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12 March 2024

Philadelphia Art Commission
1515 Arch St., 13th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

RE: Proposed Sign Addition at Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Dear Members of Sign Committee:

The Department of Veterans Affairs has requested the assistance of ThinkForm Architects to explore the feasibility of augmenting existing signage on a pedestrian bridge spanning over South University Avenue at the VA Medical Center in Philadelphia. The current sign includes identification of the property simply as "Veterans Affairs Medical Center" on the north and south faces of the bridge.

The pedestrian bridge (referred to as Building 29) was erected in 2004-2005. On December 16, 2014, the VA Medical Center was officially renamed the Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo Medical Center in honor of the only Vietnam-era soldier from the Philadelphia area to receive the Medal of Honor. The VA would like to amend the signage on the bridge to pay tribute to Corporal Crescenzo.

ThinkForm has prepared presentation materials to reflect the Owner's intent to include this signage as a modest gesture approved by both the VA and members of the immediate Crescenzo family.

The design proposal is to replicate with the same means of attaching, cast aluminum letters of the same size as the existing, to the north and south faces of the bridge. The proposed typeface will match the existing as well. In addition, an adjustment is proposed to the lighting to upgrade existing fixed fixtures and to supplement the lighting to direct additional lighting at the new text to be installed near the cornice of the bridge.

Please note that there are no proposed changes in the size of the existing pedestrian bridge. Revisions are limited to adding signage only including the following text, "CPL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZO".

We are submitting the following materials for your review and consideration:

Feasibility Study:

- Project Scope
- Design Approach - Proposed Design Drawings and Renderings
- Technical Design Information (Lighting)
- Existing Conditions and Drawings
- Construction Photos – Existing Bridge
- Photographs of existing conditions

We request that the commission's decision be forwarded to the following person:

Russell DiNardo
ThinkForm Architects
38 E. Broad Street Suite 3
Hopewell, NJ 08525

Phone: 609.644.3121
Russell@thinkformarchitects.com

For any questions about the design and/or this application, please feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely,



THINKFORM® Service-Disabled Veteran Owned

Michael A. Crackel AIA, NCARB | Senior Architect
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cc: Daniel Clark, P.E., VA
Rob Martin, Asst. Chief, FMS, VA
Russell DiNardo, ThinkForm Architects

encl. Feasibility Study



FEASIBILITY STUDY REPORT AND CONCEPT DESIGN

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE SIGNAGE FEASIBILITY STUDY AT

CORPORAL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ
PHILADELPHIA VAMC
3900 WOODLAND AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104

PREPARED FOR
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

12 March 2024
Project No. 642-22-132
Contract No. 36C24423N0417
PO No. 642-C30136

PREPARED BY

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PCM, INC.
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PH: 973.853.6060 pcmcompany.com

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1.0 PROJECT SCOPE

1.1 PROJECT GOAL

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ORIGINAL SCOPE:

1. A/E is to provide a feasible study with services to include all investigative surveys and verification of as-built conditions and to study feasibility of signage on the south side of the pedestrian bridge spanning South University Avenue.

1.2 PROJECT TASKS

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY:

1. The Feasibility Study shall examine the possibility of adding a sign to an existing pedestrian bridge with a message displaying “Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center” or an acceptable version of this message. Investigations shall include considerations for, but not be limited to, structural limitations and/or required amendments, city ordinance and zoning permits and commitments when constructed, permits to add signage, determination of size and scope of sign, lighting, constructability and compliance with VA design requirements.
2. Additional tasks of this study will include:
 - a. Submission of three (3) concept architectural renderings in 3D;
 - b. preparation of cost estimate and;
 - c. a presentation to the executive leadership committee and a public presentation to a veteran’s organization. The architect/engineer may be required to meet with the city multiple times.
3. The A/E will be required to generate minutes from all meetings including gathering and addressing public comments.

2.0 DESIGN APPROACH

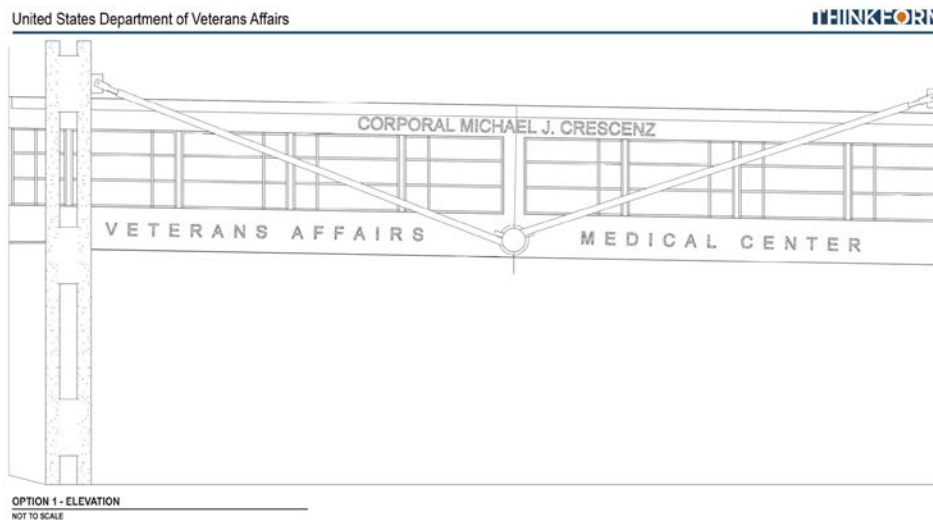
A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

1. After extensive design options were prepared and presented to the VA, it was decided to reduce the scale of the design and develop options much more modest in nature. The strategy became limited to the addition of specific text: “CPL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ” mounted on the north and south faces of the bridge with an appropriate level of lighting.

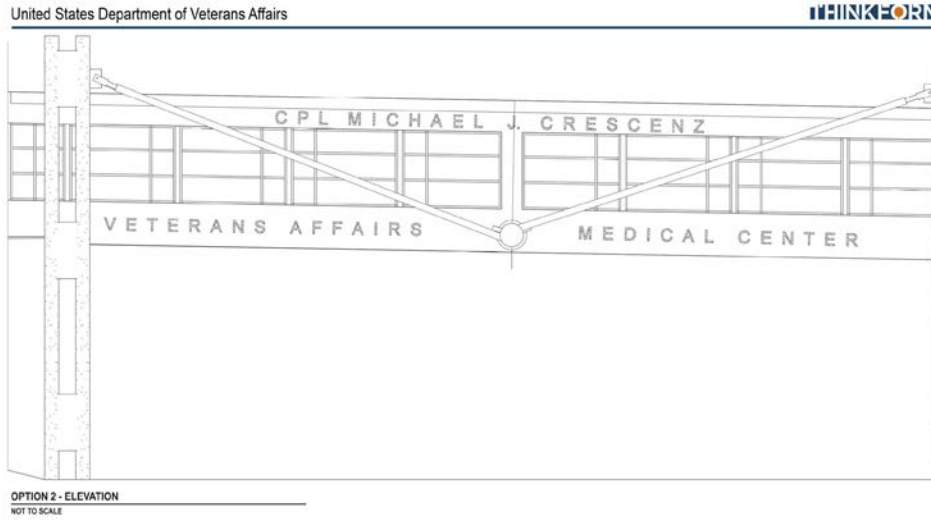
Given this new direction, four (4) options were generated for further review by the VA. After consulting with VA Executive Leadership, Option 2 was selected for additional development and renderings were prepared and, once again, submitted to the VA for approval.

2.1 DESIGN STUDIES

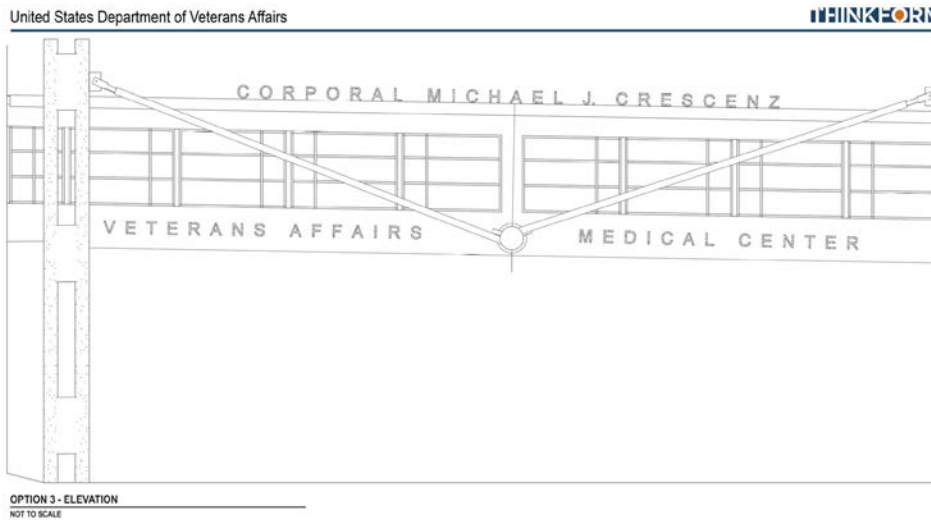
Option 1



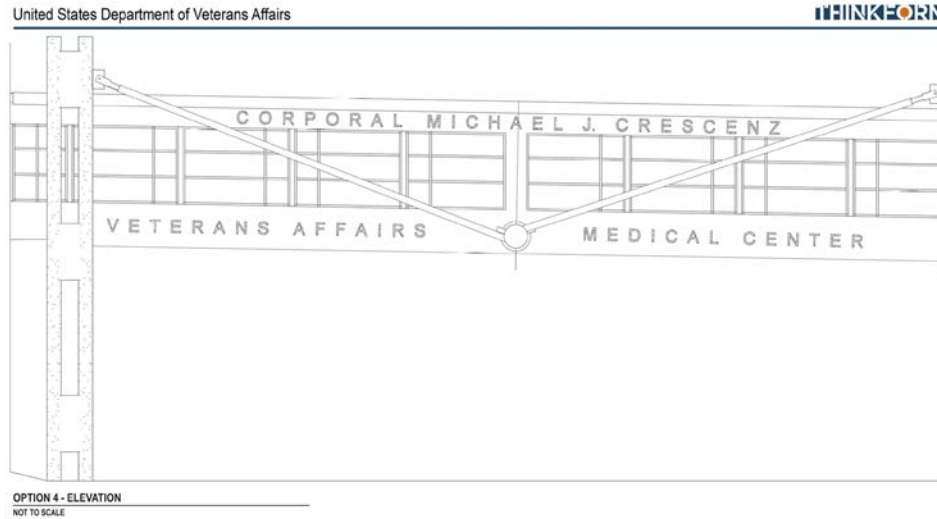
Option 2



Option 3



Option 4



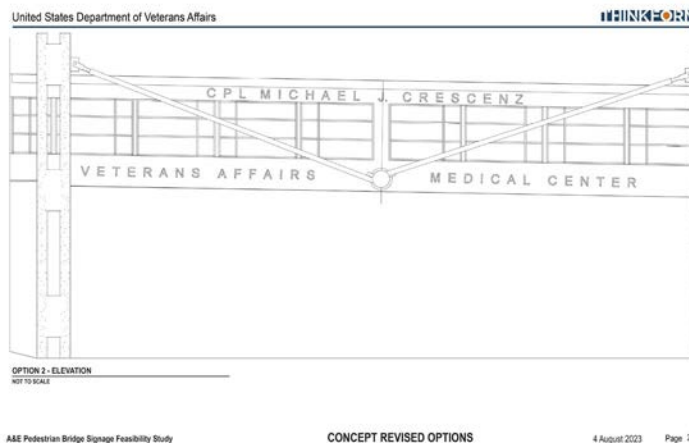
A&E Pedestrian Bridge Signage Feasibility Study

CONCEPT REVISED OPTIONS

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2.2 SELECTED DESIGN DESCRIPTION

- Option 2 was selected for its consistency with similar signage used on the campus to honor Corporal Michael J. Crescenz at the VA Medical Center.



A&E Pedestrian Bridge Signage Feasibility Study

CONCEPT REVISED OPTIONS

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The letters will be of the same style, color, material, and dimension to match the signage already mounted on the north and south faces of the pedestrian bridge. The

new signage is mounted above the existing window and below the fold in the composite aluminum panel cladding that demarcates the bottom of the cornice.

Existing lighting will be replaced and upgraded to provide more energy efficient fixtures that cast light to a broader field of view to include the new proposed text on both sides of the bridge spanning South University Avenue.

2.3 RENDERED OPTION

1. Southern View



2. Northern View



2.4 SIGNAGE REGULATIONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

1. The site for the proposed amendment to signage on an existing pedestrian bridge that is part of the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Veterans Affairs Medical Center, is in the University City neighborhood of Philadelphia at 3900 Woodland Avenue.

The Zoning Base District for this area of the city is classified with Code: RSA-2.



The pedestrian bridge spans over University Avenue between cross streets Curie Blvd. and Civic Center Blvd.

2. As per Philadelphia’s Zoning Code, Chapter 14-900. Signs, paragraph 14-902 provides a figure to orient code users when examining the applicability of sign usage.

