

8 May 2023 (updated 25 May 2023)

**The Fox Club – Certificate of Appropriateness Narrative  
44 JFK Street / Harvard Square Conservation District**

Renovations and an addition are proposed for the Fox Club at 44 JFK. This facility was designed by architect Guy Lowell and constructed in 1902. Guy Lowell designed the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and other prominent buildings in the region. The Fox Club is a contributing structure in the Harvard Square National Historic District and in the local Harvard Square Conservation District. The project requires review and approval by the Cambridge Historical Commission.

The renovation includes infrastructure, life safety, and functionality improvements for the preservation of this significant historic structure. An addition is proposed on the south side of the building to provide an accessible entrance, an elevator for vertical access, and a new stair for egress. The primary entrance from JFK Street cannot be adapted into an accessible entrance without major disruption of the historic character of the building, so the addition is proposed for this purpose. Similarly, an elevator cannot be integrated into the building's interior without modification of character-defining features and spaces, so the elevator will be in the addition.

Enclosed are captioned photographs of existing conditions and drawings as follows:

- Captioned Photographs (Pages B.01 thru B.08)
- Exterior Rendering of JFK Façade with Addition
- Existing West Exterior Elevation (JFK Façade)
- Proposed West Exterior Elevation (JFK Façade)
- Existing East Exterior Elevation (Courtyard Façade)
- Proposed East Exterior Elevation (Courtyard Façade)
- Existing North & South Exterior Elevations (Mt. Auburn & Sideyard)
- Proposed Sections and South Elevation at Addition
- Partial Elevations: West at Garden Wall; North at 48 JFK Apartments
- Sectional Detail of Viewing Angle to Low Roof of Accessible Route
- Existing Basement Plan
- Proposed Basement Plan
- Existing First Floor Plan
- Proposed First Floor Plan
- Existing Second Floor Plan
- Proposed Second Floor Plan
- Existing Third Floor Plan
- Proposed Third Floor Plan
- Existing Roof Plan
- Proposed Roof Plan
- Existing Survey Showing Configuration of Proposed Addition

The Certificate of Appropriateness application summarizes the Alterations, Construction, and Demolition components of the project and more details of each category are included below.

### **Project Introduction**

The Fox Club has been a private club since its founding in 1898 and its construction in 1902. Due to its legacy with the work of Guy Lowell, the club intends to host periodic events that invite the public into the facility, so the work includes making the building meet accessibility requirements to the extent feasible while preserving its historic character and features. Following review by the Cambridge Historical Commission, approval will also be required from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board due to the need for some variances since the project triggers full compliance with current regulations. Accessibility improvements have been reviewed with the staff of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities and they have expressed support for the project. As part of the MAAB variance application process, the Massachusetts Historical Commission will also review the project scope via MHC's ADA Consultation Form.

**Alterations:** *Renovations to provide public accessibility, infrastructure upgrades, and functionality improvements to this 1902 private social club designed by Architect Guy Lowell.*

Alterations seek to preserve primary character-defining spaces while providing functional improvements that include the following:

- Providing accessibility in compliance with current regulations to the extent feasible. A few variances for preservation of historic character will be requested from the MAAB.
- Renovating interior restrooms on the basement, first, and second floors with accessible restrooms for compliance with public accommodations. Third floor will remain private.
- Improving maneuvering clearances at hallway access areas to restrooms for provision of wheelchair turning radius as required.
- Reshaping original wood door thresholds to meet current accessibility regulations while retaining original historic materials.
- Modifying basement configuration for improved useability and functionality while preserving the character and location of historically designated rooms.
- Replacing the back winder staircase with code compliant stairway in the addition for improving life safety and egress. Infilling existing stairs for support space that includes replacement and relocation of the 3-stop dumbwaiter and the provision of pantry areas.
- Replacing gas cooking range in the commercial kitchen with electric induction range.
- Providing automatic fire suppression system (sprinklers), upgrading electrical service and wiring, improving fire alarm and detection systems, restoring original light fixtures, and upgrading all lighting fixtures with energy-efficient LED lamping.
- Replacing gas-fired heating system with energy efficient all-electric air-source variable refrigerant flow (VRF) system for heating and cooling. Interior distribution units will replace existing radiators and piping in the same locations to the extent feasible. Exterior components of the system will be in locations that are not be visible from the public way.
- Repair, restore, and retain primary character-defining spaces in all public areas.

**Construction:** *Provide an addition on the south side of the building for an accessible entrance from JFK Street, a small LULA elevator, replacement of the back exit stair, and limited rooftop HVAC equipment.*

The side yard of the Fox Club is approximately 13'-8" wide between the building plinth and the north façade at 48 JFK. The basement and first floor of the addition will extend the full width of

the side yard, while the upper floors will be just over 5' from the adjacent building. The first floor of the proposed addition will provide an accessible entrance from the front sidewalk and from the back courtyard area, while the upper floors are limited to enclosure of the elevator and stairs. The elevator will be a limited use, limited application elevator (LULA) that will serve the entrance level at grade for access to the basement, first, and second floors. The third floor will not receive elevator service since that level will remain private, and this allows for minimal impact of the hoistway on the building envelope since it will not penetrate the roof area.

The front wall of the proposed addition will be setback almost 6' from the JFK façade to avoid disruption of the southwest corner fluted pilaster and to lessen the mass of the addition in relation to the principal street elevation. The wall surfaces visible from the public way will match existing materials with painted clapboards on the JFK elevation and brick on the side elevation. Corner boards of the addition will be appropriately scaled to compliment the building's character without detracting from the broad prominent fluted pilasters at the original corners.

The roof materials and eave details of the addition will match the existing roof and eaves. The low roof over the first floor of the addition will be marginally visible from the public way, and its materials and detailing will be treated differently from the primary façade so that the corner of the addition's upper floors will read more prominently than the low roof extension area. An oculus window on the JFK façade of the addition will be a painted wood sash with simulated divided light muntins adhered to each side of clear insulated glass. The muntins will match historic profiles of the original windows and exterior casings will be painted wood trim.

The accessible route for the proposed accessible entrance will commence with a small sign mounted to the low metal fence to the right of the main entrance, directing visitors to the south along the sidewalk. The existing metal gate in the low fence by the garden wall will be rehinged in its same location and its operation will be improved for easier use. Behind the metal gate will be a wire-cut brick paved walkway parallel to and matching the JFK sidewalk. The relocated wooden gate in the reconstructed garden wall will provide access into the site, leading to an exterior door in the addition that serves as the accessible public entrance at grade.

There are no setback requirements in the Harvard Square Conservation District or the Harvard Square Zoning Overlay District, so zoning relief is not required for the addition footprint.

**Demolition:** *Selective interior demolition related to upgrades while preserving character-defining features and spaces. Temporary removal of garden and courtyard walls for construction access to site.*

Exterior demolition will include temporary removal of the Garden Wall on JFK Street and Driveway Wall on Mount Auburn Street to facilitate access to the site for construction equipment and materials. During demolition, existing brickwork will be salvaged to the extent feasible for reuse during reconstruction. At the JFK Garden Wall, reconstruction will be in the same location, but the wooden access gate will be relocated and rehinged to provide an accessible route into the building. At the Mount Auburn Driveway Wall, reconstruction will relocate the wall about 5' to the south to increase parking depth and eliminate encroachment of cars onto the public

sidewalk and blocking of the areaway stairs to the basement. The existing wooden access gate for the driveway will be reinstalled in the same location in the center of the reconstructed wall.

Interior demolition will be very limited on the first and second floors, primarily focused on support areas, accessibility improvements, and infrastructure upgrades as noted under "Alterations" above. Restroom configurations, maneuverability clearances, and threshold profiles will be modified for wheelchair compliance. The existing winder stair in the southeast corner will be removed and that means of egress will be replaced with a safe code-compliant stair in the addition.

### **Project Summary**

Renovation of this historic 1902 Guy Lowell building is intended to preserve and upgrade the facility for accessibility, energy efficiency, enhanced functionality, and improved life safety. The configuration and location of the proposed addition will provide an accessible entrance, an elevator, and replacement of the back stair to allow access for persons of all abilities. Respect for the original design elements will be echoed in the addition to compliment the historic building while minimizing its massing in relation to the existing structure.



# THE FOX CLUB RENOVATION

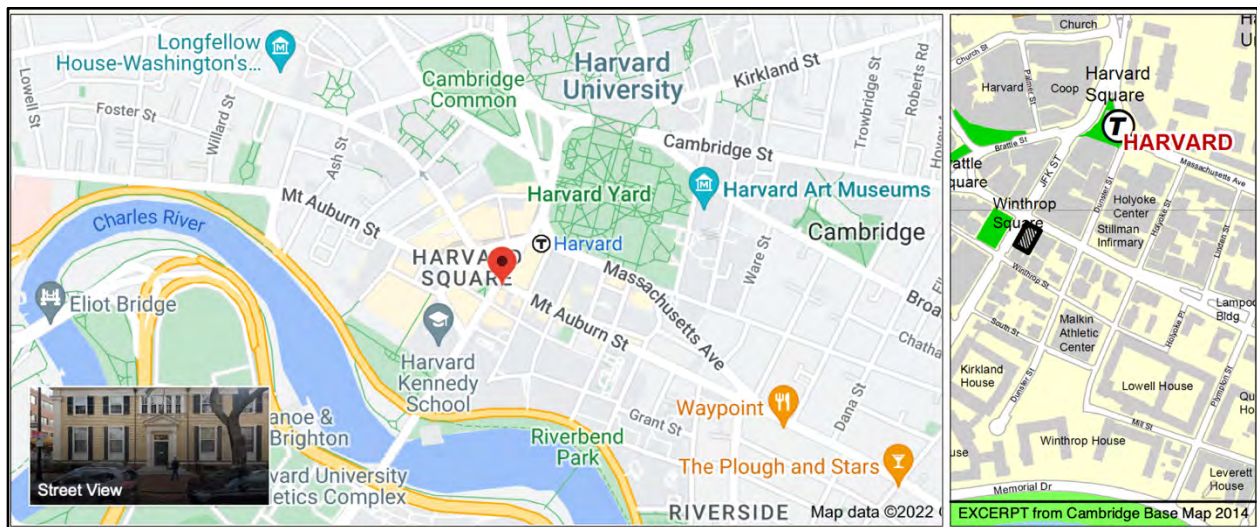
44 JOHN F. KENNEDY ST.  
CAMBRIDGE MA 02138

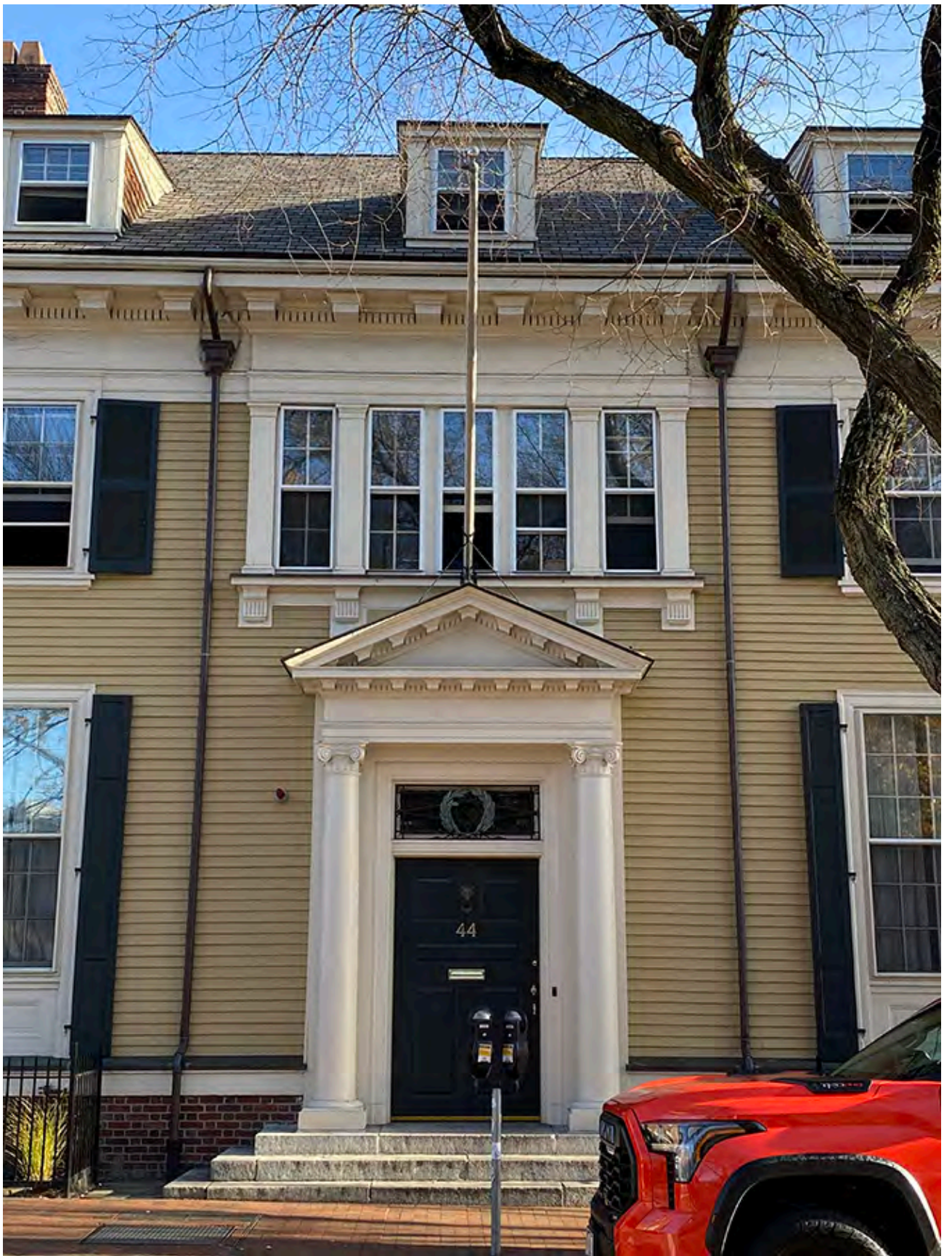
**OWNER:** Fox Club Holdings LLC  
**ARCHITECT:** Mills Whitaker Architects LLC  
**SURVEYOR & CIVIL:** Hancock Associates Inc  
**GEOTECHNICAL:** McPhail Associates Inc  
**STRUCTURAL:** Structures North Consulting Engrs Inc  
**FIRE SUPPRESSION:** Comprehensive Fire Protection LLC  
**MECH. & ELECT:** Johnson Engineering & Design Inc  
**ACOUSTICAL:** Acentech Incorporated  
**ENVIRONMENTAL:** Universal Environmental Consultants Inc

