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August 30, 2019

Swaathi Joseph
Zoning and Development Director
City of Cambridge
Community Development Department
344 Broadway
Cambridge MA 02139

Subject: Santander Bank
PB #349, 599 Massachusetts Avenue
Project Number: 011.6850.127
File Code: 3BD

Miss Joseph:

Thank you again to you and your team for your time and attention to the above-mentioned project during our meeting at your offices on August 22, 2019.

The purpose of this was to discuss the comments from the August 13, 2019 Planning Board meeting, explore the results of attempts to employ the board's direction, and review options to meet the board's request.

During the Planning Board meeting, board member Hugh Russell referenced a historic photo of the subject building, drawing attention to the storefront with its prominent central entrance and design elements in keeping with the classic image of a financial institution. It was his feeling that Santander can improve over the existing storefront, originally installed by the former Payless Shoe store, by incorporating some of the historical layout, geometry and elements.

In an effort to vet Mr. Russell's comment, the option of centering the storefront entrance was first examined. Due to a variation in height between the sidewalk and the interior floor, the current floor is sloped. This existing slope exceeds the allowable pitch stipulated in the State of MA CMR 521 Accessibility Code, requiring the installation of a new interior ramp at a compliant slope. If the entrance were centered, and the ramp ran straight to the rear of the space, this ramp would need to be cut into the existing floor in a way that would require extensive structural modification. Additionally, this central location would not allow ample circulation around it to provide functional access to the vestibule ATMs. A side-sloped ramp option was examined as well, but this also does not allow enough circulation space or clearance to meet the accessibility guidelines. Refer to SK-02 in the provided packet. Based on the above, a central entrance would not be feasible for this site, and the current side entrance configuration would be maintained.

Additional review was given Mr. Russell's comment with regard to the geometry and design elements. In an effort to incorporate these themes into the current storefront, applied architectural elements were presented that would affix to the existing storefront, aligning with the centers between the windows



