

**COVER LETTER**

To: The Philadelphia Historical Commission  
1515 Arch Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
Attn. of Megan Cross Schmitt, Historic Preservation Planner I

From: Luca Segato, Eimer Design

Date: June 3, 2020

Re: **Façade & Rooftop Alterations at 1618-22 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103**

Dear Ms. Schmitt,

On behalf of Gazit Horizons (Chestnut Street) LLC (Property Owner), Eimer Design respectfully requests the above referenced project to be included in the Agenda of the Historical Commission Meeting scheduled on Friday, June 12, 2020.

As presented to the Historical Commission Architectural Committee on 5/26/20, the project consists of façade and rooftop alterations as part of a comprehensive renovation/rehabilitation of the building located at 1618-22 Chestnut Street, known as WCAU Building, and occupied by the Art Institute of Philadelphia from the early 1980s to recent years.

The building, listed in the National Register of Historic Places (with designation date 8/6/1981, ref# 83002281), has been recently acquired by Gazit Horizons LLC with the goal of reactivating the lobby and the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> vacant floors with office/co-working space, amenities and roof deck, maintaining the lower floors as retail space (currently occupied by Old Navy).

The permit application for the demolition of existing interior non-load bearing partitions of floors 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> is being reviewed by L&I (Appl #1057526), with the required approval already obtained from the PHC's Staff.

The proposed design for the main façade, side elevations and rooftop is illustrated in the attached submission package, **revised per the Historical Commission Architectural Committee's recommendations.**

Table of contents:

- Pages 1, 2: General Info and photos of the Building and neighboring context.
- Pages 3, 4: Historic pictures and documents, from PHC archive and other sources as noted.
- Pages 5, 6: Pictures of current conditions with callouts of original / and modified features.
- Pages 7, 8: Proposed exterior demolition work.
- Pages 9 to 12: Proposed exterior new work – Renderings and elevations with scope description, and materials/finishes information.
- Page 13: Proposed new work at 9<sup>th</sup> floor / roof level.

The revised presentation addresses the following comments from the **Historical Commission Architectural Committee:**

**Façade paint color:**

Although the current blue paint color is not original to the building, but rather a reinterpretation of the original surface treatment of the façade (gray cementitious coating with insets of opaque blue glass chips), we concur with the Architectural Committee and the Preservation Alliance recommendations, and propose to paint the façade with a blue color, and lighter accents per original design, as conceptually illustrated in the attached drawings.

The color shown are for general intent only, with final specifications to be selected in close collaboration with the Historical Commission and the Preservation Alliance, via study of historic documents / paint analysis, and review of samples and field mock-ups, prior to the permit/construction phase.

**Storefront doors:**

The Architectural Committee suggested to further research for additional historical sources that would provide any evidence with regards to the design features of the original storefront doors.

We were able to confirm that the Philadelphia Athenaeum does not have any drawings of the WCAU building in its archives and are currently investigating if any relevant documentation is available at The University of Pennsylvania Architectural Archives.

However, from a picture dated 1945, shared by The Preservation Alliance and part of a 1983 Historic Preservation Certification Application Form (shown on page 3), it appears that the original door on the west side of the main façade, under the carved stone canopy, had a heavy frame and a three-bar handle.

This original configuration is now reflected in the proposed new doors at the building lobby entrance.

It is understood that the storefront design will be detailed and finalized via PHC and Preservation Alliance review and approval of shop drawings/finish samples prior to the permit/construction phase.

**Signage on rooftop and west side facade:**

The rooftop and west elevation signs presented as part of the previous design package have been removed from the proposed scope, per the PHC's Staff and Architectural Committee recommendations.

We will further investigate and advance the level of detail and historic documentation support, to possibly resume the dialogue with the PHC and Preservation Alliance, under a new application in the future.

Please let me know if anything else is needed.

**Point of contact for this application:**

Luca Segato  
Eimer Design  
109 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 111-A  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
**Cell: 267-530-5651**  
**Email: [luca@eimer-design.com](mailto:luca@eimer-design.com)**

**Building Property Owner Info:**

Gazit Horizons (Chestnut Street) LLC  
1696 NE Miami Gardens Dr  
North Miami Beach, FL 33179

Thank you,



Luca Segato, Project Manager, Eimer Design

**NOTE:** ALL PHOTOS TAKEN BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2019 - MARCH, 2020



**1** 1618-22 CHESTNUT ST



**2** EXISTING FACADE, UPPER LEVELS



**3** EXISTING FACADE, STREET LEVEL

**REVISED**



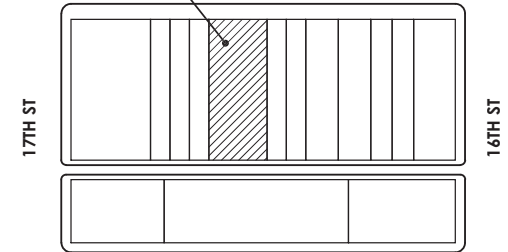
**4** VICINITY MAP

PROJECT  
LOCATION



AREA OF WORK

CHESTNUT ST



SANSOM ST

**5** KEY PLAN



**PROPERTY ADDRESS:**  
1618-22 CHESTNUT ST  
**BASE ZONING DISTRICT:**  
CMX-5  
**OVERLAY DISTRICT:**  
CENTER CITY  
**HISTORICAL RELEVANCE:**  
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
DESIGNATION DATE 01/27/1983  
**HISTORIC DISTRICTS:**  
N/A





