City of Charlottesville
Board of Architectural Review
Staff Report
August 18, 2026

Pre-Application Conference - Certificate of Appropriateness
No formal action will be taken.
BAR #26-0034
301 East Hight Street, Tax Parcel 330070000
North Downtown ADC District
Owner: Village School
Applicant: Design Develop
Project: Addition onto rear of building, related site work





Background
Year Built: 1958
District: North Downtown ADC District
Status: Contributing

Built for the City Mortgage and Insurance Company. The firm of Johnson, Craven and Gibson designed this Colonial Revival structure based on George Mason's home *Gunston Hall*, constructed 1759 in Fairfax County. Previously on this site was a 19th century, two-story brick dwelling. (Historical survey attached.) Notable as one of three dwellings that families later claimed had been occupied by General Sheridan for three days in March 1865. (It is generally accepted that Sheridan headquartered at a house in the 500 block of Park Street, and the confusion was due to subordinate officers staying at the other two homes.)

Prior BAR Actions
N/A

Applicant Request
- Submittal: Design Develop drawings *Village School, 301 East High Street,* dated July 6, 2026, 23 pages.

Pre-application conference re: a CoA request for a two-story addition to an existing 1-1/2-story, brick structure, with related site work.

Note: A pre-application conference is required by Code Sec. 34-5.2.7.B.2.c. No formal action will be taken by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR). The Code does not prescribe what information must be presented for a pre-application conference; however, the BAR has historically required at least a general representation of the location, context, massing and scale of the proposed building.

Pre-application Conference Process

This is a pre-application conference, and no BAR formal action will be taken; however, by consensus, the BAR may express an opinion about the project as presented. (For example, the BAR might express consensus support for certain materials, identify features that require revision or clarification, or request additional analysis or modeling of specific elements.) Such comments will not constitute a formal motion and the result will have no legal bearing, nor will it represent an incremental decision on the required CoA.

The key objectives of a pre-application conference:

- Introduce the project and applicant to the BAR.
- Allow the applicant to present to the BAR any questions they have.
- Allow the BAR to provide guidance on what information is necessary, with the formal submittal. for the BAR to evaluate the requested CoA.

Regarding a pre-application conference: In response to any questions from the applicant and/or for any recommendations to the applicant, the BAR should rely on the germane sections of the ADC District Design Guidelines and related review criteria. While elements of other chapters may be relevant, staff recommends that the BAR refer to the criteria in Chapter 2--*Site Design and Elements* and *Chapter* 3--*New Construction and Additions* (see excerpt below).

Of assistance are the following criteria from Chapter 3:

- Height & Width
- Scale
- Roof
- Orientation
- Windows & Doors
- Foundation & Cornice
- Materials & Textures
- Paint [Color palette]
- Details & Decoration

Elements:

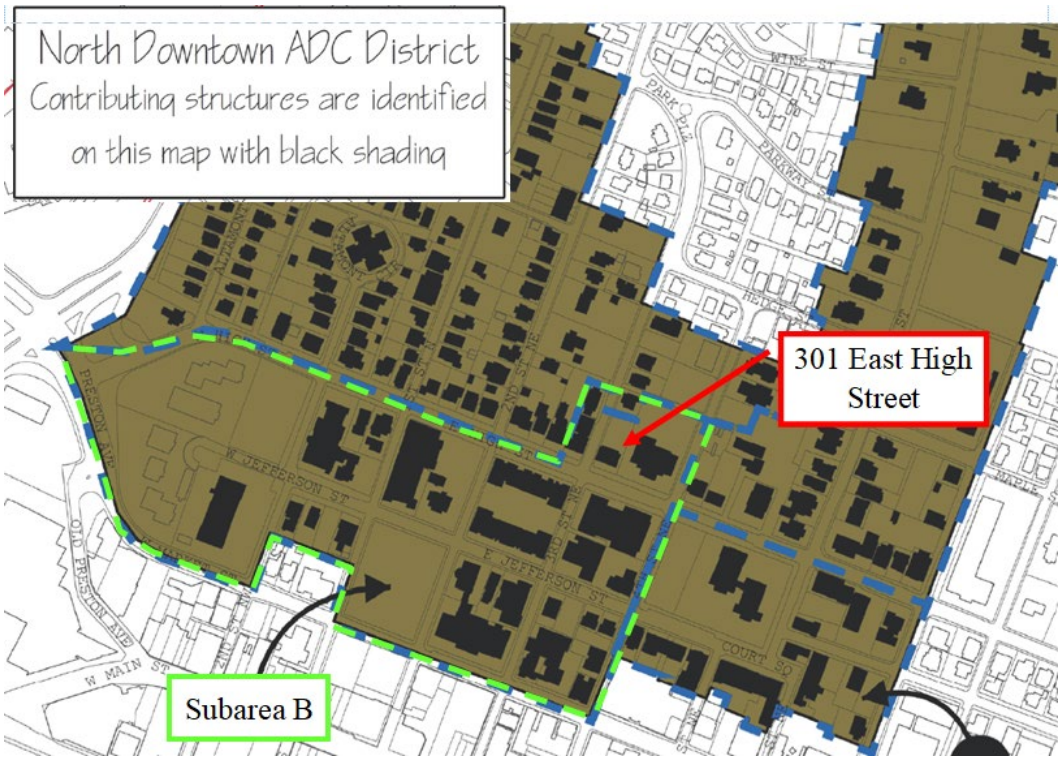
- Roof
- Gutters & Downspouts
- Exterior walls
- Trim
- Doors & Windows
- Lighting
- Plantings/Landscaping
- Patios & walks
- Screening (HVAC, utilities)

Discussion

For additions, aside from compatibility with the district, the design guidelines have two primary objectives: the new is subordinate to the existing (scale, location, materials, etc.) and it reads *as an addition*, not an extension of the existing. As presented, staff suggests the addition accomplishes these goals.

North Downtown ADC District: Adjacent to the Albemarle County Courthouse and laid out according to the 1762 town grid, this area served as the city's first civic, religious, and commercial center. Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and James Madison were frequent visitors to the Court Square area. Park Street residences built in the late eighteenth century for lawyers, judges and other professionals still retain their architectural integrity. Today, this district represents the socio-economic and architectural evolution of the original town.

Subarea b. Jefferson Street/High Street West: institutional, residential, large scale, open space, brick, 2 to 5 stories, limited setbacks, mix of styles, some classical styles.



