



# HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 3, 2020

NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: GRIT DEVELOPMENT, LLC, OWNER, PROPOSING ALTERATIONS TO AND RESTORATION OF PORTIONS OF THE TOWN & COUNTRY CENTER LOCATED AT 174 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE; CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE #51, CASE 3.1780 MAA (KL)

FROM: Department of Planning Services

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## SUMMARY

The owner is proposing alterations and restoration of various parts of the Town & Country Center as part of a multi-phased redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the site.

## RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the alterations as proposed with the following conditions:

1. Provide an angled fascia at the proposed new canopy at the Bank of America Building to match original.
2. No fixed canopies or patio covers over the proposed outdoor dining patios.

## PRIOR ACTIONS:

| <i>Related Relevant City Actions</i> |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 04/20/16                             | The City Council designated the Town & Country Center as a Class 1 historic site (HSPB 51, Resolution #24001).  |
| 06/15/16                             | The City Council Downtown Project Subcommittee (Roberts, Mills) approved a security plan for the Town & Country Center, including fencing, motion detectors, smoke and heat detectors, and a wireless alarm system. |
| 04/10/18                             | The HSPB approved a Certificate of Approval for minor repairs to the complex in preparation for the repainting work.  |
| 05/08/18                             | HSPB approved a repaint of the Town & Country Center.   |

## BACKGROUND:

The Town & Country Center (“the Center”) was designated as a Class 1 historic site in April 2016, in association with amendments to the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan. The Town & Country Center is included in Block K of the Specific Plan, and the plan document states that the center shall be “preserved, renovated and reused.”

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant is now preparing to implement the first phase of restoration and renovation of the Center which is comprised of the following scope of work:

Along the Palm Canyon Drive façade:

1. Repair and repaint of the corrugated upper wall panels to original colors.
2. Removal of non-original light fixtures on the upper corrugated wall panels.
3. Reconstruction of a portion of the “fins” at the first floor level of the Bank of America Building.
4. Installation of a folding storefront glass door along a portion of the first floor of the Bank of America Building.
5. Removal of non-original storefront canopies, awnings, railings and fixtures.
6. Removal of deteriorated stucco and installation of new stucco.
7. Installation of wood-grained cement board at various wall surfaces that were originally wood siding.<sup>1</sup>
8. Installation of raised planters clad in wood-grained cement board where wooden planters existed originally.
9. Installation of a new folding storefront door on the north façade of “the 166 Building” and new cement board wood siding to match original (currently occupied by Crazy Mel’s Burgers).
10. Repaint all wall surfaces original colors as previously approved.
11. Installation of a railing for a dining patio in the passageway between Building 166 and 170.
12. Replacement of concrete flatwork at the passageway.

Along the courtyard façade (Specifically the 168 “Merrill Lynch” Building):

1. Removal of the storefront glazing at the east elevation of “the 168 Building” (formerly Merrill Lynch Building) and replacement with glass sliding pocket doors and fixed glass.
2. Construction of a low raised dining terrace and planters.
3. Restoration of the terrazzo tile wall panels on the 168 Building.

With respect to the proposed outdoor dining area in the passageway, it is noted that the passageway is roughly 22 feet wide. The existing railing at the hamburger restaurant

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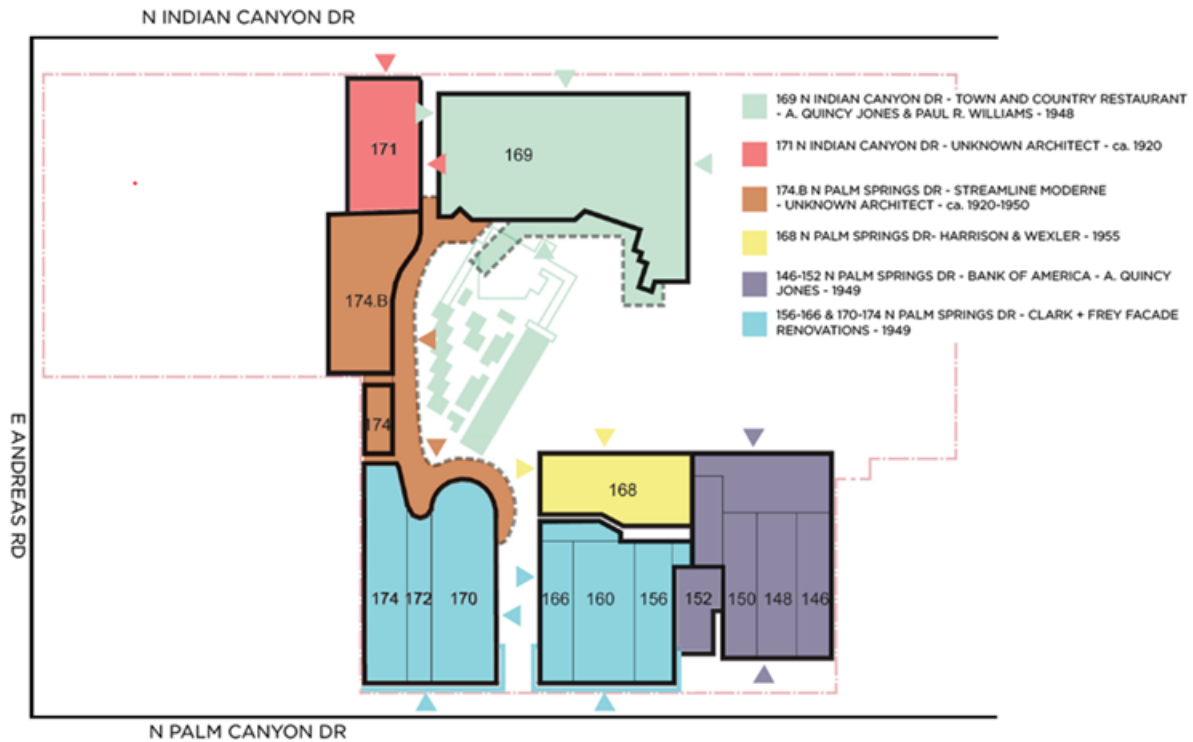
<sup>1</sup> These type of cementitious boards were approved by the HSPB for use in restoring and replacing deteriorated natural wood on the Tahquitz Plaza buildings.



encroaches into the passageway roughly 12 feet -- over half the width of the passageway. The proposed outdoor dining area encroaches only 6 feet into the passageway, thereby making access to the courtyard visually wider, more inviting and accessible while still providing an outdoor dining area that will bring vitality to the space and is visible from Palm Canyon Drive.

The outdoor dining area proposed in the courtyard will also add vibrancy and activity to that area and does not impact or affect the existing hardscape design or the angular configuration of the courtyard hardscape.

**SITE DIAGRAM SHOWING THE VARIOUS BUILDINGS THAT COMPRISE THE CENTER**



ANALYSIS:

The proposed alterations involve removal of non-original canopies and storefront, restoration of original façade treatments and introduction of new fixed and operable storefront to facilitate outdoor dining uses and improved thermal performance of the building envelope.