1 1618-22 CHESTNUT ST LOOKING SOUTHWEST



3 NEIGHBORING LOT, EAST



5 CHESTNUT ST LOOKING WEST



2 1618-22 CHESTNUT ST LOOKING SOUTHEAST

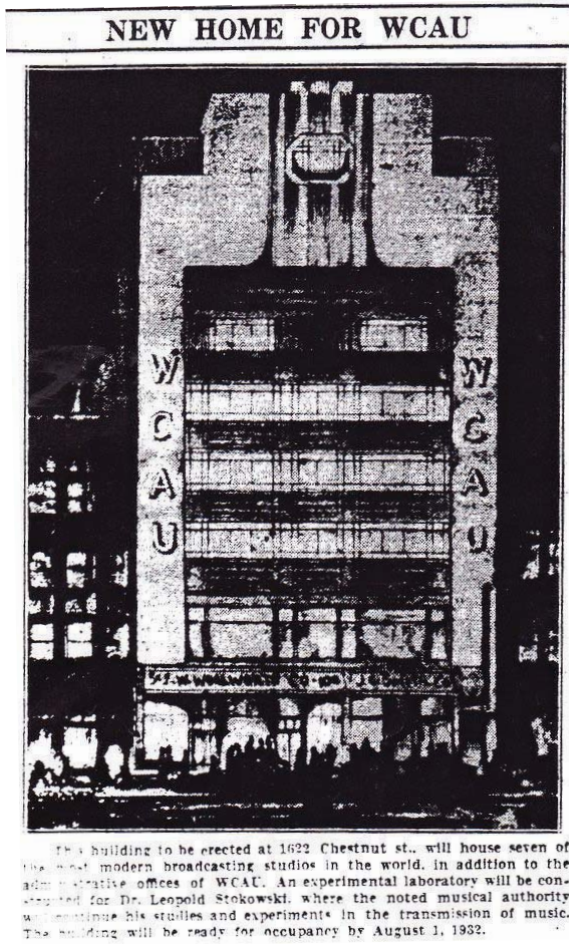


4 NEIGHBORING LOT, WEST

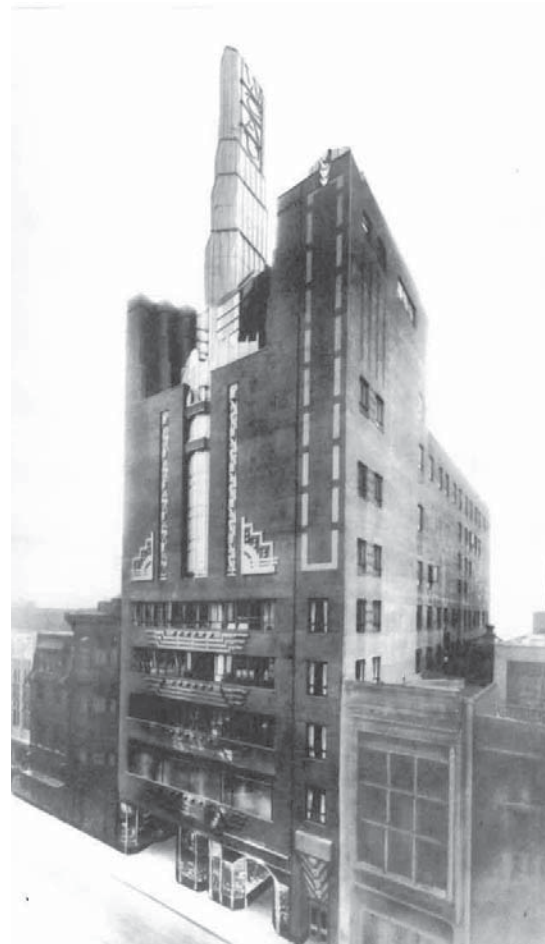


6 CHESTNUT ST LOOKING EAST





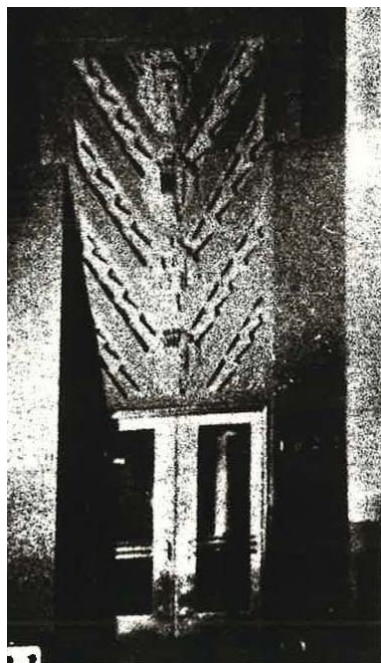
Rendering - Philadelphia Record Magazine - 1931  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: Web]



Historic photo (with touched up surrounding) - 1930s  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: PHC Files]



View from Chestnut Street looking South-East - 1940s ?  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: Web]



**Detail of West Entrance - 1945**  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: Preservation Alliance]



**View from Chestnut Street looking South-West - 1950s**  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: PHC Files]