Suggested Motion
Pre-application discussion. **No action will be taken.**

Criteria, Standards, and Guidelines
Note re: BAR authority: Per Code, the BAR is charged only with the authority to approve or deny a design review CoA, following an evaluation applying the criteria under Code Sec. 34-5.2.7. Major Historic Review. The BAR does not evaluate a proposed use. Additionally, per Code Sec. 34-5.2.7.E.2., the issuance of a CoA "cannot, in and of itself, authorize any construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, demolition, or other improvements or activities requiring a building permit. Where a building permit is required, no activity authorized by a [CoA] is lawful unless conducted in accordance with the required building permit and all applicable building code requirements."

Review Criteria Generally
Per Chapter 34, Div. 5.2.7. C.2:

a. In considering a particular application the BAR will approve the application unless it finds:
   i. That the proposal does not meet specific standards set forth within this Section or applicable provisions of the City's design guidelines; and
   ii. ii. The proposal is incompatible with the historic, cultural or architectural character of the district in which the property is located or the IPP that is the subject of the application.
b. The BAR will approve, approve with conditions, or deny applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in accordance with the provisions of this Section.
c. The BAR, or City Council on appeal, may require conditions of approval as are necessary or desirable to ensure that any new construction or addition is compatible with the scale and character of the Architecture Design Control District, Individually Protected Property, or Historic Conservation District. Prior to attaching conditions to an approval, due consideration will be given to the cost of compliance with the proposed conditions as well as the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Conditions may require a reduction in height or massing, consistent with the City's design guidelines and subject to the following limitations: [not germane]

Standards for Review and Decision
Per Chapter 34, Div. 5.2.7. D.1:
a. Review of the proposed construction, reconstruction, alteration or restoration of a building or structure is limited to exterior architectural features, including signs, and the following features and factors:
   i. Whether the material, texture, color, height, scale, mass, and placement of the proposed addition, modification or construction are visually and architecturally compatible with the site and the applicable District;
   ii. The harmony of the proposed change in terms of overall proportion and the size and placement of entrances, windows, awnings, exterior stairs, and signs;
   iii. The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation set forth within the Code of Federal Regulations (36 C.F.R. §67.7(b)), as may be relevant;
   iv. The effect of the proposed change on the adjacent building or structures;
   v. The impact of the proposed change on other protected features on the property, such as gardens, landscaping, fences, walls, and walks;
   vi. Whether the proposed method of construction, renovation, or restoration could have an adverse impact on the structure or site, or adjacent buildings or structures;
   vii. When reviewing any proposed sign as part of an application under consideration, the standards set forth within Div. 4.11. Signs will be applied; and
   viii. Any applicable provisions of the City's design guidelines.

Links to ADC District Design Guidelines
Chapter 1 Introduction (Part 1)
Chapter 1 Introduction (Part 2)
Chapter 2 Site Design and Elements
Chapter 3 New Construction and Additions

P. Additions
Many of the smaller commercial and other business buildings may be enlarged as development pressure increases in downtown Charlottesville and along West Main Street. These existing structures may be increased in size by constructing new additions on the rear or side or in some

cases by carefully adding on extra levels above the current roof. The design of new additions on all elevations that are prominently visible should follow the guidelines for new construction as described earlier in this section. Several other considerations that are specific to new additions in the historic districts are listed below:

1) Function and Size
    a. Attempt to accommodate needed functions within the existing structure without building an addition.
    b. Limit the size of the addition so that it does not visually overpower the existing building.
2) Location
    a. Attempt to locate the addition on rear or side elevations that are not visible from the street.
    b. If additional floors are constructed on top of a building, set the addition back from the main façade so that its visual impact is minimized.
    c. If the addition is located on a primary elevation facing the street or if a rear addition faces a street, parking area, or an important pedestrian route, the façade of the addition should be treated under the new construction guidelines.
3) Design
    a. New additions should not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.
    b. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
4) Replication of Style
    a. A new addition should not be an exact copy of the design of the existing historic building. The design of new additions can be compatible with and respectful of existing buildings without being a mimicry of their original design.
    b. If the new addition appears to be part of the existing building, the integrity of the original historic design is compromised and the viewer is confused over what is historic and what is new.
5) Materials and Features
    a. Use materials, windows, doors, architectural detailing, roofs, and colors that are compatible with historic buildings in the district.
6) Attachment to Existing Building
    a. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to existing buildings should be done in such a manner that, if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the buildings would be unimpaired.
    b. The new design should not use the same wall plane, roof line, or cornice line of the existing structure.

LANDMARK SURVEY

IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 301 East High Street
Map and Parcel: 33-70
Census Track & Block: 3-502
Present Owner: City Mortgage & Insurance Co.
Address: 301 East High Street
Present Use: Offices
Original Owner: City Mortgage and Insurance Co.
Original Use: Offices

BASE DATA

Historic Name: City Mortgage and Insurance Bldg.
Date/Period: 1958
Style: Colonial Revival
Height to Cornice: 37.5
Height in Stories: 1 1/2
Present Zoning: B -1
Land Area (sq.ft.): 62 x 150
Assessed Value (land + imp.): 13,330 + 24,450 = 37,750

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

This modern office was designed as a reproduction of Gunston Hall, the famous Georgian mansion of George Mason in Fairfax County. The most prominent feature taken from Gunston Hall is the one story entrance porch with its Palladian motif enriched with four Doric columns and a frieze with triglyphs. The brick walls were designed to simulate Flemish bond with a water table of molded bricks, and non-structural flat arches. The rear, or north elevation is fitted with a long shed dormer which supplements the five traditional facadal dormers in providing light to the architectural offices located on the second floor.

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

The City Mortgage and Insurance Company building was designed by the firm Johnson, Craven, and Gibson and was completed in 1958. The old Valentine house occupied the site before it was destroyed to make room for the existing structure. Deed reference: 149-146 (1950).

GRAPHICS

CONDITIONS

Excellent

SOURCES

City Records
Stevens, Virginia House Tours, p. 125.

