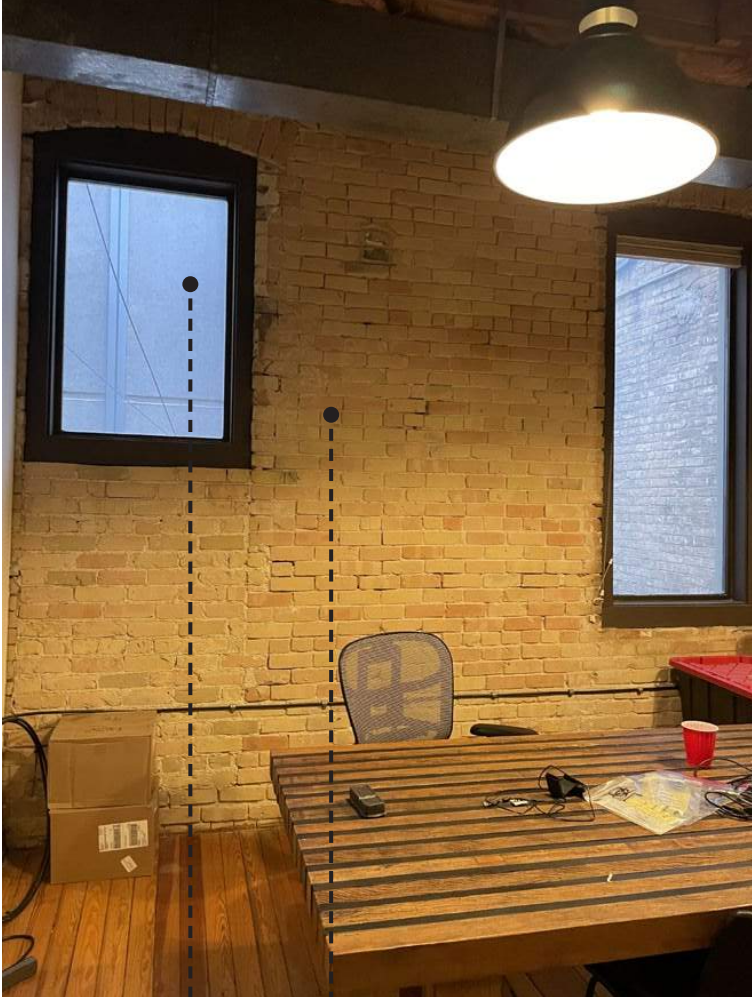
- Remove windows
- Partial demolition of wall
- Rework slab and paving

Exit Access through Courtyard



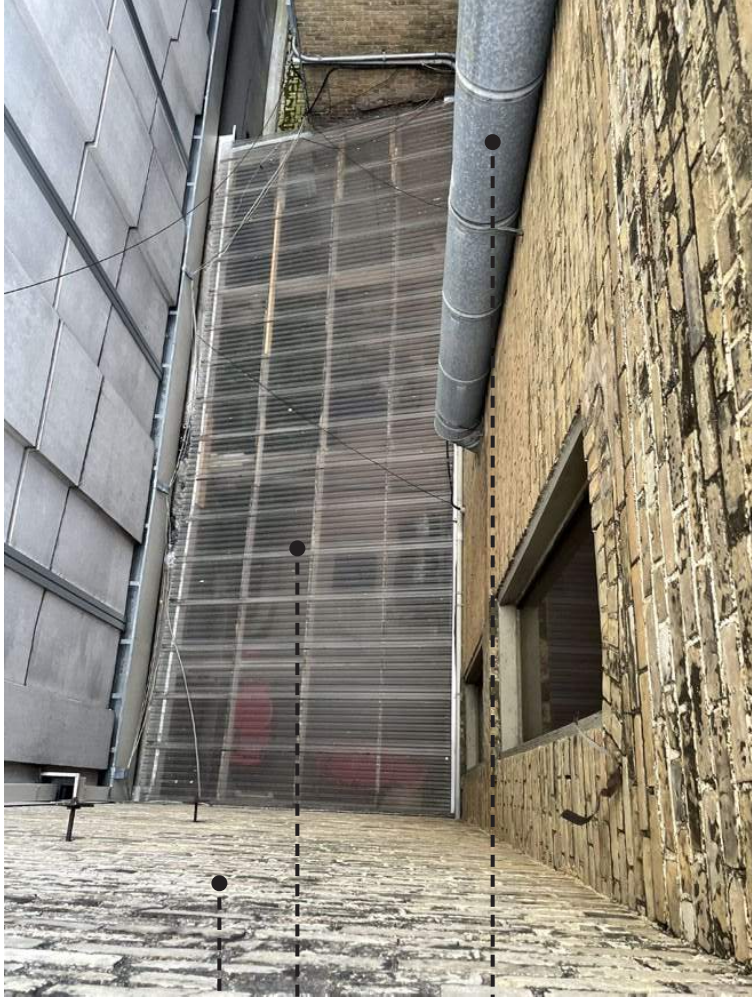
- Demolish half-walls
- Partial demolition of wall
- Remove overhead roof and structure