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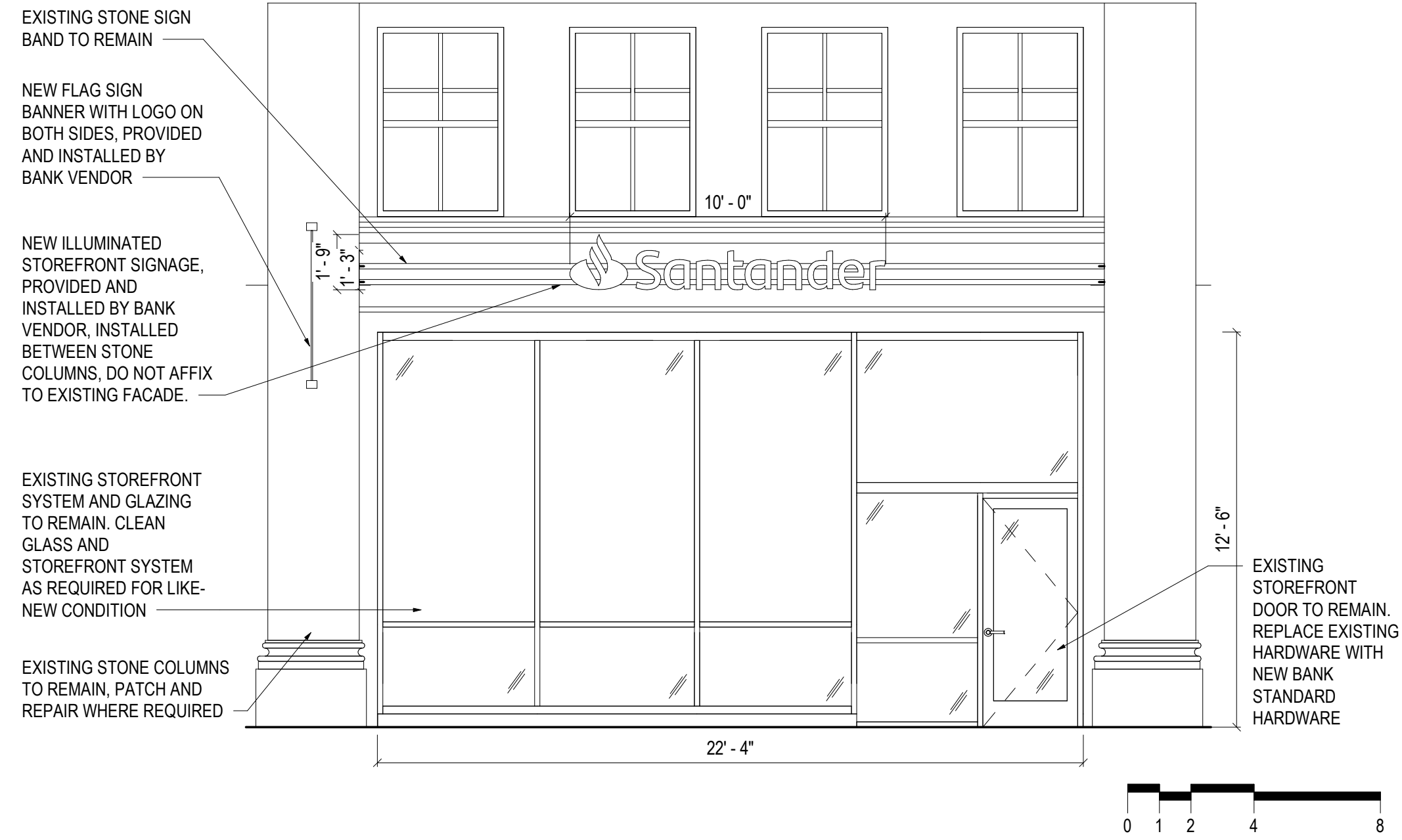
above. This would help to tie the storefront in with the existing building geometry. These elements would also have profiles incorporated to give them greater prominence and relevance. Refer to SK-03 and SK-04 in the provided packet. During our review, Mr. Sullivan of the Cambridge Historical Commission commented that rather than install “gratuitous” and “negative” elements to the existing storefront, he felt it would be better to retain the existing storefront and “clean it up”. Per the original submission, it was always Santander’s intent to refurbish the existing storefront to ‘like-new’ condition. Additionally, Santander is proposing to further improve the storefront by replacing the rough stone pavers and repair the damaged stone pillars.

Based on the above, we respectfully request that the Planning Board approve the Special Permit for a “Formula Business” based on the originally submitted storefront proposal.

We thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

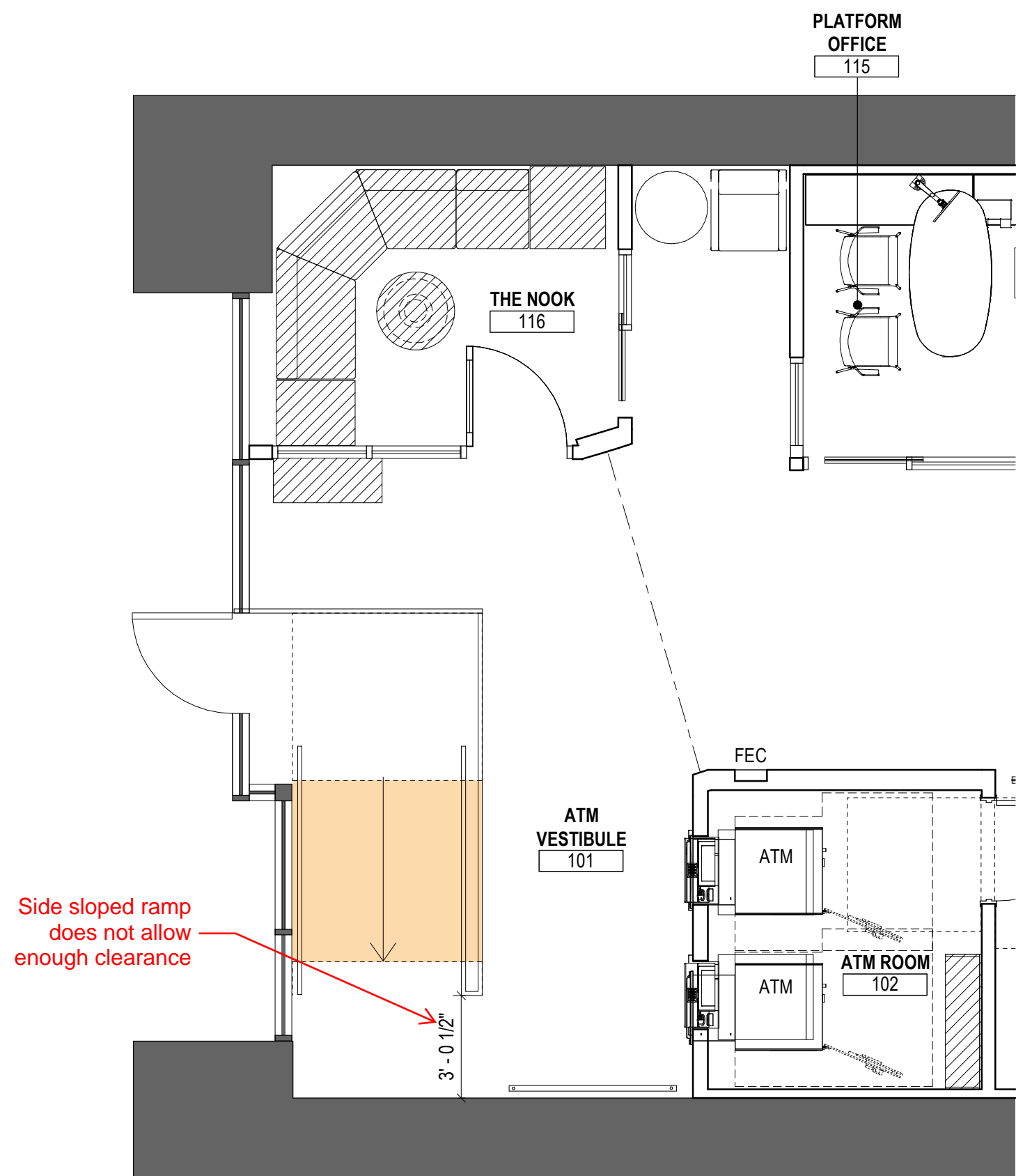