## DOCUMENTS ENCLOSED

Captioned Photographs (8 pages – 8.5 x 11)

Drawings & Illustrations (20 sheets – 11 x 17)





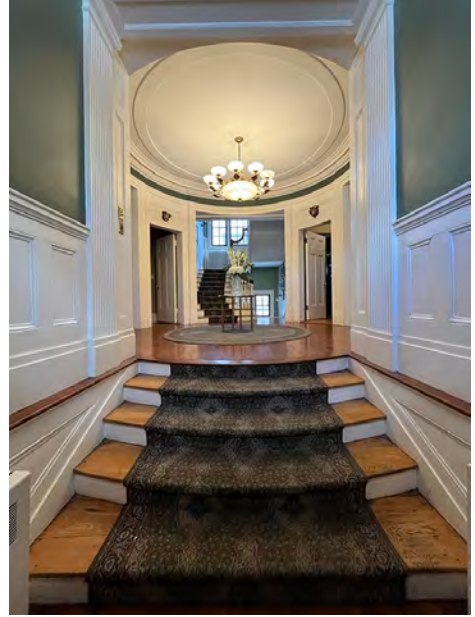
*Central Public Entrance to the Fox Club on  
Primary Facade at JFK Street on West Elevation*

220216-IMG\_0819.JPG



*Three Steps Up to Public Entrance and Limited Depth Between Sidewalk and Facade*

230425-IMG\_0718.JPG



*Five Stairs Up from Entrance to Central Foyer in First Floor Interior of the Fox Club*

220718-IMG\_1840.JPG



*Original Central Stair Balustrade Looking Toward Central Foyer and Public Entrance*

220718-IMG\_1841.JPG



*Details at Original First Floor Stair Balustrade*



*Interstitial Sideyard Space Between the  
Fox Club and Adjacent 48 JFK Apartment Building*



220216-IMG\_0828.JPG



*Garden Wall with Wooden Gate and Metal Guardrail at JFK Street*

221202-IMG\_3080.JPG



*Swinging Gate in Fence at Property Line; Wooden Gate in Garden Wall*

220718-IMG\_1856.JPG

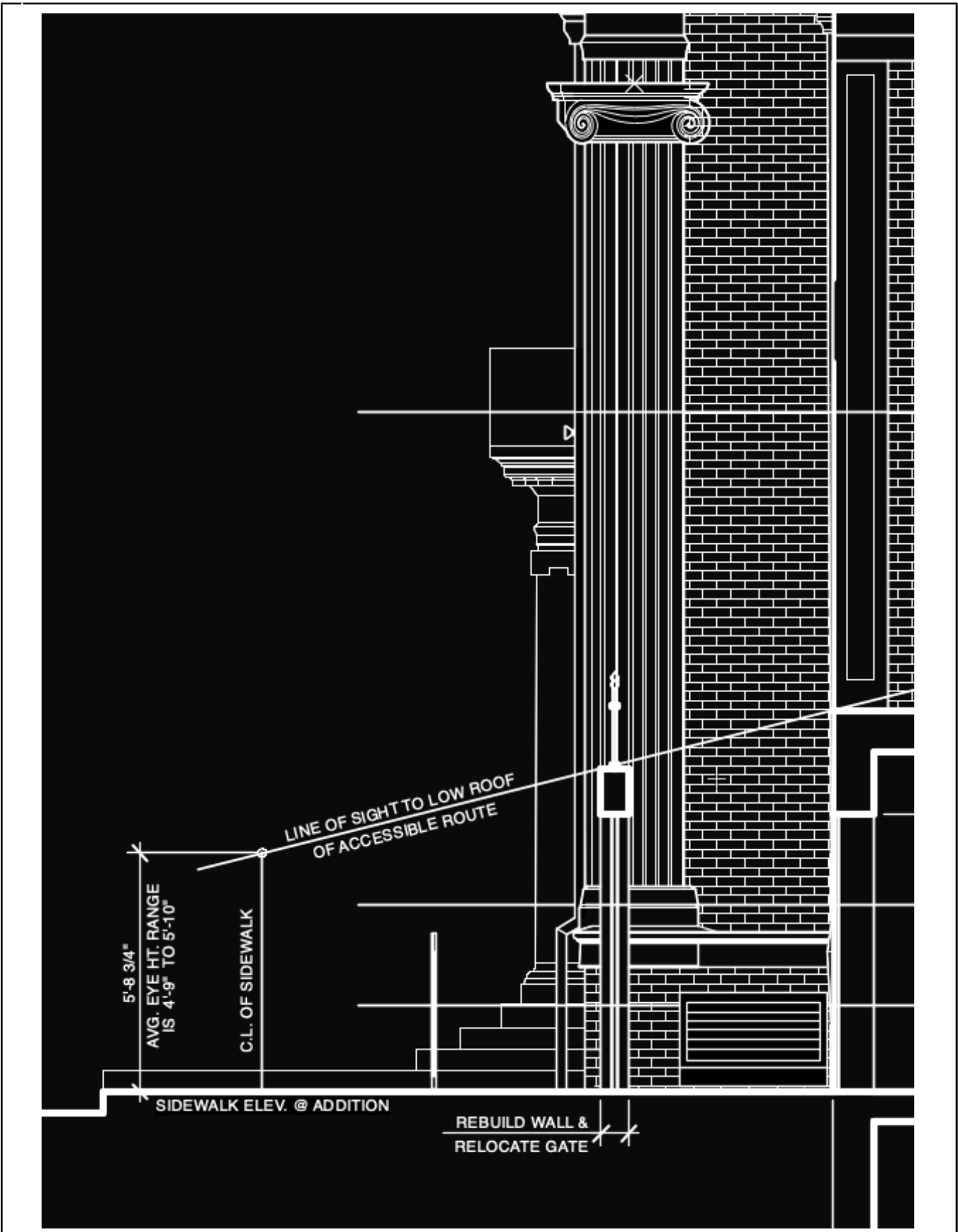


*Sideyard Area Looking Toward JFK Street; Apartment Building at 48 JFK to Left*

220718-IMG\_1857.JPG



*Areaway Stairs to Basement from Sideyard; Gate at Garden Wall Beyond*



*Sectional Detail at JFK Sidewalk and Garden Wall Showing Line of Sight to Sideyard Addition; Proposed First Story Low Roof of Accessible Route Marginally Visible from Sidewalk*

220718-IMG\_1851.JPG



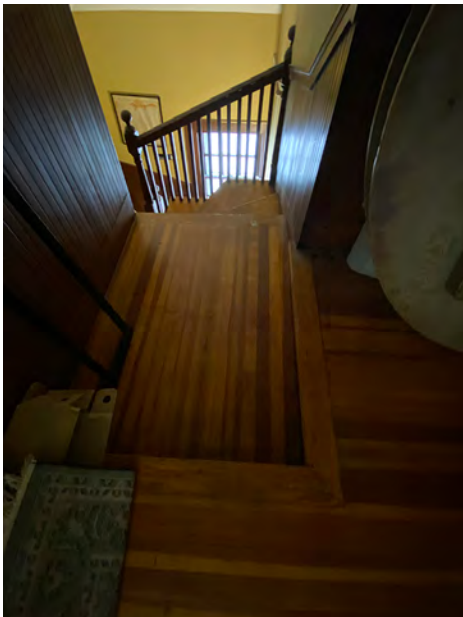
*Central Stair at Second Floor Looking East*

220718-IMG\_1846.JPG



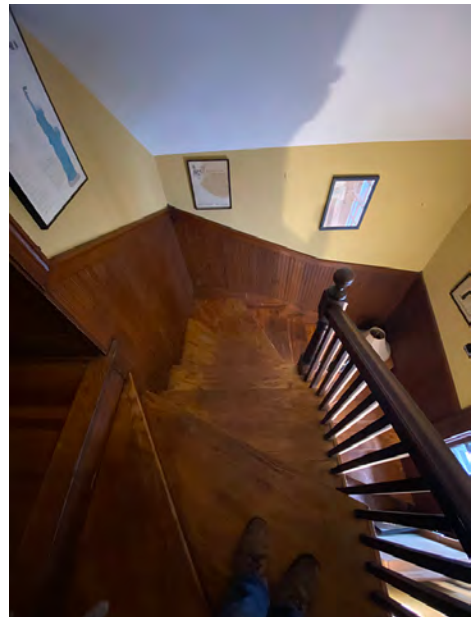
*Third Floor Hallway Looking South Toward Back Stair with Headroom 47" at Left and 76" at Right Side of Path to the Back Stairway Due to Roof Slope*

220718-IMG\_1847.JPG



*Extended Landing at Back Stair with Low Headroom*

220718-IMG\_1848.JPG



*Winder Staircase at Back Stair Looking Down from Third Floor Level in Southeast Corner*

220216-IMG\_0810.JPG



*View of Fox Club from Mount Auburn Street;  
North & South Facades are Brick; East & West  
Facades are Painted Wood Clapboards*

220726-IMG\_1898.JPG



*Looking West Along Mount Auburn from Driveway*

220216-IMG\_0816.JPG



*Areaway Stairs Parallel to North Facade at Mt. Auburn*

220216-IMG\_0815.JPG



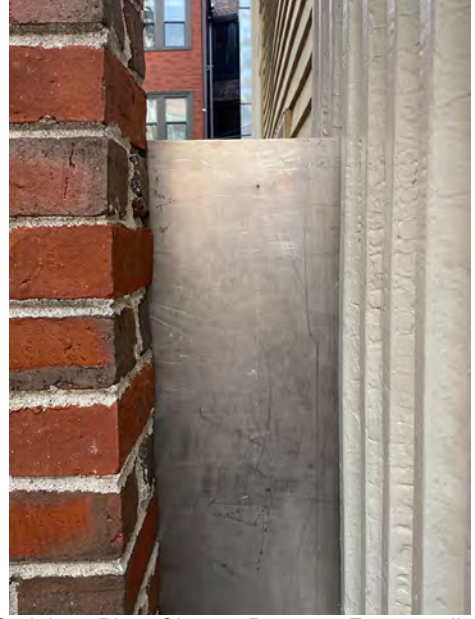
*Basement Door in North Facade Areaway*

220216-IMG\_0812.JPG



*Driveway Wall at Mount Auburn Street with Gate & Guard Similar to JFK Garden Wall*

220216-IMG\_0813.JPG



*Stainless Plate Closure Between Freestanding Driveway Wall and Adjacent Building Allows for Reversibility and Preservation of Facade*

220718-IMG\_1858.JPG



*Detail at Courtyard and Stairs to Back Door with Driveway Wall Beyond to North*

220718-IMG\_1854.JPG



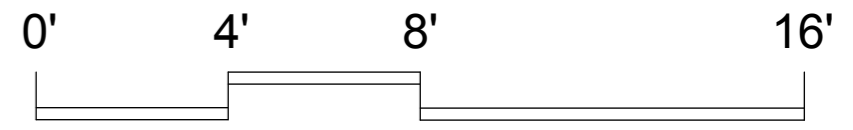
*Driveway Wall with Wooden Gate and Metal Guardrail to Match JFK Garden Wall*



The Fox Club Renovations • 44 JFK Street, Harvard Square



EXISTING WEST EXTERIOR ELEVATION (JFK FACADE)



EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK

LOW ROOF  
BEYOND

ADDITION FOR  
ACCESSIBILITY

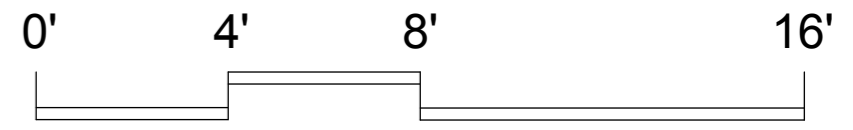
ENTRY

3

2

1

B



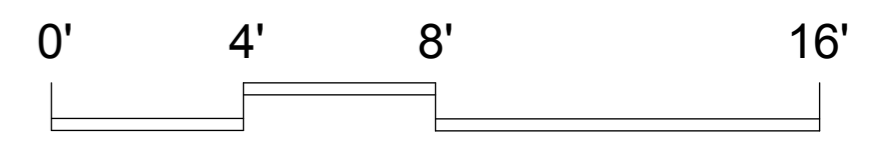
PROPOSED WEST EXTERIOR ELEVATION (JFK FACADE)