Punched Openings from Level 2 Interior



- Partial demolition of wall
- Remove windows

Covered Courtyard from Roof

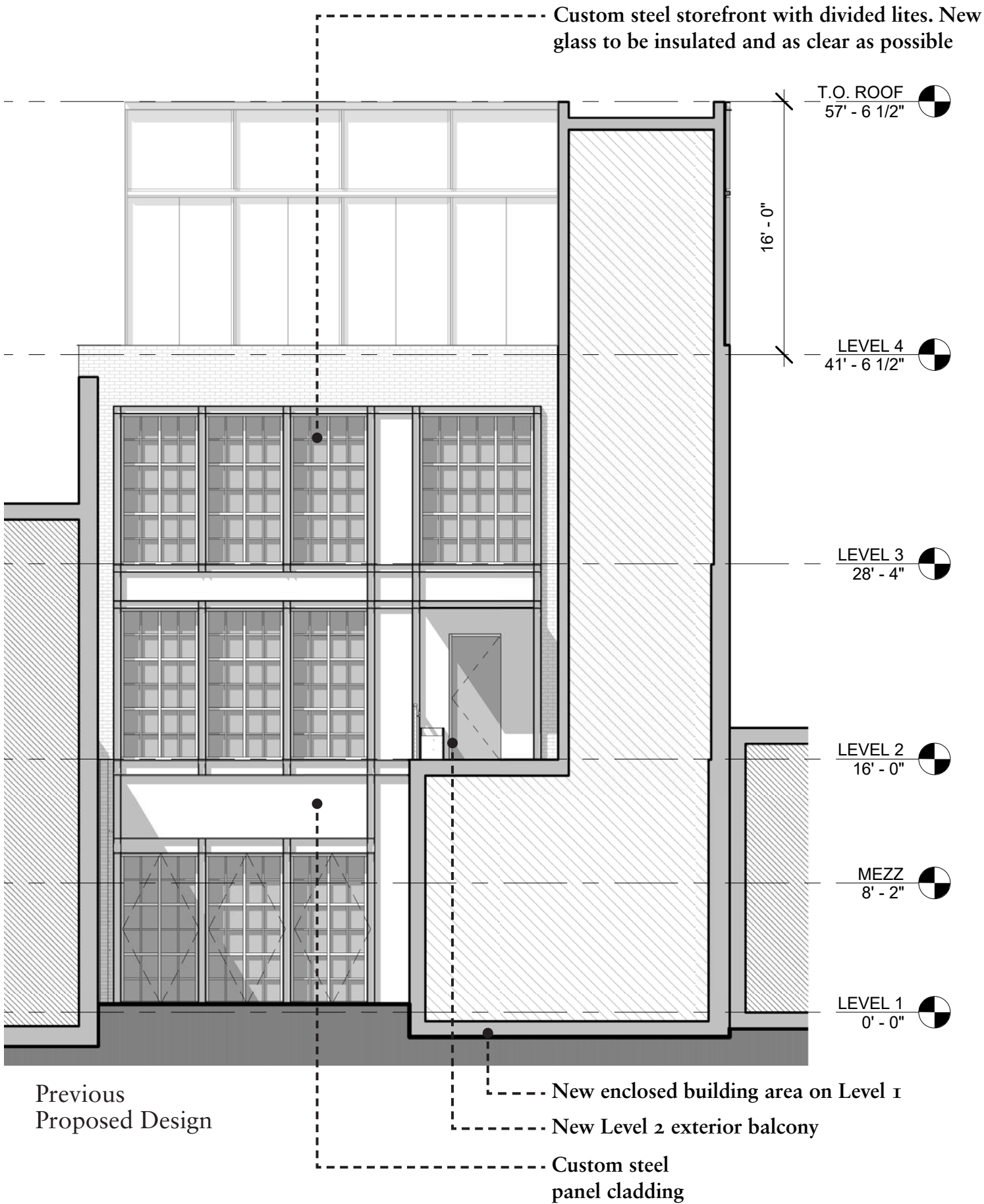
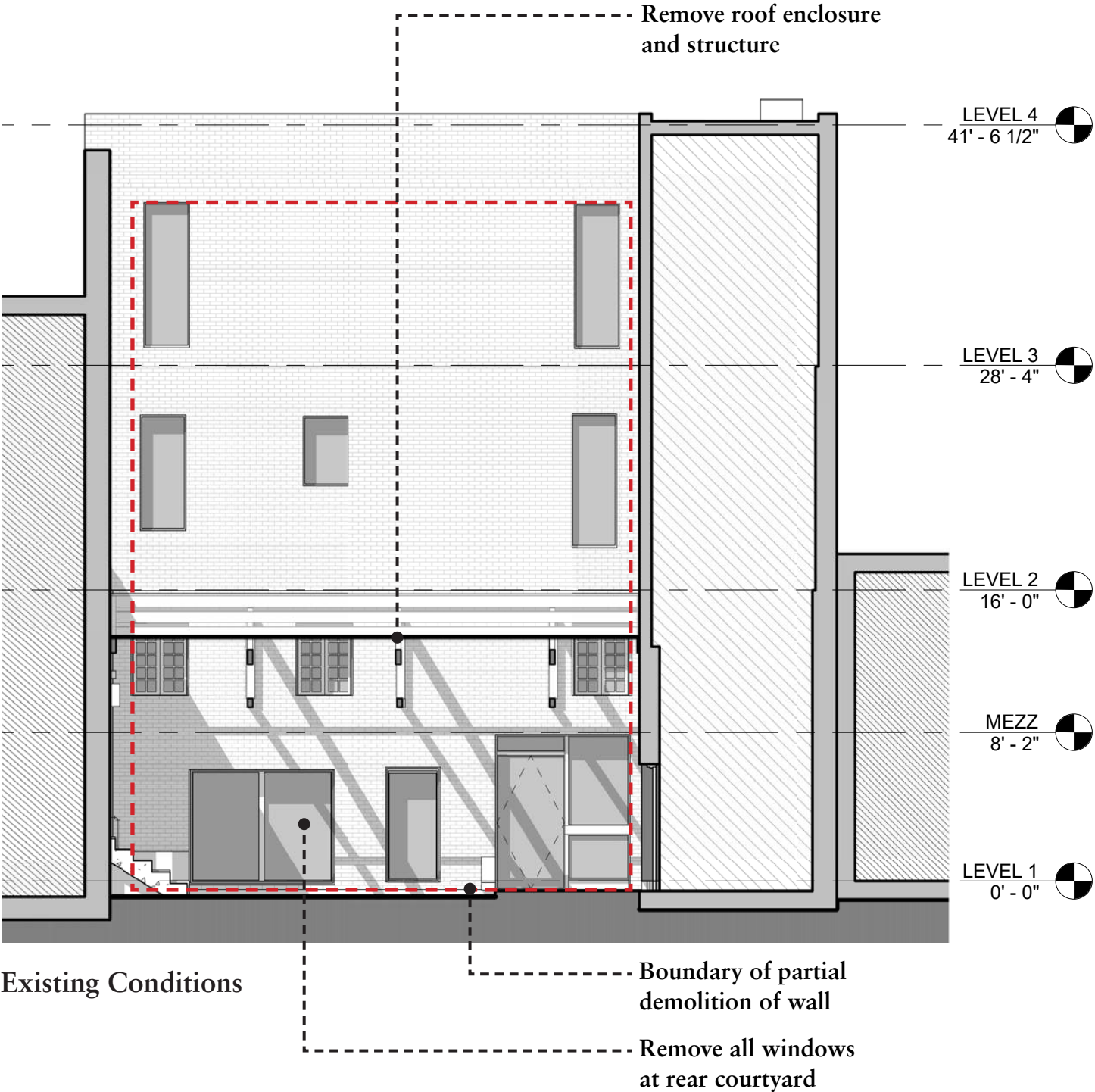


- Remove HVAC
- Remove roof and structure
- Clean and repair brick as needed



Note: Rear facade is not visible from any public area.

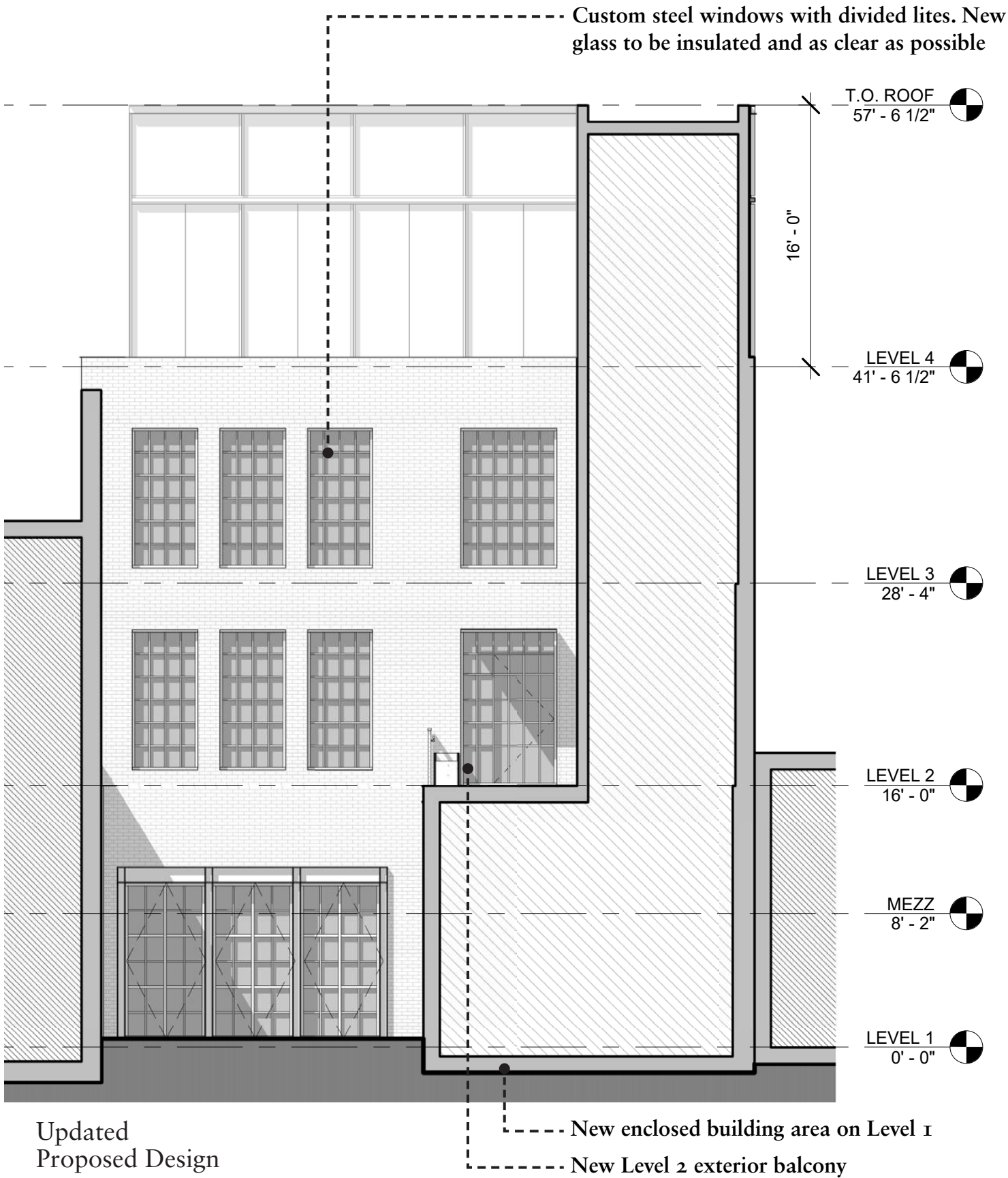
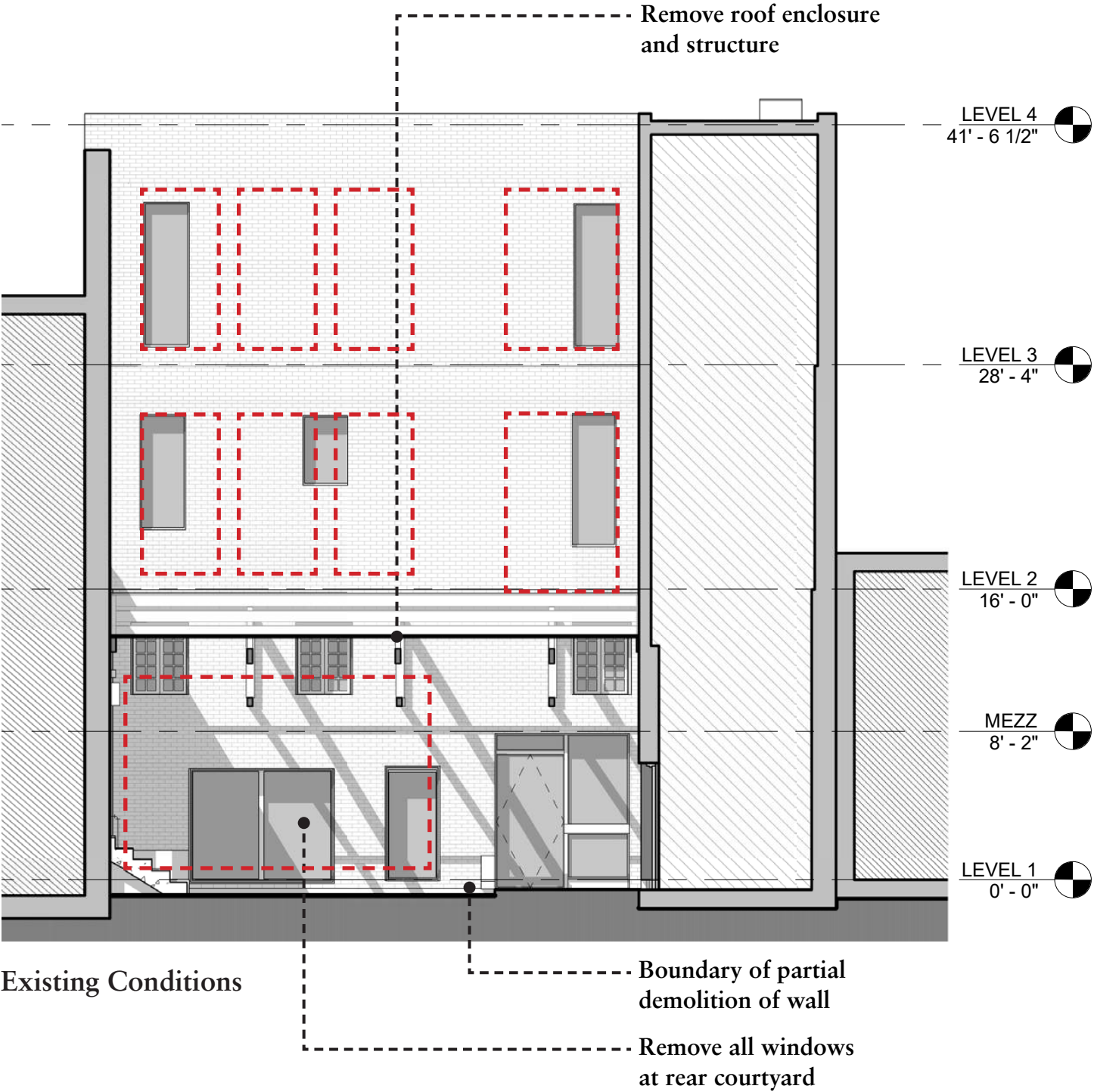
Area of Alteration