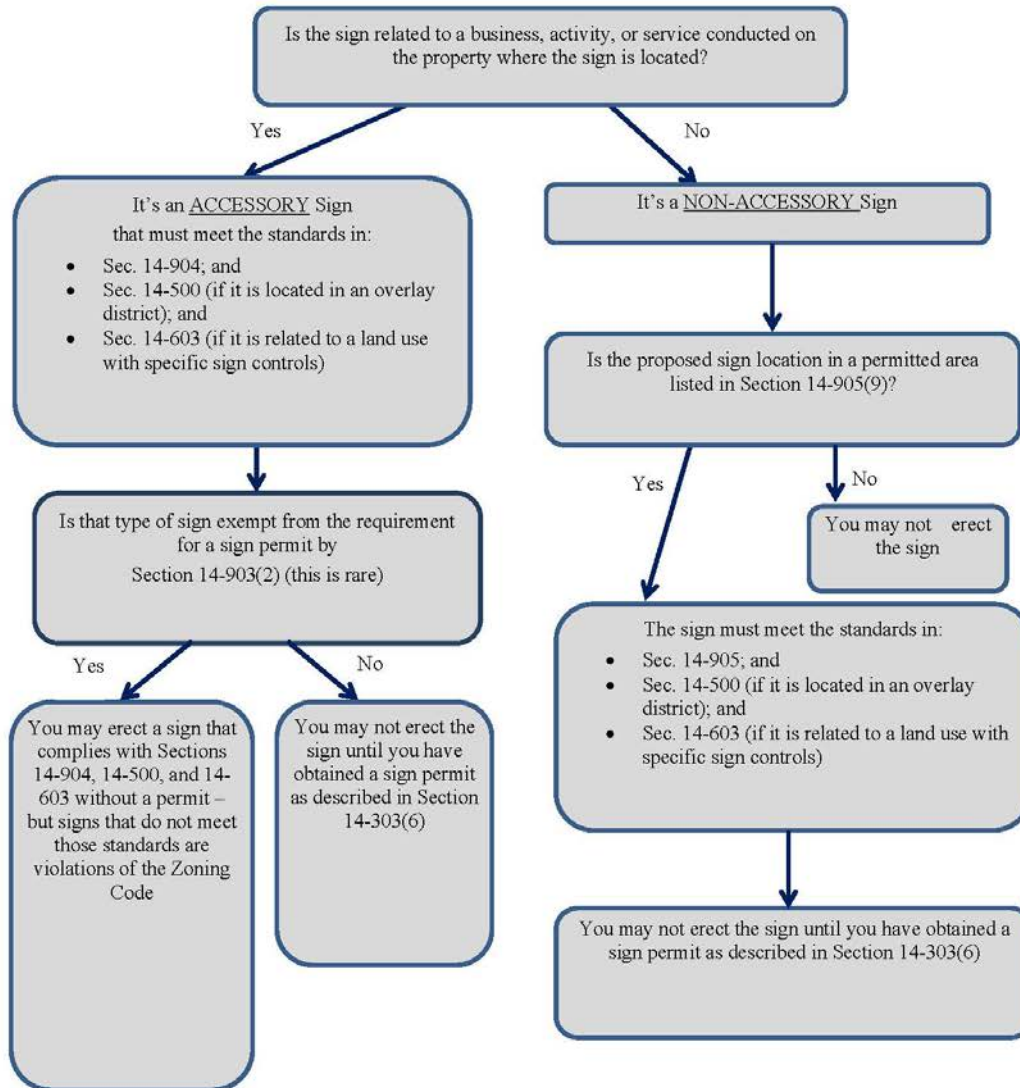


Figure 14-902-A: Sign Regulation Applicability Decision Tree

3. The existing sign is considered an ACCESSORY sign as it is related to a business, activity, or service conducted on the property where the sign is located. Paragraph 14-904. *Accessory Sign Controls*, governs what is permissible for this particular signage. Paragraph 14-904(1)(d) addresses controls that apply to *Extension of Signs over Public Rights-of-Way*. In particular:
 - a. Subsection (.2) Pursuant to Section 4-606 of The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, Art Commission approval is required.

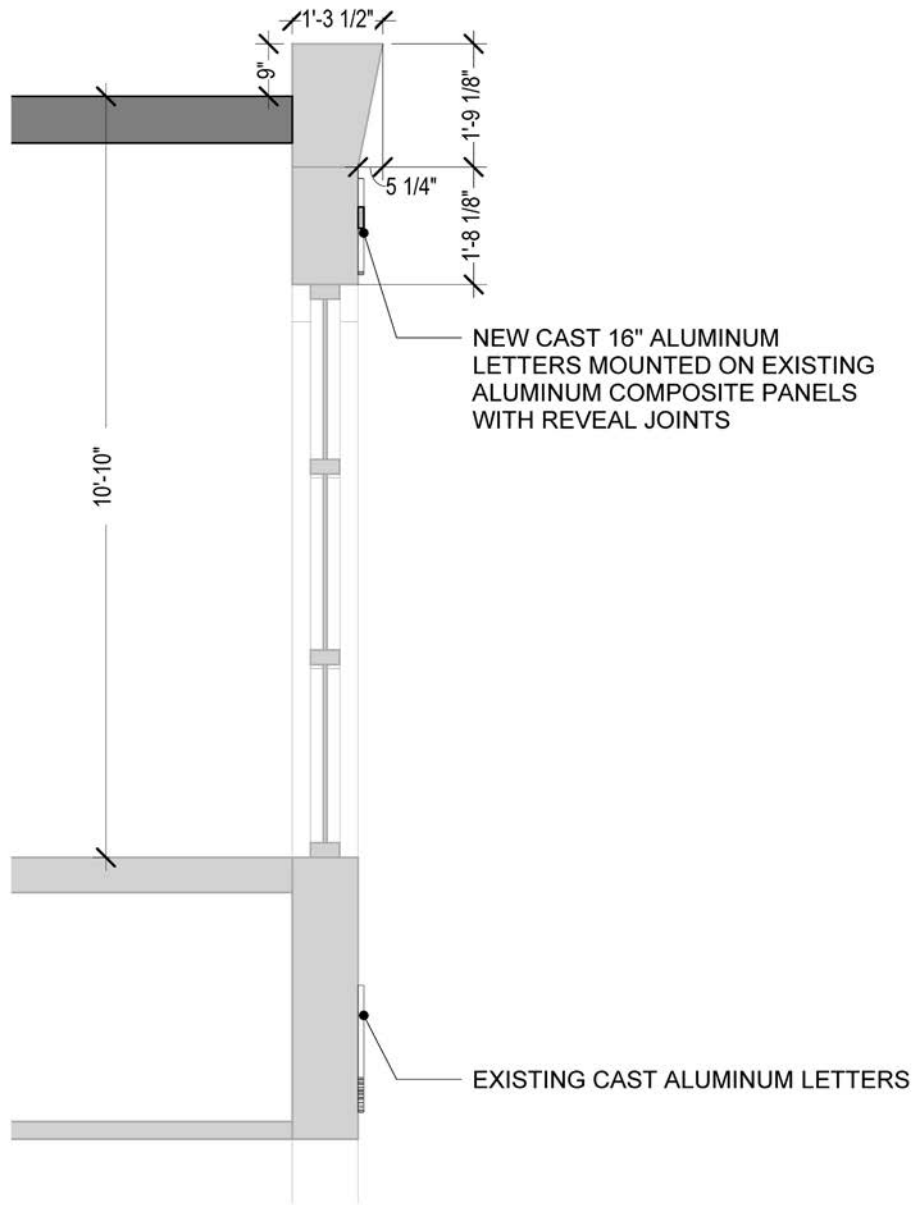
The sign will be mounted to the face (wall) of the existing bridge.

The area of the sign, composed of text only and including all spaces between the letters, is approximately sixty-three (63) square feet. This is intended to appear on both the north and south faces of the pedestrian bridge.

The new signage will be mounted below the roof line of the bridge.

The existing lighting currently illuminates the bottom portion of the bridge where the text, "VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER" signage is located. As previously noted, existing lighting will be replaced and upgraded to provide more energy efficient fixtures that will cast light to a broader field of view to include the new proposed text on both sides of the bridge spanning South University Avenue. The proposed light fixtures will not be animated or include any mechanical motion. The illumination will be static.

4. The text letters will be cast aluminum to match the existing letters on the bridge. Each letter is approximately 16" in height and $\frac{3}{4}$ " in thickness as shown on the following wall section.



WALL SECTION

3.0 TECHNICAL DESIGN APPROACH

3.1 STRUCTURAL EVALUATION

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

1. Existing Conditions

- a. The Project Structure consists of a single-story elevated pedestrian bridge spanning across S. University Avenue, Philadelphia, PA to connect the Veteran's Administration Community Living Center Building to the east with the stair tower for the parking structure adjacent to the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Veteran Administration Medical Center Building to the west.

The existing bridge structure circa 2004 was visually observed by HDR on March 21, 2023, for comparison of as-built conditions to available design documents by Hayes Large Architects LLP dated July 29, 2004. The pedestrian bridge consists of a steel superstructure with a V-shape truss across each span and concrete floor and metal roof deck. Based on the visual assessment of accessible portions structure, the steel framing was found to be in alignment with existing documents and in satisfactory condition.

2. Proposed Structural Amendments

- a. Originally contemplated that the existing structure would require the addition of outrigger type connections at the spandrel floor and roof beams to support multiple glass panels. Since the design was scaled back to a more modest surface mounting of letters to match existing letters applied directly to the north and south faces of the pedestrian bridge, no structural amendments will be necessary.

3.2 ELECTRICAL EVALUATION

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

1. Existing Conditions

- a. Power to the bridge lights is sourced from Panel LL which is located in an electrical room directly adjacent to the bridge area. Panel LL is currently supplying power to the lights inside the bridge and to the four flood lights outside of the bridge. The four flood lights are mounted to the four columns of the bridge. Panel LL is a 277/480V, 3 phase, 4 wire. Panel LL was noted as being replaced in 2014.

2. Proposed Electrical Service

- a. The proposed electrical design to power the new light fixtures will be based on the light fixtures selected. Spare circuit breakers are available in Panel LL for the new circuits as required. The loads and the power for the lighting design are available in the lighting fixture cutsheets.
 - b. The new lighting control system location is yet to be verified but the appropriate power will be provided from the adjacent electrical room.
3. Preliminary Calculations
- a. Load calculations will be needed to ensure the panel is not overloaded. The loads that will be served, including the new and existing loads will be determined after the fixture selections are finalized and approved by the client. Additionally, as-built single lines, panel schedules, and panel metering data will be needed to finalize load calculations.

3.3 LIGHTING DESIGN APPROACH

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

- 1. The intent of the lighting design for the bridge signage is to highlight the signage with proper illumination that meets the City of Philadelphia zoning codes but also create an impactful design that creates an eye-catching site.
 - a. Layers of lighting will be introduced to provide dimensionality to the sign and to create a dynamic lighting approach from both facades of the bridge.
- 2. Existing Conditions
 - a. **Interior Bridge Lighting Condition**
The current lighting of the interior of the bridge is linear 1'x4' fixtures to provide ample illumination to the pedestrian access route. The exterior of the bridge is currently highlighted by four bridge column mounted flood lights that currently provide lighting to the façade of the bridge.
 - b. **Signage Existing Lighting**
Existing signage is illuminated by four bridge mounted flood lights located on the four columns of the bridge.
- 3. Proposed Design Intent
 - a. Signage will be illuminated with a combination of new flood and oval flood optic flood lights mounted to existing poles via a 2' arm. The flood lights will provide illumination to the signage as well as the bridge itself. The combination of various optics allows for a dynamic lighting effect on the bridge itself while precisely lighting the signage. The flood lights are

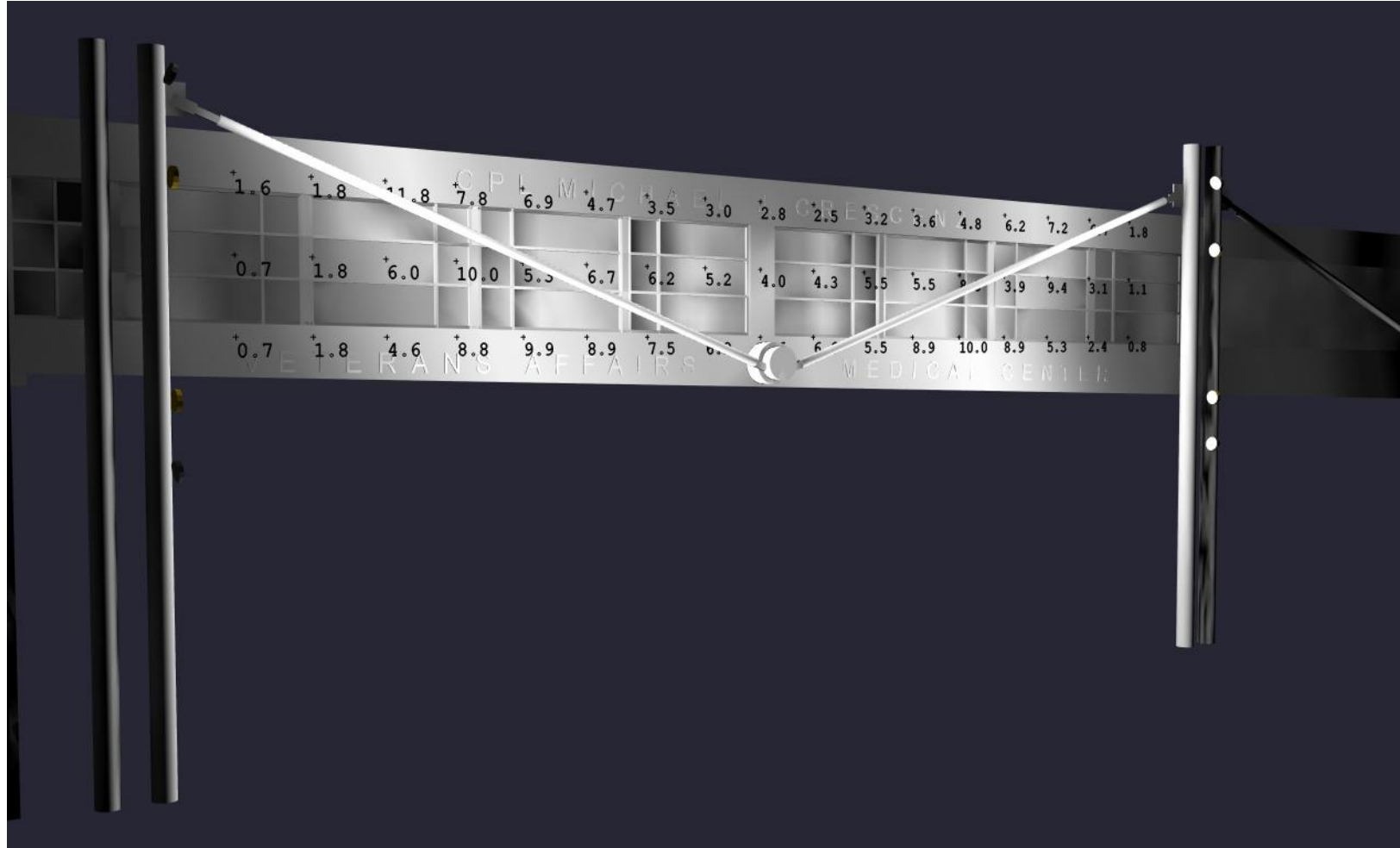
aimed backward and have a controlled light beam to not cause any pedestrian or vehicle distraction.