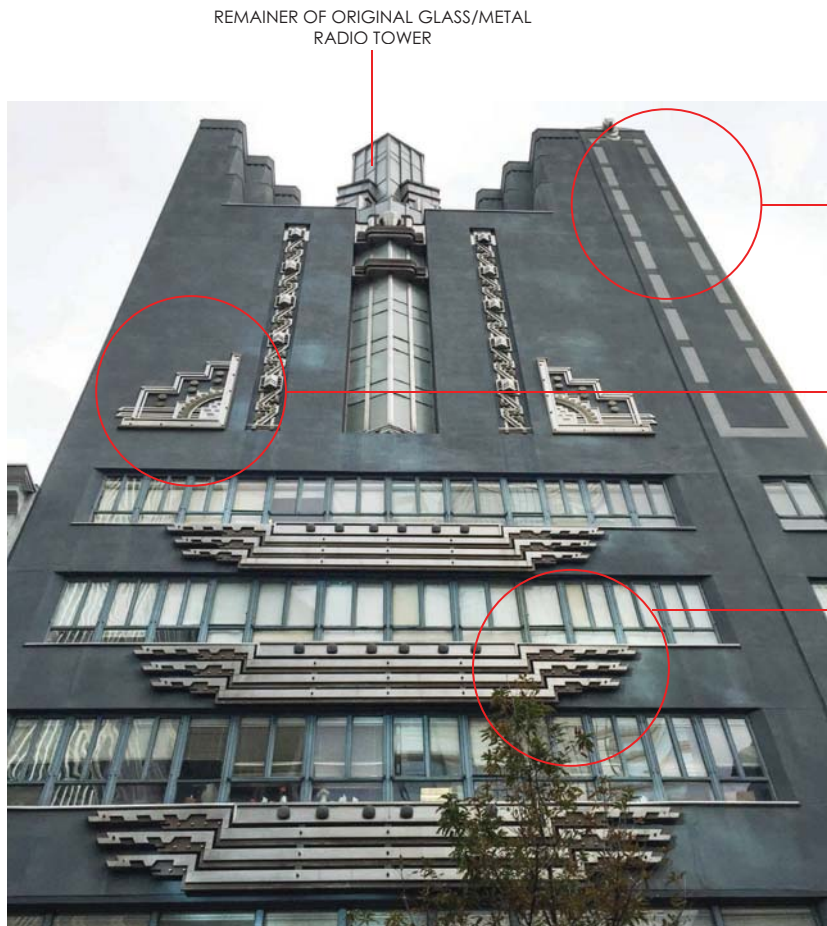


**Main Facade, upper levels - 1981**  
[Author G.E. THOMAS PHOTOGRAPHER | Source: PHC Files]



**Main Facade, street level - Early 1980s**  
[Author UNKNOWN | Source: PHC Files]





REMAINDER OF ORIGINAL GLASS/METAL  
RADIO TOWER



ORIGINAL ACCENT PAINT AT CIRCULATION  
TOWER AND AT WEST ELEVATION BETWEEN  
OPENINGS

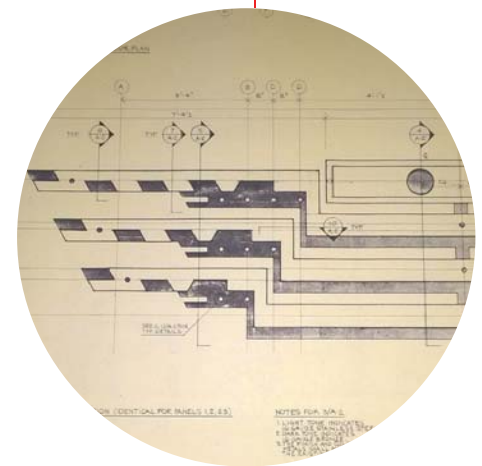


ORIGINAL STEEL AND BRONZE ORNAMENTS



LEFT: STEEL AND BRONZE SPANDREL PANELS  
INSTALLED IN THE EARLY-MID 80S TO REPLICATE ORIGINAL DESIGN

RIGHT: PHOTO OF EARLY 80S DRAWINGS DOCUMENTING SPANDREL DESIGN  
(SOURCE: OWNER ARCHIVE)