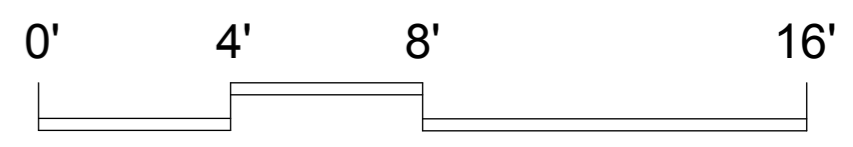


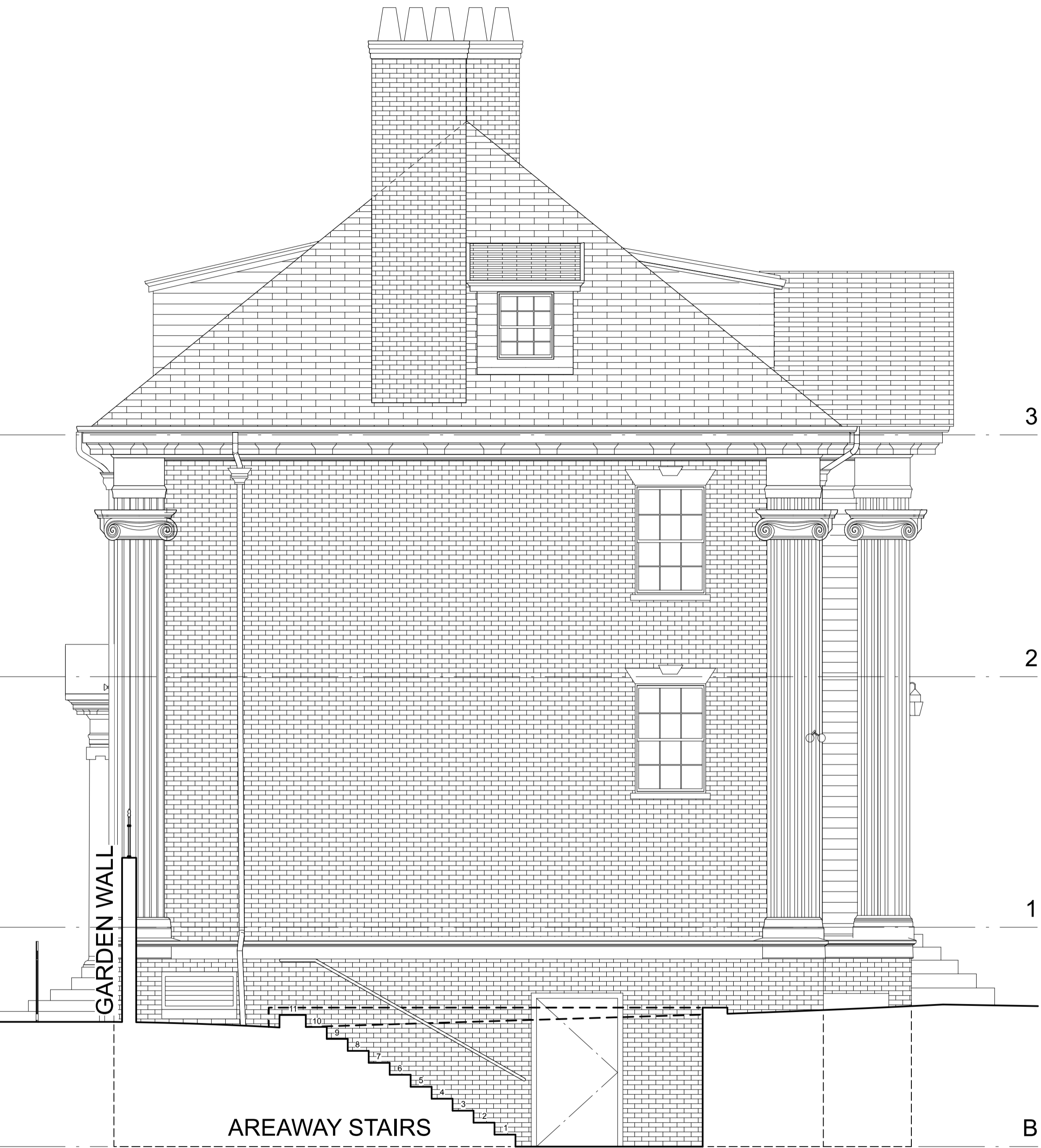
EXISTING EAST EXTERIOR ELEVATION (COURTYARD FACADE)



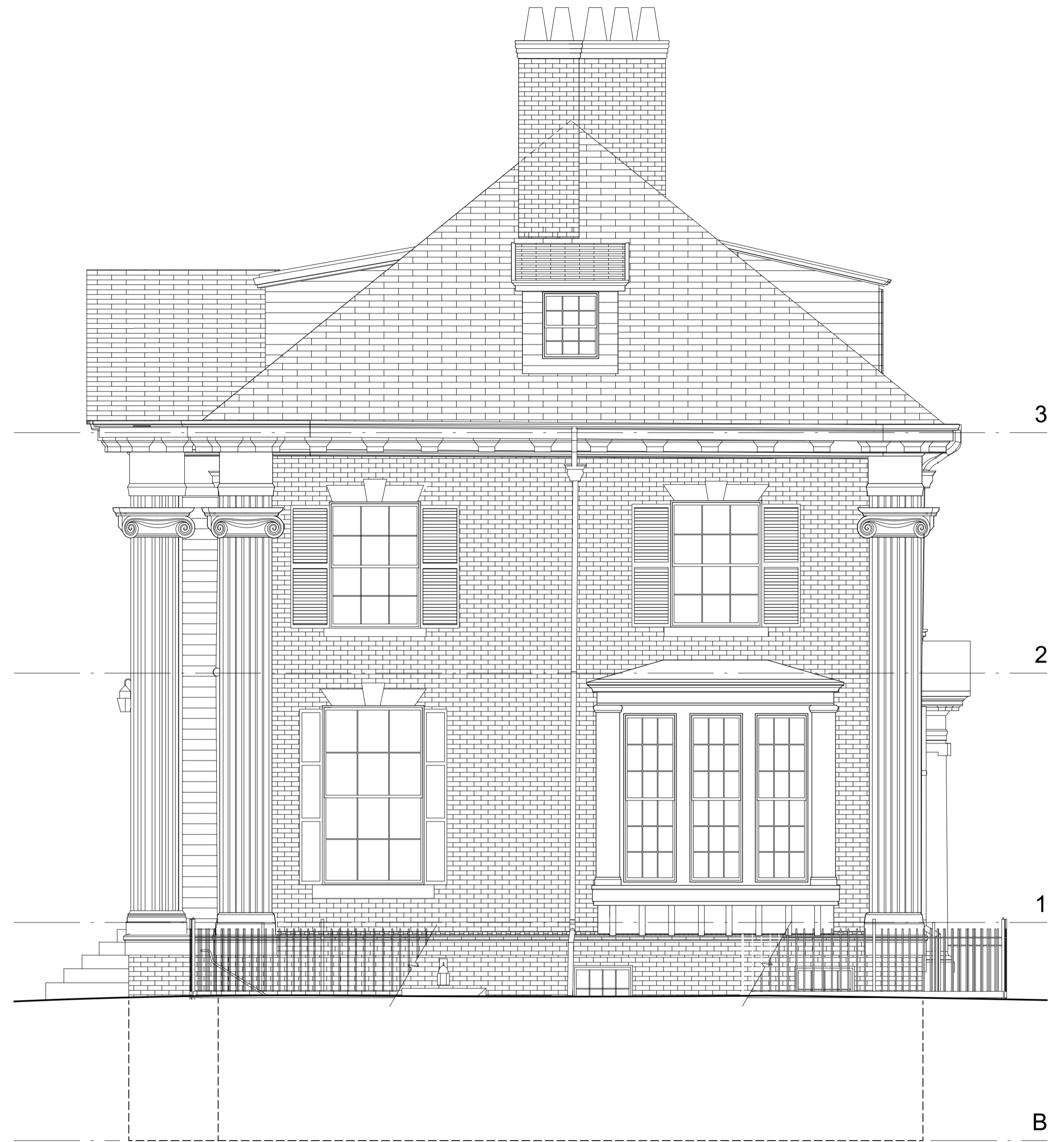
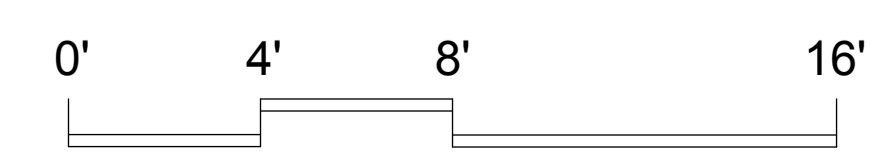


PROPOSED EAST EXTERIOR ELEVATION (COURTYARD FACADE)

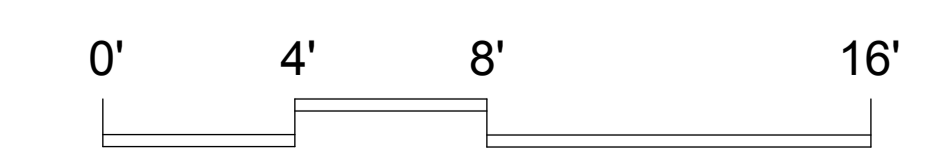


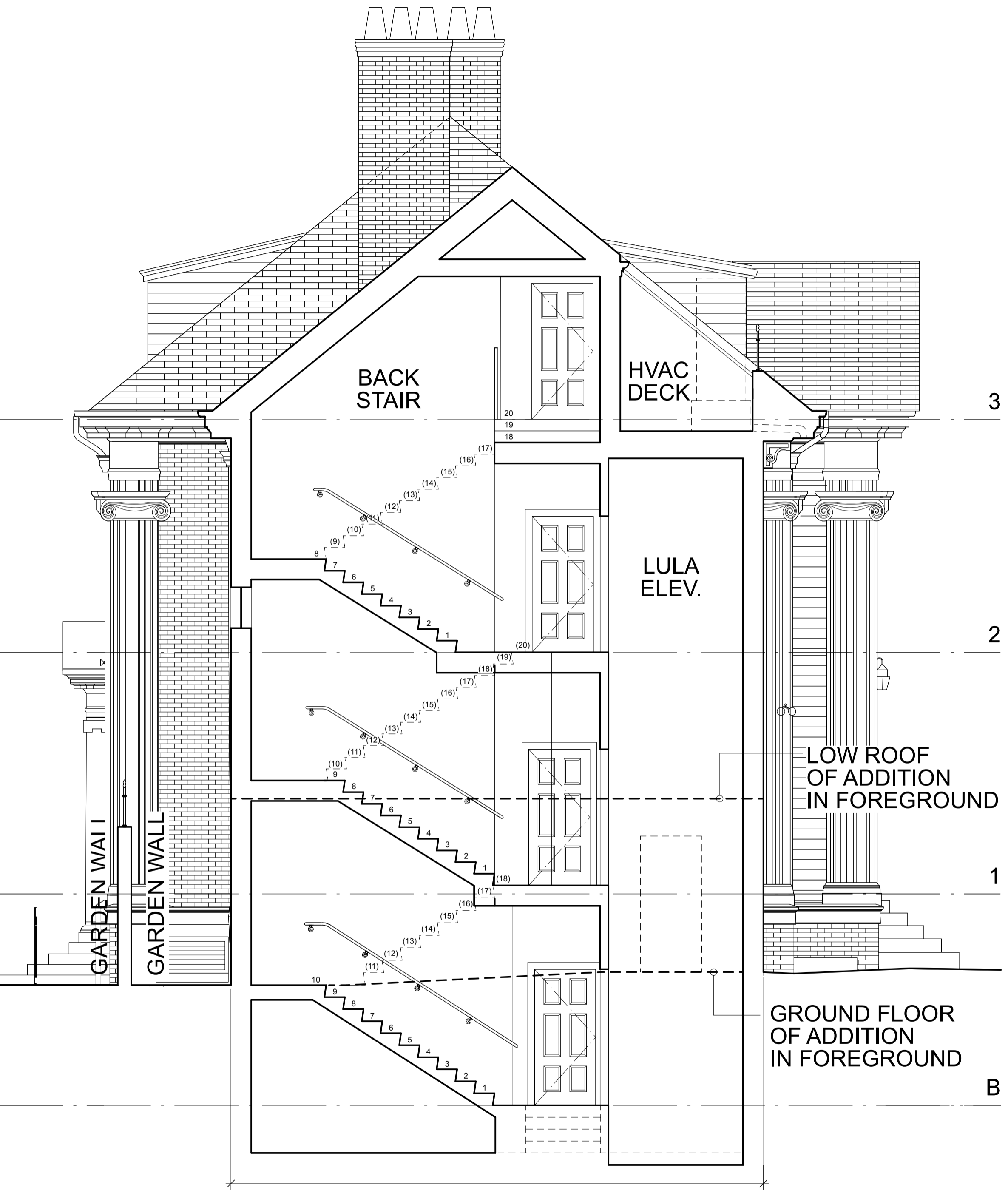


EXISTING SOUTH EXTERIOR ELEVATION (SIDEYARD FACADE)