VILLAGE SCHOOL

301 EAST HIGH STREET

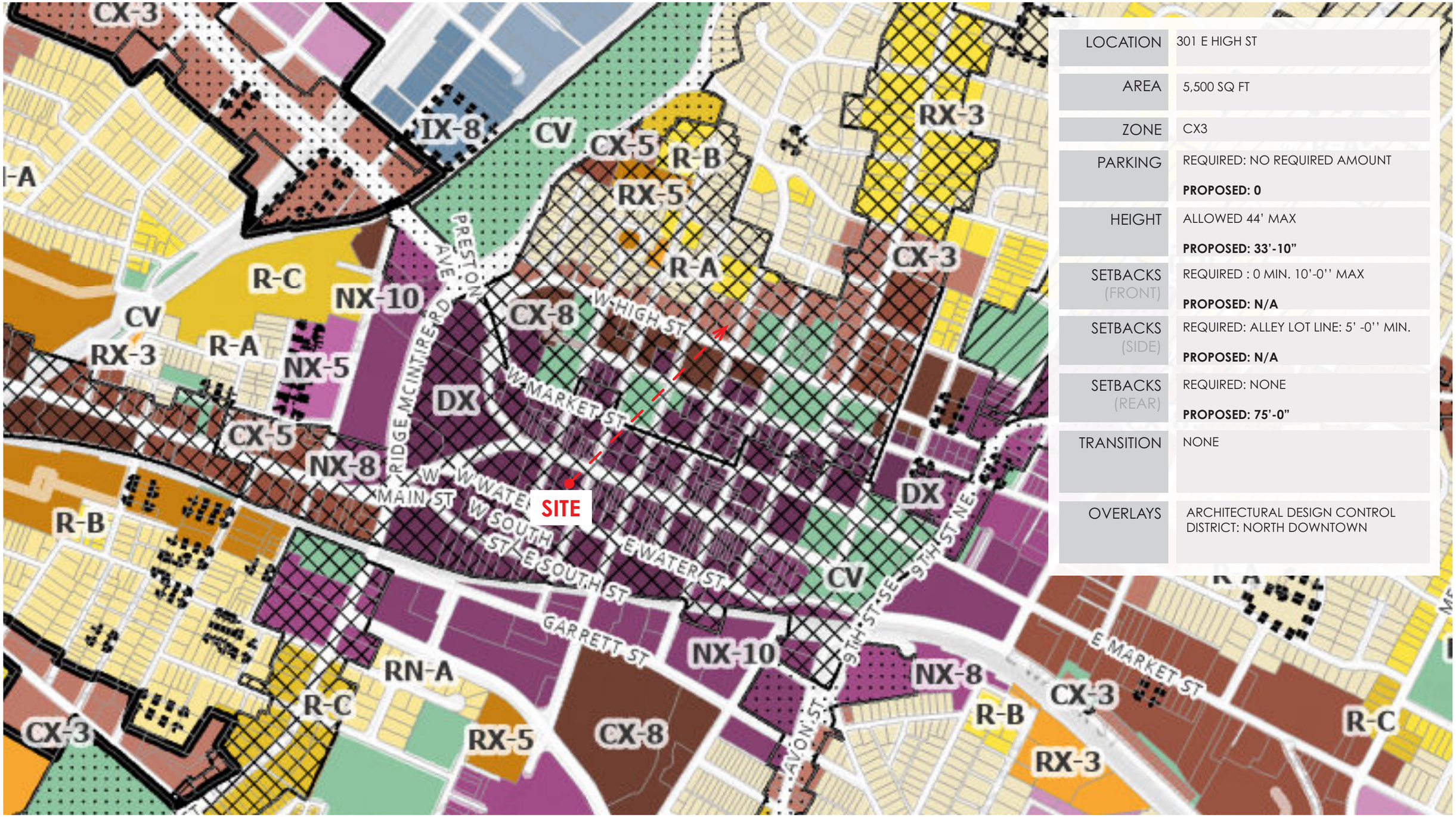
CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY
BAR SUBMISSION

PRESENTED BY

DESIGN
DEVELOP

07 | 06 | 2026

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LOCATION	301 E HIGH ST
AREA	5,500 SQ FT
ZONE	CX3
PARKING	REQUIRED: NO REQUIRED AMOUNT **PROPOSED: 0**
HEIGHT	ALLOWED 44' MAX **PROPOSED: 33'-10"**
SETBACKS (FRONT)	REQUIRED : 0 MIN. 10'-0'' MAX **PROPOSED: N/A**
SETBACKS (SIDE)	REQUIRED: ALLEY LOT LINE: 5' -0'' MIN. **PROPOSED: N/A**
SETBACKS (REAR)	REQUIRED: NONE **PROPOSED: 75'-0"**
TRANSITION	NONE
OVERLAYS	ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN CONTROL DISTRICT: NORTH DOWNTOWN


High St
4th St NE
3rd St NE
2nd St NE
SITE



315 E High St

Existing site



409 3rd St NE





215 E High sT



301 E High St



401 E High St





315 E High St



310 4th ST NE



202 E HIGH STREET



205 AND 211 E HIGH STREET



401 E HIGH STREET



407 2ND STREET



412 3RD STREET



420 3RD STREET



409 3RD STREET



411 2ND STREET



426 2ND STREET









ADC DISTRICT
NORTH DOWNTOWN

SIGNIFICANCE TO DISTRICT FROM CITY SURVEY
THIS 1.5-STORY, COLONIAL REVIVAL STYLE BRICK OFFICE BUILDING WAS BUILT IN 1958.

"DESIGNED AS A REPRODUCTION OF GUNSTON HALL, THE GEORGIAN MANSION OF GEORGE MASON IN FAIRFAX COUNTY. THE MOST PROMINENT , THE BUILDING FEATURES A PALLADIAN ENTRANCE PORCH WITH DORIC COLUMNS AND FLEMISH BOND BRICKWORK. IT CONTRIBUTES TO THE VISUAL APPEAL AND SCALE OF THE DISTRICT."



CITY MORTGAGE BUILDING — William A. Rinehart III, president of the City Mortgage and Insurance Company, stands before the company's new quarters on High Street. —Progress photo by Luhnow.

City Mortgage Is First to Build In Area of Restricted Design

The new colonial office building of City Mortgage and Insurance Company at High and Third Streets is the first to be built in the historic "Old Charlottesville" area around Court Square since the restricted design district was established two years ago.

The 1½-story brick building is modeled on Guston Hall, colonial home of George Mason in Fairfax County. It cost $85,000 to build.

Plans for the building received approval of the Board of Architectural Review in December a year ago.

The restricted design district embraces an area of approximately three blocks, including Court Square and the block west of it. The area is part of the early town of Charlottesville.

The design of new and remodeled buildings within the district must harmonize with early architectural styles of Charlottesville. Plans for building and remodeling within the area must be submitted to the architectural review board for approval.

City Mortgage moved into the new building during the last week of October from its previous location at 204 E. Market St.

The new office building was designed by the Charlottesville architectural firm of Johnson Craven and Gibson. Gunston Hall, after which it was modeled, was the home of George Mason, author of the first constitution of Virginia and the Virginia Declaration of Rights.