Pursuant to Palm Springs Municipal Code (“PSMC”) 8.05.110 (“Alterations to Class 1 and Class 2 Historic Sites”), part “E”; “Criteria and Findings for Alteration of Class 1 and Class 2 Historic Resources”, in considering a request for alterations to a Class 1 historic site, the HSPB shall evaluate the application and make findings for conformance to the following criteria:

*Finding 1. That the proposed alteration does not significantly impact or materially impair the character-defining features of the historic resource as listed in the resolution for historic designation, or, where a character-defining feature may be impacted, the proposed alteration minimizes that impact as much as possible.*

The City Council resolution designating the Town & Country Center identified the following character-defining features:

1. *The facade of 146-150 North Palm Canyon Drive (“The Bank of America Building”)  
Exception:  
The first floor storefronts below the cantilevered shade element due to material alterations that do not reflect the original materials.*
2. *The facades of 156-166 and 170-174 North Palm Canyon Drive, including those fronting the courtyard, which includes the semi-circular element on the back of the 174 Building.  
Exception:  
The painted corrugated metal panels at the second floor that replaced the original cement-fiber panels in the 1980’s. The material however should not be removed from the site unless a restoration effort is undertaken to replace it with material similar in appearance to the original cement-fiber panels.  
The storefront materials at the first floor level because they have been altered from the original materials. Note: At the 174 Building, if a restoration is contemplated in which the breezeway is re-established, it is recommended that the storefronts that originally fronted that breezeway be re-established by referencing the original architectural drawings, photographs and other historic materials.*
3. *The facades of the 168 North Palm Canyon Drive Building.  
Exception:  
Aluminum awning frames.*
4. *The facades of the 167 North Indian Canyon Drive Building.  
Exception:  
The low masonry wall along the Indian Canyon Drive frontage.  
The masonry planters that are not shown in the original photos of the courtyard adjacent to the stairs to the second level.*
5. *The south and east facades of the 171 North Indian Canyon Drive Building.*
6. *The open courtyard in the center of the complex and all the connecting paseos connecting this open space to both street frontages including the landscape (hardscape/softscape) plan in this courtyard.*

*Exception: Miscellaneous plantings, benches and trash receptacles that are not part of the original features of the courtyard.*

*The following are identified as “non-contributing” to the historic significance of the Center:*

- 1. The north and south parking lots.*
- 2. The aluminum and canvas canopies and awnings affixed to several of the buildings.*
- 3. The wall sconce light fixtures on the 156-166 and 170-174 Buildings.*
- 4. The corrugated metal panels on the Palm Canyon façade (note: these panels shall not be removed unless it is part of an initiative to restore the façade with panels replicated to the appearance of the original cementitious panels).*
- 5. The miscellaneous plantings benches, and furniture that are not part of the original features of the courtyard.*
- 6. The low masonry wall along the Indian Canyon frontage.*
- 7. The 181 North Indian Canyon Drive Building.*

The proposed alterations and restoration conforms to this finding because it does not materially impair the character-defining features of the Center. The proposed operable glass pocket and folding doors are a visual improvement over the existing conditions on the building and allow the tenant spaces to be adaptively reused for restaurant uses with outdoor dining. The first floor storefronts that are proposed to be replaced were specifically exempted from the character-defining features of the building as noted above. The façade of the 168 Building (Merrill Lynch Building) is proposed to be altered by replacing fixed glazing with openable glass pocket doors, however the pattern and dimensions of the solid and void of the 168 façade is preserved.<sup>2</sup> A modest sized (10 feet by 50 feet) outdoor dining terrace is proposed in front of this façade using materials harmonious with the existing building that will further invigorate the courtyard with activity.

*Finding 2. That the proposed alteration will assist in restoring the historic resource to its original appearance where applicable, or will substantially aid its preservation or enhancement as a historic resource.*

The proposed alterations conform to this finding because the proposed alteration will assist in restoring the Center’s Palm Canyon façade and adapting the 168 Building to accommodate potential new retail and restaurant uses. The proposed project eliminates non-original railings and canopies that detract from the original design of the complex and restores or reconstructs details shown on the original drawings that are missing or deteriorated.

*Finding 3. That any additions to the historic resource are consistent with the massing, proportions, materials, and finishes of the existing historic resource,*

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<sup>2</sup> The existing glazing does not meet current code for wind load and safety glass.

*and: (i) can be distinguished from the existing historic resource as may be appropriate; or (ii) are indistinguishable from the historic resource as may be appropriate, and where such alterations are clearly documented in the City's archival file for the historic resource as being non-original to the historic resource.*

There are no additions proposed except new outdoor dining area railings and a low terrace adjacent to the 168 Building. These additions could be removed in the future and can be distinguishable from the original fabric of the building. Reconstruction of raised planters is proposed in locations shown on the original design drawings for the Center.

*Finding 4. That, in cases where Federal funds are to be utilized in financing the proposed alterations, the alterations are consistent with the Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, as put forth by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior.*

There are no federal funds associated with the subject project.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed exterior alterations to the Town & Country Center are deemed a project under the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Pursuant to Section 15064.5 “*Determining the Significance of Impacts on Historical and Unique Archeological Resources*”, the property is deemed a historic resource under CEQA because the Town & Country Center is a listed Class 1 historic site (HSPB #51).

According to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a “*substantial adverse change*” in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a “significant effect” on that resource. “Substantial adverse change” includes alteration of the immediate surroundings of the historic resource such that the significance of the resource would be materially impaired.

The proposed alterations involve removal of non-original building components, canopies and railings. It involves repainting the building to its original color palette. It includes replacement of some fixed storefront glazing with operable glass doors, however the overall opening size and pattern of solid wall and void is not changed. It also includes reconstruction of architectural “fins” that were previously cut off from the first floor level of the Bank of America Building. These are being rebuilt according to the original design drawings. The outdoor dining terrace proposed in front of the 168 Building is differentiated from the historic building and is removable in the future if tenant uses change.

Staff has concluded that the proposed project is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Structures.

CEQA allows for a Class 31 Categorical Exemption (*Historical Resource Restoration / Rehabilitation*) for projects involving maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of historical resources in a manner

consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer. The City has concluded that the project meets this criterion and therefore has determined that the project is Categorical Exempt from further analysis under CEQA.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed alterations are the first phase of rehabilitation of the Town & Country Center. The project will not adversely impact the character-defining features of the Center. The alterations conform to the required findings outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.110. The proposed project significantly improves the physical condition of the Town & Country complex and restores or rehabilitates key elements of the complex. Staff recommends approval subject to conditions.



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Ken Lyon, RA, Associate Planner  
Historic Preservation Officer



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Flinn Fagg, AICP  
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map.
2. Site Plan, elevations and details.

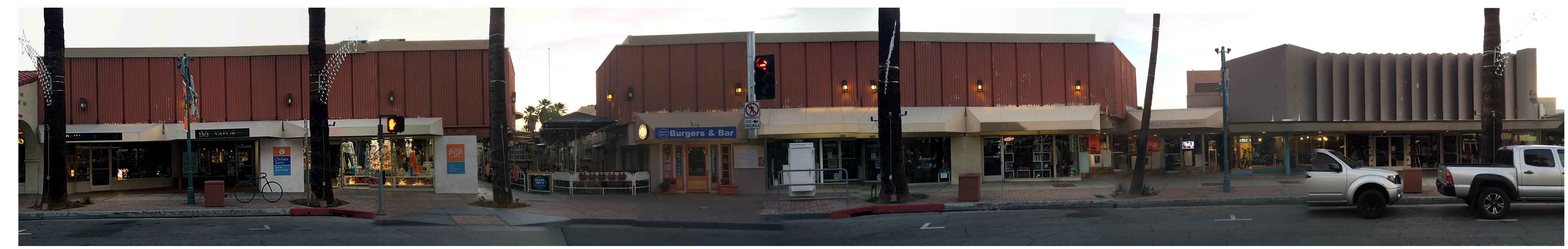




**SITE PLAN LEGEND:**

- EXISTING BUILDINGS - NOT A PART
- EXISTING BUILDINGS WITHIN THE CENTER'S BOUNDARIES
- PHASE 1 - LIMITED AREA OF CONSTRUCTION

EXISTING OVERALL SITE PLAN OF "THE CENTER" AND ADJACENT STRUCTURES



EXISTING PALM CANYON DRIVE PHOTO MONTAGE

**Cioffi**  
ARCHITECT

**CLASS 1 HISTORICAL RESTORATION FOR:  
TOWN & COUNTRY - "THE CENTER"**  
GRIT DEVELOPMENT COMPANY  
PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, 92262

