

BOSTON LANDMARKS COMMISSION
24 MAY, 2022

THE AYER MANSION
395 COMMONWEALTH AVE



HACIN + ASSOCIATES
500 HARRISON AVE. STUDIO 4F
BOSTON MA 02118
P 617.426.0077
WWW.HACIN.COM @HACINASSOCIATES



2014 Photo from backbayhouses.org

Constructed in 1899-1900 on a vacant lot by architect Alfred J. Manning with designer Louis Comfort Tiffany for Frederick Ayer and his wife Ellen Barrows (Banning) Ayer. They Ayers lived in the mansion until their deaths in 1918.

1923 Acquired by the the E. A. Abbott Company and converted to offices.

1939 foreclosure by Brookline Savings Bank after continued use as medical offices by several owners.

1958 acquired along with 397 Commonwealth by Hearthstone Insurance, buildings operated as single building with various offices.

1964 acquired by the Association for Cultural Interchange for use as a dormitory in conjunction with 397 Commonwealth.

1966 added to the State Register for Historic Places

1988 300 square foot addition to the chapel created extending onto the 397 Commonwealth lot

2005 designated a National Historic Landmark as one of three surviving examples of residential interiors deisgned by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

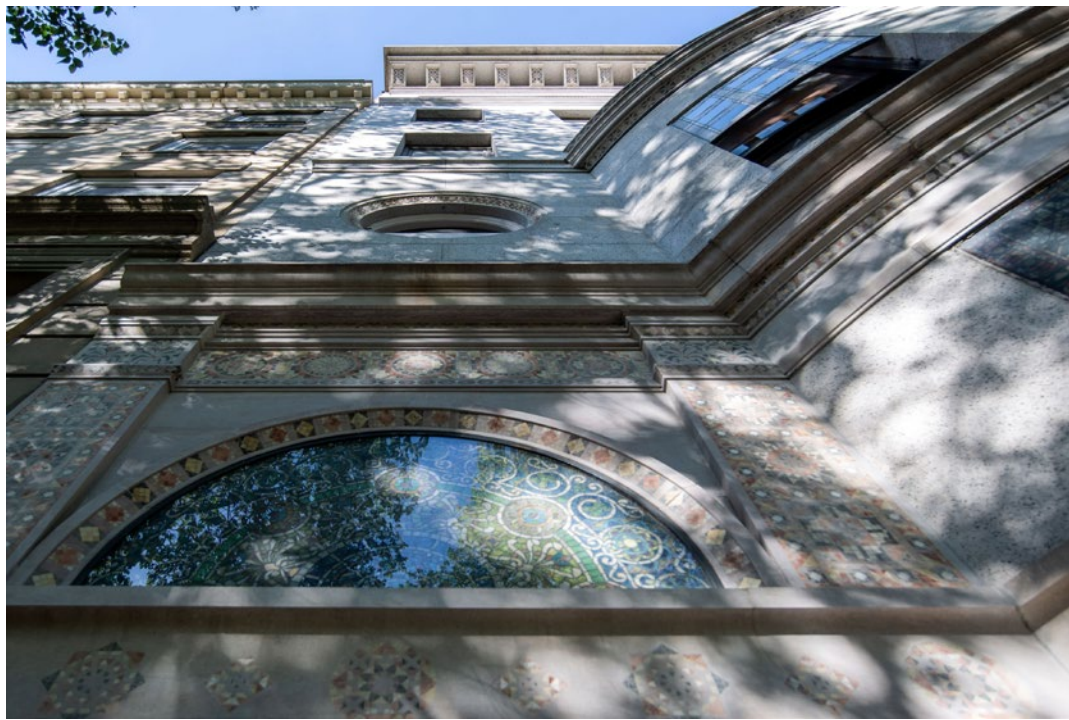
One of only twelve Back Bay addresses to have frontage on both Commonwealth Avenue and Marlborough Street.

Building History

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Existing Conditions – Commonwealth Facade

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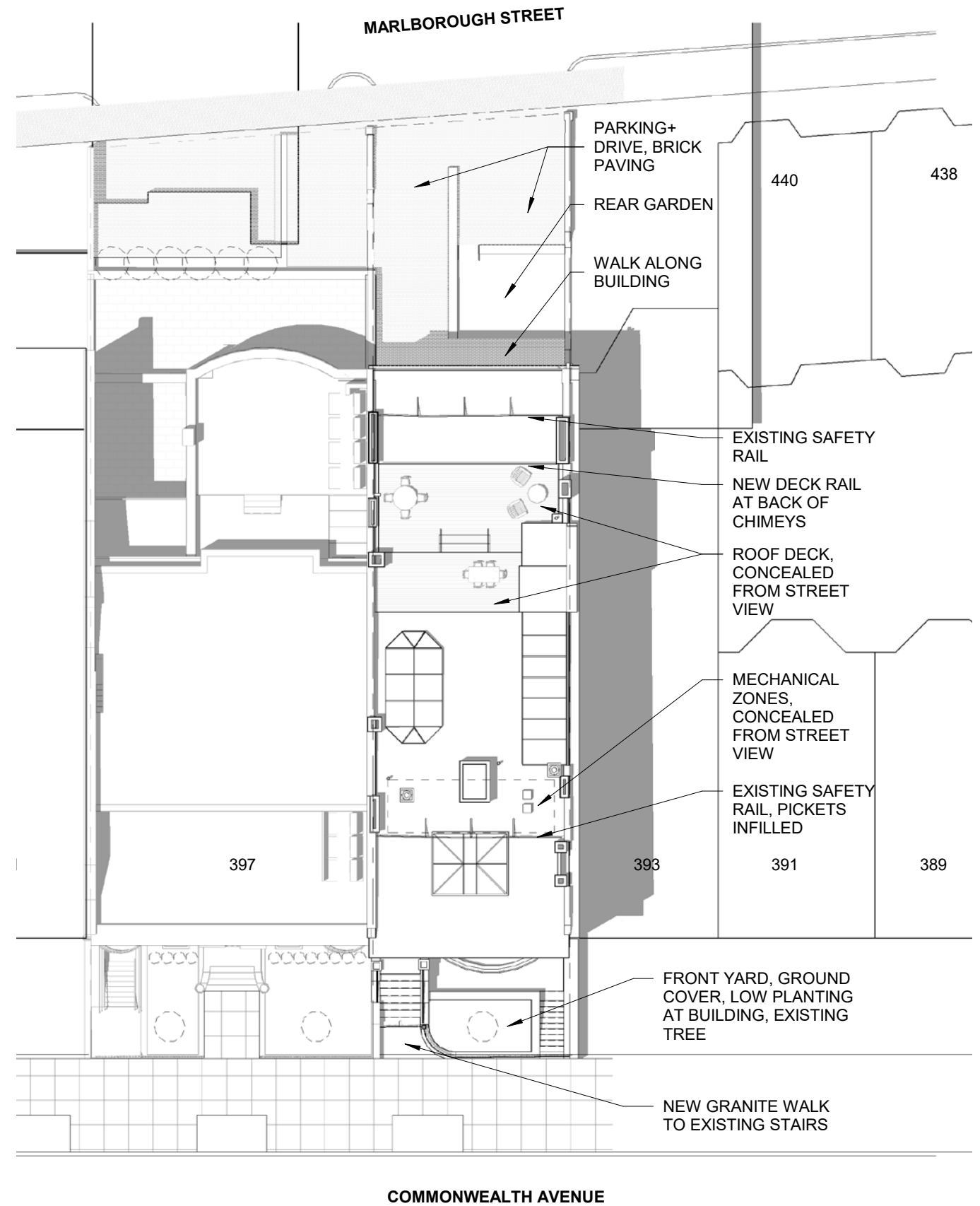
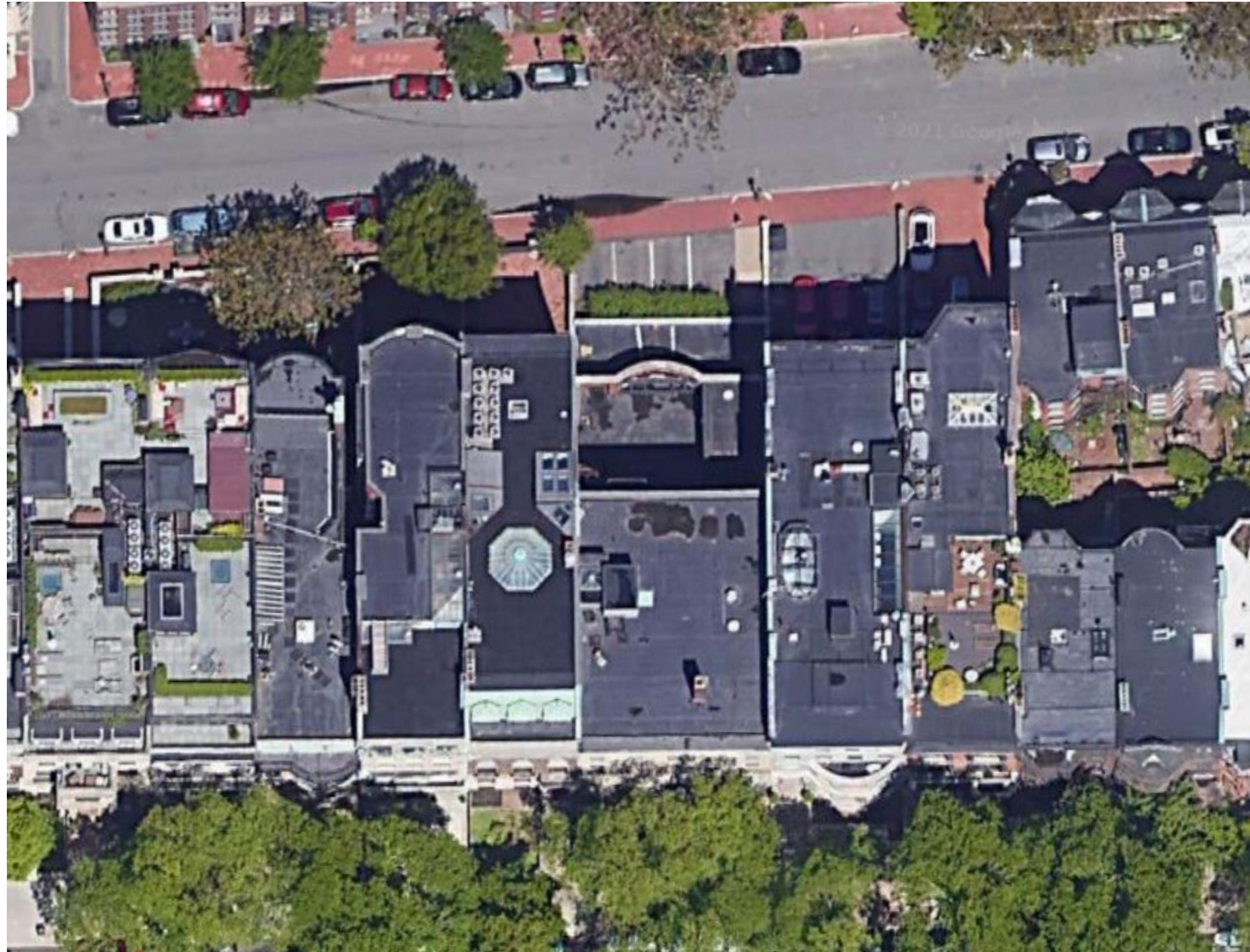