- h. Control system. Lights will be controlled with two zones per side. Dimming keypads/multi-scene controller shall be provided to control lighting levels, zones, dimming and ON/OFF operation. Keypads will be located inside the vestibule area of the bridge entrance. Drivers and control devices will be located remotely for ease of access and maintenance. Suggested remote distances by the manufacturer will be followed to avoid voltage drops.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE SIGNAGE STUDY
LIGHTING DESIGN

LIGHTING STUDY

DISTANCE FROM COLUMN – 2'-0"
 15" FIXTURE
 TOP & BOTTOM FIXTURE – FLOOD OPTIC
 MIDDLE FIXTURE – OVAL OPTIC



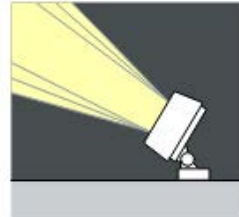
ERCO KONA FLOODLIGHT



OPTICS



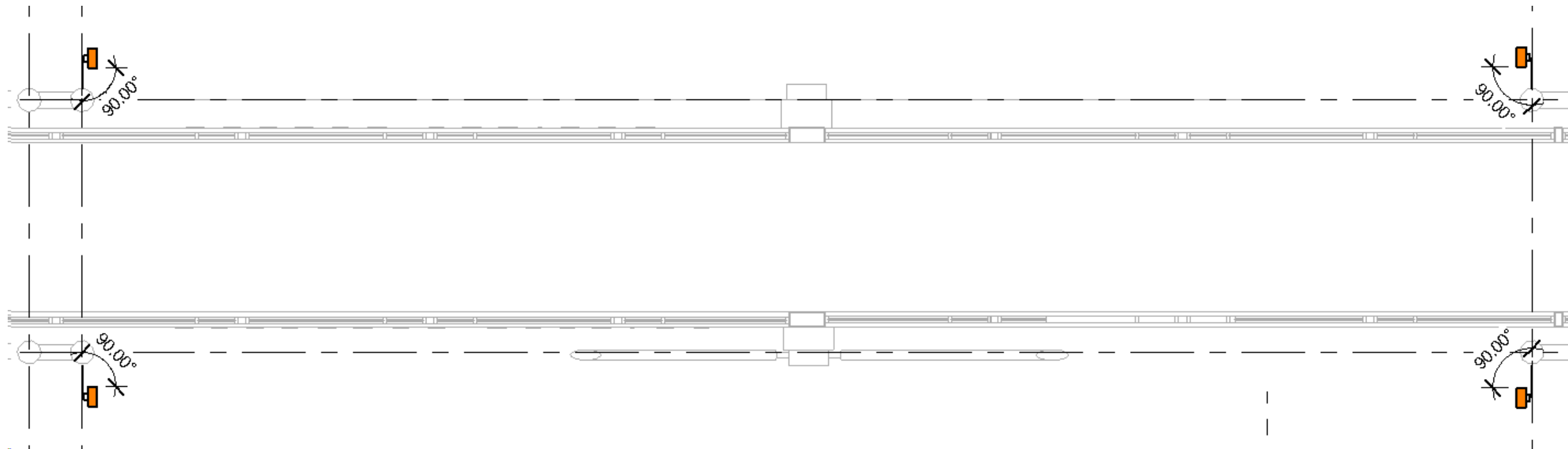
**OVAL
FLOOD**
10195 LUMENS



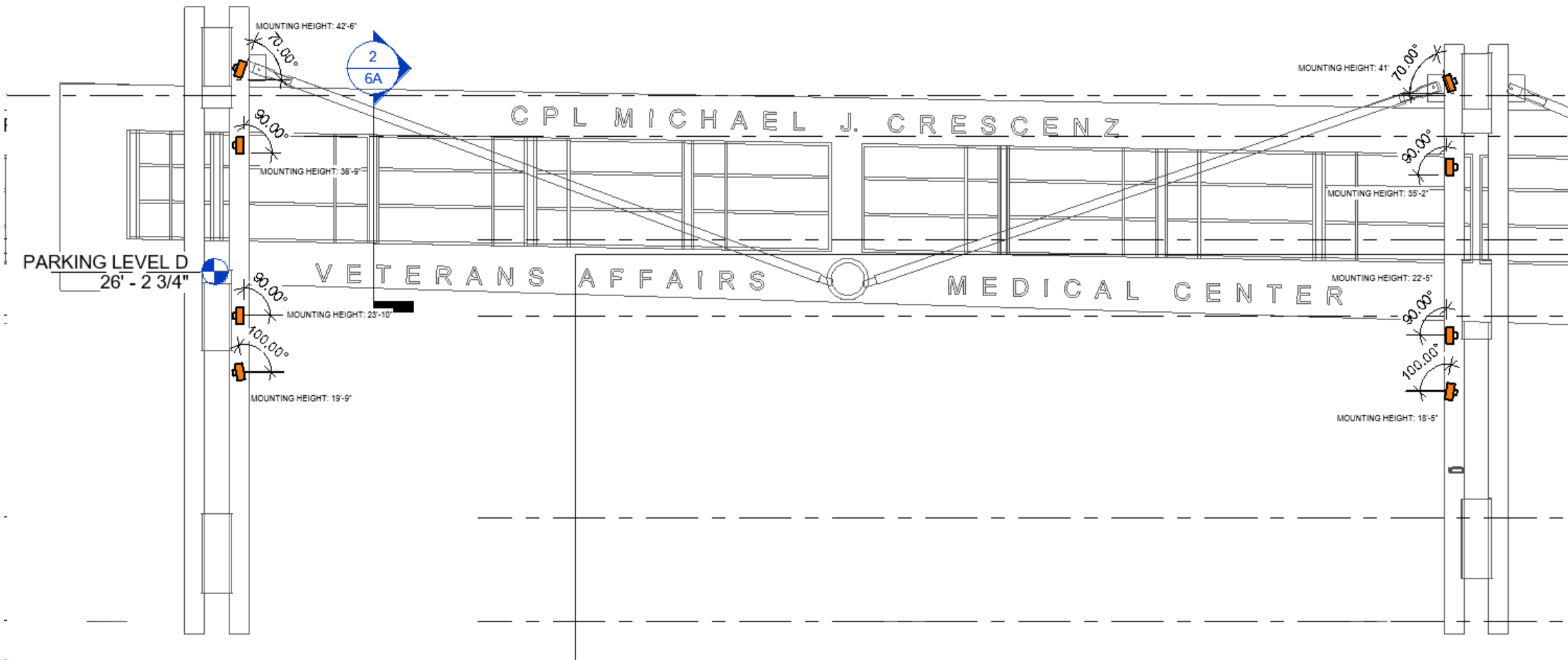
FLOOD
10195 LUMENS

Calculation Summary						
Label	CalcType	Avg	Max	Min	Avg/Min	Max/Min
A-WALL_143_Surface_1	Illuminance	5.30	11.8	0.7	7.57	16.86

PLAN



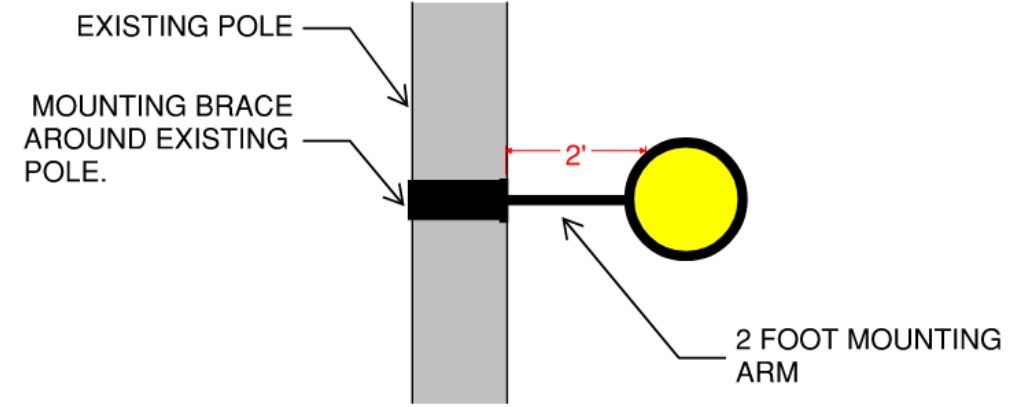
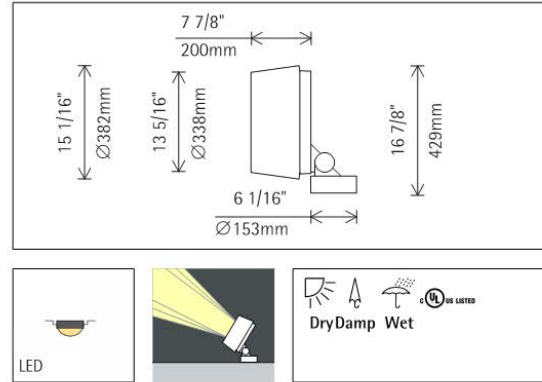
ELEVATION



LIGHTING FIXTURE SPECIFICATION

LIGHTING MOUNTING DETAIL

ERCO Kona Projector



- OVAL FLOOD
 - ERCO #34886.023
 - Wattage: 113W
 - Voltage: 277V
- FLOOD:
 - ERCO #34882.023
 - Wattage: 113W
 - Voltage: 277V

4.0 COST ESTIMATE

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Pending review and approval of this proposed design by the City of Philadelphia review authorities, this report will form the basis of an evaluation by A/E cost estimators to determine probable construction costs for application of letters on the north and south faces of the existing pedestrian bridge as well as amended lighting.

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A1.0 HISTORY – VA PHILADELPHIA HEALTH CARE

A2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

A1.0 HISTORY - VA PHILADELPHIA HEALTH CARE

Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center

On December 16, 2014, the Philadelphia VA Medical Center was officially renamed the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center, paying tribute to the only Vietnam-era service member from the Philadelphia area to receive the Medal of Honor. Congress passed legislation renaming the facility, and President Barack Obama signed it into law.

Born in Philadelphia in January 1949, Michael J. Crescenz grew up in the West Oak Lane section of the city. In February 1968, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. A few months later, he shipped out to Vietnam. On November 20, 1968, an entrenched enemy force ambushed Crescenz's unit and pinned them down. With extraordinary bravery, 19-year-old Crescenz charged the enemy position and single-handedly took out three machine gun bunkers before he was killed. His sacrifice saved many lives.

Crescenz received the Medal of Honor and a posthumous promotion to the rank of corporal. President Richard M. Nixon presented Crescenz's Medal of Honor to his parents at a White House ceremony on April 7, 1970. Crescenz's parents asked to have him buried in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Cheltenham Township, 13 miles north of Philadelphia. In 2008, after his parents died, Crescenz's remains were moved to Arlington National Cemetery.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.va.gov/philadelphia-health-care/about-us/history>

A2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

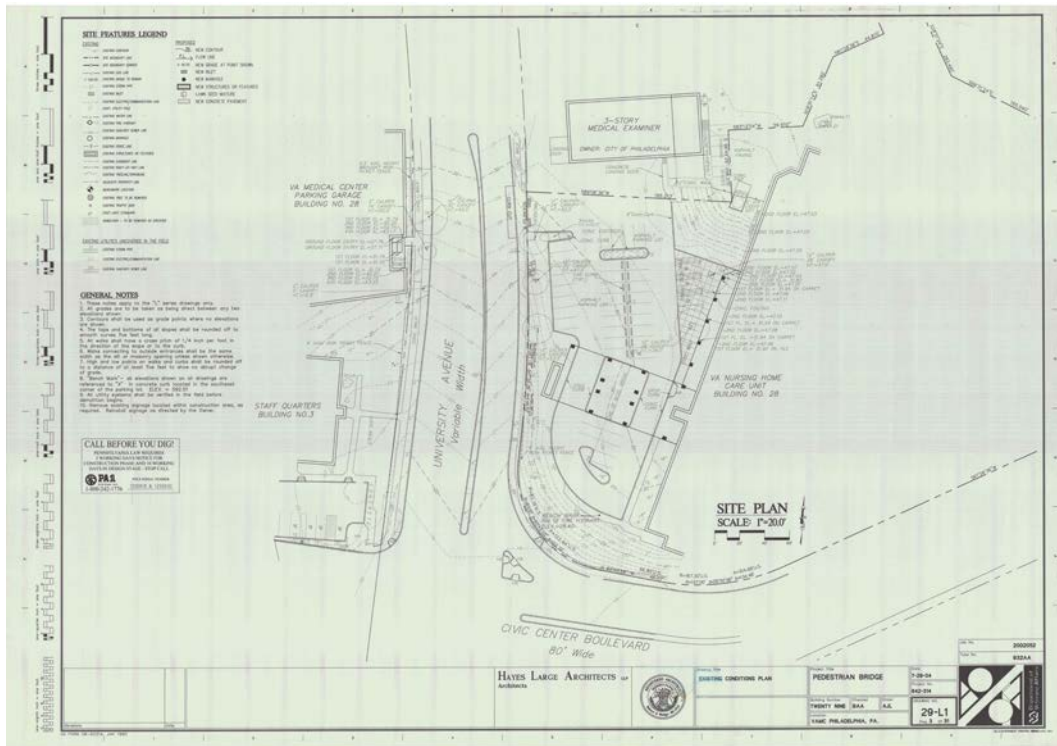
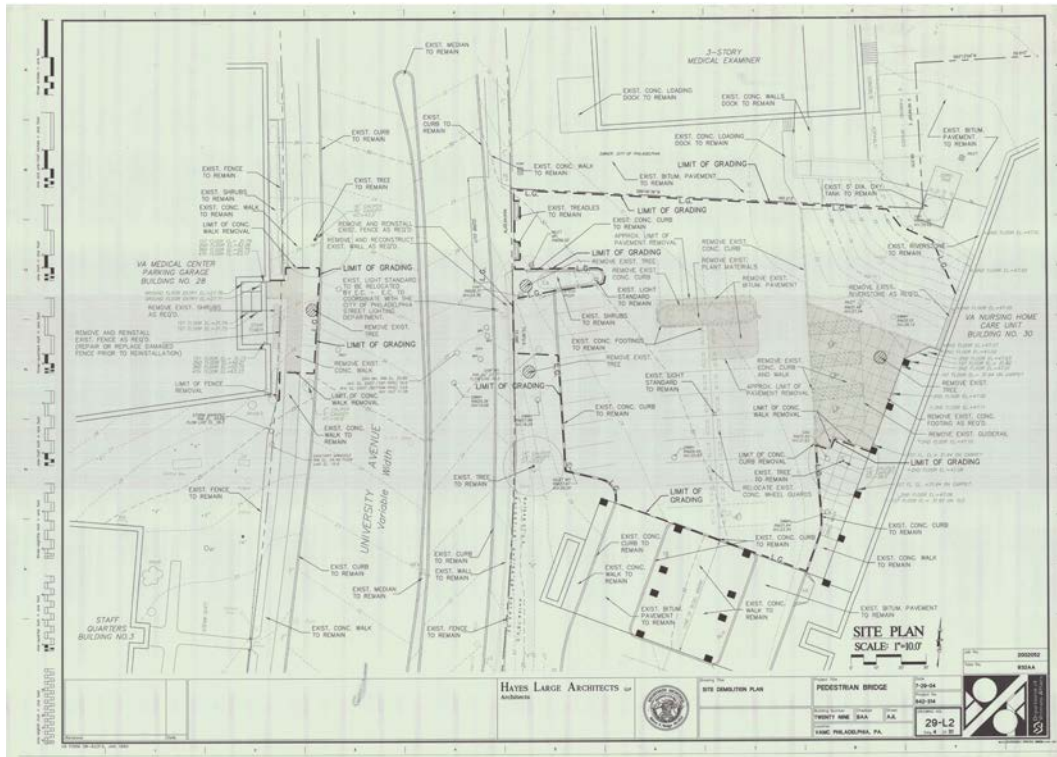
EVALUATION	A2.1
BRIDGE DRAWINGS	A2.2
CONSTRUCTION PHOTOS OF EXISTING	A2.3