**secoyarchitects**  
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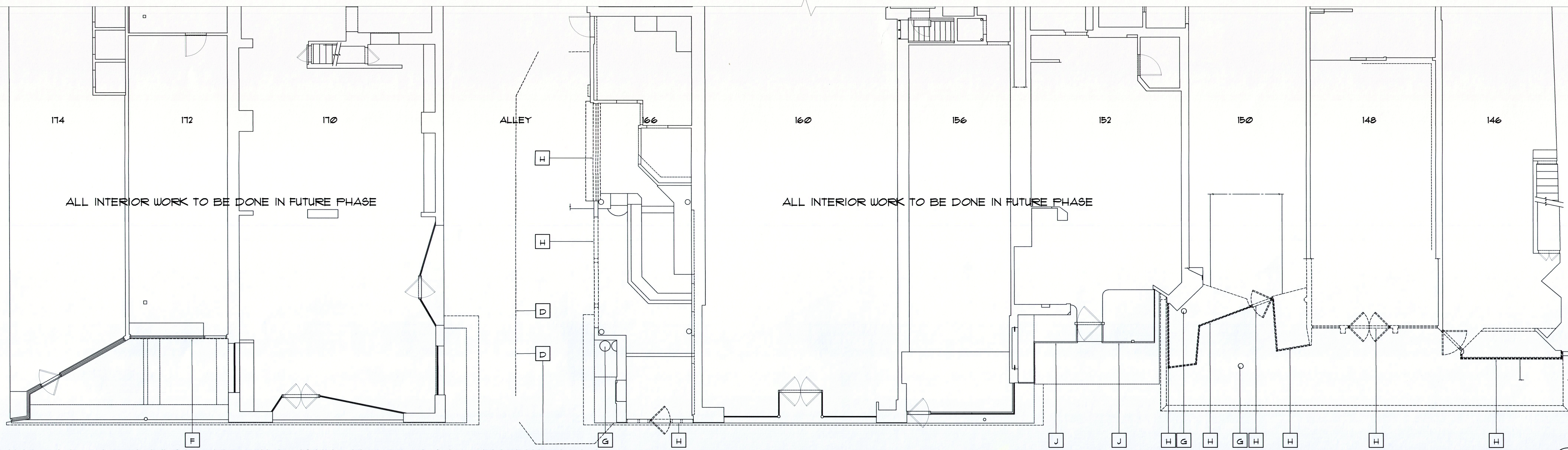
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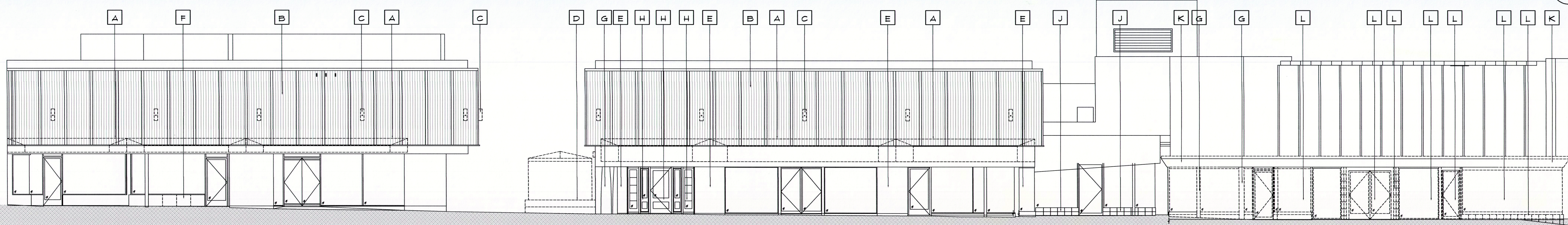
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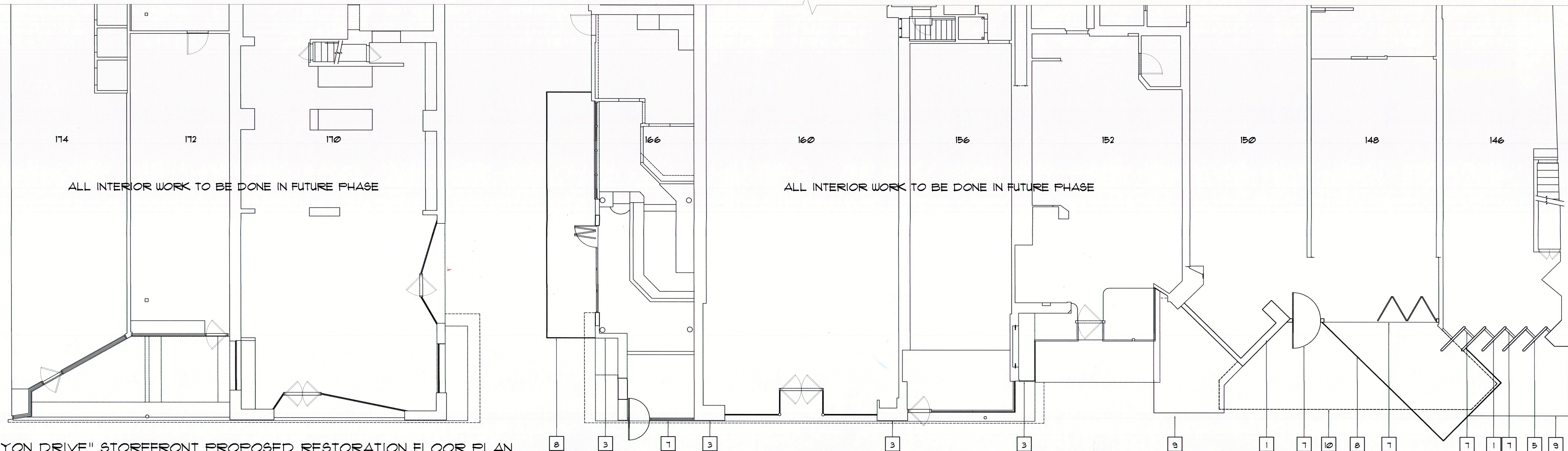


EXISTING PARTIAL "PALM CANYON DRIVE" STOREFRONT EXISTING FLOOR PLAN / DEMOLITION PLAN

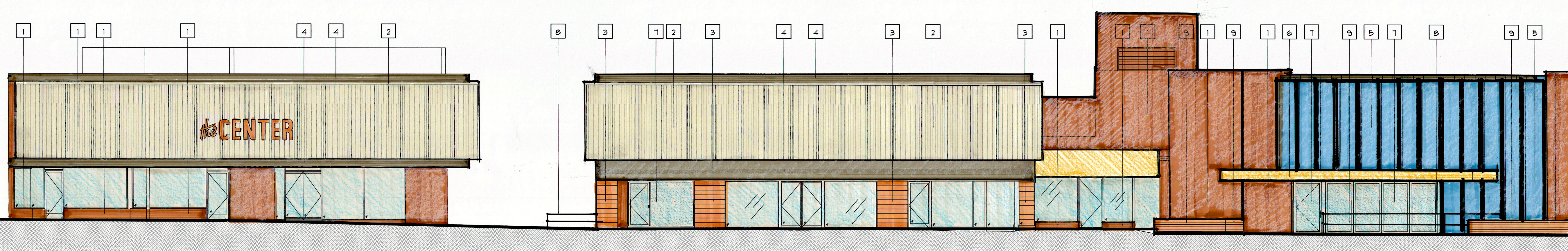


EXISTING PARTIAL "PALM CANYON DRIVE" STOREFRONT EXISTING ELEVATION / DEMOLITION ELEVATION

- EXTERIOR DEMOLITION LEGEND:**
- A REMOVE EXISTING AWNING
  - B PRESSURE WASH REMOVE LOOSE PAINT REPAIR METAL AS REQUIRED
  - C REMOVE EXISTING LIGHT FIXTURES AND ELECTRICAL CONDUITS - (IF PLASTER)
  - D REMOVE EXISTING CANOPIES RAILINGS AND MISC. FIXTURES
  - E REMOVE EXISTING STUCCO VERIFY IF ORIGINAL WOOD SIDING STILL REMAINS
  - F REMOVE EXISTING PANELS AND PREPARE FOR NEW EXT. PLASTER
  - G EXISTING COLUMN (VERIFY STRUCTURAL)
  - H REMOVE EXISTING STOREFRONT
  - J REMOVE EXISTING TILE AND PREP AREA TO RECEIVE NEW EXT. PLASTER
  - K PARTIAL DEMO ROOF OVERHANG (VERIFY STRUCTURAL)
  - L DEMO AND PREP FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION



PARTIAL "PALM CANYON DRIVE" STOREFRONT PROPOSED RESTORATION FLOOR PLAN

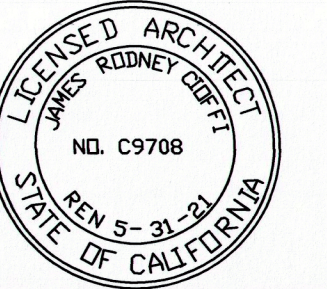


PARTIAL "PALM CANYON DRIVE" STOREFRONT PROPOSED RESTORATION ELEVATION

- EXTERIOR RESTORATION LEGEND:**
- 1 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT3-COBBLE STONE
  - 2 REPAIR METAL TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT4-HIST
  - 3 NEW HORIZONTAL WOOD SIDING MATCH ORIGINAL SIZE, PATTERN, TEXTURE AND COLOR: FT8
  - 4 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT2-SUNSHINE
  - 5 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT1-BLUESTONE
  - 6 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT2-SUNSHINE
  - 7 NEW STOREFRONT GLASS AND MULLIONS TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: CLEAR ANODIZED
  - 8 NEW A.B.C. RAILING COLOR: FT10-BLACK
  - 9 NEW BASED PLASTER HORIZONTAL WOOD SIDING COLOR: FT8
  - 10 NEW ROOF OVERHANG EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: FT2-SUNSHINE

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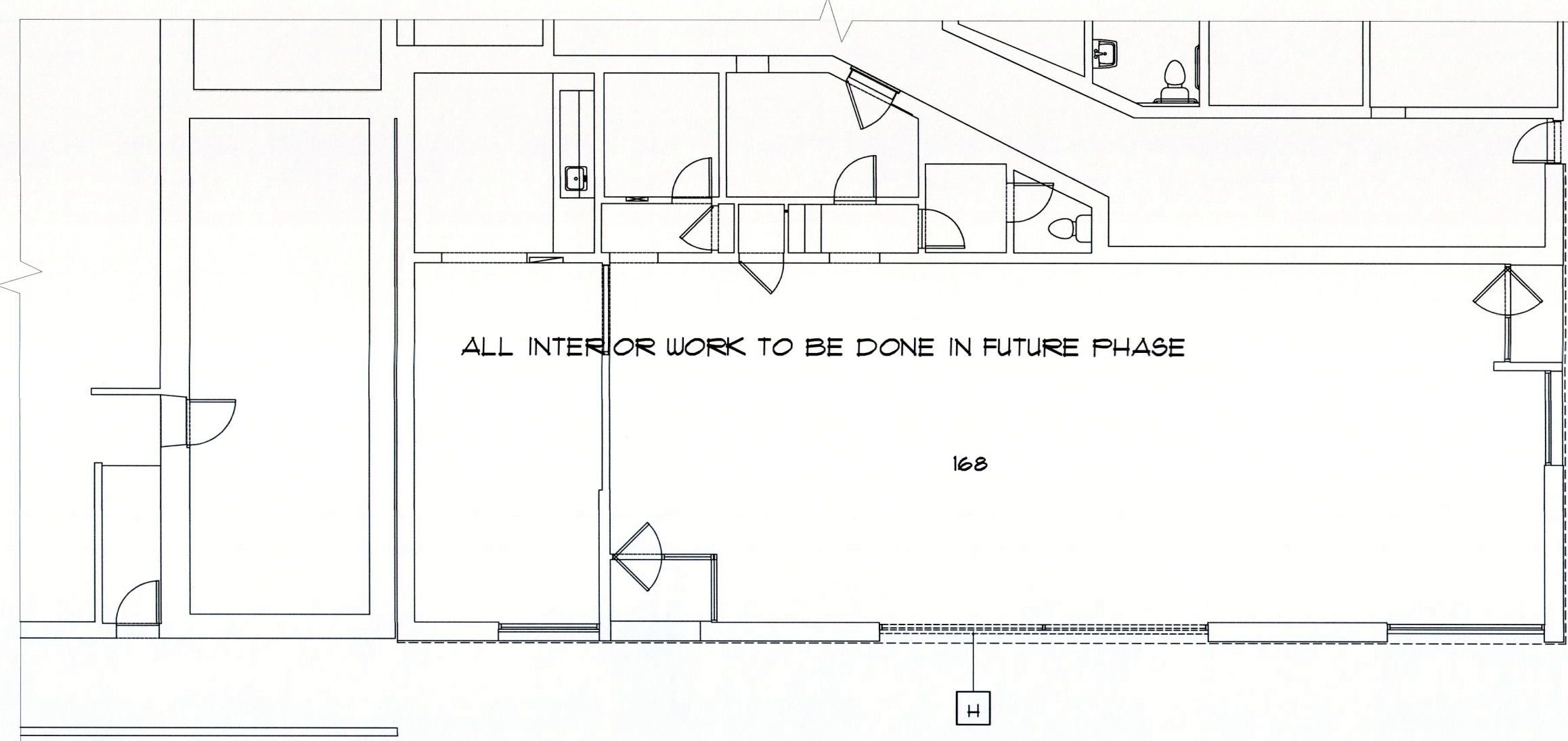
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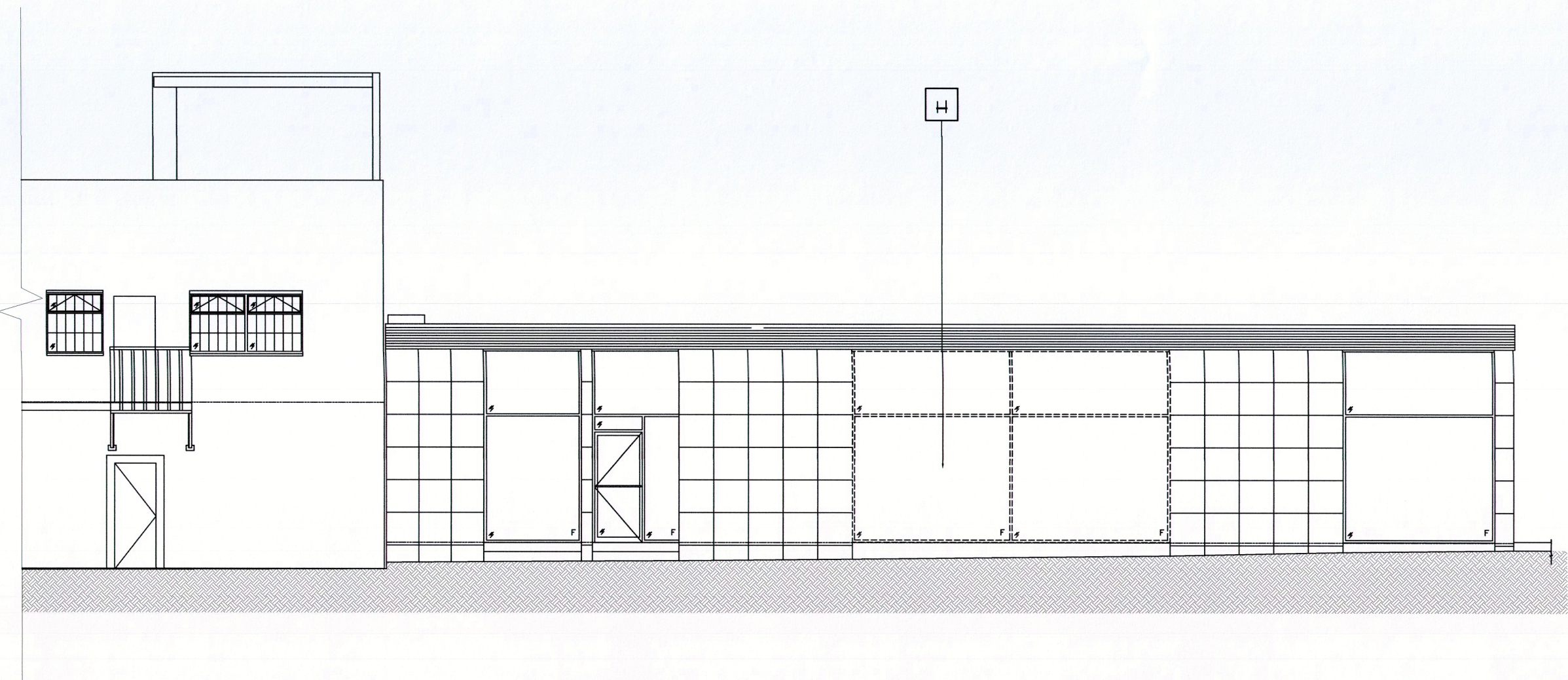
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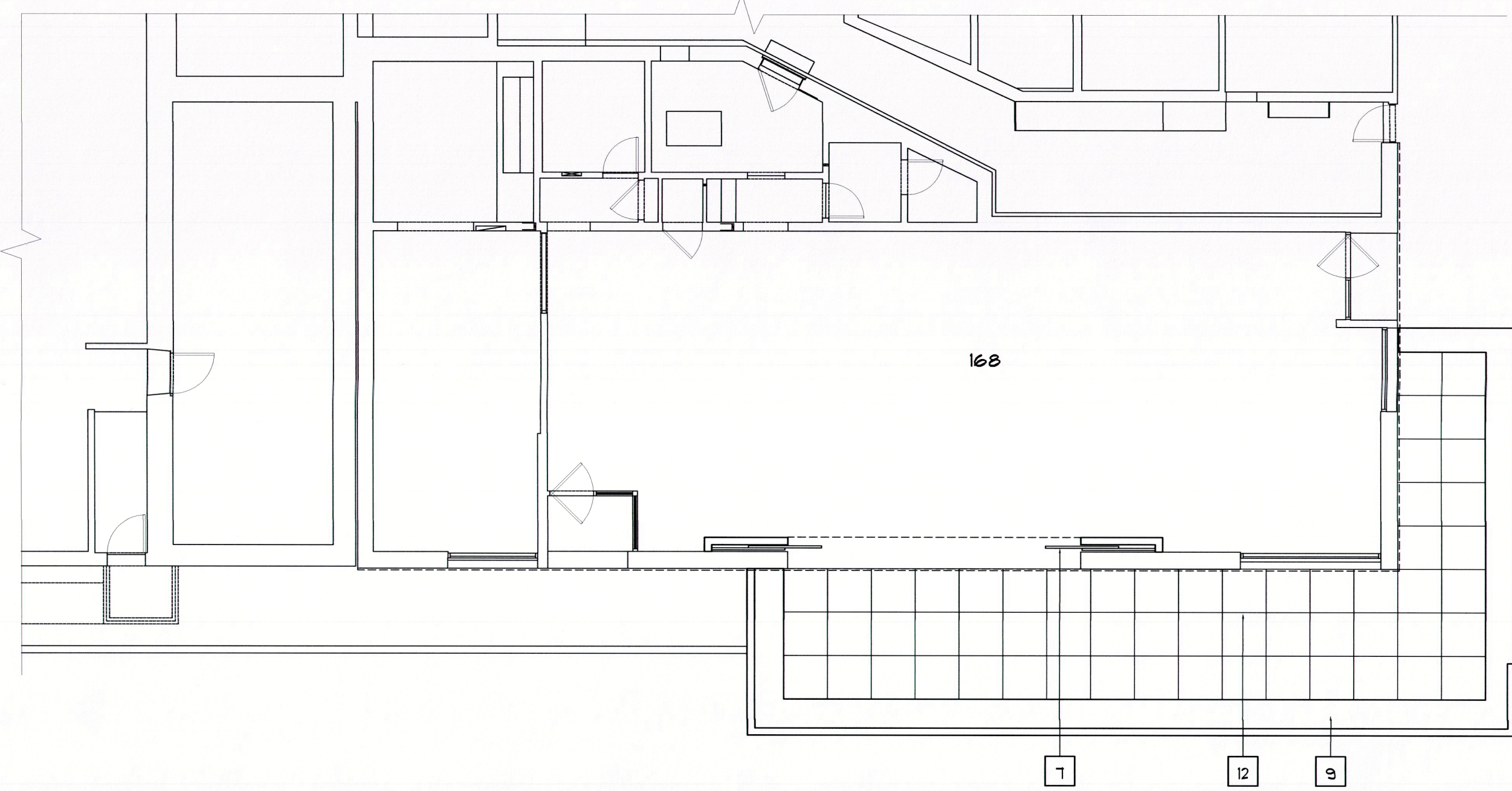




