

ADDRESS: 6915 GERMANTOWN AVE

Proposal: Construct four-story apartment building on subdivided parcel

Review Requested: Final Approval

Owner: Tier View Development

Applicant: Zach Jones, CANNO Design

History: 1798; Joseph Gorgas House

Individual Designation: 5/28/1957

District Designation: None

Staff Contact: Ted Maust, theodore.maust@phila.gov

OVERVIEW: The property at 6901 Germantown Avenue, located at the corner of Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane, includes a late-eighteenth-century stone structure, the Joseph Gorgas House, and a large parking lot at the side and rear. The property's large open space historically functioned as a side and rear yard. Aside from a wood-frame shed or stable building at the rear of the stone house, historic maps show that no other structures existed on the site. The property was recently subdivided along the western edge of the Joseph Gorgas House to create 6903 Germantown Avenue, which was then consolidated with the neighboring property at 6915 Germantown Avenue. This application proposes to construct a four-story, multi-unit building on this newly consolidated lot with frontages on Germantown Avenue and Gorgas Lane.

The Architectural Committee reviewed an earlier version of this project in December 2023 and then significantly revised the design for the January 2024 meeting of the Historical Commission. This submission responds to feedback offered at those meetings by increasing the setback from the front corner of the Joseph Gorgas House compared to what was originally proposed and using materials that better respond to the historic structure.

This proposal specifically responds to comments from the Historical Commission, which encouraged the design team to use early twentieth-century apartment buildings in the area as inspiration, breaking up the façade with vertical and horizontal lines.

SCOPE OF WORK:

- Construct four-story, multi-unit building on a consolidated parcel which includes a portion of a designated property.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW:

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines include:

- *Standard 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - The new work does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property.
 - The new work is differentiated from the old and is compatible in materials, but not in massing, size, and scale to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
 - The application partially satisfies this Standard.
- Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction:
 - *Recommended: Considering the design for related new construction in terms of its relationship to the historic building as well as the historic district and setting.*

- *Recommended: Ensuring that the addition is subordinate and secondary to the historic building and is compatible in massing, scale, materials, relationships of solids to voids, and color.*
- *Recommended: Distinguishing the addition from the original building by setting it back from the wall plane of the historic building.*
- *Recommended: Locating new construction far enough away from the historic building, when possible, where it will be minimally visible and will not negatively affect the building's character, the site, or setting.*
 - The façade facing Germantown Avenue is closer to the street than is typical for residential buildings in the neighborhood.
 - The proposed building does not defer to the Joseph Gorgas House and is sited closer to Germantown Avenue than the historic structure.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the new construction is set farther away from the Joseph Gorgas House, pursuant to Standard 9 and the Guidelines for New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings and Related New Construction.

MAPS & IMAGES:



Figure 1: 2020 aerial showing 6901 Germantown Avenue. Source: Atlas.



Figure 2: The front façade and adjacent parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.



Figure 3: View from Gorgas Lane of the rear yard and parking area of 6901 Germantown Avenue, 2020. Source: Cyclomedia.



Figure 4: Historic photo of the property at the time of designation, June 1957. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 5: Historic photo of the front façade of 6901 Germantown Avenue, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 6: Historic photo of the north elevation, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 7: Historic photo of the rear of the property taken from Gorgas Lane, undated. Source: Historical Commission files.



Figure 8: The 1910 G. W. Bromley Atlas illustrates that a wood-frame structure historically existed at the rear, with no other structures on the site. Source: PhilaGeoHistory.



6915 GERMANTOWN

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Existing Site

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1. 6901 Germantown Avenue



2. Lovett Memorial Library



3. Germantown Home



4. 6857 Germantown Avenue



5. E Gorgas Lane



6. E Gorgas Lane, toward Germantown



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Immediate Context

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Overhead view showing surrounding density and variation in use categories



7. Fire Department Engine 09



8. Commercial Corridor on Germantown Avenue



9. Commercial Corridor Continued



10. Septa Maintenance and Service Center



11. Contemporary Development West of Site



12. Acme with Contemporary Buildings Visible

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Surrounding Context

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PREVIOUS DESIGN



REVISED DESIGN



CURRENT DESIGN

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Germantown Avenue Facade

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Germantown Avenue Facade

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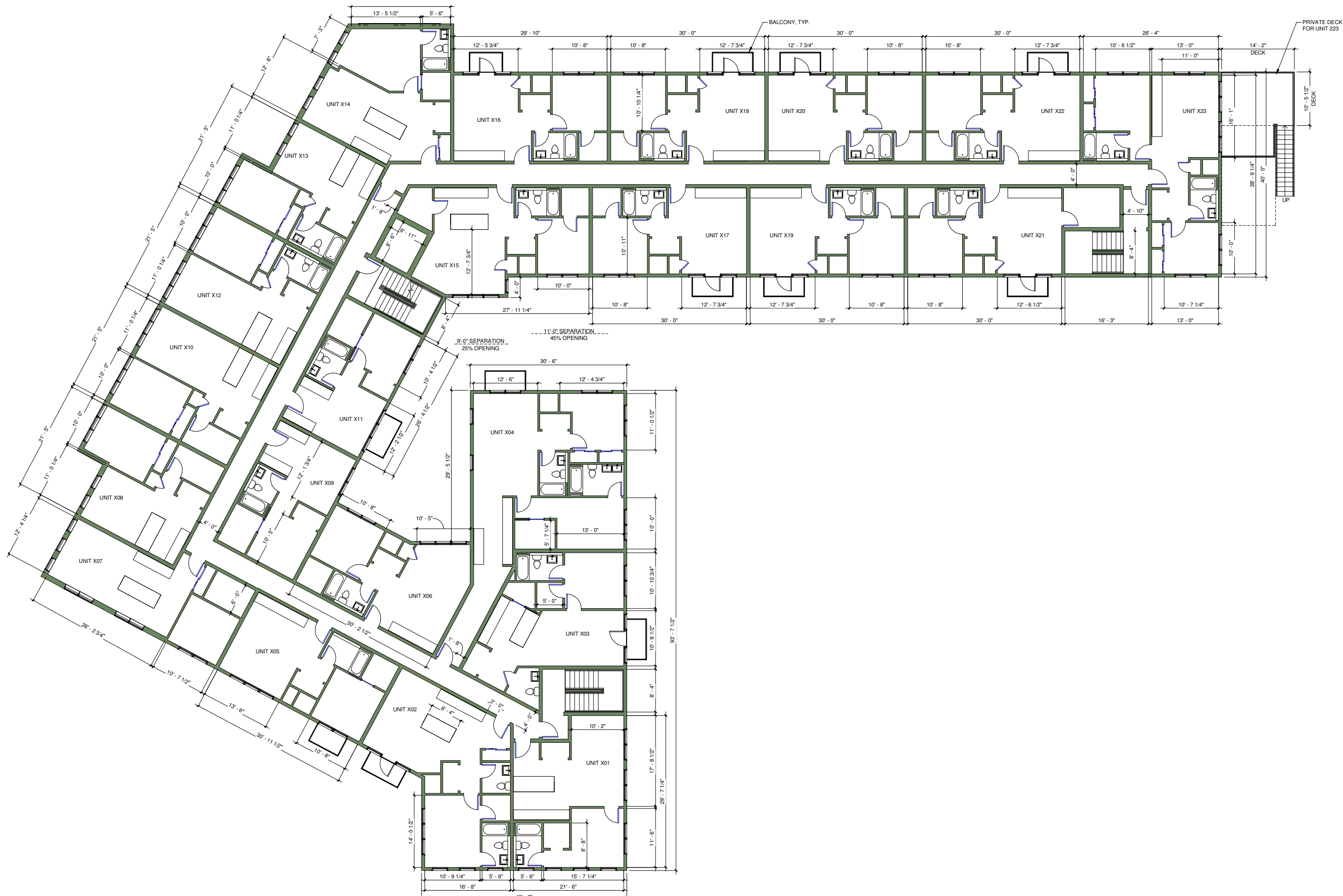
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First Floor Plan

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Typical Floor Plan

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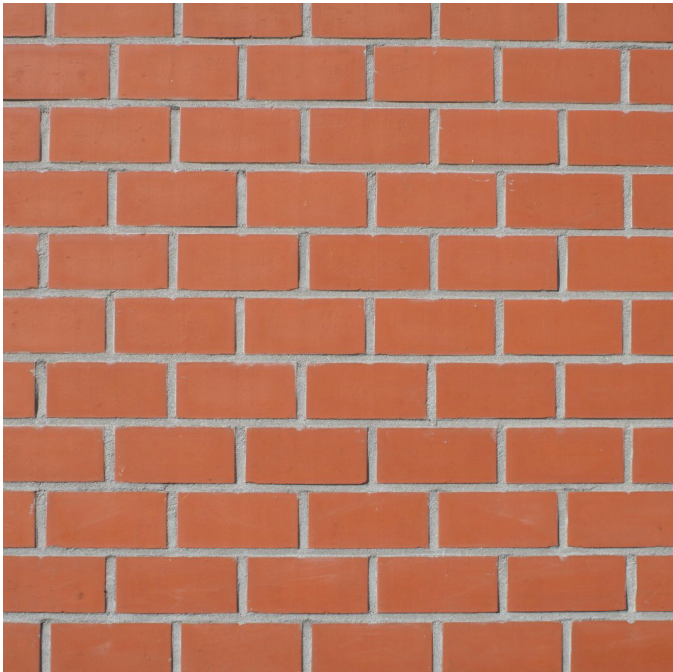
Brick, Running Bond, Flemish Bond

SPEC: TBD
Color: Tan



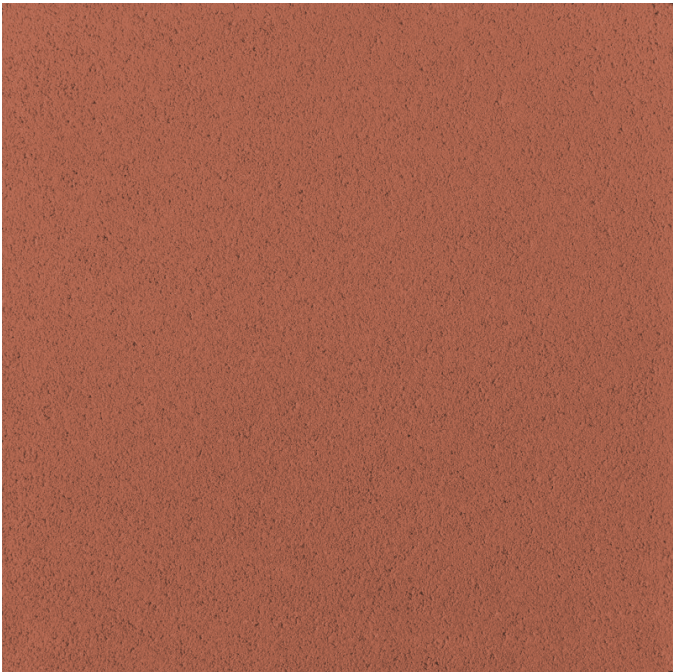
Cast Stone

Manufacturer: Reading Rock
Color: [Custom]



Brick, Running Bond

SPEC: TBD
Color: Red



Cast Stone

Manufacturer: Reading Rock
Color: [Custom]



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Commercial Entry at Germantown Avenue

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REVISED DESIGN



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Previous and new schemes

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View South East on Germantown Avenue

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PREVIOUS DESIGN



REVISED DESIGN



CURRENT DESIGN

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Germantown Avenue Facade

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Building Facade on Gorgas Lane with detailing similar to Germantown Facade

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Building Facade on Gorgas Lane with detailing similar to Germantown Facade

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1357 Ridge Avenue
50 Units, 49,988 SF
Completed Spring 2020



723 North 6th Street
35 Units, 39,400 SF
Completed Spring 2021



2333 Fairmount Avenue
33 Units, 56,200 SF
Completed Fall 2019
2020 BIA Silver Award Winner



1720 Fairmount Avenue
18 Units, 24,700 SF
Completed Fall 2015
2020 BIA Best in Class Award Winner



631 North Broad Street
41 Units, 52,700 SF
Completed Summer 2019



1833 Fairmount Avenue
15 Units, 29,400 SF
Completed Winter 2013



1723 Ridge Avenue
14 Units, 14,900 SF
Completed Summer 2021



545 North Broad
108 Units
Completed Spring 2023



965 Frankford Avenue
33 Units, 38,700 SF
Completed Spring 2021

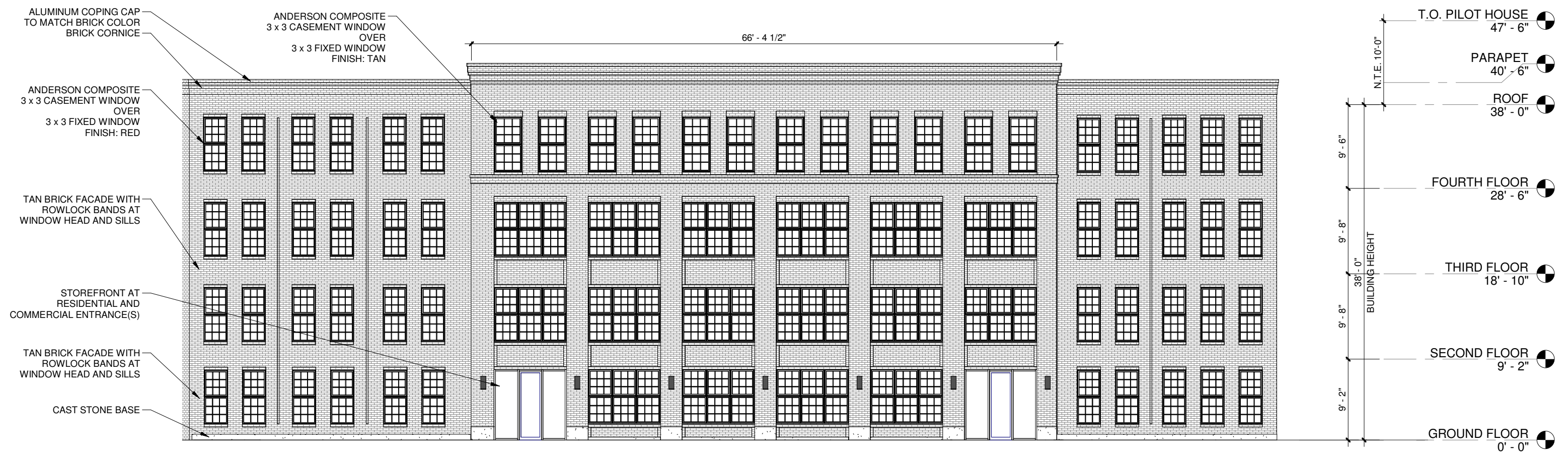
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Proposed North 20th Street Elevation

- 
T.O. PILOT HOUSE
 47' - 6"
- 
PARAPET
 40' - 6"
- 
ROOF
 38' - 0"
- 
FOURTH FLOOR
 28' - 6"
- 
THIRD FLOOR
 18' - 10"
- 
SECOND FLOOR
 9' - 2"
- 
GROUND FLOOR
 0' - 0"

METAL COPING
COLOR TO MATCH BRICK

BRICK CORNICE

3/4" RECESSED REVEAL

ROWLOCK HEADS AND
SILLS AT ALL WINDOWS

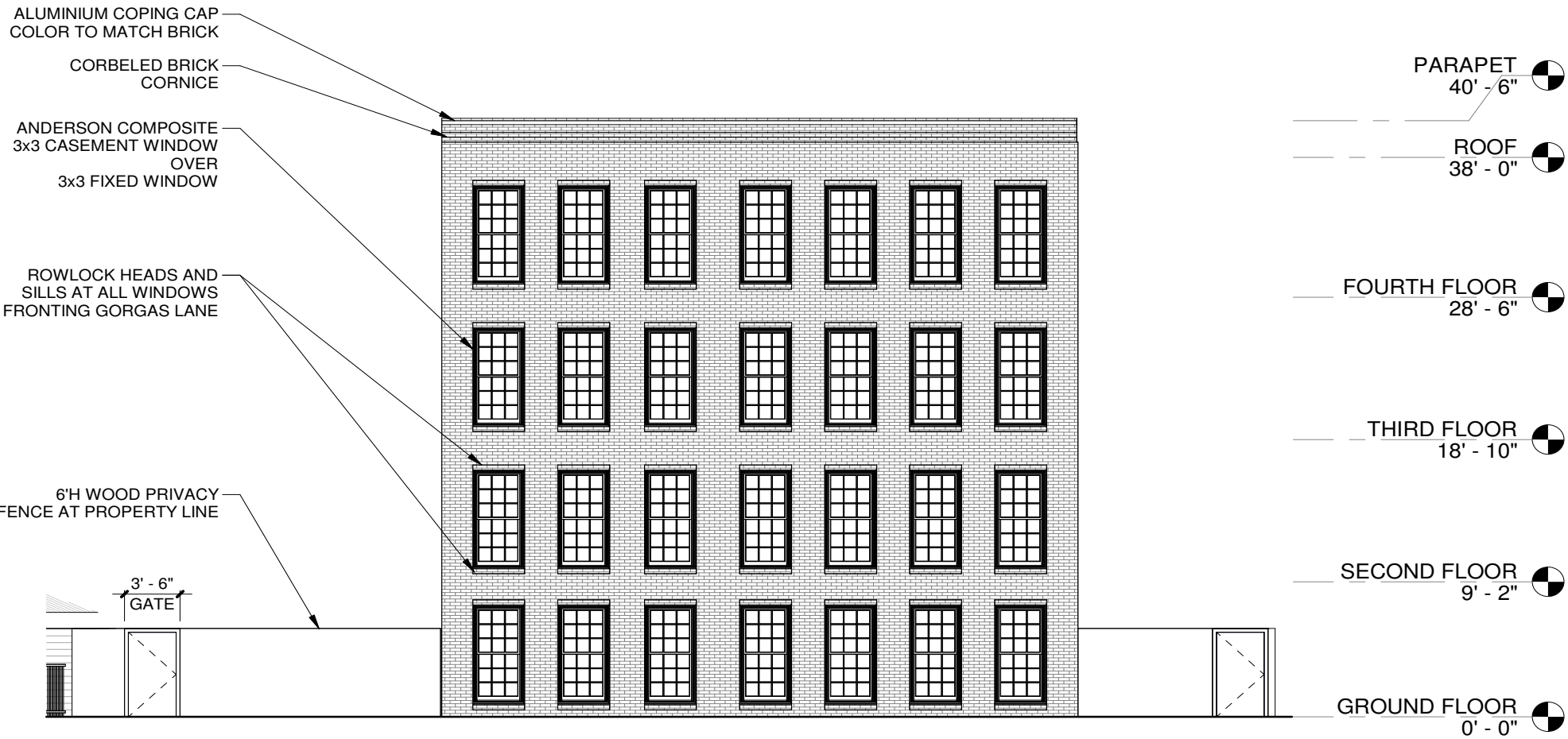
CAST STONE BASE
COLOR TO MATCH BRICK

GERMANTOWN
AVENUE

GARDEN



Gorgas Lane Elevation





Drive Aisle Elevation at Gorgas Lane



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Drive Aisle Elevation at Rear of Gorgas Lane Homes

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Elevation Facing Lovett Memorial Library Green