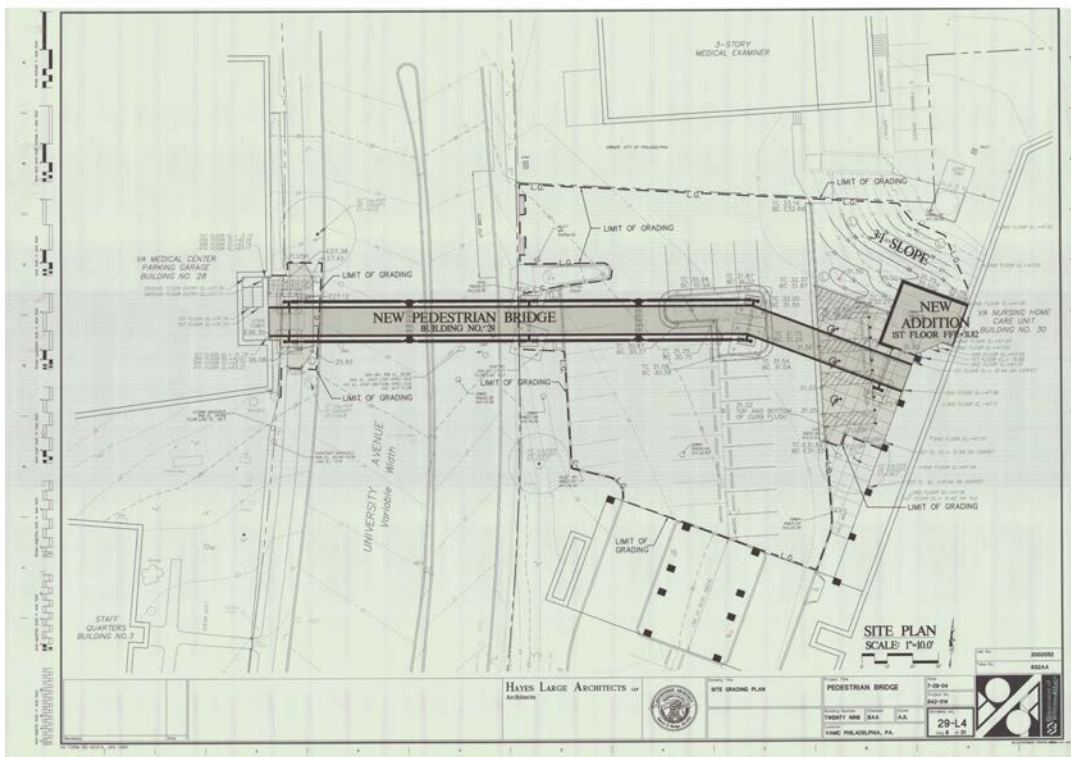
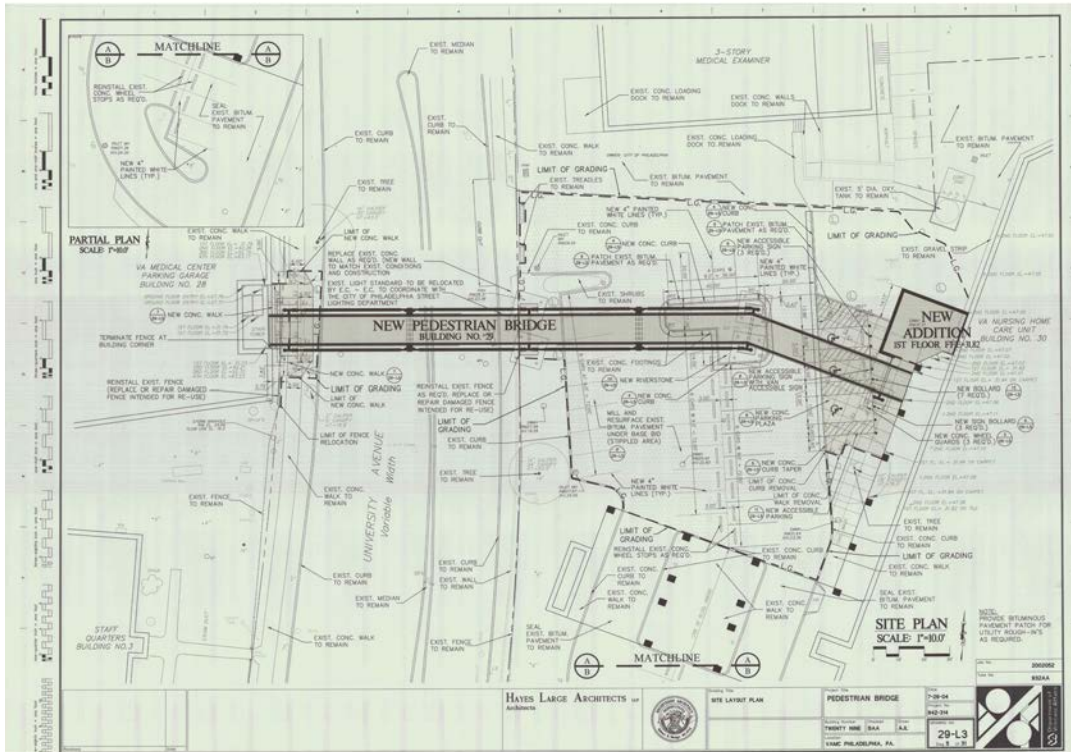
A2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

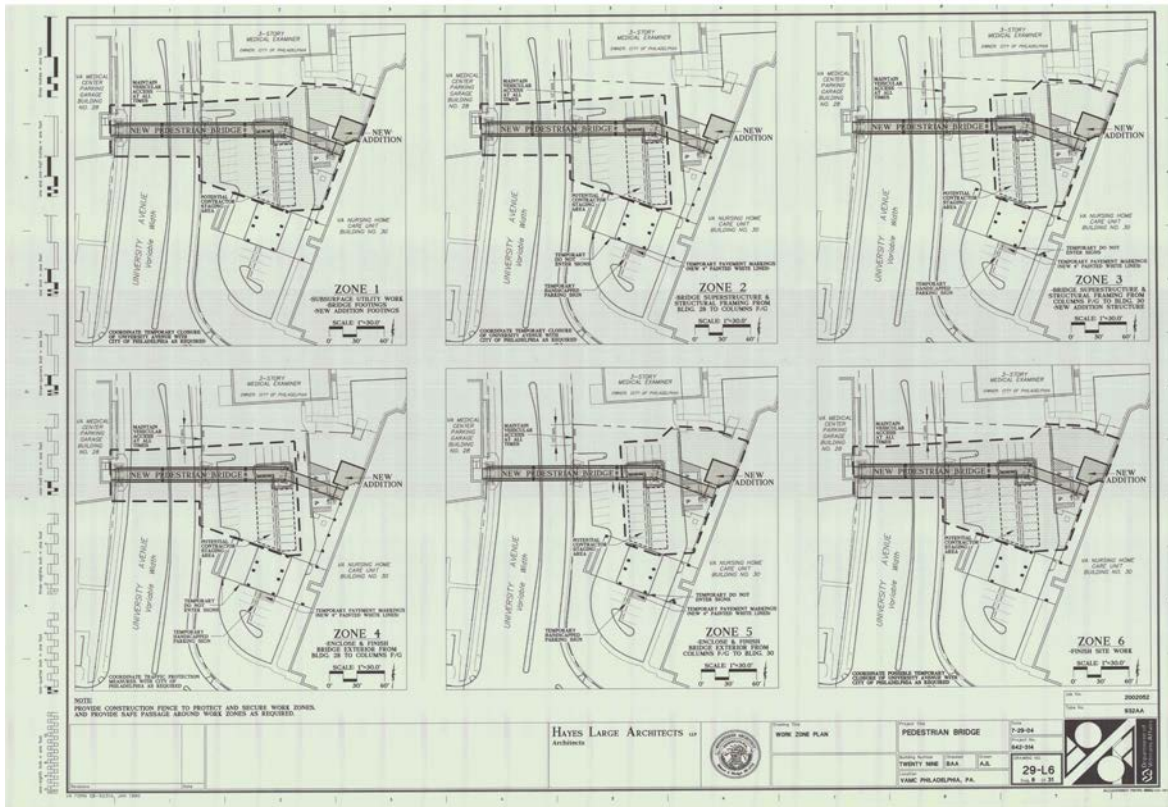
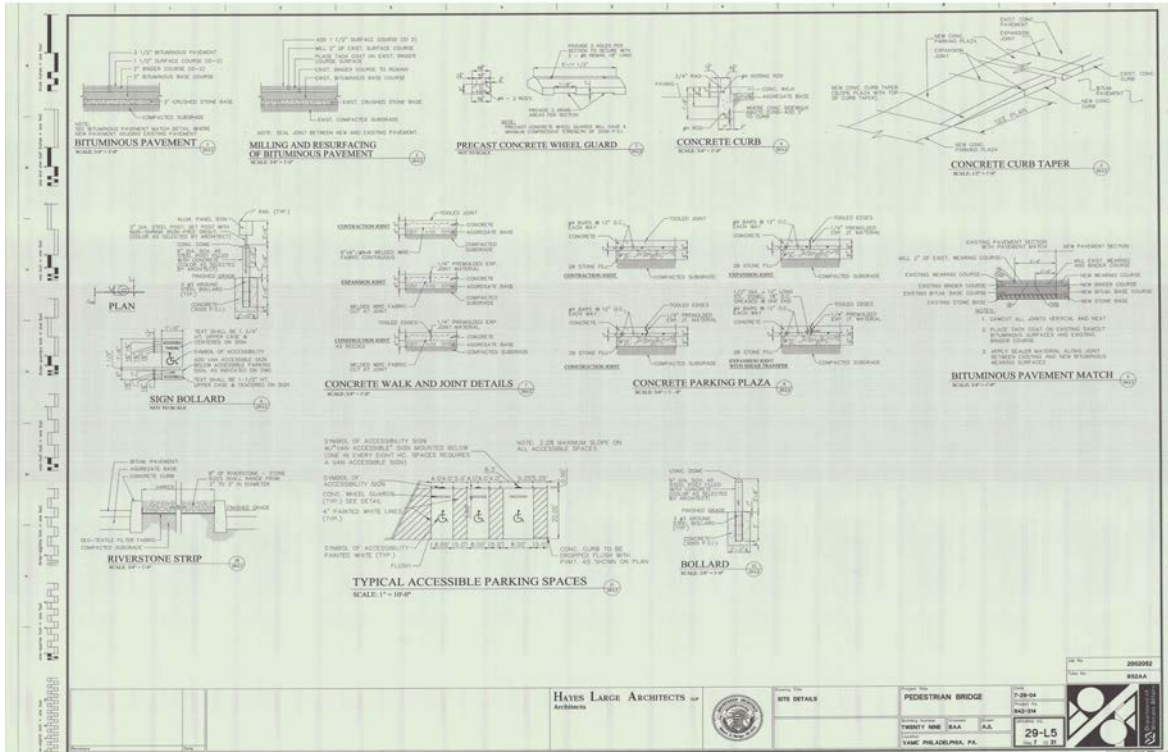
A2.1 EVALUATION

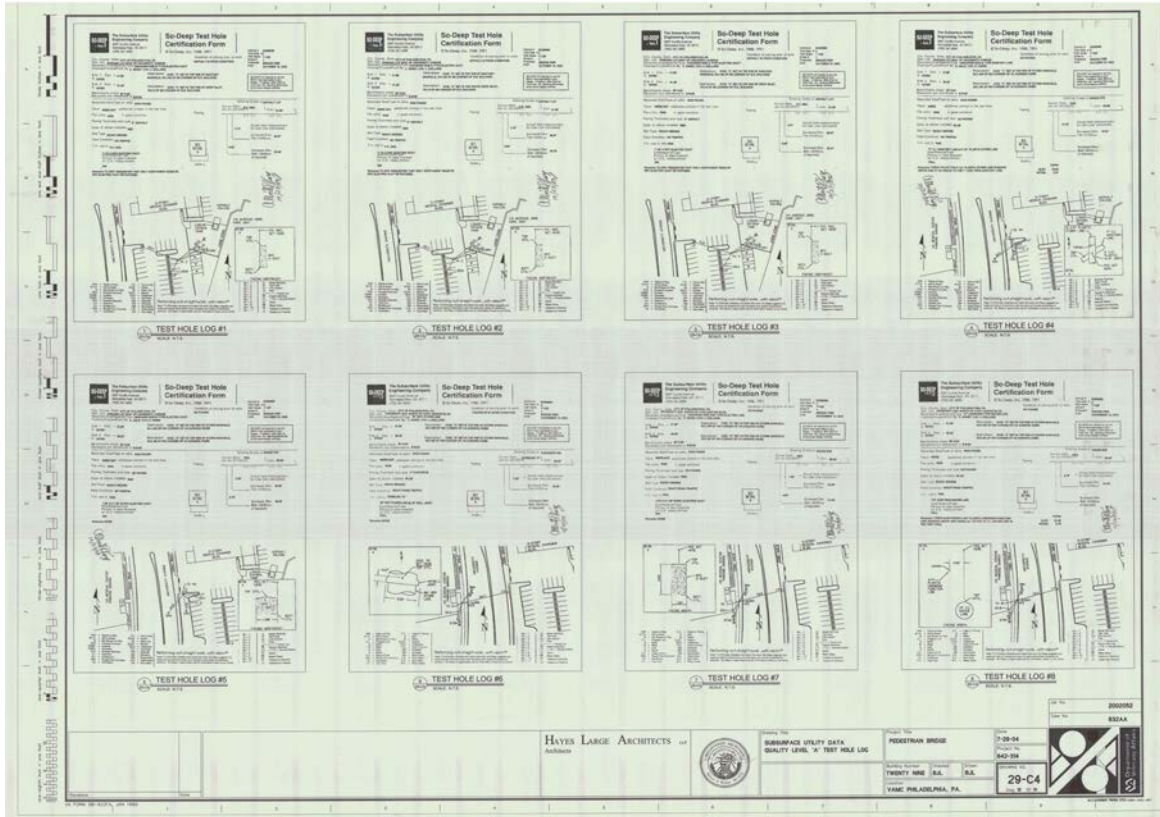
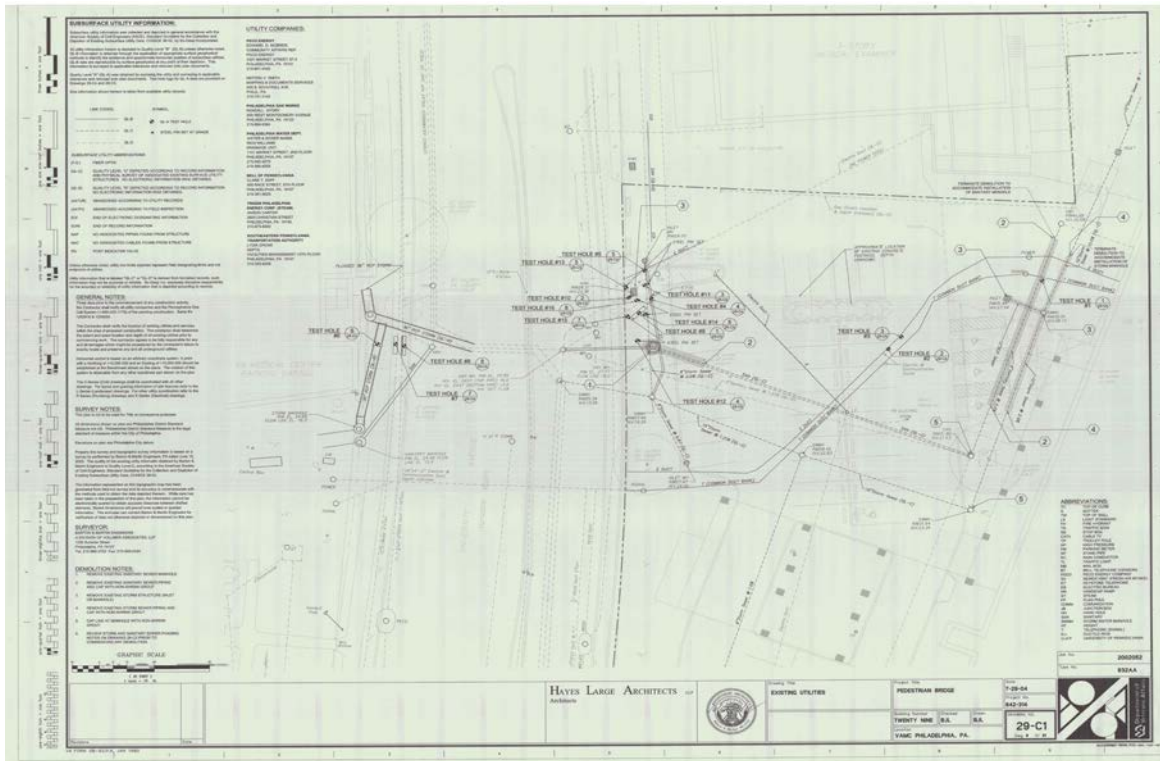
A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