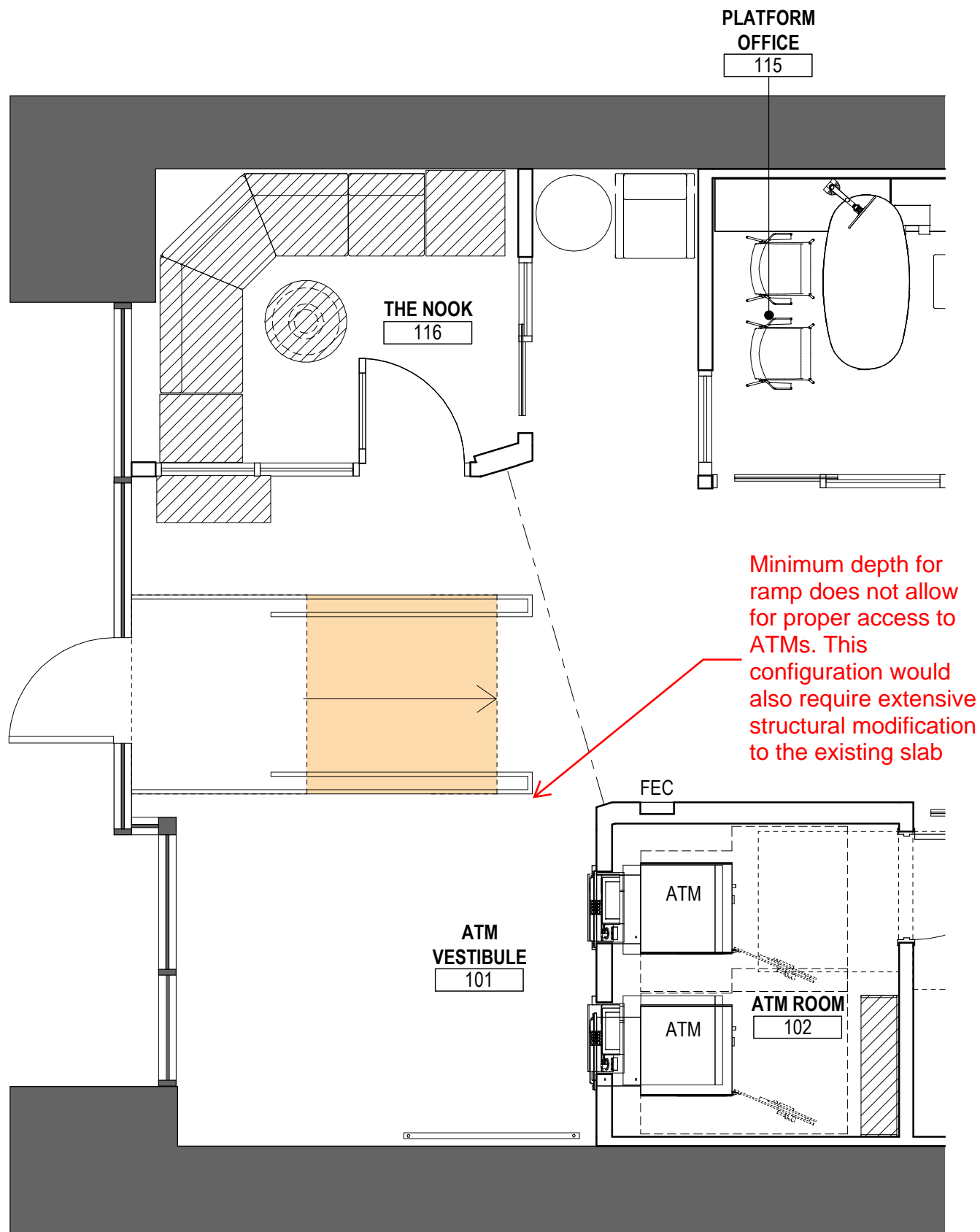
Marc Sides
Design Manager



