

MEGAN BARRY  
MAYOR



**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission  
Sunnyside in Sevier Park  
3000 Granny White Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37204  
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**  
**1322 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North**  
**May 18, 2016**

**Application:** New construction – infill  
**District:** Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay  
**Council District:** 19  
**Map and Parcel Number:** 08209005400  
**Applicant:** Patrick Bales, Architect  
**Project Lead:** Sean Alexander, sean.alexander@nashville.gov

**Description of Project:** The applicant is proposing to construct a new one-story commercial building on vacant land between two historic buildings. This application is a revision of a proposal that was denied at the previous public hearing.

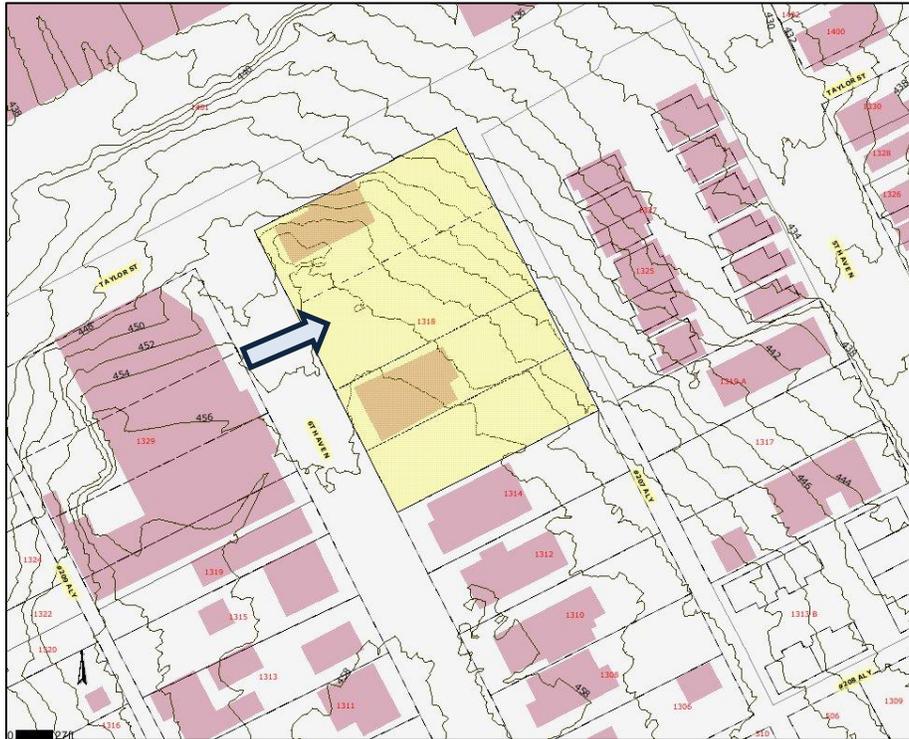
**Recommendation Summary:** Staff recommends approval of the new construction with the conditions that:

- Clapboard siding shall be smooth with a five inch (5”) reveal,
- Cornerboards shall be added at the exposed intersection of clapboard walls
- Staff shall approve the masonry selections prior to purchase and installation,
- Window and door selections are approved by Staff prior to purchase and installation,
- A walkway shall be added from the front stoop to the sidewalk,
- The materials of site features including the walkway, paving, stairs, railings, fences, and a fountain are approved,
- HVAC mechanicals shall be located behind the mid-point of the building,
- Electrical transformer box shall be located at the rear of the lot,
- The driveway curb-cut shall be limited to twelve feet (12’) in width.

Meeting those conditions, Staff finds that the proposed infill will meet the design guidelines for the Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.

**Attachments**  
**A:** Photographs  
**B:** Site Plan  
**C:** Elevations

**Vicinity Map:**



**Aerial Map:**



## Applicable Design Guidelines:

### 2.0 New Construction within historic context

#### 2.1 General Principles

- 2.1.1 Guidelines apply only to the exteriors of new construction. Public facades shall be more carefully reviewed than non-public facades. *Public facades are those that are visible from the public right of way, street or streets. Non-public facades are those not visible from the public right of way, street or streets. Facades facing the alley are generally not considered public facades.*
- 2.1.2 Construction in Historic Germantown has taken place continuously from the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries and a variety of building styles and types have resulted. New buildings should continue this tradition while remaining compatible with the existing historic context. Because a great variety of historic building forms exist within Germantown, more flexibility in design is possible than might be the case for more architecturally homogenous historic neighborhoods.
- 2.1.3 Because new buildings should relate to an established pattern and rhythm of existing buildings, both on the same and opposite sides of the street, a dominance of the pattern and rhythm should be respected and should not be disrupted.
- 2.1.4 New construction should be consistent and compatible with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, setback, relationship of materials, texture and color; roof shape; orientation; and proportion and rhythm of openings.
- 2.1.5 Reconstruction of a historic building which no longer exists may be appropriate if it meets these criteria: it was formerly located on the site on which the reconstruction is proposed; it contributed to the historic and architectural integrity of the area; it was compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding the site; and pictorial documentation supports its accuracy.
- 2.1.7 The MHZC does not review paint colors on wood or metal surfaces.
- 2.1.8 Painting of masonry materials is reviewed by the MHZC.