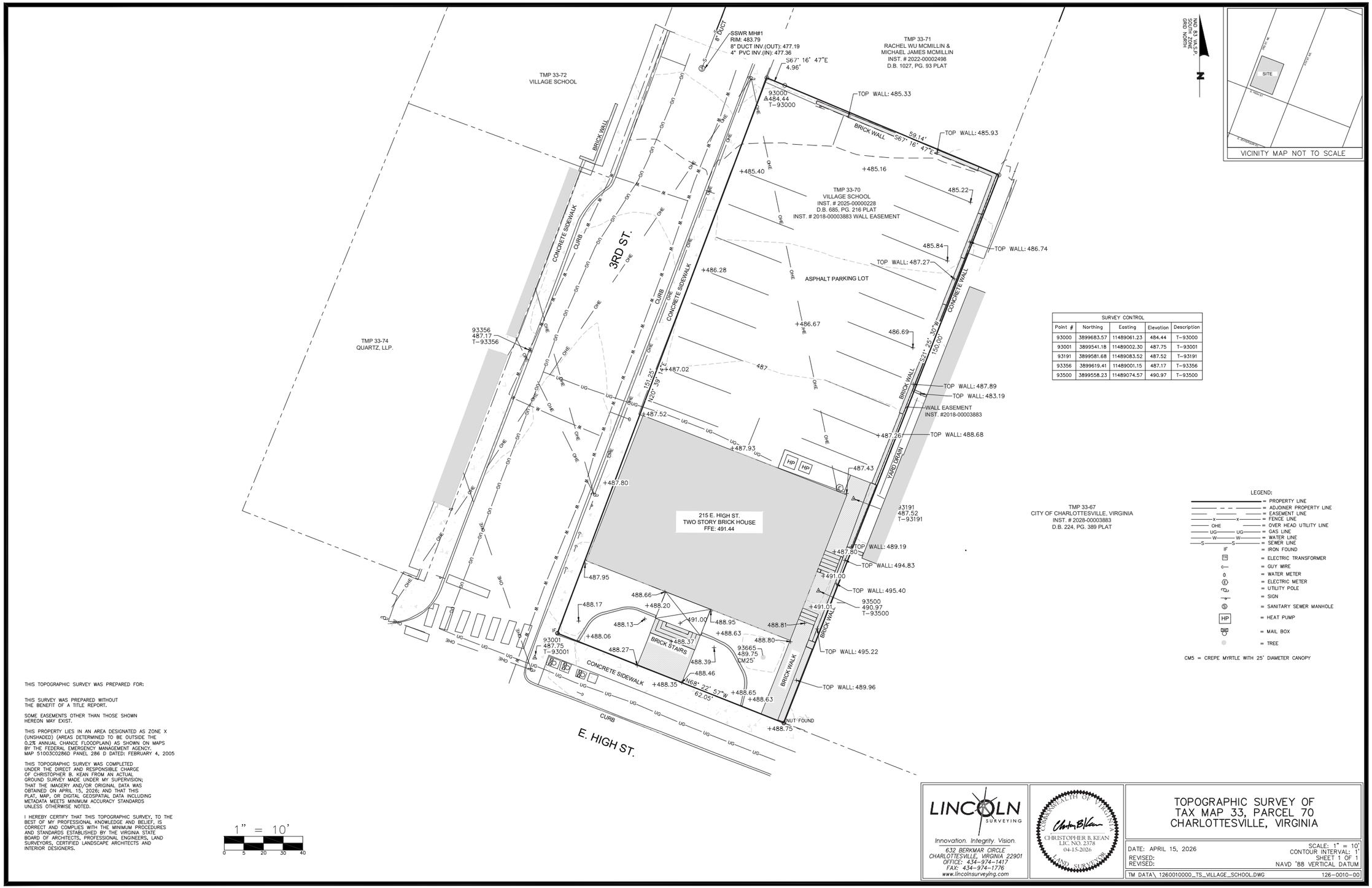
It is built of hand-made brick that was set in wooden molds. The brick is laid in flemish bond (brick pattern) and the structure has a molded brick water table as well as curved flat arches of rubbed brick over the windows. The water table design allows greater thickness in the walls at first floor level.

Johnson, Craven and Gibson now occupy part of second floor of the building. They moved there in the middle of October from their previous location on Court Square. John B. Gordon has also opened a new real estate office on the second floor.

City Mortgage was first organized in 1919 as Corbett and Rinehart, an insurance agency formed by Julian Corbett and W. A. Rinehart. In 1923 it became known as City Mortgage and Insurance Inc. J. D. Tilman Sr. was president; Corbett, secretary and Rinehart, treasurer.

In 1929 City Mortgage purchased Maphis and Twyman Agency, an insurance business started in 1900. It was transferred by its owners, the late Charles G. Maphis and the late Taylor Twyman.

W. A. Rinehart is presently chairman of the board and treasurer of City Mortgage. W. A. Rinehart III is president and J. D. Tilman Sr. is vice president. Mary G. Hisle is assistant secretary-treasurer. There are five other employes.



SURVEY CONTROL				
Point #	Northing	Easting	Elevation	Description
93000	3899683.57	11489061.23	484.44	T-93000
93001	3899541.18	11489002.30	487.75	T-93001
93191	3899581.68	11489083.52	487.52	T-93191
93356	3899619.41	11489001.15	487.17	T-93356
93500	3899558.23	11489074.57	490.97	T-93500

LEGEND:

- PROPERTY LINE
- ADJOINER PROPERTY LINE
- EASEMENT LINE
- FENCE LINE
- OVER HEAD UTILITY LINE
- GAS LINE
- WATER LINE
- SEWER LINE
- IRON FOUND
- ELECTRIC TRANSFORMER
- GUY WIRE
- WATER METER
- ELECTRIC METER
- UTILITY POLE
- SIGN
- SANITARY SEWER MANHOLE
- HEAT PUMP
- MAIL BOX
- TREE

CM5 = CREPE MYRTLE WITH 25' DIAMETER CANOPY

THIS TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY WAS PREPARED FOR:

THIS SURVEY WAS PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A TITLE REPORT.

SOME EASEMENTS OTHER THAN THOSE SHOWN HEREON MAY EXIST.