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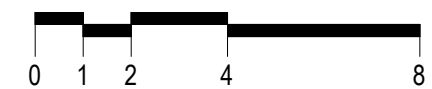
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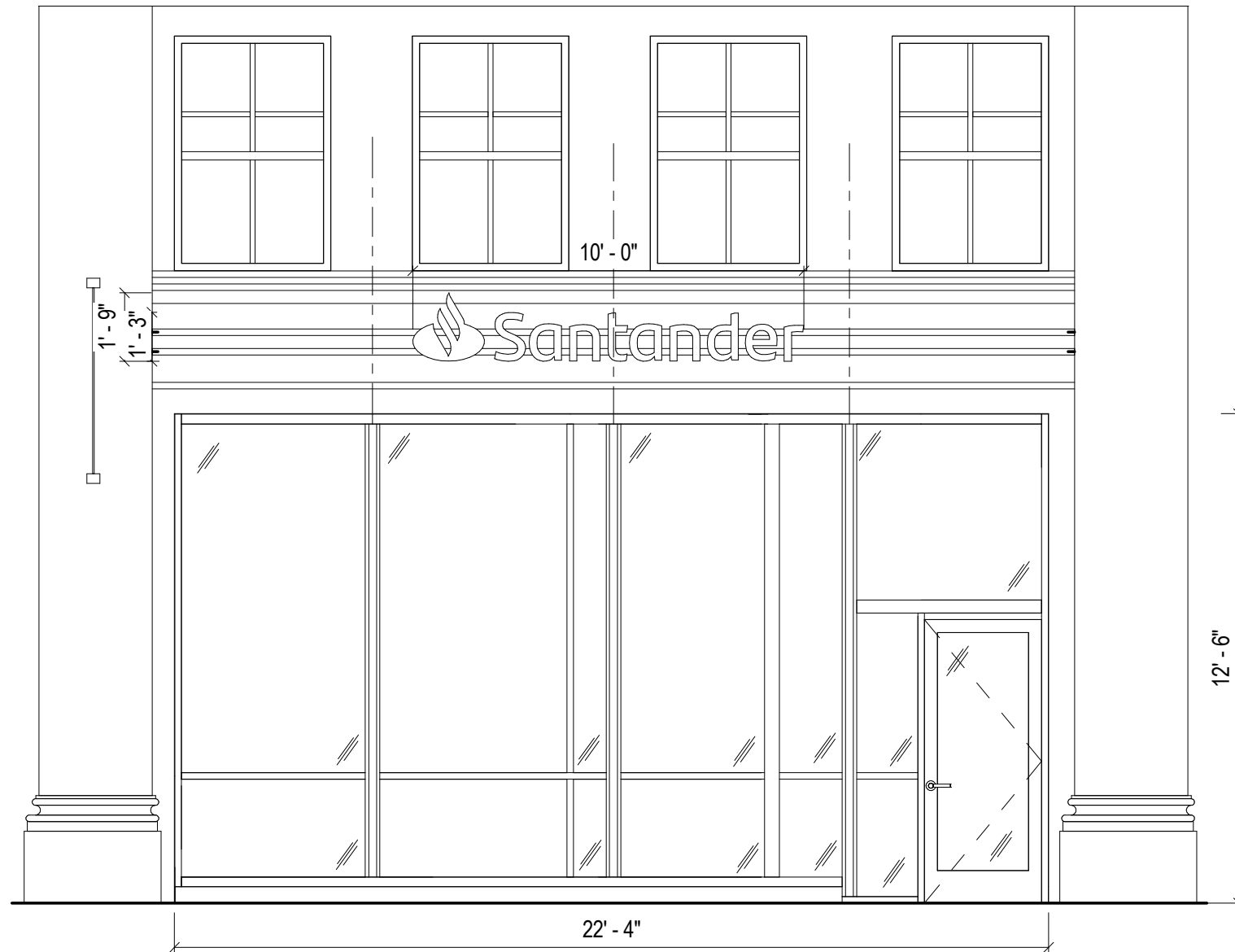