Note: Rear facade is not visible from any public area.

Area of Alteration







P.O. Box 12276  
Austin, Texas 78711-2276  
512-463-6100  
thc.texas.gov

October 3, 2022

Jeff Berryman  
Michael Hsu Office of Architecture  
826 Houston Street, Ste 100  
Austin, Texas 78756  
*Via email to berryman@hsuoffice.com*

Re: Recorded Texas Historic Landmark project review, Heierman Building, 115 E. 5th Street, Austin, Travis County, Texas (RTHL 14733)

Dear Mr. Jeff Berryman:

Thank you for sending information regarding proposed work on the Heierman Building, which has been designated, with the adjacent Hotel Provident, as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) since 1974. This letter represents the comments of the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

The THC Division of Architecture staff, led by Alex Toprac, has completed its review of the proposed exterior work to the property, including the Heierman – Historic Landmark Commission Review design document by Michael Hsu Office of Architecture, dated September 07, 2022. Our staff acknowledges the scope will notably include replacement of the existing roof and associated mechanical equipment and appurtenances to accommodate the construction of a 16’ tall, custom steel panel and curtain glass clad, modern rooftop addition to be set back twenty feet from the north, primary elevation parapet; removal of the egress door, primary double door entrance and associated sidelights, and existing three storefront windows on the previously altered first floor of the north, primary façade to be replaced with a single 3x5 light fixed multi-paned window in place of the egress door, a new recessed entry referencing the 1974 entry appearance reusing the salvaged existing double doors and installing slightly larger sidelights to fill in the associated remaining brick veneer masonry opening, and three new multi-paned, fixed storefront windows; as well as selective demolition of the existing fenestration and a large portion of the brick masonry on the rear, south elevation in order to accommodate the installation of a custom steel framed and paneled facade with large steel multi-paned storefront windows and a new enclosed building area on the first floor extending west from the existing egress stairwell addition that will also be extended a floor in height to be incorporated into the proposed rooftop addition.

Regarding the proposed rooftop addition, our staff appreciates the architect providing the sight line diagram and accordingly setting the associated new construction twenty feet back from the primary façade’s parapet to reduce visibility of the new addition from the principal perspective across 5<sup>th</sup> Street. Yet, our staff recommends the new addition being lowered in height to be more commensurate to the approximately 12’-13’ heights of the historic second and third stories of the building. Furthermore, our staff recommends and expects the proposed steel paneling of the new addition to be painted a lighter color to blend in more with the existing buff colored historic brick of the Heierman Building and the light grey concrete color of the parking garage directly behind the building to the south.

Our review staff acknowledges the architectural team’s commendable effort to reference historic photo-documentation of the Heierman Building as a means of providing rationale for their chosen design approach. Yet, our staff always recommends preservation of as much existing repairable material as possible and otherwise to replace deteriorated existing material in-kind wherever necessary, or alternatively restore the building back to its appearance at a certain period of significance to ideally meet either the *Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* or *Restoration*, respectively.

Furthermore, although the 1974 appearance of the building was referenced as a rationale for the proposed inset reconfiguration of the primary façade, the architectural condition of that portion of building had already been significantly altered and would not be considered historically significant, despite the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark designation having been awarded at that time. Similarly, the planned alterations to the rear, south elevation are not a recommended approach due to the extensive removal of original historic brick masonry and original fenestration openings that is proposed. Yet, due to the severity of inappropriate changes to the building over time, along with the most extensive alterations proposed being on the rear elevation and therefore not visible to the public, our staff will not be making a recommendation to pursue removal of the RTHL designation in the case that the current design plans are carried out. Our staff does recommend salvaging and storing (for potential future reuse), as much of the historic material planned for removal as possible.

Although the THC Division of Architecture staff finds the proposed scope of work does not meet the *Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*, it has been decided that no additional waiting period will be imposed for the project and work may proceed at this time. Should the nature or scope of the RTHL project change, or if unforeseen events or findings are encountered, please contact the THC as soon as possible.

Additionally, as the applicant noted interest in potentially applying for historic preservation tax credits, our staff would like to clarify that the receipt of this letter only represents the fulfillment of the required RTHL review and consultation process and does not constitute review and approval for the Texas Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program (THPTCP). Furthermore, in preliminarily reviewing the submitted design documentation with the THPTCP staff, it was concluded that the project as proposed would not be eligible for the associated financial incentive. If the owner is still interested in pursuing historic preservation tax credits, our staff strongly encourages them to contact and work with the THPTCP staff as soon as possible to ensure necessary design revisions are made to meet the associated program requirements.

Thank you for your interest in the cultural heritage of Texas, and for the opportunity to comment on this proposed project in accordance with Recorded Texas Historic Landmark legislation. We look forward to further consultation with your office and hope to maintain a partnership that will foster effective historic preservation. **If you have any questions concerning our review or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Alex Toprac at 512/463-6183.**

Sincerely,

Alex Toprac, North Texas Project Reviewer  
for: Mark Wolfe, Executive Director

MW/at

Cc: 115 Provident Holdings, LLC. *(via email)*  
Bob Ward, Travis County Historical Commission Chairman *(via email)*



# CoA Historic Design Standards

## Repair and Alterations

(1.4) Do not attempt to re-create an architectural detail or element without proof that it existed on the building historically. Documentation can be physical (traces on the building) written (such as building plans), or photographic.

- (1.5) When demolishing additions or features that were built after the building’s period of significance, minimize damage to the building.
- Stabilize and repair building walls that are exposed when non-historic additions or features are removed.
  - Avoid demolition that removes historic structural systems or compromises the structural integrity of a historic building.

(5.8) If a historic window or door is missing, replace it with a new unit based on the documentation of the historic feature. If no documentation exists, use a new design compatible with the historic opening and the historic character of the building.