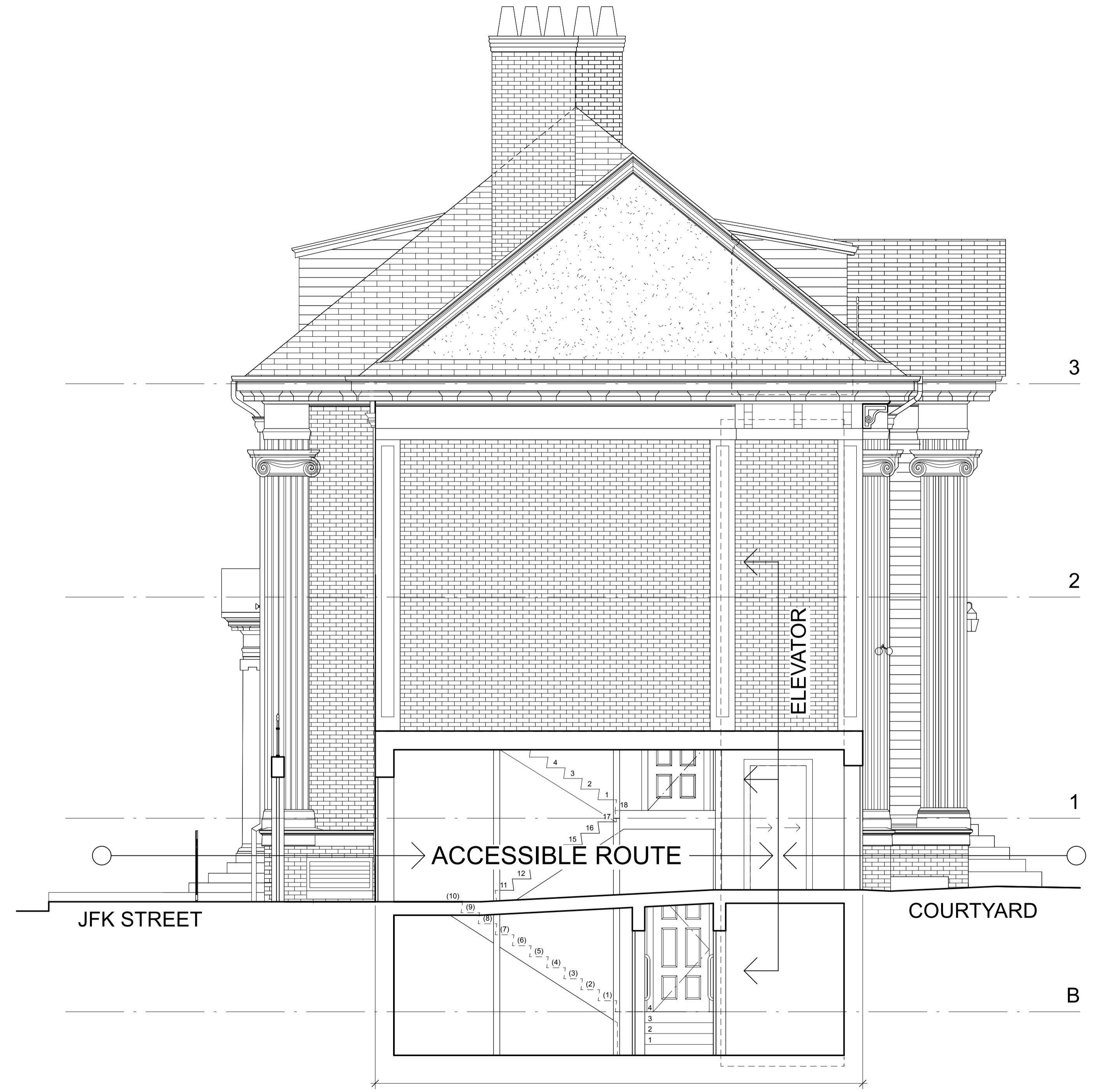
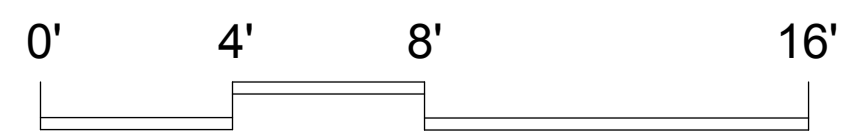


EXISTING NORTH EXTERIOR ELEVATION (MT. AUBURN FACADE)

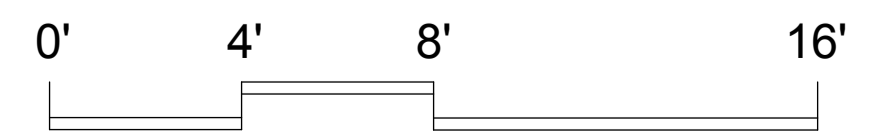


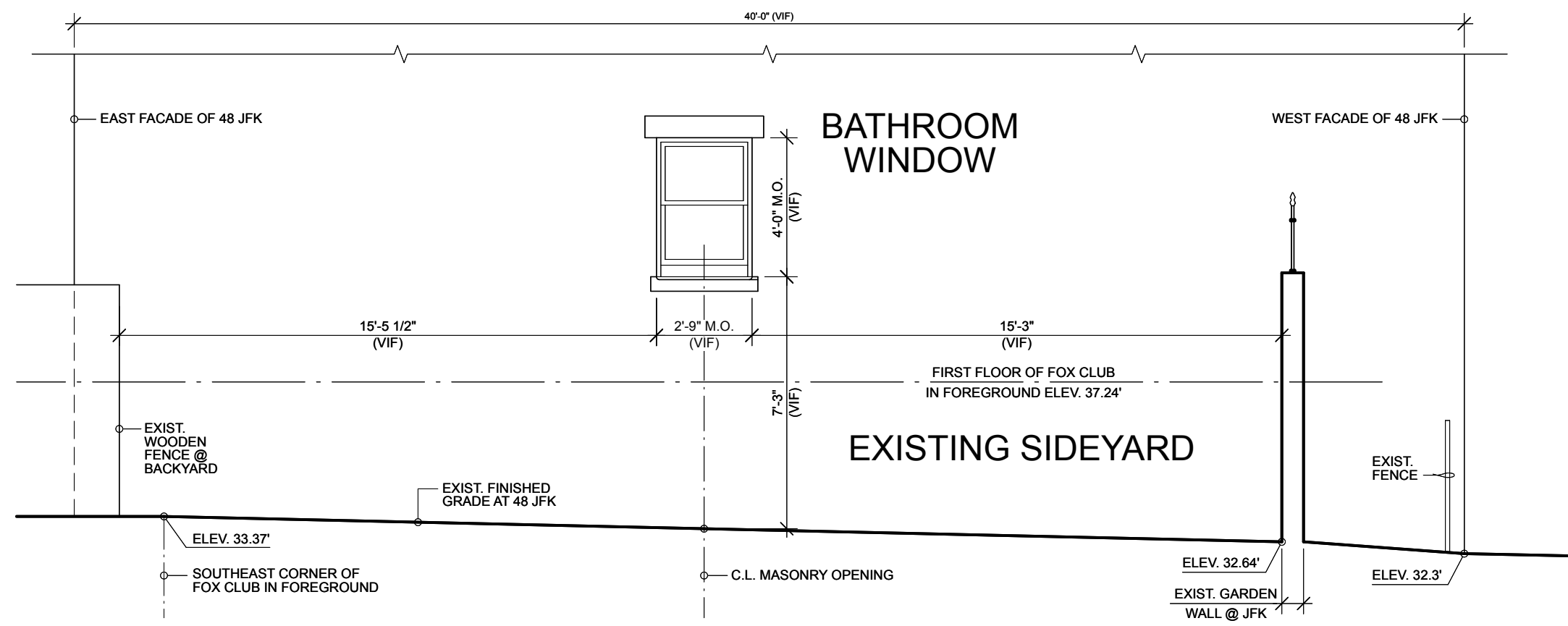


PROPOSED SECTION THRU STAIRS & ELEVATOR

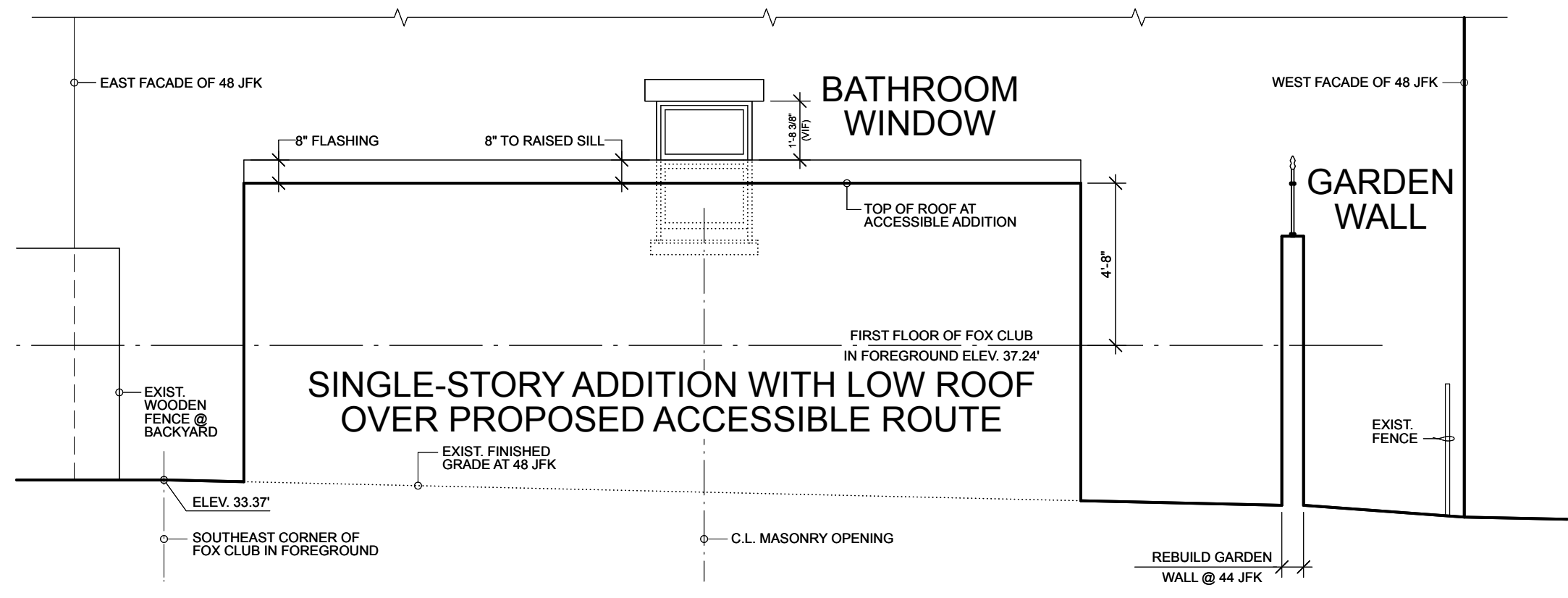
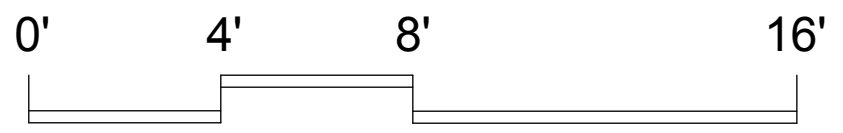


PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION & ACCESSIBLE ROUTE

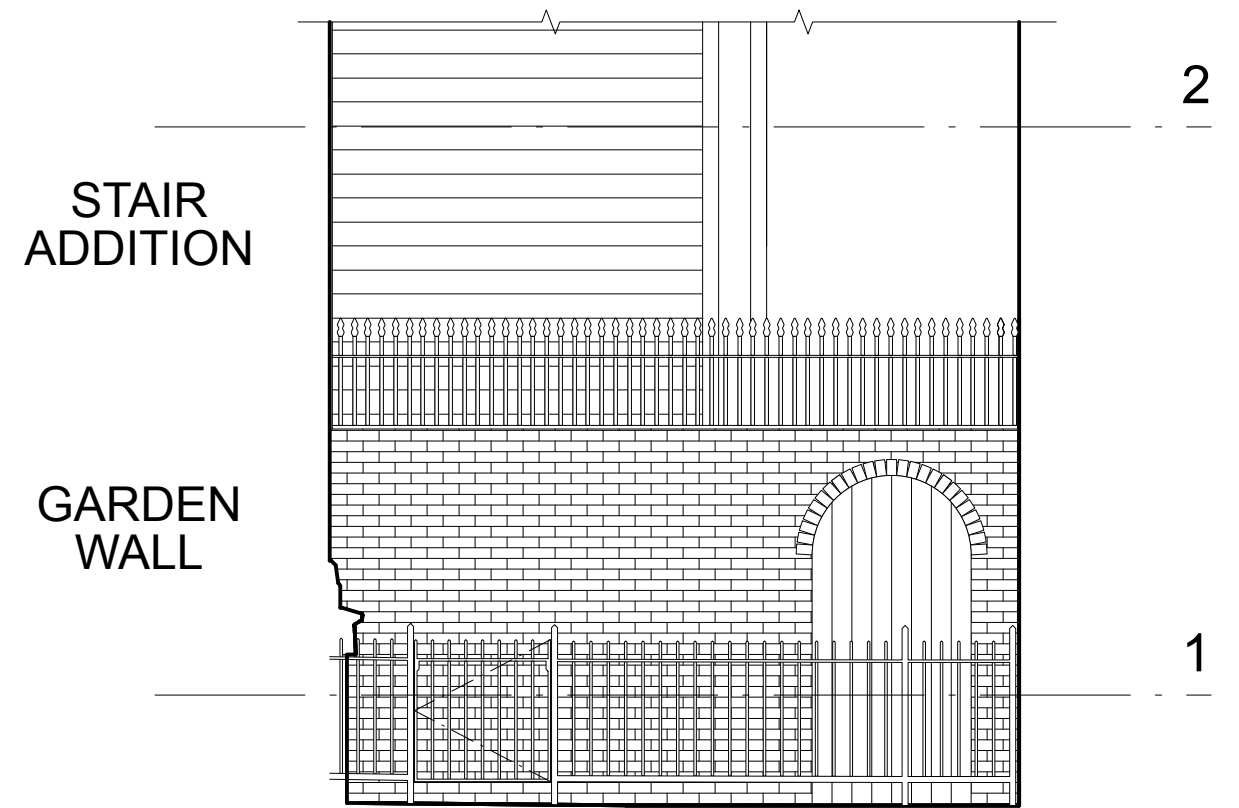
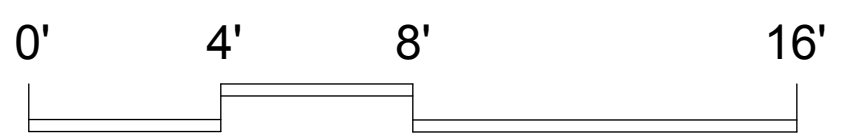