THIS PROPERTY LIES IN AN AREA DESIGNATED AS ZONE X (UNSHADED) (AREAS DETERMINED TO BE OUTSIDE THE 0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOODPLAIN) AS SHOWN ON MAPS BY THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY. MAP 51003C0286D PANEL 286 D DATED: FEBRUARY 4, 2005

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1" = 10'
0 5 20 30 40

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04-15-2026
LAND SURVEYOR

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF TAX MAP 33, PARCEL 70 CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA

DATE: APRIL 15, 2026
REVISED:
REVISED:

SCALE: 1" = 10'
CONTOUR INTERVAL: 1'
SHEET 1 OF 1
NAVD '88 VERTICAL DATUM

TM DATA\ 1260010000_TS_VILLAGE_SCHOOL.DWG 126-0010-00





301 E HIGH ST
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

PERSPECTIVE FROM 3RD ST NE

BAR SUBMISSION
JULY 6, 2026



301 E HIGH ST
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

PERSPECTIVE FROM COURTYARD

BAR SUBMISSION
JULY 6, 2026



301 E HIGH ST
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

PERSPECTIVE FROM COURTYARD

BAR SUBMISSION
JULY 6, 2026







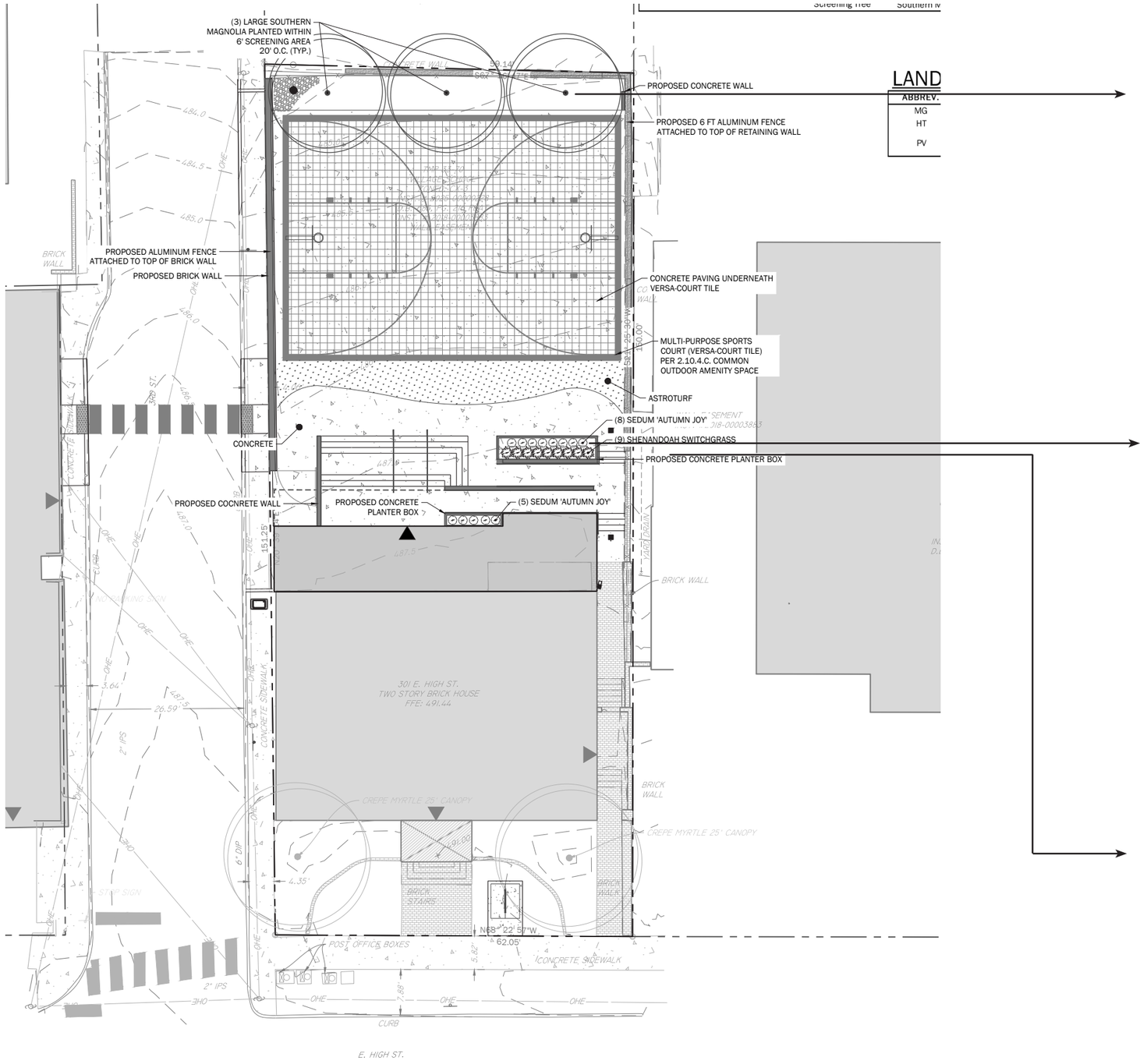
301 E HIGH ST
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