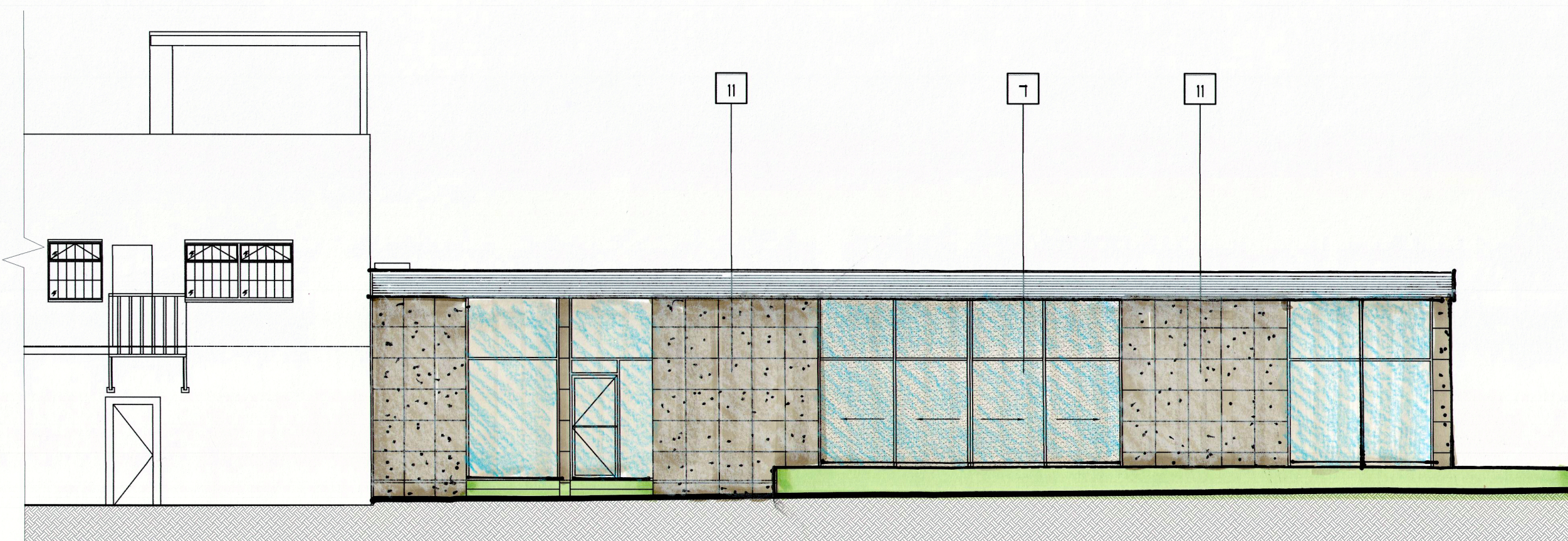
PARTIAL "UNIT 168" EXISTING FLOOR PLAN / DEMOLITION PLAN