#### 2.2 Site and Building Planning

##### 2.2.1 Setbacks

1. Maintain the prevailing setbacks from the street within a block.
2. When a definite rhythm of spacing along a street is established by existing lot and building width, infill construction shall maintain that rhythm.
3. Wings, porches, and secondary building elements should be at similar setbacks to existing context.
4. Corner Lots: New construction should appropriately address setbacks on both streets.
5. Alley Setback: Setback from any alley (rear or side) shall be a minimum of 5 feet in order to retain the historic urban street character.
6. Corner Commercial: Historic corner commercial buildings within the NR historic district were typically built to the property line/sidewalk. Setbacks for the construction of new corner commercial structures shall be compatible with this historic precedent.

2.2.2 Orientation: The orientation of a structure's primary facade shall be consistent with that of adjacent historic buildings.

##### 2.2.3 Massing and Scale

1. In new construction, the size of a building, its mass in relation to open spaces and its windows, door openings and porches should be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.
2. The visual mass of the building shall be at or near the same setback as buildings on adjacent sites.
3. When multiple lots or parcels are assembled within the district, buildings shall be designed to be compatible with the adjacent structures. New structures shall employ design techniques that break the facades into multiple vertical elevations.

##### 2.2.4 Height

1. New buildings shall be constructed to a height which is compatible with the height of adjacent buildings. *Characteristics of the following shall be considered in determining compatibility of height; adjacent properties, historical precedent, height of existing historic structures within the District, location within the District, topography and view corridor.*  
*Generally, historic single-family residential structures are one or two stories in height.*

*Special features of limited height such as towers or turrets may be acceptable.*

*Greater height may be appropriate for commercial and multi-family structures, where there is a lack of historic context along a block.*

*Consideration may be given to the physical characteristics of a property in determining compatible heights (e.g. exceptional topographic condition, lot size and/or lot shape) In such cases, where height may be greater, height is guided by the Germantown Detailed Neighborhood Design Plan, a component of the General Plan of the Government of Nashville and Davidson County, while ensuring an appropriate transition to smaller historically significant buildings that abut or are across the street or alley from a proposed new building.*

### 2.3 Foundations

- 2.3.1 The foundation height shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with those of surrounding historic buildings.
- 2.3.2 For new structures, brick, limestone or split-face concrete block may be used for either pier or solid perimeter foundations. Intervening spaces may be filled with an open lattice work.
- 2.3.3 Foundation access doors shall be located on the side or rear of the building. Slab-on-grade foundations may be appropriate for commercial buildings. Slab-on-grade foundations are generally not appropriate for residential infill buildings.

### 2.4 Walls/Exterior Materials

- 2.4.1 Masonry materials and wood siding were primarily used in the district and should continue to be predominant. Other materials may be used if they possess characteristics similar in scale, design, finish, texture, durability, and detailing to historic materials and meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.
- 2.4.2 The relationship and use of materials, texture, details and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to or shall not contrast conspicuously with those of adjacent historic buildings.
- 2.4.3 Large expanses of featureless wall surface are not appropriate. It is most appropriate for materials to change between the foundation to the first floor.
- 2.4.4 Exterior Insulation Finish Systems (E.I.F.S) and vinyl siding are not appropriate exterior materials.
- 2.4.5 Traditional brick colors range from dark red-orange to dark red. The use of "antique" reproduction or multi-colored brick is not permitted.
- 2.4.6 Clapboard siding should exhibit an exposure of 3 to 5". Wood or composite siding and trim (ex. Hardi-plank) are appropriate. Composite materials must match the visual and durability characteristics of wood.

### 2.5 Doors

- 2.5.1 The relationship of width to height of doors and the rhythm of solids (*walls*) to voids should be compatible with surrounding buildings. (*Exterior doors often have transoms, giving them a tall, narrow proportion.*)
- 2.5.2 Primary entrances shall be in locations similar to those used historically for primary entrances.
- 2.5.3 Door openings should be recessed (2" minimum) on masonry buildings, as they are traditionally, rather than flush with the rest of the wall.
- 2.5.4 Front doors shall be wood and at least half-glass.

### 2.6 Windows

- 2.6.1 The relationship of width to height of windows and the rhythm of solids (*walls*) to voids should be visually compatible with surrounding buildings. (*Exterior windows are generally tall and narrow in proportion*)
- 2.6.2 Tinted, reflective, or colored glass are generally not appropriate.
- 2.6.3 Window openings should be recessed (2" minimum) on masonry buildings, as they are traditionally, rather than flush with the rest of the wall.
- 2.6.4 For new commercial structures a significant portion of the street level façade shall be transparent (i.e., doors and windows) to provide visual interest and access for the pedestrian.
- 2.6.5 On corner commercial buildings, glazing shall address both streets.

## 2.6 Porches / Entrance/ Recessed Entries

- 2.6.1 Primary building entrances should be oriented towards the street.
- 2.6.2 Within the district front porches and recessed entries are common on residential and commercial buildings. New construction (specifically of single and multi family homes) shall provide an entry that utilizes elements of a porch to create a transition from the outside (*public domain*) to the inside (*private domain*).
- 2.6.3 The height of porch roofs shall be compatible, by not contrasting greatly, with those of surrounding historic buildings.
- 2.6.4 Entrances to commercial buildings should be recessed.