EAST ELEVATION

16

BAR SUBMISSION
JULY 6, 2026







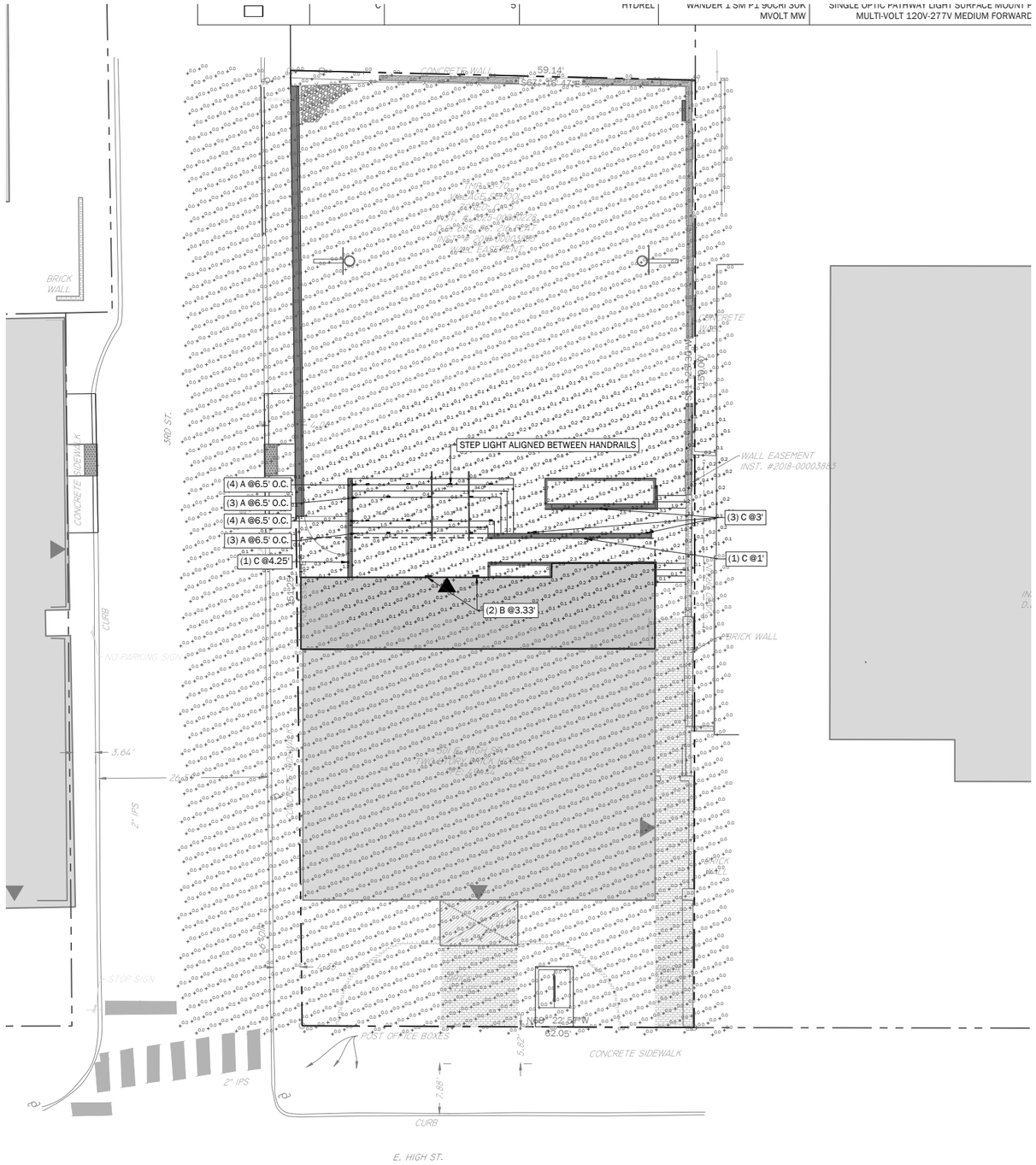
Large Southern Magnolia

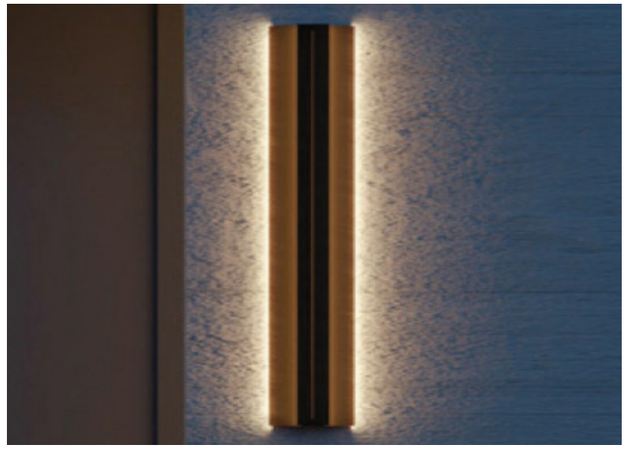


Sedum ‘Autumn Joy’

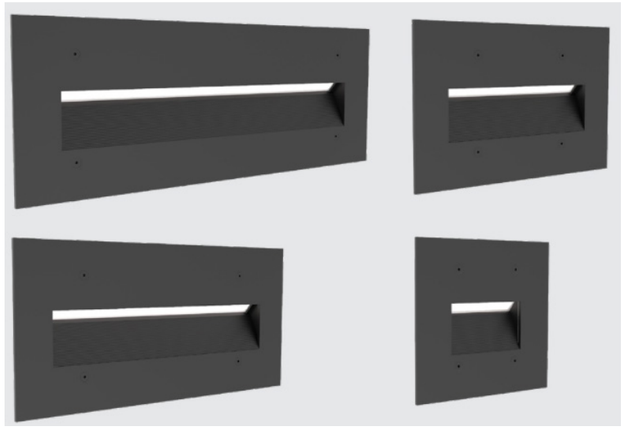


Shenandoah Switchgrass





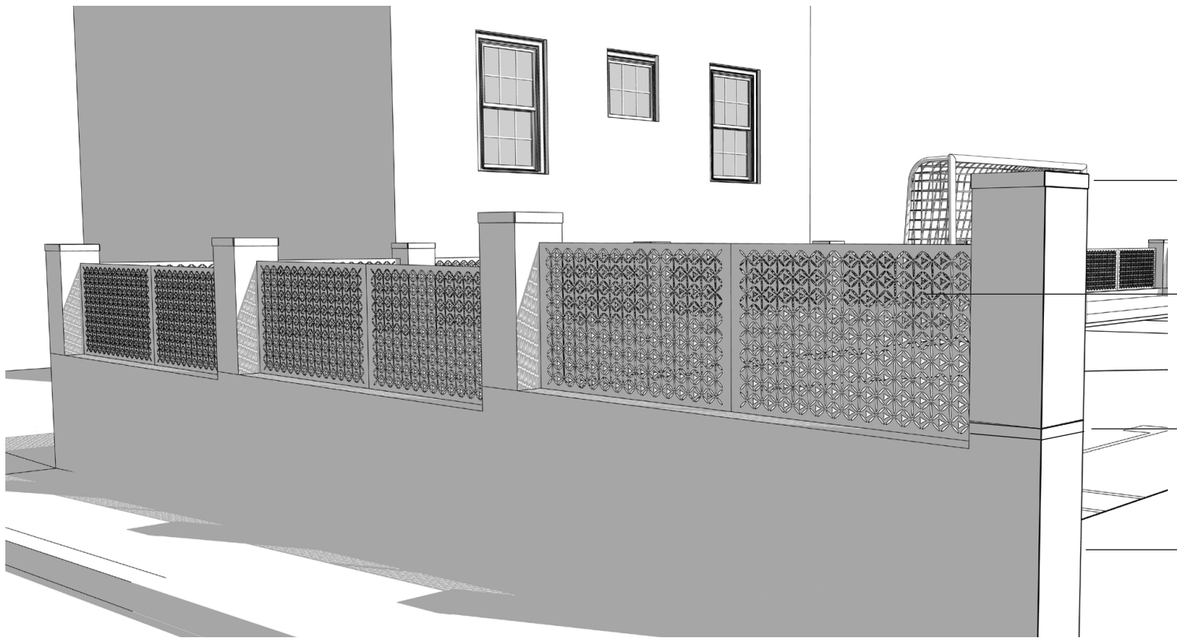
Building Facade Light
Tex Jr-60 in Enviro Oil-Rubbed Bronze(EOB)