Existing Conditions – Marlborough Street Facade

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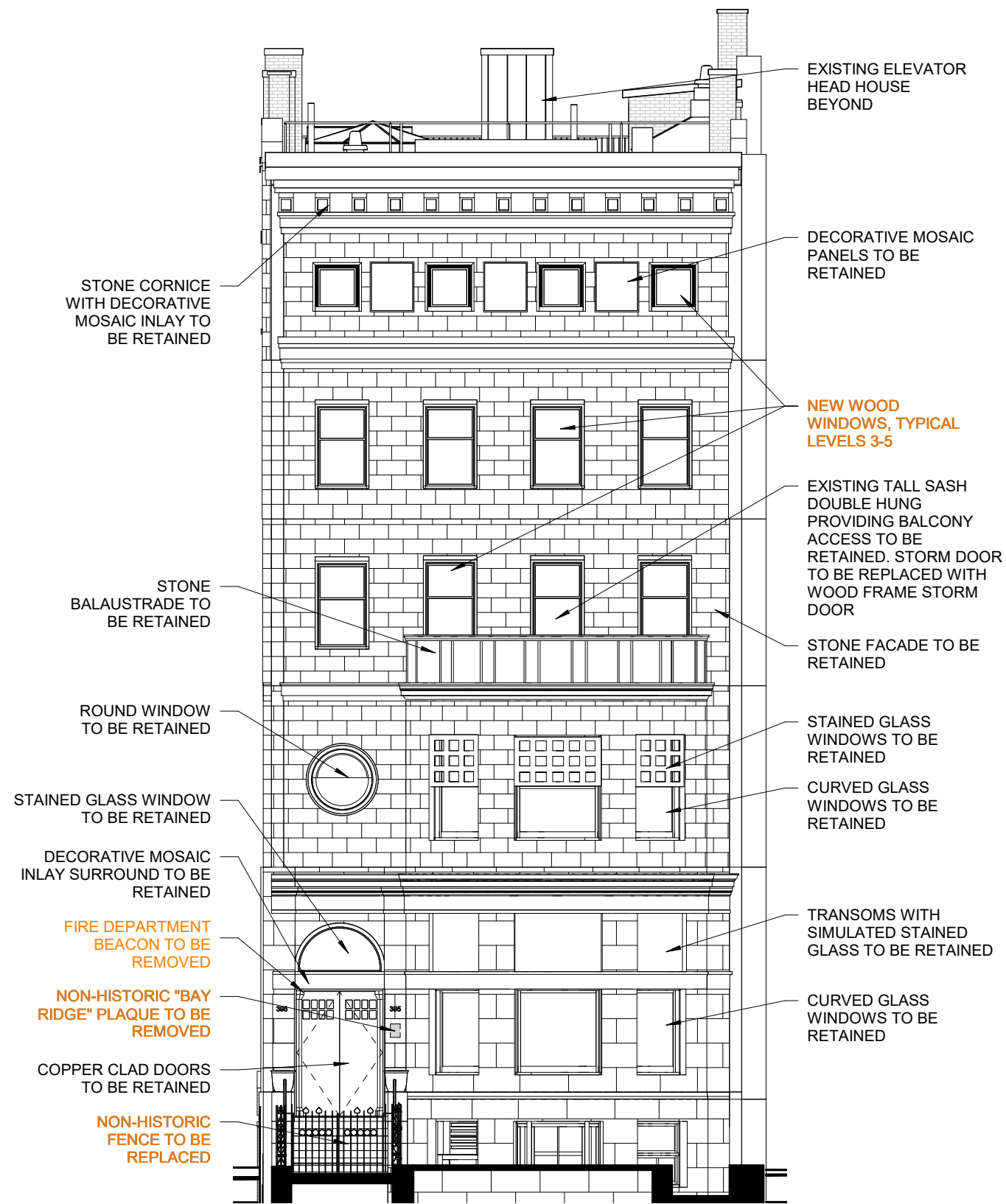
Site + Roof Plan as Approved by the BBAC

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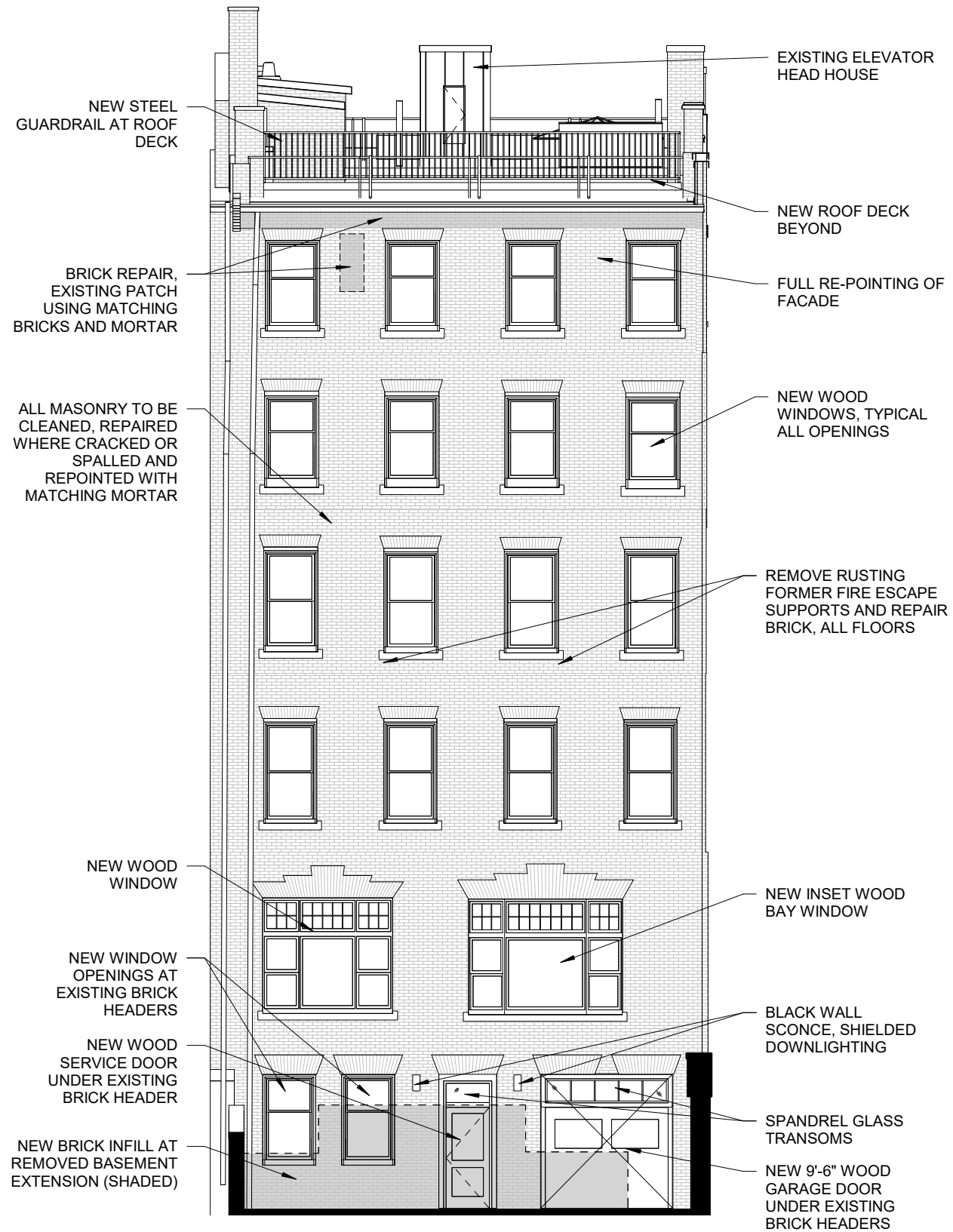
Commonwealth Elevation as Approved by the BBAC

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Marlborough Elevation as Approved by the BBAC

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Marlborough Views as Approved by the BBAC

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Keep Existing Handrails at Main Entrance