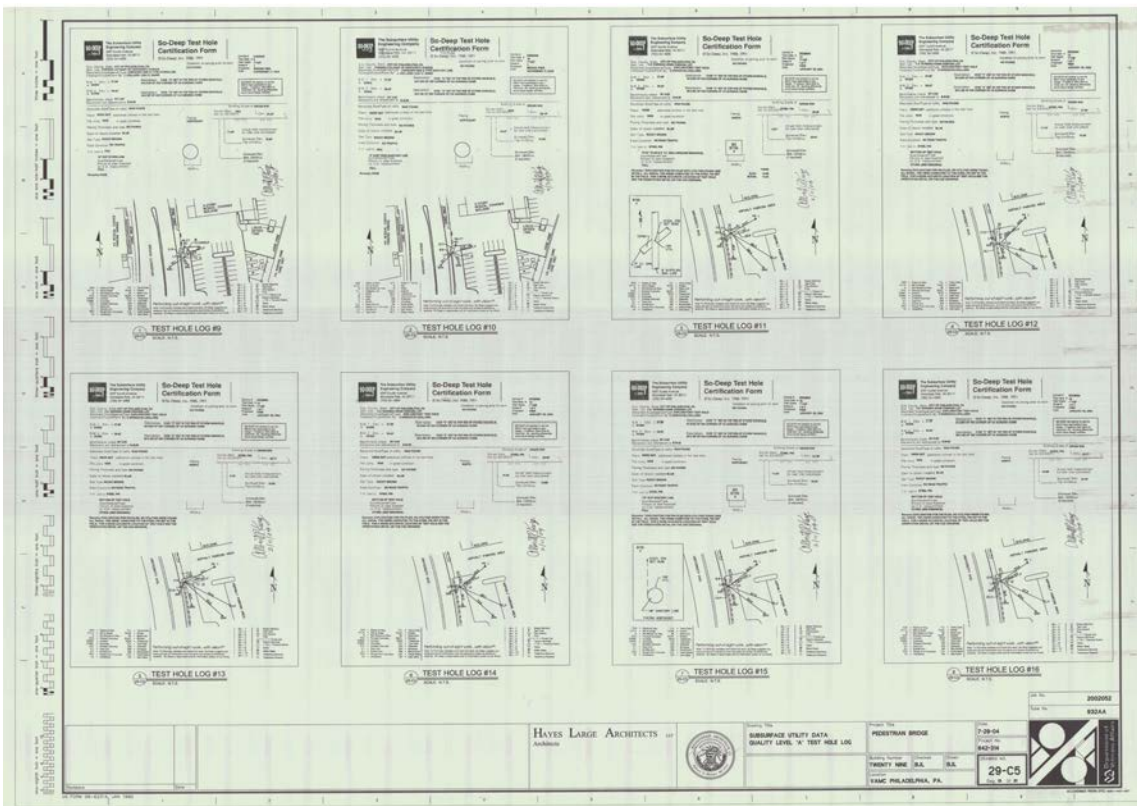
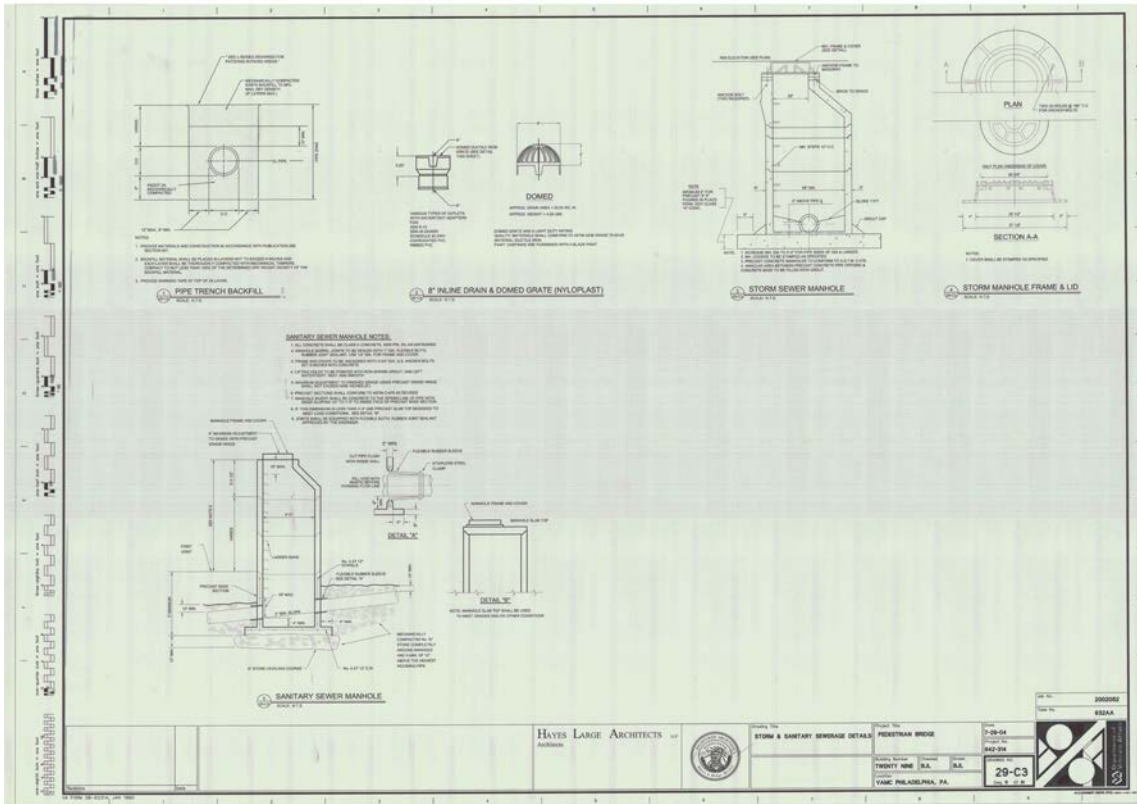
1. As-Built drawings and construction photographs were made available to the A/E Team during the week of 13 March 2023.
2. A/E conducted an on-site survey of existing conditions on 21 March 2023 including members of ThinkForm Architects and HDR. We were escorted by the VA COR (Alternate), Rob Martin.
3. The pedestrian bridge was designed and built in 2004 and spans between VA Medical Center Parking Garage Building No. 28 and VA CLC Building No. 30 in a north/south orientation over University Avenue. The bridge varies in clearance above the roadway with an approximate height of 26 feet. The roadway is bounded on either side by concrete pedestrian sidewalks.
4. The bridge is constructed with a steel superstructure and clad with aluminum windows and aluminum metal panels.
5. This bridge is mostly used by hospital staff for convenience and less so for patients. Access is controlled for security reasons.
6. Photos of the bridge are included with this report showing historical views taken during its erection and views taken of its condition today.

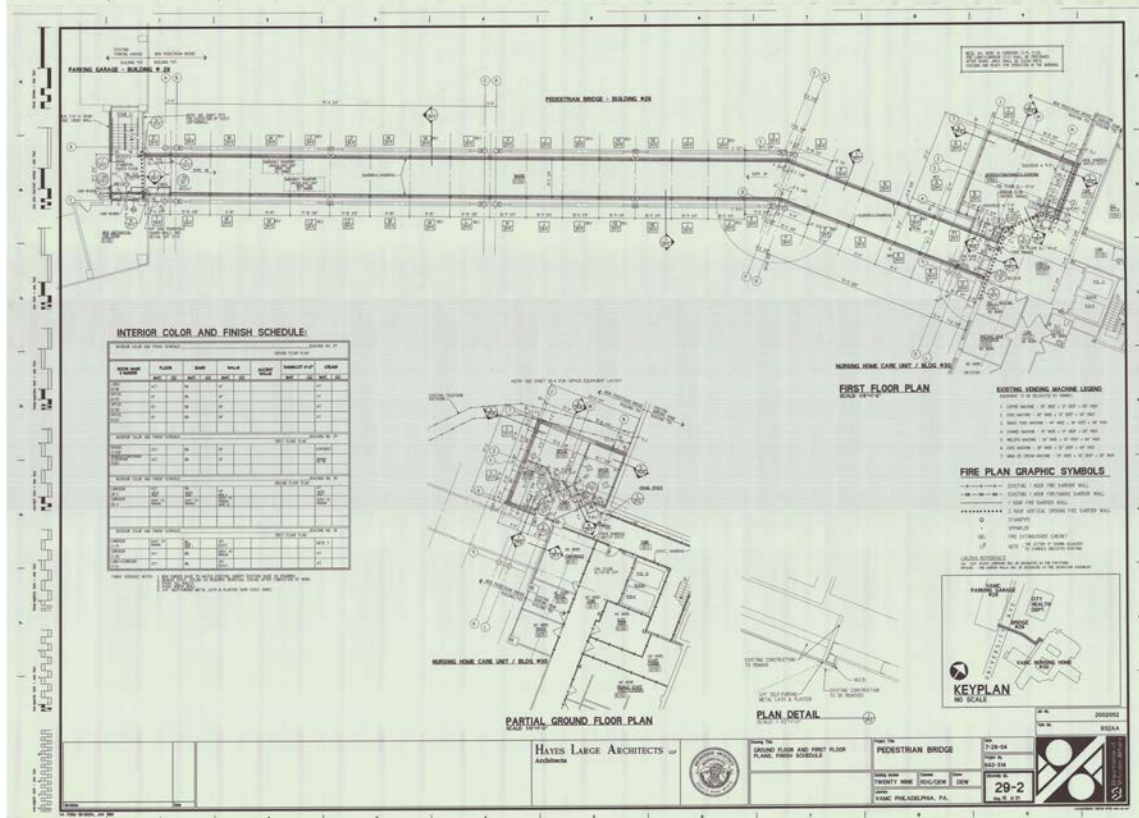
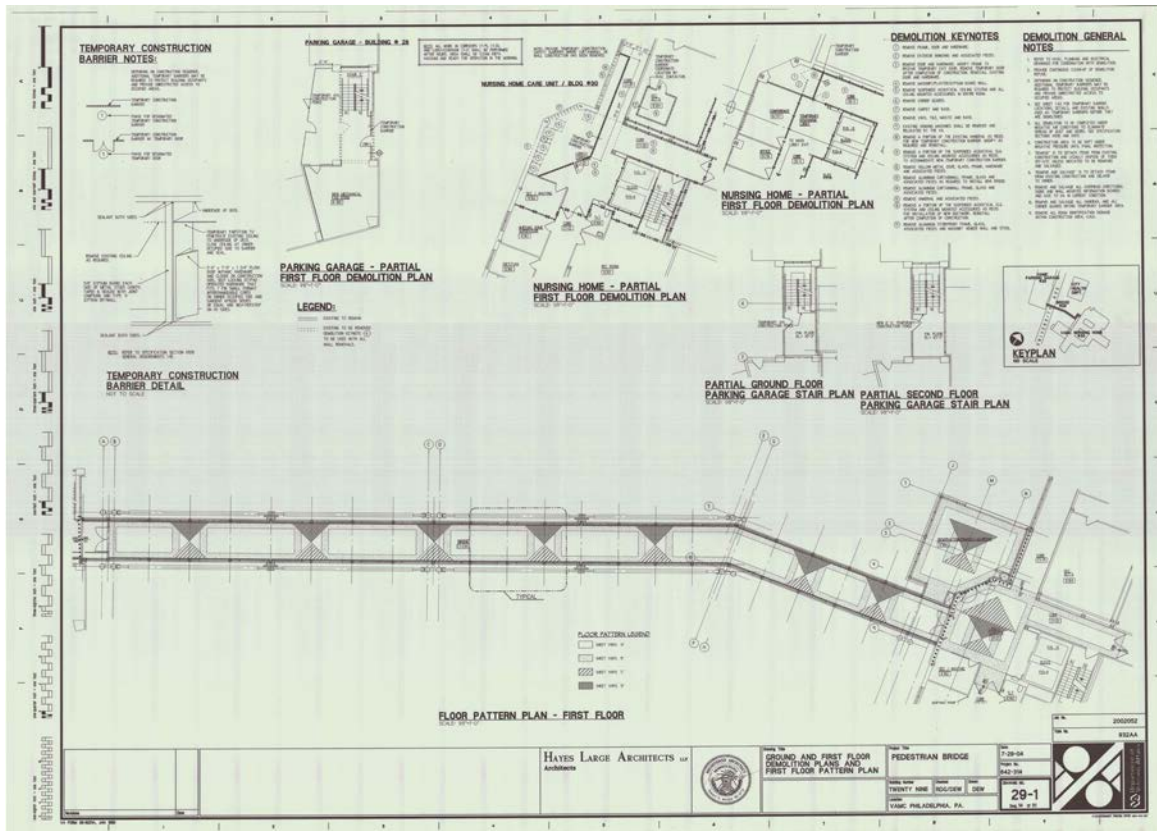