(5.14) New door or window openings must be limited, appropriate for the building, and compatible with the architectural character.

(5.15) Do not replace historic windows; repair them except in cases of extreme damage or deterioration. Replace in-kind if necessary.

(11.3) When working on a storefront that has been substantially altered or removed, use a design and materials that are compatible with the scale and style of the building.

## Commercial Additions

(1.1) Locate additions at the rear and sides of historic buildings to minimize visual impact.

(2.4) Additions are subject to a 20’-0” setback. They may be cantilevered 5’ towards the front wall, but may not extend closer than 15’ behind the front wall. The cantilevered portion must begin above the historic building’s roof.

(2.5) Match floor-to-floor heights as closely as possible with an adjacent historic building, if extant.

(3.3) Do not replicate the design or details of the existing building to a degree that the addition might be mistaken for the historic.

(3.4) No particular architectural style is required for the additional design. Designs in both traditional and contemporary styles can successfully achieve compatibility and differentiation with historic buildings.

(5.1) If an addition will be visible from the pedestrian level, including from the opposite side of the primary street, use exterior wall, window, and door materials that are compatible with those on the historic building in scale, proportion, material, finish, and texture.



# Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

## Building Features and Systems

### Windows

- Replacing incompatible, non-historic windows with new windows that are compatible with the historic character of the building; or reinstating windows in openings that have been filled in.

### Entrances and Porches

- Designing and installing a new entrance or porch when the historic feature is completely missing or has previously been replaced by one that is incompatible. It may be an accurate restoration based on documentary and physical evidence, but only when the historic entrance or porch to be replaced coexisted with the features currently on the building. Or, it may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.

### Storefronts

- Retaining later, non-original features that have acquired significance over time.
- Designing and installing a new storefront when the historic storefront is completely missing or has previously been replaced by one that is incompatible. It may be an accurate restoration based on documentary and physical evidence, but only when the historic storefront to be replaced coexisted with the features currently on the building. Or, it may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.

## New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction

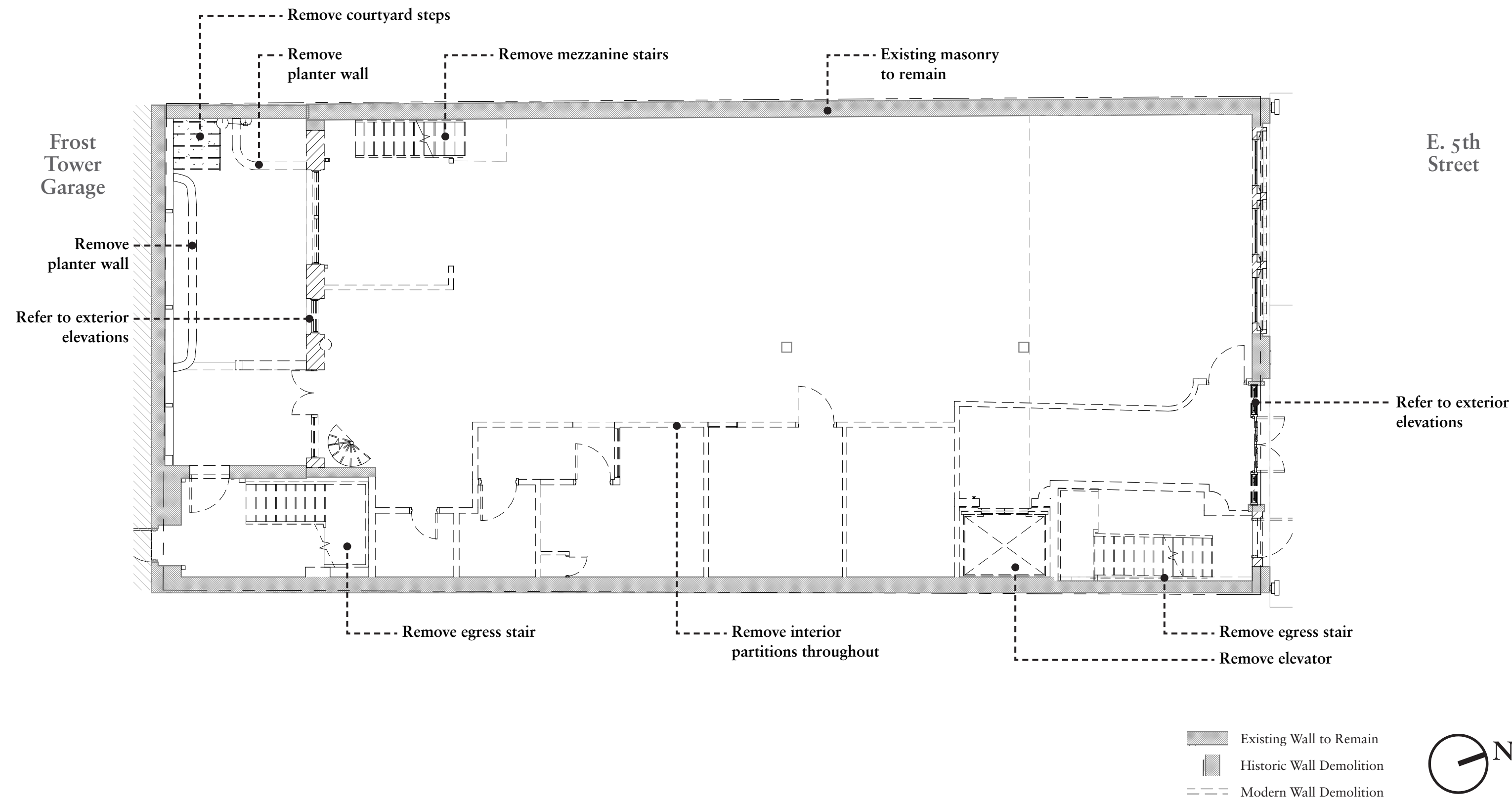
### New Additions

- Constructing a new addition that results in the least possible loss of historic materials so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

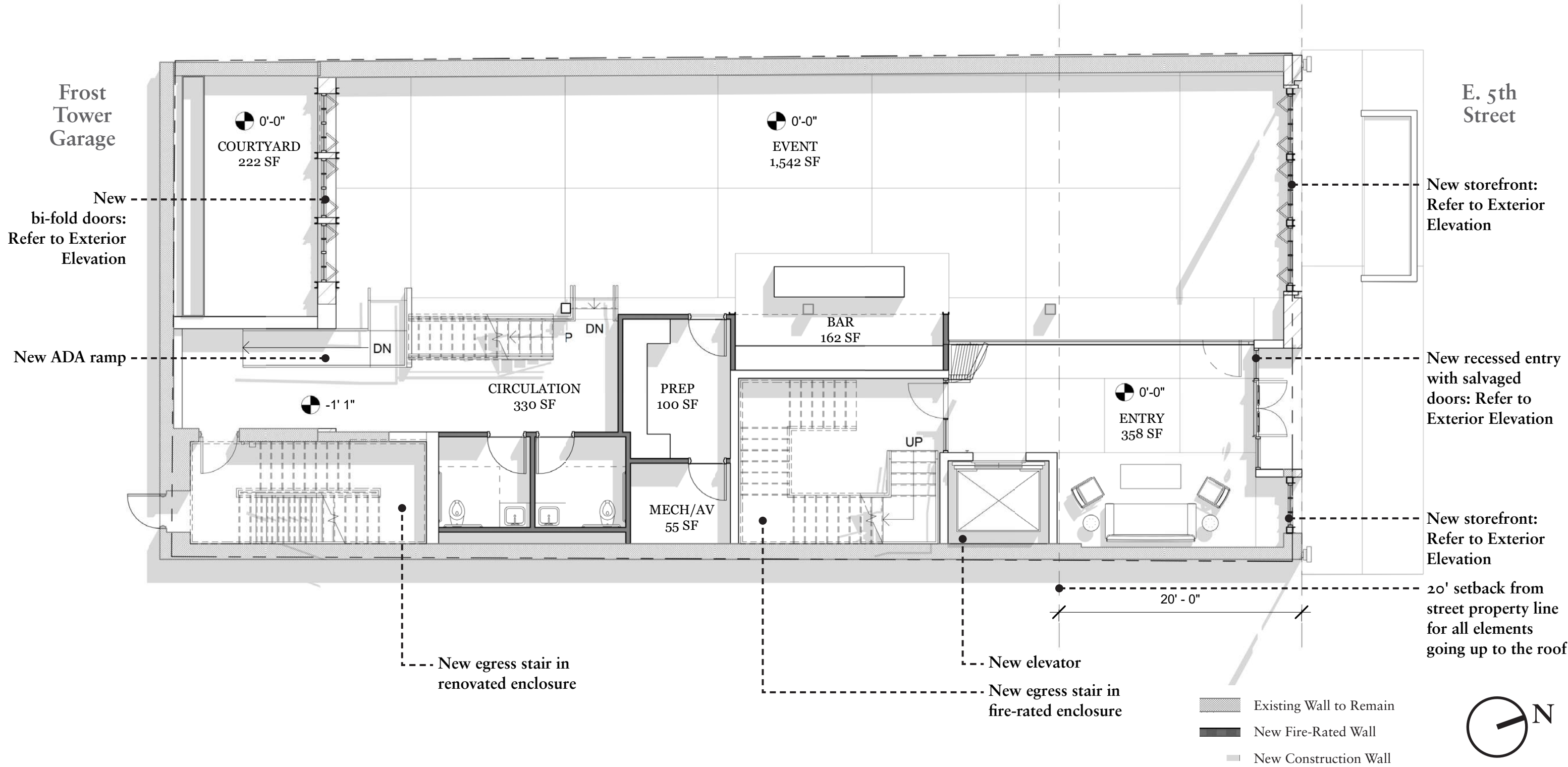
### Rooftop Additions

- Designing a compatible rooftop addition for a multi-story building, when required for a new use, that is set back at least one full bay from the primary and other highly-visible elevations and that is inconspicuous when viewed from surrounding streets.
- Limiting a rooftop addition to one story in height to minimize its visibility and its impact on the historic character of the building