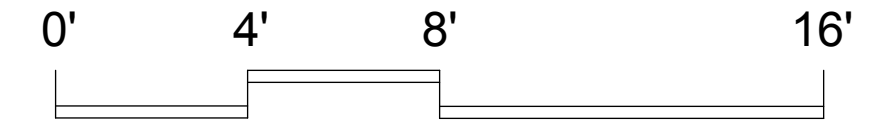
**EXISTING PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION  
@ 48 JFK STREET APARTMENTS**



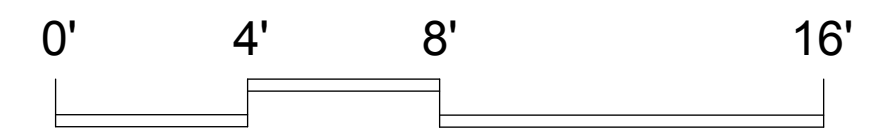
**ACCESSIBLE ADDITION PROFILE  
@ 48 JFK STREET APARTMENTS**

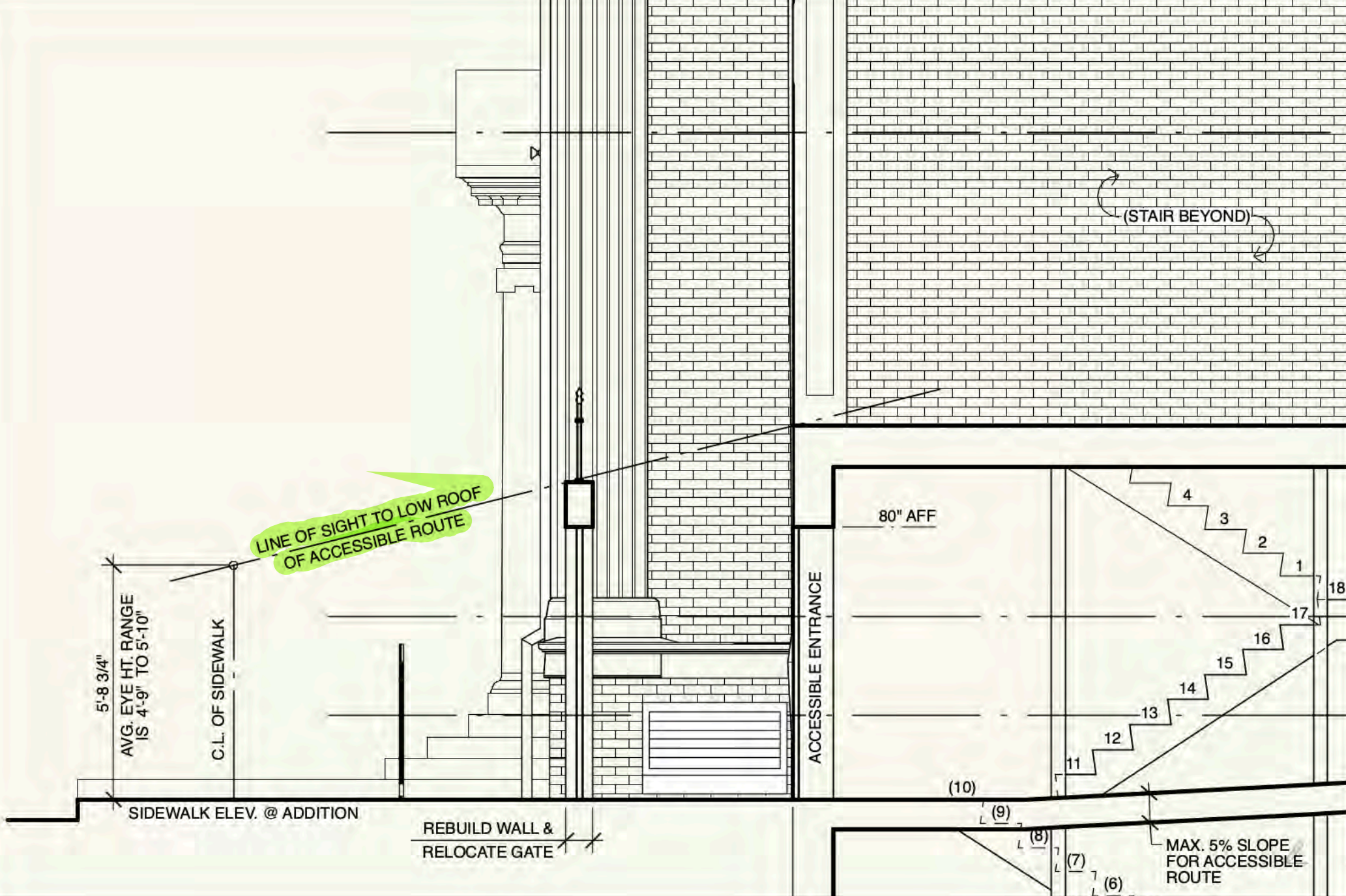


**PARTIAL WEST EXTERIOR  
AT GARDEN WALL**



**PARTIAL WEST EXTERIOR  
BEHIND GARDEN WALL**





(STAIR BEYOND)

LINE OF SIGHT TO LOW ROOF  
OF ACCESSIBLE ROUTE

5'-8 3/4"  
AVG. EYE HT. RANGE  
IS 4'-9" TO 5'-10"

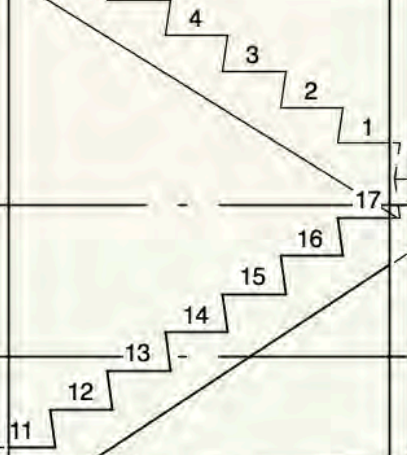
C.L. OF SIDEWALK

SIDEWALK ELEV. @ ADDITION

80" AFF

ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE

REBUILD WALL &  
RELOCATE GATE



(10)

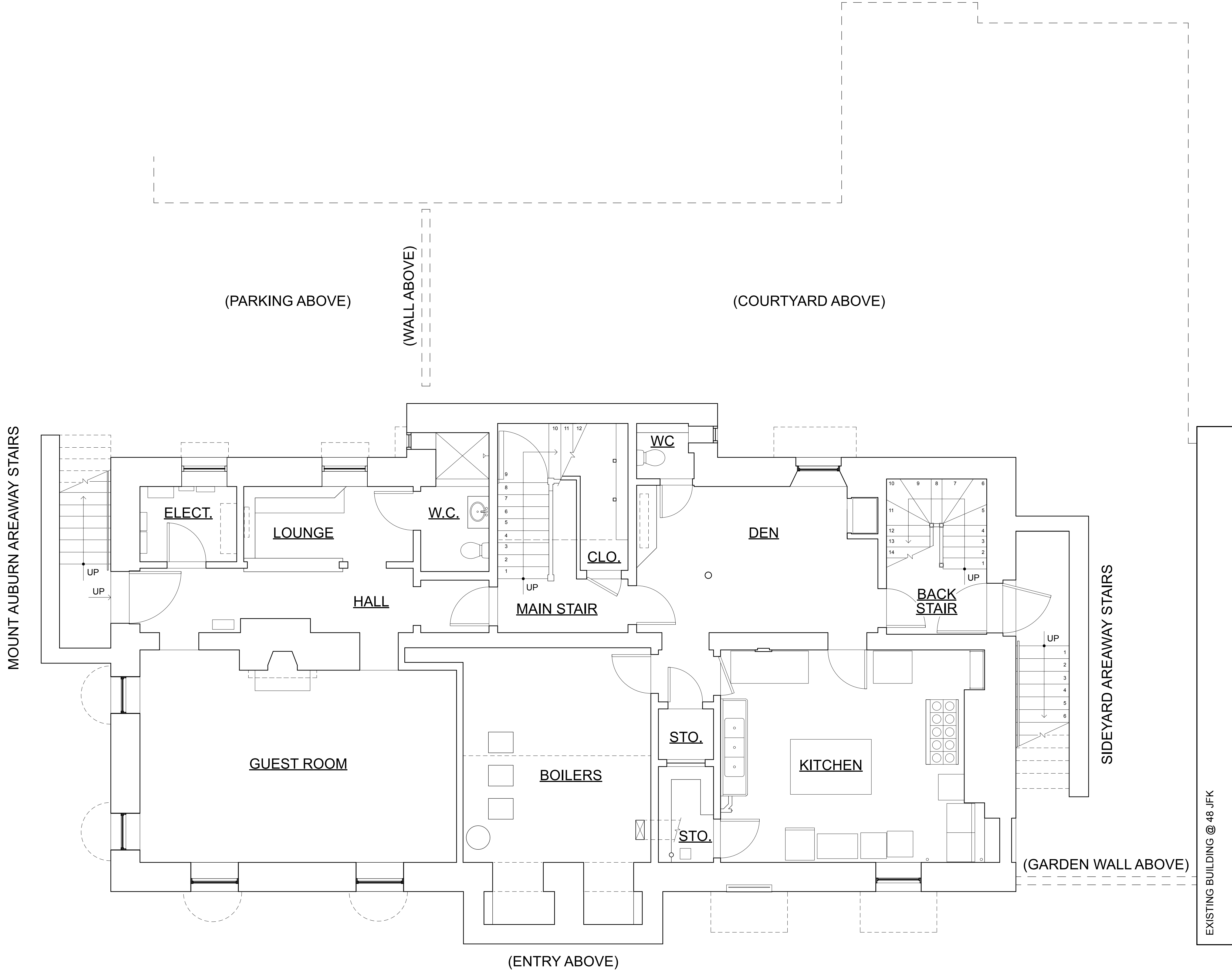
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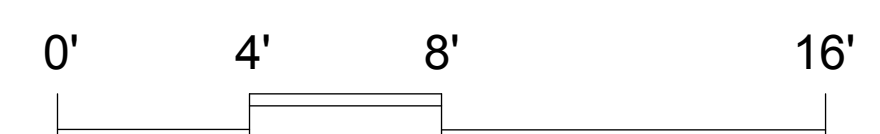
(7)

(6)

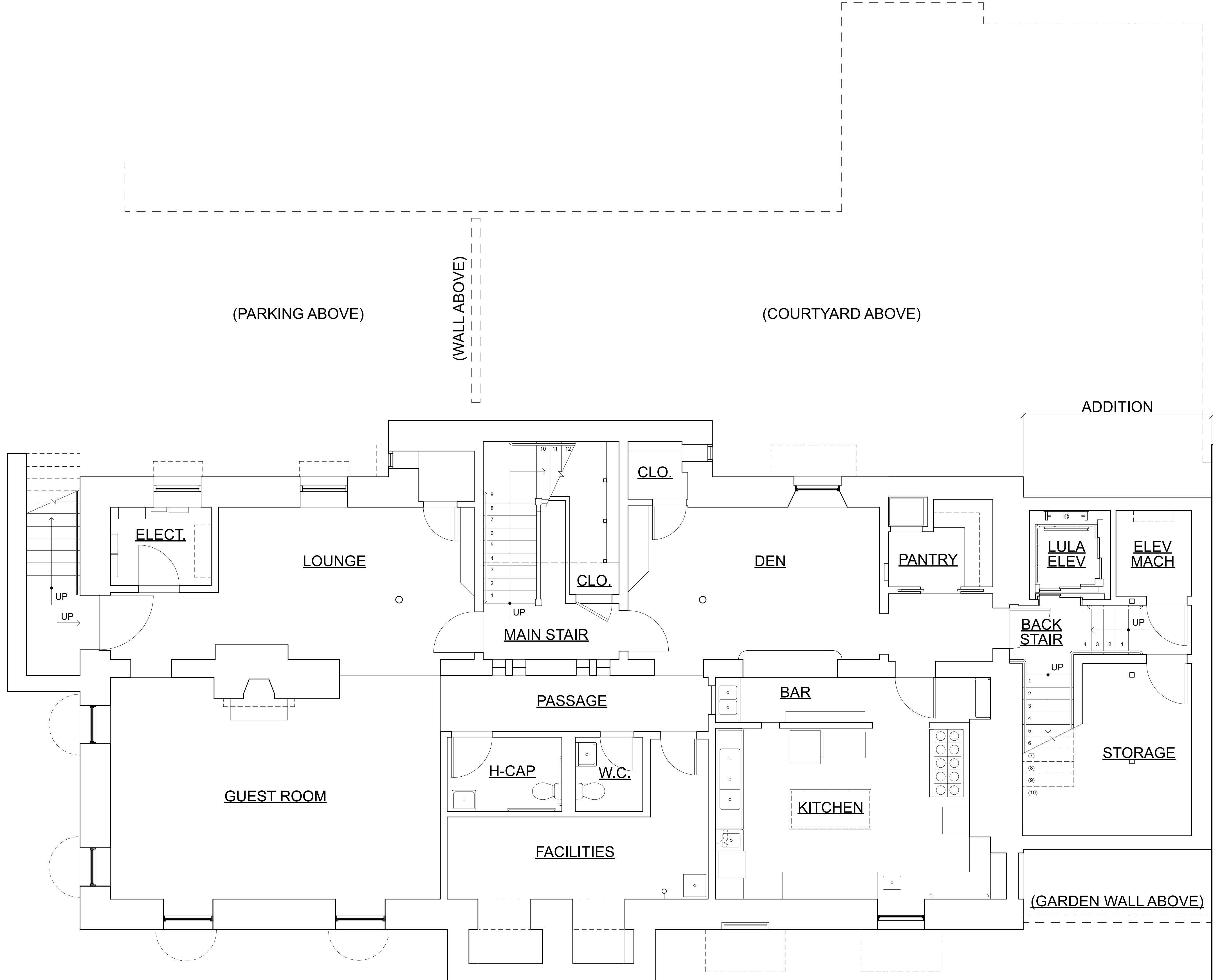
MAX. 5% SLOPE  
FOR ACCESSIBLE  
ROUTE



EXISTING BASEMENT PLAN



MOUNT AUBURN AREAWAY STAIRS



(PARKING ABOVE)

(WALL ABOVE)

(COURTYARD ABOVE)

ADDITION

ELECT.