Replace Existing Fence with Low Ornamental Fence



Remove Existing Gate at Main Entrance



12-18" Ornamental Metal Fence on Existing Granite Wall



280 Commonwealth Avenue



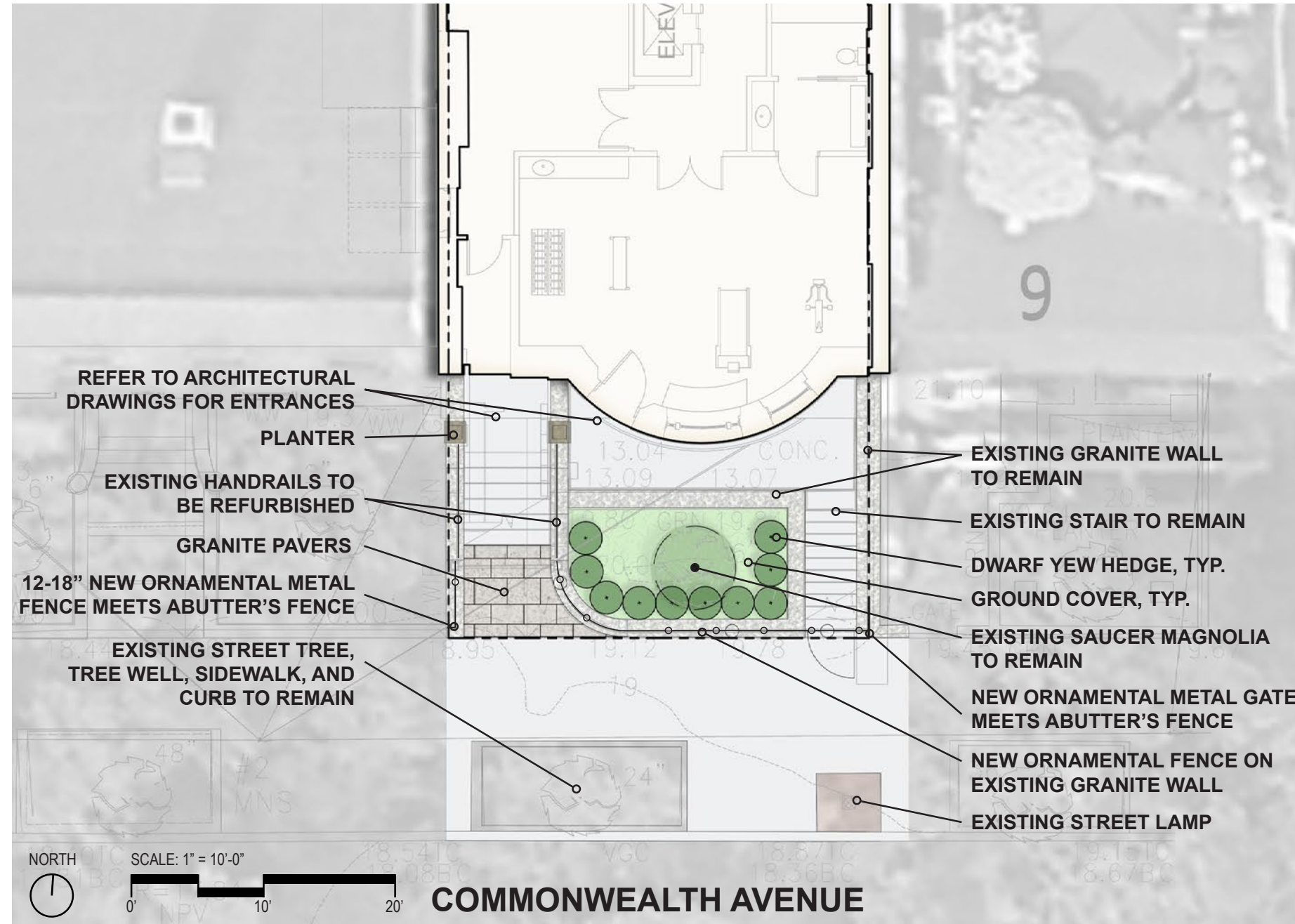
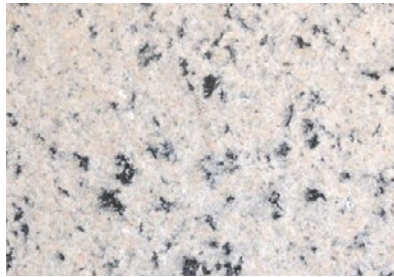
280 Commonwealth Avenue



Garden Planters (Seasonal Display)



Granite Pavers



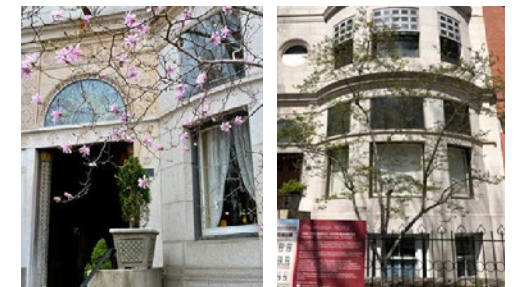
Evergreen Groundcover (Vinca Minor)



Dwarf Yew Hedge (419 Comm. Ave)



Existing Saucer Magnolia to Remain



SITE MATERIALS

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Landscape Design - Commonwealth Frontage (as Approved by the BBAC)

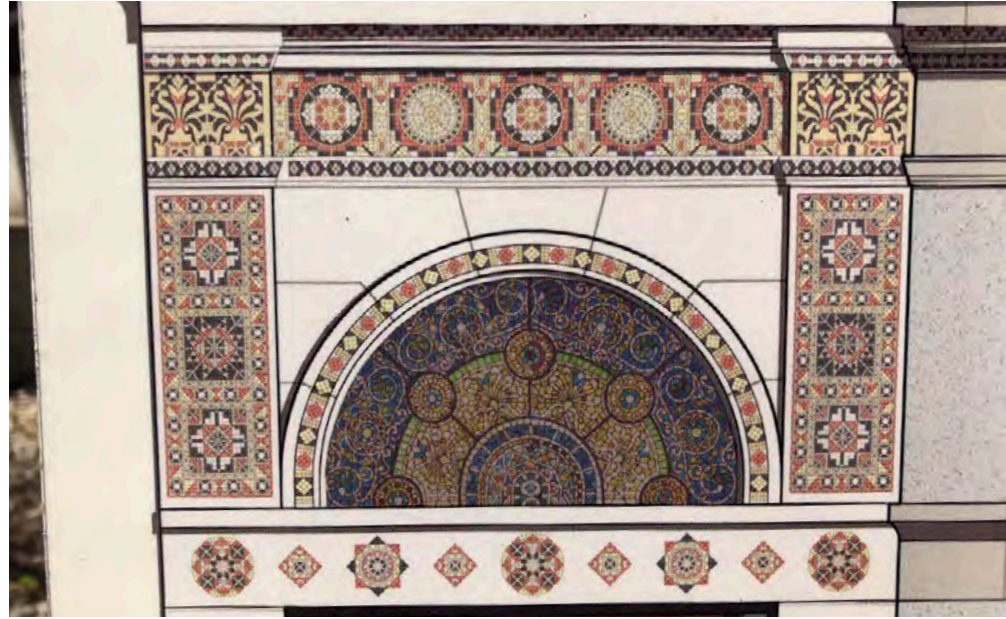
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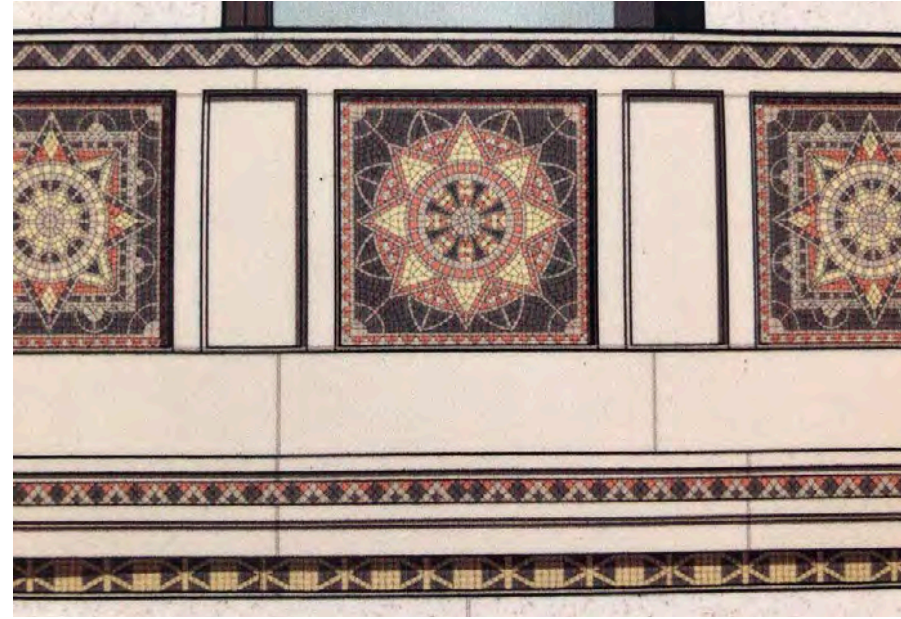
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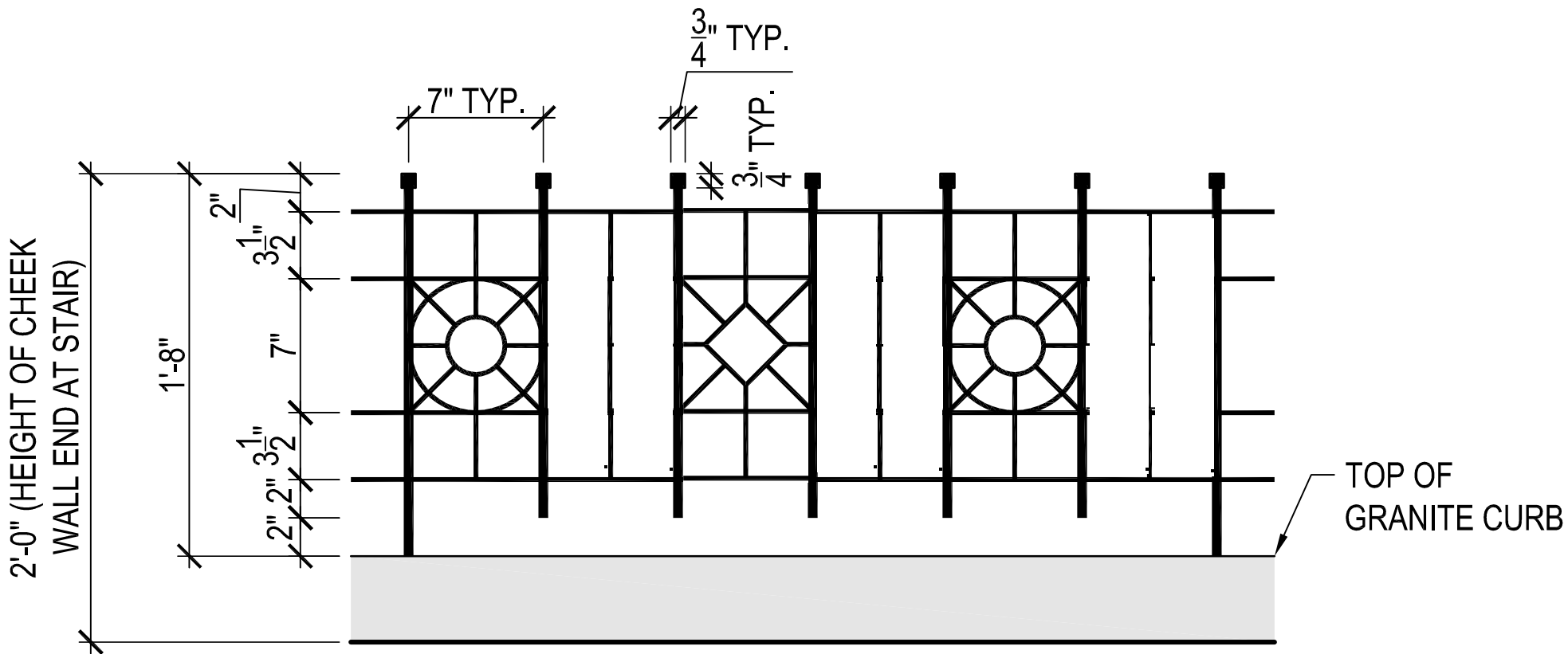
Ayer Mansion Details