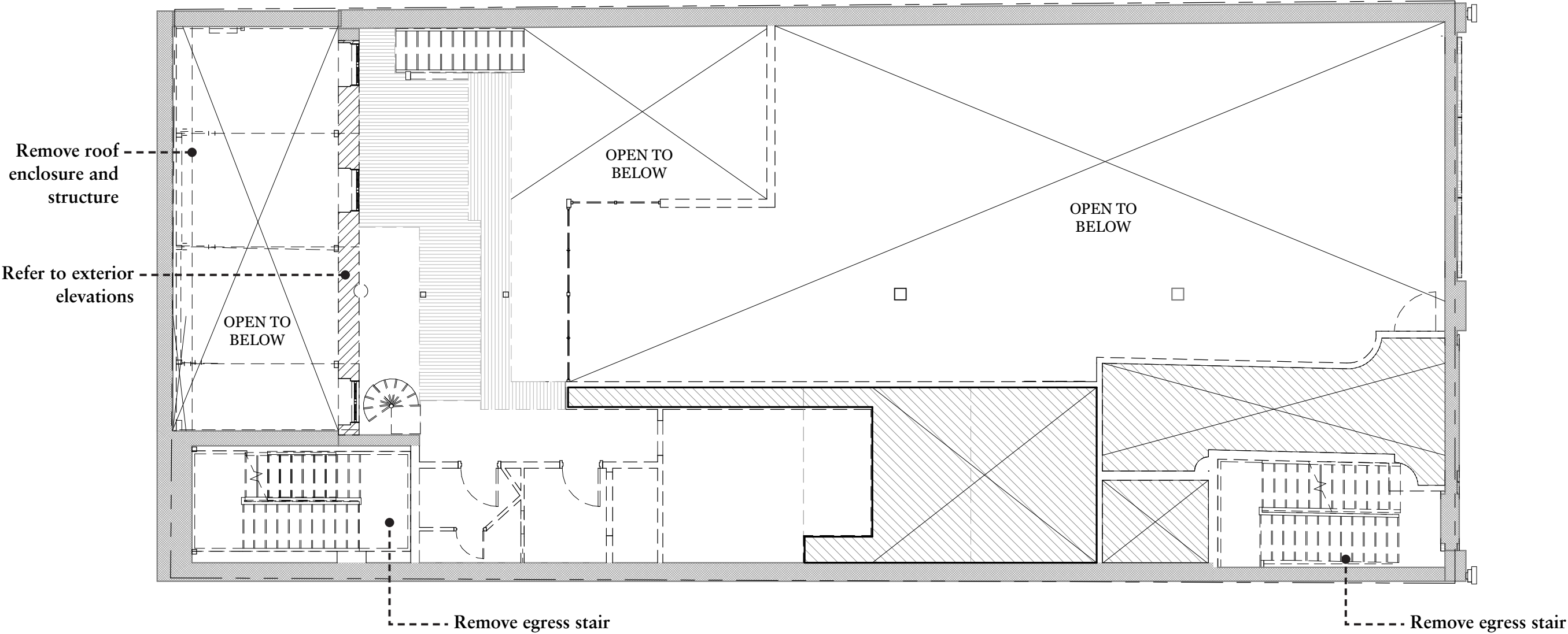




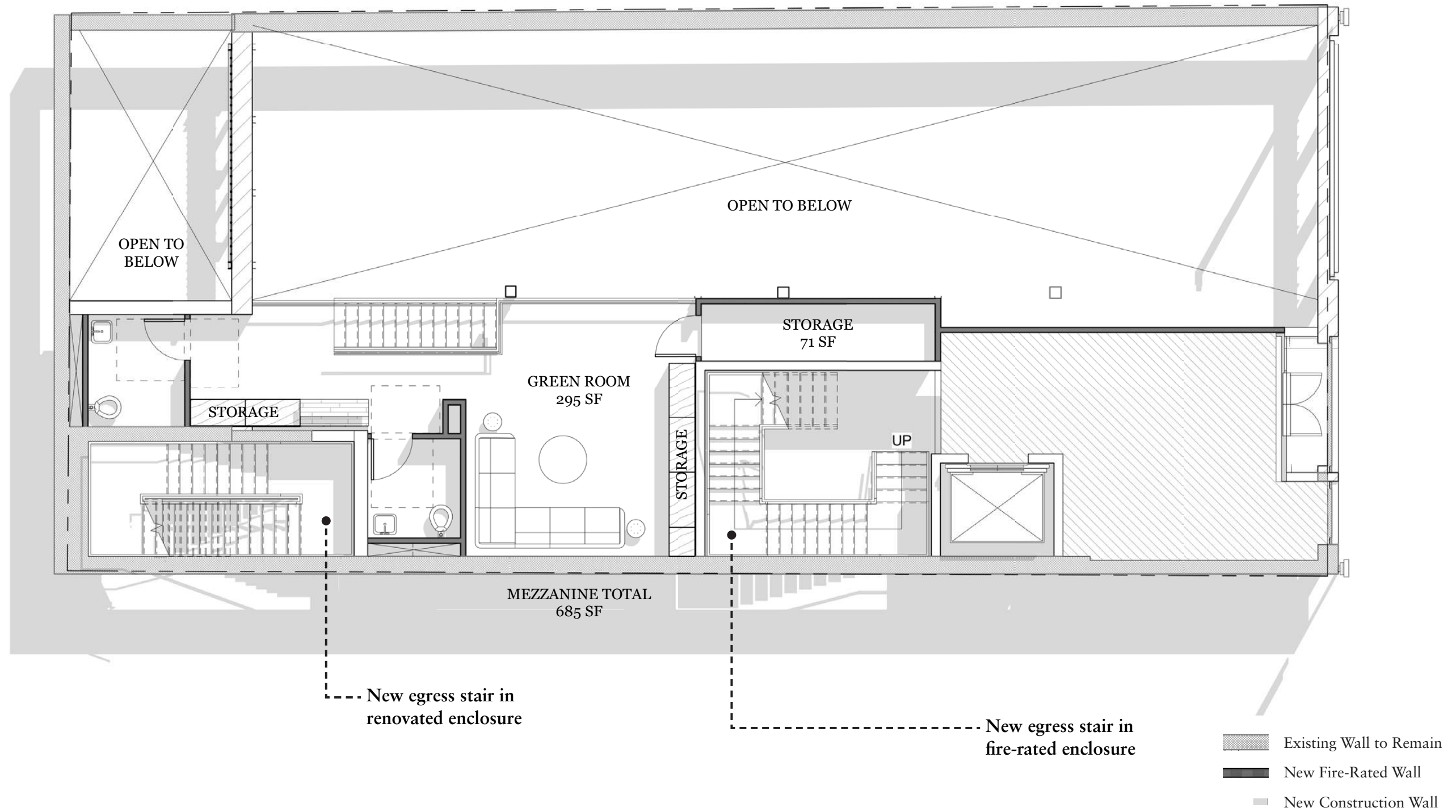




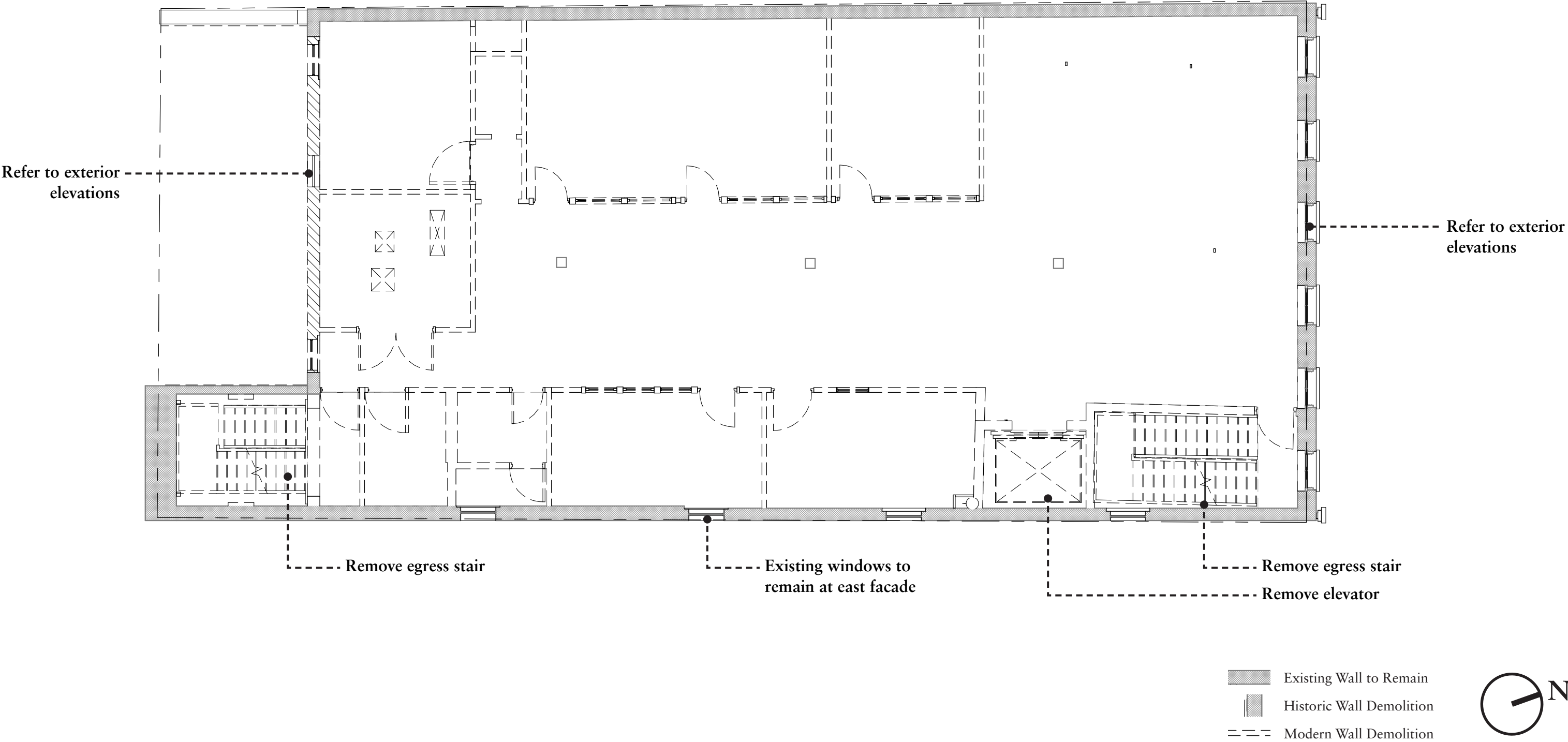