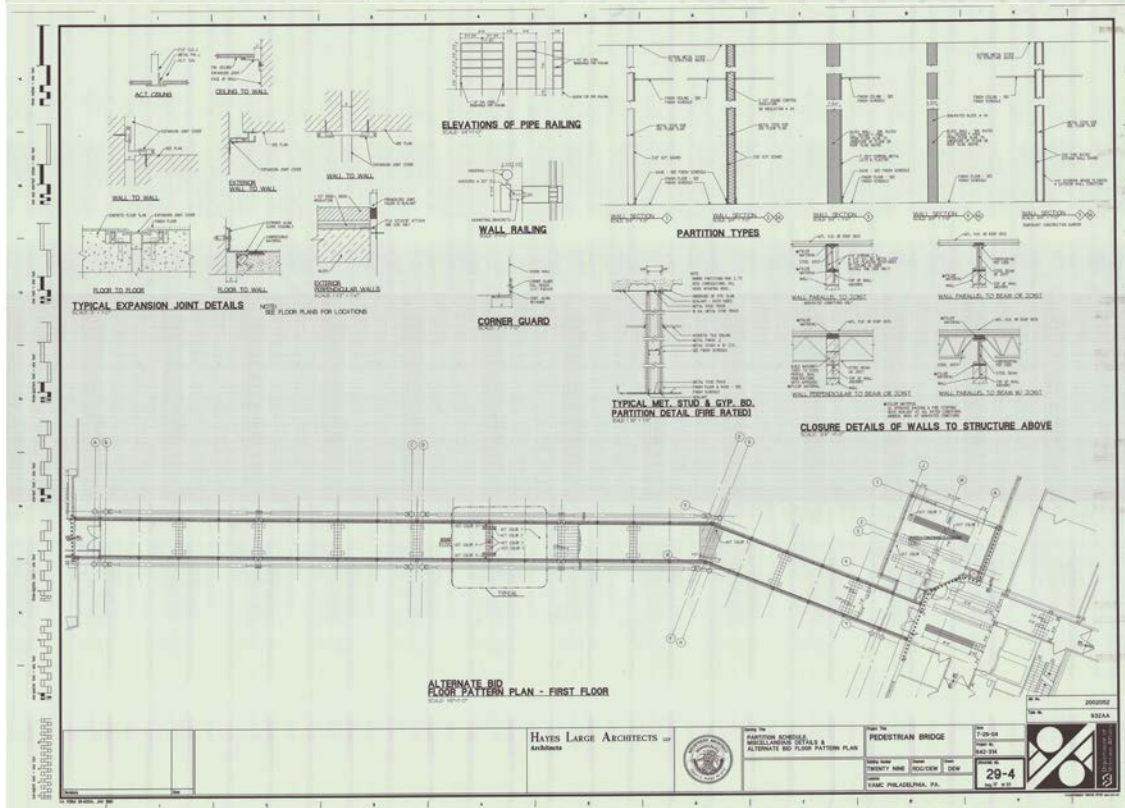
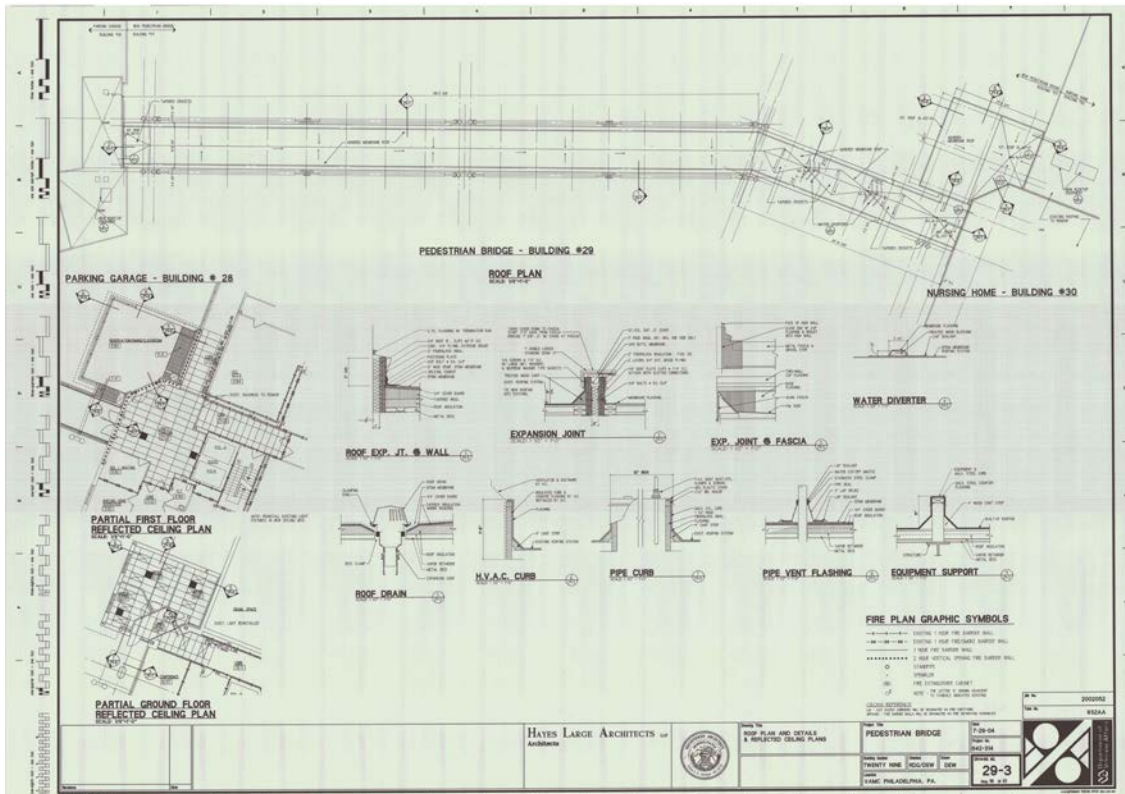


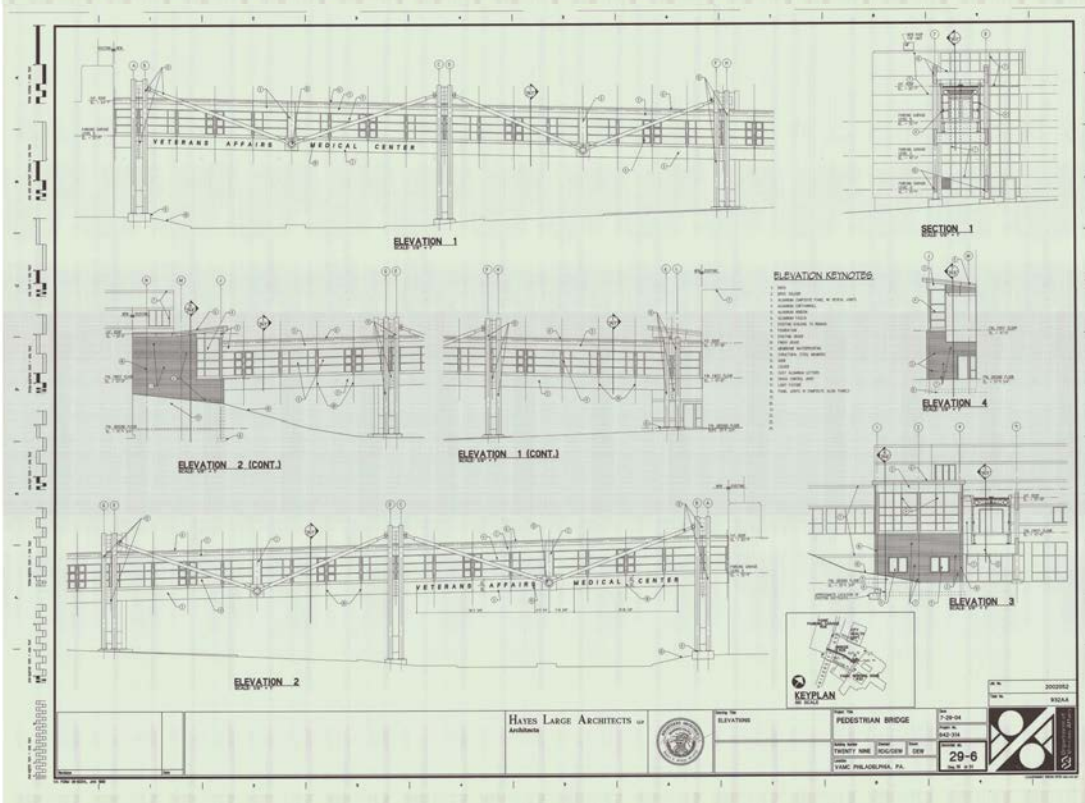
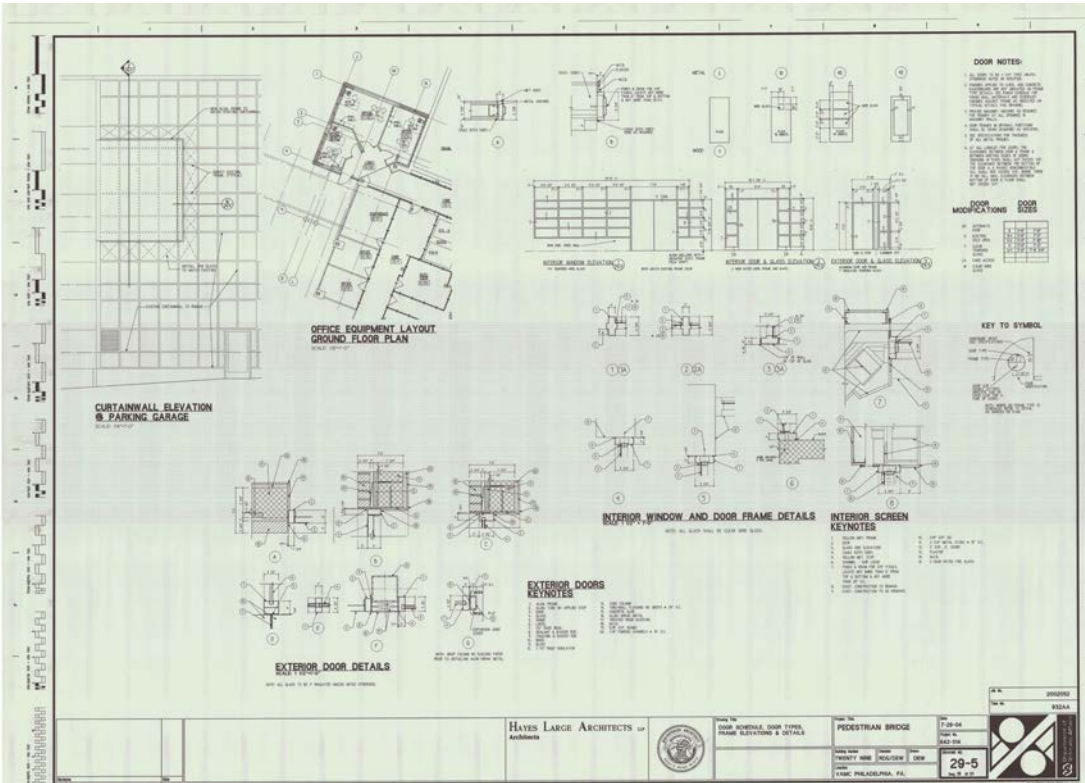


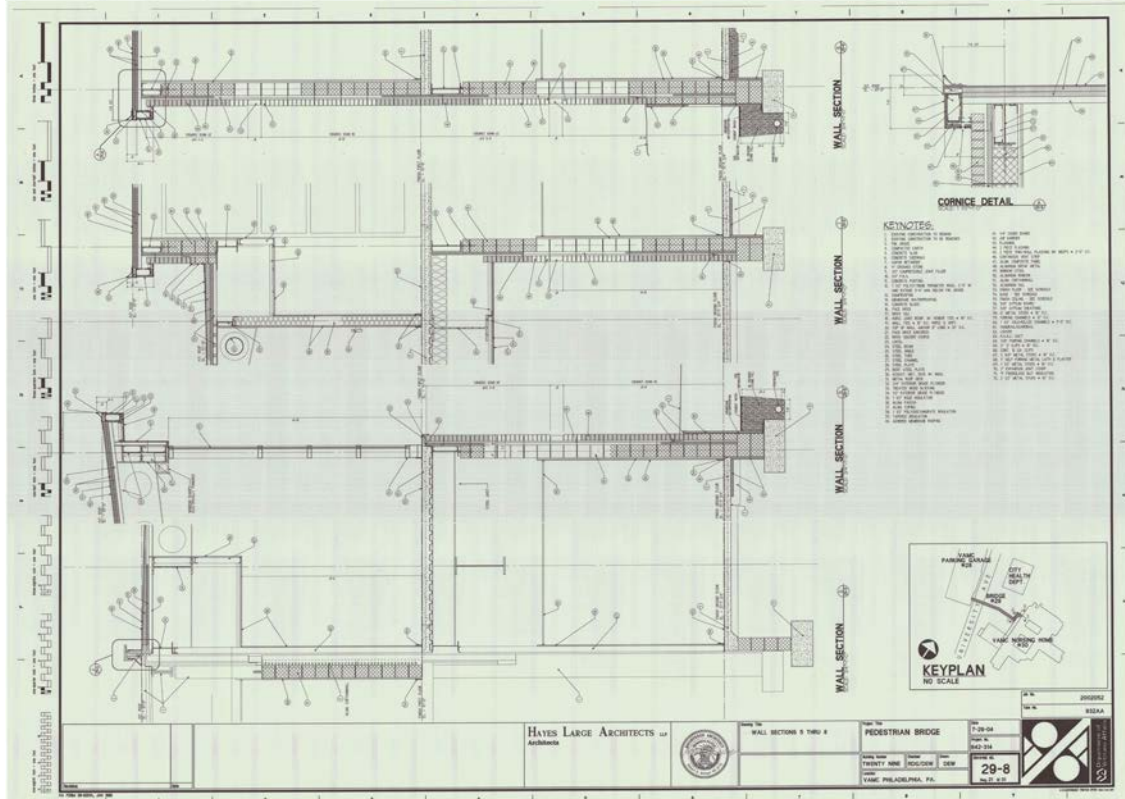
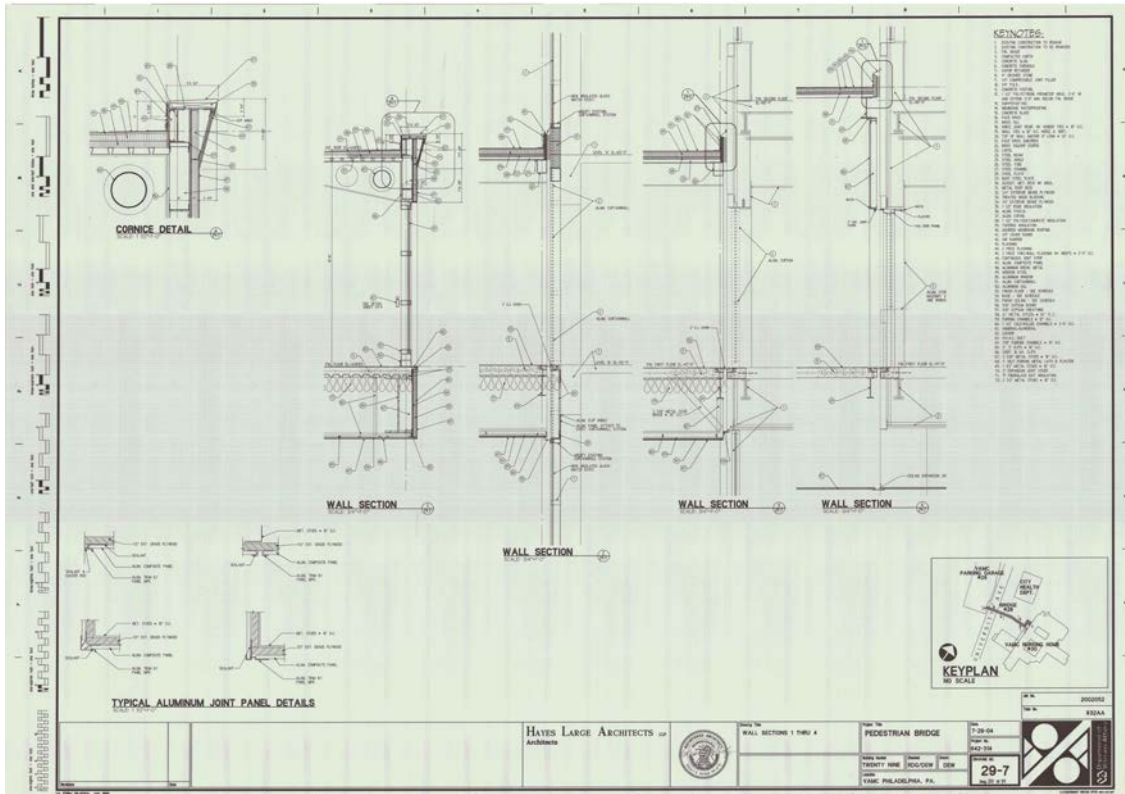