## 2.7 Roof

- 2.7.1 The roofs of new buildings should be visually compatible by not contrasting significantly with the roof shape, pitch, and orientation of surrounding buildings. (*Predominant roof shapes are gables and hips with slopes ranging from 35 to 50 degrees, 7/12 to 14/12*).
- 2.7.2 Roof-top equipment, skylights, solar panels, and roof penetrations located on or attached to the roof shall be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street. *Generally, they should be placed rear of the mid-point of the building.*
- 2.7.3 Within the district are surviving examples and/or pictorial evidence of commercial, multi-family, and institutional buildings having a low slope roof behind a parapet wall. Therefore, low slope roofs may be appropriate for buildings of similar use within the district.

## 2.8 Utilities / Mechanical

- 2.8.1 Utility connections such as gas meters, electric meters, electric service mast and power lines, phone, cable, satellite TV and HVAC condenser units should be located so as to minimize their visibility from the street. Exterior utilities and mechanical equipment shall generally be located in the rear or side yard and/or screened when visible from the street.
- 2.8.2 Appurtenances related to new buildings and additions, should be visually compatible with the environment established by surrounding existing buildings and the site on which they are located.

## 5.1 Fences

*Rear yard / privacy fences shall not exceed 72". (Exception: Fences may be 96" in height when the top 24" is open in nature).*

- 5.1.4 Coordination of style and materials with adjacent properties is encouraged where appropriate.
- 5.1.5 In general chain link fencing is not appropriate. Black or dark green chain link fencing may be used for pet enclosures or at the rear of the lot when it is screened from public view.

## 5.2 Sidewalks

- 5.2.1 New sidewalks or walkways should remain visually compatible with the materials and placement of historic walkways.
- 5.2.2 Curb cuts on public streets are generally not appropriate. The removal of existing curb cuts on primary streets (where a lot can be accessed from the alley) is encouraged to bring non conforming properties into conformance.
- 5.2.3 Original sidewalks and walkways, including details such as original curbstones, brick, etc., should be preserved in their original state as closely as possible. Special care shall be taken to preserve existing specimen trees and significant landscape elements.
- 5.2.4 Pathways and walkways providing access to buildings shall be serviceable and relate to the building in scale, width, placement and material.
- 5.2.5 Brick, concrete, concrete pavers, stone, and stepping stones are appropriate walkway materials.

## 5.3. Paving/Driveways/Parking Areas and Parking Lots

- 5.3.1 The predominant vehicular access to properties within the District should continue to be through the use of alleys. It is acknowledged that in some cases alley access may not be possible or practical. In this case, curb cuts and driveways at the public street should be minimized and the width of parking access should be limited. Curb cuts and driveways shall be located so they are visually less dominant.

- 5.3.2 Vehicular access to new developments (specifically large lot developments) shall be executed with techniques that minimize interruption to the sidewalk network and the pedestrian environment. Cross access between parking areas to minimize street curb cuts and adjacent driveway is encouraged.
- 5.3.3 Parking structures should generally be located below or behind buildings and landscaped to mitigate their visual impact.
- 5.3.4 Parking structures that are located close to the sidewalk are encouraged to include retail uses at street level to minimize the visual impact of the structure and engage the pedestrian network - Where street level retail uses are not feasible, architectural treatments shall be used to modulate the façade breaking the mass and horizontal lines typical of parking structures. Facades of parking structures facing public streets shall have flat (non sloping) floor plates.
- 5.3.5 Shared parking facilities that efficiently utilize parking spaces are encouraged.
- 5.3.6 Garages and carports shall be accessed from the service alley as is typical in the district. For residential lots new curb cuts on public streets are generally not appropriate. Where a lot can be accessed from the alley, the removal of existing curb cuts on primary streets is encouraged. Where an existing lot cannot be accessed from the alley executed vehicular access shall be executed with techniques that minimize interruption to the sidewalk network and the pedestrian environment.

**Background:** The properties at 1318-1326 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North encompass four lots, two of which have historic houses on them and two are vacant and/or parking. In 2014 the MHZC approved a plan to rehabilitate the two existing houses and construct a new multi-family building in the space between and behind them. The work on the two existing buildings is proceeding, but the infill portion of that project has been changed.



Figure 1: Historic house at 1318 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

In April of 2016, the MHZC disapproved an application to construct a new one-story commercial building at 1322 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, a vacant lot between two historic buildings, finding that the garage doors on the sides of the proposed building were not compatible with the rhythm and proportion of windows on buildings in the area historically and because additional information was needed on structures and appurtenances shown on the site plan.



**Analysis and Findings:** The applicant has revised the plans so that the side elevations would no longer have garage doors, but French doors instead. In addition, the cabanas shown on the original site plan are no longer a part of the proposal and a fence has been added to screen the rear of the building from the alley.

General Principles, Site, Building Planning and Setbacks: Mass and Scale, Height: The new building will be one story, twenty feet (20') tall from the front grade to the top of a parapet on the front façade. Both of the adjacent historic houses are twenty feet (20') tall as well. Staff finds the proposed new building to meet guideline 2.2.4.1, which states that buildings shall be compatible with the heights of adjacent buildings.