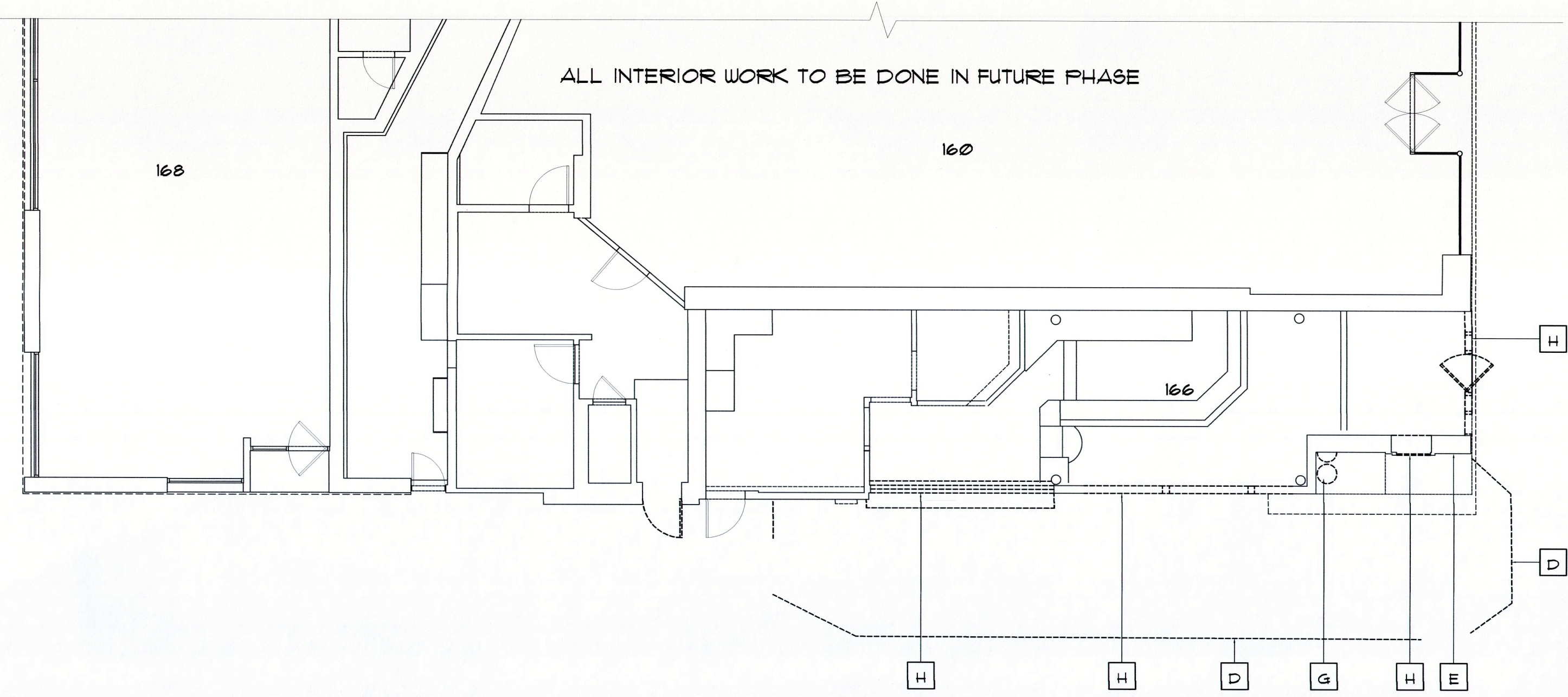
PARTIAL "UNIT 168" EXISTING ELEVATION / DEMOLITION ELEVATION



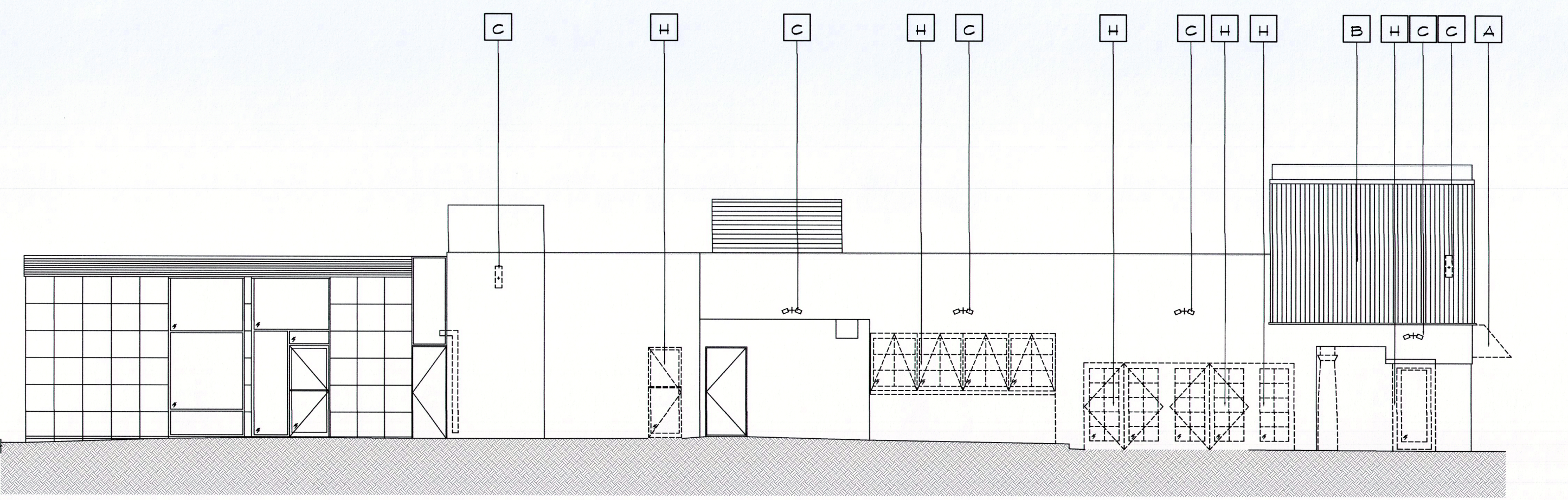
PARTIAL "UNIT 168" PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