LOUNGE

CLO.

DEN

PANTRY

LULA ELEV

ELEV MACH

UP  
UP

CLO.

MAIN STAIR

BACK STAIR

UP

PASSAGE

BAR

UP

H-CAP

W.C.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
(7)  
(8)  
(9)  
(10)

STORAGE

GUEST ROOM

KITCHEN

FACILITIES

(GARDEN WALL ABOVE)

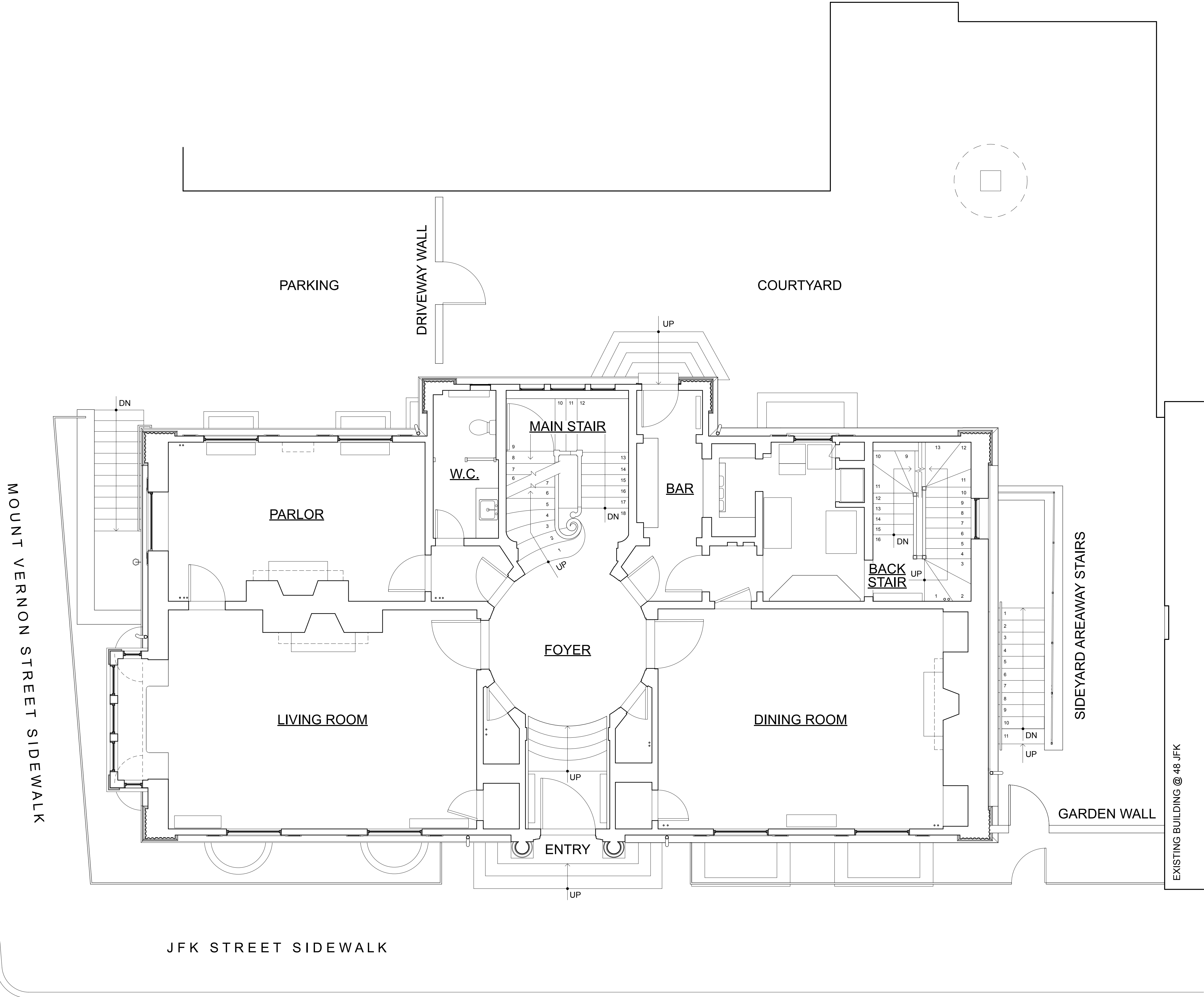
EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK

PROPOSED BASEMENT PLAN

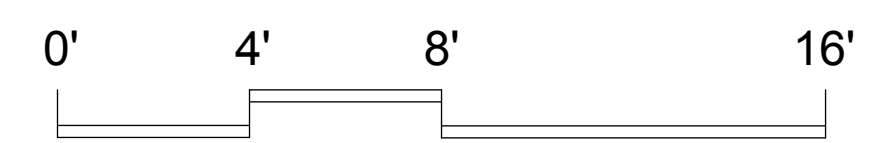
0' 4' 8' 16'



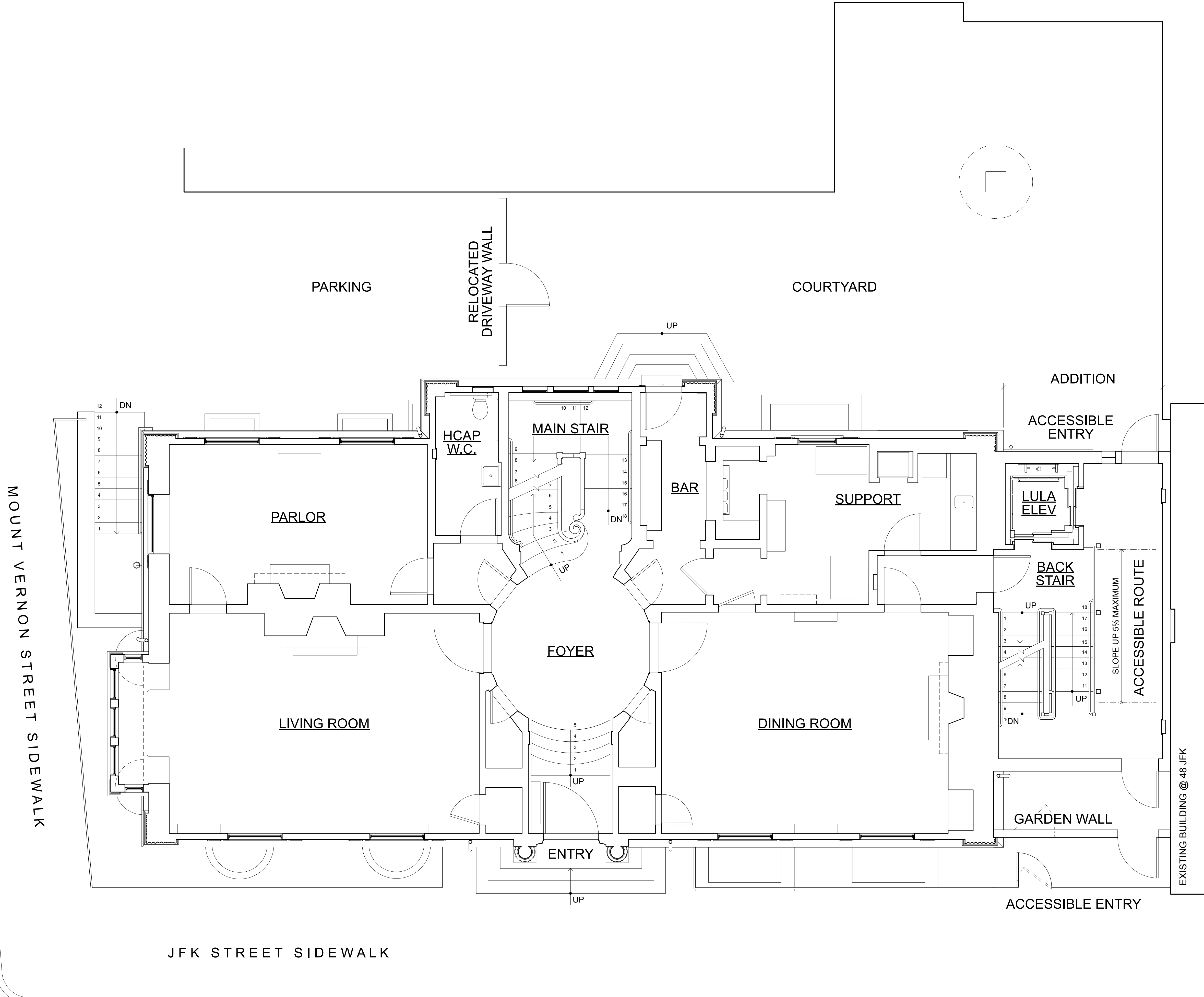




EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN



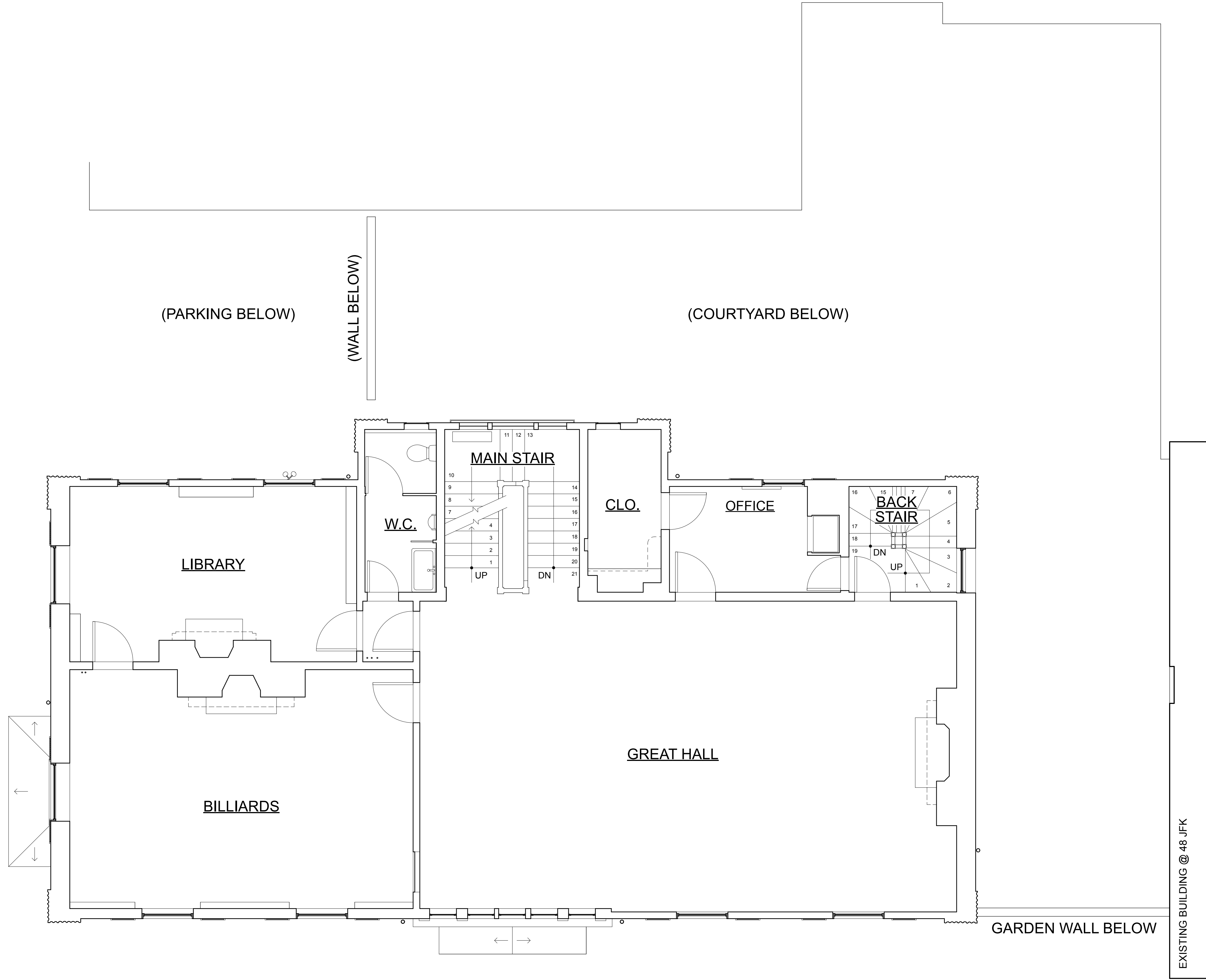
EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK



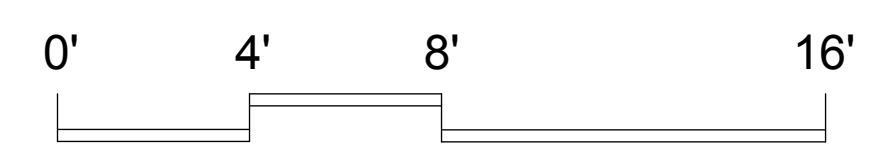
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN



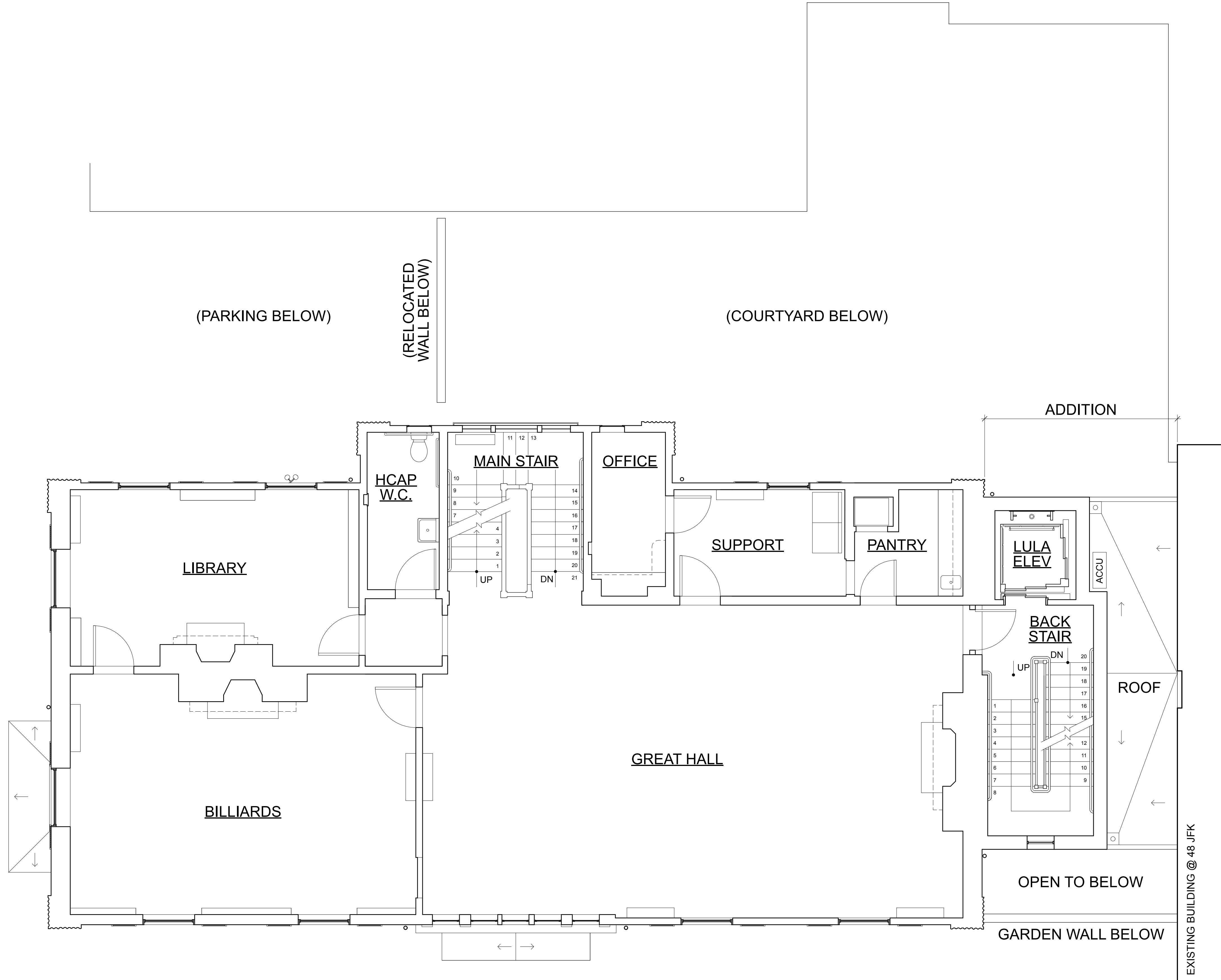
EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK



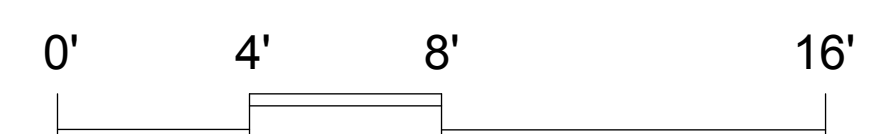
EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