Ayer Mansion Details



Existing Fence and Gate



Existing Fence and Gate



FENCE CONCEPT

Landscape Design - Commonwealth Frontage (provisionally approved by the BBAC)

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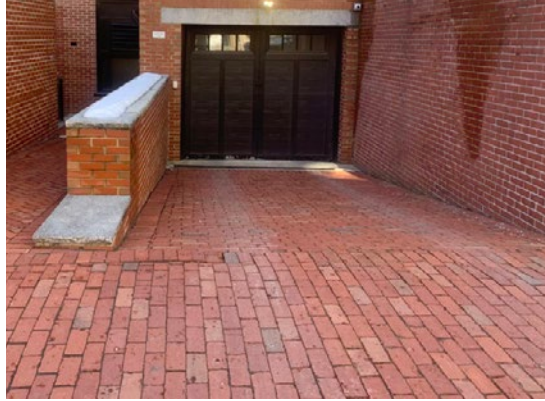
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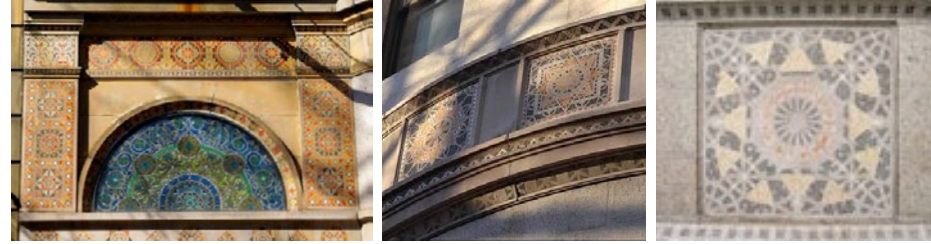
WARNER LARSON
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



Running Bond Brick Pattern at Garage Entrance
(Pavers laid on side)



Ayer Mansion Mosaic Details



Plant Materials - Hicks Yew



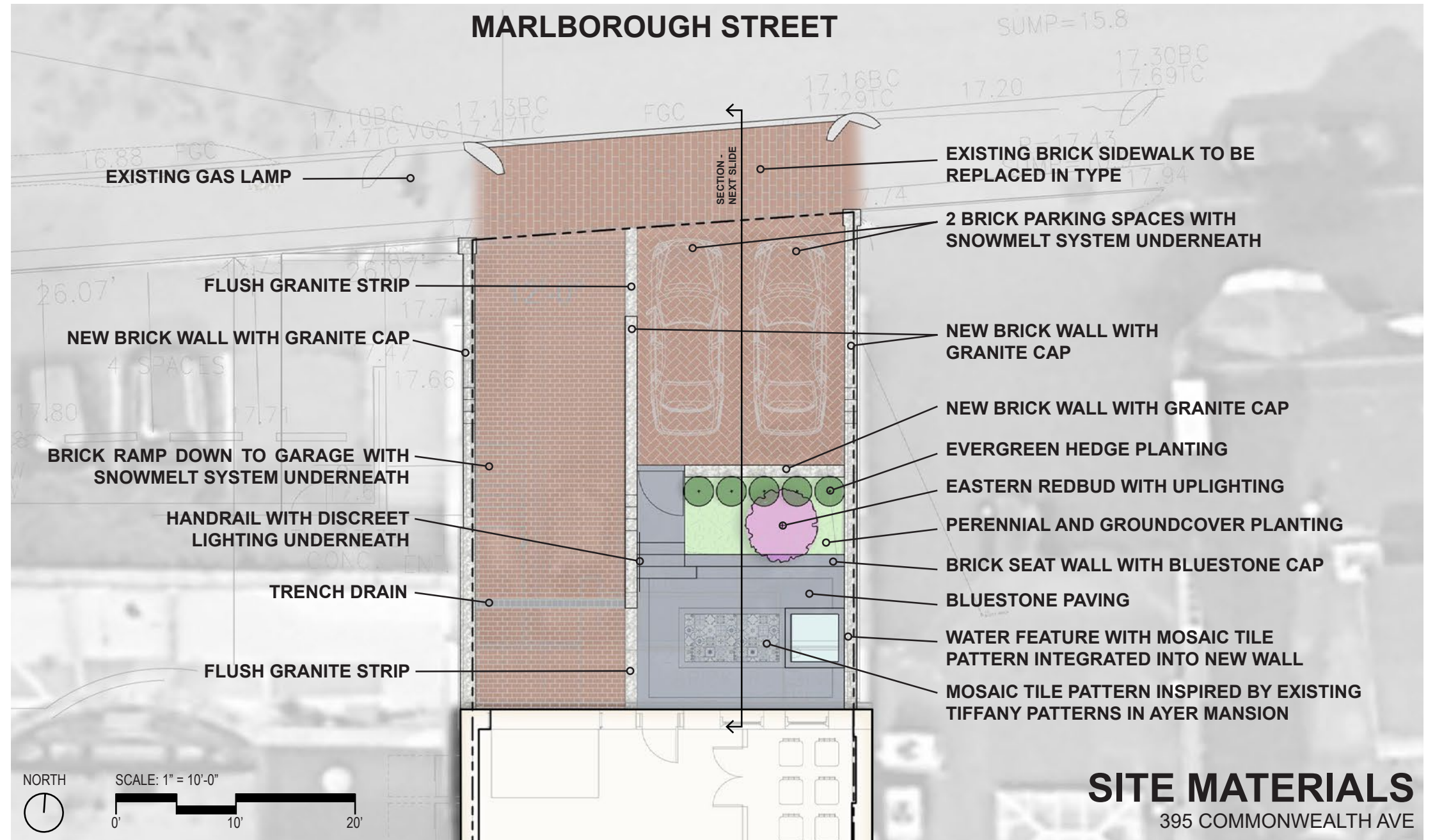
Plant Materials - Ground Cover Kaleidoscope to Compliment Mosaic Tile Pattern



Parking Brick Herringbone Pattern (Brick)



Water Feature Integrated Into Wall



SITE MATERIALS

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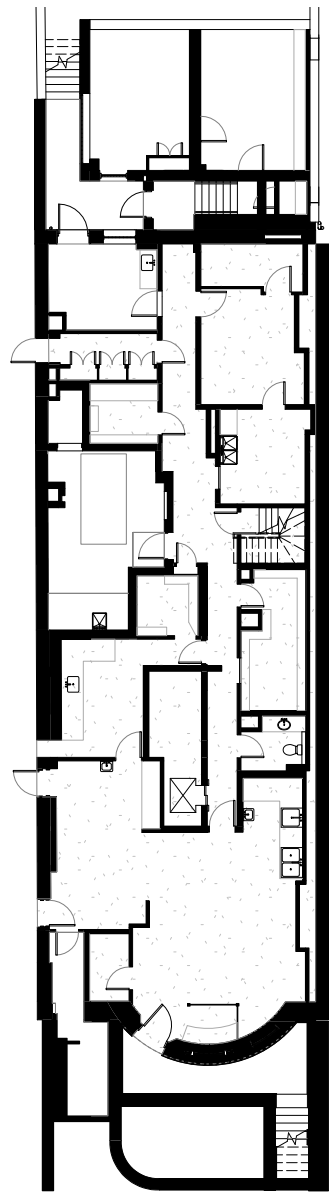
Landscape Design - Marlborough Frontage (as approved by the BBAC)

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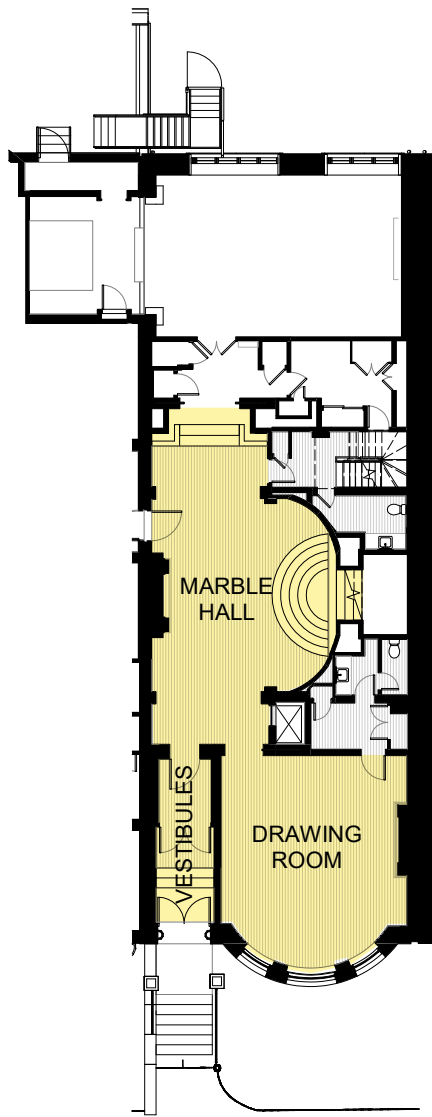
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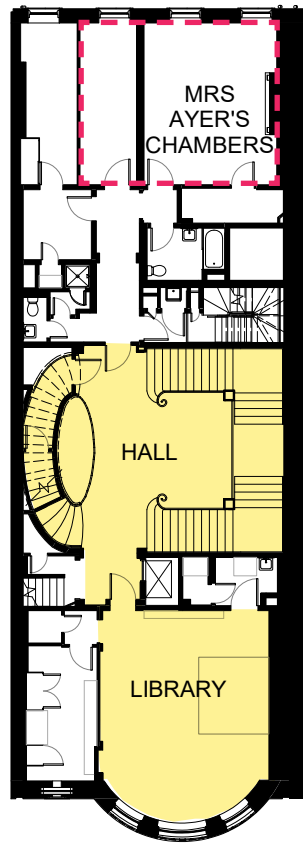




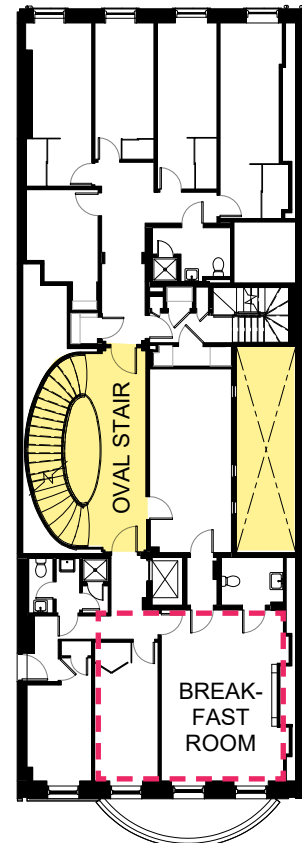
B | Basement



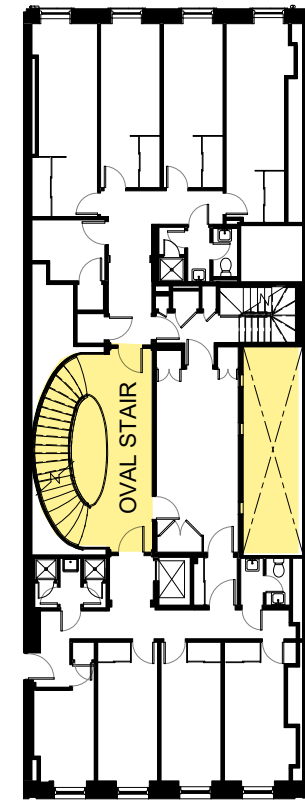
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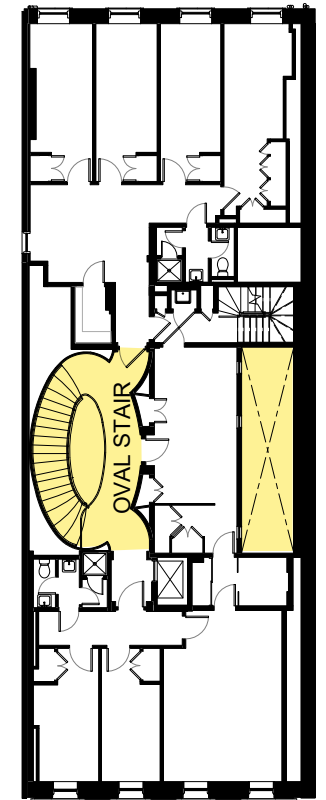
2 | Level 2



3 | Level 3



4 | Level 4



5 | Level 5


Existing Plans - Protected Spaces

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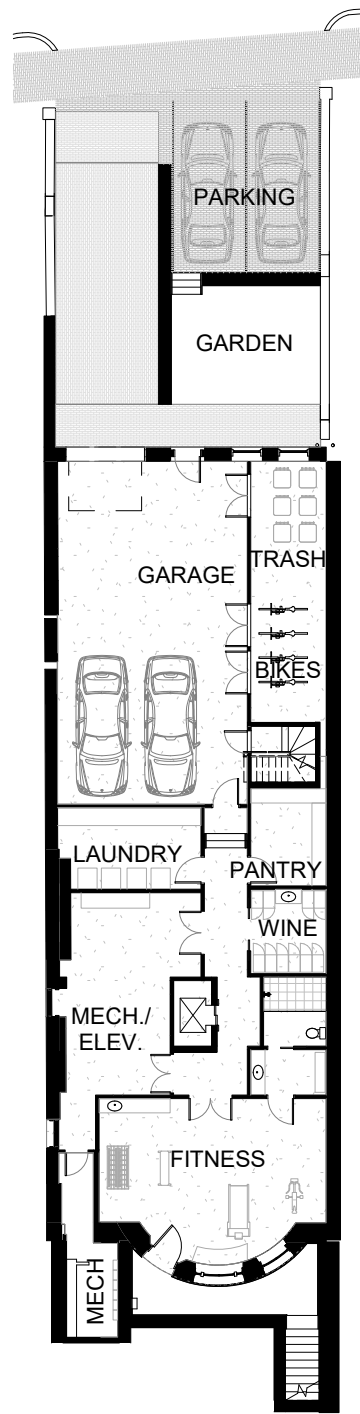
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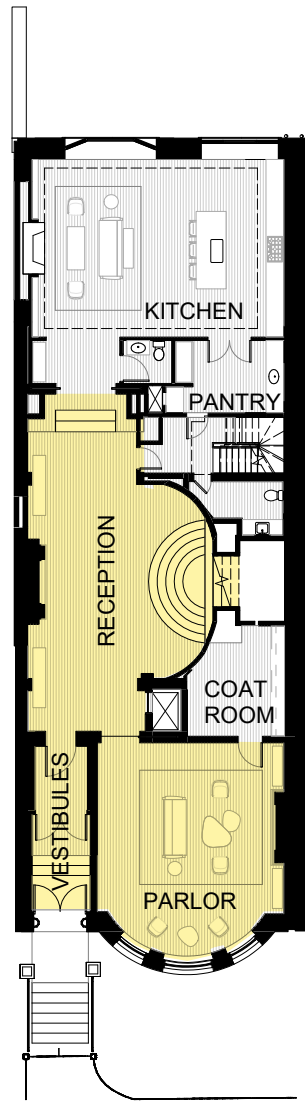
 INTACT HISTORIC SPACES TO BE RETAINED

 PREVIOUSLY ALTERED SPACES

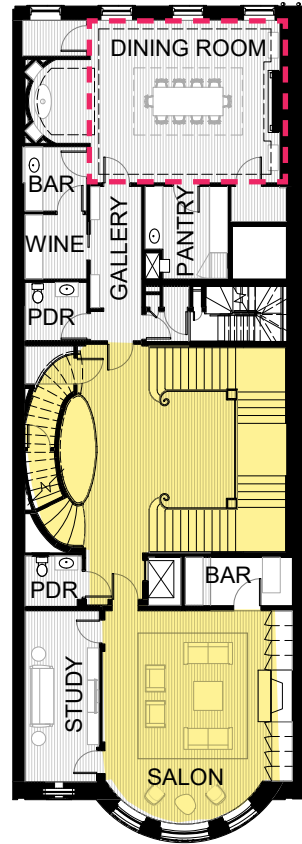




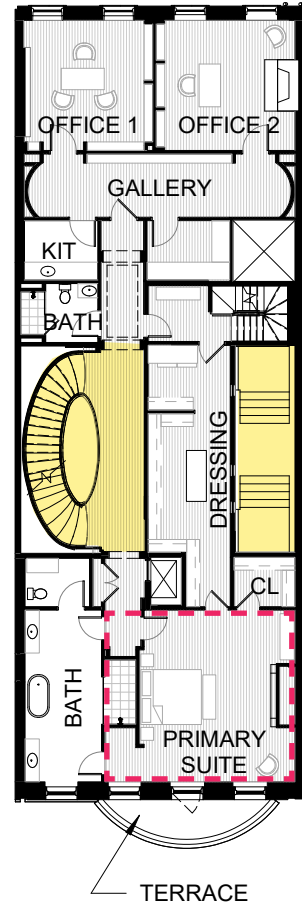
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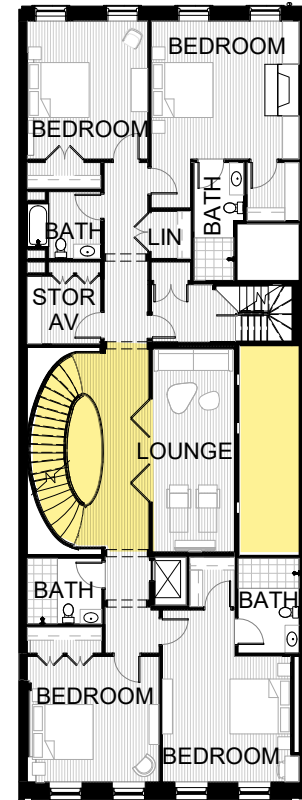
1 | Level 1