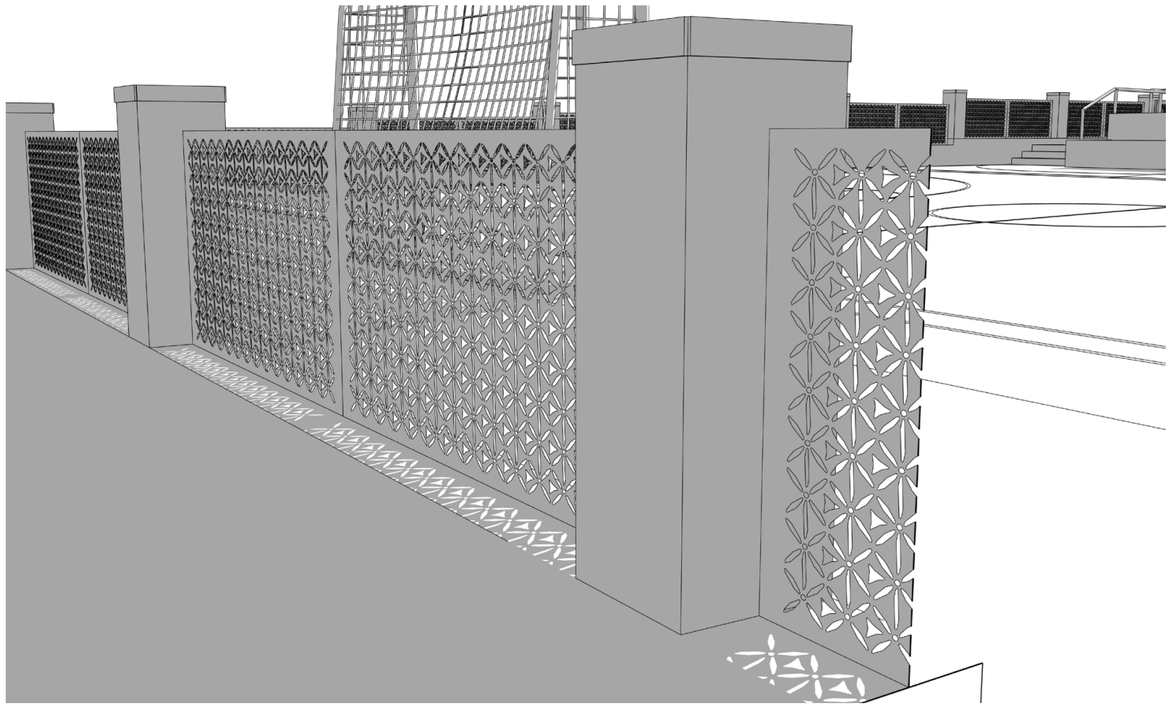


Stair Light
HSL13 Static White and Color



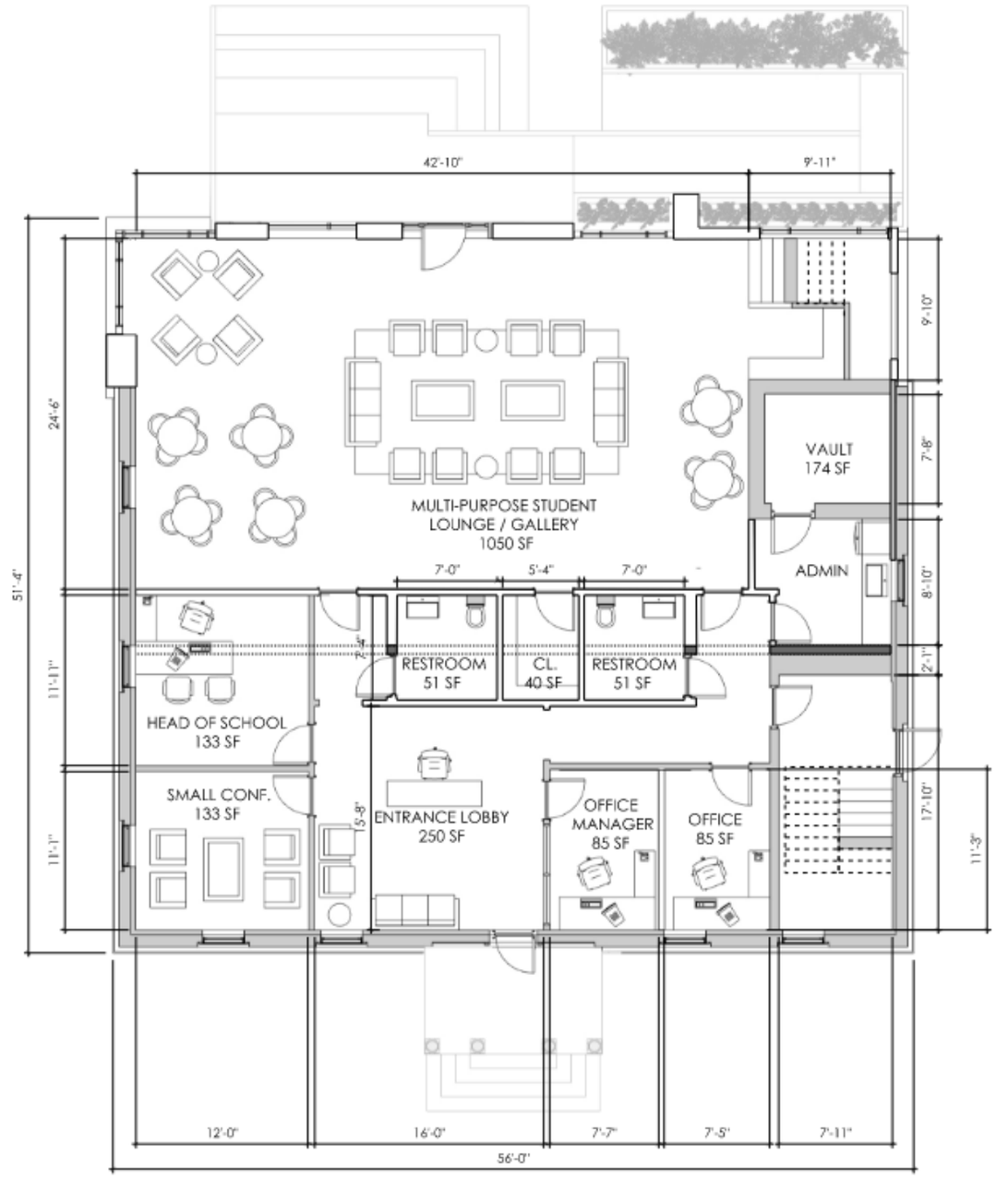
Wall Mounted Lights
Wander Pathway and Step Light Family