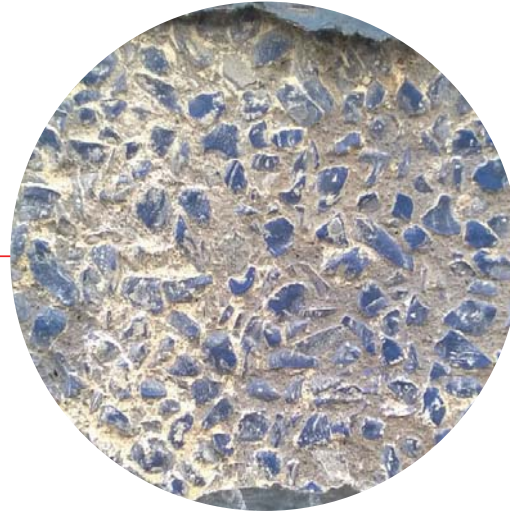


NON ORIGINAL GRANITE WALL  
& ALUMINUM ORNAMENTAL  
PATTERN AT STOREFRONT, TYP

NON ORIGINAL STOREFRONT  
DOOR SYSTEM, TYP



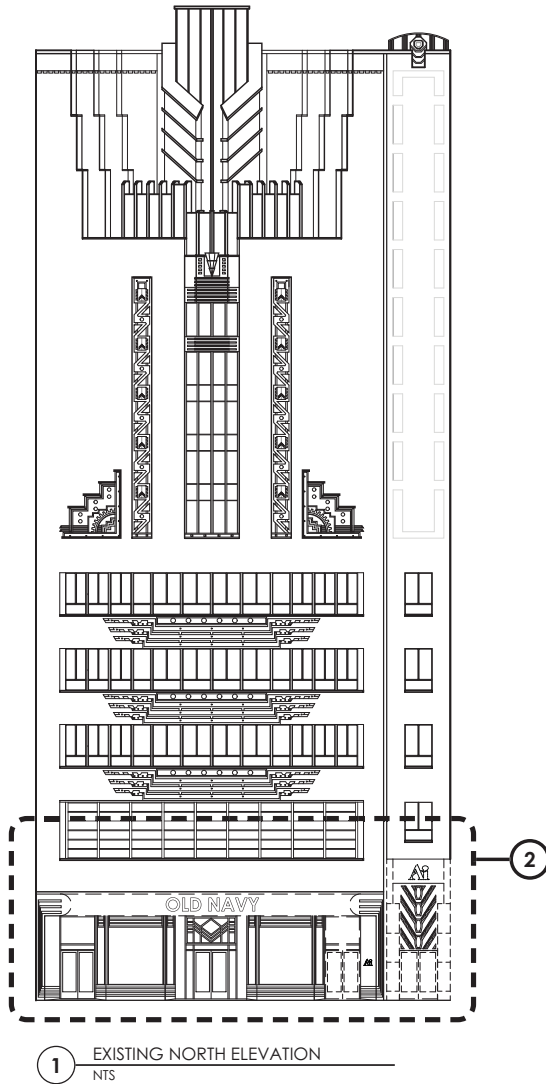
DETAIL OF ORIGINAL  
CARVED STONE ABOVE  
MAIN ENTRANCE



ORIGINAL BLUE GLASS CHIP  
STUCCO FINISH, VISIBLE AT  
STREET LEVEL



REVISED

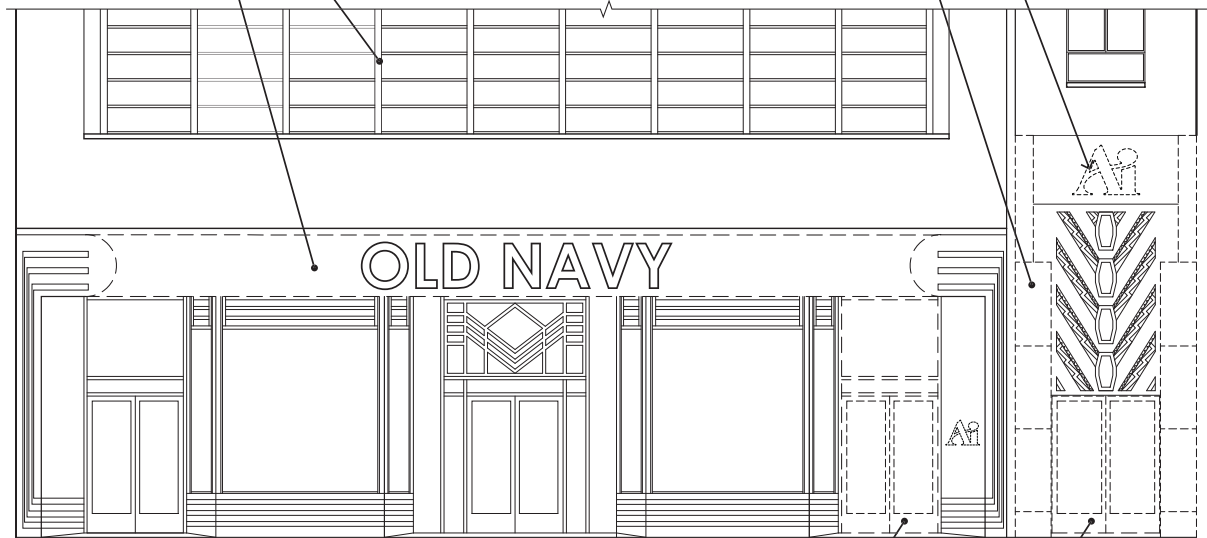


EXISTING WINDOW ASSEMBLY TO  
REMAIN, TYP

EXISTING NON-ORIGINAL METAL  
CLADDING TO BE REMOVED

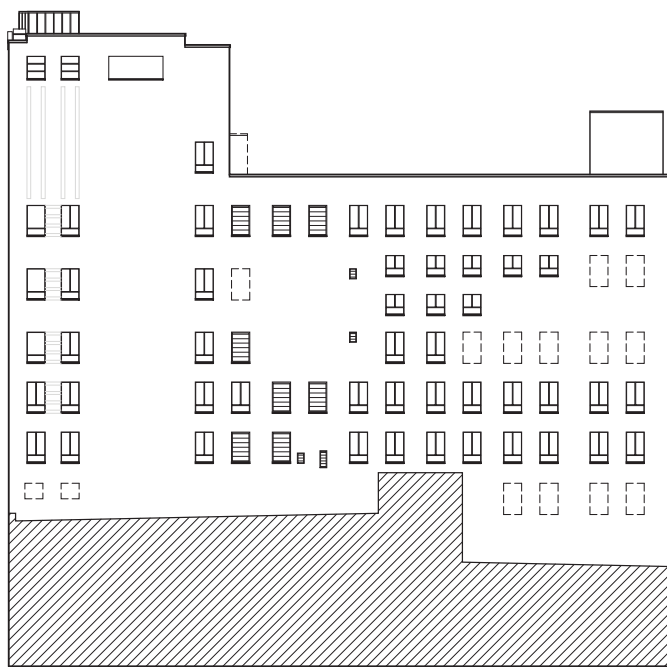
EXISTING ART INSTITUTE SIGNAGE TO BE  
REMOVED, TYP

EXISTING PAINT FINISH AT LOBBY EN-  
TRANCE TO BE REMOVED TO EXPOSE  
ORIGINAL WALL FINISH (REF PICTURE ON  
PAGE 6)

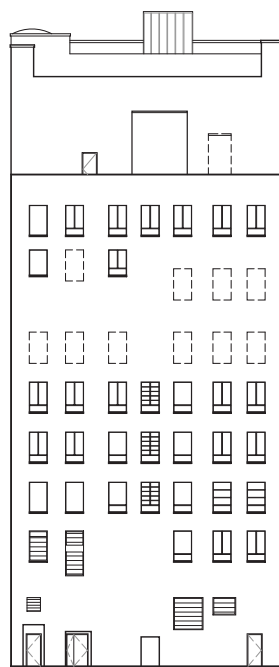


2 ENLARGED ELEVATION @ NORTH ENTRANCE  
NTS

EXISTING NON-ORIGINAL ALUMINUM  
& GLASS STOREFRONT DOORS TO BE  
REMOVED

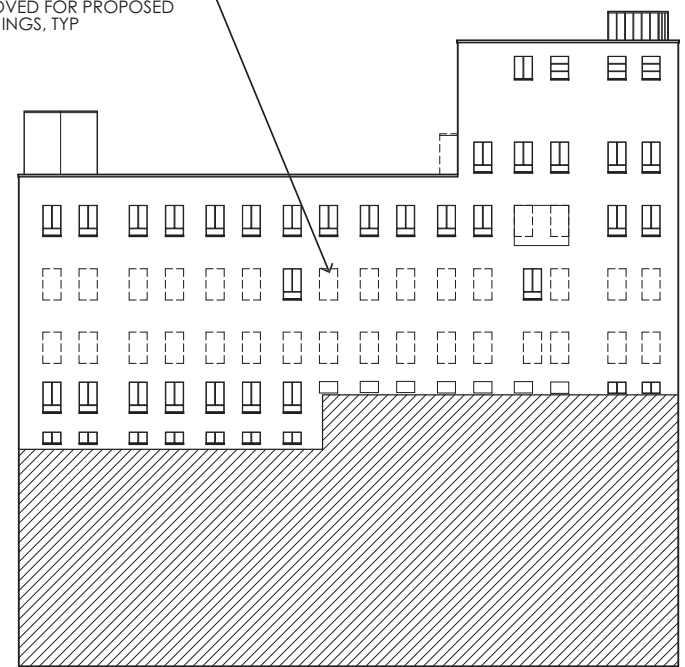


1 EXISTING WEST ELEVATION  
NTS



2 EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION  
NTS

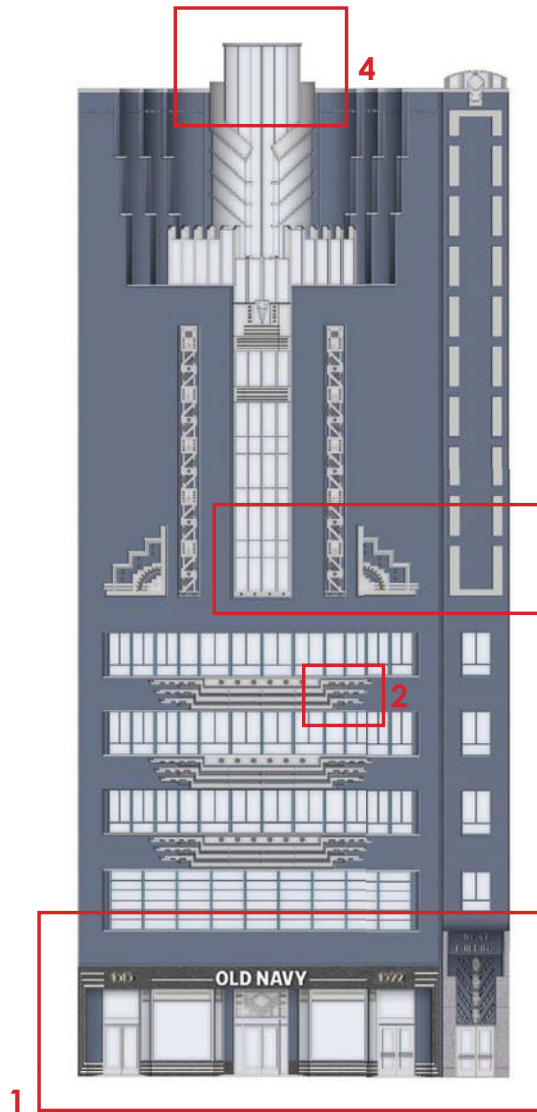
DASHED LINES INDICATE  
PORTIONS OF WALL TO BE  
REMOVED FOR PROPOSED  
OPENINGS, TYP



3 EXISTING EAST ELEVATION  
NTS



REVISED



REFINISH EXISTING WINDOWS, COLOR TO MATCH EXISTING

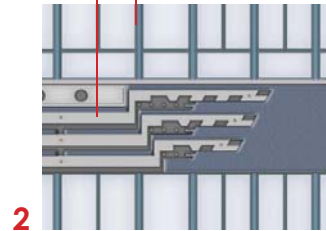
EXISTING METAL ORNAMENT, NO SCOPE TYP.

EXISTING METAL COPING, REPAIR AND REPLACE IN KIND AS NEEDED

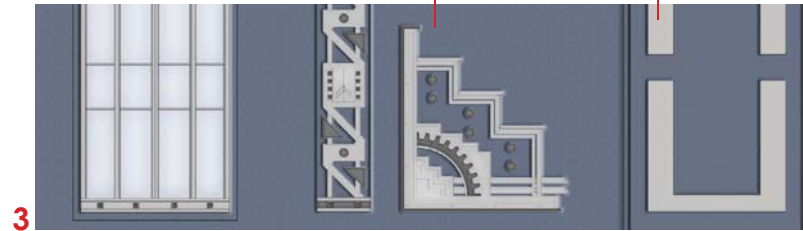
EXISTING METAL/GLASS TOWER, NO EXTERIOR SCOPE

PROPOSED GENERAL PAINT (SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COLOR INFO)

PROPOSED ACCENT PAINT (SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COLOR INFO)



PROPOSED RETAIL BUILDING ADDRESS

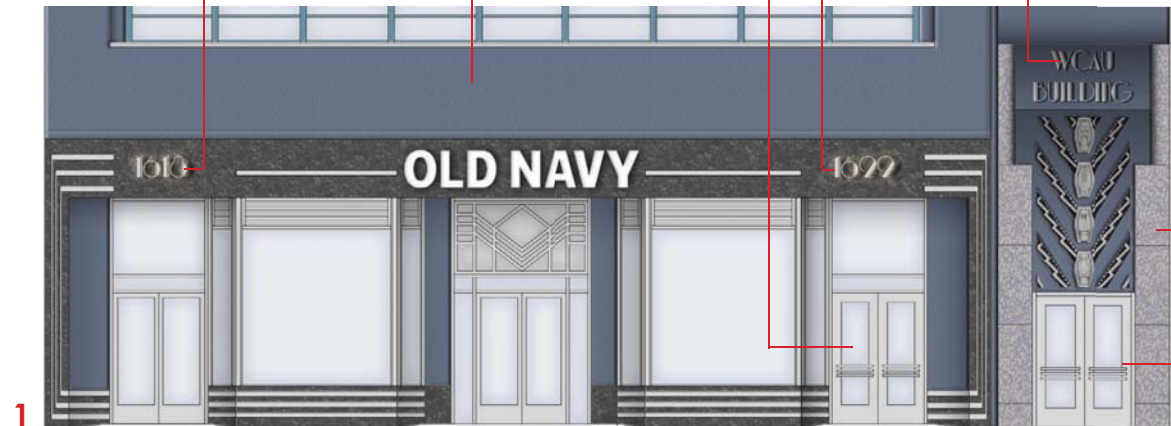


PROPOSED GENERAL PAINT (SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COLOR INFO)

PROPOSED CUSTOM ALUMINUM/GLASS STOREFRONT DOOR & TRANSOM

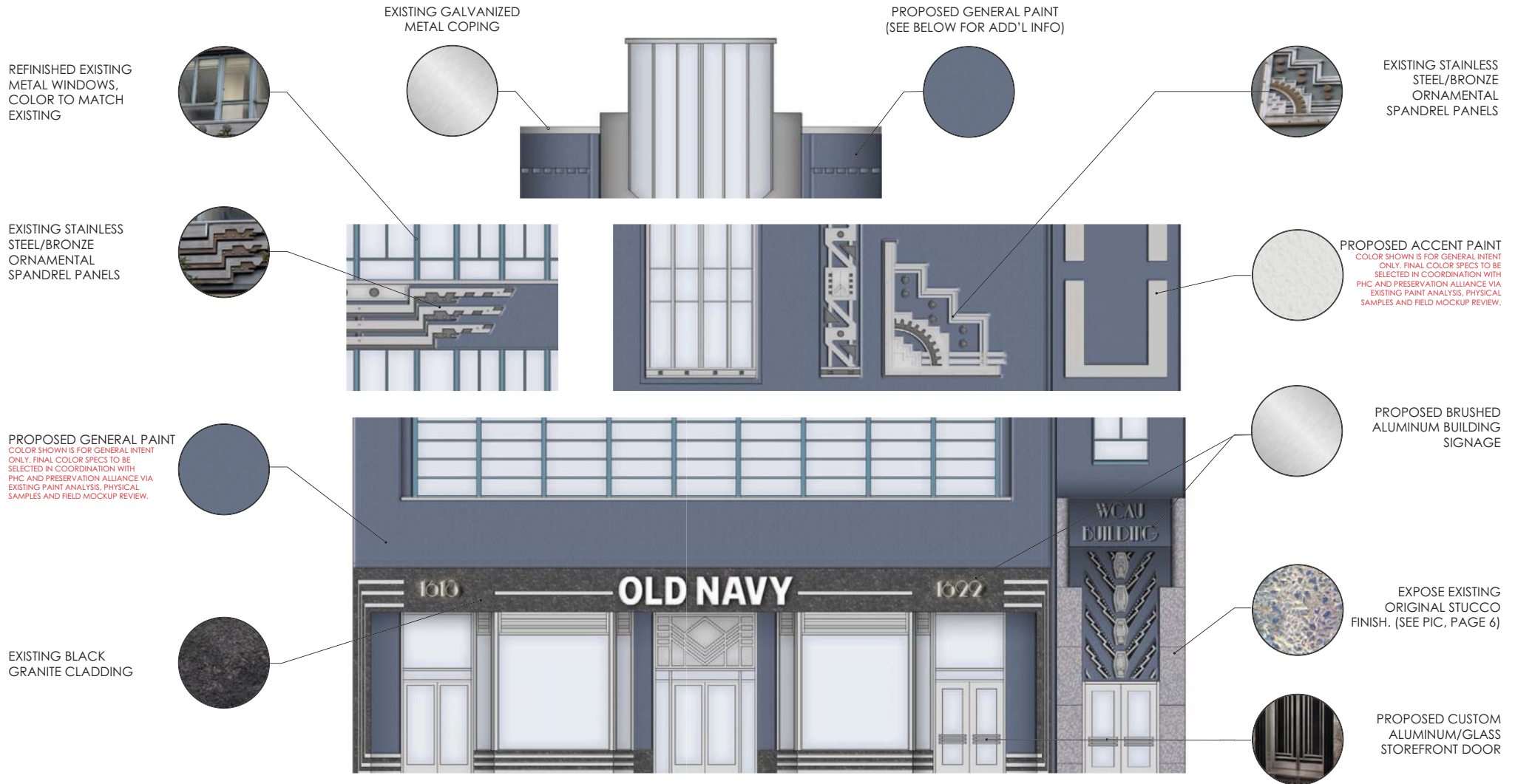
PROPOSED LOBBY BUILDING ADDRESS

PROPOSED LOBBY BUILDING SIGNAGE

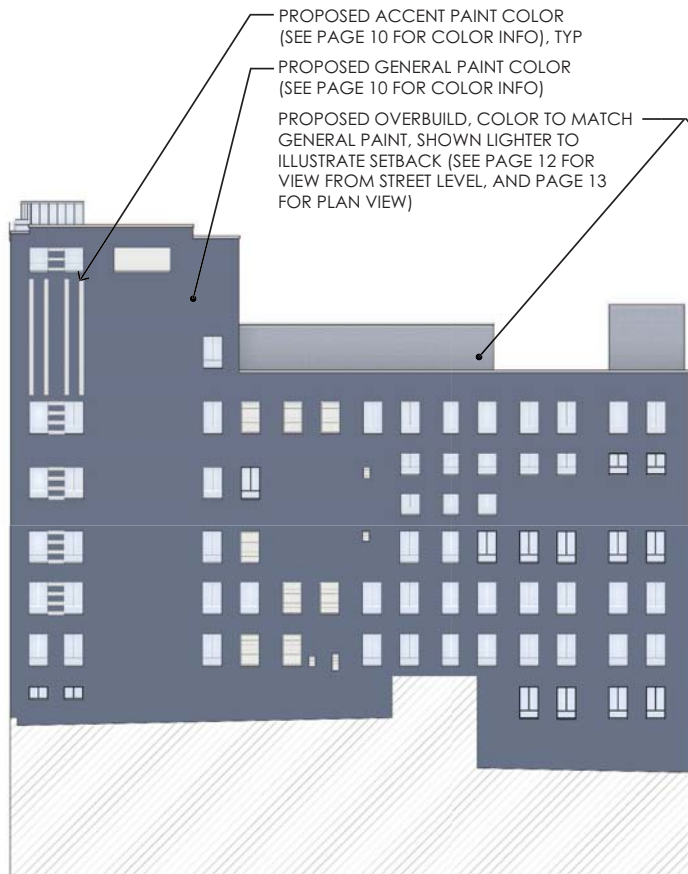


EXPOSED EXISTING ORIGINAL STUCCO FINISH (SEE PIC, PAGE 6)

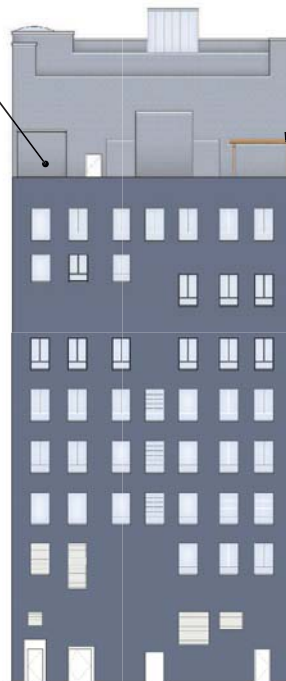
PROPOSED CUSTOM ALUMINUM/GLASS STOREFRONT DOOR



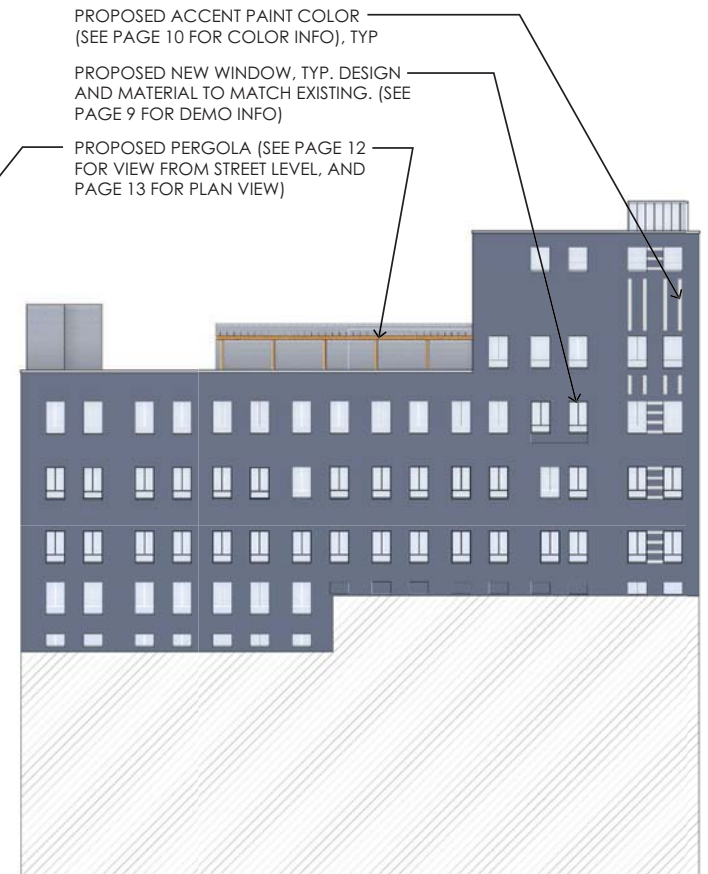




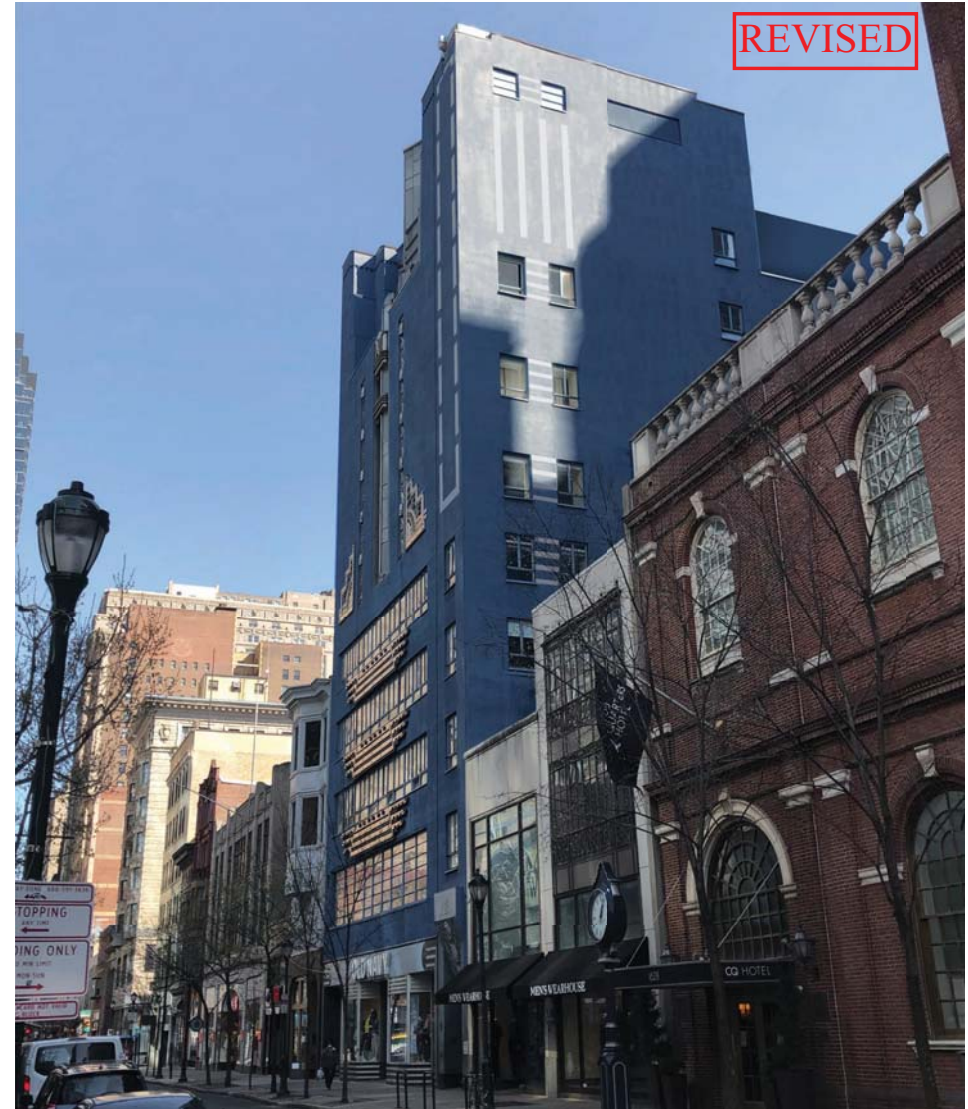
1 EXISTING WEST ELEVATION  
NTS



2 EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION  
NTS



3 EXISTING EAST ELEVATION  
NTS





REVISED