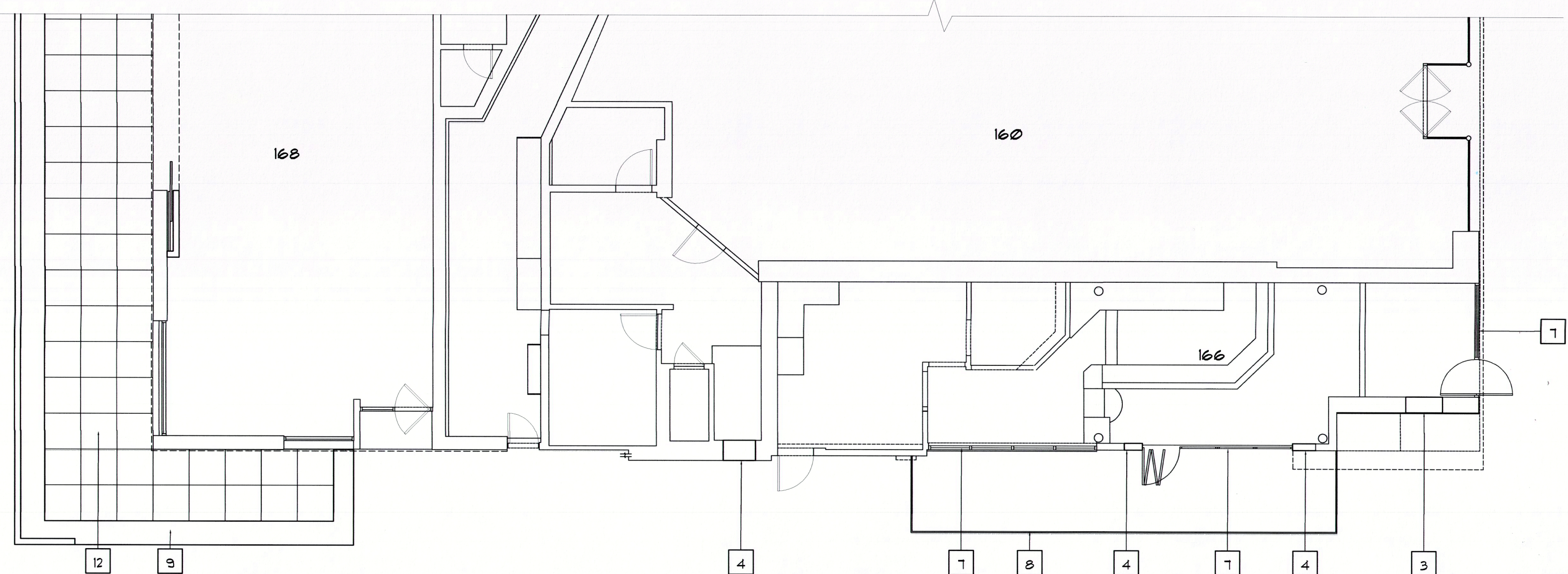
PARTIAL "UNIT 168" PROPOSED ELEVATION



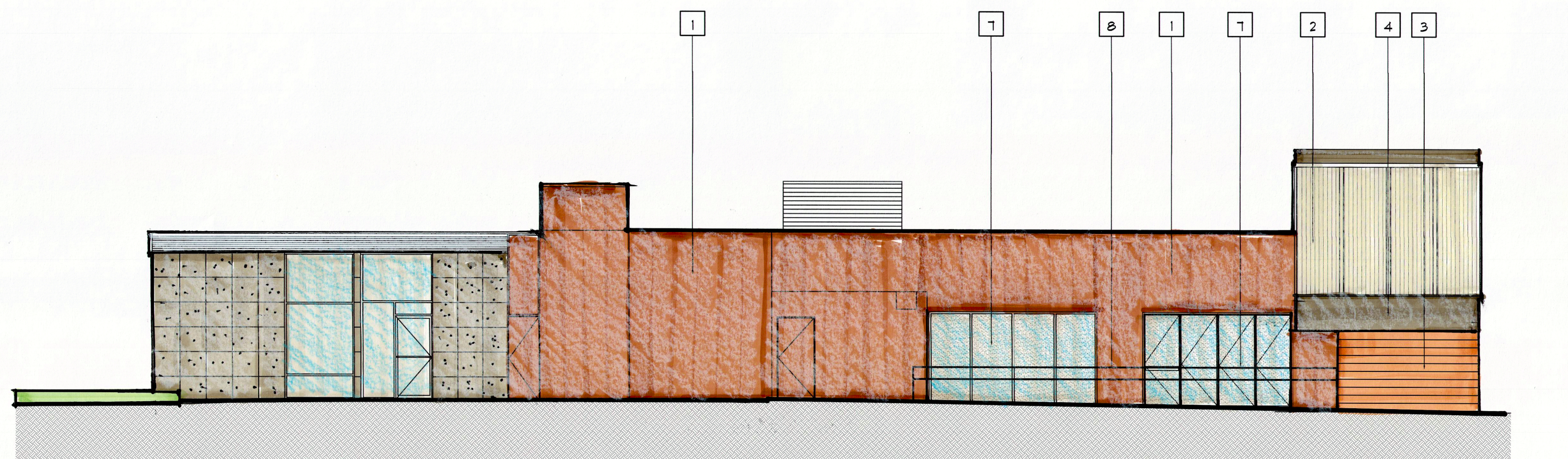
PARTIAL "UNIT 166 / 168" EXISTING FLOOR PLAN / DEMOLITION PLAN



PARTIAL "UNIT 166 / 168" EXISTING ELEVATION / DEMOLITION ELEVATION



PARTIAL "UNIT 166 / 168" PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



PARTIAL "UNIT 166 / 168" PROPOSED ELEVATION

- EXTERIOR DEMOLITION LEGEND:**
- A REMOVE EXISTING AWNING
  - B PRESSURE WASH REMOVE LOOSE PAINT REPAIR METAL AS REQUIRED
  - C REMOVE EXISTING LIGHT FIXTURES AND ELECTRICAL CONDUITS (IF PLACES)
  - D REMOVE CANOPIES, RAILINGS AND MISC. FIXTURES
  - E REMOVE EXISTING STUCCO PREPARE FOR NEW WOOD SIDING
  - F REMOVE EXISTING PANELS AND PREPARE FOR NEW EXT. PLASTER
  - G EXISTING COLUMN (VERIFY STRUCTURAL)
  - H REMOVE EXISTING STOREFRONT
  - J REMOVE EXISTING TILE AND PREP AREA TO RECEIVE NEW EXT. PLASTER
  - K PARTIAL DEMO ROOF OVERHANG (VERIFY STRUCTURAL)
  - L DEMO AND PREP FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

- EXTERIOR RESTORATION LEGEND:**
- 1 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: P18-CORBLE STONE
  - 2 REPAIR METAL TO MATCH ORIGINAL COLOR: P14-HST
  - 3 NEW HORIZONTAL WOOD SIDING MATCH ORIGINAL SIZE, PATTERN, TEXTURE AND COLOR COLOR: 100
  - 4 NEW EXTERIOR PLASTER TEXTURE AND FINISH TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: P18-PINE
  - 5 not used
  - 6 not used
  - 7 NEW STOREFRONT GLASS AND MULLIONS TO MATCH EXISTING COLOR: CLEAR ANODIZED
  - 8 NEW A.B.C. RAILING COLOR: P10-BLACK
  - 9 NEW PLANTER AT GRADE
  - 10 not used
  - 11 RESTORE TERRAZZO TILE
  - 12 NEW CONCRETE MARBLE CHIP

**Cioffi**  
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 CLASS 1 HISTORICAL RESTORATION FOR:  
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PERSPECTIVE 'D'



PERSPECTIVE 'A'



PERSPECTIVE 'E'



PERSPECTIVE 'B'



PERSPECTIVE 'F'