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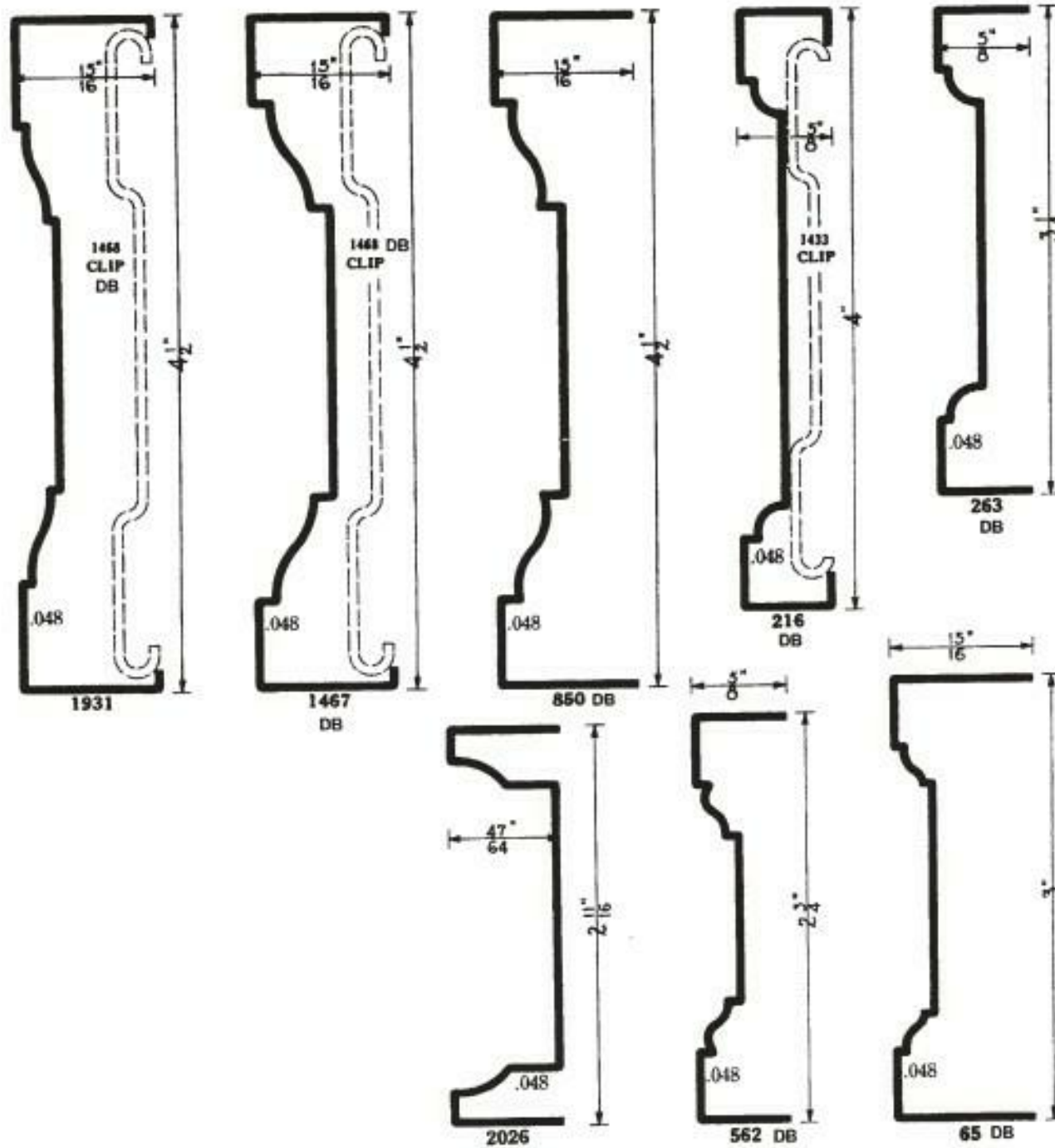
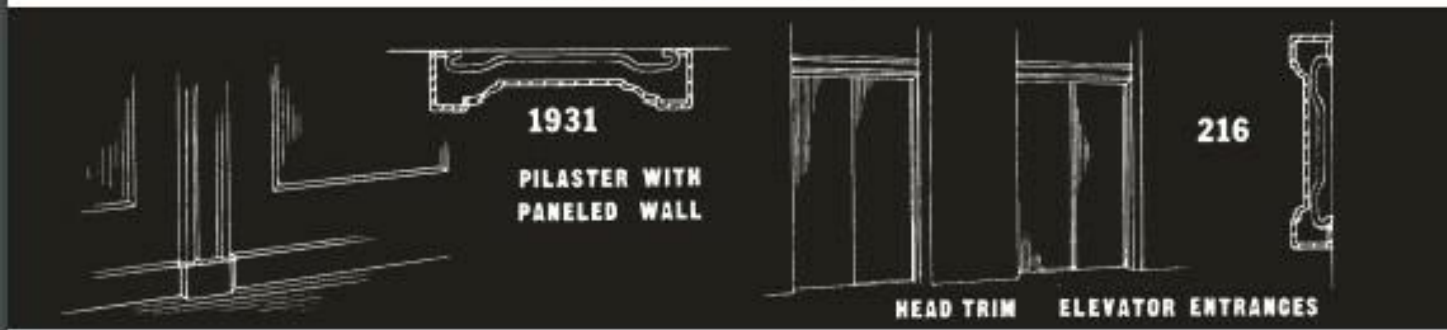




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