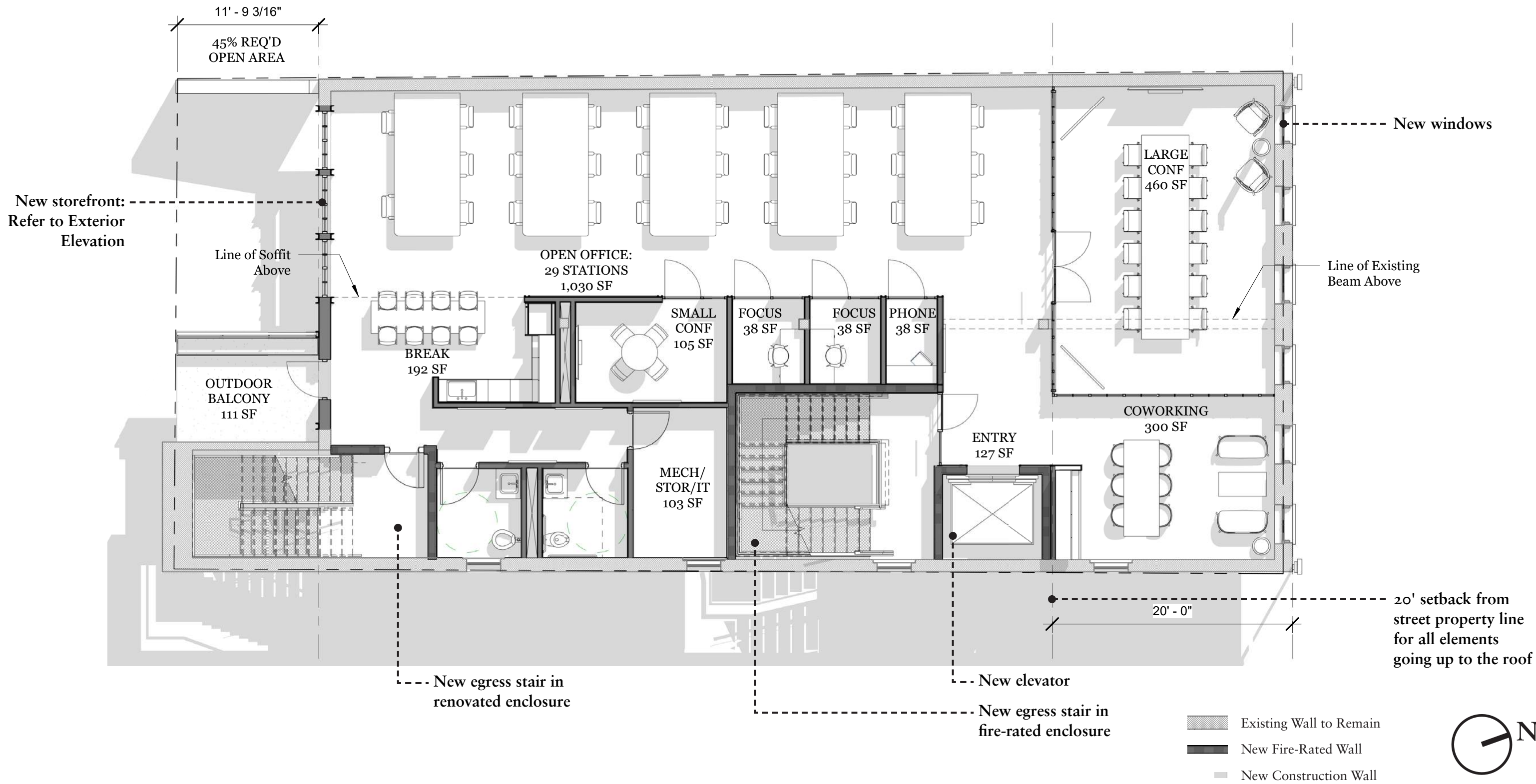




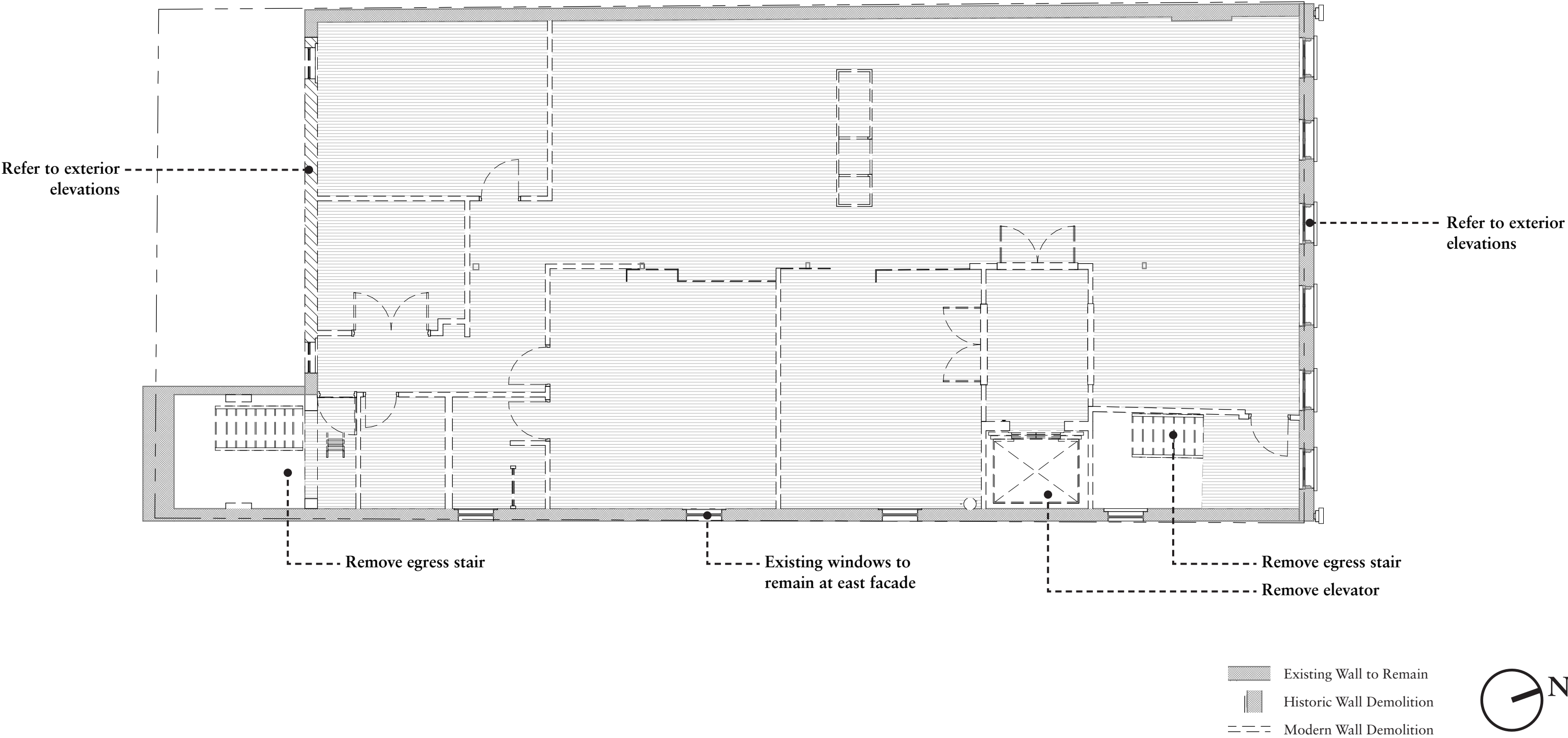




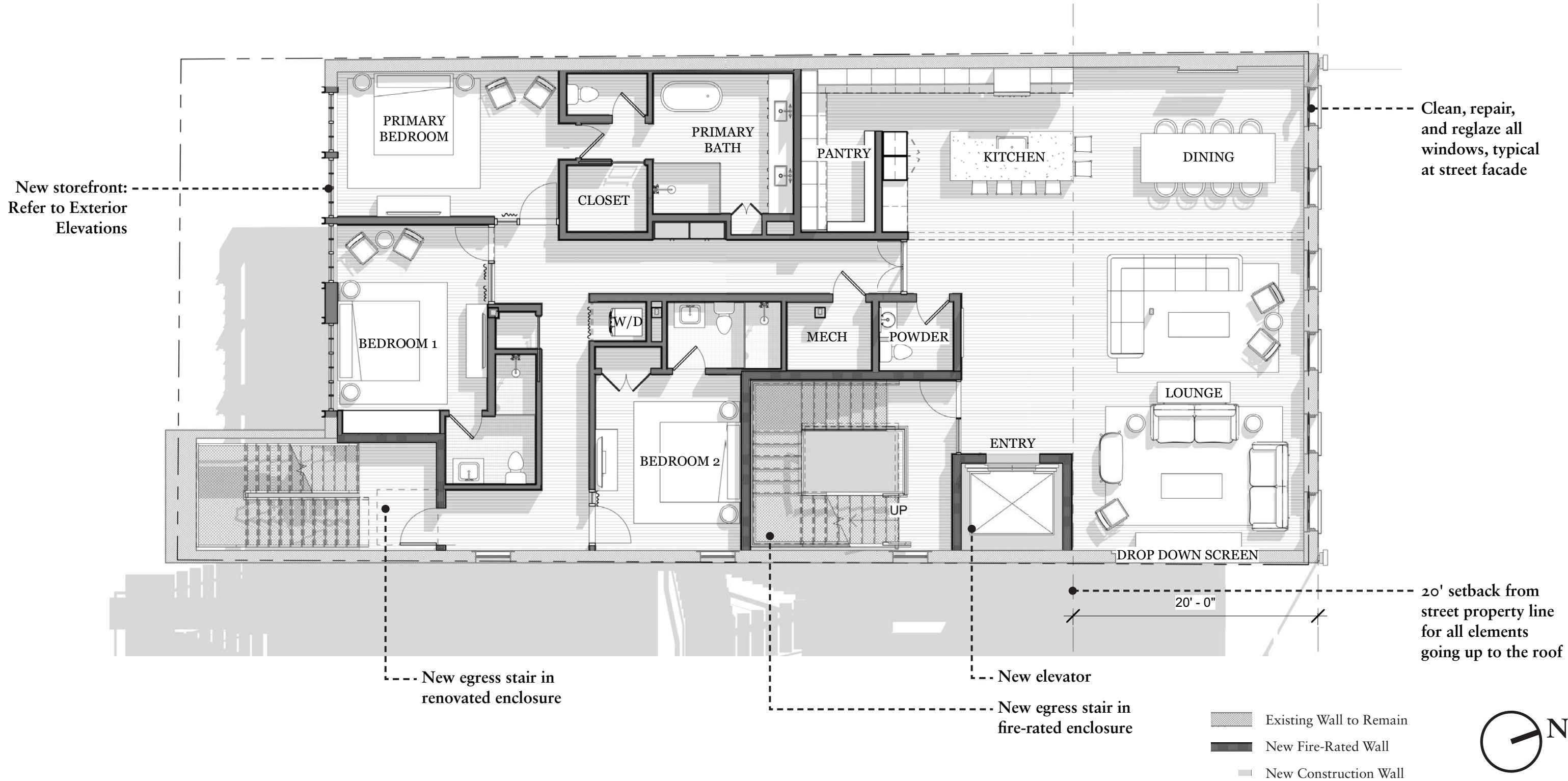




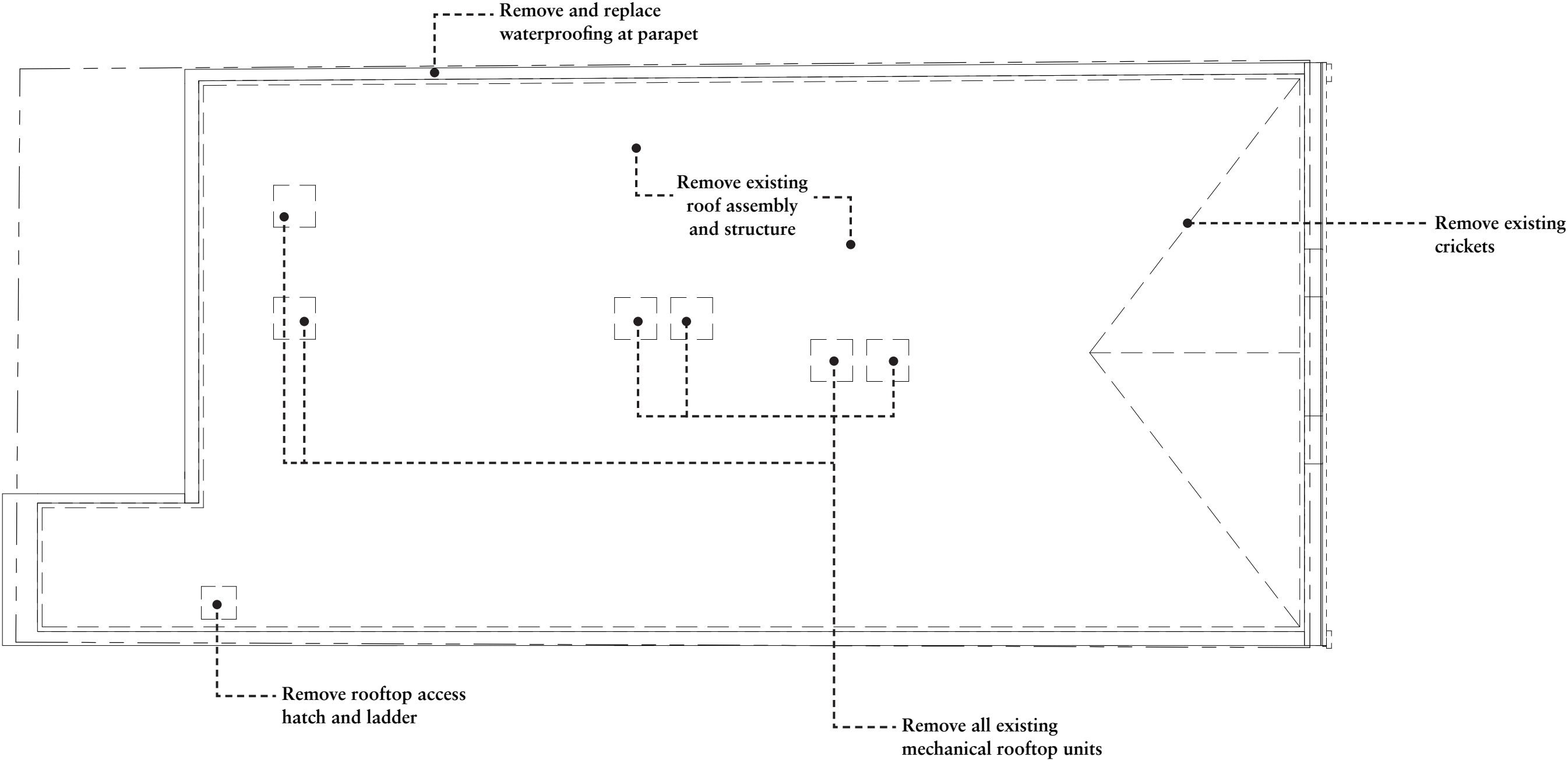








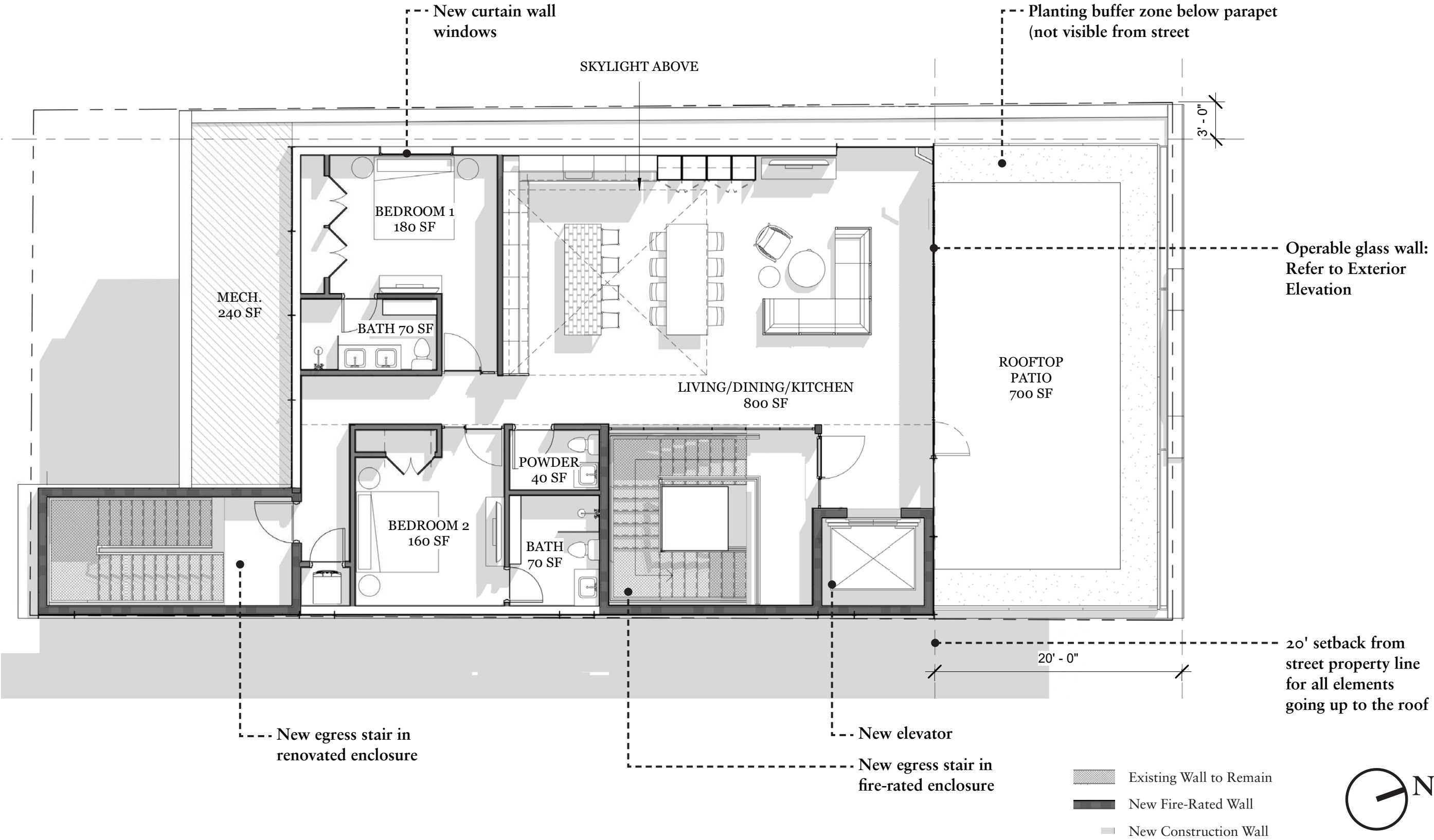




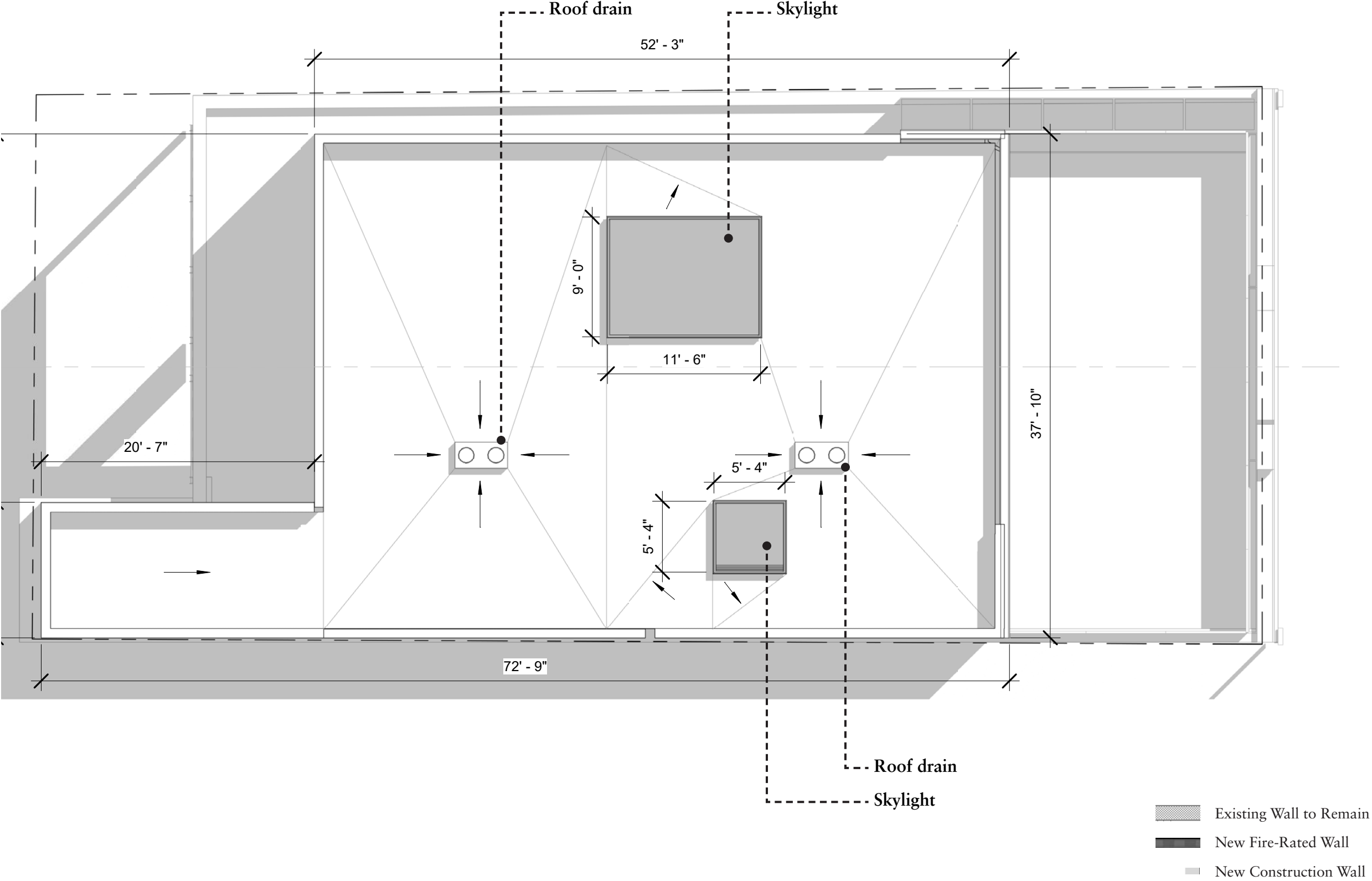
- Existing Wall to Remain
- Historic Wall Demolition
- Modern Wall Demolition













THANK YOU