DECORATIVE METAL PANEL
ARTISAN PANELS INC PRIVACY PANEL.
18-FLOWER POTS IN BRECCIA COLOR



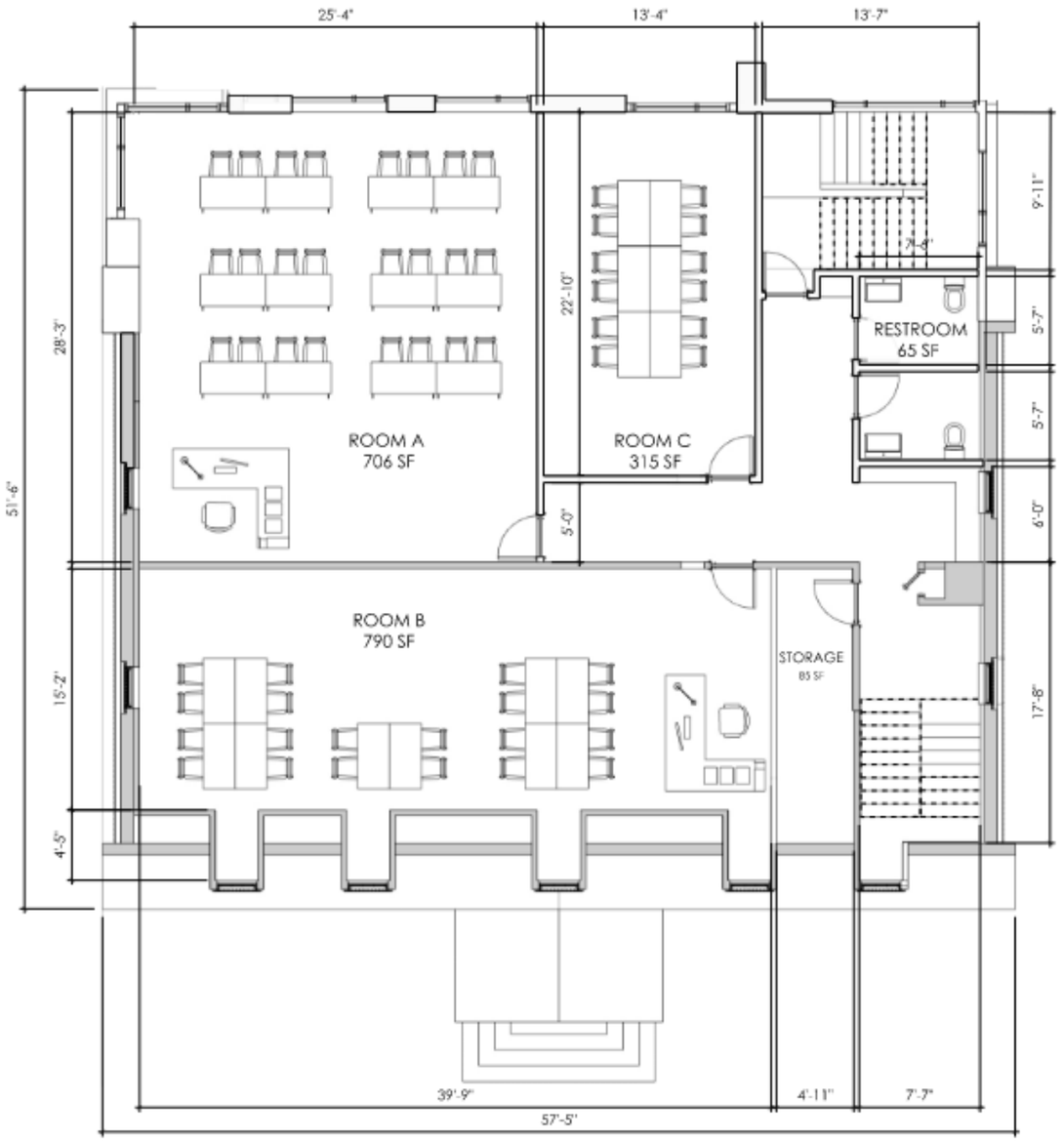
NEW WALLS

EXISTING WALLS

PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR AREA: 2,610 SF

1 A1.1 PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1/4" = 1'-0"



1 A1.2 PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1/4" = 1'-0"

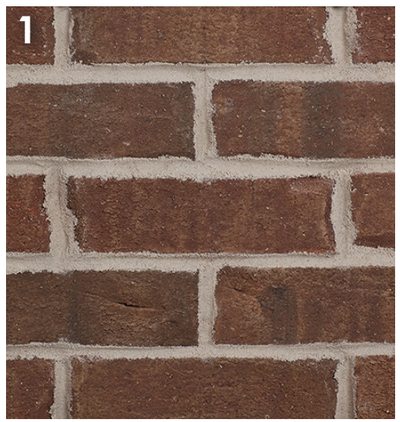
NEW WALLS

EXISTING WALLS

PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR AREA: 2,350 SF

N

1



SITE WALLS
BRICK TO MATCH EXISTING

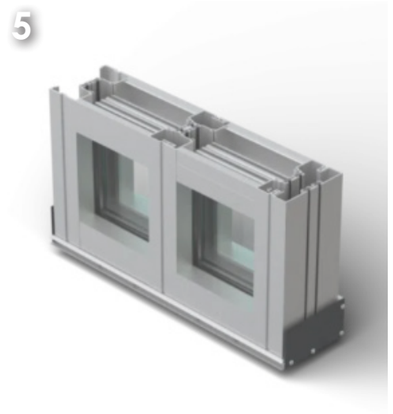
2

EIFS SYSTEM
MASTER WALL INC. ROLLERSHIELD DRAINAGE CLASS PB EXTERIOR INSULATION AND FINISH SYSTEM, PAINTED BM-1528 "EARLY MORNING MIST

7

F. HARDIE PANEL
JAMES HARDIE ARCHITECTURAL PANEL SIDING PAINTED BM-1631 "MIDNIGHT OIL"

5

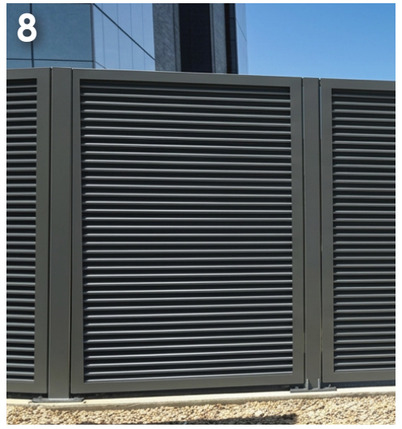


WINDOWS
KAWNEER TRIFAB VERSAGLAZE 451 STOREFRONT SYSTEM IN #29 BLACK

6

WOOD SIDING ON ADDITION
WOOD SIDING, DOUGLAS FIR TO MATCH EXPOSED GLULAM BEAMS

8



ARCHITECTURAL LOUVERS
ROOF EQUIPMENT SCREENS WITH 4" DEEP VERTICAL BLADES IN "BLACK"