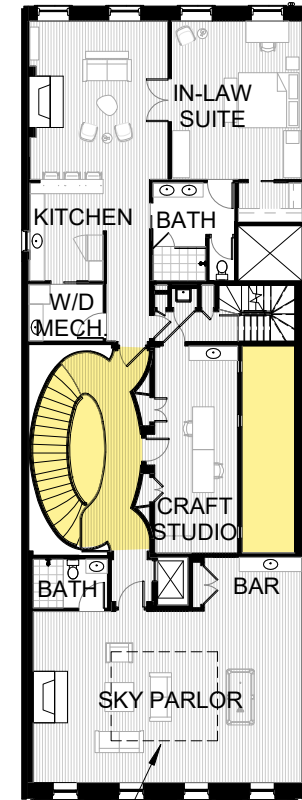
2 | Level 2



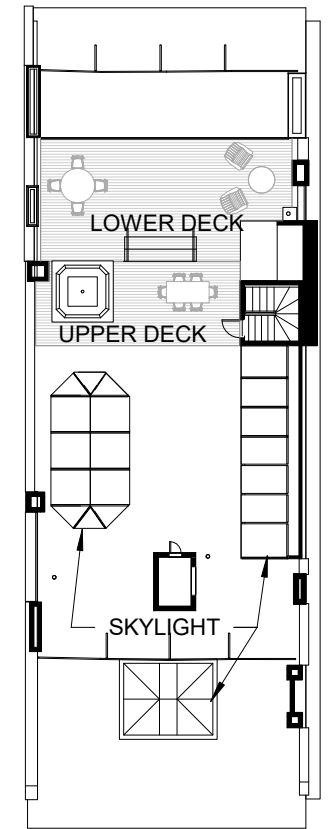
3 | Level 3



4 | Level 4



5 | Level 5




6 | Roof Deck


Proposed Plans

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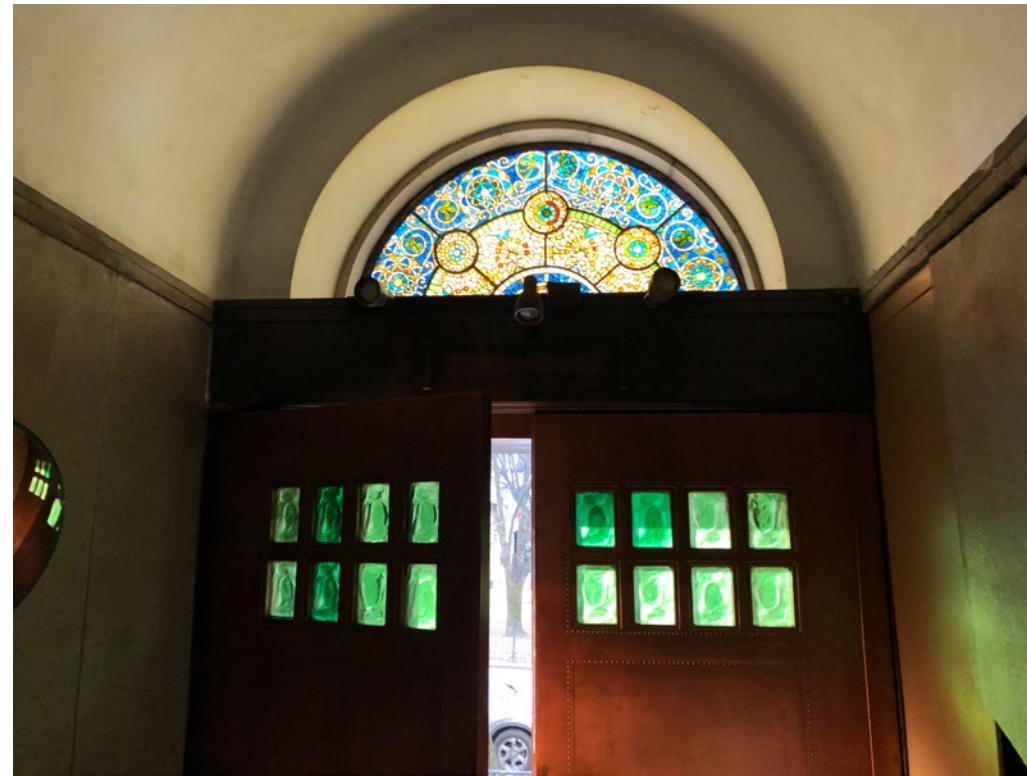
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 PREVIOUSLY ALTERED SPACES





Copper clad entry doors



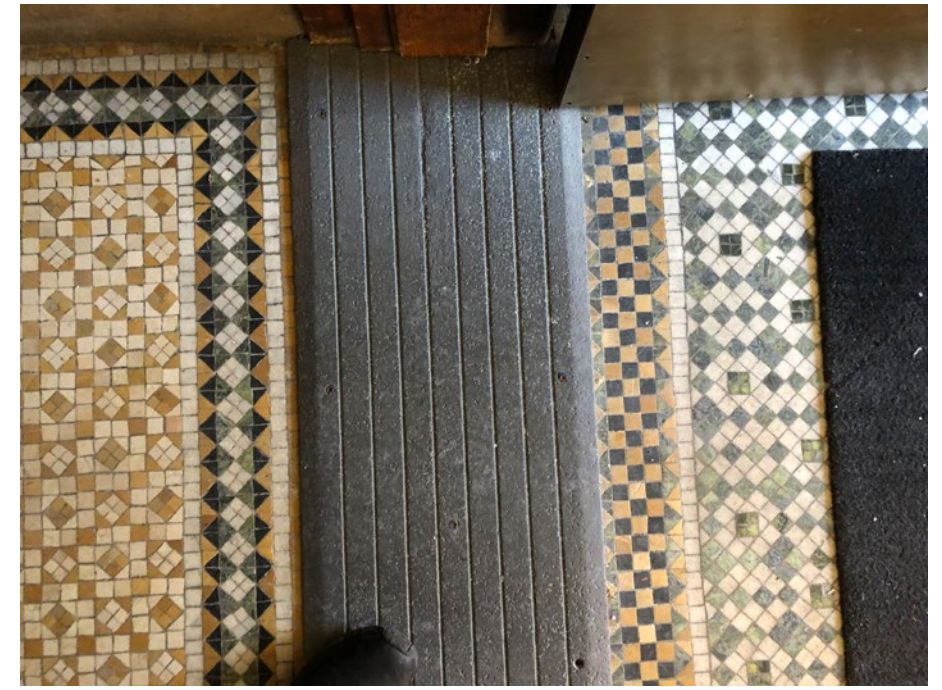
Stained glass transom



Green stone behind cementitious cladding at walls



Outer vestibule mosaic, inner vestibule doors



Inner and outer vestibule mosaics

Existing Photos - Entry Vestibule

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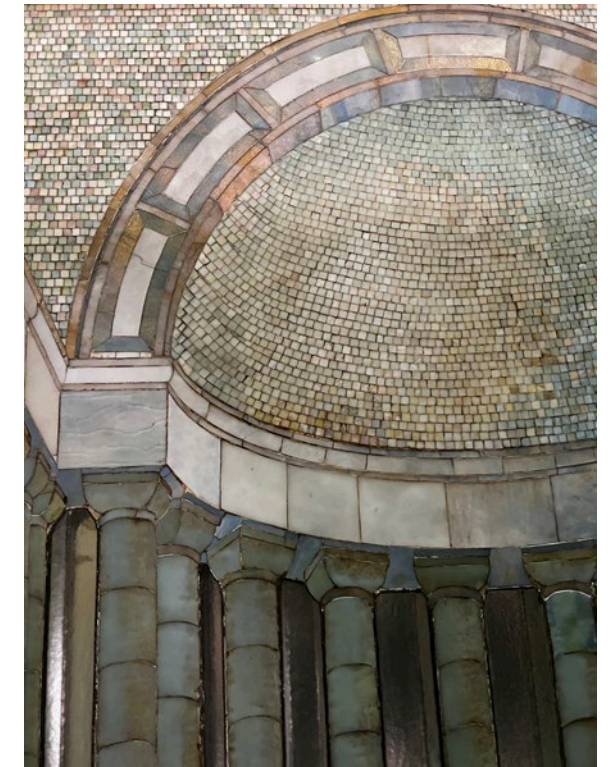
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Looking east up stairs to apse



Looking west at fireplace



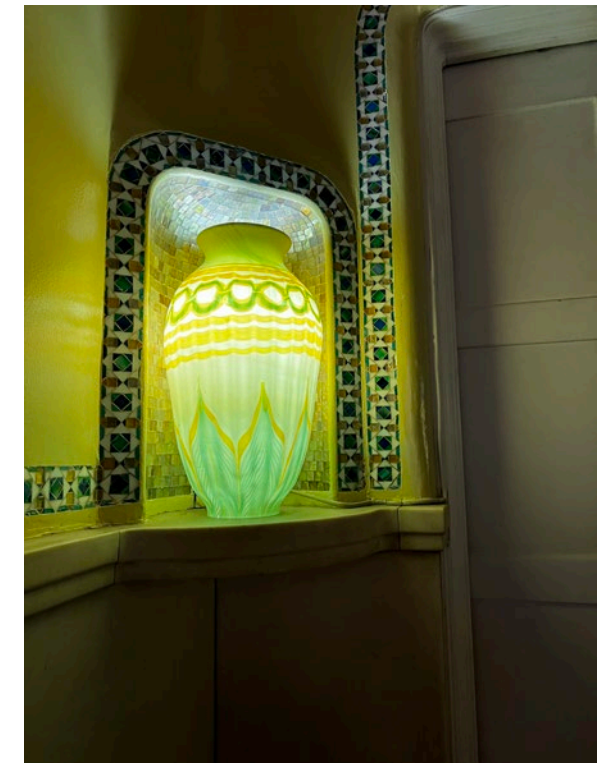
Apsse mosaic detail



Looking north to chapel



Looking south to parlor and entry



Lighted glass vases

Existing Photos - Marble Hall

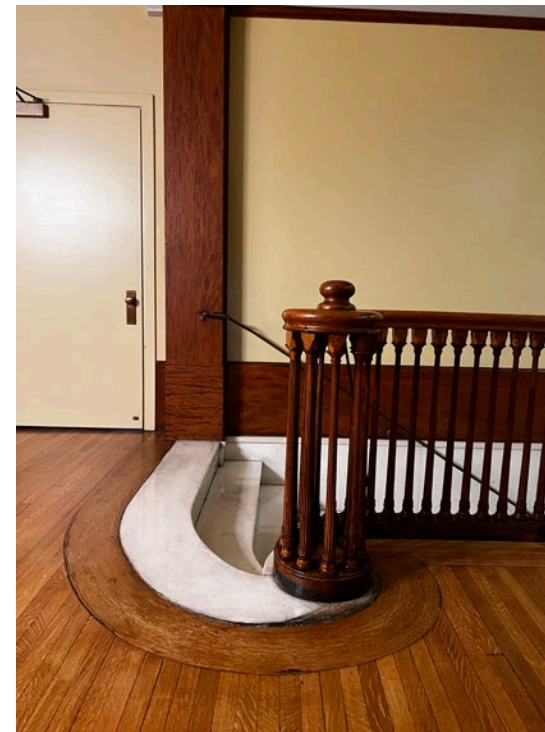
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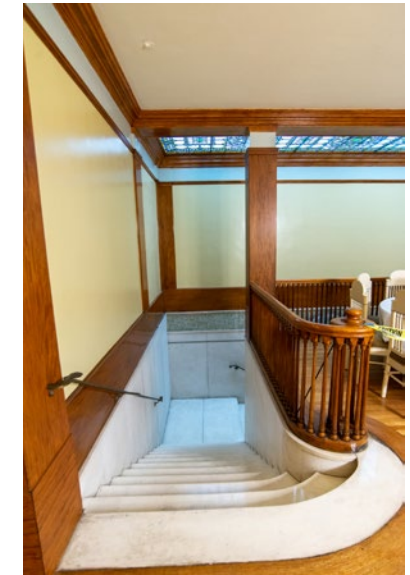
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Looking west at oval stair



Marble stair landing and rail



Looking east at apse overlook and skylight



Stained glass lay light over stair

Existing Photos - Hall Level 2

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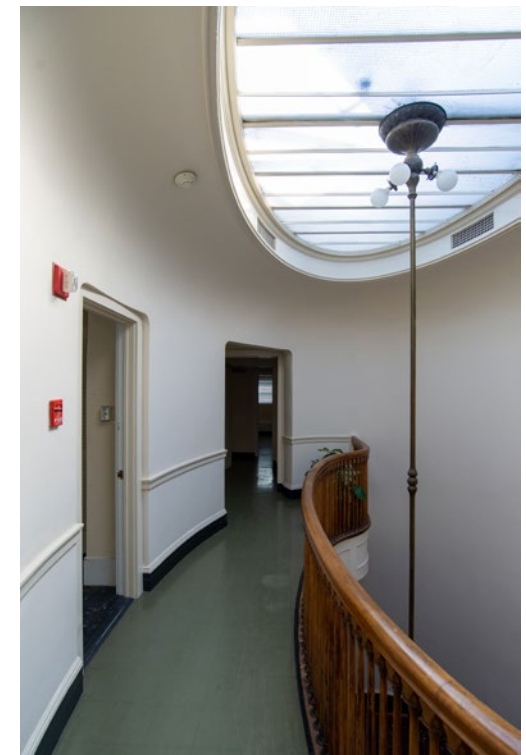
View up from entry hall



Level 3



Level 4



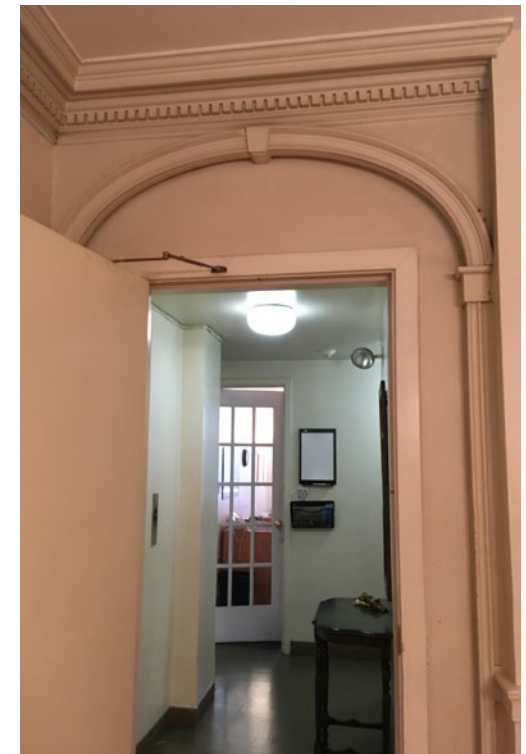
Level 5



Level 2 detail



Baluster detail transition level 3



Level 3 trim details

Existing Photos - Oval Staircase

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Ceiling, replica stained glass (plastic film)



Front bowed windows, curved glass



Front bowed windows, curved glass



West wall



East wall - fireplace



Parquet floor detail

Existing Photos - Parlor Level 1

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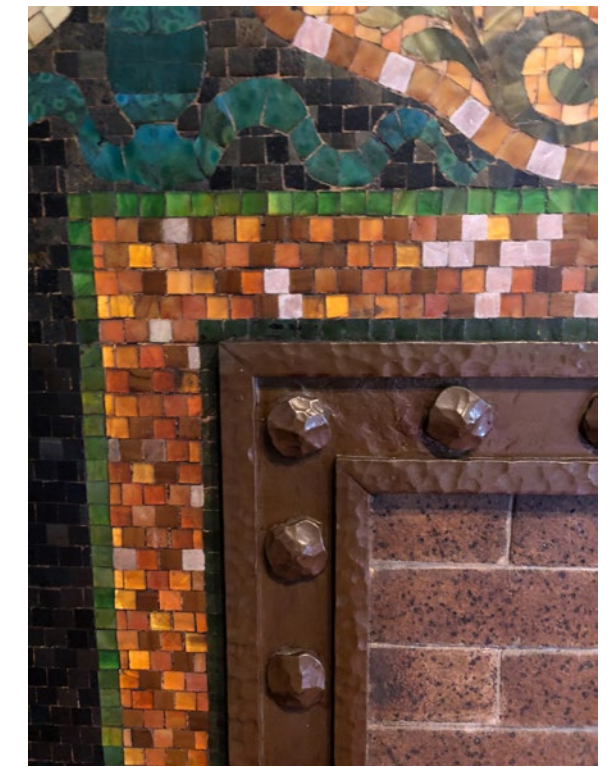
Glass front cabinets, paper covered



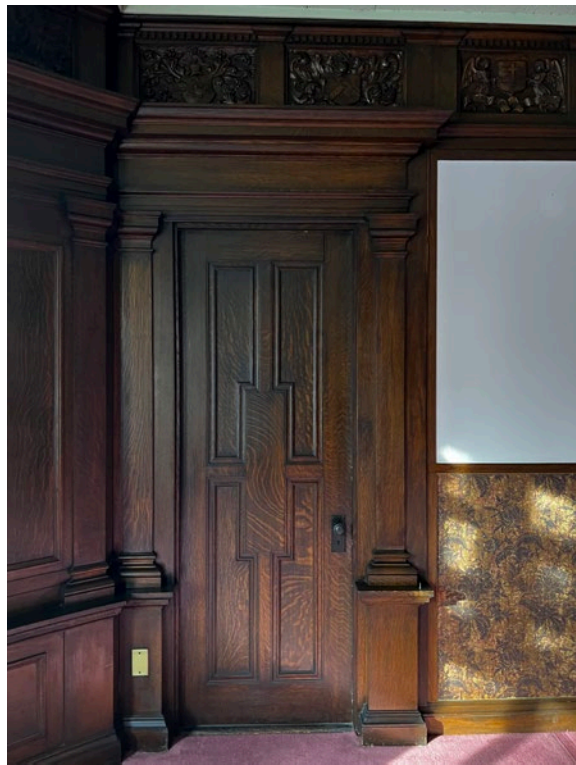
Fireplace



Fireplace mosaic detail



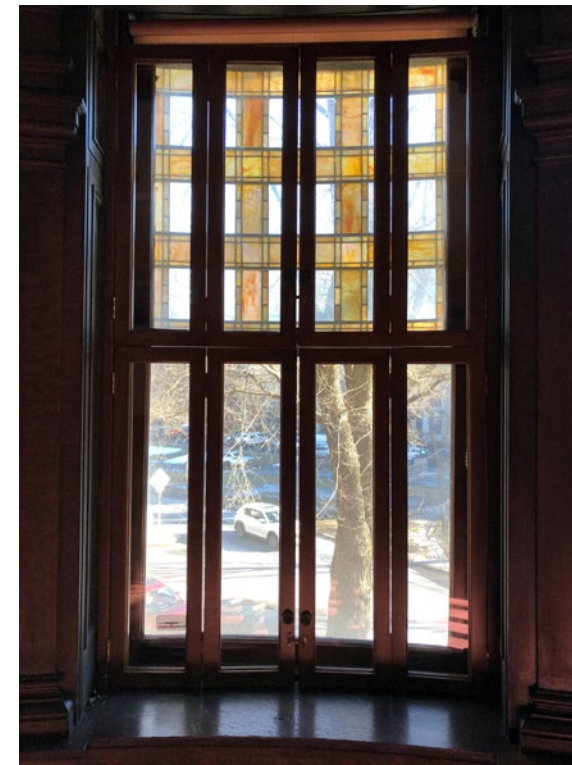
Fireplace mosaic detail



Door and wood trim detail



Bow windows, curved glass, original stained glass



Window shutter detail



Stained glass detail

Existing Photos - Salon Level 2

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View looking north



Fireplace

Existing mantle, hearth and surround to remain

Existing Photos - Mrs Ayer's Chamber Level 2

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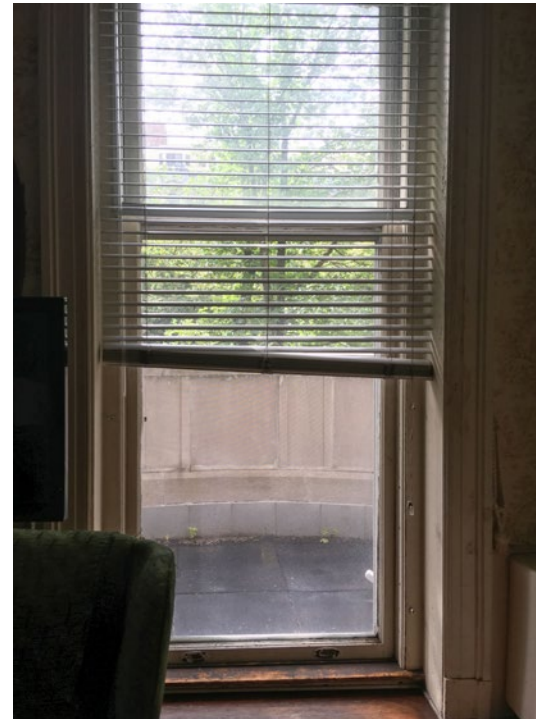
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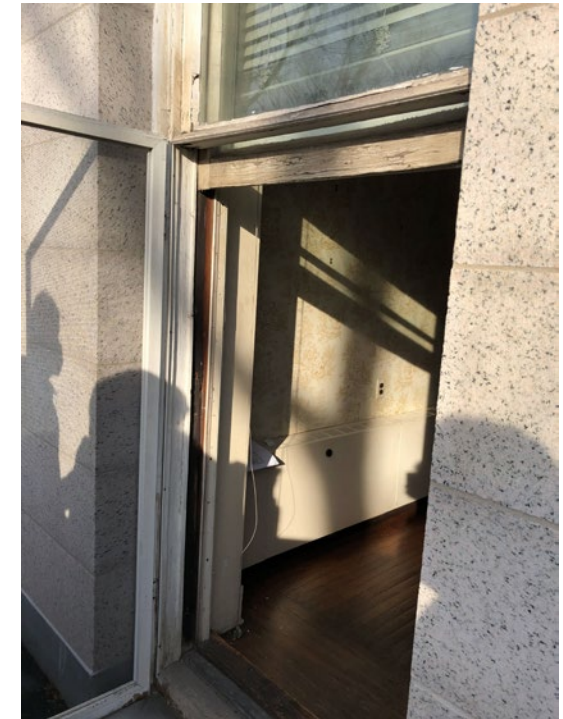
Room looking south



North wall, door trim detail



Original tall double hung at balcony



Window balcony access

Existing Photos - Breakfast Room Level 3

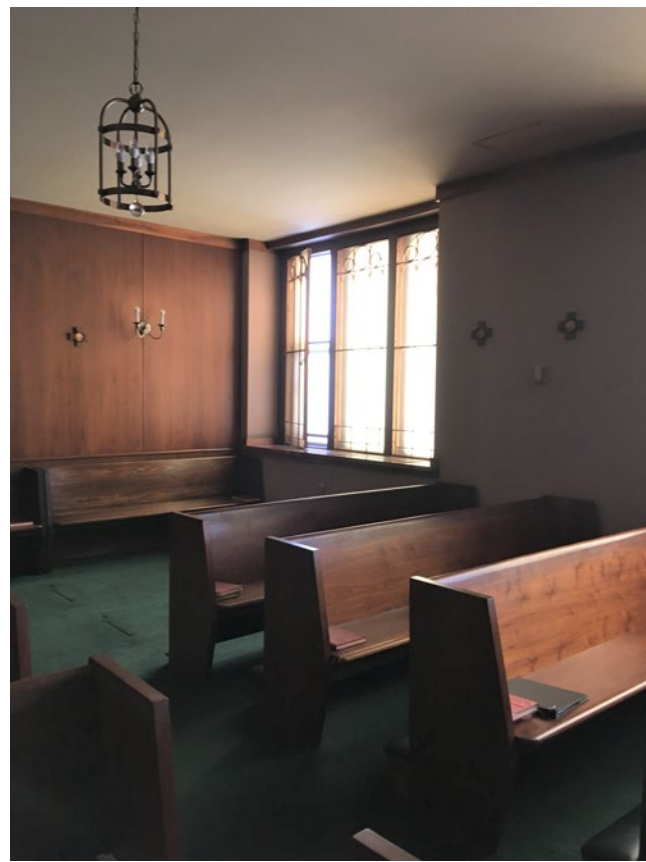
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Existing Chapel



Existing Chapel



Existing Dorm Room



Basement Hallway



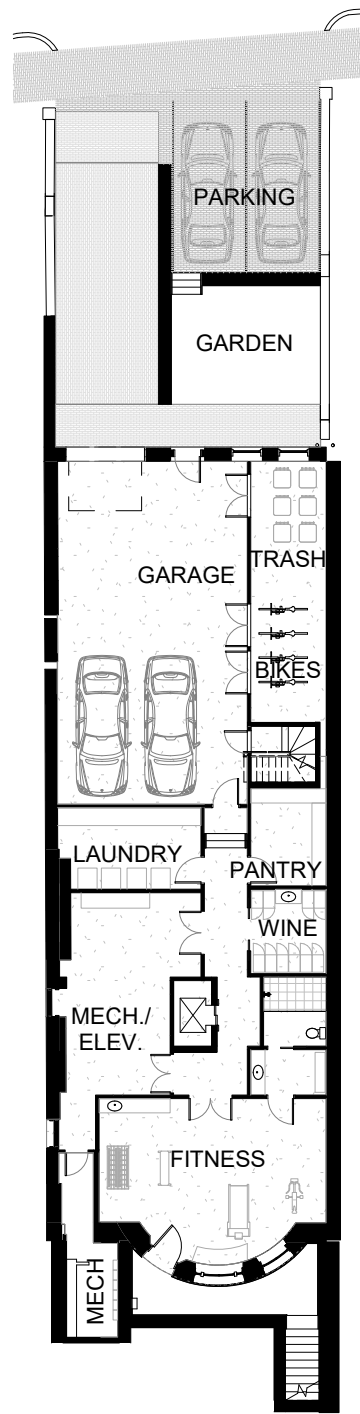
Basement Hallway

Existing Photos - Chapel, Dorm Rooms & Other

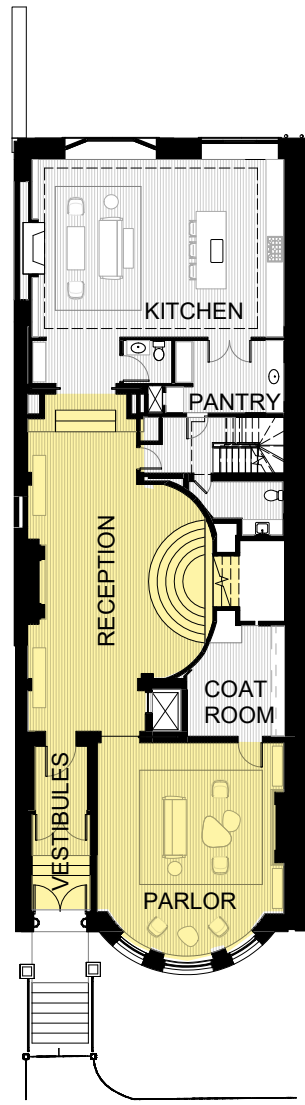
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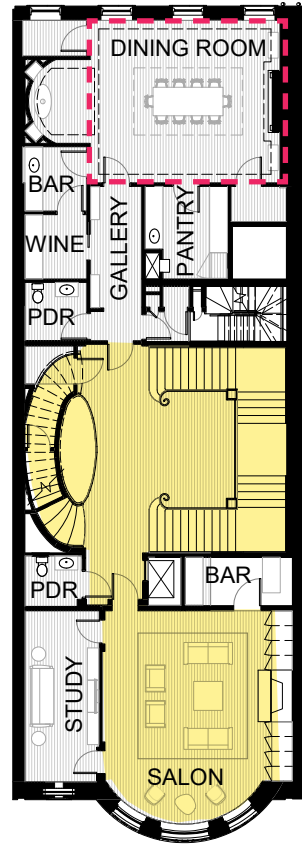
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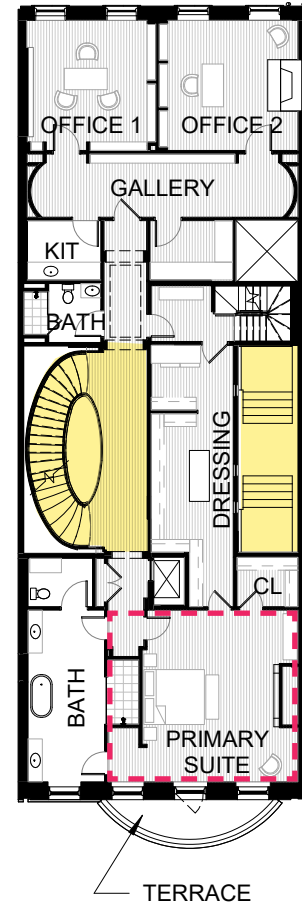
B | Basement



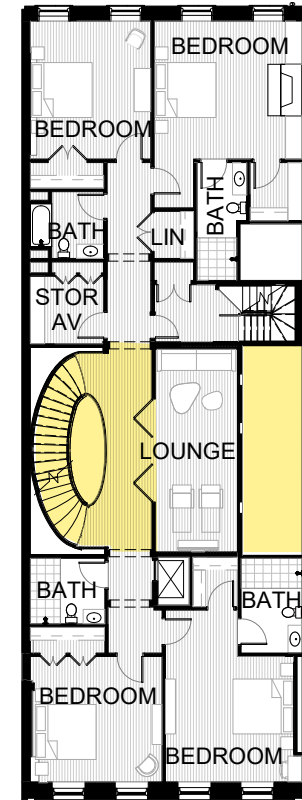
1 | Level 1



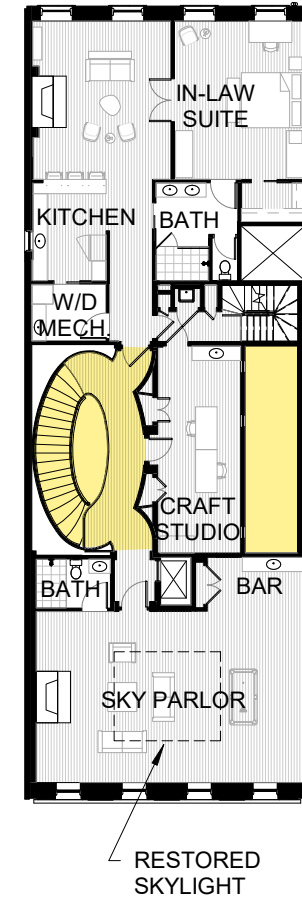
2 | Level 2



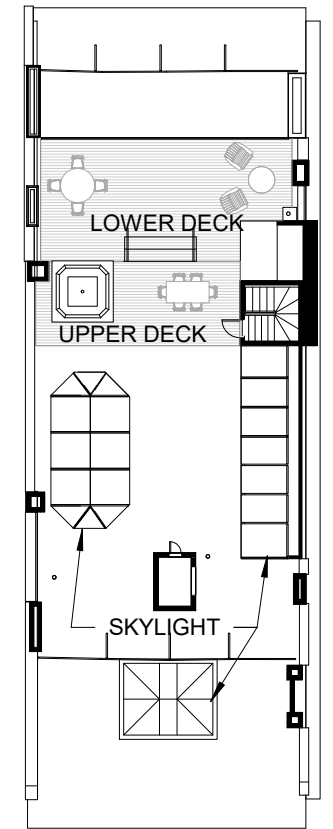
3 | Level 3



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Proposed Plans

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THANK YOU



HACIN + ASSOCIATES
500 HARRISON AVE. STUDIO 4F
BOSTON MA 02118
P 617.426.0077
WWW.HACIN.COM @HACINASSOCIATES