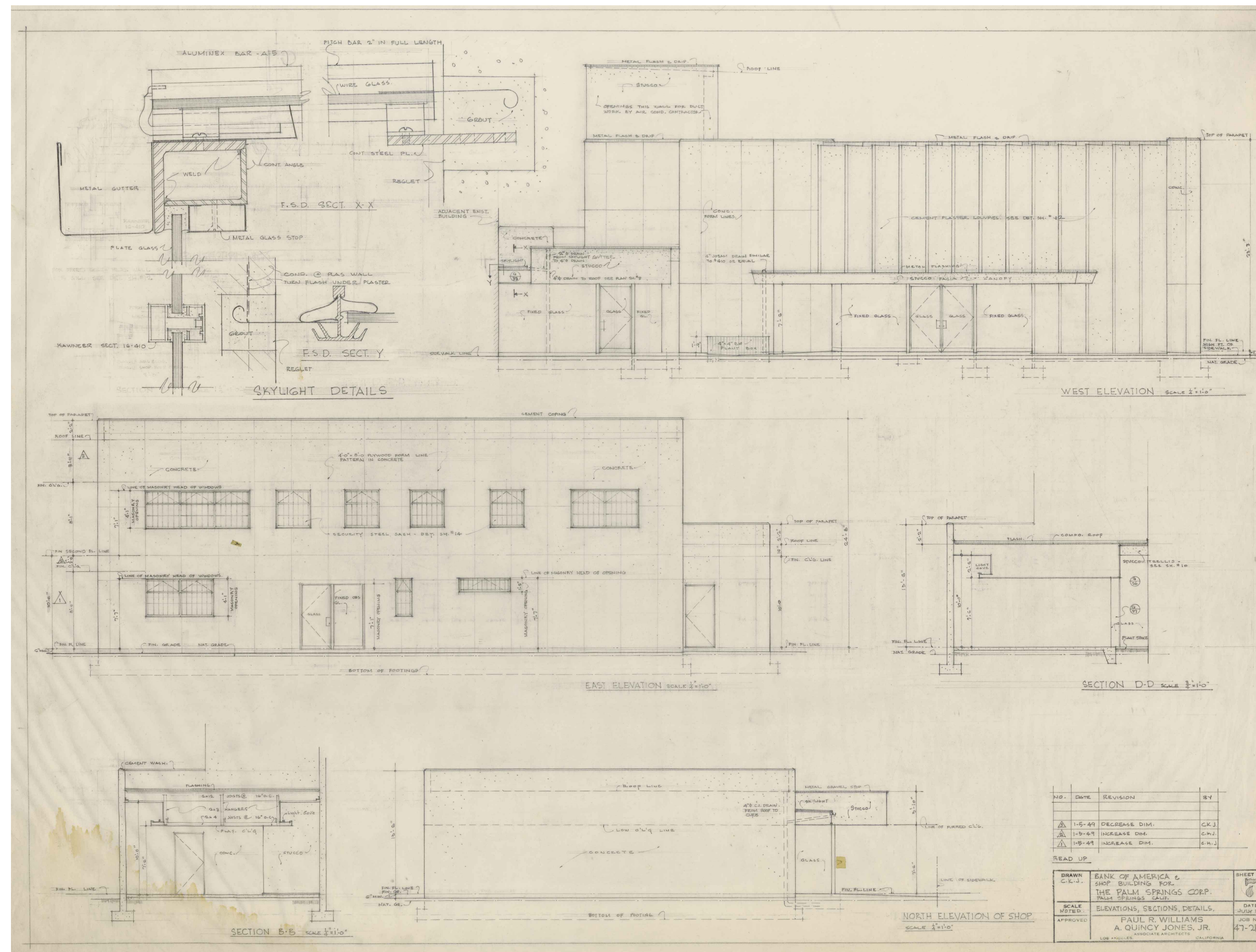
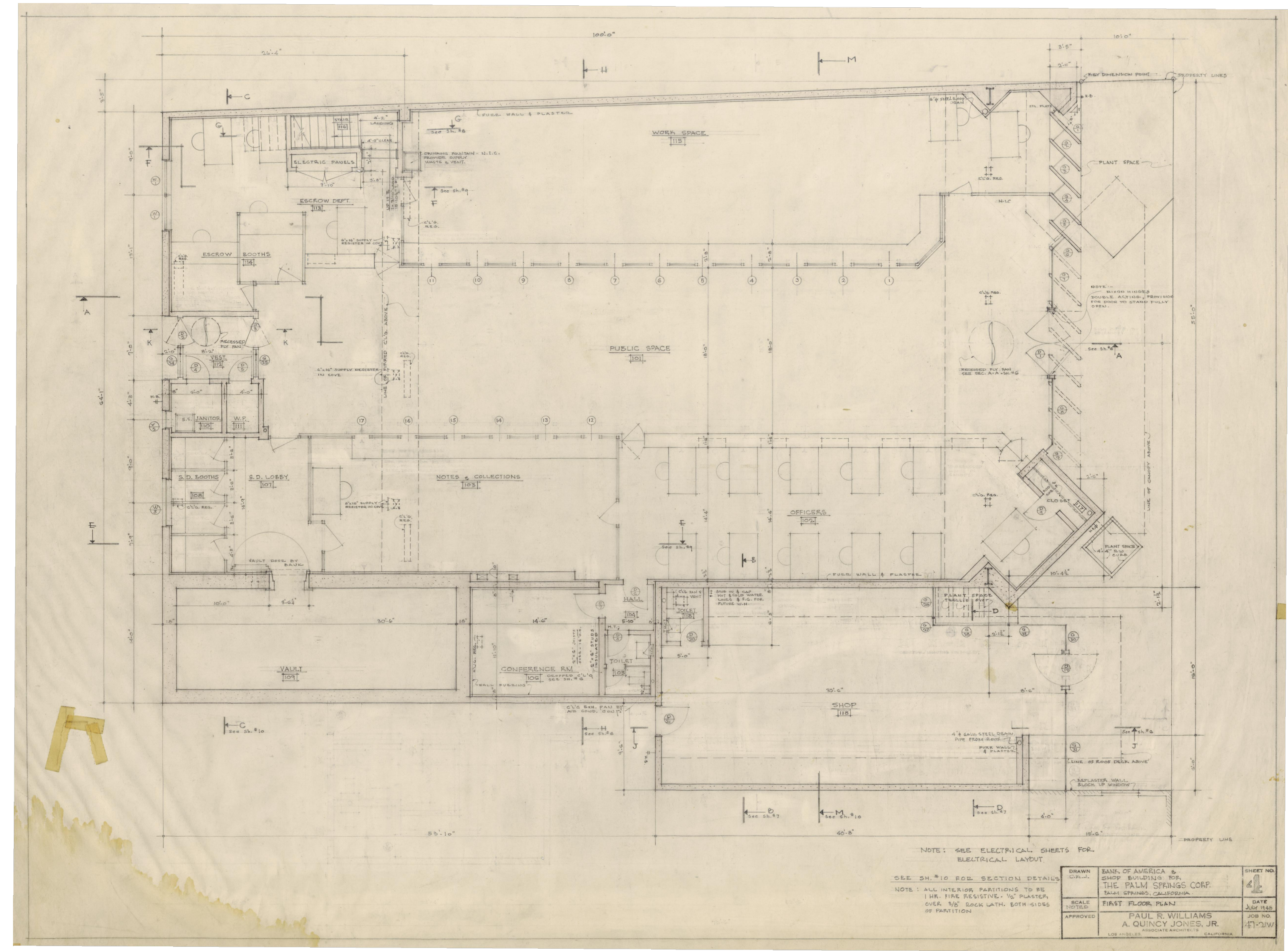
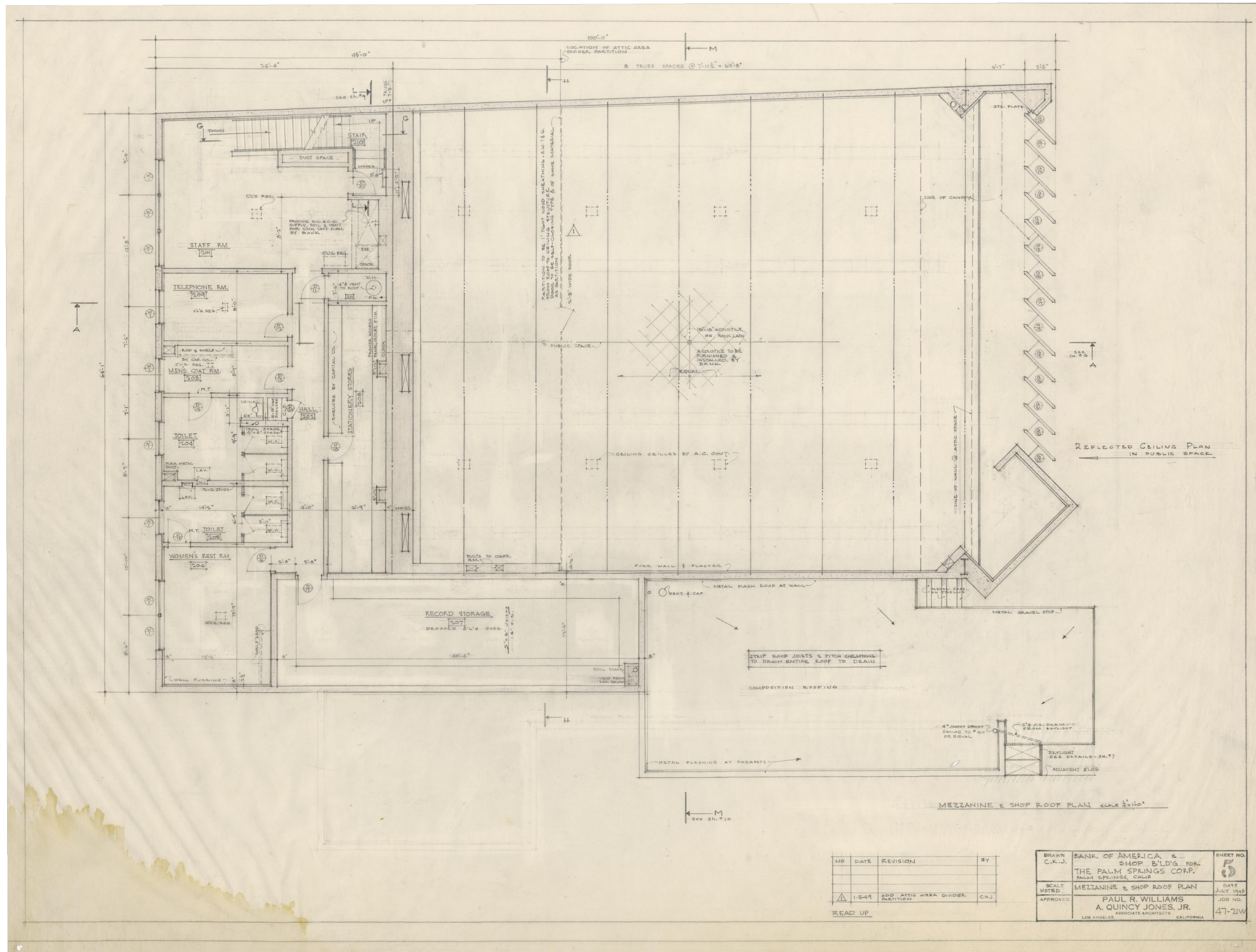
PERSPECTIVE 'C'



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HISTORICAL REFERENCE : FLOOR PLANS / BUILDING SECTIONS / BUILDING ELEVATIONS / PERSPECTIVE  
 PAUL WILLIAMS / A. QUINCY JONES, JR. - 1948



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