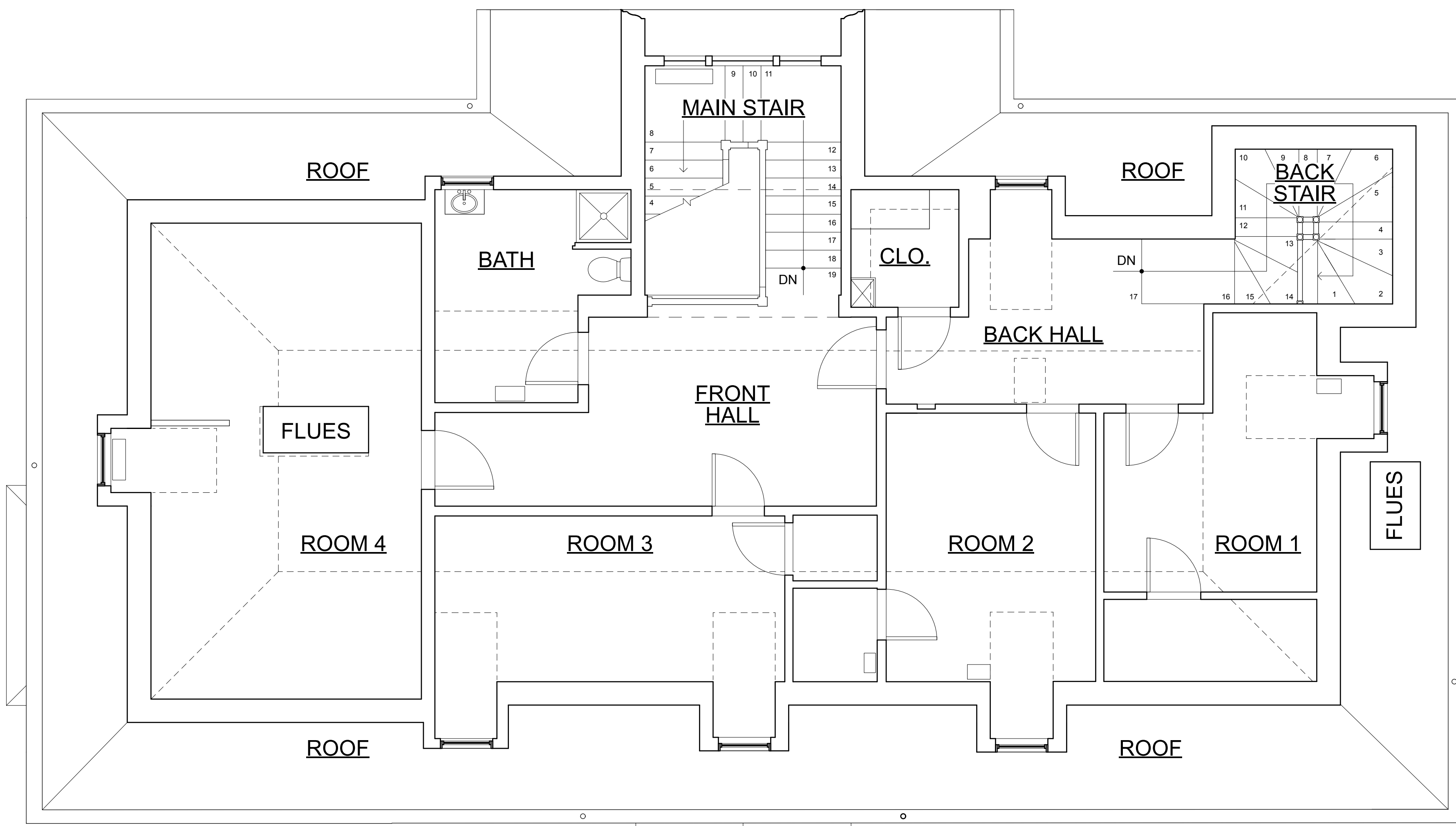


EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK

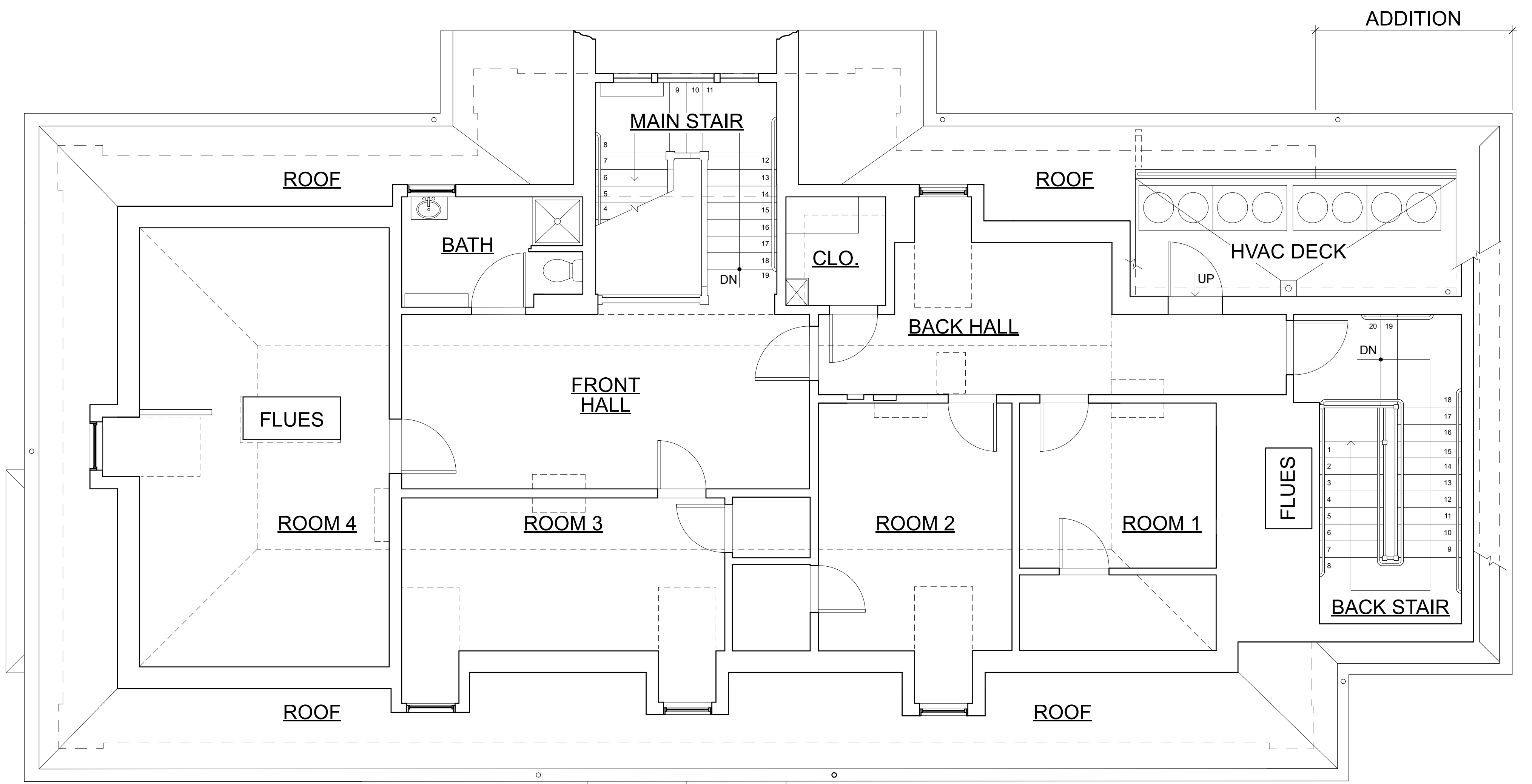


PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN





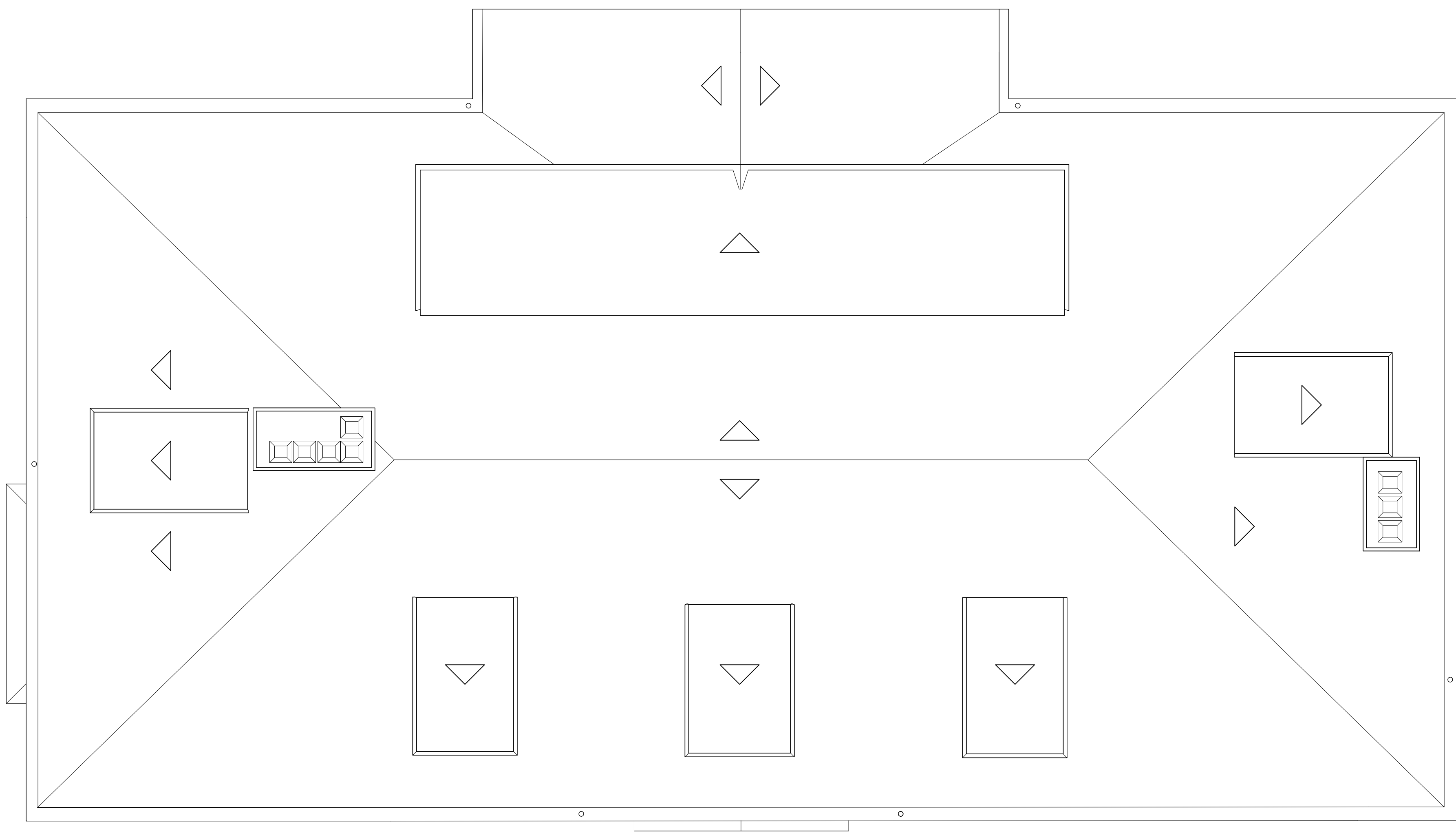
EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK



EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK

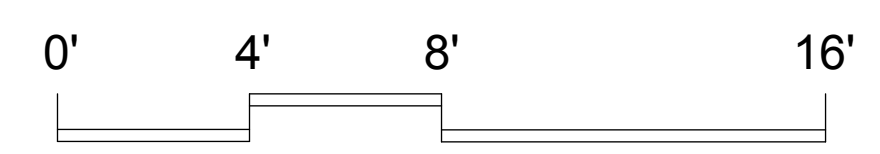
PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR PLAN

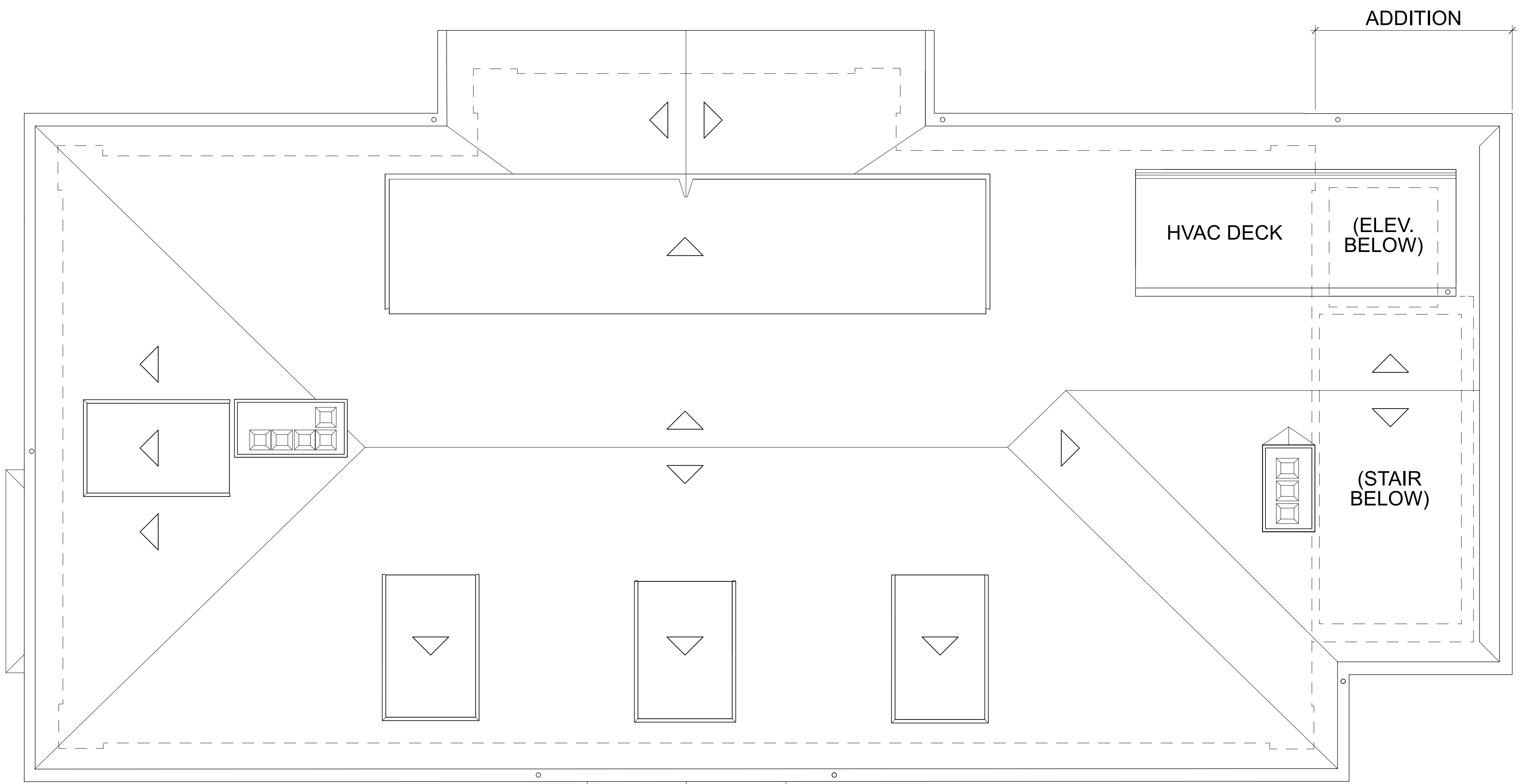




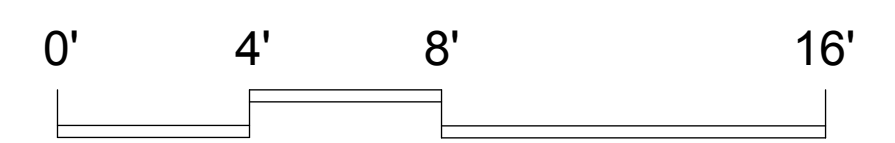
EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK

EXISTING ROOF PLAN





PROPOSED ROOF PLAN



EXISTING BUILDING @ 48 JFK



4 STORY "ARCHITECTURAL FINISH" BUILDING (OVERHANGS ARE NOT SHOWN)

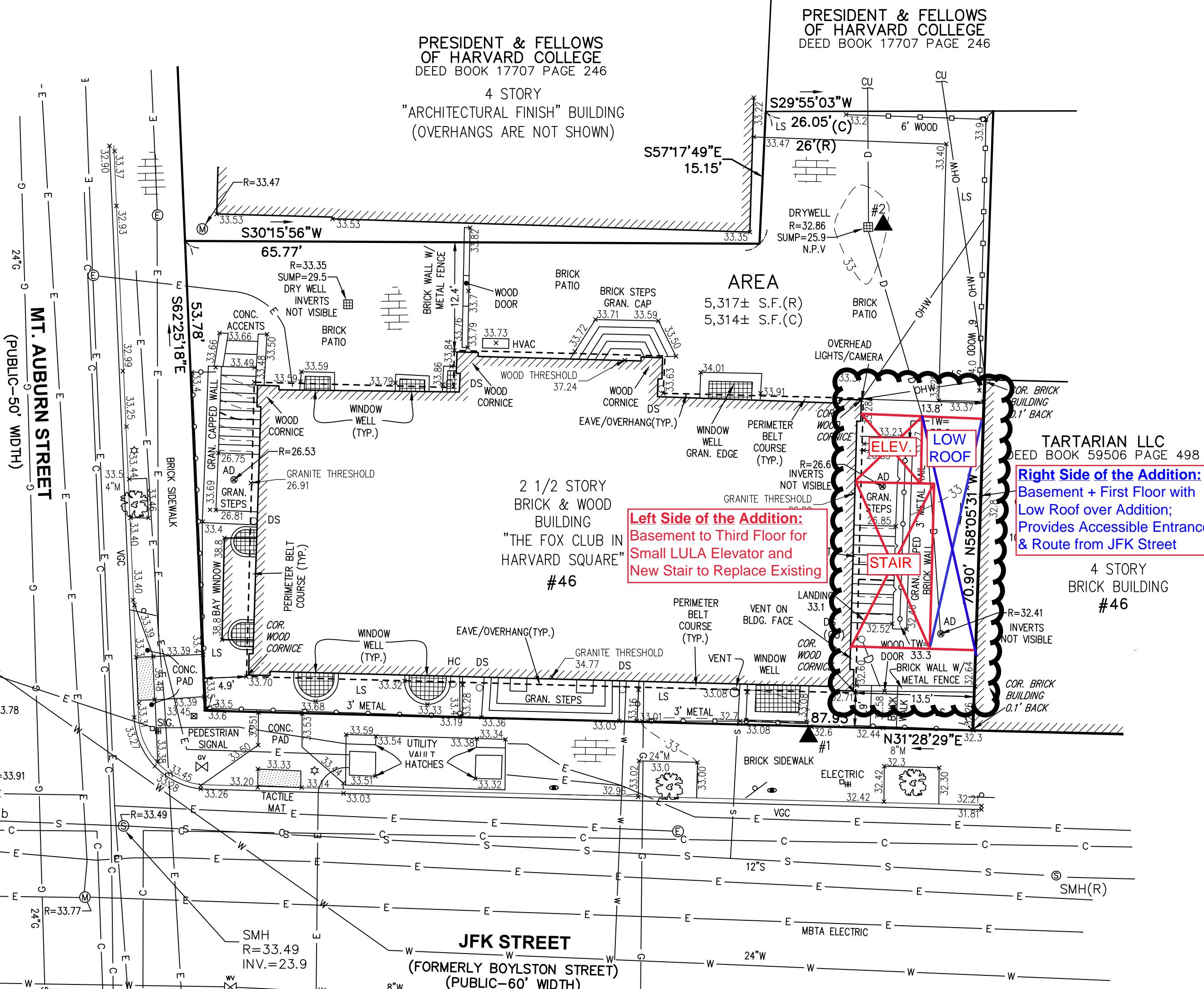
AREA 5,317± S.F.(R) 5,314± S.F.(C)

2 1/2 STORY BRICK & WOOD BUILDING "THE FOX CLUB IN HARVARD SQUARE" #46

TARTARIAN LLC DEED BOOK 59506 PAGE 498

Right Side of the Addition: Basement + First Floor with Low Roof over Addition; Provides Accessible Entrance & Route from JFK Street

4 STORY BRICK BUILDING #46



Left Side of the Addition: Basement to Third Floor for Small LULA Elevator and New Stair to Replace Existing

ELEV. LOW ROOF

STAIR

JFK STREET (FORMERLY BOYLSTON STREET) (PUBLIC-60' WIDTH)

MT. AUBURN STREET (PUBLIC-50' WIDTH)

SMH R=33.49 INV.=23.9

MBTA ELECTRIC

SMH(R)

24'G

24"W

8"W

24"W

12"S

R=33.49

R=33.91

R=33.78

R=32.41

R=26.6

R=26.53

R=33.35

S57°17'49"E 15.15'

S29°55'03"W LS 26.05'(C)

S30°15'56"W 65.77'

S62°25'18"E 53.78'

N58°05'31"W 70.90'

N31°28'29"E 87.95'

24'G

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