The front facade of the new building will be symmetrical with five distinct bays. In the center of the building will be a main entrance, with a trio of windows in the bays to either side. Together these three bays will be forty feet (40') wide. This center section of the building will be flanked by a pair of shorter windowless walls, set one foot (1') back from the front wall. These bays will bring the total width of the building to fifty-eight feet (58') wide.

The historical and architectural context in the Germantown neighborhood is diverse, and includes structures ranging from single-story Shotgun houses to large single family houses, corner commercial buildings, and multi-story mixed use developments all present in close or adjacent proximity. Staff finds that the massing of the new one-story commercial building will be compatible with the surrounding area.

Setbacks, Orientation: The new building will be located in a vacant lot between two historic houses, with the front setback aligned between the two buildings. The new building will be centered in the space between the two existing houses, with twenty feet (20') of separation on both sides, which is compatible with the spacing between buildings historically. Staff finds that this location meets guidelines 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2, which states that buildings should maintain the prevailing street setbacks and rhythm of spacing on an established block. The building will face the street directly, which staff finds to meet guidelines 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.2.

Walls/Exterior Materials: The primary exterior materials on the new building will include brick on the front façade, continuing on the sides approximately one third of the depth of the building before switching to cement-fiber clapboard siding. Whereas the plans show “stamped siding,” siding in the historic neighborhood typically is smooth. Both of these materials are appropriate for new construction when the brick is traditional in its color and texture, and the cement-fiber siding has a smooth surface with an exposure no greater than five inches (5”). Staff also asks that any exposed corner between two clapboard-sided walls have a four inch cornerboards, as is typical of historic buildings. With the conditions that Staff shall approve the masonry and siding selections and that cornerboards are added, Staff finds that the infill meets guidelines 2.4.1, 2.4.5, and 2.4.6.

The materials of site features including paving, stairs, railings, fences, and a fountain are not known. Staff recommends that administrative review of these site features is required as a condition of approval.

Windows & Doors: As with the previous design, the front façade of the building will have a central doorway with transoms and sidelights. Staff finds the configuration and

location of this primary entrance to be appropriate. The new front doors will be narrow and tall, will be all glass, and will be recessed four inches (4") from the primary wall. The windows on the front façade will be storefront-type windows, and they will also be narrow and tall and recessed four inches (4") from the primary wall.

The rear elevation will have overhead doors. The doors on the rear cannot be seen from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, and do not have an impact on the historic character of the area. Under section 2.1.1 of the design guidelines "*Facades facing the alley are generally not considered public facades.*" The rear wall/doors will be screened from the alley by an eight foot (8') tall decorative privacy fence. Additional information is needed regarding the design of the fence. (See "materials.")

The side facades of the building will each have sets of double glass doors. The side doors are vertically oriented, which is consistent with the proportions of windows on historic buildings in the area.

Staff recommends final approval of the specific window and door selections prior to purchase and installation. With that condition, Staff finds the doors and windows on the proposed infill will meet sections 2.5 and 2.6 of the design guidelines.

Porches, Entrances: The primary facade of the new building will face 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North directly, with an entrance in the center of three bays. There will be a stoop at the entrance, from which Staff recommends that a walkway shall be added leading to the front edge of the property to engage the right of way in a manner consistent with historic buildings nearby. With the condition that a walkway shall be added from the front stoop to the sidewalk, Staff finds that the proposed infill would meet sections 2.6.1 and 2.6.2 of the design guidelines.

Roof: The roof of the building will be flat with a stepped parapet on the front facade of the building, as seen on many historic buildings in the district. Staff finds that the project will meet sections 2.7.1 and 2.7.3 of the design guidelines.

Utilities/Mechanical: The location of HVAC unit's mechanicals is not indicated on the submitted plans. Staff recommends that they be located behind the building on a non-street-facing façade, or on the roof behind the mid-point of the building in order to meet section 2.8.1 of the design guidelines.

Site Features, Appurtenances: New walkways, railings, a fountain, and fences will be installed on the lot. The materials of these items are not known at this time, therefore Staff recommends that administrative review of those items be required as a condition of approval. The plans show an electrical transformer box located in the front-right corner of the lot. Staff recommends that the transformer box be located at the rear of the lot. As conditions of approval, staff recommends that conditions are added requiring that the electrical transformer box shall be located at the rear of the lot, and that more information on these appurtenances that shall be administratively reviewed prior to permitting to

ensure that the meet guideline 5.1 and 5.2, and that the electrical transformer box is located at the rear of the lot.

A landscape feature labeled “cabanas” on the previous submittal has been eliminated from the revised design.

The project will retain portions of an existing parking lot at the rear of the property, accessed by an existing driveway to the right of the building at 1318 and the alley. Staff recommends reducing the width of the driveway curb-cut to twelve feet (12’), which would be more typical of the widths of other nearby driveways. This lot will be shared by the new building and the two adjacent buildings, with entrances from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue North at an existing curb cut and the alley to the rear. Staff finds the parking lot design to meet section 5.3 of the design guidelines.

Signage: No signage has been submitted for review at this time. Signage can be reviewed separately later and approved administratively if it meets the design guidelines.