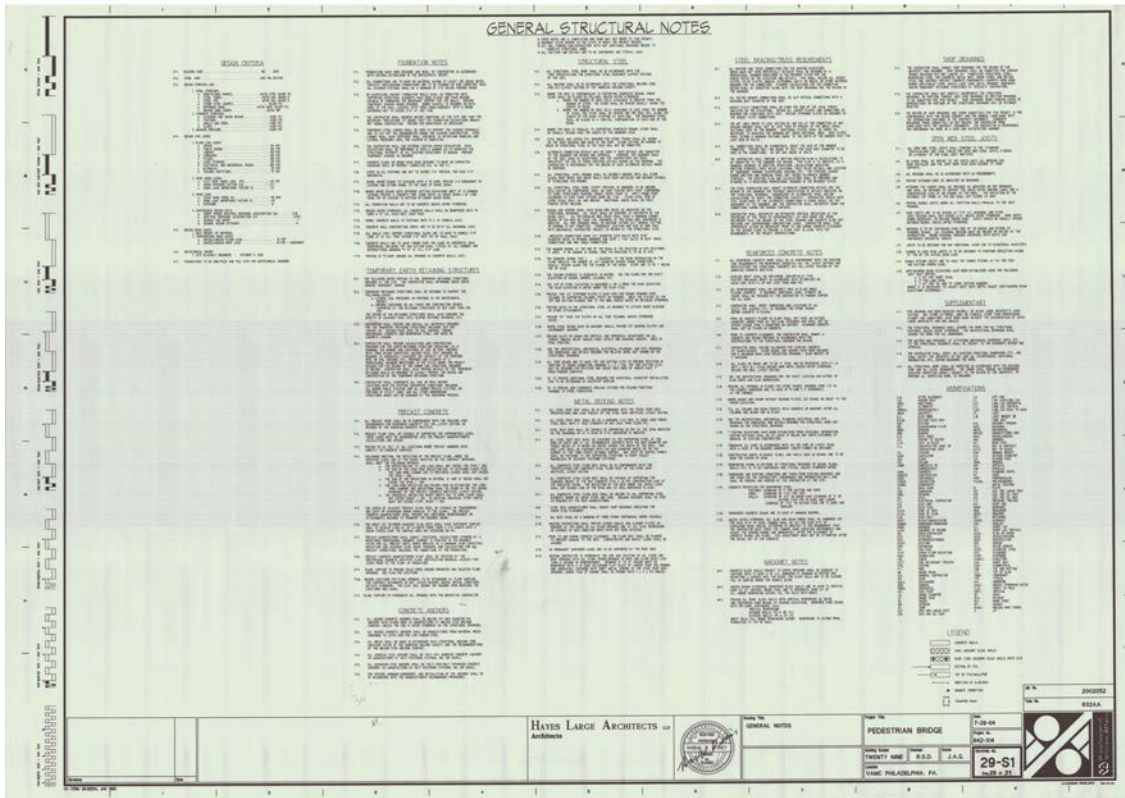
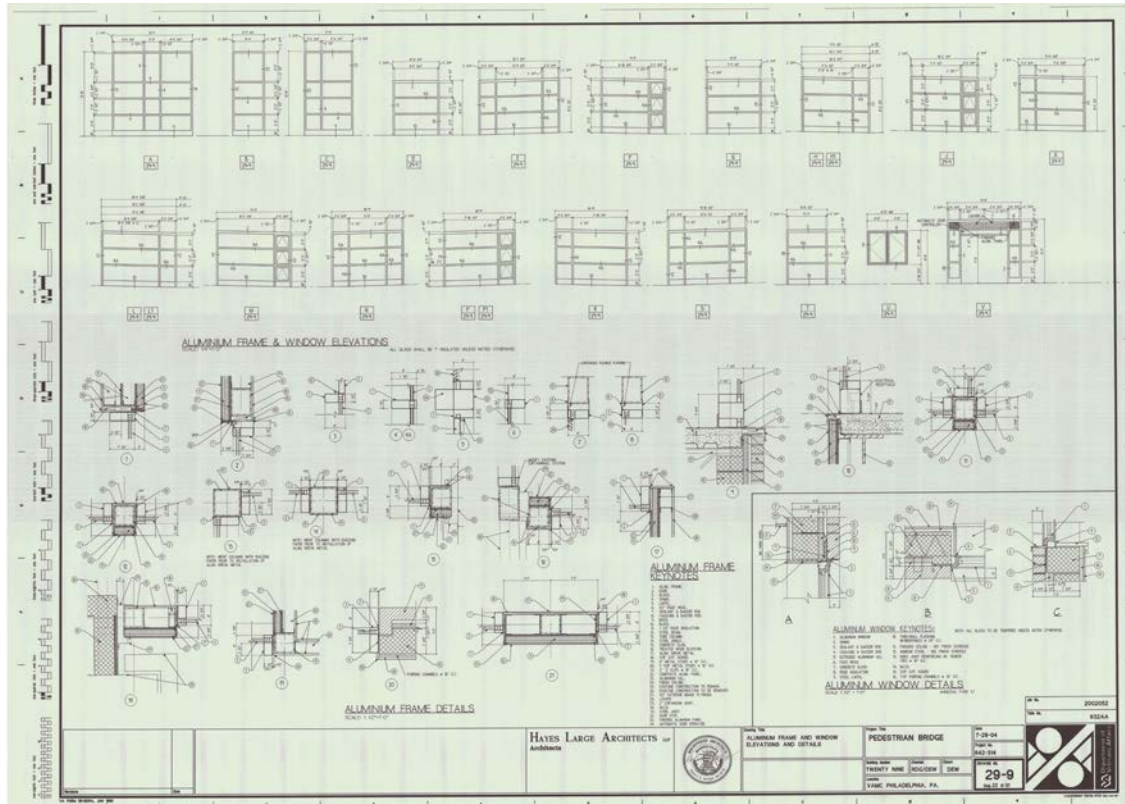


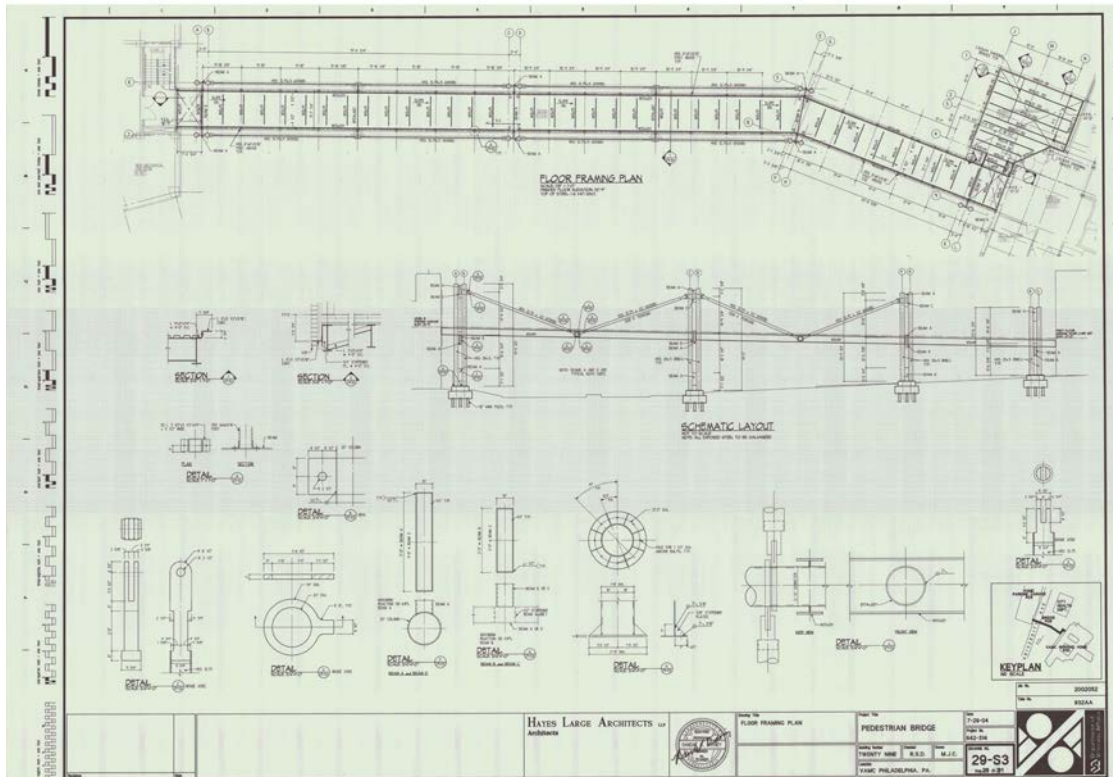
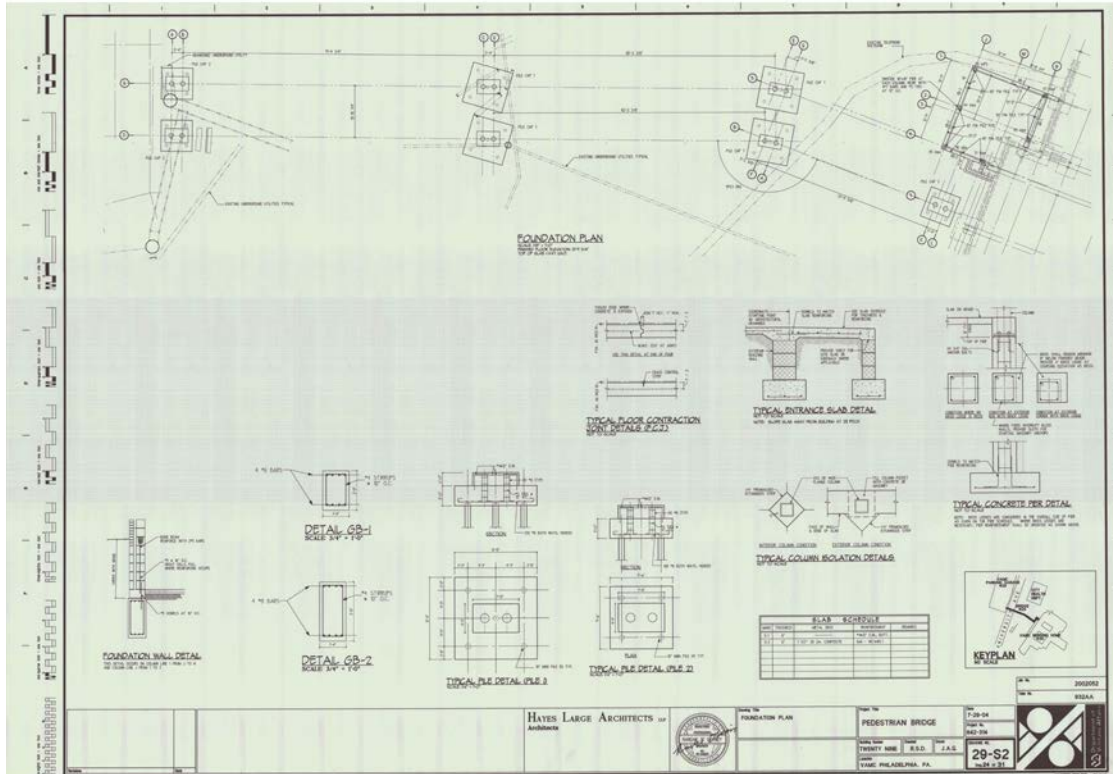