**Recommendation Summary**: Staff recommends approval of the new construction with the conditions that:

- Clapboard siding shall be smooth with a five inch (5”) reveal,
- Cornerboards shall be added at the exposed intersection of clapboard walls
- Staff shall approve the masonry selections prior to purchase and installation,
- Window and door selections are approved by Staff prior to purchase and installation,
- A walkway shall be added from the front stoop to the sidewalk,
- The materials of site features including the walkway, paving, stairs, railings, fences, and a fountain are approved,
- HVAC mechanicals shall be located behind the mid-point of the building,
- Electrical transformer box shall be located at the rear of the lot,
- The driveway curb-cut shall be limited to twelve feet (12’) in width.

Meeting those conditions, Staff finds that the proposed infill will meet the design guidelines for the Germantown Historic Preservation Zoning Overlay.

The Commission does not have the authority to approve the use. This recommendation is for the design of the building based on the proposed use.

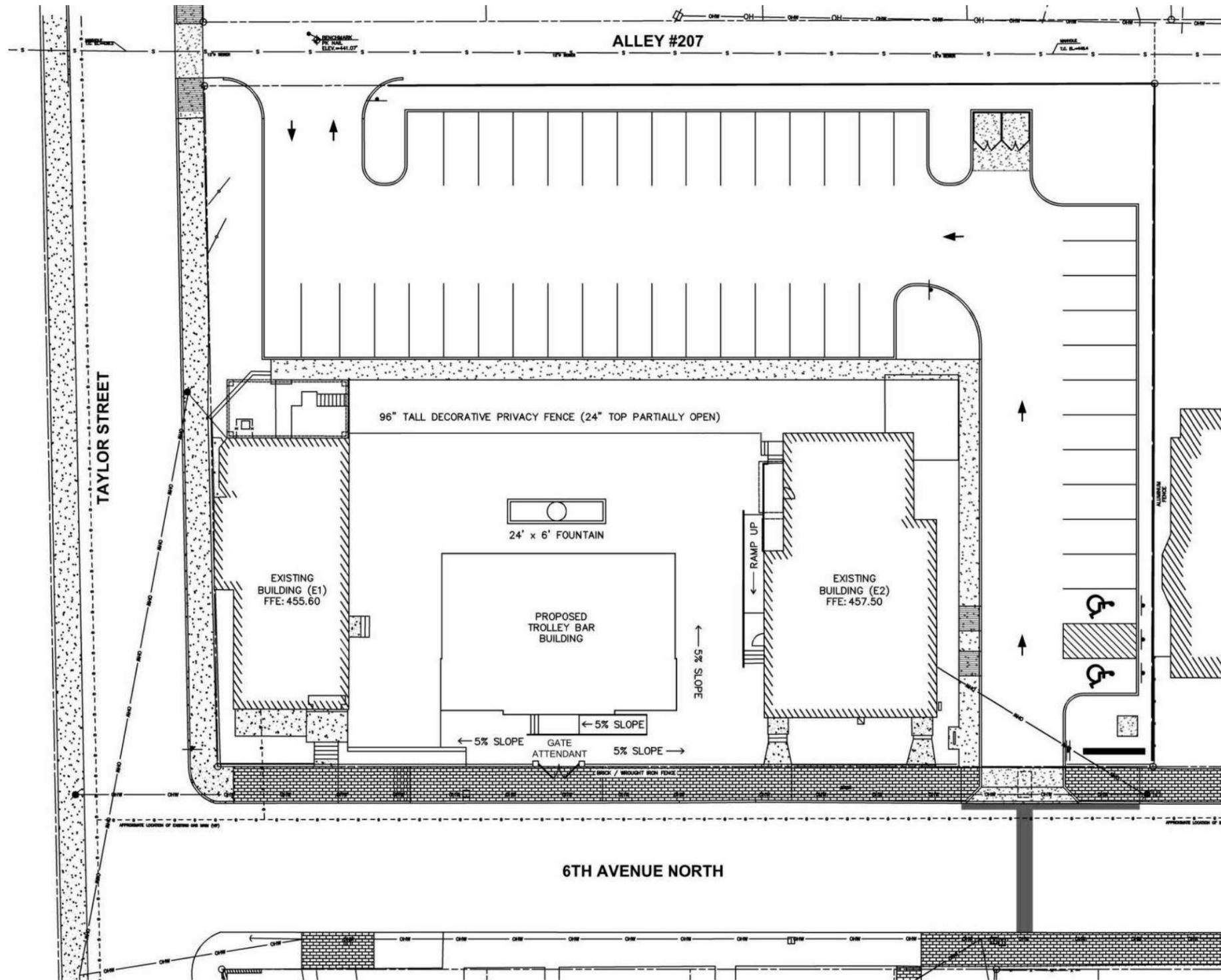
**Attachment A: Photographs**



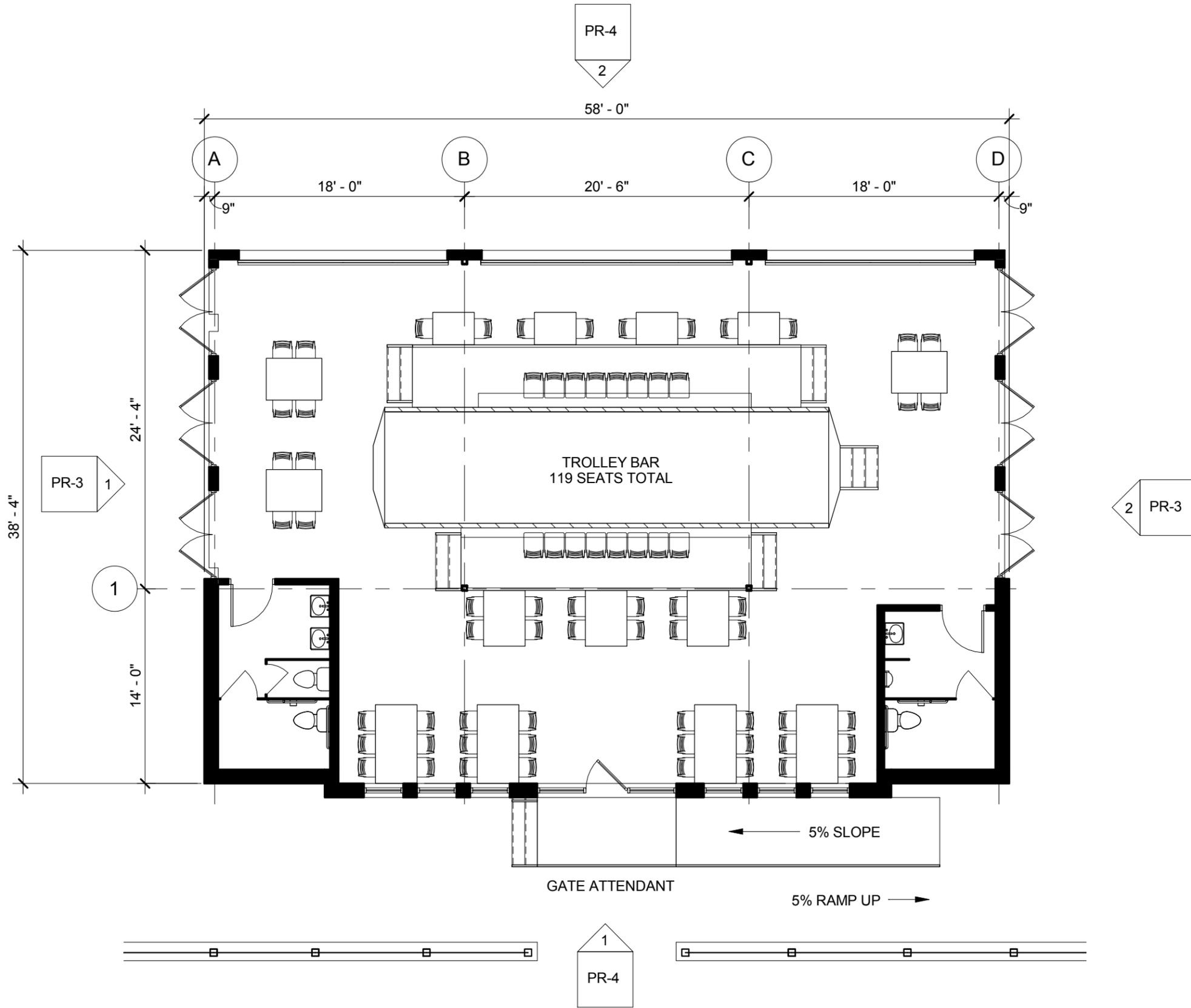
Site of proposed one-story infill between two historic houses, viewed from the south.

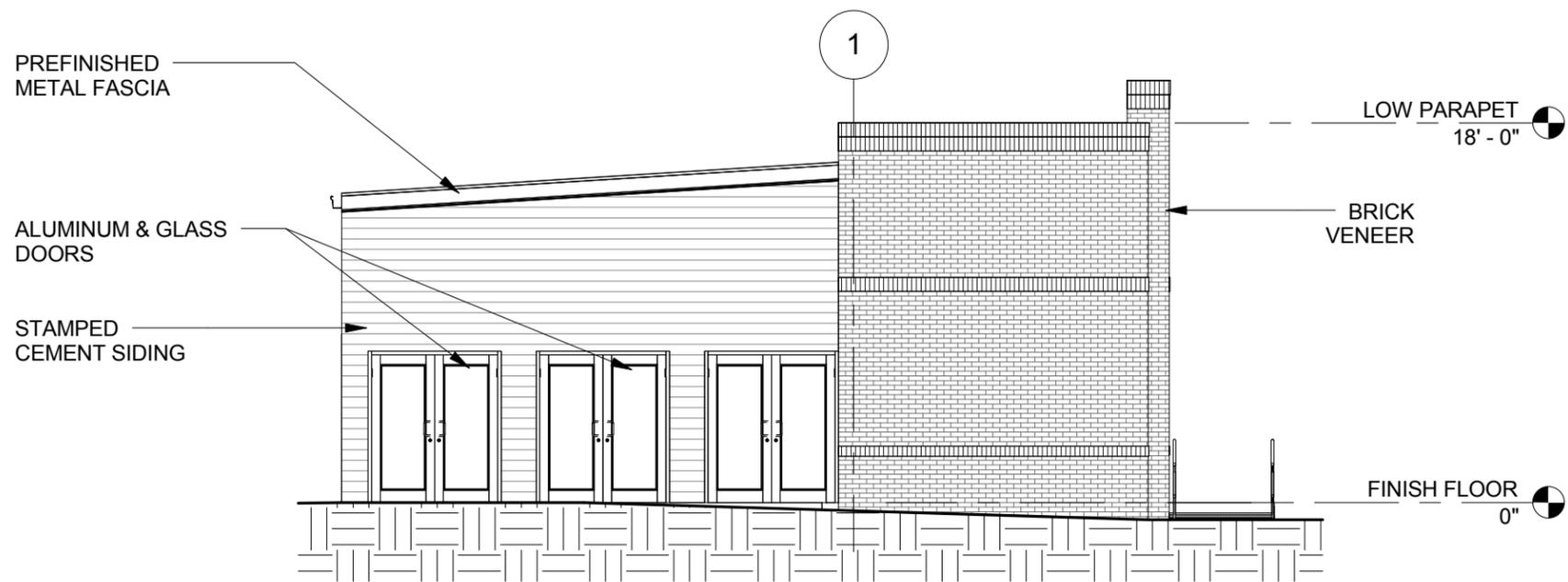


Site of proposed one-story infill between two historic houses, viewed from the north.

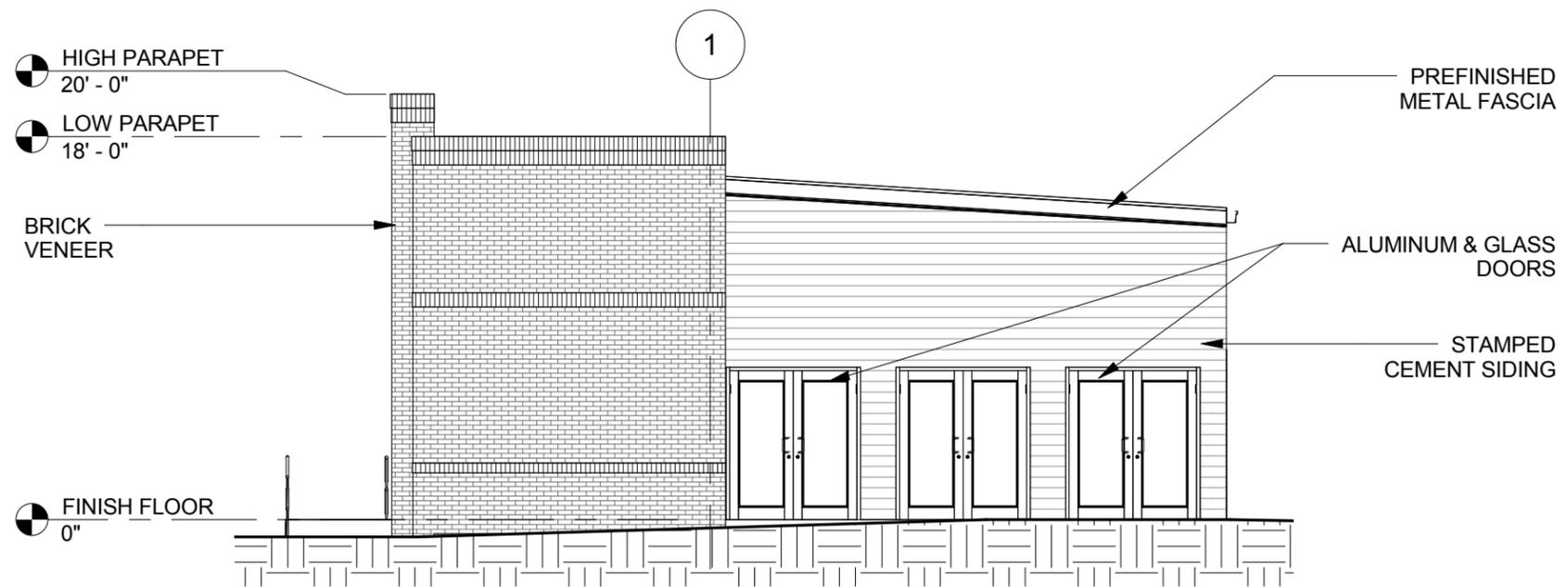


① SITE PLAN  
1" = 30'-0"

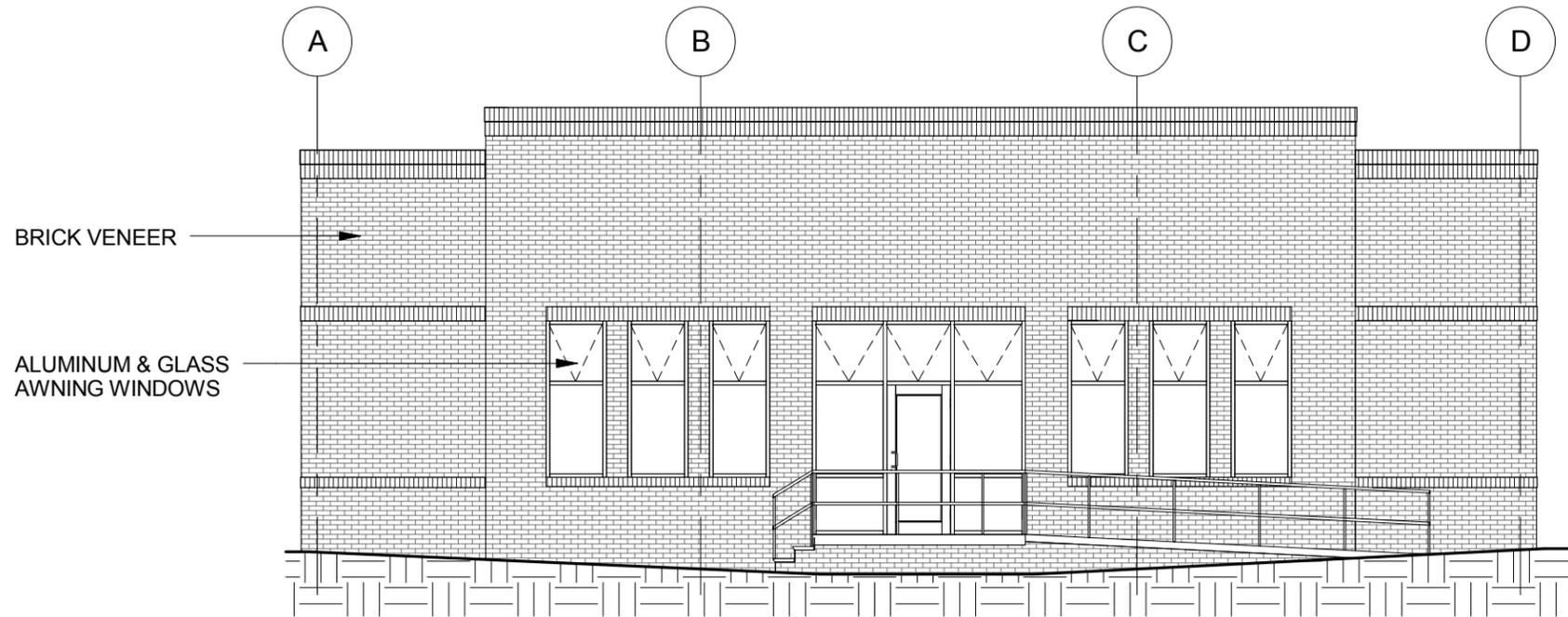




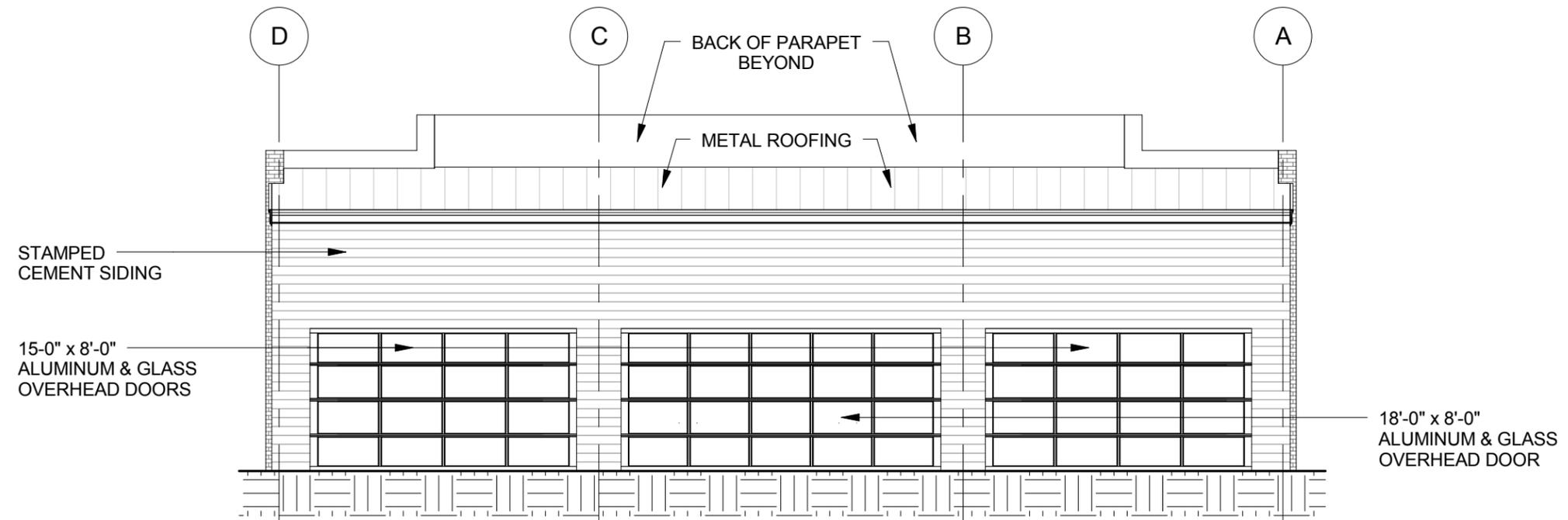
① SIDE ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"



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1/8" = 1'-0"



① FRONT ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"



② REAR ELEVATION  
1/8" = 1'-0"