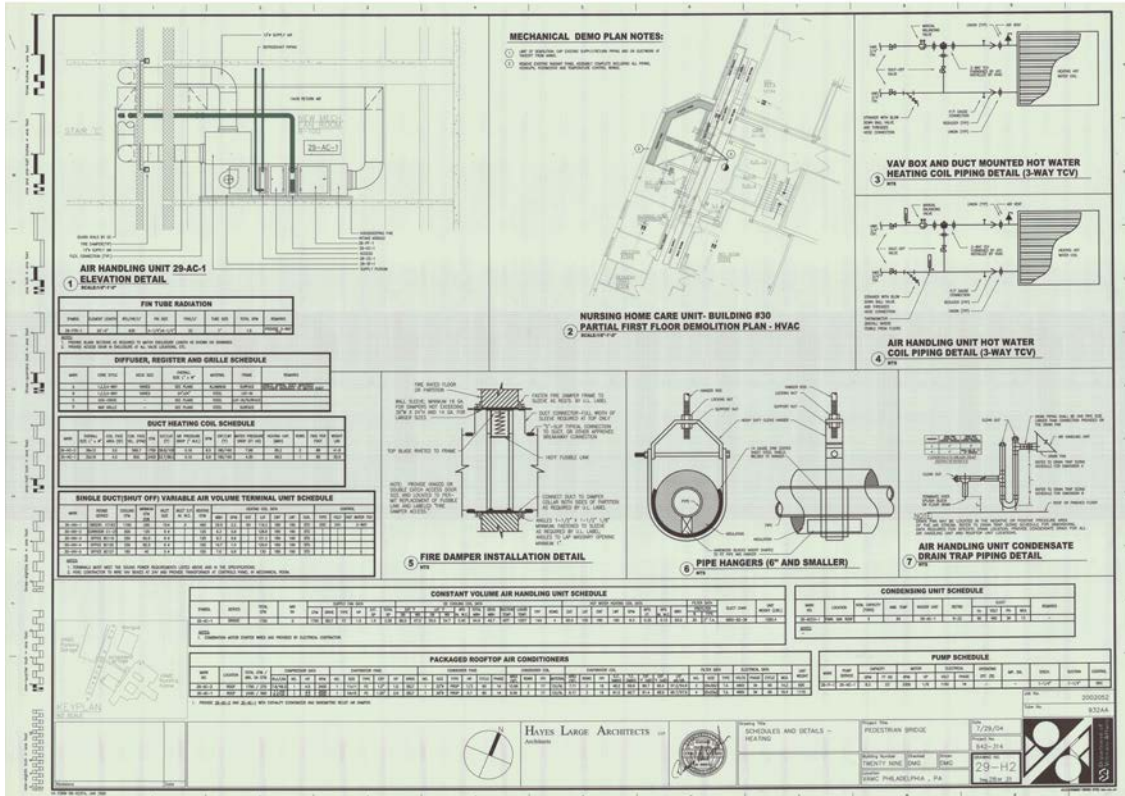
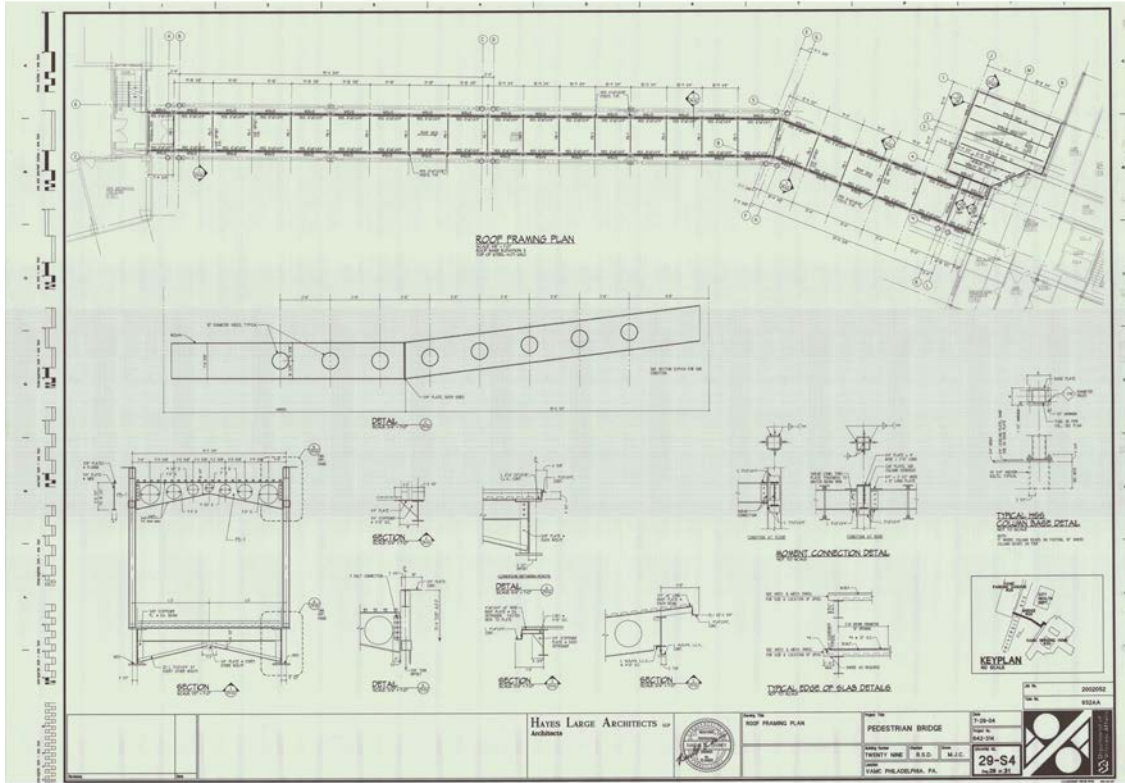


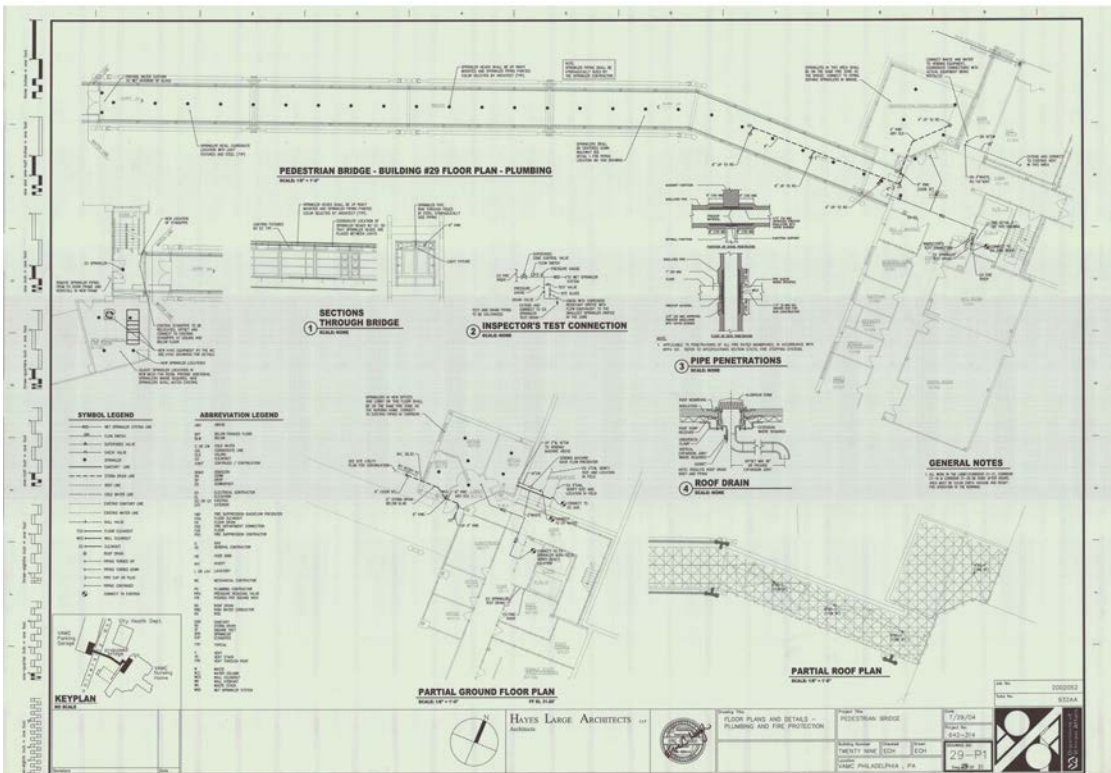
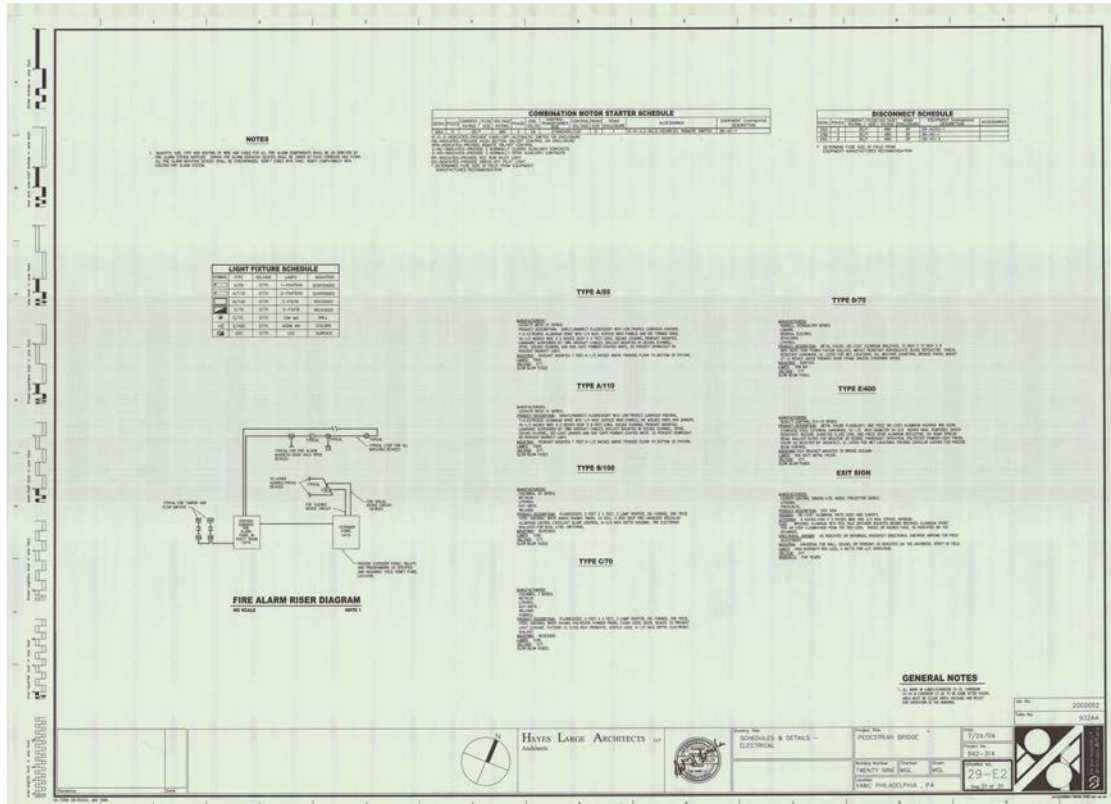


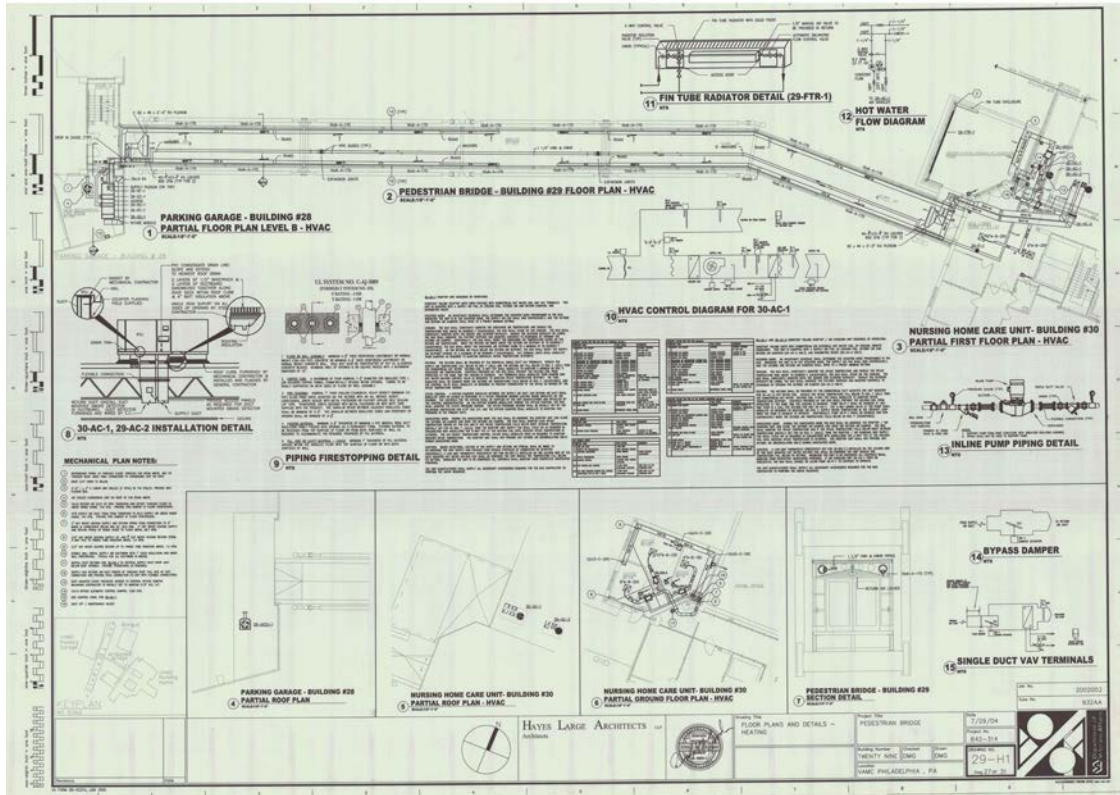
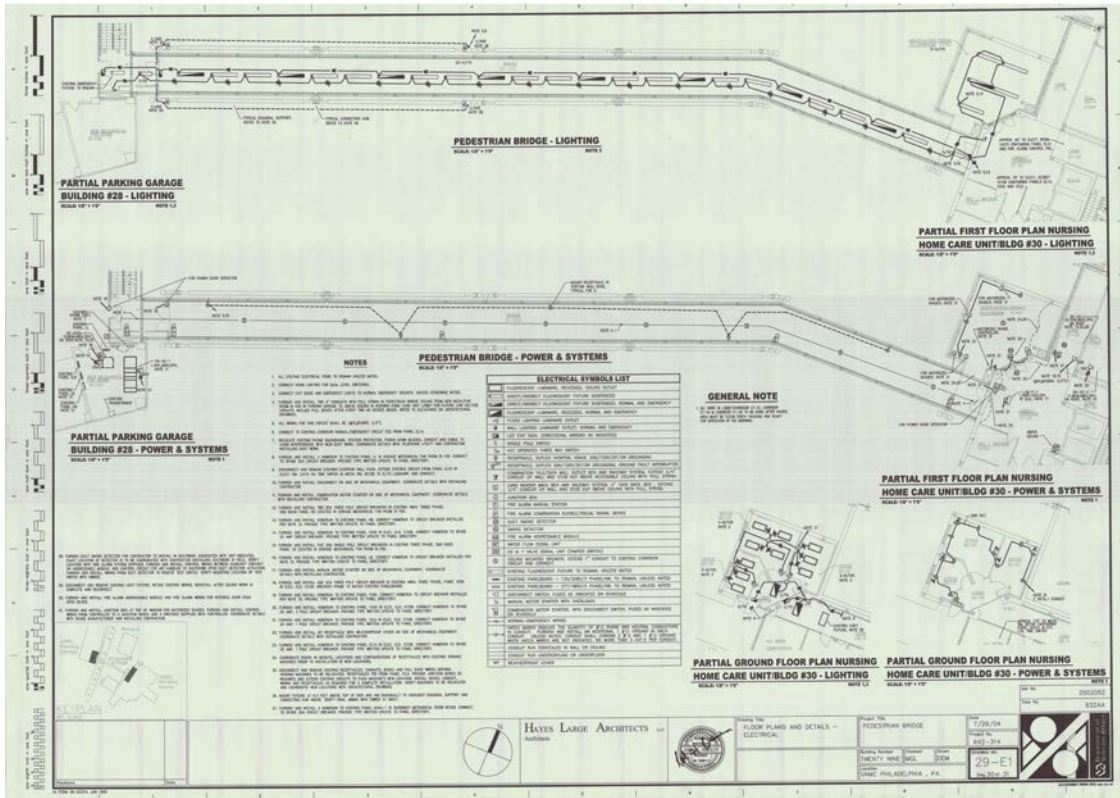












A2.3 PHOTOS

A. DURING CONSTRUCTION:











B. CURRENT CONDITION:







